

GRAYWOLF / BCHW-PENINSULA TRAIL CREW NOTES

Friday June 27 (scout) – Saturday June 28 (work day), 2025

Location: Upper S. Fork Skokomish Trail, ONF

Crew members:

Rebecca Wanagel

Martin Knowles

Bernt Ericson

Elizabeth Storm

Total volunteer hours: 46

Report written by Rebecca.

Objectives achieved:

1. Scouted to main project area and beyond to Start Up Creek to see the work at hand (actually, we went all the way to Sundown Pass, another 3 miles past Start Up Creek, but that was for a hike – the scouting for this particular work crew stopped at the creek).
2. Analyzed, planned and conducted a repair to a major tree-fall that had obliterated the trail at mile 1.5.
3. Logged out from trailhead to Start Up Creek, which is at about mile 4.8.

Main project:

Two crew members, Bernt Ericson and Randy Kraxberger, worked on this trail during our LeBar regional work crew in early May. They discovered that a 6+' diameter doug fir had fallen sometime after we scouted the work on this trail. This huge tree fell essentially parallel to the trail (but right above it) and sometimes actually on the trail (the tree is straight but the trail curves). When it came down it brought down another tree, also parallel but just below it. This tree's rootball was blocking the trail in addition to the big mess of branches. The trail was somewhere underneath all that. At that time Bernt and Randy took a couple hours with handsaws to make it so people could get through until a better fix could be made.

Logout:

We knew there were a few more downed trees from the main project to the 3-mile mark (second crossing of the Skok). On our scout, we found that there were also more downed trees beyond the second crossing, which is a ford. We decided it was realistic to log out to Start Up Creek in a day, but not beyond. The last log before Start Up Creek was at mile 4.5 so the logout crew had a 9-mile saw and equipment carrying hike.

The crew was originally bigger, but when we scouted this on Friday the 27th we realized two things:

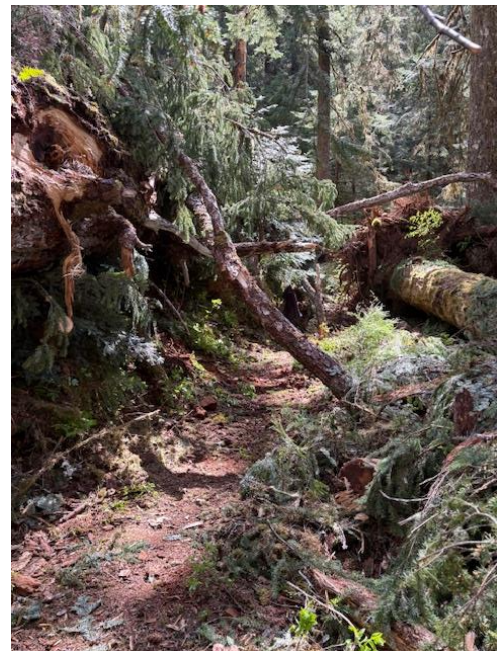
1. The main project area was too tight to have a large crew. With a chainsaw running, branches being tossed, etc, we wanted to keep the work area safe by making it a smaller group.
2. The logout would require folks to hike 9 miles round trip, including a river ford, which not everyone wants to do.

Therefore, I messaged this information to the crew and asked folks to decide if they still wanted to participate. This resulted in a smaller crew than originally planned. We had 2 on the main project and 2 for the logout, both of which turned out to be perfect.

MAIN PROJECT



These pictures are taken looking downtrail. The big slab in the background is the remnant of this enormous doug fir getting ripped off by – I presume – wind. In the left picture, the tree that is by Bernt's left arm is the one that got knocked down by the big fir. It is below the trail (Bernt is standing on the trail) but its rootball is partially blocking. These pictures were taken immediately upon finding the project, before Bernt and Randy did some triage brushing to let people through.

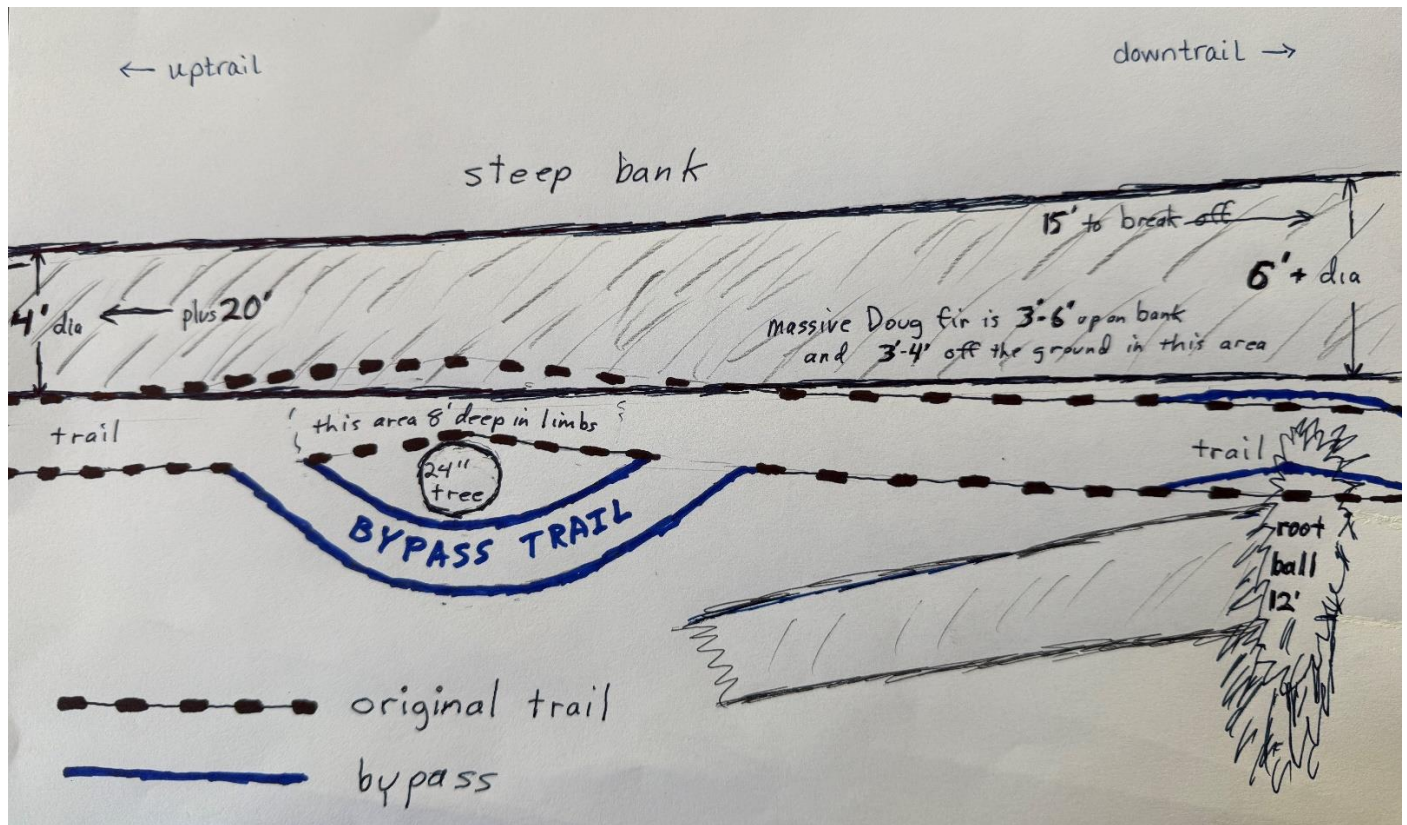


Both of these pictures are after some triage brushing had been done. You can see the enormous number of branches cut and tossed to the right side of the picture.

Left: looking downtrail you can see the big fir landed right next to a 24" live tree, which is where the trail used to run. You can see from the trail in the foreground that it went to the left of that live tree.

Right: Looking downtrail. This shows the rootball of the smaller tree partially blocking the trail.

Bernt and Martin were the crew that worked on this mess. We didn't manage to get any after pictures, but we have something even better! A sketch! 😊



(sketch credit to Martin Knowles)

The plan, designed and conducted by Bernt and Martin:

It was deemed impractical to try and cut out the large fir for many reasons, including the fact that if they cut it downtrail of the live tree, about 40' of the largest part would roll directly onto the trail corridor. Once that happened, it would take a couple days and many gallons of gas to cut out enough rounds to open the trail back up. And that would be assuming we could move the rounds or find a place to put them. Though we had come prepared with a large saw and lots of gas, we ended up not needing all that because a better, more realistic plan was made.

They cleared all the limbs and built a durable bypass trail, also trimming the rootball and re-establishing tread at that spot. The bypass trail was not as straightforward as it might sound: the terrain was dropping away below that 24" live tree. The team worked to heavily armor and shore up the edge, and then pulled fill material out of the rootball to build it up.

MEANWHILE ... the girls were off doing a logout! This team was Elizabeth and Rebecca, slaying logs and moving rounds! Carrying saws and equipment, we had to hike 9 miles and do a river ford twice to make this happen. We had a great time.

