

GRAY WOLF TRAIL CREW NOTES

1/27/24

Location: Pyramid Peak, ONP

Crew members:

Rebecca Wanagel
Martin Knowles
Randy Kraxberger
Bernt Ericson
Eric Nagle
Josie Dean
Vern Bessey
Julie Metzger
Bill Mueller
LaVonne Mueller
Joe Grojean
Mike Bonomo

Estimated On-Trail Volunteer Hours: 60

Report written by Rebecca.

We all had a surreal and beautiful drive to the trailhead this morning. Lake Crescent was floating in and out of the fog. Rain was in the forecast, but we had hopes it wouldn't be heavy nor constant. Our hopes came true as we weren't bothered by the weather at all today. Off and on light rain, no wind and the temps were comfortable.

Objectives: (1) Clear an overhanging rootball and restore the tread at mp 2.5. (2) Continue brushing, tread work and raking on 1.75 miles below the slide (started in December).

Metrics achieved:

Length of trail that got attention: 2.5

Specifics:

1. Upper crew (Josie, Eric, Martin, Randy and Bernt) – first Bernt and Randy did a quick scuff with their hoes on the slide area to provide safer footing for the crew crossing with tools. Once the crew got to the overhanging rootball a little more than a steep half mile after the slide, it was cleared and the tread was restored.
2. Lower crew (Rebecca, Joe, Julie, Mike, Vern, Bill and LaVonne) – achieved one mile of brushing with kombi brushers, plus tread cleanup and raking and some re-benching. End result is there is only a 3/8-mile piece of trail below the slide that hasn't been maintained yet, so one more crew is needed.



This is where we first took another look at the slide, to re-assess it for safety. We decided it was okay to cross once Bernt and Randy did some quick work with the hoes.

Thank you, Josie, for this incredible picture!



Left: The team takes a look at the project. Backstory: In December when Randy and I were the saw team, we made that cut you can see in the picture but opted to leave it at that. We made it so hikers could get through without having to go up and around, but knew to do any more would need an entire crew for a day. That's why I scheduled us to go back up there, even though it's a 2.5-mile steep uphill hike to get there plus crossing the landslide.

Right: The team starts clearing the rootball to uncover any roots that might be holding it – also to make the job site safer for the sawyers who would have to cut the two trees still holding the wad.



Left: progress on the clearing. You can see a LOT of material has been removed, plus the tree in the foreground has started to become unearthed.

Right: Randy cutting the first of the two trees that needed to be cut. This one had to come first because of the direction the rootball was going to roll. This one was on the downhill side of the roll, with the other tree still holding the mass in place. So this was safe to do.



A great action shot of Randy at work! You can really see in this picture how much clearing the team had to do on both of the logs. The one in the foreground used to be buried but is now wide open.



Left: Nice cut! One more to go.

Right: I heard later that watching the rootball roll was super fun for the crew. They look pretty nonchalant here. Preparing for tread restoration.



Second log was cut, the rootball rolled and the tread was restored! Can you believe this is the same spot??



Down below the slide, I was a baaaaad crew leader and had tucked my phone into my pack to keep it dry ... and never pulled it out for pictures! Therefore, I did not get before and after pictures of the brushing and tread cleanup! Sad me. Joe, the new guy, was working the kombi brusher for hours while I was furiously raking behind him, trimming overhanging branches, moving packs ... I had to work extremely hard to keep up with him! I regret not getting a picture so I could introduce our new crew member, so Joe will have to come back to be properly introduced. Fortunately, Julie, who was working hard below us (and above Vern, Mike, Bill and LaVonne) snapped some pictures of the tread work and raking that they took care of. Julie, thank you for always remembering to get pictures when I fail in that department. Your work is stellar! Down below that, the lowest crew had done remarkable tread repair, brushing and raking. The trail looked absolutely beautiful, even through the jackstraw area that we had cut the day before (see previous summary report).



Another great Josie shot. Gotta just LOVE the Olympic National Park!