

# Trail Advocates

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

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## Rimrock Trail 704

**Topic:** Rimrock Trail 704

**Author:** Donovan

**Topic Started:** 1/13/2004; 6:02:20 PM

**Last Posted:** 8/6/2007; 11:29:00 AM

### Re: Rimrock Trail 704

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**Rob Williams** : 8/4/2007; 4:08:27 PM

Reads: 80, Responses: 0 ( [view responses to this item](#))

Just curious what the "Be careful not to trip on the old phone line" comment means. Was there really an old phone line up on this trail?

Rob

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### Re: Rimrock Trail 704

**Bill Cattrall** : 8/6/2007; 6:41:05 AM

Reads: 69, Responses: 9 ( [view responses to this item](#))

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Hi Rob,

I found this about phone lines in an old book about the Hidden Wilderness(Bull of the Woods).

"The advantages of rapid communication provided by the invention of the telephone were not lost on the Forest Service. Early in this century they began stringing wires across the wilderness and the trees in the heavy forest along Elk Lake Creek provided the necessary places to attach them. The Bagby Trail crossed an old burn which made hanging line difficult. Remnants of this system are still to be found: coils of wire and ceramic insulators, a few of which can be seen still attached to trees along the Elk Lake Creek Trail. The Forest Service used an ingenious 'Slack line system' to keep the line operating where falling limbs and trees were a regular condition. The line itself was anchored only at widely separated points and held above the ground between anchor points by stringing it through the doughnut-shaped insulators. A limb falling on the line might pull it to the ground but would rarely break it."

I have seen this line on Elk Lake Creek trail. Other parts of this book discuss the heavy use of this trail in the 30's and that might relate to the other post about the camp-trail to the Collawash.

Bill

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**Re: Rimrock Trail 704**

**Doug Firman** : 8/6/2007; 9:08:20 AM

Reads: 58, Responses: 7 ( [view responses to this item](#))

Bill,

I have also seen the phone line and insulators at several points along Elk Lake Creek. It's a fairly heavy-gauge wire and is in surprisingly good shape considering how old it probably is. I always wonder when I see it where it led to. Lookout towers? Ranger stations? Does your book address specifics like this?

Could you give us some details about the book you have (full title, author, publisher, date, etc.)? It might be hard to find a copy, but I'd like to give it a try. It sounds like fascinating reading.

Doug

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**Re: Rimrock Trail 704**

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**Rob Williams** : 8/6/2007; 10:29:00 AM

Reads: 73, Responses: 0 ( [view responses to this item](#))

Bill

Thanks for the info. I would be interested in knowing the title/author, etc of that book as well. Based on your descriptions, I'm guessing that is the source of the little "box" on top of Ruddy Hill as well.

Just an aside, where on the Elk Lake trail did you see these?

Rob

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**Re: Rimrock Trail 704****Bill Cattrall** : 8/6/2007; 7:35:55 PMReads: 73, Responses: 6 ( [👤](#) view responses to this item)

Doug and Rob,

The passage I copied was from the chapter called -Lookouts A Historical View-. It is an interesting look at the good old days of the Forest Service.

The book is; Oregon's Hidden Wilderness subtitled; Including The Bull-of-the-Woods area within the Willamette and Mt. Hood National Forests.

It was put out by the Central Cascades Conservation Council, PO Box 731, Salelm, Oregon 97308

My copy is called, A revised Hiker's guide on the title page. There is no date that I can find but most of the trail reports are either 1974 or 1978 so I'm guessing first edition in '74 and mine is '78. The book is dedicated to Vina Coffel. "A native Oregonian, a friend of the north Santiam Canyon, a founder of the Central Cascades Conservation Council, and a passionate advocate of QUALITY in all things." I knew Vina well as I spent my formative years hiking and fishing with her son Steve. Steve and I are still fast friends going on fifty years. The book is 64 pages 5 1/2" by 8 1/2" with a map. There is history, trail guides, and photos. I spoke to a friend today that had seen my post about the book and he has one also. He found it in a used book store so there may be hope. Perhaps the Cascades Council is still going, I didn't check. If nothing else works it could be scanned.

Good luck finding the old wires, I have been through Elk Lake Creek many times but I couldn't tell you where to look, it has been a couple of years. This trail was a mainline connecting the South Mt. Hood district with the Detroit so it must have been well used. This makes me think that the trail and camp on the Collawash in another post was on this route and is the OH Boy Forest Camp. I need to get up there and check it out.

Bill

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**Re: Rimrock Trail 704**[Edit this Page](#)**Rob Williams** : 8/7/2007; 5:19:40 AMReads: 92, Responses: 1 ( [view responses to this item](#))

Bill:

Thanks for the info on the book. I was able to find it at Goodwill Books for only \$5. It is on its way to me....I look forward to reading it!

I just love hearing about the history of the area, and even better, seeing remnants of the past (the camp, the box on Ruddy Hill, the telephone line, etc). It makes history come alive for me. I just need to time to be able to explore some of these areas!

Rob

[Discuss this message.](#)**Elk Lake Creek phone wires (was Rimrock Trail 704)****Doug Firman** : 8/7/2007; 3:14:54 PMReads: 84, Responses: 0 ( [view responses to this item](#))

Regarding the phone lines on Elk Lake Creek, I have seen wire on the ground on the trail about 1/2 mile past the second creek crossing (heading from the Collowash trailhead towards Battle Creek shelter). Also off the trail near the edge of the creek about 3/4 mile upstream from the Collowash bridge. The wire at this spot looks like it was dragged downhill to the creek by a rockslide. There's also an insulator but no wire high in a tree along the trail shortly after the first creek crossing. Good luck finding this one! I had hiked this trail at least a dozen times before I noticed it. You could probably spot more insulators up in the trees along the trail if you really look for them.

At the campsite on the Collowash there is some of this same telephone wire wrapped around and between the two trees where the storage cabinet is attached. This further supports the idea that this segment of trail was part of a major trail at one time.

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**Re: Rimrock Trail 704**[Edit this Page](#)**Rob Williams** : 8/11/2007; 4:10:58 PMReads: 69, Responses: 3 ( [view responses to this item](#))

You must have a later copy than the one I found. Mine is the same title, etc, but it doesn't have a chapter on Lookouts A Historical View. It is still an interesting read, and the map is especially nice!

Here are the chapters my book has (I found it at goodwillbooks.com):

- Introduction
- About this guide
- Maps - an observations
- Vicinity map
- Northern Approaches
- A note on wilderness use
- Southern Approaches
- Political Realities of Wilderness
- Western Approaches
- Additional Trails
- As we walk these trails

[Discuss this message.](#)**Re: Rimrock Trail 704****Bill Cattrall** : 8/12/2007; 8:32:43 PMReads: 71, Responses: 2 ( [view responses to this item](#))

Rob, All of the trail reports in mine are dated and most are 1978, is yours like that?  
Bill

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**Oregon's Hidden Wilderness Book (was Re: Rimrock Trail 704)**

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**Rob Williams** : 8/13/2007; 4:52:38 AM

Reads: 84, Responses: 1 ( [view responses to this item](#))

You definitely have a later copy. I looked back at your original description, and yours has 64 pages. Mine has 39. Most of the trail reports are 1974, but one is 1972, a couple are 1973 and a couple are 1975. Many of the trail reports are by the Lowes previously mentioned here (100 Oregon Hiking Trails book)

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**Re: Oregon's Hidden Wilderness Book (and others)**

**Tom Kloster** : 9/1/2007; 3:35:08 PM

Reads: 91, Responses: 0 ( [view responses to this item](#))

Just catching up on threads here - this is a fine old book, especially if you have the map! It was one of a series that I'm pretty sure the Oregon Wilderness Coalition (before ONRC, before Oregon Wild) inspired among several groups in the "coalition". There were similar, self-published guidebooks to Hardesty Mountain, Middle Santiam/Old Cascades and Badger Creek. I worked on a simpler brochure/map for the Salmon-Huckleberry and Roaring River at about that time (late 70s), and there were map/brochures for other pocket areas, including French Pete and High Rock.


The purpose of all of this was wilderness designation, pure and simple: get people into the relatively untraveled areas to build advocacy before they were cut. The 1984 wilderness bill covered most of these areas, and the guidebooks sort of lost their purpose. But they were terrific resources, to be sure. There was a subsequent set of commercial guides published for the Jefferson/Olallie area by a guy out of Salem - first name was Tony, the last name escapes me (and the book is in a box somewhere), but it was a nice little handbook, too.

Good to know I'm not the only compulsive collector of old hiking guides and maps out there..!

Tom

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