

ATA's plans for the Applegate Ridge Trail surge ahead

BY DIANA COOGLE

Thanks to its many avid supporters and hikers, and thanks to a stepped-up commitment from the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the Applegate Trails Association (ATA) is on a roll!

In September 2014 our fund-raiser at Red Lily Vineyards put a whopping \$4,236 in our treasury. That figure says a lot about the passion of people in the Applegate—and beyond—for our trails and especially for ATA's dream of

building a trail from Cathedral Hills in Grants Pass to Jacksonville, where the Applegate Ridge Trail—ART, as we call it—would meet the Jack-Ash trail that the Siskiyou Uplands Trails Association plans to take on into Ashland.

At the turn of the new year, BLM went into high gear with the ART project. With the money from our fund-raiser and the rest of our Title II grant money, we can now show our financial commitment to: (1)

obliterate an old off-highway vehicle trail at the end of BLM road 38-2-29.1, just west of Sterling Creek Road, that promotes private property trespass, (2) complete the trailhead at the east end of the East ART, which runs along the ridge north of Bishop Creek between Sterling Creek Road and Highway 238, and (3) have the very costly, legally necessary, and environmentally warranted Environmental Assessment (EA) done. BLM is on board with these projects, and the train is moving!

After accomplishing these goals (we hope by the end of the year), we will seek grants to help fund the construction of the six-mile East ART trail. An ATA fund-raiser

in September will help us fatten the coffers for that project as well. In the meantime, check out our website (www.applegatetrails.org) for the exciting schedule of hikes for this year's season, including a full-moon hike, a photographer's hike, and other specialties. Keep tabs on our website for updates.

We are so excited. If you would like to join the excitement and serve on the board (monthly meetings, some tasks between meetings), let us know. We would love to have you, and we think you would enjoy working with us.

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