

Mount Hood Chapter, PCTA Caretaker Meeting Minutes

September 11, 2019, 6:45 pm

Location: Clackamas REI

Attended: Robert Caldwell, Thomas Calvery, Bill Canavan, Roberta Cobb, Ron Goodwin, Terry Hill, Peter Hoffman, Leif Hovin, Chris Keil, Diane Kelso, Kim Kovacs, Tim Lagasse, Susan McDonnell, Steve Plant, Steve Queen, Hilary Renshaw, David Roe, Tamara Sheets, Brooke Stevinson, Susan Tracy, Ruth Weston, Michele Wier

Notes: Kim Kovacs

Welcome

- **Absent:** Sue Melone (Boston)
- **Welcome:** None
- **Announcements**
 - Trail Status Report is for REPORTED work. Corrections only. When you submit your report, THEN it will get into the report. Put completed work that has not been reported on Unreported, Completed Work but extra page. Examine and update Notes column closely.
 - Send September admin hours to Steve instead of Libby.
 - Update the Trail Status Report ONLY with hours that have been reported.
 - Reminder that there are links that are at the bottom of the reminder email and the minutes.
[2019 Future Projects Columbia Cascade Region](#)
[2019 Project Reports](#)
[2019 Trail Status Report](#)
 - New trails in the chapter system
 - Wahtum Lake Trail 406H
 - Wahtum Express Trail 406J (Logout only)

Round the Room

- Steve Queen
 - Favorite report from Bill and Hilary: "Swore loudly at some Bear Grass hopefully causing it to blister and die before next year."
- Sue Melone (via email)
 - A HUGE welcome back to Kim! After barely holding it together as a note taker for our meeting for several months, I am really grateful that she is back and able to take notes. :) Yay!
 - I worked on an awesome one day, 14 mile, 23 log work day on the Herman Creek Trail with Roberta and Chris on 30 Aug. What a fantastic crew! Thank you for an awesome day.
 - I am coordinating with Nathaniel to review the failed log retaining wall on my section of the trail. I hope to have a solid repair plan together soon.
- Kayla Ondracek (via email)
 - I don't have anything to report for the last month as August was busier than I expected. I'm looking to hike some vacant caretaker sections over the next few weekends to see if there's anything that looks suitable for me to pick up. Also thinking about taking Friday off & joining Rob on the Upper Muddy Fork logout.
- Leif Hovin
 - August went by fast and September is cruising by as well. Hoping to focus on trails in the coming weeks.
- Chris Keil
 - Was on a very difficult logout on 8/30, from Wahtum Lake to the Herman Creek trailhead (14 miles). They ended up cutting out 23 logs, although they had to leave two fairly large ones. It was a long day; left at 6:00, got home at 10:00.
 - Steve mentioned that he thought the blowdown along the Paradise Park Trail had been taken care of; Chris said he hasn't been able to get up to this section of trail. He's heard that it's logged out, but the reports have been confusing and hasn't been confirmed. Susan Tracy said she'd had recent pictures from a friend that showed but a bit of blowdown, but that it was passable. Chris felt that there's no reason to believe the Forest Service hasn't logged out the trail, but that he needs to see it for himself.
- Roberta Cobb

- She was also on the 8/30 logout.
- She was the camp tender at Wahtum Lake with Hilary. It was fun, but she made too much food because two people dropped out.
- She originally thought Eagle Creek up to First Bridge would take three days; it took three weeks, but it's done.
- She worked at the Three Creeks crossing on Eagle Creek yesterday (9/10)
- In the burn area, PCTA has logged out all our trails. The Forest Service did Nick Eaton/Gorton Creek loop because they said they'd received a large number of Search & Rescue calls for the area. Roberta thought the issue was at the Hood River end of Nick Eaton, and after looking at the loop the Forest Service agreed. The problems begin near Deadwood Camp. Hood River was going to have a youth group work on it.
- Susan McDonnell scouted Ruckel Creek and can report on that.
- Roberta had an interview with the Oregonian that was widely reprinted. The article also quoted a Forest Service representative who thought Eagle Creek might open this fall.
- David Roe
 - No trail work in August
 - Assisted with a couple of late-season training courses for the Forest Service
- Ruth Weston
 - Nothing to report
- Robert Caldwell
 - He was on three Eagle Creek crews, including an overnigher with Susan. Yesterday's trail party worked at the water crossing at Upper Eagle Creek, reinforcing it to keep water off the trail (hopefully; we'll find out next spring).
 - He scouted his own trails. Two crews are scheduled for the Upper Muddy Fork, one a logout this Friday, and then another next Thursday.
 - He participated in PCT Days.
- Hilary Renshaw
 - She attended two overnighers at Wahtum but developed Achilles tendonitis, which limited her participation. During the first trip she had to sit the first day out and then cancel the second day. For the second overnight, Bill and Sway were there and had to do the work without her at Benson Plateau.
 - Hilary is officially retiring from being Caretaker of Benson Plateau. She'll continue to be a crew leader and will assist whoever takes over the section.
 - She's feeling better and hopes to be back on the trail soon.
- Bill Canavan
 - He received a note from Dana. She misses us. Her physical challenges continue; she can only be upright for 45 minutes at a time. She'll continue to be part-time only for the foreseeable future. Phone calls are easier for her to handle than emails.
 - He participated in an Urban Youth trail party. The youngest were fifth graders, the oldest was 22. They were at Timothy Lake from Road 58 to Road 42, a mostly downhill section.
 - He mentioned the work on Hilary's trail party. They had to re-dig several drain dips. They hadn't been maintained in a long time, and some had two feet of debris and duff in them.
 - We went with the Red Cross to Augusta, GA to help out with Hurricane Dorian, but there was no storm damage there so he returned after one week.
- Terry Hill
 - Enjoyed shooting photos at PCT days.
 - On 9/2, he "stepped into a time machine" at the Mountain Music Festival with "a lot of old hippies." "I felt unusually comfortable."
- Michele Wier
 - She was at a Phish concert in Colorado while Terry was at the music fest.
 - There will be a tabling event at the Mountain Shop grand opening on 10/5; it's fully staffed. Leif and Pace contributed that they're combining with OMC, merging the two shops together in the large building along I-84 (now blue instead of yellow). OMC will run an online-only business on the second floor, while the Mountain Shop will have their retail-only enterprise on the first floor.
 - The volunteer BBQ is also on the calendar. We should have received an email, and she'll continue sending reminders out every two weeks.
- Diane Kelso & Peter Hoffman
 - They've done nothing on their own section; they've been day hiking the length of the Timberline Trail.

- They also toured Bull Run with the Portland Water Bureau. It cost \$20 but was very worthwhile and highly recommended.
- Tim Lagasse
 - Nothing on his trails. Happy to see the rain.
- Ron Goodwin
 - Enjoyed working at PCT Days. He spoke with Liz, with whom he'd worked in 2003, taking out asphalt at Timberline. He recently visited it and it was in good shape – looks just like it did when they built it in 2003 except for a few scrapes from the groomers. Mary Ellen was the Forest Service person at the time. She was recently on the news telling people about putting out their camp fires. The horses haven't impacted the trail at Timberline. So it can be done in ash-type side-slope. The user trail still has a lot of people hiking it.
 - It seems as if every year the people from Sacramento attend PCT days are new, and this year was no exception. Except for Liz, who's been doing this for a long time.
- Tami Sheets
 - She hasn't worked on Sedum Ridge She sent an email to those who wanted to work but got zero response.
 - She was on the trail before the Three Corner Rock PCT 50K race last weekend and it was looking good. The race starts at Whistle Punk and does three loops to the bridge. She, Bill, and John had three crews up there to remove as much rock as possible from the trail pre-race, to keep the runners from getting injured.
- Susan Tracy
 - Participated in PCT days, directing people to the Crosscut demo.
 - She also worked with Susan McDonnell at Eagle Creek for two days.
 - She ended her job on 8/31 so has lots of free time.
 - Ron interjected that he's got a trail party going up to Barlow Pass tomorrow (9/12) but that it's only half full. Susan said that when she tried to register it was full.
 - Susan also wants to set up work parties for Table Mountain before the snow flies.
- Susan McDonnell
 - She circumnavigated Mt. Hood with her hiking partner – her son – and then drove him to Colorado & left him there.
 - She scouted Ruckel Creek with the Forest Service. The first half mile looked OK, but got progressively worse. The four switchbacks are completely gone; they're buried and can't be seen at all. There were lots of slides and they had to do a lot of scrambling. There's also a lot of poison oak up there now. In sections where the trail is undamaged, the grass is covering it, making it very slippery and dangerous. The trail is OK along its last half mile, but it's hard to see because of bark sloughing off the burned trees. It's "pretty messy." Nathaniel from the Forest Service decided that they won't be able to open it any time soon. They ended up coming down the long way because it was too dangerous to descend the way they went up.
 - She did overnights in July and August at Eagle Creek. Wahtum lake to High Bridge is in pretty good shape, although there's still a lot of slough, unsafe footing, and devil's club. There's still a lot that can be done there, but it's much better than it was.
 - She worked with Pace at the water crossing at Three Creeks. The water shouldn't run down the trail any more.
 - The Indian Springs Trail junction to Inspiration Point needs work. She's planning a group in there next Tuesday, plus one additional. The Forest Service couldn't find the trail junction and so they re-routed it. Now it's much higher up the slope and steeper than it was.
 - The Forest Service would like us to decommission campsites there, and put up "no camping, no fire" signs as well as a wilderness boundary sign.
 - There was discussion about the vandalism of these signs, which morphed into talk about running into hikers on closed trails and how to discourage people from accessing closed trails.
- Brooke Stevinson
 - She didn't do trail work in August
 - She just completed a six-day backpack trip through the Wind River Range in Wyoming.
 - She's planning an overnighter this weekend.
- Thomas Calvery
 - Participated in no PCTA trail parties but did complete his 101st trail party with WTA. He took his wife on her first one, too.
 - He needs a camp tender for Birkenfeld in a couple of weeks. The last half mile of road is pretty bad. He also needs water jugs, if anyone has extra. The shelters are available and ready.

- Steve Plant
 - Worked with Terry at the Mountain Music Festival at Timberline. It was larger this year due to a tribute to the Grateful Dead. They piped music to where the vendors were this year, which was different than in previous years. Traffic coming back on Labor Day was awful; it took 40 minutes to get from Mirror Lake to Rhododendron.
 - The Forest Service mentioned that Mary Ellen would be retiring soon. Many of the Caretakers in the room mentioned the influence she'd had on them.

Any near misses that weren't discussed already?

- Susan smashed a finger under a rock yesterday.
- Chris Keil scraped his arm.
- Steve prompted Susan Tracy to mention her experience hiking. She did serious damage to her leg when clearing a branch from a trail (not a PCTA project). In moving one, it snagged another one which she drove into the back of her leg, causing some fairly serious bleeding.
- Steve mentioned the incident with the Forest Service truck, where they were driving slowly along a road when a tree came down. It went through the driver's window, behind the driver's head, and lodged in the headrest. It was a very close call. There was nothing that could have been done, though; the Forest Service personnel were doing everything correctly. It was just one of those things.

Reports

Columbia Cascades Regional Rep (Dana)

- Bill already provided a report from Dana during Round the Room.

North Cascades Regional Rep (Michael)

- No report submitted from Michael.

Chair (Leif)

- The end of the fiscal year is the end of September. Please get in your paperwork.
- Rachel called and was confused about the upcoming volunteer BBQ. She was worried she had to get awards together, but that's the annual celebration.
- There isn't any additional news about the tool cache. Dana being out has slowed the process. We'll proceed as-is until we hear more. They're looking at commercial storage sites but still no info from Sacramento.
- He's putting together advanced training for November. It'll be a two-day event. Most are due for first aid and CPR recertification, and it looks like Marijke may be able to handle that. Steve mentioned that the November caretaker meeting is also coming up. It's usually the first weekend of the month at the Estacada Public Library. But it sounds like we need to know when Marijke can hold the training, since it'll have to be before she goes to Mexico. David Roe will try to line it up, but it's kind of late to reserve the library space, particularly for a Saturday. Leif will confirm a date with Marijke and let David know.
- Tim asked about the "For Sale" sign in the Estacada Ranger Station. David responded that the rangers are all being moved to Sandy as soon as the Sandy Ranger Station remodel is complete. There will be just one Estacada person, staged in the Sheriff's Office.

Partnership Crews (Leif)

- Nothing going on. Chris Keil asked about a note he had relating to a New Season's crew in September that he was supposed to put together. Hilary said that they'd had changes at New Season's, and there's no one there coordinating it, so there's nothing he needs to do.

Volunteer Coordinator (Rosemary)

- I won't be at the meeting tonight, it's my birthday! While I love all of you, I will be having dinner with friends. We are having some trouble with volunteers later in the season, although people really like the Eagle Creek crews. The earlier I can get details, the better. I am wanting to send out another email on Friday, so if anyone has an upcoming crew that isn't already posted I need info by EOD tomorrow (Thursday).

Trail Skills College (Tammy)

- Nothing going on with this yet, per Leif. It's the last weekend in April, 4/25-4/26, which is later than usual.

Outreach and Events (Michele, Tammy)

- Report given by Michele during Round the Room.

Tools (Terry)

- The annual inventory of the Stevenson Tool Cache is coming up on 9/24, 9:00-noon. He requested assistance, since fewer people from the tool team are available this year. The process is to empty the whole cache, and then inventory the equipment as it's replaced. They'll also need to do the Portland Cache by the end of the year. He didn't think to do it while it was being moved. The Trout Lake and the Trailer caches should be easy.
- New people are getting confused about which tools are which on the check-in sheet (for example, there's only one category on the check-out sheet for green grubbers and Rogue hoes). Robert is going to create a new check-in form that'll be clearer.

Training and Safety (Dana)

- No report.

Saw Program (Leif)

- The group didn't have a teleconference this month, as folks were just too busy, but one is coming up in October.
- Chris Keil said Sue Melone asked him to mention that she wasn't on the sawyer list. Steve said he did get the list from Sacramento but it included thousands of names and was way too long. There's no field for the person's chapter. He started digging into it but got discouraged. He wondered if it would make sense to send an email to all Oregon & Washington sawyers and ask them to opt-in, if they wanted to be on the list. Most of the Caretakers thought that was a good idea. David said it's going to get worse with the national database – 15,000 names with no information, only an address. Leif asked if the opt-in should be done during the training, but David mentioned that would exclude those who have been certified by other agencies.

Budget (Little Brown)

- Erin Lane in Sacramento left, and as a result the last numbers we have are from June. The link to the budget dies in a week. He thinks we have maybe \$1000 left to spend through the end of December. We'll lose that if we don't spend it, but he thinks it'll all get spent by the end of the year anyway.

Crew Leader Development (Pace and Little Brown)

- No report.

Stats (Pace)

- Total hours are now at about 93% of 2017.

- Number of crews is at 94% and on trail hours at 99% of 2017.

Mount Hood Chapter Stats - August 2019 updated								
	Aug 2019	Aug 2018	Aug 2017	YTD Aug 2019	YTD Aug 2018	YTD Aug 2017	YTD compare 2019 vs 2017	
Total Volunteer Hours	1,699	1,967	2,135	13,463	22,242	14,530	-1,068	92.7%
Specialized hours	347	279	294	2,859	4,206	2,200	659	129.9%
Number of Trail Crews	11	14	8	80	140	85	-5	94.1%
Miles Logged out	21	10	4	227	186	159	68	142.8%
Logs cleared, crosscut	49			258				
Logs cleared, chainsaw	4			391				
Miles Maintained	7	6	14	55	98	68	-13	81.4%
Feet of Rehab/Recon	5,140	6,295	5,000	19,585	57,744	13,594	5,991	144.1%
Volunteer hours by Category								
Trail Maint - crews & scouting	1,521	1,314	1,723	8,345	13,967	8,429	-84	99.0%
Trail Maint - support	178	372	289	1,788	2,609	2,442	-654	73.2%
Trail Skills Training		52		3,207	5,247	3,381	-175	94.8%
Outreach Events		230	123	124	420	279	-155	44.4%
	<u>1,699</u>	<u>1,967</u>	<u>2,135</u>	<u>13,463</u>	<u>22,242</u>	<u>14,530</u>		

- Bill asked why there was such a jump in specialized hours. Pace said that it's due to changes in what's reported as specialized hours this year, plus new people doing the reporting. Tim asked if someone is pulling a pack animal, if that counts as specialized hours. Pace said yes.

Final Comments and Discussion Items

- Pace said that there have been several overnighiter crews, but it's not always clear if these events are pack-in or car camp. He asked that this be made clear/emphasized when posted to Eventbrite.
- Steve thanked people for putting the name of the section in the online reports. It's helpful for figuring out what section is being referenced.
- Ron mentioned he's seen a lot of "flip-floppers" – people who started the PCT headed north, but due to high snow they've had to travel to the northern terminus and finish as south-bonders. Tami said that she ran into many thru-hikers on her section and all but two were southbound. Steve mentioned that there was a straight five years of light snow, but that's no longer the case. Wildfires in recent years have also caused people to skirt sections. Ron said that water is still running in Yosemite, which is unusual.

Past Events

This is a brief accounting of projects that occurred since the previous caretaker meeting. For a full accounting of projects, visit <http://mthood.longtrails.com/projectreports/project-reports-2019.pdf>.

Trail Work and Scouting

- August 15-16:** Wahtum Lake Overnight: Hilary Renshaw
PCT at Junction with Chinidere Mountain Trail to 1.5 miles north on PCT from Junction with Chinidere Mountain
- August 19:** Ruckel Creek Scouting: Susan McDonnell
Eagle Creek Campground to Benson Plateau
- August 20:**
- August 20-22:** Urban Youth Project near Timothy Lake: Kim Owen
PCT MHNF Rd 5890 north to Rd 58
- August 21-22:** Lower Eagle Creek First Bridge Build Week 2: Roberta Cobb, Robert Caldwell
Herman Creek Work Center and a few hundred feet from Eagle Creek Trailhead

6. **August 23-25:** Spiffing up Benson Plateau: William Canavan and Hilary Renshaw
on PCT 6 miles trail north of Wahtum Lake TH to Teakettle Spring, 8.45 miles trail north of Wahtum Lake TH
7. **August 24-27:** Middle Eagle Creek Brushing & Treadwork: Susan McDonnell & Susan Tracy
Wahtum Lake Campground to High Bridge
8. **August 26:** Mt Adams Logout: Kim Owen
Riley Camp Trail #64 / PCT junction to PCT/ Riley Cutoff Trail #64A junction
9. **August 30:** Herman Creek Logout: Chris Keil
Wahtum Lake Trailhead to Herman Creek Trailhead
10. **September 10:** Upper Eagle Creek: Stream Crossing Improvement: Susan McDonnell & Robert Caldwell
Three creek crossings at approx. 1.5 miles from Wahtum Lake Campground.

Other Events

1. **August 16-22:** Skyline Volunteer Vacation – Jeff Park 2
2. **August 30-September 4:** Sasquatch Volunteer Vacation – Hidden Spring in Goat Rocks Wilderness

Future Events

1. **September 13-19:** Sasquatch Volunteer Vacation – Goat Rocks Fire Restoration
2. **October 9:** Caretaker Meeting at REI

Notes

- **11 Vacancies:** 1) Potato Hill; 2) Grand Meadows; 3) Steamboat Lake; 4) Twin Buttes; 5) Panther Creek; 6) Wind River; 7) Birkenfeld Mountain; 8) Table Mountain (reserved for Susan Tracy); 9) Lower Eagle Creek; 10) Upper Eagle Creek; 11) Indian Springs Trail 435
- **Columbia Dispatch:** Dispatch 7:30 am to 6:00 pm, seven days a week, beginning May 25, 2019, waccc@firenet.gov, 360-891-5140. Remember to submit a TCP to your agency partner, your dispatcher or alternate dispatcher, Dana, and Leif.