

**BCH of Virginia State Report for 2025-  
Presented at the 2026 BCHA National Board Meeting**



<b>BCHVA CHAPTERS</b>		
<b>Chapter Name</b>	<b>Abbreviation</b>	<b>Primary public agency and land</b>
BCH of the Virginia Highlands	BCHVH	George Washington /Jefferson National Forest, Mt Rogers NRA
BCH Eastern Divide	BCHED	George Washington /Jefferson National Forest- Eastern Divide District, County and State Parks
Golden Horseshoe BCH	GHBCH	George Washington /Jefferson National Forest, St.Parks
Coalfields BCH- New Chapter	CFBCH	George Washington /Jefferson National Forest- Clinch Ranger District, Cumberland Gap Natnl Pk

**BCHVA BOD & Officers-**

- Chairman -Jeff Nelson- Virginia Highlands
- 1st Vice Chairman- Jane Eckes- Golden Horseshoe
- 2nd Vice Chairman- Nancy Sluys- Virginia Highlands
- Treasurer- Sandi Pennington- Eastern Divide
- Secretary- Marge Lewter- Eastern Divide
- National Director- Jeff Nelson- Virginia Highlands
- National Director-Sally Farrell- Eastern Divide
- Alternate National Director- Nancy Sluys- Virginia Highlands
- Board Member- Monica Dean- Golden Horseshoe



# Backcountry Horsemen of America

## Volunteer Hours Report

January 1 - December 31, 2025

Back Country Horsemen of Virginia

	P1 Totals	Rate per hour/mile/day	Total Value	
Total Basic Hours	850	\$34.79	<b>\$29,571.50</b>	Calculated per hour
Total Skilled Hours	862	\$52.19	<b>\$44,987.78</b>	Calculated per hour
Total Trail Recon Hours	241	\$34.79	<b>\$8,384.39</b>	Calculated per hour
Total LNT - Education	31	\$34.79	<b>\$1,078.49</b>	Calculated per hour
Total Public Meetings	70	\$34.79	<b>\$2,435.30</b>	Calculated per hour
Total Administrative Service	170	\$34.79	<b>\$5,914.30</b>	Calculated per hour
Total Travel Time	617	\$34.79	<b>\$21,465.43</b>	Calculated per hour
<b>Total Hours</b>	<b>2841</b>			
Wilderness Trail Miles	25			
National Scenic Trail Miles	0			
Other Trail Miles	947			
<b>Total Trail Miles</b>	<b>972</b>			
Personal Vehicle	9485	\$0.67	<b>\$6,354.95</b>	Calculated per mile
Stock Hauling	5284	\$1.35	<b>\$7,133.40</b>	Calculated per mile
<b>Total Travel Miles</b>	<b>14769</b>			
Power Equipment	280	\$35.00	<b>\$9,800.00</b>	Calculated per hour
Heavy Equipment	136	\$140.00	<b>\$19,040.00</b>	Calculated per hour
<b>Total Equipment Hours</b>	<b>416</b>			
Total Stock (Pack and Saddle)	116			
<b>Total Stock Days</b>	<b>160</b>	\$125.00	<b>\$20,000.00</b>	Calculated per day
Total Donations	\$10,025.00		<b>\$10,025.00</b>	
		<b>Total</b>	<b>\$186,190.54</b>	

# BCH of Virginia State News

## **Agency and Partner Interaction-**

All Virginia chapters are very engaged with their land management offices. Chapters are partnering with other organizations to combine strengths to get bigger things done

The **Eastern Divide** chapter, in the Blacksburg/ Roanoke area, is very active in several city, county and national forest trail systems where they help maintain trails and educate other trail users. Members continue to work with the Craig Botetourt Scenic Trail Committee in planning the rail trail and acquiring equestrian parking.. They have also been partnering with the town of Blacksburg, the US Forest Service and other user groups on the new McDonald Hollow Multi Use Trail System and also with the US Forest Service on the new Grace Furnace area. EDBCH also maintains the Flat Top trail system adjacent to the White Cedars Horse Camp in the George Washington / Jefferson National Forest, Eastern Divide District. This area sustained significant damage from Hurricane Helene and BCHED is spearheading the clean up efforts.

The **Golden Horseshoe** chapter, near Lexington, VA, interacts with the Glenwood Peddler district of the George Washington / Jefferson National Forest to maintain the Glenwood Horse Trail (65+ miles). BCHGH have modified their volunteer agreement with the Forest Service to include using mechanized equipment in the maintenance of trails so they can take over some of the backlog. Coordinating with the Forest Service to repaint all the blazes on the Glenwood Horse Trail.

The **Virginia Highlands** chapter, in the Mount Rogers National Recreation Area, interacts frequently with the Forest Service and have formed a team approach to addressing problems in the forest. There has been positive turnover in the Forest Service with a new Rec Manager, Area Ranger and several new trail techs coming aboard. They have been eager to work with BCHVH and have been very receptive to our ideas.

BCHVH has partnered with the Forest Service on several significant grant opportunities along with other partner organizations such as the Appalachian Conservation Corps (ACC) and Southern Appalachian Wilderness Stewards (SAWS).

The **Coalfield** chapter near Coeburn has just gotten started and are reaching out to their land managers to get their volunteer agreements in order. Members of the group are also connected with the Tri-State Trail Coalition and the Cumberland Gap Trail Alliance.

# BCHVA Chapter Reports

## BCH Eastern Divide Chapter

Hurricane Helene damage was extensive at White Cedar Horse Camp. In the Dismal Falls area of the George Washington - Jefferson National Forest. The Forest Service Fire Crew came and did much of the work, clearing piles of large uprooted trees. BCH chapter members had a work weekend with folks from two chapters helping and got the trails passable.

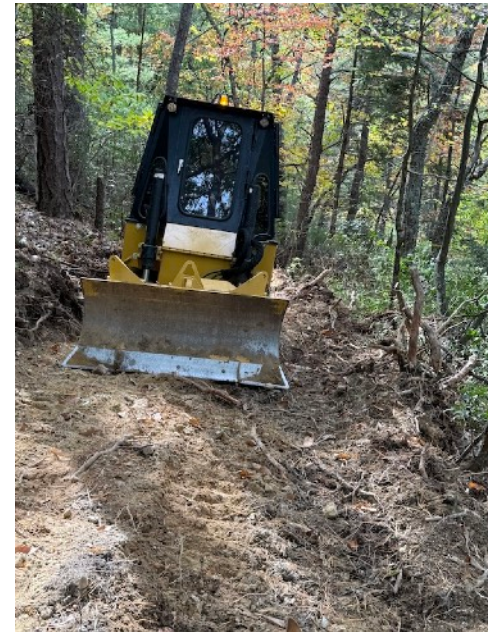
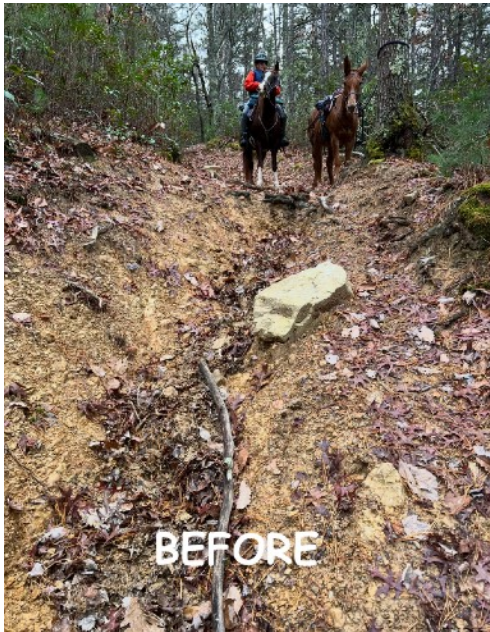
Other activities were less well attended due to summer heat. We recently had a mule packing demo and bike education day for the 5<sup>th</sup> graders at McCleary Elementary school. The Craig Botetourt Scenic Rail Trail is being developed and BCH members were instrumental in obtaining a grant to purchase land for an equestrian parking lot in the midpoint of the 26-mile trail. Members have been involved in community outreach and volunteer work days.



## Virginia Highlands-

The first half of the year BCHVH was busy clearing trees that continued to fall due to the damage caused by Hurricane Helene. BCHVH was authorized to use UTVs to speed up access to many areas of trail and the rest was done by horse/mule back.

They were also able to restart a project that got postponed due to the hurricane. The Virginia Highlands Horse Trail/ Mikes Gap reroute Project was a 0.6 reroute to bypass a dangerously washed out section of the iconic trail that spans the whole length of the Mt Rogers NRA. BCHVH had originally proposed the project over 15 years ago and after years of persistence it was finally approved. With the help of a FS bulldozer operator, AK Trails LLC and BCHVH members the reroute was completed in 6 days and the bad washout was replaced with a beautiful new trail section. The entire project was planned and executed entirely by BCHVH.



## Golden Horseshoe -

Throughout the year the Golden Horseshoe chapter continued to re-blaze the 65+ mile Glenwood Horse Trail that they started last year. We also maintained 4 main trail heads, which included keeping the trash cleaned up, limbing, weed eating and mowing grass etc. We had 4 large group scheduled work days doing brushing out of trail and several smaller projects on the trail.

3 schedule meetings in person with good attendance.

First aid class with 12 people attending.

We also also helped the Eastern Divide chapter with their clean up weekend at White Cedar Horse Camp, which was damaged in Hurricane Helene.

Many postings of things on our GHBCHA website. Thanks to Leah and others.

Multiple meetings , phone calls and emails with our Forest Service district.

We continue to be impressed with Megan Martin and our volunteer coordinator Plinio Beres. They are the two best we've had in this district in a long, Our head ranger Lauren Stull is much more engaged with us than in past years !



## Coalfield-

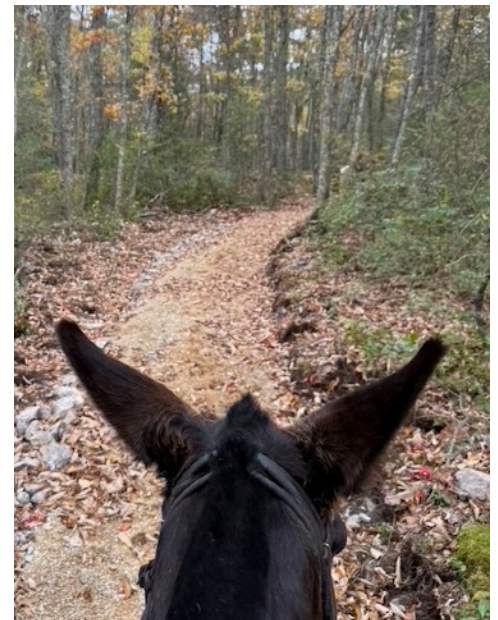
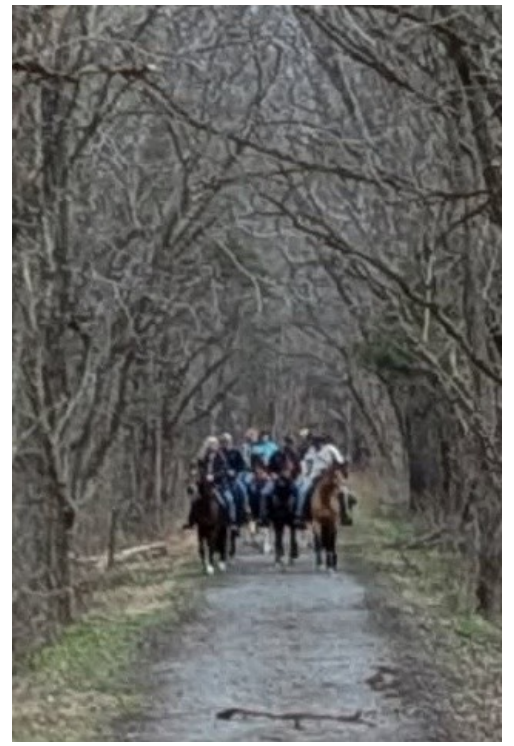
The Coalfield chapter is located in far southwest Virginia, in the Coeburn area. They are maintaining trails in the Clinch Ranger District of the George Washington / Jefferson National Forest and the Cumberland Gap National Historic Park. Coalfield has been growing their membership and their relationships with the land managers.

Members of the Coalfields chapter joined the BCH of East Tennessee in clearing the Wallen Ridge Trail that was still blocked with blow downs from Hurricane Helene



# Back Country Horsemen of Virginia Chapters Gettin' things done and havin' fun!!!





**Happy Trails!!!**