

# Rubicon Trail Site Assessment May 20, 2017

**Crew:** Justin Williams, John Arenz, Merlin Scott

**Weather Conditions:** The weather conditions for the Rubicon Trail were sunny and warm. The summary of weather conditions up to this day are as followed:

	2017	16-May	17-May	18-May	19-May	20-May
SLT	Precip (in)	0.02	T	0	0	0
	Avg Temp (F)	40	41	44	49	53
R2	Snow Depth (in)	82	81	80	78	77
	Avg Temp (F)	38	36	38	42	47
LL	Precip (in)	0.39	0.13	0	0	0.01
	Low Temp(F)	29	31	31	40	42
	High Temp(F)	41	47	52	60	66
	Ave Temp(F)	34	38	43	49	54

-- = Indicates that weather station did not report this information

Reference Loon Lake Elevation: ~6,500 ft

SLT= South Lake Tahoe; elevation: 6,623 ft <http://classic.wunderground.com/cgi-bin/findweather/getForecast?query=38.89361191,-119.99527740>

R2 – Rubicon#2 Snotel Site; elevation: 7,689 ft <http://www.wcc.nrcs.usda.gov/nwcc/site?sitenum=724>

LON –Loon Lake; elevation: 6,410 ft [http://cdec.water.ca.gov/cgi-progs/stationInfo?station\\_id=LON](http://cdec.water.ca.gov/cgi-progs/stationInfo?station_id=LON)

## Trail Sections (Areas in grey not observed):

Wentworth Springs Campground / Post Pile Grade /

Ellis Creek Tie Intersection / Walker Hill / Soup Bowl / Winter Camp / Little Sluice Area

**Trail Conditions / Observations:** Staff entered the Rubicon Trail from the Loon Lake trailhead. The snow has melted significantly since the last trip to the trail. The snow berm at the Chalet is gone and there is no snow until the end of the first dam of Loon Lake. There were areas of the lake exposed that were not visible the week prior. Staff was able to reach 5 of 7 monitoring sites.

Once on the trail the snow was patchy and sporadic with depths ranging from 1-6 feet deep until you reached higher elevation further into the trail. At the higher elevations there are fewer patches of rock showing and the snow depths range from 4-10 feet deep, depending on how shady the area is. Along the way staff removed 10-12 downed trees from the trail. Staff was able to drive approximately to the Soup Bowl at which point they walked the rest of the way into the Little Sluice to take measurements and photos.

Ellis Creek Bridge had 3 feet of snow down the center with anywhere from 3-6 foot of concrete showing on either side at 930 am. At around 6pm there was roughly 18-24 inches down the center with about the same amounts of concrete showing on either side.

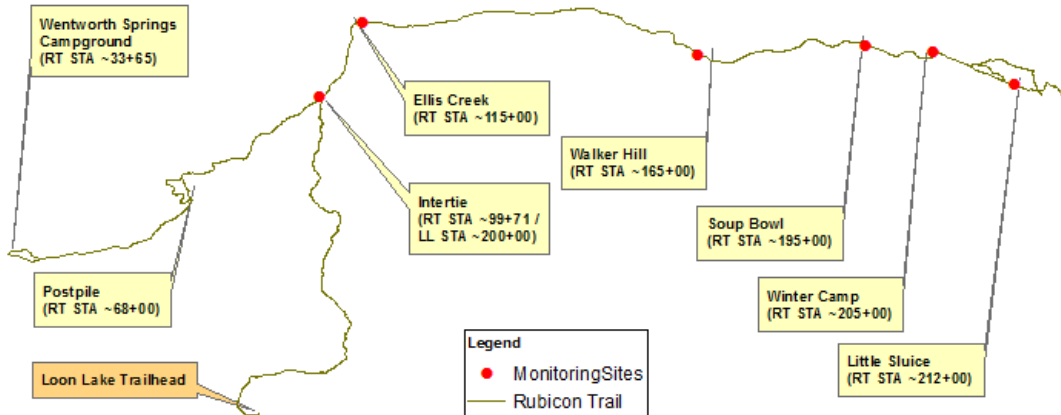
**County Assessment:** The melt is on with the snow melting rapidly. Throughout the day staff was able to see the snow melt approximately 12-18 inches in some places. The trail is in very good shape at the exposed sections, and all visible BMP's were working as designed. The trail has enough snow to make travel very difficult and dangerous for those who have limited experience. Though the goals are being met, observations at Soup Bowl indicate that the three conditions identified in the Monitoring Protocol are also being met which requires a temporary closure of the Trail.

Report reviewed by U.S. Forest Service on May 25, 2017

Reviewers: Richard Thornburgh, District Ranger, and Vince Pacific, Hydrologist

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## Photo Monitoring:



Ellis Creek Intertie  
RT Station 99+86

Water Depths: 0.1', 0.1', 0.25'  
Water Length and Width: 25'x4'

Notes: The water bar at the Intertie was functioning as designed. In November County staff determined that the water bar at this location needed to be rebuilt to better direct runoff to the Rock Energy Dissipater (RED), as opposed to flowing down the Intertie. With maintenance work to the water bar, the runoff was observed flowing across the hardened surface of the Trail to the RED and not down the Intertie. The BMP's were functioning as designed.



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Walker Hill  
RT Station 170+80

Water Depths: 0.1', 0.1', 0.1'  
Water Length and Width: 50'x3'

Notes: Water was visible and was no deeper than 0.1' deep across the rock armored trail. The BMP's were functioning as designed.



Soup Bowl  
RT Station 198+40

Water Depth: 0.9', 0.7', 0.9'  
Water Length and Width: 25'x20'

Notes: The depth measurements listed above were taken approximately 10' apart. The Rock Ditch Crossing (RDX) was covered in snow causing a snow dam preventing this area from draining. Based on the depths measured, Conditions 1, 2 and 3 of the Protocol for closure of the Rubicon Trail have been met.



## Rubicon Trail Site Assessment May 20, 2017



Winter Camp  
RT Station 209+58

Water Depth: 0.8', 0.6', 0.8'  
Water Length and Width: 30' x 15'

Notes: The depth measurements listed above were taken approximately 10' apart. In May of 2016 the BMP, Rock Fill (RF) with an underlying of chain link fencing was added to armor this area. In November a Rock-Lined Channel (RLC) was added to help with drainage outside of the travel way. All BMP's were functioning as designed.



Little Sluice  
RT Station 213+50

Water Depth: 0.6', 0.35', 0.2'  
Water Length and Width: 10'x3'

Notes: The Rock Fill (RF) was covered with 3-8 feet of snow, with minimal areas exposed. The depth measurements shown were taken at one exposed area.