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## Hat Creek Rim - January 2008

Hat Creek Rim's #1 LZ was found in a deplorable condition earlier this year in January. There was trash, fireworks debris, rutting across the LZ and restricted off-road areas, and huge logs drug into the LZ used for firewood. This was all found a week after a winter fly-in event known as "Blue Balls."

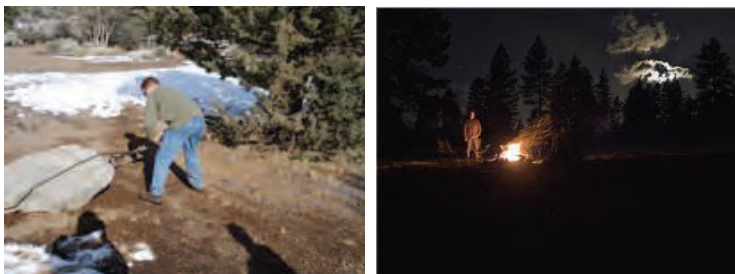
The annual Blue Balls event is known for its illegal fireworks and huge timber-sized bon fires. A couple years ago, the Hat Creek Committee was contacted by the Forest Service to repair rut damage in the #1 LZ caused by this event. A group of us spent half a flying day repairing the damage.

Weeks before this year's Blue Balls, an e-mail containing a video announcement of the upcoming event was received by three of our club officers, two of which being Hat Creek Committee members. A letter was sent from the Hat Creek Committee to the Chico Cloud Street Gang, the hang gliding club that sent the video and supports this event, urging them to use the site respectfully. There was no reply to the letter and what was found in the #1 LZ after the event was anything but respectful site usage.

Hat Creek Committee members, along with some volunteers, picked up the debris and trash from this year's event. Only after receiving negative public pressure, did members from the Cloud Street Gang return days later to take care of the ruts and remove the logs from the LZ.

After we removed the trash and debris from the #1 LZ, the Forest Service rock barrier at the main launch was repaired. This rock barrier keeps vehicles out of the set-up area and prevents anyone from driving off of launch. Someone, apparently to gain better access, had moved one of the huge rocks. Unfortunately, this allows anyone to drive across the set-up area, which erodes the ground cover. This road base ground cover is expensive to have hauled up there. It's placed there to keep our glider sails off of the native red volcanic cinders, which will stain the hell out of your sail! Veteran club members who remember the launch area before the road base can tell you about the "red plague."

Since repairing the rock barrier in January, its been vandalized three more times. If you see the jerk who keeps moving this rock, please get the license plate number and turn the person in!!!



*Using a come-along to restore the Forest Service rock barrier at the main launch (left) and enjoying a nice fire by the #2 LZ. Note the moon behind the clouds during the early morning sky—camping this time of year can be very beautiful.*

## Permit for Hat Creek Rim—Part 1

In other news, our Special Use Permit for Hat Creek Rim expired on December 31, 2007. That's right, its been expired for about a year now. We had paid the renewal fee, but the Forest Service told us that because of government cutbacks and limited budgets, they are way backed up. They said if we continue to pay the annual permit fee, however, that the use permit would still be in effect.

As you know, the permit is issued to the Shasta Sky Sailors' Hat Creek Committee, which has three members from our club and includes three paragliding representatives from the Northern California Foot-Launched Pilots Association (NCFLPA.) As agreed to with the FS, the liaison between the flying community and the FS rotates between a committee member in our club and a committee member from the NCFLPA. It would have been the NCFLPA's turn at being the liaison this time when the use permit was renewed.

*Things get a little sticky...*

The NCFLPA has been disbanded for some time now, but there were left over members who were continuing to provide paragliding representation for the use permit. Liz Hern was one of those members. Liz has been a great supporter of Hat Creek Rim and chief organizer of the October Monster Mash fly-in, a fly-in that generated a lot of revenue and helped to support Hat Creek Rim's operating costs.

Earlier this past year, Liz told the Hat Creek Committee that she was moving on to other things and thought it best if a replacement was found for the now disbanded NCFLPA. She recommended the Rogue Valley Hang Gliding and Paragliding Association as a replacement.

The RVHGPA has a great reputation for site management and are well organized. So, the Hat Creek Committee approached the RVHGPA to see if they would be interested in sponsoring paragliding representation on the use permit. They were in fact interested and agreed to help share the costs of running Hat Creek Rim as did the NCFLPA did before them. The committee began a dialog with John Ivey. John is a paragliding pilot in the RVHGPA who has experience with site management and working with government officials. John was to be the point of contact for paragliding on the committee.

At this time, Jan Sorochtey, the Hat Creek Ranger District Recreation Officer, thanked the committee for being proactive at finding a paragliding replacement. She also wanted a meeting to "discuss concerns and go over the renewal of the use permit." By "concerns," we hoped that she meant addressing the issues that were being created by the Blue Balls event.

The Forest Service, Hat Creek Committee, and John Ivey all agreed that the Memorial Day weekend would be a good time to meet since a lot of us would be there that weekend anyway. We all agreed to meet in the #1 LZ on the Saturday of that weekend.

*Part Two, Continued Next Page...*

## Permit for Hat Creek Rim—Part 2

The weather was somewhat nasty for Memorial Day weekend. It drizzled almost the whole time. But John, nether the less, made it down from Southern Oregon and met us at Fireside Village Saturday morning. We had some breakfast and went over a little bit the requirements of the use permit and being on the committee. Then we headed off to the #1 LZ to meet with the FS.

We arrived at the #1 LZ and met with Jan Sorochtey. She introduced us to Ray Torres. Jan is moving on and Ray is her replacement as the recreational officer for the Hat Creek Ranger District.

Within two minutes of meeting Jan and Ray, a caravan of vehicles entered the #1 LZ parking area and about seven Chico Cloud Street Gang members emerged and joined the meeting.

Jan began the meeting and the Cloud Street Gang members quickly expressed their disapproval of how the site is being managed, stating that their interests at the site were not being “represented” by the current permit holders.

Jan and Ray informed us that we would need to work things out among ourselves. Jan also went on to say that “our permit” was expired and that it would not be renewed. Jan and Ray said the “new” permit would have to be issued to all interested parties and that we would have to work out our differences.

We were completely dumbfounded. Here stood the people who only four months earlier participated in an event that left the #1 LZ trashed and now the Forest Service is saying they must be included on our use permit.

We expressed our reservations and concerns about this arrangement, but Ray and Jan kept saying, “you guys have to work it out.”

Not knowing any better and believing that we had no choice, we reluctantly accepted the mandate.

John was designated to be the permit signer and liaison between the new three group committee and the forest service.

Ray told us that there would only need to be some minor tweaks of the use permit language and so it would not take long to get the new permit issued.

The meeting adjourned and John headed back to Southern Oregon.

The next day, we conducted our annual spring maintenance of the site. This year, a paraglider pilot by the name of Bill, helped with the annual maintenance. Bill was camping at the Hereford Ranch Campground and was a big help. Thanks Bill! The Cloud Street Gang had expressed an interest in going the work party earlier, but their help never materialized.

*Part Three, Continued on Page 4...*

## Memorial Day Weekend Flying

A better title for this article would probably be “Lack of flying over the Memorial Day Weekend.” As noted before, it pretty much drizzled the entire weekend. We still had fun around the campfire, but no one got to fly. That is, except for me!!!

Last year, I traveled back on Monday and had to work the following Tuesday. It wasn't very fun driving back and then having to work the next day. So, this year I took the whole week off and we didn't have to head back on Monday with the rest of the crowd. And as luck would have it, the sun came out for a while on Monday.

No sooner than did the last camper pull out of the campground at around noon, did the sun start breaking through the clouds. With excitement, I gathered up the wife and kids and we headed to launch. I was especially excited because I had a new wing to try out. Well, new to me anyway. I picked up a Wills Wing XC with very low hours for a very reasonable price. I only use my Moyes for coastal flying now. It never landed very well at Hat Creek Rim's altitude.



The sun stayed out long enough to warm the ridge and brought the wind straight up launch. I took off and was able to soar for a half hour before it started to shut down. The landing was great! I had a good flare in the #2 LZ and only took a few short steps. It's good to have a Wills Wing glider again...

*- editor*



*Heading south along the front ridge—note the unsettled weather towards the southeast.*

## New Fundraising T-shirt for Hat Creek Rim

Fundraising efforts in 2008 included a new Hat Creek Rim t-shirt. This beautiful shirt is the work of Jim Tibbs. You may have noticed his cartoon artwork on the pages of the USHPA calendar. We have many of these shirts in different sizes, available in natural or ash color. The cost is \$15.00 each and all proceeds go to the operational costs at Hat Creek Rim.



## Vandalism of Porta-potty and Trees at HCR

While waiting for the Forest Service to get around to issuing the new use permit, the business of operating Hat Creek Rim went on as usual. Well, kind of...

The cost of porta potty pumping was now being split three ways between us, the RVHGPA, and the Cloud Street Gang. After the first or second pumping of the toilets, the Cloud Street Gang began to express opposition to maintaining



the second porta potty in the #2 LZ, noting the increased cost. The toilet in the #2 LZ is not required under the current use permit.

## Vandalism, Cont...

However, the Forest Service allowed us to place a toilet in the #2 LZ for sanitation needs after Steve Kozloff donated a newer, wheel-chair accessible toilet that replaced the one at launch.

Shortly after the Cloud Street Gang expressed opposition to maintaining a second toilet, the toilet in the #2 LZ was vandalized. It was stood back up by Intermountain Septic and they cleaned up the mess for a very reasonable price.

Before the Labor Day Weekend, however, it was tipped over again. This time, it appeared to have been rammed very hard, probably by a vehicle. The door was torn from its hinges and had to be repaired.

The toilet has been knocked over three or four times now. The one at launch never sees any vandalism. We (Shasta Sky Sailor members) keep standing it back up and someone keeps tipping it over.

The last we heard, the toilet is laying on its side again. The point of contact for the Cloud Street Gang club said they'd be by there soon, stand it up, and report back the status of the toilet. That was months ago and after asking twice, no word back yet.

### *More Vandalism...*

Sadly, the toilet in the #2 LZ wasn't the only thing that suffered from vandalism in 2008. Someone, for some reason, cut down the trees in the set up area at the main launch.

These trees had provided shade and a nice wind break for those who showed up to launch first.

The trees were just felled, but not cut up or removed. Is someone possibly trying to make this site top-landable???



*This year, Hat Creek Rim has seen the most disrespect and irresponsible use than it has ever seen in its over 3-decade history*

## Flying the South Ridge on a Southerly Day

One of my flights on the new glider this year included a run down the south ridge, past the old fire lookout, and into the “Buttonhook” LZ.

Why did I land in the bailout LZ and not come back out to the #2 LZ? Well, let me tell you... This day had a pretty good southerly component and after committing to the south ridge, things started to get interesting.

After launching from the main launch, it was immediately clear that lift was abundant and going up was easy. I was a grand over in no time and decided to head south.

The penetration going south was slow, but lift was plentiful and so I committed to the south ridge. About half way down, the lift was not so abundant. By the time I reached the old fire lookout, I was level with it. About this time, things started getting bumpy.

The ridge south of the Buttonhook LZ was creating rotor turbulence and I was on for the ride. I looked down at the bailout LZ and the windsock was showing perpendicular to the ridge, much more south than what was noted in the other LZs.

Before long, it was clear that I would never be able to get more than just level with the south ridge and I was really getting thrashed around.

I started evaluating what would be the best approach into the bailout LZ. The windsock stayed consistently way south, so I would set up a landing for the north end of the LZ to avoid rotors from the south as much as possible.

It was a rock-n-roll ride all the way to the deck, but the new glider did me well. Thank God for the Buttonhook LZ. Even in the most marginal conditions, it's doable.

I'll be more careful in the future when evaluating the south component. I also have the entire flight on video. I'm burning copies of it, so look for it in your mailbox. I think you'll find it entertaining.



*Struggling to keep the glider in the right direction on approach into the Buttonhook LZ — Kids, don't try this at home :)*

## Permit for Hat Creek Rim, Part 3

*November 2008*— Well, six months had come and gone now since our “group” meeting with the Forest Service and still no use permit had been issued. John Ivey had reported the incidents of vandalism to the Forest Service, requesting guidance on how we might best deal with the situation, but no response back as of yet.

Over this period of time, there were some very disturbing correspondences with the contact person for the Could Street Gang.

This person said that he didn't have a problem with someone moving the rock barrier that the Forest Service had put in place at the main launch and said that “it's in our way.” He also said driving in the set up area doesn't really cause any erosion.

He went on to say that he didn't have any problem with illegal fires in the LZs during summertime, even if it were pilots who were doing it.

He has suggested several times that the toilet in the #2 LZ be removed and that their club didn't really have the funding to support these kinds of things. We, on the other hand, would like to keep improving the site, not remove the improvements. I know my wife and others sure do appreciate the #2 LZ toilet.

Having very serious concerns about the intentions of the Cloud Street Gang at the Rim and still not fully understanding the “ambush” meeting in the #1 LZ over the Memorial Day weekend, the committee contacted a division of the FS with some questions.

The committee has found out that there are no grounds for having our use permit modified. The person contacted said that there would have to be “severe non-compliance with the use permit” to have the permit *not* renewed. The committee was also told that there would have to be an official, written notice of permit termination, stating the reasons why.

We, of course, have faithfully executed the requirements of the special use permit for over 12 years now. Ray Torres was contacted by the committee and informed we wish to keep the permit in its original configuration with paragliding representation provided by the RVHGPA, as originally agreed to with the RVHGPA.

This upset the RVHGPA for some reason and they have since opted out of the agreement.

According to a conversation between John and Ray, we have the option of having the use permit issued straight to the Shasta Sky Sailors. We would have preferred that the RVHGPA stayed on board to provide paragliding input, but they have chosen to opt out.

The committee (our original SSS Hat Creek Committee since before 1996) is currently waiting for Ray to issue the permit to our club. This makes sense. We pioneered, developed, and maintain the site. Where else do you find multiple hang gliding clubs trying to steer the direction of a managed site? It's problematic at best.

*The Hat Creek Committee will report back to the membership as to the final outcome of the Special Use Permit.*

A few more things...

- ▶ For Sale
- ▶ The 2008 Maintenance Crew
- ▶ Some Labor Day Weekend Pictures



Happy New Year!

### For Sale



Well, I like my new wing so well that I've decided not to fly the Moyes anymore at all. It's a Moyes SX5 (Super Extralite 154.) I have a spare down tube, manual, and two batten charts. The bag is in decent shape and I replaced the zipper a while back. The glider is in very good shape with only a few minor blemishes. Color is white LE and blue 1st panel. E-mail me for some detailed photos. \$500.00 OBO.

Brian Bokkin  
 flyingbrian17@hotmail.com

### Some Labor Day Weekend Pictures



Setup area—about 20 hang gliders and 10 paragliders flew.



#2 LZ after a great evening of flying.

### The 2008 Maintenance Crew



From left to right: Brian, Bill, Mike, and Phil. Hey, it rhymes!  
 Thanks again to Bill, for volunteering.



Cousin Matt next to my new wing—He says he wants to try it.