

Summary of the year's trail work, 2009

Another very pleasant and successful year on the trails of Castle Rock State Park. There was no day that was so miserably wet or miserably hot that we had to pack up early.

The year started with the usual fallen trees, especially a major tree-fall on the Loghry Woods Trail.

Since we had already done much of the brushing on the south side of Saratoga Gap trail we were able to quickly finish that off, then found time for work on the trail from the falls to Goat Rock.

For Trails Day We only had 7 workers total. We brushed the Travertine Springs Trail up from "The Waterworks".

The summer sessions were used to brush and scrape all of the Loghry Woods trail.

Our October session was joined by a scout troop where we eliminated an unofficial bike trail and also scraped and leveled the south end of the Skyline Trail.

For November and December we cleared fallen trees again and started on the brushing of the north section of the Saratoga Gap Trail.

For most of the time we just had the core four workers, myself, Frank Turner, Ken Margiott and Kevin McDevitt. Joseph Torres joined us for three sessions in the winter/spring. Sixteen others came for just one session.

We did have slightly fewer hours worked in 2009 falling to 474.5 hours from the 483 in 2008.

The hours of the "hard-core" crew are shown in the table below

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Martin Donald	88	117	94	98.5	120.5	122
Frank Turner	63	81	60.5	68.5	76	83
Ken Margiott	75	93	91.5	103	92.5	90
Kevin McDevitt	58.5	68.5	74.5	69.5	75	64

Ken still managed to put in 90 hours despite losing all of the summer trail-work to fighting the devastating California wildfires.

Apart from this summary of the work done during the year (4 pages) I attach a spreadsheet detailing the hours worked.

January 4 Martin went out on his own to scout the Skyline and Loghry Woods Trails.

The Skyline Trail required only minor work. I removed one fallen oak tree and several fallen limbs and branches.

The Loghry Woods Trail needs much more work, there is:

A large step-over log in first forest section

A nasty duck-under fallen madrone 200 feet before the switchback

A huge mess of fallen trees at the first creek crossing.

I removed branches of fallen bay-laurel just past the crossing but major work is required to remove the fallen trees. An alternative is a reroute of the switchback leading to the creek crossing.

January 15 Martin and Miles met to check out the tree-fall on the Loghry Woods Trail. We decided to have a go at clearing it, with a fall-back option to cut a temporary switchback to bypass the main mess.

January 17 Frank and Ken went straight down to the tree-fall while Kevin, Joseph and Martin took out the step-over and the crawl-under madrones before joining the others. It took us a long day's work but we managed to clear the trail all the way through that massive tree-fall.

February 21 Frank and Ken went to the main parking lot to remove small fallen trees on the way to the falls. They removed several, including one on the Castle Rock Loop. Kevin, Joseph and Martin parked at Partridge and started brushing and tread-work on the Saratoga Gap Trail just south of the Connector Trail. Ken and Frank joined us at lunch after removing their fallen trees.

March 7 Martin scouted Skyline and Loghry Woods Trails. On the Skyline Trail he removed one 9-inch tanoak that was on the trail. There are 2 non-urgent step-over fallen tanoaks in the usual "falling tanoaks" area of the Loghry Woods Trail. He got as far as the bridge over the creek, just past the "Great Wall of China".

Both Skyline and Loghry Woods Trails are in good shape apart from excess of leaves and slough (on inside of the trail) in places. The Skyline Trail needs some brush removal in areas each side of the connector by Loghry State Forest.

March 21 We worked the trail leading up to Goat Rock from near the platform. We spent most of the time putting in two sets of steps in steep places near the bottom of the trail. We did get to do a little brushing and tread levelling.

April 18 We worked on the trail leading to Goat Rock again, concentrating on steps and tread-work. There is only a little brushing to do just below the YCC steps leading up to Goat Rock. Not Enough for Trail Days! We will do Travertine Springs Trail next week (Trail Days) unless there is rain (Loghry Woods Trail).

As we were leaving we asked the Park Aide whether she knew of any trees down and found that there was one down on the Handicap Trail so we cleared that (adding another hour).

April 25 – TRAIL DAYS We had just 7 for Trail Days but did a very good day's work. Kevin is off on a trip and could not come but we had 4 SCMTA hikers along to help us Thank you Mary Ellen, Vivian, Sumi and Judy.

We parked two cars at the campground and ferried us all down to Twin Bridges in 2 other vehicles. We completed brushing of the Travertine Springs Trail from "The Waterworks" back up to the wooded section of the trail. The weather was perfect for trail-work, not too hot, not too cold, not too windy, not too still. We should have taken more hoes to tackle the weedy stuff encroaching on the trail.

May 09 Martin joined the Big basin Trail Crew in their annual sweep of Michael's loop at the San Lorenzo Watershed Area. This will enable Sempervirens docents to lead hikes for donors there.

May 16 Kevin was not back yet so it was just the three of us. We drove to the campground, parked two vehicles there then drove to Summit Rock parking in Frank's truck. We removed the two step-over logs on the Loghry Woods Trail, then worked our way towards the campground, mainly scraping leaves and slough off the trail.

May 23 Ken and Martin went to take out fallen trees on the Toll Road. We found that the tree on the Skyline-to-the-sea Trail (by the junction with the Toll Road) has been taken care of. Farther down the Toll Road we find evidence of another log has also been removed. We thought that there was no point of continuing so we went back to Saratoga Gap and took Ken's truck down the Service Road and to Twin Bridges and the Travertine Springs Trail where there are two step=overs to be removed.

Just before the San Lorenzo bridge we removed the first log, then we continued on past Travertine Springs to deal with a log that had been there for a few years. On our return we brushed on the north side of the river, then continued brushing just-the-worst-stuff up to where we left off on April's Trail Days. We also pulled a few french broom by the Magnetometer Site.

June 20 We parked at Summit Rock parking area and worked the Loghry Woods Trail, starting just below the switchback and continuing up to Skyline Blvd. Ken also worked from below the switchback to where we reached in the May 16 session.

We had a bad experience on returning to Summit Rock Parking when we find that Ken's truck had been broken into (window smashed) and his laptop stolen.

July 18 Only two of us could come this month. Kevin has visitors and Ken is probably away fighting fires somewhere.

Frank and Martin drove to the campground and walked up the Loghry Woods Trail to work downhill from where we left off two months ago. The work was mostly scraping off loose leaves and slough but we did spend time clearing one big mess of old buckbrush (poison oak included).

August 15 Kevin was back with us this month. Ken was away, probably fighting the Lockheed Fire.

We parked by the campground again and worked the Loghry Woods Trail from where we left off last month (the large buck-brush/poison oak bush). We finished the buck-brush/poison oak then scraped the tread as far as the "Great Wall of China" (by the bridge over the creek).

September 19 We had a full crew, Ken was back from firefighting, and we had one newcomer Kelly Lehman. We finished our work on the Loghry Woods trail, including improvements to the steps area and brushing of the hot open areas.

October 17 A BIG turnout today, 15 total. Four + 10 from boy scouts + Chris Pereira from State Park Trails.

First we obliterated an illegal mountain bike trail from Skyline Blvd. across the Skyline Trail, then we scraped and cleaned the Skyline Trail from Loghry State Forest south to Skyline Blvd.

October 31 Ken and Martin went down from the main parking lot looking for downed trees.

We removed two small downed trees on the Castle Rock Loop Trail then found two larger ones (needing the big saw) going down to the falls. We walked from the falls a little way along the Saratoga Gap trail without finding more significant fallen trees.

November 7 Martin scouted the Saratoga Gap Trail and Ridge Trail in a figure-8 loop and checked the Frog Flat Trail and Nature Trail.

There are three downed trees on the Saratoga Gap Trail just by the Connector Trail, two to the north and one to the south. All are now easily passable after trimming work.

Russell Point is clear. Someone has done chainsaw work.

Frog Flat Trail is clear.

There are two trees down on the Nature Trail.

At the foot of the Ridge Trail there is a downed tree. Going up the Ridge Trail There are two log removal jobs.

Everywhere is clear enough for easy hiking.

November 21 Just the usual 4. We parked at Partridge Farm. Ken and Frank removed the fallen trees close to the bottom of the Connector Trail, then those on the Ridge Trail. Kevin and Martin brushed the Saratoga Gap Trail from the Connector Trail northwards.

November 28 Just Ken and Martin. We parked by the campground then took out the two downed trees on the Nature Trail followed by a little brushing there. We removed a fallen branch that was blocking access over the bridge. We lunched at Russell Point (freezing cold) then brushed our way back to the campground.

December 19 Just the usual four again. We parked at Partridge Farm again and brushed the Saratoga Gap trail toward the campground. We did some tread leveling and made some steps in a steep and awkward bit.

December 26 Ken went out on his own, parked at the campground and walked up the Loghry Woods Trail. He cleaned up some fallen trees and left two easy step-overs to be dealt with later. There was a bigger tree down between the Ridge Trail Junction and Russell Point. That tree was cleaned up and will be dealt with on our scheduled maintenance next month.