

Back Country Horsemen of America

Volume 33, Issue 3

www.bcha.org

Summer 2022

National Board Meeting Highlights

BCHA National Board of Directors



BCHA Officers - Chairman, Sherry Copeland; Vice Chairman, Mark Himmel; Treasurer, Latifia Rodriguez



Brenda Yankoviak, USFS National Trail Program Manager



Past Chairman, Darrell Wallace leads Memorial to departed members



New Executive Committee Member, Dan Key



Missouri Volunteers



From the Chairman's Saddle Podium

By Sherry Copeland, BCHA National Chairman

Hopefully, National Directors have shared the results and experiences of the 2022 National Board of Directors Meeting with all Back Country Horsemen members, chapters and state organizations. Thank you to all the National Directors for their dedication, participation and direction. It was an incredible opportunity for everyone involved.

As Chairman, it was my responsibility to deliver a report to the National Board of Directors on the “State of Back Country Horsemen of America.” And, now, I would like to share that message with all of you. So, this time, I report to you from the Podium...

Over the next few days, you will hear details about the accomplishments and challenges contributing to the State of Back Country Horsemen and the continued efforts to ensure access for pack and saddle stock on our public lands.

A major significance was the implementation of Communication and Advocacy Software for the ability to leverage the entire membership on public lands issues - imagine the impact of over 12,000 branded messages all directed in a conjunction of efforts.

During this past year, Back Country Horsemen have:
Provided thousands of hours of trail maintenance,
Participated in thousands of hours of meeting with Agencies,

Provided thousands of hours of education and information to Back Country Horsemen members and the general public and,

Worked thousands of hours with other user groups and like-minded organizations.

But with Back Country Horsemen there is so much more!

On the National Level – Back Country Horsemen accomplishments are wide ranging:

From: Determining BCH doesn't need to be “Managed” – but does need tasks completed that the Volunteers shouldn't do,

To: Finding the outsources to complete those tasks;

From: Improving communications with Monthly Updates to the entire membership and continued monthly calls with National Directors,

To: Simplifying reporting of information for membership data and volunteer hours;

From: Serving as a contributing partner on the Trails Are Common Ground platform,

To: Getting the USFS to issue a field directive order regarding Horse Camps;

From: Funding the largest dollar value of Chapter Support Grants,

To: Succession planning, as stipulated in the Governance Policy;

From: Fundraising campaigns,

To: Connecting individuals and groups in States to ultimately gain additional BCH organizations;

From: Reimagining how to reach “youth,”

To: Even the definition of Youth;

Members (boots on the ground), Chapters, States, Committees, and the Executive Committee have proven successful this year and continue to set the standards even higher.

As you get the details of these accomplishments, remember WE – YOU are Back Country Horsemen – and, as founding father, Ken Ausk said, “Back Country Horsemen - the ‘of what’ doesn't matter.”

So, it is my privilege to report the State of Back Country Horsemen is:

12,795 Members - 212 Chapters - 31 State and Affiliates

And, that is a great State of Back Country Horsemen!

Highlights of goals identified at the National Board Meeting include:

Reaching youth, increasing membership, developing the Light On The Land program, evaluating fundraising, increasing committee participation, and

[continued next page]

honoring the upcoming 50th Anniversary of BCHA!

As we look to the future, I encourage you to contact your National Directors to get all the details reported and the goals identified at the National Board Meeting; and, more importantly, share your ideas, objectives, and goals as Back Country Horsemen.

It is my privilege to serve the membership as Chairman and, along with Mark Himmel, Vice Chairman, Latifia Rodriguez, Treasurer, the Executive Committee and all the Committee Chairs, look forward to working with you to meet the challenges and achieve the goals for even greater accomplishments as Back Country Horsemen.

See y'all on the trail,

Sherry



Chairman Sherry Copeland addresses the National Board

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 ensure 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.

Thank you to our Advocacy Partners:

- 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.

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National Board Meeting Highlights

Volunteer Hours Report 2021

By John Chepulis, BCHA Volunteer Hours Chair

Backcountry Horsemen of America Volunteer Hours Report BCHA Date Range (Oct 2020-Sept 2021) or (Jan-Dec 2021)				
	Totals	Rate per hour/mile/day	Total Value	
Total Basic Hours	72209	\$28.54	\$2,060,844.86	Calculated per hour
Total Skilled Hours	35522	\$42.80	\$1,520,341.60	Calculated per hour
Non-Trail Hours	59114	\$28.54	\$1,687,113.56	Calculated per hour
Travel Time	40960	\$28.54	\$1,168,998.40	Calculated per hour
Total Hours	207805		\$6,437,298.42	
Personal and Stock Use	1021410	\$1.00	\$1,021,409.90	Calculated per mile
Total Travel Miles	1021410		\$1,021,409.90	
Power Equipment	7216	\$30.00	\$216,480.00	Calculated per hour
Heavy Equipment	3346	\$110.00	\$368,060.00	Calculated per hour
Total Equipment Hours	10562	.	\$584,540.00	
Total Stock Days	11669	\$100.00	\$1,166,900.00	Calculated per day
			\$1,166,900.00	
Total Donations	\$179,566.04		\$179,566.04	
		Total	\$9,389,714.36	

The value of Volunteer time is determined by The Independent Sector each year.
 Skilled labor is one and one-half times basic labor.

https://www.independentsector.org/volunteer_time



PO Box 1182
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Interested in Joining?

<https://www.bcha.org/membership/>

BCHA Officers, Committee Chairs and Staff

<https://www.bcha.org/about/>

National Board Meeting Highlights

2021 Winner of the Double Diamond Award

By John Chepulis, BCHA Volunteer Hours Chair

Four applications for the Double Diamond Award were submitted for 2021. All the applications were excellent but the best presented project and the winner of the 2021 Double Diamond Award goes to Northwest Montana Back Country Horsemen of Kalispell MT for their partnership with the Flathead County 4-H program working with the 4-H youth in developing a training program termed “4-H Trail & Packing”. A training program, complete with educational outlines, 4-H packing manual, horsemanship skills, and what your horse needs to know to be safe on the trail.



Sold!

By Tif Rodriguez, Fundraising Chair, BCHA

BCHA's auctions at our national board meeting in Kansas City, MO, this year were fun and successful! Our national directors from all over the country brought donated items for the live or silent auction. We were able to bid on the items at the silent auction, over the three days of the national meeting. The live auction was held at our banquet on Wednesday evening, with a very entertaining and experienced auctioneer!

All told, we were able to bring in about \$6,000 for the live auction and about \$1,500 for the silent auction. Some of these proceeds were given back to MO, the hosting BCHA state!

Thanks everyone! Your generosity and competitive spirit are appreciated.

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National Board Meeting Highlights

Welcome West Virginia!

By Freddy Dunn, Expansion Committee Chair

With just days to go before the April National Board Meeting in Kansas City, I received an application and all the required information and fees to recommend that West Virginia become a member of BCHA! Their application was formally accepted by the Board on Monday, April 11, 2022. West Virginia is home to the Monongahela National Forest which has no designated horse trails, as well as other areas that have become overgrown due to lack of maintenance. After some ideas on how best to proceed from our Public Lands Chair and Education Chair, they seem to be on their way! My last report from Sonya Penson, the organizer stated:

‘We actually had a good meeting with, I believe it was, six Forest people and they are all on board with us. We choose to work in our district at first and see how all goes. At this point we are awaiting dates for our two-day training course. One lady, who’s in our district, had just worked (in I believe she said Nevada but don’t quote me on that, it was hard to hear her), with a group of BCHA. She was impressed and said we needed one in WV, go figure, lol. A friend of mine that is in our group knows people from another state’s BCH chapter and she said she’s going to talk with them about coming to help us, because they have all the pack equipment. So will

see how this goes. If everyone follows through, we should be able to get at least one trail done this summer. Lol. We also inquired about other areas that allow horse traffic and we found out that there are very few areas that don’t allow horses. Unbeknownst to us. We were definitely excited about that. Some areas we were told years ago that we weren’t allowed in. Those people have since moved or retired. Yah for us! So at this point it’s looking good. I appreciate all you have done for me.’

So it looks like all systems are a go! Congratulations, and welcome West Virginia!

Looking Ahead with Fundraising Committee

By Tif Rodriguez, Fundraising Chair

What better way to start off 2022-23 than to be looking ahead! Our first meeting of the year for our BCHA Fundraising Committee was amazing. We have so many new faces and we had some great dialogue. We are working on making this year a memorable one. We are developing partnerships and relationships with some sponsors, small and large.

There are a few ideas we’re kicking around. Do you have one? Would you like to be involved on our committee? If so, contact us and we’ll get you on the list.

We met our challenge goal last year for Legacy. We have another challenge in front of us that we’re working on. We’ll have more information on that as that develops.

As always, thank you to all of our generous donors and contributors. All of our funds... Spur, Trails Forever Fund, Legacy... have a special sig-



nificance and give our donors options in supporting BCHA.

Contact us any time with questions, fundraising@bcha.org. We’d love to hear from you.

Black Hills BCH SD hosts Youth Trail Challenge

By Alice Allen, President, Black Hills Back Country Horsemen of South Dakota

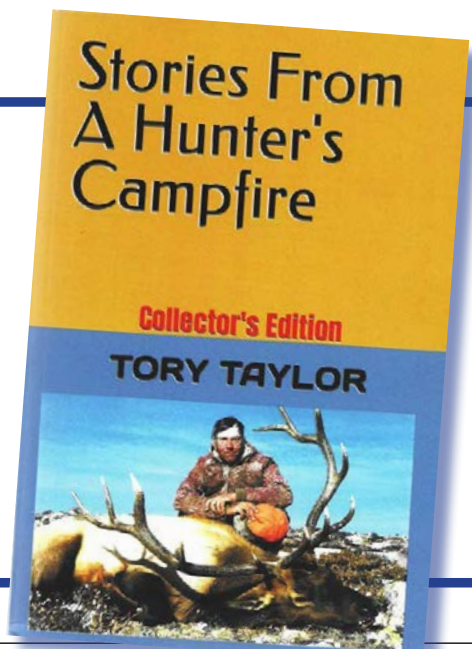
We had perfect weather for our first 4-H youth event on Saturday! We helped sponsor a Trail Challenge clinic and competition for local 4-H kids and their horses. We started out in the morning with our local clinician and Black Hills BCH member, Larry, teaching horsemanship skills and working with the youth to learn to negotiate various trail obstacles. A hot lunch was provided by Black Hills Energy. Then the kids tested the skills they had learned in a trail challenge competition to earn prizes. During the competition, the youth that were not competing watched a packing demonstration and got some hands on experience with saddling and loading a pack mule. Thanks to all our Black Hills BCH members, Black Hills Energy, and Pennington County 4-H Youth Advisor who helped with this awesome event! And much thanks to all the parents and kids (26) who attended!



Retired Wyoming outfitter Tory Taylor announces his newest book,

"Stories From A Hunter's Campfire".

Taylor writes about what he knows - horses and mules, packing in the backcountry wilderness, hunting, and outfitting. Tory Taylor's books are available at Amazon.com.



East Slope Back Country Horsemen Tackle Weed Management

By Casey Drishinski, East Slope Back Country Horsemen, Montana

Here on the east slope of the Rocky Mountain Front, we are pretty lucky for lots of reasons. With millions of acres of accessible public lands and thousands of miles of motor-free (and largely mountain bike-free) trails to enjoy whenever the time allows, it's easy to get complacent and take these abundant gifts for granted. However, noxious weeds pose a threat to these treasures that requires persistent action – and some creativity.

We all know that the best time to tackle almost any problem is when it is still small. When it comes to noxious weeds on our backcountry trails, sometimes infestations are few and far between. Maybe scattered between water crossings or confined to gravelly stream bottoms. It's all too easy to ride on by, hoping someone on foot or the USFS will tackle the problem. On the other hand, being horseback provides the ability to scan for weeds trailside while also covering longer distances and packing the proper equipment.

After decades of participating in annual, community spray days to help beat down the weeds at the trailhead, in the summer of 2021, members of the East Slope Back Country Horsemen Chapter decided to up their game. Members Ron Ries and Zane Drishinski designed and constructed horse-mounted herbicide spray gear to tackle spotted knapweed on the trails leading into the Bob Marshall Wilderness behind Swift Dam. After consulting with the USFS and the county weed district and lots of tinkering, they came up with two pressurized tank setups that could be carried by a packhorse, allowing the rider to spray from his horse.

Like you, our chapter is looking forward to the nice weather and



getting back out on the trail. We are also looking forward to honing our new backcountry spray equipment and using our horsepower to tackle those hard-to-reach noxious weeds.

There are so many ways to ensure that noxious weeds don't ruin our favorite backcountry areas – educating people on weed identification, keeping our vehicles and trailers clean, and pitching in where we can to pull or spray weeds. If you are ready to trade in your backpack sprayer, are tired of dismounting every time you see a weed, or just want to make sure your packhorse is bulletproof, feel free to get in touch at zanethezman@yahoo.com.

East Slope Back Country Horsemen member Ron Ries heads out to spray weeds at Swift Dam.



Public Lands Update: Act Now to Influence Spending of Great American Outdoors Act

By Randy Rasmussen, M.S., Director, Public Lands & Recreation

It has been nearly two years since Congress passed the Great American Outdoors (GAOA) Act, which represented a significant game-changer in the funding of projects that address the deferred maintenance backlog on federal public lands. For background, see BCHA's Spring, Summer and Fall 2020 newsletters.

Specifically, the GAOA's "National Parks and Public Land Legacy Restoration Fund" (Legacy Restoration Fund, or LRF) has been put to work to reduce priority deferred maintenance identified by the National Park Service, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the US Forest Service, and the Bureau of Indian Education. In total, the LRF will provide nearly \$9.5 billion for that purpose over five years (2021 through 2025).

Now is the time for BCHA chapters to influence spending of these funds over federal fiscal years 2024 and 2025. BCHA urges you to reach out to your local or regional federal contacts to inquire about when and how they intend to solicit public feedback for GAOA Legacy Restoration Fund projects over the next few years. A list of recommended actions is provided at the end of this public lands update.

US Forest Service

BCHA members should reach out to their Forest Service regional trail program manager to get an idea of timelines and how to become involved. Contact emails are listed in Sidebar 1. The agency recently debuted an online "dashboard" depicting current GAOA LRF projects

throughout the nation. Check the [dashboard](#) (To navigate to the dashboard, go to <https://www.fs.usda.gov/managing-land/gaoa> and click on 'Project Data') to view what projects have been approved and are ongoing in your forest and region. Regional points of contacts for broad questions about the timing and scheduling of GAOA LRF projects are provided in Sidebar 2.

National Park Service

You can review the list compiled by the National Park Service (NPS) for GAOA LRF deferred maintenance projects expected to be addressed during the current fiscal year (FY 2022) at: <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/infrastructure/identifying-reporting-deferred-maintenance.htm>

The agency's listing of FY 2023 LRF projects, which has yet to be approved by Congress, can be found here (starting on page 404): <https://www.doi.gov/sites/doi.gov/files/fy2023-nps-greenbook.pdf>

While the Park Service will receive the lion's share of GAOA LRF funding (70%), the Forest Service will receive 15%, which amounts to

\$285 million per year, while the BLM will receive 5% (\$95 million/year).

It is important to note that neither the NPS nor the BLM have yet to allocate significant GAOA funds to address the deferred maintenance backlog of backcountry or wilderness trails. BCHA chapters need to be vocal about these needs because the Park Service, for example, continues to focus on projects that have high public visibility that by definition are largely almost exclusively in high visitor-use areas (i.e., the front country). Contact the local offices of these agencies to inquire about their current GAOA LRF lists, and whether they would accept proposals from partners related to trails and trails-related infrastructure for which you believe qualifies for listing as deferred maintenance.

Purpose of Legacy Restoration Funds

The primary purpose of GAOA LRF is for projects that address the current backlog in the maintenance of facilities throughout U.S. public lands and includes visitor centers and

[continued next page]

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Public Lands Update

historic structures, water and wastewater systems, roads and parking areas, trails, trail bridges, campgrounds and trailhead facilities. Trailhead facilities under this definition include kiosks, parking and the upgrading or removal of vault toilets, water systems, and hitching posts/rails.

While the focus of LRF will remain on “priority deferred maintenance,” BCHA encourages you to speak with agency personnel about packaging such maintenance with other related and unmet “needs” such as a project that includes trailhead amenities, upgrades to inadequate parking for our trailers, the maintenance of trails that emanate from the trailhead, and even maintenance of roads leading to the trailhead to provide better clearance for our rigs. Think big. And work with agency personnel and other partners to leverage LRF monies to maximum advantage for the trails community.

Project Selection Criteria

The Forest Service lists in one news release from the Pacific Northwest Region the following criteria used to select its first round of LRF projects:

- Reducing deferred maintenance
- Promoting management of America’s forests
- Improving visitor experience
- Contributing to rural economic development
- Improving visitor access
- Ensuring health and safety
- Leveraging partner contributions and resources

Check with your local Forest Service office to see if they apply these or similar criteria.

Refer to <https://www.fs.usda.gov/managing-land/gaoa> to view

listings of fiscal years 2021, 2022 and some Fiscal Year 2023 LRF projects for national forests of interest. For example, the list for FY’21 was divided into Forest Service regions and included many trails or trails-related projects. These projects comprised 37 percent of the deferred maintenance list of projects expected to begin that year.

TAKE ACTION

The agencies will soon begin to develop their list of projects for fiscal years 2024 and 2025. **This represents an important opportunity for BCH chapters to compare notes with local federal land management leaders on what projects might be funded.** BCHA encourages your chapter to put forth its own “priority deferred maintenance projects” for the remaining years of GAOA funding and share it with your local agency contacts.

With three funding years remaining, there should be ample time to encourage the agencies to conduct and complete any necessary environmental analysis for more complex trail re-

location projects.

BCHA recommends that you **start the necessary dialogue with local agency officials now.** Let them know that your chapter has specific ideas for GAOA LRF funding. They already know that your chapter will be there to help with the heavy lifting. So take advantage of the GAOA funding that continues to flow. This could represent a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for BCHA volunteers to help the agencies make significant strides toward reducing its deferred maintenance backlog.

Here are some pointers for how to approach agency personnel.

1. Contact your local federal agency trails or recreation manager and ask them to share their current list of GAOA “priority deferred maintenance projects.” At the same time, ask them what it might take to include in the list deferred maintenance projects that are a priority for your BCH chapter.

2. Review the agency’s list with BCH chapter members to see if trails and trail-related facilities that are im-

[continued next page]



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Public Lands Update

portant to your chapter appear on the list.

3. If deferred maintenance projects important to your chapter are included among the agency's list, ask your agency trails/recreation manager what you might do to elevate the priority of these projects. This could include:

a. Teaming up with other trail user groups to promote the project's benefits to multiple user groups and its benefits to rural economic development and tourism.

b. Offering to enter into a Cost Share Agreement with the agency for reimbursement of fixed costs associated with your chapter's use of gas/diesel, food, "stock days," camping fees (if any) and the purchase of saws, fuel/oil, hand tools, etc.

Note: BCHA's Partnerships Committee chairman can share information

4. If deferred maintenance projects important to your chapter are not included among the agency's list:

a. Engage the agency trails/recreation manager in a dialogue to explore to what it would take to include your priority project(s) on the list in subsequent years.

b. Review their list of project selection criteria to ensure that your proposal responds to agency-developed criteria.

c. Seek the opinion of other local trail user groups, tourism and chambers of commerce and local elected officials, who might support trail work/restoration that your chapter would like to promote as GAOA Legacy Restoration Fund projects. There is strength in numbers.

Sidebar 1:

US Forest Service Regional Trail Program Managers

Northern Region (R1): Christopher Prew, (Acting), christopher.prew@usda.gov

Rocky Mountain Region (R2): Chad Schneckenburger,

chad.schneckenburger@usda.gov

Southwestern Region (R3): Marcy DeMillion, marcella.demillion@usda.gov

Intermountain Region (R4): Larry Velarde, larry.velarde@usda.gov

Pacific Southwest Region (R5): Garrett Villanueva, garrett.villanueva@usda.gov

Pacific Northwest Region (R6): Zach Jarrett, zachary.jarrett@usda.gov

Southern Region (R8): Debbie Caffin, deborah.caffin@usda.gov

Eastern Region (R9): Leon Lavigne, leon.lavigne@usda.gov

Alaska Region (R10): Sharon Seim, sharon.seim@usda.gov

Don't know your Forest Service region?

See the map at: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/managing-land/gaoa>

Sidebar 2:

US Forest Service Regional GAOA Points of Contact

R1: Corrie Kegel, corrine.kegel@usda.gov

R2: Roger Pritchett, roger.pritchett@usda.gov

R3: Danny Montoya, danny.montoya@usda.gov

R4: Chris Campbell, christopher.campbell@usda.gov

R5: Leslie Boak, leslie.boak@usda.gov

R6: Christy Darden, christy.darden@usda.gov

R8: Mark Meng, mark.meng@usda.gov

R9: Tiffany Benna, tiffany.benna@usda.gov

R10: Kendra Bull, kendra.bull@usda.gov

d. Offer to assist your agency contact in developing letters of support from other partners and/or local governments.

e. Offer to assist your agency contact in preparing any necessary paperwork.

Good luck in your efforts. Please don't let this opportunity to secure funding for your chapter's priority projects pass you by. After decades of inadequate funding, the federal agencies are currently flush with resources intended to improve public access and the visitor experience. Act now.

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Status of the Continental Divide Scenic Trail in Wyoming

By Al Sammons, Wind River Chapter of the Back Country Horsemen of Wyoming

If you are an avid horse person who enjoys riding in the back country, the Continental Divide Scenic Trail [CDT] here in Wyoming might be for you. The CDT which travels kitty-corner across the state is slightly over 500 miles in length so lots of space in which to ride. The route has an unlimited variety of riding opportunities. There are deserts, vast forests, tranquil mountain valleys, towering peaks, tundra-covered high country, snowfields, crystal clear flowing streams, plus numerous areas of historical significance.

The Continental Divide National Scenic Trail was approved in 1978 by the US Congress. Similar to the earlier Appalachian Trail in the East and the Pacific Crest Trail along the West Coast, the newer CDT was to follow the backbone of the geographic Continental Divide some 3,100 miles from the Mexican border across five states – New Mexico, Colorado, Wyoming, Idaho, and Montana – to the Canadian line.

By the mid 1980s a tentative route had been mapped out across the five states. Development of the Trail was handed to the United States Forest Service. However, early on, little “pick and shovel” work was done. Finally, in 1995, the Continental Divide Trail Alliance based in Colorado was formed to raise funds for support of the trail idea and to involve the user public in volunteer, on-the-ground work. Back Country Horsemen became involved in the volunteer effort in a big way at this time. As National BCHA Chairman in 2001, I appointed a BCHA member to represent BCH interests on the Alliance Board of Directors. Our rep was a professional surveyor and engineer and his talents were invaluable in many of the final trail route selections.



Here in Wyoming BCH members have contributed thousands of hours of volunteer work to the CDT from the earliest push to get on-the-ground work started to the present time of continued development. While the general location of the route was decided early on, specific location for the exact trail tread often had to be determined. This meant creating an inventory and the marking of the trail across vast expanses of sage brush prairie typical of Wyoming's Red Desert. Old primary and secondary trails on the Shoshone and Bridger Teton national forests – especially in wilderness areas – had to be inventoried. This work included such tasks as the measuring of stream crossings, calculating the incline on steep mountain slopes, and doing the first trail signage. Work was often done 20 to 30 miles from a trailhead so “pack in” by horse and mule was necessary.

Currently, approximately 70% of the CDT route here in Wyoming has seen development and is open to non-motorized travel. However, there are still sections which can be clas-

sified as “primitive,” making horse travel difficult. There are also some unresolved issues where the trail route is not open due to conflicts with private land use. Fortunately, these blocked areas can be by-passed as the route has been temporarily diverted to existing multiple use trails.

For the past few years, BCH chapters such as the Wind River group, of which I am a member, has adopted sections of the trail for annual maintenance – primarily the log out of winter blow-down and assisting the Forest Service with the signing of newer sections of trail development and/or re-route.

While the other states which host the CDT may have larger areas of desert or higher mountain peaks, Wyoming's natural diversity is unequalled. A local BCH member recently made the following comment, “We have the last of the best here in Wyoming.” A ride on the CDT will certainly confirm that statement. For more information on the CDT as related to Wyoming see the state's web page or contact one of their chapters.

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Our BCHA newsletter is read by passionate trail riders, saddle and pack stock owners, avid back country packers and others who have an investment in saddle and pack stock and public land management. We serve over 12,500 members nationwide who belong to 212 active chapters/units and affiliates in 32 states. Our mailing list includes members, public land agency personnel (Forest Service, BLM, National Parks, state land agencies), elected officials, advertisers, and other trail and horse organizations. Visit www.bcha.org for more information on BCHA.

Display Sponsorship Rates

Newsletter Ad Size Price per Single Issue

One column wide (W x H)

2.5 inches x 2.5 inches \$55

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UCD Student Pack Team Wins Bishop Mule Days Intercollegiate Championship

By Lucy Badenhoop, Back Country Horsemen of California Mother Lode Unit

About ten years ago, Bishop Mule Days introduced a separate competition for student packers during the Memorial Day week-long event. Four-person teams collect points in six event categories: 1. Pack Team Comedy Load; 2. Team Packing – Mystery Load, 3. Pack Scramble; 4. Team Packing Pack-Off; 5. The Saturday Bishop Parade; and 6. Support of the Kids Korral.

In 2022, the University of California at Davis (UCD) pack team won the interscholastic championship. Additionally, the UCD team members were champions in 2016 & 2017 and reserve champions in 2015 & 2021. The student team is recruited and organized by Kelli Davis, UCD Horse Barn Manager.

They were sponsored by Mother Lode Unit (MLU) with uniforms, practice equipment, a travel stipend and most importantly, their packing trainer/coach Andy Assereto. The picture shows them wearing the 2021 buckle and holding the 2022 buckle – the same team members competed both years.

The 2022 UCD team (left to right in the picture) consisted of Wes Pezzini (vet med student from Salinas CA), Skylar Campbell (vet med student from Sterling AK), Catharine Renner (nutritional science student from Grass Valley CA), and Sarah Finch (agricultural education student from Ojai CA).

Six other student teams competed from Fresno State University, California State Polytechnic at San Luis Obispo (2 teams), Deep Springs Junior College, Modesto Junior Col-



lege, Reedley Junior College, Rock Creek Pack Station and others provided stock for students to use during competition. Stock for the UCD champions was provided by BCHC member Bill Carter.

