



The Highline

Greetings from BCHO President

Submitted by: Jerry Bentz, BCHO President

Greetings from the foggy Willamette Valley. I hope the rest of you are enjoying our dry sunny winter. I hope we aren't shut out of the woods early this summer because of the rain and snow we are not getting this winter. Enough doom and gloom, let's talk about something fun.

It's time for Winter Convention. By now I think you all know that the Winter Convention is March 8th at Eagle Crest Resort. There is a block of rooms set aside for us. To make reservations call 855-682-4786 and be sure and tell them you are with BCHO. Saturday the general meeting will start at 9:00 a.m. That should give most of you time to drive over in the morning if you get up early.

The day will start by going over the budget and we will follow that up with chapter reports. Next we have a speaker from ONDA that is going to talk to us about the proposed trail that will run from the Bad Lands to the Idaho border in the area of the Owyhee Reservoir. Lunch this year will be a box lunch. After lunch we are going to have a basic class on how to use your GPS put on by Dennis Worden of the High Desert Trail Riders. You are encouraged to bring your GPS. Thanks again to Dennis for doing this. Our last speaker is Rick Grae. Rick is with Region Six of the Forest Service. Rick is in charge of monitoring air

quality in Region Six. Rick will be talking about air quality in the woods and what it all has to do with climate change. (Not global warming, but climate change.) We have all noticed that our weather has been changing and it should be very interesting to hear what the experts have to say. Lastly, during the general meeting we will vote on the constitutional change creating two Vice Presidents. We also need to elect a National Director, Alternate Director and possibly a second Vice President.

Saturday night we will have our annual banquet. There will be entertainment including, but not limited to, several of our members doing Cowboy Poetry. Be prepared to laugh. We also have some awards to hand out, including several very special awards to well-deserving people including one long overdue. I always look forward to Winter Convention and look forward to getting together with old and new friends. Sometimes I have more fun than I should. I do look forward to seeing everyone. We need to get a head count for lunch and dinner so please contact myself or Vice President Carol Hopkins if you are planning to attend. The next item I would like to talk about is Saw Certification. Those of you on the e-mail list recently got an e-mail about the proposed National Saw Policy. The proposed policy,

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and the fact that it has been put on hold, has no effect on BCHO's saw program that was put into effect last year. For those of you that don't know, BCHO has been given the ability to certify our own folks by the Forest Service. BCHO has a signed letter of agreement with the Forest Service as well as written saw program approved and signed by the Forest Service. Most, but not all chapters currently have certifiers in place to run anyone interested through the program. There is a class room portion, mainly about safety, and there is a field portion that can be done at a work party under the watchful eye of one of the certifiers. You also need to have a current First Aid and CPR card and then you will be given a certification card that will be honored by the Forest Service and the BLM. We can only certify BCHO members. We are planning on having a very brief meeting Sunday morning at the Winter Convention with any of the certifiers that are there. If anyone has a question about this program please contact myself or Bert Morris. Bert is a member of the West Cascade Chapter and co-chair of the saw program.

Next on my list is this year's State Ride. The ride will be held at Allen Creek Horse Camp in the Ochocos. The date is July 18th through the 20th. BCHO has taken on the camp as a state project. OET has provided the funding and BCHO is providing the man power to start rebuilding the corrals. It's a nice place to camp. This year we will have several trails laid out and mapped out so it will be a little easier to find your way around. Jim Kitzhaber is this year's ride chairman. I know Jim has a potluck planned for Saturday evening and has volunteered West Cascades to provide breakfast on Sunday morning. We had a great time last year. There always seems to be stories about the road going in to the camp and being able to get a large horse trailer into the camp ground. The last, I think, eight miles is a two-lane gravel road. The rock is small and easy to drive on. I believe I could get a semi trailer in and out of the campground and never back up. I would be happy to park anyone's trailer. I hope everyone puts the ride on their calendar. We have a lot of fun every year. It's nice to take a break from all of the trail maintenance we all do.

I also would like to mention High Desert Trail Riders annual Pack Clinic. The Pack Clinic is May 2,3 and 4 at the Fair Ground in Klamath Falls. I joined BCHO at the Pack Clinic many years ago. If you have never been there you are missing something special. I truly believe that the High Desert Trail Riders put on the best pack clinic in the United States. Your loss if you don't go.

Last I need to again mention BCHO and bicycles. I believe there are two articles in this edition of The Highline. The two articles have two different viewpoints about how we should deal with the bicycle community. All the user groups are competing for the same trails, especially the "Front Country" trails. Studies have shown that in most cases the bikes win. Most hikers and equestrians don't care to be

on the same trails as the bikes due to the safety issues that arise. I don't think most bikers are bad folks and are just out enjoying themselves in the same way we are, but at the same time it's hard for us to safely share the trail. We need to be careful; we know that IMBA is behind the effort to allow bicycles on the National Scenic Trails which include many miles of wilderness. I know it's nice to play well with others but sometimes we have to fight to keep what is ours. I can only suggest that you be careful. Don't give away the farm trying to be nice, being the nice folks that we are.

Thanks, Jerry

**Something new has been added
to the 2014 Winter Convention...**

A SWAP MEET

It's not too early for spring cleaning!

Do you have saddles, tack, pack equipment, etc that you would like to clear out of your tack room? Why don't you dust them off and bring them with you to the Winter Convention General Membership meeting at Eagle Crest?

Wheel and deal for good stuff you need!

There will be a corner to set things up. Make sure they are clean and marked with a price, name and contact info.

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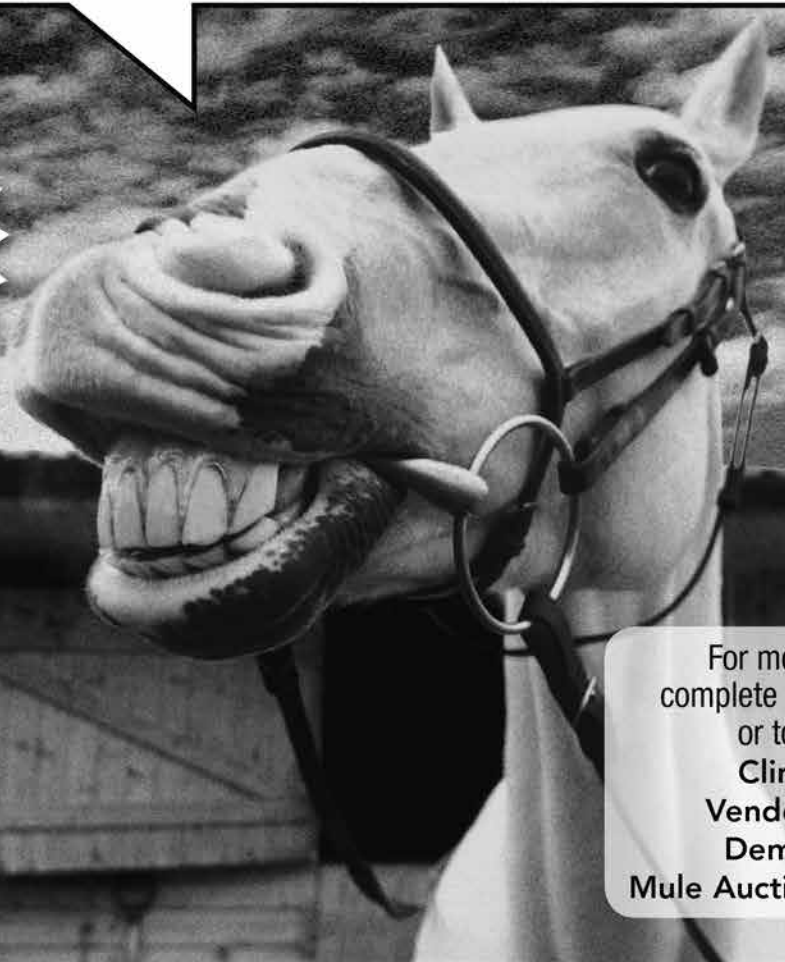
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Saturday—Silent Auction, Live Auction and Mule Auction
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Hazards on the Trail

Submitted by: Phil Hufstader

Have you had an experience of the wheeled kind? The summer of 2013 really turned out to be a nightmare on several trails in the Three Sisters, Mt. Jefferson and Mt. Washington Wilderness for our stock. It all started on the way back out from a weekend of LNT training in the Mt. Jefferson Wilderness. We were on the PCT heading South. We had five riders and a string of six pack mules loaded with camping gear, and had just started down the switch backs five miles above the trail head on the Santiam Pass when we came upon mountain bike tracks. We were at Santiam Lake Trail & PCT crossroads. The question in our minds was were the tracks coming or going? If it was coming, then it was behind us, and we didn't need the

biker high balling down the trail behind us in the switchbacks. If the biker had come in from another trail and was making a loop, then he could be in front of us already and we were probably ok. The riding stock started to get nervous and around the next switch back we saw the biker down below us just getting back on his bike. We rode out to the trail head and we just hit

the parking lot as the van with the bike pulled out. The guy didn't waste any time getting away, and we couldn't get the license plate number.

Three weeks later we were pulling a string of mules in the Three Sisters Wilderness, riding the PCT, stopping along the way cutting logs off the trail. We had made it to the switchbacks leading down into Mesa Creek meadow. We had just crossed the little bridge when up behind us came two mountain bikers hell bent for election. The riding stock bolted to the left as the string of mules broke loose and headed down the trail. The first biker baled off over the side and grabbed his bike and headed for the trail below, the other biker turned his bike around and went back up the trail. We had a mess and I couldn't get my hands on either biker to put a rope on them. It took us a long time to gather up the stock and settle them down, several had cuts and the loads had shifted on a couple of the mules. Right then we changed our approach to riding the PCT trail, we put an outrider way up front and a drag rider on a real old sound mule in the back. Neither of the bikers said anything. They just lit out.



The first weekend of High Cascade deer season three of us were riding the PCT in the burn area of the Mt. Washington when we came upon a group of mountain bikers heading out of the Wilderness. This time we were lucky and met them on the flat. Not a single biker stopped to talk, they just blew by us at a high rate of speed. This time we followed them out yelling at them we were going to turn them in to the Feds. They hit the trail leading down to the church camp and we couldn't keep up with them.

Now Casey and I sat down and had a long talk, and we decide we are own worst enemies. We had been cleaning the trail out all summer and had encountered bike tracks on several of the trails that we had cut open the weeks

previous. We have decided to change our trail opening practice after that weekend encounter - from now on we are going to leave all trees across the trails that our stock can step across easily, especially on any steep portions of the trail. If a bike can't get a head of steam up it will make it safer for the equestrian. The problem is it's against the law for them to

be in the wilderness but that hasn't stopped them, and the FS Wilderness Ranger from the Deschutes National Forest we talked to in the Jefferson didn't see a problem with an occasional biker. The bottom line - it's not safe for the equestrian when you have a bike encounter on steep trails. The biker's head is looking down and they generally are at a high rate of speed when they come upon you. Very few horses or mules are going to stand still when a bike approaches going fast, either from the front or the back of the animal. Generally the animal is going to bolt off the trail and generally it will be down off the side. The end result is the biker is unhurt and you have rider and animal hurt severely. In Oregon and California the bikers have access to 85 % of all trails in the National Trail System outside the wilderness, now they are encroaching into our sacred wilderness. If you can take pictures of the vehicles parked at trail heads and pictures of the bikers if they come past you, turn them in and the life you save might be yours or your stock. If you see tire tracks become very concerned for your party's safety and remember why are we cutting all the logs out of the trail on the steep portions if our animals can step over.

★ ★ STATE RIDE 2014

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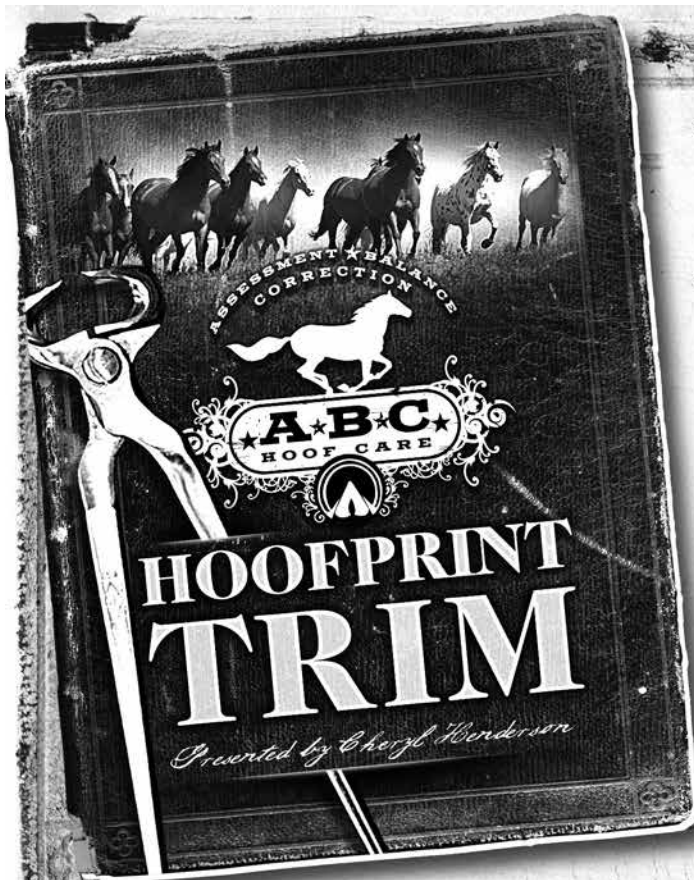
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Submitted by: Jim Kitzhaber



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Leave No Trace Training

Submitted by: Becky and Matt Hope



Phil Hufstader, Casey Hufstader and 9 year old Cody Hufstader work as family to give Leave No Trace training to 16-19 year old youth going into the back country. The young people are brought together by the Northwest Youth Corps. This organization provides opportunities for youth and young adults to learn, grow, and experience success. They do this while working on needed projects throughout the Pacific Northwest. For additional information contact: www.nwyouthcorps.org



Emerald Empire Chapter of Back Country Horsemen works to train youth to be around and work with horses and packing material, and to teach camping skills for trips into the back country of Oregon.



Matt and Becky Hope bring their Norwegian Fjords to meet squirrels, kids, and adults alike.



Again in conjunction with the Northwest Youth Corps, the Emerald Chapter works with multiple organizations to expose over 2000 children from our local area to horses and Leave No Trace principles. Betty Jean Keele and Jean Clancey lead the LNT training as group after group of participants file through their area.



Matt and Dee Dee Holst, Troy Hansey, and CJ Croce show off their mini horses to entice the smallest kids to meet them.

Looking ahead to Leave No Trace 2014

Submitted by: Phil Hufstader

It's time to be thinking about LNT training for the summer of 2014, and we have a great spot this year for the class. The class will be held for the very first time at Fish Lake the end of June. Fish Lake is a historical USFS pack station that has been totally restored right down to the last detail by volunteers, and will be used for educational opportunities that tie back to the historical use of the facilities when it was a thriving pack station.

We are planning to have a two and a half day class followed by a LNT pack in trip as in the past. We have three youth scholarships available right now. All other students will have a cost of \$75/person that will cover all cost for materials and food for the class.

Sign ups will be conducted by calling Jerry Bentz at 1-971-645-3593 to save you a place. If you have a youth that needs or would like to attend the class, get their names in ASAP to qualify for the scholarships. If any individual, or a chapter, would like to sponsor a student, please contact Phil Hufstader 1-541-914-3725.



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Back Country Horsemen Attend NW Regional Meeting of International Mountain Bicycling Association

Submitted by: Becky Hope, Edited by: Jean Clancey

I want to thank local representatives of IMBA for allowing members of local BCH chapters to attend their regional meeting. Local members wanted to go hear what IMBA leadership considered their priorities in our NW regional area. Guess what! No surprises. Their priorities are the same as ours: increasing membership, having fun when recreating, recreating with similar levels of skills, protecting their trails with education, and trail maintenance.

BCHO had two members in attendance on Friday and two members on Saturday. Even though we were given discounted rates for attending the meeting, all our members were invited to lunches and dinners. So thanks to Laura Robson and Kate Beardsley for attending on Friday, and to Melanie Kate-Mason who attended with me on Saturday.

Kate and Laura reported that they were treated very well. They were asked questions after the meeting about getting horse people in California to work better with mountain bicyclists concerning an area where an equestrian endurance ride is held. Mountain bicyclists want increased access to said area. Kate and Laura just stated that not knowing the circumstances, they were unable to answer any questions about this subject. The mountain bicyclists were interested in more joint projects in our area.

There were discussions on Friday during seminars titled "Building and Maintaining Partnerships with Agencies and Organizations," "IMBA's Mapping Initiative," "Insurance Programs," and "Liability and Risk Management". Then after the meeting, which ended after lunch each day, participants did something great. They went riding and enjoyed a party afterward.



On Saturday there were discussions on the topic of club care, including how to improve your organization's capacity by growing partnerships, raising money, building membership and more. Some of the ideas they had are to make sure that they have open rides to make new members comfortable and welcome. They conduct these rides regularly, once a month or once a quarter, and

the rides are led by some of their leadership.

They had a speaker on "Navigating Bike Friendly Land Protection, Forest Planning, and Working with Decision Makers". The talk was presented by IMBA Policy Director Jeremy Fancher. The discussion mostly covered working with land managers to explore other options than protecting lands as wilderness designations. These could include land conservation titles that don't exclude mechanical entities within their boundaries. They did discuss working with land managers to develop cross mountain corridors of travel which did include some wilderness areas. Discussion we heard about the Pacific Crest Trail concerned getting access to use the trail in non-wilderness areas.



Melanie and I came away from the meeting feeling we had been made welcome. We were approached by local leaders to discuss future potential joint projects. There were also two local Forest Service personnel at the meeting who work with recreation and who ride mountain bicycles themselves. The FS personnel were heard reminding the mountain biking folks that they weren't the only ones involved with trails in our local area. They also discussed with us working on getting water to the Harrelson Horse Camp at Waldo Lake.

The most important outcome of the meeting was showing the folks that we do care about our trails and about our interactions with other users on those trails. We hope that with future meetings like this, working with land managers, and continuing our joint trail projects, we can continue to have safe shared use of our recreational trails.

Training for the Back Country

By Gary Sischo, Territorial Riders Director

Territorial Riders Back Country Horsemen of Oregon had only been a chapter of Back Country Horsemen Oregon for a very short time when I proposed a project to build several obstacles at McIver State Park.

The idea happened when I was riding with my friend (Ron Snider) at the park. As we rode the trails there was a small tree across the trail. My friend Ron said, "I wish there were more things on the trails to make it more challenging". The trails are kept clear of all obstructions so the volunteers that maintain the trails can drive the "Club Car" on the trails. We drive the trails to repair the tread, brush removal and any work that needs to be done to maintain their high standard of quality.

McIver Park is only 30 miles from down town Portland, Oregon, making it a very unique riding opportunity so close to an urban area. You can ride year round even with the amount of rain in Oregon's Willamette Valley. Riding the trails will take you through tall majestic firs, Cottonwood trees, Alders, ferns, Oregon Grape, and Vine Maple, making it feel that you are at times deep in the forest. Then there is a large field that has been neglected for many years. The field has been invaded with black berries and Scotch Broom. This is a future project for the volunteers to restore the field to a meadow as close to a natural state as possible.

The chapter voted to fund the project. The word "obstacle" could raise a red flag that there would be some danger involved. So the decision was made to call them "training stations" when we proposed the project to the park management. They thought it was an excellent idea.

The next thing was to decide what the training stations would be. I had been to the Oregon Horse Center in Eugene. The Oregon Horse Center hosts trail trials in their huge indoor arena. The Oregon state championships and the national championship are held there. After seeing their obstacles we selected eight of them for training stations. A double step up and over, step over log, side

pass log, a back through, water crossing, gate, suspension bridge, cavaletties, balance beam and a teeter-totter. We presented the training stations to the park management for their approval. The park management was very receptive to the eight training stations. The next stage was to select where to locate the training stations. My thought was to have them scattered throughout the trail system. With input from park management the training stations were located around the perimeter of the field. This makes it convenient for those who want to just ride through the training stations. Others can just ride the trails at their leisure.

The next step was to select material that would stand up to the weather. Treated lumber is a natural choice

for many of the training stations. Composite material was selected for the suspension bridge decking as it is water proof and for its surface texture. The design of the suspension called for something to anchor the ends of the bridge. The problem of what to use was met with a cement block at each end (2'x2'x6' weighing 3,300 pounds). Finding a log to use for the balance beam was next. The log needed be cut in half and have a wide enough surface for a horse to walk down,

this was a challenge. The log was found with the help of a fellow equestrian. Her neighbor was logging her property, and some of the logs were not lumber quality, there was one large enough for our needs. We purchased the log and had it sawed in half.

The park manager and volunteers selected the sights for the training stations. I feel the locations were well chosen. The response to the training stations has been well received by all of the equestrian users at the park. The training stations were used for a judged trail ride in September. There were 62 riders who rode the judged trail ride, making it a huge success.

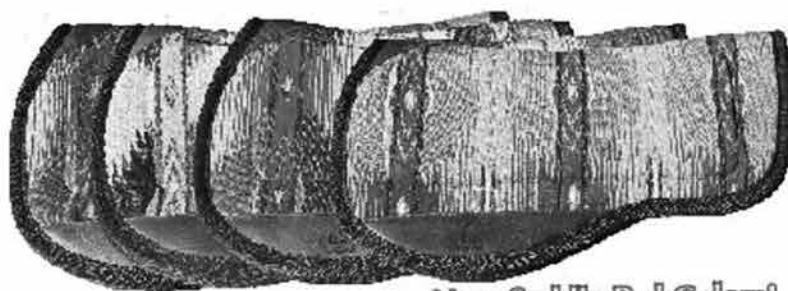
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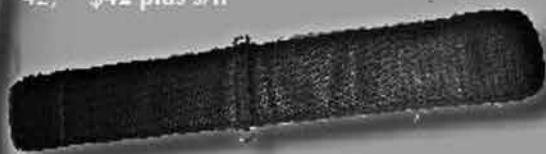
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"On October 6, 2012, my cousin Mickey Williams and I were riding on Tall Peak Trail, in Shady Lakes, Ark. I was on my six year old molly, Pearl, and he was on his john mule Henry. I was riding my Cowboy saddle and on this day we were climbing the mountain. Pearl began to lose her footing in some loose rocks and mud as it had started raining. As I could feel her falling, I heard Jimmy Williams say in my head, "Get off on the high side." I never really thought about that phrase much, as it had been said to me so many times by Jimmy, Mickey and Ken Wilson. It would appear that their guidance took hold though. Pearl went one way and I went the other. Once I was able to roll over after hitting the ground, I watched her bounce and roll off several rocks and trees before I lost sight of her. I was sure we would find her dead, but she ended up bruised, battered, cut and bleeding from a large cut

Jimmy Stewart on Pearl, Jake Williams on Big Mama, Jimmy Williams on Spur and Ken Wilson on Shine all riding Steve's Cowboy, Rancher, and the new Buckaroo saddles in Big Flat, Arkansas



on her head, directly between the ears. Even more amazing was that her saddle was still intact. I believed it would be destroyed when I found it. The best estimate on the fall was between 200 and 250 feet down. This is truly a testament to the quality product you make."

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Back Country Horsemen Mount Up for Wilderness Cleanup

Submitted by: Arden Core

The recognition of Public Lands Day was all that it took for members of the West Cascade Chapter of Back Country Horsemen (Salem) to ride into some remote yet heavily used areas of the Mount Jefferson Wilderness in search of left behind debris. After a summer of hiking, camping, High Cascades Hunt and the first week of general deer season, it was expected to generate at least a horse pack of items to be recycled. The chosen target area was around Duffy and Santiam Lakes where some twenty high use camps are located. What a pleasant surprise it was to find very little material to be removed. The total absence of bottles and cans was unexpected and instead of a pack full of recyclables, only a plastic garbage bag of some burned and discarded aluminum was removed from some fire pits. It appears that the no trace camping policy is working.

The Back Country Horsemen of America are committed to standing with the U.S. Forest Service on no trace camping and other wilderness ethics policy. It falls in line with their national objective of keeping public lands open for equestrian use. More info at www.backcountryhorse.com.



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Why We Need To Share Our

Recreational Trails With Each Other

Submitted by: Becky Hope



Bottom line: we need to share. There are not enough resources to go around. We each need to protect our public lands for the best experience for all of us as well as for the best interest of the resource – or it won't be around to enjoy. We each want and would prefer to recreate in our favorite way. Well, this would be great.

But we need to do this with the other recreationists in mind. Horse folks need to realize that the other users don't like to be pushed around, step in our manure, follow us up a dusty trail. Just as we don't like being told we don't belong, that we tear up the trails, come to bridges we can't cross because they haven't been built strong enough, risk our horses in poor footing, or can't go into an area because it might not be safe for us and the other users due to speed differences.

As stock users, our number one advantage is that we can haul large amounts of cargo, a need that no one else can supply. Basically it is our 'in', our 'ante' to the game. We need to maximize this benefit. We can also maximize the draw our stock has to youth. While we maximize these benefits, we need to minimize our negatives. We do this by LNT education and being courteous when possible. We can try to move the horses off the trail to poop, stop to allow other users ahead of us when possible, or get moving to get the horses way down the trail in a timely manner. Find out if other users you encounter might need help, directions, or aid of some kind. Next time you might need it. Continue to work with land managers and other users to fix trail maintenance problems as they come up.

We basically need to get involved (and work to get other stock users involved) in working with competing user groups by doing joint projects. We must work with land managers so they get to know us and become friendly toward us. Reach out to new horsemen and help make sure they are on the same page and understand the consequences, even if it means helping them train their horses so they are ready to go out on the trails. So ask yourself what you can do to help. Do you need to train your own horse better, give your mount more exposure, find out what you don't know? Once you have this covered, then ask should you be offering to help attend meetings, do LNT training, talk

to other horse people? Get involved with either one of two horse groups that are working hard to protect our ability to use our recreational trails.

We face a big threat to our ability to use our trails safely, and it is going to get worse before it gets better. We have a big user group that has reason to feel they are the only user group out there working on trails on our public lands. Land managers welcome their numbers, their youth, and their energy in an effort to get some work and maintenance done. They are opening their arms to these folks, and, in many instances, are themselves members of this same user group. We have the opportunity to turn this around. It has been done many times all over the United States. We simply need to remind ourselves, our land managers, and this user group that they are not out there all by themselves recreating and keeping the trails open. How can we do this? Well, the mountain bike folks themselves don't want to be the only group out there working on trails. They need our help, and we can work with them. Such cooperative effort not only gets the trail work done, but also puts us out there with them working on joint solutions, reminding the land managers at the same time that we are around and are not going away. Go to their meetings. Go to joint meetings with land managers. Request joint planning meetings. Do joint trainings with them to get them used to horses and horses to bicycles and riders. Basically, get to know your local mountain bike leadership and your public lands recreational staff members and interact with them. Be proactive. Pay attention to trouble areas where conflicts might start happening more often. Again, talk with the leadership and land managers to work out joint solutions.

Is this an incredible amount of effort just to go on a trail ride? You betcha! All the more reason to spread this out among many people, making the work light. A little effort frequently brings in great returns. Please consider getting involved the next time something comes up that needs to be done. Or at least be overly courteous next time you meet another recreationist on the trail. Keep our long term interests in mind as you enjoy the pleasure of a day ride.



Cody's Corner

Submitted by: Phil Hufstader

Hi, my name is Cody and I just turned 10, and if you have been following my adventures, you know I have a lot of fun for my age. The winter of 2013, I lost my riding mule to old age, he was 35 plus in age and finally he just gave up the ghost. Grandpa and Dad looked around to find something to fill in until one of our colts came of age, but in a fit of insanity Grandpa one day said why don't we just put him on one of the filly colts that had just turned three and had been packed light all summer. The reason being, both the filly colt and I had both started to spread our wings, and Grandpa figured it was time to put two strong minds together to either figure out life or not. We started the winter and spring out riding in a round corral and then moved over to the deep sand on the beach. Dad kept laughing each time we rode and kept commenting on who really was in charge. You see Grandpa named this filly "Tequila" for a reason, she couldn't walk a straight line if you paid her. Grandpa had bought the filly off a ranch over East of Lakeview. She had been running with 60 other colts, was about seven month old when we got her, and wilder than a march hare. Well, I rode her all summer in the high country pulling two pack mules and helping Dad and Grandpa open trails and packing in crews. Well, the summer went well clear into hunting season, and I even killed another nice deer – that puts me up to three now. I'm sure glad the ODF & W came out with that mentor program for kids. I've been able to kill some nice bucks. Well as usual, things started to go hen house on me and the filly colt right after hunting season. You see Dad decided to have me join a local pony club so I could get better control on the filly. He figured if I rode her all winter in an arena I would finally get a good rein on her, and maybe she would then stay in the trail instead of wandering back and forth on both sides of the trail like she was drunk. The first two nights went fine, and then come the third night everything fell apart. Grandpa blames the flatland instructor, Dad just shakes his head, and Grandma thinks they're both insane. What happened? Well, I was riding around the arena in a circle along with 35 young ladies all on horseback. You see, I'm the only male in the whole bunch, what a position to be in! Well, we had just made a couple passes around the arena when the arena instructor



yelled for us to bring our stock up to a trot. Most of the other stock came right up to a trot and "Tequila" followed suit. Boy this was great, I had never had her out of a walk since I started breaking her. Then that darn old flatland instructor yelled bring our mounts up to a canter. Well several of the horses started loping around the arena but mine was satisfied in her trot. I made three trips around the arena and the instructor yelled at me to kick her up. So I did. That's when all heck broke loose. Now mind you, Grandpa said it wasn't my fault, I was only following instructions. The minute I sunk my big mexican rowls in her side, she broke ranks to the center, she started bucking hard and had me out of shape the first three jumps. Then she stood up on her front legs and kicked backwards at everything close to her. I regained my seat and sank down against my bucking roles and started raking her from the neck to the saddle skirts. Boy did she go berserk, horses running everywhere, big group at one end all huddled together, loose horse running around the rail and me in the middle on a bronc. Then I heard my Dad's voice above all the commotion yelling to get her head up and turn in a circle. I went to the inside rein and dogged her with an inside spur. Her head came up and she started running in a left hand circle – man this was easy. I ran her around and finally brought her to a stop down at the opposite end of the arena. The main instructor headed my way with fire in her eye but was brought up short by my Dad's voice. He stopped her in her tracks when he told her that I was just following instructions from the arena instructor. Just then some big old cowboy came out of the stands and told the lady to leave that young cowboy alone. He had just proved to the crowd that he could really ride, turns out this was the lead instructor's husband. Grandpa figures that guy was probably cut off, although I didn't see anyone with a knife. When everyone took a break, Dad had me take the colt out and run her around the arena a couple of times. He just suggested that I should probably keep the spurs out of her side once I got her started. Boy she took to the running like she was born to do it, we run barrels and the poles, and we do something flat landers call keyhole. Tequila still can't run a straight line so she does great at pole bending. Well, on the sixth night, I really got cross

threaded with the arena instructor that told me to kick my horse up into a canter. We had just rode into the arena and she came over and told me I would have to unsaddle my filly so she could measure the height of my horse. I looked for my Dad and he came over to see what the problem was. That's when we found out another parent had complained that my horse was too tall. Dad pulled my saddle and they measured and found out that Tequila was one inch below the required height. So now the instructor started to walk away and Dad stopped her and said what was fair for one was fair for everyone, he demanded that all saddles be pulled and all horses be measured. Bingo, the parent that complained, well their horse was two inches too tall. Well, I started to ride again right after break when the same instructor came over and told me that the next class I would have to show up without a back cinch, no breast collar, no britchin', and I would have to take the chain hobbles off the colts neck, and I would have to ride her in a bit. Oh by the way, the rifle and scabard, and holster would also have to come off. She said they were going to have a well-known judge there for the showmanship class. I got real calm and told her I would not strip my mountain saddle for anyone, and turned and rode over to my Dad. The instructor came over and was upset with what I had told her, and started to chew my Dad out....big mistake. Dad told her that I was not there to impress a judge, I was there to get a rein on my horse, and that he would not bring me on the nights they were having "showmanship". Boy did that start a revolt. Several other students withdrew also. Their parents had brought them to learn how to ride, not get involved in showmanship. Now they post a calendar on what is going to happen several weeks in advance, so the parents can make up their mind on which arena they are going to that night. You see, the arena owner across the street holds trail class the same night and it has developed a big following from kids my age. Well things didn't get any better come Christmas time. Pony club night we were all suppose to show up and do games horse back for candy. Things were going great until at the end of the arena a wagon came into the arena pulled by a pony with a Santa Claus standing up in the back swinging a bell above his head like a drunken sailor. The guy just happened to be the boyfriend of the arena instructor. As soon as he hit the center of the arena, all the horses scattered like quail, two little girls hit the dirt, loose horses everywhere. Dad and another guy jumped the fence and caught up with the dude in the Santa suit, the bell was surgically removed and the pony was turned around and escorted out of the arena. Dad started yelling about what ever happened to safety for the kids and horses. All the horses were gathered up and the kids cleaned up and the night called off. So you see, Grandpa says trouble seems to follow me everywhere I go, so enough for now. Grandpa is going to find a medicine man to get rid of any curses that might be following me. So, until next time, I need to be hitting the trail, keep your saddle oiled and your powder dry. - Cody

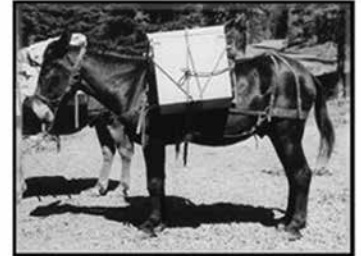


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Mule Musing

Submitted by: Melissa Farrier

I've determined that horse people are a pretty passionate group of folks, whether defending their training beliefs, which saddle conditioner is the best, or picket vs high line. But, the most passionate of all, are the mule owners, the true fanatics. If you start talking to a long-term mule fan about the differences between horses and mules, and how they stack up, halfway through the conversation, maybe not even that far, you realize that this is an argument you are not going to win. How many times have you made introductions and been asked what kind of horse you have, when you get to the person in the room with a mule, are they content to simply say, "I own a mule name of Bogart, he's an OK guy?" Or, do you get to that person, and they throw out their chest, and in a loud and proud voice, say, "I ride a MULE, he's a handsome 34 years young, and answers to, Sir Humphrey Bogart, Beast of Bozeman, best mule in the world, and he'll tell you himself gosh golly by gum because he is just that smart!" That's another thing I've noticed, like a bad haircut, those mules live in infamy a long time, if not in real life. Their useful lifespan far surpasses a regular horse; I blame that on the donkey side of the family. If you thought bad ponies lived forever, just try to outlive your naughty mule. You frequently see mules in their 20's and 30's still striding out and climbing the mountains, long after a horse has broken down and gone into retirement. Mule legends are even longer lived, an entire night around the campfire can be spent hearing the tales of mules at their best, and worst; mule owners never run out of material. Horse people are no slouch at their tall horse tales, but I think the mule skinnners have cornered the market on interesting wrecks, and embellished tales of daring 'do.

So far I've seen the admiration for mules reflected in the strength of the mule market. If you search any horses for sale site, and look for a mule, say, between 5-20, with great training, who's a solid and reliable, steady, trail mount, you'll be lucky to find one under \$5000, and that's cheap. Now, not many folks I know of are paying that much for a good 'ol trail horse, unless it's got some fancy designer cowboy trainer's name attached to it. The average trail rider has spent less than \$2000 for their trail horse, and some are even more frugal than that. What is it about mules that makes them so special? I think it's the culture, as much as the animals themselves. Mule folks are larger than life, rarely timid, and typically outspoken if not a wee bit eccentric. God bless them all.

I was gifted a 50+lb sack of back issues of Western Mule, and Mules n' More, by our chapter mule cheerleader, Molly Schmeltzer, and boy, was I in for an education about mule life and the people who love them. It took me a couple of months, but I finally worked through them all, from 2008 on up to a few from 2012. I ascertained that mule people are as fiercely competitive in their aim to breed a perfect animal, and in showing, as horse people are. I have never picked up a breed magazine and seen monthly updates about a member battling something larger than life. You might see a mention about so and so coming off their horse, or having a bad wreck, and that's it, no follow up you wonder how they're



doing. In one of the mule mags, I learned about Dozer, the son of family with a big presence in the mule and jackstock world. With the progression of articles about Dozer, from the first issue I read, until the last article about him, where he'd lost his fight with a rare form of cancer, you really felt the support from the mule and donkey community, with everyone pulling for him.

Recently on a chapter work party, our esteemed president, Tim Lagasse, arrived to find his horse had miraculously pulled a front shoe off on the way over. Well Tim, no getting out of the work that easy. Jerry Schmeltzer just happened to have a spare mule that day, usually he packs them all up, but decided not to this time, lucky for Tim! You could see the trepidation on Tim's face as he manned up to ride Bo, a fuzzy, lovable spotted mule of Appaloosa descent. Deep breath, foot in the stirrup, swing up and....whew, nothing happened, no different than climbing on a horse, Bo just stood there like a rock. At several times throughout our ride that day, Tim mentioned how great it was just sit back and relax, and enjoy the ride. I think it was one of his best work party rides ever. Perhaps his horse will show up shoeless more often?

Now I don't want you to get the wrong idea, this is not just a horse person dogging on those crazy mule owners. While I do not own a mule, I have a perfectly fine, solid, 6 year old mustang mare, I refer to as my short eared mule...this is not to say, I will never own a mule. I have spent a lot of time riding with the mules and have really come to appreciate them. Their stoic, if not sometimes martyred expressions, you just can read that they think they got the short end of the stick in life, they really should just be royally pampered pets, not workers. I've had fleeting thoughts of breeding my mare, to have a little muley of my own, but then I look at her not very sweet, stubborn expression and think, er, maybe not. So, you'll be seeing me at the Klamath Falls Pack Clinic, and the Hell's Canyon Mule Days this year comparing all kinds of mules in person, from weanlings to adult, talking with owners and breeders, and maybe coming home with one in the trailer. You see, it is true, the mule owners won me over, their love and passion for the quirky long ears brought me to understand their side of the argument over who is better. I too want to join the ranks of the loud and proud mule owners.

National Director's Report

Submitted by: Phil Hufstader

2013 and January 2014 were very busy times and a lot was accomplished by the two National Directors from Oregon. Phil Hufstader filled an elected position on the BCHA Executive Committee (8 person committee) and was instrumental in the following projects completed in the calendar year 2013:

- Moving the BCHA forward with a full time contract for a Wilderness and Recreation Advisor, using mostly outside funding rather than monies from the general fund, for the 2014 budget year, thus saving membership dues money for other opportunities to move BCHA ahead into the future.
- The hiring of a new majorly qualified BCHA Executive Director for the next three calendar years at zero cost to the BCHA organization, with his primary focus to be our fundraiser. This will be based on the approval of the NB members in April at the National Board meeting.
- Instrumental in moving BCHA forward with the Mountain Bike Resolution.
- Instrumental in moving High Desert Trail Riders' excellent Resolution to not support any Wilderness expansion in Klamath County on to our Political Representatives from Oregon.
- On the task force instrumental in asking for quality control of the past BCHA Executive Director that resulted in accepting his resignation.

Outside of the Executive Committee, Casey and Phil represented Oregon on several small BCHA futuring committees that will move BCHA on with a new business plan. Casey will be the National Spokesman on a new upcoming three minute video that will be on the new BCHA website by May of 2014, quite an honor to have Casey picked from the 13,000 BCHA members to represent the organization. Phil is one of two directors chosen to spur on the task of finishing the original law suit with the USFS on Trail Classification, and will dove tail that work into the new GAO study just recently published. Both Oregon National Directors are part of a six person team to come up with a new BCHA National "brand" that was accepted by the BCHA Executive Committee and will start being used immediately for the BCHA image change.



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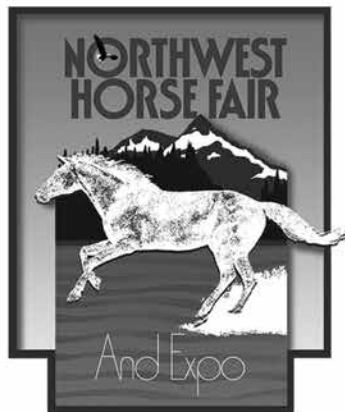
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