

Trail Operations Report

Winter Trail Damage – Reports from hikers and posts on social media indicate considerable damage from the late winter storms, primarily downed trees from the snow and flood damage. This will take some time and effort to repair, especially in designated wilderness areas.

Ramada Salvage – Volunteers disassembled and removed four steel ramadas from a campground at Roosevelt Lake. These were excess FS facilities made available to other FS entities. Two will be installed at Sahuarita Road TH when Pima County receives approval from the State Land Department, and two will be installed at Pine TH.

Rim Country Sustainable Recreation Trails Initiative – No news since the partial government shutdown. However, before he retired, Pablo Burghard secured funding to assist Payson RD with NEPA clearances and other administrative tasks on AZT projects.

Passage 2-3, Canelo Hills – Passage 3 re-route is complete. 1.7 miles of new trail between Red Rock Canyon Road and Red Bank Well was constructed in approximately 4 weeks in Feb/March. ATA staff and AZCC crews cleared corridor, the mini-excavator roughed in trail, and crews, ATA staff, and volunteers finished including moving or replacing signage where applicable. Passage 2 re-route is almost complete. The trail will be open by the end of March, when volunteers will complete the last 0.8-mile to connect to the existing route during the Volunteer Vacation. Safety concerns about big trucks from the Hermosa Mine and trail users on narrow Harshaw Road have been temporarily mitigated with warning signs for trail users near the intersection of Harshaw Road and the AZT. Santa Cruz County has determined that a trail along Harshaw Road is not feasible. This fuels the importance of moving the Temporal Gulch Re-route along as quickly as possible.

Passage 4, Temporal Gulch – Nogales Ranger District staff and volunteers cleared 60+ deadfall off the Wilderness section of this passage. Coronado National Forest remains supportive of the massive 18-mile re-route, and we expect NEPA analysis and specialists' review in 2019. This could mean trail construction in 2020.

Passage 5, Santa Rita Mountains – AZCC crews from the White Mountains completed Sawmill Fire restoration work on 5 miles of trail from Enzenberg Canyon to North of Box Canyon Rd. Nogales RD staff have promised approval for Oak Tree Canyon Trailhead by the end of March. We have finalized plans and are ready to implement as soon as we have the go ahead.

Passage 10, 11, and 11a, Santa Catalina Mountains – ATA staff and volunteers completed work on the East Fork Trail from Gordon Hirabayashi to Palisades Trail Junction as part of grant funding received from NWSA. AZCC crews restored approximately 2.8 miles of trail, part of the Pusch Ridge Wilderness Bypass at Green Mountain Trail, and Passage 10, between Bellota Ranch Rd. and Redington Rd., as part of the Burro Fire Disaster Relief Funding.

Passage 13, Oracle– SaddleBrooke volunteers continue to do great work clearing catclaw and repairing erosion issues.

Passage 15, Tortilla Mountains – The northern 0.8-mile of the Teacup Realignment was completed in 3 days with ATA staff, volunteers, and the mini-excavator. Additional realignments are pending ASLD and BLM approval.

Passage 16, Gila River Canyons – Maintenance with the mini-ex and hand finishing was completed on 7 miles of trail north of the Gila River in December.

Passage 17, Alamo Canyon – Volunteers repaired damage to the trail from recent flooding, which caused a 3-foot drop-off into the wash. The new LOST alignment, connecting the AZT at Picketpost TH to Superior, is complete. ATA volunteers installed two super gates, and helped a volunteer horse packer, Bill Vicary, haul out some debris.

Passage 28, Happy Jack – Winter has delayed efforts this quarter, but FS is fully engaged and plans are in place to resume work when the roads dry out and the backcountry becomes accessible. FS financial agreements are in place so conservation corps and machine work on the new trail has been scheduled to start in May. Volunteers will be installing signs and markers on day trips. A three-panel kiosk and a hitching rail for Gooseberry Springs Trailhead are on order and the art panels are nearly complete. Final trail layout is planned for April, conditions permitting.

Passage 35, Babbitt Ranch – Coconino County has dedicated \$30,000 toward the Babbitt Ranch Singletrack Project, along with 4 to 6 weeks of work from two county employees and their machines for trail construction (\$45,000 value). Route marking will occur in April, and a combination of volunteer events and professional trail construction will occur in May-June, and September-October. Half of the 13-mile project is anticipated to be completed this year, and the remainder in 2020.

Passages 40-41, Kaibab Plateau – Two more trailhead log fence projects are scheduled for August.