BCHA National Director Call Notes

October 28, 2026

Meeting began at 5:04PM Pacific (45 Attendees)

Financials as of September 30, 2026

- Balance Sheet
  - Bank account, investment accounts and CD balances provided.
  - Liabilities provided.
- Budget vs Actual
  - Donations, sponsorship and grant income provided.

Status of moving the investment accounts to Baird from Stifel. We are in the transition phase including providing and signing documents.

Some discussion on the investment fees.

REI Grant: There are not any restrictions on this grant, but we have not had a discussion on how we are going to spend the money.

Public Lands

National Park Service Rule to Expand Bicycle and E-Bike Access in National Parks: The NPS issued a proposed rule (i.e., regulation) on August 31st to expand bicycle and e-bike access. It would streamline the agency's process to approve bike use, including minimizing opportunities for public input. The proposed rule would affect primarily use on paved roads and pathways, yet would extend to "improved" trails indicating that park superintendents could authorize e-bike use on any improved trails per the definition provided. Reached out to BCHA states and public land officers seeking clarification of whether our members use and would be concerned with e-bike use on improved trails.

USFS Changes to NEPA Public Comment and Objections Process: Reviewed Final Rule, issued Oct. 13th, that serves to limit (truncate) public review periods for

EAs and EISs issued by the USFS and limits the timeline for the submittal of formal objections among other things. The minimum public comment periods were shortened from 30 days to 15 days for EAs and from 45 days to 30 days for EISs. Written objections must be filed with the responsible official within I0 days following the publication of the draft EA decision (FONSI) or 20 days following the publication of the draft EIS decision (ROD) as posted on the USDA website. Forests will no longer be obligated to inform the public of these opportunities to comment/object, as members of the public will now have to regularly follow the local forest website for such information. This latter point will make the advocacy of BCHA chapters more difficult and will require BCHA member/volunteers to monitor a forest's website at least weekly for announcements.

USFS 2005 Travel Management Rule Revisions: Submitted to the US Forest Service on September 23rd the BCHA-led public comment letter regarding proposed revisions to the Travel Management Rule (see previous Public Lands monthly reports for details and background on the proposed repeal). Prior to submittal, the letter was circulated widely for organizational sign-on and garnered the support of 90 trail and recreation organizations, including many BCHA states and chapters, in addition to letter co-authors American Hiking Society (AHS) and American Trails.

Worked with AHS and American Trails to distribute a press release touting the coalition letter. The release included a quote from BCHA's chairman. Received interest from both *Politico* and *High-Country News* regarding the letter, yet no media outlets have reported on the letter to date.

Coalition Meetings: Randy represented BCHA in the following key and virtual coalition meetings:

- **Northwest Trails Roundtable**—Topics included:
    - US Forest Service Travel Mgt Rule public comment letters;



  - Continuing difficulties getting USFS grants and agreements into place;
  - America the Beautiful Act (S.1547, HR 9250 that would extend the Public Lands Legacy Restoration Fund), which appears to be held up by Sen. Lee (UT) and his demand that there be "offsets" identified in order to pay for the bill.
- **Travel Management Rule Core Team**—Topics included collective efforts and public comment letters on USFS Travel Mgt Rule revisions and similar anticipated rulemaking proposal pending by the BLM.
- **Partnership for the National Trails System**—Participant in Advocacy & Policy Committee meeting, with topics of interest to BCHA including:
  - USFS Roadless Rule repeal could affect 1,400 miles on 20 NS&H trails;
  - USFS Travel Mgt Rule revision; and
  - America the Beautiful Act and the hope that the Lame Duck Congress will revive the bill.

Regulatory changes affecting public involvement in park and forest service decisions, explaining that the Park Service proposal requires a new approach through specific recommendations rather than protest letters. The Forest Service has eliminated the requirement for forests to notify the public about comment opportunities, shifting the responsibility to stakeholders to monitor Forest Service websites for public notices. Chairman also mentioned a new Forest Service grant process using a Notice of Funding Opportunity model, similar to BLM's approach, which will be discussed further in a November webinar. Finally, Chairman requested examples of successful collaboration between equestrian groups and hunting communities to avoid trail closures during hunting seasons.

National Bike Policy Development

Keith presented and is working on developing a national bike policy in response to concerns about lost trails, while there was agreement on the need for such a policy, it must carefully balance enforcement with local management capabilities. The group discussed sending NEPA guidelines to members through the monthly newsletter, with Randy agreeing to write the content.

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Comment: With this resolution/policy we need to write this based on what BCHA needs, not other partner needs and it needs to have teeth.

Committee Updates

There are some changes within the committees…

Education: Connie Long will be the Education Chair.

Education, Marketing & Media and Fundraising will be working more closely together.

Working on "What Does BCHA Do for You", this will help Expansion as well as Chapters.

Fundraising: Worked on the REI Grant, John Deere Raffle was completed and still working on the video. Meeting monthly still.

Public Lands/Saw: The three areas in the new structure is working well together. Mark was at 9 mile last week attending a training and spent time discussing saw certification with the Forest Service. The saw course is becoming more difficult for the C level, many are going back to B. There were 12 forest coordinators that attended 9-mile crosscut sharpening training.

Chapter Support Grants: Time to turn in your reports if you received a grant last year.

Expansion: Still working with a couple of states to try and get them join BCHA. Misty recorded an AHC podcast today that will be released in early November.

AQHA

Received the final contract and asked the EC to take one more look at it and one question was asked. AQHA provided further information regarding that question,

and the Chairman is ready to sign the contract with AQHA. There are 200,000 members in AQHA and they will be pushing those members to BCHA.

Other

Forest Service Equestrian Safety Course. Does BCHA have someone who can teach this class? Yes, we do have members who can help you with this training. Mark Himmel, Craig Ferdig, Connie Long were a few named.

Next Meeting

We will remain the same schedule in November, but we will skip the December meeting.

Meeting ended at 5:53PM Pacific