



The Highline

A tri-annual newsletter of the Back County Horsemen of Oregon

Fall 2012 Edition

On April 6, 2013, BCHO will sponsor a comprehensive training at the Veneta Fire Hall at 9 in the morning. BCHA Wilderness Expert Dennis Daily will lead the session.

Several chapters requested the training as a follow up to the last great session that Dennis put on a couple of years ago. The cost is \$20 per person.

Dennis will cover topics submitted by several chapters:

- BCHO interaction with agencies and their policies.
- Update of the 2320 Wilderness Guidelines.
- Explanation of the "Minimum Tool Section: of the Wilderness Act."
- Accountability of USFS money to the Ground Study.

A Q & A session will follow.

For any question on this session, or to save a place, please call either Phil Hufstader (541-914-3725) or Jerry Bentz (971-645-3593).

Please take the time to put this date on your calendar and come prepared for one of the greatest informational sessions that BCHO has sponsored.

Note: this session is open to all Equestrians.

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PURPOSES of BACK COUNTRY HORSEMEN of OREGON

To **PERPETUATE** the common sense use and enjoyment of horses in America's back country and wilderness areas.

To **WORK** to insure that public lands remain open to recreational stock use.

To **ASSIST** the various government, state, and private agencies in their maintenance and management of said resource.

To **EDUCATE**, encourage and solicit active participation in the use of the back country resource by stock users and the general public commensurate with our heritage.

TO **FOSTER** and encourage the formation of new state organizations and BCHA.

A Little Thank You

A little thank you goes a long way. We promote ourselves and our organization for a variety of reasons. The positive reasons are to foster good will with other organizations and to recruit new members to strengthen our ranks and spread out the workload – “many hands make light work.” But it never hurts to shine the spotlight on others once in awhile.

This past week Jim Thornton, Recreation Manager for the Barlow Ranger District of the Mt. Hood National Forest (and Columbia Gorge Chapter’s FS liaison) had a work project that required spreading

gravel along two trails. Four very talented ladies assisted him – BCHO member Sue Forsman and her three mules, Katie, Snickers and Patsy. Jim had a crew from the Northwest Youth Corp on the project. They have been working in the district for the summer on many trails. After a safety talk from Sue and teaching them how to load and release the gravel bags the crew went to work. They had already done a good deal of clearing, rehab and improving the trail access at the road. I hiked a portion of the trail and saw the fine work that they were doing and taking photos of the process.

I don’t know the backgrounds of any of these young people, but I do know that some in the program have had some troubles. As I encountered the crewmembers along the way, I thanked them for their work and asked if anyone had any problem with me taking photos of them. One young man answered, “No ma’am, we’re just glad someone’s noticing.” I assured him that we did and appreciated their help.

Thank You, Jim Thornton for your continued efforts to keep the trails open for us. Thank You, Sue, Katie, Snickers and Patsy for your packing expertise. And Thank You, Northwest Youth Corps for your toil and labor. We do notice and we say, “Thank You.”

Submitted by Joy Senger
Columbia Gorge Chapter President

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Newsletter Revisions & Update

I tried very hard to thank all the folks involved with the beach ride hosted for the National Board Members that came to Eugene for the National Board Meeting, but it turns out that there was a misunderstanding and names I had wrong. So for these, I apologize and would like to make the following corrections.

My article was only meant to thank the folks involved with the beach ride; not any other part of the National Board Meeting as I was not the person involved with the other aspects.

The article was also meant to simply show the amazing camaraderie of this organization with people across the nation. I am sorry that people didn’t see the positiveness of the sentiment from that one board member.

I would like to give my profound apologies to the wonderful son and mother team of Frances and Roger Yazzie. I had their last name wrong in the article. I wrote it down wrong at the outset and didn’t get it changed. I deeply appreciate their efforts to drive all the way from Klamath Falls to help shuttle board members from Eugene to the coastal trailhead, their help with lunch, wiliness to drive the folks to Sea Lion Caves and anything else they did that I am not aware of.

Also seems that I forgot to thank a very special person who makes everything possible that Matt and I do. She brought her truck and trailer, her horse and another member’s horse; plus she helped my husband guide the ride! We don’t know what we would do without her. She is there whenever we need her. Please accept my apology, Barb Kirchner, for not listing you in the article – and our profound thanks.

By Becky Hope

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BCHO State Ride 2012

Many, many thanks to the State Board team of Becky Wolf and Joy Senger for their efforts to provide a fine event in Central Oregon's beautiful Ochoco Mountains in July this year. Forty-five people came from all over the state: Emerald Empire, Columbia Gorge, Territorial, East and West Cascades and Steens Chapters were all represented. We enjoyed great rides through stands of Ponderosa and Aspen, perfect weather, green meadows and no bugs!

Funny thing about BCHO members: they spend so much of the year working on trails and volunteering for all sorts of related projects, but what do they do when they get together for some relaxation and fun? They jump right in and help some more! Neil Senger hauled weed-free hay in and hauled all the manure out. Jerry Bentz organized campfires and conducted a planning meeting for next year. Dan and Joyce Founts and Don Jimerson led fantastic rides through their "home mountains." About 20 folks rode out with the Fouts and Don over two days. Tobbi and Mike Countryman led songs around the campfire. Kathy Levy and Debbie Lund cleared out several bags of trash from an adjacent campsite

And in the spirit of BCHO volunteerism, Dr. Don Howard DVM, who is sought after statewide for his equine veterinary, chiropractic, and acupuncture practice, gave complimentary chiropractic adjustments to as many horses and mules as were brought up to him by their owners Saturday evening after the potluck. How remarkable is that? Don (West Cascades BCHO) was heard to say, "You are the folks out doing the work. Thank you for keeping the trails open. I don't always have the time for trail work. This is my contribution." From many horses, mules and their riders, THANK YOU Dr. Howard!

Joy and Becky organized the potluck dinner Saturday night and it was a feast! Pulled pork was purchased at a discount from Redmond Smokehouse. We thank them greatly for their help with the price. And thanks all and everyone who contributed to the spread of food that filled three tables!

There are even more folks to acknowledge for their contributions to this successful and community-minded State Ride. Neil Senger took the bagged manure to Seed to Table organic farm in Maupin. Becky Wolf set up a can for recycling cans and bottles, then took them to the Humane Society Shelter in The Dalles as a contribution. John Volle of Healthy Hay for Horses in Madras was extremely helpful and cooperative in providing quality weed-free hay at a fair price. Finally, thanks go out to the Jimersons for arranging port-a-potties and for arriving early to help set everything up, including the standup directional signs. Becky wants the Jimersons to know that they were lifesavers to her.

Discussion is underway for the 2013 BCHO State Ride. The location will again be in the Ochocos, though the exact spot is not yet determined. The date has been set for August 2, 3 and 4, 2013.

If you missed this year, you have another chance to ride this magnificent country. If you attended this year, then you know how special this place is and how much fun it is spending time with this wonderful group of folks that make up the chapters of Oregon's Back Country Horsemen.

By Jean Clancey, EEBCHO



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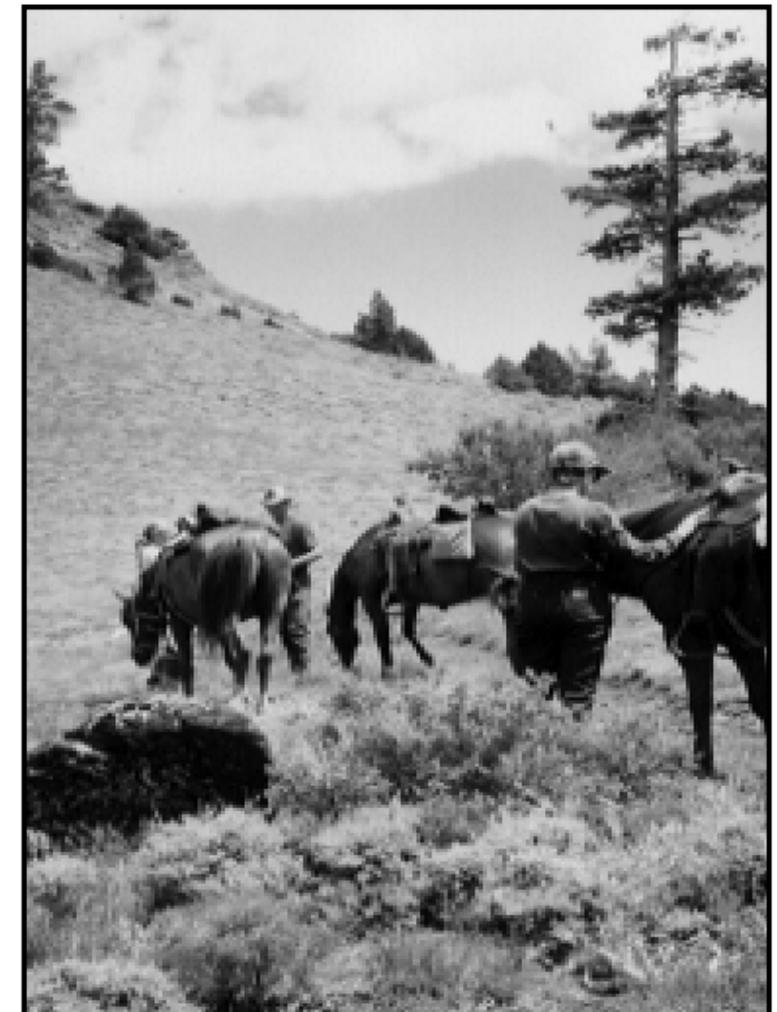
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Guest Ranch Adventure

Granted, this type of equine adventure does not include the pannier packing, sleeping on the ground, bug swatting joy of an honest-to-gosh back country pack-in....bug, there are advantages to an occasional vacation to a guest ranch. Especially the one our family most recently enjoyed at Willow Springs Guest Ranch, near Paisley in Oregon's outback.

I did a lot of thinking about this: where is there a destination that includes unlimited riding for me, a stream for my husband's fishing pleasure and mountain biking, hiking, and the possibility of a once-in-a-lifetime ride for the rest of the family members? A place where all the work of camping and cooking wouldn't fall on me, where hot showers and a Dutch oven meal were ready at the end of a full day's ride? Where a log cabin with shower, heater and good bed topped off the long day? Not that I'm getting soft, but what a way to bring the whole family in on enjoying my passion -- riding!

The first impression we all had upon arriving at Willow Springs was the utter quiet of the place. Keith and Patty Barnhart (BCHO and OET members) purchased the 2500-acre ranch 18 years ago and run 80 cattle plus calves on their own pastures and an adjacent BLM leased parcel.

The landscape is stunning. Ponderosa pine, juniper stands, aspen and lush meadows are a surprise in this arid land. The bird life is phenomenal as well. We saw sand hill cranes, eagles, yellow headed blackbirds and bluebirds. The evening and morning hours were filled with the eerie sounds of snipes performing aerial courtships. There are sage grouse too, which the Barnharts are helping protect with habitat improvements.

If you time a visit for the second weekend in May, you can help Keith with the cattle drive -- and it's the real thing! You can use your own horse or one of his own well-trained cow ponies. This was definitely the clincher for my husband. Mister "you'll never get me on a horse" decided at the last minute he didn't want to be left out of all the fun. Keith saddled up his trusty Murphy, gave my husband a 15 minute riding lesson and away we all went. About 5 hours later my husband was a convert to the cowboy way, appreciating the view while actually helping with real work in partnership with a horse. I wouldn't have believed it possible that he would take to it with enthusiasm. He talked about this cattle drive for days.

Keith also maintains the Fremont National Scenic Trail, which is about a 20-minute trailer trip from his ranch. So in addition to riding the wide-open spaces of his ranch and adjoining public lands (for which Keith provides detailed maps) you can ride the FNST north and south.

So here's an idea for my fellow Western Oregon riders, especially in spring when you are sick of mud, the mountains are still under piles of snow and you are itching to get started on the riding season. There is an excellent horse camp at Moss Creek, just up Clover Flat Road from where Willow Springs is located; about a 4 1/2 to 5 hours drive with horse trailer from Eugene. There you can enjoy couple days great spring riding in the beautiful Fremont National Forest, which is open much earlier than our Cascades. The horse camp is located at one of several trailheads for the FNST.

Then for a real treat, you could spend a night or two at Willow Springs Ranch and enjoy Patty and Keith's exceptional hospitality. Not to mention a hot shower, ranch breakfast, fabulous Dutch oven dinner, and freedom to ride all the open territory around the Willow Springs Ranch. Four days of riding make the trip definitely worthwhile. You can call Keith at 541-947-5499 and ask him in person for the condition of trails and snow levels. Or book a stay.

One last note, my husband did find his fishing stream. The Chewacan River runs through Paisley and the mountains beyond. Plus a day trip by car to the Hart Mountain Antelope Refuge and the Abert Rim led to some great hikes, views, lakes, and waterfalls.

Our Oregon outback adventure is one we will remember. Now I am wondering how beautiful the aspens will be in fall? By any chance do those cattle need to be brought back down from the high country? Hope so!

By Jean Clancey, EEBCHO

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June 23-24 – Howard Lake, Minnesota* (602) 999-6853 steve@muleranch.com

June 29-July 1 – Central Minnesota Donkey & Mule Days, Howard Lake, Minnesota; Come by Steve's booth to say "Howdy" or bring lots of questions; Steve (602) 999-6853

July 20-22 & October 18-20 – Flying R Ranch, West Plains, Missouri*; Host: Katie (417) 469-2267

July 27-29 – Driving Clinic, Glen Allen, Missouri; Host: Anthony Efkink (573) 238/5350

August 11-12 – Pajama Llama Ranch, Free Soil, Michigan*; Host: Tonya Wilson (605) 786-2120

September 1-2 – Crimson Acres Equestrian Center, Orange, Massachusetts*; Host: Laurie Neely (413) 374-3755

September 6-10 – Mammoth Cave, Kentucky*; Steve (602) 999-6853

September 14-15 – Kentucky State Championship Mule & Donkey Show, Liberty, Kentucky; 2-Hour Clinic and Mule and Donkey Tack Booth; Gail (606) 303-1810

September 20-22 – Clearview Horse Farm, Shelbyville, Tennessee*; Trainer's Challenge September 22; Host: Clearview Horse Farm (931) 684-8822

October 20-21 – Best of America by Horseback Trail Ride, West Plains, Missouri*; Steve (602) 999-6853

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Horseback Riders vs. Bike Riders: How to get along on the Trail

I am a trail user. I happen to ride a horse and enjoy being out in the woods and the mountains. I was asked to give a few ideas on how horse riders and bike riders could better understand each other when we encounter each other on the trails.

The first idea is just this: We are the same. We are both folks out on the trail to enjoy the experience of being out in Mother Nature, get some exercise, get away from civilization, and see what is around the next bend in the trail. We just happen to do it in a different ways. One group, who is decidedly crazy, happens to choose the experience from the back of an unpredictable animal with its fluid of motion and freedom. The other chooses a bicycle with its motion for the exercise that it gives.

Second idea: Horseback riders are on the back of an animal. Its first response, when startled, is to flee first, ask questions later. The way we keep this from happening is to give the horse a chance of realizing that something is coming and that the 'something' is not dangerous.

Above all speak:

Horses know what the human voice is and generally like it, because it's associated with something that it is familiar with. If you don't want to speak to every horse person you meet then you can try a bell or something. It isn't guaranteed that the horse will be any more familiar with that, but at least it will give the horse and rider a chance to be aware that you are coming up behind and adjust for that.

Keep from coming up on the horse fast:

On most trails, the bike rider is going faster than the horse rider. For both groups, realize that you are on a trail that is being used by different user groups and that at any moment you may come around a corner and find the other in front of you. Choose you speed accordingly. This also goes for horse riders encountering hikers on the trail.



Horseback riders need to get their horses use to bicycles:

I have asked bicycle riders to let my new horses smell and look at bicycles up close so to begin the process of getting them use to the bicycles and their riders. I purposefully go out to these rail trails where there are always some bicycles and lots of room to get my horses used to bicycles before I encounter them on a small single track trail with no room. I get my horse off of the trail and let them take a long look at bicycles and their riders.

Third Idea: Keeping the above ideas in mind, when we encounter each other on the trail, I think the 'rules of the trail' applies here. **Remember common sense.**

- If a smaller group meets a larger group, the smaller group or single person gets off the trail, (if they can do so safely).
- If the groups are the same size the group who can get off of the trail the most safely does so.
- Let the faster user go on through when safe and let the other group know if it is not safe.
- Bicycle folks need to be patient with the horse folks who are trying to get off of the trail. Horses are their own beings; sometimes have their own ideas about what they want to do.
- If on a wider trail such as a rail trail, speak to the horse and rider. Let them know you are coming up behind and which side you are coming past on. I generally like the 'rules of the road' on this and the slower user pulls to the right and the faster users passes on the left.
- If meeting head on, stay to the right, slow down and pass each other. I think it is still a good idea to talk to each other. Horse riders, if you think your horse is going to spook or jump around, get them off the trail all together and try to avoid scaring the other user.
- Although I strongly recommend that another solution be tried first, if a biker and horse person meet head on a trail and there is no other option, the horse folks would appreciate if the bike folks would step on the downhill side of the trail, that way if the horse spooks he is not going downhill and taking the rider with him.

Remember:
Use Common Sense
Speak to each other
Follow rules of the trail/road
Be aware of the other users
SAFETY, SAFETY, SAFETY



Gibson Horse Camp

At their June meeting, the Columbia Gorge chapter voted in favor of officially adopting the Gibson Prairie Horse Camp. The camp is located in the Hood River Ranger District of the Mt. Hood National Forest. Originally, the camp was nothing more than hitch rails, "teepee shaped outhouses" and a spring fed trough. In 2002, Columbia Gorge BCHO worked with the FS to obtain funding to build the current corrals in a new location away from the meadow. With the help of OET, the camp had a new entrance, a vault toilet, three 4-horse corrals and a manure pit.

Gibson Prairie Horse Camp is a little known gem on the east side of Mt. Hood on Surveyor's Ridge. It is a fee-free camp. The camp has long been a favorite of chapter members, Ken & Helen Hansen, who have spent countless hours riding and mapping the area envisioning a variety of loops and connections. Ken has worked tirelessly to promote the camp and trails and has been in regular contact with the Forest Service discussing trail issues and improvements. As a result of his efforts District Ranger, Daina Bambe, proposed that the chapter adopt the camp. With the adoption agreement approved and a nod from the FS to Ken's "wish list" of projects, eleven members met on June 25 for a work party. Fire pits and the toilet were cleaned, grass cut, trees limbed, water trough drained and cleaned, trail repair and exposed ground cloth in the stalls removed. Hazard trees were also marked for removal by the FS.

A second work party and campout followed in July. Six members attended. This time armed with tractors. By removing a tree stump and several large rocks, four new parking/camping spots were created. There is also now a nice leveled open space for day use parking and turning large rigs. We hope to have it and the new camp spots rocked before winter. The FS is also open to the building of a fourth set of corrals. They also provided several horse/hiker only trail signs to be erected. The camp will be designated for horse camping only.

Credit for the adoption and improvement not only goes to Ken (for his passionate pursuit of the project!), but also to our partners in the Forest Service – Daina Bambe, District Ranger; Dan Gilfillan, Recreation Manager; and Ken Kollas, Trails Coordinator. A big thanks to you all for your part in making this happen.

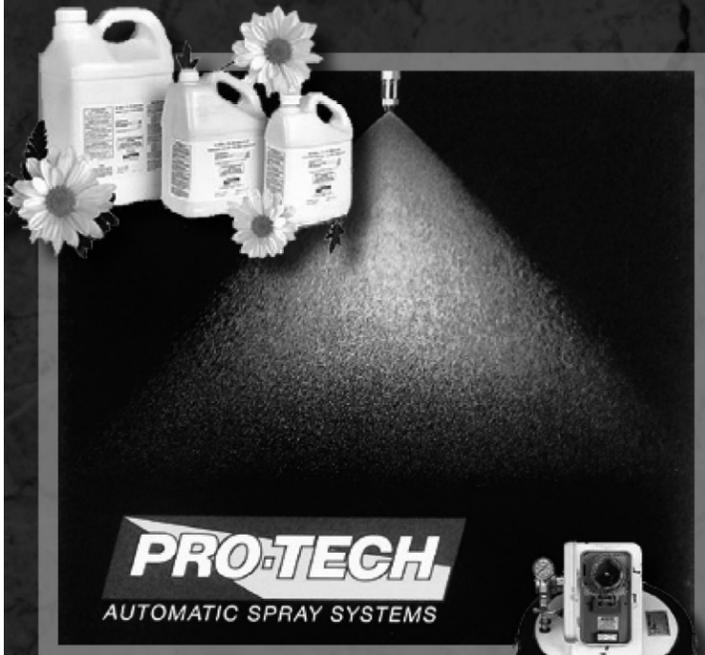
By Joy Senger, Columbia Gorge Chapter President



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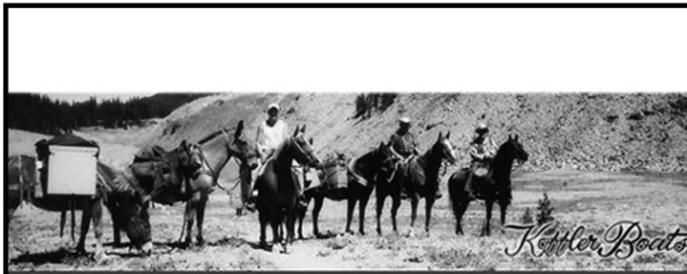
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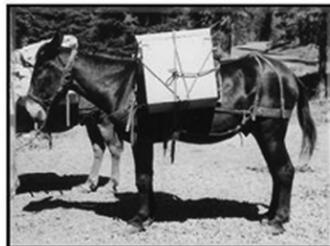


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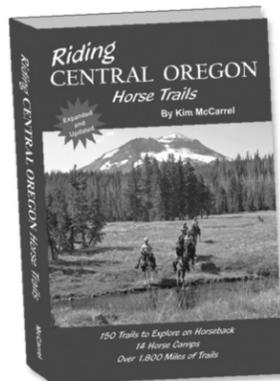
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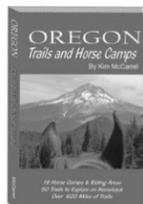
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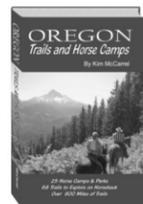
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Territorial Riders Update

We have been a chapter of the Back Country Horsemen of Oregon for just under a year now and we have taken on many substantial things.

We have adopted six miles of the Pacific Crest Trail and the Bull of the Woods wilderness, had a camp out, held a poker ride and raised funds for the training station at Milo McIver State Park with Oregon Equestrian Trails providing the labor.

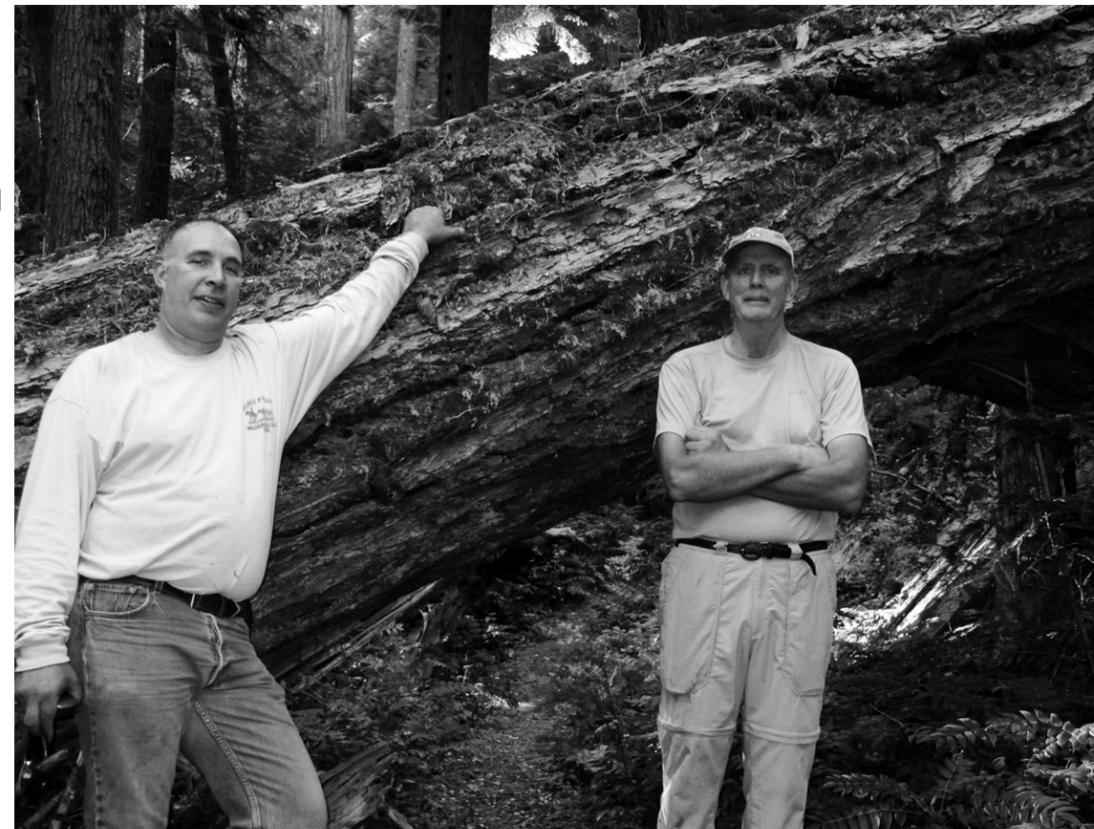
Additionally we donated our old storage trailer to the state and purchased a new one for our chapter belongings, picked a chapter logo for clothing, had a work party of the PCT and four on the Bull of the Woods Wilderness.

We are going to have a work party at the Horning tree farm to pay for the use of the Bureau of Land management land for our Poker ride. The training stations are a step up platform, a gate, a back through, a step over log, a side pass log, and bollards spaced at 4 feet and 10 feet spacing. We have plans for a suspension bridge, a water crossing, a log plank to walk your horse on and a teeter-totter. These training stations are meant to train the horse and rider to handle any and all situations that they may encounter on their riding in the backcountry.

We went on our first adventure on a trail clearing in the Bull of the Woods Wilderness using the cross cut saw, boy did we have fun! The trails were more challenging than the trails around home. There were eight of us in the first work party and about 12 logs were cut out that day. Only having my horse for two years, I really didn't know exactly what he would do on a more challenging trail like cliffs. I also wasn't the only one in the group wondering about their new horse. We found out our horses actually had a brain and used it. This trail had not been cleared out for about four years or longer and the horses and mules did great. We ended up clearing the first long loop that the Forest Service wanted us to clear, which made everybody happy. We have had two more work parties since then and are planning to have a campout next year to clear more trails since it is a long drive to the trailheads.

Next year there will be more trail clearings, more campouts and even more fun for the Territorial Riders BCHO.

By Gary Sischo and Deloris Devall



Tim Lagasse and Marty Devall – Saving this one till next time.

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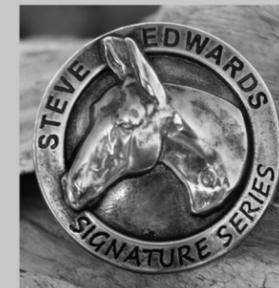
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Trail Classifications

Accomplishments of BCHA and BCH

Background

Five years ago the National Forest Service recognized that their trail classification system did not reflect actual trail usage. In their efforts to address this discrepancy, they developed a new trail classification system for all trails. Their focus was to list the national system of trails as they are currently being used. They developed a new classification system and sent it out to their agencies offices. This new system immediately and arbitrarily downgraded 59% of our trails to a level below pack and saddle stock standards.

The new US National Forest Service Trail Classification System has changed standards for pack and saddle stock trails that have evolved and been time-tested for nearly a hundred years. When BCHA was first made aware of and got involved in this process, we were concerned that managers would assign classes and design parameters to trails that would not accommodate pack and saddle stock -- that we would lose trails that have been historically accessible to stock use. Our task is to determine if the new trail classification system has indeed changed historic accessibility to stock, and if so, whether the agency has involved the public and followed an approved land management process agreed upon in the court decision.

New Trail Classes

According to the new USFS Trail Classification System, there are five new trail classes ranging from the least developed (Trail Class 1) to the most developed (Trail Class 5):

- Trail Class 1: Minimally Developed
- Trail Class 2: Moderately Developed
- Trail Class 3: Developed
- Trail Class 4: Highly Developed
- Trail Class 5: Fully Developed

The graph below shows design specifications and design parameters for each trail class:

Trail Class	TC 1	TC 2	TC 3	TC 4	TC 5
Widths Tread	n/a	12"-18"	18"-24"	24"-96"	n/a
Widths Structures	n/a	60" w/o handrails	60" w/o handrails	60" w/o handrails	n/a
Heights	n/a	8'	10'	10'-12'	n/a
Clearing Widths	n/a	72"	72"-96"	96"	n/a

Those of us involved in reviewing the new trail classification system noted that across the country miles of trails went from being Class 3 to Class 1. And in many cases design parameters were changed, managing them for lower standards than stock use requires. In the Willamette Forest alone, 173 trails went from being managed for pack and saddle stock to standards appropriate for bicycles or hikers only.

The following diagram shows the impact of the new design standards as applied to different users:

- Stock Heights 10' - Biker Heights 8' - Hike Heights 6'
- Stock Widths 72-96" - trail Clearance Widths
- Bike Widths 60-72" trail Clearance Widths
- Hiker Widths 24-48" Trail Clearance Widths
- Stock and Biker 18"-36" tread Widths
- Hiker Tread Widths 6"-12" Widths

Court Mandates

We have BCH of California and their Ann Lange to thank for recognizing the implications of this change of thinking within the Forest Service. Her vigilance, Dennis Daily's expertise and Steve Didier's drive resulted in BCHA taking action and filing suit against the USFS in court. As a result, the Forest Service will be able to keep their new Trail

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Classification System as designed, but they will not be able to reassign a trail to a new classification without public input on the proposed change.

BCH members are meeting with USFS representatives all over the nation to see how each Forest or Ranger District has implemented the new Trail Classification System in their area. On the Willamette Forest most of the 173 trails that had been categorically downgraded from pack and saddle stock standards to bike and hiker only standards have been reinstated. The trails will be managed for other uses than just stock, but they must continue to be managed to include stock. When trail work is undertaken, it will be expected to meet and maintain the highest design standards.

These positive results for stock users on our public lands are the result of hours and hours of meetings and travel for some very dedicated BCH members. And the process is still ongoing. On the Willamette, for example, there are 7 to 8 trails that will need to go through the public process to be changed to needed design standards. The Forest Service acknowledges that they will have to operate with two lists of trails: one of objective standards and another of needed maintenance standards. This way we should all have a better idea of the exact conditions of our trail systems.

Bringing It Home

Here locally, I ride trails on public lands at least once a week. There were ten trails in my area that had their designed use changed from pack and saddle to biker only. And ten other trails had their classification changed from Level 3 to a Level 2 or 1. We were able to get those trails back to previous levels and will be working with local Ranger District managers on making these levels permanent.

Huge thanks are in order for many folks who have helped with this effort. First, thanks to Ann Lange for starting the discussions. Thanks to BCHA for taking on the fight and following through with it. Thousands of dollars were raised and thousands of letters were written and the networking of many made this possible. Thanks to Phil Hufstader and the board members of BCHO who educated themselves on the issues and then did the work, persevering until the changes that negatively affected stock users were changed back.

Basically I want to thank the whole Back Country Horsemen organization for being there and acting to save our access to our trails. It takes all of us doing our share to ensure saddle and stock users will be able to continue using trails on our public lands.

Finally, thanks are in order for the welcoming attitude and professional work of the recreational staff from both the Deschutes and Willamette Forests who have worked with us on this project. We have had two four-hour meetings so far to review trails and their classification status. Plus they have put additional time reviewing their trail designations and doing the paperwork to put the trails back to their proper classifications. Steve Hayden, Stacey Forson, Wayne Chevalier, Tyson Cross, Mark Christensen, Marv Lang, Kit Dickey and Judy Mitchell all have been working with us and have been working hard to do what is best for our trail and forest systems.

By: Becky Hope, Betty Jean Keele, Jean Clancey
Emerald BCH of Oregon

Back Country Horsemen of Oregon, Inc.
2012 Membership Application

Yes! I would like to help preserve Horsemen's rights to use stock on public lands.

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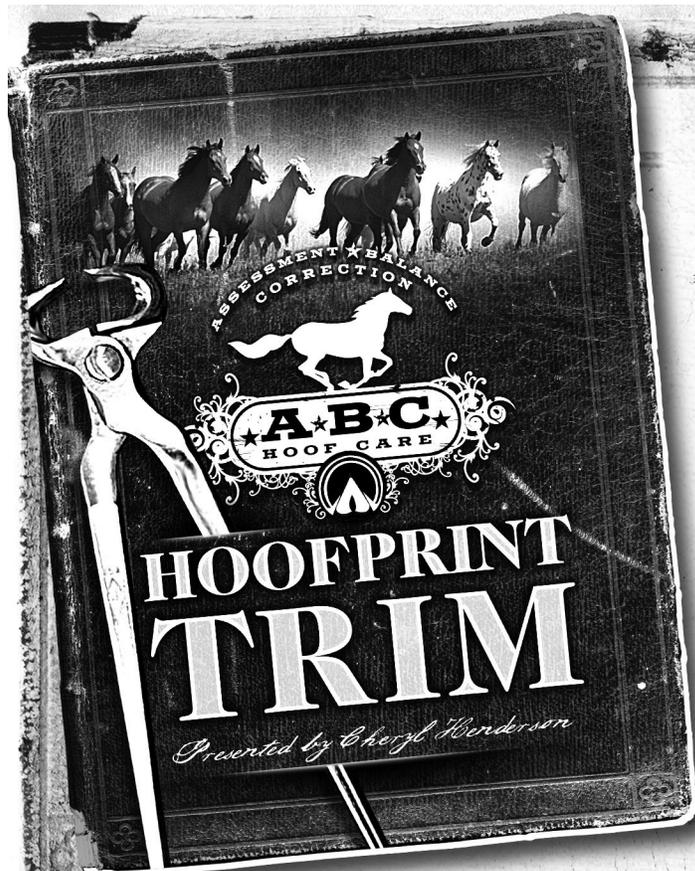
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