

Mount Hood Chapter, PCTA Caretaker Meeting Minutes

May 13, 2020, 6:45 pm

Location: Microsoft Teams

Attended: Robert Caldwell, Jennifer Calvery, Thomas Calvery, Dana Hendricks, Terry Hill, Peter Hoffman, Leif Hovin, Frank Jahn, Renee Janssen, Todd Janssen, Chris Keil, Diane Kelso, Kim Kovacs, Tim Lagasse, Stacy Lee, Roberta May, Susan McDonnell, Sue Melone, Kim Owen, Rosemary Prescott, Steve Queen, Hilary Renshaw, Tami Sheets, Susan Tracy, Tammy Turner, Ruth Weston, Becky Wolf, Nathan Zaremskiy

Notes: Kim Kovacs

Welcome

- Mute your audio unless you are speaking.
- No Trail Tip this month
- PCTA COVID-19 shutdown extended to June 1.

Chapter Chair Report

- Leif expressed how glad he was that everyone was able to make it to the meeting. He noted that given the closures, life is pretty tough these days, and he appreciates everyone hanging in there. We'll get an update later in the meeting from Dana.
- The Forest Service is feeling the crunch. He was in a meeting with the Teacup folks. The delay will narrow the window between when we start working and the beginning of fire season, and now they have to focus on what their priorities will be. Given the weather forecasts we're seeing that will be challenging. We'll see how all this progresses.
- We've had some of the PCTA saw teams hold meetings, but things are slower on our side.
- David Roe is retiring from his caretaker role. As a sawyer, he'll be focusing his time working with the Forest Service on their saw program. It's a big loss for us, but he'll still be around and helping the volunteer groups in Region 6.
- Brooke Stevinson has also said she's going to focus her attention on other priorities in her life, and will be stepping down as Caretaker, freeing up the North Mount Adams section. She plans to continue participating in work parties.
- There was no leadership meeting last month because that is our off month. Next one will be in June.
- Dana mentioned that there will be an electronic card going around for David Roe; you can expect to see that in your Inbox. We can probably get one for Brooke as well.
- Leif spoke about the Twin Lakes project David was working on. The Forest Service put that project on hold anyway, so David's retirement isn't impacting that.

Steve Status

- Steve read a statement letting the group know that he'd be stepping down and thanked the group (past, present and future). The statement text:

To the greatest group of human beings on the planet: thank you. Thank you to those of you on this call. Thank you to those of you who aren't here tonight. Thank you to those who have retired and to those whose light has passed on.

After hiking the PCT in 1981 and living a life shaped by that hike and by that Trail, I started the Mount Hood chapter on November 23, 1993. What has transpired since that date goes way beyond any vision of success that I could have imagined 27 years ago.

I am announcing tonight that I am stepping away from all leadership roles associated with the chapter by the end of the year. I am so thrilled to have been a part of this chapter, and our part of a larger mission with the rest of the PCTA to benefit the entirety of the PCT. That mission, however, is not always smooth and the Portland tool cache move was particularly rocky. It was so bad that it required a "summit meeting" with leadership from the chapter and the main office in February. I was dissatisfied with the limited degree

to which Jen and Liz took responsibility for the main office's role in creating a major problem where one did not need to exist. Leaving that meeting, I knew that my future with the PCTA was untenable.

The circumstances under which I am leaving are disappointing, but I look at the chapter as a living entity. Its life has been, and will continue to be, phenomenal. My overarching goal 27 years ago was for this chapter to live a healthy life after I moved on. The solid leadership I leave behind assures me that I succeeded.

Again, thank you. You are my family. And I love you all.

*Steve Queen
May 13, 2020*

- He made this announcement at the April leadership team meeting, but didn't mention it at the April caretaker meeting because it was our first remote caretaker meeting and it didn't feel right to make the announcement while we were getting used to the new environment. However, it was important for everyone to hear it from him this month.
- Leif said thank-you to Steve, and went on to state that we are where we are today because of all Steve's hard work, and the foundation that this chapter has been built on is a great reflection of what he put into it. For all of us and the PCT itself, and the association...words really can't describe all you've contributed to it, and I want to thank you for all you've done.
- Dana also said that it's been an indescribable honor to work with him, and she's proud of all he's built and all he's given to the trail, and to all these wonderful people here.

Round the Room

- Todd and Renee Janssen
 - They're doing fine and observed that Steve has been at this for 27 years and they've been part of the group for about five weeks.
 - One of their big races is on the PCT, and they just sent out a notice about an hour ago that they had to cancel it (it's in July). It's the first ultra Todd ever ran, so it's near and dear to their hearts and cancelling it has been kind of rough. It's one of many they have or will have to cancel this year. The beneficiary every year is PCTA, and this year he spoke to Dana about splitting the proceeds with the Food Bank in Sandy. It seemed appropriate for this year. One thing that was encouraging was that a ton of people responded to the email he sent asking that they donate their pre-paid entry fee to these two organizations. Todd and Renee also provided a donation to FISH in Hood River from a race that was to be held on the Surveyor Ridge Trail that got cancelled in June. They ran a short section of the PCTA yesterday and it felt good to be out there.
 - Peter Hoffman mentioned that as representatives of the Sandy Food Bank, he and Diane (Diane is Chairman of the Board and he's a volunteer) are very grateful for their support. Todd said that even the Sandy folks don't know about the donation yet.
- Peter Hoffman and Diane Kelso
 - They haven't done any hiking, although one day they did drive across the PCTA (Road 2000 just inside Washington).
 - They did a little road cleanup in their community. They purchased a Katanaboy 650 (just got there the day before yesterday) for use on their own property and so that they wouldn't need to check one out across the river for trail parties. They tried it on a peach tree and it worked great.
- Sue Melone
 - She showed off a mug that says "You become successful by helping others become successful." The soldiers under her command in 1990 gave it to her. She wanted to say to Steve and David – She works with leaders all the time (that's her job) and that some people are good leaders, others are shitty leaders. When you step down, you'll never see all the good things you've done, and those can never be taken away from you. Thank you. She's been working, and staying in shape by walking and doing weights in her garage. She's looking forward to whatever's ahead. Don't get bummed out, we'll all still be here for each other. ("I'm talking to you, Pace!")
 - She plans to step up her game regarding the foster trails. We have 15 sections open. A couple of volunteers are lined up, and we need to discuss sustainability. With the compressed season it'll be

challenging. She's got a couple of people penciled in on sections. Kim and Pam Owen on Grand Meadows, Thomas Calvery on Birkenfeld and Table Mountain, Susan Tracy at Teakettle. That's all she has confirmed right now. We're all anxious to get out there and scout, and to get out there and cut (because that's how we are). A lot of these trails have been fosters since she's been here – four years now – so it'll be important to get out and put together a good scouting report to know what has to happen later. Some are fairly distant so we'll have to plan that out. If you don't already have an assignment for one of the fosters, it'll be important to coordinate communication so that we don't duplicate our efforts. She'll try to post it somewhere, not sure where yet. Will add in the section from Brooke. Steve said to forward that to him, and he'll include it with the minutes. Roberta wanted to add that she offered to foster Gorge Trail 400.

- Terry Hill
 - He asked Steve if he was going to “evaporate” or will he still be around? Steve said it'll be closer to evaporation. He plans to continue his membership and occasionally pop in on the caretaker meeting just to bother us. Vanessa is evaporating as well. Terry asked about Vanessa's role as social media coordinator. Steve said that she will be leaving as well and that Leif will need to fill the position.
 - Terry said that we need to find a new home for the trailer/cache that currently lives at David Roe's place. Leif said he'd spoken to him and they will be looking for some type of non-residential site where they can park it. Terry said he's leaving it in Leif's hands.
 - Otherwise he's been busy; they just bought a house for his son and that's been pretty cool. The Internet is driving him crazy!
- Hilary Renshaw
 - This group has been so welcoming, and that's thanks to Steve.
 - She has nothing to report. She's settled into her new house, but doesn't have curtains since no one will come out to install them, so she just has sheets over the windows.
- Ruth Weston
 - She's staying healthy; everything's good.
- Thomas and Jennifer Calvery
 - Jennifer said to Steve that it was great to learn from him for the short time she's worked with him. She's appreciated the way he's managed this group and his calmness and his persistence. She's taking that with her; he's leading by example. Thomas said, “Thank you Steve. Don't evaporate.”
 - Thomas has a logout planned for June 6 that was supposed to be Birkenfeld but looks like it'll be Table Mountain instead. We'll see what happens.
 - Jennifer said there's nothing going on on her side, although she's been a bit out of touch because of work. She'll be happy to continue working on the Eagle Creek project, so hopefully the Trailhead Ambassador program can kick off as soon as the trail is ready to open up. She thanked Robert Caldwell for the stats (mileage, hours, logs, etc.). They'll be putting together visuals using the data for the THA program. Glad to be here and working and alive.
- Robert Caldwell
 - Been working around the house, that's about all.
 - He had to cancel his ONDA Steens trip scheduled for the first week of June. All their activities have been cancelled to-date, and with the guidance from the governor about not travelling outside one's area, they didn't think they could move forward with it.
- **Reopening Discussion**
 - Earlier today Robert sat in on a Webinar with the Oregon Trails Coalition on restarting trail work. They had folks from the Forest Service, Youth Corp, WTA and TKO. Dana will talk more about the proposed guidelines later. He took a look at them and there's a lot of good information there, but what he took from it was that we're going to have trouble interacting with the public. If we need to have spacing on the trail, we can manage that with our crews – which will probably have to be smaller than they've been in the past – but if we'll be interacting with the public – hikers – on some of the narrow trail sections, there's no way to pass people and maintain six feet of spacing. He thinks that'll be a serious concern when we do get back out.
 - Robert felt that if we haven't already, we should talk to our agency partners about getting out before the trails open up to the public and doing scouting and logouts. It would be safer for our crews to work, but not sure if it's feasible.
 - Dana agreed that we need to get some scouting done. PCTA did have a meeting today regarding reopening guidelines (which look a lot like the WTA and TKO guidelines). Specifics to be shared later. Edan said that we might be able to get in before the trails open; the trails opening in the Gorge will be opened little by little. They're targeting trails that don't have pinch-points. Eagle Creek will not be

opening any time soon because there's no passing room. They're also targeting the less-popular trails. The more difficult to manage trails will be opening later. Eagle Creek is also having a bridge replaced. It's in the parking lot and will be repaired this summer, but that puts us out until September. Edan is not ruling out having work parties in there before the trail reopens. He hasn't spoken with Mount Hood or Gifford Pinchot, but he doesn't think they'll have a problem with us scouting in the interim. Unlike the Gorge, their trails aren't closed, just the trailheads. Other than that, the use of tools will come in later. We'll probably do lower risk activities, then in Phase 2 we'll work on trails with only experienced volunteers. There will be other protocols – wearing masks, washing hands, moving our forms to electronic format so no one has to touch clipboards or pens. He reminded the group that this is all draft and could change.

- Leif mentioned that Thomas's logout on June 6 would probably be too early; we won't be touching saws until July at the earliest. Dana agreed. It's going to look a lot different than it used to, and we won't get in the things we generally do. We may need to lean on agency folks for assistance. Definitely cancelled is the Urban Youth Program for this year. The group is big.
- Dana said that Skyline/Sasquatch programs aren't cancelled – for now. We may have to think about having people bring their own food and limit group size, for example.
- Tami Sheets
 - Not a lot to report. She's been busy with work, and that's where her energy's been focused.
- Becky Wolf
 - She was also on the Oregon Trails Coalition call today. She thought it was very good, and got lots of information from it. There were 69 people logged in.
 - She also wanted to thank Steve. She is one of the "old timers" who was around when Steve started the chapter and they met in peoples' houses. Steve asked the horseman's group at that time if they'd take Warm Springs. They agreed to it, and have been happy that they did.
- Frank Jahn
 - He's been wearing ruts in the highway between here and Central Oregon since the last meeting. He's been doing a lot of hiking in the open BLM lands. He's also been doing more yard work than he's ever done. It looks like he won't be heading off to his National Park Service job this year, so we may have him for the summer if things ever open up.
- Rosemary Prescott
 - Not much has changed since last month. She's been running around her neighborhood. She bought some plywood and is building a climbing wall since the gyms are closed.
- Susan Tracy
 - She was glad to hear we were considering initial crews to be more experienced volunteers. She also liked what Pace said about getting in while the trails are closed.
 - Otherwise she's been running, walking and hiking in her neighborhood, she's done all the yardwork she can think of and has even done woodwork in her house. She's itching to get out. When we're allowed to get out, her priorities are to scout the Teakettle section of the PCT as well as her own section (Benson Plateau), work with Susan at Eagle Creek, and perhaps share a logout, although given our phased approach that's probably not going to happen for a while.
 - She's still hoping for a July 25 departure from Castle Crags headed northbound.
- Tammy Turner
 - She's doing OK, not doing much. She had a tree fall in her yard but doesn't have saws so there it remains.
- Nathan Zaremskiy
 - Not much. Observed the snow melting at Barlow Pass; looks like Timberline South should be open most of the way. That's about it.
- Kim Kovacs
 - Spoke about the trail she was hoping to foster (Wind River). She wasn't sure if it made it to Sue's list, or if, because she's an ACL, it's still considered unassigned. She scouted it not that long ago with Bill Canavan just before everything shut down. As soon as it's open she'll get out and do a complete write-up.
 - Otherwise, just running and walking in the neighborhood, and looking forward to being able to get out and hike and work.
- Tim Lagasse
 - Things have been busy at his place. It's been good that things have been closed because he's had time to work on his farm. Two months ago he planted trees and one month ago he was spraying weeds. It's

amazing how much distance you can cover with a spray wand in your hands. Now they're cutting Scotch broom – a labor intensive project. It does die when you cut it below ground level when it's blooming.

- He does have one concern: If we're getting out in July, there will be fire danger. They may not be able to use chainsaws, and we may have to be out with just crosscut saws – or wait until September or October when the fire danger dies down.
- Also, the Backcountry Horse Group received a cryptic email from the Mount Hood National Forest describing a new process for volunteers, and they're actually going to exclude volunteers for some time until they can get the process ironed out. It might be something Dana should discuss with the Forest Service, since neither her nor Dan understood it. It was a "Don't call us, we'll call you" kind of message. Dana asked him to forward it to her.
- Stacey Lee
 - Her big announcement was that she'll be working again at the end of May and won't be able to do day work parties.
 - She's excited that she was able to land the job. She's been doing yard work and worked on some raised beds. She's got two weeks before she has to rejoin the workforce. She'll probably concentrate on her Central Oregon sections. She's hoping to be able to help Susan with scouting, and can get a 5 – 7 mile section done in a day. She's hoping her August race will still take place.
- Chris Keil
 - Things are pretty much the same. He's still looking for work. He's getting lots of calls from recruiters, but no jobs. He's making a trip in June to Oklahoma to see his dad. Otherwise, lots of housework, got his garden finished; he's also doing some online training to keep himself in shape for the job market. Also, it's currently snowing at Timberline.
- Roberta May
 - Her new goat decided to say hi. The goats are getting along okay. She's fine; she built a turnpike – and it takes a lot longer when you're doing it by yourself. She's been doing a ton of yard work.
- Susan McDonnell
 - Also lots of yard work because it's there and it's outside. Once a week she goes to Forest Park – it's nice and close. Also once a week she's been doing trail work at Cooper Mountain Nature Park, which is part of Tualatin Hills Parks & Rec, so she's volunteering for her former employer. She's looking forward to when trails open up.
 - In response to Pace re hikers on the trail – It would be so much easier to do maintenance while the trails are closed. Maybe we can hold logouts with spotters?
 - She reminisced about a PCTA trail party with Pace and Tom Weimann. Pace asked her to cut a small yew tree that was hanging over the trail. It had to be over 100 years old and was very dense. Tom cut off a chunk of it and hiked it out (it was about the size of an elephant tusk). He carved it into the shape of a bear and gave it to Susan. It's on a round of yew with PCTA on it. It's a treasure. He counted the (very fine) rings – it was 103.
- Kim Owen
 - He and Pam are holed up in their hillside retreat. Itching to get out like everyone else, doing lots of yard work. He's part of a team of volunteer saw instructors called the Sustainable Instructor Pool, and their task is to figure out how they can make their saw instructor program better, how to recruit new instructors. They're in the process of creating a saw instructor handbook to help ease the process of becoming an instructor (both crosscut and/or chainsaw). He'd like anyone who's interested in becoming an instructor or finding out more about it to contact him. You don't have to be a super sawyer to be a good instructor, you just need to be able to communicate.
- Leif Hoven
 - He's been tied too much to his computer. He's hoping to get out sometime soon. The snow will delay scouting in some sections.
- Dana Hendricks
 - She moved her office. She's still in downtown Stevenson, but is now in the Port Building at the waterfront. She has an awesome river view out her window. She was kicked out of the building she was in when it was purchased by a new organization and it's being remodeled as a hotel. It was the first hotel in Stevenson so she's pleased that it's being restored for that purpose.
 - The tool shed at the Mazama's on hold for now. They're still planning to go ahead with it, but there are some complications to work out.
 - They're working on their administrative backlog right now. It feels good to get some of that stuff done, but it hurts to not be able to get out on the trail.
 - She already mentioned the card for David, and will also have one sent around for Steve.

- She thanked those who submitted comments about the safety protocols that have been mentioned. She stated that we don't have a lot of control over when the various units will be opening their piece of the PCT – it's all over the map. We're trying to stay consistent trail-wide as far as our programs go. There are already some places where the PCT is open to the public, and likely in our area there will be places where the PCT is open to the public before June 1. We'll deal with it as it comes.
- She thanked the group for being so resilient right now. It's a big deal. The trail will still be there for us, though. She thanked the group for their dedication.

Reports

Regional Rep (Dana)

- She wanted to repeat that the details for restarting trail work are still in draft and subject to change. Three of the things we're waiting for before we can even scout - 1) We have to make sure our volunteer agreements are still valid. They were actually put on hold for a while at the federal level, and we're now reviewing them at the regional level. 2) We have to make sure that we comply with state stay-at-home orders and guidance on group sizes. 3) We also have to make sure the PCTA can supply the required PPE and sanitizing equipment we're going to need out there. Those things could happen before or after June 1. We're not sure Phase 1 will happen on June 1 – but it could potentially be really short when it does kick in. But it's still kinda mushy. Thanks for hanging in there.

Volunteer Coordinator (Rosemary)

- The event form has been reformatted into a fillable form so that when we submit it to her to post on Eventbrite it'll have all the information she needs without her having to do a lot of back and forth.

Foster Trails (Sue)

- Discussed during Round the Room

Outreach and Events (Jennifer)

- Jennifer's company manufactures sanitizing solutions. She'll see if they're willing to make a donation, or perhaps provide product at cost.

Trail Skills College (Tammy)

- Tammy dropped off the call, but Leif said that TSC is cancelled for the year. He also mentioned that any on-trail training we can do with new volunteers would be good.

Training and Safety (Dana)

- Ditto what Leif said.

Tools (Terry)

- We don't have much in the way of PPE in the tool caches. If we're going to get more we'll need to discuss it. We lost John Arp as the Stevenson tool cache host last month. He needs a fourth for the tool team. It's complicated work but fun.
- Thomas Calvery offered to fill the Stevenson tool cache host slot vacated by John Arp.

Saw Program (Leif)

- They've been having meetings, and he's been involved with the education and policy teams. They're hoping to get something together that can be accessed online to keep volunteers focused.

Budget (Little Brown, Susan McDonnell)

- Bill was absent, but Susan reported. She thought we had a 2020 budget but it wasn't making sense to her... and that's because it wasn't the 2020 budget. The 2020 budget has been delayed.

Crew Leader Development (Pace, Little Brown, Susan McDonnell)

- Susan is working with Bill on this.

Stats (Pace)

- Our numbers are way down; all we have is admin hours. No crews, no trail hours.

	Apr 2020	Apr 2019	Apr 2018	Apr 2017	YTD Apr 2020	YTD Apr 2019	YTD Apr 2018	YTD Apr 2017
Total Volunteer Hours	90	1,830	2,641	1,389	1,591	3,491	7,870	3,229
Specialized hours		431	504	245	240	694	1,311	478
Number of Trail Crews		10	16	5	12	16	45	16
Miles Logged out		7	5	7	7	15	13	21
Logs cleared, crosscut					10			
Logs cleared, chainsaw					69			
Miles Maintained		5	9	3	13	16	30	19
Feet of Rehab/Recon		2,975	7,635	150	1,970	4,698	21,667	1,000
Volunteer hours by Category								
Trail Maint - crews & scouting		1,008	1,769	534	930	1,477	4,482	1,413
Trail Maint - support	90	223	400	416	533	975	1,325	1,244
Trail Skills Training (w/o TSC)		599	456	439	54	995	1,938	475
Outreach Events			16		74	44	126	97
	<u>90</u>	<u>1,830</u>	<u>2,641</u>	<u>1,389</u>	<u>1,591</u>	<u>3,491</u>	<u>7,870</u>	<u>3,229</u>

Final Comments and Discussion Items

- Sue Melone asked how rules will get communicated when we get the green light? She suggested developing a strategy for when we meet next. Dana said there would probably be a rollout where you'll receive an email about a Webinar, and you'll probably get a document as well. The earliest would be 10 days from now, but it'll probably be a little longer than that – that's her guess. Leif added that there should be a Leadership Meeting in that timeframe, too, which will help. We'll have more information at the next meeting – so think positive.
- Frank Jahn asked about how Thunder Island is doing? Terry said that they're doing carryout and delivery, and the construction on the new building is continuing. Dana added that they're hurting but they're OK for now.
- Stacy said that she'd be willing to help with the Facebook group; she managed a large one several years ago, so she's got the skills. Steve said he'd talk to her more about it offline.
- Steve thanked the group for coming. He thought it went well, and was glad it wasn't as painful as he feared it would be a few months ago. We'll likely need to use Teams again next month. Ruth asked if there were thoughts about holding the meetings online routinely, and Leif responded that yes, we'll be looking at that, and there will likely be more of this type of thing in the future.

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. **None** due to pandemic response

Other Events

1. **None** due to pandemic response

Future Events

1. **June 10, 6:45 PM:** Caretaker meeting, location TBD
2. **July 3-9:** Columbia Gorge (Skyline Volunteer Vacation)
3. **July 17-23:** Sisters Mirror Lake (Skyline Volunteer Vacation)
4. **July 24-31:** Jeff Park 1 (Skyline Volunteer Vacation)
5. **July 31-August 6:** Jeff Park 2 (Skyline Volunteer Vacation)
6. **August 7-14:** Jeff Park 3 (Skyline Volunteer Vacation)
7. **August 14-20:** Jeff Park 4 (Skyline Volunteer Vacation)
8. **August 28-September 3:** North Goat Rocks (Sasquatch Volunteer Vacation)
9. **September 11-17:** South Goat Rocks (Sasquatch Volunteer Vacation)

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)
- **4 Fosterings:** ➤ Grand Meadow (Kim and Pam Owen) ➤ Birkenfeld Mountain (Thomas Calvary), ➤ Table Mountain (Thomas Calvary) ➤ Teakettle Springs (Susan Tracy), ➤ Gorge Trail 400 (Roberta May)
- **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.