

Monthly Trail Report for the Board and Membership
Peninsula Chapter and Gray Wolf Trail Crew
Report written by Rebecca Wanagel
September 2026

Donna and Bill's reports include the description of the work. Rebecca's reports are via attached narrative summaries with pictures.

Jim and Donna Hollatz, DNR and State

Miller Peninsula and Clallam County Trails

8/28/2026

Donna, Heather Hamilton, and Stephanie Robinson led a trail ride at Dungeness Trails on August 28th with County Commissioner Mike French and his wife to give them an "equestrian view" of what it is like to ride in that County park. It was a very successful outing, but we are aware that some trail brushing needs to be done in some areas. We will organize some work parties once the fire danger is over. Running brushing equipment is too likely to cause sparks from rocks, so needs to be postponed until after some heavy rains.

9/08/2026

We had reports of a blocking tree on the Bluff Trail, so we rode in from a parking spot along Fireweed Road with 2 horses and a pack horse for the chainsaw and tools. Rode the Beach Trail to be sure it was open, then rode all of Bluff Trail looking for the offending log, and only found one 12" tree on the ground to cut out. We knew of another tree across Manzanita, as we had encountered it on a pleasure ride on 9/5/26, so rode that trail and removed the 10" blocking tree. (Turns out, our intel source had mis-identified the trail in her report.) As far as we know, all trails are clear at Miller Peninsula. There have been reports of ground bees on some trails, but we did not encounter any. (Our total trail miles that day were 9.3)

Call or text Donna Hollatz (360-808-3965) if you want to help us.

Bill Mueller, OAT Trail (Thursday Trail Crew)

Thursday Trail Crew

The first couple of weeks for the crew was business as usual on the OAT.

August 13 and 20

For these two workdays in August, the trail crew performed major rehab on the "horse" trail from the intersection to Onella Road north of HWY 112. The tread was widened, drainage was improved, the corridor was widened to stock standards, and encroaching trees and brush was cut. The end result was a nice trail that readily qualifies as a hiker trail as well. Local residents do use it for walking/hiking.

August 27

Typical work on the OAT. Around MP 13, tread widening, brushing and rehab of drainage. A new trailside table was put together and placed after an old, failed table was dismantled and removed.

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

OLYMPIC NATIONAL PARK

8/15

Little River trail, logout. See attached report.

9/12

West Elwha trail, puncheon removal. See attached report.

OLYMPIC NATIONAL FOREST

8/22

Kloshe Nanitch and Snider Ridge trails. Logout and narrow trail repair for stock. See attached report.

9/1

Slab Camp trail, removal of one cedar that was impeding stock access. See attached report.

Please remember the Gray Wolf Trail Crew is a program within BCHW-Peninsula. Anyone can sign up for a work crew.

Gray Wolf Trail Crew website: www.graywolftailcrew.org



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

Little River trail, ONP

August 15, 2026

Report by Rebecca Wanagel



Crew members

Martin Knowles

Kristie Kocurek

Rebecca Wanagel

Quick Stats

On-trail volunteer hours: 29

Miles worked: 3.5

Trail rating: hiker

Objective: Log out the top half of Little River trail. Bottom half already done by us earlier in the season.

Future work: There are a few more logs to clear. Also, a tree tipped over taking the tread with it, right above the fifth footlog. Make a "good enough" trail around the rootball or find some way to get a grip hoist to the site.

Today's task was to log out the top half of Little River trail, as we had already done the bottom half over several trips. I consider the top half to be from the fifth footlog up. That's where the trail gets extremely steep. As a result of this steepness, like we've done before, we got a ride to Hurricane Hill and worked the trail from top to bottom.

We cleared the entire top half until just above the footlog. There, we had to leave a couple of projects directly above the footlog and not far below it (2 new ones had come down in the place we had recently cleared) due to a saw malfunction. The trigger mechanism on the Stihl 400 failed on us. The saw is not very old, so that was disappointing. Fortunately it was at such a time that we really needed to pack up and do the long hike out anyway.





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

Kloshe Nanitch and Snider Ridge Trails, ONF

August 21-22, 2026

Report by Rebecca Wanagel



Crew members

David Graves
Joanne Graves
Martin Knowles
Kristie Kocurek
Randy Kraxberger
Deni Lojko
Bill Mueller
LaVonne Mueller
Eric Nagle
Elizabeth Storm
Mark Subbotin
Rebecca Wanagel

Quick Stats

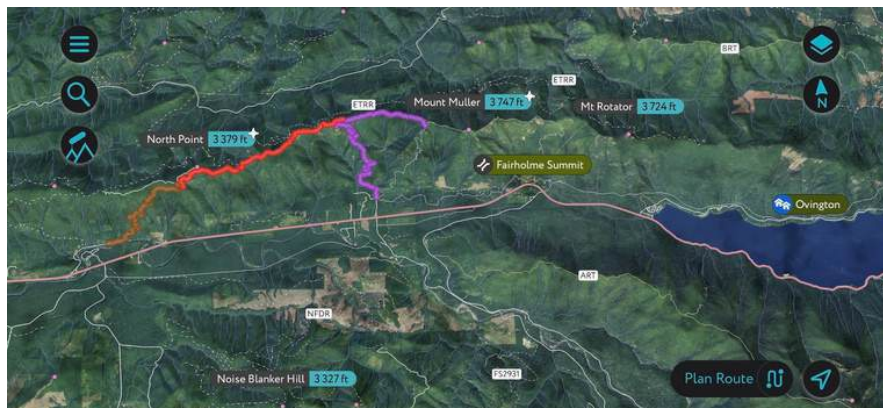
On-trail volunteer hours: 78
Hours including travel time: 131
Miles worked: 7.5
Trail rating: hiker / stock

Objectives:

1. Kloshe Nanitch
 - a. logout
 - b. tread repair where necessary
 - c. cut back branches and old cuts to ensure stock standards are met
 - d. address a section at 2.9 miles where a large tree was bulging into the trail, narrowing it to where it was a hazard to equestrians.
2. Snider Ridge
 - a. logout
 - b. repair tread where necessary due to mountain beaver damage (common on this trail system)
 - c. continued mitigation of firs growing into the trail
3. Lookout Loop (this is a loop at the top, basically that connects Kloshe Nanitch to Snider Ridge)
 - a. brush the sections that need it
 - b. clean up the debris
 - c. rebench tread as necessary

Achieved: All above objectives achieved.

Future work: Kloshe Nanitch needs some rock bashing and more tread work. That will be addressed early in the 2027 season.



Kloshe Nanitch
Snider Ridge
Mt. Muller

This is the trail system easily accessible from Littleton Horse Camp. Great for hikers, horse riders and the Mt. Muller loop is for bikers as well. All trailheads are located not far west of Lake Crescent, shown in the map above.

Kloshe Nanitch: narrow tread mitigation
Kristie, Elizabeth, Eric, Martin



Horses were stepping down off the trail onto that extremely steep slope. Martin expertly felled the tree (approval granted by ONF) and the plan was to remove the stump. That proved impossible. They went to Plan B: cut the stump way down and back, then put in a curb log and fill with rock and mineral soil to widen / reinforce the tread which had gotten damaged when the butt of the falling tree hit it.



Here is the final product! It's now safe for horse riders. The stump has been cut down and back to the point that there is enough room. We might go back in next season and take a little more off. There was gravel, oddly, **inside** the stump which ruined 4 chains.

Kloshe Nanitch: logout, stock corridor, tread maintenance
David and Joanne tackled this trail on Friday, Aug 21.



It's important to pay attention to detail on trails. Old cuts and branches sticking into the trail like this aren't often noticed by hikers, but definitely noticeable by horse riders.

Lookout Loop: brushing and tread work.
Bill, LaVonne, Rebecca

These are basically the connecting trails between Kloshe Nanitch and Snider Ridge and the 3040 road.

We didn't manage to get any pictures of ourselves. But we did manage to get this section of the trail system brushed, which some parts needed very badly. We cleaned up the debris and did tread rebenching where necessary.

Snider Ridge: logout, tread repair, fir tree encroachment mitigation.
Deni, Mark, Randy



About 16 logs were cleared along the 3 mile ridge trail.

A great before and after shot of what the encroaching fir trees do to the trail. If we get them when they are young, most can simply be pulled (but there are a LOT of them!). Along the route many branches were cut back as well.

**With this work, plus the two days we put into Snider Ridge a year ago, plus the clearing of Mt. Muller earlier this season - this entire trail system is in great shape. There are a few areas on Kloshe Nanitch that need some tread work and rock crushing, so ride and hike that with care until we get to it next season.
Enjoy!**



Gray Wolf Trail Crew

in partnership with

BCHW, Peninsula Chapter



Slab Camp Trail (#838), Olympic National Forest

1 September 2026

Crew members

Rebecca Wanagel

Martin Knowles

David Graves

Quick Stats

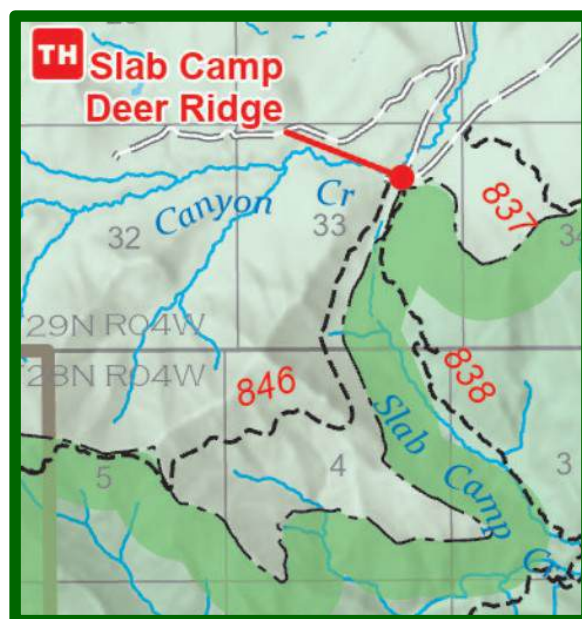
On-trail volunteer hours: 15

Hours including travel time: 20

Miles worked: 0.1 miles

Total miles hiked: 5.2 miles

Trail standards: Hiker / Stock



Objectives:

- Remove, if feasible, ~80ft fallen cedar leaning over trail with branches down into trail corridor.

Achieved:

The cedar, which fell a few years back, has been a continuing impediment as it has kept sagging. While the trunk was well above the trail corridor, its long branches hung down into the trail. The branches would get cut back repeatedly when they got in the way but this was time-consuming and it was impossible to cut them to stock corridor standards.





The tree had been left alone because its trunk was pivoted high up on the steep opposite side of Slab creek. Several other trees had also fallen just under or on top of the cedar so there were numerous complicating factors. In the left photo, you can barely see the top of the cedar's trunk. In the right photo, the cedar is completely hidden.

After climbing over and above the mess (which again, was at the midpoint of the cedar's length), the crew decided on a plan to remove 1) the complicating factors, and 2) the cedar itself.



First, from the trail, we cut the tree lying under the cedar so that when we cut the cedar, it would fall far enough to be removable. Next, we cut the log just



uphill of the first log; this log was resting on the cedar. It pivoted clear.



Finally, we cut away the blocking wood up top and then the cedar itself which, as expected,

quickly split and dropped the top to the ground.



The final tasks were just to cut off all the branches intruding into the trail and to remove the top portion of the trunk that was in the trail corridor.



Tasks remaining: None this year. Brushing upper trail in 2027.

David Graves, 1 September 2026



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



West Elwha Trail, ONP
Puncheon removal project
September 12, 2026
Report by Rebecca Wanagel

Crew members

Jack Bochsler
Kellie Creamer
Mike Forsyth
Martin Knowles
Grey Mercer
Eric Nagle
Bear Percy
Cricket Pomeroy
Gwen Scott
Mark Subbotin
Rebecca Wanagel

Quick Stats

On-trail volunteer hours: 55
(includes getting to the job site from the trailhead)
Hours including travel time: 83
Length of puncheon dismantled: 84 ft
Trail rating: hiker / stock

Objectives:

1. Dismantle and properly dispose of extremely old, rotten puncheon - 84 feet.
2. Touch up the tread on the reroute we built in May, if necessary.

Achieved:

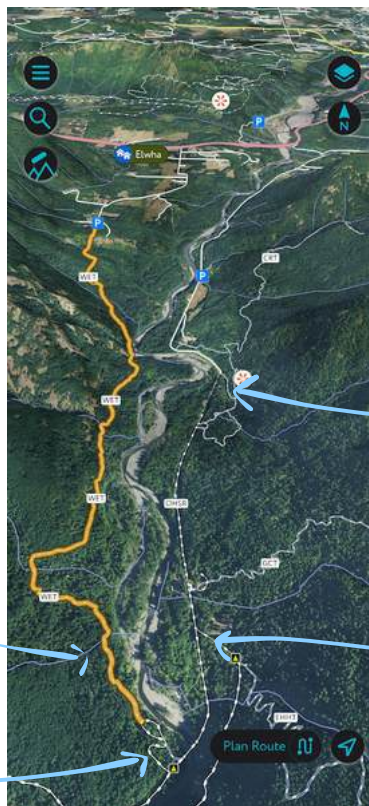
1. Puncheon was successfully torn apart, fasteners all removed, wood tossed randomly into the surroundings (out of view).
2. Tread touchup not needed! We examined the tread we built in May and it had hardened up over the summer very nicely. It was in great shape!

You've read about us working on the West Elwha Trail many times before. This project was just under a half mile uptrail from the old Altaire campground.

Some of us used our bikes on the old Olympic Hotsprings road, pushing them over the rough bypass trail, and then parked them at Altaire to hike to the site. Some walked the whole way.

Approximate site location.

Old Altaire Campground.



Madison Falls parking.

Olympic Hotsprings Road



We start by putting aside the brush we had thrown over it back in May so people would start using the new reroute. Then remove the bullrails and start the process of carrying everything with fasteners still attached over to the fastener removal department.



Why remove the fasteners? Because we would be tossing all the old wood to disperse it back to nature in the surrounding fern and salmonberry forest. There is no way we would leave these dangerous spikes sticking out for some poor unsuspecting chipmunk or other critter to injure themselves. None of the old wood was pressure treated - it will all decompose.



We were joking about what we might find under those planks that have been there for many decades. Money? Treasure? All we found was two old beer bottles, which we packed out.



Some of the wood was more awkward to carry.



Our West Elwha Trail Angel, Bobbie Stoneman, treated us again to a huge pan of homemade sweet rolls, coffee, tea and even milk or cocoa for our coffee! Bobbie hiked these treats in from the upper trailhead, 3 miles each way, and the rolls were still hot. This is such a treat for a hard working crew.



Bobbie took the time to teach Gwen how to set the axe at the edge in line with the spike, then turn the wood over, lift the plank and bring it down on the axe - it drives up and splits the old cedar to release the spike. That helped speed up the process!



We utilized many methods of getting the spikes out - depending on the size of the wood it was buried in. Axe. Sawzall. Splitting. Punching through ...

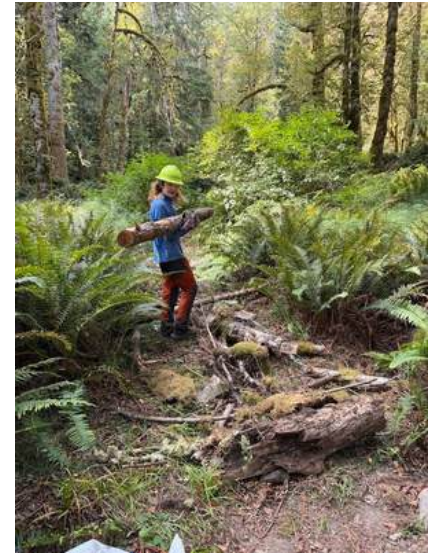


Our crew does not realize its own strength. We managed to break the head off the demo bar! So that made us switch to Plan B - made up on the spot. We would now cut one side of the planks with the battery chainsaw we had brought, and then wrench the plank off the other stringer. We could only do that because they were so rotten. Turns out this method was faster! Who knew?



That left blocks on top of the stringers on one side, which we were able to knock off with an axe and then pull out the spikes.





Once the puncheon was gone, we “decommissioned” the pathway it left behind. Meaning we threw a whole bunch of natural debris into the pathway. Ideally what it needs is for a few dozen ferns to be transplanted into the path. This was not the day for that, maybe over the winter.



What to do with these old spikes? Well, there was probably 50-60 pounds of them, so we didn't want to carry them out. I got a hold of the ONP packer, Heidi Brill, and she readily agreed to come in with a mule later this week to get them. I'm sure they will be recycled. For now we hid them behind a tree.

This crew was absolutely amazing. When we first started, I was thinking we might not even finish today and need to come back another day. I mean, really, 84 feet of old rotten puncheon? But no ... even with our sweet roll / coffee break AND the fact that we had to get to the jobsite from 3 miles away ... we were packing up to leave by 12:15!

A final note on puncheon

Puncheon (otherwise known as boardwalk by some) is supposed to be used only as a last resort when the terrain is simply too wet for anything else to work. Puncheon, or any wooden structure on a trail, requires maintenance and eventually it rots or gets broken by a falling tree (which happened to this one, multiple times). This puncheon had been rotten for so long that it was a hazard even to hikers, never mind the horses that simply could not use it. The reroute we did, which allowed us to get rid of this puncheon, turns this trail back into a stock trail. There are two more projects we will do, probably this winter, to mitigate semi-hazardous spots. But otherwise, the entire trail is open again to horse riders.

And what a lovely trail it is.