

# ◆ NSA Trail Maintenance ◆

Special Report

Missoula, Montana

January 1, 2001

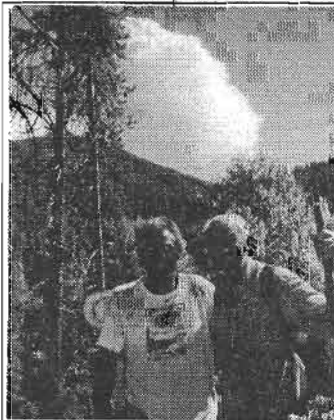
## PROJECTS FOR 2001

### Possible Expansion of Program!

Dave Owen advises that, at this printing various projects in Idaho, Oregon and Washington are being discussed and slowly taking shape. This is in addition to Montana, and Montana may enlarge its projects if projected interest in the program continues to expand. As it is early and none of the proposed projects have reached a serious level in the planning stage we can not discuss details yet. You can rest assured that all of the future programs will be **GOOD DEALS**. This subject will be followed by an update in the spring to all 2001 volunteers with appropriate information on all projects available. Why don't you consider planning for your participation in next summer's NSA Trail Maintenance Projects? The 2001 summer sign up sheet is included in this Special Report. Take the time to send it in. It may be the best summer project you have had in many years! That is since your jumping days

## Projects for 2000 a total success! 30 NSA Member Volunteers! Over 25 Miles of Trails Cleared!

Missoula MT. Dec. 2000: First reports on NSA Trail Maintenance Projects indicate more than 20 miles of maintenance of US Forest Service Trails in Wilderness complex were completed during the past summer. With 17 member volunteers in 1999 expanding to 30 in 2000, Art Jukkala's trail project is alive, possibly expanding, if inquires and participation by former jumpers is any indication. Quotes from reports received so far by Dave Owen, NSA Trail Maintenance Coordinator are as follows: The Spotted Bear Trail Coordinator



Cliff Dalzell & Ted Nyquist of Team #3 with smoke plume

viewed work at the head of Dean Creek and was surprised at the clearing and amount of windfall removal. Rocky Mountain District Wilderness Supervisor Kraig Lang and former jumper Paul Evenson viewed work on Biggs Creek and Dryden Creek, near Gates Park and both were very complimentary. Quoting Dave "I'll let others add to the assessment, however, special compliments need to be made to Tom Blunn for his outstanding organizing, purchase of food, packing of food for the trail, menu creation and

*(Continued on page 2)*

## Dean Creek Team #1 by Bill Moody

**Old Dean Creek Trail Rediscovered**  
or  
**McIver "Bull of the (Dean Creek) Woods"**  
or  
**Gunsight - Dean Creek Trail 2000**  
July 8-14, 2000

After a rousing inspirational send off speech by Fred Brauer (MSO-41) the Dean Creek Trail Crew, accompanied by Asst. Trail Coordinator Jon McBride, took off for Spotted Bear Ranger Station (north end of the Flathead National Forest). Crew members included squadleader Chuck Fricke (MSO 61), Carl Gidland (MSO, 58), John McKinnon

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## Dean Creek Team #1 (continued)

(MSO, 57), Rod McIver (MSO, 64) Bill Moody (NCSB, 57) and Bob Marshall Foundation volunteer, Shawn Cranmer. Joining the crew a few days later were Roger Savage (MSO, 57) Jim Hagemeyer (MSO, 57) and Hal Howell (MSO, 55). Up at 0530, we enjoyed a hardy send off breakfast prepared by Tom Blunn. In the mean time NSA Trail Coordinator Dave Owen (MSO, 51) had "manned up" the food and gear for the volunteer outfitters, the Flathead Backcountry Horseman. Starting from the Big Bill Mtn. Trailhead we hiked approximately 4.5 miles before entering the Great Bear Wilderness near Whitcomb Peak—a spectacular scenic alpine trek! Passing Gunsight Rock and Gunsight Lake we ended the 8-mile trek in

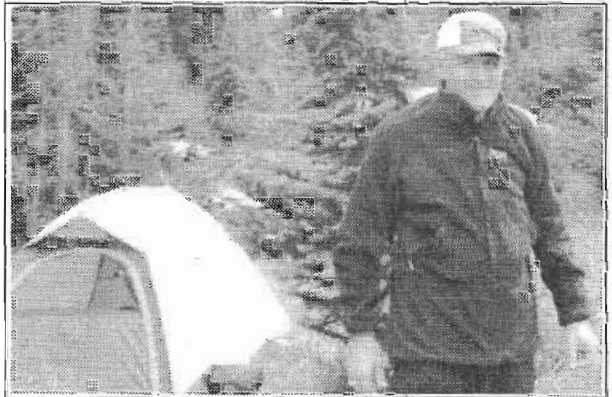
a one-acre meadow in a saddle at the 7000 ft. level—only to be greeted by a mega-swarm of blood thirsty mosquitoes. The gear arrived—camp was set up. During the next four days our tasks were to: 1) locate and open up the old "Dean Creek Trail" #87 from where it joined the Gunsight Trail to the head of Dean Creek (about 1.5 miles). The back country horseman have been working up Dean Creek from the south and would eventually tie into our work. 2) clear the Gunsight Trail from Gunsight Lake to the junction of Gunsight/Dean Creek Trails—a total of about 6-7 miles of trail clearing in a decadent timber stand—about 2.5 miles of moderate to major cross-cut work. The old trail was hard to locate.



*L to R: Carl Gidlund and Roger Savage in camp near Gunsight Rock*

After a few hours of searching Rod McIver, member of the "Trail # 87 Location Expeditionary Force" (Fricke, McIver, Moody) discovered a faint weathered trail blaze and old trail tread near the location shown on Dave

*(Continued on page 4)*



*Bill Moody getting ready to hit the trail*

## 30 NSA Member Volunteers (continued)

attention to detail. Chuck Fricke, Roger Savage and Roy Williams for their early scouting activities both by foot and aircraft. Jim Hagemeyer and Hal Howell for their hiking/riding into two of the teams work locations and acting as official photographers. The Back Country Horseman provided

volunteer packers for team # 1 into the Dean Creek location and their professionalism was outstanding. The Missoula Smokejumpers came through and provided (on loan) all four teams with like new tools for the summer projects and the volunteers returning from 1999 especially appreciated this. Lastly we were lucky to

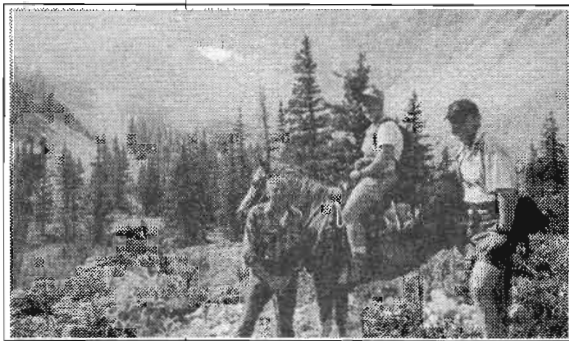
have outstanding cooperation by the Forest Service and the Bob Marshall Foundation personnel. Spotted Bear District Ranger Deb Manley viewed our projects as a part of her

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***"Art Jukkla's trail project is alive, possibly expanding, if inquiries and participation by former jumpers is any indication".***

### *Team #4: Gates Park (cont'd)*

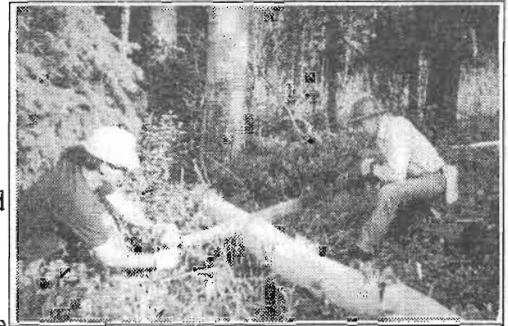
Creek trail. This trail would eventually connect with the S. fork of the Teton River once we got over that pass. About halfway up the trail, a grizzly bear had left its track in the mud. As dry as it was there was no telling how old the track was. The work was slow and steady as this area had also burned in 88. The trail was choked with dead trees that for some reason liked to fall



*Team 4  
L to R; Tom McGrath, Wendy Kamm,  
Mike Overby deep in the "Bob"*

lengthwise down the trail. With two crosscut saws and an assortment of axes and Pulaskis we rekindled old skills and muscles long ago stored in our memories. Being as we were in Level IV fire restrictions we had a longer hike each day to reach the work site.

With a restriction on fires and stoves the only cooking facilities were at the cabin. On the last day we broke out of the old burn and the work went faster, as there was not so much deadfall. It was decided to split the crew again, and send two workers over the top of the pass to the S. fork of the Teton River while the rest of us went out via Headquarters Pass. Jon Klingel and Dave Owen volunteered and cold



*Team 4  
L to R; Mike Overby and Tom McGrath  
bucking a log*

camped near the pass with C- Rations as dinner while the rest of us went back to Gates Park and steak. With the stock being less burdened with gear, on the way out we were able to use one riding horse for each of the two crews and we switched off riders on the way out. Jon McBride and a cooler full of cold beer and soda met us at the trailhead. It was the perfect way to finish the trip. Thanks Jon.

### *Team #3 Black Bear Creek (continued)*

nights weren't totally dark. This night it was a different story. Something woke us up about midnight and we realized it was distant thunder, the real change was how dark it was. One couldn't see a thing and we tripped over our tent tie down ropes when we crawled out to see how close the storm was. One member of our crew who had been camping on the outer fringes of the camp had decided to get a jump start on packing the next morning and had packed his tent so was sleeping in the

open. It had started to rain and his voice came out of the dark asking for a flashlight to be turned on. He was trying to drag his bedroll down to the kitchen fly and was having one awful time finding his way through the brush. The storm moved up our canyon and when the lightning and thunder came together we knew the storm was on top of us. The lightning sure does light up nylon tents! The next morning we

found two crewmembers under the kitchen fly. As it got light we broke camp and had a cool hike out to the trailhead.



*Team 3  
L to R; Tom Blunn, Phil Davis, Ted  
Nyquist at wilderness boundary*



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NSA TRAIL MAINTENANCE

**SPECIAL REPORT**

JANUARY 1, 2001

## *Dean Creek Team #1 (continued)*

meal. Evenings were spent around the campfire doing you know what (besides swatting mosquitoes) — telling revitalized, embellished silk stories. The top story went to John McKinnon for his recount of the 1959 fire jump thriller when he exited the Twin Beech and was suspended outside under the plane by his leg harness strap—several minutes later cutting away and descending into a ranch field, miles away from the exit. Sounds like a story for the NSA Smokejumper magazine. Clear

warm to hot weather punctuated with a few afternoon lightning storms, and a small fire 200 yards from our trail, gave the project that “special smokejumper effect.” With the nailing of the Dean Creek Trail sign on a snag at the junction of the Gunsight Trail, plus some brushing above Gunsight Lake on the way out, the “fire was declared out”—mission accomplished! On Friday, July 14th we readied the gear for the Flathead Backcountry Horseman and hiked back to the trailhead.

There Jon McBride and Dave Owen greeted us with a cooler full of “very fine quality refreshments.” Before parting Squadleader Fricke bestowed smokejumper knighthood on Rod McIver—The Bull of the (Dean Creek) Woods in recognition of Rod’s cross-cut skills and maintenance of our tools. Reflections: --great camaraderie, great adventure, great weather—great scenery—great food—great stories and we got the job done—thanks Art.