

Monthly Trail Report for the Board and Membership
Report written by Rebecca Wanagel
August 2025

Jim and Donna Hollatz, DNR and State

Robin Hill:

July 15th, 28th, and August 2nd: We had a great work party at Robin Hill on Tuesday, July 15th, organized by Tom Mix (note: Tom's report with pictures is attached). The goal was to add a turnpike to mitigate a muddy spot, and then add about 20 yards of gravel to sections of the trail that needed hardening. About 8 members of the Thursday crew turned out to help with the work. Jim Hollatz brought the chapter tote, Tom Mix borrowed the Peninsula Trails tote (operated by Larry Sammons), and one of the County employees (John) used the county tractor to haul gravel for us, too. Logs had previously been placed for the turnpike. Ground cloth was put down between the turnpike logs, then a 6" layer of large rocks (4-5 inches) were placed on that cloth. The large rock was covered with another layer of ground cloth, then a 6" layer of 5/8 minus gravel was placed over that cloth. That allows the water to move across the trail area through the large rock without clogging it up with mud from above. It required many loads of rock and gravel with a team of 4 or 5 people helping spread the gravel once it was delivered to the work area. Most of this part of the work was finished by noon. Then the smaller gravel was hauled and dumped along the trail where it was needed most, and spread with rakes and mcleods. While part of the crew worked on this gravel, 3 or 4 others worked on repairing tread and fixing some spots for water drainage. After working for about 6 hours, we called it a day, but still had several yards of gravel left to haul and spread.

A smaller crew (Tom, Jim & Donna, LaVonne & Bill, and Jack Bochsler) returned to Robin Hill on July 28th to do more work. The County tractor operator helped by hauling more gravel and Jim hauled some of the large rock with the chapter tote. We reinforced the edges of the switchback with large rock and dug drainage along the sides of the switchback trail section. Additional gravel was hauled and spread on both sections of trail near the large culvert "bridge" to keep it from becoming muddy in the winter. This should be all the work this trail needs for this year.

On August 2nd, Tom, Jim & Donna, and Rick and Suzanne King worked for a couple of hours to clean up the site where the gravel had been stockpiled for the trail work. A local neighbor has allowed us to use his property near the private north gate to do this work, so we wanted to leave the area as smooth as possible so he can mow the grass. We really appreciate his neighborly cooperation in helping us complete this trail work.

Miller Peninsula:

Trees always seem to be falling across the trails at Miller. Wind is not needed. Dead trees just fall and block the trails! July 17th, Jim and Donna took horses and a chainsaw to remove a log that Tom Mix had reported was preventing horses from reaching the Beach. While we were there, Jim cut out two other trees that had been "hanging" above the trail for a couple of years. They just kept sagging lower, so we knew they had to come out, even though they weren't yet blocking! Then, we took a pleasure ride to the Beach on July 30th and found a driftwood piece that was crowding the trail at the entrance to the Beach. Since we carry a small pack saw, Jim was able to cut it off by hand, making the beach entrance much safer for horses and riders. Tom Mix cut out a couple more offending trees (one on W. Diamond Point and some on Yarrow) during a trip with his pack mule on August 3rd. We are aware of a large alder across the Bluff Trail where it meets the trail that goes up from the beach, but we didn't have a big enough saw to get that one on July 30th. There will be another chainsaw ride soon!

Bill Mueller, OAT Trail (Thursday Trail Crew) and NOLT

Nothing new to report since July's work was alluded to in my last report.

Rebecca Wanagel, Gray Wolf Trail Crew, ONF, ONP, Saw Program and Safety

OLYMPIC NATIONAL FOREST

7/20:

Lower Dungeness

David Graves led another crew on this trail to repair the work that was done by the NWYC group. They are young and, therefore, the quality of work will naturally vary from group to group. This year's group wasn't the smashing success that I reported from last year, so there was work needed to take apart and rebuild what they had done. Report attached.

OLYMPIC NATIONAL PARK

7/30:

Heart of the Forest

Martin and Rebecca went with John Wegmann onto this trail again to remove a 52" diameter overhead tree that's been there for many years but was sagging lower and lower. This was near the end of the trail. Once that tree was removed, we nipped back other previously-cut trees that were encroaching on our way back to the trailhead. At the trailhead we took out one more newly-fallen tree.

8/6:

Olympic National Park had a volunteer appreciation dinner that some of us attended.

8/9:

We will be starting our next backcountry crew (6 days) which was supposed to be Wynoochee Pass / Graves Creek and Sundown Lake trails. Some of that area has now been closed down due to the devastating Bear Gulch fire that is currently burning in the N. Fork Skokomish area (as I type this report, the fire is reported to be up to about 5,600 acres). I had to make a fast switch to another needy trail, which is Appleton Pass and Boulder Lake trails, also in the ONP. I also managed to get us stock support for this one from the Tullers again. We are grateful for their quick response and willingness to help!

SAW PROGRAM

July 25: Martin Knowles and Rebecca Wanagel spent the day with Rick King, Jeff Chapman and Bob Hoyle to conduct saw re-certifications for them. It was a safe and successful day up on Howard Heights where there were projects of just the right complexity for what we were trying to achieve that day.

SAFETY

Nothing new to report

Please remember the Gray Wolf Trail Crew and BCHW-Peninsula have a solid partnership. Anyone can sign up for a work crew.

Gray Wolf Trail Crew website:

www.graywolftailcrew.org