

TRAIL NEWS

Summer 2025 §



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2025 Wagon Train
Photo by Cat Cook

Another Great Year!

Hard to believe we are halfway through 2025 already, with three events hosted on the trail to date: 50K running event, Wagon Train and June Bike Event. All events went well with outstanding participation, and managed by a cadre of volunteers. We look forward to OctoberTrek this fall!

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- ✓ New slate of officers
- ✓ Remembering Barb McGann
- ✓ Trestle redecking
- ✓ Improvements to weed mitigation program (new UTV!)
- ✓ New camp host at the Wye
- ✓ Fund raising opportunities
- ✓ Memorial benches and more



REMEMBERING BARB MCGANN 1953 - 2025

In May 2002, recruited by FWRT director Dot Wiggins, Barb McGann was elected as a director. Barb was passionate about preserving trails and became one of our biggest advocates. A lifelong equestrienne, Barb enthusiastically embraced being a director and remained involved in the trail for the next 23 years, serving not only as director but acting as treasurer and then president for several years. Barb personified the volunteer spirit, donating countless hours of her time not only as an officer but managing events and spearheading improvement projects such as installation of hitching rails, corrals and mounting blocks.

Barb wrote her last president's message just about a year ago, where she shared the news about her metastatic breast cancer. Barb remained active and engaged in the trail until the end of her life, and her last passion project was the trestle restoration project. In her words, "Plans for 2025 include making a big push to fund raise for re-decking/repairing the trestles. We would like to introduce sponsorships of trestles, \$2,250 would buy you that 10 foot trestle with a permanent plaque with your name on it saying this trestle sponsored by Jane Doe!!

I can safely say that this has been my best year with the trail. I got a bunch of projects started and in progress; accomplished some projects like cleaning up the graffiti at Weiser; and brought on 3 new enthusiastic board

members!!! Thank you, one and all, who helped me make those goals!!"

Not only was Barb a champion of the Weiser River Trail, she was my dear friend for over 30 years; she was a mother, daughter, wife and sister. She embraced all of those roles with passion, and she is deeply missed. Please help us honor her member by donating to the trestle restoration project (more information here <https://weiserrivertrail.org/trestle-sponsorship>).

The endurance community has already purchased a memorial bench, to be placed at Thousand Springs next to Barb's mother's bench, in the fall of 2025. All will be invited to join us in the dedication of the bench (date to be announced). ~~Pam Haynes



Presley Trestle Before Restoration



TRESTLE REPAIRS

UPDATE As we go to press, we are aggressively working on re-decking and repairing several trestles.

We have been able to source two contractors and they will be working on the project over the next several months. In addition to

re-decking, some of the trestles require significant work around the approach.

One of our most recent restorations

was the historic Combs Trestle north of Fruitvale. Check the web site or Facebook for current conditions and any potential closures.



MOTHER NATURE



Mother nature raised heck along the trail this spring, from rock slides in the canyon

between Presley and Midvale to a massive slide on highway 95 that ultimately led to a four week closure of the highway. During this time, after intense discussion by the board of directors, we elected to allow the contractor to run a UTV along an approximate one mile stretch of trail, as a temporary detour around the slide. Many people who live in Council work in Tamarack, New Meadows and McCall, and we believe that our decision was for the greater good of the community. The detour was in place for four weeks and the contractor subsequently restored the trail to its original condition (or better).

In addition to the slide, multiple trees came down, and Glen Carsten and his team have worked hard to remove the trees and keep the trail open.

MEMORIAL BENCHES

Lane Williams and Elsa Freeman memorial bench in Midvale



The memorial bench program continues to be successful, adding an average of 2 or 3 benches per year. We now have a total of 19 benches installed with three more on order. The cost includes a plaque with wording of your choice, installation in the location of your choice, and lifetime maintenance. For more information on ordering a bench, please contact Pam Lakey at (208) 739-3366. Note these benches can

recognize and honor not only people but organizations. Additionally, we can offer a memorial bicycle rack or hitching rail.

FUND RAISING OPPORTUNITIES



Ridley's. They have a points program. The next time you are in a Ridley's store, tell the cashier that you want to donate your points to Friends. To date, Ridley's has paid us over \$89,000. Please consider us if you shop at Ridley's!!



Fred Meyer. If you don't shop at Ridley's but you do shop at Fred Meyer, they have the same program... Fred Meyer Community Rewards. If you have a rewards card, you can tell the cashier that you want to give your points to us, or you can go online, create an account and at the bottom of the home page, you will see Fred Meyer Community Rewards. Click that and follow the steps. We are listed as Friends of **THE** Weiser River Trail, Inc



Idaho Gives. This year, generous donors gave nearly \$4000 through the Idaho Gives campaign. We appreciate each and every one of you!

Albertson's Boise Open:

While the format of ticket sales has changed over the years from paper to

digital, the Albertson's Boise Open continues to be a great way for us to raise funds. Tickets for the 2025 event are nearly sold out and can only be purchased on-line at <https://tinyurl.com/3avffbeu>



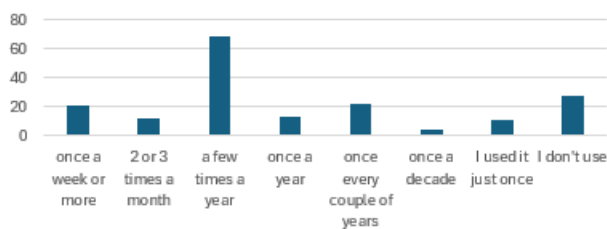
TRESTLE REPAIR PROJECT: You can also make individual contributions that are project directed (right now for example we are looking to fund repair and re-decking of 57 trestles). There is a grant feature available through PayPal or you can send a check to us directly (FWRT, P. O. Box 191100, Boise, ID 83719).

IDAHO COMMUNITY FOUNDATION: Another way to support the trail is to donate directly to the Idaho Community Foundation. For more information, visit their web site at <https://tinyurl.com/4pft7fpb>

WE ASKED, YOU ANSWERED

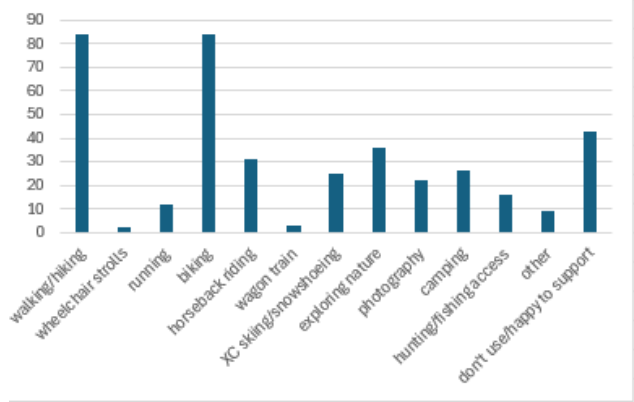
Last year, the membership renewal committee (Chris O'Brien) started sending a survey, requesting data regarding trail use, frequency, physical distance from the trail and recreational intent. The return rate of nearly 50% is extremely gratifying. This is the second of two articles regarding your responses.

FREQUENCY OF USE

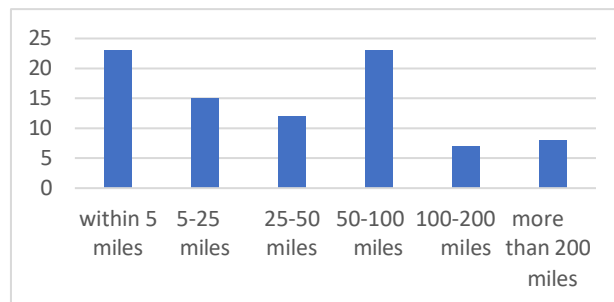


TYPE OF USE

FWRT Member Survey July-2024 - June 2025



DISTANCE LIVED FROM TRAIL



YOU COMMENTED, WE ARE RESPONDING

This is a random sampling of comments (not all of them).

"Please ask horseback riders NOT to use the trail when muddy. Horses leave deep holes in the trail in muddy conditions." Unfortunately, it is impossible for us to patrol 85+ miles of trail. We have to trust that most users are responsible enough to not use the trail when it is muddy.

"Bike ramps after Goodrich. It's a drag to open/close all those stock gates." We fully understand the inconvenience but given the narrowness of the trail through that section and given that it is literally up against the river, it is impossible to install pass-through access next to the gates as in other locations. In addition, if a bike or horse can pass through, so can the cows. We have to honor pre-existing agreements with adjacent landowners to close the corridor to cattle, and this is the only way to achieve that.

"Fewer goatheads." We maintain an aggressive weed mitigation program. If you find goatheads, please notify us of the exact location so we can get in there and remove the plants as well as spray the area. Again, we do our best to maintain the entire 85 miles of trail.

"Remove the ballast from the Trailhead in Weiser to Unity Bridge and replace with road

mix or pavement.” At this time, we have no plans to pave any more trail. Removing/replacing the ballast would be an extraordinarily expensive project, and we struggle to fund the basics such as our weed mitigation program, restroom cleaning, trestle and ongoing surface repairs and bank erosion.

“More access point bathrooms.” We currently spend about **\$30,000** per year for maintaining the existing bathrooms. This is MORE than we spend on chemicals for the weeds. While we appreciate the fact that more bathrooms would be nice, we are already struggle to fund what we have. In addition to cleaning of the restrooms (daily in Midvale and Cambridge) and paying for the Port-A-Potties at key locations, we have to deal with vandalism.

“The stretch between Midvale and Weiser is long, exposed and beastly hot. It would be GREAT to have a covered rest stop with toilet and potable water.” Yes it would. We do not recommend going through the canyon between Presley and Midvale during the really hot months. There is a Port-A-Potty, table and bench at Thousand Springs. There is a vault toilet, picnic table, potable water and a kiosk at Presley (unfortunately the kiosk has been badly vandalized). Projects like this cost a LOT of money, which is why we appreciate every member and all those who are able to participate in our fund raising efforts such as Idaho Gives and the Boise Open.

“Never pave or allow motorized vehicles.” We are committed to maintaining a nonmotorized, nonpaved corridor.

“Not sure if it’s been fixed, post at Middle Fork trailhead bridge at Mesa Siding.” If you mean the post at the Middle Fork access point, it has been repaired and the gate painted. The pile of tires was also removed.

FEEDBACK WE LIKE TO HEAR!!!

You are doing great! (Try to keep the motorized from sneaking on...good luck!)

Please continue to do the great job you are already doing.

You are doing a great job!

I like it, I love it, I want some more of it!

Great bathrooms!

Thanks for all you do!



Again, we are always happy to hear your ideas and your SOLUTIONS! Meanwhile, Happy Trails!

JUNE BIKE EVENT

On June 14, approximately 60 bike riders departed from the Wye Campground, riding 28 miles to Council or 48 miles to Cambridge. The day began with check-in and registration in Cambridge and Council. Bikes were loaded into an assortment of trailers and riders were shuttled to the Wye courtesy of Weiser School District. The first aid station was at Starkey, where Karin Lakey and Pam Lakey greeted them with snacks and water. The riders continued to Council where they enjoyed a wonderful lunch served at the Senior Citizen Center. Riders continuing on to Cambridge headed south, with a second aid station at Mesa Siding. The weather was beautiful, the riders reported an enjoyable day and there were no major problems.

Thanks to Pat Trainor for organizing the event (he also hauled bikes); Pam Haynes and Kathy Rainwater for transporting bikes; Elsa Freeman for rider check-in; Pam Lakey, Karin Lakey, Kathy Hughes and Ann Poole for sitting at the aide stations; the bike mechanic who followed the riders; the sweep team who brought up the rear and made sure no one was left behind. A special thank you to the ladies at

the Senior Center in Council and the Weiser School District for the buses.

The next bike event will be OctoberTrek, a two day fully supported ride covering the full length of the trail. Registration is now open <https://weiserrivertrail.org/events>

NOTE TO THE MEMBERSHIP

We strive to provide members with real time information to our membership. While we absolutely will continue to honor your preference for a paper newsletter, if you have E-mail and have no objection to receiving occasional E-mails from us and on-line voting in the annual election, we would greatly appreciate you sending us your E- mail and we will update our database. You can E-mail weiserrivertrail@gmail.com with your E- mail address and state your preference to switch from paper to digital. **WE WILL NEVER SHARE YOUR INFORMATION.** (Please note we still mail about 175 newsletters at a cost of over \$3 per newsletter.)

Another way of supporting the trail at renewal time is to up your membership level, or even consider joining at the \$1000 lifetime level. As we go to press, we currently have FORTY lifetime members, a gain of 10 in just the last year!

2025 SO FAR

WYE CAMPGROUND: Welcome to our new camp host at the Wye, Susan Williamson. Susan is really enjoying her summer and we are thrilled to have her!

NEW OFFICERS: Every year we are required to elect a new slate of officers. Welcome our 2025-2026 officers: President Glen Carsten, Vice-President Mike Beavers, Treasurer Pam Lakey and Secretary Pam Haynes. We currently have eight directors, so three open positions.

Please contact any of the directors listed on page one if you are interested in becoming a director.

GRANTS: We were absolutely blown away when the Idaho Womens Charitable Foundation gave us a \$28,000 grant. IWCF



gave

only nine grants for 2025, with 92 applicants, and we are honored to be one of the nine recipients. \$8000



went to purchase a UTV for our weed mitigation program. The remaining \$20,000 will be used to repair/redeck trestles.



In addition to IWCF, we finally received approval

for the 2024 Idaho Parks and Rec grant for \$30,900. Funds from this grant will go towards trail cleanup and repairs, as well as trestle repairs/redecking. In addition to the decking, we are repainting the hand rails as needed. We also received a \$1000 grant from Pacific Northwest Endurance riders and \$1000 from the Idaho Horse Board.

WAGON TRAIN, JUNE BIKE EVENT, 50K RUN:

Three events have been held already this year, and all went very well (see above for June Bike event recap). We look forward to OctoberTrek this fall (registration now open). In addition, we are partnering with Happy Ass Burro Rescue to sponsor a burro race in October 2026, and we are also partnering to sponsor a 5K Walk for Suicide Prevention in October 2025 (check web site and Facebook for updates).

Become a Member

The Weiser River Trail is owned and managed by the Friends of the Weiser River Trail, a 501(c)3 nonprofit corporation. The mission of FWRT is to preserve the integrity of the rail corridor, manage it as a public trail, and conserve the natural habitats along its length. FWRT is a self-funding membership organization that depends heavily upon funds raised through membership dues, grants, and fund-raising efforts to cover ongoing maintenance and operational costs.

We welcome your support!

- o \$15 Basic Member
- o \$25 Trail Blazer
- o \$50 Pioneer
- o \$100 & Up Bridge Builder
- o \$1000 Life Member

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State / Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____

I prefer to receive my newsletter via (check one): E-mail ☐ snail mail ☐

Please Send your contribution and membership information to:

Friends of Weiser River Trail
P O Box 191100
Boise, ID 83719

If you would like to help work on the trail or serve on a committee, please
E-mail weiserrivertrail@gmail.com. Your help would be greatly appreciated!

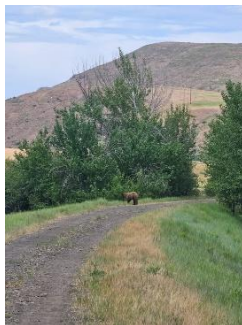
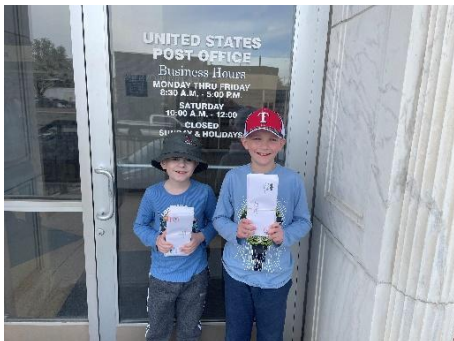
If you would like more
information about
the Weiser River Trail,
visit us on the web at:
www.weiserrivertrail.org
or
call (208) 861-8614

FRIENDS OF THE WEISER RIVER TRAIL

P O Box 191100
Boise, ID 83719

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

TRAIL NEWS



You're never too young to volunteer and director Mike Beavers' grandsons, James Dewey and Robby Dewey, enthusiastically helped with the annual mailing in April! Thank you to all who submit pictures!!!