

June 20, 2012

## **Douglas, Nogales and Sierra Vista Districts' Trail and Spring Update**

### **Douglas District:**

#### **Springs –**

All springs encountered after the Horseshoe fire, are flowing good. In many of the high elevation springs, work has been done to clean them out and restore them back to functional use.

#### **Trails –**

Nearly every trail in the Chiricahua range was within the boundary of the Horseshoe II fire this past summer. The fire itself did not impact the trails all that much. However the post fire rains did impact the trails. In many areas measures were taken prior to the rain to ensure the stability of the trails. Many areas were stabilized with BAER\* funding using the Southwest Conservation Corps (SCC). Some areas this worked well and in others, for example, trails that follow or frequently cross drainages favored poorly.

Some trail crews have already been to work clearing and repairing damages from the fire's wake, and many more will be working in 2012. This list will cover what has been observed, reported and maintained since the fire.

#43 Morse Canyon – This 2.4 mile trail was maintained by CREC funded by Fire Rehab, and sections rebuilt from last years flooding are now passable to horses. The trail is in good condition.

#219 Turtle Mountain – 5.5 mile trail from Rucker Canyon to the Monte Vista trail junction. This trail was maintained at the upper end from the Johnson Peak area to the Monte Vista trail (just under 2 miles). The rest of the trail is in poor condition especially below Turtle Mountain.

#221 Monte Vista – this 4.5 mile trail was maintained by CREC funded by Fire Rehab in May 2012. The trail is in good condition, but the sign at the crest junction was burned and has not been replaced yet.

#222 Rucker Canyon – New Trail head sign. This trail has not been maintained for about 5 years. Most of the trail follows the Rucker drainage for about 3.8 miles and is subject to be dynamic until it climbs out of the canyon for the last 0.8 miles.

#223 Red Rock – Trail not maintained after the Horseshoe II fire, and has not been scouted.

#224 Price Canyon – Trail has not been maintained since the Horseshoe II fire and is in poor condition, and very bad after Price spring. Will be scouting this trail soon to get a better idea of what can be done in the future.

#228 Raspberry Ridge – This trail is 4.6 miles from the bottom to the junction of the Crest trail and Monte Vista intersection. The trail was in good shape prior to the fire and was used a fire line at one point during the fire. Its location of the lower end passing through Bear canyon has been heavily

impacted by post fire flooding. The upper ridge is in good shape. Signs are gone at the junction of the Crest, but the signs at the Rucker trail head are okay or have been replaced.

#236 Price Shake – This primitive 4.7 mile trail “route” is for those who like a worthwhile challenge. Hikers need a keen understanding of route navigation to use this trail. A couple new signs however have been added to make this a bit easier to follow as well as some trail maintenance to clarify an often overlooked turn in the trail. The fire only made this one more challenging!

#243 South Fork – this trail received some much needed work to the upper reaches of the trail in the spring of 2011 to re-establish the junction with the Crest trail. The post fire flooding has made some large debris flows in the many stretches that follow the creek bottom more challenging, and may continue to be dynamic for a few years to come. Be cautious of hiking this trail in the event large rains are predicted. Local volunteers and some Sierra Club members have helped out tremendously in maintenance efforts.

#246 Snowshed – This 6.8 mile trail has several washed out areas on the ridge below Pine Park. The worst of the damage is between Fossil saddle and Cypress saddle. Below Cypress Saddle the trail has been well maintained by CREC funded by Fire Rehab. No observations above Pine Park to Deer spring.

#247 Booger spring trail – This short trail (0.2 mile) was cleared by CREC funded by Fire Rehab. The spring was maintained by Volunteers. Both projects completed in October 2011. Cleared again in June 2012 by the Sierra Club.

#248 Greenhouse – This 4.1 mile trail should expect to have multiple areas where the trail has been washed out. Areas where it crosses or follows drainages are particularly going to be a mess for the next few years. However the trail has been maintained by a few crews over the last few months. CREC funded by Fire Rehab and the Sierra Club have maintained and improved the stability of the trail over its entire length. Areas that may be at risk of washing out again have been strengthened to withstand the added pressure of high water flows. Several new signs have been installed on this trail as well.

#252 Jhus – No information

#257 Bootlegger – A 1.6 mile trail that links the Crest to Rattlesnake and Witch Ridge trails. Post fire flooding has washed a lot of debris over the trail, but one can still navigate over it. Horses will not be able to pass through a particularly bad drainage about a mile in. One sign burned away at the Crest junction.

#259 Rock Creek – This 7.9 mile trail will have several problem areas in the lower elevation segments where the trail follows the creek. Local Volunteers have already helped clear the trail from Bootlegger junction to the Crest junction. Signs are still needed at “Fitch Corral” and the junction of Rattlesnake trail. Signs have been replaced at the junction of Saulsbury Saddle trail. NYC funded by ARRA was able to maintain the lower section of trail below “Fitch Corral” this spring (2012) so hikers should find most of the trail in fair to good condition.

#260 Witch Ridge – Unfortunately after a lot of hard work (spring of 2011) went into this trail it was badly burned over by the Horseshoe II fire. However, if the work had not been done the trail would be a total loss. On the bright side, one can negotiate the trail quite well. Expect to find a lot of new down trees and some debris flows over the trail in sections that make steep elevation changes. Signs have been replaced at some of the junctions and access points from other trails. More signs are needed, but old ones are still present in some areas. The trail was maintained again this spring (2012) by NYC funded under ARRA to clean up the largest problems along the entire length of the trail.

#261 Hoovey Canyon – A 3.8 mile trail that starts at FR 357 (pine canyon) and ends at Witch Ridge Trail. About 50% of this trail was maintained by NYC in the spring of 2012 starting from the Pine canyon road up. Due to the position of the trail being primarily in a canyon bottom, expect to find some areas washed out. New sign added at the junction of Witch Ridge.

#263 Saulsbury - Trail signs added to clarify route and boundary markers. SCC worked this trail in March 2011 funded by ARRA\*. Most of this 4.4 mile trail is now in good shape and easy to follow. Only received minor damage from the fire and flooding.

#263A Saulsbury Saddle – This 0.5 mile trail was maintained by SCC in March 2011 funded by ARRA. The crew re-established and maintained the trail from the saddle to the junction of Rock Creek. New signs were added with the help of some local volunteers. Only received minor damage from the fire and flooding.

#264 Pole Bridge – this trail has yet to be maintained since the Horseshoe II fire and is in poor condition.

#266 Cottonwood Canyon - Trail signs added to clarify route and boundary markers. This 4.0 mile trail has not been surveyed since the fire and summer rains.

#267a Rak – Trail repairs made and signs added this January by F.S. Personnel.

#269 Mormon Ridge – Trail signs added to clarify route and boundary markers. Upper end of trail, cleared and maintained by CREC funded by Fire Rehab in October 2011.

#270 Crest – maintained extensively after the Horseshoe II fire and summer rains. 3 CREC crews funded by Fire Rehab, maintained the trail from Barfoot to Monte Vista. Several new signs have been installed, and more are on the way. Most of the trail junctions have now been resigned, and the rest are targeted to be up by the end of the year. Sierra Club in June 2012, re-cleared the trail from Rustler Park to Chiricahua Peak. The trail was also cleared out to Monte Vista Peak during this time.

#270a Chiricahua Peak – this 0.7 mile trail was maintained in June 2012 by the Sierra Club.

#270b Crest – this trail links Sentinel Peak to Junction Saddle. CREC funded by Fire Rehab in October 2011 maintained this trail to Aspen saddle with the help of local volunteers and again by the Sierra Club in 2012. Conditions are fair past that.

#270d Crest- This is the trail that links Aspen Saddle to Chiricahua Saddle; a long time ago it was called the "Fir Trail" as well as "Chiricahua cut off". This short 1.2 mile trail was cleared by a volunteer project in September 2010. Cleared again in March 2011. Favored well after the fire, although the sign at Aspen saddle needs a new post and the first couple hundred yards of the trail past that are faint and hard to see. Once one gets past this segment the trail is okay to Chiricahua Saddle.

#272 Green Canyon – This trail was maintained in the spring of 2012 by NYC funded by ARRA. The trail being situated in the bottom of a steep canyon will make it susceptible to washouts for the next few years. New sign added at the trail head off Pine canyon road (FR357).

#273 Fife Canyon – Conditions same as Green Canyon trail, but no post fire maintenance has been done to this trail.

#275 Rattlesnake – No new information has been observed. Accessing the trail head is going to be harder than it was in the past, due to flood damage on FR 357 in the vicinity of "Methodist Camp". The trail should still be in fair condition, as some volunteers have cleared the trail since the fire. Signs were burned at the junction of Witch Ridge.

#277 Middlemarch – This 2.3 mile trail located in the Dragoon range was brushed and cleared out by ACE in early 2010 funded by a grant from the State.

#279 Cochise – This 5 mile trail in the Dragoons was maintained by ACE in the spring (2010). Due to time constraints they could not get to all the maintenance needs from the "divide" to the end of the trail on the west side of the range. This would account for 1.5 miles of trail that still needs maintenance. Past work was funded by a grant from the State. The last 1.5 miles of this trail may be picked up this year or in 2012 depending on grant funds.

#280 Silver Peak – Two CREC crew projects have now completed the majority of maintenance needs on this 4.6 mile trail as of December 2010. CREC crews were funded by ARRA and made many improvements to the trail. A much needed wall was added to the low-mid. section of the trail where the trail bench had "fallen off" the slope. Also the upper end is now clear of all the over-growth and a few new signs have been added to make things more clear. Silver Peak was not within the Horseshoe II fire area.

#333 Bear Wallow spring trail – Was heavily impacted by the Horseshoe II fire. About half of the 1.0 mile trail was burned to a High Severity level. Most of the damage was done to the middle of the trail, so both end of the trail are not impacted as severe. With the help of local volunteers and CREC funded by Fire Rehab, the trail was cleared in October 2011. In June 2012 the trail was well maintained by the Sierra Club. During this time the spring box was cleaned out and was flowing normal. Sign for Bear Wallow trail at Round Park junction (on the Crest trail) was burned, and should be replaced by the fall.

#334 Centella – This 1.9 mile trail was maintained by the Sierra Club in June 2012. Signs are all in good shape.

#337 Fly Peak – This 1.1 mile trail was maintained by the Sierra Club in June 2012. Both sides of the peak are in good condition, however folks seem to have a easier time negotiating the trail if they come up from the north side and then down the south face to “Round Park”.

#352 Mormon Canyon – This 2.8 mile trail was impacted by the post fire flooding due to the location of the trail in the bottom of the canyon. In October CREC funded by Fire Rehab cleared the trail and maintained the switchbacks in the upper reaches of the trail.

#361 Ojo Agua Fria – This 1.0 mile trail was heavily impacted by the Horseshoe II fire and summer rains. However some basic clearing was done to the trail in October 2011. Work was completed by local volunteers and CREC funded by Fire Rehab. The upper end of the trail was rebuilt and a new sign was installed at the Crest junction in June 2012 by the Sierra Club. The spring was also cleaned out and re-plumbed in October. The tank did suffer a direct hit by a fallen tree, but we were able to cut it out and make tank repairs to restore it to about 95% capacity. Spring is still flowing great after the fire, at about 3 gallons a minute.

**Other plans for Chiricahua trails in 2012:\*\***

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## **Nogales District:**

### **Springs-**

It's best to contact the district for current observations and conditions.

### **Trails –**

#67 Gardner Canyon – Lower end of trail from trail head to Walker Basin trail junction was cleared by fire crews this spring accessing the Walker fire in the summer of 2010. The upper section of trail was significantly improved with regional grant money that derives funds generated by outfitter guide permits. The Forest Service employed the Wilmont State Fire Crew to get work done. This approximately 4 mile trail is now in good shape from the trail head to the junction of the Supper Trail.

#77 Vault Mine trail - Was cleared by CREC funded by a combination of State grants and ARRA in 2010.

#88 Madera Nature – Local volunteers in the Green Valley Hiking club cleaned portions of this trail in the spring and generally keep this trail free of obstructions through out the year.

#100 Atascosa – This 2.5 mile trail was impacted by the 2011 Murphy fire, also burning down the Atascosa look out. The trail did get some minor rehab work after the fire from the BAER team.

#134 Super – This trail was cleared by CREC, funded by a combination of State grants and ARRA in 2010.

#136 Walker Basin – Trail was maintained by fire crews this spring after the Walker fire in 2010.

#140 Agua Caliente – This trail was cleared from Josephine saddle to Vault mine by CREC, funded by a combination of State grants and ARRA in 2010.

#144 Crest – 2.0 mile trail cleared by CREC, funded by a combination of State grants and ARRA in 2010. From what has been observed this year the trail is still looking okay.

#145 Florida – Lower end of trail was maintained by Wilmont State Fire crew in 2010. They also helped install the new gate on the fence line close to the Florida Work Center. In April 2011 CREC funded by ARRA cleared the 4.6 mile trail from top to bottom.

#146 East Sawmill Canyon – This 4.4 mile trail received maintenance to the upper 2 miles by CREC funded by ARRA in April 2011. The crew was able to restore the trail from Florida Saddle down to about Sawmill Spring. In May of 2012 the trail was maintained from the bottom up to meet the work done last year. Now the entire trail should be in good condition. However with the amount of trees killed by the Florida fire, the area will be subject to problems for several more years.

#149 Cave Canyon – This 3.0 mile trail cleared by Wilmont State Fire crew in 2010.

#372 Old Baldy – Trail cleared by CREC, funded by a combination of State grants and ARRA in 2010.

# Carrie Nation Mine trail – Cleared by volunteers from the Green Valley Hiking club in early spring of 2010.

#940 Four Springs – Southern Arizona Hiking Club volunteers provided maintenance to the upper reaches of this trail between Shovel Saddle and McCleary Saddle in November 2010. In April 2011 CREC crew funded by ARRA provided maintenance to the remaining section of trail from Shovel Saddle to the Crest trail Junction. This trail is about 3.5 miles.

**Other Plans for 2012:\*\***

## **Sierra Vista District:**

### **Springs –**

It's best to contact the district for current observations and conditions.

### **Trails -**

Many of the trails on the district received maintenance work in 2010, 2011 and 2012. A large scale trash clean up project removed well over 12,000 lbs. of garbage from the Miller Peak Wilderness in October 2010. This was done largely with the help of SCC and CREC over the course of several weeks. Users should notice a much cleaner look to the areas along side major system trails in the Huachucas compared to the last several years. The 2011 Monument fire impacted many trails between Ash canyon and Carr Canyon, and repairs have already begun to restore these trails.

#102 Reef Townsite loop – This trail was brushed and cleaned by Scout Troop 444 in the fall of 2010. In the near future we would like to add some more signage to clarify some of the trail locations as well as fix existing signage.

#103 Crest/Arizona Trail– less than half of the 11.0 mile trail was affected by the 2011 Monument fire. After the fire the BAER team was able to implement some erosion control feature in the trail to prevent damage by the post fire rains. In October CREC, funded mainly by Title II (Eastern Arizona Resource Advisory Committee, aka RAC) and some Fire Rehab funding maintained about 5 miles of the Crest. Most of the work was focused around Miller Peak, where work was done to rebuild switchbacks and remove the overgrowth of trees. Signs at several of the junction were burned and should be replaced in 2012.

#104 Lutz Canyon – This 3.5 mile trail was impacted by the Monument fire and post fire rains. The lower end of the trail being located close to the main drainage has been impacted the hardest by the flooding. In November 2011 and again in March 2012, CREC funded by Fire Rehab maintained the entire trail. New signs are installed at the top and bottom of the trail.

#106 Miller Canyon – Impacted by the Monument fire and post fire rains, especially in the first mile from the trail head. Some work has been done to make repairs to the trail. In November CREC funded by Fire Rehab started working from the junction of the Crest trail down, rebuilding about a mile of the trail. The trail maintenance has been completed as of April 2012, and new signs have been installed where needed.

#107 Carr Peak – CREC maintained this 4.1 mile trail with funding from ARRA in October 2010. Additional clearing was done by CREC in April 2011. Carr Peak trail was affected mostly by the post fire rains, most of which is minimal. Erosion control features are the main maintenance needs on this trail, and should be attended to in 2012.

#108 Carr Peak Spur - CREC maintained this 0.3 mile trail with funding from ARRA in October 2010.

#109 Comfort Spring – 2.3 mile trail was maintained by CREC funded by ARRA in May 2011.

#110 Ida Canyon – Trail was maintained by CREC, funded by ARRA early in 2010. The crew maintained the trail from the Wilderness boundary to Bear Spring. This leaves a short section of about a half mile from Bear spring to the junction of the Crest trail that was not worked. However this trail should be in fair shape, although there may be some down trees making it difficult for horses to navigate.

#111 Hunter Canyon – This 1.1 mile trail was maintained from Miller canyon to Hunter canyon by CREC, funded by Fire Rehab in April 2012. The crew was able to make some good improvements to the trail as well as repairing and replacing most of the needed signs. The Monument fire did impact the trail, but over all, the trail is okay. The worst damage was around drainage crossings.

#112 Oversite Canyon – This 2.5 mile trail was maintained in two phases by CREC funded by ARRA. The entire stretch has been cleared and 70% of the tread has been maintained. This makes it easy to follow compared to how it has been in the past. Latest work was completed in April 2011. It is unclear how much the Monument fire affected the trail at this time. The upper end of the trail was still okay in November 2011.

#122 Hamburg – Trail was cleared of downfall early in 2010 up to the junction with Pat Scott Canyon and Wisconsin Canyon. Possible ARRA funded crew will provide further maintenance in 2012.

#123 Pat Scott Canyon – 2.1 mile trail has received maintenance from CREC funded by ARRA in April 2011. Most of the trail has now been cleared and tread has been maintained up from the bottom about half way. The trail is in good shape and should be easy to follow up to the Crest.

#124 Clark Spring – This 1.6 mile trail was heavily impacted by the Monument fire and post fire flooding. In September and October 2011, NYC funded by ARRA, was able to maintain most of the trail. The area inside the Wilderness is still in need of some work, but everything outside the Wilderness is great for Bikers.

#125 Arizona trail (Scotia Canyon/East of Canelo Segment) – A short reroute of the trail near the road crossing of Scotia Canyon by the Arizona Trail Association (ATA) made this area of the trail much easier to hike. The work was done with volunteers from the ATA members in the local area in 2010. This reroute moved the trail off of a large hill that was heavily eroded due to road water run off and put it on a much nicer line on an old road bed in Scotia canyon. With the addition of new signs one should have no question where the trail is now. Continued Volunteer projects are ongoing to maintain this trail.

#126 Old Sawmill Spring – This 0.7 mile trail was maintained by Scout Troop 444 in the spring of 2010. A CREC crew funded by ARRA made additional improvements in October 2010.

#135 John Cooper – This 1.1 mile trail was severely impacted by the Monument fire and post fire flooding. Extensive damage, mainly concentrated to the drainage crossing, had been scoured down to bed rock by heavy flooding. In September and October NYC funded by ARRA totally rebuilt the trail and

restored it to like new conditions. Due to the nature of the fire's impact, we can expect some areas to be problematic over the next few years. The hope is to keep this trail in good shape as we go these critical next few years. With help from the local Dawn to Dust mountain bike club and local volunteers, we should be able to keep this trail in good shape. Additionally, the annual John Cooper race is still planned for 2012. For more information contact Sun and Spokes bike shop or the Sierra Vista Ranger District office.

#138 Perimeter – A 3.7 mile trail that links Carr Canyon to Miller canyon. This trail was lightly affected by the Monument fire. In October, NYC funded by ARRA maintained this entire trail.

#398 Guindani - This 4.2 mile loop trail was maintained by SCC funded by ARRA in May 2011. Additional trail markers were added for clarification.

**Other Plans for 2012:\*\***

1. Continued trail maintenance to all the trails impacted by the Monument fire.
2. Signs burned in the fire will be replaced.
3. Extend Perimeter Trail from Carr Canyon to Ramsey Canyon. This short segment has many hurdles to cover as it passes over not just Forest Service land but State land and Nature Conservancy property. All parties must have proper clearances as well as addressed concerns of private landowners who still have property within the boundary of the Nature Conservancy. Positive progress is being made here and looks like we may soon be able to see this come to fruition. Due to the fire, this project will not be a high priority. Please understand we must maintain what we have before adding new trails to the area.

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\*CREC = Coconino Rural Environment Corps

\*ACE = American Conservation Experience

\*SCC = Southwest Conservation Corps

\*NYC = Northwest Youth Corps

\*ARRA = American Recovery and Reinvestment Act

\*BAER = Burn Area Emergency Response

\*\* Please note- this is not a complete list of trails or upcoming work plans, this is merely a list of projects in the near future that have the most realistic plans to compete at this given time.

Thank you to all the Volunteers, clubs, youth crews, AmeriCorps, and partners that have made so much of this possible. My sincere apologies to anything and anyone that was not included here. – Zac Ribbing

Information provided by John "Chris" Callard (Zone Wilderness) & Zac Ribbing (Zone Trails/Wilderness)