

The INDEPENDENT

Vol. 20, No. 21

"Voice of the Upper Nehalem River Valley"

November 3, 2005

Recent visitors



Occasional small flocks of Hooded Mergansers visit Vernonia Lake during the winter months.

B-V Trail project is helped by grant \$\$

Local and state partnerships are paving the way for some exciting improvements to the popular Banks Vernonia Linear Trail in Washington County. An attractive trailhead will be built in the City of Banks, and the nearby intersection of Banks and Sellers Roads will be re-configured for improved safety. Washington County and the

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD) successfully competed for federal Transportation Enhancement funding for the project. In March 2005, the Oregon Transportation Commission approved a grant of \$655,000; OPRD will provide the matching funds required for this grant.

State recognition for Sheriff's office and Marine Deputies

Columbia County Sheriff's Office and Marine Patrol Deputies Dave Peabody and Dave Fuller were recognized, October 25, by the Oregon State Marine Board (OSMB), with the Marine Program of the Year Award for performing at a high level in all areas including boating safety, boater contact, and patrol hours. Peabody also received an award as Deputy of the Year for 2005.

"These awards are given to recognize top performance. To give credit to officers who reach above and beyond the requirements," said Bill Ryd-blom, Law Enforcement Program Manager for OSMB. "People's lives are directly affected by the actions of these officers."

The project will complete the trail, which currently ends approximately 2/3 of a mile north of Banks. The improvement will connect the city of Banks with other destinations along the 26-mile long Linear Trail, including Buxton, the new L. L. Stub Stewart State Park and Vernonia, and will provide pedestrians, equestrians and bicyclists with a pleasant and safe travel route. The proposed trail extension runs along an abandoned rail bed that is owned by OPRD and parallels the Port of Tillamook Bay rail bed. (It is a Rails to Trails project.)

The completed Banks-Vernonia Trail Extension will include the following:

- A landscaped trailhead near downtown Banks, at the intersection of Banks and Sellers Roads. The trailhead will provide parking and safe access for trail users.

- A ten-foot wide paved path over the abandoned rail bed to match the existing trail to the north, including a parallel four-foot wide unpaved equestrian path north of the Banks city limits.

- Bridge repairs and modifications to ensure safe crossing of the west fork of Dairy Creek. The existing bridge will be updated with pedestrian handrails and bridge decking.

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Telephone fiberoptic cable cut – twice!

By Noni Andersen

In February of 1996, when flood waters inundated the Nehalem River valley, Vernonia lost all telephone communication, except within town. The loss of phone communications was consistent throughout the valley. Locally, the telephone switching equipment was protected by volunteers, but ham radio was the only way to reach the world outside.

Fast forward to October 24, 2005. During work at the entrance of the (under-construction) Stub Stewart State Park, at Buxton, a contractor for Oregon Department of Parks & Recreation (OPRD) severed the Verizon fiberoptic cable that carries phone and internet lines to Vernonia. Although members of this community have been told by Verizon employees that we now have a redundant system – that is, a backup system

that would be available if the primary system isn't working – cell phones and radio were the way to reach the world outside.

Phone lines worked locally, but outside calls and internet services were gone. If your business needed the internet...tough!

According to emails from Project Manager Terry F. Moore, of OPRD's Engineering and Design Section, in 2004

Historic logging presentation at Vernonia Library

"Historic Logging: Often Pictured, Seldom Understood" is the name of a presentation by Merv Johnson at the Vernonia Public Library on Saturday, November 5, at 1:00 p.m.

Johnson, an expert on historic logging, will use slides and sound to portray the logger's experience and will recount stories of logging life a century

ago. "Many people haven't considered the technology of moving logs from the stump to the railroads or trucks. The machinery was awesome, but the people complete the story," said Johnson.

Born in Vernonia, Johnson spent his early childhood near logging camps in the Coast Range and worked as a logger

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after high school.

President of the non-profit Camp 18 Logging Museum, Johnson lectures and publishes articles on logging history. He is the author of the book, *In Search of Steam Donkeys, Logging Equipment in Oregon*, which will be available for purchase and signing.