

Mount Hood Chapter, PCTA Caretaker Meeting Agenda

September 9, 2020, 6:45 pm

Location: Microsoft Teams

Attended: Robert Caldwell, Thomas Calver, Bill Canavan, Dana Hendricks, Peter Hoffman, Leif Hovin, Frank Jahn, Renee Janssen, Todd Janssen, Chris Keil, Diane Kelso, Kim Kovacs, Stacey Lee, Roberta May, Susan McDonnell, Kim Owen, Pam Owen, Steve Queen, Hilary Renshaw, Rick Schmidt, Susan Tracy, Ruth Weston

Notes: Kim Kovacs

Welcome

- Steve welcomed the group.

Regional Rep Report (Dana)

- Dana said that she knows we've seen a lot of messages from her about the fires. She feels it's like COVID all over again; the forests are falling like dominos as far as being closed. All the California forests are closed; the Willamette closed yesterday morning, Mount Hood in the afternoon, and this morning it was the GP, and tomorrow will be the Gorge. Out of those, the GP is the only one where the PCT is NOT closed (yet – she's not sure if that'll change). The wind is supposed to die down, but it's still extremely dry and hot, so the red flag warnings are still in effect.
- Dana showed her Google Earth screen. There's a layer you can get called MODIS Fire Detections (a satellite detection of fire, so it gives you a good idea of the fire perimeter). She showed the fires down in mid-Oregon, and explained that yellow is where the fire was yesterday (or more than 24 hours ago). Orange is within the last 24 hours, the red is the last 0-12 hours. It showed exponential growth across the board. She's been busy just trying to keep on top of the closures and restrictions. We learned with the Eagle Creek fire that fire can be good for the landscapes; a lot of them haven't burned in a long time and are out of their cycle of burning every 200 years or so. If some of this burns at low intensity we could end up with a nice mosaic that would help the ecological diversity – so she's just going to choose to think about it that way.
- The Gorge is willing to let us have work parties while the trails are closed to the public. She's not sure how long that'll last, but right now that's what they're saying.
- Kim Owen asked about the Mount Adams district. Dana confirmed that that's still open for trail work. The PCT isn't included in their closure and they haven't suspended volunteer activities. But it IS an IFPL 4, so we won't be out there with chainsaws. Kim said that that whole area's already been logged out so he was just planning on trail work.
- Dana also brought up the Big Hollow fire near the Observation Peak trailhead – about 15 miles from her house.

Chapter Chair Report (Take I)

- Leif was delayed by helping with evacuations, so Steve reported
- They had a Leadership Team meeting on Wednesday. For the remainder of the year they'll have them monthly instead of every other month.
- Sue Melone is now a member of the Leadership Team (congratulations to Sue!).
- Dana mentioned that they're revising some of the job descriptions in an attempt to refine how each role interfaces with PCTA staff. They'll be taking on the Crew Leader and Caretaker job descriptions next. They'll be releasing a draft in the next month or so, which they hope will help clear up some of the questions that have come up about people's roles in the chapter.
- Dana asked if anyone had attended the intro to trail maintenance web class. She heard it went really well. Connor, one of the regional reps, made a really adorable video where he demonstrates slough and berm removal – and it's double speed. And then a hiker comes by and he stands up and puts on his mask and says hello. So yeah, we have some more teaching resources available online, and we'll probably keep developing that.
- She also asked if we'd seen pictures of the new Southern Terminus. The border wall has been replaced, and it has a different look than it had before. (Steve said it couldn't have gotten much worse; it was pretty ugly before.) Dana said you can now see through it into Mexico, which is an improvement. It doesn't support graffiti, and it doesn't say Army Corp of Engineers anymore. It's a reminder of our geopolitical situation that she finds really odd. It's a lot closer to the actual terminus. Steve shared a picture of the southern terminus that he found on the Internet while Dana was talking.
- Sue McDonnell asked if the training is available online somewhere, or if you have to sign up for a training to view it. Dana responded that she didn't know, but if there's a link she'll send us all an e-mail that'll include it.

Trail Tip

- Stacey put together a PowerPoint presentation on how to scout a trail from a trail running perspective. She said scouting when hiking and scouting when running aren't really all that different. She's always focused on the trail itself and not on the scenery. She's looking out for hazards she might trip over or run into (she actually earned her trail name – George of the Jungle - by always running into little trees and snags). It helps her understand how much clearance a trail needs; if she can run into it with an arm, for example, it's obviously not wide enough for a horse.
- The tools she uses are: 1) a watch or other GPS measuring device; 2) a small notebook and pen; 3) a sewing measuring tape to get an accurate estimate of the size of a slide or log; 4) her smartphone for its camera.
- She demoed how she recorded one example – a cleanup that's needed of a waterbar in the North Mount Adams area, 1.49 miles in from the Potato Hill trailhead at Road 5603. She starts right at the trailhead, almost always the trailhead from which someone would start a work party. She notes the distance traveled to the obstacle, and also makes a note at every trail junction (a lesson learned from a previous scouting trip). She takes photos and notes any significant details, and then notes if special tools would be needed. She takes a photo of her watch, and then a photo of the obstacle, and correlates her notes to that. She's often scouting for others, so she needs to be very clear and accurate. Her naming convention is always the trailhead name plus the mileage location, which she then adds to an Excel data file. She then uploads the Excel file to her Google Drive for sharing.
- The data was used by Mark Scott and his team this year, to determine what tools they needed and how to approach the problems on that trail.
- Pace asked that she list more details in the Work Overview section of the PCTA Project Report.
- Chris Keil mentioned that it's helpful to put in landmarks as well ("This log was near this bridge...").
- Stacey also taught herself how to capture log size without a pen – she learned how to count in binary on her fingers. She took a picture of her fingers near the logs to help her note the log sizes. See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Finger_binary.

Chapter Chair Report (Take II)

- Leif joined the meeting. He said that he's not turning the video on since there are a lot of evacuees in town sucking up wifi and phone service so the internet is slow. Mount Hood is closed for everything. He'd just completed a logout, and he's curious as to whether or not the wind storm undid all their efforts.
- We've got 21 days to get hours in for the fiscal year to the Forest Service – so get your admin hours in!
- He has been working with the PCTA leadership folks and Dana, Allen and Jen. They discussed that our chapter leadership and PCTA leadership haven't had a good chance to understand our relationship and roles and responsibilities, so we're in the process of doing a RACI which will split out who's responsible/accountable, how to coordinate with each other, and how we inform each other. That work is ongoing. There will be a couple of meetings between Leif and Dana, and then a couple of meetings with the staff.
- Sue Melone joined the leadership team. She's not present tonight because she's hosting Dave Roe and his family who evacuated from Still Creek. Best wishes to Dave and everyone else who's impacted by this – the Riverside Fire. Leif said the skies to his south are black – it looked like nighttime even when it wasn't. It has an orange tint now.

Round the Room

- Leif Hovin
 - He and Bex spent Labor Day weekend hiking their trail to do some crosscut work. They have a saw that was donated to the Mount Hood Chapter. They took out a 6.5' bucking saw, and also got a super-sweet deal on a 58" single-person D-handle. They carried that one in from Lolo Pass and cached their tools and then hiked in from Indian Springs, covering the 14 miles, including Buck Peak. They had 12 logs plus two on Buck Peak. They had a really good fir – 60' suspended, top bind – that was challenging. They had to go back in on Sunday to finish it up.
- Ruth Weston
 - Last weekend they went to Womack, Oregon to watch the lawnmower races. That's about the most exciting thing going on. Leif said he was surprised because he'd have thought they were impacted by the White River fire. Ruth said that they saw lots of firefighters and firefighting camps, but they still held the races.
- Susan McDonnell
 - She was not at last month's meeting, so her report for August: She got out twice to scout, once at Indian Springs, once at Eagle Creek. She was on three logouts with Pace and others. They worked on the Muddy Fork, Wahtum and Twin Lakes. She spent three days on Upper Eagle – logout, brushing and tread work.

- This month, she was still doing logouts with Pace and Sue and Tom – three logouts at Benson, Upper Muddy and Twin Lakes. She spent another three days at Eagle, a three-day project on the Middle Eagle section doing some heavy brush removal and a little bit of tread work. It's looking a lot better, but there's still a long way to go.
 - They did encounter a couple of hikers coming down from Indian Springs who'd lost the trail because of the vegetation. So it was good to have a report from a trail user, even though there weren't supposed to be any trail users there.
 - They were scouting for a project for this Saturday on the Lower Eagle Creek trail working on some slides and debris/rock removal, brushing out. She's also supposed to have a four-day on Middle Eagle next week, but she suspects that won't happen because it's on the Mount Hood Forest, and it probably won't be open. She's not willing to cancel it until Monday. Let her know if you'd like to get out in the Gorge. We can only go in on weekends, since there's a bridge crew working on the suspension bridge working at the mouth of the trailhead.
- Susan Tracy
 - She wanted to thank Pace, Susan, Sue Melone and Tom, who logged out Benson while she was recovering from back surgery. She's having a great recovery, doing lots of PT and getting stronger. She's looking forward to getting out again, but probably not next week because of the closures.
- Todd and Renee Janssen
 - They had a very successful logout at their Little Crater Lake section with Sue Melone and Pace. They thought they might cover five miles out and back, but ended up covering 10 (because Pace wouldn't let them stop ;-)). They cut out 39 logs, and it was their first time on a crosscut crew so it was a lot of fun.
- Stacy Lee
 - Did her first crew lead with mid-Oregon chapter and did a logout on her section at Three-Fingered Jack. They hiked in three miles and logged out eight logs; there are still 20 left. They were hoping to get back out there but that's out of the question at this point in time. It was a good day and she learned a lot.
 - She also mentioned that was the first time she met Arden Corey; their first aid cache is at his home in Mill City (he's safe, but his house isn't). She's also concerned about the chapter's tool cache in Idanha, but that's not really important compared to everything else and they'll worry about that later.
 - It's looking likely that they're done in mid-Oregon for the rest of the year.
 - She'd still like to get the last four logs off the Teakettle section, once the trailhead at Herman Creek reopens.
- Roberta May
 - She's getting used to not volunteering; she hasn't been able to get out at all with PCTA or any of her other volunteer organizations because she got a puppy. She feels very fortunate that she still has a home, and feels very bad for those like David Roe and Arden Corey whose homes are in jeopardy or gone.
- Dana Hendricks
 - Nothing additional to report.
- Thomas Calverv
 - Jennifer is working tonight in Seattle. He hasn't done much on the trail. He did hike up Red Mountain which was fun. He also helped a friend cut down some trees, which was also fun. Otherwise, nothing to report.
 - Trail Skills College – Nothing to report, he's not sure in what form or when, but they're planning on it somehow, at some time. Hopefully they can make something happen. He wouldn't expect it to look like it has in years past, but it'll look like something... if it happens. Dana added that normally the committee would have started meeting by now, but they want to wait probably until January, when they'll make a call as to whether it'll be in-person or virtual.
- Bill Canavan
 - Hasn't done much on the trail; he's been staying home away from the crowds. He did go to Hamilton Mountain last week.
 - He's also working on the tools; we got a \$7000 grant from the Meyer Foundation or Trust to buy tools for our chapter and the mid-Oregon chapter. He spent maybe 30 hours doing that last month. He's also helping Ellen with the database test. Steve mentioned that Rosemary is also a tester for the database.
- Chris Keil
 - He was out on the 16th and scouted then entire length of the Paradise Trail. It looked good; a Forest Service crew came in and did the first two miles of it. He thought it was pretty sloppy; they left things like logs half in the trail (he did provide feedback to Rachel). The upper part of the trail was in pretty good shape. There were 14 logs down, which is pretty light compared to other years. Rachel asked if her crew could do the logout, and Chris said sure. He hasn't heard back, but either they went up before the fires or it's on hold now. He'll check back with her on it. It was nice to get out – the flowers were at their peak.
- Kim and Pam Owen

- They missed the last meeting because they were busy evacuating. Right before that meeting they did some work on Mount Adams at Grand Meadows, and then they hiked into Bob and Jane's section. They cut out the "Christmas Tree" section in the rain.
 - Kim had knee surgery after that, which turned out better than hoped.
 - They're hoping to get back up to the Grand Meadows section to do tread work as soon as conditions permit. It'll just be the two of them, so the COVID restrictions won't be cumbersome.
 - He's also been doing a lot of radio work with people. He asked if we thought the crew leaders would be interested in radio training; let him know. Susan McDonnell thanked him for his help with her radio.
- Kim Kovacs
 - Nothing new on her section.
 - She did a logout at the Clackamas River with TKO, but it's now toast.
 - She also got her orange hat w/ WTA.
 - She's been doing a lot of Zoom meeting with the other trail organizations.
- Frank Jahn
 - He spent the entire month of August scouting the PCT in Washington (by way of hiking from the Columbia River to Canada). It's in excellent shape, except for the one section they call "The International Embarrassment." It's right in the heart of the Glacier Peak Wilderness, about midway between Stevens Pass and Rainy Pass – very remote. The trail is in utterly wretched condition; there should be signs there that say, "Trail Not Maintained Beyond This Point," and there should definitely be signs that say, "No Stock Allowed" since there's no way horses could get through it. There are huge blowdowns, streams running through the trail, brush so thick it towered 6' over your head and blocked the view of your feet.
 - They had beautiful weather almost the entire time; no smoke, no fires. He ran into Carol Dearholt and her husband. Carol is a recent caretaker for the Mount Hood Chapter and many at tonight's meeting know Carol. He passed on a hello from her to the group.
 - He's in the "Get Ready" phase of evacuation. He's about a mile from Carver and two hours ago he saw a plume of smoke not that far away, but he thinks they got that one out quickly. Right now he's OK, but the fires are a little too close for comfort.
 - Dana added that Michael DeCramer is well aware of "The International Embarrassment" section and they were supposed to work on it this summer, but the crews got canceled due to COVID. Frank replied that he did see a Forest Service crew just beyond that point, as had a former Mount Hood chapter volunteer he ran into (Steve said that was Chris Sanderson/"Freefall") who also saw a group of North 350 Blades out as well, so there are people out there doing maintenance.
- Hilary Renshaw
 - Hasn't done any trail work, just a couple of hikes. She's been helping out with the New Seasons stores, first with COVID and now with the fires. The Happy Valley store had to evacuate, but she thinks they'll be able to reopen tomorrow.
- Peter Hoffmann and Diane Kelso
 - No trail work this month; they did their logout in early August. They did hike their section twice, but from Top Spur around toward McNeil one time, and down the Muddy Fork section the second time. They saw some of the work Pace had done at the Muddy Fork. It was very busy, especially for mid-week, and especially at McNeil.
 - Otherwise, they've been busy with the blueberry and peach U-Pick operation. They're currently about 2 miles from the Level 3 evacuation around Barton Park. They spent the day doing cleanup around the farm from the wind storm to reduce the amount of fuel on the ground, but they wouldn't be surprised if they did get evacuated.
- Rick Schmidt
 - Commented on Stacey's trail name; it reminded him of someone he met whose name was "Faceplant."
 - Hasn't done any trail work, just a lot of yard work.
- Robert Caldwell
 - Also in a Level 1 area and can see a lot of smoke coming over the ridge to the south. He had a lot of blow-down due to Monday's wind storm, which took two days to sweep up.
 - He had five logouts: Susan's Benson Plateau section; Todd and Renee's Little Crater; two trips on his section – Top Spur and Ramona; and a second logout at Twin Lakes, where he had a 24" and a 30" log to clear out along with a couple of smaller ones. He scouted Timberline Lodge South (the Forest Service had already logged it), and helped Susan scout Eagle Creek on Monday. He was supposed to have a logout today on Ruth's section, Timberline North, but it got cancelled due to the closures.
- Rosemary Prescott
 - She scheduled just one crew on Eventbrite before leaving town.
 - She went to Idaho to backpack the Sawtooth Mountains, but the smoke from all the fires in California was so bad she couldn't see the mountains, so she went to the Wallowas for four days instead. She had backpack plans this weekend which are now cancelled.

- Her birthday is on Friday, and she just bought herself a puppy yesterday, which she named Loki after the god of mayhem.

Leif added that because he had a radio, he was able to call Dispatch from Lolo Pass to report an abandoned campfire that had gone outside of its collapsed fire ring. He was able to listen in to hear that they did check, and that they found no heat/no smoke. (Kim heard it via his scanner.) Leif said that even though there's a lot of talk about using Spot, the radio is still a valuable tool. He also ran into quite a few thru-hikers.

Other Reports

Foster Trails (Sue Melone)

- No report.

Volunteer Coordinator (Rosemary Prescott)

- No additional report.

Outreach and Events (Jennifer Calverv)

- No report.

Trail Skills College (Thomas Calverv)

- No additional report.

Training and Safety (Dana Hendricks)

- No report.

Tools (Terry Hill), Radios (Kim Owen)

- Kim has already talked about radios, and Bill's spoken about the tool purchase. Thomas asked Bill to let him know if tools need to be taken out to the cache and painted, and if so, let him know. Bill said it would be after the repairs to the Interstate Bridge are complete.

Saw Program (Leif Hovin)

- No report.

Technology (Steve Queen)

- Added Sue Melone as a caretaker on the About Us page.
- Moved Kim and Pam Owen as caretakers on the About Us page.
- Have started the move from Google Drive to Box, and it's been OK. Google offers a significantly better experience, but it's working out. He's actually started using Google Docs through Box, and it's been useful.
- The Mount Adams - North and Sedum Ridge caretaker sections that have been split up have been updated on the Caretakers page.
- The trail status spreadsheet didn't import very well, so it'll have to be redone. Please check to make sure your section says what it should. It's helpful if you put the status of your section in your report so he doesn't have to infer things. The less he has to infer the better. The link is hot, so Leif can send it to our agency partners.
- They started transfer of the role of updating TCPs to Pace. Steve created a document that explains how that works. Next up is his documentation on the tasks associated with the web site.
- If you see anything that needs to be updated please let him know.
- He mentioned that we've been using Teams, but that'll go away when he does so it should probably be changed sooner rather than later. He asked Dana to get together with him to formally transition to something that's officially in the "PCTA House" so whoever's doing the facilitating has control over it.

Social Media (Stacey Lee)

- Been busy updating the web page with closures. It's usually pretty quiet, nothing significant has been posted. Going forward, she's heard comments about what we could be using our page for, and she wanted to put it out there: What do we want to use our chapter's page for? Obviously promoting work crews, once we're back to having larger work parties and promoting them on Eventbrite. Also communicating trail closures and other items related to trails in our area. If there are other things, please let her know.

Budget (Bill Canavan)

- We still have money – he thinks about \$4100. It's the first time since he's been doing the budget that there's been this large a surplus, and he expects that'll roll over into next year.

Crew Leader Development (Susan McDonnell)

- There haven't been a lot of opportunities for crew leaders to be developed. It's good that Stacey has gotten out, and Todd and Renee have been out, and Graham made it out with Susan for his first stint as assistant crew leader. But still, not a lot going on.

Stats (Robert Caldwell)

- We're looking better. We had a good number of trail crews (12 this year vs. 13 last year) – but they're all small crews due to COVID. Our total hours are still down. We're still out and doing things, but not a lot of people are out.

Mount Hood Chapter Stats - August 2020								
	Aug 2020	Aug 2019	Aug 2018	Aug 2017	YTD 2020	YTD Aug 2019	YTD Aug 2018	YTD Aug 2017
Total Volunteer Hours	752	1,953	1,967	2,135	3,271	14,423	22,242	14,530
Specialized hours	244	348	279	294	666	2,916	4,206	2,200
Number of Trail Crews	12	13	14	8	34	87	140	85
Miles Logged out	36	21	10	4	59	227	186	159
Logs cleared, crosscut	126	49			166	271		
Logs cleared, chainsaw		4			161	403		
Miles Maintained	5	7	6	14	19	27	98	68
Feet of Rehab/Recon	2,690	5,140	6,295	5,000	6,350	19,605	57,744	13,594
Volunteer hours by Category								
Trail Maint - crews & scouting	669	1,528	1,314	1,723	2,205	8,606	13,967	8,429
Trail Maint - support	83	174	372	289	847	1,870	2,609	2,442
Trail Skills Training			52		144	3,568	5,247	3,381
Outreach Events		251	230	123	74	379	420	279
	<u>752</u>	<u>1,953</u>	<u>1,967</u>	<u>2,135</u>	<u>3,271</u>	<u>14,423</u>	<u>22,242</u>	<u>14,530</u>

Final Comments and Discussion Items

- Dana presented Susan McDonnell with an award: Regional Trail Maintainer of the Year. Susan Tracy submitted a nomination, and read her nomination to the group. Dana added an anecdote about the Eagle Creek trail, about asking Susan for information on how many hours she thought it would take to get it back in shape after the fire. It came out to something like 48 crew days. Dana started making suggestions on which groups could be recruited to do the work, but Susan said she'd do it personally. And she has. She's also stepped up helping with new ACLs. She'll be presented with a lovely coffee table book about the PCTA, which has a bookplate on the inside cover thanking her for her work on the Eagle Creek Trail and for her mentorship. The group went off mute to offer enthusiastic applause. Susan thanked the group for the award, but also said it can't be done without good people on the crews, and thanked the group back for their participation.

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. **July 11:** Little Crater Lake Scouting: Todd and Renee Janssen
2. **July 18:** Warm Springs River Logout: Tim Lagasse
3. **August 8:** Trout Creek scout/logout: Sue Melone
4. **August 12:** Sedum Ridge South: Sue Melone
5. **August 14:** Timberline South scouting: Robert Caldwell
6. **August 16:** Paradise Park Trail Scout: Chris Keil
7. **August 19:** Benson Plateau Logout: Robert Caldwell
8. **August 22:** Little Crater Lake logout: Robert Caldwell
9. **August 24:** Upper Muddy Fork Logout: Robert Caldwell
10. **August 26:** Muddy Fork & Upper Muddy Fork logout: Robert Caldwell
11. **August 26-28:** Middle Eagle Creek Brushing & Treadwork: Susan McDonnell
12. **September 2:** Twin Lakes Logout #2: Robert Caldwell
13. **September 4-6:** Lolo Pass to Indian Springs Logout: Leif Hovin
14. **September 7:** Lower Eagle Creek Scouting: Susan McDonnell & Robert Caldwell

Other Events

1. **August 13, 12:00-12:45 PM:** Crew Leader Q&A (Zoom)

Future Events

1. **October 14:** Caretaker meeting (Location TBD)

Notes

PCT Vacancies

1. Lava Spring
2. Adams Glacier
3. Steamboat Lake (fostered by Roberta Caldwell)
4. Twin Buttes (fostered by Roberta Caldwell)
5. Panther Creek (fostered by Bill Canavan)
6. Wind River (fostered by and reserved for Kim Kovacs)
7. Trout Creek (fostered by Sue Melone)
8. Sedum Ridge - South (fostered by Sue Melone)
9. Birkenfeld Mountain (fostered by Thomas Calver)
10. Table Mountain (fostered by Thomas Calver)
11. Teakettle Springs
12. Benson Plateau (unfostered; reserved for Susan Tracy)
13. Timberline - South (fostered by Hilary Renshaw)
14. Twin Lakes (reserved for Graham Hulbert)
15. Little Crater Lake (fostered by Renee and Todd Janssen)

Non-PCT Vacancies

1. Gorge Trail 400 (fostered by Roberta May with Nathaniel Brody's team)
2. Lower Eagle Creek Trail 440 (fostered by Susan McDonnell)
3. Upper Eagle Creek Trail 440 (fostered by Susan McDonnell and reserved for Albert Iggi)
4. Indian Springs Trail 435

Columbia 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.