

Backcountry Horsemen of America: Idaho State Chapter

2024 Year-End Summary Report

As we reflect on 2024, the Idaho State Chapter of the Backcountry Horsemen of America remains dedicated to its mission of protecting and maintaining public lands for equestrian use. Despite challenges such as wildfires, extreme weather conditions, and evolving land use policies, our chapters have continued to demonstrate resilience and commitment to stewardship, advocacy, and public education.

Spanning the state from the Canadian border to Utah, our chapters oversee extensive trail systems, engaging in critical maintenance projects and fostering community involvement through outreach and education. This report details the significant accomplishments of each chapter in 2024.

Chapter Reports

Portneuf River Backcountry Horsemen

Projects & Community Engagement:

- Hosted a free dinner and auction, which led to increased membership.
- Participated in the **Spring Environmental Fair**, focusing on bear safety and horse education.
- Conducted an assessment of six horse corrals at **Big Springs Campground**, originally rebuilt in 2015.

Trail Clearing & Maintenance:

- Conducted the **Eagle Rock Ride**, encountering unexpected trail closures due to missing gates.
- Completed minor trail work, including approaches to a new bridge at **West Fork Mink Creek** and improvements to **Lead Draw single-track trail**.

Conclusion: Portneuf River BCH engaged in successful public outreach efforts while addressing key trail maintenance issues. The chapter remains dedicated to increasing trail accessibility and expanding future service projects.

Twin Rivers Backcountry Horsemen

Projects & Community Engagement:

- Partnered with **Lewis Clark Saddle Club** for monthly meetings and trail challenges.

- Hosted **CPR/First Aid Training** for 18 members.
- Organized the **Annual Chili Ride** and the **Gate Closing Membership Ride**.
- Purchased an **electric chainsaw** for improved trail maintenance efforts.

Trail Clearing & Maintenance:

- Cleared trails in **Asotin Creek Drainage**, dealing with post-wildfire obstructions.
- Assisted with the **Dough Creek Adopt-A-Cabin Project**, focusing on fire mitigation and structural maintenance.
- Cleared **Dry Lick Creek Trail** and **Fordyce-Cabin Gulch Trails**.
- Logged out multiple trail sections in the **John's Creek Work Project**.
- Removed fallen trees and overgrowth during the **Isabella Creek & Elmer Creek Project**.

Conclusion: Twin Rivers BCH made remarkable progress in trail clearing, especially in areas affected by wildfires. Their proactive approach to public education and safety training strengthened their community engagement.

Teton Valley Backcountry Horsemen (TTBCH)

Projects & Community Engagement:

- Hosted a **Pack Clinic & Tack Sale**.
- Organized the **Teton Valley County Fair Trail Challenge**.
- Participated in **Fremont Ag Days**, educating over 100 children.
- Volunteered at **Targhee Kids Camp**, introducing youth to equine activities.

Trail Clearing & Maintenance:

- Provided **7-day pack support** hauling lumber for **South Bitch Creek and Teton Canyon bog bridge replacements**.
- Maintained the **Moose Creek Adopt-A-Trail** for the third consecutive year.
- Completed two **USFS service projects in Coyote Meadows**, including hitching rail safety improvements and bog bridge construction.

Conclusion: TTBCH successfully balanced education, community service, and trail maintenance, ensuring safe and sustainable backcountry access for equestrians.

Cache Peak Backcountry Horsemen

Projects & Community Engagement:

- Organized the **Boots 'N' Draw Ride** at Niagara State Park.
- Hosted the **4-H Memorial Horse Show Clinic**.
- Participated in **local parades**, including Hazleton Days and the Albion Christmas Parade.
- Hosted the **BCHI Fall Directors Meeting** in Jerome.

Trail Clearing & Maintenance:

- Conducted routine trail maintenance projects across Southern Idaho.

Conclusion: Cache Peak BCH focused on fostering equestrian community engagement while maintaining essential backcountry trails.

Heartland Backcountry Horsemen

Projects & Community Engagement:

- Provided **CPR/First Aid and Chainsaw Certification** training.
- Organized a **trail-sharing discussion** with bicycle groups.
- Launched a **new website and Facebook page**.

Trail Clearing & Maintenance:

- Removed **downed barbed wire fencing** from the Weiser River Trail.
- Maintained the **Deseret Trailhead**.
- Cleared **Six-Mile Trail**.

Conclusion: Despite wildfire-related limitations, Heartland BCH completed key maintenance projects and improved public outreach efforts.

Salmon River Backcountry Horsemen

Projects & Community Engagement:

- Donated to and volunteered for the **Whitewater Therapeutic Riding Association**.

- Created a **participation incentive program** for volunteers.
- Provided **educational first aid and sawyer training**.
- Participated in **highway cleanup efforts**.

Trail Clearing & Maintenance:

- Cleared **4 miles of Lower Henry Creek Trail**, addressing 104 fallen trees.
- Assisted with **bridge replacement pack support** in Pashimeroi Valley.
- Maintained **five trails covering 54 miles**.

Conclusion: Salmon River BCH overcame numerous challenges, continuing to play a vital role in trail maintenance and safety training.

Squaw Butte Backcountry Horsemen

Projects & Community Engagement:

- Conducted **Chainsaw Certification training** for multiple organizations.
- Hosted **two public rides**.

Trail Clearing & Maintenance:

- Cleared **Joes Creek and Sage Hen Reservoir Trails**.
- Provided **trail packing support** for Farley Lake and Seven Devils.
- Conducted a **reconnaissance ride with the BLM** for future conservation projects.

Conclusion: Despite weather-related setbacks, Squaw Butte BCH remained active in training and trail restoration projects.

Treasure Valley Backcountry Horsemen

Projects & Community Engagement:

- Hosted the **New Year's Day Ride at Wilson Creek**.
- Assisted at the **Sportsman's Show and Horse Expo**.
- Planned the **BCHI State Convention (March 2025)**.

Trail Clearing & Maintenance:

- Removed and replaced the **Elk Creek Bridge**.
- Cleared **Porter Creek Trail in Frank Church Wilderness**.
- Assisted in **two bridge-building projects** in the Idaho City Ranger District.
- Rebuilt fences in **Atlanta, Idaho**.

Conclusion: Treasure Valley BCH significantly contributed to infrastructure restoration while maintaining strong public outreach.

Final Summary

The Backcountry Horsemen of Idaho continue to demonstrate unwavering dedication to preserving public lands and ensuring safe equestrian access. With strategic partnerships, consistent trail maintenance, and ongoing education initiatives, each chapter plays a crucial role in sustaining Idaho's backcountry heritage for future generations. The accomplishments of 2024 set a solid foundation for continued success in 2025.