

Trails: Future plans envision a network of trails down into Seaside

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Clatsop County initiated upgrades at the parking lot and access to the trails.

Local forestry giant Greenwood Resources provided access and help “at every stage,” said organizer Steven Blakesley of Arch Cape.

The cyclists’ goal will be to reach the top of Twin Peaks at an elevation of between 1,500 and 1,600 feet, “where you can see the whole coastline up to the north,” Chris Quackenbush, the operations director, said.

Future plans envision a network of trails from Twin Peaks down into Seaside. The trails could empty out near the new school campus in the Southeast Hills.

The hardest paths will be at the top of the mountain, he added, with an intermediate trail in the middle and

a beginner trail at the bottom to the parking lot.

Forester David Dougherty, of Greenwood Resources, joined volunteers with shovels, chainsaws and brush cutters.

“We’re working together to make sure we meet a certain set of standards, reducing sedimentation, trying to keep everything in its natural form to last and be sustainable, to have a good collaborative process,” he said.

The Northwest Trail Alliance, based in Portland, provides insurance and acts as the North Coast Trail Alliance’s fiscal agent.

Northwest Trail Alliance president Bob Lessard described the enthusiasm for the new trails.

“People in Portland are incredibly excited about this,” Lessard said. “There’s nowhere else that I know of in Oregon where you can ride and see the ocean.”



Operations director Chris Quackenbush provides instructions for the clearing.

R.J. Marx/The Daily Astorian

Camp Rilea: This spring has been a soft opening for Starbase’s academy

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The state paid more than \$400,000 to buy the schoolhouse and surrounding 12 acres of field, wedged between the eastern edge of Camp Rilea and the Fort to Sea Trail on the Clatsop Plains. The Seventh-day Adventists had acquired the property and opened a school in 1980 halfway between churches in Astoria and Seaside, taking in students from the first through eighth grades.

Greg Kabanuk put several of his children through the school, served as a board member and still lives in an apartment of the schoolhouse as a caretaker. Kabanuk has resigned himself to the sale, which he said was decided by the church’s regional leaders in Gladstone and is still a sore spot for locals.



From left to right, Micalynn Rowton, Amadeus Stowers and Aaliyah Kost learn about the weight of air Thursday at Camp Rilea using pumped-up and deflated marshmallows.

Edward Stratton/The Daily Astorian

“It was not our decision,” he said. “We did not support the decision. The local population wanted to reopen it as a school.”

The state military’s purchase of the campus lined up with an expansion of Starbase, short for Science

and Technology Academies Reinforcing Basic Aviation and Space Exploration. The program started in 1991 through a grant from the Kellogg Foundation and was later included in federal appropriations. There are fewer than 70 Starbase cam-

pus nationwide, including two at airbases in Portland and Klamath Falls.

“It took me a few years to get the funding approved,” said Denise Kortez, state director of Starbase.

Starbase’s mission is to get fifth-graders interested in technology-based careers. Classes from around Clatsop County have been coming for five hours once a week to Camp Rilea. Two federally funded, state-employed teachers take them through a series of science experiments and technology projects spread over five weeks.

The classrooms are equipped with iPads, Lego interactive white boards, Lego robotics kits, GPS units, a full computer lab with computer-aided drafting software and other technological resources beyond the funding capabilities of local school districts.

“We do some labs, but nothing like the resources these guys have,” said Glenn Stelson, a fifth-grade teacher at Warrenton Grade School whose class was at Camp Rilea on Thursday.

Camp Rilea was chosen as a new Starbase in part because students around the county are considered low-income.

“We’ve had entire (classes) come here who have never touched an iPad,” said Jeremy Hand, an instructor with the program.

Kids work in teams and aren’t tested or graded. Aside from short lectures, Starbase’s teachers largely let students experiment with

solving hypotheses and get creative with the program’s technology, much of which they wouldn’t be able to access anywhere else in the county, Hand said.

“It’s mostly hands-on — 90 percent hands-on and 10 percent lectures,” he said. “The kids seem to get more from it when they get to experiment. It’s just letting them have it.”

This spring has been a soft opening for Starbase’s new academy. The program is planning an aeronautics camp in the summer and a full slate of fifth-grade classes in the fall, along with after-school programs for middle schoolers.

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