

# Pine Valley Bridge Project

By Paul G. Sloane, Southwest Chapter President, Back Country Horsemen Utah



Pine Valley is located within the Dixie National Forest about 45 miles north of St. George, UT. For decades, there exists a two-mile-long trail running east to west. The trail originates at the equestrian campground and terminates at the Whipple trailhead. There are two water crossings along this trail that have deteriorated significantly over the years making it difficult to cross safely. Our Southwest Chapter of BCHU wanted to build bridges for these crossings, but the funds were simply not there. Then we attended the Utah Outdoor Recreation Grant (UORG) Workshop in February 2018. We partnered with the USFS and American Conservation Experience (ACE) and applied

for the grant. We were awarded a \$20,987 grant to build the bridges in June 2018. This was a 50% match grant where UORG would match cash contributions and in-kind labor to purchase the bridges. In January, the bridge designs were completed by the USFS and the bridges were purchased with a delivery schedule for late May 2019. The bridges arrived in mid-June and we gathered our troops readying for installation. The bridges are robust, to say the least, with the total weight of the components tipping the scales around 3,000 pounds. The bridges are 21' in length and 5' (inside width) with glued laminated lumber decks that are 6-3/4" thick. Hand rails were

also included. The challenge was transporting the materials from the parking area to the bridge sites. One location was over 700' away and the other was slightly further. Keep in mind that each deck component weighed more than 400 pounds and had to be off-loaded by hand and transported part way to the site by hand. The USFS provided a side-by-side vehicle with a trailer which was used to transport the heavy items most of the way which was a great help and relief. Throughout the installation process our chapter had fourteen people on the job, ACE provided another dozen and the USFS provided another three persons. It took four days to



get the bridges in place and assembled. The ACE crews are continuing to build the approaches to the bridges. We anticipate that these bridges will provide many decades of service to horsemen, hikers, and bike riders alike.



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## View from the Chairman’s Saddle

By Darrell Wallace, BCHA National Chairman

I hope you all have had a great summer! I had several great rides and most involved trail work. Preparatory for our statewide work party, there was a reconnaissance ride with friends in the Blue Mountains in southeast Washington. Our work party involved a mix of trail work—from sawing out logs in Wilderness trails to repairing drains and water bars to guiding our grant manager around the various worksites, so he could meet some of the 75 members at work.

During rides on the trails in a county park near my home, I spent much of my time felling trees to enlarge the parking lot there. My little chapter worked with the county to make the park much more equine friendly.

Then, I had quite an adventure! My buddy Jason Ridlon collected 39 of his best sawyers (and one old national chairman) and took on a project deep in the Pasayten Wilderness. Twenty of us rode 24 miles into the Wilderness. We camped and worked three days logging out trails near the Canadian border before returning. We crossed over a newly rebuilt bridge that the other 20 volunteers finished while we were up north, making it no longer necessary to use a rather difficult temporary ford.

I used some quiet time in August to catch up on BCHA work, writing lots of emails, and working with committee chairs. Please see our response to the e-bike decision by the Secretary of the Interior in the column by BHCA’s Director of Public Lands and Recreation. I have nothing against e-bikes in safe places, but I don’t think much of decisions made at the top without local input about safety. We are accomplishing a lot on behalf of Back Country Horsemen and not a day goes by that I don’t appreciate the many contributions by so many of you!

I had a great experience in September. Public Lands Chair Jerry Bentz organized a VIP Ride in Oregon’s Eagle Caps Wilderness and he let me come along. Three days of fantastic scenery, great trails, good food, and good weather (the snow stayed at least 200 feet above us). “Trailmeister” Robert Eversole was along to test out new camping gear and tell his tales of presentations to riders all over the country. Our Forest Service guests enjoyed the ride and engaged in promising discussions about local issues over the campfire. Now that’s my kind of BCH experience! I hope you have similar ones in your neck of the woods.

Happy Trails!  
Darrell

## Olympic Chapter Donation Honors Founder of BCHW, Makes Him a Legacy Fund Founding Member

By Ginny Grulke

Jim Murphy lay elevated in his bed in Edmonds, WA, surrounded by friends and family. Now in his 80’s and in hospice care, Jim relishes memories of his years with Back Country Horsemen. Jim was one of the founding members of BCH Washington. As his friends surrounded him, fellowship with like-minded people lit up his eyes, belying his age. Jim’s fellow Olympic Chapter Members reminisced on the work they did on the trails, the funny situations they got themselves into and the horses and mules they remembered. Jim chipped in with details that the group had forgotten. Jim’s fragile health seemed to melt away as his thoughts returned to those sunny days, the storm-struck mountains, the steep trails and the trees reaching to the skies. As the laughter died down, Jim wanted to get down to brass tacks. “OK you guys, why are you REALLY here?” he asked.

Past BCHA Chairman Mike McGlenn stepped forward and honored him with appreciation of the role Jim played in starting BCHW, being a role model for others new to the organization and enthusiastically giving generously of his time. Then Mike opened a large box holding a framed certificate that recognized Jim as a Founding Member of the BCHA Legacy Fund.

Jim was surprised and thrilled. Mike expanded on what the Legacy Fund was and how Jim had

become a Founding Member. His Chapter and BCHW friends had all chipped in over \$2,100 to create the Founding Member status in his honor. The framed certificate was placed on his bureau in sight of his bed, and Jim motioned for some adjustments to get it into his best viewing position. Yet another surprise awaited, as Mike presented Jim with a Legacy Founder pin, attaching it to his shirt. Mike expanded on the significance of Jim’s involvement with BCH, as well Jim’s and Mike’s history and role as a team.

After about 40 minutes, Jim was tiring and wanted to get some rest. The group knew it was time to close and quietly filed out. Jim fell into a contented sleep, filled with images of good friends, family and trails. Unfortunately, Jim passed away shortly after the visit. But Jim knew his fellow riding and packing friends had remembered and honored him and that was all that mattered. He knew his values were BCHA values — he helped create them.

Do you have someone in your state who played a significant role in BCHA, but who can no longer participate due to health issues? Consider a donation to the Legacy Fund on their behalf. The joy and honor it



Jim Murphy, surrounded by friends and family.

brings to those who helped BCHA get off the ground many years ago is touching and memorable. The Legacy Committee can prepare a framed certificate, similar to the one given to Jim. This is truly a Legacy for those individuals, a lasting dedication to the Legacy Fund: “Keeping Trails Open for Future Generations.”

If you have any questions about the Legacy Fund, please contact Erica Fearn at 860-586-7540 or [erica@bcha.org](mailto:erica@bcha.org)

## BCHA Mission Statement

1. To perpetuate the common sense use and enjoyment of horses in America’s back country and wilderness areas.
2. To work to insure that public lands remain open to recreational use.
3. To assist the various government and private agencies in their maintenance and management of said resource.
4. To educate, encourage and solicit active participation in the wise and sustaining use of the back country resource by horsemen and the general public commensurate with our heritage.
5. To foster and encourage the formation of new state Back Country Horsemen’s organizations.

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- Equine Trail Sports
- Fannin County Equestrian Trails Association
- North American Trail Ride Conference (NATRC)
- North Carolina Horse Council
- Old Dominion Endurance Rides Inc.
- Pennsylvania Equine Council
- Walkers & Talkers Saddle Club

BCHA Advocacy Partners are organizations, alliances, and coalitions involved in a common goal of Keeping Trails Open. To learn more about your organization becoming an Advocacy Partner email [Partners@bcha.org](mailto:Partners@bcha.org).



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Public Lands Report [continued from page 2]

By Randy Rasmussen, Director of Public Lands and Recreation

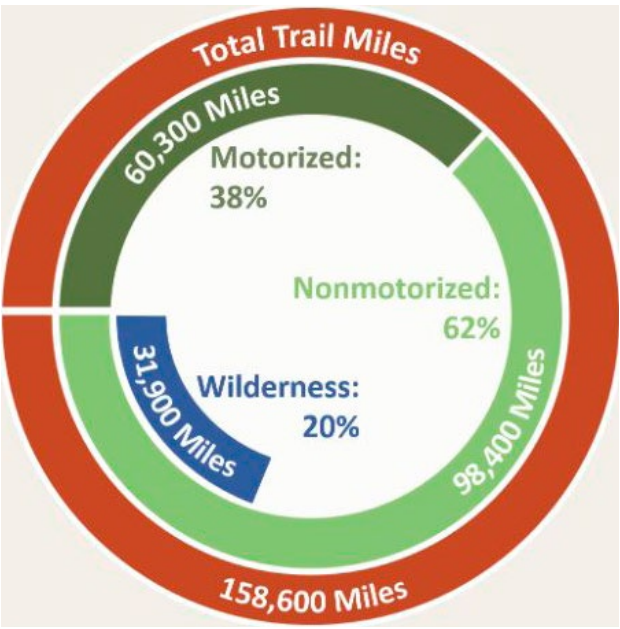
The list of national park units that have mountain bikes trails is not long. But the policy change could represent a game-changer in park units like Mammoth Cave National Park; Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area; and the Chattahoochee River, Golden Gate, Santa Monica Mountains, and Whiskeytown national recreation areas. Only time, and the vigilance of BCHA and its partners, will tell.

BLM Lands: Conversely, there are many trails on which mountain bikes are allowed at present on Bureau of Land Management (BLM) lands, which are extensive throughout the 11 Western States. Yet existing BLM policy would seem to prevent the instant authorization of motorized uses, like e-Bikes, on non-motorized trails. It appears the agency would first have to enter into a public decision-making process, like a trails or travel plan on a case-by-case and site-specific basis, with full public involvement. It’s too early to tell which direction the agency’s leadership will take this.

National Forests: Fortunately, the U.S. Forest Service resides within the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and not within DOI. So, the new Secretarial Order does not apply to the Forest Service. But don’t breathe a sigh of relief quite yet.

The U.S. Forest Service has received a similar level of lobbying by the same bike and electric motor lobbyists. Plus, the Secretary of Interior is leaning heavily on his counterpart in the Department of Agriculture to follow his lead and make the new e-Bike policy consistent among all federal land management agencies. Consequently, we’re bracing for the other shoe to drop. But we are not sitting by idly.

In early September, BCHA joined forces with TWS and their “legal muscle” to demand that the Tahoe National Forest rescind its recent action to allow Class 1 eMTBs on over 130 miles of non-motorized trails throughout the forest. The “decision” was announced quietly, largely among mountain bike magazines and online forums, and without any public scoping or public meetings. Even the local chapter of BCH California, the Mother Lode Unit, and another local equine trails organization, were left in the dark, despite maintaining good relations with Tahoe forest staff. Proponents of eMTBs hailed the Tahoe National Forest as a “pilot” project among national forests, with more to come.



Existing U.S. Forest Service Trail Miles

with a key partner like the Forest Service. It strains relationships, represents an enormous sink of time and money, and does not always yield the results we would want, or in the timeframe we would want, even if we were able to convince a federal judge of our claims.

Ideally, if there were to be public dialogue about the role e-Bikes and eMTBs might play on public lands, equestrians and all affected users would have a seat at the table in local decision-making processes. There would not be a top-down mandate from Washington DC in the form of a Secretarial Order or other change in agency policy that allows motorized uses on non-motorized trails. Electric bikes have their place on public lands. Moreover, they provide a segment of the public with opportunities to explore and enjoy public lands that might not otherwise have such an opportunity.

Hope for a Rational Solution

So why all the madness coming from Washington DC? What diminished role of oversight of our federal lands do citizens retain when manufacturer lobbyists can push agency leaders to redefine an electric bike as not really having a motor? This is crazy.

A motor is a motor is a motor. They have no place on non-motorized trails. The U.S. Forest Service alone has 60,300 miles of legally designated motorized trails on which e-Bikes and eMTBs are currently allowed (not roads, but actual trails). One can only hope for a rational solution. But if the craziness persists, the options for BCHA, our partners and of the affected public to be able to influence public lands policy will be limited.

BCHA Prepared to Litigate

The September 9 “demand” letter, submitted to the Tahoe National Forest by TWS, BCHA, BCH California, its Mother Lode Unit and two other local organizations, lays out a legal case for why the action to allow eMTBs on non-motorized trails was in violation of existing law and policy (a copy is posted on BCHA’s website, under ‘About Us,’ then ‘BCHA News’). It serves as a courtesy notice to our partners within the agency to do the right thing by rescinding the illegal action and cease advertising on its website this new regional, eMTB playground.

Yet litigation is the last thing we’d choose to do, particularly

Notes from the Ad Hoc Membership Committee

By Dennis M Serpa

Finding new members is every member’s responsibility!  
HELP ME !

As the chair of the Ad Hoc Membership Committee, my challenge is to increase membership in all states. I’m depending on all members to help out with this challenge. We all know non-member horse or mule enthusiasts who are out there riding trails that we maintain. They just need to be asked to join our group to help with the cause. We have good information available on our website under membership resources that can help you with the process or remind you of how to encourage people to join.

In the coming months, we will be providing additional ways to maintain and increase membership. Our goal is to have every chapter create and promote a Membership Development and Retention committee of their own. Your chapter committee will work in conjunction with the me to find ways and means to promote membership in BCH and welcome new members. In addition, we’ll explore the needs of existing members by reaching out to see what we can do to persuade them to be more active. It is very important to find moti-

vated individuals that can reach out and motivate others to find new members.

Finding new members is every member’s responsibility!  
HELP ME !

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# BCH of Missouri Represented at the Missouri State Fair Opening Day Parade

By Staci Harrison, Trails End Back Country Horsemen, Missouri

A last-minute thought regarding the Missouri State Fair will become a tradition for BCH of Missouri (BCHMO)! On August 8, 2019, several chapters from BCHMO—with only 1 ½ weeks' notice—represented the organization during the Missouri State Fair Opening Day Parade. Here's how it happened.

Annually, the Trail's End Chapter participates in the Opening Day Parade. As chapter leader, I spoke with co-leader Dale Yelton about inviting all the state chapters to help represent the organization, as it is the Missouri State Fair. Dale quickly agreed that this would be very fitting, so the invites went out!

In the week following until August 8, Dale, Liz and Kelly Yelton built 11 wonderful RV/trailer sites with water and electric hook ups for participating members. The work got done just in time. Robert Phillips, chapter leader for Heartland, and Maury Mertz, chapter leader for South Central, had several

planning phone conversations throughout the week.

Representation at the parade included three wagons with teams and 25 individual riders from Heartland, South Central, Brownfield, and Trail's End Chapters. The state organization banner was proudly carried at the front of the group. If you would like to watch the video, you can check it out on the Trail's End Facebook page. To date, there are 1,200 views!

This was a great opportunity to bring the state organization together to represent the work we do in collaboration with our land managers. Following the parade there was a potluck and campfire dinner at the Yelton's property. There was a lot of great food, fun, and laughter that took place that evening. Memories and friends were made!

A few days after the parade, I was informed that the BCHMO entry won the blue ribbon for the Equine Division! The theme for the Missouri State



Fair was "Come Home Missouri." It was fitting that BCHMO won the ribbon, as there was tremendous effort to have members from all over the state come together as family would, coming home.



# Colorado BCH Rendezvous

By Sherry Baker, Front Range Back Country Horsemen, Colorado

Front Range BCH of Colorado hosted the first Colorado State BCH Rendezvous in Gunnison National Forest. We headed up to work on clearing 20 plus miles of trails and setting up camp for the 70 guests coming in. All week several of us, including two forest rangers, cleared trails. The Northern Chapter of Colorado catered Rendezvous weekend meals which were delicious.

During the Rendezvous we had a Meet-and-Greet Friday evening with appetizers. We had a short trail safety talk, plus a lovely Leave No Trace event ending with music around the campfire. On Saturday morning, we

had delicious breakfast, then trail rides with beautiful views. After a packing demo and silent auction, the day ended with dinner, music and campfire. On Sunday morning, many attended Cowboy Church followed by breakfast before people started to pack up and head home. It was a safe week with a combination of education, trail work and fun.

We had folks attend from all over Colorado plus Arizona, Idaho, Iowa and New Mexico. It was so fun to get to know new equine lovers. Here is hoping this is the start of an annual event hosted by different chapters in Colorado.



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# 911, When Cell Phones Are Not an Option! Training and Having the Proper Communications Tools Are Key to Having A Good Outcome

*By Marybeth Conger, BCHI Education Chair*

On Wednesday August 7, 2019 a Squaw Butte, ID BCH member was thrown from her horse while on a pack trip with other BCHI members in the Frog Lake area of the Bolder White Cloud Wilderness. Many of the members on this trip had attended one or more Wilderness First Aid training opportunities and their training kicked in. It was quickly determined that the BCH member had suffered a major trauma with possible injury to her head, neck, back and pelvic regions. It was obvious that advance medical treatment was called for and air evacuation was her best option.

One of the members of the trip was carrying a Garmin inReach Mini and activated its SOS function. Soon she was texting the International Emergency Response Coordination Center (IERCC) giving them details of the accident. The IERCC contacted the Idaho State Communication Center who took over the coordination of the case. The GEOS IERCC is the only global Search and Rescue Coordination Center for Satellite Emergency Notification Devices (SEND). On Fri, Aug 9, 2019 The SBBCH member wrote: "I can't express how thankful I am for you and all of the ladies! I never felt worried or afraid. All of their first aid training kicked in and they did everything right. If they hadn't, I would have been a lot worse off than I am. Thank you all for saving me from something that could have changed my life forever.

GEOS locates people in distress no matter where they are. This is accomplished through global partnerships with SEND providers, GEOS technology, and a broad reach to official Search and Rescue (SAR) Agencies around the globe. The GEOS operations team never stops until the mission is done and that is why GEOS has successfully coordinated the rescues of thousands of people in need in over 170 countries. Idaho State EMS Communications Center – more commonly known as State COMM – is a 24/7 emergency communications center located in Meridian, ID. State COMM is a Component of the Bureau of EMS and Preparedness, Division of Public Health, Department of Health and Welfare.

As stated by NAIC (The National Association of Insurance Commissioners), the average air ambulance cost for a 52-mile trip falls somewhere between \$12,000 to \$25,000 per flight and can reach as high as \$6 million depending on the medical equipment and maintenance. So, it pays for you to know before you go on backcountry trips some details about evacuation helicopters.

### **Question: How high can a helicopter go to pick you up?.**

In our situation, the LZ was at 8,900 feet and before they landed, they circled for an hour burning off fuel and even with that reduced weight, they needed to leave a crew member on the ground to get the bird back into the air. It sounded to me that 9,000' seemed to be about the maximum before they need to consider a different model. I know on Mount Hood they call in Na-

tional Guard Blackhawks, which according to Google can fly at 15,000' and I assume land at around 13,000'.

**Answer: Most helicopters have a hover ceiling of between 15,000 – 20,000'.** There are many variables that are in play anytime a helicopter does a flight like that. The biggest one tends to be temperature but there are a few more. If that flight was done on a different day with a different crew, they may have been able to lift off with all crew members on board. Here are a few of those variables: Temperature, crew weight, patient weight, density altitude of the landing zone (LZ), winds, and fuel on board. Fuel on board is one that can be played with a little bit, but they still have to have enough fuel to reach their destination plus 20 minutes of flight time for reserve.

Since it was the hottest part of the year, I'm guessing it was pretty warm that day, therefore the density altitude was much higher than the pressure altitude of 8900' thus limiting the aircraft performance at that location. Combine that with the other factors and you have the scenario that took place.

You mentioned Blackhawks. Even they have to deal with the same issues but on a much larger scale. A Blackhawk may have had no problem doing this flight, however, the approval from local military channels may very well slow the process even if it is approved. This is a question than can be addressed local military commands. In the area this flight took place there are two Helicopter Air Ambulance (HAA) companies. HAA programs throughout the world use different types of aircraft so there may be a significant difference in the performance of one aircraft over another. This is a question that should be asked of any flight program conducting training with BCH members.

The issue that came up on this flight can happen with almost any helicopter landing to a hot high Landing Zone (LZ). Although there are helicopters out there that would have done this flight without a problem, they are much larger and much more expensive. Cost of an aircraft is always a factor for HAA companies.

At least one of the companies in this area is in the process of getting new aircraft partly because of this type of scenario.

### **Lessons learned:**

1. Accidents will happen and you need the knowledge and tools to evaluate the situation and if necessary, contact outside assistance no matter where you are.



2. Get advanced first aid training that will allow you to evaluate the injured and provide appropriate care until they can be evacuated to the trail head or in this case directly to a care facility.

3. Carry multiple ways to communicate, Cell phones, inReach or Spot devices, forest service channelled radios.

4. Know how your communication devices work and what you need to tell a communication center like, 911, State Comm's, IERCC.

5. Stay cool and think each step through, but don't over think, you need to act.

6. Travel with people who have similar training and discuss what should be done if an injury or such event occurs.

I would like to acknowledge all of the Squaw Butte BCHI members involved on this pack trip for how they handled things. Way to go ladies! Also, thanks to SBBCH Projects Coordinator Rob Adams and SBBCH President Ron Fergie for researching information in preparing this article.

Sharing this educational article with all BCHA may help to keep someone else safe out there. Incidents like this, can happen anytime in both the front and back country. It is how we prepare beforehand, both mentally and physically, that can and will make a difference.

Stay safe and hope to see you on the trail!



# Seventh Annual Washington State Work Party

By Doc Wesselius, Lewis County Chapter, Back Country Horsemen of Washington

The names Mount Misery and Danger Point conjure up visions of geographic landscapes that require a concerted effort to reach these remote, but beautiful destinations in the Umatilla National Forest. Located in the southeast area of Washington state's Blue Mountains, the Umatilla National Forest encompasses the Wenaha-Tucannon Wilderness. Trail maintenance in this area is a constant challenge, especially in these times of budget cuts and reduced employment for the United States Forest Service (USFS).

Back Country Horsemen of Washington (BCHW) partnered with the USFS to aid in wilderness trail maintenance and trailhead facilities upkeep. BCHW Vice President and Trail Work Coordinator Jason Ridlon organized the multitude of details required to conduct a four-day work party involving twenty-one state chapters. Several years of diligent efforts were required to match USFS-identified projects that needed attention with the BCHW volunteer assistance.

Western Life Outfitters provided the headquarters for the work at their Goose Corral facilities. Preparations for the management of a large group of volunteers with their trail stock in the remote setting required provisions for water and delivery of weed-free hay at the camp. Procurement of provisions and commitment from a staff of cooks was also necessary to feed the volunteers three meals a day for five days.

An undertaking of this magnitude could not be accomplished without financial assistance. A Recreation and Conservation Organization grant, Recreational Trails Program 16-2675, was obtained. Grant funding required a



volunteer labor match based on hourly work values accumulated throughout the project. Seventy volunteers accumulated 2,755 volunteer hours for a labor match totaling \$78,000. In addition to BCHW volunteers, Northwest Youth Corps and Pomeroy Youth Corps personnel assisted the assembled workforce.

With logistics covered, the next challenge was to assign volunteers the various projects to undertake and appoint crew leaders to lead the labor force. The trailhead crew, with guidance from USFS, conducted maintenance at three trailheads and a spring watering station. Assisted by a youth group, the crew painted 17 picnic tables, four corrals, three trailhead signs, three outhouses, four stock feeding structures, four hitching rails, and a group picnic shelter.

Supporting repairs for the Oregon Butte Lookout, a packer hauled six 2"x 6"x 8' planks on his mule to the tower. Other packers met each morning with their crew leader and determined the tools necessary for the day's work and loaded their packstock. Trail crews left the camp compound and rode to their

worksites. A crosscut crew camped four nights at their worksite on East Butte Creek Trail clearing blowdowns. They appreciated the packers that hauled their tools and camp supplies to their campsite and brought them back for the 4th of July celebration the last night of the gathering. The West Butte Creek Trail crew and their pack and riding stock needed to be hauled four miles to Godmen Trailhead. A youth corps was also transported daily to the trailhead to brush out, log out and conducted trail tread repairs. Each evening, Ridlon needed to ensure water and hay delivery to each campsite.

Mount Misery Trail had two projects that required considerable expertise to correct hazards in the trail. Over the years, water at Oregon Butte Springs had eroded the trail and exposed two culverts at the crossing. The culverts were dug out and set back in place after digging out a trench to make the crossing level. Once the culverts were in place, they were covered with dirt to make a smooth crossing. The second project corrected a rock outcropping that protruded into the trail and was slippery due to a small drainage. It took

a two-day effort to chip out a rock, then a French Drain was installed to carry the water away from the trail.

Smooth Ridge Trail crews cleared the trail and worked on logging out Yearling Ridge Trail. Geo-tech fabric material and fill dirt was used to raise the trail tread in a boggy spot to prevent water from accumulating in the trail. Turkey Creek Trail was cleared to the intersection with the Panjab Trail – a popular route to Oregon Butte. Water bars were installed and others were dug out to prevent water damage to the trail. One group diverted water drainage from the trail to prevent water from flowing down the trail.

Every evening the crews – some covered with mud – returned for dinner and shared their day's struggles with other volunteers. Everyone was astounded by each day's accomplishments and proud of the collective efforts to clear and maintain trails in the panoramic Blue Mountains. Future riders and hikers will appreciate the efforts of BCHW volunteers and youth corps groups that helped USFS maintain forty miles of wilderness trails.

## Partnerships Are Key!! BCH of the Virginia Highlands Teams Up to Assist USFS

By Nancy Sluys, Back Country Horsemen of the Virginia Highlands

Congress designated the Raccoon Branch Wilderness Area in 2009. The Wilderness Area is located in the Mount Rogers National Recreation Area in the Jefferson National Forest in southwest Virginia. About seven years ago, the United States Forest Service (USFS) asked BCH of the Virginia Highlands to help pack out the remains of an Appalachian Trail shelter camp. Even though our chapter didn't have any packers, I immediately said, "Yes!"

Due to high turnover in the USFS, the project got pushed back several times over the years. The Southern Appalachian Wilderness Stewards (SAWS) group took the reins and revived the project. Once again, we were contacted for help. Coordination and planning began last winter. I started

training my mule for packing. In the meantime, I started beating the bushes for other packers who could help. At the BCH National Board Meeting, I met President David Michael of BCH North Carolina. An avid packer, David consulted his calendar and accepted the challenge. Mike McClelland from BCH of East Tennessee also signed on for the job. We ended up with members from five BCH chapters on the team!

With so many chapters and other organizations involved, many hours went into planning and coordinating the project. However, it all came together and was implemented on the weekend of August 4, 2019. SAWS volunteers, along with a group of midshipmen from the United State Naval Academy in Annapolis, MD, demolished the re-

mains of the camp. They took out an outhouse, picnic table and fire grate. On Saturday, a couple of us took out a load that day and assessed the situation for the next day. On Sunday, seven teams of packers went in and took out the rest of the material, packing out the whole fire grate and privy pedestal. The rest of the material was sorted and bundled by the SAWS volunteers. We packed it out three miles to the awaiting USFS truck.

Members of the BCH of the Virginia Highlands hosted our out-of-state guests with pot luck dinners and cama-



raderie. Thank you so much to all who participated in this project. Relationships were forged that will endure well into the future! When many get together, great things can happen!

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# Buffalo River BCH Receives Arkansas State Trail Award

Photographs by Elaine Appel and Steven Parker.

The Buffalo River Chapter of the Arkansas BCH is happy to announce we received the 2019 Organization of the Year award from the Arkansas Trails Council. The certificate was awarded at the quarterly Council meeting at Hobbs State Park on July 20. Our chapter was nominated by Buffalo National River Park Ranger Lauren Ray. Arkansas Trails Council Chairman Toby Von Rembow Trails Coordinator and Project Officer Mi-

chael Sprague presented the award.

Vice President Ted Spears and Membership Chairman Elaine Appel represented Buffalo River BCH. Members Jaci Perry and Max Ryan were there to add their support. The nomination and award were a complete surprise to everyone in the group.

It is such an honor to be recognized for all the hard work and perseverance of our chapter.



Left to right: Bill Jackson, Arkansas Trails Council vice chair and Recreation program manager for Ouachita National Forest; Ted Spears, Buffalo River BCH vice president; Elaine Appel, Buffalo River BCH membership chair; Toby Von Rembow, Arkansas Trails Council chair; and Michael Sprague, Arkansas Trails Council coordinator and project officer.



## It's Not All Work and No Play

By Marybeth Conger, Square Butte Back Country Horsemen, Idaho

I just got home from an amazing backcountry trip. Bill Conger and I, along with Lynn and Peggy Garner, spent four great days near the Warm Springs, ID trailhead. Our four-legged animals got along, the weather was absolutely perfect, we saw some breathtaking backcountry views, and the meals got an average 4.5-star rating. All of us had fun – even when we cleared trails on two of the riding days. We need to be sure to log our volunteer

trail clearing hours because they give the BCH organization leverage in terms of our financial impact.

This is why I joined the BCHA organization some 30 ago. Where else can you have wonderful riding adventures with friends and do some good by keeping trails maintained? One difference I did notice between 30 years ago and now is how I have only so many “get on and offs” before I start groaning!



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