



**Washington Trails  
Conference**



The Tri-Cities has been selected as the host community for the 2016 Washington Trails Conference! The biannual event will take place in October of next year, and we mostly have Visit Tri-Cities to thank for landing the event, as they lobbied very hard on the community's behalf. The primary venue for the conference will be the Red Lion Hanford House in Richland.

For those of you who are interested and will be able to attend, it would be great if we can have a strong local showing.

# Tapteal Talk

**President's Message**

*President Steps Down*

*Scott Woodward, board member 1996-2015; president 2003-2015*



Nearly 20 years ago I attended a public meeting at Spaulding Elementary School in Richland. An article in the Tri City Herald sparked my interest in a project that focused

The conference will consist of various workshops and informational sessions, along with a bit of a trade show section and several field trips. The agenda is the domain of the Washington State Trails Coalition who puts on the conference, but we have a local organizational committee that is assisting with logistics, promotion, and extracurricular activities. The Greenway is a part of the local committee, and we will keep you informed through the newsletter and elsewhere over the next year. Stay tuned!

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### Want to Be In the Know?

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If you want to see what's going on with Einstein and the rest of the beaver clan, if you want reminders of upcoming events, if you want to be in the know with what's going on with Tapteal Greenway, be sure to "Like Us On Facebook."

<https://www.facebook.com/TaptealGreenway>

on my old stomping grounds along the Lower Yakima River. A group of folks were taking input on the project so I joined in and made my first contributions to what was called The Lower Yakima River Greenway. They stressed Education, Recreation and Conservation on a section of the Yakima River that had been seriously abused but had great promise if managed properly. I was all in and excited to be working with such a committed and energized group of people.

I was teaching and coaching, bringing home about \$8000 a year and working another job at night and weekends to make ends meet. It was difficult to dedicate as much time as I would like to the Greenway. In reality I was learning a new trade dealing with habitat, wildlife and jurisdictional procedure. Near the end of 2003 the Board of Directors decided I was ready to take the reins as President to what was then The Tapteal Greenway Association. My term of office would be up in 2005. Somewhere along the way the Board saw fit to eliminate term of office limits and I found myself honored every year since with a vote of confidence from the Board to stay on. Well that run is over, I resigned the Presidency and any pending Board position on August 10. I am leaving Tapteal after 19 years, 12 of those as President.

It truly is amazing what this organization has accomplished over the 20 years it has been operating. The volunteer Board and Officers have crafted a respected and recognized Conservation voice for the Mid-Columbia region. If you have not done so you should go to the Tapteal web site and take a look at the accomplishments page ([www.tapteal.org/abouttaptealnatureconservation](http://www.tapteal.org/abouttaptealnatureconservation)). You will be impressed and I hope inspired to continue your support of this group, join them as a volunteer and consider a position on the Board of Directors.

My biggest disappointment was losing Phase 3 of the Amon Basin Community Project and seeing the continued assault on what is left of wildlands and wildlife in our area. My biggest joy has been working with a dedicated, hardworking Board of Directors and representing you, the Tapteal members and supporters. There is much unfinished business ahead and the officers and Board will need your backing to take on Rachel Road, finish the Trail North section of the Tapteal Trail, **Preserve the Paradise** of Amon Creek Natural Preserve, protect Columbia Point South, connect the Tapteal Trail into Benton City, install Tapteal Trail markers and complete the Chamna back-door project among others.

I did my best! My wife Pamela and I are off to find new trails. Happy Trails to you.

## Nighttime in Johnson Park



Our springtime night hikes have been such a big success that we are offering a fall version on October 24 6:15-8:30 PM in W. E. Johnson Park, Richland.

This will be our first night event in W.E. Johnson Park so we all should be ready for an adventure after dark.

We encourage a small flashlight or headlamp, comfortable shoes for walking a few miles and dress for the weather. The bugs should be settled down by then but repellent should be included in your things to bring. This hike is not advised for children under 5 and please leave your pets at home.

This event is free but does require an RSVP to Scott at 627-3621 or woodfish24@charter.net. no later than October 20.



Mark your calendars for Saturday, October 10 at 6 p.m. at Kiona Winery! Come help Tapteal Greenway celebrate its 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary with light snacks, wine, and other beverages. Enjoy the beautiful location and good company. Bring a friend—you need not be a Tapteal member to attend.

- silent auction and bucket raffle to benefit Tapteal Greenway
- presentation summarizing our achievements and challenges
- announcement of the 2015 Tri-Cities Conservationist of the Year
- special displays to commemorate 20 years of Tapteal Greenway history

Kiona Winery, 44612 Sunset Road, Benton City. [www.kionawine.com](http://www.kionawine.com).

For more information, please call Karen at 396-5936.

## Share a Memory

The Tapteal Board of Directors is asking you to share a memory—or two.

Can you believe it? Tapteal Greenway is celebrating 20 years of conservation, education and recreation this year! To help us reflect on the past and look ahead to the future, we are asking if you would be willing to share some memories with us—just a sentence or perhaps a paragraph—about your personal recollections of Tapteal Greenway's activities, contributions to the Tri-Cities community, or perhaps a remembrance of a special time spent cleaning up, planting, or maybe just having fun? Photos are also welcome: print or digital format both accepted!

Please send your recollections to Karen Sowers at [maucats4@yahoo.com](mailto:maucats4@yahoo.com) so we can compile them for others to enjoy. If you'd prefer, call her at 396-5936. Please return your response as soon as you can, but no later than **Friday, October 2**. Thanks!



## Tri-Cities Conservationist of the Year

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*Adam Fyall, board member 1997-present; president 2000-03*

The Conservationist of the Year award has been given by the Tapteal Greenway Association Board of Directors each year since 1996 to individuals, groups, companies, or other organizations for outstanding work in the area of land and water conservation in or around the greater Tri-Cities area. The Board will name its 20th Conservationist of the Year at the Annual Celebration on October 10th.



Sometimes the award has been given to celebrate a particular endeavor, and at other times to recognize an ongoing dedication to conservation ethos and practices. Our recipients have been wide-ranging – from groups such as the Lower Columbia Basin Audubon Society for their work in protecting the Hanford Reach, to reporter Mike Lee for his excellent coverage of environmental issues for the *Tri-City Herald*, and to the Trust for Public Land for their efforts to help local groups purchase and protect open spaces and other land resources.

Please join us on Red Mountain at the Annual Celebration where we will be joined by several past recipients as we announce our 2015 Conservationist of the Year.

## Amon Basin Restoration

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*Adam Fyall, board member 1997-present; president 2000-03*

Those of you who frequent the Amon Basin have noticed some major disturbances recently with the expansion of the Claybell Park and now the construction in the Hayden Homes development. You will notice some additional activity in the coming months and years, but perhaps activity you'll find more amenable.



The City of Richland is going to take another shot at large-scale restoration on its properties within the basin and into Claybell. You will recall there was an effort at natural restoration a couple of years ago as a part of the large Leslie trunk sewer line installation, but that project met with... well let's just call it "mixed results".

The City has entered into a contract with Richland-based WildLands for an intensive, extensive, and long-range landscape restoration that will hopefully yield better results that we can

all be proud of. WildLands began scouting and scoping the project last winter, mapping the properties, doing taking soil samples, and looking at visitor use patterns. They have developed a plan that considers conditions of soil depth and composition, steepness and orientation to the sun, and abilities to match native plant community conditions already present on the site. The plan also includes weed control, site preparations, native seed and sprouts plantings, and post-planting care. There will be up to three years of active monitoring and up to two years of additional monitoring and assessment. The City's Public Works and Planning departments are jointly overseeing the project, as it involves Public Works funds and infrastructure upon Parks land.

The dry conditions of the past year, and the pending El Niño that is anticipated to take hold over the next year portend ominously for soil moisture conditions at Amon and throughout our region. WildLands will adjust this year's planting schedule accordingly, so we don't know exactly when the main activity will get underway. Shrub-steppe is already one of the most difficult environments within which to do this sort of restoration work, and it doesn't appear that nature is going to cut us any breaks any time soon.



As such, we will all need to be patient all the way around. The work will be visible to the public - WildLands will screen off certain areas that need to remain closed to foot and wheel traffic and there will be barriers, some lasting for a few years. There will also be signage, vehicles, and equipment. We all need to try to see the long game here and put up with some physical and visual inconveniences for a while. There will be efforts by the City and by the Greenway to communicate this information, but the best ambassadors are those of you who are on the ground in Amon on a regular basis.

Finally, the City will create a website for the project that will be online sometime this fall. Updated project details – including the planting and monitoring plan – will be available there. I will also provide regular updates to Tapteal Talk to pass along any other pertinent information or developments.

## The Origin and Early Years of the Tapteal Greenway

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*Mike Lilga, founder; board member 1995-present; president 1995-98*

July 8, 1992. That's when Rick Leaumont and I, representing the Lower Columbia Basin Audubon Society, wrote a letter to Christine Carlson of the Rivers Trails and Conservation Assistance Program of the National Park Service requesting technical assistance to create a greenway along the lower Yakima River. We had only hatched the idea the day before. But the proposal was accepted and before long Sally Sheridan of RTCA was helping bring together jurisdictions and agencies with interests along the Yakima and organizing public meetings to talk about and establish the greenway. Interest was high, meeting turnout was excellent, and the group quickly decided to have a trash cleanup at Duportail where it meets the river.



Originally the Lower Yakima River Greenway, as we called ourselves then, stretched from the mouth at Columbia Point and Bateman Island upriver to the Horn Rapids Dam, now called the Wanawish Dam. During the planning process the group decided the Greenway should extend to Benton City, its current terminus. One of the first Board of Directors actions was to change the name to the Tapteal Greenway, partly because the Yakima Greenway in Yakima thought people would be confused. Tapteal, or a variation of that spelling, is mentioned in Lewis and Clark's journals and is the Native American name for the lower Yakima River. We were almost the Wanawish Greenway. The organization was incorporated on May 16, 1995 and later received 501(c)3 tax exempt status. Susan Roberts patiently helped us design the logo.

Our first big effort as an organization was writing a draft plan for the Chamna Natural Preserve and presenting it to the Richland Parks and Recreation Commission, which spurred the City of Richland to start a several month public planning process. The results were the establishment of the name we all use for the area, rather than "Acme" as it was then called for the nearby gravel pit, recognition that this was a natural area, control of vehicular access, and establishment of the trail system. In addition, the Big Chamna Cleanup pulled out 16 tons of garbage, including a car body or two, the remnants of many home remodels, a huge pile of tires, and many, many empty motor oil bottles.

The Tapteal Greenway has a long list of accomplishments over its history. The key to all of them has been the amazing volunteer support we've received over the years. Thank you for 20 years of caring.

## Summer Happenings

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Tapteal Greenway took the lead or was part of many activities and events during the summer months:

### May

- Eagle Scout project in Amon Creek Natural Preserve
- Display at the REACH museum as part of LCBAS 'Spring Migration at the REACH' event
- Salmon Summit
- Amon Creek flyover (video available on Amon Basin page of tapteal.org)
- Wildlands Walk

### June

- Tapteal Trail signs installed in WE Johnson Park
- Display at El Rancho Reata Community Alliance Extravaganza
- Chamna Preserve trail work day



### July

- New trail maps installed at Chamna
- Celebration Committee planning meetings begin
- Water Trail display at Kid's Camp at the REACH museum



### August

- Table at Battelle Music Break

### September

- Table at WSU-TC Volunteer Fair
- Trail North trail work day



Look for the next edition of Tapteal Talk in December.

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