



EAST SLOPE BACK COUNTRY HORSEMEN

30 YEARS TRAIL TAILS AUG. 2011

OFFICERS

President:

Bob Hermance

Vice President:

Steve Hutton

Secretary:

LeAnn Hermance

Treasurer:

Fred Fitzpatrick

State Directors:

Ron Ries (11-13)

Connie Manning (10-12)

Alt. State Director:

Kurt Dyer

Chapter Directors:

Dick Kinyon

Merlyn Huso

Lisa Schmidt

Dale Sand

Debbie Ries

Gary Manning

Jr. Director:

Kelsey Fitzpatrick

Editor: Gary Manning

Email: candgmanning@msn.com

Webmaster: Fred Fitzpatrick

Email: richfitz@3rivers.net

BCH of Montana:

Chairman: John Chepulis
Beartooth BCH

ESBCH-WEB SITE:

[www.bchmt.org/esbch/
default.html](http://www.bchmt.org/esbch/default.html)

**MONTANA BCH WEB
SITE:** www.bchmt.org

President's Letter

Greetings,

Can you believe how fast the summer is going? I've been working to get the hay up but the wind has been a major pain. I got lucky that the wind only bunched the hay not totally blew it away. Next week we will be irrigating up until we go fishing with Gary and Connie.

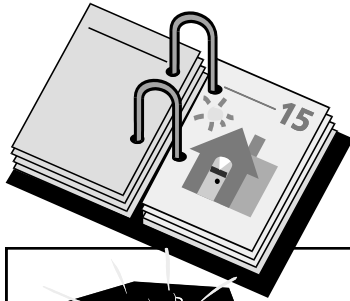
I hope you had better luck in the drawing for tags than I. Ron Ries will have lots of help getting his cow elk this year.

To date we have completed 3 projects, Swift Dam, Green Fork and Black Tail. Our last project will be the Swift Dam Poker ride August 6th and 7th. We just completed the Black Tail project this weekend. The weather was beautiful and we completed replacing 6 bridge planks and extend another puncheon bridge 15' over a mud bog. Thanks to Merlyn, Joe and Helen, Ron and Debbie, LeAnn and Charlotte Marshall for all their help.

Due to conflicting schedules and members health issues, the Labor Day ride has been cancelled.

We have received great comments from the public on the improvements to the Swift Dam Campground. Ian Bardwell from the Forest Service commented "that is the best trail head in the region". If you have not had a chance to see the improvements, come to the poker ride and join the fun. If you can donate or collect some door prizes for the Poker Ride that would help us out a lot, thanks.

Bob



HAPPY BIRTHDAYS AUG. 2011

Bob Facklam

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO ALL

East Slope Back country Horsemen General Meeting July 20, 2011

Bob Hermance called the meeting to order at 7:12 pm. Ron Ries, motioned to accept the minutes as published 2nd by Dick Kinyon, motion carried. Present were Fred Fitzpatrick, Ron and Debbie Ries, Dick Kinyon, Gary and Connie Manning, Bill Poser, Joe and Helen Suta, Bob and LeAnn Hermance.

Fred gave the treasurers report. Bills presented were from Connie \$33.75 for the Blacktail project. Helen Suta moved to accept the treasurers report and pay bills as presented, Debbie Ries 2nd the motion, motion carried.

Presentation was viewed on Equine trailhead gate entries DVD from John Simons, Beartooth BCH.

Unfinished business;

The Hannan Gulch bridge project for this upcoming weekend was discussed. The trail head is about 3 to 4 miles from the administration camp site and the project is about 4 miles from the trailhead. Discussion followed on trailering the horses to the trailhead from the administration site. A decision will be done at the admin site. Planks need to be picked up at Forest Service in Choteau. Need feed for horses in case there is no grass. Bob will visit with Ian on what equipment will be available at admin site.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

July 23-24: Blacktail Bridge Work Project (Hannan Gulch)

Aug. 3: No Directors Meeting

Aug. 6: Grizzly Days & Parade in Dupuyer, Mt

Aug. 6-7: Poker Ride and Work Project (Trail Work around Swift Dam Reservoir)

Aug 17: Regular Meeting at the Conrad Library in Conrad at 7:00 PM

Sept 3-5: Labor Day Weekend—**No Ride Scheduled**

Sept 7: Directors Meeting in Conrad, 7:00 PM

Sept 21: Regular Meeting at the Conrad Library in Conrad at 7:00 PM

Swift Dam Poker ride, August 6 & 7. Connie will get the hot dogs and hamburgers. Stations will be Bob and LeAnn, Steve and Lisa, Joe and Helen. Ron Ries will cook burgers. Connie will have cards and supplies. Please remember [We need to pick up door prizes from generous supporters and have them marked who donated.](#)

Labor Day ride. Due to conflicting schedules and members health issues, the ride has been cancelled. We will discuss this at the next meeting to see if there are any changes.

Ron Ries brought up that Cliff Gustafson was very impressed with the sign that has been placed at Swift Dam. Very good response from the public has been received.

Committee reports: Fred brought up that he put the ESBCH on face book. If you have a face book account, go to your home page, in the search line type in East Slope Back Country Horsemen, and click on “I like this”. When we get enough people to click on this, we can get a domain name.

Ron Ries brought up a possible project in the Beartooth on putting in hitch rails. There have been problems with burglary in the area and 4 wheelers in the upper campground racing. There is a potential that the gate going to Elkhorn will be permanently locked.

Next general meeting will be August 17th at the Conrad Public Library and Debbie will bring treats.

No further business, Connie motioned to adjourn, Ron Ries 2nd, meeting adjourned.

BLACK TAIL BRIDGE PROJECT

Preparations for the Black Tail Bridge project started with the food preplanning, very important. Debbie, Connie and LeAnn did the planning and pre cooking. Not knowing what to expect, we were very pleasantly surprised to find a wonderful administrative cabin site with hot and cold running water, bathroom and 8 bunks. Friday night's dinner was spaghetti with all the fixings. Those who come to the work projects know we always eat very well. Saturday morning was piggies, hash browns and eggs and sub sandwiches for lunch. Helen Suta helped with the cooking and made a delicious blueberry Dutch oven dessert for dinner of which I promptly claimed the leftovers. Le Ann and Helen stayed back at the cabin so the food would be ready when we got back. They pulled weeds around the admin site and cleaned around the memorial stone from the helicopter crash.

Bob had picked up the bridge planks and tools for the bridge repairs in Choteau. So Saturday morning we loaded five pack horses, three loaded with planks and two with tools. The project was to replace rotten planks in one bridge and to add 15 feet to the next bridge down the trail #223. It was a beautiful ride as the scenery and weather were great. We couldn't have asked for a better day.

We arrived at the first work location within one hour and forty five minutes, unloaded one load of planks and noticed the next project was only a little ways up the trail, so we unloaded the remaining planks up there. Bob, Ron, Debbie, Joe, Merlyn and Charlotte began taking bad planks off and replacing with the new. This didn't take too long so we started on the next one. We cleaned out mud and the old bridge debris to make way for the new sill. We then had to cut the timbers for under the planks. Needless to say Ron wanted to bring his chainsaw, but didn't get it loaded, so now we are doing it the old fashion way with Ron cursing under his breath with each cut. We managed to find trees real close to the work project, so Fred (the horse) didn't have to drag them very far. We cut 2 sills and 3 timbers and after placing them, laid the planks, replaced the

side rail on the old part of the bridge that had been torn off and put two new ones on the new part of the bridge. After finishing we had two planks left so we went back to the other bridge and replaced two more. We left the project at 5:00 pm and got back for supper at 6:30 pm. We had a great day and a successfully completed the project.

Respectively submitted by Debbie Ries, Bob and Le Ann Hermance

'The Big One That Didn't Get Away'

Debbie & I along with Debbie's Mom Arcelia left to fish @ Prince Rupert, B.C (1225miles). Tuesday morning we loaded the boat with supplies, beer, whiskey, etc. & headed for sea to fish the next 3 days. We baited and set 2 crab pots as we left the harbor in 85-100ft. of water, then on to the fishing hole.

2 ½ hours later 20+ miles of open sea, we were again amidst small islands, we found our spot where we baited and set 12 shrimp pots in 325-400 ft. water. I drove the boat while Debbie and Louis set out the pots, watching the depth sounder and trying to keep at the perfect depth. Then we set out for a spot to bottom fish in 200' or so water. We soon found it anchored and started to fish, within 20 minutes Debbie was hauling in a fish, that seemed to be pretty good, after bring it in & it making 4 or 5 runs out, she had it on board it was a 77# X 54" long halibut. Not bad for our 1st fish, hope this keeps up!! We fished till Arcelia had a 40# X 29" halibut and Ron a 44# X 40". Debbie managed a nice Red Snapper. It was getting evening so we went and pulled our shrimp pots, we got 200, we rebaited and set the pots again, Now to find the cove to tie up for the evening, we relaxed w/Caesars, high balls, and beer, before supper of hamburgers then to sleep.

Next morning we had fresh cinnamon rolls, butter, & breakfast. We left the cove and pulled our shrimp pots, we scored another 200 or so, rebaited and reset. Then off to bottom fishing spot, it wasn't too windy so Louis decided to take us to a favorite spot out at sea. We crossed 5-6 miles of 500-600' seas, he has his special fishing holes at sea marked on his computer GPS & ocean Quad maps. He

CONTINUED NEXT PAGE

CONTINUED

showed me on the computer where we would soon come to a plateau that would be 300-400 yards wide and ½ mile long & 200-225' deep water, we set anchor, baited our gear and began to fish. We had a couple bites, Debbie got 2 red snappers and Archie a couple halibut. I was fishing along through all this only getting a couple bites, but nothing would hook up. After a little longer it felt like I had hooked something, I was reeling in, but it wouldn't come after fighting this a few minutes, Louis said let me see your pole. He grabbed it, reeled and jerked reeled and jerked and said hell you got the bottom. We pulled anchor, he told me to circle the boat so he could free the hook, we were about ½ ways around with Louis reeling and jerking. When he said holy shit it's taking off I believe you got something, not sure what it is, but its got to be big!! The reel started slowly reeling out, it went & went, and by this time I was at the back of the boat (boat was auto pilot). So I started to reel it in as fast and hard as I could which was slowly, only to watch all the line go out again, it did this 3-4 times, then Debbie came to help between 3 of us Debbie, & Louis and me and 45 minutes later. We finally got sight of it down in the water, I ask what is it, Louis said it's a halibut. I brought it a little closer, now I saw it is quite large, I ask Louis how big it is. He says it is a monster and was going to cut the line and let it go. It's too big and no good to eat anyway. Grandma Archie says NO were not, we want it, and I was saying the same. Louis doesn't like to bring in big fish, they can be dangerous, he hurt his back last year bringing in one that wasn't dead, it flopped part way in and jerked & twisted his back. Louis has the line now, he is sizing up the fish & He tells me I didn't want that big S.O.B., I said Bull shit!! He says well then get the gun; he's got to be dead before we bring it aboard. I get the gun (auto 22) bring it back to Louis he say we got to kill him fast, he is only hooked in the jaw and all the fighting the hook has worn a large hole, if it flops too much it could come loose. Louis lets off 4-5 rounds wildly. I say don't shoot the line and there go 4-5 more rounds. The fish relaxes a little and Louis says get the gaff. So I give him his gaff, he pulls the fish closer to the boat and pulls it doesn't come out of the water much. Louis says get another gaff, I need help. So I grab a gaff, slam it into its skull and try to pull, it comes up a little further. I said how the F are we

going to do this, Louis says OK, get good footing and a good hold and on 3 pull like hell!! Our timing was perfect and we just barely got it over the side rail as I was falling backwards and it flipped in the boat partially on top of me. I got tangled in some rope in the bottom of the boat. Once in the boat it was huge!! Grandma said my that's a big fish. After we all calmed down & caught our breath. I measured it @70" long X 180#, I was tired as hell that ended my fishing for the day! We finished the day with 8 red snapper and 4 more halibut, 200 shrimp. We could cove up again for the night more Caesars, high balls, beer, and fish stories. In AM more hot rolls & breakfast, pull shrimp pots final time and another 200 more shrimp. It was decided since we were limited out (8 halibut with Louis's 2), we would salmon fish today. We fished all day with only 1 bit, but no salmon, back in the harbor we pulled our 2 crab pots, and both were nearly full. Most were females that had to go back; we netted 15 crabs we could keep.

Ron & Debbie Ries



The Green Fork Trip

By Lisa Schmidt

How long does it take you to slow down? How much faster will you complete your to-do list by taking a couple of days to ignore it? Summertime is hectic at our house -- all those projects that must be done while the grass is growing and the ground is thawed. The days are long and it is hard to let even an hour or two of sunshine slip by without moving one step closer to finishing one of those projects.

CONTINUED NEXT PAGE

CONTINUED

Steve had started cutting hay and I was still trying to finish putting tin on the roof when the ESBCH trip in to the Green Fork administrative site crept up on us. Just like everyone else, the juggling act among what we have to do, what we need to do and what we want to do weighed on our minds before this trip. Our club had invited kids from the 4-H horse program to join us for an overnight packing lesson and weed pull. LeAnn and I were supposed to plan and cook the meals -- this was a first for both of us. "Don't forget critical supplies" became our mantra. Of course, I forgot a few things, but nobody starved to death. Fortunately, Connie had prepared parts of two meals ahead of time and Debbie helped plan the menu so everyone had something to eat. Haying overwhelmed Steve's sense of responsibility so he decided he would stay home. Abby had no compunction about heading to the mountains and I wasn't about to leave LeAnn with all the dishes so Abby and I packed our gear.

Our crew consisted of Merlyn Huso, Joe Suta, Bob and LeAnn Hermance, Abby Hutton, Travis and Casey Burrows and me. At least, that was our crew on Friday night. Sometime in the night, Steve crept into my tent and was reminded just how hard that ground can feel without an air mattress. He had finished baling the cut hay by about 9 p.m. Then, on Saturday morning, Billie and Connie Manning joined up for the ride in. They turned around and rode back out on Saturday, no doubt because they had dinner on the stove back at Connie and Gary's cabin.

Bob and Joe were packing young horses. LeAnn and Merlyn packed reliable mules. Steve and I took turns leading Abby while she rode her own horse all the way in and all the way out.

All of the horses did their job well. Their rhythmic stepping kept a constant beat for 11 miles. Straight Creek roared down the mountain, the wildflowers bloomed all around us and the trees offered that pine scent that can't be truly duplicated anywhere else.

Abby was sure she smelled a grizzly. "I smell a grizzly, Mom. Mom? Mom, I smell a grizzly. What does a grizzly smell like?" she chattered.

"Not like this," I replied.

By the time we pulled in to the administrative site, the conversation among riders had turned from all the commotion of the outside world to relaxed talk

about the peace and beauty of here and now. And -- big bonus -- we did not find any noxious weeds around the Green Fork cabin. Instead, Casey and Abby took off their boots, rolled up their pants and splashed in the creek.

All the planning, organizing, packing, saddling and driving gave us those rhythmic steps, rushing water, blooming flowers, sunshine on our backs, awesome cliffs and peaks, mellow conversation and smiles. They slowed us down so we could speed up later.

It worked. And that's what ESBCH is all about.



The East Slope Back Country Horsemen is now on Facebook for all of you that mingle on this social network. We would ask that you logon to your Facebook page and check us out; you can access the page by doing a search from your home page by typing [East Slope Back Country Horsemen](#).

We have pictures from our last three work projects and some current events coming up such as Grizzly Day in Dupuyer on August 6th. We also have our Poker Ride at Swift Dam which will be on August 7th; if you wish to come up early we will be doing some trail clearing on Saturday before the Poker Ride. If you are going to attend on Saturday please call Ron or Debbie Ries at 278-3727 or 278-3015 and kindly let them know. You can also call me at 279-3232 after July 30th.

Also we need people to logon to our Facebook page and at the top click on the box that says you **Like**. I have enclosed the actual URL for obtaining our site on Facebook.

<http://www.facebook.com/esbch>

We appreciate your help with this; you can post your own comments on there or send us a message also.

As of Sunday we now have our own domain name as shown above, so please take note.

Thanks, Fred (ESBCH Webmaster)

4-H Youth Pack Trip to GreenFork



Travis and Casey by the campfire



Abby and her horse Moonie

4- H youth learning from the Back Country Horsemen, who in return may become Back Country Horsemen in the future.