



Rubicon Trail 2023 Annual Report

Report of maintenance activities, volunteer projects and summary of the 2023 Rubicon season.

Rubicon Trail 2023 Annual Report

The goal of this document is to inform the public of the accomplishments of the volunteers, users, El Dorado County (County) and other agencies and departments in our efforts to fulfill the direction from the El Dorado County Board of Supervisors. The report documents the activities, good and bad, on the trail and what needs to be addressed in the future. This provides a record and history for the El Dorado County Parks Division (Parks Division). With the support of both the community and the Board of Supervisors the Rubicon Trail (Rubicon) is in great condition and we continue to meet the conditions of the USFS easement.

Adopt a Trail Program

Fifteen different segments were established in 2014 and adopted. As of 2019 there are now sixteen segments in El Dorado County.

2023 was a crazy year. The last winter inspection occurred in early June and there was still snow on the trail. The trail dried out in July, but August brought rains. So, it was very difficult for adopt a trail group to get on the trail and do their inspections and to do their projects.

In 2024, we will put the adopt a trail program on a temporary pause. This will give an opportunity for the County to complete an overall trail assessment. The County continues to use the ArcGIS Collector application to document activities on the trail. Through this app we have records and inspections for all the BMP's on the trail. The Parks Division will continue working with County Transportation Engineering staff on completing an assessment of the BMP's. We thank everyone for all their support and hard work on this program.

ADOPT-A-TRAIL 2023

Segment #	Segments	Length of Segment	Adopted by
1	Francis Cow Camp - Airport Flat Turnoff to Wentworth Springs City	6.07 miles	Mud Suckers 4WD
2	Wentworth - Wentworth Springs City to Junction Loon Lake Intertie	1.84 miles	Madhatters 4x4
3	Loon Lake Intertie #1 - Kiosk to Whale Bone	1.64 miles	Georgetown Stump jumpers
4	Loon Lake Intertie #2 -Whale Bone to Tie-in.	0.51 miles	Auburn Jeep Club
5	Ellis Creek - Intertie to 1.6	1.0 miles	ECV 86
6	Ellis Creek B - 1.6 to Below Walker Rock	0.67 miles	Ruffstuff
7	Walker Rock - Walker Rock to Benchmark above Walker Hill	.70 miles	Sierra Treasure Hunters 4 Wheel Drive Club
8	Soup Bowl - Crest above Walker to Winter Camp	.40 miles	EIDorado Rock Crawlers (EDRC)/ Daystar Products
9	Little Sluice - Winter Camp to Property Line - Spider	.5 miles	SLO Crawlers
10	Arnold's Rock - Property Line - Spider to Egg Rock (Indian Bypass)	.78 miles	Russ and Janet Watkins/MTA
11	Old True Big Sluice - Old Sluice turnoff to Egg Rock	.60 miles	Placer County Crawlers
12	Mechanic's Pit - Egg Rock to Buck Island Dam	.72 miles	OPEN FOR ADOPTION
13	Buck Island - Buck Island Dam to Dive off	.53 miles	OPEN FOR ADOPTION
14	Big Sluice - Dive off to Sawtooth	.48 miles	Jeep USA
15	Rubicon Bridge - Sawtooth to Rubicon Bridge	.32 miles	MetalCloak/NorCal 4 wheelers
16	Rubicon Springs - Rubicon Bridge to Property Line	1.02 miles	Jeepers Jamboree

Yellow=vacant segment

The sediment removed in 2023 was 15.39 cubic yards which was the result of 622 buckets worth of sediment removed by volunteers and staff. You can see the history below. Sediment removal amounts are relatively high after a wet winter.

Year	Number of Buckets	Sediment Removed (Cubic Yards)	Water Year Type
2014		5.51	Drought year
2015	620	15.52	Drought year, warm temps, lack of snow pack
2016	436.5	10.91	Average snow pack, large rainfall amounts in fall
2017	678.50	16.96	Well above average
2018	556	13.90	Below normal
2019	321	8.93	Large snow pack, late melt. Late snow November.
2020	238	5.95	
2021	168	4.2	Below normal
2022	527	13.04	Below normal
2023	622	15.39	Wet year

Below is a recap of all sixteen segments as reported to the Parks Division by the Adopt a Trail volunteers.

1. The Francis Cow Camp segment was adopted by Mud Suckers 4WD. This segment of the trail is from the Airport Flats turn off to the Wentworth Springs campground. All BMPs in this segment were inspected, maintained and/or re-established in 2023 by the Parks Division. The County completed maintenance to this section in 2023.

The assessment for this segment was completed by Parks Division, Brian Bettencourt.

No new photos available.

2. The Wentworth Springs segment of the trail was adopted by Madhatter's 4X4 club. This segment of the trail is from the Wentworth Springs campground to the Intertie. Madhatter's inspected the trail in June and reported that the water bars needed to be re-established and a rock was causing trail issues. The county informed them that we would have an excavator in that segment in the fall and we would take care of the maintenance issues. We thank the club for doing their inspection.



Photo of excavator working on a section of post pile.

The assessment for this segment was completed by Madhatter's 4x4 club.

3. The Loon Lake Intertie #1 segment from the Kiosk to Whale Bone was adopted by Georgetown Stump Jumpers. The crew removed 282 buckets of sediment from the BMP,s this year which equates to 6.98 cubic yards of sediment.

The assessment for this segment was completed by Georgetown Stump Jumpers and Parks Division, Brian Bettencourt.

No new photos available.

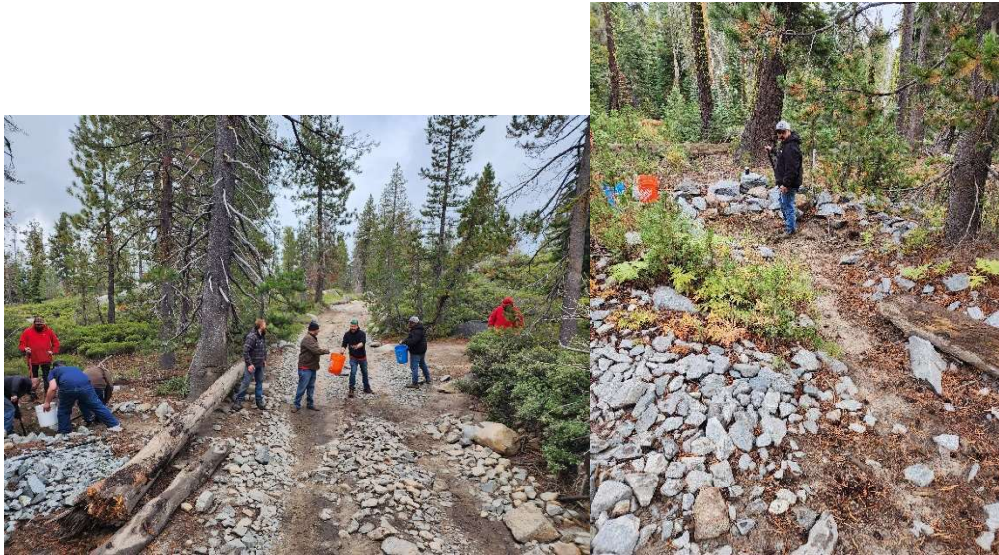
4. The Loon Lake Intertie #2 segment from the Whale Bones to the Intertie. This segment was adopted by Auburn Jeep Club (AJC). AJC was not able to get to the trail this season for an assessment. The Parks Division completed an assessment and determined that all BMP's were functioning as designed.

The assessment for this segment was completed by Parks Division, Brian Bettencourt.

No new photo available

5. The Ellis Creek segment of the Rubicon Trail is from the Intertie to what we here at the County call 1.6. This segment was adopted by ECV. Inspection and work was completed on 9/30/2023. Rock Energy Dissipaters were cleaned out and 86 buckets sediment were removed equaling 2.12 cubic yards.

The assessment for this segment was completed by ECV and Parks Division, Brian Bettencourt.



6. The “new” segment is known as 1.6 to Walker and was a segment was split from the original Ellis Creek segment. This segment was adopted by Ruff Stuff. County staff removed 184 buckets of sediment from this segment which equates to 4.55 cubic yards.



Photo of BMP work in progress

The assessment for this segment was completed by Parks Division, Brian Bettencourt.

7. The Walker Hill segment is from below Walker Rock to the Benchmark above Walker Hill. This segment was adopted by Sacramento Treasure Hunters. This area had 70 buckets removed this year equating to 1.73 cubic yards of sediment.

The assessment for this section was completed by Parks Division, Brian Bettencourt.

No new photo available

8. The Soup Bowl segment is from the crest above Walker Hill to Winter Camp. This segment was adopted by El Dorado Rock Crawlers (EDRC)/ Daystar Products. All BMP's in this segment are functioning as designed.

The assessment for this segment was completed by Parks Division, Brian Bettencourt. Daystar has been removed from this segment (non-responsive)

No new photo available

9. The Little Sluice segment goes from Winter Camp to the property line at Spider Lake. This segment was adopted by SLO Crawlers. SLO Crawlers were unable to get to the trail this season for an assessment. BMP's in this section are functioning as designed. The drainage to the west of Winter Camp was reestablished before the rains.

Trail assessment was completed by Parks Division, Brian Bettencourt.

No new photo available

10. The Arnold's Rock segment is located from the property line at Spider Lake to Egg Rock (Indian Bypass). This segment was adopted by Russ and Janice Watkins with the help of Mountain Transit Authority (MTA). Janice and crew were unable to get to the trail this season for an assessment.

Trail assessment was completed by Parks Division, Brian Bettencourt.

No new photo available

11. The Old True Big Sluice segment is from the Old Sluice turn off to Egg Rock. This segment was adopted by Placer County Crawlers. There are no rock energy dissipators in this segment. This segment of the trail looks great and all BMP's are functioning as designed.

Trail assessment was completed by Parks Division, Brian Bettencourt.

No new photos available.

12. The Mechanic's Pit segment is from Egg Rock to the Buck Island Dam. This segment is open for adoption. BMP's in this section are functioning as designed. Bio-response was also applied to areas as needed.

Trail assessment was completed by Parks Division, Brian Bettencourt.

No new photos available

13. The Buck Island segment is located from Buck Island Dam to the Dive Off. This segment is open for adoption. Rock was added to this segment as part of the helicopter project. See County maintenance activities for additional summary details.

Trail assessment for this segment was completed by Parks Division, Brian Bettencourt.

No new photos available

14. The Big Sluice segment is located from the Dive Off to Sawtooth. This segment was adopted by Jeep USA. The section at the hairpin had an illegal bypass created. Jeep Jamboree dropped trees in the area in July but trail users drug them out of the bypass and continued to use it. The erosion in this area was substantial. County staff along with trail volunteers and Jeep USA staff we able to block the bypass on November 10th.



Trail assessment for this segment was completed Jeep USA and Parks Division, Brian Bettencourt.

15. The Rubicon Bridge segment is from Sawtooth to the Rubicon Bridge. This segment was adopted by Metal Cloak. Metal Cloak completed a trail assessment on August 30th. The report was sent to the Parks Division at the end of November, so we were unable to assist as they requested due to the lateness of the season. From the photos submitted, there is not a concern in the short term but an assessment of this segment will be completed by the County Transportation Engineering staff in 2024.

A tree that had fallen in Scout Hole and was removed by trail volunteers on the November 10th work party.



The assessment for this segment was Metal Cloak and Parks Division, Brian Bettencourt.



16. The Rubicon Springs segment is located from the Rubicon Bridge to the County Line. This segment was adopted by Jeepers Jamboree. Jeepers Jamboree noted that they had dropped a tree at hairpin in July to block the illegal bypass (Segment #14). The Parks Division received bo report of what was completed in their adopted section.

The trail assessment for this segment was completed by Parks Division, Brian Bettencourt.

No new photos available.

2023 Project List

Below is the list of projects for 2023.

2023

Project	Description	Justification	Claimed By	Status
Kiosk Volunteer	Volunteer at any of the Trailheads to provide education to the users	Education		
Bathroom Door springs (kiosk)	Install springs to Loon Lake restroom	Door are caught in the wind and are being bent.	AJC	
Wentworth Springs Kiosk	Repaint and clean up the area	Lots of 5 gallon buckets broken that need to be removed and the general area needs to be cleaned up	Gold Country Broncos	Completed in 2023

Even though staff is on the trail weekly during the season, there may be projects that a user may see that needs to be done. If you have a project that you would like to do, please call the Parks Division at 530.621.5554 to discuss. We are open to ideas or suggestions.

Volunteer Support

From the project list for 2023, the Gold Country Bronco's claimed the Wentworth Springs Kiosk. They painted the fascia boards and did clean up at the campground. We thank them for getting involved and hope to have their support in future projects.

On November 10th, County staff put together a successful volunteer project with a few goals, including removal of downed tree at Scout Hole and blocking the illegal bypass at Hairpin. Volunteers from Jeep USA, and Rubicon Soda Springs Inc. were involved in the project.



Removal of a tree that was across Scout Hole was removed.



The illegal bypass that was created on Hairpin was blocked and signage was installed to clearly define that this was not the trail.

County Activities

Staffing

We are very fortunate to have Brian Bettencourt on the trail weekly during the season providing maintenance and pumping activities. Nick Howle joined the team at the end of 2022 and has also done a great job on the trail providing pumping services with Brian weekly. Once again, I can't express enough how fortunate we all are to have their experience and expertise on the trail.

Tim Canavarro is the Parks Program Coordinator and administers the Rubicon and River programs for the Parks Division. Tim has done a great job with the Collector app and will continue to improve the information collected.

Pumping and Restrooms

Brian and Nick pumped the restrooms every week during the summer. The pumper truck suffered a major breakdown on Thursday before Labor Day weekend. Coordinating with Stretch Fab, Brian and volunteers went back in on the next day (Friday) to repair the truck. Brian also took the pumper trailer during the repair mission and pumped the rest of the restrooms as the truck was under repair. Such dedication to the Rubicon community is just amazing and I appreciate Brian for this dedication. Unfortunately, the truck was not able to make it off the trail until Tuesday after Labor Day as other parts were needed. Stretch Fab did an amazing job and were ready and

willing to do whatever was needed to get this truck off the trail and back to running condition. I cannot thank them and the volunteers enough that went in to assist with this recovery mission.

Thank you to Glen, Rubicon Trail Foundation (RTF) Mid-Trail staff for assisting with the stocking and cleaning of the restrooms. Glen and Brian communicated weekly and Glen provides useful information for Brian about restroom condition. We appreciate all the assistance that Glen has given.

Events

County staff along with State Parks Off Highway Motor Vehicle Division and Jeep Jamboree were at the El Dorado County Fair on June 15th – 18th. There was a great turnout for the Fair and the County appreciates the opportunity to educate and demonstrate what the Rubicon Trail is and is not.

Staff attended Jeep Jamboree to assist with Camp Rubicon. Staff gave a presentation on the history of the trail and answered questions the group had. The kid's activities were handled this year by Tread Lightly. Everyone seemed to have a wonderful time.

The County had a VIP trip again this year, taking representatives from the Water Agency, County Departments and various other to educate them on what the Rubicon is and what it takes to provide maintenance to the trail. It was another successful trip and we thank all the volunteers who took their time to drive and educate their passengers on the Rubicon. It was a rainy and wonderful day.

Maintenance

As staff is on the trail weekly, maintenance activities are done as they see the need. Such as when bypasses are blocked, rocks are moved if needed, and projects are identified and scheduled for another day. It is very beneficial to have staff on the trail weekly and they see the trail move and change every week.

In 2023, staff focused on maintenance from Ellis Creek to Airport Flats Campground. Staff using the Morooka transported rock to various location from Airport Flats to Wentworth Springs. A backhoe was used to re-establish some drainage features and to move the rock around.

In September, an excavator and driver from Doug Veerkamp Engineering was used to dig better drainage and to improve areas that staff was unable to get to. Brian started with the excavator at Ellis Creek and walked it down Post Pile. Post Pile is an

inspection location and the drainage needed to be re-established. Rocks were moved out of the way making drainage better and a water bar was created to eliminate the water from running down the trail and to keep it draining off the edge. This type of work helps to reduce trail erosion by getting flows across the trail in the shortest distance possible.

The Madhatters have this section as part of the Adopt a Trail program. They reported that the water bars on this section were no longer visible and the energy dissipaters were in need of repairs. The excavator was able to re-establish these features on the trail. This is the type of work where we need equipment to do the work and it is unrealistic to expect volunteers to do this hard labor. Now that they have been re-established, they will be easier for the group to maintain. We appreciate the early season communication on this section, enabling us to add it to the fall work project list.

County Contracts

There were several contracts to assist with maintenance activities in 2023.

Doug Veerkamp Engineering	Work on 14N05	\$59,500
Doug Veerkamp Engineering	Rock Transport	\$8,400
EN2	Habitat Management	\$44,992

Inspections

This was a year of many inspections. With the heavy snow and the closure at the end of 2022 there was a lot of attention on the trail. The trail was closed at the end of 2022 due to the atmospheric river storm events. The County was challenged on the closure which resulted in a 90 day closure and direction from the Board of Supervisors to amend the resolution for closure. That will be discussed in the section on board actions.

Even though the trail was closed there were still inspections. Inspections were completed but at times a formal report was not needed as staff was unable to get to any inspection sites. Here is a list of inspection, if a formal memo or report was filed they will be attached.

1/18/23-Memo	4/12/23-Staging and plow line
1/24/23-Report	4/19/23-Report
1/27/23-Report	4/25/23-Report
3/8/23-Only to plow line	5/3/23-Report
3/10/23- Only to plow line	5/9/23-Report
3/13/23- Only to plow line	5/16/23-Report
3/21/23- Only to plow line	5/31/23-Report
4/6/23-Only to staging	6/6/23-Report

Hazardous Material Removal

There was no hazardous material to remove from the hazardous materials sheds this year. Staff is working with Environmental Management on the signage on the sheds and to repair some damage that was done to the shed in the Tahoma staging area.

Education

The campaign for 2024 is sediment. We will once again be at the kiosk handing out spill kits and educating on how to use them. In 2023, we saw a few user created bypasses. This bandana will address the bypasses and erosion that they cause.



Law Enforcement

2023 Rubicon Trail Patrol Report Prepared by Sergeant Paul Hadjes

The 2023 Summer Season Rubicon Trail patrol began on May 26, 2023, and ran until September 05, 2023. During the operational period of May 26 through September 15, 2023. EDSO engaged in patrol operations every weekend, Friday through Sunday and extended those hours on several events and holiday weeks, but there were low numbers due to the heavy snow. Most of the contacts involved resource damage in areas on and adjacent to the trail, due to all the melting snow, trespassing, and registration issues. We responded to several calls which ranged from lost/injured persons to disabled vehicles as well as assisting US Special Forces in recovering a vehicle on the trail that was disabled during a training exercise. Deputies assisted in landing CHP H24 for a medical emergency for a subject that was injured on the trail.

Measurable totals include:

- 1,148 hours of Deputy Hours on the trail
- 3,784 vehicles encountered on the trail.
- Over 8,000 people on the trail
- Fifty-four enforcement contacts
- Forty-seven warnings
- Five citations
- Two arrests

Season	Major Events	Stats			
		Vehicles	Persons	Warnings	Cite/Arrest
2013: Tim Peterson solo Deputy		3,846	7,803	187	0
2014: Tim Peterson/Steve Wunschel	Helicopter Crash, Small fires, King Fire, Rollover on Big Sluice, SAR	4,199	8,879	140	1/1
2015: Tony Broadfoot/Jeremiah Hamon	7 SAR's, 7 Veh. Rollovers, 5 M.A., Dis. Veh's, Illegal shooting, fires, attended multiple event	7,146	15,846	46	1/1
2016: OHV OT by committee	Citations for Registration/Resource/Parking 3 medical aides/1 death Problems: Trespass/Alcohol/Illegal Camping/Abandon Vehicles	2,654	7,158	90	7/1
2017	Off-Road Travel & Resource Damage	2,156	5,005	102	4
2018-Tim Peterson	Citations-1 vehicle code expired registration, 4 Illegal Fire.	4,557	7,640	87	5
2019 Tim Peterson	Citations were for registration	2,722	5,400	61	10
2020 Tim Peterson	Citations for lack of helmets, concealed weapon, 4 illegal fires	2,788	6,263	126 Rubicon 12 Barrett	12 Rubicon
2021 Tim Peterson	Citations for resource damage, trespass and registration.	7282	17,000	56	14/3
2022 Craig Reimche		4,457	10,625	57	1/1
2023 Craig Reimche		3,784	Over 8,000	47	5/2

Grant

The Rubicon Trail, Operations and Maintenance (O&M) grant was set to expire on 10/31/2023. This grant for 21/22 is in the total amount of \$298,242 with the grant amount at \$220,698 and with \$77,544 in match. The O&M grant funded operations and maintenance, restroom cleaning and pumping and staff. This grant was extended for one year and will expire on 10/31/2024.

The Education grant expired on 9/30/2023 in the amount of \$112,979, \$81,064 in grant with \$31,915 match. The Education grant for 23/24 was awarded in the amount of \$110,469 grant amount of \$78,677 with \$31,792 in grant match. These grants provide staffing at the kiosk and educational materials.

In 20/21 we received a development grant for a maintenance yard for the County pumper truck storage. The grant amount is \$255,998, grant amount \$186,875 with a match of \$66,123. Staff is working on this grant and preparing for bids. The bid for this building was awarded at the Board of Supervisors on December 5, 2023.

A Planning grant was also received in 23/24 for the expansion of the parking lot in the Tahoma Staging area. Working with the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit the County with the help of a consultant will prepare the plans and environmental documents needed. This project will also have a lot of public input so watch in 2024 for public notices.

Board of Supervisor Actions in 2023

Legistar Item:

23-0139-1/10/23, Emergency Road Closure

23-0125-1/24/023, Approval of grants

23-0145-5/2/23, New Road Closure Resolution

23-1155-7/18/23, Authorization for Ellis Creek Building bid

23-1947-11/14/23, Sheriff's OHV Grants

23-1840-12/12/23, Award of the Ellis Creek Building

Message from the Parks Manager

I would like to thank the Rubicon community for all that you have done for the Trail, the County and for me personally. If you have heard me speak before I always say, the Rubicon is just another pretty place to me, but the people make it special and what it is to me.

I have worked on this project since 2001 when it was assigned to me. I had no idea what the Rubicon Trail was. But over the years many of you have spent countless hours on the trail teaching me about this asset everyone loves.

It is difficult to leave this position, the trail and all the other programs and functions I have been involved in while at the County. I have worked hard for the County and the community to do the right thing. Together we have achieved amazing things. I know you will all continue to support the County who is there for you and the Trail. As the title of the video produced in 2010 says "It is in your hands." I know the trail will be cared for and watch by many. Please support each other and the County.

Sincerely,

Vickie Sanders