

NATIONAL SMOKEJUMPER ASSOCIATION

TRAIL MAINTENANCE PROGRAM

ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2017

December 2017



2017 NSA Trails Program Volunteer of the Year (VOY) Nominees

The NSA Trail Crew Committee is very pleased to report this year that we will have the opportunity to honor two stalwarts of the trails program as co-volunteers of the year of 2017 for their outstanding continuous contributions to this important ongoing program for the US Forest Service and related national entities that we annually serve.

The selectees this year are Fred Cooper, North Cascades 1962 and Steve Carlson, Idaho City, 1962. Steve was our original nominee since he announced earlier that he is

retiring from the position as editor and coordinator of the NSA Trail Crew Year End Annual Report that he has worked so diligently at for the past 6 years. He is stepping down due to current health conditions of lung and brain cancer which he also reports that, thankfully, seem to be stable at this time but do take its toll. Soon thereafter, Fred also announced his retirement from the trails coordinator position and will step down in December.

The committee had Fred in their "back pocket" for 2018 for all his hard work after Jon McBride died in June 2010 and helped in pulling the program together at that critical time and ensuring that the 20 plus annual projects since then, continued to get done in the future without skipping a beat. However, his announced departure from the program precludes that option. Therefore, due to these coincidental circumstances, it was voted to select two nominees for this year. This decision was easily reached and wholeheartedly concurred in by all members of the committee. It should be noted however, that this is not intended to set a

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Base Abbreviations

Anchorage.....	ANC
Boise.....	NIFC
Cave Junction.....	CJ
Fairbanks.....	FBX
Grangeville.....	GAC
Idaho City.....	IDC
La Grande.....	LGD
McCall.....	MYC
Missoula.....	MSO
Redding.....	RDD
Redmond.....	RAC
West Yellowstone....	WYS
Winthrop.....	NCSB

Fred Cooper
Co-Volunteer of the Year - 2017

Fred has been volunteering with the National Smokejumper Association (NSA) since 1999 when he began serving as the Membership Coordinator until 2006 when John McDaniels took over the Membership position. During those years, Fred was getting sales pitches from Jon McBride for working on the Trails program. He was living in Oregon but Jon asked him to be Squad Leader for the Silvertip Cabin project on the Spotted Bear Ranger District in 2007. In May 2008, he and his wife Cherie moved to Missoula to be near her family. She spent many years telling and showing him how nice it was in Montana from her experience growing up in the Bitterroot Valley and Missoula. Cherie's pitch was taken, move made and the ink barely dry on the buy-sell agreement and Jon was at the door and had him roped in. Jon always did know a good man when he saw one.

When Jon suddenly died in June 2010, Fred was one of several who volunteered to assure the Program continued. His primary role has been as Planning Coordinator for an average of 20 projects per year, working with numerous National Forests, National Parks, the Forest Service Regional Office in Missoula, and the National Office securing a long-term Memorandum of Understanding between the Forest Service and the NSA. He emphasized though that the projects would not have been possible without a tremendous amount of diligent and patient work by project Squad Leaders who are responsible for getting boots on the ground.

Fred was a rookie at North Cascades in 1962 while attending Oregon State. When the Redmond Air Center opened in 1964, he asked for a transfer to be closer to his home in Oregon. Francis Lufkin approved and he continued at RAC until 1967 when he traded his canopy and Squad Leader position for a career in Human Resources (HR). Fred began on the Deschutes National Forest and after serving as HR Officer on three Forests and in the Regional Office in Portland, OR for 25 years, he and Cherie transferred to Washington D.C. There, he worked 10 years in HR policy, ending as Director of Recruitment & Employment policy for the Secretary of Agriculture. After "retiring" in 1996, he started a private practice in Oregon

as an HR Contracting Consultant for Federal Land Management Agencies in the Western United States. Fred credits his Smokejumping experience and the leaders of that program in preparing him for the physical and mental challenges he used the rest of his career.

Fred has announced that he is stepping down from his role as TRAMPS Planning Coordinator and retiring again. He says he will still be involved with the NSA, writing about the history of Smokejumping. He has written a draft manuscript about the 16 men who participated in the 1939 Parachute Jumping Experiment. He has started writing the History of the Redmond Air Center and he and Barry Hicks are discussing writing about the founding and history of the NSA.

It must be noted that without Steve and Fred's significant contributions to this vital program through these past years, the notoriety and success enjoyed would not have been possible. Their diligence and professionalism were unparalleled. However, with the abundance of talented personnel that the program is fortunate to have in its ranks, the NSA believes that outstanding replacements will be successfully identified and in that regard, several excellent candidates are possibly already in the loop.



Fred Cooper, smiling on his way to a project.

Steve Carlson
Co-volunteer of the year 2017

Steve was born in Seattle and raised in Roseburg, Oregon. His motivation to become a smokejumper was somewhat of a veiled epiphany more than a huge desire to leap out of aircraft. He said the first was when he was on a suppression crew in 1961 that helped pack out a jumper with a broken leg. It was up a steep rocky hill to a waiting chopper. The second was getting pulled away from dinner to hike to a fire. After hiking half the night and finding nothing, they got back to the truck. The boss met them and said to take the other trail! They did and ended up sleeping somewhere in the timber. At sunrise they saw the smoke and hiked up the up the mountain through heavy rhododendron that he said, "was determined to separate me from the crosscut saw on my pack". Upon reaching the fire and resting a bit, they looked up and saw a guy they didn't know coming toward them. They asked where did he come from. He pointed to the sky and an aircraft and another jumper hanging under a chute. Situation assessed....conclusion reached, that program was for me he said. The next summer he trained at McCall and got assigned to Idaho City. He jumped there until Aug. 1964, when he joined the Marine Corps. He returned to Idaho City in Aug. 1967 when he got out of the Marine Corps

Steve went through boot camp at MCRD San Diego and then to the Recon Battalion in Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii. After a month or two, his unit boarded a transport ship headed west bound for Okinawa where they trained for about a month and then back aboard a ship. After two days of sailing the South China Sea, the ship's captain got on the bull horn and reported that their sealed orders were just opened and said "congratulations, you are going to write a new chapter in the history book". Steve said that the US papers reported 50,000 Marines landed in Danang. The following day his platoon landed in Hue City and set up camp at Phu Bai. Two months later they moved to Danang and then on to Chu Lai providing recon support for that vital Marine air base for the rest on his tour. He spent the last year of his enlistment at El Toro USMCAS.

Steve married his wife Dianna in late 1967 where the two of them continued their ed-

ucations at Oregon State and graduated in 1970. During college Steve again jumped in Idaho city. Upon graduation they both got teaching jobs in Grants Pass, OR so Steve transferred to the Cave Junction jump base. On his first fire jump, he hung up and his chute slipped, fell 25 feet shattering an ankle and thus terminating his jumping career. This segued into a 30-year career in computer operations with Weyerhaeuser Co.

The NSA program, specifically TRAMPS has been a huge beneficiary of that talent. He has maintained an email list for since 2008 that has grown to more than 350 folks who help with or are interested in the trail crew program.

In 2004, Steve got bit by the trail "bug" and was on crews every year through 2016. He wrote the report for several projects he was on. In 2013 he took on the production of the Trail Crew Annual Report projects which entails significant computer know how and massive hours of assimilation for publication which is vital for the USFS and related entities to see the value that our program provides.

It is reported that Steve is also an accomplished poet and has done many readings which all enjoy and is also a very knowledgeable astronomer with a powerful telescope that he enjoys sharing on projects and exploring the dark without city light deterrents.

Thanks Steve.



Steve enjoying lunch on the job

Program Summary for 2017 Fred Cooper (NCSB 62)

We had 21 projects this year with over 150 volunteers contributing nearly 175 work-weeks of their personal time. In addition, you volunteers contributed considerable personal travel time getting to the project sites at your personal expense. In addition to working on National Forests, we had projects for two National Parks and one for the state of New York, Department of Environmental Conservation.

As usual, several of the crews were short-handed and we routinely have more requests for projects than we can accommodate so it is requested that whenever you have the opportunity, recruit for more volunteers, including cooks. The U.S. Hot Shots Association has been working on organizing themselves the last few years and they are having their first Conference in San Diego, California in February 2018. We will be inviting members of their organization to sign up for our projects in 2018.

Don't forget, the key to the success of TRAMPS, is the Squad Leaders. They are the primary front-line individuals completing project plans, recruiting, project logistics, ensuring that their project report gets written and submitted for the annual report, and doing the administrative work with the sponsoring Agency. TRAMPS is a highly decentralized operation relying on the Squad Leaders for a successful experience for their crews. Don't forget to give them all the thanks they deserve!

Plans are underway for identifying projects for 2018. As of the end of December, it appears we have at least 15 projects in the tentative column. Most of those are projects we typically have each year and led by Squad Leaders who are continuing to volunteer their time and/or help someone take their place. Additional projects have been requested by Agencies and they will be reviewed and determined to the extent requests can be accommodated. The target date for getting the Registration Form listed on the www.nsatrails.com website is March 15.

Tax Exemption Status of NSA Fred Cooper (NCSB 62)

Keep in mind that the National Smokejumper Association is a non-profit charitable organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Consequently, non-reimbursable expenses incurred by NSA TRAMPS members

Tax exemption cont.

may be deductible on your Federal Income Tax Return. Because this varies by individual circumstances, you are encouraged to consult your tax preparer or accountant for more information. Our official registered organization name with the IRS is National Smokejumper Association and the assigned identification Number is 81-0479209.

Editor's Note Steve Carlson

The TRAMPS Annual Report for 2017 is finally coming to an end, as is 2017. It was hoped that this would be wrapped up in November or December but it has lasted until January. No specific reason for being late, it just worked out that way.

It is always interesting to go through the project reports. Each author has his/her own touch on what they deem as important. Some give details of the project, some mention the food, some the afterhours activity.

My job has been to gather all the project stories and pictures together, correct spelling and punctuation sort of stuff, and put each report in the annual report document, which you have in front of you now. The reports are not in any particular order, it's sort of "first come, first serve", so you can tell, sort of, the order in which the reports arrived in my inbox.

This year I had a volunteer proof reader in the person of Mike Pepion (MSO 82), which was a great help. He picked out all sorts of things that make the report more readable, from rearranging text to finding correct spelling to missing periods. Thank you, Mike!

Don't forget to thank the spouse who got left behind when you went off for your week in the woods. A few even joined projects to get the real flavor of what we do. Another big Thank you goes out to them.

The admin folks spend an incredible amount of time both before and after projects, getting tools, food, and facilities lined up so you have a fun productive week in the woods. And then getting the report in to the editor of this document. Be sure to thank them for their effort and tell them you appreciate it.

Minnesota Trail Project Jim Cherry (MSO 57)

Time flies when you are having fun... and we have been having fun. I had to check back through past trails reports to find out how many years we have been doing projects in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness and at Wilderness Canoe Base in Northeastern Minnesota. We started back in 2008 and haven't missed a year. In fact, a couple of years we did two projects... one in the spring and another in the fall. Ten years now and counting... having fun.

The USFS provided us another project at the East Bearskin Cabin where we have been housed and where we have worked before. This year we stained the boathouse. It's a log structure built by the CCC in 1939 and still in excellent shape. Since our total crew numbered 19, we split up and got the job accomplished with 5 guys. The other 14

members of our crew stayed back at Wilderness Canoe Base where we are housed, have meals and tackle the varied jobs that the camp has laid out for us.

For the second year some of our crew focused on a project of building a Yurt. We worked on one last year but this year we had a larger version of a better design. Over the time we worked on this project the construction crew caulked and sealed the exterior of the building, got it stained, installed the windows and the door and got the interior insulated and most of the paneling completed.

At this point I should explain the work week as we have it laid out. We arrive during the afternoon on Thursday, get our marching orders following dinner in the dining hall, have some social time and then hit the sack. Friday and Saturday are working



Back row, L to R.... Ron Thoreson, Denis Symes, Ron Lufkin, Bill GeMeiner, Lee Dybvig, KG Sheley, Chuck Sheley, Bonnie Petty, Phil Petty, Dan Tinnel
Front row, L to R... John Culbertson, Neil Boyd, David Readinger, Leah Boyd, Joyce Thoreson, Judy Cherry, Susy Tinnel, Kathy Culbertson, Jim Cherry

days with breakfast at 8:00 a.m., lunch at 12:30 and dinner at 6:00 p.m. We tend to knock off work about 4:00 p.m. for a social hour. I would be remiss if I failed to mention that a brief afternoon nap is sometimes included during the day. We take Sunday off for a worship time for those who look for that opportunity, arrange a visit to a nearby museum, a pontoon ride around a portion of Seagull Lake, hiking, fishing, a sauna, a cool swim and general R & R. Our aging bodies appreciate the break in the work week as it gives us a chance to heal and renew our energy. On Monday and Tuesday, it's back to work.

The other work was a potpourri of tasks. We hauled building materials from the mainland to the island where we lived and where our projects were focused. We did major fire-wise work around the camp chapel and created a huge burn pile for this winter. Firewise is a great project for those who love to create order out of a chaos of brush and tree thickets. After completing work at the chapel we moved to doing the same thing around the main lodge and then two of the camper cabins. This is critical work as we remember that in 2007 the camp lost 40 of their 60 buildings in the 75,000-acre Ham Lake wildfire.

Trail work called others to the task of

adding or replacing steps on paths with steep slopes. Still others worked to improve a nature trail around Dominion Island and a canoe campsite that is located adjacent to the trail. Finally, we built up the firewood supply at the sauna and took care of winterizing the windows in the main lodge.

Our project is rather unique among the trail projects in that we self-fund our time together by charging a \$50/person fee, we encourage wives to join us, we have a good representation of associate members in our crew, we eat "high-on-the-hog" with our meal menu, we give the ladies a day in town for their own special socializing and shopping, and we are able to make a donation to the camp that helps the camp serve at-risk and special needs youth... and we have fun doing it.

Our crew was made up of the following:

Jim & Judy Cherry (MSO 57), Chuck & KG Sheley (CJ 59), Ron & Joyce Thoreson (CJ 60), Lee Dybvig (Assoc), Dan & Susy Tinnel (Assoc), David Readinger (Assoc), Denis Symes (MYC 63), Phil & Bonnie Petty (MSO 68), John and Kathy Culbertson (FBX 69), Bill GeMeiner (Assoc), Neil & Leah Boyd (Assoc), Ron Lufkin (CJ 60)... and a local bear (or 2 or 3) kept us entertained as a high topic of conversation and photography.



Above—Yurt construction crew above positive IDs not possible.

At Left—Painters: Top to bottom-Neil Boyd, Lee Dybvig, David Readinger

Monture Guard Station Restoration

Barry Hicks (MSO 64)

Our project was to scrape and prepare the exterior logs on the guard station for a treatment of double boiled linseed oil, turpentine and paraffin to help preserve the logs for another 100 years. The chinking was also spruced up prior to log treatment.

The crew consisted of, Dick Hulla (MSO 75), Edmund Ward (MSO 80), Dan Hensley (MSO 57), Gary Lawley (MSO 57), Jan McLaren (MSO 71), Neil Marjerrison (Assoc), Barry Hicks (MSO 64). Wendy Kamm (MSO 82) was signed up for the project but had to withdraw due to death in the family. Greg Hulla and Larry Wright filled in part time on the project.

We had a great crew with an age range from the 50's to the 80's. It turns out that Edmund Ward was born after Gary Lawley and Dan Hensley trained in 1957. The age range turned out to be very helpful in that the younger guys could climb the scaffolding to the second story of the cabin while us older guys kept our feet firmly planted on the ground.

Prior to beginning the project Roger Savage (MSO 57) shared a picture of Monture Guard Station taken in 1958 with Dennis

Gother (MSO 57) sitting on the front porch (see below). Roger and Dennis had just finished a project of treating the logs on the station much like we are doing in 2017. It turns out that Dennis Gother and Gary Lawley were best friends back in 1958 and Gary wanted his picture taken like Dennis'.

So, here is Gary Lawley sitting on the same porch in 2017.

The project turned out great and we were able to finish the primary project early and to accomplish additional work for the Seeley Lake Ranger District during our week there. We dug holes and replanted a sign in the campground, sanded and refinished the deck on the front and rear porch, repaired a loading chute in the corral, treated the spring house and barn logs, added shingles on dormers, repaired the tongue and groove flooring on the porch, removed a broken window and did some electrical work.

Jan McLaren was lucky enough to get the project of replanting the sign going into the campground. He was able to sharpen up his skills on a rock bar, shovel and post hole digger.

I came to realize that having the age

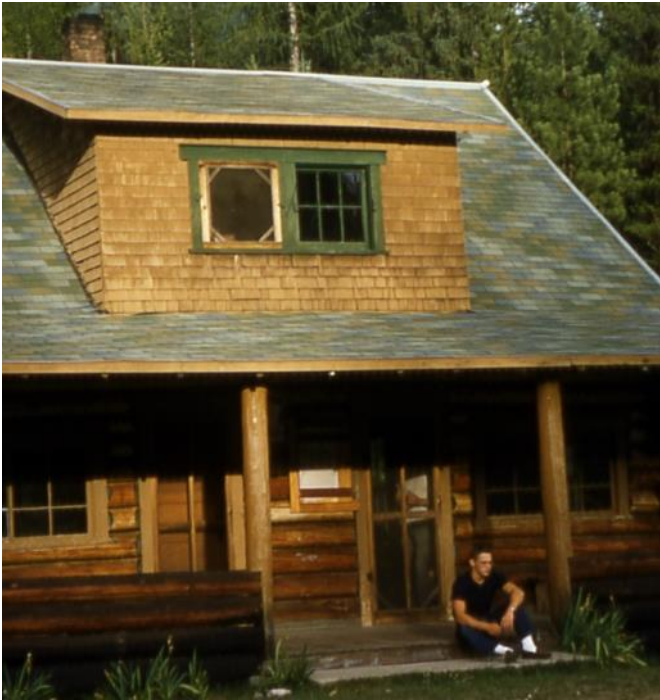


L-R: Dick Hulla, Edmund Ward, Dan Hensley, Gary Lawley, Jan McLaren, Neil Marjerrison, and Barry Hicks

span of 23 years between rookie training dates was a great asset. And if Wendy had made the project it would have been a 25-year span which I think would have been even better. It might be worthwhile for the organization to think about adding an older jumper(s) to projects at no expense to the receiving agency to enhance the experience of the crew. Having Dan and Gary with us was very good for all of us. While they were

not able to climb like Eddy and Dick they were able to deal with other issues on the ground that the rest of us did not have the background to deal with. Plus, I wish I had video of the two of them ribbing each other. It was continuous.

A great week and the food was great. Neil was our cook and it was his first venture cooking for old smokejumpers and he did great.



Above: Dennis Gother in 1958

Upper right: Gary Lawley in 2017

Lower right: the paint crew L-R: Unknown alien (Eddy Ward), Gary Lawley, Jan McLaren, Dan Hensley



WILDFLOWER TRAIL

Bill Kolar (MSO 59)

The Wildflower trail near Lemhi Pass southwest of Dillon received a well needed makeover the last week of July. The mile and a quarter scenic loop was originally built in the 1930's by the Civilian Conservation Corps and as the years went by the Forest Service neglected to maintain this trail. Most of the trail tread was overgrown with brush and grass and numerous trees were across the trail. The trail crosses two large meadows which produce a magnificent display of some 22 of Montana's best wildflowers during the spring months.

Before I proceed with the description of the tremendous labor and the fantastic finished results, I would like to give you a little history of the site and area. Today's Lemhi pass was used by the Shoshone Indians that lived to the west in what is now Idaho as a major crossing to hunt local deer/elk and buffalo on the plains of Montana. This route was where Lewis & Clark passed over in 1805 on their journey to the west coast. In the valley to the east of the pass some 20 miles is where Lewis & Clark saw their first Shoshone Indian on horseback. In fact, this was the first sighting of an Indian since they entered into what is now Montana. They had seen signs of campsites, horse tracks and other evidence of the local tribes along the route up the Missouri River, but did not see a single Indian until August 11, 1805 as noted above. After contact was made, several trips were taken over Lemhi Pass from the Shoshone camps in Idaho to where Lewis & Clark were camped which is now underwater created by the Clark Canyon Dam located 20 miles south of Dillon. These trips were associated with the effort in trying to trade goods for horses needed in crossing the mountain ranges going west.

Now slipping ahead to the 1880's to early 1900's, Lemhi Pass was used as a stagecoach/Freight wagon route to haul people and goods. One of the highlights of the trips was having to tie logs on back of the wagons to help with the braking on both sides of the pass for about one quarter mile on each side. You can still see signs of the ruts today.

This project has been the dream of the

Dillon Ranger District along with one of its former employee's Katie Bump for several years. Katie was aware of our NSA trail program. She contacted the district Recreation Specialist Mat Walter with information on our program who in turn contacted me on how to get this project into our schedule of work. Matt was our on the ground District coordinator, fellow worker and a very strong supporter for NSA to do this project. Contact was established with Planning Officer for NSA Fred Cooper (NCSB 62), and through the very helpful efforts of Fred, he applied for a grant from REI Sporting Goods store in Missoula, MT to fund this project. Fred's eloquently written grant paid off. REI gave NSA \$1250 for a 6-man crew and the purchase of guide posts and two trail signs.

All of our crew had moved into the campsite by 2 PM on July 23, which was located in the Sacajawea Memorial Area just below Lemhi Pass. Nice area for a campsite. All pitched in and we had camp setup for our cook by 4 PM. One of many fine meals was cooked that evening by Tom Blunn Assoc. Crew members were Bob Smee (MSO 68), Spokane, WA, Gary Lawley (MSO 57), Anchorage, AK, Jack Atkins (MSO 68), Bozeman, MT, Richard Trinity (MSO 66), Red Oak, Iowa: Bill Kolar (MSO 59), Dillon, MT.



The AmeriCorps crew

L-R: Kelly Anderson, Sam Owens,
Chandri Patel, Brandon Janney, Jordan
Sutter, Lindsey Tripp

won't go in to a blow by blow description of each day's progress as others do. It was just hard tiresome work grubbing out a trail in thick grass cover and rock. Cutting out downfall took one entire day through the efforts of our two distinguished sawyers, Richard Trinity and Jack Atkins. We were able to finish the mile and one quarter of trail by Thursday at 1 PM. It's a hard fact to admit, but some of us can't keep up the pace as we did when this program began 19 years ago. I must confess that the 5 of us would still be grubbing away another week if it wasn't for the help of 6 young Ameri-Corps volunteers, 3 Phillipsburg Ranger District trail crew members and 3 employees of the Dillon Ranger District.

We had several visitors during the week. Doctor Dan Downey an orthopedic surgeon from Dillon who spent one night and three quarters of a day with us helping out, Katie

Bump, retired Forest Service employee from the Beaverhead Forest, Fred Cooper and grandson and Frank Fowler (MSO 52), retired Planning Staff Officer from the Beaverhead National Forest. During the week there were numerous vacationers, and dedicated Continental Divide hikers going both North and South along the Divide who stopped in for a brief rest and listen to a little BS some of the best on our crew.

This project was very special to some of the local Beaverhead Co. residents. I personally have received very good comments and Kudo's for our work and for the entire NSA program and the efforts put forth by all of the ex-jumper volunteers. Chalk up another successful jumper story. The wind was in our favor, the jump spot was great, new friends were made and old friendships strengthened.

At right: Left to Right: Richard Trinity, Jack Atkins (sawing), Gary Lawley, Bob Smee, Bill Kolar (back to camera). (Person in background is unknown.)



At Left—Standing L-R: Gary Lawley, Tom Blunn, Bob Smee, Richard Trinity, Jack Adkins, kneeling-Bill Kolar

Big Pryor Mountain Trail Jack Sterling (MSO 66)

The Project Crew consisted of Jack Sterling (MSO 66), Bruce Morey (MSO 67), Chuck Hull (MSO 67), and our chef John Brastrup. One of the group was recovering from fairly recent cancer treatment, another had a case of broken ribs, and one case of Krohns disease. Nevertheless, the project was completed on time and to the satisfaction of the Trails Supervisor for the Beartooth Ranger District of the Custer/Gallatin National Forest.

We were impressed with the hiking ability of the Trails Supervisor as she out hiked our Leader the first day on their initial scouting trip. We later learned that she does ultra-marathons.

The Project consisted of clearing and partially re-constructing approximately 3 miles of more or less vertical trail. The trail had likely not had any significant maintenance for many years, except for the lower half mile or so which had seen some initial work last year. In addition to packing equipment up the trail every day (at an increasing daily distance), the daily hike started about three quarters of a

mile from the start of the trail work-all up hill.

Two sign posts were also set, one at the base of the trail, and one at the parking area. Even though the ground was quite rocky, the posts holes were dug after a consensus vote regarding the ideal site for digging.

Very little wildlife was seen in this area, which was surprising. We did encounter considerable bear sign on the trail, some quite fresh. We assumed that it was from black bears, however a local rancher told us that they have encountered grizzlies and have lost livestock to them.

The accommodations were upscale compared to some projects, consisting of utilizing the old Sage Creek Ranger Station for headquarters. The building had seen some maintenance work in recent times and was very adequate for our needs. Our camp cook, while having some health issues, did a great job of providing excellent meals. Overall it was an enjoyable project and the crew would be interested in taking on another project on this district if one is available.



Our crew including the cook. Left to right: Bruce Morey, John Brastrup, Chuck Hull and Jack Sterling.



L-R: Jack Sterling and Bruce Morey setting a sign post.

Reese Cabin Firewood Jack Sterling (MSO 66)

Crew: Don Whyde (MSO 66), Richard Trinity (MSO 66), Jim Scofield (MSO 66), Don Ranstrom (MSO 66), Jack Sterling (MSO 66), Chuck Fricke (MSO 61) and Jimmie Deeds (MSO 64) our crew cook. Fred Cooper (NCSB 62) paid us a visit, took photos and helped stack wood one day. Bob Schumaker (MSO 59) was going to assist but had an accident and wasn't able to join us for the project. He did however come up and deliver ice cream one evening. It went great on the pineapple upside down cake we had for dinner. We lost another volunteer, William Whyde, due to a herniated disc before the project. We also had the assistance of six AmeriCorps volunteers for two days who were a great help on the project. They were Ethan Kommar, Britany Feathers, Jordan Sutter, Chandi Patel, Lindsey Tripp and Kelly Anderson.

Reese Cabin is a Forest Service rental that is available year-round. It is located on the Continental Divide Trail which runs from Canada to Mexico. Entrance to the cabin is just off Chief Joseph Pass and is a drive to location.

Our cook, Jimmie Deeds, got set up and groceries stored in the basement Sunday afternoon. Jim Scofield brought a trailer with a water tank on it to make sure we were hy-

drated for the week. Jimmie kept hot water on for the crew to wash up in the morning and had coffee waiting for us each morning.

Monday morning, we sent a crew to start falling trees and cutting it into sections to haul to the wood spitting area. There they were cut to stove length, split and stacked. We first filled the basement of the cabin with firewood and then made stacks outside. Chuck Fricke ran the splitter and had several of us assist with the stacking. Richard Trinity and Jim Scofield did much of the falling. Don Whyde and Sterling also shared falling duty with assistance from Don Ranstrom. AmeriCorps had a crew fall one day and they hauled a lot of bolts to the splitting area.

We had great meals prepared by Jimmie Deeds who uses Dutch ovens for most of his cooking. He also had a gas stove to assist with some items. The pies were a great treat!

By late Thursday afternoon we had about 12 cords of firewood split and stacked. The basement of the cabin was filled with split firewood also. It was a pleasure working with John Erickson of the Beaverhead National Forest, who was always asking for suggestions to improve our working relationship and had all our tools ready for us when we arrived.



Above R-L: Don Ranstrom, Richard Trinity, Don Whyde, and Jim Scofield

Below L-R: Chuck Fricke, Jim Scofield, Don Ranstrom and Don Whyde.



Standing L to R: Jim Scofield, Richard Trinity, Ethan Kommer (AC), Jack Sterling, Chuck Fricke, Don Ranstrom, Don Whyde, Britany Feathers (AC)
Kneeling L to R: Jimmy Deeds, Jordan Sutter (AC), Chandi Patel (AC) Lindsey Tripp (AC), Kelly Anderson (AC)

Horse Camp-Fish Lake Bob Whaley (MSO 56)

The project this year had many returning veterans of the trails escapades who for some reason keep showing up every year despite the leadership; with JB Stone (MSO 56), Bob Cushing (MSO 59), Joe Kroeber (MSO 62), Dennis Pearson (MSO 62), Steve Henry (retired MD), (MSO 65), Larry Ukestad (MSO 67), and Jim Lee (MSO 77), (glad his name wasn't Robert, or I wouldn't have been able to have him!). But it was good to have him back after his retirement from the power company as a lineman. After some time, around the house I think the conversation from his wife went something like this... "a, honey, isn't it time to look into volunteering again for that trail crew thingy you used to do in the summer"? Or words to that affect.

"It was the best of times; it was the worst of times"; A Tale of Two Cities by Chuck Dickens begins to sum up the project this year beginning with slightly reversed application of the work which should more appropriately begin with... "It was the worst of times, it was the best of times". Starting with your fearless leader missing the main Boulder Cr Trail after lunch, resulting in an extra mile+ uphill away from the creek and to another trail junction on trail 247 and Long Lake which split into 3 separate trails,

two of which were explored and went nowhere but consumed precious time and daylight. Finally, Joe backtracked and discovered my error, so we hiked back the mile+ and continued on. But the delay put us in camp near dark and setting up tents in that less than ideal environment.

MEA CULPA X3 guys. That's one I won't soon forget. However, Bob Cushing, in his ever pleasant, forgiving demeanor was quick to say, don't worry about it Bob...we all missed it. Bob Cushing with his GPS tracked our hike at 13.1 miles to camp from the parking lot which made the hike in at 15 plus miles for some but closer to 16-17 or so for Joe, Uke and Jim who checked out the dead ends. And in a final, slightly, redeeming note, I recently read the following by Edward John Phelps, American lawyer and diplomat, 1822-1900, who said, "The man who makes no mistakes, rarely makes anything". I'm still trying to figure out all the things I've made.

Pack support was once again provided by Larry Cooper and his merry men of the North Idaho Back Country Horsemen (BCH) wranglers, which again included Joe Robinson, Ed Enneking and a new member, Todd Roberts. They were outstanding helpers in



The end of the trail L-R: Steve Henry, Larry Ukestad, Joe Kroeber, J.B. Stone, Jim Lee, Mark Stergios, Dale Florshinger, Bob Whaley, Jerry Power.

every aspect of what it takes to successfully pull off these annual capers. And again, in their usual upbeat fashion, we were greeted by Linda Cooper and Joe Robinson's wife Kathy at the trail head with hugs all around for those old friends of many years who only get this warm send off on an annual basis at this special time. Thanks ladies, and especially to Linda who is the lynch pin to the successful organization and coordination with the BCH group and who, with Larry, does all the purchasing of vittles and supplies. It makes the trip worth it.

Our camp was very well selected by the packer squad right on Boulder Creek and provided excellent grass for the 20 some head of stock and good water for camp and bathing. But I'm still trying to figure out how Dennis coerced JB into catching small flies to cast into the water at their bathing hole to watch the small 4-6" inch cut throats rise to the occasion for their late afternoon snacks. My solitude in the creek also found the art in observing such mundane aquatic feedings to be quite entertaining. I know....I need to get out more! We also had the pleasure of being visited nightly by a cow elk that mingled casually with all the stock.

Our USFS rep this year was Adam Muscarella who replaced Corey Swanson whom we thought was irreplaceable. Adam

was very quick to set that concern aside as he jumped right in and led us in the project, guiding and instructing us in the art of the check steps process which were strategically placed in difficult areas of trail 211 toward Fish Lake, several miles above Horse Camp. He worked very hard the whole 2 days he was with us. We are now trained in that newly learned trail repair process that we can apply in the future and know how to do it right, thanks to Adam's guidance. It was calculated that we dropped 8 trees for check step materials and placed 32 steps, 5 water bars and did several miles of brushing in that area and up toward Fish Lake thanks to the efforts of JB and Dennis but more may be required.

It was a bit of a challenge trying to meet Adam's stringent requirements to ensure that adequate rock support for those steps was applied to the process. This required locating the right sized rocks for not only the front and back support of the steps, many of which needed to be crushed from much larger rocks to meet the size needed but also quite large ones for the ends for lateral support to hold them firmly in place. Those who were the crushers supreme were Bob Cushing who I renamed Crushing, Jim, Uke (two brutes of the woods) Steve who was right in the middle of it all and of course our Doc, Joe. Dennis and JB were also prime contributors and hauled their share of the many heavy "pebbles" that now rest in place on that beautiful stretch of trail. You guys **ROCK!** Dennis was also our crew photographer as he's done on so many past "good deals" and we thank him for getting the CDs out to everyone. Good job Dennis and thanks again.

It was a very labor-intensive project particularly as the days were exceptionally hot as usual. The creek was most welcome as were the many splendidly prepared meals by chef Cooper and his BCH helpers and what superb fare they provided all week, including the chocolate non-birthday cake for JB's non-birthday, constructed again in Coop's Dutch oven which was just one of his excellent creations by that mode. Most of us remained healthy throughout with some blisters and knee problems, all well attended to by Doc Joe with MD Steve hunkering in the shadows but letting Joe do his thing and then my suspected plantar fasciitis which seemed to im-



Dennis Pearson and J. B. Stone

prove a little each day thanks to Uke's offer of one of his heel cushions which helped immensely and is still in use today.

We had our steak night on Thursday and as usual, Joe Robinson and company cooked them all to perfection with an added tribute provided by Jim Lee's presentation of a bottle of Famous Grouse in memory of Jim (doc) Phillips who always enjoyed that welcome elixir at our many projects in the past. Thanks Jim. It was a very touching thing to do and we all appreciated the thought and gesture... and of course the Grouse. Jim took the first smile off it and it was passed around the fire with memories of Doc Phillips that Jim shared along with others who also shared their memories of our departed "doc" with the group.

And speaking of libations, Cooper's Tangle Ridge was ever present with a splash in a morning coffee going a long way to open one's eyes and greet the day. And it made its appearance again around the fires after dinner as we sipped and listened to favorite jokes, one which registered a 10 from Ed Enneking with his "the burn victim's new lips" story. That was so bad! On a personal note, I lost the top to my large Smart Water bottle and in searching for a replacement, Todd said that he thought that the top of his Crown Royal bottle might fit and by golly it did. Only problem was that there were still several slugs lingering within. Todd, in a very conciliatory and generous manner suggested that we proceed to empty the remaining contents which I heartily endorsed. Every time I refill that travelling cruse and look at that golden cap I think of Todd and ask myself..... where do we get such men?

The hike out was again brutally hot, around 100 degrees. Realizing, finally, my limitations to handling that type of condition, I slowed my pace and let the others proceed back to the trail head with Joe and Bob walking with me as we took our time in proceeding out ensuring that I had sufficient water. Thanks guys. It is appreciated. As we approached the parking lot, after spending a week in God's country, we were again greeted by our most trustworthy, loyal and dedicated greeting crew of Jerry Power, Dale Florshinger and Mark Stergios who met us with cold Cokes, Pepsis, beer, ice cream and popsicle treats that were never more welcome than on that very hot 100-degree afternoon, all of which was tremendously appreciated and enjoyed by the whole crew.

It wasn't the "best of times" going in with setting up in the dark and Cooper's late feeding but thanks to Larry and his BCH guys and a determined, hardworking crew, we recovered and had a very good week for the USFS. It was also very much appreciated when the BCH crew arrived at the parking lot with our gear not long after us. Thus permitting those who had a long drive to Bozeman to depart without much delay. And a special thanks to the Selway- Bitterroot/ Frank Church Foundation that so generously funds our annual project.

I saw a comment in my DAV magazine that speaks volumes about our "thing".

"We are proud of what we stand for and prouder of who we stand with".

See 'ya down the trail.....if I can find the damn thing!

Bob Whaley MSO '56



Almost chow time.

L-R: Ed Enneking, Larry Ukestad, Jim Lee, Larry Cooper, Joe Kroeber

Dixie Oak Grove Campground Improvement Gary Johnson (RDD 69)

Five National Smokejumper members reported to the Dixie National Forrest on Sunday May 7th, 2017. Last year's Project (2016) was on the same Ranger District (Pine Valley) on the west side of the Pine Mountains just north of St. George, Utah. The 2017 Project was up Leeds Creek. Leeds creek runs east out of those same Pine Mountains. The crew consisted of veterans from last year's project, Doug (Digger) Daniels (MSO 61), Doug (The Lawyer) Wamsley (MSO 65), Tom (The Artist) Wilkes (GAC 87), Associate Chuck (The Chef) Orona (Johnson's Corner's). This year the veterans welcomed two newcomers to the crew, Jim (The River Runner) Rush (McCall, 65) and Gary (Gramps) Johnson (Redding 69).

The work took place at the CCC built Oak Grove Campground at the head of Leeds Creek. It is a short (8 ½ mile) drive along the creek. We set up our tents in the same-campground which made it convenient for going back and forth to work each day. As everyone settled in Sunday evening we made our introductions and had a short orientation from Digger who was the Squad leader.

The actual work project began the next day (Monday) when Will Gilbert, our Forest Service on site coordinator from the Dixie NF arrived. Will showed up bright and early, so we could complete the necessary paper work and safety briefing and provide us with Personal Protective Equipment.

The work included repairing, replacing, and removing items at each of the eight campsites:

- We removed the roof and frame of an old Gazebo

- We spent the next day taking down an old out-house.

(The above work required that we organize the old material to facilitate its removal at a later date).

- We installed a new sign and improved the trail to the Historic Bee Tree. This tree is a large Ponderosa Pine (4 ½'-5' diameter) that has survived several forest fires and lightning strikes. It is called the "Bee Tree" because a colony of Honey Bees live in the hollowed-out trunk.

- We spent a day replacing/repairing picnic table tops/benches and repainting all the tables.

- We brushed out a trail that leaves the Campground and leads into the Pine Mountain Wilderness.

- We repaired and replaced fire rings at several of the campsites.

- Several of the campsites required to re-grade and level (by hand) the ground in the campsite.

It took the crew pretty much the whole week to complete this work. What follows are some of project highlights from our time on the Dixie NF:

As always, Chuck performed magic for Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner. Some of the chow included: "Chucks Famous BBQ Ribs with his special Cole Slaw, Surf and Turf (Sirloin Steaks and Shrimp with Steak Fries, Salad and Rolls). Needless to say, no one went away hungry!

On Thursday, Personnel from the Pine Valley RD come out to the Campground for the day to help us finish up the work and cleanup the material that we tore down. Pine Valley District Ranger, Joe Rechsteiner, our crew Administrative Coordinator, Nick Welenzaick, on site Coordinator Will Gilbert plus a large part of the Ranger District spent the rest of day cleaning up and hauling away the old material we had spent



Replacing a fire ring in a campsite L-R: Chuck Orona, Jim Rush, Gary Johnson, Digger Daniels, and Doug Wamsley

the week taking apart (i.e., old outhouse, gazebo, fire rings, etc.) This was followed by a lunch prepared and served by Ranger District Personnel and Chuck. Everyone pitched in and all work was completed in time to enjoy an outstanding lunch provided by the Ranger District folks. Everything was great, and our crew wants to thank Joe, Nick, Will, and everyone on the Pine Valley RD. We had an outstanding week. We all look forward to coming back to the Dixie NF in 2018.

One of our new crew members and first time NSA volunteer, Gary Johnson was awarded the "Order of the Purple Glove". This is a significant achievement. Gary was evaluated by his peers and judged to be a great fit to be on the crew.

Another event that should be noted: this occurred while we were breaking camp on Saturday. (We spent Friday doing some final touch up items in the Campground). One of our crew members had a camping trailer at the CG. Tom Wilkes' son Rory provided his dad with the trailer (which came in handy when it started raining). While pulling the trailer down the 8 ½

mile narrow twisty road to the highway somebody thought it would be a good idea to send a vehicle ahead of the trailer to warn any vehicle coming up the road that a trailer was coming down. **What could possibly go wrong!** The lead vehicle was being driven by Doug Wamsley with Chuck Orona as co-pilot while Digger Daniels was towing the trailer. Well, things were going fine and the trailer was almost out of the narrow and twisty part the road. We met another vehicle coming up the road and Doug pulled over, got out and went over to this vehicle to tell the operator that a trailer was coming down the road. Unfortunately, when Doug exited the vehicle his seat belt somehow hit the emergency break and the vehicle started rolling. As Doug's co-pilot, Chuck struggled to reach across and get control of the vehicle it continued rolling down the road. But before any damage or injuries could occur it stopped at a berm alongside the road. **What could possibly go wrong!**

We had a great week with a good crew and beautiful country. Looking forward to next year.



Getting the throne placed just right.
L-R: Chuck Corona, Gary Johnson, Jim Rush (kneeling) and Digger Daniels



Crew at old Gazebo before starting work.
L-R; Digger Daniels, Doug Wamsley, Jim Rush, Tom Wilkes, Gary Johnson, and Chuck Orona.

Rocky Mountain National Park Warren Pierce

This was our fifth year in Rocky Mountain National Park (RMNP). As always, we had great support from the parks staff but our group of planners struggled with the logistics of our project due to the loss of Stan Linnertz. The learning curve was steep and we came to appreciate just how much Stan has done for our projects over the years. However, we had Johnson's Corner Master Cook, Chuck Orona, and Denis Symes to provide much needed help with the menu and finding camp equipment Stan had squirreled away in his storage shed. We actually had a head start on the process as Doug Wamsley had to find the shared equipment for the Dixie Project. Doug and Denis made several trips to Stan's storage shed trying to find all the equipment. Some of the equipment didn't exist and required a jump thru the "hoops" process getting several pieces of primary camp equipment just days before the Dixie project started.

Our crew consisted of Bob Doran (Associate), Jim Klever (Associate), Luke Lemke (MSO 69), Chuck Orona (Associate) Cook, Warren Pierce (CJ 64), Ron Siple (MYC 53), "Doc" Siple (Associate), Ryan Si-

ple (Associate), Denis Symes (MYC 63), Steve Vittum (MSO 71) and Doug Wamsley (MSO 65).

We enjoyed good weather if you exclude the thirty plus mile per hour winds that blew for several days and nights requiring us to take down our cook canopy and trying to shore up Chucks tent which was not rated for high winds. The wind was bad enough to send one of our guys to his SUV for the night rather than listen to the wind beat his tent. We all wondered if branches or trees would drop on us during the night. Calm returned, and we didn't lose one beer or wine to the wind.

Our project consisted of removing an old single log footbridge and replace it with a single, multi-span, footbridge with native sixteen-foot logs. As always, moving large logs is not what the doctor ordered for old guy's backs but with the two young Siple boys and some RMNP personnel the logs were moved with ease, at least that's the way it seems now. After showing the park personnel that we could make big rocks into little rock for the past four years they had us use that expertise again this year. They call



Standing L-R: Ron Siple, Jim Klever, Steve Vittum, Luke Lemke, Doug Wamsley, Denis Symes, Chuck Orona, Doc Siple
Kneeling L-R: Warren Pierce, Jesse Miller, Ryan Siple, Ben Robinson, Bob Doran

it granite crush but for those making little rocks probably had other names for the process. Fortunately, we had Luke Lemke who seemed to enjoy that kind of work. Luke had experience with mind numbing work as he had been a ribe goon in the Clearwater Forest Blister Rust Control the first summer with the Forest Service. The last day of the project we had a welcomed visitor. Zephyr McConnell appeared from behind one of the RMNP trucks as we headed toward the trail to our project site. We all greeted her as she had been our RMNP Project Boss the first three years volunteering at RMNP. She heard we were in the park and decided to help us our last day and then join us for dinner. As one guy said, "Zephyr is sure a sight for sore eyes, if you get my drift". We did.

We can't say enough about the RMNP personnel who help us every year. They "really enjoy" our many smokejumper stories and contributed a few of their own but I think Jesse Miller, our Trail Boss, probably heard some of them last year. He was kind enough not to say anything. The rest of us didn't say anything because we most likely heard the same stories the night before. But, who can

remember the night before? Age or drink? Probably a combination of both. I look forward to the same "new "stories next year.

The Volunteer Coordinator and Trails Team make our experience a positive one which makes us want to return each year. So, everyone mark your calendar for June 10 -15, 2018 and join us at RMNP.



Making it fit just right
From lower left clockwise: Ben Robinson, Jesse Miller, Steve Vittum, Warren Pierce and Ryan Siple



Left to Right Standing: Bob Doran, Jesse Miller, Marika Flynn, Steve Vittum, Denis Symes, Warren Pierce, Doug Wamsley, Ron Siple, Doug Parker, Doc Siple, Chuck Orona
Sitting: Ryan Siple, Zephyr McConnell

Sawtooth Jim Burleigh (MSO 58)

A time to reflect, a time to remember, a time to work, a time to play.

All occurred at Pettit Lake, not far from Stanley, Idaho in the Sawtooth National Forest July 10-15, 2017 when the Ron Stoleson (MSO 56) /Digger Daniels (MSO 61) crew met to renew friendships, comment on world affairs, honor two colleagues of unchallenged character no longer with us, and, oh yes.....to work.

No one can deny the beauty of the Sawtooth range as seen from the Fourth of July Creek Ranger Station. Superlatives fly out the window. T'is a joy to be among friends who share a common history, surrounded by natural wonders that bring good men to their knees in gratitude.

Our crew, composed of men from ages 75-80+, was graced by the addition of the Sawtooth National Forest Representative, Renée Catherin, our magnificent cook, Chuck Orona (Assoc.), and by Bret and Kyle Linnertz (both

Assoc.), son and grandson of that great Norwegian, Stan Linnertz (MSO 61) who's passing left us bereft of a fine gentleman, raconteur, and cook.

Beauty and the Beasts. Front row: Charlie Brown (IDC 56), Chuck Fricke (GAC 61), Neil Rylander (MSO 61), Bill Ward (FBX 72), Renée Catherin, Gary Hendrix (Assoc.). Back row: Jim Burleigh (MSO 58), Digger Daniels (MSO 61), Chuck Orona, Doug Howard (MSO 64), Tom Wilks (GAC 87), Bret Linnertz, Kyle Linnertz, and Larry Nelsen (MSO 56). Ron Stoleson (MSO 56) was not available for the photo op. It should be noted that the individual with the long ears between Chuck Orona and Doug Howard was a beauty in her/his/its own right.

The tasks were simple: repair mangers and horse stalls at trail heads. This we did with gusto at Hell Roaring Creek, Champion Creek, Pettit Lake, Iron Creek, Williams Creek and Al-



Beauty and the Beasts. Front row L-R: Charlie Brown, Chuck Fricke, Neil Rylander, Bill Ward, Renée Catherin, Gary Hendrix.
Back row L-R: Jim Burleigh, Digger Daniels, Chuck Orona, Doug Howard, Tom Wilks, Bret Linnertz, Kyle Linnertz, and Larry Nelsen

turas Creek. As well, two hitch racks were installed at the Sawtooth Work Center.

Some thought we were being asked to dig post holes through solid granite. Yes, somewhat of an exaggeration, but not by much. No one resisted an offer to take over the bar, the posthole digger, or the shovel. By sharing the work all was completed with energy left to hoist a cold one in the evening hours back at camp.

A typical day began at 0630 with coffee, campfire, talk, and breakfast prepared by Chuck. A few comments regarding characteristics of certain individuals were heard around the morning campfire; and I quote. "Digger...a born prevaricator", "Charlie failed to bath last evening and it is noticeable this morning". Needless to say, the bathing stream nearby was frequented that evening much to the delight of former smokejumper guests, Tom Kovalicky (MSO 61), Gary Stitzinger (MSO 61), Ron Stoleson (MSO 56), Jay Dorr (Technician with the Sawtooth National Recreation Area), Brian Anderson (Acting Deputy Director, Sawtooth National Recreation Area) and Deb Peters, long-suffering former liaison between the Sawtooth NRA and Ron Stoleson's crew. It was said of Cleopatra (and Deb), that "age cannot wither her nor custom stale her infinite variety". A jewel she is.

During the evening of July 12, we were treated to the last bottles of Stan Linnertz' supply of "Smokejumper Beer" from a brewery in Longmont, CO. Thanks to Stan's son, Bret, everyone had a swig or two. Toasts and commemorative comments regarding Stan were

made by Charlie Brown, Digger Daniels, and guest, Tom Kovalicky (MSO 61). A bitter-sweet time it was, made all the more so when the names of Neil Satterwhite (MYC 65), Cliff Dalzell (MSO 61), and Jon McBride (MSO 54) were remembered with reverence and awe. Neil and Cliff were participants on the Stoleson crew in the Sawtooth and Jon was a frequent visitor to our camp sites over the years as well as one of the original trail crew members.

Some of us were startled by gaps in conversation during the evening hours following dinner. A moment of silence! Unheard of during those evenings when Wild Bill Yensen (MYC 53) was among us. Wild Bill was unable to attend and his absence was noted with a tip of the hat and a sip of Olympia, Smokejumper, Flyline, Corona, Blue Moon, Fat Tire, Jack Daniels, or Johnny Walker Black Label. Next year, Bill.

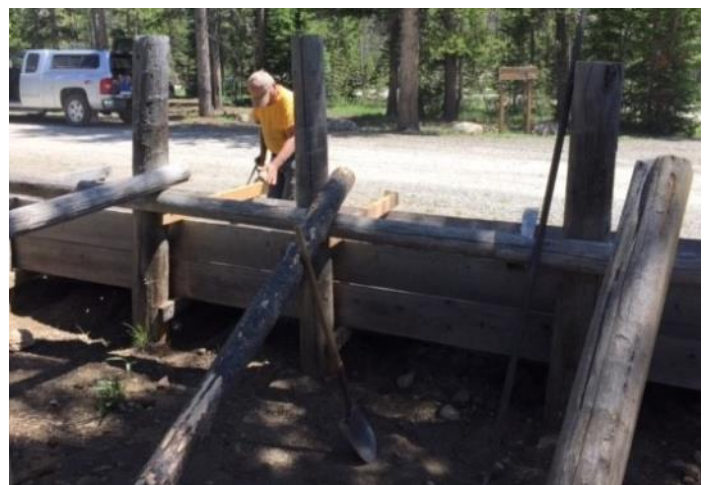
Generally, evening stories, or better, evening historical accounts, began with, "Once upon a time", or in Smokejumper-ese, "Now, this ain't no detritus"; you can insert your own noun here. And on into the night.

The nights passed quickly. All too quickly. But each morning brought with it the aroma of Chuck's incomparable coffee, a superb breakfast of hotcakes, sausage, bacon, French toast, etc, etc, etc and the opportunity to prove to ourselves that we can still do hard, manual labor...albeit, at a slower pace.

Until next year when we again meet at the river to renew friendships, work, play, tell stories.....and remember.



Horse stall & manger
Gary Hendrix & Jim Burleigh



Unidentified crew member working
on the feed trough

Stanley Basin
Neil Rylander (MSO 61)
With a little help from Digger and Robin

The Indian: First thought to be a long-lost jumper from the 50's turned to petrified wood, but no. Nice guy really, didn't say much, he was a good listener. I know, he's hard picking out from rest of us, but check close.

One by one they arrived at quarters, Crooked Creek Ranch, on Sunday, July 1. Too comfy to be called a trail crew experience by some, but we like it.

Our task was to install 350 LF of log-worm fence at what the USFS calls Gateway Subdivision which curtailed a long-standing problem of trash dumping and encroachment on public lands as described by Kirk Flannigan, Area Ranger. Kirk sent out a letter of thanks which was appreciated by all. Also, we spent the second half of the week at Red Fish Lake shoring up, and replacing as needed, the log worm fencing throughout the Red Fish Lake Complex which again Kirk pointed out in his letter saying it will benefit the natural landscape by protecting sensitive habitats in this popular area from trampling. Now these tasks, needless to say, didn't get completed without a few issues. Per usual! First, the logs used on first project were salvaged logs, deemed usable, they contained much dirt and dust which required ongoing chain sharpening and slowed progress. But, we got to eat more

watermelon that way, so a win, win situation!

The annual bet on the frost during the project was won by Richard Hulla (MSO 75), Jim Scofield (MSO 66) and Doug (Digger) Daniels (MSO 61) with Robin Embry (GAC 85), Neil Rylander (MSO 61, Tom Kovalicky (MSO 61), and Gary Cardoza (MSO 74) paying up. Proceeds were sent to the Guatemala Shoe Factory.

Now, Tom has been known to utter the oath "I'd rather have my b**l's slammed in a screen door than do that", whatever "that" is. Lucky Tom now has a new screen door handy and it snaps shut briskly! Digger did the presentation as delicately as he could, trying to hide a grin!

Poetry: Shelly Dumas (Assoc.) did herself proud with an excellent poem. Steve Carlson (IDC 62) wasn't here this summer, so she filled in. If Steve is back next year, we'll have a poet Laurette event.

Shelly, also really out did herself again as chef. Watermelon each day, with cookies, really hit the spot!!! We have, in our opinion, the best and really appreciate her!

Final evening our gracious hosts, Hans and Terry Carstensen, joined us with a few USFS luminaries for dinner and wine, etc. They have been so kind to endure us annually.



Precision work
L-R; Jim Scofield, Gary Stitzinger



Fence at Redfish Lake
L-R; Gary Cardoza, Robin Embry,
Tom Wilks, Jim Scofield



Fixin Fence: L-R; Jim Scofield, Dick Hulla, Gary Cardoza



The Indian: First thought to be a long-lost jumper from the 50's turned to petrified wood, but no. Nice guy really, didn't say much, he was a good listener. I know, he's hard picking out from rest of us, but check close. Standing L-R: Digger, Neil, Gary S., Jim, Tom Kneeling L-R: Gary S., Shelley, Gary C.



The whole crew L-R; Gary Stitzinger, Tom Wilks, Tom Kovalicky, Shelly Dumas, Dick Hulla, Gary Cardoza, Jim Scofield, Digger Daniels, Neil Rylander

Rio Hondo Cabin Restoration Mike Overby (MSO 67)

This drive-to project was a second-year effort that began in 2016. The 2017 project consisted of former jumpers Mike Overby, Project Lead (MSO 67), Jon Klingel (CJ 65), Bruce Burling (RED 69) and volunteers Mark Rivera, Jeff Hanford (Back Country Horseman) and Ken Collins (veteran cook) and Carson National Forest Service Archeologist and project lead Carrie Levin and Forest Service intern XXX.

The Hondo Cabin was built over 100 years ago around 1913 by Forest Service rangers. It was known as the South Fork Ranger station, named after a mine and mill that were located across the Rio Hondo and high up on the hillside. It was one of two original Carson National Forest Ranger Stations in early years.

"The Hondo Cabin was at one time the gateway to the high country, until the highway was built all the way to Twining, now called Taos Ski Valley, in the mid-1950s. The five-acre cabin site sits just off the road to Taos Ski Valley and includes an old corral that is still used by the grazing permittees who take their cattle to the high country every summer. The cabin itself was in good shape and everything was still within a quarter inch of level more than 100 years after its construction.

In 2016, Smokejumper Trail Crew removed old wood shingles from half the roof and replaced with new Cedar Shakes. Other work included brushing along the road, so you could actually see the cabin site.

In 2017, we replaced the other half of the Cedar Shakes on the roof and rebuilt the sadly sinking and crumbling stone porch and rebuild the outdoor fire pit.

While working on the project, the crew was visited by reporters from the Taos News Pa-

The crew re-roofing the cabin with metal corrugated roofing

per. A very nice article on the project and Smokejumper Trail Crew work, in gener was printed in the paper in following week. The article can be found at;

<http://www.taosnews.com/stories/forest-service-ranger-cabins-get-new-life,42556?>

Another big project during the week included prep work acid treating (to achieve a rusted look) to 56 panels of corrugated metal roofing that was to be used on another 100-year old historic forest service cabin the crew was to work on later in the summer – Baldy Cabin. After much research we were able to sand, treat the metal with Muriatic acid and hydrogen peroxide to achieve the look desired.

Funding for cost of the Cedar Shake Shingles and corrugated metal came from 2015/16 fundraising efforts by New Mexico Trail crews who have accumulated over \$10,000 through personal donations, Oktoberfest events and raffle drawings.

Future work envisioned for the 5-acre site includes possible relocation of another historic cabin to the site, moving two Wilderness Trail heads and spur trails (within a mile of the site), creating parking areas, construction of a Wilderness Information Area Kiosk, and campground/picnic areas.

With significant lack of Forest Service funds, if work above is accomplished, we will ask that the site have a sign established in recognition of our efforts (maybe call it "Restored by Smokejumper Trail Crew - Making the Wilderness Great Again").



Lewis and Clark Descent Trail

Jeff Kinderman (MSO 75)

Crew: Jeff Kinderman, (MSO 75) Squad Leader, Phil Difani (MSO 67), Bruce Ford (MSO 75), Dan Roberson (MSO 75), Bill Thomas (MSO 75), Mike Pepion (MSO 82), and Kathy Elzig/Kathleen Nerison (Associates & Cooks). USFS: Jake Long and Mark Smith, the Bitterroot NF Trails Manager.

This project is a continuation of work that was accomplished in 2016. We started by changing the trailhead location to more accurately follow that used by the Lewis & Clark Corps of Discovery. The change is based on research provided by Ted Hall. Ted is the author of the book "The Trail Between the Rivers", which traces the L & C expedition overland segment of their journey, from the headwaters of the Missouri River to those of the Colombia.

The trailhead change required new trail construction of approximately ½ mile. The work consisted primarily of bucking downed logs, limbing and treadwork. We also constructed a simple log crossing to protect a small riparian segment of the trail. This is a Level 2 trail requiring a four-foot-wide clearing, seven-foot height clearance, and tread width of 18 inches. We hiked the existing trail and removed a few trees that had fallen over the winter. Mark Smith inspected the new trail addition and had us do a little more tread work. This gave more definition to the trail. The overall length of the trail is approximately

three miles. Access to the trailhead is via Forest Road 73468 which is 25 miles south of Darby, Mt on Highway 93.

Beside trail work, the crew installed three directional signs for the Descent Trail. Two are located off Highway 93 and one is near Indian Trees campground. The area is extremely rocky, which resulted in having Jake Long assist us with a backhoe. Jake works out of the Sula work center in trails and recreation. Many thanks to Jake. Without his help we would still be digging holes!

Other tasks consisted of sanding and staining interpretive signs at the Nee-Mee-Poo trailhead and the Sula Work Center. The crew also installed new L & C signs at the Sula store.

Our base of operations was Indian Trees campground which is located close to lost Trail Hot Springs. We were allowed free use of the hot springs to soak our weary bones. Thanks to Gary Baker (MSO 67) for use of their fine facility.

As mentioned, we camped at Indian Trees Campground and enjoyed great meals provided by Kathy Elzig and Kathleen Nerison. One evening was devoted to an excellent steak meal that was attended by Ted Hall and family, as well as Forest Service, Park Service, and local people associated with the Lewis and Clark Heritage Foundation.



The Crew (L-R)
Dan Roberson,
Bruce Ford, Phil
Difani, Bill Thomas,
and Mike Pepion

Mann Gulch Trail

John Driscoll, MSO '68

This project involved 17 NSA members, including 6 Associates (2 packers, 2 cooks, 1 artist educator and 1 driver educator). Myself and Seth Roby (NSA Associate) visited the site May 2, as part of an Advance Party that included four Helena National Forest (HNF) personnel, including two archeologists. We accomplished flagging of the Trail descending past Sylvia's Rock, took measurements of the crosses for mold reproduction and familiarized Roby, an artist-educator with the site. One important result was a realization that the need for educational graphics is from the "briefing area" indicated in the historic preservation plan below Reba's markers. This contrasted sharply with my own understanding that we have been trying to introduce visitors to the site from over the head of Mann Gulch, rather than via "the social Trail" up from the river. Roby and I then adjusted our thinking from interpretive benches up high in the Gulch to educational graphics on signs covering seen areas in three principle directions from the "briefing area." During this time we remained unaware there is already a Helena Ranger District 5-year work plan for the Gulch, serving as the basis for limiting what NSA can accomplish this year.

Until told otherwise I continued to organize this summer's project directly from the Mann Gulch Historic Preservation Plan agreed to by HNF and NSA. That portion of planning we did accomplish executed as follows:

For the first 2.5 days we were two crews: A River Squad and a Gulch Squad. The former opened the Missouri River Canyon Trail from Grant Gulch high above American Bar downriver to the Vista Overlook switchback above Meriwether. This Missouri River Canyon Trail serves as still another land entry to Mann Gulch, while collecting hikers entering the area by boat via two new sets of docks that were installed at Coulter and Meriwether last August. The River Squad installed 8 signs and used a crosscut saw to remove 17 trees, including blowdown behind the Gulch Squad from a Monday night storm.

Within Mann Gulch we can now report there exists a long set of winding stone and tread risers from above Sylvia's Rock down to above Thompson's markers; there is now a sin-

gle (improved) user Trail that ties most of the monuments together with a broad unsymmetrical circle tied to the Jim Phillips (Connector) Trail at three points. The Jim Phillips (Connector) Trail is now well-signed at the head of the Gulch, and we are able to provide the HNF with GPS information, should they want it, to help orient their educational graphics (3-dimensional or virtual), if such a requirement materializes. The Gulch Squad started by clearing the lower end of the Missouri River Canyon Trail from the Willow Creek Trailhead into Mann Gulch and there focused on closing up the work intended by NSA the late Jim Phillips.

We hoped to complete all of the Mann Gulch Historic Preservation Plan remaining tasks: cribbing to protect monuments from erosion, cleaning and painting of the 10 crosses still standing in order to slow their deterioration, replacing the two crosses destroyed over 67 years by the elements, contribute in some way to the content of signs expected to be located at the habitual " staging area" below the monuments at Reba's markers, address the dangerous steepness of the trail descending from the end of the new Jim Phillips (Connector) Trail down past Sylvia's Rock to Thompson's markers, and tie the Jim Phillips (Connector) Trail more clearly to the spiderweb of internal user trails to each of the various individual monuments.



Sharon Bruce and JoAnn Bushman, Cooks

There now exists a long set of winding and tread risers from above Sylvia's Rock down to above Thompson's markers. The reconstructed stretch is picturesque, and a great improvement for safely descending past Sylvia's Rock. There is also a single (improved) user-inner-trail that ties most of the monuments together with a broad unsymmetrical circle tied to the J. Phillips Connector at three points (1, 9 and 11 o'clock); the J. Phillips (Connector) Trail is well-signed at the head of the Gulch, and here we provide the HNF with the following GPS information to help orient their educational graphics (3-dimensional or virtual), should any ever materialize.

"These are GPS markers from Lammers using degrees, minutes, seconds (one adjusted by Maynard for accuracy). If HNF wants additional GPS coordinates of the jump spot (guessing at where it was) or the Sallee/Rumsey gap in the ridge and/or rock slide Maynard can provide them. If HNF wants pictures to go along with coordinates, in this or a different format, Maynard can provide those as well. Here are the GPS coordinates, corrected, as recorded with an apple SE."

Henry J Thol Jr	46*53'22" N	111*53'48"W
Eldon E Diettert	46*53'19" N	111*53'50"W
Joseph P Sylvia	46*53'14" N	111*53'52"W
Robert J Bennet	46*53'14" N	111*53'51"W
Newton R Thompson	46*53'16" N	111*53'48"W
Silas R Thompson	46*53'13" N	111*53'51"W
Stanley J Reba	46*53'12" N	111*53'50"W
James O Harrison	46*53'15" N	111*53'53"W
Leonard P Piper	46*53'18" N	111*53'49"W
Philip R McVey	46*53'35" N	111*53'48"W
David R Navon	46*53'21" N	111*53'47"W
Marvin L Sherman	46*53'19" N	111*53'45"W
William J Hellman	46*53'22" N	111*53'57"W

Head of gulch sign	46*53'36"N	111*53'3"W
Sallee's gap	46*53'19" N	111*53'52"W

We failed to accomplish two of our initial tasks. Though organized and capable of doing all tasks, we were advised by the Helena Ranger District of the Helena National Forest that we were not authorized to install the two replacement crosses, pending higher level discussions still needing to happen inside the broader U.S. Forest Service. With regard to restoring, painting and slowing the deteriora-

tion of the still-standing crosses, the two replacement crosses proved to be the long pole in the tent, causing the Gulch Squad to vote in favor of not painting the other 10 crosses. Now the two replacement crosses and all materials and tools necessary to refurbish the other crosses, including two sacks of concrete, four 6-inch rebar and an unopened gallon of the recommended and FS- approved TUFF-CRETE paint for the crosses, donated by Helena's Danzers Paints (\$50), will be stored in the NSA Trails tool and supply cache near the USFS Smokejumper Loft in Missoula.

The mold for the crosses, fabricated by expert carpenters Milt Knuckles (MSO '61), Jason Hartwick and Greg Cejka of Helena, will remain at 3080 Rodeo Road, the Helena home of Chuck Spencer and his sister Jan Dell. Spencer is the expert monument concrete finisher, responsible for similar work at the Fort Harrison Veterans Cemetery. Spen-



Mike Pepion and Kim Maynard, Working on blowdown

cer combined white Portland cement, Macabond hardener and mold release oil, all donated by Helena's Macon Supply (\$77), to create the two crosses now being placed in storage near the loft in Missoula. Should there prove to be a need to make more crosses, rather than refurbish and paint the remaining 10, only Knuckles and Spencer know the delicate procedures for getting quality copies of the cross-shaped monument.

These individuals went out with the 2017 Missouri River Canyon Trail to Mann Gulch crew: Sharon Bruce and JoAnn Bushman, Cooks; Fred Benson and Jeff Nisbet, Packers; Fred Stanaway, Steve Straley, MSO '77-'91; Kim Maynard, MSO '82-'90; John Lammers, MSO '71-'76; Bob Sprute, MSO '61; Mike Pepion, MSO '82-'95; Bill Duffey, MSO '71-'79, '83-'86; to Bob Reid, MSO '57, '59-'60, RDD '95; Bob Beckley, RAC '83, GAC '84-'85; and John Driscoll, MSO '68 & '77.

In summary, we did what we could do. The place is better than we found it and it's going to be there for a long time after we've all become pleasant memories.



Bob Beckley, Steve Straley, John Lammers, Jeff Nisbet, and Bob Reid,



From L-R: Fred Stanaway (NSA Associate), Bob Reid (MSO 57), Bob Beckley (RAC 83), Mike Pepion (MSO 82), John Driscoll (MSO 68), Kim Maynard (MSO 82), Bob Sprute (MSO 61), Bill Duffey (MSO 71) and John Lammers (MSO 71)

Not shown: Jeff Nisbet and Fred Benson, Packers; Steve Straley (MSO 77) and Sharon Bruce and JoAnn Bushman, Cooks, Milt Knuckles (MSO 61) and Seth Roby (NSA Associate)

Lassen National Park
Volcano Adventure Camp
Scott "Mouse" Warner RDD 69

Lassen Peak, a volcano (10457 feet above sea level) which grandly erupted in 1914, is a favorite Northern California landmark. The surrounding 100,000 acre Lassen Volcanic National Park (LVNP) is a wonder: snows up to 30 feet deep with the LVNP National Parkway not usually plowed through until July, bubbling and steaming thermal features, the extensive Devastated Area from the 1914-16 eruptions, alpine lakes and streams, lava beds and cinder cones, different kinds of volcanos, and even dunes.

The Volcano Adventure Youth Camp (VAC) was inaugurated October 2016 as a joint effort of the Lassen Park Foundation (LPF) and LVNP to get kids of all backgrounds "Into the Woods." The VAC consists of 2-covered pavilions, 10 platform tent cabins (each accommodating 8 "campers"), extensive wide graveled paths, 2 graveled campfire circles with fire rings and benches, and modern shower and numerous toilet facilities. All is American Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant for wheel chair campers. A tidy, "squared-away" camp indeed, in a mixed-conifer forest at 5800 feet above sea level - in the "Banana Belt" lee side low-snowpack of Lassen Peak.

The NSA Smokejumper TRAMPS (Trails Restoration and Maintenance Project

Specialists) assignment was to work with the park Facilities & Maintenance to get the Adventure Camp ready for "campers" from Northern California, Southern Oregon, and beyond. Gary Mott, Maintenance Chief and our liaison, lined out the work, and as a good boss let his fine Maintenance crew and NSA "run with it." The TRAMPS and LVNP were somewhat similar: problem solvers, results-oriented, wide range of expertise with "hidden" talents, used to being understaffed and working "with what you've got", having endurance and patience, and graced with a great sense of humor.

Lassen Park was "up against it" because of staff departures, extremely heavy 2016-17 snowpack with our colleagues plowing deep snow through the National Parkway, dealing with campground water systems and many hazard trees, and getting the VAC ready for campers to arrive mid-June. There was a lot to do without much time and folks to do the work. The TRAMPS "dropped in" 16-strong to help out just like the "Smokejumper Days"

Being in the "Banana Belt" with low snowpack, it was from snow one week, to glorious weather for the 28 April - 6 May project duration, LVNP North Maintenance Center supervisor Merita Kimball and Bobby Rogers were our support. First the NSA "Advance Party" of Gordon "Guido" Brazzi (RDD 66) and Scott "Mouse" Warner (RDD 69), arrived a day early to prepare for crew arrival; clean up the two Pavilions" of "drifts" of pine needles; removal of packing and construction materials from Fall 2016 heavy and early snow chasing out the LVNP "Engine Room" in the face of a woods-closing blizzard; and laying out the few assembled picnic tables, then the to-be-assembled parts and scattered nuts and bolts.

The next day Bill Wharton (Associate) and Spud DeJarnette (MSO 49) arrived with the complete Camp Outfit and provisions. Volunteers filtered in from near and far before supper. This was part of the 15 volunteer work days of project preparation; then the 65 volunteer work days to follow.



Assembling Picnic Tables in the Osprey Pavilion. L-R: Bob Harris, Jack Johnson Obscured: Gordon Brazzi



Standing L-R: Ray Mitchum, Robert Cromwell, Dan Greenwall, Gary Mott, Jim Snapp, Scott Warner, Jim Klump, Bob Bente, Matt Houston (w/black cowboy hat), Steve Meyer, Bob Harris, Jack Jackson, John Houston, Murry Taylor, Ryan Finnegan.
 Kneeling L-R: Jim Richardson, Gordon Brazzi, Bill Wharton, Jennifer Finnegan, Patrick Carr, Ken Svilich, Dorsey Lightner.

The first work day, straight-away NSA and our Lassen NPS colleagues took on tent platform cleanup, and started the set-up of the ten tents. A few days later the NSA/LVNP Crew unloaded, man-hauled, and assembled canvas bunk-style cots and cabinets. Copious packaging was sorted and arranged for recycle and disposal. The NSA "Crack Crew" who saw the extensive "Tent Set-Up" all the way through were Bob Harris (RDD 75), Ken Svilich (Loyal Associate for years), Jim Snapp (MSO 67), Jack Johnson (Associate), and Dorsey Lightner (RDD 89). Others understandably "Job Hopped" to other "Calls to Duty" or, perhaps for a "Better Deal." Dan Greenwell and Ray Mitchum LVNP Maintenance showed how to set up the tents and worked alongside the NSA.

Bob Bente (RDD 88), recruited as the future NSA CA TRAMPS "Squad leader" when "Mouse" gives it up or "makes his last jump", came and went during the project due to jury duty. Ironically, he received the same jury call/group designation as the "Redding Rodent" who respectfully asked and was

granted reschedule. Bente opted (unsuccessfully) to "beat the system."

Concurrently, the ADA compliant trail (5-foot wide and about 85 feet long) to the second fire ring adjacent to the Osprey Pavilion was engineered, pioneered, leveled, bordering sill logs installed, and a 1-foot lift of cobble & gravel laid down & compacted. Old smokejumpers learned a new log-fitting technique from LVNP Maintenance called "Kerfing." Rather than the laborious log angle fitting with scribing, logs of near diameter were "fitted" as close as possible, then chainsaw "Kerfed" to a near exact fit. This repetitive process required log propping, cleaning logs of soil/gravel, marking, then "Surgical Sawing." Logs were then anchored with cut-on-site steel rebar. Cobble and gravel of a much deeper lift was applied and compacted to the Osprey fire ring of about 30 feet in diameter.

The much larger fire ring some "Five Chains" (One chain equals 66 feet) west of the Pavilions of about 70 feet in diameter was layered with an additional one-foot lift of gravel. In all, NSA "Bob Cat Boy" Steve Meyer (MCY 73) transported and strategically placed

48 cubic yards of road base gravel and foundation cobble. That is a lot! Arley Kisling (RDD 69) was the sill log "Surgical Saw." Murray Taylor (RDD 65) expertly operated the mechanical "whacker." Johnny Culbertson (FBX 69) feathered the Fall 2016 gravel installation extensive "grade break" to the 2017 new trail. Jim Klump (RDD 64) shepherded log selection and placement, rebar cutting, and motivation of personnel. "Tent" volunteers joined as available and as needed. Ray Mitchum LVNP instructed, directed, and worked alongside NSA. He confided to "Co-Engineer" Scott Warner that he had never seen such a crew with diverse expertise - good attitude and had so much fun, given the never-ending smoke-jumper "Wit and Humor."

The ten large metal picnic tables - 5 for each pavilion - were assembled and placed, with Bob Harris and Jack Johnson seeing the sub-project all the way through, with others in assistance. Numerous water facets with ADA compliant gravel bases were finished off, along with 2 main water valves in risers. Bill Fouts of LVNP Maintenance showed up with an enormous truck "chocker-block" with "gut-busting" heavy Recycle, Refuse, and Bear Bins for unloading. This took a big coordinated effort of NSA-NPS folks: reminiscent of past smokejumper manual off-loading/loading



Tent Crew, L-R: Ray Mitchum, Ken Sivilich, Jim Snapp, Bob Harris (ladder), Murry Taylor, Jack Johnson .

of aircraft. There were many other miscellaneous tasks to get the VAC ready for campers.

Integral and all-important to TRAMPS adventures was "Camp Life." The facilities and food were superb. The covered Osprey Pavilion was transformed into a "Cook Shack" and "Mess Hall" manned by Bill Wharton, Loyal Associate of many years, and Gordon Brazzi (RDD 66). Camp Outfit assembling, packaging, and transport - not to mention provisioning including purchase, are enormous "Behind the Scenes" tasks. Many thanks to Bill and Spud who perform these tasks year after year. A "Flat Top" and Oven with top burners complemented our complete camp outfit. Nearby snow kept victuals and libations cool and fresh. Food was varied and delicious. The Dutch Ovens were out. Even yet, there were "complaints": "The food was too good, I came here to lose weight"; "What about Crème Brûlée, Croissants, Oatmeal, and Pepsi?"; "The Steaks were too big"; and so on. Not to be forgotten: "How about an 'Air Drop' of C-Rations for old times' sake?"

Around the steel fire ring with the laser cut deer family brought by a volunteer, stories and jokes abounded. Who could forget master story and joke teller Jim Klump's "The Real Story of Cinco de Mayo" (Texas accent long "a"), "How a Certain Southeast Asian City Got Its Name", and the pièce de résistance "The Maku, Maku" (set in the India Raj, complete with British accent)! There were even "oral readings" by the "Squad leader" from The Collected Poems of Robert Service (The Men Who Don't Fit In" and others); and from Murry Taylor's first book Jumping Fire, where jumpers around a campfire "North of the Arctic Circle" commiserate about the shared "Peter Pan Syndrome." Author Murry weighed in with favorite passages from his "literary art."

"End of Project Steak Night" was a long-planned 'Stellar Event', with over 40 in attendance. Decorations included a customized NSA Banner, a T-10 "out-of-service" parachute canopy, drift streamers, and a FS-14 D-Bag with yellow static line and cable snap. NSA invited our LVNP Maintenance colleagues and their significant others, along with the Education Specialist Robert Cromwell (with wife and child), and new Park Superintendent Jim Richardson. Also attending were

the wonderful Lassen Park Foundation folks: Executive Director Jennifer Finnegan with husband Ryan and Board Members John Sharrah and Patrick Carr. The Foundation generously financed the 2017 NSA TRAMPS VAC Project as part of the Private-Public, LPF-LVNP Partnership. Also, our good friends John Houston, Redding City Fireman and little brother "Matt the Katt" Houston (NSA 2015 CA TRAMPS Associate) were in attendance with John expertly grilling over 40 steaks! The Houston boys are the sons of departed jump buddy Everett "Doc Sam" Houston (MCY 1971). Redding Fireman and friend Jamie was also there with his camera and photo skills. We were even musically entertained around the campfire by NPS guitarists Gary Mott, Ray Mitchum, and Robert Cromwell.

By way of recognition of the marvelous "2017 NSA TRAMPS VAC Roster" the shadowy, semi-secret executive committee met in a volunteer's "hooch" (commandeered tent cabin). In a sincere, not "politically correct where everyone gets a trophy" format, was the following recognition - they earned it - in no particular order. Admittedly there is double entendre, inside jokes, and irreverence which would only be understood by those "Who Were There" and those with Smokejumper association. No apologies are forthcoming.

Murry Taylor, "*Whacker Award.*" Gordon Brazzi, "*Phoenix Award.*" Ken Svilich, "*Esteemed & Loyal Associate Award.*" "Pepper" Jack Johnson, "*Up for Any Task Award.*" Bill Wharton, "*Ace Cook/Provisioner - Good Natured Award.*" Dorsey "Dors the Horse" Lightner, "*Best Newcomer Award.*" Johnny Culbertson, "*Energizer Bunny Award.*"



Happy Campers 6/6 LVNP VAC Monterey Bay CA Charter School. Scott Warner holding NSA Banner, with Gordon Brazzi at right of child holding Banner.

Jim Klump, "*Motivator, Morale Award.*" Steve Meyer, "*Bob Cat Boy Award.*" Bob Bente, "*Prodigal Son, He Came Back Award.*" Bob Harris, "*See it Thorough to the End, No Job-Hopping Award.*" Jim Snapp, "*Gentleman Jim Award.*" Arley Kisling, "*Surgical Saw Award.*" Scott Warner, "*Mighty Mouse Award.*" Finally, sincere appreciation for our good, loyal friend John Helmer (RDD 59), leaving early; and Spud, our NSA CA TRAMP Patriarch who started it all in California in 2008.

It should be pointed out, CA TRAMPS owes much to loyal NSA Associates. Associates Bill Wharton and Ken Svilich "have been there" for the TRAMPS for nearly a decade. Now we have also enlisted "Pepper Jack" Johnson who worked for Lassen National Park way back when, before making his career with the Eldorado NF.

To conclude, even "Old Smokejumper Curmudgeons" would have to admit the 2017 NSA CA TRAMPS Volcano Adventure Camp endeavor was a great project for a great cause. It was singular in nature given great need, that time was of the essence, the active collaboration with the Lassen Park "Engine Room" Maintenance staff, Lassen Park Foundation, and NSA. For many of us, it is what the USA is all about.

Epilogue:

6 Sept 2017, NSA volunteers Scott Warner, Bob Bente, and Gordon Brazzi returned to the VAC for a follow-up visit to see "Campers" and Lassen Volcanic National Park in action. The Monterey Bay Charter School, Pacific Grove CA of 2-6th grade classes, of about 40 kids of equal boys & girls in number, 2 teachers, and 8 parent chaperones were booked at VAC for the week. We were favorably impressed with the student "camper"-teacher-chaperone contingent and LVNP Ranger Trixene Peart. At the suggestion of a teacher, we old smokejumpers hosted a "Q & A" which lasted 40 minutes of penetrating questions. Recently retired California Smokejumper Training Officer Bob Bente carried most of the load. He gracefully handled a "camper" question of "How old are you?", before we broke up to accompany inquisitive campers on a compass and orienteering exercise. Bente's obviously older smokejumper colleagues were spared contemplation of the "March of Time." We left content the NSA CA TRAMPS 2017 Volcano Adventure Camp Project was Definitely Worth It!

Rio Puerco Trail Mike Overby ((MSO 67)

The project included a diverse crew of former Jumpers and well qualified Associate Volunteers. Jumpers included, Mike Overby (MSO 67), Jon Klingel (CJ 65), and Watson (Java) Bradley (MSO 74), together with veteran volunteer Mark Rivera and new Back Country Horseman volunteers Piet Werbrouck, Jeff Hanford (and wife/cook Terri). A great plus of having BCH was they helped pack in/out and kept horses/donkey at the trail during the project.

Over the past 3 years, New Mexico NSA trail crews have forged a solid partnership with the Santa Fe Chapter of Back Country Horseman (BCH). Two prior projects in Pecos Wilderness (2015 and 2016) were supported with pack support from this outstanding crew. The BCH suggested we explore this area of northern New Mexico based on their knowledge of needed trail work in this Santa Fe National Forest Wilderness that has gone without trail work for years. The trail was located just a short distance south of the Continental Divide Trail.

Jon and Mark scouted the area in late May to find huge blow-down areas blocking the trail (or what they thought was the trail). Fortunately, after the project started we learned that the trail was in a different area and not as bad as once thought – but no less a huge challenge. In addition, the project high-elevation



Jeff Hanford and Mike Overby undercut a log. Mark Rivera and Java Watson in the background.

location was dotted with multiple snow drifts – even at this early summer date.

As sometimes happens, the BCH were not able to deliver all supplies on first day pack-in but, thankfully, when you have trail crew with pack stock, going back next day to retrieve our Coleman stove and other tools wasn't too bad – it only required us to cook dinner and breakfast over an open fire to begin the project.

After the first day of clearing that included extensive cross cut work, the crew left tools, hard hats and our tried and true spray on saw lubricant (Pam) on side of the trail. When arriving the next morning, we crossed a very large pile of fresh bear scat in middle of the trail – which drew a number of comments – wow, hope he doesn't venture in our direction today or tonight. When arriving at tools we found torn up hard hats and two cans of Pam with teeth puncture marks. Someone said "sure wish I could have seen that bear crunching those aerosol cans – what a picture that would have made." By-the-way, the makers of Pam aerosol lubricant probably doesn't know about this new market niche they are missing.

Another unusual and very interesting late volunteer assisting the crew was a young female that showed up on the second day of the project. Isabelle Bordet was a 30-something French Veterinarian explorer traveling north on Continental Divide Trail – who had been in communication Jeff Hanford of BCH. She had traveled to US a month earlier, purchased two mules (Earl and Molly) and all packing supplies for a trip north to Wyoming from New Mexico. She stayed with us for 3 days of the project, helped with trail work and some cooking (very attractive but camp cooking wasn't her strength – maybe French food). Jon helped her with much needed repair work on her saddle.

Even though there was no river/creek near-by, Jon discovered and dug out an excellent spring gurgling very cold (ice cold actually) water within 100 yards of camp – needless to say, we kept the dug-out full of beer for the week.



San Pedro parks 2017 team

L-R: Mike Overby, Piet, Jon Klingel, Jeff Hanford, Terri, Mark Rivera, Java Watson

By the end of week, we had cleared the trail to wilderness boundary cutting 264

logs on 3 trails covering a total of 8 miles – huge accomplishment for our small crew. In addition, we explored future trail work

needed in other areas of the wilderness. All-in-all, this was a great project in wonderful wilderness experience - that I am sure will be continued in future years.

Antone Guard Station Trails (The Boys of Summer) Robin Hamilton (MSO 69)

Our crew, mostly from the Missoula rookie class of 1969, gathered at the Antone Guard Station in the Snowcrest Mountains Southeast of Dillon at the end of July to hike the heights and trim the trails. The cabin is at 8,000 feet and all work was up from there. It's the smallest cabin we've used, but has been well maintained and the stove works. The kitchen needs a peeler, a pasta ladle, and a few more coffee mugs.

This remote corner of the Gallatin Forest is relatively unknown except by elk hunters and the young district foreman wasn't sure of some of the trails overgrown into lush mountain meadows and flowers blooming at the end of July. Luckily, the camp cook, Hamilton, had dragged a few elk out of the area and was able to guide some of the work crews. The terrain was rough and there were some minor injuries, so the survivors had to work even harder. Hey, we're jumpers, right? The crew included

Dave Dayton (MSO 69), Mark Johnson (MSO 69), Fred Axelrod (MSO 69), Keith Beartusk (MSO 69), John Stewart (MSO 69), John Boles (MSO 69), Bob McKean (MSO 67), Lon Dale (MSO 69), and Robin Hamilton (MSO 69). We did enjoy the district horses carrying the tools.

The assignment included an unbalanced ratio of hiking to actual work, which meant trail repair. The crew persevered and finished ahead of time as usual. Unfortunately, fishable water was too far away, so we had to spend evenings in conversation. We even broke the rules and talked politics. It seemed that the mess in DC required a few curses and condemnations. Even in the August heat the temperature plummeted after the sun sank behind Sawtooth Peak and the evening fire was popular and well surrounded.

Driving to the work site was a treat so we'll be looking for something similar next year.

West Fork Cabin Chuck Haynes (Associate)

West Fork Cabin was originally built in 1931 as a smoke chaser's cabin. Later, it was used for other purposes, such as overnighting by hunters, hikers, and even honeymooners. It burned to the ground in July 1998. The Forest Service did not have the money to replace the structure, so Pat Hart, the Bonners Ferry Recreation and Trails Program Manager who developed our project, organized an effort to rebuild the cabin. On a tiny budget, using a great deal of volunteer help and mostly donated equipment and materials, the cabin was rebuilt in 1999. The cabin is now used by USFS personnel and the public alike for various activities.

The week of August 6-11, Carl Gidlund (MSO 58), Jimmy Deeds (MSO 64), Karl Maerzluft (FBX 66), Bob Denner (Assoc), and I hiked in to work in and around the cabin. Nate Demmons, a Forest Service employee and jack-of-all-trades, was our liaison and both directed and participated in our efforts. We were packed in by the Back-Country Horsemen out of Priest River. They did a great job. It was interesting and enjoyable, watching and helping them pack, balance, and secure their loads. We were quite thankful for their professionalism, and they were a great bunch of people with whom to work.

We did a variety of projects during our stay. Inside the cabin, we worked on the windows to make them function better, and we replaced the seals. We installed a tin sheet behind the wood-burning stove to provide a dead-air barrier for fire safety. We cleaned out the stove and chimney and replaced the stove

pipe. Finally, we pulled several nails used as hangers and replaced them with a coat rack which Nate had built using horseshoes as hangers.

On the outside of the cabin, we replaced the porch stairs and railing. We removed the old stairs, which had two risers and one 2x10 tread per step. The new stairs have three risers and treads made with two 2x6s (with a drainage gap between the 2x6s). We then replaced the shaky stair railing with a much sturdier one, using (at the bottom of the stairs) 4x4 balusters secured with 3/8th inch bolts. We also swept and rinsed the outside of the cabin to prepare it for receiving a new coat of oil sealer (to be completed by a local painter). Finally, we removed and replaced the ridge cap on the cabin roof.

There were two tables at the cabin, one inside and one on the porch which doubles as the front window shutter. The one on the porch folded down, and Jimmy used it for cooking most of our meals. Both had damage and needed some new boards. We replaced boards as necessary, then covered each table with a sheet of tin. We bent the tin sheets over the edges of the tables and screwed them into place to provide a more permanent and durable table top. We also remounted and re-secured the front porch table/window shutter.

In front of the cabin is a fire pit. When we arrived, along two sides of the pit were rotting logs lying on the ground used for seating. We felled two trees to replace the logs, skinned the bark, and shaved off the top to provide a relatively flat seating surface. We then cut four rounds, removed the bark, and notched them to fit the flattened logs. Using 8" spikes, we attached each log to two of the rounds, creating benches which are now useable, especially for more experienced (i.e., more senior) hikers and horsemen.

Beside the cabin are several trees which show marks where riders have tethered their horses. We were tasked to install a horse high-line to encourage riders to tie their horses there and protect the trees. The high-line installation was to be a six-step process – clear brush; dig holes; insert poles; mix, pour, and tamp concrete; allow concrete to set; install high-line. How hard can that be? As it



Crew – L-R: Karl Maerzluft, Bob Denner, Carl Gidlund, Jimmy Deeds, Chuck Haynes

turned out, there were five easy steps. Unfortunately, Step #2 had a number of sub-steps.

Step #2 required digging two holes, 20-to-25 feet apart. Each hole was to be 18 inches in diameter (to accommodate the reinforcing rebar near the base of the pole) and 24 inches deep (to provide a stable concrete base). After about six inches of easy digging, we hit rock. We widened the diameter of the hole to about 36 inches without finding any indication that we were getting close to the edge of the rock. When digging a hole, you have to be smarter than the rock, so we moved the hole. We successfully managed to dig down about 18 inches before hitting rock. After widening that hole, we decided, with Nate's concurrence, that 18 inches would be deep enough because, if we were hitting bed-rock, there was little concern for frost heave.



The new stairs with unidentified crew member.

We moved on to the second hole, 20 feet from the first hole, and dug down to about 12 inches. At that point, Bob jinxed us by saying that he had a good feeling about this hole. Virtually the next shovel strike hit rock. At that point, Step #2 became multi-faceted. We dug, expanded the hole's diameter, groaned, cursed, started a new hole, created a trench out of the new hole, cursed some more, employed a sledge hammer, jumped up and down, took a break, cursed some more You get the idea. Finally, we managed to locate a spot where the rock dropped off enough that we could get down to 18 inches.

The rest was easy. We managed to

get the concrete (2 bags per hole) mixed, poured, tamped, and set so that we could string the high-line before the packers arrived on the 11th. The line has four loops in it, and one of the packers tied up three of his horses after they were loaded. Two were not happy and moved around, pulling at their leads repeatedly and with some vigor. Thus, we were fairly sure that the high-line will hold for future use.

Finally, we cut, split, and placed about a cord of firewood under the front porch of the cabin for use by visitors during cold weather.

All the while, Jimmy kept us going with delightful and hardy meals, from his world-famous meat-and-bean stew to Mexican and Italian dishes to ribs on the last night. Cooking was a little tough on him though, since fire restrictions meant that he was constrained from using all the instruments in his arsenal. Nevertheless, we never went away from the table hungry or unsatisfied.

The hike from the trailhead to the cabin was only 1.6 miles, but it was an hour-long drive from Bonners Ferry to the trailhead, so we roughed it – more or less. Carl, Karl, and Bob bunked in the cabin. Jimmy and I brought our personal tents. Nate hiked in and out every day. Something about a wife at home?

The weather was beautiful, although the smoke from wildfires diminished our distance views. Temperatures ranged from the mid-40s at night (brrr!) to the mid-90s in the afternoons (ahhh!). Carl & Karl usually commented on how pleasant the cabin was for sleeping, while Bob complained that, since heat rises, his top bunk was always too warm. I listened with my usual equanimity while shivering from the cold. However, I got even in the afternoons!

The view from the front porch is beautiful – an open meadow filled with grasses and wildflowers, then a stand of coniferous trees, all backed by a mountain rising several hundred feet. No wonder people like this cabin. During the week, a Boy Scout troop, four women on horseback, and a family of four all came through the site. We even had a local journalist hike in to interview us on the work we were doing.

It was a good project, and we went to bed tired each evening. We all enjoyed the camaraderie (that's what it's all about), and our relationships with those we met seem to have created goodwill between the Forest Service in the area and the NSA.

Yellowjacket Lake Trail Perry Whittaker (MSO 71)

The project was located on the Salmon/Challis National Forest in the east end of the Frank Church River of No Return Wilderness (FCRNRW). The crew camped at Yellowjacket Lake Campground in Section 23, T. 20 N., R. 16 E., Boise Meridian approximately thirty-two (32) air miles southwest of Salmon, Idaho. Our camp was just outside the wilderness boundary although the trail work was within the FCRNRW. Wednesday, July 12 was spent driving to the campsite and setting up camp for the week. We had a fabulous week of summer weather with clear days and moderately cool nights. The campsite was near a beautiful small lake with a stunning backdrop of mountains.

The crew consisted of ten National Smokejumper Association (NSA) retired smokejumpers, and a cook. Crew included Tom Boatner (FBX 80), Bruce Ford (MSO 75), Jeff Kinderman (MSO 75), Kim Maynard (MSO 82), Rod McIver (MSO 64), Jeff Nerison (MYC 77), Doug Stinson (CJ 54), Joe Chandler (MSO 71), Bill Werhane (MSO 66), Perry Whittaker (MSO 71) acting as squad leader. This was a strong crew with many years of smokejumper experience and NSA trail projects under their belts.

We were blessed to have Jane Wright accept the Cook position. Jane did a fine job cooking for a large crew. She cooked several things in the Dutch oven which were enjoyed by all. The crew enjoyed the meals during the week. Jane went above and beyond my expectations, it was great having her on the crew!

The project involved an estimated fourteen and one-half miles of trail maintenance on



Joe Chandler, Bruce Ford, Bill Werhane, Jeff Kinderman, Kim Maynard.

the Hoodoo Meadows Trail #043, Hoodoo Creek Trail #041, McEleny Mtn Trail #039, Deer Creek Trail #029, and Yellowjacket Creek Trail #38. A lot of the trail work was in mountainous terrain between 6,600 and 8,700 feet above sea level.

July 13 and 14 was spent working an estimated six miles of the Yellowjacket Creek Trail both directions from the Frog Meadows area along with 1.25 miles of the McEleny Mtn. out of Hoodoo Meadows. This work included removal of 110 trees from the trails using crosscut saws, tread work on approximately 33 feet of trail, cleanout of an estimated 20 water bars, and significant seedling, sapling, and brush removal.

July 15 was spent on the McEleny Mtn



Geoff Fast and Joe Chandler running the misery whip.

Trail and two and three-fourth miles of the Hoodoo Meadows Trail where we cut and removed 46 trees, improved a stream crossing, cleaned 25 water bars, and removed seedlings, saplings, and brush.

July 16 the crew worked three miles of the Deer Creek Trail cutting and removing 20 trees, cleaned approximately 25 water bars, completed 2.5 chains of tread, and removed seedlings, saplings, and brush.

July 17 the crew worked one and one-half miles of the Hoodoo Creek Trail cutting and removing 137 trees, and removed seedlings, saplings, and brush.

The crew did a fabulous job of trail

work, setting up camp, assisting with cooking and dish clean-up. They bonded well and had a great time telling and listening to stories about one another and other old smoke-jumpers most of who were not present to refute or substantiate the stories. Evening camp fire stories are always plentiful and most interesting.

Many thanks go to Geoff Fast, Wilderness Ranger, on the Salmon/Challis who worked with us two days and provided sufficient guidance regarding what he wanted and providing the crew with a great experience. Geoff knew where to set up camp making our experience most rewarding. It helps tremendously to have Forest Service folks work with the NSA crew to ensure the work product is satisfactory.

In summary, the crew cleared and improved an estimated fourteen and one-half miles of trail. This included cutting and removing 313 trees from the trails, 200 feet of tread work, cleaned out 70 water bars, and removed seedlings, saplings, and brush along the trails. Since all trails were within

FCRNRW, all saw work was done with cross-cut saws or smaller hand saws. It is always fun being on these trail projects. We broke camp and departed for our respective homes early the morning of July 18, peace and harmony prevailing.



Bill Werhane, Kim Maynard, Jeff Kinderman, Doug Stinson, Rod McIver, Geoff Fast, ?. Clearing the trail.



The Crew Front row L-R: Perry Whittaker, Doug Stinson, Bill Werhane Back row L-R: Rod McIver, Kim Maynard, Joe Chandler, Bruce Ford, Tom Boatner, Jeff Kinderman, and Jeff Nerison.

Santa Barbara Bridge Project – Pecos Wilderness Area New Mexico

Mike Overby (MSO 67)

I've been doing NSA trails projects for 17 years (since 1999) and have experienced some great projects. That being said, this project was probably the best one yet.

The project team came from miles away and included Jim Schmidt (CJ 63) - Portland, OR, Doug Walmsley (MSO 65) - Denver, CO, Jon Klingel (CJ (65) -Santa Fe, Tom Wilks (GAC 87) - Oak Harbor, WA, Jim Thompson (MSO 63) - Sand Point, ID, Mark Rivera (Associate) – Angel Fire, NM, and Project Lead Mike Overby (MSO 67) – Angel Fire, NM and Dallas, TX.

The project was on the West Fork of Rio Santa Barbara, 3 miles from the Trail head/wilderness boundary. In summary, the project team constructed a 40-ft. bridge with railings that is claimed to be the largest/longest pedestrian bridge constructed in the Pecos Wilderness Area. The effort involved cutting two giant Engelmann Spruce that provided the foundation for the bridge.

The week-long effort (Sunday to Saturday) could not have been accomplished without great support from Santa Fe Chapter of Back Country Horseman – who have been our go-to packers for New Mexico trail projects for the past 3 years. The BCH started on Saturday by packing in lumber, tools and bridge materials. Their effort continued on Sunday by finishing the pack in of the project team and our supplies. Following project completion on late Friday, the BCH came back and did multiple pack-out trips with our supplies and great quantities of tools (boy were we glad we didn't to carry out very multiple – and very heavy – grip hoists and cabling and tools). And yes, they didn't have to pack out anything but empty beer cans.

The 5-day long effort would also not have possible without the expertise and technical supervision of retired Civil Engineer Jim Thompson. Jim's background of owning a marine engineering company in the bay area was invaluable. The team had to hoist/drag the two 1,000-pound Spruce from one side of river to other in order to cut/trim (from 50 ft. to 40 ft.) the two Spruce logs, bolt them together and then pre-drill and cut railing slots. The base of the bridge consisted of 3 ft. x 9 ft. ga-

bion rock filled foundations on both sides of the river and large sill logs on top that supported the logs.

Pulling the 2 logs together (2,000 lbs.) back over the river to be placed on the foundation required an ingenious cable supported A frame structure on both sides of the river. Two (strategically placed) large grip hoists worked together to pull the logs (very slowly) across the river and into place. Once secured, the team bolted the 5-ft. bridge supports and railings in place.

A very curious observer that traveled to the construction site most days was Bill Kimsley from Taos, NM. Bill was the original founder of Backpacker Magazine and co-founder of The American Hiking Society. Bill was so impressed with the project that he authored a great article for The Taos Newspaper entitled "Smokejumpers build bridge across Rio Santa Barbara, save taxpayers money."

Note: Jim Thompson had estimated that for this project to be done commercially would have cost the Forest Service over \$40,000. A copy of the article can be found at: <http://www.taosnews.com/stories/smoke-jumpers-build-bridge-across-r237o-santa-barbara-save-taxpayers-money,43268?>

In summary, the New Mexico Smokejumper Trail Project team(s) have established quite a reputation over the past 3 years. A total of 7 projects and two great news articles in local papers are the talk-of-the town and in the Santa Fe and Carson National Forests. We hope to continue that reputation as demand for our services continues to grow.



The crew ready to haul bridge components across the river. Photo by Bill Kemsley

Jumpers working on a stringer for the bridge.
Photo by David Barager



Bolting the stringers on the bridge.



Sean Ferrell, a senior Forest Service officer, snaps a photo of a smoke jumper and ranger crew at the new Río Santa Barbara bridge in the Pecos Wilderness.
Photo by Bill Kemsley