



National Public Lands Day September 22, 2018



This year on National Public Lands Day, CTA volunteers will work trails in Beacon Rock State Park. We will gather at 8:30 a.m. at the upper picnic shelter for refreshments and a safety talk. Lunch will be provided when we wind down our work about 1 p.m.

Pre-register at www.chinooktrails.org/events-2.

Partnership with Loowit Brewing, June 10, 2018

A big thank you to Loowit Brewing Company of Vancouver. On June 10th, they hosted an afternoon of brews, fellowship, and a chance to support the work of CTA. Live music, good food, and of course their own varieties of beer, made for a memorable afternoon. Proceeds and donations from a silent auction and food and beverage purchases went to fund CTA trail assurance markers which are being installed in strategic locations along the Chinook Trail.

Loowit Brewing is located at 507 Columbia Street, Vancouver.

Chinook Trail Survey

Text and pictures by Steve Jones

On July 8th, Andrew Mathe and I conducted a trail scouting and flagging day to begin creating 10 more trail miles to extend the Chinook Trail east of Silver Star and Bluff Mountain to Mowich Butte. We chose the area west of Springs Camp, an abandoned camping area along Forest Road 41, to begin scouting because of the easy access.

We each drove our car down the bumpy, rocky, and rutted roads because we expected to survey about five miles of trail and wanted to park a car five miles from Springs Camp. We rendezvoused at the Bluff Mountain Trailhead where a profusion of wildflowers with Mt. Hood in the background provided a picturesque view to the south. Driving east we came to Lookout Mountain and noticed the gate to the top was open. I drove my four-wheel-drive truck up the steep, rocky and rutted road to the small radio communications site on top. The beautiful 360-degree view encompasses all the major volcanic peaks of the region, a potential side-trip for future Chinook Trail hikers. Looking down we could see a scenic route for some of the trail. One goal for trail siting is to provide spectacular views. We couldn't pass up this route above the trees.

It didn't take long to follow animal trails and sidestep down to a little ridge with great views of Mt. Hood. We didn't realize how far we had descended until we finished the steep climb back up to the truck where we had lunch.

After lunch we started at Springs Camp, crawling through thick vine maple and light undergrowth to begin flagging a route. Fortunately we didn't disturb any angry



Andrew Mathe and Lookout Mtn.

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yellowjackets! They are particularly bad this year.

As we crossed the dry headwaters of Rock Creek we found a little cave beneath a dry waterfall. Unfortunately, there was a rock cliff on the other side of the stream so we had to backtrack and re-flag our future route. We did find one spot

where an animal track went across another dry tributary to Rock Creek, making a perfect trail for about 200 feet.

The route we flagged sometimes comes within 500 feet of Forest Road 41 so it was easy to bush-whack up the hill to the road. Then back to the car. It turns out we only

scouted about a mile of trail instead of five so we didn't really need two cars.

We will continue trail scouting expeditions until we have explored, flagged, and mapped this future section of the Chinook Trail. Once done, we will need to seek funding and apply for permits.



1. Hi Sean! Tell us a little bit about yourself.

I live in Bellingham, Washington with my wife and two kids in their late teens. My day job is with a local boat tour company. "On the side" I have owned and operated Double Crown Records since the mid-90's—a surf and instrumental rock n' roll label. However, I have always been a hiking enthusiast—first with my family growing up, then going with friends in college. I kind of took a break from hiking in my 30's and early 40's as I was more interested in playing rec soccer, playing two to three games a week year round. However, with the knees starting to go, I gradually faded out soccer and got into Crossfit, and started hiking again (not exactly activities that are easy on the knees, I should say!).

Interview with Sean Berry Chinook Trail Thru-Hiker (October 2018)

(Questions posed by CTA board member Andrew Mathe.)

Over the last few years I have worked towards doing just about every hike within 20 to 30 miles of Mt. Baker, and have also made it a goal to do every trail on Chuckanut and Blanchard mountains near Bellingham, Washington. In October 2018, I will be doing a solo through-hike of the Chinook Trail in Washington and Oregon along the Columbia River. This will be my first long-distance hike and my current route plan is about 302 miles.

2. How did you decide on hiking the Chinook Trail?

Well, I first became aware of long distance hiking through the movie *The Way*, which was about the Camino pilgrimage walk in France and Spain. My wife showed interest in doing the Camino at some point, as was I, but as I read blogs and stories online about it, I guess I took a few tangents along the way in my searching and found info about the Pacific Crest Trail and the Appalachian Trail.

Since I work full-time, and have a family, I don't have four to five months to do trails like that, and I also can't take time off work May through September, so I started to look for Northwest trails that could

be done in two to three weeks in October. The Wonderland Trail and the Palouse To Cascades trails were options, but with the former, I was concerned about the weather in October at altitude, and the latter just doesn't seem well-suited for through-hiking (yet). Then I found the Chinook Trail and it seemed like a perfect fit—doable in two to three weeks, fairly low altitude, trail towns along the way, and ample camping opportunities. As I looked into it more, I did like the fact that few have done it so far, and it was kind of fun doing the route planning and working with folks like the CTA to make it all come together.

3. I understand you've been approached by The Trek to provide coverage of your through-hike experience of the Chinook Trail. What's the story behind that? How do you think this interest will impact a trail that remains in development?

Well, it was kind of the other way around. I saw that they were looking for writers/bloggers for the PCT and AT, and asked if they would be interested in someone blogging about the Chinook Trail.

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They said yes, and have been extremely helpful since day one. I've done lots of writing over the years about surf music (in addition to the record label, I also do a surf rock magazine called *The Continental Magazine*), but I haven't written about hiking before, and not for such a large audience. They rely on a large readership, and people clicking on ads on their website to maintain the site and pay their staff, so with the articles/posts I write, they are very concerned about SEO, keywords, readability, etc. So my first post, which just went live, took a lot of tweaking to get just right, but I think it'll be easier with future posts.

My hope is that people will read about my experience on the Chinook Trail and want to do it themselves. I don't know how many people have done it so far—I can only name five, although I imagine others have done it, and perhaps haven't written about it online. In any case, although I haven't even set foot on the trail yet, I think it has all of the elements to make it a popular "medium-distance" through-hike. For most people, getting two to three weeks off work isn't that difficult, so it's a trail that can be done without quitting a job or putting undue hardship on one's family. It has lots of variety—mountains, forests, deserts, plains, trail walking, road walking, trail towns, etc. To me, it's really like a mini-PCT in many ways.

As I write about the trail, and perhaps give presentations about my experience, there are a couple of things I'll have to address. There's a

section of dirt road, less than a mile, near Maryhill that I needed to get permission from the landowners to access. I really don't think that section is going to be an option if dozens, or hundreds of people end up doing the Chinook Trail every year. Also, because of the fire closures in the Eagle Creek/Cascade Locks area, I am having to do a huge detour to the south, and will actually go south to Mt. Hood before heading west to Portland. This really isn't part of the intended route of the Chinook Trail, but because of the fire closures, and the inaccessibility of the Bull Run Watershed, I have to go around a huge section to get from Hood River to Portland.

For anyone who wants to follow my journey you can see my posts at <https://thetrek.co/author/sean-berry/> or <http://www.reverbhiker.com>.



4. You've been doing meticulous research into trail logistics for months now. What sections of trail are you most excited to discover?

I'm really excited about the whole section from the start through the Klickitat Trail. As it stands now, I won't be able to do the Swale

Canyon section, due to the annual fire closure there, but I have my fingers crossed that we get tons of rain in September and they open it a bit early. Otherwise it's a long road walk from Wahkiacus to Maryhill,



but I think I can do that in about a day.

I'm honestly also excited about a section that really isn't part of the Chinook Trail, but is part of my intended route. I'll be going from Wahtum Lake to Mt. Hood on the PCT, plan to attend one day of the annual ALDHA-West Gathering, and then spend one night at Timberline Lodge. It'll be great to do this section of the PCT, hopefully have time to see Ramona Falls, and enjoy some great scenery along the way.

5. It might get wet considering the timing of your trip. What kind of rain gear to you plan to pack?

I will have rain pants, rain jacket and a backpack cover—otherwise it's the NW, so I plan on getting wet along the way. But who knows, sometimes we have pretty nice Octobers, and I'm hoping it'll at least be dry in the eastern

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Sat., Sept. 22nd

**National
Public Lands
Day**

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Washington and Oregon sections.

6. Speaking of gear: what are some absolute essentials that you're bringing along?

I've done some great training hikes in the Chuckanut Mountains, as well as the Welcome Pass trail near Mt. Baker and the Cascade Pass/Sahale Glacier Camp trail, so I think I have my gears dialed in pretty well. My pack without food and water weighs in at about 19

pounds. I think there should be ample water to filter throughout, other than the eastern sections, so I can probably get by with a couple of liters at a time in the west, and three to four liters in the east. With several towns along the way—White Salmon, The Dalles and Hood River—I'll have ample opportunities to resupply, so I'll probably only have to carry three to four days of food at the most.

Essentials for me are Darn

Tough socks with thin toe-socks underneath (blister prevention), hiking poles, an Osprey pack (heavier than some, but sooooo comfortable), an Enlightened Equipment quilt, and, as a luxury, I'll have a Therm-a-Rest Z Lite Sol Foam Sleeping Pad and a Therm-a-Rest NeoAir XLite Sleeping Pad. Oh, and a hefty supply of Snickers bars!

7. Thanks for your time! We look forward to checking in with you on the other side of your experience.



CTA Annual Brunch and Meeting

On Sunday, February 24, 2019, the Chinook Trail Association will gather for our annual brunch and meeting. Brunch begins at noon at the Vancouver Water Resources Center at 4600 S.E. Columbia Way. Put this on your calendar and stay tuned for more details.

www.chinooktrails.com

www.instagram.com/chinooktrail/

To support the work of the Chinook Trail Association, click the donate button on our website at www.chinooktrails.com or use the QR code to your right.

