



DTC Trail Crew Dispatch

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# 2025 Mid-Season is Update

July - Mid August 2025 Update





before



after



The DTC Trail Crew has been hard at work across the Deschutes National Forest through July and into mid-August, keeping up a fast pace to tackle projects big and small. One highlight of the summer was having Central Oregon Daily join us on-site at Suttle Lake, where they filmed and interviewed the crew while we worked on a major reroute project.

This section of trail has struggled with erosion for years, slowly creeping toward the lake. Thanks to reroutes we began last summer and continued this season, the trail is now on much firmer ground—literally—and offers visitors some fresh perspectives and beautiful new views of the lake.

The reroute we focused on this year wound its way through dense stands of ceanothus, which made for plenty of brushing and clearing. Ethan stepped up as lead sawyer, carefully bucking out downed logs and opening the corridor so the rest of us could move in with hand tools. From digging out rootwads to shaping tread, the crew worked together to build a sustainable trail that will last for years to come.

We're proud of the work completed so far and excited for all users to experience the improvements. If you'd like to see the project in action, Central Oregon Daily put together a great feature—you can watch it here:

[https://www.centraloregondaily.com/the-great-outdoors/suttle-lake-trail-reroute-deschutes-trails-coalition/article\\_8785ce45-a91b-49ae-9029-95456309e76a.html](https://www.centraloregondaily.com/the-great-outdoors/suttle-lake-trail-reroute-deschutes-trails-coalition/article_8785ce45-a91b-49ae-9029-95456309e76a.html)

## **Collab Hitchin'**





This summer brought a special opportunity for the DTC Trail Crew—we teamed up with the Mackenzie Bridge Trail Crew for a four-day hitch in the woods. It was an incredible experience to collaborate, share knowledge, and learn from one another while tackling trail work side by side.

Our basecamp was set up at Horse Lake, and from there we fanned out to clear a network of surrounding trails, including Red Hill, Horse Lake, Horse Creek, McBee, Sunset Lake, Breezy Point, and Park trails. The days were long—sometimes more than 12 miles of hiking and clearing—but the camaraderie and shared sense of purpose made it all worthwhile.





Evenings were spent around camp swapping stories from the season, playing cards, and simply enjoying time together as crews. Over the course of just four days, we accomplished as much (if not more) than what had taken eight days the year before—a true testament to the power of teamwork.

On the final day, we tackled a particularly challenging project: safely removing a large tree that had been hanging over the trail for several years. With careful planning and teamwork, we were able to clear it, leaving the trail safer and more accessible for future visitors.





Thank you Mackenzie Bridge Trail Crew!

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🌟 **This Month's Top Stories**









## COTA Collaboration

Last year, our crew was invited to partner with COTA to help log out trails in the Newberry Volcanic National Monument—and the effort was such a success that we were invited back again this season. This time, Ethan joined one of the saw teams, equipped with his bike, his saw, and his expertise, ready to take on the challenge.

The crew's hard work paid off, and together we were able to clear all the remaining trails in just one day—an impressive accomplishment that ensures this incredible area stays accessible and enjoyable for everyone who visits.





Met-Win Crew





Many in the area may remember the Red Fire that burned through the Crescent Ranger District last year. In the process of containing the fire, roughly four miles of the Metolius-Windigo (Met-Win) Trail were heavily impacted—either lost to the fire itself or damaged by suppression equipment. This summer, our crew had the opportunity to take on the restoration work between Fawn Lake and White Fish Horse Camp, a project that has kept us busy for much of the month.

The work has been both challenging and rewarding, involving everything from rediscovering stretches of the original trail to flagging new alignments, logging out downed trees, and digging fresh tread. Piece by piece, the trail is taking shape again.

We like to joke that we've become the "Met-Win Crew," since we also completed a major construction project on another section north of Todd Lake at the end of last season. The truth is, this trail has helped us sharpen our skills—we've grown increasingly efficient and precise in building sustainable new tread, and it shows in the results.

A special thanks goes out to Josie Bourne, whose leadership and sharp eye for trail alignment have been invaluable. Her guidance has elevated our work this season, and the success of this project is due in no small part to her dedication.



## What's Next?

The funding for the following projects has come through and we will be diving into some exciting **project-based work** that reflects our long-term commitment to sustainability:

- A **redesign of the Dillon Falls Sand Ladder**, replacing it with stairs and rerouting the trail off the fall line to reduce erosion into the Deschutes River. This work is funded by a **\$67k grant** from the collaborative program conducted by **Visit Central Oregon** and **Travel Oregon** as part of the **Central Oregon Destination Management Studio** using tourism revenue to make a positive impact in our region.
- **12 trail reroutes** in the Sisters Ranger District to improve long-term sustainability and protect sensitive terrain. This work is funded by **Oregon Recreation Trails Program (RTP) Grant** in the amount of \$66k. We will begin some of these reroutes with partner groups Sisters Trails Alliance (STA) and Central Oregon Trails Alliance (COTA) this year but many of these will be completed in 2026.



# Odds & Ends

- The DTC Trail Crew welcomed a new intern through the Central Oregon Intergovernmental Council and Youth Compass Program. We are so excited to have Jewelle Jones with our crew!
- Jason Whittaker represented DTC at the Heart of Oregon Career Fair in Redmond.
- Continued thanks to Matthew White with the USFS and all his continued support and efforts to ensure our crew is as successful as it is!

Stay tuned for more updates—and see you on the trail!

By Jason Whittaker 8/15/25

[Find out more about DTC on our website!](#)



Deschutes Trails Coalition  
Bend, OR