

Hockett Meadow Ranger Station
1994 Report
Lorenzo Stowell

Dates: MAY 31st to Oct 15th

Miles Patrolled: Stock 387
Foot 443
Total 834

Hockett + Ranger Stock Nights: Hockett Mdw
↳ 206

Visitor use: Horse 172; Backpackers: 295; Total: 467

Medicals: June 12th one Med. vac - Injured right knee.

Visitor Assists:
1 Assist with Resetting Horse shoes
2 Assists with shoeing stock
1 Assist catching and returning stock
4 Relivered messages
Total 8

Law Enforcement: Citations: Pet in closed area - 1
Improper Food Storage - 1
Unattended Camp Fire - 1
Total 3

Verbal Warnings: Improper Food Storage 3
Litter in Camp 1
Looked for lost stock - 2
Total 6

Bear Incidents: NONE; Bears Present - Visitors well behaved.

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Fine Rings: Removed - 8
 Cleaned: 75
 Total 83

TRASH removed: 135 LBS

TRAIL MAINTENANCE: The trail crew came into the Hockett Area on July 7th and left on August 8th 1994. As usual they did a fine job on the trails in this area. There were few down trees on the trails this season so we all had time to work on other projects. The crew I placed 14 fence posts on the pasture fence on July 26th. I later removed all the old metal posts from that part of the pasture. Despite their busy schedule they found time to work with the rangers on three (3) team work days this season. On July 13th we traveled to Upper Camp and replaced two (2) broken down hitching trails in the horse camp there. Then on Aug. 1st we rode to Summit Lake and replaced the hitchrail there and cleaned up around the lake. The next day August 2nd we all (5 persons including the packer) rode to Turkey Pass and rucked the trail from there to the Park Boundary, over 3000 lbs of stone was removed from the trail, a complete job because later I returned and finished the north side (Aug 12th). Some visitors had mentioned how rocky the trail

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WAS BEFORE WE FINISHED THE JOB THERE, THE TRAIL CREW PROVIDED VALUABLE ASSISTANCE ON THE SEARCH WE HAD IN THIS AREA ON JULY 27th. BILLY HANCOCK ASSISTED A VISITOR ON THIS DAY AS WELL PUTTING HIS HORSE DOWN NEAR CAHOON ROCK. THE TRAIL CREW PACKERS BROUGHT THE RANGERS TWO (2) SACKS OF GRAIN AND OTHER NEEDED ITEMS AND WE WORKED TOGETHER ON STOCK SHOEING, STOCK WRANGLING, PASTURE MANAGEMENT AND FENCE REPAIR. THE CREW WAS KIND ENOUGH TO CUT A FEW ROUNDS FOR THE RANGERS WOOD PILE AS WELL. WHEN THEY WERE SHORT OF HORSES "FROSTY" THE HORSE WAS KIND ENOUGH TO HELP THEM OUT WHEN NEEDED. THEY'RE A HARD WORKING CREW AND IT'S A DELIGHT TO WORK WITH REAL PROFESSIONALS. THANKS TO THE TRAIL CREW FROM THE RANGERS!

AS USUAL I TRIED TO CONTRIBUTE SOME TRAIL MAINTENANCE WORK MYSELF. I BELIEVE IT'S OKAY FOR RANGERS TO WORK ON TRAILS WHILE ON PATROL. I CARRY A SHOVEL WHEN I'M WALKING THE TRAILS AND ALWAYS "ROCK" THE TRAILS WHILE TRAVELING. BY "ROCKING" I MEAN REMOVING ALL FIST SIZED STONE (AND SMALLER) FROM THE TRAIL TREAD I.E. "SWEEPING THE TREAD" AND DIGGING OUT OF THE TRAIL TREAD OBVIOUS LOOSE STONES AND STONES POLISHED WHITE BY HORSES HOoves. IT TAKES A BIT LONGER TO GET FROM "A TO B" THIS WAY BUT IMPROVES FOOT AND STOCK TRAVEL ON TRAILS WORKED IN THIS MANNER. I ALSO REMOVE STONE FROM CREEK

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Crossings making it safer for stock to cross the streams. During this season almost four tons of stone (7600 lbs) was removed from the trails and streams by the rangers. As mentioned above there were few down trees on the trails this season however I continued to cut trees out of the trail with my trusty double bit axe. I removed seven trees from the trails in that fashion in 1994 - down from 30 in 1993. This goes along with removing sticks, limbs and overhanging limbs from the trails. I was able this season to "sweep" some trails like the trail to Blossom Lakes and the trail from Wren meadow to Quinn Ranger Station.

The trail crew fixed a "trail problem" on the trail to Garfield Grove. There was a very rough and rocky section that was rerouted, also they blasted a small section of rough trail on the Atwell mill to Hockett trail making that section much safer. However other problems still exist eg. Pecks Canyon Entrance trail could be reroaked and reroaked it receives heavy use; the bog above Tuohy Creek near South Fork crossing needs repair (a causeway) and the "Horse Swallower bog" on the Windy Gap to wet meadow Entrance could use some work. I must say, however, that the trail system on the Hockett Plateau is well maintained and well cared for thanks to the trail crews past and present.



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SEARCHES: ONE: ON the evening of July 26, 1994 three men arrived at the Hockett meadow Ranger Station at 9:15 P.M. and reported to the Ranger that a member of their party was lost. We got rolling at 5:00 A.M. by hiking to Evelyn Lake where the lost person and his group were camped. Richard Morhar age 49 was found about 5:00 P.M. on July 27th by a stock person who was looking for his lost stock near Evelyn Lake, "Nothing is so amazing to be true".
Michael Faraday.

Visitor Use: The most popular camping areas for backpackers were Hockett meadow, South Fork meadow, Horse Creek and Evelyn Lake. Visitors who can't quite make it to Horse Creek etc. will use the camps on Clover Creek. There's some backpacker use at Blossom Lakes & Ansel Lake as well.

Stock users will stay at Hockett meadow, South Fork Pasture (Upper Camp) Rock Camp, Hidden Camp with some use at the South Fork Crossing and Fred Slaven who uses the camp at Turkey meadow above the South Fork Crossing Camp. Tim Shew the Ballet Park Outfitter mainly uses, Rock Camp, Hidden Camp and Upper Camp. Don Bedell has almost quit using the Hockett (2 spot trips - one overnight). There were almost no problems with backpackers & stock parties this season. However, the last 2 seasons has seen some problems coming up the trail from the South Fork entrance.

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Fires: The Hockett Plateau had one major fire this season. A storm passed on July 19th with lightning strikes and caused a small fire west of the Ranger station and the trail to sand meadow. Then on Aug. 24th the fire blew up a bit and expanded moving fast, it burned across the trail and moved toward sand meadow. The fire burned hot for few days settled down and by the end was over 50 acres. Fire monitors were present throughout. Some fire hose, a pump etc. were flown in to protect the cabin. The trail was closed until near the end. The last fire monitors were flown out on Sept. 26th.

The Ranger rehad a small fire from 1993 near Conner creek. Its hard to see now.

Resource management: The Ranger participated in the meadow monitoring program again this season. The Hockett Pasture, South Fork meadow, South Fork Pasture (upper camp) and Tally meadow were sampled. It took the better part of three days to complete. The Hockett meadow Pasture fence took part of four days to put up and remains a flimsy disaster.

After four seasons here its my view that the earliest opening date even in dry seasons like this year should be June 20th. Even that date should be checked by an unbiased Ranger. This Plateau with its meadows holds water and should be checked well before opening to prevent unacceptable impacts by stock.

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✓ Stock Care: I APPLIED 10 SHOES AND RESET THE SHOES 7 TIMES ON 2 DIFFERENT STOCK ANIMALS I WORKED THIS SEASON. I WAS ASSISTED BY THE TRAIL CREW PACKERS IN ADDITION TO THE ABOVE, EXCEPT FOR "PATCHES" AND HIS UNHORSE LIKE ABILITY TO ESCAPE THROUGH THE WIRE OF THE FENCE (WHENEVER HE WANTS TO) I HAD NO PROBLEMS WITH MY STOCK.

IN REGARD TO STOCK I HAVE A MODEST PROPOSAL, I.E. THAT HORSE MOUNTED RANGERS WHOSE JOB IT IS TO RIDE HORSES ON PATROL, TO "SHOW THE FLAG" AND REPRESENT THE PARK SERVICE SHOULD HAVE HORSES AT LEAST AS GOOD AS A FIRST SEASON CREW PERSON WHO MAY NOT EVEN LIKE RIDE THEIR HORSES. IN THE PAST (AND NOW AS WELL) IT WAS THE POLICY OF THE BARN TO ASSIGN THE OLD, WORN OUT CULLS TO THE RANGERS. SINCE WE ALL PAY THE SAME WE ALL SHOULD RECEIVE EQUAL CONSIDERATION, ON ANOTHER MATTER. AND I ADMIT ^{HOWEVER,} I'M NOT AWARE OF PARK POLICY IN THIS REGARD. IN MY VIEW WE NEED TO HAVE THE PROPER DRUGS ON HAND AT FIELD STATIONS TO DEAL WITH WOUNDS, INFECTIONS ETC. AND TO HAVE THE CAPABILITY TO PUT DOWN STOCK WITH DRUGS WHEN NEEDED.

IT'S BEEN A REAL DELIGHT AND PRIVILEGE TO WORK AND LIVE HERE ON THE HOCKETT PLATEAU THOSE PAST FOUR SEASONS. EQUALLY DELIGHTFUL IS WORK WITH NPS PROFESSIONALS WHO ACTUALLY CARE ABOUT WHAT THEY DO. THANKS,

L.S. 