

# TRAIL NEWS

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## REMEMBERING LANE WILLIAMS

1934 - 2022

On February 17, 2022, Friends of the Weiser River Trail lost one of our founding members when Lane Williams of Midvale passed away. Lane was involved with the formation of FWRT and maintained a vital and integral role until his passing. Lane was passionate about the trail and even after he retired from the Board of Directors in 2014, he remained one of our finest supporters.

Born July 13, 1934, Lane left behind a legacy of championing the underdog and empowering people by creating possibilities and opportunities, and this extended to the Trail. Lane and his first wife, Mary Gaile, were a powerful presence in the early years of the Trail. Some years after Mary Gaile's passing, Lane met Elsa Freeman, and Elsa wholeheartedly embraced Lane's passion for community involvement and supporting the Trail.

Lane's legacy to the Weiser River Trail will live on and we ask that you honor Lane's memory by taking a moment to reflect on this remarkable man the next time you are on the trail, listening to the sounds of nature and enjoying this Idaho Gem!

Please join Elsa, family and friends in the Midvale Community Park on May 21, 2022, at 2 p.m., for a celebration of Lane's life. Please bring a lawn chair. Light refreshments, coffee, tea and water will be provided.

**REPRINTED FROM THE STAR-NEWS,  
McCall, Idaho, circa 1996**

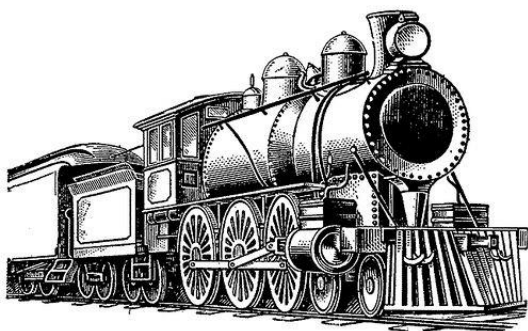
***RAIL BED SHOULD BE SAVED AS BIKE TRAIL***

“Here’s hoping Adams and Washington counties succeed where Valley County failed in preserving its railroad right of way corridor for recreational uses.

Eighty-three miles of railroad bed are being abandoned between Tamarack, near New Meadows, and Weiser, and a citizens group needs \$1 million to keep the corridor intact. If the right of way is secured, then work can begin to develop the railbed into a trail for bicyclists, hikers and others.

In the early 1980s, Union Pacific Railroad pulled its tracks between Cascade and McCall after the Boise Cascade Corporation sawmill on Payette Lake shut down. Lack of foresight allowed much of the right of way to revert to adjacent landowners, and the rail bed was lost forever. Fortunately, the City of McCall has managed to secure an important section of the right of way through the city for a recreational path.

The Tamarack to Weiser section may not seem to be a high priority for recreational use today, but if the corridor is not preserved, there may be a lot of people 20 years from now wondering why such an opportunity was missed.”



**EDITOR’S COMMENT:** Twenty-five years later, we can be very proud of the all the accomplishments of the people who had the vision to preserve this valuable resource!!!

**Lortz Trestle Repair  
By Pat Trainor**

**Milestones:**

- Failure April 2019. Flow at 13,000 cubic feet per second (cfs) the second highest recorded flow on record.
- Construction: Start November 29 2021 – December 15, 2021. (12 days)
- Cost: Original \$136,014 - 2019 Updated - 2021: \$ 169,005 a difference \$32,991

The Lortz Trestle had two failures since the Friends gained control in 1996. The trestle failed in spring of 1997 when two of the supporting dents were washed out. The river flows in 1997 was the historic high. The Cambridge gauge station washed out that year but the estimated flow was calculated at 22,800 cfs. The trestle was repaired by the Trail in 1998. In April 2019, another dent was washed out. The flows in 2019 were the second highest recorded at 13,000 cfs.



After the 2019 failure, the Trail, in cooperation of Adams County incorporated a 2.3 mile bypass around the Trestle using the County Road as an alternate route. The design and permits were completed in time for Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation grant cycle in 2020. The grant was approved in the summer of 2020. However, funding was not available until in the spring of 2021.



The original grant was \$136,014 but because of large increase in building materials the adjusted cost was increased 24%. Thanks to all your generous donations and some additional grants, we were able to finalize the contract to start construction.

The contractor was Braun-Jensen Construction in Payette, Idaho. The start of construction was delayed until November 2021 due to supply delays of the steel girders. Work started on November 29, 2021. Work was completed on December 14, 2021. We had 16 inches of snow fall on December 12. Lucky the deck was finish prior to the snow fall. The last task was the hand rails which regardless of the snow was completed the following week.

I would like to thank the following: Trail member Steve Schmoeger with his engineering construction experience to oversee the construction. His volunteer time was greatly needed and appreciated while I was out of state. Great West Engineers for reviewing the design and shop drawings at very little cost to the Trail.

Most importantly, I wish to take time to thank the many folks who donated specifically to the repairs of the Lortz Trestle. Thank you to the Laura Moore Cunningham Foundation for the gift of \$24,000 towards the repairs. While we had five extraordinarily generous donations of \$1000, the majority of the donations were \$200 or less. The total donations came to almost \$70,000. With these generous gifts we were able to absorb the outrageous increase in material costs and help with the grant matching funds. All of you should be very proud. We are preparing a plaque with the names

of all those who donated, which will be displayed on the Lortz Trestle.



**Note to the membership:** As we move more and faster into the digital age, we strive to keep up with real time information to our membership. While we absolutely will continue to honor your preference for a paper newsletter, if you have an E-mail and have no objection to receiving occasional E-mails from us, we would greatly appreciate you sending us that information and we will update our database. You can E-mail [weiserrivertrail@gmail.com](mailto:weiserrivertrail@gmail.com) with your E-mail address and state your preference to continue to receive a paper newsletter or switch to digital. **WE WILL NEVER SHARE YOUR INFORMATION.**



**WAGON TRAIN EVENT 2022**  
*by Pam Haynes*

This year marks the 20th anniversary of the Weiser River Trail Wagon Train! We have a specially designed logo for the T-shirts and we once again are looking forward to a lovely catered celebration dinner in the Midvale Park on Saturday, May 28, 2022. As in past years, we will have many awesome raffle items (including a selection for the “non” horsey crowd. If you wish to join us for any

portion of the Wagon Train either as a participant or to attend one of the meals, please contact us as soon as possible. Registration is NOW OPEN. Please contact Pam Haynes 208-861-8614 or Alan Stoneman 208-941-3052 or E-mail [weiserrivertrail@gmail.com](mailto:weiserrivertrail@gmail.com) for additional information.



## DONATION OPPORTUNITIES!

by Barb McGann

You now have multiple ways to help the trail! We so appreciate the generosity of our members and we keep trying to find new and EASY ways for you to donate to the trail. Every dollar you donate allows us to keep the beautiful 86 mile trail open, do necessary maintenance like re-planking the trestles (yes, the trestles are now 20 years old and needing replacing/repairing), and to find new and exciting events on the trail so you can come use it!

Here are the current funding opportunities:



AmazonSmile. Every time you shop, Amazon gives a small percentage of the money to the trail. We

currently receive almost \$100 every quarter from them. Next time you sign onto Amazon, look for the Amazon Smiles program, and tell it you want to donate to Friends of Weiser River Trail. Then shop away!!



Ridley's. This is a BIG one for us. Pattie Heldt signed us up more than 10 years ago. They have a points program, and all you need to do is the next time you are in a Ridley's store, tell the cashier that you want to donate your points to Friends. You would be amazed at how many points we get from people shopping in their favorite grocery store. To date, Ridley's has paid us over \$89000 in the 10+ years. Please consider us if you shop at Ridley's!!



Fred Meyer. If you don't shop at Ridley's but you do shop at Fred Meyer, they have the same program...Fred Meyer Community Rewards. If you have a rewards card, you can tell the cashier that you want to give your points to us, or you can go online, create an account and at the bottom of the home page, you will see Fred Meyer Community Awards. Click that and follow the steps. We are listed as Friends of **THE** Weiser River Trail, Inc in their listings.



Idaho Gives. Every spring, we participate in the online giving spree called Idaho Gives. This year, you can go online anytime from May 2 to May 5th! Last year, we received \$7900 in online donations and pledges. We again have a "matching" donors who pledged to match 100%!!! That way, every donation that comes in online is automatically doubled. It is a powerful motivator to have matching donors!

**LATE BREAKING NEWS:** We raised over \$7000 in this year's Idaho Gives campaign, and we have a 100% match!!! **THANK YOU, DONORS!**



AUGUST 18 - 21, 2022 | HILLCREST COUNTRY CLUB

The Albertson’s Boise Open is BACK after a couple of rough years because of Covid. As in past years, 100% of ticket sales support local charities. They also have some great entertainment lined up this year, with three nights of live music. Tickets include admission to concerts after golf on Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights on the 18th fairway at the Hillcrest Country Club.

Tickets can be purchased on the Albertson’s Boise Open web site (link on our web site on the fund raising page). Four day passes are SOLD OUT already but day passes are available.

You can sign up for all the shopping programs and every time you shop, you will be contributing to your favorite 501 (c) 3 organization, FWRT! We are thanking you in advance...we know from the Ridley’s program that the power of everyone designating us as their choice for points donations is immense and can lead to major funds for us. THANK YOU!



**WEISER RIVER TRAIL REPORT**  
*by Anonymous User*

My wife, son and I rode the Weiser River Trail Wednesday and Thursday of last week (May 4 and 5) and found it in overall great shape. Given the generous and desperately needed rain of April, plus the snow of May 2, we feared a mud fest even with the sunny and warm forecast for the first day, but though there were patches of snow, running water and mud puddles in the vicinity of Tamarack, no swimming was required!

As we went south along the forested upper trail, with the Weiser River raging beside us, we

encountered perhaps a half dozen downed trees. Only one log required portaging out bikes over, the rest we could slip under, or around, sometimes without dismounting.

Though the Lortz Trestle below Starkey has been repaired, the route is still diverted 2.4 miles along the county road before rejoining the trail. We looked longingly across the river to the inaccessible trail, but a quick glance back when we rejoined the trail showed it to be quite rough.

As the old railroad grade that is the Weiser River Trail separates from the river above Fruitvale, through and past Council, no longer guided by the river, it makes a beeline south. There were great views of the spring growths of the Fruitvale and Council farms, but the ten miles of rough gravel seemed endless.

The turn west to the convergence of the West and Middle Forks was a welcome relief, both to see the river again and the freshly smoothed trail. This section has always been stunning, with flows coming and going from multiple directions. The Osprey in the willow agreed.

As the trail drops deeper into the canyon below Cambridge, the water became rougher as the river snaked through the canyon boundaries.

The trail was in great shape for foot and two wheel travel, but there were a number of areas of rockfall with many large boulders (2') that would make wagon passage difficult. We were lucky to have traveled after two dry days; dried tracks showed that other recent travelers were less lucky!

With the river running quite strong we didn’t see that much wildlife. Ducks and geese all over, including one goose running the rapids. Red winged blackbirds and grackles in abundance. A pair of blue herons heading upstream. A few perched hawks. A great horned owl kept us company for several first downs. As we approached the Weiser farmlands, pheasants ran through the newly plowed fields. Beautifully

marked Killdeer were all over. After its parent flushed, we saw a tiny, fledgling killdeer, only a couple inches tall, running down the trail, barely discernable against the gravel. We stopped, of course, until it found cover. Marmots were busy near the rockpiles, whistling and chirping at us or running back and forth across the trail.

Above Cambridge, the wildflowers were not really in bloom yet though there were some areas of camas. Below, the daisies, lupine and phlox were starting to come on strong. The flowering trees – apple? – here were really fragrant.

One high point was Li’s Chinese Kitchen in Cambridge, that had just opened that day. We had been expecting to find things to heat up from general store, but Li had just passed health inspection the day before and was operating. He looked exhausted, but man can that guy cook!

He wasn’t fully stocked yet - pork, chicken, shrimp but no beef or tofu. Fresh vegetables were in abundance though. We ended up just telling him that we didn’t eat pork or chicken and liked things spicy and let him do whatever he thought. He came back with piles of stir fried FRESH vegetables with fantastic sauces. Shakers of roasted sesame seeds and chopped peanuts got put on everything. If you ever go, ignore the menu, tell him how you like to eat and great food happens.

*Many thanks to whomever submitted this report, we LOVE  hearing from satisfied trail users!!!*



**EDITORS NOTE:** Apologies for the long pause since the last newsletter, we hope to be back on track now!

## Become a Member

The Weiser River Trail is owned and managed by the Friends of the Weiser River Trail, a 501(c)3 nonprofit corporation. The mission of FWRT is to preserve the integrity of the rail corridor, manage it as a public trail, and conserve the natural habitats along its length.

FWRT is a self-funding membership organization that depends heavily upon funds raised through membership dues, grants, and fund-raising efforts to cover ongoing maintenance and operational costs.

We welcome your support!

- o \$15 Basic Member
- o \$25 Trail Blazer
- o \$50 Pioneer
- o \$100 & Up Bridge Builder
- o \$1000 Life Member

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State / Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Please Send your contribution and membership information to:

**Friends of Weiser River Trail**  
9201 Grandmason  
Eagle, ID 83616

If you would like to help work on the trail or serve on a committee, Please call the number listed below. Your help would be greatly appreciated!

If you would like more Information about The Weiser River Trail, Visit us on the web at:  
[www.weiserrivertrail.org](http://www.weiserrivertrail.org)  
And for membership information Call: (208) 602-2534



Above: Long time FWRT members Bob Bunch and Lynn Stoneman representing the 20th annual Wagon Train at the Idaho Horse Expo in Nampa in April 2022.



Above: Idaho Sled Dog Challenge 2022

Left: Hikers strolling on the trail



The Wye Trailhead slumbers under a deep layer of snow, winter 2021-2022.

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**FRIENDS OF THE WEISER RIVER TRAIL**

9201 Grandmason Place  
Eagle, ID 83616

***RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED***

# TRAIL NEWS