

Rainbow Gathering 2008 Cleanup Report (short)

To whomever this may concern.

I've done several clean ups and most of them I've been one of the last 5 or so people to leave.

I personally feel that this one was one of our better cleanups.

We always put trunks as well as branches on impact areas as well as fire areas to keep people as well as animals off the area until it has healed. We then mulch with duff found on the gathering site. This not only makes the area a bit more pleasant to the eye but also helps retain moisture to facilitate new growth. The duff is also full of seeds local to the area. Every year the seeds sprout. In fact, we already extensive growth going on three weeks after the gathering.

What seems to be heavy compaction on the trails, is really a thin crust of short term hard pack on top of the soil. Every year, I explain to the local resource people that under this crust is a damp soil. When the sun heats up the outer layer dries and cracks. Then the grass and other plant life grows in these cracks. The morning dew, which collects in the cracks, provides a water source. This process is evident in the photos included below.

We may have many people on the trails but the multitudes are at the gathering for only a week, thus the effects I call short term impact of the trails.

As for the fire pits, we renaturalized the ones we used by deeply burying the ashes and then covering the buried ash with sand and rock to prevent upwelling. Finally we duffed or mulched the area and tossed wood or rocks on the area to allow plants to get a good foothold. This also makes the area appear more natural while the native plants regrow.

Most of the compost and toilet holes were buried under rock, sand and/or logs and the area covered with duff. We also use ash and/or lime to accelerat the decomposition of fecal matter.

There were pre-existing fire pits at this location. After we cleaned them up, local people rebuilt some of them when they returned to their regular camping spot. The ones that were reused by locals during our cleanup, were duffed or had natural wood stacked on them so that they were not so obviously fire pits. However, as these pits were in frequent use by local campers we were unable to completely remove evidence of their existence.

In regards to the one large fire pit that some people complained about, most of the construction was mud covered wood and rocks resting upon the ground. We along with the USFS measured the actual hole to be 1' 6" to about 1'8" deep and approximately 18 feet in diameter. The next level up was the meadow itself and not a hole. Then above that area was a stack of logs covered in mud with a railing for safety purposes. The area of the fire itself was approximately 6 feet in diameter including the boulders.

As clearly illustrated in the photo below, the lower railing is a built up back rest on the meadow. Everything else is local rocks and or logs set on the meadow and covered in mud. The rock circle in the very center is the area of the actual fire. The space around it was for safety.

NOTE: IGNORE DATES ON PHOTOS – CAMERA WAS NOT SET TO CORRECT DATE

The photo below shows the main boogie pit during the gathering. The boulders used in its construction were removed from the hole that was dug and returned there during our rehabilitation process.



The photo below shows the same pit on the evening of July 7th during our rehabilitation process. Water is being used to dampen the area – thus encouraging root growth and helping settle the soil as part of the rehabilitation process.



The following photos were taken in late August and early September of the main boogie pit

This first photo of the boogie pit is from August – notice the green



These next two photos were taken on September 16 – notice the plants growing in spite of the drought



A Kitchen Rehabilitation

These during and after pictures of the large kitchen show the contrast between a fully functioning kitchen and the same spot after rehabilitation work has been done. The first photo was taken during the Gathering



The photo below shows the same kitchen after cleanup



The Info Booth

The photo below shows the Info booth during the Gathering, which is visited non-stop during the gathering – upwards of a thousand people a day spending time here and is one of the main hubs of the gathering.



The photo below shows the Info Booth area at the end of cleanup.



Trail to Kid Village

The photo below shows the heavily used trail to kid village during the gathering



The photo below shows a shot of same trail going to Kid Village and was taken in late August/Early September.



The photo below shows a close up of the trail to Kid Village after cleanup, photo taken in late August/early September. Notice that grass is growing where the trail was due to our rehabilitation efforts and the sides of the trail are yellow where we did not walk on the grass.



Main Meadow

The photo below shows what was our main meadow on July 4th during the prayer for world peace and shows the large rock and down trees in the meadow.



This next photo shows the same shot of main meadow after the gathering was over – this area was one of the most heavily used areas of the gathering. (The area that was in front of Info). Photo taken in August.



The Bridge at HandiCamp

A small bridge existed at this location before the gathering started. We enhanced the bridge for safety reasons and to allow handicapped access. We were told to tear it down, which we did. However, locals rebuilt a bridge in mid-September at this same location after we removed the existing bridge.

The photo below shows the bridge improvements.



This next photo shows the same spot over the creek following the removal of the bridge.



Cleanup Techniques.

These next photos show samples of the techniques used to allow the land to heal.

The next photo shows a close up of a trail rehabilitation showing new trees sprouting on what was a highly used main trail – photo taken in September of a spot near Montana Kitchen.



2008

The next photo shows an example of our water barring technique. This particular water bar was created on the main (snake) trail – and one of 50 or more that were constructed during cleanup.



This next photo depicts one of the sections of trail that we rehabilitated to prevent any wheeled access and to strongly discourage human foot traffic as well as large animal traffic. This was once the main trail. The techniques used make it difficult for anyone to utilize the trail and forces all traffic (human or animal) to disperse.



Signed,

One of the hard core cleanup crew and last gatherer on site.