



CASCADE CHRONICLES

Issue 5, 2025

The mission of Cascade Volunteers is to connect individuals and communities to the Willamette National Forest and adjacent public lands through programs, stewardship, and education.

Every Visitor is a Steward

Willamette National Forest

Please Tread Lightly & Keep the Wilderness Wild

- Pack It In, Pack It Out – Take all trash, food scraps, and toilet paper with you.
- Stay on Durable Surfaces – Use existing trails and campsites. Don't create new ones.
- Respect Wildlife & Solitude – Give animals space and keep noise low for others
- Be Self-Sufficient – No services may be available. Carry maps, first aid, and extra supplies.
- Minimize Fire Impacts – Use a stove instead of a campfire. Never leave coals or flames unattended.
- Leave It as You Found It – Don't build structures, cut vegetation, or move natural features.

Longbow Organizational Camp – Cayla Kennedy, Sweet Home Ranger District Archaeologist

Originally named the Long Bow Forest Camp, the Longbow Organization Camp is a group facility constructed by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) on the Sweet Home Ranger District of the Willamette National Forest (WNF). Starting during the winter season of 1937-1938, the Camp Cascadia workers (Co. 2907) completed the ten-acre campground during the winter season of 1938-1939. Their work was supervised by the US Forest Service. They built six sleeping shelters, a community kitchen with attached dining, an amphitheater that seats seventy-five people, and a water system for the campground. A footbridge crossing the South Santiam River connecting the campground with the road north of the river was removed in 1974, and modern bathrooms were installed.



While US Forest Service's rustic style choices influenced construction throughout the Pacific Northwest, the design for Longbow reflects a degree of originality and stylistic variation. The shelters are enclosed on three sides with the east/southeast facade facing the river with a small stone fireplace just outside. In each, four sets of bunks are made of flat boards supported by small logs, with exterior vertical log construction and shingled gable ends. The community kitchen shelter was based on the Clark Creek Campground picnic shelter and was constructed in two stages, the first in 1937 and the second in 1938.

Despite several flood events between 1948 and 1996, much of the original historic character of Longbow has remained intact. Efforts to maintain the camp since construction have occurred mostly in-kind to preserve the historic construction, except for modern vault toilets designed to blend in with the construction style. For many years, the campground hosted a CCC alumni and family picnic to remember the work completed by Co. 2097, memorialized in a sign near the entrance. Another sign on the picnic shelter honors restoration work by [HistoriCorps](#) volunteers, and Job Corps participants completed in 2022 at Longbow. In 2025, a team from Cascade Volunteers started a project to replace the roof on three sleeping shelters.



Evidence of Those Before Us –*Tim Fox, McKenzie River Ranger District Archaeologist*

Stories live in places. And the Willamette National Forest is a place rich with them. Like chapters in a book of the land, they are layered one atop another. On the McKenzie River Ranger District, the earliest chapter that includes humans may date back some 13,000 years and the most recent is still being written.

Given that people of European descent didn't set foot in the McKenzie valley until 1812, most of these stories predate their arrival. Because pre-contact material culture relied primarily on plant and animal-based resources that decompose rapidly, the remaining physical evidence of these stories is almost entirely made of stone. Most of this evidence consists of obsidian and chert debris—called debitage—generated by flintknappers at work making tools. The tools themselves turn up less frequently and offer clues as to the activities taking place in the locations where they are found. In a broader sense, when artifact type and location are considered together, they tell a story of landscape-scale use and movement patterns: where people lived, how they lived there, and when.

Clovis-style point found, McKenzie River Rd



To find and protect these stories on Forest Service-managed lands, the agency employs archaeologists who use various methods. These methods include consulting old maps and documents as well as conducting survey grids on foot and undertaking subsurface excavations. This work is usually associated with projects that will disturb the ground and so might inadvertently damage or destroy a cultural site. But the Forest Service is also tasked with undertaking non-project-related surveys to expand our general understanding of the human story on the lands they manage. Why?

Cultural sites are like endangered species, with one critical difference. Even endangered species can reproduce. Cultural sites cannot. Once they are lost, they are gone forever as are their stories. That is why it's important to leave artifacts in place if you find them.

Glacier Creek at Obsidian Cliffs (clovis point source)

As tempting as it is to pocket a beautiful projectile point and take it home as a souvenir, doing so is like ripping a page from the book of the land. The contribution it might make to the greater story is lost.

Instead, you can become a positive contributor to the story by reporting the findings to the archaeologist. If you can include photos and a location on a map, all the better. In this act, the story of the land becomes a deeper part of your story as well.

In addition to protecting pre-contact sites, the Forest Service also needs your help protecting historic sites, like lodges, trail shelters, lookouts, railroad grades, and other structures over fifty years old. Taken all together, precontact and historic sites represent the heritage of not just Willamette, but our country.

For those with an interest in helping preserve this heritage, there are volunteer opportunities with groups like Friends of Fish Lake who help maintain the historic Fish Lake Remount Depot and need site hosts every summer, and [HistoriCorps](#) who undertake restoration projects on historic structures.

2024 Heritage Team at Obsidian Cliffs
(Tim, Bianca, Natalie, Noah, Isabella)



A True Team Effort! – Stacy Rudisill & Jim Suitor

After months of planning, multiple days of some intense labor, and the help of a jackhammer, Cascade Volunteers is proud to announce the installation of the first in a series of Santiam Wagon Road (SWR) Interpretive Panels at Fish Lake Remount Station. First unveiled at the SWR Exhibition in September 2024, the sign is the result of hundreds of hours of work involving volunteer historians and educators, WNF archaeologists, authors, graphic designers and hands-on laborers.

Beautifully presented and complimenting the natural surroundings, the sign beckons visitors to continue along what is thought to be an original section of the wagon road that leads into the historic Fish Lake site.

The installation team included Phil, from Friends of Fish Lake, who harvested the red cedar from his property, then prepped and hand peeled the logs to build the sign base; Tom, a skilled craftsman who drafted the sign base design plans ensuring ADA compliance and oversaw its assemblage; and Jim, who oversaw the installation of the panel itself and with the help of his grandsons began the arduous process of digging the holes to accommodate the large log posts. All endured 90-degree temps in the blazing hot sun as they battled against solid lava rock, gravity and the weight of the cedar posts to assemble the sign base.

Dave, Jim, and Phil discussing finishing touches



Tom: drilling holes, Phil: assisting

Everyone agreed that Jim had made the right decision to rent the jackhammer.

This wonderful project shines a spotlight on the nationally recognized Santiam Wagon Road and the rich cultural history of the people who utilized the corridor since time immemorial, while at the same time bringing together multiple organizations and dozens of folks from all walks of life. It truly is a team effort!

“With humble gratitude I thank all those involved in making this event finally happen.” – Jim

Looking Ahead - The next panel is currently in production and will be placed at the Mountain House Trailhead of the SWR in the Sweet Home Ranger District.

Winter Recreation Preparations – Bob Young

As the snow is already beginning to fall in the mountains the Oregon Nordic Club ramps up volunteer work to get ski/snowshoe trails and shelters ready for use. There is always trail maintenance needed to keep them clear and well-marked. We rely on groups like the Salamanders with their certified sawyers to help with removing downed trees. There are 3 remote shelters plus the Roger Schmidt shelter at Ray Benson Sno-Park stocked with firewood. The three shelters: North Blowout, Island Junction, and Brandenburg were replaced by the Forest Service and many volunteers in 2006. The exact visitor numbers are unknown; however, they get a lot of use as they are accessed by ski/snowshoe trails and the perimeter snowmobile trails.

Each year we have joined the Mount Jefferson Snowmobile Club to stock the firewood that is often used up before the winter is over.

This year our scheduled workday was affected by the government shutdown and the “cease volunteer activities” directive for CV partners. Fortunately, the MJSC was able to proceed and with over 20 participants all 4 Ray Benson shelters were stocked. A big thank you for their work and continued support.

Mountain Meadow – Cheryl Friesen, USFS Science Liaison/Ecologist, Retired Volunteer

The Willamette National Forest's rich landscape has provided opportunities for hundreds of researchers over the past century. Ecosystems are complex, and the depth of our ignorance is profound. But intrepid souls, armed with calipers and cameras and a variety of other recording devices have scrambled through the forest seeking answers to often simple questions that, in aggregate, can lead to profound insights. This column will be a regular feature to highlight the often-surprising findings from these endeavors. For more information on the rich Science-Management partnership on Willamette, check out the [H.J. Andrews Experimental Forest webpage](#).

Mountain Meadow Morning

Hey everybody! The sun is just about to rise over the horizon. Here comes the heat and light – fuel for our daytime industries! Night crew members: meadow voles and deer mice, pocket gophers and star-nosed moles -- time to duck down for the day in the labyrinth of tunnels beneath my roots. Your underground activity aerates and refreshes my soils. Plants: time to start your engines! Dew will be evaporating off your leaves and petals – let photosynthesis begin to roar. Pollination crew – let's get bbb-busy! Bees and flies: time to start your awakening-shivers. You little ones, you know you will warm sooner and be first to hit the flowers for their nectar. Bumble bees, oh ye of heavy body, your turn will come as you are released from your nighttime torpor and spread your wings to fly. Hummingbirds, it's also your time to shake and shiver and enter the fray. Flowering plants await!

Ants! I haven't forgotten you. I know you are key to moving seeds around when wind and gravity just don't cut it. Time to get to work! Elk...you cows of the mountains...time to rise from your grassy beds and chow down – every bite means rejuvenation of my grasses and forbs.

And the morning unfolds in one of the most diverse ecosystems in the Cascades....

The power of the sun awakens the meadow community. There is industry. There is order. There is movement. Some activities were unknown to humans before Dr. Julia Jones and her students started watching and taking meticulous notes. Over 6 summers of observation, they documented 137,916 interactions between 178 different flowering plants and 688 flower-visiting species. Drawing on wells of patience, perseverance, and dedication to discovery, the young researchers uncovered a complicated world. They learned that roughly one third of the species visiting the flowers are actually forest-dwellers, slipping into meadows to mate; one third are meadow-residents that make their home across several meadows scattered on the landscape; and one third are full-time meadow-dwellers that are perfectly content to hang out within a couple hundred yards of their nest sites.

Meadows occupy less than 2% of the Willamette National Forest, but they are hotspots for biodiversity. Do yourself a favor: go sit in the middle of a meadow, watch the sunrise, absorb the energy, and observe the bustle that happens every day, whether someone is watching or not.



Photo by Tanya Hardy

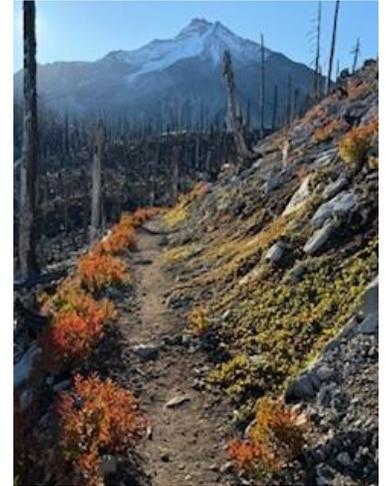
The Solitude & Spectacle of a Jefferson Park Sunrise – Magnificent! – *Melinda Martin*

Recently, I found a piece of magic that only an early start and the turning of the season can provide.

Well before most were stirring, I pulled into the Whitewater Trailhead, eager to hike into one of the jewels of the Cascade Mountains: Jefferson Park. The air was crisp, carrying that unmistakable edge of a cool fall morning. Looking west, the full moon was just beginning its descent, fading into the morning sky. Simultaneously, the sun was rising to the east, lighting the nearby peaks with the first light of day.

For the first few miles, the trail belonged entirely to me. There is a profound stillness that accompanies being the first one on a path, a feeling of stepping into a pristine, undisturbed world and connecting to nature with ease. The climb took me up to the ridgeline where Whitewater Trail meets the Triangulation Trail. From there, I continued around the lower hills, soaking in the expanding views. This area is heavily burned from the Santiam Canyon fire of 2020. Before 2020, the dense forest yielded only glimpses of Mount Jefferson. Now, the views are vast and plentiful. The burned forest gave way to a thick treed hillside, and I soon crossed the rustic log bridge over a small creek that marks the entrance to Jefferson Park.

The signs of autumn were everywhere. The low-growing huckleberry bushes were ablaze with color, carpeting the ground in brilliant reds and oranges.



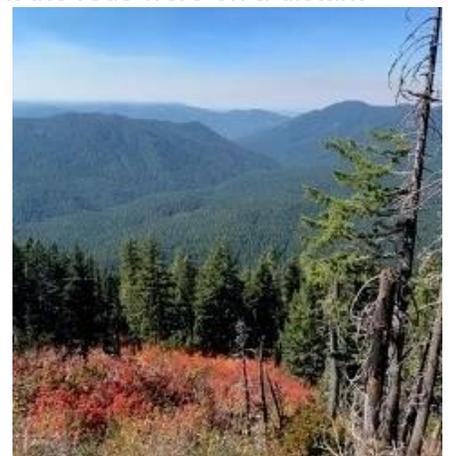
When I stopped at Scout Lake for a morning snack, the reward was breathtaking. Still and silent, the water was a perfect mirror, capturing a dreamy reflection of Mount Jefferson's rugged peaks. Despite the prime location and the incredible display of nature, the solitude was maintained. I saw only a handful of other people out there, all respectful and quiet, and equally enthused as I was about the perfect day. If you ever have the chance, set that early alarm—some of the greatest beauty awaits those who are willing to greet the dawn.

The Whitewater Trailhead is accessed from Highway 22 about 10 miles east of Detroit, and then 7 miles from the highway to the trailhead on a very nice gravel road.

Not What I Expected on Olallie Mountain – *Michael Smith*

On the last push to the summit of Olallie Mountain, Jeff asked me what I thought the reds were on a distant mountain to our northwest, across the Three Sisters Wilderness. I wasn't sure if they were maples and even mentioned the possibility of a local die off of conifers where orange needles can look red from a distance.

A hundred yards later, carrying packs, saws, and other trail working tools, hiking on a narrow trail where I did definitely did not want to trip, I discovered a third possibility. Below us were large patches of vivid red huckleberry plants. I quickly averted my gaze, however, not wanting to tempt my body to go where my eyes were looking. Huckleberries are a common plant we cut out in order to work on a log we want to remove. The berry season had been over for a good month, but I had fond memories of being first to the bottom of Lowder Mountain a month prior, after our log out there, not because I was the fastest hiker — I am closer to the back these days — but because I left the



top before anybody else. I knew there were huge berries at the trailhead and wanted them. They were delicious. My job is to support the crew, but huckleberries are another matter. The crew's founder, the late Ron Robinson, told me he loved his huckleberries. I picked some for him and brought them to his house when he was no longer able to go out.



After summiting earlier than expected, due to another trail crew's prior log out of some of the top trail, we hiked back out. I stopped to take pictures of the huckleberry plants I had just seen. Well down past the junction, re-entering the forest, where I planned to take a short rest before the final mile, I was on a stretch of trail that dropped off steeply to the east. Out of the corner of my eye, something red caught my attention. I looked and saw a small maple far below, completely red. I've seen a lot of small maples that have been brilliant in autumn.

Before the outing, I thought my recollection of the day would be work I did on the mountain, using the big saws on large logs, cutting out the small stuff, pushing logs off trails, and a tough hike.

Nope. The memory is all the red I saw.

French Pete Creek Trail Appreciative Trail Users – Jeff Krueger



My wife and I were hiking the French Pete Creek trail last week and I wanted to express our gratitude for the recent trail work that has recently been done just past the first creek crossing.

Almost 35 years ago, my girlfriend (now wife) and I were camped at French Pete Campground and did a day hike up French Pete Creek. We got as far as the second creek crossing and then stopped for lunch and it was at that point that we decided to get married! As you probably know, it's one of the most beautiful spots in

Oregon. Anyway, it's been probably 30 years since we've hiked that trail, so we decided to go back and see if we could get to that spot.

We had read on several trail blogs that the trail was just about impossible to follow and overgrown after the first creek crossing, but we wanted to give it a shot anyway. We were delighted to find that the trail had recently been brushed out, and we made it all the way. It was a great experience.



Jeff & Sally

I'm not sure if the trail work was done by an NFS trail crew or volunteers, but I wanted to pass along our gratitude especially considering USFS budget cuts. It's reassuring to know good work is still getting done.

Willamette National Forest, Obsidians Lend a Helping Hand – *Lyndell Wilken, CV Love Your Lake Program Coordinator*

The Obsidian hiking club offered a stewardship hike led by me. Campsites and fire rings were cleaned, trash was removed from the shorelines and several fire rings removed that were too close to the water.

Thanks to the club for lending a helping hand.



Middle Rosary Lake



Chris, Ian, Paul, Eva

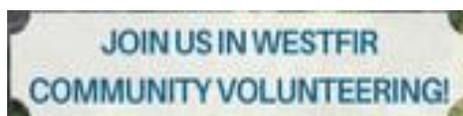
Lunch Break



Middle Fork Willamette Watershed Council Volunteer Opportunities – *Dassy Smolianski,*



The watershed council has volunteer opportunities with our restoration program.

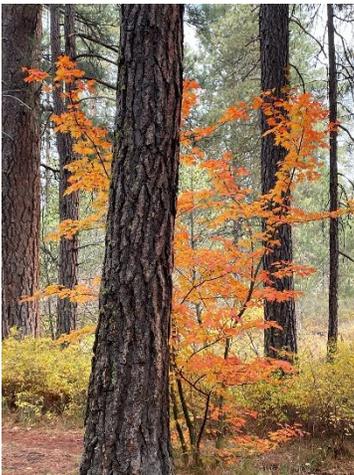


Within the education program, the largest area where we need volunteers is the *Salmon Watch Program*. During September and November, students from across Lane County participate in the *Salmon Watch Program* to witness the magic of the salmon life cycle. Volunteers lead four stream-side learning stations on the topics of water quality, riparian ecology, salmon biology, and macroinvertebrates. New volunteers are required to attend at least one of the two training options held in August and September. While volunteer recruitment and training have already passed this year, and we are in the middle of field trips, we would love to connect again before training next year! If you would like to learn more, please take a look at the *Salmon Watch* website [Here](#).

For more info on volunteer restoration opportunities, please feel free to reach out to our Restoration Manager, Virginia. Her email is: virginia@middleforkwillamette.org

All the volunteer opportunities, and more, are shared in the Middle Fork Willamette Watershed Council Newsletter. You can sign-up for the Newsletter on the website [Here](#).

Happy Fall to You All! – Rhonda Levine



The days are shorter and cooler and soon to be darker. And wetter. We need this to really appreciate the light and growth Spring will bring in a few months.

We've made some changes to your Newsletter team. Norma, my good friend and co-editor, is stepping away. We have done Newsletters together for over 6 years and she will be missed but still consulted. We are now working as a team to inform and connect you to what's going on out there with Cascade Volunteers. There are four of us...me, Susan, Karol and Sanjana... bringing you articles and photos about what is important and interesting, informative and educational and meaningful.

You can expect to see a publication every 2 months. We encourage you to volunteer, as we are doing, to make a difference. And if you'd like to write something for **YOUR** Newsletter... please do.

Due to yearend holidays, the deadline for the December Newsletter is **Monday, 12/8/25**. Please send your submissions to rhondaxo@comcast.net.