

SUMMER 2019

photo by Trevor Meyer

# ***THE SISKIYOU HIKER***

***Outdoor news from the Siskiyou backcountry***

NEWS,  
STORIES,  
TRAIL MAPS



## **2019 SEASON UPDATES**

READ ABOUT OUR SUMMER  
WILDERNESS CORPS

## **OFF-TRAIL ADVENTURE**

FOUR WOMEN GO ON AN INTREPID DAY  
HIKE IN THE ILLINOIS VALLEY

## **GET INVOLVED!**

CHECK OUT OUR UPCOMING EVENTS



photo by Trevor Meyer

**THE CREW:** Our 2019 Wilderness Conservation Corps smiling on top of Mt. Billingslea after a week of hard work. For many, this was their first experience doing trail work. For some, it was their first time carrying a backpack. Subscribe to our email newsletter to stay up-to-date with their season: [siskiyoumountainclub.org/calendar](http://siskiyoumountainclub.org/calendar).

# Change of Plans: Daytime adventure to Mt. Billingslea

by: Ryan Ghelfi, Board Director  
for the Siskiyou Hiker

Board Director Ryan Ghelfi planned to hike in the Red Buttes Wilderness. However, after meeting our 2019 Wilderness Corps, he switched his itinerary to a different trail: the Kalmiopsis Rim.

**04 JULY 2019 | ASHLAND, OR** -- A couple weeks ago I had the good fortune of attending the Siskiyou Mountain Club Meet the Crew BBQ up in Gold Hill. It's a fantastic event, where stoke levels are crazy high. I was able to meet this year's crew of interns: 11 new faces, fresh off a seven-day hitch restoring a lost and forgotten trail, hiking really far and working harder than maybe they thought possible.

I'd planned on doing a long run in the Red Buttes Wilderness that Sunday. But during the BBQ I got talking with Trevor Meyer, deputy field director for SMC, about the work the crew had just done on the far north end of the Kalmiopsis Rim Trail. It's a route that provides access to some of the most remote ridgelines in the Kalmiopsis Wilderness and ends at a commanding peak - Mt. Billingslea.

The trail had not been cleared since the 1980s. To say it's been lightly trafficked is almost certainly an understatement. The enthusiasm for this trail and those mountains I could see on Trevor's face was infectious. I changed my plans.

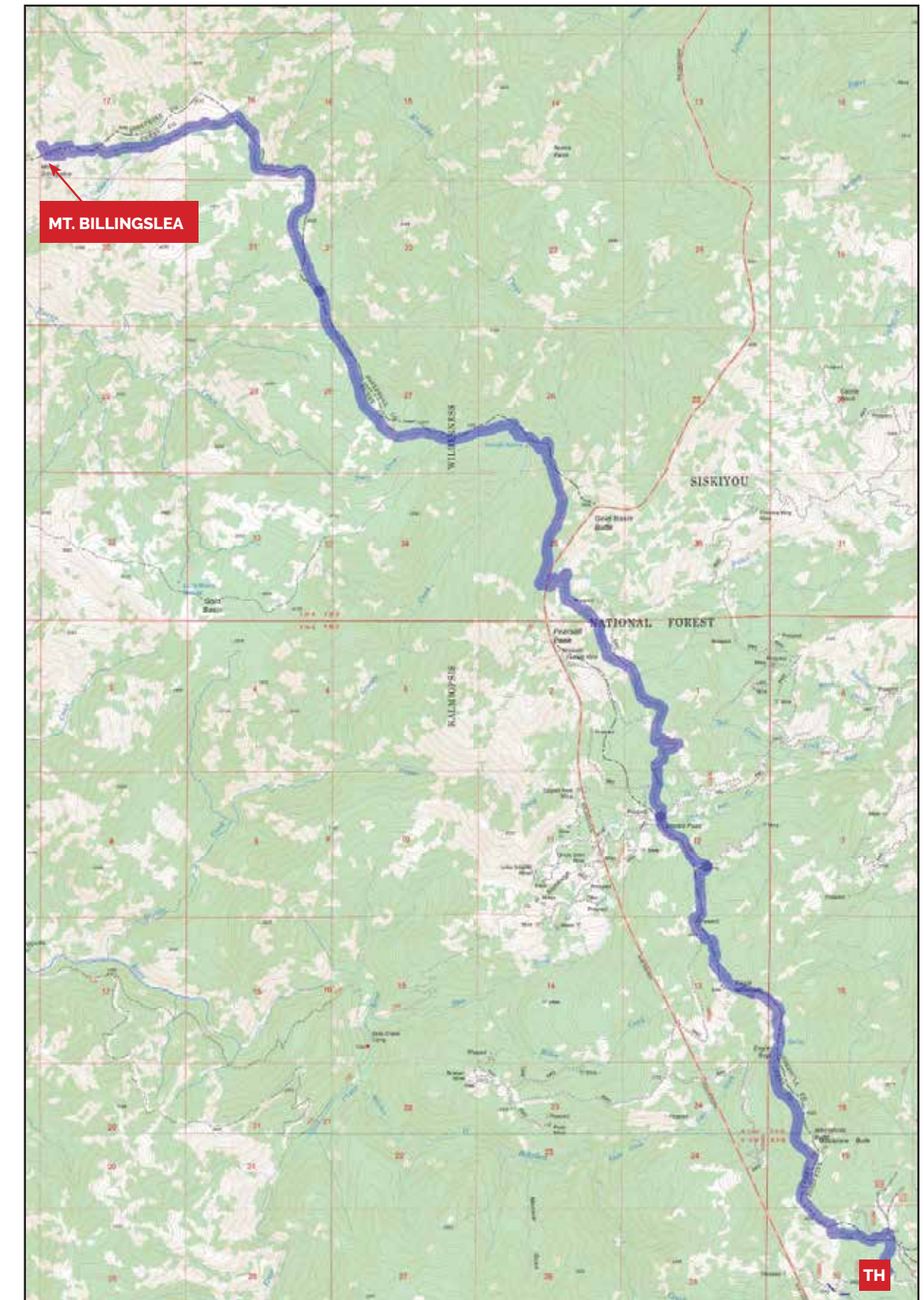
There's an unfortunate catch-22 playing out in the mountains and public lands of our country. If a trail gets used it's more likely to be maintained. If it gets

less use, it won't be. The trails that don't see maintenance become less desirable or even impossible to hike, leading to less use and lower odds of federal maintenance.

I think it's a little like the chicken or the egg analogy. This leads to fewer trails and concentrated human use and impact. A large percentage of our trail use is focused on a small percentage of our trails. Ever hiked in the Grand Canyon or in Yosemite Valley?

A few miles into my run, as I delved further from the car, humans, and any sense of civilization, I was reconnecting with the land in the best way I know, reveling in the purest sense of solitude one can feel in the 21st century.

The Kalmiopsis is equal parts stunning, rugged and,



**THE ROUTE:** Start at the Onion Camp Trailhead and head north on the Kalmiopsis Rim Trail #1124. The full trip to Mt. Billingslea and back covers approximately 28 miles and 7,600ft of elevation gain. This route traverses unique botanical areas, wide open ridgelines, and is a connecting point to a larger network of trails throughout the Wilderness.

dare I say, hostile. So many fires have sculpted this landscape over the past few decades. As I passed the turn off to the Tincup Trail and moved into freshly maintained trail territory, I was greeted by a mosaic of burned as well as fully intact forest, telling a story of the winds of the past.

I entered the headwaters of Lucky Creek, a fitting name as I happily drank down two bottles directly from the source. Perfection. The path follows along as the creek gains volume and tumbles with fervency into the larger Tincup drainage.

I turned back on the upper flanks of Mt. Billingslea, knowing if I didn't I'd be late for my appointment with civilization. Nonetheless, the magnetic pull to keep going, and going, tugged quite hard. Maybe next time. The lure of the next summit, the next ridge, the next babbling brook, is never too far off.

Just because a trail has not gotten much use does not mean that it should stay that way, or that the little use it does get is not extraordinarily meaningful.

I'd argue that these little-used trails in the most remote, hard to reach corners might be the most important. These are the trails which still provide the opportunity to seek the greatest freedom from our busy world. We need more of them, way more, certainly not less.

It was easy for me to see that even after just a single week in the Kalmiopsis, the SMC Conservation Corps interns realized this as well. They are part of a mission and a legacy that will outlast us all. Endless gratitude for the hard work that has been done and the work that is still to come. And long live the backwoods trails!

**Author Bio:**

Ryan Ghelfi is an active trail runner and member of the Siskiyou Mountain Club Community. He joined our board in September 2018 and is spearheading a number of exciting projects. Ghelfi is the founder of Trails and Tarmac, a personal coaching service, and holds the speed record for climbing Mt. Shasta.



# 2019 Wilderness Conservation Corps



**LINING UP:** The 2019 crew hoists their packs at the Onion Camp Trailhead before hiking into the Kalmiopsis Wilderness for their week-long orientation. The team cleared 6.5 miles of the Kalmiopsis Rim Trail #1124, a route that had not been fully maintained since the mid 1980s.

## for the Siskiyou Hiker

One of our goals for 2019 was to put more effort into our intern program - earlier hiring, better onboarding, and more training. That effort has made an impact, and this year's interns are pulling off big wins.

**01 AUGUST 2019 | GOLD HILL, OR** -- Last winter, deputy director Karly White started vetting applicants for our 2019 Wilderness Conservation Corps. Doing so is not an easy task. Spending a summer in the wilderness may sound enchanting, dreamy even. But don't kid yourself. This work is hard, relentless, and takes toughness that is difficult to recruit for.

"We're looking for people who are in pursuit of a real personal challenge," says White. "We work in rugged places, and we need people who are going to dig deep when things get uncomfortable."

Applicant Laina Rose, who goes by Rose, was determined to push her limits. She was eager to challenge herself, so White hired her. "I came into it without a lot of expectations," says Rose. "I'd done a lot of hiking before, and had no idea how much went into maintaining trails."

Rose grew up near the Trinity Alps Wilderness and is a student at Southern Oregon University. After returning from a 10-day hitch in the Red Buttes Wilderness, she says "shifting from busy school life to being present has been the greatest challenge. The best

part has been learning how to run a crosscut saw," she mentions. "You have to think about it." She says the work is tough. "I wanted to be pushed. That's why I'm doing this."

Rose is joined by Leah Doeden, an intern from Silverton, OR. Doeden says planning and shopping for 10 days of food was difficult. "I had just enough," she remarks. One of the Leave No Trace principles we follow is to travel and camp on durable surfaces. "Cowboy camping on rocks is fun," she adds. "Mine was kind of slanted."

If Doeden wasn't swinging Pulaskis and pulling saws in the Siskiyou Wilderness this summer, she says she'd be harvesting blueberries in her home town. "I can adapt really well to most things."

The best part so far? "Swimming in Clear Creek," she says. In addition to working long days in less than ideal conditions, the interns read aloud as a group each day and keep a journal.

"It's better than what I thought," Doeden adds. We asked her what she would bring more of on her next 10-day work hitch. "Food and mosquito repellent."

Doeden and Rose are joined by Jack Drimer, a student at Virginia Tech. He says he's had to break out of his shell. His three-person crew, which includes Laina Rose, is quiet, he mentions. "I'm not usually the one talking a lot. But I started doing the talking."

"The crew got dialed in after a few days. We just get up and go," adds Drimer. He came out west with a new pair

of boots. "But they got holes in them early on, so I have to get new ones," he laments. "I want to keep getting in better shape."

Drimer, Rose, and Doeden are joined by Jeron Dastrup, Kalani Aligarbes, Tyler Brahmstadt, Sasha Benson, and Cameron Salazar. They are led by staff members Aaron Babcock, Trevor Meyer, Nick Hodges, and Haleigh Martin.



**JOB WELL DONE:** Interns Jack Drimer and Laina Rose celebrate after their first 10-day hitch with fresh watermelon. What's the best tool to carve that thing? A 24-inch handsaw of course!

# 2019 Season Updates: A renaissance in National Recreation Trails

## for the Siskiyou Hiker

We have a variety of exciting projects to share with you, but our main focus this year has been restoring a string of National Recreation Trails.

**01 AUGUST 2019 | ASHLAND, OR** -- In 1968, Congress passed the National Trails System Act, putting America's great trail systems onto the map. Most of us have heard of National Scenic Trails like the Pacific Crest, Continental Divide, and Appalachian. Those trails are designated by Congress and receive allocations through annual budget processes.

But National Recreation Trails (NRTs) do not receive earmarked funds and they are designated by the Secretary of Agriculture or the Secretary of Interior to recognize regionally significant trails. We have been and continue to bring a handful of them back to life.

None of the NRTs we are restoring and maintaining stand on their own. They each connect to other trails that build greater circuits for backpackers, day hikers, and anyone looking to get out into the Siskiyou backwoods.

### Clear Creek National Recreation Trail

Miles: 22.5  
Maximum Grade: 15%  
Map: Siskiyou Wilderness Map (available fall 2019)

This circuit runs north to south through the heart of the 180,000-acre Siskiyou Wilderness, providing a connection to a handful of feeder trails, including the West Fork Clear Creek Trail and the South Kelsey National Recreation Trail. The Clear Creek NRT traverses its namesake, which is known for its pristine swimming pools, enchanting waterfalls, and a rugged landscape all around it.

Much of the Clear Creek NRT had sunk into a long backlog of maintenance when we started working on it in 2018. We put some major work into it that year, and then came back to finish the job in 2019. Work here is financed by the Klamath National Forest and our supporters.

**South Kelsey National Recreation Trail**  
Miles: 17  
Maximum Grade: 25%  
Map: Siskiyou Wilderness Map (available fall 2019)

This historic route was built in the 1850s to transport supplies between Crescent City and Yreka, CA. It ascends 4,000

feet from the South Fork Smith River to a high ridge that connects to the West Fork Clear Creek Trail. The trail has received a lot of interest in the last couple of decades, but organizations with multi-million dollar budgets have had a hard time tackling it.

But we took it on with support from the Six Rivers National Forest and Del Norte Trail Alliance. Some work is still needed, but the most damaged sections are now passable for the first time in recent memory.

**Boundary National Recreation Trail: Kangaroo Segment**  
Miles: 8  
Maximum Grade: 15%  
Map: Red Buttes Wilderness

The trail originates at the Pacific Crest Trail near Cook & Green Pass and traverses a prominent ridge all the way to Goff Butte. In 2017 we completed major restoration of the route, and have been working to keep it maintained in both 2018 and 2019. In summer, the trail explodes with Shasta Lily and other flowers.

**Boundary National Recreation Trail: Rogue Segment**  
Miles: 17  
Maximum Grade: 25%

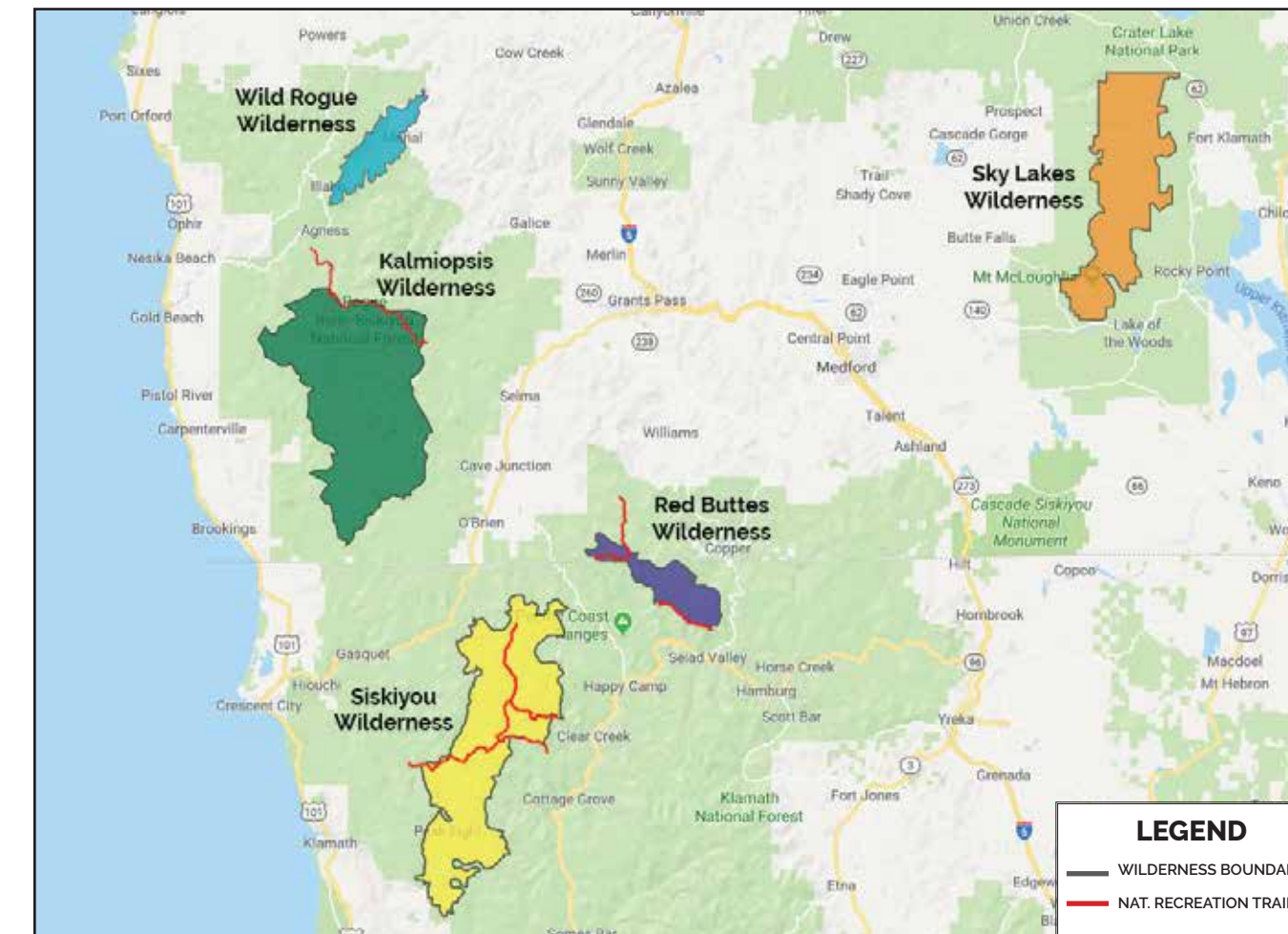
### Map: Red Buttes Wilderness

This ridgeline trail connects the Red Buttes Wilderness to the Grayback Range and Oregon Caves National Monument. It carries expansive views of the Rogue, Illinois, and Klamath drainages, as well as panoramic aspects of the Siskiyou Range.

From mountain meadows to towering fir forests, the Boundary Trail traverses a pristine ridge top. Volunteer Jeff Thieret took the lead on restoring this trail in 2018 and maintenance is continuing. Work here is supported by volunteers and the Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest.

**Illinois River National Recreation Trail**  
Miles: 8  
Maximum Grade: 25%  
Map: Kalmiopsis Wilderness (available fall 2019)

Only eight miles of this stunning trail made it into National Recreation Trail status, but the entire 30 mile length of it is being restored this year by our Klondike Crew with support from the Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest. The trail traverses the wild banks and the rugged ridges in the north recesses of the Kalmiopsis Wilderness, and for the first time in decades the entire thing will be in good shape for hikers.



**GROWING FOOTPRINT:** When Siskiyou Mountain Club was founded in 2010, the SMC crew promised to open one trail in the Kalmiopsis Wilderness. Now our reach has extended to five different Wilderness areas and over 350 miles of backcountry routes.

## SEASON STATS

- 8 Wilderness Corps Interns
- 3,150 volunteer hours logged
- 95 miles of trail restored
- 6 National Recreation Trails maintained
- 3 Wild & Scenic River Corridors opened
- 3 crews on the ground
- 40 jars of peanut butter consumed
- 18 pairs of shoes destroyed
- 2,000 logs slayed

# 1. Middle Fork Trail: The gateway to the Sky Lakes

Hike along the banks of the mighty Rogue on this lesser-known artery of the Sky Lakes Wilderness.

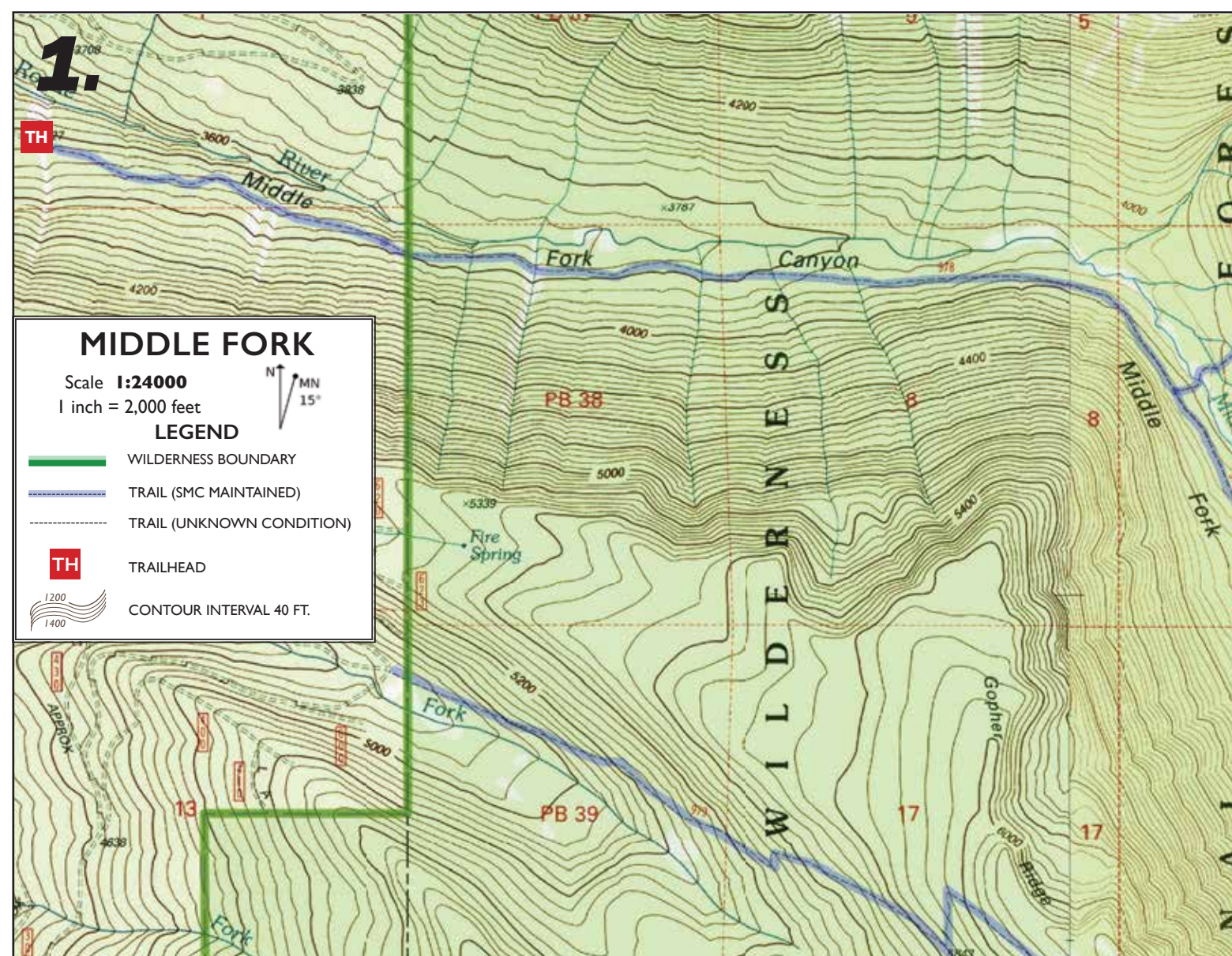
### Description:

01 AUGUST 2019 | PROSPECT, OR -- Just a few minutes from Prospect, OR., this trail is a gateway into the Sky Lakes Wilderness.

The canyon that the trail traverses was carved by glacial ice, and the first few miles of the route are flat and easy, suitable for small children and older adults who want a taste of the Sky Lakes. They can also get a taste of the Middle Fork Rogue River itself, which is fed by Lake Alta and remains very cold throughout the hot summer months.

Options include an easy overnight along the banks of this pristine upper reach of the Rogue or a simple day hike. Or connect to the Lake Alta or Halifax Trails to pursue other longer route options.

Expect to encounter some downed trees on the route. Our maintenance crew will have the trail logged out by August 30. To explore the Middle Fork and the rest of this 110,000-acre wilderness, pick up the Sky Lakes North and Sky Lakes South maps.

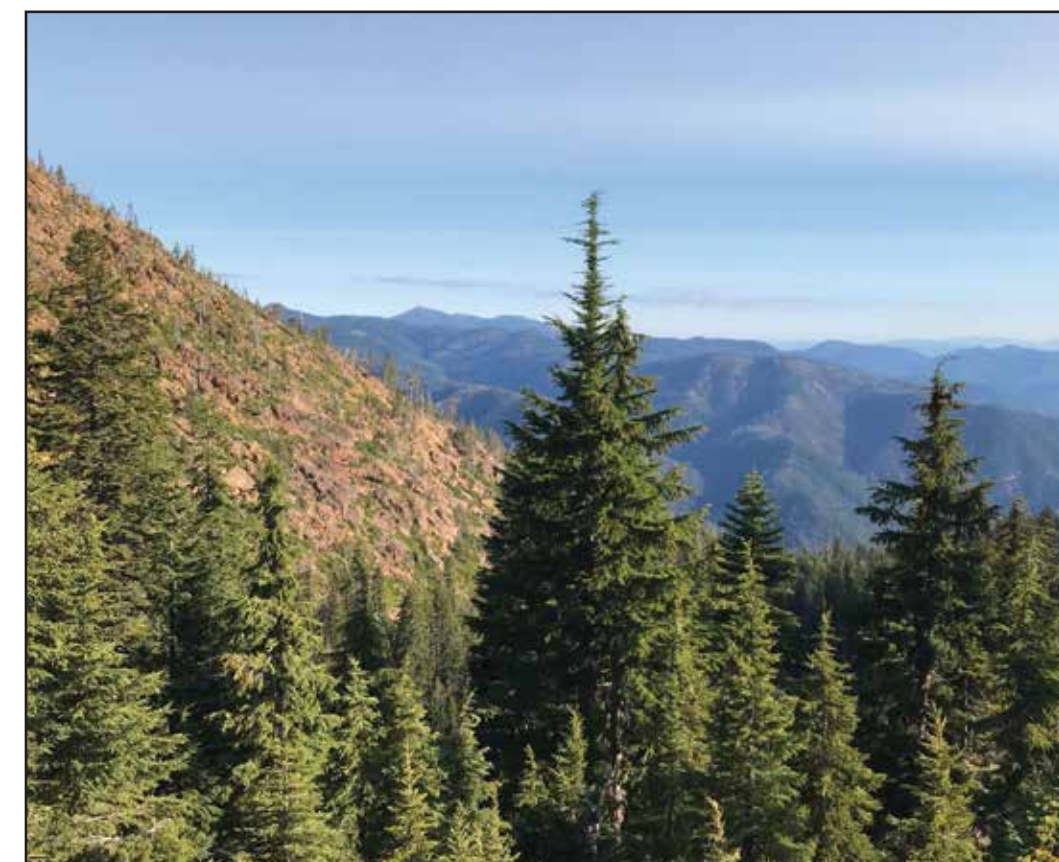


# 2. Horse Camp Trail: Elevator hike to Siskiyou Crest

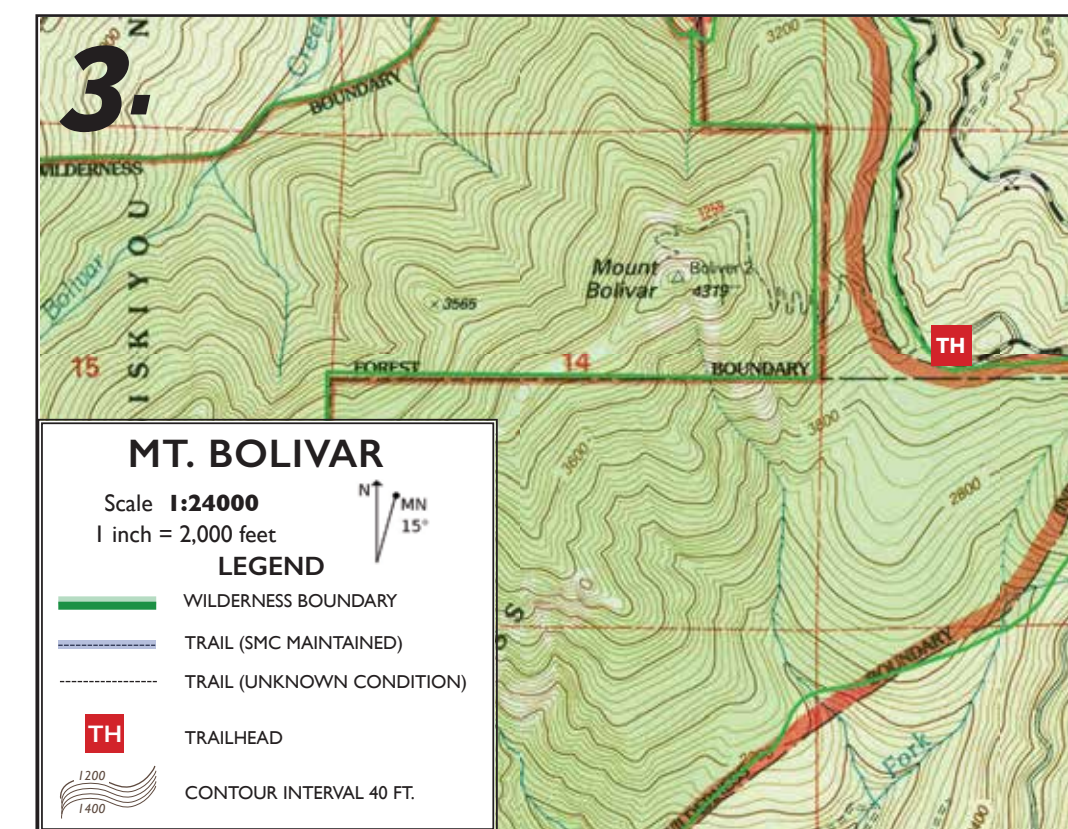
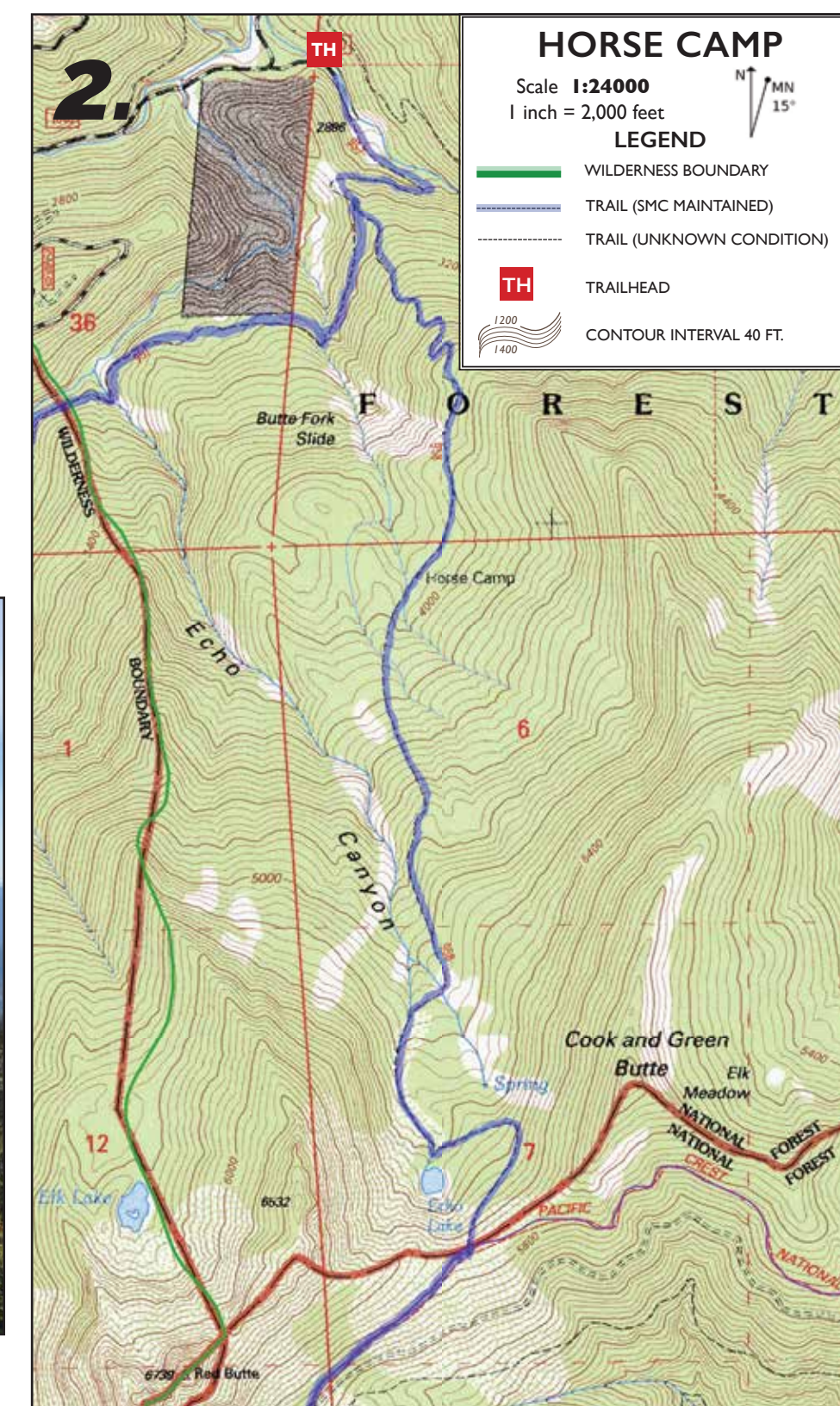
### Description:

01 AUGUST 2019 | APPLGATE, OR -- Just a few minutes from Applegate Lake, the Horsecamp Trail climbs around 3,000 feet in just a few miles, where it reaches the Pacific Crest Trail. From there head east on the Pacific Crest Trail toward Oregon, or west to Kangaroo Springs and a junction with the Boundary National Recreation Trail #5254. Intrepid hikers could go as far as Ashland, the Oregon Caves National Monument, Canada, or Mexico.

From the Upper Applegate River, the route crosses a junction with the Butte Fork-Applegate River Trail, and climbs through a mixed forest into meadow basins with stands of cedars more ancient than most anything in the Pacific Northwest. Just before cresting, the trail reaches Echo Lake. From the top, catch views as far as Shasta, Thielsen, Preston Peak, Kangaroo Peak, Mt. Emily, and beyond.



**BIG VIEWS:** The Horse Camp Trail might be steep, but hikers will be rewarded with panoramic views of the Klamath-Siskiyou at the summit.



# 3. Mt. Bolivar Trail: Summit a remote peak in the Wild Rogue Wilderness

### Description:

01 AUGUST 2019 | POWERS, OR -- Head to the northernmost trail in the Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest and climb the highest peak in the 36,000-acre Wild Rogue Wilderness. The climb is steep but short, just about 1.4 miles to the summit. The drive is long, so consider extending your trip and hiking Panther Ridge, the Rogue River, or Mule Creek Trails.

At the top of the (roughly) 1,000 foot climb, you'll find a bronze plaque to commemorate the naming of what is also the highest summit in Coos County. The story behind the peak is an unsure one. History is unclear on whether or not it was named after Coos County surveyor Simon Catchart Bolivar or Venezuelan revolutionary Simon Bolivar. On the way to the mysterious summit traverse an old growth forest that leads to a scrubby ridge peppered by an array of conifers.

The route can be found on the Wild Rogue Wilderness map.

## 4. Illinois River Trail: Historic route being restored after 2018 fire season

The Illinois River Trail is a 30-mile route that traverses the Wild & Scenic Illinois. This stretch reaches a variety of feeder trails that connect to form loops. Hike it this fall, before the snow comes.

### Description:

01 AUGUST 2019 | AGNESS, OR -- This challenging trail has one trailhead at Oak Flat just east of Agness, OR. The other trailhead is west of Selma, OR, near the confluence of Briggs Creek with the Illinois River.

In between those remote trailheads, you will find a 30-mile trail that rises high above the turquoise water of the Wild & Scenic Illinois. It traverses high meadows, steep ridges, and crosses pristine creeks and botanical areas.

The elevation profile is challenging, and the only direct river access

is actually along feeder trails to Pine Flat and Collier Bar. For years, sections here and there would get maintained by a Eugene, OR group with an annual budget of over \$5,000,000 who just never got ahead of the game.

In 2017 just after that group had reportedly worked the Illinois River Trail, hiker Beth Dayton wrote that she was reduced to "crawling and climbing on our hands and knees, or balancing several feet above the trail on a jungle gym of branches." Then, on day three she encountered a major landslide that "left a near vertical

wall of compacted earth with the consistency of concrete."

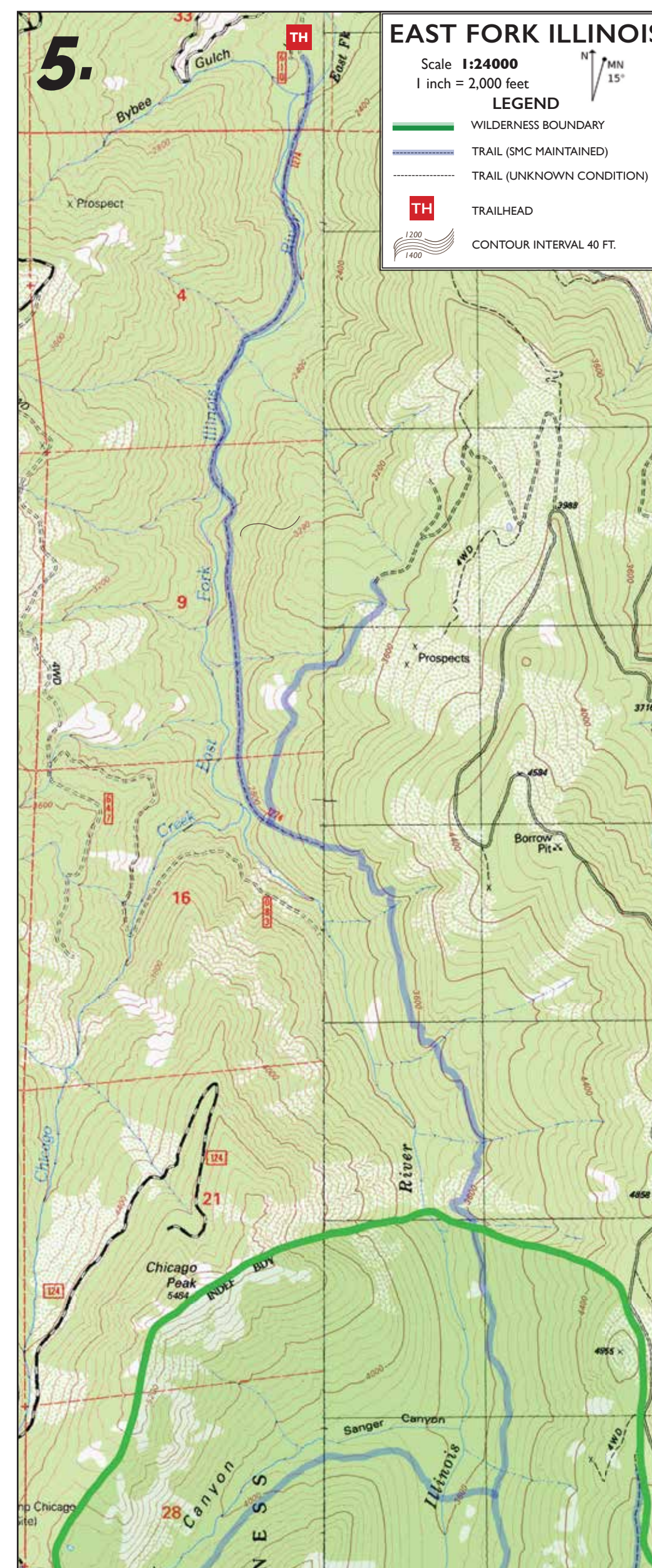
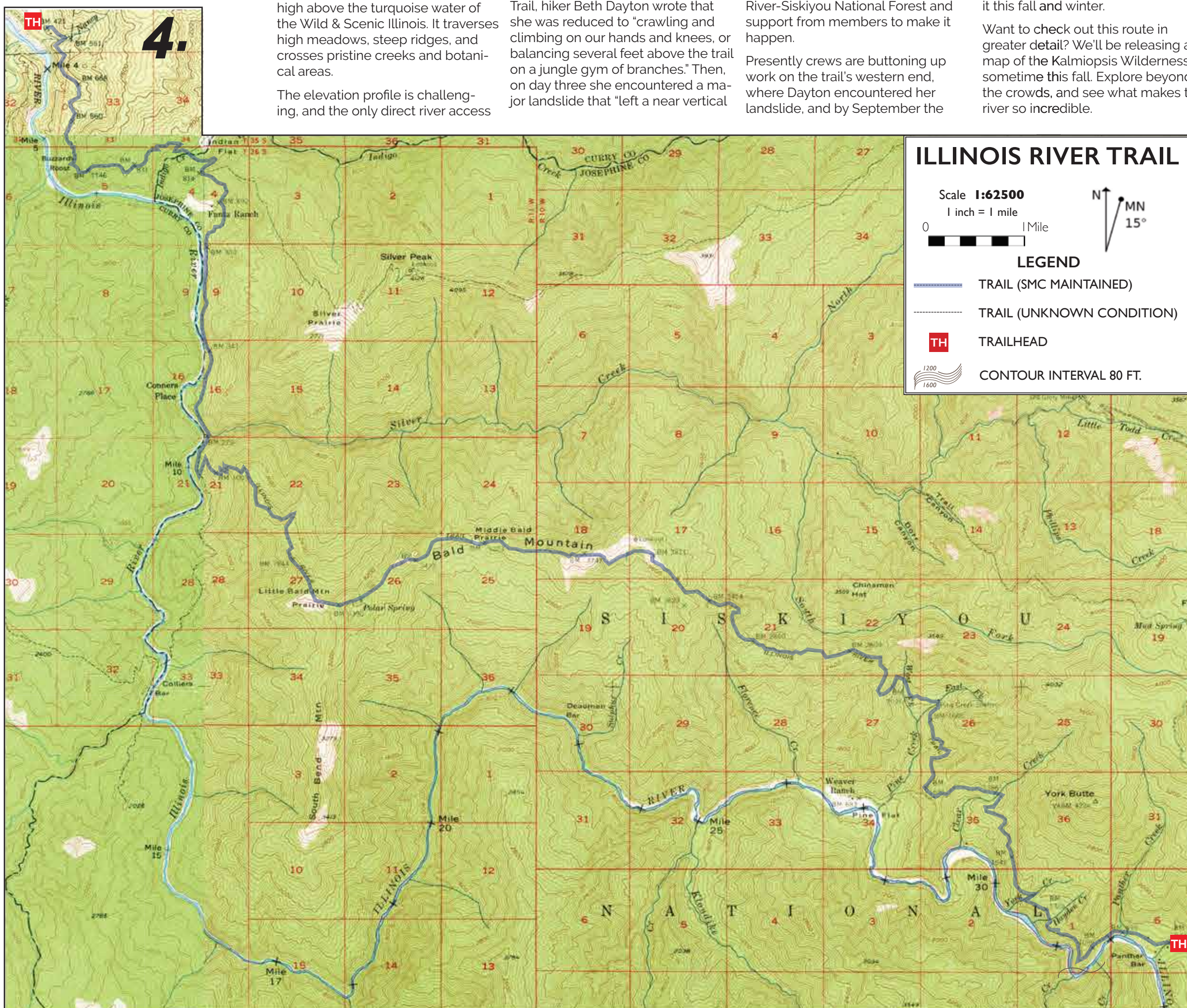
Dayton didn't turn around, but others have at the same obstacle, and the stories we've heard range from humorous to downright dangerous. So we started making plans to maintain the entire route. Then this year we got the financing from the Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest and support from members to make it happen.

Presently crews are buttoning up work on the trail's western end, where Dayton encountered her landslide, and by September the

trail will be ready to hike.

With elevations ranging from 200' at Oak Flat West to nearly 4,000' at Bald Mountain, the trail is accessible year-round, but the higher elevations get significant snow pack from winter storms. The wooden planks of a steel bridge burned in the 2018 Klondike Fire, and we'll be redecking it this fall and winter.

Want to check out this route in greater detail? We'll be releasing a map of the Kalmiopsis Wilderness sometime this fall. Explore beyond the crowds, and see what makes this river so incredible.



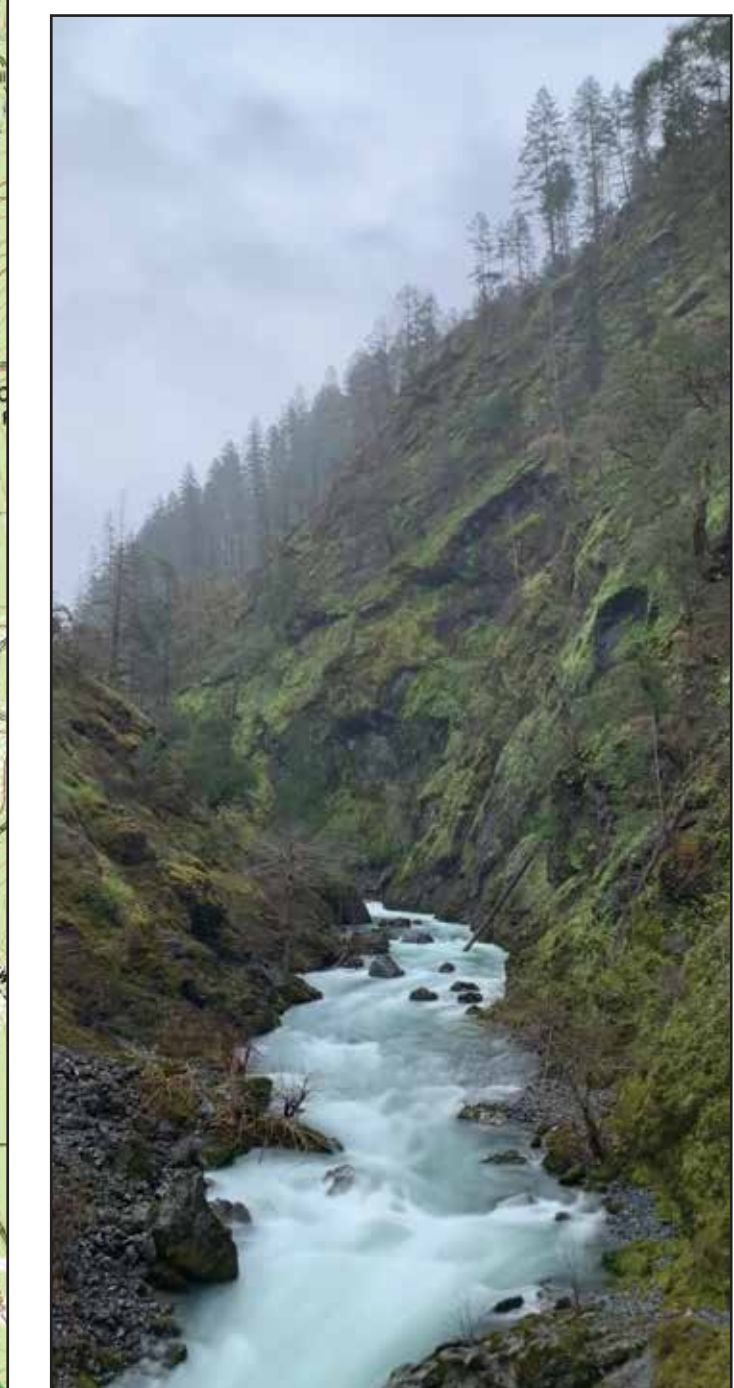
## 5. East Fork Illinois River Trail: Summer oasis, if you work for it

### Description:

01 AUGUST 2019 | TAKILMA, OR -- Tucked in the southernmost reach of the Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest, the trail traverses a stunning tributary of the Illinois and ancient old growth forests, and serves as an entry into the Siskiyou Wilderness.

Just a few minutes from the community of Takilma, OR, the historic route crosses the river and slowly marches to its pristine headwaters. The East Fork Illinois can also be accessed from the Osgood Ditch Trail. Its deep, cold pools lure summer swimmers who should be wary of poison oak, black bears, and plenty of rattlesnakes.

Massive stands of fir, cedar, and pine line the East Fork. Follow the trail to Crazy Peak, or keep going to connect with the Black Butte Tie Trail #1273. From there head to Twin Valley, Young's Valley, Raspberry Lake, Preston Peak, and a number of multi-day opportunities in this 179,000-acre federal wilderness.

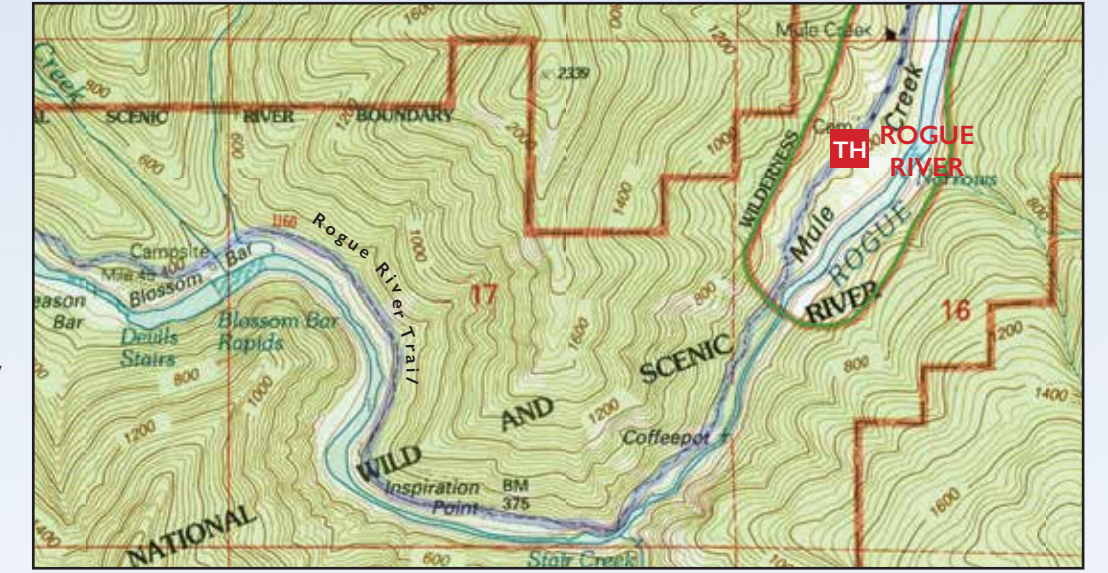


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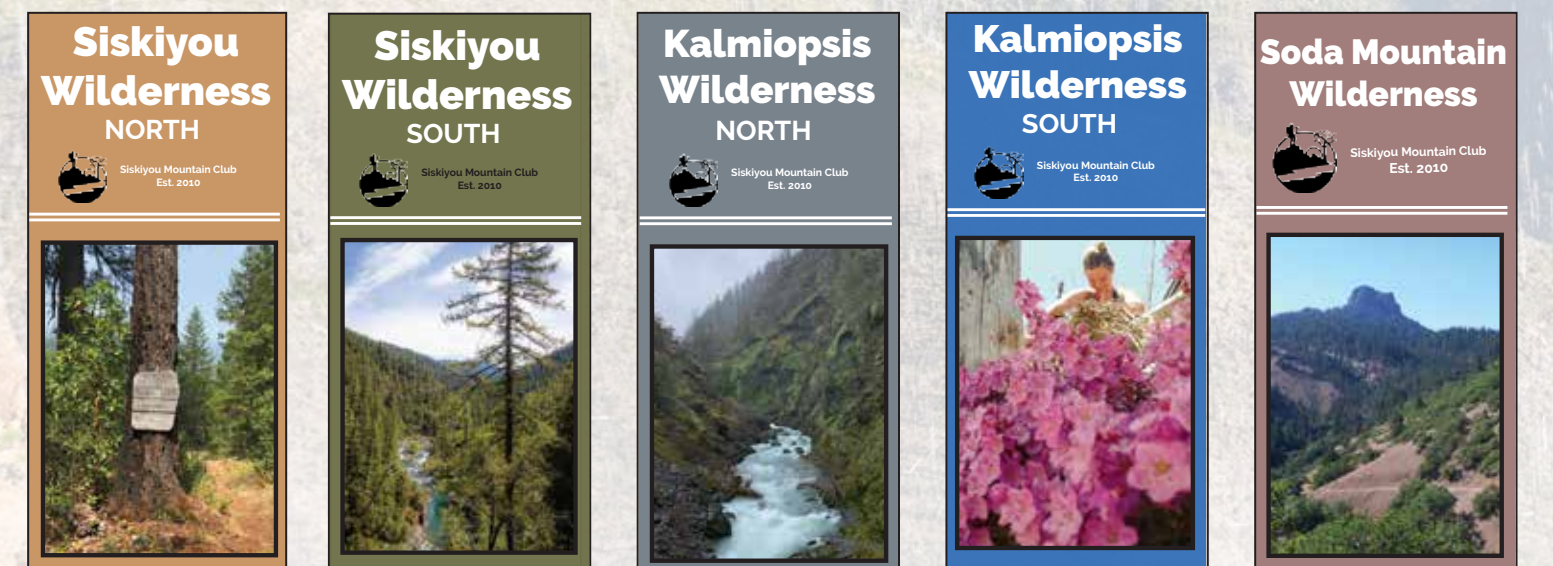
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*- Mike Beagle, founder of Backcountry Hunters and Anglers*

**COMING SOON:**





# “Bloody, battle-tested, and sore” Cross-country hike along Rough & Ready Creek

by Kelly Ramsey, USFS Wilderness Ranger  
for the Siskiyou Hiker

*This past spring, Deputy Director Karly White invited three friends on a cross-country day hike around Rough & Ready Creek: SMC co-founder Jill Stokes, BLM firefighter Emma Anderson, and USFS Wilderness Ranger Kelly Ramsey. The trip was a little more ambitious than they bargained for, but it's a story they'll never forget.*

**01 MAY 2019 | O'BRIEN, OR** -- The Rough & Ready Loop can't rightfully be called a "hike," a word that grossly trivializes the intensity of this day-long (more than day-long) adventure, one that involves hiking, scrambling, hand-over-hand climbing, semi-perilous creek crossings, and a slip-sliding route down an endless vertical descent I can only describe as foot-sledding—or maybe scree glissading?

If you're looking to test your mettle against an unmarked route on the bleeding perimeter of wilderness, look no further. You'll come out bloody, battle-tested, sore, and probably proud as hell that you pulled it off at all.

We four ladies started out at sunrise on what promised to be a beautiful Saturday. I knew the "hike" (as

it has been mislabeled) was about 14 miles, but I still figured we'd be home by dinnertime, and I told a friend I could let out her dog when I got back. No big deal.

Our route began innocuously enough, with a thigh-deep creek crossing and a cross-country climb up a steep, but not too steep, slope. We climbed some 3,000 feet over a couple miles from Rough & Ready Creek to a ridgeline at 4,000 feet, creating our own switchbacks through a sparse, fire-scarred landscape of manzanita and skinny conifers.

At the ridge, where we stopped (for too long, I later bemoaned) to snack and talk in the windy sunshine, there were amazing panoramic views of the snow-capped Siskiyou Wilderness to our south and the reddened, fire-stripped ridges of the Kalmiopsis Wilderness to the northwest. It was beautiful.

Following the ridge as it widened into a plateau, we picked up an old road. A Swedish gold miner named Alberg, who illegally squatted and built his homestead on this land, built roads all over this ridge system, later rampaging over them in his Model T.

Following the old road, we found landmarks from his time here. Rocks were meticulously piled, and antique tools (now rusted and tarnished with time), were strewn about. Here we stopped for another snack break, the length of which I heartily regret.

"It's all flat and downhill from here," Karly famously chirped.

Following the ridgeline (the "wrong" ridgeline, we later learned) as it sloped downhill, we eventually reached a point of no return, where it was time to scramble down to the creek. This is the aforementioned scree glissade.

The slope's surface was unstable, and steep; I'd wager we slipped and skied and tripped and fell a good 2,000 vertical feet in a mile, if not more. When we got to the bottom, I noticed that Jill's shin was bruised and bleeding. Blood dripped from a decently deep cut on my right hand. But we'd reached the creek!

"Okay," our fearless leader informed us. "The home stretch!" Now it was just two or three miles along the creek back to the gravel road near O'Brien on which we'd arrived.

Or...not. For one thing, because we'd taken a "different" (not to say "wrong" again) ridge, we actually had closer to five miles to go, following the creek. The mileage, and the conditions of so-called hiking, would explain why it took about five hours.

Because this was not hiking. In summer, when the water is lower, I'd been told it's possible to just walk directly down the middle of the creek. Unfortunately, on this particular late April weekend, the water was still high enough that the creek presented a swim,

and an icy one at that.

So we clambered over the large boulders at creek's edge, then scaled to the ridge above the creek and battled our way through brush. Then the boulders ended in a cliff. We'd either scale this cliff to a higher ridge, or cross the creek—or, in one instance, split the difference, with two people going separate ways.

That's how we got split up for almost two hours, during which time Karly and I also got separated, during which time it began to get dark and I was convinced Karly was dead, during which time I doubled back yelling her name, my cries inaudible over the thunder of the water, and...you get the idea.

The boulders/cliff/brush/creek/boulders/cliff scenario repeated, until I felt I was climbing in some kind of fugue state or fever dream from which I'd never emerge, eventually dying from dehydration, never knowing I'd been in *The Matrix* all along.

Yep, that's how it felt. And I ran out of water about two hours before it ended.

Finally, just as the golden hour yielded its yellow sweetness to dusk's shadows, we found our crossing and stumbled through a meadow onto the true final stretch: an old roadway leading to a dreamy half mile of single track skirting a ridgeline high above the creek. Below us, the stream split and merged, a silver thread in the blue twilight.

"I bet this section is beautiful in daylight," I said.

"I wouldn't know," Karly said. "I've never finished this hike before dark."

When we reached the car, it was after 9:00 pm and fully dark. We were bruised, sweaty, thirsty. Karly had lost a sandal. Emma's bag had come undone. To a person, we were sore for a good three days afterwards—like can't-sit-down-on-the-toilet sore. But as we piled into the van and pulled out onto the highway, we were grinning.

"Man, that was awesome."

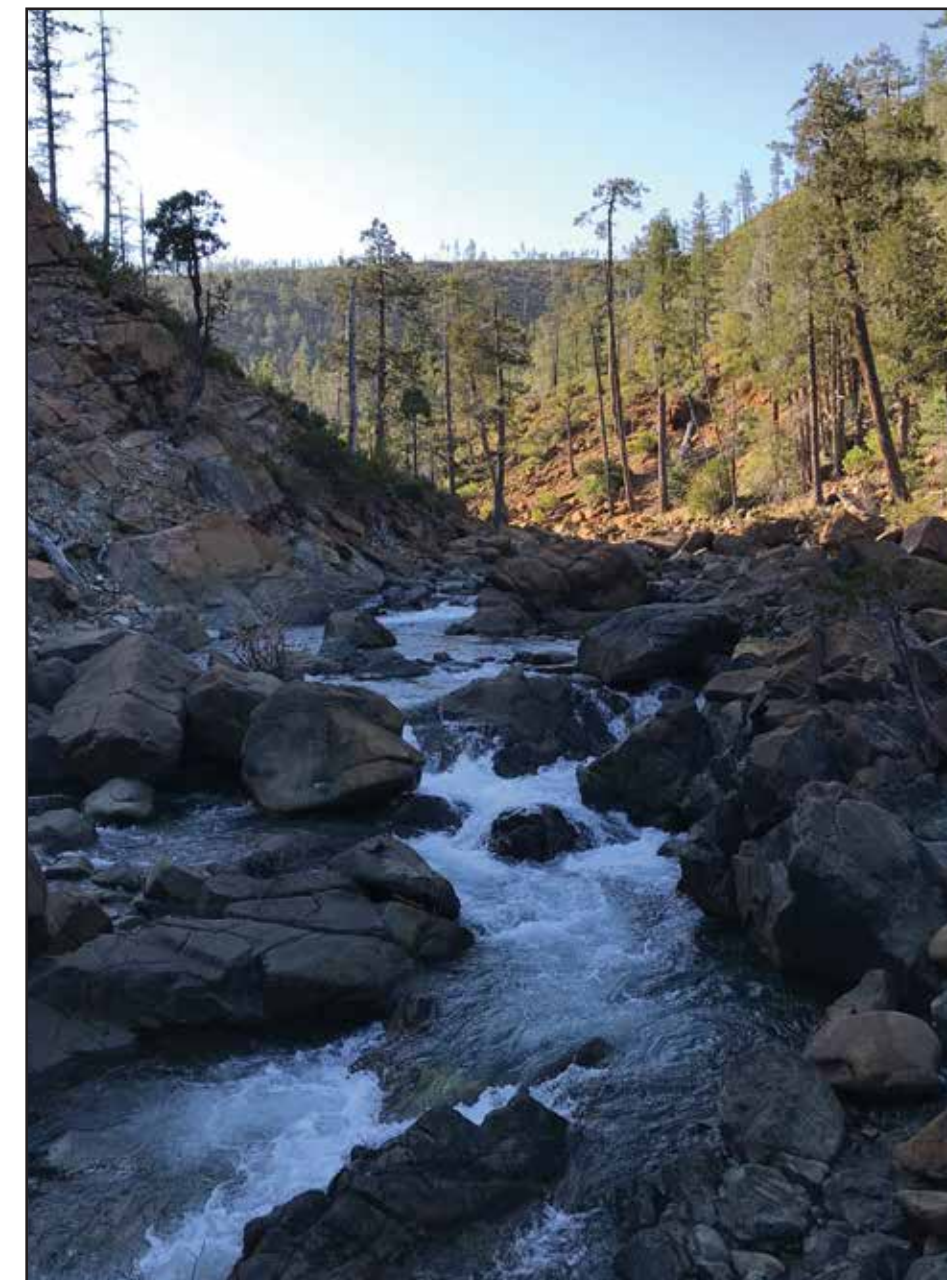
"Yeah, that was amazing."

"Let's do it again next year!"

That was the biggest ass-kicking I've gotten from a "hike" in ages—and I work in the Klamath. The Rough & Ready Loop truly does feel like a once yearly expedition. But it was a day, and a route, I'll never forget. I have to admit I'd recommend it.



**MAP TIME:** Kelly (left) and Emma (right) scope out the route using the Powers & Gold Beach Ranger District map. All of the orienteering for this trip was done using map, compass, and a sense of adventure.



**GETTING DARK:** The clock was ticking as the group watched the sun set below the canyon walls. It was slowly getting darker... and harder to see.



**THE ROUTE:** Kelly and the gang hop across ridgelines as they descend into the creek drainage.



# Trail Threads

01 AUGUST 2019 | ASHLAND, OR --

## Update yourself on popular SMC trail routes

We have over 350 miles of trails we promise to maintain once every three years at minimum. In those three years, though, a lot can happen. Here are some updates. But first, a word of caution.

### Trails are not perfect

The trails we work on are primitive. In places, they may be more difficult to see than the Pacific Crest Trail, or a popular path in the urban interface. When pursuing adventures in the backcountry, you should come prepared with a good map, and you should understand how to read it.

And expect downed trees. Anticipate brush. Count on areas along slopes and through meadows that aren't well defined. And submit a trip report to us online when you're done at [siskiyou-mountainclub.org](http://siskiyou-mountainclub.org).

### Use our Trailfinder

Go to [www.siskiyoumountainclub.org/trailfinder/](http://www.siskiyoumountainclub.org/trailfinder/) to use our interactive map that distinguishes trails that have been maintained in the last three years from those that haven't. We update this monthly and it's the best tool for staying up-to-date.

### Submit a trip report

Submit a trip report at [siskiyoumountainclub.org](http://siskiyoumountainclub.org) from your latest adventure. We use this data to capture trail conditions and make efficient work plans. We also use your data to build a case for support and demonstrate use.

### Wild Rogue Wilderness

The Mule Creek Trail has around 200 trees down, most of which are easy to pass. The Panther Ridge Trail has a couple of miles of salal brush growing into the prism. Mule Creek Trail will be maintained in fall 2019 or spring 2020.

### Red Buttes Wilderness

Check out our Trailfinder online and you'll see most of the Red Buttes trails have been recently maintained. The Sucker Creek Trail has sustained some damage and needs work.

### Sky Lakes Wilderness

The 27-mile Rogue Wolf Loop we promise to maintain every three years has around 1,000 trees down on the Middle Fork and Halifax Trails. This loop will be logged out by fall, 2019.

### Siskiyou Wilderness

We have done strong maintenance on the Clear Creek Trail from Young's Valley to No Man's Trailhead, as well as the South Kelsey Trail from the South Fork Smith to Baldy Peak. Work is continuing on the West Fork Clear Creek Trail and

Boundary Trail #4E520. Check out our Trailfinder online for details.

### Kalmiopsis Wilderness

Many signs still have to be replaced since the 2017 Chetco Bar Fire and 2018 Klondike Fire, but trails are generally in good shape. We are working hard to finish work on the Illinois River Trail, and you'll find the Kalmiopsis has received a facelift with heavy maintenance on the Little Chetco, Red Mountain, Navy Monument, and Tincup Trails. Refer to our Trailfinder for details.

### Starting in 2020, permits required to hike Three Sisters, Mt. Washington, Jefferson

Next year a permit will be required for anyone camping overnight in the Three Sisters, Mt. Washington, and Mt. Jefferson wilderness areas. Day hikers parking at 19 different popular trailheads will also be required to secure a permit.

The permits will be at least \$6, but final amounts have not yet been determined. Permits will be available online and there will also be day-of permits issued for spontaneous hikers.

### Decision to bring chainsaws into Colorado wilderness areas rescinded

The Forest Service rescinded an exemption to use chainsaws in two Colorado wilderness areas where there are up to 100 trees down per mile. Siskiyou Mountain Club has regularly used crosscut saws to clear trails with over 1,000 trees down per mile. We'd gladly head to Colorado for a project.

### Forest Service job corps centers to remain open

The Trump administration has reversed their decision to close a handful of Forest Service job training centers. The Job Corps Civilian Conservation Centers serve at-risk youth who learn fire-fighting, forestry, and other skills. Come fire season, the corps members often serve on the front lines with fire crews.

### Fire season: So far, so good...

Aside from a few small blazes, the Pacific Northwest is experiencing a slow start to the fire season compared to years previous. The Weather Service's Climate Prediction Center is still calling for higher than usual temperatures and average precipitation in their 90-day outlook, but nothing out of the ordinary for the next 3-4 weeks.



Read the predictions for yourself at <https://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov>.

Some firefighters from the Northwest have been mobilized to Alaska where there are more fires than usual.

### Seeking volunteer crew leaders

Is there a trail in our footprint that you'd like to adopt? We are looking for volunteer crew leaders to brush and scout trails within our inventory. We will provide training, tools, and back-end organization help. You head out for a few weekends over the year and help with the general maintenance of trails in the Sky Lakes, Wild Rogue, Red Buttes, Kalmiopsis, and Siskiyou Wilderness areas. Email [info@siskiyoumountainclub.org](mailto:info@siskiyoumountainclub.org)

### Last inholding in Kalmiopsis Wilderness purchased by Wilderness Lands Trust

The last inholding was purchased last year by the Wilderness Lands Trust. The 45-acre parcel along the Little Chetco River was patented in 1988 and sold in 2007 to Dave Rutan for \$500,000. Rutan attempted operating a dude-mining operation at the property utilizing helicopters to fly people and supplies in and out. Rutan sold to the Lands Trust for \$300,000.

Rutan now manages other peoples' assets as an advisor for Prudential Financial.

**Land deal in Trinity Alps goes through**  
10,300 acres of private land transfer is complete in the Trinity Mountains of Northwest California. 17 miles of the Pacific Crest Trail traverses the land

once held by the California Timber Co. In 2014 that company chose to divest the land and San Francisco's Trust for Public Land stepped in with a \$15,000,000 buyout.

Through Land and Water Conservation Funds and a \$5,000,000 gift from the Wyss Foundation, the land has been transferred to the US Forest Service.

### We accept gear donations

We have a constant need for lightly-used gear that interns and volunteers use on project outings. Other gear that we cannot use may be consigned by the Club so interns and volunteers can pick up the gear they do need. Interested? Email [info@siskiyoumountainclub.org](mailto:info@siskiyoumountainclub.org).

### The power of solitude

We believe in solitude and believe people are far better off having experienced true frontier in a remote setting alone or in small groups. We believe in the right to be left alone on trails in the middle of nowhere.

That's why we focus on restoring and maintaining the hardest to reach and most remote trails in the deep recesses of Northwest California and Southwest Oregon.

It's an uphill battle and a tough sell to funders, building resources that receive such little use. But it's well worth it, and we're proud to be maintaining an inventory of trails that had disappeared from the landscape and the line items of agency budgets. Long live the backwoods trails that lead to places so remote and grand.

# New horizons from greater summits

by Gabe Howe, Exec. Director for the Siskiyou Hiker

*It's been almost ten years since a scrappy group of volunteers promised to open a route to the Chetco River. It's been quite an adventure since then.*

01 AUGUST 2019 | GOLD HILL, OR --

Dear SMC Friends,

Something is happening here, something more than I bargained for when this whole Siskiyou Mountain Club thing started almost a decade ago.

These crosscut saws, these Pulaskis and axes, clippers and handsaws, they have come to be more than tools on a trail. They have become instruments of change, and in 10 years I have witnessed a slow but seismic shift in how communities interact with the Siskiyou backwoods.

I see more people engaging. I see land managers coming to value these places for their enduring value to the public. I see more families and young

people discovering the places that we're so lucky to have.

I share this assertion humbly, but having my finger on the pulse of the agencies, communities, stakeholders, and the places, I know this transformation is lasting and real.

I have done this work under the premise that all people -- no matter where they come from or what they believe or who they vote for or who they pray to -- are better off having experienced the great American backcountry.

And working under that premise has brought us to a new horizon this year. Please join us for this next chapter in the Siskiyou Mountain Club adventure as we expand our work under the same premise.

It is my privilege to serve this mission. Thank you for your support, friends, and long live the backwoods trails.

Sincerely,

Gabriel Howe

Executive Director



**THEN AND NOW:** (Above) SMC Pioneers start work at the Babyfoot Lake Trailhead in 2010. (Below) executive director Gabe Howe, lifetime volunteer Luke Brandy, and field director Aaron Babcock explore a remote section of the Chetco River. It took four years of hard work to carve a path to that spot.



## THANK YOU - THANK YOU - THANK YOU

### Interns:

Jeron Dastrup  
Cameron Salazar  
Sasha Benson  
Laina Rose  
Leah Doeden  
Tyler Brahmstadt  
Kalani Aligarbes  
Jack Drimer

### Staff:

Trevor Meyer  
Aaron Babcock  
Zac Wilner  
Haleigh Martin  
Zach Lopez  
Nick Hodges  
Karly White  
Gabe Howe

### Board Members:

Tami Kelly  
Doug Kendig  
Dave Brennan

### Mac Jefferson

Dave Eye  
Ryan Ghelfi  
Wenonoa Spivak

### Agency Partners:

Travel Southern Oregon  
Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest  
Klamath National Forest  
Six Rivers National Forest

### Foundations:

Goulder Family Foundation  
Carpenter Foundation  
North C.O.A.S.T. Forest Foundation  
McKenzie River Gathering Foundation  
Curry County Citizens for Public Lands Access

### 2019 Volunteers:

Jeff Thieret  
Luke Brandy  
Erin Brandy  
Andris Ollins  
Chris Oswald

### Emma Anderson

Gary Roberts  
Angie Panter  
Jerry Pendzick  
Andrea Humbert  
Greg Walter  
Daniel Burdis  
Amalie Dieter  
Annie Schreck  
Rebecca Johnson  
Joe Gillespie  
Nate Chotlos  
Chad Countiss  
Mikaela Lee  
Jack Worman  
Bryan Duggan  
Luke Nalley  
Suzie Gruber  
Mark Bradley  
Ben Gross  
Jilll Stokes  
Maria Katsantones  
Yeonjoo Lee  
Tannen Oak

### 2019 Major Donors:

Mark & Arlene Bradley  
Joe Gillespie  
Scott Allison  
Tom Peil  
Steve & Jen Marsden  
Rene Casteran  
Steve Weyer & Maria Geigel  
Paula Gubrud & Lee Howe  
Justin Rosas  
Kevin McDaniel  
Alan Frierson  
John Burns  
Dave Eye  
Nancy Tappan  
Annette & Andrew Batzer  
Steve Eddy  
Barbara & Kirk Jones  
Elizabeth Landreth  
Jeffrey & Deanna Moore  
Rich & Cheryl Ugland  
Anne Uzzell & Eric Ronemus  
Ed Gross  
Kathie Bate



# August

# September

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11 VOLUNTEER TRAIL WORK	12	13	14	15	16	17 VOLUNTEER TRAIL WORK
18	19	20	21	22	23	24 OVERNIGHT BACKPACK →
25 →	26	27	28	29	30	31

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6 WEEKEND BACKPACK: SISKIYOU WILDERNESS →	7
8 →	9	10	11	12	13 OVERNIGHT VOLUNTEER AT SUCKER CREEK →	14
15 →	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26 EVENT: REI MEDFORD	27	28 EVENT: OREGON CAVES
23	30					

## DETAILS:

### August 11th:

Join deputy director Karly White for a day of work high in the Red Buttes. This steep trail needs to be brushed and logged out. Meet at Star Ranger Station at 8am and be back by 5pm. No experience necessary, but you should be in strong physical shape and prepared for a steep ascent of 1,500 vertical feet. This is a great opportunity to build your trail skills.

Email [karly@siskiyoumountainclub.org](mailto:karly@siskiyoumountainclub.org) for details and to sign up.

### August 17th:

Join SMC and the USFS to help brush out a short, thick section of the Kalmiopsis Rim Trail from Onion Camp. Beginners welcome. Meet at 7:30am in Selma. Be back by 5pm. Email [info@siskiyoumountainclub.org](mailto:info@siskiyoumountainclub.org) for details and to sign up.

### August 24-25th:

Camp underneath the stars and see the wild recesses of

the Siskiyou backcountry on this easy overnight backpack into the Siskiyou Wilderness. We'll hike a couple miles into Young's Valley, and then the group will have options of different day hikes from there. Beginners are highly encouraged. The trip is free and everyone is welcome.

The trip is led by SMC board officers Dave Brennan and Tami Kelly, who are both known for their excellent instruction and high degree of patience. Just email [daveb@mind.net](mailto:daveb@mind.net) for details and to sign up.

### September 6-8th:

Join deputy director Karly White for a moderate two-night backpacking trip into the Siskiyou Wilderness. Check out the highlands of this 180,000 acre wilderness and traverse the mountain meadows, head water streams, and mountain lakes that define this gorgeous area.

This is a great trip for new backpackers, but you should

have some experience. The hiking is moderate but comes with some steep pitches and you should be in good physical shape and ready for an adventure. Email [info@siskiyoumountainclub.org](mailto:info@siskiyoumountainclub.org) for details and to sign up.

### September 13-15th:

Join deputy director Karly White and USFS field ranger Andrea Humbert for two nights of work on the Sucker Creek Trail, Red Buttes Wilderness. Meet in Cave Junction at 7:30am on Friday and be back there by 5pm on Sunday.

### September 26th:

Join us with REI Medford as we unveil a new 90-mile backpacking route connecting the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument with the Oregon Caves.

This project was completed with support from REI and our stakeholders.

The event starts at 6pm, and everyone is welcome. Refreshments will be provided.

### September 28th:

We will be running a table at the National Public Lands Day celebration at the Oregon Caves National Monument. We will be selling maps and hosting a crosscut saw competition. Come swing by, and show your public lands some love. We'll be there all day.



**TRAIL PIONEERS:** Over 4th of July weekend, Deputy Director Karly White led a group of intrepid volunteers to a remote section of the S. Kelsey National Recreation Trail. They were able to open a section that hadn't been touched in decades.

## 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.*

## Contact Us:

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# JOIN US!

