



Gray Wolf Trail Crew - in partnership with - BCHW, Peninsula Chapter



West Elwha, ONP

Feb 21 and March 4, 2026

Report by Rebecca Wanagel

Crew members

Rebecca Wanagel (2/21 + 3/4) Eric Nagle (2/21)
Martin Knowles (2/21 + 3/4) Bernt Ericson (2/21)
Tim Branham (2/21 + 3/4) Paul Kamps (2/21)
Randy Kraxberger (2/21) Barbara Maxwell (2/21)

Quick Stats

Working volunteer hours: 57
Hours including travel time: 76
Miles worked: one 40-foot area
Trail rating: hiker / stock
Bobbie's cinnamon rolls
consumed: One Large Pan

Objective:

Dismantle materials currently in place and replace with a rock-filled turnpike with curb logs. Location: approximately 2.5 from Herrick Rd trailhead.

Achieved:

Turnpike installed.

Future work at this location:

Turnpike needs more fill (see story below).

Saturday, February 21

The 8-person crew hiked 2.5 miles to get to the work zone. The tasks then were:

1. Dismantle what was there.
2. Make a plan as a team for the new structure.
3. Bring in as many rocks as possible from above and below the site.
4. Dig a major drainage channel alongside the rootball that is trapping all the water.
5. Dig a ditch alongside the hill on the uphill side of the turnpike.
6. Cut, peel, transport, place and support curb logs to hold turnpike in place.
7. Fill with larger rocks at the bottom, working up to smaller rocks.
8. Fill with better dirt from nearby - all the dirt at the site is clay.



Very Muddy! The entire work zone started muddy and slippery and got worse as hundreds of footsteps made the saturated clay soil more and more slick.





Done for today, time to get back to the trailhead and cinnamon rolls before the incoming heavy rains.

The plan we made was slightly different than what I originally envisioned. Originally I was thinking of running two rock-lined culverts straight through the turnpike - which would have allowed us to use the back hillside as the uphill block for the turnpike. We changed to making one culvert and then a ditch alongside the turnpike (allowing the rest of the water to drain off below rather than through the turnpike). That meant we would need a curb log on that side as well.

We didn't have time on the first day to install the curb log on this side. Three of us went back on March 4 to finish.

Wednesday, March 4

Tim, Martin and Rebecca manage to pick an EXTREMELY RAINY DAY to go back for the finish work.



We entered from Madison Falls this time, using bikes to get to Altaire. So we tried the new Trailboss packable tools that we bought with donation money. Those break down and easily pack in your backpack to the job site. We found them to be ... AMAZING.

We moved a few rocks up out of the way and widened the ditch to allow for another curb log. Found a log, peeled, placed and staked it.



Finished!

Except

It was absolutely pouring this day. We had brought bags with the intention of bringing in more fill dirt from above the site since our other fill had a chance to settle. We wanted to mound it more.

However ...

The clay soil in the nearby tread was so wet and slippery that we couldn't bring in more fill without taking a fall and making more of a mess of the trail.



Therefore, we left it like this for now - needing more fill on top. Tim says he runs this trail a lot and is happy to bring a bag and shovel on a few of his runs to add more fill ... when it has had a chance to dry out! What is currently there will dry and, remember, underneath that dirt is all rock - which is allowing the water to drain. It just looks like this now because of the deluge currently underway and the fact that we walked all over it.