

I am a private landowner that has owned 27.34 acres for 38+ years located on Highway 101 wedged in between the south side of Yachats and north side of Cape Perpetua. My late husband and I were the first private property owners in the State of Oregon to donate a public trail filling a critical gap in the OCT. With Tribal and OPRD permission, our ½ mile of walking trail and its connection to the top of Cape Perpetua is named the Amanda Trail in commemoration of the government sponsored genocidal policies that led to the murder and senseless deaths at the Alsea Sub-agency and the forced marches.

After years of planning and working with OPRD, Siuslaw National Forest, and dozens of volunteers, the trail opened in 1997. The popularity of the trail has grown exponentially during these last 28 years. There is now an Amanda Gathering Area, seating, and Amanda Statue, tribally supervised interpretive signage, and a 144-foot long suspension bridge crossing the Amanda Creek. An average of 500+ people (documented by a trail counter) of all ages a month come to marvel at the ocean and forested views and pay homage at the Gathering Area where gifts are left at the statue. Events and ceremonies as well as educational forums occur regularly at the Gathering Area where there is seating for 40+ people. The 15th Annual New Year's Day Peace Hike that is tribally led is a heartfelt event. The remainder of the 27.34 acres is in an additional conservation easement to assure that the forested headland is not cut, and that wildlife is protected. This trail and its representation of historical truths has brought profound and positive effects on not only the residents and visitors, but also it has brought about a level of reconciliation among a previously divided people. Tribal members now come back to this area that once was one of great pain and sadness. Allowing the public to cross my property and use this trail for telling historical truths was not a generous act, but rather simply the right thing to do. I have never wavered in feeling good about sharing part of the property I steward with the public. But quite frankly, if the Recreational Immunity Act did not exist back in the 1990's, I wonder if my husband and I would have gone forward with this donation of an irrevocable trail, bridge, and Gathering Area easements. It is imperative that the recreational immunity act is maintained and even strengthened, or there will be no more recreational easements given by private landowners and more recreational opportunities of all kinds will be shut down. Thank you for reading my strong support to pass SB 179. Respectfully, Joanne Kittel