

Swan View Coalition's Position
on
Unauthorized Crane Mountain
Jumps, Ramps and Extreme Downhill
Mountain Bike Trails

July 2011

Keith Hammer, Chair
Swan View Coalition

1. We appreciate efforts to maintain Forest Service system trails on Crane Mountain for traditional family-friendly hiking, horseback riding and standard mountain biking that “leave no trace.”
2. We oppose, however, efforts to alter the historic Beardance, Phillips, or Crane Creek trails to favor extreme downhill speed and stunt biking through the construction of unsightly jumps, ramps, humps, and other unnecessary structures.
3. Extreme downhill biking requiring a full-face helmet and body armor does not mix with traditional non-motorized recreation on Crane Mountain.*
4. We support efforts to “get kids off the couch” and engaged in affordable family-friendly outdoor activities like hiking and mountain biking. The \$5,000 cost of one specialized downhill-only bike, however, could buy 10-30 kids standard mountain bikes designed to also pedal uphill and on community bike trails.
5. The Forest Service has allowed a number of unauthorized downhill bike ramps and jumps along the Beardance Trail to persist for years, as it has a network of unauthorized downhill bike trails on the Ferndale side of Crane Mountain. The construction of these unauthorized ramps, jumps and trails is in violation of the law and they must be removed.
6. We do not teach our kids to obey the law by rewarding unlawful behavior.
7. The public is overdue a public planning process to discuss the merits of investing in extreme downhill mountain biking trails on Crane Mountain when such opportunities already exist on Big Mountain and funds are desperately needed instead to complete community bike trails in the Bigfork area.

*High speeds and risky stunts are featured by Crane Mountain Trail Supporters:

On its Facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/groups/162388947122609>.

On videos posted at <http://montanabikerman.pinkbike.com/channel/Crane-Mountain-Trails>.

In showing “Pedal Driven” <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3ggRsKMrh6o&feature=related>.

In its promotional video at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J0-IcXgCS0s>.

Beardance Trail: Jump

Very fresh construction found 6/13/11.



Beardance Trail: Ramps over stump.



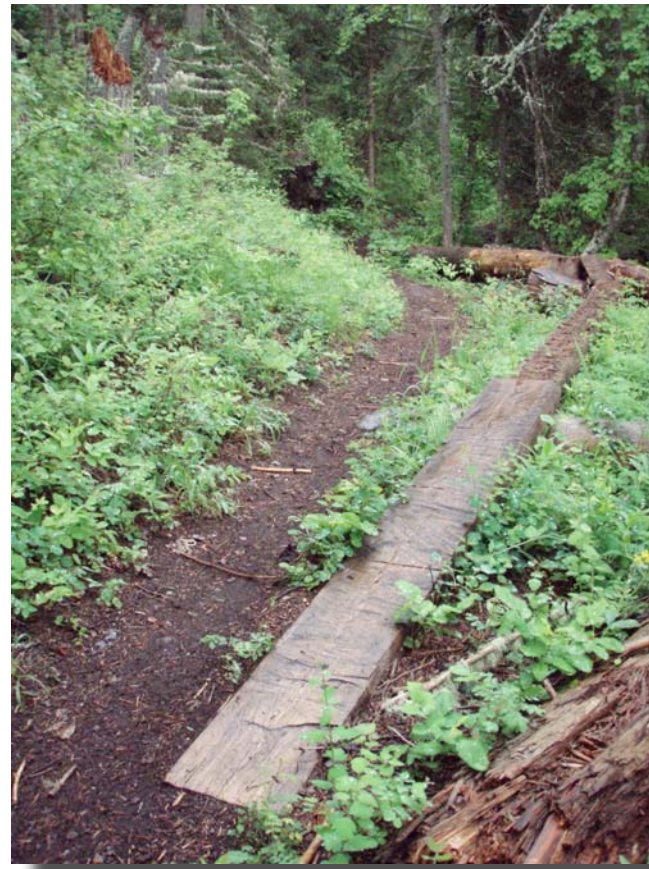
Beardance Trail: Jump over gap.



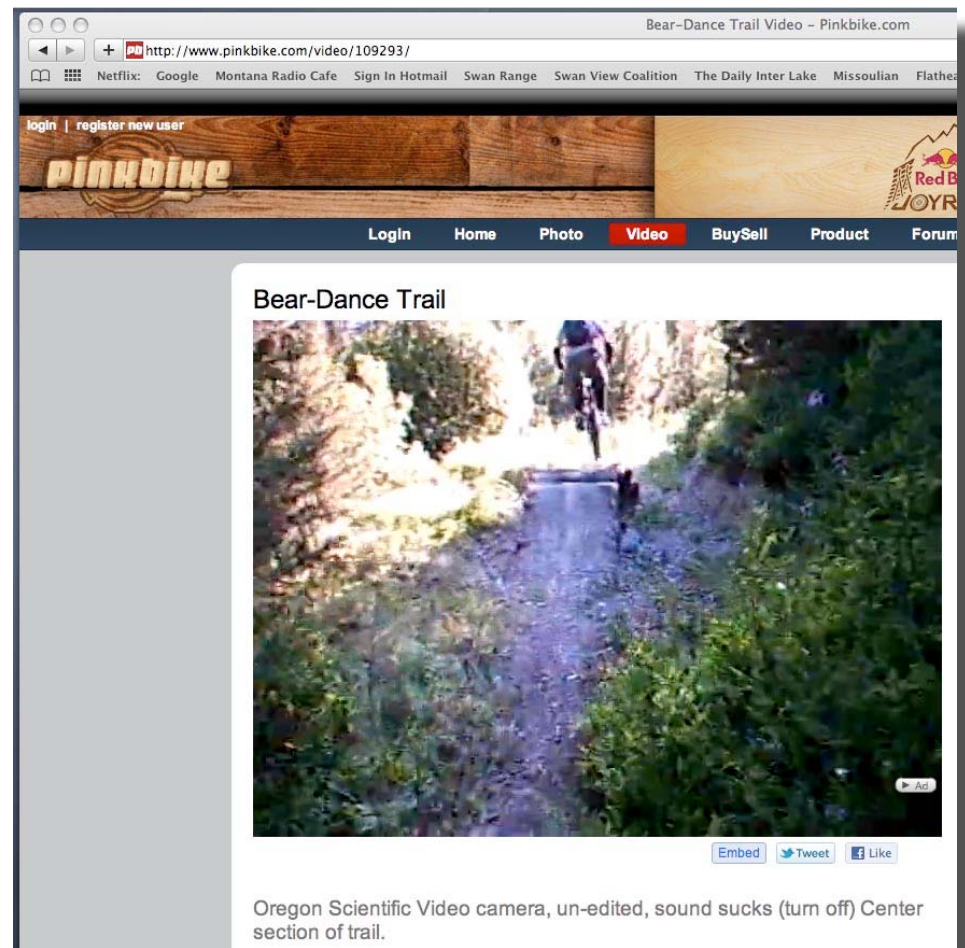
Beardance Trail: Flattened log and ramp.



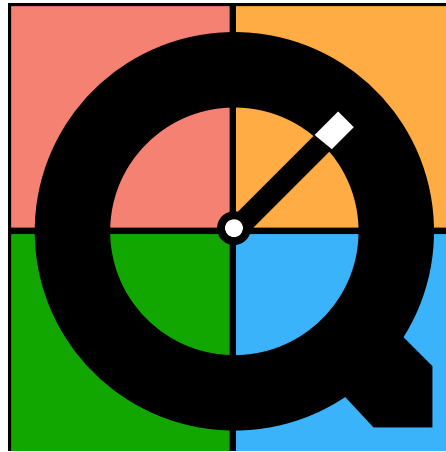
Beardance Trail: Flattened logs and ramps.



Beardance Trail: Jump above Road #9704. Screen-shot from video at <http://www.pinkbike.com/video/109293>



Ron Cron at 6/10/11 Fundraiser



“The Forest Service is allowing us to put in ... jumps the whole length of that [Beardance] trail ... unfortunately we got to kind of start a little bit small, but that doesn't mean that if you're not a capable rider you can't, you know, get 15 or 20 feet out of one of those jumps.”

Unauthorized Downhill Bike Trail

Wheel- and water-scoured single track.



Unauthorized Downhill Bike Trail

Vegetation damaged on main track and bypass.



Unauthorized Downhill Bike Trail

One of many blazed trees along trail above Road 10213.



Unauthorized Downhill Bike Trail

Brush cut and wet meadow damaged below Road 10213.



Unauthorized Downhill Bike Trail

Downfall cut above “The Crevice” and Road 498.



Unauthorized Downhill Bike Trail

Tree cut, vegetation damaged just above “The Crevice.”



Unauthorized Downhill Bike Trail

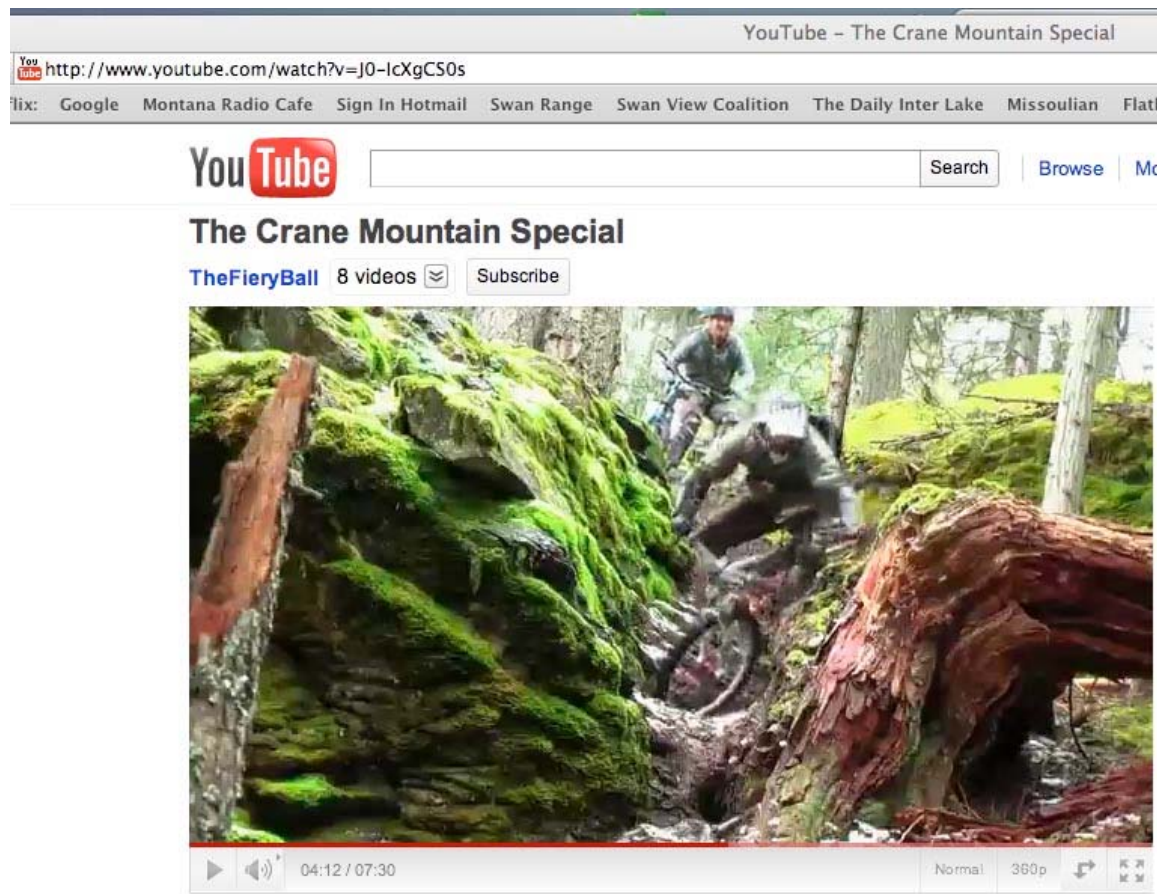
“The Crevice” just uphill from Road 498.



Unauthorized Downhill Bike Trail

Watch trail promoters scour vegetation and crash head-over-heels in “The Crane Mountain Special” video at

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J0-lcXgCS0s>



Andrew Johnson in 2/18/11 Forest
Service email to
Crane Mountain Trails Proponent:

*“Despite your assertion that the
[unauthorized] trails will disappear in a
few short years with no harm done,
there are user created social trails on
this district that have not healed on
their own in nearly 50 years.”*