

Trail Advocates

of the Clackamas River Ranger District of the Mount Hood National Forest

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Hillockburn Trail 516

Topic: Hillockburn Trail 516

Author: Rob Williams

Topic Started: 4/1/2007; 2:06:24 PM

Last Posted: 4/13/2007; 7:28:31 AM

Hillockburn Trail 516

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Rob Williams : 4/1/2007; 1:06:24 PM

Reads: 249, Responses: 25 ([view responses to this item](#))

I was finally able to get out and do a short hike today. I made it to the Hillockburn trail - Trail 516. Trailhead was not too hard to find based on the info in the USFS sheet, but I did have to make an educated guess. The place is popular with ATVs and motorcycles, and I asked one of the riders if the place I thought was the trailhead, and he didn't think so (he said it went down a little ways and stopped). Anyway, a nice short hike, although the best is at the very end. Most of the trail isn't my most favorite, as you hear ATV's, Motorcycles, and shooting, and the initial part of the forest is relatively new 2nd or 3rd growth stuff (small). But once you turn one of the switchbacks, you start descending into a beautiful older patch of forest, and can hear the river instead of all the other distractions. Once you get to the bottom, there is a nice place to camp, and there are some very nice old growth trees down there. The river was running pretty fast, and was very pretty.

It only took me a little over 2 hours to go in and out, taking pictures and exploring. The trail is in great shape except for a few of the switchbacks which have a fair amount of erosion. No trees across the trail, and the tread is generally in great shape. The last half mile is more difficult due to the steepness and the erosion, but none of it is too strenuous.

A great way to start April!

Rob

P.S. - No snow on the trail, and I went up the 45 road a bit, to about 3000', and found just small traces of snow at that level. Hopefully the lower trails will be accessible soon!

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Re: Hillockburn Trail 516

Robert Koscik : 4/2/2007; 10:46:52 AM

Reads: 244, Responses: 24 ([↩](#) view responses to this item)

Thanks for the update! I agree the upper part isn't as nice but I've never heard machinery like you have so maybe it was an "off day"...

The trail continues (abandoned) up across the river but can only be crossed in drier days. I've yet to check it out.

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Re: Hillockburn Trail 516

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Rob Williams : 4/4/2007; 7:51:46 AM

Reads: 253, Responses: 23 ([↩](#) view responses to this item)

I think I saw where the trail continues on the other side. I would be much later in the summer when you could cross, as the river is pretty deep and fast these days!

Maybe I'll have to check that out later this summer.....

As far as ATV's, etc, there were quite a few of them, but once I rounded that one turn, the whole feel just changed. It was like a whole different trail.

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Re: Hillockburn Trail 516**Robert Koscik** : 4/5/2007; 11:40:42 AMReads: 250, Responses: 22 ([↩](#) view responses to this item)

Yeah, and down along that S. Fork canyon is all old growth like that, and mostly trail-less. I think it's part of that wilderness proposal.

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Re: Hillockburn Trail 516**Zack Byerly** : 4/9/2007; 10:10:06 AMReads: 250, Responses: 21 ([↩](#) view responses to this item)

Last summer I bushwhacked downriver from the end of trail #516 for about a mile, and I came upon a good sized waterfall that I assumed was unnamed. I am sure others have also visited these falls, but the area is so pristine it gave me the feeling that I'd just discovered the place.

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Re: Hillockburn Trail 516**Robert Koscik** : 4/10/2007; 7:45:19 AMReads: 259, Responses: 0 ([↩](#) view responses to this item)

I think that canyon is VERY wild with few human visitors over the years.
Good for you! I've always felt a bit spooked down there.

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Re: Hillockburn Trail 516

Donovan : 4/10/2007; 10:31:36 PM

Reads: 250, Responses: 19 ([↩](#) view responses to this item)

South Fork Falls. The old picture we had posted was at it's base. Did you notice a shallow diversion trench on the west bank? There is a series of three twenty foot punch bowls followed by the main fall of about a hundred and twenty feet.

To check it out from below, from Memaloose Bridge scramble along the Clackamas to the South Fork. Cross the log. Go to the camp, enter the woods and get on the old road that heads up stream. Pass a fifty foot falls and pass through a series of tunnels. You are there.

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Re: Hillockburn Trail 516

Zack Byerly : 4/11/2007; 1:00:16 PM

Reads: 262, Responses: 17 ([↩](#) view responses to this item)

Actually, I have taken the route you described and visited the south fork falls in the past. The falls that I am describing though, are prior to the confluence of the south fork and memaloose creek. It is possible that I happened upon the first of the series of punch-bowl falls, but I assume that those would be past the creek-river confluence. I have some pics that i can post a link to tomorrow.

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Re: Hillockburn Trail 516**Robert Koscik** : 4/12/2007; 9:17:22 AMReads: 249, Responses: 0 ([↩](#) view responses to this item)

Post em! Love that bush-wackin' high adventure stuff!

[Discuss this message.](#)**Re: Hillockburn Trail 516****Donovan** : 4/12/2007; 9:35:10 AMReads: 259, Responses: 15 ([↩](#) view responses to this item)

The big falls and it's punch bowls are upstream of the confluence. You may have visited yet another falls.

Another falls of interest is Three Lynx Creek Falls. Looking forward to seeing pictures!

[Discuss this message.](#)**Re: Hillockburn Trail 516**[Edit this Page](#)**Rob Williams** : 4/13/2007; 6:28:31 AMReads: 241, Responses: 0 ([↩](#) view responses to this item)

This is all very cool info.....I've got another area to explore soon! I'll be very interested to see pictures as well.

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Re: Hillockburn Trail 516**Zack Byerly** : 4/13/2007; 7:11:46 AMReads: 262, Responses: 14 ([↩](#) view responses to this item)

Here is a link to a pic of the chute type falls that I came across on the south fork. <http://portlandhikers.com/photos/zackoftheclack/picture16628.aspx> I guess it was actually summer before last that I was exploring that area. I would like to check it out a little earlier in the season when the water flows are higher.

[Discuss this message.](#)**Re: Hillockburn Trail 516****Robert Kosciak** : 4/13/2007; 9:18:11 AMReads: 258, Responses: 13 ([↩](#) view responses to this item)

Nice pics!

this one's my fav: <http://portlandhikers.com/photos/zackoftheclack/picture8375.aspx>

[Discuss this message.](#)**Re: Hillockburn Trail 516**[Edit this Page](#)**Rob Williams** : 4/13/2007; 11:53:24 AMReads: 282, Responses: 12 ([↩](#) view responses to this item)

This one is my favorite:

<http://portlandhikers.com/photos/zackoftheclack/picture8380.aspx>

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Re: Hillockburn Trail 516

Zack Byerly : 4/17/2007; 5:30:01 PM

Reads: 269, Responses: 11 ([↩](#) view responses to this item)

Thanks for checking out my pics! I know that anyone who frequents this site is capable of appreciating my pics in a more complete way than any gorge-obsessed person on portlandhikers.com would be. Which in some ways is a good thing, I hiked the hillock burn trail on Saturday and then did a short jaunt after I attended a wedding at the gorge hotel on Sunday. What a contrast! Battling for parking, displaying a forest pass...personally, i hope our district never attracts the kind of rei outfitted hordes that I ran into.

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Re: Hillockburn Trail 516

Robert Kosciak : 4/18/2007; 10:26:44 AM

Reads: 285, Responses: 10 ([↩](#) view responses to this item)

Donovan calls em' Eco Jocks pretty funny.....

We're off the beaten path! I agree, hope it stays that way. A lot of those people seem to be more into convenience and cardio workouts. The nature is just a backdrop. Angel's Rest, Dog Mountain...FEEL THE BURN DUDE!

Us, we're Gentleman Adventurers. A toast!

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Re: Hillockburn Trail 516**Karl Helser** : 4/19/2007; 10:59:19 AMReads: 278, Responses: 9 ([↩](#) view responses to this item)

Oh brother...!

[Discuss this message.](#)**Re: Hillockburn Trail 516****Tom Kloster** : 4/21/2007; 9:17:10 PMReads: 288, Responses: 7 ([↩](#) view responses to this item)

Hey, Zack - great photo of the upper South Fork waterfall. There was a thread on the topic here about a year ago. There are a total of four large waterfalls on the South Fork - it sounds like you visited the upper of two falls that are upstream from the 120-footer. There's an excellent description on the Oregon Kayakers website:

http://oregonkayaking.net/rivers/sf_clack/sf_clack.html

Also liked your Periwinkle Falls shot. Are you a kayaker?

Don't be too hard on the Portland Hikers website! I'll admit bias, since I'm one of the field guide editors, but the intent is somewhat different than what you see here -- the main point is to introduce new people to hiking, with the longer term goal of building some advocates for preserving/expanding the trail system. Among the Gorge junkies there are several folks who are helping keep the less-traveled Gorge trails open, too. Some of those old paths are just as threatened as the lesser-known trails in the Clackamas district.

Longer term, we'll be expanding coverage of the PH field guide to include more detail from the Clackamas area and SW Washington, but the first pass is really focused on a complete description of Mount Hood and the Gorge. We've got some new contributors who are already working on areas north and south of the "big two".

Tom Kloster

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Re: Hillockburn Trail 516**Robert Koscik** : 4/24/2007; 2:20:13 PMReads: 268, Responses: 0 ([↩](#) view responses to this item)

Oh brother in a good or bad way? Smile!

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Re: Hillockburn Trail 516**Robert Koscik** : 4/24/2007; 2:23:02 PMReads: 283, Responses: 6 ([↩](#) view responses to this item)

I was teasing really, honestly don't think there's a problem with people doin' what they enjoy. It's just different than my point of view. The site is very nice; I've spent some time digging around there and it's a valuable resource for people in PDX wanting to get out but not sure where to start.

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Re: Hillockburn Trail 516**Tom Kloster** : 4/25/2007; 5:35:45 PMReads: 287, Responses: 5 ([↩](#) view responses to this item)

No offense taken! I think the .com part of their URL has been a bit deceiving, since it's really just a joint, volunteer venture of Jeff Statt and Jeff Black -- plus a second ring of volunteers who are helping with the field guide. They're funding it out of their own pockets, plus a few contributions here and there. I've encouraged them to become a .org and establish non-profit status, since their real goal is simply to bring newbies into the forest and create a place for veterans to gather and compare war stories. A nice example of the latter is this thread:

<http://portlandhikers.com/forums/thread/17067.aspx>

Lots of places in the Gorge that are as remote as anywhere else in the MHNF! This one would be a good candidate for one of those trails I mentioned, too..! :-)

In a perfect world, the MHNF would provide (or at least manage) the content that we've been creating for the Field Guide portion of the Portland Hikers site -- but it's not a perfect world, so we're taking it on as a volunteer effort. IMO, it's yet another missed opportunity for the USFS to show a renewed interest in trails and hikers, but that's just my opinion.

One of the interesting aspects of the Portland Hikers site (for me, anyway) is seeing the management of the national forests through the eyes of newbies who haven't been plugged into the politics and policies

over the years. There's a lot of frustration and disillusionment from people who don't understand why the recreation opportunities seem to be falling back, even as the demand is growing. My hope is that this energy can be directed toward restoring proper funding for recreation and forest restoration. That's why I'm involved in Portland Hikers.

BTW, we also point folks over here - so hopefully, there will be a few new citizen caretakers for the Clackamas district, too!

Tom

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Re: Hillockburn Trail 516

Donovan : 4/25/2007; 10:16:01 PM

Reads: 303, Responses: 4 ([view responses to this item](#))

Portland Hikers might consider a link to this site, my permissions. After a cursory glance, I see little of the Clackamas River District, ie, most of what lies between Mount Hood and Mount Jefferson, represented. Maybe that's a good thing.

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Re: Hillockburn Trail 516

Tom Kloster : 4/26/2007; 7:39:21 PM

Reads: 302, Responses: 1 ([view responses to this item](#))

I'll pass that along to Jeff Statt - he's traveling on business right now, but back in a few days.

Not sure what to make of that last comment - I guess that advertising the Clackamas District to the teeming Portland throngs might be a bad thing? I guess that's always part of the tradeoff in advertising a lightly visited area. But I've spent a lot of time in the Clackamas, and would welcome a few thousand hikers to balance out the many ATVs, shooters, drinkers and illegal dumpers that seem to be the dominant "users" in much of the district -- plus, there are surely new trail advocates in Portland that would help keep the old routes open and used.

One of the negative hits on the Clackamas in Portland circles is that it's a dangerous place to hike, for all of the reasons I listed above. That's partly a product of the Bagby sideshow playing out in the media (seemingly endlessly - the recent violent assault drew lots of wary discussion on Portland Hikers). But there have already been a few trip reports from the area on Portland Hikers, and it's definitely on the radar for expanding the field guide. I'll be adding a few of those in the Roaring River drainage, as time permits, and you'll see others adding trips in Bull of the Woods and the Olallie high country added this year. Hopefully, some new information will help remove some of the stigma associated with the Clackamas.

Portland Hikers is also teaming up with Northwest Forest Conservancy on a maintenance project in the Bull of the Woods area in June, and there are at least a couple of projects planned to reopen some long-abandoned trails in the Mount Hood area, too.

Tom

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Re: Hillockburn Trail 516**Robert Kosciak** : 4/27/2007; 8:49:49 AMReads: 315, Responses: 0 ([↩](#) view responses to this item)

True, closer to town the yahoos have made a mess of things. But out in the deep boonies, past the clearcuts lies some really rugged and beautifully remote country. Bagby is just one little parking lot surrounded by many miles of wilderness...

I've never had reason to fear the locals. Treat people with respect and usually communication flows easily. But this is pretty wild country, and I don't think the casual hiker accustomed to clear routes and parking lots would be adequately prepared for a lot of these areas or to even be able to find the trailheads. It's always a balance I guess...use versus overuse, or even the degree of adventure you're willing to take on.

Ultimately, the drive from the city to MHNF is far more dangerous than the perils faced in the woods.

[Discuss this message.](#)**Re: Hillockburn Trail 516****Zack Byerly** : 5/4/2007; 3:35:11 PMReads: 297, Responses: 1 ([↩](#) view responses to this item)

Might want to be a bit cautious about having TrailAdv, posted as a link on Phikers.com. Worst case scenario, we start seeing discussion threads on this site with headlines like: "Trail-tested my new umbrella outfitted camera tri-pod", or a 1000 word "Memaloose Lake trip report". Not sure if those types of topics fall under the objectives of this site.

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Re: Hillockburn Trail 516**Tom Kloster** : 5/16/2007; 11:50:33 AMReads: 286, Responses: 0 ([view responses to this item](#))

I really don't think there's much risk of that happening - the Portland Hikers site has a lot of traffic, and is specifically designed to handle the kind of detailed discussions that wouldn't really work here. Just the ability to post images would make Portland Hikers the natural venue for trip reports, for example.











But if the goal of the Trail Advocates site is to bring new interest to fading trails, then the Portland Hikers site is a great connection. Take a look at the Lost Trail discussion area, and you'll see that trails similarly abandoned by the USFS in the Hood and Gorge areas are being re-visited and documented. That's the first step toward bringing them back - and for helping people learn about less-traveled alternatives to the abused trails that the USFS continues to funnel the masses to (you could drive a golf cart up the Angels Rest trail these days).

BTW, my camera umbrella is working like a charm, though I've upgraded to an even better model since that I posted that review. :-)

Tom

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