

June 2011 Overview Stanislaus Backcountry Trail Crew

Cesar Ramirez: Supervisor

OVERVIEW: Where does the time go? Last I checked my calendar we were scheduled to be in Bishop CA for their annual "Mule Days" Parade – yes the first ever Backcountry crew to be in a parade, waving our tools, all smiles for the wonderful crowd. Thirty minutes of standing ovations to our fine work as trailworkers – sure on occasion someone would shout "thanks, firemen, for saving my home" or "there go the miners," but don't be fooled, the announcers would correct them with high praises of our work keeping trails open for all to hike. We were treated to front row seats experiencing up close the pride and beauty which is America and the announcer made sure to let us know what a great country we live in!

The packers put on as good show. They sure know how to handle mules along those trails. Our trip in Bishop was short and we made our way up north to the Stan with anticipated stops along the way only to have mother nature tell us NO!

We hunkered down for the night while the storm passed us through and in the morning headed to Mono Lake and Bodie (a great old ghost town). The crew was slightly unhappy, but was confronted by some good music as we took the long way home. Strawberry has been a good camp to us – we arrived in the snow but slowly the heat has crept in and our new home showed its beautiful colors.

We have been working hard on trails around Pinecrest Lake, Cleo's Bath, 7 Pines, Column of the Giants, railroad Grade Trail. Strawberry has been a great camp and we celebrated our Summer Solstice Party and brought Strawberry to a close with BBQ and costumes, dance offs, bowling and some great fire effects provided by John Goodwin. We have moved to Kennedy Meadows and are grateful to not be in the van driving to trailheads!!! We race up the trail and our work is no longer brushing but also rockwork. Oh yeah, it has begun.

CURRICULUM: June has been exciting in ways of classes. We had John Goodwin teach a class on using the crosscut and its many uses and magical powers of always starting! He also presented a very informative class on rockwork and rock vocab. We had Mary Savo present a class on the life of an interpreter and last but not least a fantastic reading done by none other than Karlson Hubbard who managed to make the connection of "In a Far Country" by Jack London to our very own Backcountry experience. Thank you for that.

We continue to read "Into the Wild" and do team-building exercises.

PERSONNEL CHANGES: None to report, the crew is becoming like one big piece of chewing gum.

ODDS AND ENDS: Thank you to Karlson Hubbard for visiting us and dispensing stories, laughs and, most important, advice to keep us clean and together! Thank you Philip LaFollette, his wife Bobby Jo (I love you Booby Jo) and their awesome daughter Taylor who helped us prepare for the Summer Solstice Party and helping with chores. Also a shout out to all those pen pals and family and friends who write to us while we are out here, it means a lot to us so keep those letters pouring in. Till next time, Peace.