

Eagle Creek Opening Delayed Again

by Steve Jones. On March 9th I worked on the Eagle Creek Trail clearing off new slides of mud, trees, and rocks. We worked in perfect weather for shoveling, chopping, lopping, and dragging all the gunk off the trail. The end result of the day is that the trail crew restored the first half mile of trail, except for the washout which is still being repaired.

We have discovered the landslides sometimes contain poison oak which had been growing in the sunny patches on the hillsides above the trail. A few of the trail workers, including myself, have had the rash several days later. We are more cautious now and mention it in the safety session held before the work party.

When we were finishing up the day and returning to our cars several of us talked with two stone masons working on the new Eagle Creek hiker bridge near the fish hatchery. They are putting rock facing on the concrete bridge abutments. I was very impressed with their work and how it will complement the existing stonework from the CCC era. One of the stone masons told us his family tree goes back to stone masons who worked on cathedrals in England hundreds of years ago.

The new cause for a delay in the opening of the trail is a large landslide on the access road to the trailhead. There are dozens of old-growth trees and tons of mud that came down the hillside, covering the road, and spilling into Eagle Creek. The Forest Service will take until at least mid-April before the slide can be cleared. The slide will have to be cleared because the fish hatchery workers can't drive to the water intake for the fish hatchery. The workers monitor the water level of the creek several times each day to ensure the right amount of water is diverted for the fish hatchery. Meanwhile

work continues on repairing two sections of trail which slid down the hillside during the last big storm we had in January.