



Bear Creek Greenway

FOUNDATION

April 2018 Newsletter

Bear Creek Greenway – Expansion Coming Soon!

In early 2018 the Bear Creek Greenway was again expanded to the south past the Ashland Dog Park along Ashland Creek and adjacent to the Verde Village Residential Subdivision in Ashland with the short-term goal of reaching North Mountain Park and the long-term goal of reaching Emigrant Lake, five miles southeast of Ashland. The City of Ashland's Parks & Recreation Commission, Jackson County and the Bear Creek Greenway Foundation are now collaborating on the short-term goal with an Extension Feasibility Study to evaluate possible routes over to North Mountain Park, roughly one mile to the south. The study will not only evaluate alternative routes based on their environmental and financial feasibility, but will also evaluate opportunities to connect to existing and planned parks and trails as well as residential neighborhoods and commercial centers.

The Greenway's connection from Verde Village to North Mountain Park will generally parallel the creek's alignment, but for small sections where it will cross a street intersection or parallel a street for a short distance. The best news is the majority of the route along the creek is already owned by the City of Ashland or will extend through private property that has already been planned to be dedicated to the City of Ashland when developed via the 1995 North Mountain Neighborhood Master Plan.

Look for the proposed route to be released soon in upcoming newsletters, as well as ways in which you can be involved in raising the funds necessary to complete the trail!

Mark Knox

Mark Knox, Board Member

Jackson County Parks Update

From the desk of Any Austill

The nice weather we have been having is making it feel like summer is just right around the corner. Vegetation is starting to grow pretty fast, so we have continued our brushing and weeding on the sides of the Greenway. Many users have complimented this work and are really appreciative of the safety aspect of having more space and line of sight, and visually it is looking great! We are in the last couple weeks of the root heave construction. We started in Central Point heading south, and we are now in the Ashland section completing this work. This involved tearing out sections of the Greenway that had really bad root heaves and large cracks and resurfacing the path with cement. We couldn't get every single root bump, but we definitely got the sections that needed it the most. This will provide a much smoother and safer trail surface for Greenway users.

Become a "Bear Creek Greenway Champion!"

For an annual tax-deductible donation of only \$50, you can become "Greenway Champion!" As a Greenway Champion, you will receive the monthly Bear Creek Greenway Newsletter in your e-mail, containing messages directly from the Bear Creek Greenway Board regarding plans and updates, messages from Jackson County about current work and future projects planned for the Greenway, notification on all upcoming events being held on the Greenway and a special feature each month highlighting a certain location on the Greenway where one can appreciate the unique features of our natural surroundings. Becoming a Greenway Champion is simple. Just click on this link: <http://bearcreekgreenway.com/get-involved/donations/> and follow the directions on our webpage. You will receive confirmation as well as a receipt of your donation for tax purposes. You will begin receiving your Bear Creek Greenway Newsletter the following month. Your annual donation will renew automatically, and you will be sent an annual notification and receipt.



**Bear Creek
Greenway**
CHAMPION

Isabel Sickels Memorial

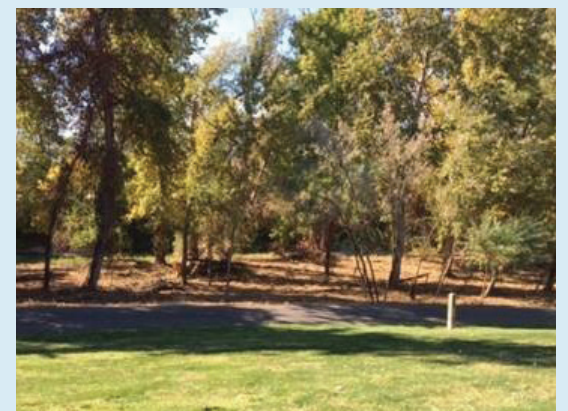
Once mile south of Lyn Newbry Park in Talent, on the east side of the trail, you will see next to the large pond a boulder with a plaque that dedicates this section of the Greenway Trail to the memory of Isabel Sickels, the first woman elected to the Board of Jackson County Commissioners in 1975. Isabel Sickels championed legislative support for the Bear Creek Greenway program, helped form the Greenway Foundation and continued to promote the program with gifts of time and money for twenty-five years.

The pond beyond the boulder was created in the process of extracting gravel for local construction projects and it currently provides wetland habitat for a great variety of wildlife. Large numbers of migrating geese winter in the larger ponds and pastures along Bear Creek. The gray-brown Canada goose (*Branta Canadensis*) with its distinctive white chin strap and pale gray breast, is easy to spot.

Many varieties of ducks frequent this pond. Bring your binoculars and bird book and see how many you can identify. To help you in identification, watch how the ducks feed. Whether they dabble, that is, surface feed (mallard, wood duck, teal, widgeon, pintail, gadwall or shoveler) or dive under water (coot, canvas back, bufflehead, scaup, ring-necked, goldeneye or redhead) will divide them into one or the other of the two most common categories. Notice that the males have the most colorful and distinctive markings.

Riparian Restoration Work

The Oregon Stewardship group, with help from Dave Goddard of Slide Creek, has cleared blackberry thickets and replanted several acres of riparian land near Bear Creek Park. These efforts have drastically improved the condition of the park and greenway.



Restoration efforts have expanded at U.S. Cellular Community Park near Coyote Trails Nature Center. Blackberries in this area were removed and approximately 240 Ponderosa pines were planted.



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