

Trails advocates honor volunteers

By Craig F. Eisenbeis
Correspondent

The Sisters Trails Alliance (STA) held their annual meeting last week, and there was a lot to review from 2014. STA President Chuck Humphreys began the program by outlining STA's significant accomplishments in trail work in the Sisters area.

He forcefully drove home his biggest point that "the trails are for everyone." STA supports trail use by all non-motorized trail users. Membership is comprised of hikers, bicyclists, and equestrians.

Humphreys also applauded the launching of STA's quarterly speaker series, which is designed to highlight outdoor recreation in the Sisters area. He also announced that the organization has passed the 100-member mark, a notable milestone. Many of those members, he noted, devoted considerable volunteer time to build, maintain, and upgrade the area's trails, 95 percent of which are on public lands. One of STA's chief goals, he said, is to "promote public stewardship and appreciation" of those lands and resources.

Humphreys' exuberance was tempered by what he termed as "two setbacks" during the year, specifically the collapse of plans for public connector trails to the Crossroads and Black Butte Ranch developments. He did

not hide his disappointment, nor did he mince words, calling the successful opposition to the trails "a victory of selfishness over the best interests of the community."

Gary Guttormsen, chairperson of the trails committee, gave further specifics on 2014's trail accomplishments and also touted the success of STA's adopt-a-trail program. The real meat of his presentation, however, focused on STA's many trail goals for 2015; and their plans are quite ambitious.

One very significant project — among many — involves the Sisters Tie Trail as part of a 25-mile loop that would join the Indian Ford and Cold Springs Campgrounds and loop back to Sisters parallel to the Metolius Windigo Trail. The Sisters Tie Trail would also be rerouted farther south and west to provide separation from equestrian traffic on the existing route.

The guest speaker for the occasion was Marv Lang, recreation forester for the Deschutes National Forest. Lang's topic was "Sustainable Trails," and much of his emphasis was on the contributions of STA to the greater community. In reference to Humphreys' "trails for everyone" talking point, he observed that STA is unique among trail organizations in that it focuses solely on a specific area (Sisters Country) and, instead of a single

trail-user group, includes a broad scope of trail users — hikers, bicyclists, and equestrians. In reference to STA's public role and inclusiveness, Lang said, "STA has been a great example in doing this and continues to be a vital part of this community."

Regarding the bureaucratic hurdles necessary to achieve many of STA's goals, Lang conceded that "much of the process is glacially, molassesly, slow." But, he said, "It will always take people, groups, stakeholders, etc. to make trails happen. And it is important to do it the right way..."

Ann Marland, STA's community outreach director, conducted the final business of the evening and recognized some of STA's many volunteers. She pointed out that 69 different members contributed 2,294 hours of volunteer work in 2014. Volunteers contributing 16 or more hours were awarded free Forest Passes for the year; but much of the praise was reserved for a couple whose volunteer work was singled out as exemplary. In recognition of their outstanding work, Mike Armstrong and Bev MacDonald received STA's Volunteers of the Year Award.

Marland also reported that STA has applied to the Oregon



PHOTO BY CRAIG F. EISENBEIS

Bev MacDonald and Mike Armstrong receive the Sisters Trails Alliance "Volunteers of the Year Award" from Ann Marland (center).

State Parks and Recreation Department for a "Scenic Regional Trail" designation of the Peterson Ridge West Trail, and she hopes to receive confirmation of approval soon. "It will be an economic boost for Sisters just from the Parks and Recreation national advertising, as well as Travel Oregon," she said. "I'm very excited."

The Sisters Trails Alliance is a community volunteer organization dedicated to the planning, constructing and maintenance of walking, hiking, cycling, and equestrian trails in Sisters Country. The STA believes that trails are an indispensable ingredient for the quality of life and economic vibrancy in Sisters Country.

At the close of the

meeting, Dixie Eckford challenged each STA member to recruit one new member in 2015. Volunteer help and new members are always welcome.

For more information about STA, call 541-719-8822. Additional information can also be found on their website at www.sisterstrails.com.

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NOTICE OF SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET HEARING

* For supplemental budgets proposing a change in any fund's expenditures by more than 10 percent.

A public hearing on a proposed supplemental budget for Sisters Urban Renewal Agency, Deschutes County, State of Oregon
(Agency Name)

or the current fiscal year will be held at 520 E. Cascade Ave, Sisters, OR
(Location)

The hearing will take place on February 12, 2015 at 7:00 AM PM.
(Date) (Time)

The purpose of the hearing is to discuss the supplemental budget with interested persons.

A copy of the supplemental budget document may be inspected or obtained on or after February 4, 2015 at
(Date)

520 E. Cascade Ave., between the hours of 8:00 AM AM
5:00 PM and 5:00 PM
(Location) (Time) (Time)

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED BUDGET CHANGES
AMOUNTS SHOWN ARE REVISED TOTALS IN THOSE FUNDS BEING MODIFIED

FUND: Urban Renewal Project Fund			
Resource	Amount	Expenditure	Amount
1 Loan Proceeds	\$150,000	1 Capital Outlay	\$150,000
Revised Total Fund Resources	\$928,928	Revised Total Fund Requirements	\$928,928

Comments:
Chamber Building ADA and landscape upgrades and Village Green parking improvements financed with Bank of the Cascades loan.

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