

Crown Zellerbach Trail is a Gem *continued from front page*

a paved, 21 mile, abandoned railroad grade which heads south through Stub Stewart State Park ending at the new trailhead in Banks.

The rougher style of trail is geared towards mountain bikes and bikes with wider profiled tires as well as equestrian trail riders and provides a great alternative to the paved Banks-Vernonia Trail says Crinklaw. "I look at this as a positive for Vernonia in terms of this being a hub for bikers and for the equestrian groups."



The trail crosses under Scappoose-Vernonia Hwy at the summit.

"The equestrian riders have a huge market potential," says Crinklaw.

"We're having some great brainstorming discussions about existing facilities and how to connect to the CZ Trail—about how to enhance Columbia Counties attractiveness to out-of-county horse riders. For them the CZ Trail has a lot of appeal as a destination."



A bike rider using the new bridge at the Alder Creek crossing.

Commissioner Hyde noted that the county has expressed interest in acquiring more property at the Camp 8 area to develop a horse camp.

The historical nature of the region may also be a draw for users. "One of the more valuable pieces of this trail as far as a recreational asset to the county is just the history associated with the trail," says Crinklaw. Crinklaw says that in time the full build out of the trail will likely include historical information kiosks and interpretive signage that will tell about rail lines that originally used the area, abandoned logging camps that dot the landscape, the ethnic groups that worked in the area, the natural features, and historical landmarks and remnants

of early settlers and residents of the region.

A long term project, Columbia County began negotiations with Hancock Timber around 1995 to purchase sections of old logging road and use it as a county trail. The county was able to



The view from the trail at the summit.

"One of the things I am most proud of about this project is the way we were able to mitigate the concerns of the local property owners," says Hyde. "I was always very concerned about the impact the trail would have, and we were able to meet individually with every one of them and find a solution to their concerns. And I believe they are pleased and have, in fact, realized that the trail provides benefits for them like recreation opportunities in their own back yard and increased property values."

The County recently completed the installation of three new stream crossings including the most recent Alder Creek bridge crossing just south of Cater Road. The County was able to use federal funds to make the Alder Creek improvement which included the salvage of old rail car decking that had been converted into bridges and used after the 1996 flood near Fishhawk Lake.

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