

## Logistics

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**Logistics** is the [management](#) of the flow of [resources](#) between the point of origin and the point of consumption in order to meet some requirements. Just like the [UPS commercial](#), the Renwyk Creek and Tripod Peak projects were all about logistics. The first logistic problem was how to schedule and manage two separate projects on the same weekend. The projects were trail maintenance on two trails out of the Renwyk Creek trail head north of Sage Hen, the second was packing over 1500 pounds of food, water and equipment from Joes Creek Trail head to the Tripod Peak fire lookout with members of the Boise National Forest crew.

Squaw Butte members, Nancy & Robbin Schindele, Lorraine & Charles Chick, Chris & Bill Holt, Gail & Terry MacDonald, Marybeth Conger, Jon Seel and Rob Adams all met at the Renwyk Creek trail head where we would be camping for the weekend.



The plan was to work the two trails out of this campground on Saturday and meet the forest service crew at the Joes Creek trailhead on Sunday. Saturday was a pretty typical trail maintenance day, up early for a hearty breakfast that was prepared by Nancy and Gail followed by getting stock and equipment ready for the ride.

The first thing Rob noticed when he went to saddle his horse Willow was he had forgotten his saddle blanket and saddle bags (logistics failure). Terry had a spare blanket so that problem was resolved, otherwise Willow would have had to use one of Rob's extra large pack blankets and would have looked and felt weird. Two trail crews were formed, with Terry, Jon and Bill planning to work trail [141] while Lorraine, Chick, Robbin and Rob would work trail [138]. Both trails start up [Renwyk creek](#) and [141] splits off after about 1 ½ miles. The lower trail was in pretty good shape with only a couple of logs to remove and a sink hole in the trail bed to repair.

At the junction Terry's team started the climb to the meadow at the top of the ridge, removing down fall and brush. When they got to the meadow, all signs of the trail disappeared and after lunch, they gave up looking for it and returned to the camping area for some shade and a cool brew.

Rob's team didn't do much better, continuing up trail [138] they removed a number of large down fall, and cut a lot of brush. The trail became less defined and harder to follow. Rob got off on game trail that lead into bogs



and dead ends, requiring turning around and re-acquiring the trail many times. After crossing the creek and scrambling up a very steep mud slope they lost the trail completely and decided to give up and head back to the camp. That steep mud bank turned into a big horse slide going back, as the stock could get no footing going down and just slid into the creek, like on a slip and slide. Back at

the camp we found the other team unsaddling their stock and the ladies engaged in a board game.





As the day was hot, the shade of the large trees in the camp ground associated with cool drinks was enjoyed by all. Dinner was pot luck and

quality and quantity was typical Squaw Butte standard, Excellent!



After dinner, plans for the following day were made. Joes Creek trail head is a bit over eight miles from Renwyk Creek, located east of Sage Hen and a couple thousand feet higher at 6500 feet. The road is typical of many Idaho access roads, narrow, steep, with washouts, tight turns and very narrow sections. At the trail head there is a large area for parking. It is not a road that members wanted to drive pickups with campers, or large goose neck trailers. There is also little shade at the trailhead.

The plan was to use Rob's truck and green trailer (4 horse) and Jon's trailer (5 horse) pulled by Chick's truck to shuttle 13 horse and mules, plus the riders, and equipment to the trail head (Logistics). It would take three trailers loads to get all the stock and equipment delivered and three trailers loads to get everyone back to Renwyk after we were done. We made arrangement to meet the Forest Service at 08:30 at Joes, which required an early start to the day. Marybeth, Gail and Nancy said they would have breakfast for the crew at 06:00.

The day started with birds greeting the dawn, the first bits of light were just starting to dim the stars when the girls got up and started breakfast. Dogs and stock also started their day, saying they also wanted breakfast. After feeding and watering stock, equipment was piled into the back of trucks and stock loaded into trailer. The team was making the first shuttle run to Joes by 07:00 and the slow trip took a bit over 40 minutes to complete. The stock and equipment was quickly unloaded and Bill drove Chick's truck with Jon's trailer back to Renwyk for the second load.



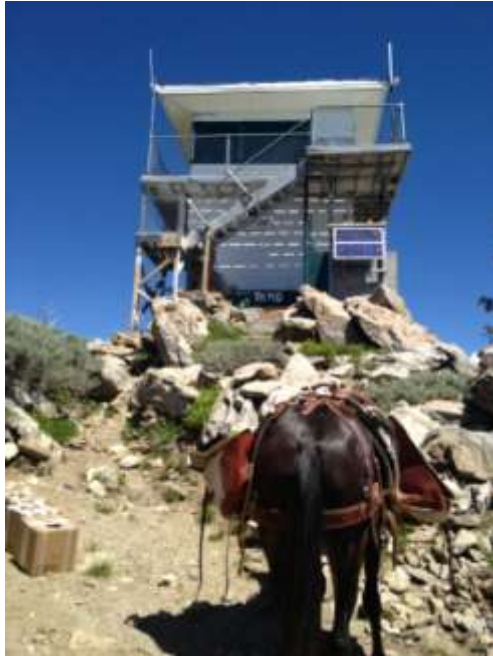


Stock was saddled and then the crew found shady spots to wait for the second load of horses and the Forest service. They arrived within 5 minutes of each other at 09:15 which was late for the USFS, but good time for the shuttle truck. Francis White apologized for being late, something about trouble getting the fire crew up before daylight. They brought sticky buns and were quickly forgiven. The fire crew was to hike up to the fire lookout and help the keeper get it cleaned up and all the food and gear put away.



They were also going to learn something about stock and packing. The fire crew quickly unloaded a huge pile of boxes and equipment and we started the daunting task of breaking it up into smaller piles, and fitting it into bags and manties and weighing, until we had balanced loads for each of the pack stock. About 15 minutes into the process a fire call was received on their radio and they jumped into their truck and were off to fight a new fire. One stayed behind, Brian to help Gale the keeper get set up. With fewer hands I am not sure if the process went faster or slower, but by 10:45 we had the first loads built and the stock loaded. All the loads were well balanced, but they were heavy, the average was around 150 pounds, the heaviest just shy of 200 pounds.

[Joes Creek](#) trail [137] is in very good shape, and through a series of switchbacks (rare in Idaho) quickly moves up the mountain to its junction with West Mountain south trail [131]. The trail up to the fire lookout is not in as good shape, it's steep and washed out but short, less than a mile. We were at the fire lookout by 13:30 and had everything unloaded by 14:00.



The view from the 8000 foot lookout is spectacular and everyone took a breather, had a bit of lunch before we started back



down to the trail head. Going downhill, the team made great time and we were back in a bit over 45 minutes. Billy Bob the mule was favoring a leg and Robbin said he was done for the day as were the Chicks. So the plan was for Rob and Jon to take up one

more set of loads, while Bill drove the first shuttle run back to Renwyk. Rob and Jon had loads built and loaded and were heading back up the trail by 15:00 and were on top by 16:30 and back at the trail head 45 minutes later.

In all we move nine loads up to the fire lookout. There was some stuff still at the trail head and we arranged for the forest service to come pick it up to be transported to the lookout when an opportunity presented itself. By 18:00 everyone was back at Renwyk, trailers were loaded and the group started the trip home.



Lessons learned, in the future when we pack for the USFS on a project like this we are going to ask them to pre-weight every box and mark it. We spent a lot of time looking for stuff of a specify weight for a load. The shuttle worked well, but did take a lot of time, not sure there is much that could be done about that, as Joes trail head is dry and not a great place to take trucks with campers. We did a great job of balancing loads, none slipped, but some were too heavy and with more pack stock, we could have packed lighter.

