

## Back Country Horsemen of Texas Annual Report 2023 Review and Plans for 2024

In 2023, Back Country Horsemen of Texas (BCHTX) embarked on its inaugural year with a membership of approximately 70 individuals. Despite facing challenges, including the loss of key members, BCHTX demonstrated resilience and commitment to its mission of promoting equestrian access and trail stewardship across Texas. As the organization reflects on its achievements and navigates the road ahead, let's review the highlights of 2023 and outline the plans for 2024.

### Achievements in 2023:

- Fundraising Success:** BCHTX organized its first fundraising event, a poker run in September, which proved to be a successful endeavor, raising over \$1500. Additionally, the sale of 2024 calendars featuring trail riders on Texas trails generated over \$1700, further contributing to the financial resources of the organization.
- Trail Stewardship:** BCHTX conducted trail work days at significant locations such as Big Mineral, LBJ Grasslands, Plum Creek, and Lake Ray Roberts. These efforts underscored the organization's commitment to maintaining and enhancing trails for equestrian use, ensuring safe and enjoyable experiences for riders.
- Community Support and Donations:** BCHTX demonstrated its dedication to supporting local parks and recreational areas by donating funds to various projects. Notable contributions include \$150 to Palo Duro State Park for water tanks, \$100 to Pat Mayse for pens, and \$500 to Big Mineral for gravel.
- Grant Acquisition:** BCHTX secured a \$1,000 grant from the Back Country Horsemen of America (BCHA) chapter grant for Lake Ray Roberts, enhancing the organization's capacity for conservation and trail development efforts.

### Plans for 2024:

- Continued Trail Stewardship:** BCHTX plans to sustain its trail stewardship initiatives by organizing workdays at Big Mineral, Mineral Wells, Palo Duro, LBJ, Lake Ray Roberts, and other areas requiring assistance. These efforts will ensure the upkeep and enhancement of trails across Texas.
- Membership Growth and Engagement:** With a goal of reaching 150 members by the end of 2024, BCHTX will focus on membership recruitment and engagement activities. Building a robust and active membership base is crucial for expanding the organization's impact and effectiveness in advocating for equestrian interests.
- Infrastructure Improvement:** BCHTX aims to address infrastructure needs, such as restoring the vault toilet at Big Mineral and installing new boards on rails to trails in Mineral Wells. \$1,000 was raised for this project. These projects will enhance the usability and safety of recreational areas for equestrians and other trail users.
- Partnerships and Advocacy:** BCHTX will strengthen partnerships with entities like Big Bend National Park and Big Bend State Park to advocate for increased equestrian access and engagement. Collaborating with these organizations will amplify BCHTX's advocacy efforts and promote the interests of equestrians statewide.

### Conclusion:

In its inaugural year, Back Country Horsemen of Texas faced challenges and celebrated successes, demonstrating resilience and dedication to its mission. As the organization looks towards 2024, BCHTX remains committed to promoting equestrian access, trail stewardship, and community engagement across Texas. With a clear vision and strategic plans in place, BCHTX is poised to continue making significant contributions to the preservation and enjoyment of Texas trails.