



# EAST SLOPE BACK COUNTRY HORSEMEN

## 30 YEARS TRAIL TAILS JUNE 2011

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**Chairman:** John Chepulis

Beartooth BCH

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

**MONTANA BCH WEB**

**SITE:** [www.bchmt.org](http://www.bchmt.org)

### President's Letter

Greetings,

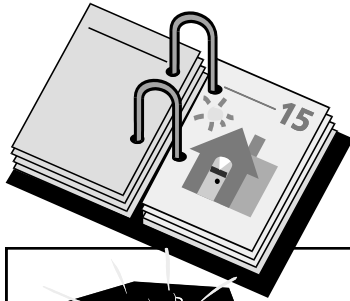
The Memorial Day weekend at Swift Dam was the first scheduled project and though very wet and snowy at times, was very successful. Thanks to all who braved the weather and were able to get the high line and signs up.

The June Blackleaf project has been moved. Due to the snow, we are very concerned that access to Johnson's Crossing might be limited. So we are planning on returning to Swift Dam to finish the high line and replace the entrance sign. This project will not take a long time, so bring your horse as we hope to do some riding.

Lisa Schmidt and I met with one of the county 4-H horse groups and there is some interest in the July 9th project. We will need help from the club members so if you are able to go on this project, please let Lisa or myself know.

Please check out the website to see pictures of the Swift Dam project and hope to see everyone at the Wednesday, June 15th general meeting at the Conrad Public Library.

BOB



## **HAPPY BIRTHDAYS JUNE 2011**

Chuck Skorupa, Wylie Gustafson,  
Lisa Schmidt, Rochelle Stoll,  
Mary Jane Kinyon, Kelsey Fitzpatrick  
and Mariah Hayes

### **HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO ALL**

### **ESBCH Board of Directors Minutes June 1, 2011**

Bob Hermance called the meeting to order at 7:40 pm. Members present were Gary and Connie Manning, Fred Fitzpatrick, Ron and Debbie Ries, Steve Hutton and Lisa Schmidt, Bob and Le Ann Hermance, Dick Kinyon and Kurt Dyer.

Fred Fitzpatrick moved to accept the minutes as publish, Connie Manning 2nd, motion carried.

Fred Fitzpatrick gave the treasurers report. No bills were presented, Dick Kinyon moved to accept the treasurers report as presented, Steve Hutton 2nd the motion, motion carried.

Committee Report: Swift Dam mileage sheet was passed around; the web master has updated the web site and put the pictures of the work project. Great Job Fred.

Unfinished Business: Community Center is not finished so the general meetings will be at the

### **MARK YOUR CALENDARS**

**June 3-5:** Whoop-up Trail Days in Conrad

**June 4:** National Trail Day

**June 11-13:** Work Project Swift Dam Trailhead

**June 15:** Regular Meeting at the Conrad Library in Conrad at 7:00 PM

**June 25:** Valier Homesteaders Days-Parade in Valier, Mt

**July 4:** Choteau 4th of July Celebration, Parade, Rodeo, Fireworks

**July 6:** Directors Meeting in Conrad, 7:00 PM  
Bob & Leann's House

Conrad Public Library.

New Business: Moving the Blackleaf project. Due to snow and wet conditions the June Blackleaf project will be moved. There is still work left at Swift Dam so this would be a good time to finish it. The chains need to be installed and the new entrance sign put up. Connie Manning moved to change the work project to Swift and complete the started projects, Steve Hutton 2nd the motion, motion carried.

Dick Kinyon and Bob Facklam are still working on the Labor Day project. Bob will be having knee surgery and hopes to be healed by that date.

Lisa Schmidt and Bob Hermance talked to the 4-H Horse project at Balkenbush's. There is some interest in the packing program and we will need help from the club members. More discussion and information will be at the general meeting on June 15th. Colleen Gustafson will visit with the ranch horse group and explain how this will work. This is something new and we hope to have a lot of participation from club members.

No further business, Fred moved to adjourn, motion carried.

LeAnn Hermance

## **4-H Benefit Cutting Clinic Held April 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2011**

Submitted by Colleen Gustafson

Wylie Gustafson held another weekend of cutting clinics, with the proceeds going to benefit local 4-H Horse Programs.

April 2<sup>nd</sup> was a private clinic for members of the East Slope Back Country Horsemen (ESBCH) chapter. According to ESBCH member Lisa Schmidt, "The East Slope Back Country Horsemen value Wylie's riding and teaching skills so much that they requested a private clinic with him. As payment, Wylie asked that the ESBCH club contribute to the 4-H Horse Program. "

ESBCH came up with an innovative means to support the 4-H Horse Program. Chapter members who attended Wylie's clinic contributed to an internal grant fund for 4-H Horse Program participants to become ESBCH members. Those funds will be used to subsidize membership fees for 4-H members and families to join ESBCH. As ESBCH members, the 4-H members will be eligible to learn the art of equine packing into the backcountry on an overnight trip, escorted one-on-one by knowledgeable ESBCH members.

The overnight pack trip and noxious weed pull will be held July 8-9-10, 2011. We will camp overnight at Straight Creek Trail Head on Friday July 8<sup>th</sup>. Ride into the Green Fork administrative site on Saturday morning and come out Sunday, July 10<sup>th</sup>.

4-H Horse Program members who are interested in becoming ESBCH members and participating in the pack trip should contact Bob Hermance at [hermance@3rivers.net](mailto:hermance@3rivers.net), 278-5378, or Lisa Schmidt at [alandofgrass@3riversdbs.net](mailto:alandofgrass@3riversdbs.net), 278-0159.

The April 3<sup>rd</sup> clinic was open to the public. The snowstorm and a flu bug caused some last minute cancellations, which reduced the class size. Wylie donated all proceeds from the April 3<sup>rd</sup> clinic to the Pondera/Glacier/Toole/Liberty County 4-H Horse

Programs.

All horse members are strongly encouraged to thank Wylie for his generous financial contributions to our 4-H horse programs. You are also encouraged, whether you participate in the pack trip or not, to thank the ESBCH for their interest in our 4-H horse program and their generous offer of the packing lessons and pack trip.

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## **Swift Dam Memorial Day Weekend Work Project**

Submitted by Fred Fitzpatrick

The work project description was to construct a permanent high-line at the Swift Dam Park and Trailhead for stock users. The project was the brainchild of Fred Fitzpatrick who with the help of Ron Ries and all of his equipment and the labor of East Slope Members; Connie Manning, Tanner (Connie's grandson), Joe and Helen Suta, Kelsey Fitzpatrick, Debbie Ries, Bob and LeAnn Hermance, Steve Hutton, Lisa Schmidt and Abby Hutton labored in some very unsatisfactory weather and trying conditions.

The first phase of the project of course was the design and procurement of the necessary materials to begin the project. Connie called several businesses in Great Falls for the actual high line steel cable. Ron contacted Sun River Electric for the donation of several used power poles, along with his donation and use of his skid steer, post hole auger, gator with dump box for gravel and numerous hand and power tools that would be needed along with a cement mixer and concrete to set the power poles. Debbie did the shopping for groceries and planned the work project menu

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making sure we would all be feed exquisitely. Fred ordered rings and swivels and put those items together along with figuring out and fabricating a spring system that would allow for the steel cable to flex like a regular high line rope and designing and laying out the high line. Fred and Connie worked on the design of the loose horse signs that would also be put up at the work project. Kurt Dyer donated the fence posts for the signage portion on the work project.

Several members arrived at Swift Dam on Friday evening and we unloaded all the high line parts along with groceries and the setting up of the building that would serve as our cooking, dinning and warming hut. After cooking and having dinner everybody drifted off to get some rest before the actual construction phase of the project would begin on Saturday.

Saturday morning arrived and started out fairly nice. After Ron and Debbie cooked breakfast we set out to begin the construction phase of the high-line. We started with laying out the positions of the power poles for the high-line, then Ron using the hydraulic auger we began the slow process of digging 3 - 48" holes for the poles. The holes were a long drawn out affair as the auger would hit rocks and go down no further that and the fact that the auger would not bring the loose material out of the holes, they had to be cleaned by hand then use a bar to dig around the rocks and lift them out. We would then try auguring the hole again to loosen more material before having to clean the holes out again. While working on the holes we received rain and sleet, so we decided to go in the building and take a break and warm up a bit. While we were warming up Steve, Lisa and Abby arrived and so as we meandered out to the holes once again when Bob and Leann arrived. So with the added help and moral support we were able to finish the holes shortly after lunch. So we began setting the poles and mixing the concrete. We placed two bags of concrete in the bottom of each hole then added the dirt and rocks that had been excavated from each hole and tamped them until we were about 8 inches from the top and then added two more bags of concrete to finish off the top.

With the completion of setting the power poles

for the high-line Steve, Lisa and Abby headed back for home as they had lambs to take care of. Bob, LeAnn, Ron, Connie, Tanner and Fred took on the chore of setting sign posts for the loose horse signs that would be attached to the poles to notify stock users that loose horses would no longer be tolerated at the campground. This ordinance was okay-ed by the Pondera County Commissioners last fall at the request of our chapter.

We had been in all types of weather we had been soaked by rain and snow most of the day and had to change clothes at least a couple of times during the day. The camp building looked like a laundry with all the clothes hanging around the wood stove drying out.

For supper Saturday night Debbie had brought pizza fix-ins, so it was Kelsey and Fred's job to cook Dutch oven pizza for our tired and hungry crew. After dinner Connie and Tanner headed back to Great Falls as Connie was having company on Sunday. Bob and LeAnn left shortly after that as they also had things to take care of at home, we all had a very nice evening and reflected on the day of digging those terrible holes, but we had achieved what we had set out to do and that brought great satisfaction.

Sunday morning Fred cooked breakfast with a lot of coaching from Mr. Chef (Ron) and a few comments from Helen. After breakfast Joe, Ron and Fred headed out to string the cable on the high-line poles, while Debbie, Kelsey and Helen packed up the camp kitchen and groceries. Joe and Helen headed home after stringing the cable and Ron and Fred began hauling gravel for under the high-line. Debbie had fixed us lunch and we then spread out the gravel and loaded everything up and headed home on Sunday afternoon.

Here is a comment from two of our members received via e-mail: "Good job. will be a great asset to the camp ground." Dick & Gloria

I would like to thank Dick and Gloria for the encouraging comment and thank all who helped with the project. I realize it was not of the most accommodating circumstances.

## June 11-12 Work Project

The project for this weekend was suppose to be the marking of trail 153 from the North Fork of Dupuyer Creek over to the Middle Fork of Dupuyer Creek that would tie in with the markers that we placed from the South Fork of Dupuyer Creek to the Middle Fork. Unfortunately due to immense amounts of rain and snow pack melt it will be impossible to make the creek crossing at Johnson's crossing for accessing the project.

After discussing the access issue at the June 1<sup>st</sup> Directors meeting it was decided to finish the project at Swift Dam which will include the completion of the permanent high line for horses (no mules, ha ha Dr. Dick). We will be putting the drops on the cable and adding some Pex pipe to add visibility to the cable. We will cap the power poles with some tar to keep moisture from entering the poles and deteriorating them.

We will also be putting up a new entrance sign to the campground as the old sign met an untimely death due to the hurricane winds that sometimes can be present on the East Slopes of the Rocky Mountains please come and join us finishing these improvements on one of the premiere gateways to the Bob!

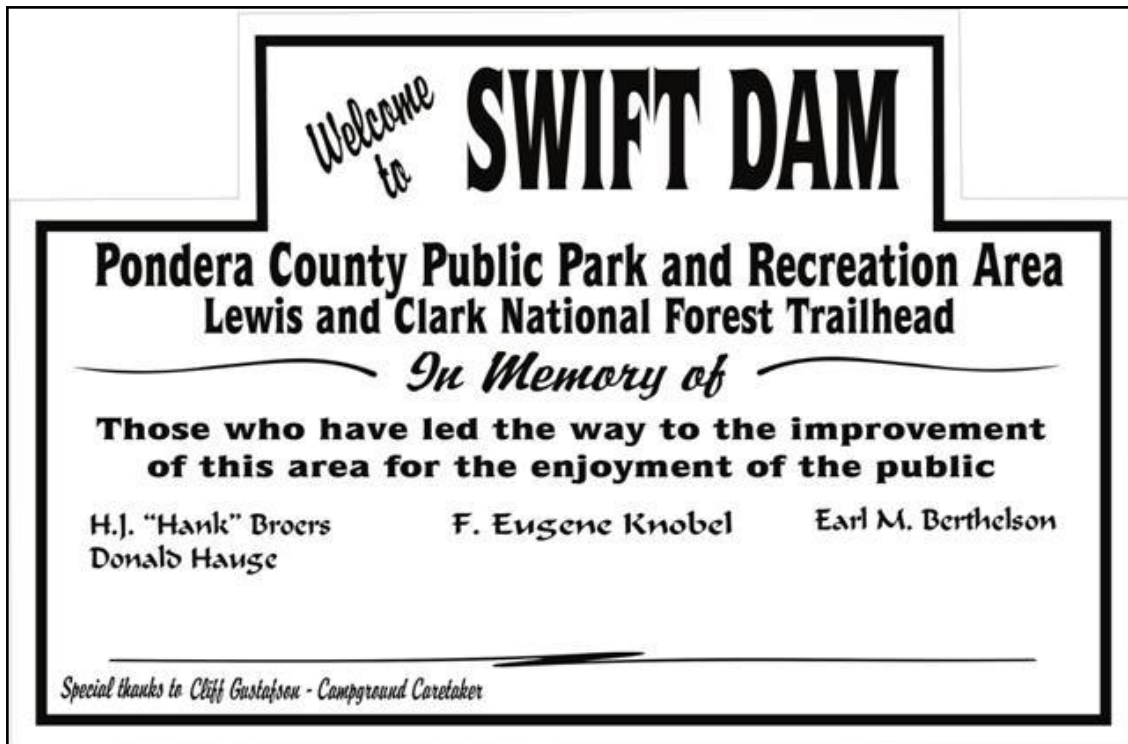
See the example of the new sign below.

You are welcome to bring your horses along, hopefully we can find some time for a little riding; just remember no loose horses allowed in the campground area!

To sign-up for this project please call Fred Fitzpatrick at 279-3232 or Ron Ries at 278-3015 or 278-3727

**REMEMBER WEED —FREE HAY**

**PLEASE CALL ASAP**



CAMAS CREEK CANTER  
ENDURANCE RIDE AND TRAIL RIDE

POTOMAC, MONTANA  
JULY 23, 2011

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COME RIDE WITH US!

Ride Manager: Jennifer Knoetgen, 70083 Martz Drive, Arlee, MT 59821 [montanariding@gmail.com](mailto:montanariding@gmail.com) 406-880-3083



## The Swift Dam High-Line



## One of the new “No Loose Horses” signs

