

January 12 Martin went out on his own. He scouted the Skyline and Loughry Woods trails for fallen trees and other problems. See

<https://picasaweb.google.com/106610948947790867941/130112CastleRockTM>

Skyline Trail: Removed 5-inch oak just past the junked trailers. Left step-over 9-inch oak before north connector. Left large oak (maybe 14-inch at the connector. Left 10-11-inch oak on south connector.

Loughry Woods Trail: Removed old madrone, 8-inches just past switchback. Left 8-inch old madrone considered too risky to take out when no-one else was around. Removed 8-9-inch madrone in area of the fallen tan-oaks. Tidied up by the small slide and took out one 8-inch oak, leaving a similar one.

Summary: There is work to do here but continuing work on Saratoga Gap Trail is more urgent. Ken and Martin could deal with trees on Skyline and Loughry on an off-Saturday.

January 19 Just the usual crew of four. We parked at Partridge and walked on down to continue from where we left off on the Saratoga Gap Trail—close to the Connector Trail. We worked hard restoring the tread putting in drainage and installing rock steps. Beyond here the tread looks good and the work for the next few months, on this trail, will be mainly brush removal.

January 26 Ken and Martin removed fallen trees on the Skyline and Loughry Woods trails.

We parked by the northern horse-trail connector to the Skyline Trail and removed the 20-inch oak at the junction with Skyline Trail, then the 9-inch tan-oak 500 feet to the north. Returning south we removed the 14-inch oak on the southern horse-trail connector and continued on to the Loughry Woods Trail. On the Loughry Woods Trail we removed the 11-inch awkward arch-like log and went on down to remove the 8-9-inch log by the small slide.

We also cleaned out the water-bar just above the switchback and repaired the water damage, then, on the northern horse-trail connector, we cleaned up a mess of fallen limbs and branches.

February 16 There were just three of us this time, Ken Frank and Martin. We parked at Partridge Farm and worked the Saratoga gap Trail from the connector south. The work was almost all brushing and we got past the bridge and bench and a little beyond. We did one rock reinforcement to the trail edge and removed one 7-inch log that was partly across the trail.

March 16 Frank was unable to join us this time but Ed and Vivian came to help out Ken, Kevin and Martin. We parked at the main parking lot and went down the Saratoga Gap trail to where we left off last month. We brushed back toward the parking lot and built a rock wall to shore up the trail edge in one place

We should be able to finish the brushing of this section next month.

March 23 Ken and Martin went to the Ridge Trail to take out that 12-inch tree, between campground and connector, that Ken had found on December 29. It was a madrone, not an oak (Martin's mistake). We took out that madrone and another two small 6-inch trees on the trail.

There was another step-over madrone at the top of a steep stretch of the Ridge Trail and we turned that into a water-bar. We will see how it works.

We also brushed the chamise by (the new) Russel Point and also walked to the old Russel Point to see if any more tan-oaks had fallen there – none.

We had parked by the campground and were very pleased to find that the old house had been removed along with all the other junk.

April 13 Martin went out on his own to scout for fallen trees after the recent wind-storm and to estimate the work to be done next Saturday April 20 on the Saratoga Gap Trail.

The parking lot was full and so was all the outside parking so I went to the Saratoga Gap parking and then walked the Skyline Trail and part of the Loughry Woods Trail.

Just 100 yards from the parking lot was a fallen 11-inch madrone, also a smaller 8-inch dead madrone. These were both removed. Down the Loughry Woods Trail, about 100 yards past the big tree-fall was a downed tan-oak. This was too big—about 18 inches—for me to handle on my own so I just trimmed it up to make passage easier.

This tree needs to be removed soon since it is hard to get over by straddling and difficult to crawl under. I met some hikers who told me that this was the only tree down on the trail.

see: <https://picasaweb.google.com/106610948947790867941/130413CastleRockTM>

April 20 Ken could not come today but we were joined by eight students from Santa Clara University and by a father and son. The weather was not as hot as it was expected to be due to a cool breeze off the ocean so it was a pleasant working day. We met at Saratoga Gap then moved to the main parking lot.

We found a fallen 9-inch tan-oak on the way down to The Falls, which Frank and Kevin removed as the main group carried on down the Saratoga Gap Trail to where we had left off brushing last month. We finished brushing the south section of the “Face Trail” and built one small rock retaining wall and rocked drain where the trail edge had been damaged by a small watercourse.

April 27, TRAIL DAYS We had a total of 9 volunteers today. The usual 4, plus Cathy Howard and 2 newcomers Chris Olston and Vatsal Dholabhai. Most of the usual SCMTA hikers who join us for this event were off for Henry Coe Backcountry Weekend and could not join us.

We parked at Partridge And went down the Ridge Trail past Goat Rock. Ken and Frank worked all day at making rock steps just past where Kirby Fosgate had finished the wooden steps. Starting from near the bottom Cathy, Chris and Vatsal brushed up the Ridge Trail. Martin and Kevin went on down to the chaparral part of the Saratoga Gap trail to reinforce a rocked drain that Kevin had made last week.

When Martin and Kevin rejoined the brushing party on the Ridge Trail they found 2 new helpers who had looked for us at the Main Parking Lot rather than at Saratoga Gap. The Father and son Wayne? and Andy will email me their full names and address. I could not sign them in since the sign-in was at Partridge and they would return to their car at the main lot.

We still have about a day’s worth of brushing to do on the trail up to Goat Rock.

May 18 Ken could not come today. He had wrecked his knee in the way home after our Trail Days session. Ed could come so that, with Kevin, Frank and Martin, we had a crew of four. Ken hopes to be back again next month.

We worked Travertine Springs Trail. Frank and Kevin worked at “The Waterworks” while Ed and Martin went on down to the river and worked back up. We removed a 9-inch fir that was down just up from the bridge and brushed up to the magnetometer site. Brushing allowed us to get the trail back up away from the edge in a few places. We came back up and met Frank and Kevin who had done a great job clearing out “The Waterworks”.

June 15 Ken is still on the injured list but hopes to be back with the crew next month. Ed La Pointe joined the crew again as did Carolyn and Mary Ellen. We also had Kevin’s nephew David to help us.

We parked at Partridge and worked at the bottom of the Connector Trail removing the berm, widening the tread and maintaining a good out-slope. We were able to remove a dead tree and straighten the trail at one point where it was narrow and rutted.

At the top end of the Connector Trail there is a tree down (not blocking the trail completely) which will require the big saw for removal.

July 20 Present: Frank Turner, Ken Margiott, Kevin McDevitt. Martin with his ailing back would have fit in just fine with this bunch of cripples.

We parked by the old repeater site instead of Summit Rock and walked down to the Loughry. The horse trail route is much shorter, as Frank discovered only on the way back. We removed the first two trees on the list. Only trimmed a little bit on the third one; it’s too dangerous to tackle until it settles down further - still plenty of clearance to walk under it. Cleared heavy duff from a couple stretches. The whole trail could use a tread and brushing touch-up.

[ft]

P.S. We could get that tree later when Ken’s leg is fully healed and when Martin is back. We need to cut it high up on the bank where it’s close to the surface. It will take quite a few cuts to finish the job

[md]

August 17 We had the crew of five today, Martin was back and Ed joined us again.

Ken and Ed parked at the main lot and looked for the tree that Stu had reported blocking most of the trail. They removed that one (8-inches) and another 6-inch log and repaired trail where people had gone around. They then joined Frank, Kevin and Martin who had parked at the campground and started raking and scraping the tread on the Loughry Woods Trail from the one remaining fallen tree back to the Service road. There was also some light brushing done.

August 21 Ed and Martin parked at Partridge Farm and took out an 11-inch oak that had fallen between the Interpretive Shelter and Goat Rock. This tree had many limbs and it had been difficult to get past it. Our thanks again to those reporting downed trees.

September 21 Trail Crew trainee Louise Wholey joined us this month so with Ed La Pointe and the faithful four we had a crew of six.

We parked at the campground then took two vehicles down to Twin Bridges to remove that awkward tree at the start of Travertine Spring Trail. The tree (14 inches at the base) was trimmed and successfully removed.

We returned to the campground then removed two 6-inch logs on the Nature Trail and 5-inch and 6-inch logs on the Ridge Trail before heavy rain stopped work for the day.