



# The Highline

## An Update on the Effort to Keep Oregon and Washington Trails Open

Submitted by: Dan Applebaker

At the BCHA Annual Meeting in Sacramento during the last weekend in April of this year, the Backcountry Horsemen of Oregon (BCHO) were given an opportunity to present an effort they, along with the Backcountry Horsemen of Washington, have been working on for some time to keep wilderness trails open and available for use in their states. Although considerably more complicated, put simply it is asking the Forest Service to use their own procedures to reevaluate the methods and primitive equipment they have historically used to maintain wilderness trails they can no longer maintain by such means.

In other words, our two state BCH organizations are asking the Forest Service not to let these trails fall into such disrepair because of their insistence on using traditional primitive tools which have become too slow, inefficient and expensive to maintain them in a usable condition. We are convinced that with 63% of our trails receiving no maintenance whatsoever and only 25% being maintained to standard, that thousands of miles of trails will be lost to recreational horsemen. This situation also means that the Forest Service has failed in its legally mandated requirement to administer wilderness areas “for the use and enjoyment of the American people in such a manner as will leave them unimpaired for future use as wilderness”, and “Except as otherwise provided in this Act, wilderness areas shall be devoted to the public purposes of recreation, scenic, scientific, educational, conservation, and historic use.” (The

Wilderness Act, September 3, 1964, Sec. 2(b) and Sec. 4(b). How can the mandate to provide for the use and enjoyment of the American people, and to leave wilderness unimpaired for future use as wilderness, be possible if historic access trails are closed due to lack of maintenance? How can the public purposes for which wilderness are devoted be continued when access is not available on thousands of miles of trails into thousands of acres wilderness?

We ask if continuing to require the use of traditional primitive equipment thereby expanding the trail maintenance deficit and denying access to thousands of acres of wilderness is more important than complying with the intent of the Act. The Wilderness Act does allow the use of motorized tools for trail maintenance if that use satisfies the test of, “as necessary to meet minimum requirements for the administration of the area for the purposes of this Act”. We see in our trips to the wilderness areas that the required use of primitive tools is not even coming close to meeting the minimum requirements for the administration of these areas for the purposes of this Act – Not even close.

So what are the Back Country Horsemen of Oregon and Washington doing about it?

With the help of the BCH organizations of Oregon and Washington, Dave Price (a member of both BCH State organizations) filed a request for a Minimum Requirements Assessment (MRA) on the Wenaha River Trail in the Wenaha/Tucannon Wilderness



### What's Inside

Cover Story (Continued)	3
President's Letter	4
Thank Goodness Hoppy Wasn't Here	7
Consider Yellowstone for Your Next Trip	8
National Director's Report	9
Badger Creek Wilderness	10
Big Meadows Horse Camp Clean Up	11
When Work is Fun	14
Memoirs of a Novice Back Country Rider	16
2016 Winter Convention Info	18
EEOCHO & Mt. Washington Wilderness	19
East Cascades Chapter Update	21
The Comfort Zone	24
Cody's Corner	26

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Please feel free to contact our officers or staff if you need any assistance or have a question pertaining to BCHO.

## **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.

# **Come to a meeting and make a difference...**

### **Columbia Gorge Chapter**

Meets: The 3rd Wednesday of the month at the Hood River Saddle Club, 4384 Belmont Dr Hood River OR 97031

Meeting starts at 7:00 p.m. Please confirm meeting with contact.

Contact: Joy Senger at columbiagorge@bcho.org

### **East Cascades Chapter**

Meets: The 2nd Monday of every month at the Black Bear Diner, 1465 NE 3rd St., Bend OR meeting starts at 6:30 p.m.

Contact: Buck Davis, eastcascades@bcho.com

### **Emerald Empire Chapter**

Meets: the 2nd Wednesday of each month at the Utility District building, 33733 Seavey Lp Road, Eugene, OR 97405 at 7:00 p.m.

Contact: Emily Elias, emeraldempire@bcho.org

### **High Desert Trail Riders Chapter**

Meets: The 2nd Tuesday of each month at More Than Mongolian Grill, 4470 S 6th St, Klamath Falls at 7:00 p.m.

Contact: Jim Icenbice, jimicenbice@retiredhorseman@gmail.com

### **North Umpqua Chapter**

Meets: The 3rd Thursday of the month at the Douglas County Courthouse, 1020 Oakley Road, Roseburg, OR 97471 in Room #317 at 7:00 p.m.

Contact: Janet Miller, northumpqua@bcho.org

### **Sourdough Chapter**

Meets: The third Saturday of the month at the Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, 150 Lewis Court, Cave Junction.

6:00 p.m. in the winter and at 7:00 p.m. in the summer

Contact: Dick Butler, sourdough@bcho.org

### **Steens Chapter**

Meets: The 3rd Wednesday of every month at El Toreo Restaurant, 239 N Broadway, Burns, OR Please confirm meeting with contact.

Contact: Leon Pielstick leonandsusan@centurytel.net

### **West Cascades Chapter**

Meets: The 1st Wednesday of each month at Elmer's Restaurant, 3950 Market Street NE, Salem, OR. Dinner time is at 6:00 p.m. meeting at 7:00 p.m.

Contact: Jennifer Paulson, westcascades-pres@bcho.org

### **Territorial Riders Chapter**

Meets: The 2nd Tuesday of each month at the Beaver Creek Fire Department, 22310 S Beaver Creek Rd. Beaver Creek, Or. 97004 at 7:00 p.m.

Contact: Tim Lagasse, territorialriders@bcho.org

### **Wilderness Packer Chapter**

Meets: Held by conference call every other month

Contact: Mat Wooley, Wctimberfalling@aol.com

## Cover Story Continued...

on the Umatilla National Forest straddling the border between Oregon and Washington. The legislative process establishing the Wenaha/Tucannon Wilderness specifically mentions that motorized equipment can be considered "where appropriate and/or necessary" for trail maintenance. The MRA is the procedure developed by the Arthur Carhart Wilderness Training Center for the Forest Service to reevaluate the methods and primitive equipment they have historically used to maintain wilderness trails.

Dave used much of the methodology contained in the "Guide for Requesting an MRA" developed by the BCH of Oregon and available for BCH organizations from the BCH of Oregon. Nearly two dozen copies of these "Guides" were distributed at this year's National Meeting in Sacramento.

The Forest Service agreed to complete an MRA on the Wenaha River Trail as requested and that process is underway. While waiting for the Agency to decide how and when to do the MRA (which is somewhat of cumbersome and time consuming project, and perhaps made intentionally so) a huge fire burned most of the Wenaha/Tucannon Wilderness. Now the need for the MRA is even more necessary to restore the trail systems from the damage of the fire,

An MRA was also requested for the Duckabush Trail on the Olympic National Forest in Washington but no response from the Agency has been received as yet.

Our next step was a meeting with the Regional Forester for the Pacific Northwest Region 6. That meeting was held in Portland at the Region 6 Office with Regional Forester Jim Pena and his staff. Three representatives from BCH of Oregon and Washington attended.

Several positive results came from that meeting. Perhaps the most positive was the opportunity to meet face-to-face with the wilderness/recreation staff people in the Regional Office and to see/feel firsthand the respect that the Forest Service at this level has for the Back Country Horsemen.

One of our primary concerns was answered when Mr. Pena stated that there is no unwritten or unspoken Regional predetermination not to conduct or not to support Ranger District or National Forest level MRAs for determining minimum tool requirements within designated wilderness. In fact, he supports the MRA process to determine the minimum tool requirement(s) for site specific trails, conditions or events such as severe wind storms and/or fire damage where or when initial assessment indicates that other than minimum tools may be more efficient, more economical or safer. The FS Manual and Handbook direction and Arthur Carhart Wilderness Institute guidelines are to be followed within the Region for the conduct of site specific MRA.

It was also noted that BCH should not have to request that MRAs be conducted. Ranger Districts and National Forests within the Region should be conducting MRAs whenever there are site specific, on-the-ground conditions that merit such consideration. The MRA should be included in annual planning and assessment of conditions - if merited.

It was also suggested that BCH should meet annually - or as necessary - with Ranger Districts and National Forests to discuss

trail conditions and how to effectively partner to get work done the most efficiently, economically and safely. Mr. Pena cited the Trails and Wilderness Working Group (TWWG), on the Naches Ranger District of the Okanogan Wenatchee National Forest, as such a group that has been successful through the years.

Following the formal meeting, the Deputy Regional Forester and several of the staff members were queried regarding participation in VIP rides or pack trips and the BCH of Washington annual Public Lands Day event. Without exception all agreed that Regional participation would be beneficial to all parties. BCH of Oregon plans to host a VIP pack trip in the Eagle Cap Wilderness and BCH of Washington will send a formal invitation for Public Lands Day. Also in the post meeting discussion, it was agreed that BCH of Oregon and Washington should request follow-up meetings with the Regional Office.

So where do we go from here?

You may find some of this repetitious but it is absolutely necessary that we continue to constantly keep bringing our issues in front of the Forest Service at all levels. We need to meet routinely at the District and Forest levels to discuss priorities; to request they consider all appropriate methods and tools (this is a good time to bring up the BCH of Oregon Power Saw/Crosscut Saw Efficiency Study), and to prioritize what projects are important to horsemen.

Always in the forefront of our discussions is the need to keep wilderness access available to meet the needs of the public and the mandates of the Wilderness Act. Our ammunition is The General Accountability Office Report (GAO-13-618) of June 27th, 2013 defining the huge trail maintenance deficit and its continued rapid annual increase. In Fiscal Year 2012, the Forest Service had only performed maintenance on 37% of its 158,000 mile trail system, only 25% maintained to agency standard, and there has been no report showing any improvement. We also have the added conditions of trail damage and lots of down trees as a result of the many fires we experienced this summer. We see this as the biggest threat to BCH "Keeping the Trails Open for All" that has occurred since the organization was started in 1973.

We, and the Agency, need to recognize that Congress is not going to fix this problem they have put us in with lots of dollars funded to trails. We, and the Agency, have to do the best we can with what we have, and that means reevaluating methods and minimum tools.

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# President's Letter

Submitted by: Jerry Bentz, President of BCHO

Happy fall. I hope everyone had a great summer. Most of us, fearing a dry summer like we had, got our work projects done early this year. I hope that we have enough of a winter to kill off some of the bees and get some water back in the lakes. The dry weather also created one of the worst fire years we have seen in a long time. Despite the warm dry weather, we had a great State Ride at Farm Well in the Silver Lake area. Becky Wolf once again put together a good team of folks, and they did a great job. Those of you who have never been to a state ride are missing out. It's great to get to know each other around the camp fire, and yes, we were allowed to have a camp fire.

BCHO has been busy this year on the political front. At the fall board meeting 2013 held in Veneta, Dan Applebaker presented BCHO with a resolution he had written and was passed by the High Desert Trail Riders asking that the Forest Service follow their own wilderness rules and consider MRA's (minimum requirement analysis) in the wilderness. BCHO's board passed a motion to endorse the resolution. Now let me try to explain what all that means in simple terms. An MRA is a process that the Forest Service can use to evaluate what would be the best way for a wilderness trail to be maintained. That analysis allows for the agency to look at many things including using mechanized tools in the wilderness. Most of you right now are racing to the idea of chain saw use in the wilderness. While chain saw use can be part of the equation, it's just part of what the Forest Service is allowed to consider. BCHO realized that all we had done was complain that the Forest Service would not consider MRA's when the lights came on that no one in our organization had ever gone through the steps to file one. Dave Price, a retired Forest Service employee and member of BCHO and BCHW wanted to file an MRA on a trail in the Wenaha – Tucannon Wilderness in the Umatilla National Forest. Last March, we told Dave to go ahead and file the MRA. While all of this was going on Phil Hufstader was trying to get BCHO and BCHW a meeting with the Region 6 Forest supervisor. Phil wrote probably six different emails to different folks in the regional office only to find out that those folks had all transferred to other regions. About this same time Dan Applebaker and myself were asked to put on a presentation for the BCHA National Board Meeting about Dan's resolution, how to write an MRA and where we were in the process. Dan, Betty and myself jumped in a car and drove to Sacramento and put on the presentation. We got great response especially from all of the delegates from the western states. At the meeting in Sacramento we expressed our frustration with trying to get a meeting with the Regional Forester. Somebody at the meeting came up with the contact information for Jim Pena, the new Regional Forester for region 6. Tyrgve Culp, President of BCHW, got a meeting set up with Mr. Pena and his top staff to meet with Trygve and myself. The meeting was primarily to talk about the MRA process as well as a few other pressing issues. Dan Applebaker was then asked to attend as our expert on MRA's. The day of our meeting I got a letter from Jim Penna stating that the Forest Service would go through the MRA process that Dave Price had requested on the Wenaha – Tucannon Wilderness. The letter made the meeting a lot easier and considerable more cordial than it could have been had Mr. Penna decided to turn down our request for the MRA. Now the bad news. As most of you know, this was a horrible fire year. The Grizzly Bear Complex fire in NE Oregon

and SE Washington burned up most of the Wenaha – Tucannon. At this time, as far as we know the MRA process has not been completed. The Forest Service is busy trying to evaluate what they have left and what trails there are to maintain. Historically the agency has been a little more willing to open up wilderness trails after a catastrophic event with power equipment. By the time you are reading this we may have a few more answers. We plan to file several more MRA's in the near future in an attempt to get a few more wilderness trails open. We may be looking for volunteers in the future to work on these trails if we get a go ahead. Many good things have come out of all of the work we have done going through this process. First is the fact that we now have direct lines of communication with the regional office. I have the direct phone numbers and emails for all of the top staff folks in the regional office. We are also planning on taking several of the key regional folks on a pack trip next summer in an attempt to strengthen our relationship with those folks as well as put them on the working end of a cross cut saw. Probably one of the best things that has come out of all of this is that BCHO and BCHW are working together as a team. By working together all of a sudden we represent a larger user group and the agencies are very willing to listen to us. Our relationship with Washington will allow us to share ideas and present a united front as public lands controversies and crises continue to arise.

The other big public lands issue is the movement for the states to take control of Federal Lands. While at first blush this may sound like a good idea, it's not. One of the principles of Back Country Horsemen is to ensure that public lands remain open to recreational equestrian saddle and pack stock use. The general fear across the country is that if the states take over control of the public lands that a great deal of that access will be jeopardized. There is also a concern that the states would sell off a lot of the public lands. BCHA wrote and passed a resolution at the National Board Meeting opposing any and all public land transfers. BCHO's board passed a motion at the May board meeting supporting that resolution. I am currently working on a letter of support that we are planning on sending to our congressional delegation as well as other user groups. There are a lot of public lands issues out there right now. All of the user groups as well as the environmental community are fighting for the same public lands. We need to stay vigilant and work to keep our public lands accessible for equestrian use. I want to thank all of the members who have worked so hard to keep these issues in front of the public agencies.

Lastly, I want to remind everyone that Winter Convention is right around the corner. The dates this year are March 4<sup>th</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup>. The Saturday meeting and dinner will be at the fairgrounds in Prineville. Phil has negotiated a group rate for rooms at the Stafford Inn. We have several good speakers lined up including the fellow that is in charge of all of the trails in Region 6. We have a caterer that is going to put on a great barbecued dinner for Saturday night. I am sure we will have a great time. I hope you can all plan on attending. There will be more information coming out about how you can preregister to attend.

If anyone has any concerns or ideas that you want talked about please don't hesitate to email or call myself or anyone on the state board. Thanks, Jerry



## **RESOLUTION TO OPPOSE THE TRANSFER OR SALE OF FEDERAL PUBLIC LANDS MANAGED BY THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENTS OF INTERIOR AND AGRICULTURE**

**WHEREAS**, the mission of the Back Country Horsemen of America is to work to ensure public lands remain open to recreational equestrian saddle and pack stock use, and

**WHEREAS**, the public lands of this nation managed by the United States Departments of Interior and Agriculture are a part of our national treasure and heritage, and

**WHEREAS**, these public lands are held in perpetuity to benefit future generations of Americans because of the renewable resources and recreational value, and

**WHEREAS**, we support the sustainable management of resources on federal lands in cooperation with other stakeholders, and

**WHEREAS**, the transfer or sale of these lands will remove large acreages from the nations federal public lands system, fragment existing land areas, compromise public access, and set a precedent for the privatization of all public land, and

**WHEREAS**, specifically the disposal of these federal public lands will decrease the opportunity for all recreational use of these lands,

**WHEREAS**, no federal lands should be removed or transferred except for lands considered under the Federal Land Transaction Reconciliation Act (FLTRA, PL 106-248),

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Back Country Horsemen of America to go on record in opposition of any plan, action or legislation for the disposal, sale, or transfer of public lands managed by the United States Departments of Interior and Agriculture (except under FLTRA), and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that this resolution be made known to the President of the United States, congressional delegations and elected officials from each state, and agency officials of the Departments of the Interior and Agriculture.

*Approved by the National Board of Directors of Back Country Horsemen of America on Saturday April 25, 2015.*

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# Thank Goodness Hoppy Wasn't Here!

Submitted by: Terry Sullivan, Sourdough BCHO

I enjoy trail riding on my 14 year old molly mule, Martha, as most people do in BCHO. But my stocky-quarter-horse-type mule enjoys being an endurance mule — as in going fast. When you do endurance riding, your equine is a true partner in this sport, as you spend lots of time together. We only do the Limited Distance rides, 25-30 milers, usually finishing mid-pack in around 3 ½ hours to 5 hours. There is a 30 minute vet check-hold; mid-way through the ride to make sure that the equine is fit enough to finish the remaining miles.

Using your endurance mule as a trail riding mule when you go horse (mule) camping has some drawbacks to it. First of all, mule camping is best when shared with a good friend, but that friend has to have a mule that likes to cover ground at a good pace over moderate to challenging ground and trotting at a good pace in the flat boring parts and usually doing this in six to eight hours for at least five days in a row. It's even better in having someone who considers, or says it is, that weaving through trees at a 5 mph trot is fun is a great friend to have. I'm pretty lucky that BCHO member, Linda Hansen, is always able to show up with a mule that can keep up with Martha.



In June, we went camping at Quinn Meadows Horse Camp for a week. Linda rode her young mule, Hoppy. Hoppy provided lots of interesting events, including that he might have endurance mule potential.....

When we camped at Harrelson Horse Camp this September, Linda showed up with a real nice calm 14 year old molly mule, Cass, who had no problem keeping up with Martha the whole time.

One of my biggest fears in riding Martha is ground hornets. When Martha gets stung by hornets, she gives one hard buck and then bolts. Martha is an endurance mule in very fit condition who likes to go fast — not good when bolting!! I also ride in an endurance saddle, no horn — not good when bolting!! So I plan my horse camping around bee season, as in late September and at 6,000 ft altitude. Harrelson should have been safe, but it wasn't! When Martha did her pile driving buck I stayed on, but Martha didn't bolt and waited for me to tell her where to run, despite being stung repeatedly. I was a bit slow in giving directions because I was so surprised that we weren't galloping wildly through the trees!!

Cass didn't buck or bolt, just stomped and shook her head. Our first words, Linda's and mine, after all the excitement ended was THANK GOODNESS HOPPY WASN'T HERE!!



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# Consider Yellowstone For Your Next Trip

Submitted by: Becky Hope, Emerald Empire BCHO

My husband and I are just getting back from a two week tour of Montana. We had a delightful time in the Bob Marshall area, but we got out few days earlier than we planned on and started figuring on where else we could see. Well, turns out we were only 250 miles from Yellowstone. We don't recommend going to Yellowstone without some planning. We did go into Yellowstone back country for a delightful two day one night stay. Talk about big open country, lots of feed, wildlife and no people after leaving the trail head behind. We traveled 15 miles over 9100 ft elevation, and never saw another person. Camps are well thought out, kept over ½ mile apart, big open meadows with plenty of graze, limited as to numbers nearby. Big open country with views for miles when smoke isn't in the way (smoke from the John Day, Strawberry wilderness fires came in the second day). We saw elk, mountain goats and buffalo, lots of bear sign but no actual bears.



There are some tricks to doing this that work out for us. Main trick is you need a back country pass from National Park Service (NPS). You can either pay little extra money and get a guaranteed location and pass ahead of time or pay only \$10.00 per night from one of the many visitors' centers within 48 hours of heading out. Next thing you need to do is after traveling one to two full days with your horses you will need a place outside of the park to keep your horse overnight. We were blessed with a very nice lady from the chamber of commerce who put up our horses for us in her corrals (no, not her business). We have since found local horse businesses at two entrances (West Yellowstone) and Mammoth Hot Springs that will accommodate your horses. We would have needed more time to find them then we had. Yes, you need a negative coggins test to get into the park, and if packing hay in, you need a certified weed-seed-free hay.

Now, how do you know ahead to time where to go? Turns out there are maps made by National Geographic. They have the camps and trail head locations on them. They list where there can be stock and how many animals can be in each camp. Some can have up to 25 head of stock. You apply for your permit at the visitor center or beforehand and they will let you know if anybody else signed up for those spots.

We had no problems finding rodeo grounds to stay at coming and going. It didn't seem to matter if they knew ahead of time or not. You should make sure that they are not having their annual rodeo or getting ready for it.

Yes, we are planning on going back as soon as possible.

For additional questions please contact Matt or Becky Hope [6fhope@gmail.com](mailto:6fhope@gmail.com)





# National Directors' Report

Submitted by: Phil Hufstader, High Country Wilderness Packers BCHO

## Oregon Level

Both National Directors for Oregon have been busy this summer. Casey is the BCHA co-chair for the Rocky Mt. Elk Foundation Las Vegas meeting. At that meeting, Casey will be putting on Packing seminars, and manning the BCHA booth along with four other states. Note: All expenses will be covered by Casey.

This summer the new BCHA Vice-Chairman contacted the Oregon National Directors and asked if he came out from North Carolina, if we could show him trails in our wilderness that haven't been opened in years, and discuss the mountain bike issue in the wilderness. As the future BCHA chair in two years, it was top priority for Casey and I to take time and put together a ten day pack trip in four wildernesses to give Tom an overall look at the problems facing BCHO volunteers. The trip took place in the middle of August and covered most of the wilderness areas along the PCT in the middle section of the state. Tom helped open feeder trails off the PCT and was amazed at the six foot diameter trees that we encountered across the trails that needed to be removed. And as luck would have it, he was riding in the back of the pack string on the PCT when a mountain biker came roaring down the trail and slid to a stop within twenty yards of him. Tom was able to keep control, but found out firsthand about the mountain bike issue in the wilderness.

USFS finalized the National Saw Policy that was patterned off BCHO & BCHW Region 6 Saw Policy and sent it out to all the states for review. Both Oregon National Directors sat in on the advisory team chaired by Randy Rasmussen to send in Oregon's response to the draft policy document. As usual the USFS put a spin on the issuing of the certification portions of the policy that could become cumbersome to the volunteer process. BCHA response was directed with an official position paper at that portion only; the rest of the policy was mostly how we have been working the past four years with Region 6.

Both ND have been charged by the BCHO President Jerry Bentz to help him put together the 2016 Winter Convention. Phil has negotiated a contract for the caterer and the motel to help hold the cost down to an acceptable level, but still provide the quality of service the members have come to expect.

Casey and Jerry have acquired an excellent list of guest speakers to provide for one of the best winter conventions so far.

## National Level

BCHA acting Executive Director, Jim McGarvey, has started a major fund raising campaign that will be kicked off January of 2016. It will be called the \$5/month Club. The money raised by The \$5/month Club will be used to fund the expenses of an Executive Director for three years, while other funds are obtained to keep the position going after that. After the goal is reached, the club will stop.

Public Lands, Randy Rasmussen:

\* BCHA Forest Trails Bill: Still in committee and several new members of Congress and Senators are co-sponsoring the bill. Congress is in recess so it will be awhile before the bill gets traction again. Note: 54 co-sponsors in the House; half a dozen in Senate Ag Committee. Bill is HR.845/S1110 National Forest System Trails Stewardship Act.


\* Yosemite Wilderness plan coming soon.

\* Olympic National Park wilderness draft plan coming out soon in 2016.

\* When Congress comes back into session, brace for the big push to get rid of federal lands. Big oil and gas money linked to support of this process. Several states' Congressman have step forward pushing to sell off public lands to foreign countries.

\* HR 167 Wildfire Disaster Funding Act. It's a bill to give the USFS a fund to fight fires rather than using its recreation budget or its district operating funds when a wildfire breaks out.

\* Back East several National Parks are requiring the volunteers to wear riding helmets when on work parties, then require a hard hat when they are doing the projects. This has caused several BCHA groups to pull back and cancel projects. It seems a dual requirement that has caused a major delay in work projects for 2015 trail season.



**Would you like to be the  
BCHO Historian?**

**If so please contact  
Jerry Bentz at  
president@bcho.org**

# Badger Creek Wilderness

Submitted by: Corrine Davis, Columbia Gorge BCH

The Columbia Gorge Chapter has a long history of working on trails in the Badger Creek Wilderness. For those not familiar with Badger Creek, it is located east of Mt. Hood in the northern Cascades and received wilderness designation in 1984. It comprises 29,057 acres of steep terrain, hosting ecosystems ranging from subalpine to mixed oak woodlands. The most popular trail, Badger Creek National Recreation Trail, follows the creek 11 miles from Bonnie Crossing (horse camping available) upstream to Badger Lake. Access to the canyon is limited, making the area quite remote. For the past 20 years or so, our chapter has partnered with the US Forest Service to maintain some portion of the roughly 55 miles of trails available to hikers and equestrians.

The mild winter last season made for early access and fewer downed trees on the trails. Although some of our crews were in the wilderness as early as February, our main annual work party was organized in the first week of June when a team of eight members working over four days cleared the main Badger Creek Trail all the way to the lake. This in itself is a big achievement, but additionally over the season, crews comprising 10 of our chapter members and two PCTA sawyers (thank you Kim and Pam Owen) cleared all or part of an additional five trails, leading into or skirting the main canyon, for a total of 25 miles of wilderness trail opened, ditches pulled and tread repaired. Jim and Sue Forsman also conducted our biennial saw certification training on the border of the wilderness where we used class time to clear logs from Three Mile Trail.

Columbia Gorge Chapter members have volunteered 433 hours (labor and travel) in the Badger Creek Wilderness this summer. Our Forest Service partners, led by Jim Thornton, representing the Barlow & Hood River Ranger Districts, have cleared another 20+ miles of trails in the wilderness. There will be some awesome loop trails to ride and vistas to enjoy in "The Badger" this autumn.



# Big Meadows Horse Camp Clean Up and Trail Clearing Saga for 2015

Submitted by: Jennifer Paulson, West Cascades BCHO

Each year West Cascade goes in and does maintenance to Big Meadows Horse Camp.

This year we had our Trail Boss, Arden Corey and some other chapter members go in May for pre-clean and trail work. Then in June our Chapter came and worked.

In camp Jim Kitzhaber spread gravel and worked on manure bins with a tractor. Then he and Del Orchard moved barriers back on some of the camp sites so that they could accommodate more trailers.

The trail washed out on way to Duffy Lake. Liz Mulkey, Arden Corey, and Norm Kaser moved rocks all day. It was really bad, like a creek bed. The Trail to Duffy Lake is done.

A creek crossing on Big Meadows loop trail was changed to a safer place, old crossing had washed out.

Trail to Duffy Lake is done. The bridge was repaired, and many loads of gravel were hauled in by mules.

We had a news reporter and cameraman come and shoot pictures of trail clearing, gravel hauling and what kind of work BCHO does. This went in Statesmen Journal and was put in the BCHA newsletter with photos. It was also posted all over Facebook.

The Turpentine trail needed cleared to Wilderness, then chapter members cleared their way over a ridge and they stopped. It looked like a scene from Mt. St. Helens eruptions. 100's of downed trees and it was hot, no shade, and they were done. So Turpentine was put on hold.



Mules, each carrying 200 pounds of gravel 1.2 miles one way to bridge and trail repair. Several trips were done for this trail and bridge repair. And it was hot, hot, hot.



The new Snow Shelter trail is clear. Our new yellow diamonds are now installed to mark this trail if rode counter clockwise. Next year we will post in clockwise directions. This new trail is 9.2 miles and leaves Big Meadows behind campsite 7.

*Snow Shelter at top of mountain. This is part of new trail. There is a toilet behind shelter and a hitching rack for horses. Very hot that day, no shade, no horse water.*



Meanwhile back in camp...

The mules are still hauling gravel to fix mud hole by water tank.



The water tank was cleaned and area has gravel hauled by mules.



The area around and on the stock ramp and handicap mounting area was cleaned up by Marlene Orchard.



Saturday we were all tired and hot, needed showers but we had a BBQ and the district rangers came and gave their thanks for our hard work.

We still had work left after that weekend. The trail boss and some other WCBCHO members went up to horse camp a few more times in the sizzling heat and completed some work on manure bins, put up signage on manure bin, signage for new trail and built ridge poles over a set of corrals for a shelter.

Those guys are "Die Hards." Thank you soooo much !!!!!!!



The dry forest with high fire hazard has put a stop to our continued trail clearing. Maybe if it rains we will be back up there and work on the trails again and check on our Big Meadows Horse Camp.



The end?? At least for a bit. I know some of those guys will sneak up there and clear some trail as soon as we have some rain. They have an addiction to trail clearing.



## The Big Idea

P	H	H	E	W	T	R	A	I	L
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# When Work is Fun!

Submitted by: Kelly Behr, High Desert Trail Riders BCHO

We packed fish again for the US Forest Service, and hauled crews into the woods with their tools ~

Tied down bridge decking into Mountain Lakes, in some very usually loads on our mules ~

Volunteered our time and animals for kids, going through bereavement at Camp Evergreen ~

A place where tall pines stand allowing the children, to understand life and its greater scheme ~

Drove the cook truck up to Hyatt Lake and cooked for the one's on the Pacific Crest Trail ~

Cut, cleared and sawed over forty miles of recreation trail, finishing with some hilarious tales ~

But this is what we do and this is what we love, our mission is for the you's and me's ~

The grandkids that are already here and some that are yet to be....

## 1) Rebuilt one bridge, re-set the second bridge and cleared the third bridge heading in Mountain Lakes Wilderness, our chapter bought all the material and supplies for the bridge

For this project Dan & Betty Applebaker brought their mules, a very seasoned set of mules along with all the years of packing that Dan & Betty have done. I experienced firsthand just how good Dan & Betty are with figuring out how to "stuff it in, tie it down and get it loaded" on a trip into Yellowstone this year. Mountain Lakes Wilderness was established in 1964 as part of the National Wilderness Preservation System, this area is the only Wilderness with a perfectly square boundary. Mountain Lakes was one of the three original Primitive areas created in 1930 in the Washington-Oregon region. When you first head in on the trail system into this Wilderness, you used to cross over three bridges. Probably 4x15 or somewhere close to that, this year we actually rebuilt the first bridge from the ground up, re-set the existing second bridge and made a gravel crossing on the third. It was a lot of fun to work with our chapter along with help from our US Forest Service Trails Manager Anthony and Amanda Felton, our lovely wilderness ranger. High Desert Trail Riders BCH purchased the material for this project and also provided most of the labor.



## 2) Cleared the Rye Spur trail in the Sky Lakes wilderness

The Cascade Canal is a canal located in Klamath and Jackson counties; it delivers water from Fourmile Lake in the Klamath River watershed over the Cascade Divide to Fish Lake in the Rogue River watershed. It diverts approximately 5,462 acre feet annually into Fish Lake. Because of water shortages in the nearby Rogue Valley, the Fish Lake Water Company was established in 1898 needed to find a way to aid irrigation in the region. The Cascade Canal begins at Fourmile Lake, located 5,748 feet above sea level and travels southeast, around a ridge named Rye Spur sometimes known as Aye Spur. At the edge of Rye Spur, the canal curves right, forming a half-circle of about 0.5 miles radius, then travels northwest until it meets Ursa Creek. Our chapter has cleared this trail for 25+ years.

## 3) Packed fish into Blue Lake in the Gearhart Wilderness

Oh our fish pack....the funnest of all activities "I think". In coordination with the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife it was proposed in 1985 that the High Desert Trail Riders would use their pack stock and transport the fingerlings into Blue Lake in the Gearhart Wilderness which was established in 1943. So after the first year of doing this, the chapter made the decision to make it an annual project in assisting the ODF&W. This year we used about 18 chapter members, grandkids and kids, 6 riding stock, 6 pack stock animals and whoever else wished to ride along. The fingerlings and oxygen were provided by ODF&W. They brings the healthy little fish and place them in thick plastic bags along with some oxygen, then we lift those loads into the panniers on top of ice and head up the trail where a couple other ODF helpers, along with chapter members unload the panniers. The fingerlings are then acclimated into the water before they are let loose. This year was very successful with approximately 4500 fish making to the lake alive!



## 4) Horseback Rode with the Recreation Operations with the Fremont Winema National Forest, Anthony Benedetti...on a "recon" ride to assess the trails in the Sky Lakes Wilderness

Dan & Betty provided a mule for Anthony to ride along with Jim Icenbice our chapter president. The intent was to take a tour horseback to assess the trails. It turned into about a 12 mile trail clearing tour, but it allowed our Trails Manager Anthony to cover more ground and assess how much more the trail crew additionally needed to clear.

### **5) Rode with Amanda, the Wilderness Ranger with the US Forest Service into Mountain Lakes Wilderness to assess the lack of signage**

Once again thanks to the Applebakers who provided a mule for Amanda to ride along with Ron & Brenda Stewart they toured the trails via horseback to see what condition the trail signage was in. A tour of about 17 miles, as all of you know, sometimes those arrows are pointing South...

### **6) Cleared the Hanan trail**

This historic trail accesses the Hanan Roadless Area and the headwaters of the Sycan River, a designated National Wild and Scenic River. This trail was a part of the earliest transportation route into the upper Sycan River country, pioneered by John Hanan, an early settler of the Summer Lake valley. Archaeological evidence suggests that portions of this trail follow a prehistoric seasonal migration route used by the American Indians to travel from the Chewaucan Basin to Sycan Marsh. Our chapter has cleared this trail for 5 years. We divide our crew into two work parties, each starting at each end of trail with the hopes of meeting in the middle...and "we did this year", this trail is 8 miles long.

### **7) Removed downed logs on the NRT160**

This was our chapter progressive ride which started at Farmwells Campground outside of Silverlake, OR and ended at Silvercreek Marsh Campground. It actually is part of the NRT160, this trail, also known as the Southern Oregon Intertie Trail, traverses the Fremont National Forest from north to south for 134 miles. Much of it is along the interface between the high desert of the northwestern Great Basin and the Cascade Mountains. Numerous mountain peaks and distant panoramas are found along the edge of the route. The trail also travels for 30 miles along the edge of a 2000' high fault block on Winter Rim. Open Ponderosa Pine forests and outstanding scenery are found throughout this trail. We were all glad Dick Strohkirch fast walking mule ride out first with the saw....



### **8) Camp Evergreen**

Camp Evergreen is a youth grief camp which strives to provide a safe, healthy, supportive and accepting atmosphere for youth to share experiences and feelings associated with the death of a loved one. They service approximately 50 children, ages 8 through 16, each year. Our Chapter believes in this camp and its involvement in our community, so we volunteered and handled 8 head of animals: 6 horses, 2 mules and 2 mini horses for the kids. By the end of the day every child was able to take a short ride with our chapter members by their side.

### **9) Packed trail clearing crew into Mountain Lakes Wilderness & Sky Lakes Wilderness**

With our relationship with our Trails Manager Anthony, we were able to assist them in some of their trail clearing projects this year. The first was with Dick Strohkirch and Dave Van Scoyoc, they volunteered their time and animals to pack all the personal gear into Como Lake located in the Mountain Lakes Wilderness. This allowed the crew to only have to pack their trail clearing gear, easier on them and good practice for our chapters stock. Second trip was with Jim Icenbice, Joani Kelly and Karen Reeves, they also provided their time and animals to pack gear from Nanny Creek Trailhead into the Snow Lakes Basin. The trail clearing crew consisted of Amanda Felton, our Wilderness Ranger, and Phil McGovern. I first met Phil years ago hiking into Mountain Lakes Wilderness....he was working on the bridge. Yes, the ones we replaced this year. This crew was then retrieved by Karen Reeves and Jim Collins after they spent five days clearing trail up into and onto the Pacific Crest Trail. Belonging to a Back Country Chapter is not only fun but you can use your livestock to assist and keep our trails open.

### **10) Lona Phipps and the Trails Skills College**

Ms. Lona volunteered to cook for the Skills College again this year. This is a premier trail maintenance and educational program up and down the Pacific Crest Trail. Fundamental skills of trail design and maintenance are taught with the classes free and open to new and experienced volunteers and outdoor professionals. Trail Skills Colleges are taught by professionals and volunteer leaders who have extensive experience in the fields of recreational construction, trail maintenance, and leadership. Our chapter cook truck manned by Lona, cooked and fed those attending the classes.

### **11) And last but not least attending all the meetings that it takes to put on our Wilderness Skills & Packing Clinic**

Our chapter annually puts together a fundraiser, an educational skills and packing clinic. We have numerous demonstrations with the underlying common ground regarding education for the public on what we do and who we are. The clinic is one of the biggest in the West showcasing the best educators regarding, outdoor skills, GPS, vet clinics, dutch oven cooking the list goes on and on, this is held beside 90 vendors who come with everything from packing equipment to popcorn. A clinic where we attempt to have something for everyone, or to bring the younger crowd into our "Kids' Corral" where lessons are taught regarding animals, camping, Leave No Trace Principles, campfire songs and our famous "Sunday Stick Pony Parade." So mark your calendar for next year May 6 - 8, 2016...



# Memoirs of a Novice Back Country Rider

Submitted by: Liz Mulkey, West Cascades BCHO

## Day One DAY of TERROR

The first hiker we met on the trail up the gorge wall out of Cascade Locks greeted us and said "Wow, I've never seen horses on this trail." He smashed himself and his dog against the wall to let our horses pass by him on the narrow trail. My nerves jumped a little as I thought "Norm, what have you gotten me into?!" My nerves jumped and jittered with every switch back turn we made as we climbed and scrambled ever higher up the 10 mile trail. The trail was very steep and relentlessly ascending. The horses were soaked with sweat in no time and it was only 9:00 in the morning. After 30 minutes the trail became so narrow, the drop-off side so dramatic that I began to sweat a little too. But when I started to see the trail crumble in places I suddenly realized that this was exactly the kind of trail that Andi (my daughter) had fallen off five years ago with her horse. I was terrified. When Cracker's back hoof slipped off the trail I almost fainted. I jumped off on the up-hill side and yelled to Norm "I'm off. I'm walking." I walked for about five minutes but it was too difficult and ended up having to mount up again, hoping that Cracker wouldn't step the wrong direction and slide off the trail.

The views were fabulous from the beginning. As we made each switch back turn we had a fresh new beautiful view of the Columbia River. At first I was enjoying the sights but slightly intimidated by the height. As the trail narrowed I would only glance at the view afraid that I would somehow cause my horse to veer off the path from my shift in body pressures. I wanted to take pictures but was too afraid to stop my horse on the teeny-tiny trail. Actually after a certain altitude I couldn't handle looking at the views for more than a split second since it completely took my breath away. We got to the top of the wall and then had a fabulous view of the Cascades to the south. Next task was to ascend and descend for hours in order to get to Mt. Hood.

At the end of the 12 hour day of riding the first thing I did after getting off my horse was....throw up. It was dark when we arrived to where we would make camp at Lolo Pass. We couldn't see very well so we just threw our sleeping gear down on a car pull-out area off a gravel forest road. It was surrounded by bushes which you could tell had been used as a party and potty area. Nevertheless we slept great under the stars and kept plenty warm. The next morning I went down the trail to pee and laughed when I realized that 10 yards from where we had camped and tied our horses in the brush there was a beautiful clean campsite with a picnic table, fire ring and plenty of cleared area to tie horses.

## Day 2 Terror on Valium

Before starting this four day trip from the Gorge to Detroit I had asked Arden if there were any bad parts on the trail. He said "It's not too bad." The only part that had made him a little nervous was the sand trails around Timberline. I knew that the second day would involve crossing over Mt. Hood. Sooo... with Arden's wise assessment in mind I decided to take valium (since I had barely survived the first day which was supposedly "not too bad".) The sand trails are extremely narrow (of course) trails with a sand wall on the up-hill side and a sand wall on the down-hill side. The sand of course is unstable but the path through



the walls is amazingly stable. However Norm did go off the trail with his horse briefly but was able to scramble back up. I was surprisingly calm on this trail (thank you, Valium) This trail had a lot of crevices that the horses had to observe and step over. They did great. At some points there were boulders and brush on the down-hill side. Cracker is an eager eater and gets a little frantic when she sees grass, so my biggest fear on this trail was that she would dive for any little patch of grass that she saw and throw us over the side into the abyss below.

We crossed a few rivers that day. It was always a challenge to find the perfect spot to cross that had easy access on both sides of the river and no big obstacles in the river. The horses did great and really appreciated the water break. They were thirsty and tired and the cold water revitalized them.

When we arrived at Timberline I was thrilled. I was riding my horse down the slopes that I ski in the winter-time. We rode under the chairlifts and behind the lodge. We stopped to let the horses graze on a meadow overlooking one of the black diamond ski canyons to the east.

After 10 hours of riding we camped this night at Barlow Pass meeting up with Alan, Tim and Karen who had started at the other end of this journey at Triangle Lake. This campground had an outhouse! Such a luxury!

We all compared notes about views and trail hazards. Norm advised them on how to find the trail after crossing the rivers by looking for the piles of rocks along the banks. I shared my feelings of terror about the gorge trail with them. I'm sure they appreciated that! They warned us about the bees. Not long after this warning Tim's horse who was tied to a tree got attacked by a swarm. Tim tried to un-tie him but got stung and bailed out. Our trail Hero, Norm, saved the day by jumping in and getting the horse loose. Actually Norm sprung into heroic action several times on the trip. He made a lovely make-shift tent for sleeping in that night since we had gotten a little wet the night before. Tim's horse pawed the ground all night and pulled a shoe half-way off. Norm removed and replaced the shoe after creative problem-solving and effort due to lack of ferrier tools.



### Day 3 Terror of the Bees

So the third day started with beautiful wide trails through the forests south of Mt. Hood. It would have been perfect except that there was a bees' nest in the ground every 45 minutes or so. Arden had once told me that "the first horse wakes up the bees, the second horse pisses off the bees and the third horse gets stung". Well, of course, that was Cracker and me. Some horses spin, some horses hop and some swish their tails when they get stung. Cracker bucks. Each time we ran into bees she bucked harder. I had had enough by the 4th bucking event when she threw an extra little side-ways curve into the buck that sent the saddle (and me) sliding sideways off her back. I was able to pull it back over with my body weight but I decided then that I was not going to be the third horse anymore. I told Norm that I would take the lead now. Without spurs it was a lot of work to keep Cracker moving ahead a good pace since she doesn't appreciate being the lead horse. But we didn't get stung anymore. That night we camped at Joe Graham corral. It had corrals for the horses so for the first night of our trip they didn't have to stand tied to a tree all night. We had a campsite with a picnic table. There were bathrooms and water. Such luxuries!

Alan, Tim and Karen had warned us about downed trees on the trail. One extra large tree in particular had sent them cross-country in search of a way around for quite a long time. We had already run across a few downed trees blocking our trail. With each obstacle Norm had expertly found ways to move the tree, break the tree or go over or around them. It always amazed me how he could sum up the possibilities while I was absolutely certain that we would have to just give up, turn around right there and go back down the trail we had just covered for two or three days. He pushed trees, pulled trees, broke trees and when all else failed convinced me to jump or skirt around them in the most precarious positions. One log was too high to jump over so Norm had the horses climb on one downed tree in order to jump over the other. Hold breath, pray, close eyes and hang on. It always worked out. (Thank, God.)

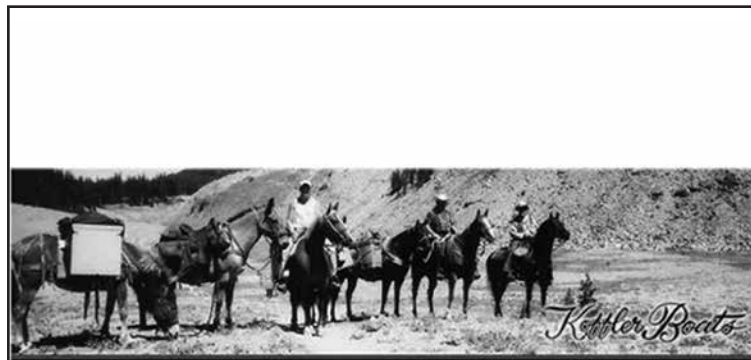
### Day 4 Nirvana

Our last day was supposed to be a little shorter, only 24 miles instead of 29. It was a beautiful relaxing ride on wide trails through forests with some beautiful views. We rode around Timothy Lake which was fabulous. Great weather/ no bees/ no death defying trails/ We rode across Warm Springs Reservation. I always feel spiritual at the Reservation. I don't know why, it just feels calm and quiet. By the end of this day I was getting pretty anxious to finish. The pains that I had been successfully ignoring thus far started to get louder. I was ready to be done. Time slows down when you are waiting for something and boy did it slow down in the last couple hours of this ride. Adding to that feeling was the unfortunate tragedy of getting lost in the last 5 miles. The signs were not showing the way to the horse camp at Triangle Lake, our final destination. To make it more confusing there was an intersection with four different choices. Norm's map did not show enough detail to give us the trail we needed. After going down and then back up three different trails we finally found the correct trail....and the sign. It was on a low rock about horse knee level. It had been broken off the post and someone had set it on the low rock trying to help.

It felt good to get off. It felt good to load the horses telling them we were going home now. I think they understood. They were

happy to get in the trailer. Now all we had to do was get to Detroit and head home. Ugh! Not until we had travelled over washboard, gravel, winding, downhill, miserable roads for an hour. The Triangle Lake road is grueling with a horse trailer. But we made it! I can hardly wait to go again!

Next year will be Willamette Pass to Crater Lake. That can't be too bad, can it?



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# 2016 Winter Convention

## March 4 -6 , 2016

It's time to start thinking about the 2016 winter convention.

The meeting is scheduled for March 4, 5, 6 - 2016. The meeting will be held at the Prineville Fairgrounds, and a bank of rooms has been set aside at the Stafford Inn located on the east end of town.

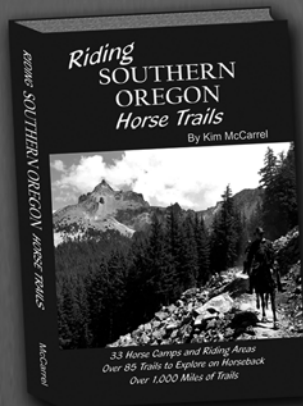
Friday will be for a BCHO board meeting that will start at 12:00 until 5:00 PM at a meeting room in the Stafford Inn. Everyone welcome to this meeting.

Saturday will be the general board meeting starting at 9:00 AM at the fairgrounds.

Sunday will have training for the new officers.

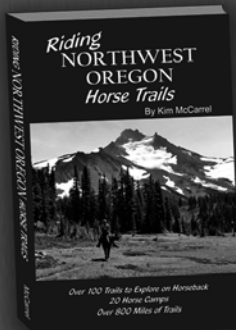


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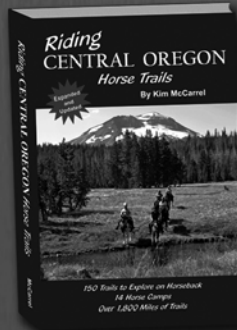


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# EEBCHO and the Mt. Washington Wilderness

Submitted by: Jean Clancey, Emerald Empire BCHO

For several years, members of Eugene BCHO have cleared trails in the Mt. Washington Wilderness. It has become a kind of chapter commitment to the McKenzie Ranger District that we will keep these trails open. Not an easy task!

The Wilderness has sustained several serious burns in recent years. Trails through the burn areas are all but disappearing. It's been hard going, clawing our way through logs burned into "cement" and branches that form grabby "hooks". And we always seem to reach the charred area during the hottest part of the day. These are not heavy-use trails and so are not on the radar for Forest Service maintenance. If someone doesn't take on the work, these legacy trails will be lost.

Why bother? Well, we've talked about that and have concluded there are a number of good reasons to keep these trails open. First, the trailhead at Robinson Lake is one of only a few access points into the Mt. Washington Wilderness and, by extension, the Three Sisters Wilderness, from the west side of the Cascades. Just 1-1/2 hours from Eugene we can be in the high country.

Plus, there is a kind of uniqueness about the area that is fascinating. Mt. Washington was set aside by the Chief of the Forest as a wild area in February, 1957. With the signing of the Wilderness Act in 1964, it was one of the original units in Oregon to be included in the National Wilderness Preservation System. So it has been preserved for a long time. As a consequence, there are groves of huge old growth Douglas and noble fir, an understory of vine maple, lava flows, and lots of interesting geological features.

And the trails are very old. They are old routes from the Santiam Pass side to the Old McKenzie Pass side, from the west side of the Cascades to Central Oregon. An impressive ride!

If you are interested in exploring the area, here are some suggestions. We start at the Robinson Lake trailhead off Highway 126. There is turn around and ample parking for 6 rigs or so. No water or amenities, but plenty of places to high line if you stay the night. Stock water is available 1/4 mile in at Robinson Lake. We start out on trail #3508. This trail accesses the Benson Trail #3502 to Tenas and Benson Lakes, and to the top of Scott Mountain for panoramic views of the Three Sisters.

But the trail that has intrigued our chapter, the Hand Lake Trail #3513, starts at the same Robinson Lake trailhead, then follows the #3508 about 2.7 miles to the Hand Lake cutoff. (Summer of 2014 our members installed a trail sign at this junction in commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the Wilderness Act.) The Hand Lake trail wanders another six miles through old growth groves, through the burn, and on to Hand Lake. This small lake

sits on a bed of volcanic rock; it's flush with water in spring and dries up by fall. Surrounding the lake is a huge meadow which provides broad views of Mt. Washington to the north, Three Sisters to the south, and Belknap and Little Belknap peaks to the east. A historic shelter sits next to the lake. A destination worth all the effort!

Hand Lake is just a mile in from Highway 242. If you were to pack-in overnight at the meadow, you could then ride on to Scott Lake campground, cross the highway, and access the Obsidian Trail to North Sister and the PCT. Or, continue on past Scott Lake Campground to trail #3502, the Benson Trail, and loop back to the Robinson Lake trailhead.

Our chapter had planned to do just that the first weekend of October this year. We were set to pack in to Hand Lake meadow to overnight, then ride on around the Benson Trail back to our starting point

at Robinson. We thought of the trip as a way of celebrating the years of work we have done in the area. We were disappointed to find, however, that in this drought year Hand Lake was bone dry. Plenty of graze, but no water whatsoever. Maybe next year!

Note. There is very little water available along the trail: One small lake about half way to Hand Lake on #3513, and a small lake about 3 miles in on Trail #3508. Also, call the McKenzie Ranger District to find out if trails are open for your route.

All-in-all, our chapter enjoys working in the Mt. Washington Wilderness. We intend to continue doing the work to keep it open -- for our own enjoyment, and for posterity.



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# East Cascades Chapter Update

Submitted by: Linda Hanson, East Cascades BCHO

The East Cascades Chapter of BCH has been busy. We still meet the 2nd Monday of the month at Black Bear Diner in Bend, but our numbers are growing and we have some young people!

In April several of us camped and cleared trails out of Silver Creek Marsh Campground. Several logs, large and small, were cleared with chain saws, and we had a great dinner afterward with several contributing, including dutch oven cobbler.

Scott Essex can ride, use a chain saw and make cobbler in the Dutch oven.



In May Duane and Ruth Miller led a ride from their place above Prineville, where they moved a short time ago. We are happy to have them as new members. They moved from Scio and Lacombe, OR. Her little mule is just the best!

In May I camped at Quinn Meadows with Terri Sullivan, BCH member from SW Oregon. Her endurance mule, Martha, kept us on the trail 10-15 miles a day, for about five days. The trails out of this horse camp, run by Hoodoo with fees and a camp host, vary from dry and rocky through forest with lots of dead trees both on the ground and standing, to lush creek side trails.



There is a tunnel under the road about a mile from Quinn Meadows horse camp that can be challenging. I am happy to report it was a non issue for us, and no cars passed overhead as we rode through!

The ride to Green Lakes is along a river, and past beautiful lupine.

The trip to Green Lakes leads to a beautiful overlook. It is a well used trail, dogs can be off leash all but a couple months of the year, and we met photographers trying to catch just the right light for their shot of the river.

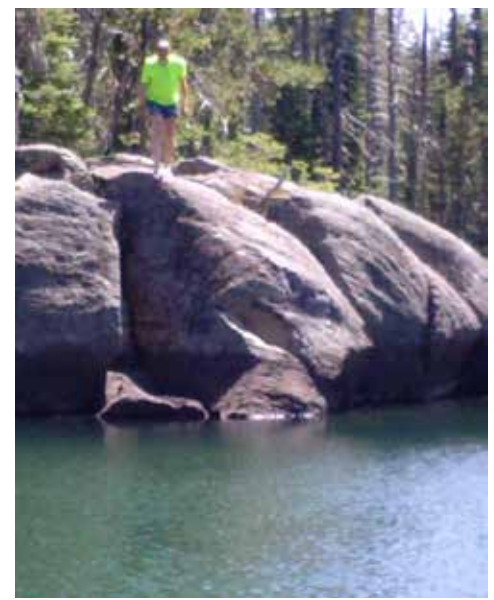


Later in June several of us packed equipment into the Black Canyon Wilderness area of the Ochoco Mountains for Heart of Oregon. They are a group that takes young people, 18 - 24 years, and pays them a stipend to do trail work, and offers some repayment of student loans as well. We had a brief session with the kids about packing and let them interact with the animals.

We carried their cook stove, coolers, food and other items that may otherwise have been left behind, or carried in back backs. It was a hot day and a steep down hill ride. The team of volunteers went on ahead of us and we met them at the bottom of the canyon where they would set up a base camp to work from for a week. Remember that little mule of Ruth's that I said was so awesome? It led the whole trip.



The young people loaded the packs and setting up their tents for the week. Some were from as far away as PA, most from Oregon, but it was a good chance to introduce them to what BCH does, and let them know we too, work on the trails as volunteers. We encountered one tight spot on the way down, where a log on a hillside had been "cleared" but the top half slid down a little, into the trail. While a man could walk by, a loaded pack animal really had to slowly negotiate the log jutting into the trail. We explained how much clearance a loaded animal needed, and they cleared the problem log before a second group of BCH members came in a week later to pack them out! It was a very good experience for everyone. And....about a week after packing the team out, the firefighters used the very same trail and were glad to have it cleared.



In July, Lane and Linda Thomas led a work party on the Many Lakes trail south of Bend, and one of our new young members, Megan Trager, joined us! We had lots of help and could “leap frog” from log to log to cut them out.

Lane and Linda, volunteers extraordinaire, led us to a lake for our lunch stop and half of us swam in the pleasant water!



Another pack opportunity arose when I attended the cross cut saw recertification class in the spring. and met a man who makes signs for the Forest Service, Dave Alward. He asked about the possibility of BCH packing the wooden signs into the forest and caching them for the volunteers to mount. He came to speak at our meetings twice about this project. Two groups of members then packed signs into Linton Meadows and also into Mink Lake. On the first trip to Linton meadows they were slowed down by blow downs on the PCT and on the James Creek trail. The next day when the actual work party hiked in, a crew from the Willamette National forest was clearing both trails. Bad timing for the BCH packers, but good timing for the work crew.

On the trip to Mink lake they ran into fellow member Pat Marquis at the trail head. He said his wife, Rhonda, was coming that direction and we might meet her. She has been riding the PCT solo much of the summer. The group did meet Rhonda and fortunately in a spot where she was able to move off the trail enough to let the pack stock through. Had they met five minutes earlier they would have come face to face on the only really steep section of the trail that leaves no opportunity to get around each other. It worked out great for everyone, and it was fun to see Rhonda on her trip and also to visit with Pat.

Several of the group had been into Mink lake before but not for quite awhile. They were disappointed to see the Mink Lake shelter in such a state of disrepair. It is falling down and would not provide much if any shelter for hikers who might need it. Members had been there when it was in good shape and didn't think that it would be allowed to deteriorate as it has. Seems like a shame for this bit of Central Oregon history to be let go.

Our chapter also rode throughout the night during this summer's Cascade Lake Relay race. Members paired up and rode beside an assigned 2-3 mile section of road while relay runners and their support vehicles drove by. This is such a popular race that contestants are chosen by lottery. From their website: “Congratulations to the 3,000 runners and walkers who completed the 8th Annual Cascade Lakes Relay, making CLR the largest running event in Central Oregon! With much gratitude, we thank our 385 volunteers, 50 staff and 250 team captains who made the 2015 event a huge success! Our 2015 events are on track to raise over \$60,000 for local non-profits and community groups in the towns and cities we run through!” East Cascades BCH is happy to be part of the event.

# The Comfort Zone

Submitted by: Melissa Farrier, Territorial Riders BCHO

Little known fact about me....I am not entirely comfortable riding a horse, never have been a get on and ride anything daredevil, not even in my resilient youth. I'm not speaking of physical discomfort, the cranky back/knee/hip refrain that plagues most horsemen, but it's mental. It surprises people who know me, as I ride often, but it's not so much that I enjoy riding, I love being around horses, but I only ride so frequently to keep my horse in shape for trail work. I have turfed often enough to know that I've been lucky to have not sustained any truly awful injuries, and I am sure that is part of my worry, that dark little voice telling me that when the big one does happen, am I going to be able to suck it up and get back on again? Quiet you, who were with me on that ride where I memorably, for you, fell off my practically unmoving horse, that didn't classify as a "the big one" to me, I didn't even sustain a bruise. Why, would I ride if I feel I need a valium with a whiskey chaser just to get on, or feel on the verge of a panic attack putting my foot in the stirrup? Because I really enjoy being away from humanity, working on the trails, that's why. There is nothing more satisfying than whacking the hell out of some underbrush, or digging out trail tread, it's an awesome way to work any repressed aggression out of your system. Sure, you say, I can do that hiking, I don't need a horse to work on trails, many people do volunteer work on foot. Little known fact number 2....I am a serious klutz. Ask Tim about that time I tripped walking towards him at the Port Blakely tree property, with loppers in my hands, and was mere inches away from making Sara the wife of a one-eyed guy, good thing he's quicker than he looks. Maybe he won't remember it...but I did, oy vey! I am far safer sitting on a squirrely horse, than I am walking on my own two feet on a steep side hill, therefore, I ride. Odds are better I won't trip over the side of a mountain that way. Put a sharp tool in hands, and we're really upping the ante on the injury sweepstakes.

Other occasions have arisen, where I hear folks speaking about their personal comfort zones, not physical, again, but the mental limitations. Volunteering alone makes a really, terribly shy person have to step out of their comfort zone, by raising their hand and calling attention to themselves. Or, to walk up to a stranger at a meeting and say, "I have a question." For some, offering to learn how to operate a chainsaw, or pull on a crosscut can take more chutzpah than they've ever shown when it comes to manual labor, but they want to help, so they take a deep breath and say, "Ok". When at a work party, try to keep in mind, some folks are comfortable with taking charge, taking initiative, others are not. It may seem like that group over there, is just doodling about, gabbing, and not working, maybe they're just waiting for someone else to give them a job because they aren't comfortable with just grabbing a tool and getting to work. Or, it's their first work party and they have no idea what to do, keep an eye on that person, you can really make the work fun for them, or you can leave them driving home with the thought they feel like they just wasted their day, and didn't feel like they really helped any. Help them be more comfortable with learning what to do, and they can pass it on to the next work party greenie they encounter. When on a trail work party, and it seems like you have two worker bees and 5 along for a ride, perhaps the 5 just aren't sure what their role is, or what else they can do. I've heard bits of conversation at meetings, where one person is questioning another on what

we do at a work party, and saying they've never been on one, they don't know...yet neither feels comfortable asking. Maybe they're afraid to ask since it seems like 2/3 of the people in the room are veterans of many work parties, and they don't want to stand out as the daft greenies. Asking for a person to step into a leadership type role can be pretty daunting as well, who doesn't ever have that feeling that they aren't good enough for the job? Liars. Everyone has that feeling, of a little self-doubt once in a while. But, to be brave enough to step out of your comfort zone and put yourself on a ballot, to be the person making decisions and leading the group is entirely different, than being the person who thinks they can do the job better...but doesn't offer to do it.

My point, and I really do have one, is that in BCHO, we are all volunteers, some raise a hand and pitch in where needed, others take the plunge and get elected to help govern our various chapters and the state organization. Now I am the most unpolitical person there is, I rarely have an opinion of one candidate or another, but I know I am a minority, just read Facebook sometime, opinions fly faster than tornado debris. When getting ramped up over something one of your BCH officials has done, or said, that may not be in keeping with what you'd like to see said, or done, ask yourself if you are mad enough to say next year, "I'm going to accept the nomination of President, so I can make some changes", or will you instead say "Nah, I don't have time to be going to meetings, I'm too busy, not interested." I know I've had to smack myself when I start thinking, "Geez all these members and so few are pitching in to help." It can be frustrating, but, by keeping in mind everyone is working at, or a maybe a little above their comfort level, it will be easier to have patience and understanding of where they are coming from. We all joined the organization because we believe in what BCHA stands for, or where they are heading in the future, so, despite our various levels of comfort, we have that in common. Keep in mind it takes some big steps out of your comfort zone to put yourself in front of the dart board, so when you're tossing the darts, think if you have the guts to be standing on the other side. "Oh, you do? Well then, will you please accept the nomination of....."

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# Cody's Corner

Submitted by: Phil Hufstader,  
High Country Wilderness Packers BCHO

Hi, my name is Cody and I just turned 11 & 7/8ths, and if you have been following my adventures, you know I have a lot of fun for my age. Well this year has been a rough one for our family as far as health issues. I broke my arm, Grandma H had brain surgery, Grandpa H broke his leg. I wasn't there when Grandpa broke his leg, but dad said that Grandpa had entered a one-leg butt-kicking contest with himself and lost. Now, I have tried to figure that out and finally had to ask him how he lost when he was the only one in the contest. Grandpa pleaded the fifth, which again I don't understand, because he doesn't drink. Go figure.

Summer started out early with us starting hay season the middle of May, Grandpa had a cast on his leg but still went to the fields everyday running equipment. I was promoted to head hay raker and got a raise, but Grandpa said he was going broke just feeding me. I used the money I made from haying at the end of summer and bought me a used Dodge diesel four wheel drive pickup, Grandpa H said it will make a fine chick magnet if I get all the dents out.

Once hay season was over, Dad and I hit the mountains packing every weekend, Grandpa had to stay home to take care of Grandma, and make money to pay off my hay feed bill. I guess me getting taller by 6 inches in six months was a big cause of concern on how much I started eating. I don't see a problem myself!

The first of August we got a call from Tom Thomas from North Carolina, he's the new BCHA Vice-Chairman. Tom was coming out to Wyoming fishing for a couple of weeks and said he could drop by Oregon on the way out (Hint- Hint). Dad and Grandpa put together a ten day pack trip into four different wilderness areas, as a show me trip for Tom to see the conditions of the trails in Oregon's wilderness. Tom flew into Eugene and we loaded him up and headed for the Three Sisters Wilderness. We packed nine head and saddled up our riding stock and headed into the mountains with Tom out front. We were just ten minutes into the trip when we encountered the first bees nest, all He-double- LL broke out. The dog got into them first, followed by the mule Grandpa was on, then four pack animals. You never seen an old man ride a bronc with a cast on his leg, cussing up a storm, and yelling like a gut scalded snake. He bucked out through the timber with the four pack stock with Poncho in the lead, following him doing the same. Dad told me to just stay put

that the old duffer would be back soon. Out of the timber came Grandpa leading the string and we got back on the trail. As Grandpa passed me he said that right there is why you use the Walker knot on your packs. I looked around and the dog was no where to be found until we rode up to the next creek and he was laying in the water cooling his heels. We road into camp after encountering sixteen more nests.

We spent a couple days opening trails, fishing, and just showing Tom the back country of Oregon, then we packed up and headed North to Waldo wilderness. Dad had volunteered to pack in ten water jugs for some type of run that was going to be held on the PCT the next day. We loaded sixty gallons of water on three mules and started up to the drop point with Grandpa cluing me in on why and how it was a lot smarter to ride the trails than run them. I couldn't grasp the meaning of his wisdom until we got into a bees nest on the way up and he had to pull the string up and move into the trees for a break. Right then several runners

came down the trail doing a pre-run race. My eyes lit up when the runners hit that bees nest. I started to yell as the first one escaped the carnage, but the next two were right in the swing of things, and I mean the swing of things. I looked over and both dad and Grandpa had grins on their faces. Dad stated can you imagine what's going to happen the next day when they have over two hundred people run by the nest. Grandpa laugh and said it should improve their time he would bet.

We made it up to the drop off point and was just unloading the water jugs off Poncho when a Mountain Biker came off the side trail at a high rate of speed and slid to a stop behind Tom's riding animal.

The horse swung into action and delivered a well placed warning shot within inches of the bikers head as he fell to the ground. The biker grabbed his bike and bailed off the trail yelling he was sorry. Tom turned and asked isn't the PCT supposed to be closed to bikes? Grandpa turned and in his own way said a few words that only mules can hear and ended his comments with "that damn yuppy can't read". We finished our ride and returned to the trail head and loaded up and headed North to Mt. Washington area. When we reached our campsite, Tom stepped off his horse and asked if we could do him a favor by just having an uneventful trip the rest of his stay. We all laughed and told him this was a normal trip for us.

This just started the summer for dad and I, and it only got more exciting as the summer continued, but that will have to wait for the next Highline. You see Grandpa threw away his cast and loaded Grandma on a old mule and they headed for the high country following doctor's orders for both of them, you know, take a week off and keep the leg and head elevated.



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