



Tapteal Greenway

Conservation-Education-Recreation on the Lower Yakima River Since 1995

Tapteal Talk

~ Board of Directors ~

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President's Message

By Adam Fyall

If this looks like déjà vu to some of you, it feels like it to me. I have returned for a second stint as President of this organization which I love and that has been a central feature of much my adult life and nearly my entire residency here in the Tri-Cities. My introduction to the Tapteal Greenway was the 1996 annual meeting, which at that time consisted of a work party at the Chamna Natural Preserve on a chilly October morning followed by some donuts and coffee. A month later I found myself in the more comfortable surroundings of David Nelson's living room being introduced as the newest member of the board as a still wet-behind-the-ears kid of 25 years old. I have served on your board of directors ever

since and as your President from 2001 to 2003.

Our organization has grown a lot and accomplished a number of remarkable things over that quarter-century. I am proud not only of the tangible accomplishments on the ground of which there are many, but also of the many fine relationships we have developed in this community and the stature and credibility this humble organization has built through patient tenacity and a commitment to doing things the right way.

I am personally excited for the year ahead and for the next several years. We have many challenges as always, but also great opportunities; and on a number of fronts I think we are on the cusp of some significant breakthroughs. Two related things that I will briefly mention here are overall trail connectivity and Benton City.

The Greenway has many missions as you know, but our signature long-term goal has been completion of a continuous 30-mile multi-use trail more-or-less paralleling the Yakima River from the Kiona Bend area of Benton City to Bateman Island at the Yakima-Columbia confluence in Richland. This is hard. But actually, over half of that mileage is in place and we are starting to splice together critical threads. I feel like we can really tie some things together and show you an impressive updated map of this trail at the annual celebration in October. I also mentioned Benton City specifically. What has really energized me personally is the commitment that the mayor, council, revitalization organization, and several business owners in Benton City have shown toward upgrading and expanding their public lands in the city, and tying them together with the Tapteal Greenway Trail. Getting from Horn Rapids Park to the Kiona Bend seemed like such a Gordian Knot to untangle just a few years ago, but now I can see us on the precipice of major headway this year.

There are some other things I look forward to working on this year, much of it in the way of organizational development and communications. I would like to get you, our members and patrons more involved in the organization and our goals. We are going to get this newsletter back to a regular publication cycle, and I want to see more engagement with our social media. We also need our members to recognize the purpose in this organization and get a little more active in our programs and activities. You will see more from me on this over the course of this year. In the meantime, thank you for your support as always. I hope that after a couple of years of hunkering down you are increasingly able to get out among your family, friends, and neighbors and enjoy your public lands and all of the outdoors. Stay well, and thank you for supporting the Tapteal Greenway.

Tapteal Greenway New Year's Day Hike

Stan Kuick, Treasurer

As we normally do, Tapteal Greenway sponsored and led a New Year's Day hike, this time in WE Johnson Park. Turnout was modest at 14 hardy individuals who came out to brave the snow and 20 degree cold. But in spite of the low temperatures the wind was calm and the walking was pleasant. Stan Kuick and Dirk Peterson were the leaders. The hike started at 1:00 pm in consideration of the fact that the prior night was New Year's Eve.

We were able to traverse the secondary loop trail, which is normally swampy, without getting our feet wet because it was frozen solid! Board member and birder Mike Lilga was also in attendance. Among the birds he identified was an American kestrel, a beautiful small raptor which unfortunately was some distance away. The total distance we covered was only a little over 3 miles, but when it's cold and you're bundled up it's harder and counts extra, doesn't it?

Our next hike will be a flower hike in the spring. Stay tuned to our website and FB page for the date!



Recreational Events on the Tapteal

By Dan Hansen

In addition to the recreational events put on by the Tapteal Greenway such as hikes and paddles, other local groups often use the Tapteal trails for their events. Runners of the Sage have had a group run in Amon Creek and the Chinook Bicycling Club has events in Chamna Natural Preserve. The Nomad Trail Runners of Eastern WA have a variety of events planned for this year: the 2nd Annual Tapteal Greenway 50K on May 14 (both paddle and run), Sole Survivor on September 16 -17 in Chamna, Chamna Chase in Chamna about October 15, and Kim's Bad Knees 5K around January 7, 2023. The 40 Something Cowgirls had a trail ride competition in WE Johnson Horse Park in the past, the Purple Sage Riders (Back County Horsemen of WA) had a large trail ride in WE Johnson last spring, and the Rattlesnake Ridge Riders (Back Country Horseman of WA) will be having a fundraising event on the Tapteal Greenway Trail in Horn Rapids Park on May 7 this year. Both the Ridge Riders and Purple Sage Riders have also donated their time to help clear tree branches and brush in Chamna Natural Preserve. These are just the groups that I am aware of - I'm sure that there are many more events. If you are aware of any not mentioned, please drop an email to any board member and we will pass it along. In addition to watching, all of these events can use volunteers. For example, the Tapteal Greenway will be manning at least one aide station this year for the Tapteal Greenway 50K at the Wanawish Diversion Dam on the Yakima River. If you are interested in volunteering at the aide station, please contact Dan Hansen at d55stude@yahoo.com or any of the TG board members.

Youth Ecology Education Through Restoration

By Dirk Peterson

Last November Gretchen Graber and Janneke Petersen gave us a Zoom presentation on the Youth Ecology Education through Restoration (YEER) program. When Janneke was a middle school science teacher in Seattle she searched for a Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) aligned unit on a local ecosystem to teach. The closest ecosystem unit she could find was for Yellowstone. She was disappointed that there was no unit available on local ecosystems so over the course of a few years she created one. In looking for ways to demonstrate and implement the unit she teamed up with the Washington Native Plant Society and the YEER program was started.

The YEER program integrates a four to six week middle school NGSS-aligned science curriculum with a field restoration project. The goal of the restoration project is for the students to increase the biodiversity of a degraded piece of land in their community. They start out by studying a healthy example of the local ecosystem. Then they apply their understanding of the ecosystem to design a restoration plan for the degraded parcel. The program culminates with the students implementing their restoration plan. This program typically involves three outdoor restoration days, for example weeding, planting and site preparation for the next year. A visit to a healthy example of their local ecosystem might also be included.

The details of the program are customized to the west and east sides of the state. Janneke is the west side coordinator and Gretchen is the east side coordinator. With the east side program each team of students take on a 10'x10' plot. They have nineteen native plants to choose from for their restoration plan and each plan must include shrubs, forbs and bunchgrasses.

The YEER program is in its first year of a two-year pilot period that is largely being funded by the Washington Native Plant Society. The two schools participating on the east side are Wahluke and Paterson junior highs. There is interest in expanding the program to a school in Pasco. The materials cost to implement the program at each school is about \$5,000. Tapteal Greenway has set a goal to raise enough money to cover these costs for adding a local school to the program. To contribute to this effort, you can send us a check or make a donation via PayPal from our website at <https://tapteal.org/ways-to-help/donate/>. In either case, please indicate that the donation is for the YEER Program.

You can learn more about the program by visiting <https://www.wnps.org/youth-ecology-education>. This page includes a recorded presentation about the program which we highly recommend watching.



Just Keep Swimming...

By Diana McPherson

What's small, round, and pink all over? Salmon eggs!

Fourth and fifth graders throughout the area are raising salmon at their school as part of the "Salmon in the Classroom" program. This important program was started by the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife as an environmental education program in 1991 and continues to serve as a lesson in interrelationships of species and their local watershed.

Not only are salmon indicator species meaning that their health is affected by the health of its environment, but they are also keystone species. Chinook salmon in particular is an important keystone species in the Pacific Northwest because they are the vital food source for several large species including orcas, bears, seals, and large birds of prey. Learning about the salmon's lifecycle and its role in the environment helps the students understand the importance of a balanced ecosystem. In the classroom, students will monitor the growth rate and success of their salmon for several months. But there's more science going on here than watching fish hatch and grow.

Tank preparations begin in the fall and are of the utmost importance to ensure a proper environment for development and growth. Tank size is typically 50-55 gallons and the bottom is lined with natural pebble-sized gravel (never colored). The water must be at the proper temperature of 48°F with a 2°F differential. A sufficient air supply must be provided to aerate the 50-55 gallons of water and provide oxygen to the eggs. A bio-filtration system covered with a netting (to prevent eggs and alevin from being sucked in) will keep the tank environment clean.

It may take a few days for the water temperature to reach the desired reading. Once this is achieved, water chemistry is monitored for pH levels, ammonia, and nitrate. pH levels should be maintained between 7.0 - 7.6. Ammonia and nitrate levels should be at zero but never getting above 0.25ppm and 0.5ppm, respectively. An aerator will circulate the oxygen-rich water at the surface with the oxygen-poor water near the bottom.

Once the tank is properly prepared, the fertilized eggs will be delivered to the school. Before the eggs hatch, a dark spot will be visible on the pink egg. This is the eye and the developing nervous system. The eggs will lay among the rocky bottom as they would in the cool stream and riverbeds. Within roughly 2 months they will hatch into the "alevin" stage where they remain in the rocks with a nutrient providing yolk sac.



After a few weeks of growth, the yolk sacs will have been absorbed and now the alevin are "fry" and can begin learning to eat. Hatchery fish food is provided in small amounts. Fry will only eat food in the water column, or falling through the water. If too much food reaches the rocks, the food waste may affect the ammonia and nitrate levels requiring additional water quality testing and cleaning of the tank. As the fry grow, their food increases to fish flakes and then to frozen bloodworms. These feeding stages are important so the fry learn to feed on their own and are able to survive in their natural environment.

In the spring, the fry are ready for release. They must be released only in the body of water specified on the permit. The fry are carefully transported to the site and are acclimated to their new home by adding a couple cups of river water to their tank/bucket water. Data is recorded on the camouflage markings and the number of fry each student is releasing. The fry are then gently tipped into the water, never poured from height, and watched swimming away into their new home. The number, date, and location of fry released is then reported to the state.

In the classroom, the students recorded their observations in a journal on the number of eggs, alevin, and fry. They are fully engaged in the water quality monitoring and maintenance. They learn more about their specific salmon species and their lifecycle. They learn about the salmon's regional and ecological importance and habitat concerns as well as practical stewardship actions that each person can do to ensure survival of the salmon.

If your school doesn't already participate in "Salmon in the Classroom" and would like to, please contact your local US Fish and Wildlife Service office. Watch our short video of [Salmon fry](#)

Palouse to Cascades Trail (PTCT)

By Adam Fyall

While not a part of the Greenway, this is an exciting milestone for public recreation in our state that will be a highlight of 2022.

In short, the Palouse to Cascades Trail (“PTCT”) is a classic “rails to trails” conversion that after decades of work is now functionally complete. The new name is kind of clunky, but you may know this trail by two of its former names – the John Wayne Trail and the Iron Horse Trail. These have been joined and rebranded. The completed trail is 288 miles long, extended from a western terminus near North Bend, over the Cascade Mountains, across the basin and range of the Columbia Basin shrub-steppe, through the Channeled Scablands, and finally on to the Palouse Hills completing the journey at its eastern terminus at the Idaho border near Tekoa.

I say that the trail is completed because in the last several months the final two huge obstacles have been overcome. If you drive to the Seattle area via the “back way” as I call it, meaning through the Hanford Site to Vernita, then along the Columbia River to Vantage and onward from there via Interstate 90, you will have seen these two obstacles. On the western slope of “Vantage Hill” (Ryegrass Summit) you would notice a tall railroad trestle spanning I-90. This is the Renslow Trestle, and if you have driven beneath it lately, you will have noticed a huge “Palouse to Cascades Trail State Park” sign lashed to it. That trestle is now open and part of the trail, and the views from up there must be nothing short of amazing, unless you have issues with heights! The other major obstacle is the nearly mile-long railroad bridge across the Columbia near Beverly and Sentinel Gap. Opened in 1909 but closed in 1980, the “Beverly Bridge” has waited 42 years to reopen, but now it has.

These two features combine with the 2.3-mile long Snoqualmie Tunnel to form a “triple crown” of sorts that is going to make this trail a major attraction. I personally hope to bikepack it in its entirety this summer.

The commitment to this project and the many partnerships, deals, fundraising, and advocacy are something we can relate to. Our Tapteal Greenway Trail is a smaller endeavor by scale, but no less of an undertaking. I take great personal energy and inspiration from the PTCT project and that is why I am calling a lot of attention to it here in the Tri-Cities this winter. Several organizations have published pieces about the trail and these recent accomplishments in specific so be sure to look those up for more information.

Finally, I want to mention the big dedication event that State Parks will hold for the Beverly Bridge on **Friday, April 8 at 1:00** at the east side of the bridge (Beverly). I am not sure at this point if the Greenway will organize anything official, but several of us will be going to the event. Watch the Facebook page for more information about carpooling or other information. I hope you will get to visit some or all of the PTCT soon.



Renslow Trestle



Beverly Bridge



Snoqualmie Tunnel

Salmon Summit 2022

By Stan Kuick

Yes, for the first time since 2019 there will actually be a Salmon Summit in Columbia Park April 26 and 27. In case you don't know what this is, it's the culmination of a program called "Salmon in the Classroom" where participating elementary schools in our area raise baby salmon in tanks and then release the young fish into the Columbia River. There is a large program of outdoor learning stations in the park that the kids attend for the two days of the summit.

Tapteal Greenway sponsors one of these stations which teaches the kids about the life cycle of salmon. After suffering through a short lecture, the kids then build a bracelet of different colored beads which represent each stage in the salmon life cycle. It's fun for everyone, teachers included, and a good learning experience.

2022 Tapteal Water Trail Series

By Adam J. Fyall

Once again we will be organizing our popular water trail series this summer and fall. As usual, we will coordinate three sectional paddles of the lower Yakima River between Benton City and Bateman Island. Each of these sections is roughly 10 miles and takes 2-3½ hours to complete depending on river and weather conditions. Most people choose kayaks, but we regularly have canoes and paddleboards on the water. The Greenway does not supply or rent kayaks, but we can help facilitate a rental in Richland for you.

We will have one or two people on the water guiding the trip, pointing-out wildlife and features of the river corridor. Tapteal volunteers also provide a shuttle service so you can drop your vehicle at the end of the trip after you have unloaded your watercraft at the beginning, and then we will take you back to the start. Now, it seems to be the same half-dozen dedicated volunteers providing the shuttle rides every time, year after year. So perhaps if you're not going to paddle you would consider giving us an hour of your time on a Saturday morning to shuttle some paddlers???

The following are the tentative paddle dates, subject to revision. Check this newsletter, our website calendar, or the Facebook page for updated information. We will also create an email bulletin so let us know if you would like to be notified that way. You will also notice a fourth event below. I will lead a one-day (30-mile) paddle of the entire water trail if at least 4 other people sign up for it. We will do this on the Friday nearest the solstice and plan to push-off from Benton City at 6:00 am. This generally takes 11-12 hours depending on conditions and rest stops.

- **Jun 11:** Upper Section – Benton City to Horn Rapids Park
- **Jun 24:** Entire Water Trail – Benton City to Bateman Island
- **Aug 20:** Lower Section – Tapteal Bend to Bateman Island
- **Oct 08:** Middle Section – Snively Landing to Tapteal Bend



Tractor for Sale

As mentioned in our recent financial report, last year we purchased a new to us tractor which is both more compact and versatile than our old 1981 Ford 4100 (serial number C669680). We are now looking to sell the old Ford. We have used it to mow the trails in Chamna a couple times each year. It is a 3.0L, 3-cylinder, 2WD diesel tractor rated at 52 horsepower. It has a 540 RPM rear PTO rated at 45 hp and comes equipped with a RCR1572 Land Pride rotary cutter (72" cutting width). Our asking price is \$6,000. For more information about this tractor contact us at taptealgreenway@gmail.com.



Pamela and Scott Woodward Conservation Scholarship

By Dirk Peterson



Applications for the 2022-23 academic year are being accepted through April 30 for the Pamela and Scott Woodward Conservation Scholarship. This \$2,000 merit-based scholarship was created by Tapteal Greenway in 2016 in honor of the years of dedicated service to the local community by Pamela and Scott, both as teachers and as active members of Tapteal Greenway. Applications are available on the Three Rivers Community Foundation and Tapteal Greenway websites (3rcf.org under Scholarships and tapteal.org under Scholarship). Recipients have to be a resident of Benton or Franklin County and pursuing their post-high school education in Washington State (full eligibility requirements are listed in the application).

The scholarship wasn't included in our recent financial report as its endowment is held and managed by the Three Rivers Community Foundation (they also administer the scholarship). The scholarship was created with an initial endowment of \$25,000. The endowment has been grown to just under \$48,000. As this scholarship is intended to be perpetually self-funding, we would like to increase the endowment further – donations can be made directly to the Three Rivers Community Foundation or through Tapteal Greenway. In either case, make sure to indicate that the donation is for the Woodward Scholarship.

2022 Webinar Series

By Adam Fyall

Off and on over the years the Greenway has organized, sponsored or otherwise in some way facilitated various seminars or other forums on a variety of topics for the public to learn about different aspects our organization or the natural environment more generally. One thing the pandemic has created is opportunities to explore this type of communication and outreach further. Social circumstances and modern technology have combined to change or at least accelerate ongoing changes to the ways we form communities and learn.

The Greenway, among others, has seized upon this moment with a number of different lectures and webinars over the past two years now that the "Zoom environment" has been accessible and comfortable for so many people. Regardless of the direction the pandemic takes, we plan to make these online forums a regular part of our portfolio going forward.

The anchor of this program will be regular webinars. We will be looking to normalize a regular date, like the fourth Thursday of the month or something like that. My goal for the remainder of 2022 is to have one of these webinars each month beginning in March, but this takes organization and planning. As mentioned in the President's Message, this can be where YOU come in. We are planning several of these webinars right now, but can use additional ideas and resources. These webinars don't have to be complicated either in topical substance or in presentation. Some of the sessions we are working on now will feature one or two guest speakers, some orchestrated Q&A, and then open discussion. So the point here is that we are looking for topics and a little help in putting the package together. Do you have ideas?

Watch your email, our website, and our Facebook page for more information on upcoming events. You will notice a wide variety of topics, and they don't always have to pertain specifically and directly to the Tapteal Greenway. Here are four of the upcoming topics we will feature in the spring and summer:

- Heritage Garden Program
- Salmon in the Classroom
- Completion of the Palouse to Cascades Trail
- Yakima River Fish & Wildlife Restoration



**Happy
Trails!**