

photo by Trevor Meyer

SPRING 2020

THE SISKIYOU HIKER

Outdoor news from the Siskiyou backcountry

2020:

A NEW WILDERNESS



2020 SEASON UPDATES

WHAT'S ON THE MAINTENANCE
SCHEDULE FOR THIS YEAR

THE KINGDOM

A MAP OF ALL THE
TRAILS WE MANAGE

GET INVOLVED!

CHECK OUT OUR UPCOMING EVENTS

Adventures in 2020: Finding distance in the Siskiyou backwoods

for the Siskiyou Hiker

This year is an opportunity to find places without names, recognition, or status. Discover your next nameless creek, anonymous valley, or forgotten peak.

The first principle

When people think of Leave No Trace, they mostly think of digging holes 200 feet from water, packing out all of their trash, and nitpicky SMC directors who threaten taking your membership after tossing an apple core or peanut shell on the trail. Pet etiquette, flowers left on the stem, and not disturbing artifacts might come to mind.

But to plan ahead and prepare, which is the first Leave No Trace principle, is often forgotten. At SMC, we know how to seek solitude and distance, and we think it's important to recreate safely in the era of super germs, so we offer some tips on planning an amazing 2020 backpacking trip.

Basics

First things first, follow up on the Leave No Trace principles and how to best follow them at lnt.org. Check out the 10 essentials and make sure you've got your bases covered.

Find the orders

With an ever changing landscape of health orders and various closures, get informed. Get in tune with the land agencies and their jurisdictions. We have State Parks, National Forests, National Parks, Bureau of Land Management. Keep track of various lands administered by the handful of counties we work in, the

boat ramps and the facilities. They all interface.

Pursue the gauntlets

Get a head start by pulling out an atlas or gazetteer, and then figure out who manages the different areas. Look at their websites, call, Google search, and learn what current orders say before you go out.

The best places to find distance are hard to get to. Long, winding drives through road labyrinths keep people out. Reading road maps takes a little practice, but anyone can do it and those gauntlets make it worth it.

Learn how to reconcile what's going on through the windshield with what's on the map, and you can find more unbeknownst attractions. These are the unsigned trailheads, the mysterious off trail lakes, and dispersed camping areas that are undeveloped.

Also, roads that take you through unsavory sites or routes that lack information or signs, are other great deterrents.

Shy from status

Designations bring people. Wilderness Areas and Wild and Scenic Rivers are a lure in themselves. Finding the recesses without status can bear good fruit. This could bring you up the middle of wild streams, nameless summits, and secret valleys.

Start on paper

Now that you've gone through the gauntlet, figure out where you want to hike using a paper map. Unfold it across your dining room table and let your imagination run wild. Then come back to reality by checking trail conditions.

Check for things like stream crossings, snow levels, and other seasonal variables that might throw a monkey wrench in your plans. Use tools available from the National Weather Service to get real time predictions.

Then really learn how to read that map and rediscover your middle school lessons of rise over run. Topographic maps provide contour intervals and scales on their legends. So, for example, the maps we produce have a 40 foot contour interval, and a scale of 1 inch = 1 mile.

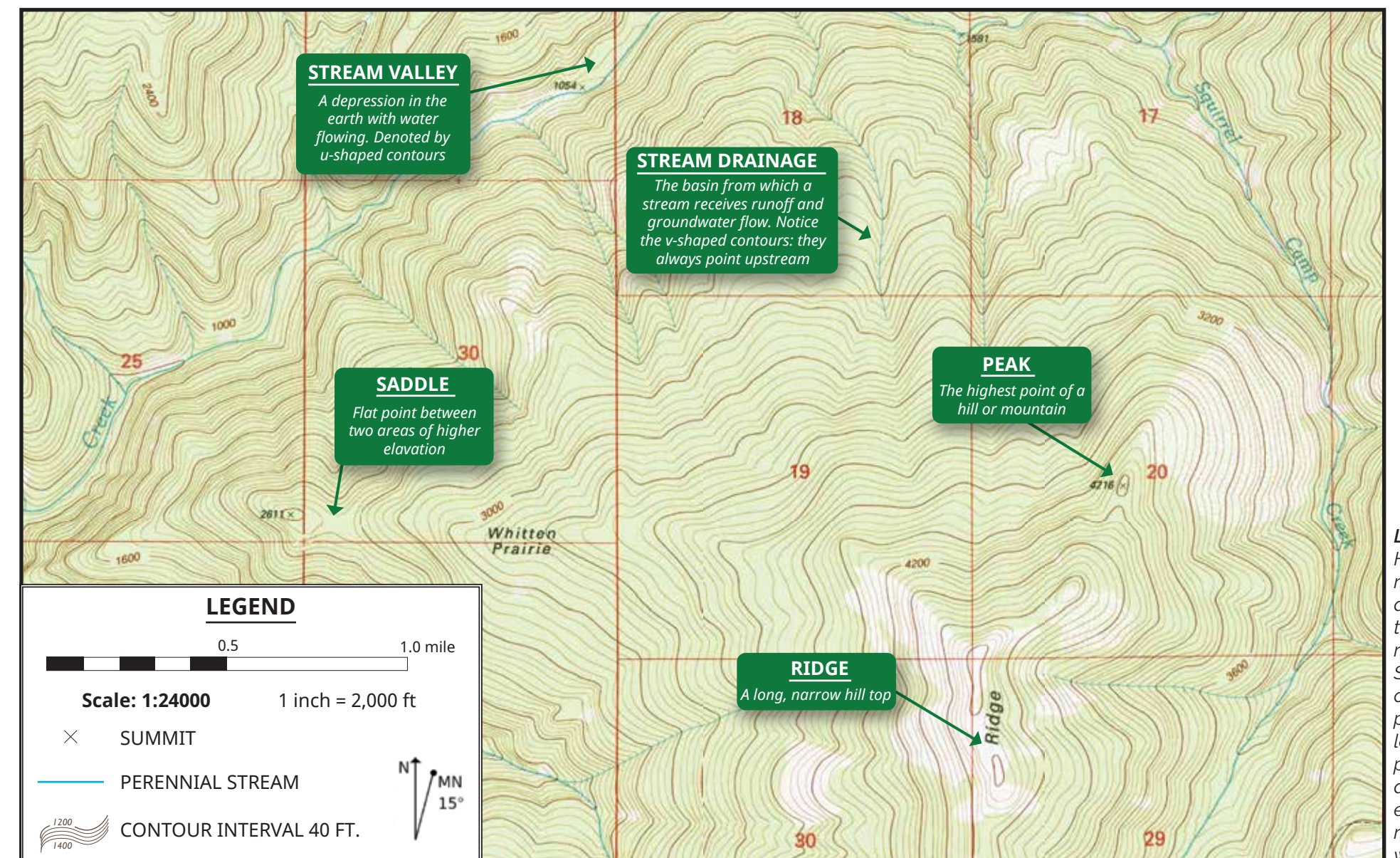
So if the trail you're looking at crosses 62 contour lines over the course of two inches, that's a climb of 2,480 feet in two miles. That's steep, comparable to climbing 240 stories.

As you get more familiar with a topographic map, you'll learn to identify features like saddles, peaks, ravines, and valleys. That's important, especially in the context of trying to find distance from other people. A random valley, an unnamed peak, or a deep canyon might be an ideal pursuit, as long as you can get there.

Online tips

Now that you've figured out how to read a real map, use online map resources to do more investigation. The program Caltopo.com allows you to research areas by providing different overlays.

Zooming in with the satellite layer might show you that the sweet valley you were looking at is actually a thick brushfield. There are overlays that show fire history, so you can figure out if you're going into a burn area. Or maybe you'll find a new spot by looking at the historic maps available there.



LEFT: How to read an area's topography. Seek out high points, low points, and areas with running water.

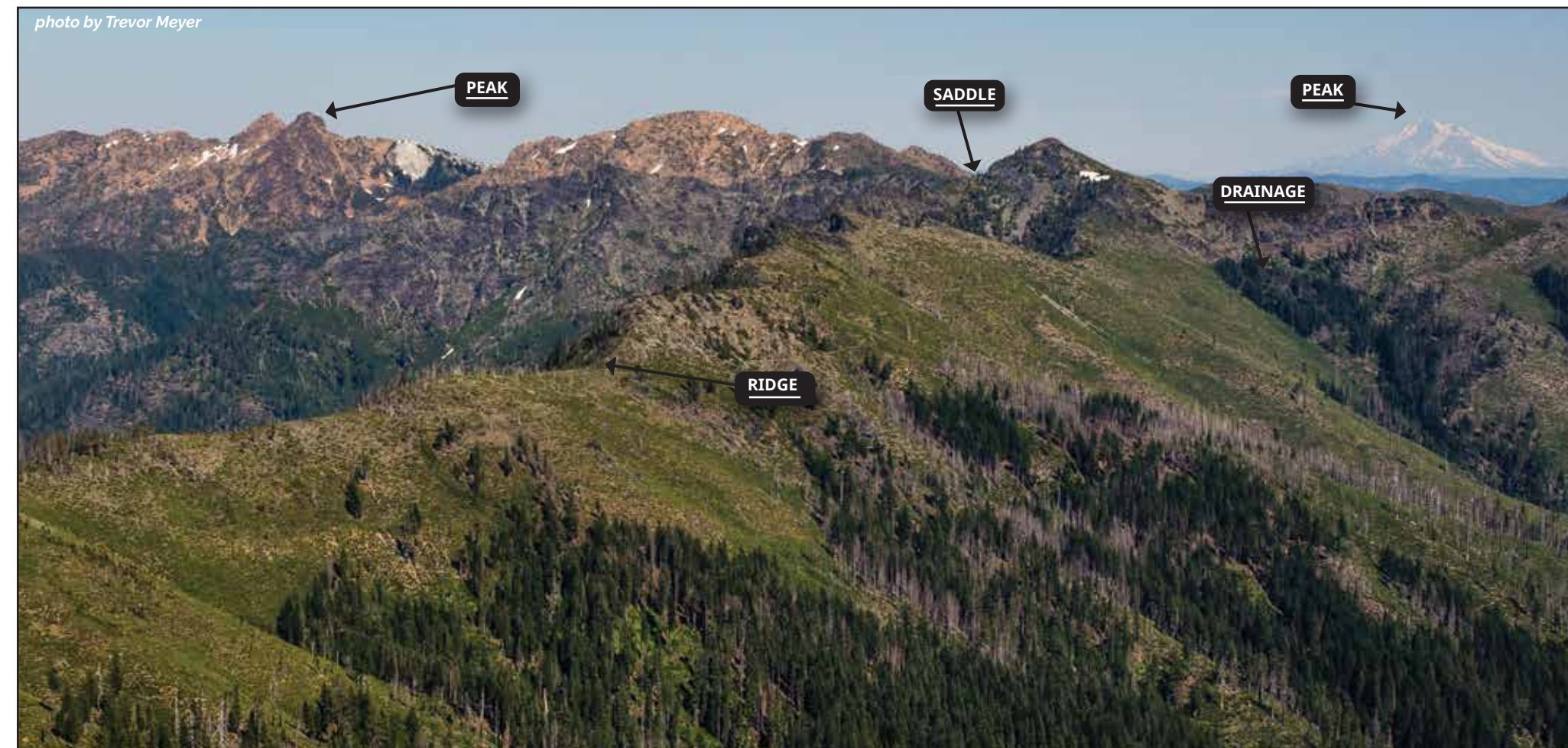


photo by Trevor Meyer

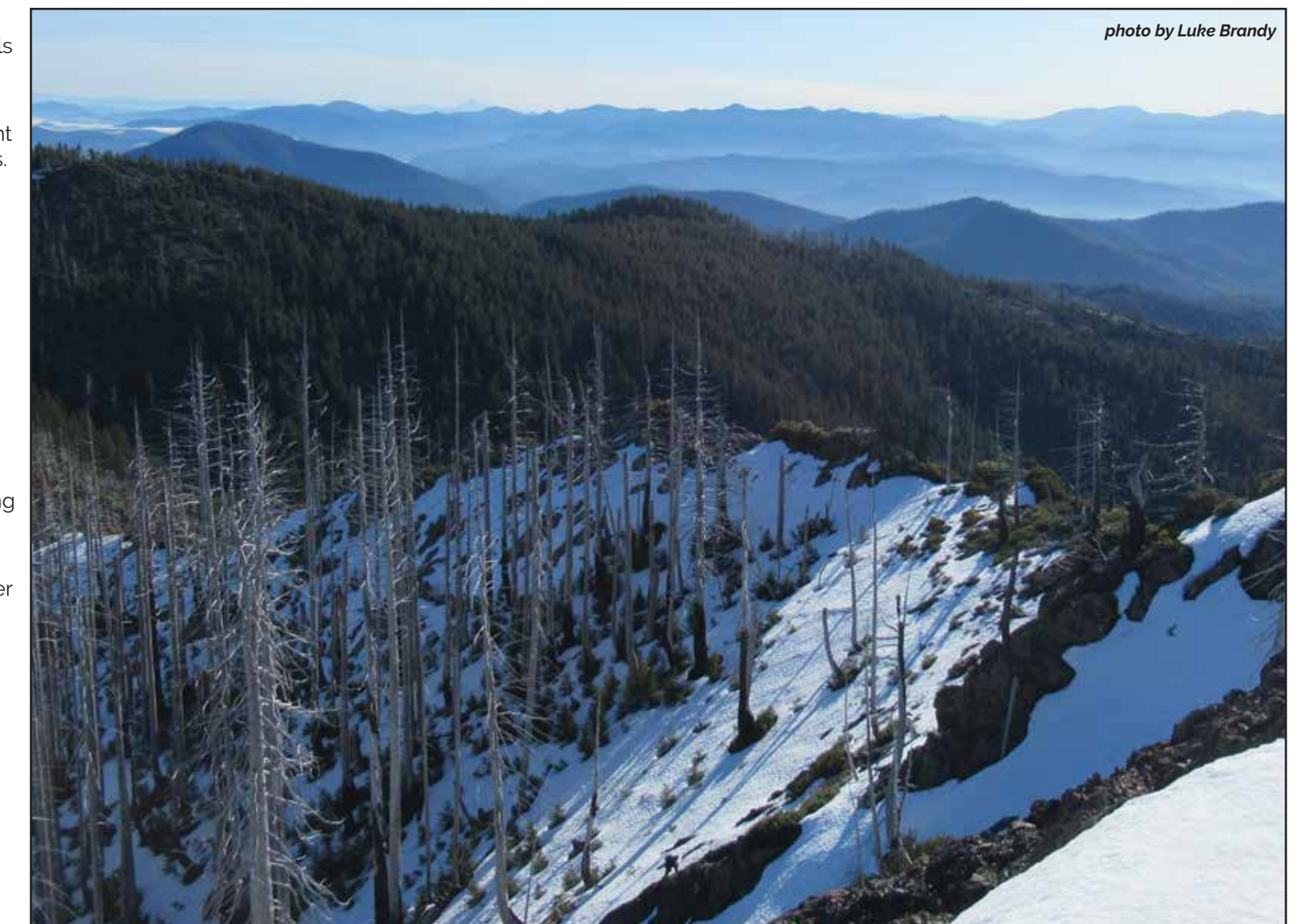


photo by Luke Brandy

ABOVE: Recognize changes in aspect and how compass direction impacts seasonal conditions. Notice how the snow is only on one side of the ridge? Due to the seasonal positioning of the sun, snow will often remain on the north side of slopes for much longer, while the south aspect melts more quickly.

It doesn't replace boots-on-the-ground knowledge, but those tools help.

We maintain an inventory of trail conditions throughout our footprint at siskiyoumountainclub.org/trails. In other areas, the local agency is probably your best bet, but you may find more about conditions online.

Fluid plans

Always let someone know where you're going, when you should be back, and update them if your plans change. But once you're off, set your expectations low. Maybe that creek canyon is a mile long logjam. Perhaps the regal, unnamed summit is a dud. Or a spring could be dry.

On the flipside, you might get to a saddle and realize the summit over has an attractive approach, even though it's not as high. You may find the log-jammed creek flows into a deep river pool, and that the dry spring leads to a dreamy lowland.

No matter what you find, the trip will be worth it. If you have questions and are a current member, feel free to contact us for help. 541.708.2056 or info@siskiyou-mountainclub.org. Stay safe, plan smart, always Leave No Trace (lnt.org), and long live the backwoods trails. ###

2019 Corps members: Onward, upward, where are they now?

for the Siskiyou Hiker

09 MAY 2020 | GOLD HILL, OR -- In 2019, our Wilderness Conservation Corps brought to life a trail connection in the 180,000-acre Siskiyou Wilderness, most of them spending 40 days deep in the backcountry over the summer. A dilapidated West Fork Clear Creek Trail had divided the wilderness into two, so that trails in the area's north end were blocked from trails in the area's south end.

It was a harrowing feat, with plenty of old growth that had fallen across the trail, overgrown brush, and other horrors that come along with decades-long maintenance deferrals. Some interns ended up sleeping next to logs that took multiple days to crosscut.

Since August, the world is in a much different place, and so are our 2019 interns, including Kalani Aligarbes. Aligarbes used his season in Southern Oregon as a bridge between New Mexico and Portland, where he started at Pacific University as a transfer in fall, 2019.

"I'm majoring in environmental studies, minoring in sociology," he says. This past January he headed toward Australia for a semester abroad, starting off with a month in the Philippines with family. "I had one month in Australia, and was then advised to come back," Aligarbes adds. He's got another year at Pacific to go before graduating.

"I was supposed to do my senior project this summer," he says. Aligarbes had gotten a head start with a gardening project, having built raised beds at a community center in Portland. "But that's not open right now. So I'll stay here and work on a farm, and then probably just do research."

At SMC, Aligarbes worked with University of Oregon senior Tyler Brahmstadt. Brahmstadt's work at the University's power plant has gone remote. He's also President of the UO Geology Club, which is also on hiatus.

"I will be wildland firefighting this sum-



ABOVE: The 2019 Wilderness Corps crew at the end of their season. From left to right: Kalani Aligarbes, Jack Drimer, Laina Rose, Sasha Benson, Leah Doeden, Cameron Salazar, Tyler Brahmstadt.

mer," Brahmstadt says. "I'll be working for Oregon Department of Forestry out of Veneta, OR. I'm stoked." He adds there are some positive aspects while living through this pandemic.

"I go jogging each day, and I notice more people coming to appreciate the outdoors, even if they are alone," he says. "And ironically, neighbors are getting to know each other better." Brahmstadt was let down that his family had to cancel some gatherings they had planned. "But it is what it is."

He'd like to land a permanent job with ODF. "I want a career in natural resources, so I'll get through the summer and see what happens."

Sasha Benson also spent her 2019 season in the Siskiyou. She can't wait to be done with school online. Benson's a sophomore at Hampshire College in Massachusetts, and returned home to Grass Valley, CA a little over a month ago.

A social psychology major, she misses the campus life in Mass. "It's been hard being disconnected from everyone, even just other households in my own family," she says. "Online learning isn't

the same."

Benson says she does welcome a society that might slow down a little bit and she doesn't think it's a coincidence that everyone started making sourdough bread. "Apparently that's what we all wanted to do, but just didn't have the time for."

Another sunny spot in the pandemic is gardening. "I'm planting a bunch of vegetables. I just turned over the beds and I'm picking up sprouts to put in the ground." Benson has gardened with her dad in the past. "But it was always his garden. This one is mine."

Leah Doeden was another 2019 intern. She was living in a sorority in Corvallis, OR but is back at home in Silverton. "Out in the boonies. There's no wifi," she says. On Doeden's days off in 2019, she would go to a nearby McDonald's for wifi access.

"They're closed now. So I'd have to sit in the parking lot, and that might be a little bit weird," Doeden laments. The nearest Mickey D's is about 10 minutes from home, and she admits to using the drive thru a couple of times since closure orders.

Another setback aside from McDonalds' lobbies being closed: "I have to do chores and stuff now." This summer she'll be picking blueberries and working at an accounting internship. One thing Doeden likes about shelter-in-place is, "If everybody's a homebody, I'm a homebody."

Doeden pauses. "There's no fomo (fear of missing out)."

One thing she didn't expect to get out of her 2019 season was a great recommendation for a TV show from Gasquet District Ranger Jeff Marszal. Doeden doesn't remember how it came up, but Marszal recommended she watch Six Feet Under. "Now it's like my favorite show."

Doeden's crewmate Laina Rose will be returning in a staff position with Siskiyou Mountain Club after graduating from Southern Oregon University this spring.

Each year is different, every intern their own ingredient in their season's special sauce. 2019 was one for the record books, and we appreciate the legacy each crew leaves for the next.



LEFT: Current photos of the 2019 crew in their normal lives. From left to right: Kalani Aligarbes, Tyler Brahmstadt, Sasha Benson, and Jack Drimer

2020 Updates: Bridge, wall complete with more projects ahead

for the Siskiyou Hiker

Despite the current state of affairs, we've still been getting work done in 2020. Read about what we've accomplished so far, and start making plans for this summer.

09 MAY 2020 | MEDFORD, OR --

The global pandemic has obviously changed the way we do business in the spring of 2020, but Siskiyou Mountain Club isn't going anywhere. Our organization was built on a foundation of resiliency and continues to not just meet, but thrive on, the challenges we are faced with.

We've been conservative with our resources, and can shift quickly to weather short term, and long term downturns. Our organization is driven by our 800 members, the communities we serve, and strong partnerships with agencies and foundations.

SMC was built on performance in uncontrolled environments. We learned our earliest lessons deep in the wilderness, not knowing what was around the next corner. We take those ten years of lessons with us into 2020.

Our decade-long track record and this year's accomplishments both speak to that.

2020 fundraising efforts: Strong, but some funding in jeopardy

Despite the economy, the coronavirus, and everything else getting jostled, spring fundraising has been strong. We have raised over \$40,000 of our \$60,000 goal, and are on our way there.

We have received warnings from multi-year business sponsors that we should

count on changes this year, which we will have to make up for through private fundraising. Please consider making a tax-deductible donation as we find our footing in this new wilderness.

We hope: Volunteer, hiking trips start late spring

We anticipate on being able to work in small groups starting in June, and we're staying up-to-date. As the pandemic evolves, we will start making more plans. We're playing it smart and preparing for when we can get back out with you.

Wild Rogue: Eight miles of jackstraw logged out

In February, our executive director hiked the Rogue River Trail to discover about 12 miles of trail that was "completely wrecked," he says, reporting hundreds of large trees, many uprooted, that had come down with heavy winter snow that hit in January.

"I had to take off my pack to maneuver through trees stacked up on one another," he says. "I'd call it impassable."

So Howe set up a crew of sawyers to tackle the very worst trail section. On March 7 they set out from Grave Creek in boats captained by volunteer oarsmen and got all the trees from Marial to Clay Hill.

On March 12, when the group came out at Agness, they walked into the reality of a global pandemic. But the worst section of the 40-mile Rogue River Trail is logged out, and Forest Service staff are working to clear from Clay Hill to Foster Bar.

A small crew of staff plans to log out and clear the Mule Creek Trail before June.



RIGHT: 2019 intern, 2020 staff member Laina Rose climbs over logs on the Rogue River Trail in February.



ABOVE: Program directors Karly White and Trevor Meyer celebrate the completion of the Briggs Creek Bridge, located at the trailhead for the the Illinois River Trail.

Bridge builders: SMC, USFS work to put Illinois River Trail back online

In early March we received a load of cedar at the Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest fire base in Merlin, OR. The Forest Service transported a massive load of the lumber to the Briggs Creek Bridge, navigating a narrow, rutted out road to the Illinois River Trailhead.

Over the following days, staff members Trevor Meyer and Karly White worked together to get a start on the project, then buttoned up the 70-foot bridge with a group of volunteers.

The bridge had burned in the 2018 Klondike Fire. That made crossing Briggs Creek dangerous and hiking the Illinois River Trail impassable. Funding to rebuild the bridge was provided by the Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest through their Burned Area Emergency Response (BAER) team.

A wall comes to life at Taylor, Minnow creeks

The same fire that burned the Briggs Creek bridge, also torched a 1,000-foot section of wall along the Taylor and Minnow creek trails. The wall was holding an entire slope in place, keeping sediment from the fish-bearing stream below.

"It's hard finding partners who have the capacity to do this type of work," says a Forest Service line officer. "But Siskiyou Mountain Club took it on."

Staff members Karly White, Trevor Meyer, and Nick Hodges set out to work on the retaining structure over the course of several weeks, bringing some (much needed) good front page news to the

Grants Pass Daily Courier. The crew hauled in 4x4, 6x6, and 2x6 lumbers by hand as they set posts connected by 8-foot boards.

Finally, the crew installed a system of "deadman" anchors, 24-inch rods are bolted to each post, extending into the trail with a sturdy block bolted in at the other end. That's what holds the entire structure in place.

Moving forward: 2020 Wilderness Corps

We are moving forward with our Corps crew provided that federal, state, and local health directives and guidelines allow for it. As the news came down, we spoke with already-hired interns and have confirmed their commitment.

"They all sound excited," says director of intern programs, Trevor Meyer. "Being in the wilderness for extended periods sounds really good right now."

Nonetheless, it will be a financial squeeze as we anticipate a drop in spring donations from previous years.

10-year anniversary

We had been planning a series of mid-size events to celebrate our 10th year in operation, but we have put those on hold. However, we are moving forward with our series of group backpacking trips starting in June, as long as it is safe and sound by then. Learn more about those on our back page.

Live map

On a desktop, check out siskiyoumountainclub.org/wilderness/ for an interactive map that is updated with trail conditions each month.

Navy Monument Trail: Visit a historic crash site

for the Siskiyou Hiker

09 MAY 2020 | BROOKINGS, OR -- It was a rainy day with thick clouds in 1945 when a PBY-5A float plane carrying eight airmen went down in a deep, rugged canyon of the Curry County wildlands. All of them died in the crash.

Alvin Ellis was one of them. "Alvin was my uncle," says Chris Ellis, who lives in Missouri. "He was the co-pilot." In 1957, a bronze monument was erected by the Forest Service and volunteers to commemorate the fallen airmen who were buried on site.

The crash site later became part of the Kalmiopsis Wilderness. "My father went there with Rene Casteran years ago," Ellis adds. Casteran served as a ranger in the Kalmiopsis from 1986 - 2008, and writes about the experience of taking Alvin's brother, Homer Ellis, down to the bomb site.

"Homer was the first family member of any of the men buried there to do the hike down," Rene writes in his memoir, *Taking Away Only Memories*.

A few decades went by since Homer Ellis's visit. The trail faded away and filled in with brush. Then in 2017 the Chetco Bar Fire made its way through.

"Funding came available through the Forest Service's Burned Area Emergency Response (BAER) program," says executive director Gabriel Howe. Howe's crews opened the trail up in 2018. "We were able to stabilize the slopes, increase safety, and restore diversion features to keep excess runoff out of nearby streams."

The wreckage and the monument are still in place, and Chris Ellis says he hopes to visit his uncle's memorial someday.

The PBY-5A was most effective for attacking Nazi submarines. It remained in service through the 1980s.



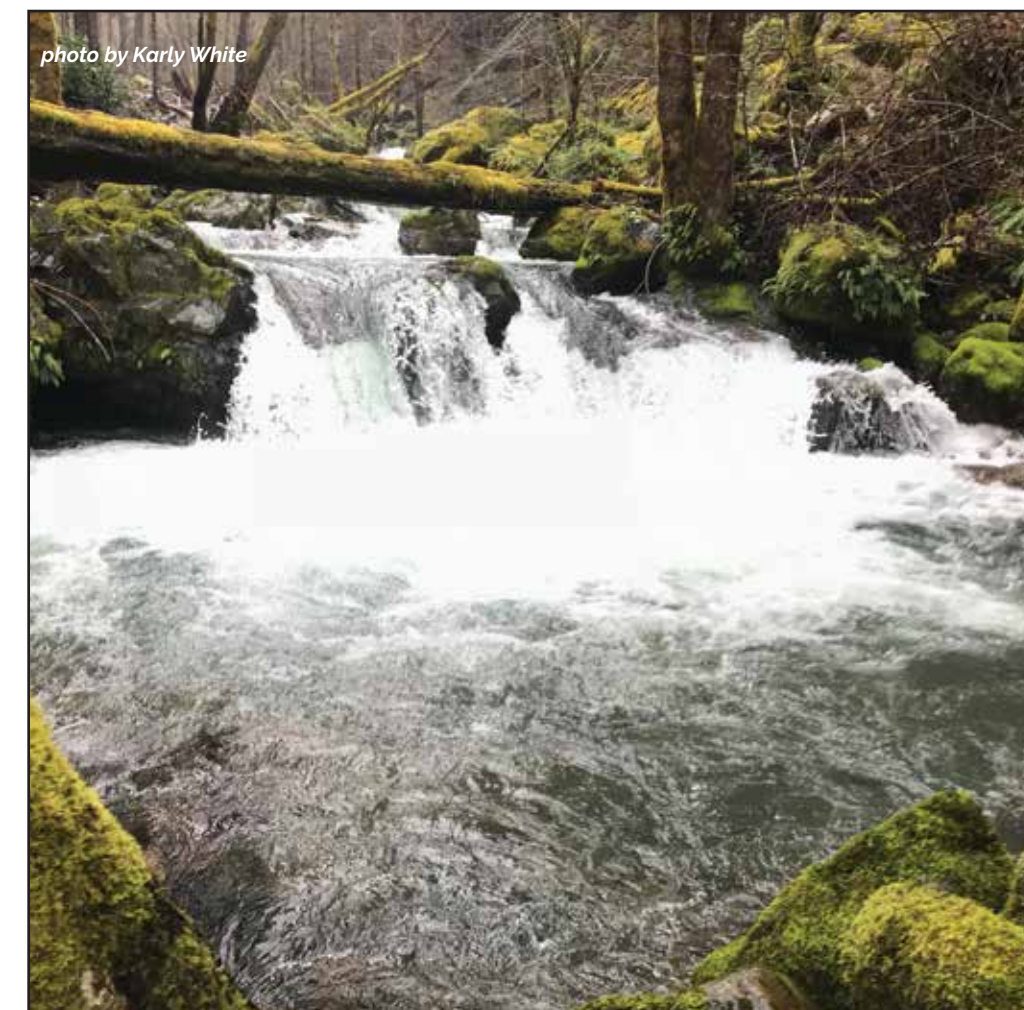
ABOVE: PBY-5A bomber in flight.

and is still used in wildland firefighting.

To visit the Navy Monument, use the Powers and Gold Beach District Map and locate the site near the southwestern boundary of the Kalmiopsis Wilderness. The hike comes with some very steep pitches

and plenty of mosquitoes. There are different approaches to reach the monument as well as opportunities to extend the hike. ###

Taking Away Only Memories is available from Southern Oregon Digital Archives at soda.sou.edu.



ABOVE: The Navy Monument is situated on the banks of a secluded section of the South Fork Chetco River



ABOVE: The bronze monument was hauled into the crash site and installed by local volunteers from the coast and staff from the Forest Service.

Boccard Point: Heart of the Soda Mountains

Hike along the ridges of the Pacific Crest Trail on this classic day hike in the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument.

Description:

Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument

Difficulty: Easy

Length: 4.4-miles roundtrip

Elevation profile: Less than 400 feet

This easy hike to a high perch in the Soda Mountain Wilderness features knockout views of the Siskiyou range, as well as a bank of radio antennas and a utility line that bisects the Federal Wilderness Area.

Visit <https://www.blm.gov/visit/soda-mountain-wilderness> or call 541-618-2200.



ABOVE: Boccard Point boasts panoramic views of the Siskiyou Crest and Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument. Pilot Rock is featured to the right in this photo.



ABOVE The 2018 Wilderness Conservation Corps atop Mt. Elijah on a smoky summer day. This commanding peak is part of the Cascades to Caves Monument Route.

Mt. Elijah: Caves, lakes, and meadows

On your next visit to the Oregon Caves, step off the beaten path on this lesser known peak with access to the Grayback Range

Description:

Oregon Caves National Monument

Difficulty: Moderate

Length: 9.2 mile loop

Elevation profile: 2,390 feet

Hike from the Oregon Caves Visitor Center to Mt. Elijah (6,390') with views as far as Mt. Shasta, Mt. Thielsen, the high Siskiyou and the valleys below. Loop around and catch the flowers at Bigelow Lakes.

This day trip includes side hikes to some of the largest fir trees in the world and along the way are interpretive waymarkers. Maps available at https://www.nps.gov/orca/planyourvisit/upload/orca_hiking_trails.pdf. Call Oregon Caves Visitor Center at 541-592-2100.

South Fork Smith River: Borders the Siskiyou Wilderness

Description:

Siskiyou Wilderness Area

Trail: S. Kelsey Nat. Recreation Trail

Difficulty: Moderate

Length: 8 miles

Elevation Profile: 500 feet

Winding through stands of dense old growth and unique rock formations, the portion of the South Kelsey National Recreation Trail that follows the Smith River is the perfect start to any long distance backpacking trip in the Siskiyou Wilderness.

Expect inclement weather with hot summer temperatures and violent marine storms. There is an abundance of poison oak and black bears along the corridor are known for being aggressive toward hikers, even those in large groups.

Expect ticks in the spring, rattlesnakes in the summer, rain storms in the fall, and dangerous creek crossings come winter.

Emergency services are limited, and the nearest hospital is hours away.



LEFT: Many tributaries flow into the S. Fork Smith River, some with commanding waterfalls that come alive during high water events. To visit this spot, pick up the Siskiyou Wilderness Area map.



SISKIYOU VICINITY MAP

LEGEND

- TH** TRAILHEAD
- - - TRAIL
- - - PACIFIC CREST TRAIL
- RANGER STATION
- GET THE MAP:** SMC MAP AVAILABLE
store.siskiyoumountainclub.org
- AREA INCLUDED
IN SMC MAP
- prepared by
the Siskiyou Mountain Club

GET THE MAP:
Wild Rogue
Wilderness

WILD ROGUE WILDERNESS

TAYLOR CREEK WALL
For more information, see page 4

GET THE MAP:
Rogue River
Trail East

BRIGGS CREEK BRIDGE
For more information, see page 4

GET THE MAP:
Sky Lakes
Wilderness NORTH

SKY LAKES WILDERNESS

GET THE MAP:
Sky Lakes
Wilderness SOUTH

Gold Beach
Ranger District

KALMIOPSIS WILDERNESS

NAVY MONUMENT

Visit the crash site of a WWII bomber on the remote banks of the Chetco River.



For more information, see page 5

MT. ELIJAH

Explore Oregon's oldest national monument and enjoy panoramic views of the Siskiyou mountains



For more information, see page 6

BOCCARD POINT

Climb a rocky outcrop with views of the Shasta Valley to the South and the Siskiyou Crest to the west



For more information, see page 6

S. FORK SMITH RIVER

With crystal clear pools and impressive old growth lining its banks, this is a great gateway to the Siskiyou Wilderness



For more information, see page 6

OREGON CAVES NATIONAL MONUMENT

OREGON CAVES
VISITOR CENTER

GET THE MAP:
Red Buttes
Wilderness

RED BUTTES WILDERNESS

SODA MOUNTAIN WILDERNESS

SISKIYOU WILDERNESS

MARBLE MOUNTAIN WILDERNESS

MAPS AVAILABLE NOW:

- Red Buttes Wilderness
- Wild Rogue Wilderness
- Rogue River Trail East
- Sky Lakes Wilderness NORTH
- Sky Lakes Wilderness SOUTH

\$10 EACH



Siskiyou Mountain Club produces accurate, highly detailed topographic maps for the areas we work in. The areas highlighted with a red square are featured in our map suite, available for order via the enclosed slip or online at:

store.siskiyoumountainclub.org

For more information, see page 14

350 MILES OF TRAIL

This map gives an overview of the wilderness hiking trails available in southwest Oregon and northwest California. Siskiyou Mountain Club has promised to maintain 350-miles of trails outlined on this map. Not all of the trails on the map are managed by SMC, but they are all excellent ways to explore the Siskiyou backwoods.

Our hope is that this map will spark your imagination, and inspire you to explore new places.

Want a little more detail? We have an interactive map available on our website. Users can zoom in and out, search for trail names, and get GPS coordinates to trailheads. We also update the map with current trail conditions once a month.

Siskiyou Mountain Club is enlisting hikers to help inventory the trails in our maintenance footprint and feed monthly information to the online map. For more information, read the story on page 9.

Check out the map online:
siskiyoumountainclub.org/wilderness

HOW TO: BE A TRAIL SCOUT

Looking for a way to serve in solitude? SMC is enlisting hikers to inventory the 350-miles of trails we promise to maintain.

Whether you're in Coos Bay, Klamath Falls, Medford, Yreka, or anywhere in between, we are enlisting trail stewards to take inventory of all the trails we've promised to manage. We use this information to make work plans and update the interactive map on our website. Does one of your favorite trails fall on our map? Help us keep up to date on its condition with accurate and quality information.

This guide covers the basic information needed to become a Trail Scout - what data to capture, how to record it, and how to submit it to us.

Want ideas of where to go? Email info@siskiyoumountainclub.org and we'll get you set up.

Signage

Signs at trailheads and junctions are subject to extreme weather, wildfire, erosion, and even theft. Please take note of the presence and condition of all signage along the trail. If a trailhead doesn't have a sign, we definitely want to hear about it. Also, if a trail junction has a missing or illegible sign, please take note of the trail names and numbers of the intersecting routes.



Logs

Downed logs can create major obstacles for all trail users and we expect winter storms to produce blow-down across the entirety of our trail footprint each year, especially in areas that have been impacted by wildfire.

For this reason early season scouting—scouting done throughout the winter (where accessible) and early spring is hugely important when planning summer projects for our seasonal field crews. Most often logs will fall separate from one another. Sometimes, however, falling logs will pile on top of one another in what we refer to as a jackstraw. Jackstraws can be very precarious, a well captured photo and written description will go a long way in preparing our crew for what lies ahead of them.

We ask that scouts hold a count of each log passed and keep track of approximate size. Very large logs,

and logs suspended over the trail (where you can walk underneath) present unique challenges for our crews, please note these logs in your report.

Brush

Brush is perhaps the most annoying obstacle when navigating a trail. Over the course of just a few years, woody and non-woody herbaceous plants can encroach upon trail corridors, and consume them entirely. Prolonged and severe encroachment of brush is a major threat to our trail network. We are primarily concerned with keeping woody vegetation—trees and shrubs—clear and are less concerned about clearing grasses and ferns.

A trail corridor in excellent condition is generally clear of obstacles. You are able to run, hike, and move pack stock without impediment from vegetation.

A trail corridor in poor condition has been almost entirely hidden by encroaching brush. There are generally only narrow passages between the vegetation, rocks and logs. You're no longer running, or hiking, you're swimming through a sea of brush. You get to your destination bruised and bloodied.

It's important for trail scouts to make note of major brush obstructions including the location and length of the section as well as the type of vegetation.

Tread

The tread, also referred to as the bench, is the actual surface over which you travel and where your feet hit the ground. In many ways, tread shapes your experience on the trail. Poorly defined tread can quickly become fatiguing to walk on and make navigation difficult.

Well constructed tread can be quickly undone by the violent forces of erosion, the unending growth of brush, and the obstruction of the trail by logs. It's very important for trail scouts to have a good understanding of tread and to record photos accompanied by detailed notes of major obstacles like flooded sections of trail, sloping, and landslides.

Ideal tread is approximately 18 inches wide, continuous, easily navigable, and has little to no drainage issues. Water does not pool on any particular section of the tread and the ground is not littered with large rocks.

Use the template to the right as a guide or build your own trip report.

BELOW: Being a trail scout isn't always an easy job. Oftentimes, our scouts experience some of the worst trail conditions in our footprint.

Leadership matters in the wilderness of 2020

for the Siskiyou Hiker
by Gabriel Howe, Executive Director

In a time of great uncertainty, SMC has what it takes to thrive: Leadership

09 MAY 2020 | GOLD HILL, OR -- This year has been a steep, uphill trail and life has changed in many ways. In March, with no notice, my wife and I both became teachers on the same day. We also became baseball coaches, school counselors, Zoom technicians, and children entertainers. All jokes aside, the process has really illustrated how much leadership matters in our community.

Leadership matters at work, too. This organization started 10 years ago, and I was excited about some big 2020 celebrations with lots of people. I had in mind potlucks, campfires, and barbecues at trailhead campgrounds. But, no, that wouldn't be on brand for a hallmark anniversary at Siskiyou Mountain Club. The challenges brought by a global pandemic is a better fitting way to celebrate our first decade.

A challenge it is. My work days are filled with plotting spider webs of scenarios,

a chess game where the rules change with each move. But we've built an organization by focusing on getting work done, and that's what we'll keep doing.

And I know that opportunities will arise from this. On the other side of this pandemic is a better world that SMC is ready to thrive in. I take Winston Churchill's advice to "never waste a good crisis," and we have always had a way of finding the upside. This is no different, and SMC will come out ahead by exercising our bold, creative, and courageous leadership.

Because if there's anything 2020 has taught the world, it's that leadership matters. And we don't have big budgets or huge reserves, but we've got leadership who have been smart about conserving resources. Our board of directors are a tight group with strong backgrounds and diverse experience. My staff are inspiring in their determination and devotion to the work.

And our supporters and volunteers are committed.

So despite the times, we are in a stronger position than ever because of



ABOVE: Crew leader Nick Hodges plots out a plan from high in the Siskiyou. Hodges has been with SMC since 2016.

the people who drive our mission, and we are looking forward to the next 10 years. We know there are headwinds. We know we are up for them, and on behalf of the SMC board and staff, thank you.

Thank you for your support of the people who keep the trails alive. Thank you for your appreciation for the backwoods we work in, and I hope to see you on a hike or at the other end of a

crosscut saw soon. In the meantime, keep your maps handy, your bags ready, and your chin up. We will get through this new wilderness together. Prepare thoughtfully for your next adventure. Always carry a bandana, always leave no trace. And long live the backwoods trails.

Sincerely,
Gabriel Howe
Executive Director



Siskiyou Mountain Club
phone: 541.708.2056
email: info@siskiyoumountainclub.org
mail: PO Box 3566, Ashland, OR 97520

Trail Reporting Template

Long live the backwoods trails
To explore all 350 miles of trails we maintain, visit our interactive map at siskiyoumountainclub.org/wilderness

Surveyor Name: _____ Trip Date: _____
 Email: _____ Trail(s) Name/#: _____
 Phone: _____

General Description:	Logs	< 6 in	6-36 in	3-5 ft	> 5 ft	TOTAL
Summary of route walked and general condition of trail as a whole. Include total number of logs, major issues, notes, etc.	#					

Trail Section #1 from: _____ to: _____

Logs	< 6 in	6-36 in	3-5 ft	> 5 ft	TOTAL
#					

BRUSH: _____

TREAD: _____

SIGNS: _____

Trail Section #2 from: _____ to: _____

Logs	< 6 in	6-36 in	3-5 ft	> 5 ft	TOTAL
#					

BRUSH: _____

TREAD: _____

SIGNS: _____

Trail Section #3 from: _____ to: _____

Logs	< 6 in	6-36 in	3-5 ft	> 5 ft	TOTAL
#					

BRUSH: _____

TREAD: _____

SIGNS: _____



ABOVE: 2019 Wilderness Corps intern Leah Doeden

Stories of Summer 2019: Scrappy and proud of it

for the Siskiyou Hiker
by Leah Doeden, 2019 Intern

Each Corps intern is required to journal and submit a few essays. This is a version of Leah Doeden's end-of-year essay.

01 SEPTEMBER, 2019 | GASQUET, CA -- My view of Gabe's pack turned to his face. He paused the hike from Gunbarrel Camp to Eight Mile Creek to look me in the eye.

I had inquired about why I was hired to be a Siskiyou Mountain Club intern for 2019. Why did they think I was a good fit? I certainly was not the most cut out for the work, not super strong, did not know how to backpack, and really did not think my phone interview had gone great.

"You just seemed sort of scrappy," he said, trotting along at a slow pace. That was a new one.

Scrappy Underdog

In the spring, when I got a call to interview for the internship, I had just gotten out of six long hours of class and I was walking home to take a nap.

"When?" I asked.

"Well, how about right now," Gabe had responded.

I said I needed ten minutes. Normally, I do a lot of prep for interviews because I am not the best at being put on the spot. Ten minutes later, I was calling back nervously.

I could have been more professional and explained myself better. And for God's sake, when asked what I did as a kid, I probably should have thought of something better than, "Uh, sports. Oh, and I watched a lot of Disney Channel." I hung up feeling sort of distraught.

Gabe mentioned he was worried about me romanticizing the experience too much. He suggested I read stories from previous interns. *I must not know what I am signing up for*, I thought. *Whatever*, it sounded cool. I just wanted to learn how to backpack and live in Southern Oregon for the summer.

Had I known then what I know now about SMC, I would have known that professionalism and lots of relevant experience would not have helped my case. They caught me at a time when I was unprepared, real, and just wanting to take a nap. It worked and I got hired.

Fast forward to August on the hike from Gunbarrel to Eight Mile when Gabe called me scrappy. Scrappy is a word I had never heard used to describe a person

until it was used on me. A comment I won't forget. It is a word most commonly used to describe things that are thrown together, incomplete, disorganized, or random.

An image of the mounds and mounds of tattered, old, and smelly given-up-on clothing and scraps from the Goodwill Bins pops into my head. "Scrappy" and I think of the boxes and bags of useless denim and fabric that I have purchased because of the appealing textures and patterns. The gingham, floral, and striped, that I can't pass up, all hoarded in my room for the someday I become an advanced seamstress. Real physical scraps. I did not think of myself or my life when the word was said.

Worst day of my life

Cut back to June 22nd, the first day of the internship. Imagine brand new, never before used gear. Deodorant, all 2.5 gallons of water, and soap in my pack (I would soon be criticized for bringing these and find them extremely unnecessary). It was already almost too heavy for me to lift and I was yet to pack food.

With the food in, I had to have help getting it on my back. *This is going to suck and I do not know how I am going to walk more than ten steps*. I thought. However, I did not seriously consider quitting as an option. As

the hike in started, I immediately got blisters, pain, and soreness.

Throughout orientation, my body got a sneak peak of what it might feel like to be a one-hundred year-old lady. I hiked about as fast as one, that's for sure. Through it all, I was excited to be backpacking and thought it was absolutely wild that I lived seven days out against the elements of the Kalmiopsis Wilderness Area.

It was probably good I was still romanticizing the experience at that point. The day we hiked out is up there with the worst days of my life. But as soon as I got into the warm van and took my shoes off, all of the pain and cold went away.

Which is why, although the summer was challenging, I have trouble giving SMC the satisfaction of it being the hardest thing I have ever done. The suffering was only temporary. There is a lot worse that could happen to a person than being uncomfortable, having to hike ten miles, or feeling weak. The experience brought clarity.

I felt lucky that I was able bodied enough to put myself in that uncomfortable a position. It meant that I had enough security and support to be out there in the first place. Worrying about things like long hiking days seemed irrelevant compared to worrying about my oldest St. Bernard, Lenard, who halfway through the summer was diagnosed with cancer and given a few months to live. Orientation did make me tougher.

I was surprised that I made it. I felt like I could probably do anything (besides math and science) if I could do that.

I am not going to go deep into any stories. The details of the hitches already blend together in my head and if you want to hear more about my days on the trails, my journals are there on the Doe Notes on the SMC blog. Overall, I certainly fulfilled my desire to learn to backpack in the most extreme way possible. I am practically a professional at it.

I know the bare necessities I need, and what foods taste best on the trail. I also learned how to swing an axe, I got certified on the crosscut, and I know I can persevere through long monotonous days of brushing and treading. I let my leg hair grow out. Fell in love with a shitty gold van. Swam in amazing swimming holes. Fell in some creeks. Missed some junctions.

I still dislike bugs, walking uphill, and being cold. Not much in me changed drastically. I did come out of it with a lot of respect for the people that do trail work, a deep respect for the wilderness, and a desire to lead a more interesting life.

Long life stories

Throughout the hitches, a few people on the crew shared their life stories. These compiled stories would go on for enjoyable hours noting love lives, college, travels, childhood, pain, passions, work experience, and more. I tried to think of what I might say if I were to give my life story. I became concerned about the length of it when it took me about five minutes to sum up my twenty scrappy years to Kalani, another intern on my crew. The things I've done so far just did not seem incredibly notable or interesting enough to talk about for longer.

It all came together when I was on a lookout rock surrounded by mountains, sometime during my last hitch. It was just before sunset, the sky a melting pot of color. I was taking things in. Throughout the work days the word "scrappy" had been in my mind and I realized I was just as scrappy as my Carharts that



ABOVE: Leah Doeden, Tyler Brahmstadt, and Jack Drimer celebrate a job well done on the Kelsey Trail

were held together with duct tape.

That night, I started a list in my journal of my life scraps. Many people would never guess that I was a valedictorian in my high school, that I started a business flipping clothing at sixteen, that I have worked on multiple farms, or sleep in a twin-sized bed with my three St. Bernards. Most people would not guess that I did ROTC for a bit, and that while I'm majoring in accounting what I really hope to do is revolutionize the death industry with green body decomposition methods. Most people don't know that I am also a member of a sorority, or I lived in the woods for fifty days, didn't shower, ran crosscut saws, and cleared miles and miles of trails in the backwoods.

These are just a few scraps.

They don't seem very surprising to me, although I see why they might to others. To me they are just normal things I do or want to do. Everyone has their own. I hope to be always collecting interesting scraps of many different varieties and patterns throughout my days on earth. My goal is that someday, when I am about to be alkaline hydrolyzed, all the scraps will be sewn together and my life story will be so interesting it will easily go on for hours. I realize I am going to have to do a lot of absurd things though, because I like to summarize. And so each scrap will probably only add a few seconds to my life story. I am okay with that and excited for it.

A scrappy ending

I could have done a few different things this summer. I could have gone back to driving a blueberry harvester, gotten an accounting internship, and I almost went to basic training for the Army. I am glad, though, that I ended up doing SMC. The summer flew by. The

Siskiyou Wilderness is now a second home. The trails I sweated on, creeks I fell into, junctions I missed, and people I met, are very dear to me.

I am proud to have been called scrappy now. It was an important comment. Being scrappy is good. Thrown together, disorganized, and incompleteness are virtues to the adventurous soul. I figure it means I won't settle and will keep searching for exciting scraps to add to the collection.

Scrappiness allows me to patch myself into any situation, to blend, adapt, and connect to experiences more closely. I suppose I am much like the patches on my jeans. I bet you anything this quality is why I was a good fit for this work.

Gabe recognized that as an important trait during my interview, and now I notice it too. Being scrappy is a darn good thing. Now I have to get to work on my hour-long life story.

Sorry for the scrappy ending.

Author Bio:

Leah Doeden grew up in Silverton, OR and spent many of her teenage summers working on blueberry farms harvesting the summer crop. In high school, she started a business selling used clothing. She'd scour through bins at Goodwill, buying vintage pieces for pennies on the dollar. She now attends Oregon State University to study Accounting.



Trail Threads

09 MAY 2020 | ASHLAND, OR --

2020 drought season takes grip of Jefferson State

Local weather conditions have many praying for spring rains. As of April 23, our area has received just about 65% of average precipitation, and Jackson County Administrator Danny Jordan says water supply in local reservoirs is as much as 89% below normal. The Oregon Department of Forestry declared fire season on May 1, and the Oregon State Fire Marshal's Office has already asked Oregon residents to voluntarily suspend outdoor burning.

Deciphering the closures: Some National Forests closed until September 30 or further notice

An order from Northwest Region 6 of the US Forest Service, which covers all of Oregon and Washington states, declared all developed recreation sites closed until September 30. Other National Forests have gone a step further in their own closures with parking restrictions and other orders. Stay up to date at fs.usda.gov/r6.

Forest Service Southwest Region 5 has its own order. Read more at fs.usda.gov/r5.

Climate predictions for Northwest: Hot and dry

The Climate Prediction Center is forecasting a hot, dry summer, with precipitation probabilities around 30% below usual, and average temperatures 60% above. Read more and get other outlook elements at <https://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/>.

Forest Service to extend contracts

The agency is extending timber, permit, and procurement contracts that were signed before April 1, 2020 in an effort to support industries that have experienced significant disruption in their markets. The notice is published in the Federal Register.

Great American Outdoors Act builds support

The bill was introduced into the Senate on March 9, 2020, and appears to have maintained bipartisan support with 58 cosponsors from both sides of the aisle. The bill would establish a fund to address maintenance backlogs plaguing National Parks and other conservation lands.

Indoor nature activities for kids

The Center for Leave No Trace Outdoor Ethics has released a block of curriculum for kids tailored for parents at home. The series gets kids doing their own dishes and provides camping skill development. Check it out at <https://lnt.org/indoor-nature-activi->

ties-for-kids/.

Portland group heads for Curry Coast

The Trailkeepers of Oregon, a group based in downtown Portland, is going to "build a movement of trail stewardship in the southern Oregon coast region," according to a recent post on their website. The organization will "drum up a beat of stewardship within communities that are eager to get out and improve their trails."

Northwest Youth Corps take interns on "case by case basis"

The organization has continued with current assignments, but has paused on new deployments. They are accepting interns on a case by case basis, according to their website.

National Wilderness Stewardship Alliance celebrates 10 years

The organization formed to develop a growing network of volunteer-based organizations to provide stewardship for America's enduring resource of wilderness is celebrating a decade of growth. The nonprofit, non-partisan group disperses grants, provides training opportunities, and hosts an annual conference. Learn more at wildernessalliance.org.

Department of Interior could open Oregon wildlife refuges to hunting

The agency proposed opening up 2.3 million acres and 97 wildlife refuges to hunting. In Oregon, that would include the Hart Mountain, Nestucca Bay, and Wapato Lake refuges. The expansion stems from a directive by previous Department Secretary Ryan Zinke.

The public has 60 days to comment from April 9. Visit www.regulations.gov, docket number FWS-HQ-NWRS-2020-0013.

Pacific Crest Trail Association: "STAY HOME"

The PCTA is asking everyone to cancel or postpone your adventures on the PCT, whether you're a thru hiker or not. They also report that not everyone is following closure recommendations.

Appalachian Trail Conservancy requests closure of namesake

On April 2, the group responsible for stewardship and management of the Appalachian Trail requested a closure of the entire corridor to slow the pandemic. The Conservancy, including 29 of 31 trail clubs, submitted an official letter to the secretaries of the Interior

BELOW: Crosscut master Trevor Meyer goes solo on an especially difficult log jam. All of SMC's crosscut saws were manufactured prior to WWII.



and Agriculture departments, as well as the director of the National Park Service. The request came after a surge in use after closures in other areas swept the eastern seaboard. More at appalachiantrail.org.

Long trail culture in jeopardy with new normal

In the years preceding the coronavirus, thru hiking the PCT and AT had become increasingly social endeavors. Using a generation of phone apps, thru hikers trace each other and travel in herds, transforming the experience from one of solitude and small groups to an athletic pilgrimage punctuated by celebrations in trail towns.

That scene could change and the party days of the PCT may be over.

Spring 2020: Southern Oregon Trail Alliance (SOTA) makes headway

The Grants Pass group has completed significant work in the Taylor Creek, Onion Mountain, and Chrome Ridge areas. For updates, check out their Facebook page: www.facebook.com/sotatrails/.

Rogue Valley Mountain Bikers Association makes case for more trails in

Grants Pass

The organization wants more mountain bike trails at the not-yet-developed Dollar Mountain Park in Grants Pass. They're also raising funds for a pump track in Ashland. Read more at rvmba.org.

Jack-Ash Trail could include motorized trails

Phase II of the multi-year project calls for construction of 24 new trail miles, including some motorized. Siskiyou Uplands Trail Association anticipates construction to start this fall after a Record of Decision from the Medford BLM. Read more at sutaoregon.org.

Municipal parking adjacent to Forest lands pose problems in Ashland

Enforcing orders on the wildland interface is proving especially difficult in the hills of Ashland, OR. The City has issued designations for one way trails and taken other steps to point recreators in the right direction, but parking has become a problem at popular trailheads.

The Ashland Woodlands and Trails Association encourages trail users to use roads and to start their adventures from home instead of parking at trailheads.

To all of our members, volunteers, and agency partners: THANK YOU!

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Travel Southern Oregon
Rogue River-Siskiyou Nat. Forest
Klamath Nat. Forest
Six Rivers Nat. Forest
Umpqua Nat. Forest

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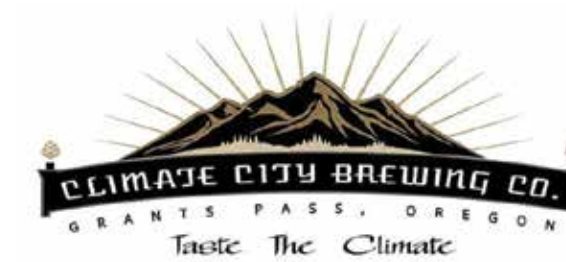
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June

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
				SIGNATURE ROUTE: ILLINOIS RIVER TRAIL →		
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
←						VOLUNTEER TRAIL WORK
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

July

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
					FOURTH OF JULY VOLUNTEER TRIP →	
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
←						
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
					SIGNATURE ROUTE: YOUNG KELSEY ROUTE →	
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
←						
26	27	28	29	30	31	

DETAILS:

*** COVID-19 UPDATE ***

We comply with all social distancing guidelines outlined by the governors of Oregon and California during the Covid-19 pandemic. Based on current projections, we hope to fulfill each event on our calendar for this summer. However, all events are subject to cancellation if deemed unsafe to the health of our members and staff. **To get the most up-to-date information on our upcoming events, sign up for our email newsletter or visit our website at siskiyoumountainclub.org/calendar.**

Small group events:

It's early May and we hope that by June we can host small social events at our facility in Gold Hill, OR. If you are interested in joining us for such events, please email us at info@siskiyoumountainclub.org or call 541.708.2056. Potential dates are: June 27, July 11, and August 15. Keep current at siskiyoumountainclub.org.

June 4-7th:

To celebrate our 10-year anniversary, SMC is hosting a series of group backpacking trips to showcase some of the "Signature Routes" in our maintenance footprint. Join trip leader Luke Brandy for a 4-day

traverse of the Illinois River Trail.

For the first time in over a decade, the entire trail is possible. The National Recreation Trail traverses the northern recess of Oregon's Kalmiopsis Wilderness Area, highlighting rare botanical areas, old growth forests, mountain prairies, and, of course, the rugged banks of the Illinois River canyon.

Interested? Email Luke at bonsaigoat@gmail.com for details and to sign up. We are currently on a wait-list, but spots may open up soon.

June 13th:

Join trip leader Luke Brandy for a day of trail work on Kerby Peak. Enjoy expansive views of the Illinois Valley, and sharpen your trail skills with one of the best. Beginners are highly encouraged.

Meet in Selma at 8am and be back by 5pm. Interested? Email bonsaigoat@gmail.com for details and to sign up.

July 2-5th:

Join us on this extended holiday weekend for a strenuous work trip deep in the Siskiyou backwoods as we attack a remote section of trail in need of some dire work.

Participants need to be in strong physical shape and have prior backpacking experience. Trail work experience is not necessary, but volunteers should come prepared to work long days.

Led by volunteer director Karly White, email karly@siskiyoumountainclub.org for details and to sign up.

July 16-19th:

To celebrate our 10-year anniversary, SMC is hosting a series of group backpacking trips to showcase some of the "Signature Routes" in our maintenance footprint. Join trip leader Luke Brandy for a 4-day traverse of the Siskiyou Wilderness on the Young Kelsey Route.

This 44-mile route begins at the lower reaches of Oregon's East Fork-Illinois River, rising to the lush plateau of Young's Valley. From there walk along

the pristine Clear Creek, then ascend its West Fork to the South Kelsey National Recreation Trail. Traverse a rugged highland area and finally descend to the South Fork Smith River where there are deep emerald pools and some of the most pristine and intact old growth forests left on the West Coast.

Email bonsaigoat@gmail.com for details and to sign up. We are currently on a wait list, but spots may open up.



photo by Aaron Wissler

WINTER WARRIORS: A group of volunteers braved cold winds and snow in March to clear a section of the Kalmiopsis Rim Trail.

Our Mission:

The Siskiyou Mountain Club is a 501(c)(3) public charity that formed to restore, maintain, and promote primitive trails in the Siskiyou backcountry, and to provide outdoor service opportunities for the public. We coordinate stewardship projects, lead outdoor adventures, and publish useful information for the public.

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