

Gray Wolf Trail Crew
Its Origins 2007-2011
by Rod Farlee

Gray Wolf Trail Crew was started in 2007 by Don Stoneman, at the request of Christine Peterson, then Trail Coordinator for Hood Canal Ranger District of Olympic National Forest. Christine knew that many hikers like to get out early in the spring, as soon as low elevation trails became snow-free, but were hampered by winter storm damage. And she knew WTA work parties have to be scheduled weeks in advance, so were often cancelled or postponed due to changeable spring weather. She asked Don to gather local trail volunteers whenever a nice spring day presented the opportunity.

Among the friends joining Don Stoneman to form Gray Wolf Trail Crew were Don Abbott, Neil and Lisa Turnberg, Rod Farlee, Rik Scairpon, Mace White, John Boles, Wayne and Peggy Siscoe, Mark Clark, Daniel Collins, Scott Metzler and Ron Frisch. Initially focused on National Forest trails in the Dungeness and Quilcene drainages, we also reopened the Little River and Cox Valley Trails in Olympic National Park.

Don's expertise in rigging and wood working enabled us to replace missing footlogs across Heather Creek, Sleepy Hollow, Gold Creek and several footbridges, puncheons and crib walls on the Gray Wolf and Dungeness Trails, all in Olympic National Forest, the 120-foot Barnes Creek footbridge in Olympic National Park, and Phantom Creek and other footbridges on the Maple Valley and Steam Donkey Loop Trails in Dosewallips State Park. In each of these projects, Don patiently mentored us in regaining all-but-forgotten backcountry skills with rigging, handsaw, adze, drawknife, auger and sledge. The high point for Don was reopening the Gray Wolf Pass Trail and revisiting Cedar Lake in Olympic National Park.

Don Stoneman received the 2010 Clallam County Community Service Award in recognition of the Gray Wolf Trail Crew.



Photo: Don Stoneman at Cedar Lake, 2009.



Photo: Don Stoneman with Jennifer Fujii on the newly completed Sleepy Hollow footlog, Gold Creek Trail, 2010.

