



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



ONF: Slab Camp and Graywolf trails

March 21, 2026

Report by Rebecca Wanagel

Crew members

David Graves

Paul Kamps

Martin Knowles

Randy Kraxberger

Rebecca Wanagel

Quick Stats

On-trail volunteer hours: 40

Hours including travel time: 55

Miles worked: 5

Miles hiked down, up, down and back up: 10

Trail rating: hiker / stock

crosscut saw logout

trees cut: approx 25

Objective:

1. Clear downed trees from Slab Camp trailhead down to and along the Graywolf trail to the ONP boundary.

Achieved:

1. Cleared trees from Slab Camp trailhead to about Slide Camp on the Graywolf (that's the jog in the blue trail in the map below). There is approximately another ¾ mile to the boundary that we did not get to on this trip.

Future work:

1. Clear the rest of the Graywolf to the ONP boundary. Possibly include this with the Deer Ridge work, making it into a long loop.
2. Clear a couple more trees on Slab Camp trail that we didn't have time to get to but that are not blocking (one is way overhead but has dozens of branches sticking down to horse rider head height).
3. Fix the tread about 2 miles down on Slab Camp where a fallen tree's rootball tore a hole in the tread.
4. Address drainage all along Slab Camp trail.
5. Tread / drainage as needed on Upper Graywolf.



Worked March 21
will be continued later this season

Yellow: Slab Camp

Blue: Upper Graywolf (part ONF, part ONP)

Worked last September

Green: Continuation of ONP Upper Graywolf that goes over GW Pass and down to the Dosewallips (also worked 1.7 miles east on the blue trail to the ONP boundary).

Red: Three Forks (Deer Park down to Grand Creek, Cameron Creek and Graywolf River)

Will be worked later this season

Brown: Deer Ridge

Yellow, Blue, Red and Brown make a wonderful loop hike!

> 18ish miles and a lot of elevation gain / loss

> Stunning, panoramic high-altitude views up on Deer Ridge and the upper reaches of Three Forks

> Majestic joining of three major creeks / rivers (Grand, Cameron and Graywolf)

> Lush, moss-covered river trail

Elevations:

Slab Camp / Deer Ridge trailhead - 2537

Slab Camp / Graywolf bridge - 1413

Our turnaround point for the day - 2253

Three Forks junction with GW - 2119

Three Forks junction with Deer Ridge - 5374

Why are we using crosscut saws?
Because we wanted a good workout! (kidding, though that is a side benefit)

Each land manager has a different interpretation of "minimal tool use" as outlined in the Wilderness Act of 1964.
Here are the guidelines we follow:

- Olympic National Forest, non-wilderness - chainsaw allowed
- Olympic National Forest, wilderness - crosscut only
- Olympic National Park - chainsaw allowed



Before picture of our main project on Graywolf trail.



Getting started by single bucking with the smaller of the saws that we brought. (the guys with the bigger saw were finishing up an earlier project)



Working on two cuts at once, something you can do with crosscut saws because the cuts take a while on a tree of this size.



Starting on the second log.



A team working on each tree.



We really didn't have any unexpected difficulties to this project, other than the hillside (and the trail) in this area is wet clay. Extremely slippery. This made safe footing a challenge.



This one was completely rotten and waterlogged. We had to do a combination of sawing and breaking it apart.



Finished! Ideally, and with chainsaws, we would have taken off a few more chunks on the foreground tree. The reason we left it like that is it is passable, and if we took off another chunk, the whole thing would have rolled into the trail. Sometime we will get rid of the rest of it, but today it was hugely better and we had miles to cover.



This tree had severe bottom bind due to the weight of that suspended rootball. It was also suspended down below to the right after it went off the trail.



This one wasn't large, but it was fully suspended down below to the left off the trail. It started cracking and popping almost right away because of the weight of the tree down below. Once released, the piece to the left sprang up and AWAY from the sawyer (predicted, that's why I'm cutting from where I am and angling it to let the piece go in that direction) and then slid way down off the trail in a split second.

Hey, final fun note! Here is a quote from a WTA trip report posted by a hiker that went through while we were working on the big tree project:

"The trail up the Gray Wolf was much more challenging, but thank god for the Gray Wolf trail crew bucking 2.5 foot diameter blowdowns with hand saws! Impressive teamwork."

