

Yachats Trails Committee
Parks & Commons Commission
City of Yachats
Lincoln County, Oregon

For Immediate Release

Contact: Lauralee Svendsgaard
541.547.3640
Mobile: 541.272.1309
lsven@peak.org

Storm Damage and Trail Closure Cause Change of Venue for Yachats New Year's Day Peace Hike

On December 18th 2015, the Amanda Trail Bridge and Amanda statue, which were to be the destination for the Sixth Annual Yachats New Year's Day Peace Hike, were washed out following several weeks of heavy rain and storms. Due to the continuing instability and dangerous conditions of the area, this section of the Amanda Trail is now closed indefinitely to all hikers and visitors while the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department determines next steps for a recovery plan.

As a result, previously announced plans for the Peace Hike have changed. If weather and trail conditions permit, there will be an alternative hike of about 3.5 miles round trip from the Yachats Commons (441 N. Highway 101, Yachats) to the 804 Trail, Ya'Xaik Trail, Gerdemann Botanical Preserve and back. All other related activities, including the traditional Peace Ceremony, will now take place at the Yachats Commons rather than the Amanda Grotto.

Anyone wanting to participate should meet at the Commons at 9:45 a.m. on Friday, January 1, 2016. Yachats Mayor Ron Brean will introduce Doc Slyter, Elder, Tribal Flutist and Tribal Council member for the Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians (CTCLUSI) who will tell the story of Amanda, a blind woman forced to leave her young daughter and march barefoot through rocky terrain to the Alsea Sub-agency internment camp in Yachats in 1864.

It is through the Tribes' and community's endeavors with the Amanda Trail that many people have become more aware of the great need to acknowledge the wrongs of the past; and to be more conscious of the need to treat people of all cultures throughout the world with honor, dignity and respect. Though the fate of the missing Amanda statue is uncertain at this time, her spirit and story remain resilient and will be celebrated this day.

Participants will then gather at the covered shelter behind the Commons where a ceremonial fire will be lit and the group will have the opportunity to contemplate and offer blessings for peace in the new year. During the ceremony, Native American flute music will be provided by Doc Slyter and Mary Beth Nickel.

Weather and trail conditions permitting, participants are then invited to hike the 804 Trail north to the Ya'Xaik Trail, on to the Gerdemann Botanical Preserve Public Footpath and back to the Commons – approximately a 3.5 mile trip. The route is mostly level but there are a few steep steps and inclines along the Ya'Xaik section of the trail. Those not wishing to hike may remain at the Commons where entertainment will be provided until hikers return. At that time all participants will complete the Peace Ceremony at the fire then join together in the Commons to share food, music and camaraderie. In addition there will be informative displays and presentations by the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department, the U.S. Forest Service, CTCLUSI, View the Future, the Yachats Trails Committee, Coastal Gems Volkswalkers, and artists who have produced and will auction work about Amanda and the Amanda Trail. Participants may also then collect their 2016 commemorative event pin, which was created by the Siuslaw National Forest 2014 Artist-in-Residence, Margie Lopez Reid.

For those interested in learning more about Yachats area trails and hiking opportunities, a comprehensive list of area trails with links to maps and other information can be found from the Yachats Chamber of Commerce Web page http://www.yachats.org/Yachats_Area_Trails_Maps.html. Printed brochures are also available at the Yachats Visitors Center.

The Yachats Trails Committee hopes all area residents and visitors will attend this event and celebrate the power of community to create a better, more peaceful world. If you have questions please contact Lauralee Svendsgaard at 541.547.3640

#

1 photo attached

Photo caption: On December 18, 2015 the Amanda Trail Bridge and Amanda Statue south of Yachats were washed away during a period of heavy rains. The area is currently closed to all visitors until hazardous conditions stabilize.

#

About the Amanda Trail

.The Amanda Trail was completed and dedicated in July 2009. A 25-year endeavor, the Trail has helped reveal the truth about the treatment suffered by the Alsea, Siuslaw, Coos and Lower Umpqua People during their incarceration at the Alsea Sub-agency prison camp from 1859 to 1875.

It is through the Tribes' and community's endeavors with the Amanda Trail that many have become more aware of the great need to acknowledge the wrongs of the past; and to be more conscious of the need to treat people of all cultures throughout the world with honor, dignity and respect

Since the Trail's dedication, the Confederated Tribes of the Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians (CTCLUSI) and members of other Tribes have become an important part of the Yachats community. CTCLUSI also provided financial aid and skilled labor toward the replacement of the pedestrian bridge along the Amanda Trail. An article co-authored by Joanne Kittel and Suzanne Curtis about the First Nations' history, including the prison camp years, can be can be purchased at Mari's Books in Yachats. Additionally, in November 2011, Tribal historian Don Whereat and Yachats citizens published a compilation of Mr. Whereat's articles on tribal history and culture to promote greater awareness and understanding. Both the article and the book can be viewed at www.yachats.info.

#