



The Trail Companion

Summer 2006

Candelabra Redwood Trail Opens!

By Hank Magnuski

On June 3rd, 2006, the Trail Center celebrated National Trails Day by working on the last three problem sections of our Butano project. Thanks to the hard work of the 27 volunteers that participated in the trailbuild, we were able to complete these segments and declare the new trail “open for business” at the end of the day.

National Trails Day is sponsored by the American Hiking Society and approximately 1100 events were registered around the country for this first Saturday in June.

We had three main objectives for the day: bypassing a large blowdown on the upper section of the trail, creating new tread through the Redwood Flat, and making a connecting switchback so the lower access trail could join the mainline tread going to the Candelabra Tree.

Crew leaders Hank Magnuski and Justin Knowles went to the top of the hill and worked on the bypass and the Redwood Flat. Further down Tim Oren, Pat Oren, Scott Heeschen and Frank Rowland tackled design and grading of the new switchback that connects the lower and upper sections.

In addition to these tasks, a lot of brushing, clearing and poison-oak



Trail Center Volunteers celebrate the opening of the Candelabra Redwood Trail at Butano State Park. Photo by Hank Magnuski.

removal was needed to open up overgrown patches of the trail. Dave Croker and his assistants handled most of these overgrown spots, making the passage easy for hikers. We also thank Ranger Michael Grant for bringing out his chain saw and removing a downed tree that was blocking the main tread.

By 3 pm all the critical tasks were complete and we gathered for a ribbon-cutting ceremony that marked the completion of two years of work at Butano.

The day ended with a BBQ prepared by Larry Stites (with the assistance of Cindy Jose) and the awarding of “trailhead prizes” provided

by the many sponsors of National Trails Day 2006.

None of this would have been possible, of course, without the many volunteers that have helped at Butano for the builds done since 2004. The Trail Center appreciates the time, energy and skills given to opening up this new resource.

This is a quiet, wooded, beautiful 1.5 mile trail with a fantastic old-growth Redwood as its centerpiece. All Trail Center members are invited to enjoy this major addition to Butano State Park.

The Trail Center

The Trail Center is a non-profit volunteer organization formed in 1983 to provide and promote quality non-motorized trail opportunities for all people in San Mateo, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Alameda and San Francisco counties. The Trail Center works with government agencies, outdoor enthusiasts and other interested parties to create and manage an interconnected network of trails for the five-county region. The Trail Center publishes The Trail Companion and organizes trail building, repair and mapping projects.

The Board of Directors meets every month on the second Monday of the month at 6:30 p.m. at the Peninsula Conservation Center.

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Message from the President

Hello Trail Center Members, Volunteers, and Supporters!

This marks our first Trail Companion of the year. As you will see, the Trail Center has been very busy over the last 10 months, with projects in a number of different California State and San Mateo and Santa Clara County Parks. We are especially proud of the completion of the Redwood Flats/Candelabra Trail in Butano State Park, which our volunteers laid out and completed. In doing so, we discovered the Candelabra Redwood, a most unusual tree with five major vertical 2 foot diameter trunks coming out of a huge base. This new trail provides you with another cool summer time hiking option. Check it out!

I apologize for the long delay in publishing the Trail Companion. Our primary focus on trail projects, our continued operation with no paid staff, and a shortage of volunteers to work on office type tasks has hindered our ability to get out the newsletter as frequently as we would like.

More volunteer support in this realm would be most welcome. However, we continue to field enthusiastic work teams and to receive grateful thanks from our financially strapped parks, so our expertise is needed more than ever.

As a visit to our web site, www.trailcenter.org shows, we have projects planned through the end of the year, and it is our hope that you will be joining us on one or more of them. If you cannot make it to a build, you can consider helping in other ways, as there are many other tasks which do not involve direct trail building.

Just describe you interests and talents to our Volunteer Coordinator, at volunteer@trailcenter.org. Of course, you financial support is always appreciated as well.

Sincerely,
David Taylor
President, Trail Center

In Memory of Robert Brown

The Trail Center Board of Directors was very saddened to hear about Bob Brown's passing last year. My contact with him was limited to interactions associated with Peninsula Conservation Center, but within that environment he seemed like the wise father and was very concerned about the organizations that work within the PCC. I usually saw Bob at the Housing Council meetings where we would make decisions about how to run the building (his generosity was a large factor in the purchase of the building), and I remember after one of those meetings that he asked me to stick around afterwards. This was right after we had sent out a plea for help and were talking of closing shop. Bob wondered how he could help out and apologized for not being able to do trailwork (he was in his 70's, for goodness' sake). After thanking him for his generous contributions through the years, I told Bob that we had several people who had expressed interest in joining our Board since our plea for help had gone out. He seemed very relieved as we continued talking. I always appreciated that conversation and the concern he showed.

- Scott Heeschen, on behalf of the entire Trail Center organization

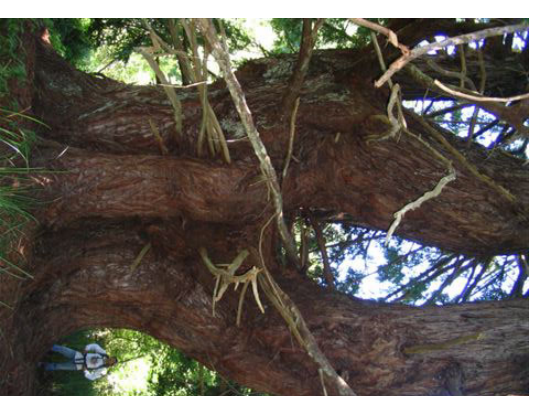


View of the top branches of the Candelabra Redwood, from the top of the main trunk. Photo by Francesca Bjorge, intrepid tree climber.

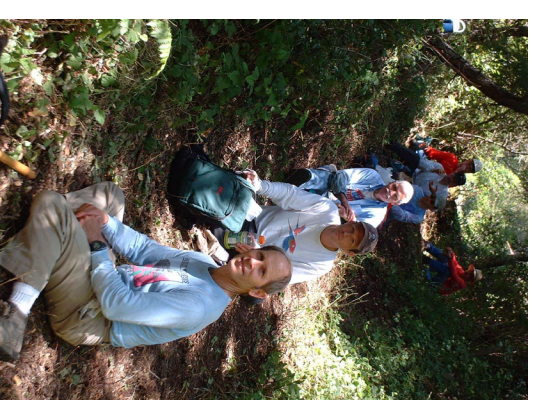


Volunteers at the May 13, 2006 build listen carefully to the safety talk given by Crew Leader Dave Croker. Photo by Ed Casper.

Photos from Butano Work Days



Bill Bjorge dwarfed by the Candelabra Redwood. Photo by Francesca Bjorge.



The brave members of the Poison Oak Team (July 15, 2005). Photo by Ed Casper.



Look out poison oak - here comes Dave Croker! Photo by Ed Casper.



Volunteers Julia and Francesca make trail build lunch breaks a family affair. Photo by Ed Casper.



Volunteers at the September 10, 2005 build apply bug repellent in preparation for a productive work day. Photo by Ed Casper.

More Trail Building News

Dean Trail in Huddart Park, San Mateo County

By David Taylor

On October 15, 2006 the Trail Center joined up with the Friends of Huddart Part and Hands on Bay Area volunteers to perform some maintenance on a stretch of the Dean Trail just above the Madrone Picnic area. The project included the construction of a French Drain on particularly difficult section where the trail intersected a fire road. Following completion of the trail work, Trail Center volunteers assisted in the planting of a large number of trees and bushes in the AIDS grove, a challenging task due to the relatively hard soil found in that part of the park.

Crystal Springs Trail, San Mateo County

By David Taylor

On December 3, 2005 and January 21, 2006 the Trail Center performed much needed erosion repairs on a stretch of the Crystal Springs Trail, a trail that parallels Canada Road between Edgewood Road and Highway 92 and overlooks Crystal Springs Reservoir. Winter rains had deeply rutted the trail and made it unusable. This trail is a special favorite of the "Team in Training" organization, as it provides an opportunity for a long weekend run, and indeed, the January build found a steady stream of runners using the more dangerous (and less scenic) road because of the poor condition of the trail. When the effort was completed the trail was pronounced "Vastly improved and safe and usable" by our resident Team in Training Captain, Dave Kison.

Trail Center Returns to Stiles Ranch

By David Croker

This year the Trail Center decided to return to Santa Teresa County Park and the Stiles Ranch Trail. We built this trail over the course of a couple years back in the early nineties, and dedicated it in 1991.

The trail is very popular with south county hikers, equestrians, mountain bikers, and just people out for an afternoon stroll. Over the years, the trail has been severely damaged due to heavy use by equestrians and bikers, especially in the winter.

Santa Clara County Parks Department has finally decided to close the trail to everyone but hikers during the wet winter months, so there's hope that the trail will survive for many more years.

In February, we had a chance to start fixing up the worst section of the trail: the switchbacks just above the parking lot on the west side of the park off of Fortini Road. With a good crew of almost 30 people, we were able to get the majority of work done on the switchback hill.

We installed several new drainage structures and improved several old ones to help keep water from cutting out any more of the trail. We also knocked down the outside berm to eliminate the severe trenching.

Perhaps the greatest accomplishment was rebuilding a switchback that had turned into a steep rocky section. Four people, including volunteer coordinator Larry Stiles and long-time regular Dave Kison tackled the switchback heroically, and when they were done, you couldn't tell that it was the same place!

With all the heavy rains that we got in March this year, we were able

to see first hand how our drainage structures worked when we returned for Earth Day in April. On a beautiful cool day, over 40 volunteers showed up to continue to repair other sections of the trail. Fortunately for us, the drainage worked very nicely, and everything we had done in February had held strong.

With such an eager crowd gathered, we headed off for the more easterly part of the trail and had folks working on many different sections during the day. Because we had a great turnout of crew leaders, we were able to assign each crew a particular section, so they were able to concentrate on just one area.

Most of the work was the same: repair eroded tread and install new drainage structures to help keep the trail together in the future. Some particularly onerous sections had crews chipping at rock for the better part of the day, and Frank Rowand led a crew that built a much-needed French drain that looked great!

At the end of the day, Larry Stiles greeted the volunteers with a great spread of food including sandwiches and wraps and all the fixin's. Head ranger Greg Bringleson gave a short speech to recognize the efforts of the volunteers and handed out t-shirts. Everyone stayed to enjoy the food and socialize.

The efforts of several people were necessary to accomplish these two workdays successfully, but too many names to mention. Crew leaders: great job! And also a special hoorah to Bob Kelly, who managed the original Stiles Ranch Trail project for the Trail Center. He drove all the way from Grass Valley to attend the Earth Day project!

TC Outreach Raising Awareness

By Justin Knowles

How can the Trail Center raise its awareness? How can the TC better convert this awareness into regular volunteers and members and leverage like-minded Silicon Valley companies and other volunteer groups?

Thanks to the efforts of many TC members, we've made significant progress during the last six months. To raise awareness, the TC has worked with the American Hiking Society, CA State Park Foundation, and other groups to get the word out. You may have seen TC events highlighted in Backpacker magazine or in an advertisement in the Sierra Club Newspaper, the Loma Prieta.

We're also contacting new members directly. We've participated in volunteer fairs at firms like HP and eBay and revamped TC literature (e.g., safety cards) to highlight upcoming builds.

Much more is planned during the next six months. Please let us know if you have any suggestions about events/outreach programs where the Trail Center can participate and help spread the good word about the TC.

What's Happening Off the Trail?

In addition to our efforts in building and maintaining Bay Area trails, the Trail Center has been busy with other things to support our mission of trail stewardship and volunteerism.

If you've visited our website recently, you'll notice Hank Magnuski's fantastic redesign. Using some page layout ideas provided by Valerie Taylor, Hank gave the Trail Center website a brand new look for 2006, streamlined access to trail build information, the ability to update all build information from a central database, and an RSS feed.

Jill McGeorge, a virtual volunteer working out of Washington, D.C., is lending her talents to help the Trail Center create a new brochure to promote our activities.

The new brochure will be available by the end of the year. The Trail Center, in conjunction with Wilderness Press, produced a new edition of the Peninsula Parklands map, available at Amazon.com.

We've accomplished a lot since the start of the year, and would love to have your help in continuing to expand Trail Center activities! Contact volunteer@trailcenter.org for more information.

Become a Member & Support Trails in the SF Bay Area

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

email: _____

Here is my annual membership fee: (circle one)
\$25 \$50 \$75 \$100 \$250 \$1000

Membership and contributions to The Trail Center, a 501(c)(3) organization, are tax-deductible. Employers will often match donations. Does yours? Please ask.

Make checks payable to: The Trail Center

I would like to volunteer:

____ Trail Building & Maintenance

____ Crew Leader ____ Map Making

____ Publicity ____ Projects Committee

____ Web ____ Fundraising

____ Newsletter (Photos, Writing, Editing)

____ Organize a group of volunteers

____ Other

I would like email notification of Trail Center events: Yes No

Please return to:

The Trail Center
3921 Bayshore Rd.
Palo Alto, CA 94303

Upcoming Events

August 17-20, 2006 - Thursday through Sunday
Forestdale Divide, Carson Pass- Joint Project with the Pacific Crest Trail Association

September 16, 2006 - Saturday
Santa Clara County Trail Work - Stevens Creek Park or Sanborn Park (TBD)

October 14, 2006 - Saturday
Mt. Suro Open Space Preserve - West Side Trail, Day 1

November 04, 2006 - Saturday
Santa Clara County Trail Work - Stevens Creek Park or Sanborn Park (TBD)

For directions and further information, email volunteer@trailcenter.org or check www.trailcenter.org. Not receiving our email newsletter, [Trail Center News & Upcoming Events](#), yet? You're missing out on the most current announcements, news and alerts. Email tenews@trailcenter.org to sign up today!



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