

January 6. The aim was to walk the Skyline and Loughry Woods trails, removing blockages wherever possible. I would take out small fallen trees and branches but just trim up bigger trees so that people could get past by stepping over or under.

- Just past the Saratoga Gap parking lot two tan-oaks had been cut, probably by P.G & E since they were threatening high voltage power lines.
- In the next 200 yards I removed 4 small logs. It looked like I would not get very far today at this rate.
- There was nothing more however until I removed parts of a fallen oak that was partially blocking the trail just before the junk trailers.
- Past the slide, and before the connector, there were 7 tan-oaks down. I trimmed these up and left them as step-overs. There was one tan-oak hanging precariously over the trail. It needs to come down but I would not tackle it on my own.
- I cut one small bough on the other connector (closer to Loughry Woods Trail) that was impeding horse traffic.
- On the Loughry Woods Trail, before the switchback, hangs a log right in the middle of the trail. It's stable and not dangerous so I left it.
- Just past the switchback there's a small step-over yet to be removed.
- At the place where we have had many tan-oaks fall in the last two years there are several more. I cleared one small one, then ran into one huge mess. Four tan-oaks had fallen together, all intertwined. It took an hour and a half to clear a path through this impassable mess and my saw felt blunt by the time I had finished. That wood was hard.
- Beyond the big mess there was a step-over, then a very large old log partially blocking the trail. That will need a big saw, as will most of the other logs that I have left.

It was getting late so I quit at this point, doing minimal tidying up on the way back to "the gap".

January 20. For the first scheduled workday of the year we were missing Kevin and Sylvia but gained Mary Ellen Quinn. We removed the numerous logs on the Skyline and Loughry Woods Trails that I had found on my scouting trip on January 6. Among those removed were two very dangerous trees that were just about to fall on the trail.

February 17. Tom Driscoll joined us for this work-session. Frank and Ken repaired the rock retaining wall by Goat Rock and did other repairs to the trail close by. The remainder of the crew brushed the Saratoga Gap Trail from where we had finished in December, getting almost to the grassy area. There was little tread work to be done but close to the connector where we finished there is water damage that needs to be fixed.

March 17. We had the usual crew again today, Martin, Ken, Frank, Kevin and Shu Zhu. Ken and Martin took out the step-over log on the Castle Rock Loop Trail, close to Castle Rock. We all parked at Partridge.

Ken and Martin rejoined the crew as they worked on the Saratoga gap trail (southern half). We finished the chaparral area close to the Connector Trail and did a little tread work on the grassy bit before the connector. We built one rock retaining wall and two drainage structures. We brushed and removed berm to improve drainage.

April 21. We had an unusually large crew today. The usual 5, plus Mary Ellen and Cathy the two Little girls (aged 11?), Diana and Winifred, who joined us for the day. Two bikers, Tao and George, came to do some cleanup. They could not stay for long so we sent them, with large bags, down to the Skyline-to-the-Sea Trail.

We widened and shaped trail, leveling and removing berm, in the meadow area of the Saratoga Gap Trail on both sides of the Connector Trail. We were lucky that the rain held off until we got home.

April 28 – Trail Days Twelve trail-work volunteers showed up at Saratoga Gap by 9 AM on the morning of April 28, 2007. The weather forecast was for a hot day and we hoped for a breeze to cool us. We all drove to the Partridge tree farm and parked there by the interpretive shelter.

The volunteers from the core trail maintenance group were Martin Donald, Frank Turner, Ken Margiott and Shu Zhu Zia. SCMTA hikers were Mary Ellen Quinn, Vivian Jung and Judy Holmes. From Sempervirens fund came Ellen Scheetz and Dan Martin. Logan Davis (another from SLAC) and Diana Hall completed the crew.

Martin led Judy, Mary Ellen, Vivian, Diana and Logan down the ridge Trail Below Goat Rock where brush was closing in on the trail from both sides. We cleared brush all morning and miraculously finished just in time to hike up to the interpretive shelter for lunch.

Frank, Ken, Shu Zhu, Ellen and Dan had meanwhile been restoring the trail tread between the interpretive shelter and Goat Rock. We all had lunch in the shade at the shelter, then continued with the restoration of the trail tread. We removed the berm at the outside edge of the trail that formed from wear due to many feet and due to erosion as water was unable to get off the trail quickly. We removed the berm and made sure that there was sufficient out-slope for the water to run off. We also cleaned out existing drainage structures and made new ones.

We were finished by 2:30 and returned to the cars.

Thank you volunteers for your important work. I hope that everyone enjoyed the day.

May 19. Martin was away backpacking this weekend so there was just a crew of four. The crew continued tread-work in the vicinity of the interpretive shelter. They continued past Goat Rock on the Ridge Trail and got within sight of the “camel rock”.

May 26. Ken and Martin did an extra day’s trail work. They continued on from last week’s work and reached the “camel rock”. They repaired a rock wall and made a hefty rock water-bar.

June 16. We worked the Ridge Trail from the camel rock to the junction with the trail coming down from the interpretive shelter. We built one substantial rock wall as well as widening and leveling the tread. There was almost no brushing work this time.

June 30. Ken and Martin join the Big Basin Trail Crew and Sempervirens Fund in trail work at San Lorenzo Redwoods.

After driving to the top we brush and clear logs on Michael's Loop Trail. We then hike back up the road to retrieve Ken's truck, then remove brush along the road.

July 7. Miles had reported a tree down on the Loughry Woods Trail so I went up there today to check it out. I parked at Summit Rock Parking and walked to find the tree just past the stream that used to wash out the trail before we fixed the problem.

The tree was a tanoak, too large to take out with pruning saw. It had fallen diagonally across the trail and had brought down a small bay tree with it. I cleared the bay tree that was blocking the trail and trimmed the oak. The oak is a step-over and we will clear it on July 21.

I walked to the Service Road and just did general tidy-up on the way back. The Skyline end of the Loughry needs some brushing, particularly by the switchback.

July 21, Miles had reported two small logs, one down from the parking lot and one by Russel Point. Frank and Shu Zhu took these out while Ken, Kevin and Martin walked down the Loughry Woods trail to the big log. The log was diagonally across the trail, more parallel than perpendicular. Two cuts did the job, the large cut out section bouncing and rolling off the trail on its own, saving hours of sawing and rolling. Sometimes the cookie crumbles in our favor!

We built a rock wall there to repair the trail, and another one close by where the edge of the trail was soft. We did some mild brushing on the way back as far as the switchback (that will have to wait for another day).

August 18, Martin was absent this time, paying close attention to family over from New Jersey. We had a new addition though, Don Lundell. We hope that he will come again.

This weeks project was to continue brushing and tread work from the switchback on the Loughry Woods Trail to Skyline Boulevard.

September 15, We worked the cut-off trail from Indian Trail Road to the Toll Road.

It's about 11 years since we last visited this trail but we found it in surprisingly good shape. Rain washes off Highway 9 and cascades down to wash over this trail in two places. We reinforced the edge of the trail with plenty of rock in these two places then, after lunch, raked and scraped the trail to its end at Indian Trail Road.

October 20, Just like last October, the Trail Boss is out with a bad back and can do only limited trail work. He takes advantage and brings the camera along.

We took out fallen trees. One was on the way from parking lot to The falls, another two were close to Castle Rock and there was one by Russel Point. We finished up by walking the Frog Flat Trail and clearing minor brush and downed branches.

November 1, Miles had reported another fallen tree close by the one that we took out October 20. Barbara and I took the tree out this afternoon.

November 17, We worked Travertine Springs Trail. Ken and Martin went right to the Toll Road taking out one fallen tree and brushing as far as the Magnetometer Site on their return. They then continued on back to meet Kevin and Mary Ellen who were brushing down from the “Waterworks”. After lunch we all continued brushing downhill. There’s at least another day’s brushing needed to have a decent clearance on either side.

Frank could not come this time as he was sick. He hopes to return for the December trail maintenance session.

December 15, Frank could not come again this month and there were only the three of us.

We worked the Travertine Springs Trail again. We removed a log on the way down to Twin Bridges. We did some repair work at “The Waterworks” then brushed downhill from where we left off last month. We completed brushing right down to The Magnetometer Site.

December 22, Ken and Martin drive to the campground, parked one vehicle there and drove the other back to Saratoga Gap. Walked Skyline Trail and removed three small logs. Walked the Loughry Woods Trail and removed one larger log. Drove to main parking lot. Walked to the Falls, clear, no logs. Walked the Castle Rock Loop, clear, no logs.