

Eight Street Dam: A controversy that won't quit

BY CINDY YINGST
The Columbia Press

Eighth Street Dam is small, but controversy flows around it like a tidal wave.

Even the simple questions – such as why it was built in the early 1960s -- have become points of contention over the six decades since the Army Corps of Engineers put it in place.

The city of Warrenton, in which the dam sits, and the Skipanon Water Control District, the entity managing it, have spent much of the past decade disagreeing over what should be done with the Eighth Street Dam.

Initially, both parties claimed to be the dam's rightful owner.

But now no one wants to be holding the baby while the bath water destroys land and, potentially, structures.

Meetings between city and water control district leaders have been so contentious in the last two years that Sheriff Tom Bergin was asked to moderate a gathering of the two groups Tuesday afternoon at City Hall.

"Having spent 33 years on the streets, like most officers, we mediate lots of things," Bergin began the meeting. "I do not know one damn thing about this dam and I have no interest in it. I haven't even read up on

See 'Skipanon' on Page 4



Above: A January 1964 photo shows flooding on Perkins Road following a storm in which 5 inches of rain fell in 30 hours.

Photo courtesy
Skipanon Water Control District

Left: The Eighth Street Dam today without tide gates.

County eyes youth facility as its new jail

BY CINDY YINGST
The Columbia Press

Clatsop County wants to acquire the Oregon Youth Authority compound in Warrenton and turn it into the jail that should have been built 40 years ago.

"If we don't have a jail that will house a population of 150-plus, we can't do what we need to do" Sheriff Tom Bergin said Wednesday during a work session with the Clatsop County Board of Commissioners. "We are constantly chasing the same people over and over again."

Bergin recited the statistics no one who cares about law and order wants to hear:

- Clatsop County is No. 1 in the state in arrests for behavioral crimes (disorderly conduct, possession of controlled substances, etc.) and No. 4 in the state for property crime arrests.

- Ninety percent of the people housed in jail have drug addiction problems.

- Nobody is locked up in Clatsop County for using drugs or being drunk. There just isn't room.

- More than 1,800 people have been booked so far this year and jail officials have been forced to release 209 who should have remained in jail but couldn't

See 'Jail' on Page 6

Historical Tansy Point could get interpretive kiosk

The Columbia Press

An interpretive kiosk is planned for Tansy Point that would tout the spot's importance to early settlers, natural resources and Clatsop Indian tribal history.

Warrenton's Parks Advisory Board asked the City Commission Tuesday night for a letter of support for

the planning, fund-raising and construction of the kiosk.

The kiosk would be placed at the 13th Street terminus along the Warrenton Waterfront Trail, which runs from Lighthouse Park to the Hammond Marina.

"We are trying to be tourist friendly," said Bert Little, a member of the Parks Advisory Board. "It's a very histori-

cal area." In August 1851, the federal government attempted to remove and relocate local Indians from the area.

But negotiations with the groups that included the Lower Chinook, Wahkiakum, Willapa, Cathlamet and Clatsop Indians didn't go as expected. The Chinook negotiated the right to remain on

some of their traditional land and be buried with their ancestors.

The tribes also secured hunting, fishing, farming and gathering rights.

The federal government, however, never ratified the Tansy Point Treaties.

Later, Tansy Point – named for the tansy ragwort weed
See 'Tansy Point' on Page 6

