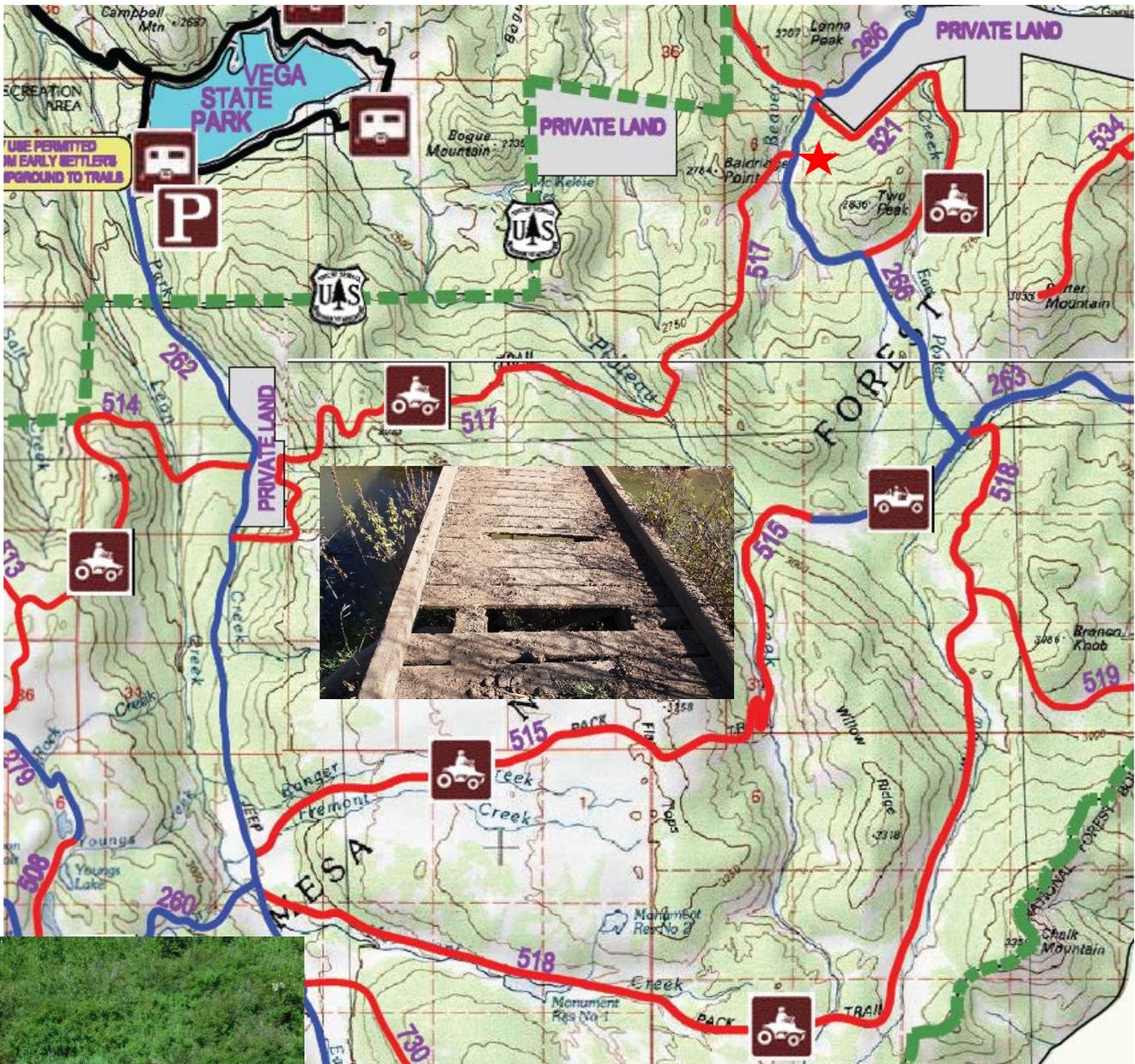


Silver Spruce East Trailhead Bridge Remedial Action 2016

Grand Mesa Silver Spruce Trail 517 has been regarded as the most beautiful two track adopted by the Western Slope ATV Association. To be sure, it is one of the most frequently used by riders staging at Vega Reservoir. Combined with either the High Trail 515, or the Monument Trail 518, it offers one leg of a loop that can be done in a day by trail users with moderate skill level. The east trailhead bridge ★ is one of the oldest in our system and has suffered through many seasons of use and abuse.



USFS required width restrictors were redundant on a bridge deck hardly wider than our larger All Terrain Vehicles. The ten foot drop to Beaver Creek caused more than a few folks to leave fingerprints on their handlebars. The WSATVA took on the challenge to increase the track width and provide guardrails in this 2016 Remedial Action Program.

It all began in John Lehman's shop with a prefabricated bridge railing system planned to set the limits for the new decking and provide the cross stringer support for the horizontal loads on the top rail. An axle and tires used for previous projects were called on, again, to put John's ideas on wheels.



Wheels on wheels are no big deal for a team like the one Lehman brought to the mission. To save a mile over a narrow twisted Forest Service Road 266, John obtained permission to stage on land owner, Andy Kelly's ranch and permit transport across his pasture.



So it was left to John Deere and Dear John to lead the parade to the East Trailhead.



The path less taken had its ups and downs, but in the end our club's answer to Green Power pulled it all together!



Gary Pennay pre-cut the new decking to length then delivered the parts & pieces to the staging area where other team members and the club's trailers were put to good use hauling the new decking from the staging area to the existing bridge site.

As the prefab railing was winding its way southwest, a second crew executed a parallel plan at the bridge site.



The trail restrictor and the old decking and curb had to be demolished to allow access for the new railing assembly. A rendezvous of the two crews would see John Lehman's plan coming together.

Only the wide flange steel beam bridge stringers and the original wood nailer blocking remained as the crew completed preparation for the team approaching from the North East.

One corner had settled about three inches over the years. Our team of perfectionists wouldn't settle for that! The step by step jack wasn't the only handy-man at work on the bridge.



When push comes to shove, it's all about someone to lead the effort. Tom Derryberry directed the transition down the trail to the span over Beaver Creek.

Look close and you will see John Lehman with his hand in the air, motioning, "Come ahead, EASY." Tom, relays that command "EASY" to the operator who has complete confidence in the skill and caution of a well-tested team of volunteers.





With the axle and wheels out from under the assembly, it was no longer a trailer. It is the new safety rail assembly for the Silver Spruce East Trailhead Bridge. New decking was pre-cut, so it dropped in place to be screwed down with precision and efficiency. The only thing left to do was to set the American flags.



and take the group picture.



1. Wayne Fry, 2. Keith Moravitz, 3. Kris Smith, 4. Bill Smith, 5. Betty Miracle, 6. John Hesslink, 7. Roger Miracle, 8. Jim Draper, 9. Dave VanDyke, 10. Hugh Montagriff, 11. Dwight Balmer, 12. Gary Pennay, 13. Reuben Gallegos, 14. Larry Jones, 15. John Lehman.
Photos by Carol Lehman 16, Tom Derryberry 17
Jerry Gallegos 18, and John Weisner 19 (Not shown)