



Cantrall Buckley Park NEWS

Turtle and trails are coming to Cantrall Buckley Park

BY HEATHER TUGAW AND AUDREY ELDRIDGE

Spring has sprung, and the energy to improve Cantrall Buckley Park, the Applegate Valley's premier community-run park, has grown across the Applegate Valley. Many volunteer organizations are now working on a range of park improvement projects. The nonprofit Greater Applegate Community Development Corporation (GACDC) is managing the effort and has collaborated with the Ford Institute Leadership Team, the Applegate Trails Association, and several other volunteer organizations to make Cantrall Buckley Park more accessible, enjoyable, and safe. And there are many ways anyone can help. Please read on!

Playground rehabilitation

GACDC's Park Committee is gearing up to rejuvenate the 40-year-old playground at Cantrall Buckley. Plans include rehabbing existing equipment to conform to current safety standards and replacing several structures. GACDC has worked closely with Applegate parents to

discuss project designs and meet the local community's needs and interests. So far, the \$57,000 project has attracted over \$50,000 in donations and pledges. All donors will be permanently recognized in the new community-inspired artwork coming to the park. Construction is set to begin this coming fall. See the accompanying box to find out how you can help us reach our goal.

Enchanted Turtle Habitat Playscape

In addition to playground rehab work, the Ford Institute Leadership Team (a volunteer group) is working to expand the play areas while informing the local community about the imperiled western pond turtle. This group will be building the Enchanted Turtle Habitat Playscape in Cantrall Buckley Park's playground. Did you know that the Applegate Watershed is home to this native turtle? You find these beautiful, shy, and quiet reptiles living in the river, lakes, ponds, and riparian

forests. However, their numbers are rapidly diminishing, and this playscape is a gentle way of educating children—and the rest of us while the children play.

The gem of the Enchanted Turtle Habitat Playscape is an artistic, locally made, colorful and fun concrete and tile turtle for children to climb on. A local Applegate artist, Jeremy Criswell, has been hired to design and build the play structure. Because every turtle needs a nice place to sun, large cedar logs and boulders will be installed for the young and the young of heart to play on. Educational signage will be installed near the play structure to inform families about the pond turtle's habitat and life cycle and what we can do to protect its home and habitat. For those who need a rest, a lovely bench will be installed near the playscape.

The group has already raised several thousand dollars and is close to reaching its goal. If you'd like to help finish the project, you can send a check to Ford Family Foundation, Enchanted Turtle Habitat Playscape, c/o GACDC, PO Box 3107, Applegate, OR 97530.

Hiking trails

We have hiking trails in the park! The Applegate Trails Association (ATA) is busy working to improve trail access, map trails, and install trail signage in Cantrall Buckley Park. Over a dozen volunteers recently attended an ATA work party and successfully cleared a majority of the trail adjacent to the river. The next phase of the project is to GPS the trail system so a map of the park and trails can be created. In addition, trail signage will be installed allowing visitors to find their way around the many trails.

Community collaboration

Volunteers working with these three organizations are collaborating on a single grant from the Jackson Soil and Water Conservation District to fund several other park-wide projects, such as the development of educational kiosks, ecological interpretive signage, invasive species removal, and restoration of native

Donors

Here are recent donors to the Cantrall Buckley Park Playground Project and Turtle Playscape (with apologies to our Oregon endangered species).

Private Community

Grey Wolves (\$5,000+): Carpenter Foundation, West Family Foundation
Northern Spotted Owls (\$4,000+)
Marble Murrelets (\$3,000+)
Pacific Fishers (\$2,000+)
Oregon Spotted Frogs (\$1,000+):
Applegate-Jacksonville Rotary Club
Siskiyou Mountain Salamanders (\$500+): Anonymous (2)
Vernal Pool Fairy Shrimps (\$1-\$500):
Robert Abernathy, Larry & Gaye Anderson, William & Alison Benton, Christopher Bratt, Larry & Shannon Buscho, Scott & Sara Cole, Cassandra & Gary Connor, P. Gordon, Robert Jones, Michael & Schuyler Loos, Annette Parsons, Joan Peterson

Business Community

Applegate Store & Cafe
Pioneer Financial Planning, Jacksonville
Savannah Fine Linens, Jacksonville

Collection Boxes

Community collection boxes are located at the Ruch Country Store, Provolt Store, Applegate Store & Cafe, and Ruch Hardware-Tiff's Trading Post. Total collected: \$558.

A huge "Thank You" goes out to all our donors!

We have now received over \$50,000 in donations and pledges (including in-kind labor) toward our goal of \$57,000!

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Checks can be mailed to GACDC, PO Box 3107, Applegate, OR 97530.

Photo left: Audrey Eldridge (right) with the Ford Institute Leadership Team, and Lori Tella with Jackson Soil and Water Conservation District, plan for native plant restoration in the park. Photo by Tom Carstens.



Photo below: Imperiled pond turtle sculpture, inspiration for the new turtle art piece being created for Cantrall Buckley Park. Photo by Yathin S. Krishnappa.



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