United States Department of Agriculture
Forest Service
Umatilla National Forest
2517 S. W. Hailey Avenue
Pendleton, Oregon 97801

Reply to: 2600 Wildlife

Date: June 18, 1982

Subject: Documentation of Investigation into Sighting of "Bigfoot" Tracks in the Mill Creek Watershed

To: Roger E. Baker, Resource Staff

On June 16th, you requested that I accompany a group into the Mill Creek Watershed on the 17th to investigate a reported find of "Bigfoot" tracks in the Low Creek drainage. This memorandum is to document the findings of this trip.

Location of the Tracks

The reported tracks were located at three (3) locations. Two (2) locations were adjacent to the Low Creek Trail adjacent to Low Creek, and the third adjacent to an un-named trail adjacent to the top of Low Ridge. The attached map shows the approximate location of the three (3) sites.

Site "A" (photograph #1)

Site "A" was directly in the Low Ridge Trail approximately 1.5 miles above Mill Creek. The site contained 6 identifable tracks extending down the trail approximately 25 feet. The trail at this point was quite muddy and bordered by rather dense vegetation (see photograph #1 to the right).

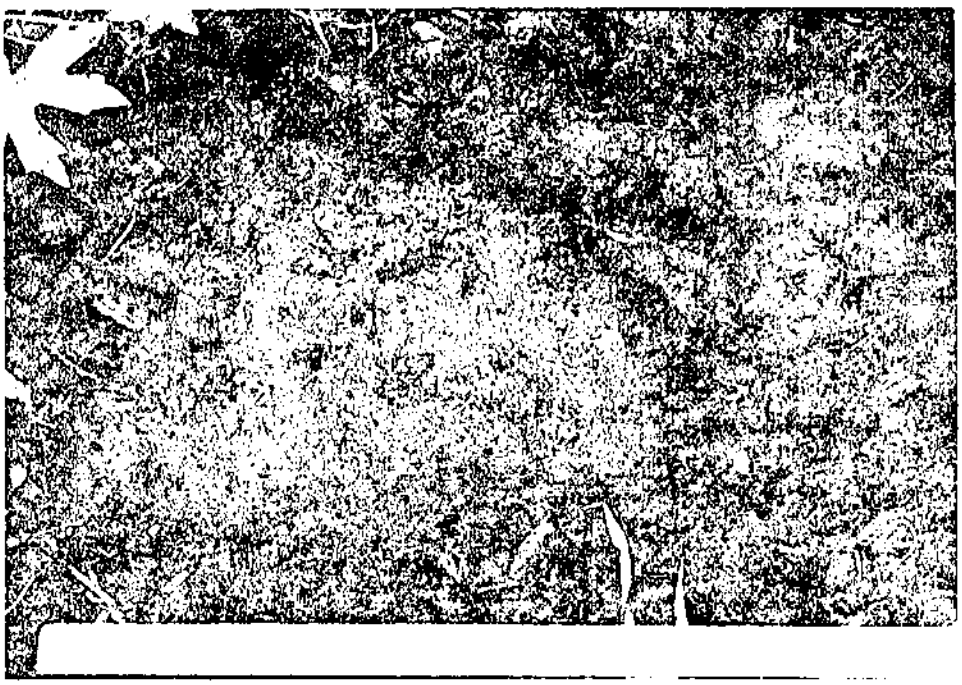
The tracking expert with the group could not find any evidence of tracks other than those few observed in the trail mud.

Plaster casts were made of two (2) tracks. The others were not cast as they were too faint to show anything of value.

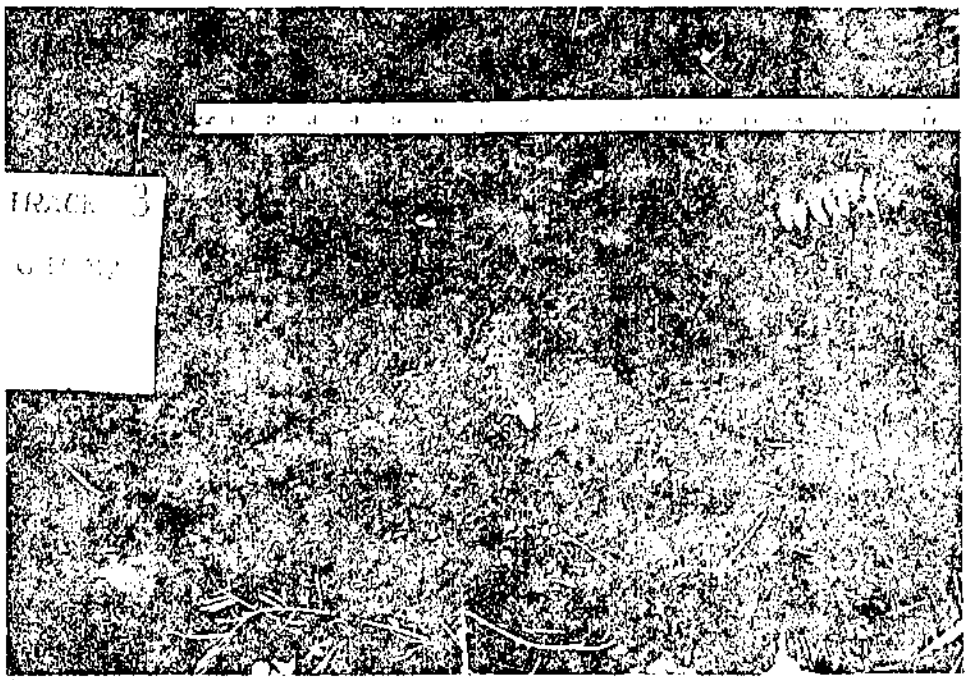
Color print pictures were taken of the tracks that appeared significant. These are shown in photographs #2 and #3 on the next page.



Photograph #1 - Site "A". Four (4) of the six (6) tracks observed are marked with white cards.



Photograph #2 - Site "A" track #4. Track running from right to left in center of photograph. The heal portion of the track was destroyed by an elk track during the night. The track is a right foot approximately 15" long and 7" wide at the widest point. A plaster cast was made of the front half of the print.



Photograph #3 - Site "A" track #3. Track running from right to left. A left foot track approximately 15" by 6.5". Note deformation of 2nd toe (next to "big toe". A cast was made of this track.

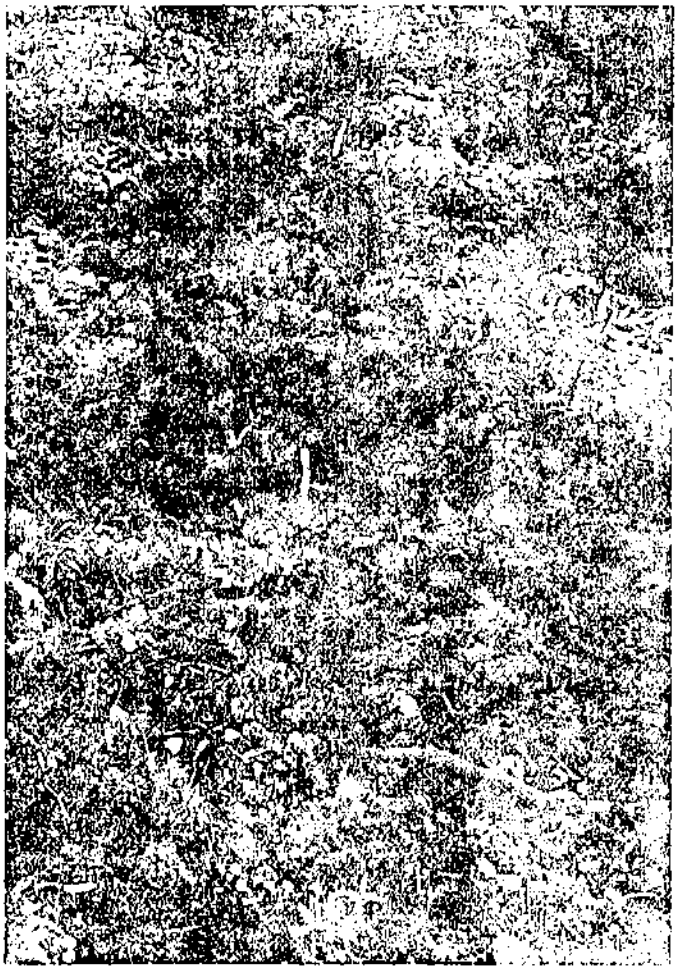
Site "B" (photograph #4)

Site "B" was adjacent to a bog (elk wallow) next to the Low Creek Trail approximately 2.75 miles above Mill Creek. The site contained approximately 18 prints over a distance of approximately 40 feet. The tracks began in the soft mud adjacent to the bog and extended up over a small rise, down the other side, and into dense herbaceous vegetation. There was sign of disturbance to this vegetation for another 30-40 feet indicating passage of something. Picture #4 below shows the tracks leading up to the small rise from the muddy area adjacent to the bog.

Plaster casts were made of two (2) tracks where the mud was not too soft, but still soft enough to make a good imprint. The remainder of the tracks were too faint to cast.

Color photographs were taken of the tracks prior to making the casts.

These are photographs #5 and #6 on the next page. Another photograph was taken of the track shown in photograph #5 with a foot adjacent to it for scale purposes. This photograph is #7 on the top of page 5.

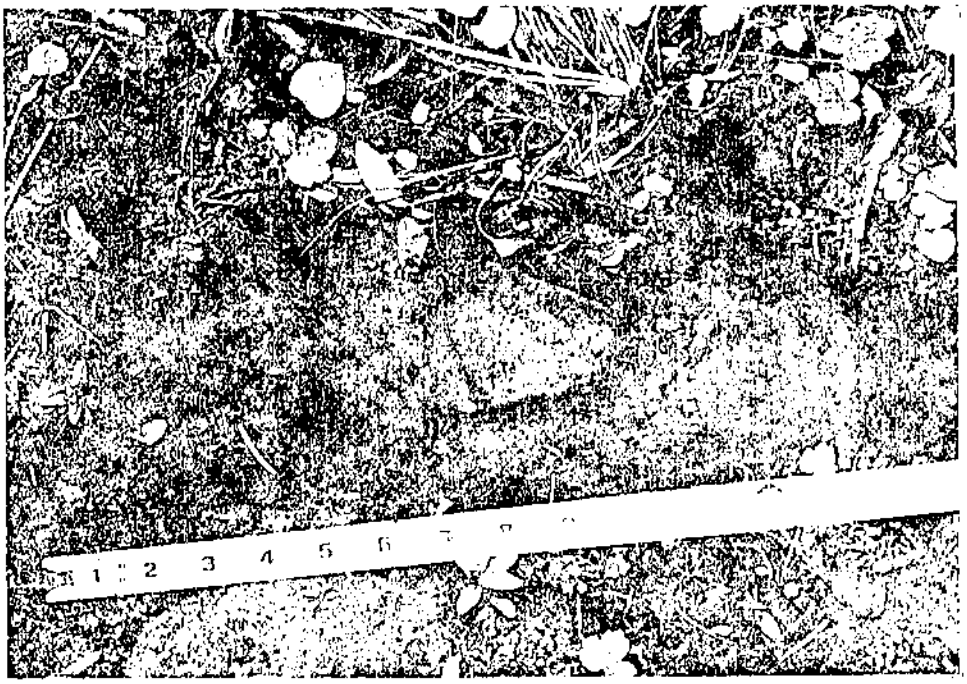


Photograph #4 - Site "B". Ribbons indicate location of tracks leading up crest of small rise between two trees. Stick in forground marks location of another track.

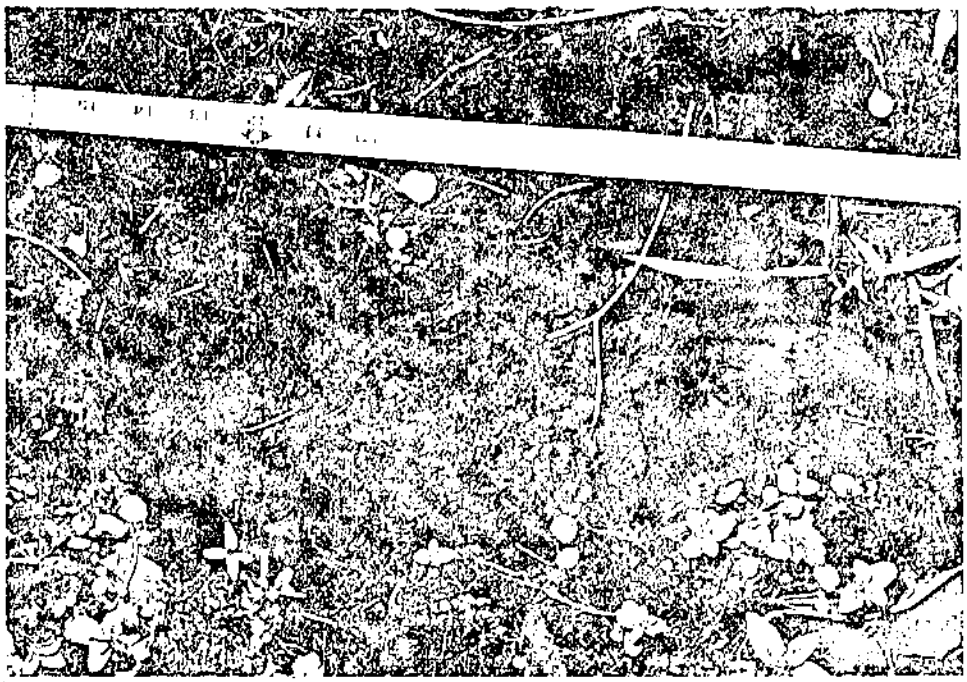
Site "C" (no photograph)

Site "C" was not visited by the group. Reasons for this were the time of day and the conclusions reached at Site "B" (explained later in this memorandum. The site was a dry open area with approximately 12 individual tracks (as described by the watershed rider - Epoch).

The general description of the tracks appears very close to that observed at sites "A" and "B".



Photograph #5 - Site "B" track (right foot). Note compresion of foot over rock (esp. on the arch side of the foot). A cast was made of this track.



Photograph #6 - Site "B" track (left foot). Note small size of toes (width) compared to the left foot track shown in Photograph #3 from Site "A". A cast was made of this track.



Photograph #7 - Site "B" track (right foot). Same track shown in Photograph #4. Watershed rider Paul Freeman's boot adjacent to track for size comparison.

Conclusions

Based on several things, it is my opinion that the tracks observed at Site "A" and Site "B" along Low Creek were made by something other than a 300 pound plus two footed being. My conclusion is based on the following:

1. The stride of the tracks did not change with slope. The stride of all tracks observed was right at four (4) feet. The tracks were on approximately a 2-3 percent grade on Site "A", and approximately 8-25 percent on Site "B". Under this range of slope the stride should have changed somewhat (shorten on uphill grade, lengthen on downhill grade, etc.). This was not the case at both sites sites.

2. The tracks at both sites were not to the "bottom" of the mud. In fact, we were sinking in deeper with boots on at the same locations.

3. The tracks were "isolated" (not connected into a trail) and had a definite beginning and an end. The numerous bear trails we observed could very easily be followed. This was not the case with the "Bigfoot" tracks.

4. The "toeprint" markings were very clear on the portions of the foot that should be worn smooth and calloused. In addition, no other creases were evident as should be the case in a foot as calloused as this should be.

5. At Site "B", it appeared that the fine forest litter (needles, etc.) had been brushed aside prior to making of the track. It was obvious that the litter had been displaced sideways from the track area in an unnatural manner.

6. The small toes lacked a definite "pad" at the tips as would be expected. These should be very evident on a track of this size as the foot rotates forward and the toes tend to "grip" and push off onto the other foot.

7. There was no sign of heel or toe "slippage" on the steep gradient areas. For an individual of the size this one is reported to be, when it was going up or down slopes of the gradient present, there should have been some slippage (backwards uphill and forward downhill) of the foot. This is especially the case in the wet areas. None of this was evident.

8. In several cases, it appeared that the foot may have been "rocked" from side to side to make the track. The toes on some tracks appeared wider than others, the "print" marks extended up the side of the foot, and the inside of the arch was compressed much more than should occur in a normal one step situation (see Photograph #5 and #7).

If the tracks were faked, someone went to a great deal of trouble and detail. The "print" marks on the foot would have to be very hard to duplicate. They appear very natural. I would almost suspect a cast made of an actual foot would have had to be used to make the "fake" feet. If this were the case though, the other creases in the foot should have shown.

If you have any additional questions, etc. let me know. I have given the negatives for the attached photographs to the District as well as the plaster casts.

Rodney L. Johnson

RODNEY L. JOHNSON
Wildlife Biologist (North Zone)

OPTIONAL FORM NO. 10
MAY 1962 EDITION
GSA FPMR (41 CFR) 101-11.6

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

TO : Mr. Wayne Long
District Supervisor
Walla Walla District

DATE: July 28, 1982

FROM : U.S. Forest Service

SUBJECT: Joel Hardin
U.S. Border Patrol
Bellingham, Washington

In regard to the "Bigfoot" sign or tracks you requested my assistance in examining on June 17.

My opinion is that the tracks were a very clever attempt to perpetrate a hoax, involving your office or agency, in order to lend authenticity or credibility to the general public.

I base my opinion on the following conclusions after the "on sight" examination on June 17. First of all, because of the exclusion of general public traffic in this area, i.e., hiking, camping, fishing -- the observation and readability of human sign is excellent.

The tracks that were examined, in two separate locations some distance apart, were identical in appearance, size, and individual characteristics, therefore concluded to have been made by the same "Bigfoot". You have pictures, casts, and measurements to compare these and I will not do so herein.

Now to the problem of who or what made the tracks, I believe they were man made by using some type of soft plaster or rubber coated foot. The tracks I examined: (1)when in soft mud failed to push down to solid matter, even in the pressure areas of the foot, the heel and ball of the foot; (2)were straight "in line" and did not show a natural swing along an irregular trail; (3)had an exact stride both uphill and downhill on an irregular trail; (4)showed exactly the same weight and body angle pressure, on heel and ball of foot uphill and downhill; (5)on hard surfaced areas or debris covered areas of the trail were ground into or squirmed into the surface in order to be readily visible; (6)finally, in both locations, the tracks appeared and disappeared on the trail with no sign leading to or away from the area.

Who made the tracks -- my opinion, someone with normal access to the area, very knowledgeable and interested in "Bigfoot" legends and stories; a person large enough to implant the track device sufficient to make the sign described and of which you have the evidence.

Trusting that this memo will suffice to close this "Bigfoot" case. It was a pleasure and a priviledge to investigate "Bigfoot" sign in your area. Please let me know if you require such services in the future.

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