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Passage 17 - Alamo Canyon December 4-6, 2015

6 members of the Arizona Backpacking Club participated in vegetation removal and basic tread maintenance on the southern portion of Passage 17 from the Forest Boundary to Forest Road 4. They were supported by 7 volunteers from the Tonto Recreation Alliance (TRAL) and the M&F Jeep Club who transported gear, water, food and 3 of the hikers to the northern boundary of the segment.

The TRAL group had the gear and hikers to the worksite by noon on Friday, giving the group a big head start. Working south, they cleared brush (primarily catclaw and mesquite) from the trail corridor and repaired 2 locations where drainage was beginning to erode the tread. Friday night and Saturday morning they were joined by 3 more volunteers who hiked in from Picketpost TH, and work southbound resumed. One team hiked to the southern boundary and worked north until they met the southbound group. In all 4.5 miles of trail were monitored, cleared and given loving attention. 20 1-gallon water jugs were cached just south of the FR4 junction.

The event host treated her hard working folks to Dutch oven chili and fresh-baked bacon corn bread, along with adult beverages and hot s'mores around the campfire for desert. Sunday morning, the backpackers hiked out to Picketpost TH, leaving the coolers and tools behind. TRAL folks came back by on Monday to pick the gear up and returned it to the event leader Monday afternoon at the Picketpost TH.

A total of 180 volunteer hours were recorded for the 3 day event.



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Hikers and 4wd enthusiasts working together to promote outdoor stewardship!



Just another lousy day in the Sonoran Desert.

Passage 15 - Tortilla Mountains December 1, 2015

Ramada number two went up today in short order. The usual suspects met up at the leisurely-crack-of-full-sunlight-8:30 AM to install the second of these structures where nature doesn't provide much relief from the sun. Freeman Road TH is getting pretty tricked out with a cache box, kiosk, trail register and now a shade ramada.

Soft soil and all the experience still fresh from the first installation at Florence Kelvin made this go smooth and quick. Everything was complete and lunch was served on the tailgate at 11:30, followed by the requisite group photo and everyone was on their way home shortly after noon.

It doesn't get any better on the Arizona Trail!

Thanks to Kent T from Pinal County for the materials, and Tom K., Bill H., Lee A., Matt N. and David R. for the labor.

Shawn Redfield



Getting started.



Laying the roof on.



All done.

Passage 1 - Huachuca Mountains November 19, 2015

Attendance: Five volunteers, including Steve Scheumann (event leader, chauffer), Rod Crick, Bernie Stalman (chauffer), Steve Anderson and Pat Scully.

Event Statistics:

Total trail miles worked: 3.4 miles

Total hours doing trail work: 5 hrs. & 14 min (8:48 AM - 14:29 PM)

Drive: Two vehicles departed around 7:30 AM and proceeded about 28.5 miles to work area via Ft. Huachuca, Cimarron Road, SR83, Forest Road (FR) 48, and FR 48F.

Weather: clear, sunny, temperatures in 60's and 70's

Trail Work Section #1:

Location: Started on FR 48F near the AZ Trail Passage 1/Passage 2 trailhead which was ¼ mile north on the S. Lake Road/FR194.

Work Done: Bernie weed whacked about a 1 mile of trail obscured by tall grass initially heading north towards the Passage 1&2 trailhead, and then south towards Scotia Canyon/FR48 junction. Remaining work crew cleared out around 15 water-bars with Pulaskies; raked trail tread with McCleods; cut back encroaching brush and tree branches with loppers; Pat built a new rock cairn; and Mr. Scheumann and Mr. Anderson added boulders on south bank of Scotia Creek where the AZ Trail crossed. Group also piled obstructing brush and tree branches in order to block the use of the old step route at the memorial Paul Phillips By-Pass. Finally, the event leader briefed new work crewmembers (Mr. Anderson and Pat) on Bernie's Bridge/Dam and re-location of the historic AZ Trail sign in lower Scotia Canyon from Montezuma Pass. Several pictures taken at the old Montezuma Pass sign.

Trail Work Section #2:

Location: Drove about 5 miles from Work Section #1 parking area via FR 48F, FR 48 (Montezuma Canyon Road), FR 228 (Sunnyside Road), and FR 4759 (Peterson Ranch Road/Gate 7 Road) to parking area on saddle between Scotia and Sunnyside Canyons.

Work Done: After eating lunch, Bernie continued weed whacking south towards Sunnyside Canyon. The rest of the crew worked



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on water-bars north of parking area at a problematic switchback on a new by-pass trail section constructed three years ago by Trail Dog Bernie's work crew. Met one backpacker heading towards Patagonia to finish up his north to south 800+ mile trek on the AZT while we worked on the switchback. The trail crew then joined Bernie by heading south towards Sunnyside for more Pulaski (water-bar) and McCleod (trail raking) work. After returning to the parking area, the crew was awarded beer, sodas, chips and cookies by the event leader.



Bernie, Steve, Rod and Steve.



Historic AZ Trail sign.



Rod, Steve, Pat and Bernie.

Passage 13 - Oracle November 18, 2015

SaddleBrooke Hiking Club volunteers worked on the Arizona National Scenic Trail and toured the American Flag Ranch House on Wednesday, November 18.

Photo of participants includes (left to right):

Back row: Sandra Sowell, Jackie Hall

Middle Row: Fred Norris, Ray Peale, Roddy Wilder, Frank Earnest, Paul Molgat, Glenda Molgat, Garrett Rassing, Kevin Arbrost (Oracle Historical Society)

Front Row: Elisabeth Wheeler, Linda Green, Marilyn Smith, Mary Croft, Kathy Gish, Claudia Enea and Mike Wolters



Passage 12 - Oracle Ridge November 7, 2015

A group of 10 hearty and motivated trail maintenance volunteers wandered up Catalina Highway in Tucson, to the Oracle Ridge trailhead just north of the Mt. Lemmon fire station. Our goal was to remove brush and improve tread along the first half mile of trail heading north. Since the over growth was significant due to the abundance of rain this year, the crew moved fast to ensure we could finish the section in one outing.

Crew leaders Bernie "Trail Dog" Stalman and yours truly paved the path with brand new string trimmers, a.k.a. weed whackers. Bernie and I went from novice to experienced trimmers in no time at all. The crew worked hard to fight the brush with loppers, and removed many a patch of grass with pulaskis. In a few spots trail reinforcement, benching and clearing small drainages were necessary. There was many a loose rock removed off the tread.

A group of REI-sponsored Arizona Conservation Corps volunteers were spending a little more than a week working beyond this section of passage 12b, all the way to Dan Saddle. On their way out they conducted a little pre-planned "fine tuning" of our work section. Thanks to the AZCC, and a big thanks to our crew: Bernie, Mary Croft, Ray Peale, Randy Ramsey, Mike Gasperek, Scott and Doris Morris, Dave Sedlak and Ellen Shopes. The weather was perfect for a fast paced work event, and this group accomplished a lot. Made for a fun day working the AZNST!

Jeff Bridge

P.S. The crew had a little extra energy, so we decided to clean up the trail head parking lot, as you can see in the pictures.



Passage 22 - Saddle Mountain November 2, 2015

Work on the Mt Peely project has resumed with vigor following the summer heat hiatus. American Conservation Experience (ACE) arrived in early October with their mini-dozer and completed ~2.5 miles of work, converting the ancient road into trail, carving robust drains into the old road bed and filling in huge washouts, accomplishing miracles through the boulder field at the Thicket Spring wash area, and pushing way south along the creek bed. Hand crews will start soon to finish the project.

Volunteers returned November 2 to work on the trail sign component. The trail signs along the route had disappeared in the 2012 fire so replacement is part of the project. Today volunteers placed signs at the Cornucopia/Thicket Spring Trail junction and at the Wilderness Boundary in McFarland Canyon. Signs at the Mt Peely TH and the connection junction were remounted following finishing treatment to prevent checking and cracking from exposure to the weather.



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ACE had arranged for TRAL, a serious 4WD club, to haul water for the crews in along FR25A. The cache was left at the "blue bus", a remnant of long ago days when the road was navigable by less than heavily tricked-out 4WD outfits. We added the 2 ft x 3 ft oak Wilderness sign to the cargo manifest, so it stashed with the water a half-mile south of the project area. After installing the sign at Thicket Spring the crew hiked to the cache, retrieved the Wilderness sign and humped it the ~2 miles over the new 260 trail to McFarland Canyon. A project last spring set the post so today's task was simply to create a flat side on the post and bolt on the sign, which went quickly.

Having been over the "new" route several times, the crew made the trip back to the truck over the "old" Thicket Spring trail, from which the AZT is being moved. If there was any lingering doubt that the trail should have been moved it was extinguished today. There isn't much left of this trail, which had serious issues before the fire and resulting erosion and now is completely gone in several locations. Add in the 500 foot climb at a relentless 20% grade, followed quickly by a shorter but similarly steep climb, and the new route is a huge improvement to the "user experience".

The crew took a short break at the Thicket Spring junction, then trudged up and out to the TH. Installing the Wilderness sign was a last-minute addition to the chore list for the day, and it made for one of the longest volunteer work days on the project so far; the crew arrived back at the meet-up location well after dark.

Thanks to John M., Joe L., and John A.

Shawn Redfield



Newly cleaned trail, formerly a stretch of grapefruit-size rock field.



This used to be a boulder field.



Cornucopia/Thicket Spring trail junction.



New trail south of Thicket Spring.



Hauling the Wilderness sign.



Wilderness sign, standing tall.



Connector trail signs, finished to delay cracking in the AZ sun.



Long day ending at one of the new signs.

Passage 8 - Rincon Valley October 12, 2015

A crew of hardy volunteers, NPS Staff and the ATA Executive Director installed two super gates along this passage. The project was funded by the Friends of Saguaro National Park and the Arizona Trail Association.

The first one went in at the Loma Alta TH, a popular, and close, access point to the AZT in this area. Soils here proved quite difficult — two jack hammers were used to break through incredibly hard caliche soils. One volunteer exclaimed, "We've hit a soft spot, it's a rock!" Perseverance paid off however and in time the holes were deep enough and the crew cemented the gate in place. Dan Green, NPS Saguaro National Park Maintenance & Trails Supervisor, was duly impressed.

Difficult soils aside, the next gate was seen as the challenge for the day since it is three-quarter mile from the nearest vehicle access point. This location received a new wire gate at a work event over a year ago, but someone cut the gate soon afterward, so it was a candidate for a more substantial structure.

The Park Service brought two power haulers — rubber tracked machines that can carry quite a load over narrow trails — which made it possible to haul the heavy steel gate and a bicycle ride-over ramp, 17 sixty-pound bags of cement mix, and 14 gallons of water, not to mention the necessary tools, to the site. While these machines are a god-send, they are no small chore to manage along the trail, especially with the 7-foot wide gate strapped on top. Jeff, of the NPS trail crew, and Rob managed the two machines.

A digging crew went ahead of the haulers to get started on the 5 post holes necessary for this site. Maybe karma had accumulated on the first gate, maybe it was just luck, but the soil for gate number two was soft sand, probably the easiest encountered in the 20+ gates installed so far. The holes were dug, the gate was set and leveled, the cement was mixed and poured, the bike ramp bolted on, an additional post set for that and the site smoothed and groomed. The crew posed for the requisite group photos and



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then everyone began the slow trip behind the haulers back to the vehicles. The soft sand in the wash gave Rob's heavy truck momentary pause but the crew added a little muscle power and he was on his way.

Thanks to Rob, Matt, Jeff, Dan, Lee, Bill, and Tom for all the hard work and for dealing with the "unknowns" of a remote installation.

Shawn Redfield



Equipment spread out and crew gittin' after it. Thanks John Officer for the generator!



Working through the hard caliche.



Gate #1 in the ground!



Traffic jam on the way to the site.



Easy hole digging!



Bike ride-over.



All done, sitting pretty.



Steel artistry!

Passage 26 - Highline October 3-4, 2015

Building a New Highline...

Those who are familiar with the Highline Trail tend to have a mixed relationship with it. They love the rugged land it travels through, tall pines, soaring cliffs, and sweeping vistas. They may be fascinated by the history of the route, which was established in the late 1800's to link homesteads and ranches along the base of the Mogollon Rim. For 17 miles of its 50 mile length, the Arizona Trail shares the Highline's tread, linking two of Arizona's premier trail opportunities.

These same users, however, often fight with the steep and sometimes badly eroded trail conditions. The climb out of the Pine Trailhead, in particular, is rutted and rocky – the kind of trail users love to hate.

On October 3-4th, an army of volunteers descended upon the Pine trailhead determined to make it easier to love this part of the trail. In partnership with the Tonto National Forest, the ATA identified a new alignment for the initial climb out of the trailhead which would provide more sustainable trail for Highline and AZT users. The initial cut was made by a machine crew in a matter of hours – chopping through tree roots and hillside to create a clear track – but there was still much manual work to be done, including removing the downslope berm, smoothing out the tread and fine-tuning the track.

45 willing hands showed up Saturday ready to work, including more than 20 first time volunteers. Armed with McCleods, Pulaskis, matics and picks they hiked the mile up to the new work and set to moving earth. Seasoned veterans of the Arizona Trail and from the Pine-Strawberry Fuels Reduction trail team and Tonto National Forest divided the group into small teams and worked on segments throughout the ¾ mile of fresh trail.

When it was time to call it quits for the day, the group returned to the Pine trailhead for a feast of fajitas and a potluck of delicious eats. Campfire entertainment was provided by Neil and Sharon Morrison, who arrived in full pioneer costume and told stories of Zane Grey, famous author and former Rim Country resident. It was a beautiful night under the stars full of laughter, fun and friends.

Sunday, a smaller but very dedicated team of volunteers headed out to complete more of the work in the morning. When they were done, 0.6 miles of the new trail was made available to users to bypass some of the ugliest portions of the Highline's western end. The event also resulted in nearly 500 volunteer hours donated and a number of new trail-work enthusiasts recruited to help carry the ATA's tradition of volunteerism into the future.

Special thanks to Mike Brandt and the crew from the Pine-Strawberry Fuels Reduction team who provided tremendous support to the event both on and off the trail. Also thanks to Chelsea Muise and Chris Welker from the Tonto National Forest for their energy



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and vision, without which the project would still be on the drawing board.



Passage 36 - Coconino Rim October 3-4, 2015

This work event was primarily to complete the re-furbishing of the 16 wooden signs along Segment 36b. These wooden signs were close to 25 years old and severely weather beaten. The routed mileage information was almost illegible. 7 signs were re-worked in September, with letters painted yellow and the entire signs and posts sealed with Thompsons Water Seal.

The Oct. 3rd and 4th work event completed the additional 9 signs and posts near the Grandview Fire Lookout / Arizona Trail Trailhead. This project involved painting over 250 letters and used a gallon of water seal. Dale would be proud we think (since he helped install most of these signs).

Next year, plans include refurbishing the Arizona Trail Overhead Trailhead sign at the Grandview Fire Tower on FR310 (1.5 miles south of SR 64 near Grand Canyon National Park).

Happy Trails!

Tom Coulson



Passage 28 & 29 - Blue Ridge & Happy Jack September 19, 2015

Four Gates

The heavy steel gates created by artist/welder Rob Bauer and installed now in 19 locations along the AZT have become icons, symbolizing the permanence of the Arizona National Scenic Trail while accommodating hikers, cyclists and equestrians yet blocking unauthorized vehicular traffic. Followings several days of site preparation, a sturdy band of stalwart volunteers installed four of these maintenance-free structures September 19 on Passages 28 and 29.

Joe and Shawn "pre dug" the sites, working three days over a period of weeks. The ATA's new electric jack hammer was initiated in this effort; THANK YOU to donors Phyllis Ralley, Frederick Frankenfeld, Bernadine McCollum, Elisabeth Good, John Officer and the Copper State Trail Riders.

Funding sources for the gates themselves include Ben Masters and the Unbranded crew, as well as everyone who purchased a ticket for the film screening in Flagstaff last weekend.

Rob brought the four gates north from where they are assembled in his shop in Catalina on Friday; the crew met in Pine early Saturday morning and caravanned to the first site. Since several members of the crew have been at all 15 previous installations they are quite practiced, and the actual installations took about 90 minutes per site. Each gate is one unified structure and is cemented (with 800 pounds of cement) into two 30-inch deep and two 18-inch deep holes with a cross-member buried a foot under the opening for the tread. The crew levels and plumbs the gate, mixes and pours the cement and attaches the fence wires to loops welded specifically for this on the outside posts. The final step is smoothing the tread through the gate, and wiping off any cement splatters. Over a few months the steel weathers to a brown patina, blending with desert or forest surroundings.

These gates went in fences at FR 751, Moqui Campground horse bypass, and the north and south sides of the Highway 87 right-of-way.

USFS Recreation Specialist Rose Harley managed the administrative clearances necessary for the project. Thanks to Rob B. Joe L., Tom K., Lee A., Bill H., Rose H. and Bob B.



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Shawn Redfield



Joe gets after the problem spot on the FR751 location.



North side of Highway 87. This is on AZT passage 29 by a few hundred yards.



Rob arrives with the gates.



Pressed into a little non-gate maintenance, Rob welds the lid back onto the sign-in box at the FR 751 Trailhead.



The crew!



North side of Highway 87; all done and standing tall.



Rob checks the last one of the day, south side of Highway 87, for sharp edges. Everyone home before dark today!

Passage 36 & 37 - Coconino Rim & Grand Canyon South Rim September 16, 2015

Four Signs

ATA has been improving the signs along the entire Arizona Trail for several years; today a crew installed four of the classy redwood trail signs to help trail users stay on course at "problem" locations.

Gary Hohner, long time AZT supporter and enthusiast, and skilled woodworker, made these and many other AZT signs from 2x6 redwood planks. They are mounted on 4x4 redwood posts set in concrete.

The plan was to have the signs installed before the Stagecoach 100 Ultra Race. As the day approached the volunteer list was a little light, so three crew members made a good long day of it, leaving Flagstaff at 7:00, finishing the last sign after 4:00 PM. Nothing beats a day along the Arizona Trail in the cool pines of the Kaibab.

The new ATA jackhammer made quick work of the hole-digging, even in the hard rocky soil of the Kaibab Forest. New signs were placed on either side of the FR 307 crossing and at the FR 303 crossing. The sign at FR 2709 & FR 9122E had deteriorated over the years and at last notice was lying in the sagebrush; it was replaced also.

Thanks to Gary H., Ian T., and Emily H. and their 4-legged helpers who had way more fun up in the woods than anyone.

Shawn Redfield



Standing tall at FR 2709.



The ATA Toyota does get around. Thanks to Joe L. for the loan of the trailer.



North side of FR 307.



South side FR 307.

Passage 41 - Kaibab Plateau Central July 19-22, 2015



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Immediately following the Marshall Lake Work Event the usual suspects ventured north on a multi-mission—logging deadfall, installing signs and placing resupply boxes. The group met up Sunday afternoon at the Orderville TH, just off Highway 86A. The Kaibab has been getting frequent rains so everything is lush and green. Trailers and tents were set up and Gary H. began his work refinishing the historic wooden sign. This sign was placed and dedicated by the Chief of the Forest Service commemorating the first officially recognized section of what became the Arizona National Scenic Trail. It is showing its age and has resisted previous rehab efforts. If this one doesn't take we'll maybe have to bring it inside somewhere, but it was worth one more attempt to do it in place.

Monday morning the group started early, installing a resupply box at the end of the log fence surrounding the Orderville TH facilities. The FS Trails Technician had flagged the desired location so that decision was made for us. ATA salvaged these bear boxes from the burned-over Rustler Park CG, and have them in storage. With a fresh powder coat paint job they look almost as good as new, and they aren't filling up a landfill. The crew dug the four holes, leveled the box with the legs down in the holes, and then placed 60 pounds of concrete around each leg. After the concrete set the leveling blocks were removed, excess dirt scattered and the job was done. Later in the day the task was repeated at the FR205 TH.

Next up was the deadfall logging. Two AZT section-hikers completed the trail over the July 4 weekend, and graciously provided photos and waypoint locations for each downed tree they encountered. See their heart-warming story at hikearizona.com/trip=119550. Thank you Bifrost and SlowandSteady, the reconnoitering is a HUGE help for the logging. Knowing where each logs is and how big it is in advance makes a big difference; no one wants to hike 10 miles with saws looking for the logs.

Lee, John, and Shawn headed south under threatening skies. The first log was a mystery; there was a log at the specified waypoint but it had been cut years ago. This was not the first time the crew has been stumped; there really are gremlins in the woods. But all the rest of the waypoints indicated a log to be cut, and as always, there were a few bonus logs that had come down since the recon. About mile 1.5 (of 4.5) the skies made good on the threat and the steady light rain started. There was no option but to continue. The other crew had started in from the south and took care of a big brushy log. The crews joined up and went to FR 205 TH to install the second resupply box.

Rain continued off and on, but by the time the box was in it had let up enough that the logging continued under the same scheme—two crews working towards each other. By midafternoon the logs were vanquished, the boxes installed and the crews sufficiently tired, wet and cold to call it a day. Tuesday was to be a light day, just mount and install the four trail guide signs. ATA volunteers and a professional lettering operation had made the signs but the FS was bringing the posts. They arrived as promised promptly at 8:00 and the crew began mounting the signs. The signs are flat and the posts are round, so some wood working was called for. A system soon evolved and the 8 posts were flattened, the signs bolted on and made ready to haul to the locations.

A youth crew was working with the FS that day, so they took the sign in to Crystal Spring, a 1-1/4 mile haul each way in and out. To maximize time, they handled that one and the ATA crew started on the rest. First up was the sign at the NPS/FS boundary. The crew leader's memory said it was located just north of the road, but memory was not what it should be. (I'll respect you in the morning, the check is in the mail, and all the projects are right by the road.) Some bike riders happened by but could offer no help. A little searching both north and south of FR 610 and the crew found it right at the boundary. The search party removed the old one, the crew hauled the new sign and tools in, dug the holes, set and leveled the sign and tamped the soil in around the posts. On to the next one.

The process was repeated where the trail crosses FR 213. The youth crews joined up there just as the ATA guys were finishing up—on to the last one at FR 205. By now the routine was well established so time was taken to provide some instruction on the finer points of post hole digging and sign planting to the next generation of trail stewards. Their excitement was palpable; they were so anxious to get back to town to share what they had learned. What else could explain their hurry to get back in the trucks? The last objective was another coat of varnish on the restored sign at Orderville. The crew arrived back at camp with the ATA Toyota—which has an inverter and can power the sprayer—and Gary applied the varnish.

A group dinner at Jacob Lake Lodge marked the end of five days of ATA work for most of the crew. The North Kaibab Forest is a beautiful part of Arizona, and the AZT in this area is as fine a piece of trail as any, if only it wasn't 5 hours from home, 7 hours for some of the crew.

Thanks to Gary H., Lee and Jan and Moqui A., Joe L., Tom and Nancy K, and Bill H.

Shawn Redfield



Gary starts refurbishing the historic sign.



Dead fall removed.



The big brushy log all taken care of.



Planting the sign at the GCNPS/FS boundary.



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Looking fine.



Sign factory.



One all done.



New sign at FR 213 crossing.



The youth crew at FR 205 TH.

Passage 31 - Walnut Canyon July 18-19, 2015

Forty-five hearty ATA volunteers plus five members of the Flagstaff Ranger District gathered at Marshall Lake trailhead on Saturday morning for a weekend trail work event on the AZT. The weekend weather forecast of heavy rain caused an unusual number of volunteer cancellations, but Saturday turned out to be a fantastic day to be working on the Arizona Trail.

The Saturday work plan was to extend by another increment the new trail we have been building for several years. The volunteers convoyed about three miles from our base camp at Marshall Lake TH to the AZT worksite. The new tool trailer recently purchased by ATA had been positioned on Friday. The trail crew leaders quickly collected their tools and were off to work with their crews. We constructed about 0.7 mile of new trail to reroute the old trail onto a new and more sustainable tread. The new tread had been pin flagged by Sean Murphy, Trails and Wilderness Coordinator for the Flagstaff RD. In addition to building the new tread, Tom K. and his Tom Sawyers group from Tucson helped clear the new trail corridor of trees and down timber so the trail builders could concentrate on building tread.

Matt Roberts of American Conservation Experience (ACE) lead a crew of new and prospective AZT stewards to teach on-the-ground layout of sustainable trail tread and proper trail construction techniques.

After the workday everyone gathered at the base camp late Saturday afternoon for a raffle, happy hour and our traditional potluck dinner. As usual the dinner was a special highlight of the day.

Saturday evening featured much conversation around the fire until a little after dark when a steady rain started. It rained most of the night so the scheduled trail work on Sunday didn't happen. Sunday morning we concentrated on drying and packing our gear, and getting everyone out of the campsite and on the way home by noon.

In spite of the Saturday night rain we had a very successful trail event. Many thanks to all of the volunteers from all over the state for their dedication to the Arizona Trail and all of their hard work. Thanks to Shawn R. who delivered the new tool trailer. Special thanks to Sean Murphy and the Flagstaff RD trail crew for working with us on Saturday. Thanks to all who participated in preparations before the event and in the clean up on Sunday. Volunteers make the Arizona Trail happen!

Thanks to Tracy F. for these photos.

Andrea and David Michaels
Gay and Gary Hohner
Co-Stewards of AZT-31A



Base camp at Marshall Lake TH.



Preparing sack lunches.



The volunteer group.



Sean gives the safety talk.



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New tool trailer.



Freshly sharpened tools.



Off to work we go.



Matt R. teaches trail design.



Tom's Sawyers move a downed tree.



Pulling stumps!



A volunteer crew building new tread.



Nice trail emerges.



When do we eat?



Campfire at the end of the day.

Passage 35 - Babbitt Ranch July 3, 2015

To accommodate the numerous events on this passage, Babbitt Ranch cleared a parking and staging area around the steel sign at the south end of this passage. The area—also known as Cedar Ranch—is now the finish line for the Stagecoach 55K, a major relay exchange and an aid station for the 100 mile Flagstaff to Grand Canyon race. The past few years this location quite congested with vehicle and pedestrian traffic and parking. And should it come to be, the site will also be a major trail head once the AZT becomes single track across Babbitt Ranch. This left the iconic sign in the middle of an open lot—not exactly the aesthetic setting the AZT symbol deserves. Several dedicated AZT enthusiasts convened in the cool, clear early morning of July 3 to move it out of the way to the edge of the cleared space.

The first task was 'un-installing' the sign out of its original setting. The handy 10-ton lifter was just the ticket for this, eliminating much digging and cement breaking. This old house jack has seen much use removing fence posts during super-gate installation, and relocation of some of the other steel signs. Nothing has been found to date that it cannot lift—a great time and work saver and a sound \$50 investment. You can find just about anything on Craigslist.

The crew then selected the new location, always a worrisome task—what if it's not the right spot? By consensus Tracy's first call became the spot and the digging began. A few shallow scratches and the hole hit hard rock—this is after all an ancient volcanic area. While it looked pretty hopeless, the guys took turns hammering at it with the manual jack hammer, and in time the rocks split and pieces were pried out, allowing the holes to progress. A little patience is a very good thing in these matters. Those not hammering away used the time to clear debris from the area, making it quite natural. Soon the holes were deep enough and everyone mustered around to set the sign in the holes. Clamps, boards and a long level were used to plumb the structure, and the cement was mixed and poured. All that remained was to pull the dirt in around the posts, a little duffing to naturalize the area, the obligatory group picture and everyone was on their way. In this case it was to prepare for the 4th of July parade in Flagstaff.

Special thanks to Jim for recruiting Charlie and Ray, and to Anne and Tracy.

Shawn Redfield



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This does the heavy lifting.



Standing tall and true,
all set to pour.



Passage 40 - Kaibab Plateau South June 1-5, 2015

This years work event had cooler weather at night, scattered snow patches and water in the dirt tanks and crystal spring. The crew divided up into the tree cutting specialists and erosion control. The adjoining passages also received attention: signage and deadfall removal on 40A, 42 and 43 previously reported deadfall removed and Shawn and Liz assessed 41. Thanks to all who came and made this possible for us: Tom, David, Joe, Stuart, Shawn, Tracy, Bonnie, Dreamer and Jessy.



Tom Kimmel and David Rabb.



Tom Kimmel and Joe Longbotham.



Shawn Redfield and Stewart.



Tom Kimmel instructs trail users
in the fine art of cross-cut
sawing.





TRAILWORK EVENT ARCHIVE - 2015



Passage 15 - Tortilla Mountains May 26, 2015

The Usual Suspects made quick work of repairing the cut cable at the Freeman Road TH, and installing a relocated kiosk this morning.

The cable had been cut or gnawed thru by some unusually ambitious knuckle-dragging, mouth-breathing Neanderthals, allowing vehicular trespass. We stretched out some of the slack and re-clamped it; then Tom scorched the clamp threads with his torch to deter a repeat. While he was doing that, the other suspects were working on the post holes.

Most of the work and time involved in sign/gate/kiosk installation depends on how well the digging goes. We badgered-down the prescribed 30 inches through decomposing granite or whatever the soil is in quick fashion--no rocks this time. Then the kiosk was leveled and clamped, the tarp-mixed concrete tamped into place, and the area quickly reclaimed. All this before 10:00 AM! We'll have to increase the work expectations on future outings.

The kiosk is salvage from Prison Camp TH on the Coronado Forest, re-purposed here because we shuffled one of the heavy steel AZ-cutout signs to this one's original location. ATA is working on artwork for this and other kiosks.

Thanks yet again to Tom K., David R., and Lee A.

Shawn Redfield



Passage 3 - Canelo Hills West May 23-24, 2015

On Saturday, 23 May, we worked mile 42.5 to 43.75. We cleared the trail of overgrown trees and shrubs. We installed ten new carsonites, built up four cairns, and secured/shored up about five existing trail markers. The team met at 0800 in Sonoita and carpoled into the AZT via Red Rock Ranch Rd. Work started at 0930 and lasted until 1700. Volunteers present were: Armando, Steven, Hollie, Rene, Ricardo, Jesse and Hal.

On Sunday, 24 May, we worked miles 40.75 to 42, including the horse/bike bypass. We cleared trees and shrubs and installed nine carsonites. This area is confusing to folks because of the horse/bike bypass. I have received numerous emails complaining about this. The new signs should alleviate any further issues. The team for this day met at 0800 and carpoled into the Cott Tank Enclosure via Meadow Valley. We began work at 0915 and terminated at 1430. Volunteers present: Armando, Steven, Hollie, Rene, Ricardo, Jesse, Hal, Greg and Charles.

Armando Gonzalez

Passage 5 - Santa Rita Mountains May 20, 2015

As the ATA upgraded the sign panels on the historic, Arizona-shaped, steel cutout signs along the trail on the Coronado National Forest, Forest staff requested some of them be relocated to more visible locations. Two signs were near now-closed roads, so locations with more exposure seemed fitting. One such sign was moved from near Italian Trap to the end of Gardner Canyon Road.

The volunteers pulled the sign from Italian Trap April 17. A 10-ton house-moving jack made short work of pulling the old sign. The drive in and out took much longer than pulling the sign out and breaking off the old concrete.



TRAILWORK EVENT ARCHIVE - 2015

Today we replanted it at the end of Gardner Canyon Road. By group consensus the sign was placed a few feet up into the trees along the trail as it drops out to the road. Digging went well, only a few rocks to be broken up. Many years ago Laddie Cox convinced ATA powers-that-were to purchase heavy manual jack hammers; these have been well used and invaluable as we install the many gates and signs. Today was another example.

While the crew was finishing the holes a Border Patrol agent came down the trail; returning from patrol in the area. He had several stories to tell, and we filled him in on the AZT and ATA's mission, then pressed him into helping lift the sign into the holes. As we mixed the concrete he was on his way.

The artwork for this sign is in production and will be installed as soon as it is complete. Thanks to Tom, David, Lee, and Bill.

Shawn Redfield



Passage 22 - Saddle Mountain April 30, 2015

Another successful day on the Mt Peeley/McFarland Canyon project. A crew of five hiked 4 sign boards in and mounted them to the posts we planted a few weeks ago. All went well, we got them mounted and did a few hours of brushing and grubbing which completed the work on the West Fork Trail 260; it is DONE! The ~.7mile realignment around fall-line washout that American Conservation Experience youth crew laid out and built is complete. They also did a almost all of the maintenance on the parts that were not realigned, which was a very pleasant surprise. The not-youth crew today did a few hundred yards of heavy brushing and grubbing and some tread work on the west end to finish it up!

Thanks to John M., John A., Tom K. and Mark J. for another great day on the AZT!

Shawn Redfield



Drilling the mounting holes.



Junction sign, West Fork and Cornucopia Trails.



Newly maintained West Fork Trail.



Thicket Spring and West Fork Trail Junction.



Brushing and grubbing.

Passage 18 - Reavis Canyon April 25, 2015

Today we met across the highway from Picketpost to drive to Reavis Canyon Trail head to do some brushing. What a wonderful day it turned out to be cool weather and some overcast. A total of 3 volunteers came out to tackle a walk back in and take care of some brushing.

I want to give each volunteer special thanks by listing each one of them by first name: Dennis, Fred, and Shawn. Together with all the volunteers we put in 35.5 hours. Without these individuals coming out and giving their time it would not been possible to keep the Arizona trail in top condition.

We hiked in to the 1.5 mile marker and I pointed out the Mud Spring box to all. We then hiked in about another mile, began the brushing towards Montana Mt., and sweeping the trail as we went. We did about 1.5 miles of brushing and sweeping. It was a great work day and again I want to say thank you to all that came out and helped and I've added some pictures below of our work day.

Craig Gregory (AZT Trail Steward Section 18b)



TRAILWORK EVENT ARCHIVE - 2015



Dennis in the distance.



Shawn and Fred.

Passage 18 - Reavis Canyon April 18, 2015

The sun came up while driving to the meeting place, cool weather, and glorious Arizona day. We had a great turnout for the Arizona Trail Reavis Canyon 18b work day. A total of 12 volunteers came out to tackle a reroute, some brushing, and a few fallen trees. The plan did change, for we did not drive all the way to the top of Montana Mt. Instead we drove to the lower TH and walked in the 3.5 miles to the bottom of Reavis Canyon. With some review and fellow insight from Pablo instead of the crew having to make the long climb back up Montana Mt. the walk back to the lower TH is downhill and felt better decision (I believe the volunteers thought so too).

I want to give each volunteer special thanks by listing each one of them by first name: Scott, Jacob, Pablo, Pete, Duane, Dennis, William, Elizabeth, Bill, Rob, and Liam. Together with all the volunteers we put in 130.5 hours. Without these individuals coming out and giving their time it would not been possible to keep the Arizona trail in top condition.

As we hiked back to the base of Montana Mountain we took a stop to find the spring box, which has been there for a while, but I was not aware of till recently for still learning new things about the section I own. Pablo helped show us where it was. I will be observing this spring box to see what its reliability is during summer months (even though I don't get many thru hikers in there during the summer), but still good to know. The group was happy to take a small break to go with Pablo and myself to locate the spring box. From there we hiked a bit more and then started dividing into the groups planned. The first group took care of some brushing and sweeping of the trail in certain sections and worked their way to Montana Mountain, next group was at the base of Montana Mountain to help with the approved reroute, and last group took a long hard climb up Montana Mountain to take care of some fallen trees.

It was a great work day. The biggest goal was the reroute and that has been accomplished. Now we shall wait for the rain and see from there where the water wants to run and tweak what we need to tweak. When we returned to the TH we all had some sub sandwiches which was much anticipated and Gatorade to drink. Again I want to say thank you to all that came out and helped and I've added some pictures below of our work day.

Craig Gregory (AZT Trail Steward Section 18b).



Before pic of reroute.



Another before pic of reroute.



After pic of reroute.



Another after pic of reroute.



Down tree before.



Down tree after.



Planning trail cut.



Corner turn.



TRAILWORK EVENT ARCHIVE - 2015



Fortifying the trail.



Making memories of today.



Making sure new trail is good to go.



Crew of the day.

Passage 13 - Oracle April 6, 2015

The SaddleBrooke Hiking Club completed three trail work events in 2015 on the Oracle Passage of the Arizona National Scenic Trail. Work efforts were focused on 2 miles of trail going north from the American Flag Ranch to Webb Road northeast of Oracle. This section required some extensive brushing and rebuilding of trail around areas of significant water erosion. In March thirteen volunteers under the guidance of Shawn Redfield and Don Washco of the Arizona Trail Association were pleased to "make a difference" on the Arizona National Scenic Trail. They also enjoyed seeing many spring flowers along the trail. Following this 3rd work event a celebration was held at the Patio Cafe in Oracle.

Trail work events will continue in the cooler temperatures of fall. To volunteer contact Elisabeth Wheeler, 818-1547, or Mary Croft, 651-270-1660, Arizona Trail co-stewards with the SaddleBrooke Hiking Club.

Elisabeth Wheeler



Shawn Redfield, Ton Oetinger, Tom Conrad, Elisabeth Wheeler, John Black, Kathy Gish, Harriet Pearson, Mary Croft, Cheryl Werstler, Garrett Rensing, Don Washco, David Vermerris, Tom Geiger, Chuck Kaltenbach
Photo by Bob Giesen

Passage 20 - Four Peaks April 3, 2015

Long Day Installing Trail Signs

Fire and old age had eliminated the trail signs near the north end of AZT Passage 20, including two important ones at trail junctions and two at water sources. The Arizona Trail Association provided the FS-regulation oak signs, and AZT steward Bob B. scheduled Friday as the day to replace them.

Pigeon Springs was the closest and first. Most of the standing dead trees in the area are juniper, the perfect natural wood for sign posts. We loaded up with signs and tools and headed down the trail, noting impressive recent improvements by Bob and his crews. We had sufficient crew today to split tasks—some finding and "harvesting" the sign post, others digging the hole and still others trimming brush so the spring is visible. As this was the first sign the crew has installed, the process required a few refinements, luckily we were close to the truck at the TH to collect additional tools and materials. A quick trip back and we were in business. Nice damp clay soil tamped in tightly around the post, the requisite photo taken and we were off to the Pigeon/Four Peaks Trail junction.

This location took the longest. No ready-made juniper posts standing nearby, so we settled for a nice thick oak one. Oak is hard and heavy, but we managed to find one not far away and the crew hauled it back to the junction. Soil here is rocky, so the hole-digging took a while. And we weren't done learning how to attach the sign to the post, so that lesson added more time. But in the end perseverance prevailed and the junction was marked with a stout sign mounted on sturdy post, and the crew headed to Shake Spring area for lunch.

The sign at Shake Spring, as well as all vegetation, was completely destroyed in the 2014 fire, and the subsequent erosion really took its toll. However, the FS Burned Area Emergency Response funds had put a crew in the area, and they did amazing work stabilizing the trail and even repairing most of the early flood damage. With the thick vegetation gone, the spring box for Shake Spring was visible—not at first glance however as it is a small rock-and-mortar structure a short ways uphill from the trail. A careful scan of the hillside across the creek yielded a juniper branch for the post, so a couple folks went over and harvested it. We decided to leave installing the sign at this location for last, the one at the Oak Flats junction being a higher priority.

On our way after a quick lunch we kept a lookout for juniper trees from which to make the post. A short distance from the junction nature had a lovely gift—a 10 inch diameter dead and down, straight juniper tree, on the trail! The crew split again between diggers and sawyers, and even though day was getting long, this installation went smoothly. Nice sandy soil helped with easy digging and we had learned from the last sign mounting so we were soon done and heading back to Shake Spring.

The crew was getting pretty tired by now—lots of hiking, hauling heavy tools, digging sawing and tamping, and now one more to go. But everyone pitched in, dug through the rocky soils, mounted the sign and set the post and tamped it in to place. Finally, all four signs were done and we headed out. Oh, yes, there was that tree down across the trail, and here we are with a crew—albeit a tired one—and a saw. Not much choice, we could have left it but then it's a day-long effort to come back and clear it. So we had



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at it, sawed off a 12 foot section and rolled it down the hill. This un-stabilized the remaining portion, so with the last remaining muscle power and pry bar work, we persuaded the whole thing across the trail and down the hill.

Finally done, in every sense of the word, the crew headed back to the trucks. Tools were getting pretty heavy and certain body parts were dragging, but it was a great day's work with much to show for it. No thru hikers today, hopefully they are all further north by now.

Thanks to Bob B., John M., Joe L., Stuart C., and new guys(!) William P. and Todd H. Special thanks for John, Stuart, William and Joe as this was the second of two long days in a row. Uff Dah!

Shawn Redfield



Tamping them in seems to be the hardest part.



First one done.



Some assembly required.



No power tools in the Wilderness.



Standing tall.



All Done.

Passage 22 - Saddle Mountain April 2, 2015

Six hearty souls hiked into McFarland Canyon from Mormon Grove TH to replace sign posts. That's a long way to walk to plant two posts, but there's no other way to get it done. We found a nice juniper post just up the trail north of the junction in McFarland Canyon, so we dug out the old post which was over half gone underground and very loose. Someone has cut off a portion of the existing sign, not sure what that was about; we'll replace it. The new post went into the same hole, and we tied the old sign to it until the new signs are ready and installed, hopefully before long.

Next up was the junction sign at the old Story Mine road. Starting out we weren't 100% sure it was gone, but some ATA equestrians had been past the spot a week ago and didn't recall seeing it, so we bet on it not being there. We walked past this spot on the way in and it was indeed gone. The area surrounding the sign has lots of old trash scattered around, likely from mining days so it is probably artifacts by now. While it's in a designated Wilderness, it is only slowly returning to "wilderness." We had to use an oak tree from across the little canyon for the sign post since there was no juniper to be had here. We are betting it lasts longer than we do.

Same old drill, some of the crew digs the hole, some prepare the post. John M is getting quite adept at hewing off a flat spot on the log for the sign to bolt to. Then we set it in, someone eyeballs plumb, and we tamp the dirt back in around the post. Two down! This is a great section of the AZT! While it lies on an ancient mine road, the 360-degree views are pristine. It contours around under Saddle Mountain with Sheep Mountain and Mount Peeley in clear view to the north. The Mogollon Rim, Sierra Anchas, Mt Ord, the Superstitions and more complete the views.

This area burned in August of 2012, but is recovering quickly. The Forest Service hired American Conservation Experience youth crews to do the emergency stabilization work along the trail, and they did an outstanding job. The big armored washes that they built are holding nicely, and several big drains that they cut in are working well. ATA should hold a work event to address the ankle-killer rocks on the steeper sections just north of the Mormon Grove Connector.

Nearing the end on our way back out we were wondering if we'd see any through hikers, when Brad and company appeared coming up the trail. Sorry, I only caught one name. They had started at Sunflower and were going to Pine where they will complete the AZT!! Congratulations all around. On the way out we noticed that the sign near the now-burned Mormon Grove corral at the connector trail is gone also. Having only a little energy left, we dug the hole for the replacement post and set rocks in to hold it until we get the signs completed, again, quite likely rather soon.



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Thanks to Joe L., Tom K., William P., John M., Stuart C. for another great day on the AZT!

Shawn Redfield



On the way in we encountered a deadfall, and made short work of it.



All clear.



Carpenter is making the post ready for the sign.



Making the hole for the Story Mine Junction.



The crew, thank you all!



All Done.

Passage 22 - Saddle Mountain March 26, 2015

Work continued today on the realignment of this passage. Joe L., John M., John A., and Shawn R. trekked in to plant new sign posts to replace the ones that burned or have decayed. We parked at the end of the regularly accessible FR25A, no super 4WD's today, and hiked in. Tools were cached at the 260/Cornucopia trail, so we picked up a saw, digging bar and digging cup and headed west. Not far from the top we encountered the newly constructed trail. A half mile or so on that and we met the crew: they were in working and making what looks like good progress.

We regaled them with tales of the AZT, then continued to the 260/95 junction, the site of the first post to be replaced. Setting a sign post does not sound like a major task, but when the dirt is really rock, and the sign post is something you go find, cut and haul, it's a bit more of an ordeal. We found a good straight post, cut and trimmed it and hauled it back to the site where the other half of the crew was making the hole, as drillers say. It was slow going in the shale. We all took turns worrying it down a few more inches for about an hour till it was as deep as we were going to get it. John M notched the post for the signs, then we set it, tamped the dirt back in tightly, and headed west to McFarland Canyon, and lunch.

Same routine at the Wilderness boundary sign, the post was broken but not burned--didn't really matter, it had to be replaced regardless of how it became damaged and the sign disappeared. The post was not to be found so easily this time, it was several hundred yards upstream, and heavy. The first log we cut turned out to be rotten in the middle so we went on to the second candidate. It was a fine specimen but a bit farther away than we liked. But we cut and trimmed it, then all four of us convened with straps to cradle the log and make our way slowly back to the hole. Repeat the post setting, tamp it in tightly.

While we were sorting this out, Sweet Pea, Beardo, and Cue Ball--thru hikers--happened along to survey the work. We passed, and they continued towards Utah. Good luck! We took a short cut back to the West Fork of Sycamore Creek and FR25A; it only added about an hour of time. Instead of returning on FT 260, we headed downstream in McFarland Canyon. This was a beautiful route, no trail, lots of water, a few falls, incredible geology, and a great setting. However, bush whacking down the canyon over all the rocks did make for a long trip back.

We have been waiting for the signs to be fabricated once we know some more precise distances for the realignment, now we can proceed. Probably 3--maybe 4--posts left to set, then another trip lugging the signs in to all the locations to mount them. Another great day on the AZT.

Shawn Redfield

Passage 9 - Rincon Mountains March 8, 2015

Photo captions:



TRAILWORK EVENT ARCHIVE - 2015

- 1 -- Two of our illustrious Trail Stewards, Joe and Kevin. Photo: Jim White ("A Challenge 43 Contender and a wannabe")
- 2 -- Coffee, bagels, and prepping tools at Park headquarters. Photo: Mark Mouw
- 3 -- Some of the Hope Camp "Regulars" goofing off at the Trailhead... Photo: Mark Mouw
- 4 -- Pulling the hill up Manning Camp Trail. 2 miles and 1,000 foot climb to get to the Arizona Trail. Photo: Jim White
- 5 -- Tread section - before. Photo: Jim White
- 6 -- Tread section -after. Photo: Jim White
- 7 -- The point here is: A rock removed during trail construction is showing its orange patina (the portion of the rock that was originally under ground). "Lets dig it in on the up hill side of the trail, barrow a little dirt in the process, and have only the weathered face showing". The joys of rewilding the landscape! Photo: Daniel Moss
- 8 -- The Bucket: In the Rincons 10 shovels of dirt may yield 8 of rock and only 2 of dirt. Dirt is valuable and any moved is bucketed/returned to the trail tread (A maintenance technique used by the CCC of the 1930's). Photo: Daniel Moss
- 9 -- Lunch at 'Big Saddle'. Rincon Peak in the background. Photo: Jim White
- 10 -- Lunch at 'Big Saddle'. Nick and Adam. Photo: Jim White
- 11 -- Hiking out Quilter Trail. Photo: Daniel Moss
- 12 -- Enjoying the pools at Slickrock. Photo: Jim White
- 13 -- Group photo. 8.5 mile hike plus worked about 4 hours on a roughly 2 mile section of trail. Photo: Jim White
- 14 -- Near Hope Camp. Rincon Peak and cacti in the late afternoon light. Photo: Jim White
- 15 -- Rincon Creek. Almost back to the rigs. Photo: Jim White
- 16 -- The Forest Service retiree bunch. Jim, Alex, Steve, Kevin. Photo: Unknown



#1



#2



#3



#4



#5



#6



#7



#8



#9



#10



#11



#12



#13



#14



#15



#16

Passage 13 - Oracle March 8, 2015

Team Oro Valley Bicycle (OVB) mountain bikers wanted to do some trail work, so they made a call! From that call arose a great morning work event on the Oracle Passage of the Arizona Trail. Jeff Bridge helped set up the event, delivered the tools, and tasked Don Washco to act as crew leader. Team OVB provided the energy and amazing effort!

Fifteen OVB team members showed up early Sunday morning and covered about a mile of trail, from the Route 77 road crossing, south to the power line. Work included some drainage work, some fairly major, minor tread repair and outslloping, and brushing of lots of catclaw.



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One participant commented, " I think it was good to have a meeting of minds and talk about what the different AZT trail users would like to see, as well as, trying to make these trails a lasting feature. I look forward to riding on the dirt we worked today!"

Team OVB is sponsored by **Oro Valley Bicycle**, and regularly does volunteer trail work as part of their team building and dedication to maintaining the trails they ride. Thanks to all who participated - Beth, Jed, Mike, Kevin, Christina, Ryan, Regan, Jacy, Mike, Steve, Kerry, Mark, Ryan, Andrea, Cassi, Kevin, and Bryan! Team OVB Rocks!



Passage 13 - Oracle February 18 & 21, 2015

Between February 18 and 21, ATA volunteers installed four super gates, 261 trail-miles apart. Both sets of gates required land manager approval, and by a quirk of fate, or maybe a slip in the cogs of the governmental machinery, approvals came thru nearly simultaneously.

The first two were funded by County Line Riders, an equestrian group with a history of enjoying and supporting the AZT. The crew planted two of the iconic structures just south of Oracle State Park, near the Gateway Community of Oracle. The existing gates in these locations were holding up well but were just too narrow, causing problems for equestrians. The AZT welcomes hikers, bicyclists and equestrians equally, so these were on the list.

The second two were acquired by the FS with that magical "end-of-year" money that we all wish had a parallel in our personal finances. Trail Administrator Laura White directed funds to the purchase of four gates which have now been installed. The first two were set at the Pine trailhead late last year; the ATA volunteer crew installed the second two February 21 not far from the others, in the highway right-of-way fences south of the Pine TH.

Thanks to Chelsea Muise, FS Payson, and the stalwart crew of volunteers: Bernie S., Tom K., Lee A., David R., Scott C., Joe L.; Steve C.; Stuart C.; Rob B., Michele B.; Don W.; Rich H., and Tracy F.

Shawn Redfield



Michele Bauer posted more photos from the Pine gate installation. You can check them out on her [Flickr page](#).

Passage 13 - Oracle February 7, 2015

On Saturday, February 7th, the R-TEAM Desert RATS (R Arizona Trail Supporters) club joined up with Boy Scouts and leaders from Troop 227 to perform trail maintenance on the Arizona National Scenic Trail (ANST). The group worked on a section of the trail in Oracle State Park, otherwise known as passage #13B. Maintenance consisted of remediating water damage on the trail, preventing future water problems, clearing debris and loose rock, trimming encroaching brush and trees, and building cairns to mark the trail through wash areas.

All enjoyed being out on the trail, making a contribution and seeing the "fruits of our labor".

Participants in photo

Back Row (L to R): Randy Ramsey, Chris Nelson, Denny Hawkins, Deb Ramsey, Brandon Smith

Front row (L to R): Jeff Bridge, Logan Fillmore, Brigham Mortensen, Ben Young, Ben King



TRAILWORK EVENT ARCHIVE - 2015



Passage 13 - Oracle January 21, 2015

The SaddleBrooke Hiking Club supports Arizona's National Scenic Trail through volunteer work on the trail. On Wednesday, January 21, eleven hikers improved a section of the Oracle Passage of the Arizona National Scenic Trail by collecting trash, removing overgrowth and improving drainage. The Arizona Trail Association provided guidance and support from Shawn Redfield and Don Washco. The main goal was to "have fun and be safe" while working together to improve the trail. The enthusiastic volunteers were: Jackie Hall, Elaine Fagan, Marilynn Smith, Ray Peale, Sandra Sowell, Elisabeth Wheeler, Fred Norris, Arlene Gerity, Roger Hove, Jan Springer and Steve Wehmann.

Elisabeth Wheeler



Passage 14 - Black Hills January 17-18, 2015

Camp was set up at the Freeman Road Trailhead on Friday in anticipation of a weekend of trailwork. This event was supported by Hermosa Tours, a self-guided mountain bike tour company that regularly leads trips on the AZT in this area. Matt McFee, Founder and Director of Hermosa Tours, came up with the idea to rally the Mountain Biking Community and involve them in maintaining this very popular Mountain Biking destination. A total of 17 hard working trail maintainers showed up, split evenly between the hikers and the bikers, and a great time was had by all.

We covered about 6 miles of trail, from Antelope Peak, south to road coming up from Beehive Well. Worked included some drainage work, mostly minor, some fairly major, brushing of mostly of Prickly Pear and Cholla, and digging out more than a few Catclaws.

Hermosa Tours provided a great dinner on Saturday evening and breakfast on Sunday, and sack lunches both days so we were all well fed. Arizona Business Partner THAT Brewery of Pine, AZ, provided refreshments for Saturday evening - some Arizona Trail Ale to wash down the dust from all that hard work!

Thanks to all who participated - Matt, Gary, Steve, Marlene, Mel, SHawn, Bernie, Cindi, Stacy, Jeff, Nancy, PNUT, Scott, Chad, Melissa, and Chris!



All in all, a great weekend on the Arizona Trail!



**Passage 5 - Santa Rita Mountains
January 7, 2015**

The usual suspects got the year off to a great start with another gate-widening adventure. This time it was in a remote location about two trail-miles north of Kentucky Camp, on a ridgeline with fantastic views to the east. The steel gate was just too narrow for pack stock, but the remote location and lack of ATV abuse did not warrant a super gate. Using a wheel-barrow and regular over-the-shoulder hauling, the crew wrangled the two wooden fence posts, metal pipe cross member, wire and assorted tools a half mile from the vehicles to the gate location. Some design confusion and inattention resulted in a superfluous post hole—oops! But with plenty of help the posts were set and braced and the gate was strung between the new posts and the existing metal gate, allowing equestrians to pass quickly through the fence.

Thanks to Tom, Lee, David, Steve, Gerry, and new recruit Aaron!



**Passage 21 - Pine Mountain
January 3, 2015**

Snow arrived on the trail the last day of 2014, but this did not deter Eagle Scout leader Jorgen Anderson, scouts, leaders, friends and family from showing up on Saturday for the planned work event. Although there was still a lot of snow in many places on the trail the work began.

While one group of volunteers set to work building many cairns along the connector trail from Bushnell Tank Gate to AZT, another group headed down the road and bushwhacked to Sycamore Creek and followed it to the AZT crossing. Some of these folks started building cairns at the crossing and others headed south to work on drainage problems along the trail.

Jorgen's group provided lunch for all. Many thanks to all for their work and especially to Mel, Marlene, Andrea and Craig for making this a very successful event that will aid hikers who have frequently gotten lost at these two Sycamore Creek crossings.



**New Year's Day
on the trail**



**New Year's Day along
the trail**



**New Year's Day
Sycamore Creek**



Building Cairns



And More Cairns



And More



Lunch



Days End

