

## TRAIL CREW NOTES

1/28/2023

Start time: 8:30 am

End time: 2:30 pm

(6 hours)

Location: Striped Peak's Bunker Ridge Trail, DNR

Crew members:

Rebecca Wanagel

Martin Knowles

Mike Bonomo

Bill Mueller

LaVonne Mueller

Vern Bessey

Eric Nagle

Randy Kraxberger

Kevin Reding

Lisa Turnberg

Neil Turnberg

John Wegmann

Unreal. The weather. Unreal. What an amazing day just to be outside, never mind the views, the lovely trail and an enjoyable group of people. Our goal was to do maintenance on our recently-built trail, now called Bunker Ridge. My crews, when I was with WTA, built that trail over 3 years (about 80ish work crew days, including scouting and flagging early on). We are proud of what we built and yesterday, the point was really driven home. Build it right and it's light maintenance from then on. We had a rather light work day, but if we do that every once in a while, this trail will always stay sustainably great. We laid eyes and boots on approximately 2.6 miles of trail, even though some of it was just walking past, watching for any trouble spots.

For those of you who don't know, we have a fan club. When we were building this trail, I would get an email after every single work crew, thanking us for our hard work. They live close to the trail and hike it – literally – every single day. They noticed our work immediately this morning on their daily hike. One of the fan club members has balance issues and used to have trouble with one of our corners – it apparently sloped outward when rounding the corner to the right going uphill. I still can't quite picture where it was, but someone in our crew (had to be Randy or John because of her description of where it was) tended that corner and it was raved about in the email I got this morning. Folks, we have made a trail that someone can enjoy, even with limitations to their mobility making more rugged trails too difficult.

Another thing you don't know ... apparently the strength of our joy being out there is enough to knock trees down. This isn't the first time trees have fallen on our trail literally hours after we left it. It happened again. A couple of trees fell down in some wind that came up last night. They fell in an area most of the crew did not see yesterday, but Randy and John would have gone right through there. (for

those of you in the know, it was in the area where we used to access our trail via that little side trail off the road near the bottom). Hilarious. Anyway, Ed the DNR warden who we know and love (and who built the bench and table in the “coffee shop”), apparently got right on that and cut them out for us. He loves our trail and he’s just a great guy.

Thanks for a super great day. I’ll do better next time at communicating about meeting places – we had a couple mix-ups.

#### Accomplishments:

1. Fixed a dangerous hole at the west edge of the clear cut, right as you enter what we used to call Hidden Valley (all names were gifted to us by our fan club).
2. Checked and worked the tread where necessary through Hidden Valley and along the old spur road.
3. Worked the tread going up what we used to call “Bunker Hill” all the way to the hairpin turn where the actual bunker is. That  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile section was finished long enough ago that the edges were starting to slough and some salal was starting to grow into the trail. Some places were barely wide enough to begin with so the tread is much better now. We also raked and that is an important job! It’s so important to get the organics off the trail, it increases sustainability by a long shot. I should have had us out there with leaf blowers last fall.
4. Worked the summit trail, fixing tread and holes and raking.
5. Built a rock structure to widen the trail in a spot that goes by rock – bikes were veering away from the rock and off the side of the trail. In the fall when we go back for leaf removal, we could borrow DNR’s generator powered rock hammer to chip that corner back further. For now, it’s much better.
6. Below the bunker: trimmed a tree back further off a corner and cleaned the mess out of the drainage that keeps that switchback high and dry.
7. Cut out a few small leaners along the trail heading back down towards Salt Creek. Did other miscellaneous tread work along the way.

#### More work to do:

1. I think Bunker Ridge trail and its companion Summit Trail are good for now. We’ll revisit in the late fall and run a leaf blower along the whole trail and beat back that rock corner.
2. The main (original) trail could use some attention. We could visit that in the fall as well.