

Subject: Please Support the John Wayne Trail!

Dear Mayor Frank Cox and Stevenson City Council Members,

I am a member of the Tekoa City Council and the President of the Tekoa Trail and Trestle Association. My city of Tekoa WA (pop. 843) is at the eastern end of the John Wayne trail on the Idaho border.

The trail is critical to our small fragile economy and a central part of our community identity.

The John Wayne trail is the property of WA Parks and DNR in different sections. It is a ribbon of beauty filled with peaceful vistas of rich forests, dramatic scab lands and the pastures of the Palouse. It stretches for 285 miles and is Washington's only cross state trail.

I am writing to ask if you will join my city and a growing list of other Washington cities, 19 so far, and pass a resolution of support for the trail.

In the 2015 state legislative session, two legislators from the 9th district wrote a capitol budget proviso that closed 135 miles of the trail to the public. It gave exclusive control of the property to adjacent landowners. The proviso was inserted in the final hours of legislative budget negotiation. No public notice or invitation to comment occurred. We were told fellow legislatures weren't even notified or consulted because they needn't be bothered by something so trivial.

The implementation of the proviso however was prevented by a miraculous typographical error and after a public outcry the WA Parks Dept. formed a committee of trail users and adjacent landowners to advise parks. They met over a six month period and the final committee report and a trail management plan was adopted by the WA State Parks Commission July 21st. It calls for trail repairs and a capitol budget request of \$2,016,000 to fund them.

We are hopeful that in 2017 our state legislature will honor this budget request. A resolution of support from your city would greatly encourage them. We are very unsure what level of opposition we will now encounter at the legislature.

I have attached:

- a) Sample resolution from the cities of Cle Elum, Spokane, and Tekoa.
- b) A map of the trail. Note that the John Wayne Trail is labeled "Iron Horse State Park Trail" and "Milwaukee Road Corridor".
- c) A picture of the trail.
- d) A list of those cities who have already passed a resolution.

Also here are some links to some news articles as well and the recently adopted John Wayne Trail maintenance plan.

Iron Horse State Park Trail Recommendations Report June 27, 2016

<http://parks.state.wa.us/DocumentCenter/Home/View/7653>

[January 29, 2016 - OBP. "Buoyed By Drafting Error, Trails Group Treks To WA Capitol To Continue Fight".](#)

<http://www.opb.org/news/article/npr-buoyed-by-drafting-error-trails-group-treks-to-capitol-to-continue-fight/>

[January 31, 2016 - The Spokesman Review. "The John Wayne Pioneer Trail track for a state park strategic plan"](#)

<http://www.spokesman.com/stories/2016/jan/30/the-john-wayne-pioneer-trail-track-for-a-state-par/>

[May 1, 2016. The Seattle Times Op Ed. "**Washington's cross-state trail needs support, money.**"](#)

<http://www.seattletimes.com/opinion/washingtons-cross-state-trail-needs-support-money/>

We would welcome an opportunity to discuss this issue with you if you have any questions or comments. You can reach us by email or call [509-284-2080](tel:509-284-2080).

Thank you!

Sincerely,
Ted Blaszak

Resolution No. _____

A resolution regarding the preservation, maintenance and improvement of the John Wayne Pioneer Trail.

WHEREAS, the John Wayne Pioneer Trail is a 300 mile long stretch of former railway roadbed that goes from the western slopes of the Cascade Mountains to the Idaho Border and is the longest rail trail in the United States; and

WHEREAS, the Washington State Parks Department and Washington State Department of Natural Resources own the land the trail sits on; and

WHEREAS, in 2002 the trail was designated a National Recreational Trail by the federal government; and

WHEREAS, the trail is used by cyclists and horse riders, including the John Wayne Pioneer Wagons and Riders Association for their annual "Ride Across Washington" event; and

WHEREAS, Fish Lake Trail, which turns in to the Columbia Plateau Trail near Cheney, provides a direct connection to the John Wayne Pioneer Trail for recreational enthusiasts in Spokane; and

WHEREAS, the City of Spokane has spent more than \$3 million on improving the Fish Lake Trail, and long term plans call for another \$4 million for the final phase of improvements; and

WHEREAS, there has been recent discussion of closing a portion of the John Wayne Pioneer Trail east of the Columbia River; and

WHEREAS, the closure of the trail would decrease recreational opportunities for citizens of Spokane and the surrounding areas, and close a critical connection to Fish Lake Trail/Columbia Plateau Trail, and forfeit the right-of-way for any possible future rail transport connection; and

WHEREAS, adjacent landowners have brought forward concerns about ongoing maintenance of the trail;

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved by the City Council of City of Spokane that the city expresses its support for the preservation of the John Wayne Pioneer Trail as well as the allocation of additional state resources for the maintenance and improvement of the trail east of the Columbia River.

City of Tekoa
RESOLUTION #15-04

**A RESOLUTION CONCERNING THE PROPOSED
CLOSURE OF SECTIONS OF THE JOHN WAYNE TRAIL**

ADOPTING A COMMUNIQUÉ FROM THE CITY OF TEKOA TO STATE REPRESENTATIVE MARY DYE, STATE REPRESENTATIVE JOE SCHMICK, THE WASHINGTON STATE LEGISLATURE, REGIONAL CITY COUNCILS AND THE GENERAL PUBLIC.

WHEREAS, the City Council for the City of Tekoa, Washington, does hereby find as follows:

WHEREAS, Washington State Representative Mary Dye and Washington State Representative Joe Schmick have communicated to members of the Tekoa City Government their intentions to introduce legislation in the 2016 legislative session that would close a large section of the John Wayne Trail/State Park from Malden, Washington to Lind, Washington.;

WHEREAS, State Representative Mary Dye and State Representative Joe Schmick serve as Tekoa's representatives in the Washington State Legislature;

WHEREAS, the entire length of the John Wayne Trail/State Park is important to Tekoa's economy, culture, and identity;

WHEREAS, the John Wayne Trail/State Park is the only state wide trail crossing in Washington and is actively used by hikers, bikers, horse riders, and other outdoor enthusiasts across its entire length;

WHEREAS, permanent loss of the only state wide trail in Washington would be detrimental to not only to the current economies of communities all along the trail, but would forever end any opportunity for future economic development of what could become a vital job producer across the state;

WHEREAS, we fail to see any reason worthy to take the highly unusual and extreme step of closing a Trail/State Park without a study of use, public hearings, or any open discussion for trail enthusiast to comment at;

WHEREAS, we feel rather than close the John Wayne Trail/State Park the state and region would be better served by enhancing the trail to make it more user friendly and therefore encourage more regional tourism,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY PROCLAIMED by the City Council of the City Tekoa, WA that recipients of this communique please make every attempt to fulfil where applicable:

Section 1. The City of Tekoa strongly objects to any attempts by any of its legislative representatives to introduce any legislation that would jeopardize the continued use of the John Wayne Trail and its accessibility to the residents of the State of Washington,

Section 2. The City Council for the City of Tekoa strongly encourages it's legislative representatives to aggressively seek funding to enhance the accessibility of use of the John Wayne Trail as opposed to introducing legislature to close the John Wayne Trail;

Section 3. That cities that would be affected by the closure of the John Wayne Trail/State Park pass similar resolutions;

Section 4. That the entire body of the Washington State Legislature be aware of the concerns of the City of Tekoa, Washington.

PASSED AND ADOPTED this 15th day of September, 2015.

APPROVED: _____
John Jaeger – Mayor

ATTEST: _____
Kynda Browning – Clerk/Treasurer

Attest