



## Region 2 Training Introduction to Tracking & Sign Training at Santa Teresa County Park

On May 15<sup>th</sup> a dozen park rangers and few police officers gathered at Santa Teresa County Park in San Jose to follow a trail.

On a day when temperatures were approaching 100°F these dedicated professionals were there to learn the basics of tracking for search and rescue. This 8-hour course, taught by Km Aufhauser from the West Valley College Park Management Program, provided students with an introduction to the art and science of tracking.

A short class room session preceded a day in the sun following variety of tracks through various types of terrain. Some tracks were fresher than others and, as in real life, some times the local flora and fauna added to puzzle.

In addition to tracks Kim discussed and provided practical exercises in looking for sign—the marks or indicators of activity that are not an actual track.

Students for this training session came from as far away as Los Angeles City Parks and had a chance to learn, share experiences and network as they increased or honed their skill sets.

PRAC would like to extend our thanks to Kim Aufhauser who volunteered his time and expertise to teach the course and to the Santa Clara County Department of Parks and Recreation who graciously hosted the training. Thanks to the support of Kim, West Valley College and Santa Clara County PRAC was able to provide this training at a reasonable cost to our members.

### Calendar of Upcoming Events

- July 10<sup>th</sup> PRAC Board Conference Call
- July 15<sup>th</sup> Scholarship Award Winners Announced
- July 31<sup>st</sup> World Ranger Day  
<http://internationalrangers.org/world-ranger-day/>
- August 15<sup>th</sup> Submissions for *Signpost* Sept/Oct issue due
- September 20<sup>th</sup> Coastal Clean Up Day

### World Ranger Day

Just a friendly reminder that world ranger day is on July 31<sup>st</sup>. It is a great way to talk about issues from ivory poaching, deforestation, climate change and challenges facing parks and rangers worldwide. Highlight the history of your organization, show “*The Thin Green Line*” or do a fund raiser for the International Ranger Federation.

Just do something to recognize our day! Every day is a walk in the park for us; it is not often we get to share it on a world wide scale.

*Patrick Boyle Region 1*

## From the Redwoods

Ah... 'Tis the season. Long days, warm nights, cold beer and maybe some star-gazing are just a few of the many joys that summer brings. For us "parkies," we know different joys. Lost hikers, drunken picnic brawls, wildfires and deer ticks. As the vacationing public heads to our parks in droves, we brace ourselves for the onslaught of shenanigans. And while we'll undoubtedly close out the season with a couple dozen new campfire stories ("Oh man, did you see what I found in that bathroom?!?" or "Whoa. Did that drunk guy just climb that redwood tree buck naked???"), we also need to remember that summer is the season where we need to have a heightened sense of safety. Officer safety should always be paramount in your daily routine, but in the chaos and stress of summer, we can get lax. I'd like to remind you all to please take the time to do a weekly review some aspect of either your emergency preparedness or routine safety protocol. Consider the following:

- Do new or seasonal staff know about routine safety protocol?
- When was the last time you all talked about emergency evacuation?
- Do you have a summer camp? If so, do you have a lock-down procedure in place?
- Does all you and your staff know how to use fire suppression equipment?
- Severe drought can bring wild animals closer to people for food and water. Do you have protocol in place to handle nuisance animals or make public notifications?

These are just a few things to think about as you're putting together your staff briefings. Sometimes just a quick discussion to make sure everyone's on the same page can make a world of difference.

If your agency doesn't provide training, or maybe your team just needs a refresher, make sure you let your regional director know. We're all here to help!

Stay safe and sane out there.

**Heather Reiter**

PRAC President,

Chief Ranger, City of Santa Cruz

## Elections

I know it is early on this but elections are coming up at the end of the year and we are looking for a few good candidates. This year we are voting for **Directors** in **Regions 1, 3, & 5**. This organization needs your help and ideas moving forward. It also needs you to step up to the plate and serve. So put your thinking caps on as to what you can do for this organization. This has been a great experience for me both personally and professionally. So think about it, you have lots of time. I just wanted to put the bug in your ear. And feel free to bug me about questions you may have about serving this great organization.

**Patrick Boyle Region 1**

## From the Bedside Table of Patrick Boyle

# Wolf Wars

by Hank Fischer

I have been looking forward to this book for a long time. (I had to reinforce the legs on the bedside table with all the books stacked on it.) Hank Fischer was at the center of wolf reintroduction in Yellowstone. He was the Northern Rocky representative for Defenders of Wildlife. He not only went toe to toe with ranchers and politicians but even went up against his own environmental group. He was there from the beginning. From the first stages of the idea of bringing back the wolf all the way through to the actual releasing of wolves into Yellowstone and Idaho.

I remember being in high school and college when this issue hit the main stream media and my own environmentally conscious group. We wrote letters and had students sign petitions. It was really interesting to see where this came into play in the big picture of wolf recovery. So much went on behind the scenes that I was not aware of. Reading this allowed me to understand and see all the intricate pieces and how they all had to fall into place at just the right moment in time for us to have wolves in Yellowstone. Anyone who has experienced the howl of a wolf or seen one is forever touched by the experience. I am one of those who have been fortunate enough to experience this in the backcountry of Yellowstone.

Hank's ability to think outside the box and listening to all the interested parties on both sides of this issue was instrumental in wolf recovery. It paved the way, showing how the Endangered Species Act could work involving such a controversial issue as wolves. He brought western livestock representatives to Minnesota to see first-hand how the local ranchers and wolves coexisted there. He instigated paying ranchers for any livestock lost to wolves with a fund set up by Defenders of Wildlife. This was something everyone could contribute to across the nation to help return the wolf to Yellowstone and was an essential part of wolf recovery. This book documents the journey from conception of reintroduction, to the release. It is a great read of all the environmental, political, and social challenges that had to be faced and gives us great hope for future restoration projects. Hank writes in a style that is easy to read and gives you lots of insight into all the players on both sides of the issue. Hope you get out under your favorite shade tree for a bit of reading this summer.

**1914** Yellowstone begins wolf extirpation campaign. Rangers were shooting and trapping wolves.

**1926** The last two wolf pups are trapped on a bison carcass. Over 137 wolves were killed in 12 years. The wolf is gone from Yellowstone.

**1936** Predator control ends with new National Park Service Policy.

**1944** Aldo Leopold advocates bringing the wolf back to Yellowstone.

**1972** President Nixon bans use of predator poisons on Public Lands.

**1973** Congress enacts Endangered Species Act. Rocky Mountain Grey Wolf listed as an endangered species.

**1975** Federal Government forms Rocky Mountain Wolf Recovery Team.

**1978** Study shows no wolves in Yellowstone and natural recovery unlikely.

**1981** Federal and state agencies begin to revise recovery plan.

**1985** Parks Service Director William Mott backs Yellowstone Wolf reintroduc-

tion. Study shows strong visitor support for wolf reintroduction at Yellowstone.

**1987** Legislation introduced to House for Yellowstone Wolf Recovery.

**1988** Republican Senator McClure backs wolf reintroduction if ranchers interests are protected. Congress has Park Service Study wolf reintroduction impacts.

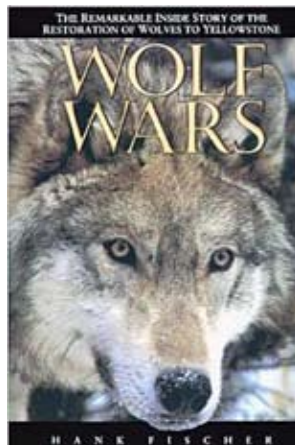
**1990** Defenders set up Wolf Compensation Fund. Over \$100,000 donated from public. Wolf Management Committee charged with coming up with reintroduction plan.

**1991** Congress bags management committee recommendations and provides funds for an EIS. This is a turning point in actually getting wolves reintroduced.

**1992** EIS public comments and meetings show overwhelming support for wolf reintroduction.

**1994** Bruce Babbitt signs off on final EIS for wolf reintroduction.

**1995** Wolves released in Yellowstone and Idaho after last minute court injunction was lost by Wyoming Ranchers Association.



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*The Conference Committee is looking for for someone to chair the following Tracks:  
Public Safety, Resource Management, Park Management and Interpretation.*

*Anyone interested can contact Richard Weiner at [region4@CalRanger.org](mailto:region4@CalRanger.org)*

*"Public sentiment is everything.  
With public sentiment nothing can fail,  
without it, nothing can succeed."*

*Abraham Lincoln*

# **OR7 Finds a Mate and Makes the Case for Protection**

## **Patrick Boyle Region 1**

This June California granted Endangered Species Protection to the Grey Wolf. OR7, named as the 7<sup>th</sup> wolf collared by Oregon Fish and Game officials, has been a lone wolf wandering in and out of Northern California since 2011. This has begun the discussion again over the status of the wolf in California. The dispersal of younger individuals from a pack is common. Dispersing wolves generally attempt to join other packs, or form their own pack in unoccupied habitat. This year OR7 found a mate and they have successfully birthed a litter of pups near the California /Oregon border. This is the first known pack of wolves to possibly occupy California since the last one was shot in Lassen County in 1924. That is almost 90 years since we have had a wolf in California. A confirmed pair of mating wolves was the tipping point that led to the California Fish and Wildlife Commission to grant the wolf endangered status.

Even with everything we now know about the balance of nature, and the benefits of predators, there is still a lot of wolf hatred and fear out there. When OR7 was first known to be in

California I heard a lot of folks say the only good wolf is a dead wolf, along with the usual shoot it on site mentality. It is hard to get rid of the “Big Bad Wolf” syndrome. We have lived in fear of this animal for most of our westward expansion, with very little proven facts to back up that fear.

We need to remind people that wolves do not attack people. They do get themselves in trouble with livestock occasionally. Ranchers can be compensated for losses and agencies and ranchers can successfully work together with problem wolves as has been shown in Minnesota, Idaho, and Wyoming. At the moment the deer population in California can use a little pruning. Just think, soon we all could experience the howling of the Wolf here in California. This is a great interpretive opportunity for all of us to act on to help educate the public about wolves.

We have put nature out of balance. Finally the scales are starting to tip the other way with OR7 and his first litter of pups. Here is to OR7, lone wolf no more, King of the California wolf pack! Long May He Reign!!!!



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