

O P I N I O N



Letters to the Editor...

The Nugget welcomes contributions from its readers, which must include the writer's name, address and phone number. Letters to the Editor is an open forum for the community and contains unsolicited opinions not necessarily shared by the Editor. The Nugget reserves the right to edit, omit, respond or ask for a response to letters submitted to the Editor. Letters should be no longer than 300 words. Unpublished items are not acknowledged or returned. The deadline for all letters is noon Monday.

To the Editor:

As suggested in some previous letters to *The Nugget* I support the idea of a paved multi-use path that is located on the north side of Highway 20 for the following reasons: First, there is the existing network of trails called the Sisters Tie trails that meander through the forest from the north Pine Street intersection in Sisters to Indian Ford Campground where there are facilities for parking, restrooms, and even camping!

These trails could be paved with much less expense than creating a new trail as proposed. With the dollars saved paving already existing trails we could construct one or two highway crossings near Black Butte Ranch and/or Tollgate. There is a beautifully innovative green highway crossing in Holland that provides access for people as well as animals like migrating deer and elk herds, which are known hazards for motor vehicles.

With these improvements we suddenly have access and connection for many more communities (Indian Ford, Sage Meadow, Squaw Creek Canyon Estates, etc...) on both sides of Highway 20. Consequently the road becomes safer for motor vehicle traffic and for the many

animals injured or killed while trying to cross. The benefits are wide-spread and friction would be greatly reduced from folks in Tollgate and Black Butte Ranch that are opposed to a paved path so close to their neighborhood.
Sarah Rowland



To the Editor

I attended the concert (Matt, the Electrician) on Thursday August 7.

What a pleasurable event! Thank you to all who made the event possible — Sisters Folk Festival and The Roundhouse Foundation. I also want to express my thanks to the City of Sisters and in particular the City Council members, both past and present, who had the forward thinking to create the Fir Street Park. What a nice addition to our community resources.

Please keep your visionary thinking going!
Again, thank you!
Ken Serkownek



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Sisters Weather Forecast

Courtesy of the National Weather Service, Pendleton, Oregon

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday
Sunny 88/52	Slt. chance t-storm 81/45	Mostly sunny 72/41	Sunny 79/43	Sunny 83/44	Sunny 78/na

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Give existing trails a shot

By Earl Schroeder
Guest Columnist

About three years ago, it started. There was this meeting at the Tollgate Rec Hall. About six folks announced there was to be a trail, all planned out and ready to go. A real surprise to all 50-plus folks in attendance. And then it began.

One might call this a "Trail of Two Cities" from Sisters to Black Butte Ranch. Immediately there was controversy. The location of this yet unnamed trail, was not accepted by many Tollgate residents, who considered that the 1,300-plus vehicles that traverse Tollgate Road in and out every day could be dangerous. But after six months of grumbling, many other comments were submitted to *The Nugget* via Letters to the Editor.

Most folks had no idea that any resistance to this trail would occur. But it did, and has become a daily conversation throughout all of Sisters Country. Sides were taken, with no real middle ground. The intensity grew, with volumes of comments voiced in *The Nugget*.

Before long, many groups became involved so that things became convoluted. Just to name a few: boards of directors from Crossroads; Tollgate; Black Butte Ranch; U.S. Forestry; Sisters City Hall; Sisters School District; ODOT; Sisters Trails Alliance; and eventually Deschutes County. All seemed to have an opinion one way or the other and things became very commingled and agitated with no compromise in sight. Many of the groups involved "supported" the concept of this new trail, but having only limited information what it would entail.

All because of a seven-mile trail to hike or bicycle on, that was thought to be wanted or needed to give our communities cohesion and to enjoy a pathway through our national forest. All the while, the USFS was conducting an environmental assessment trying to determine the feasibility, what was best for the community, and still fulfill the Forest Services' mission.

By October of 2014 it was determined by the USFS to set aside the request to develop a trail, which was requested by the Sisters Trails Alliance folks.

With the ability to allow for a second request, the door was not closed to the idea. Nine months have transpired, and at the moment, there is no local trail plan being worked on by the Forest Service.

But last week I was musing over the many concerns that have been voiced over the past many months, and discovered an article that was printed in *The Nugget* in March 2012. Lo and behold, I'd discovered information that had never been mentioned on 'The Trail' subject. I would encourage you to take the time to go to your computer and read it ([link provided with the online version of this column at www.nuggetnews.com — "Opinions"](#)).

It opened my eyes to the fact that there are so many trails in our area, approved or rogue, that there may be no need for the expense to develop yet another trail. And then it dawned on me, could the "Tie Trail," as mentioned in the above website, tie us back together once again?

Let's all take a closer look at our present inventory of trails already in place. I would suggest to USFS to draft a few options for our communities to review and offer their comments.

The Sisters Forest Service folks have a much better handle on such matters. In a way, it would allow for all of us to have some ownership in this project. It would be great to have a win-win situation. Tranquility may hopefully then be restored.

The process for development is more important than the trail itself. If the original proposed trail never comes to pass, it won't be the end of the world.

So, lets consider that we all communicate, be considerate, coordinate, and compromise. It's time that we reevaluate the many blessings the we all enjoy and love here in Sisters.

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