



EAST SLOPE BACK COUNTRY HORSEMEN

30 YEARS TRAIL TAILS SEPT 2011

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LeAnn Hermance

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

MONTANA BCH WEB

SITE: www.bchmt.org

President's Letter

Greetings to everyone,

The 2011 project season has come to an end. We accomplished what we set out to do and for those who had an opportunity to come to one of the work projects, enjoyed the rides and we hope to see you next year.

If you are interested in a position on the board, please let one of the directors or myself know. I will be putting together a nominating committee and they will submit a slate of nominees for the 2012 year. Elections will be held at the annual meeting in January of 2013.

Early bull season starts September 15th. Hope you've had an opportunity to get back into your favorite camp spot and do your scouting for the perfect bull. Snow has already been predicted so maybe this will be perfect hunting weather.

Fred and I had an opportunity to provide comments at both the Choctau and Augusta listening session with Baucus. Support was given from the majority of the attendees. What we are finding from those who do not support the act is that there is misunderstanding of the regulations that are currently in force and what the Heritage Act rules would be. There were some who are against more wildernesses and this proposal is a compromise because some are in favor of more wilderness than what was proposed.

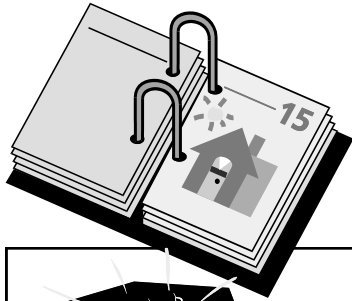
I hope your Labor Day weekend was spent in the back country. I along with Ron and Debbie, Ron's sister and friend are planning on spending a week in the mountains starting this weekend. The weather looks good and with the rain it should have helped clear the smoke from the air.

The next general meeting will be September 21st at 7 pm, Conrad Public Library and I look forward to seeing you there.

Bob

**For the latest on Fire Information
Please Visit INCIWEB**

<http://www.inciweb.org/state/27/>



HAPPY BIRTHDAYS FOR

September 2011

Laurie Eisenzimer, Connie Manning,
Alice Lybek, Jorri Dyer and
Krystal Hayes

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

EAST SLOPE BACK COUNTRY HORSEMEN

ESBCH General meeting
August 17, 2011

President Bob Hermance called the meeting to order at 7:06 pm. Gary Manning moved to accept the minutes as published in the newsletter, Fred Fitzpatrick 2nd, motion carried.

Fred gave the treasurers report. Bills presented were Connie Manning \$167.63 for copies of newsletter, sympathy card and poker ride food. LeAnn moved to accept treasurers report and to pay bills as presented, Lisa 2nd, motion carried.

Committee report: Fred and Bob attended the hearing for the Rocky Mountain Heritage Act with Max Baucus in Augusta and Choteau. Both presented letters of support for this legislation. This turned out to be a fairly good listening session. The few who were against the act have misinterpreted what the act represents. Lisa attended the Choteau meeting with Bob and Fred. Issues of concern were the weed control, grazing leases and budget.

Fred reported on the Face book page. We have a face book domain: facebook.com/esbch. Check us out and if you like us click the thumbs up.

Unfinished Business: Bob reported that the Blacktail project had the nicest trailhead cabin in the system. The projected ended up being about 7 miles from the cabin. They replaced 4 planks on the first

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Sept 7 : Directors Meeting in Conrad, 7:00 PM
(CANCELLED)

Sept 10: BCHM State Directors Meeting in Deer Lodge at 10:00 AM

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

October: Directors and Regular Meeting (TBA)

pungent bridge and then added 15' to another pungent bridge just down the trail. Helen and LeAnn stayed in camp to cook and pull weeds.

One issue we discussed is that the forest service mules graze in pastures full of nap weed around the trailhead cabins. Then they take it back into the back country. The forest service needs to be more proactive in containing the spread of weeds.

Swift Dam Poker Ride: Fred reported that Saturday there was campground and trail maintenance done . Sunday poker ride had 97 hands sold, burgers and dogs and 12 bottles of water sold \$276.50. Cost \$157.38, made \$119.12. Hands were \$910.00 and paid out \$250.00, profit was \$660.00. Deposited \$936.50. For next year we need to have a contingency plan in the event of an accident. Le Ann will visit with the sheriff's office to see if we can get the frequencies for the sheriff's office for emergency use only.

Labor Day ride: At this point the ride has been cancelled. Due to health issues and other plans, the ride is no longer going to be held.

New Business: On August 26th, 27th & 28th there will be a documentary on Buck Brannaman the original horse whisperer at 7 pm at the Conrad Orpheum Theater. Matinee at 4pm on Sunday. This is an excellent program.

Bob read the notice on information on the current fires. Fires are due to manmade and lightning strikes. For daily updated information you can go to www.inciweb.com.

The directors meeting on September 7th is cancelled and the directors will meet at the next general meeting on the 21st of September at the Conrad Public Library.

No further business, Fred motioned to adjourn the meeting, Dick 2nd, meeting adjourned at 8:15 pm.

Coalition to Protect the Rocky Mountain Front

Submitted by Fred Fitzpatrick

“It's time to back the Front!” Open Houses were scheduled for Helena, Augusta, Choteau and Great Falls starting August 11 & 12, 2001. Senator Max Baucus had accepted our invitation and will be on hand to listen to folks and their thoughts about the Rocky Mountain Front Heritage Act.

I was contacted by Gabe Furshong of, The Montana Wilderness Association. He asked if Bob Hermance and I would make a comment at the Augusta and Choteau public meetings on the Rocky Mountain Heritage Act. After discussing the matter with Bob, it was decided that we would make comments at the meetings.

On Thursday August 11, Bob Hermance and I drove to Augusta to attend the public meeting. We were met there by ESBCCH members; Jim and Shirley Brogger and Greg and Deb Schatz. Senator Baucus was late getting to the meeting as his driver missed the Wolf Creek exit off Interstate 15. Bob and I made the decision that he would make comments at the Augusta meeting and I would speak at the Choteau meeting. Because of the late arrival, Bob was unable to present his comment, but was able to give a copy of the comments to Senator Baucus's aid.

On the way home while discussing the issue of negative comments heard in Augusta, Bob and I felt that I should address some of the negativism that was heard in Augusta when I made comments in Choteau. So, I re-wrote my comments to address some of that. It should also be said that some of these comments did have justified concerns, but my feeling is from the years of misinterpretation of the public by our own land managers, it had left a really bitter taste with some of those that made comments.

On Friday, August 12, I drove to Bob's house and we picked up ESBCCH member Lisa Schmidt to accompany us to the public meeting in Choteau. When we arrived at Choteau we met ESBCCH member Kurt Dyer and his daughter Jorri. Kurt was one of the first to give his comments on the proposal. He gave very favorable comments. About

six comments later, I was able to speak and give comments on the proposal.

We heard a lot of comments in the two days of meetings that we attended. There was a good majority that was in favor of the proposal. It was not without a certain amount of rebuttal. I felt that a lot of the negative comments were very unjust. A lot of the comments that were made had absolutely no validity. It is my impression that these people did not take the time to look at the proposal and were simply making negative comments.

The meetings were well attended all over and I heard from reliable sources that the meetings in Helena and Great Falls had very few if any negative comments.

It is imperative that we make an effort to either e-mail Senator Baucus, call his office or write a letter if you are more comfortable doing that. You need to take the time and submit a comment. So, I would encourage you to please do so. If you need some ideas or contact information:

maxbaucus@earthlink.net, this is Senator Baucus's personal e-mail that he gave out at the meetings. You can also contact Senator Baucus at <http://baucus.senate.gov/?p=contact>, this is his official website it has all of his phone numbers that you use or stop in at one of the offices and make a personal comment. I would be more than happy to talk to you or I can e-mail you the comments that Bob and I submitted.

After the meetings, there was a comment that had been published in the Helena Independent Record by an Associated Press writer; “*Wilderness advocates are getting far less than they want in order to broker a deal with other interest groups, like public land ranchers and backcountry horseman.*” So with that remark and numerous e-mails with other members of the Back Country Horsemen of Montana, Montana Wilderness Association and the Wilderness Society, it was decided to submit an op-ed that would hopefully clarify the stance of Back Country Horsemen.

You can view the op-ed editorial on line at the link below; it was also published in the Thursday August, 25th edition of the Great Falls Tribune. http://missoulian.com/news/opinion/columnists/article_056d5550-ce55-11e0-88d7-001cc4c002e0.html

Pictures from the Blacktail Work Project

