

Mount Hood Chapter, PCTA Caretaker Meeting Minutes

February 12, 2020, 6:45 pm

Location: Clackam-as REI

Attended: Robert Caldwell, Jennifer Calvery, Thomas Calvery, Bill Canavan, Terry Hill, Leif Hovin, Chris Keil, Diane Kelso, Kim Kovacs, Tim Lagasse, Susan McDonnell, Sue Melone, Rosemary Prescott, Steve Queen, Rick Schmidt, Susan Tracy, Tammy Turner, Albert Iggi

Notes: Kim Kovacs

Welcome

- **Absent:** Becky (trail riding in Tucson), Roberta
- **Welcome**
 - Albert Iggi, who's been a volunteer for two years, focusing on Pace's Muddy Fork. He's also been on three crews w/ Susan McDonnell at Eagle Creek this year, and cut 24 trees there today. He's ACL'd a couple of times as well. He'd like to work up to crew leader and/or become a caretaker for a section of trail.
 - Felicia Matthews, who was shopping in REI, asked what was going on, and decided to drop in for part of the meeting. During the Round the Room, she appreciated our trail maintenance, but it wasn't appropriate for her, so she bid the group farewell.
- **Announcements:** None.

Chapter Chair Report

- The plans for hosting the PDX tool cache at Mazama's headquarters is still progressing. It's nearly a done deal, but there are still details to be worked out. One is the size of the building, which will be located in the parking lot. We've got the blessings of the key players, and people are working on getting the agreements in place.
- Mila Benson has replaced Emily Bauska as the contact person for tabling events. A tabling kit will be devoted to the chapter and a shelter to the Columbia Cascades region. Roster needs to be updated to include Mila.

Round the Room

- Steve Queen
 - Removed Potato Hill section from our caretaker sections web page, which removes 2.0 miles from our chapter's system of trails.
 - As discussed last month, Dana's section has moved north, so the northern boundary of our section and the northern boundary of her section now coincide. Road 5603 is the border.
 - Steve discussed his latest geocaching adventure this past Sunday in Sherwood. There was this really nice cat there, and as they were leaving, they saw some cat toys and a food dish, but the cat had clearly been abandoned, so they adopted him. He was originally named "Geo," but Steve decided "Sherwood" fit better. He was "snipped" yesterday and is wearing a cone now. He's about seven months, and he's really sweet. Steve already has two cats and swore he wouldn't get another, but he couldn't resist this one.
- Leif Hovin
 - It's been windy the past couple of days and there are trees down at Teacup. There will probably be more downed logs on Mount Hood this year than there were last year. He expects there will be a lot of fun logging opportunities coming up.
- Robert Caldwell
 - He was on four crews at Eagle Creek, thanks to Susan McDonnell. He said it was nice to be a "worker bee" for a change.
 - Last month he presented the new tools notebook he put together, but he forgot to mention that the tool checkout form has also been updated. It coincides with the categories in the notebook. It should be simplified now. Steve asked if anyone had clicked on the link on the web site to see Pace's work? Susan McDonnell said she learned something new – the green grubber was named after a man named Green. Steve urged people to check it out if they haven't already.
- Susan McDonnell

- Cancelled two projects in January due to nasty weather. There were four projects that did go, including today's logout. Every week it's something different, but last week they found a large slide with a log next to it so they could only work on the first 0.9 miles of trail, so Bill went out today and worked on it.
- Part of the trail looks awesome but there are new trees down.
- Terry asked about the historical markers. Susan said she works around them. Terry feels it's a shame to have them just buried, as they're important historically. Steve asked how things have changed since before the fire? Terry said they're buried. Susan asked how that's different than before the fire, and Terry said it really isn't, but that it's a shame they're not maintained. He said there might be more than three, and Leif added that they used to be present every mile.
- Albert Iggi
 - Participated on the same crews as Pace and Susan.
- Sue Melone
 - She's almost done with the Montana saw course.
- Susan Tracy
 - Worked on four crews at Eagle Creek. She's planning to work at Teakettle next month; she's hoping to foster that section, since it doesn't currently have a caretaker. She'd like to continue the tread restoration and then do the logout later.
 - She was also approached by an interesting group: the Bennetts, a family of six who were written up in Outside Online magazine. She met them on Table Mountain and again at PCT Days, and they recognized her so they reached out, hoping to volunteer. She's going to try to figure out where she can fit them into projects. They're leaving for the Appalachian Trail in June. The kids are old enough to do some work. Someone asked what they do for employment, but Susan didn't know. She said the kids are home-schooled ("trail-schooled," actually); last year they did all their reading assignments on the trail with audiobooks.
 - She got a long distance permit and will be gone the last week of July and the whole month of August hiking the trail, starting at Castle Crags.
 - Won't be at the meeting next month, since she got tickets months ago for an event.
- Chris Keil
 - No updates.
- Thomas Calvary
 - Nothing on the PCT, but has been on WTA work parties. He's planning a Table Mountain logout on Friday, May 8. He's tentatively planning to scout some or all of the trail at Birkenfeld on Saturday, June 6..
- Jennifer Calvary
 - Happy we finally got some snow; she's been out snowshoeing.
- Rick Schmidt
 - Hasn't been on the PCT, but has been to Patagonia and Easter Island. He recommends Chilean wine.
- Bill Canavan
 - Worked on Eagle Creek. They logged out 24 logs but didn't get as far as Punchbowl, only as far as the lower access trail. Sawed a unique log where the top of the tree fell onto another log, which fell straight up, at 90 degrees. He's never seen anything like that before.
- Diane Kelso
 - Peter has a cold so he didn't come tonight. They've been hiking a couple of times on the Eagle Creek trail (the one out of Estacada). He also wanted to recognize Kim Kovacs; he was on a TKO crew and was impressed with her leadership and how well it went.
- Felicia Matthews (guest who was shopping at REI)
 - She complimented the group on their activities, but said it wasn't the type of group she was looking for and would leave. She wanted us to know, though, how much she appreciates our efforts.
- Tim Lagasse
 - Didn't make it on PCT but has trail-related news. Rachael Drake was at the Backcountry Horseman's meeting in January. They're talking about blasting on the north side of the Zigzag canyon crossing. She also mentioned that they finished logging out the Paradise Park trail.
 - He was at the Timothy Lake meeting and they're working on getting the bicycles completely off the PCT. The equestrian groups are very happy about that. They're talking about putting in a new bike trail where the South Lake trail meets the PCT, and also looping around on the north side. We see most of the bicycles on the trail between the north and south lake trails, and often this is because they get off the South Lake trail and don't know where to go. Dana said she'd be putting up a map a bit later in the meeting illustrating the locations Tim's mentioning.

- They had a vote last night and Dan Dahlke is the official point of contact for the Territory Riders chapter (Timothy Lakes section for Backcountry Horsemen).
- Steve asked about the web site, and Tim said it was correct in one location but not the other. Steve asked that people let him know if they find incorrect info on the web site.
- Rosemary Prescott
 - No updates.
- Dana Hendricks
 - The Forest Service doesn't know when they'll do the blasting at Zigzag, but would like to do it as soon as the snow melts. Denise is the blaster on site, and has worked in the area before. There was a good shelf there for a while, but it fell, and the curb wall washed away. This is on the Paradise side of the crossing. It's not too bad for hikers, but it's a problem for equestrians. Chris said it's been a lot worse lately, and that it's hard for backpackers. He also asked if they'll want volunteers for crowd control, and Dana said she thinks it's unlikely. Pace asked what the status was of the blasting program. Leif said that they're planning to continue it, but it's a challenge to keep people certified. They may need to contract it out. The final word is, "If you're certified, stay certified." At one point they were going to use the National Guard, but that didn't work out. Pace said there's a 40" log on the Muddy Fork Trail, and wondered if it could be blasted. Leif said to let Rachel know. Dana mentioned that Rachel asked that they send her requests in email, as a written request raises the priority level. Tim said he'd been trying to get a log on 501 blasted for three years. Leif responded that the level of coordination needed for blasting is very high; it's a major pain. Tim added that he's just saying that if something can be cut out, we should try to do that since it'll happen a lot faster.
 - Last month we spoke about a proposed bill for a National Recreation Area (NRA) expansion on Mt. Hood. A bunch of organizations are working on this (Oregon Wild, Mazamas, some mountain bike folks), Blumenauer's office is leading the charge, and Wyden's office is getting involved as well. It's still just a proposal and hasn't been introduced yet, but we've been talking directly to Blumenauer's office. They asked what PCTA would like to see in the bill. What we'd like to see is a mile-wide corridor around the PCT (half mile on each side) along its entire length. It would be a corridor in which you couldn't place a new cell tower or a new development of any kind without special visual mitigations to protect the scenery. Chris asked about logging. Dana said there are already rules in place about logging near the PCT. She went on to say that now, they have to make a case each time someone wants to build something that impacts the PCT, like a pipeline. The proposed act would make it a lot easier to streamline comments about proposals and for forest and decision makers to understand what needs to be done to protect the PCT. But it's still kind of a pipe dream at this point. There are things that can be done to buffer the trail from development, and that's what we're asking for. It can also be done through forest planning, and that's typically how we get this done. Each forest undergoes a land and resources management plan, but revisions only happen like once every 20 years. As they do get revised, we're trying to get this mile-wide corridor language written in to protect the PCT. We got that language into the Inyo National Forest's plan last year, but that was the first one. It takes a long time, which is why we're trying to take advantage of the NRA work.
 - Chris saw some emails floating around about Top Spur. They're going to log up there and fix the trailhead in the process. Dana asked if it's within a half-mile? Chris said no, but within a mile. Leif said it would be selective logging and they likely won't see it from the trail. Pace added that they've been doing selective logging below the Top Spur Road as well, and confirmed that the landing they'll be using for the logging operation will eventually become the trailhead parking lot.
 - Steve asked about the current status of the Bridge of the Gods walkway. Dana said that they were going to pay for it with a Federal Lands Access Grant of \$1 million they were awarded for the project. Unfortunately, they found that when federal funds are given to a private entity, you have to stop tolling, or 100% of funds collected have to be used for bridge repair, so they had to refuse the grant. The Port employs 10 or 20 people, and the bridge is an economic generator. The entire project could cost \$25 million, and no one has that kind of money, so it'll have to be federal highway funds. They're now lobbying the legislature (maybe Walden's office) to have the tolling statute changed so that it's no longer a requirement for bridges in National Scenic Areas that also have a National Scenic Trail on them. Mark Larrabee, our lobbying guy, is working on it. They're also trying to get the Oregon legislature and the Washington legislature to give \$500,000 each toward the design phase.

Review any near misses that weren't discussed already.

- Pace said that yes, there was a near-miss, last week. They pulled a log off the hillside and started cutting it off the trail before it was all the way off the hillside. It sprung up and hit a guy in the chest. At the time he seemed fine, but after the fact he reported soreness. He was an experienced worker. Steve asked what should have been done differently, and Pace said they should have paid more attention to where the log was. Susan said it was small and curvy, like a hockey stick. Leif added that sometimes those roll in unexpected ways and come up. Pace confirmed that that was what happened. Leif mentioned that just a half-turn will sometimes mitigate the danger.
- Bill had one as well. Someone was using an axe and their leather gloves were wet. The axe skittered. Pace pointed out that when it's sloppy-wet like that to use the Atlas gloves, because they're rubber. Sue Melone asked for clarification on the rules for gloves while using an axe, and Bill confirmed that it's OK to use a hand axe with bare hands. Leif added that the idea is to go with what's safest; losing your grip on an axe is much more dangerous than using it without gloves. Terry asked if the person using the axe had on eye protection and Bill said yes.

Trail Tip

- Dana - Snow level monitoring
 - Dana demonstrated using the Snotel web page to find Snotel sites near your territories
 - She also showed us how to use the CalTopo maps for determining snow levels pretty much anywhere along the PCT.
 - Chris has another site from the USFS that isn't as clean but it's usable as another tool.
 - Steve said there are links to the USFS, CalTopo and NOAA on the web site, and he'll add a link to Snotel as well.
-
-

Reports

Regional Rep (Dana)

- Timothy Lake Trail Project report
- PGE manages the campground and trails on behalf of the Forest Service. They came up with an idea to minimize conflict along a 500' area of the boardwalk. They originally thought about putting in a parallel boardwalk, but Dana felt it didn't make sense; that area is the only spot on the entire PCT where there's a co-alignment with the PCT and a bicycle trail.
- Jeremy Evens proposed adding a new segment which would allow mountain bikers on the Little Crater Lake Trail.
- It'll take years of planning, approvals, impact studies, etc., but it's on its way.
- Steve wondered why another section of the bike trail wasn't being decommissioned. Tim said that it's high use, and no one really wants it decommissioned. It would make hiking the area much longer, plus it's a nice trail.
- Dana added that the new alignment creates a feature that mountain bikers want – access to Little Crater Lake.
- We have PLENTY of time to discuss how this will play out, since it'll be years before anything's done.

Volunteer Coordinator (Rosemary)

- People are still emailing her regarding Eagle Creek participation. Those trying to get on trail parties are trying specifically for Eagle Creek.
- She'll be gone during the meeting next month; she's going to Las Vegas.

Outreach and Events (Jennifer)

- Annual celebration is on February 29. She's still looking for speakers. We have interest from a person at the Barlow Forest Service desk, Kaitlyn, who'd like to speak about her experiences hiking and at the ranger desk there. Gayla also got Jennifer in touch with the Confluence Project, and they have a botanist that would like to talk about endangered plant species along the trail and what we should do if we run across them. Finally, some forest people would like to talk about sustainability as well as their 10-Year Trails Challenge. She's also looking for additional speakers.
- Dana offered to talk about Scenery Management if needed.

- Jennifer also spoke about the ALDHA-West Cascade Ruck in Stevenson. PCTA will have a volunteer outreach table there.
- The Confluence Project is having an event called the “New Canoe-fluence” on Vancouver Lake on May 30. Jennifer’s just getting information on this now, but we’ve been invited to have an outreach table there as well.
- Steve mentioned his 2017 presentation about his hike, and if all else fails he can present that. He’s streamlined it a lot, and it’s more of a contrast between 1981 and 2016 than the previous talk was.

Trail Skills College (Tammy)

- There’s a meeting tomorrow night, and we should have the class schedule soon. Once that’s done, she’ll send out another email if she needs more instructors (and she’s fairly sure we will, because we always do).
- Tammy reminded everyone that this will be her last year as the TSC coordinator and she’s looking for a replacement. Jennifer may or may not do it (Jennifer said her travel season is March-May, so probably not). Tammy says she’s got her tasks very well organized and documented so she thinks she can hand it over. And then maybe work on trails once she’s given that up.
- She’s also looking for a speaker. She’s waiting for the Oregon State Parks Archeologist to get back to her. Jennifer offered to share her contact list. Dana suggested an Oregon Trail person to talk about Barlow Pass, Cascade Locks, other historical features in the area.
- Jennifer added that if there are events coming up where we should be represented, to please let her know.

Training and Safety (Dana)

- Looking for people to teach at TSC.
- Incident report from accident on 10/13/2019. Bushwhacking, downed log, shin injury, concussion.
- Still spots open in the Wilderness First Aid class going on next weekend in Scio, OR.

Tools (Terry)

- He hasn’t been to the Portland cache lately, so he’s not sure what it looks like now. Susan said she was there four or five weeks ago and it was fine. Terry’s been involved with his grandkids, and the cache isn’t convenient for him to get to, so if you go there, the notebooks aren’t at the caches yet because he’s planning to go to take gloves and other gear. The tool team has the mechanical measurement wheel checked out. Let him know if you need it.
- We have new kitchen equipment. They’re going to take it to Stevenson to unpack it and sort it out, and decide what to keep out there. Dana will let the people at Walking Man know that they may need to spread out the gear for a day. Roberta and Leif will take care of it.
- Thomas wrecked his knee – a chronic issue – torn meniscus. Susan said it’s been repaired so he’s doing better. Terry said the tool team is still four people, and they’re a great group of guys.
- Leif added that the tool trailer at David Roe’s house was moved so that it’s no longer visible from the road. There are locks on it, but it’s not really enough to stop anyone.

Saw Program (Leif)

- The education team has a new presentation. They’re gearing up for upcoming opportunities, not just in our own territory.
- Wind River saw training is coming up in April.
- He mentioned that we should be letting our sawyers know if their first aid/CPR certification has expired. We’ll use the list maintained by Sacramento, even though it doesn’t include USFS or other agency certifications. Chris asked about how frequently it’s updated since he just updated his CPR, and Leif said it could take months; the fall database is the one that’s up-to-date.

Budget (Little Brown)

- Bill is leaving to hike the CDT so Susan McDonnell is taking over the budget. Don’t send receipts to Sacramento, send directly to Susan until Bill gets back in the fall.
- Steve asked when Bill would be leaving, and he wasn’t sure yet due to snow. He was going to speak to some folks at the ALDHA-West Ruck this weekend and see how much trouble they had in the San Juans.
- Susan said to start sending the receipts to her effective immediately, because she wants to get her feet wet while Bill’s still around to answer questions.

- Bill will send out an email with additional information and reminders.
- Leif said he wanted to give a real quick reminder to the tool guys: “Don’t use Roy Boys anymore.”
- We do not have a budget yet for this year, but we can probably expect about the same as last year.

Crew Leader Development (Pace and Little Brown)

- Hasn’t done much. Has emailed a couple of people who’ve expressed interest in being a crew leader, including Nate and Katheryn Dragich. They both said thank you very much for contacting them but both have been busy. He’ll keep touching base with them.
- Susan said she worked with someone named Terry who said she had fun being out there. Those are the type of people we want to get out there. If you have someone who expresses gratitude, invite them out again; they’re the people we want to recruit as crew leaders and caretakers. People don’t self-invite.

Stats (Pace)

- We’re ahead of last January (two this year, none last year) – but there was a government shutdown last year. So we’re out to a good start, although it’s always slow this time of year.

Mount Hood Chapter Stats - Jan 2020						
	Jan	Jan	Final Calendar Year Totals			
	2020	2019	2019	2018	2017	2016
Total Volunteer Hours	345	319	18,070	26,590	18,293	18,381
Specialized hours	54	23	3,406	5,051	2,572	3,063
Number of Trail Crews	2	0	112	168	105	129
Miles Logged out			227	186	162	267
Logs cleared, crosscut	1		277			
Logs cleared, chainsaw			403			
Miles Maintained	4		71	118	93	69
Feet of Rehab/Recon	510		28,125	69,847	17,239	23,254
Volunteer hours by Category						
Trail Maint - crews & scouting	210		10,929	16,413	9,865	10,588
Trail Maint - support	116	290	2,876	4,329	3,901	3,572
Trail Skills Training		23	3,791	5,279	4,144	3,923
Outreach Events	20	6	474	569	383	299
	<u>345</u>	<u>319</u>	<u>18,070</u>	<u>26,590</u>	<u>18,293</u>	<u>18,381</u>

Final Comments and Discussion Items

- None.

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

1. **January 21:** Lower Eagle Creek Brushing & Treadwork: Susan McDonnell
2. **January 27:** Lower Eagle Creek Treadwork: Susan McDonnell, Susan Tracy, Robert Caldwell
3. **February 4:** Lower Eagle Creek Treadwork: Susan McDonnell, Roberta May, Susan Tracy

Other Events

1. **January 16, 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM in Estacada:** Discussion with USFS/PGE/PCTA for new trails at Timothy Lake at Estacada ranger station
2. **February 22-23.** Mid-Oregon Wilderness First Aid in Scio.

Future Events

1. **February 22-23,** Wilderness First Aid, Scio Grange Hall
2. **March 11, 6:45 PM:** Caretaker Meeting at REI

Notes

- **11 PCT Vacancies:** ➤ Grand Meadows, ➤ Steamboat Lake, ➤ Twin Buttes, ➤ Panther Creek, ➤ Wind River, ➤ Birkenfeld Mountain, ➤ Table Mountain, ➤ Teakettle Springs, ➤ Timberline - South, ➤ Twin Lakes, ➤ Little Crater Lake
- **4 Non-PCT Vacancies:** ➤ Gorge Trail 400, ➤ Lower Eagle Creek Trail 440, ➤ Upper Eagle Creek Trail 440, ➤ Indian Springs Trail 435
- **1 Reservation:** ➤ Benson Plateau (Susan Tracy)
- **2 Fosterings:** ➤ Birkenfeld Mountain (Thomas Calvary), ➤ Teakettle Springs (Susan Tracy)
- **Columbia Dispatch:** Dispatch 7:30 am to 4:30 pm, Monday to Friday, waccc@firenet.gov, 360-891-5140. Remember to submit a TCP to your agency partner, your dispatcher or alternate dispatcher, Dana, and Leif.