

Back Country Horsemen of Montana

“News”

February 2009

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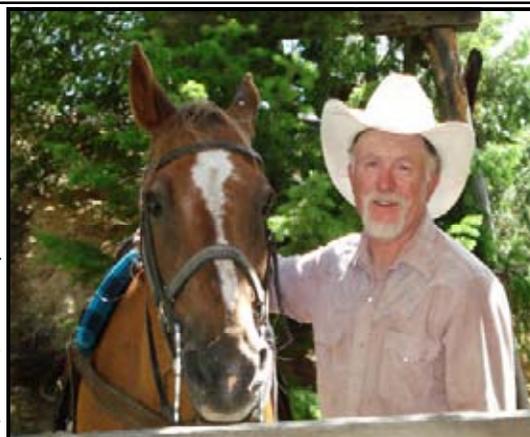
Back Country Horsemen of Montana

Mission Statement

- ◊ perpetuate the common sense use and enjoyment of horses in America's back country and wilderness.
- ◊ work to ensure that public lands remain open to recreational stock use.
- ◊ assist various agencies responsible for the maintenance and management of public lands
- ◊ educate, encourage, and solicit active participation in the wise and sustained use of the back country resource by horsemen and the general public, commensurate with our heritage.
- ◊ foster and encourage formation of new Back Country Horsemen organizations

Chairman's Message

A friend told me the funniest story the other day. His horse and mule were in their winter pasture some distance from his house. He routinely checked on them with binoculars and one day saw them darting back and forth in one corner of the pasture. Usually when he checked on them they were either grazing or just standing still waiting for spring to arrive. But on that day they must have been bored silly with the slow routine of a long Montana winter and had decided to play some games with a lone antelope doe that happened by. The two equines had her penned in the corner like a couple of cutting horses and were not about to let go of this fun anytime soon. Finally the antelope, in the style of Peter Rabbit escaping from Mr. McGregor's garden, managed to squeeze under the bottom wire and trotted off to find friendlier turf. My friend tried to tell me the horse and mule reared up for a high five before going off to graze, but I didn't believe that part.



Akin to the mule and the horse, I used to think that winter was a long semi-boring stretch of time between hunting season and the Back Country Horsemen annual convention in March. But this year has been much different for your BCHM state directors and officers. Our usual December meeting in Missoula had to be postponed due to extremely nasty weather throughout the state. We're glad we waited as it turned out to be a deadly weekend on Montana's roadways.

But issues were starting to stack up and we had a full plate when we convened in early January. Members in the Flathead chapter saw an opportunity to help the backlog of trail work on our forests and provide for some local jobs by trying to get some

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“stimulus package” money to filter down through the Dept. of Agriculture to the USFS. We approved a letter that was sent to the Congressional Delegation.

Next we addressed a previous request to endorse the Blackfoot Clearwater Stewardship Project, which we unanimously voted to support since it provides for additions to the Bob Marshall and Mission Mountain Wilderness areas, creative solutions in timber supply for mills, acceptable expansions of off road winter use access, and again, job opportunities for Montanans. These “culture of cooperation” efforts like this one and the Beaverhead Deerlodge Partnership bring Montanans together to resolve long standing and unproductive battles over forest management.

Another issue raised was proposed drilling on State owned lands along the Rocky Mountain Front adjacent to the Chute Mountain and Deep Cr./Battle Cr. Outstanding Natural Areas. The board, in light of the overwhelming support of Montana people for protection for the Front, directed a letter be sent to the DNRC and the State Land Board members opposing the leasing of these areas for oil and gas drilling.

In February Paul Evenson, Chuck Miller, Smoke Elser, Merlyn Huso, and I had our annual pow-wow with USFS Region 1 in Missoula. We were honored by the presence of Region 1 Forester Tom Tidwell, Deputy Forester Jane Cottrell, and several other Region 1 staff. Tidwell expressed his appreciation for our work and said “Without your help many of our trails would never see maintenance”. He also said he would work to “remove barriers to getting things done”. Chuck presented a preliminary summary of BCHM’s work for 2008 which will top a half million dollars in value. The meeting covered a dozen other topics and served to reaffirm our great working relationship with Region 1 and the many Forests and Ranger Districts around the state. We also expressed our collective gratitude for the work of Volunteer Coordinator Ginger Hamilton who has moved on to New Mexico.

Also this winter we have had dedicated people toiling behind the front lines such as Secretary Kathy Frazier working to produce lengthy minutes and up to date data bases, Editor Linda Brewer keeping the “News” before you and the mailing lists up to date, Web Master Dan Marsh computing away on our website with the able assistance of Fred Fitzpatrick, and the crew from the Last Chance Chapter putting on the final touches for what looks like a great time coming at us in Helena. All chapters are busy electing new officers and state directors, meeting with the agencies and planning their projects for '09, and looking for new ways to meet the admirable goals of Back Country Horsemen.

So I guess winter isn't such a boring time after all. I hope to see you all in the spring, March 27-29 in Helena. In the meantime, be well and do good work.

Charlie

THREE RIVERS BCH AND THE CONTINENTAL DIVIDE TRAIL

Article by: Dan Pence

Photos by: Mark Sant & Gordon Ash

June 7, 2008 really was a dark and stormy day-so much so that the Three Rivers Back Country Horsemen had more than a few concerns about attempting the planned project on the Continental Divide Trail in the Shineberger drainage west of Monida Pass.

Gordon Ash, BCH member and recreation specialist for the Dillon District, Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest, had specific objectives lined out for National Trail Day. We needed to mark the Continental Divide Trail above timber line with posts and signs; plus locate, roll up and haul out approximately a quarter mile of barb wire from an old fence between Idaho and Montana that was all down and tangled up. The major obstacle involved significant winter snow and high winds during the preceding winter months, followed by the ongoing cold, wet spring. Participants had serious questions about even being able to ride to the Divide.

Those accepting the challenge included BCH members Gordon Ash, Mark Sant, Rene Johnson, Dan Pence, and guest members Scott and Emily Calvert. We truck-horse-trailer pooled in Dillon Safeway’s parking lot at 8 a.m. and headed south.

A massive snow drift blocked the road a mile before we reached the trail head. We backed the horse trailers out to a good parking spot, unloaded the horses and mules, packed up supplies (including a dozen eight foot fence posts and related posthole digging equipment) and headed up the trail.

Amazingly, the trail had somehow been constructed so it avoided most of the huge snow drifts that surrounded us for the entire ride. The wind blew with interesting gusts that were generally accompanied with ice crystals and snow. Long johns and down coats were much appreciated by those who wore them.

We were riding up the canyon bottom when the lead horse balked. A significant discussion with horses and mules ensued until a couple of noisy greater sandhill cranes flew out of the beaver dam complex next to the trail. The crew advanced a short distance when another “incident” occurred. This one evolved into near rodeo status when a large cow moose and very new calf exited the willows just ahead of the remuda!

The venture continued out of the canyon bottom and up a narrow ridge to the Continental Divide. Idaho did not look any warmer than Montana, although a large herd of elk were “holed up” out of the wind in a small basin on the Idaho side.

We decided that taking care of the wire was our first objective, since it was located farthest from the vehicles. Rolling up four strands of a quarter mile barb wire fence with steel stays is interesting, especially when most of it was tangled into huge snarls. Participants eventually gave up on the rolling idea, place double mannies under the snarls and bounced up

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Trailer Training

by Joe Turner

“What do I do if my horse has problems trailer loading?”

Great question! Let's take a step back and view this question from the horse's point of view. That trailer is a big scary cave to your horse, and inside that cave is a big, mean, gonna eat you up mountain lion. Heck, even I don't want to go into that thing when it's been put that way but that is how the horse naturally looks at a trailer, no matter how big or small. There are a few things that can make the experience easier for the horse, the bigger the trailer and the more light in the trailer will help out but let's face it this isn't a perfect world so let's work with what we have. The idea is to have your horse think that the trailer is a good place rather than a bad place, a place to desire and yearn for rather than fear and loath. How do we do this in a way that is gentle and natural and at the horses pace so we have improvements and not set backs?

First off we need to have communication with our horse and find out what is bothering him/her. Is he/she scared? Does he/she just not want to go? Did he/she ever have a bad experience in a trailer? Is this the first moving cave that he/she has ever seen? All of these things matter in our success and determine our approach and speed of the lesson. Sure we may be able to force our horse into the trailer but what will that accomplish besides having to try to shove him/her in again when you have to go home and each time it will get harder and harder and he/she will get smarter and smarter at resisting. How about a horse that's willing and wants to load up, is excited about going somewhere? No, we don't have to bribe them or drug them either! Listen to what your horse is telling you and then together you can decide on when to move forward to the next step or continue working on the task at hand. Should you ask for more progress or slow things up for a bit, listen and they will tell you.

Once we know the problem then we can correctly go about finding the desired results in a way that makes sense to our best friend and doesn't present fear or resentment towards us or the trailer. Let's make the trailer a good place to be, once we know how to give direction to our horse on the ground and move their feet in every direction without having to move our own feet then we can start to work with the horse correctly. We will start by showing our horse the trailer out of both of his eyes, having him/her working when he/she is away from the trailer. We want to work with our horse away from the trailer, lunging for respect and changing directions while pivoting on the haunches (make it work not play time), then we can move into working next to the trailer having our horse work between us and the trailer utilizing both eyes separately to

focus on the trailer. Once our partner is smoothly working from both sides in both directions then we can ask for a rest and entrance into the trailer, making sure that every time he/she makes an attempt to place full interest into the trailer then we reward with a cease of asking and a short rest.

Standing at the drivers side of the entrance into the trailer we will ask for forward motion into the trailer, do not stop asking until an actual attempt is made. No matter how slight of an attempt is made we reward with a short rest (rest times will vary) and then ask again for forward motion stopping only when an attempt is made to move forward into the trailer. If done correctly and rewards are giving for tries and persistence & patience is given when the horse is not responding correctly then you will start to make your horse curious of the trailer and learn that the trailer is a good place of rest and pleasure. If your horse should happen to bolt backwards quickly or try to run away or even run over you then don't fight with him/her (don't let him/her try to run you over either of course, but try to be bigger than him/her if safety allows), let him/her go away from the trailer but it is our job to immediately put him/her back to work and have him/her learn that every time he/she wants to go away from the trailer it is fine but we will have to go back to work and it will be hard work, then when we go back to loading into the trailer that is when he gets his rewards and rest and when he finally loads into the trailer he will get a long rest with a good rub down. Always no matter what give your horse the choice of work or rest, without the option then you set your self up for failure and for your horse getting frustrated and starting a fight with you, which you will never win. Teach them to think their way out of situations and you will achieve a relationship that you have always dreamed about. Partnership!

Remember away from the trailer means work and loaded in the trailer means rest. Next thing you know your horse will be trying to load you up into the truck and himself into the trailer so you guys can go for a ride somewhere. Hope this little bit of insight helps out, it is a lot to convey on paper so if you have any questions or need any further assistance please feel free to call me at 406-579-6622 or email me at joe@rockymountainhorseman.com and keep those questions coming.

Safe & Happy Riding,
Joe Turner, Rocky Mountain Horseman



2009 MONTANA STATE CONVENTION

March 27-29, Red Lion Colonial Hotel, Helena, MT

The Last Chance Back Country Horsemen of Helena, MT, will be hosting the 2009 Montana State Convention and invites you to participate in the many planned activities and seminars. The theme for the convention will be “**Traveling in the Back Country**”.

The Key Note Speaker is Jane Cottrel, Deputy Regional Forester, Region 1, USFS.

Scheduled seminars to date are:

Back Country Equine Nutrition by Mike Wilson, Cargill Animal Nutrition

Low Impact Back Country Camps by Bob Hoverson, USFS

Getting Along with Griz in the Back Country by Jim Claar, USFS

Selecting Riding & Pack Stock for Back Country Use by Kail Mantle, Montana Horses

Also under consideration, but not yet confirmed:

Dutch Oven Cooking

Backcountry Equine First Aid

Backcountry Human First Aid

Digital Photography

Knots for Livestock Handlers

After Saturday night’s banquet, entertainment will be provided by the very popular **Ringling Five**. Vendors and displays will be on site, and there will be a silent auction, door prizes, a photo contest, and **fabulous raffle items totaling nearly \$2000** including a Silver Bullet tent stove, a Decker Pack Saddle, a Counter Assault electric bear fence, a 3’x4’ Plasma Cut metal ranch sign, and a Poulan Pro chain saw. Raffle tickets are available from any Last Chance BCH member or contact Andy Verbanac at 202-5768. You do not need to be present at the drawing on Saturday, March 28th to win.

Members of all Back Country Horsemen Chapters are cordially invited to attend as well as the general public.

For registration, cost, and accommodation information, contact Darlene or Neil Horne at 406-458-9858 or email to mules2ride@msn.com.

Wild Horse Plains Happenings

Plains, Montana

Wild Horse Plains BCH dived into two projects in 2008. At times we wondered what we'd gotten ourselves in to, but we got 'em done.

Spring Creek Trail starts in quiet cedar bottoms and ends approximately six miles later and 4,000 feet higher on top of Big Hole Peak. It needed logging-out and tread work. At times, we were able to pack tools and saws on livestock, but other times it was footwork. We opened the entire trail and made it passable for both hikers and livestock, though because of long neglect, some of it still needs tread work on a scope larger than what a BCH chapter can handle. We're hoping fire crews might need a Spring Creek "Pulaski party" next summer.

Back in 2007, the infamous Chippy Creek Fire burned 100,000 acres of high country in



the Thompson River Area and in 2008 the Forest Service needed 66 miles of trail inventoried for post-fire weed infestation in that burn area. These trails had long been neglected for lack of money.

Ironically, once the area had burned, there was money for Forest Service clearing crews so all the local BCH folks had to do was the weed inventory. It sounded simple. In fact, after the burn, water erosion had obliterated some trails. Others were cleared on Forest Service ground but not on adjoining private timberlands. Once again, it appeared we may have bit

off more than we could chew, but again we completed the job, though a good portion of it had to be afoot rather than on horseback. A hundred thousand acres of ash and dead, blackened trees will certainly remind a person of why Smokey Bear's anti-fire campaign wasn't all wrong.

The two projects put the club on sound financial footing for the next couple of years and we intend to celebrate that by spending 2009 doing more riding, more barbequing and less grunt work.

My First Horse

Written by: Noel Anderson

Submitted by: Dayna Gillman

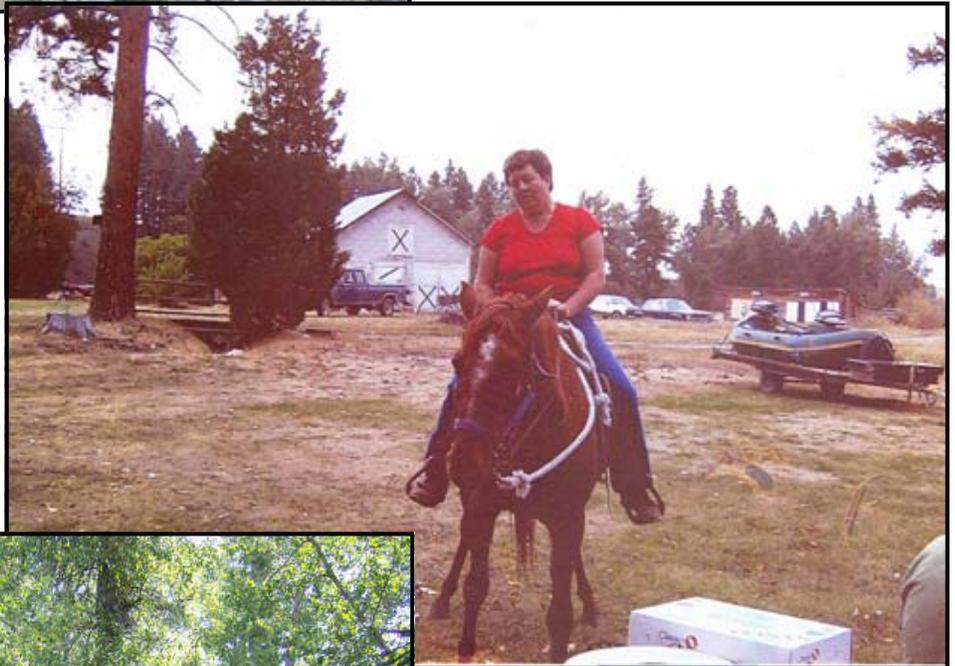
Upper Clark Fork BCH



To say I'm a green horn is an understatement. My experience with horses amounts to a few rides during the summer at my grandparent's ranch in eastern Montana. The last time I rode a horse was the fall of my freshman year in college. My grandfather instructed my older brother, who was working for him at the time, and myself to move a charlais bull that had gotten into his registered Black Angus heifers back to the neighbors. Luckily the horse and my brother knew what they were supposed to

do because I just hung on. It took me three days to walk up stairs at school without pain. That sums up my knowledge of how to take care, ride and train horses.

It was just about four years ago my husband, Norman, started talking about buying horses. A friend of his had bought a mule and two other horses and he had gone riding with him on occasions. The friend was a member of Back Country Horseman and was encouraging my husband to join and go on the rides. Norman had grown up in Lost



Creek with horses, so he knew the basics.

Now folks I'm over 40, we'll leave it at that, a little stocky and I know zero about horses. I swear my husband could probably sell me my own shoes, but I said yes. The one stipulation was the horse we found for me had to be one step above dead. We looked at several horses either they were out of our price range or were too much for me to handle. Then we looked at Reba, she is a Tennessee walker, 25 years old, with a long face, sorrel in color, a lean body, and a gentle soul. My first words were "She's homely

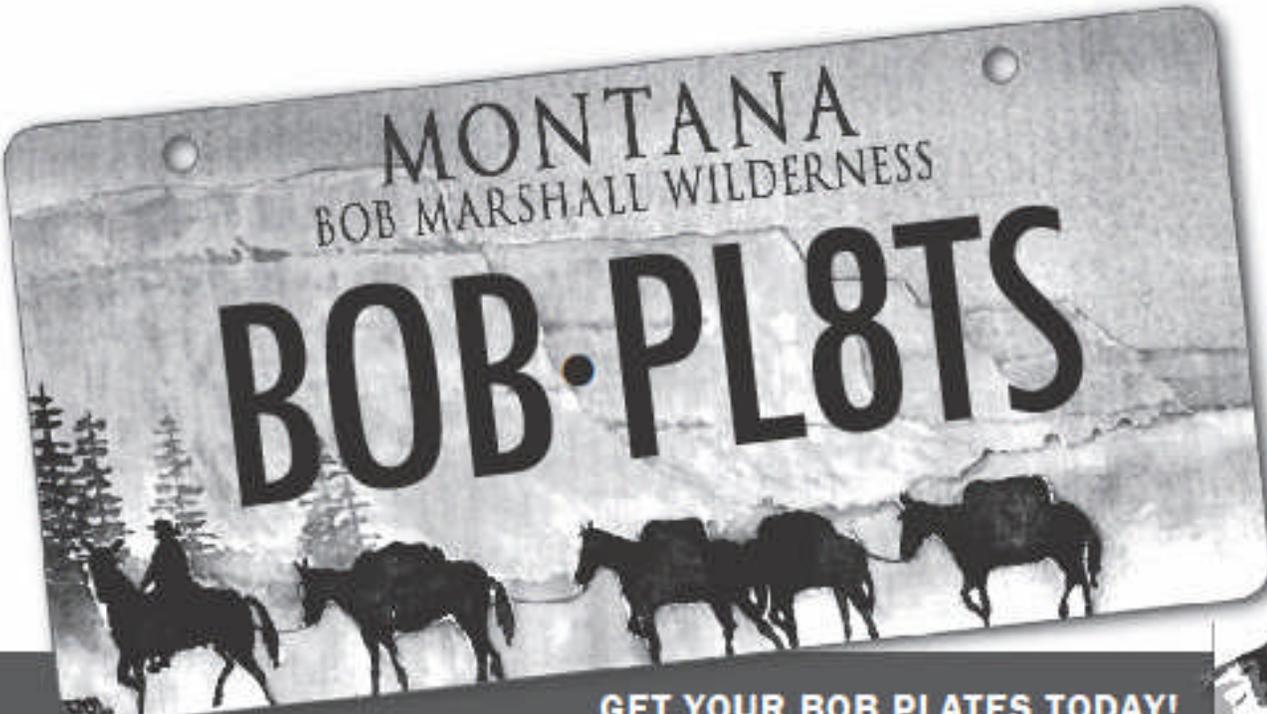
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but I guess she'll grow on me. "Reba did that. She has the patients of a saint and forgave me of all my ignorance. The first spring and summer we had her it was a lot of getting to know the how's and what's. How to saddle a horse. How to get on a horse. What to feed a senior horse. How to take care of a horse. She was so patient and she loved to go.

Our pasture was twenty-five miles from our house so our time was limited to the week ends. We spent every week-end in our camper working on the pasture and working with the horses. Three weeks after we got Reba she came down with moon blindness, we spent two weeks living in our camper and driving to work everyday so we could treat her eyes and save her sight. We took short rides around the pasture and up and down the lane. I was in love and wished I'd been doing this all my life.

Last Spring a group of friends and my husband and I decided we would ride from our pasture up to the mountains for a few hours on one of the first nice days we had. Reba was full of energy and anxious to get started. She wanted to be the head of the group but by the end of the first mile I knew some thing was wrong. She was limping so I dismounted got my hoof pick out and cleaned her hooves. Nothing. I remounted and asked one of the fellas to watch her move. He said she was definitely lame. So I walked her back to the pasture. The next day I called the vet and took her in. The news wasn't good. It was arthritis in her knees. Now she roams the pasture and makes a good ornament and I have found "Tuff Man". He's more spirited than my Reba but we are getting to know each other and my confidence grows each time I ride. Thanks to the gentle lessons that Reba taught me.



GET YOUR BOB PLATES TODAY!

Put 'em on your rig, horse and cargo trailer. When you ask for Bob plates at your local DMV office, you help the Bob Marshall Wilderness Foundation keep trails open, campsites clean and combat noxious weeds in The Bob. Plus, they look great on the road! Now available for permanent plates.

Want to pack in The Bob this summer? Call us: Bob Marshall Wilderness Foundation | 406.387.3808 | www.bmwf.org



BOB MARSHALL
WILDERNESS
FOUNDATION

Upper Clark Fork Back Country Horsemen



FAMILY FUN RIDE

Annual Fundraiser Event

Date: July 11, 2009

Registration: 8:00 am to
10:00 am

Place: Gold Creek, MT
(Exit 166 of I-90, follow the signs,
5 ½ miles)

Ride & BBQ \$20.00/rider
BBQ only \$10.00/person
Children under 12..... \$7.00

Approximately 4 hour Ride. You
can ride through a Historic Ghost
Town and past a Gold Dredge

Poker Hands (18 yrs & over)..... \$5.00 each
50/50 Tickets..... \$1.00 each or 6 for \$5.00

BBQ starts at 3:00 pm and Drawings for Door Prizes to follow.

Everyone Bring Your Horse or Mule and Have Fun!

Camping Available
Enjoy evening campfires
Absolutely NO Dogs on Ride!
Dogs in Camp must be on leash!

For More Information Please Contact:

Dayna & Charlie Gilman – 846-2464 Pat & Wendy George- 846-3499
Ron & Karen Haubbert – 498-8310 or 498-2733

Eagle Mount has three new sheds

by Jiffie Hale, Gallatin Valley BCH

A blustery overcast Saturday morning at 9am, November 25th five Gallatin Valley Back Country Horsemen members met with Pat, his construction crew and other volunteers to build three run-in sheds at Eagle Mount's handicap facilities. The wind was constant with intermittent drops of rain. The temperature was OK making excellent work conditions and blue sky tried to show so nothing deterred the men from their planned work.

The original building was a dilapidated mess and needed to be replaced. It still stands and probably will be used as temporary hay storage. Rather than replace the present run-in, this project had to be located a bit further away. It was a good turnout by Ken Yankelevitz - our BCH supervisor, Dan Porter - who was Ken's #1 side kick, Chick Hale - retiree from his construction firm and who brought his 50+ year old tools but left them in his truck, your trusty reporter and her camera snapping the work progress, Larry Thomas and Wally Becker who both use tools on the trail but found that a hammer and a few nails are different than a Pulaski and a shovel.

The wind lasted all day with no more sprinkles. The mud dried up a bit and the sun came out almost full force - but oh the wind. The crew quit at 2 pm when the wind made it unsafe to try putting the red metal siding on. The framing is completed and the siding will have to wait until a day when it is calmer. This, as far as I know, was the first carpentry work for BCH other than the corrals at Ramshorn Lake and bridges at Hell Roaring and Spanish Creek. ***This is a full blown three sided building!*** A proud bunch you all are, but keep it a secret - GVBCH might be asked to do more of this stuff! Is it in our mission statement? Sure thing and we now have three new sheds for Eagle Mount horses.

Pictures by Ken and his reporter



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and down on the whole mess until the wire was reduced into pack-able 80 pound wads. The sun showed up and the wind died down for about 10 minutes at about 2 p.m. The group took advantage of the brief change to eat a hurried lunch. Snow and wind resumed immediately after lunch.

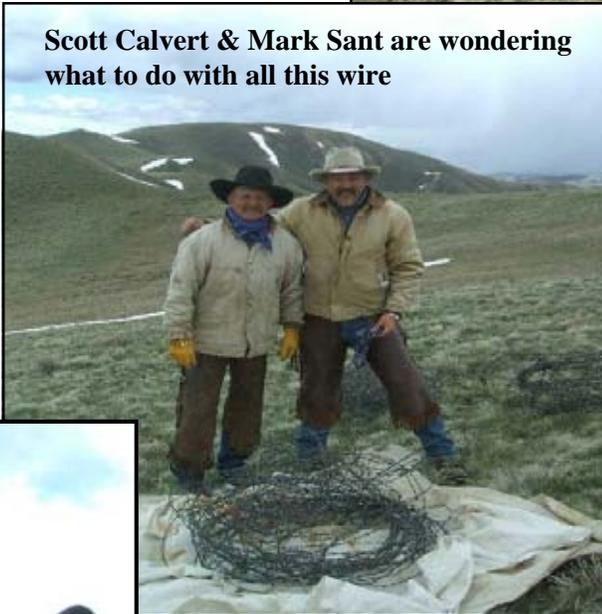
Emily Calvert is a sophomore at Twin Bridges High School who doesn't weigh much more than one of the barb wire packs, but she proved to be an expert with a posthole digger. Dan might have been the oldest member of the crew, but he tried to keep up with Emily with a crow bar. The odd couple dug postholes at appropriate points while the others followed to erect posts and put up signs.

We encountered more rocks than soil where most of the posts were needed. Emily expressed concern that an elk might come along and knock the posts over while polishing his antlers. Dan suggested that a more likely scenario would occur when a hunter would spot an elk, tie his horse to one of the posts, shoot at the elk, and spend the rest of the day chasing a horse that was dragging a fence post.

The canyon bottom was a welcome change since real soil occurred there and the posts went in fast and deep.

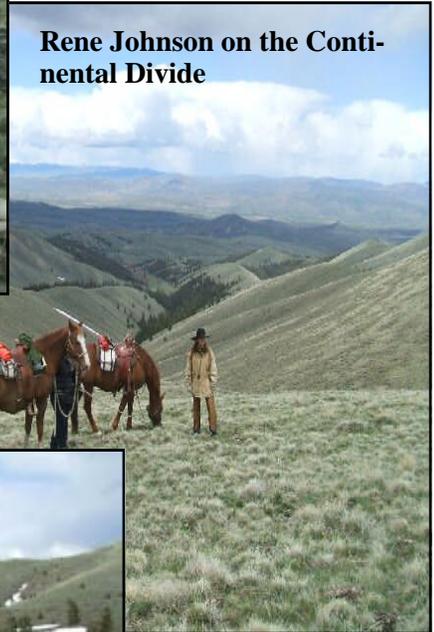
We completed our mission and reached the trucks before dark. It took most of the long drive home just to thaw out.

It was a good day.



Scott Calvert & Mark Sant are wondering what to do with all this wire

Manty it up and bounce on it!



Rene Johnson on the Continental Divide



A mule load of barb wire



Gordon & Dan help Emily dig a post hole

New Wilderness for Montana?

By; Rich Fitzpatrick, Merlyn Huso and Charlie O'Leary

The Senate on Thursday January 15, 2009 voted to set aside more than 2 million acres in nine states as protected wilderness and allow Alaska to build an airport access road through a wildlife refuge. The 73-21 vote moves Congress closer to one of the largest expansions of wilderness protection in the past 25 years. The legislation heads to the House, where approval is expected.

The measure — a collection of about 160 separate bills — would confer the government's highest level of protection on land ranging from California's Sierra Nevada mountain range to Oregon's Mount Hood, Rocky Mountain National Park in Colorado and parts of the Jefferson National Forest in Virginia. Land in Idaho's Owyhee canyons, Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore in Michigan and Zion National Park in Utah also would win designation as wilderness, and more than 1,000 miles of rivers in nearly a dozen states would gain protections.

This bill had no lands designated for wilderness in Montana. The last time Montana had any land added to the National Wilderness Preservation System was in 1983. This year there is great expectation that some areas of Montana may hopefully be added to our Wilderness Preservation System. They are as follows:

- **Blackfoot-Clearwater Cooperative Stewardship Project;** which would add an additional 87,000 acres within the Bob Marshall-Scapegoat and Mission Mountains Wilderness Areas.
- **Beaverhead-Deerlodge Partnership Proposal;** The Partnership proposal also protects special places, such as popular areas in the Pioneer, West Big Hole and Snowcrest Mountain Ranges. Approximately 560,000 acres including Garfield Mountain and Torrey Mountain and small additions to the Anaconda Pintler Wilderness would receive lasting protection so that future generations can access quiet backcountry to enjoy hunting, fishing, horse packing, camping, hiking, mountain climbing and winter sports like cross country skiing, snowshoeing and trapping.
- **Scotchman Peaks Wilderness Campaign;** Roughly 60 miles south of Canada, the 88,000 acre Scotchman Peaks roadless area spans the Idaho-Montana border. Since the 1970s, when the U.S. Forest Service carried out extensive evaluations of lands suitable for wilderness, this rugged, scenic and biologically diverse portion of the Cabinet Mountains has been managed for its wilderness potential.
- **Sleeping Giant and Gates of the Mountain Wilderness Campaign;** As the Helena area continues to grow, permanently protecting the Sleeping Giant, Sheep Creek and additions to the Gates of the Mountains as Wilderness will help and insure that the historic places around our Capitol City are preserved.
- **Great Burn Proposal;** The Great Burn has been in need of protection since the early '70's. Local citizens have tried to ensure that the wilderness character of the area endures, and through their efforts the Lolo and Clearwater national forests designated over 224,000 acres as proposed Wilderness. The Great Burn has been included in nine wilderness bills introduced in Congress between 1984 and 1992, none of which have become law.
- **Winton Weydemeyer Wilderness Campaign;** Winton Weydemeyer was a Montana rancher, farmer, tree farmer, backcountry user and wilderness lover. A man of his times, but ahead of his time in his appreciation of wild country, Weydemeyer acted to preserve a vestige of his wilderness heritage at the very beginning of conservation thinking in America. In 1925, some 39 years before passage of the national Wilderness Act of 1964, Weydemeyer first proposed the Whitefish Range Wilderness in American Forest and Forest Life Magazine, the journal of the American Forestry Society.
- **Rocky Mountain Front Wilderness Campaign;** To the east of the forest lie three wildlife management areas, three Outstanding Natural Areas, and hundreds of thousands of acres of working ranchland every bit as important to wildlife as the public ground. Two hundred and ninety species of wildlife still make their home on the Front because of generations of private land stewardship and more than 100 years of public conservation efforts shouldered by pioneering hunters, anglers, farmers and ranchers. It is this local culture of conservation that continues to guard against the threats of subdivision, industrial development, and motorized abuse of Montana's beloved Rocky Mountain Front.

The Back Country Horsemen of Montana have endorsed many of these proposals and would like to see additional acres combined into our National Wilderness Preservation System. We are asking for collaboration on the part of the chapters of Montana in helping with getting these areas preserved. Chapters should work to be involved in assisting with the draft proposals. It may also be in our interest to put the following wording into the Congressional Record for securing the preservation of saddle and pack stock use.

Recommended language to be contained within proposed wilderness legislation:

Traditional recreational saddle and pack stock use is recognized as an appropriate and historical use of wilderness.

2008 was a good year for Judith Basin BCH

Submitted by: Karen Johnson
Judith Basin BCH

Our year began with our annual Stick Horse Rodeo held during the Montana Winter Fair and again this year. We had over seventy participants between the ages of 3 to 8 competing in the event. By far the Stick Horse Rodeo is the favorite event of the Fair. This year's Stick Horse Rodeo is scheduled for January 24.

Spring finally arrived and in April JBBCH held our yearly Spring Equine Vaccination Clinic with Dr. Greg Carlson and a riding clinic with Brooks Larson. May and June arrived with plenty of rain and too many uprooted trees postponing scheduled Spring rides and trail work. Once we dried up in mid-June, the fun began.

Clean up on the Limekiln Trail in the Judith Mountains with the BLM started in June with removal of downed trees and clean up of wash out areas, along with weed spraying and removal of noxious weeds. We lost one of our major trails in the Limekiln due to a microburst with a very large blow down area, so in July and August we cleared a temporary bypass trail in order to complete the Limekiln loop trail. BLM anticipates it will take approximately 3 years to complete the timber removal before we are able to access the original trail. This, of course, means lots of clean up work for us in the future.

August and September work projects were completed on both Half Moon Trail and Cottonwood Trail in the Snowy Mountains. JBBCH extends a "thank you" to John Metrione, Bob Gleeko and the work crews from the USFS Belt Creek Station that assisted with these work projects. On the final day of the Half Moon Project, as our work crew was leaving, two mountain bikers came down the trail behind us. They expressed words of gratitude and thanks for all the work JBBCH had done to open up the Half Moon Trail. It is always nice to help your neighbors.

In November of 2007, the South Moccasin Mountains, private and BLM land, suffered extensive fire damage and JBBCH volunteered to help with the cleanup efforts. We took on the task of removing burned barbed wire which came to over 300 lbs. of wire removed. It was a prickly, dirty job but someone had to do it.

Also in 2007, the city of Lewistown, with significant help from the State of Montana, was successful in acquiring approximately fifteen miles of BNSF abandoned rail corridor. The city, together with a volunteer support organization,

Friends of the Lewistown Trails and with generous contributions by Century Construction and Casino Creek Concrete has succeeded in surfacing most of the trails through the City and in installing necessary safety features on bridges and at road crossings. The trails are heavily used and seen as a great new asset for the community.

One leg of the acquired corridor stretches eight miles west from Lewistown winding through farm land, pasture land and through 2 riparian areas, Cottonwood Creek and Beaver Creek. Judith Basin BCH recognized the potential for this segment to be developed into a horse trail that would be readily accessible to local citizens and visitors to the area as well. The rail bed itself is reserved for pedestrian and bicycle use so the horse trail parallels the rail bed at the side of the corridor. Much of the trail was easy to develop but the sections through the riparian areas required significant clearing of brush and gate building by work groups of the JBBCH.

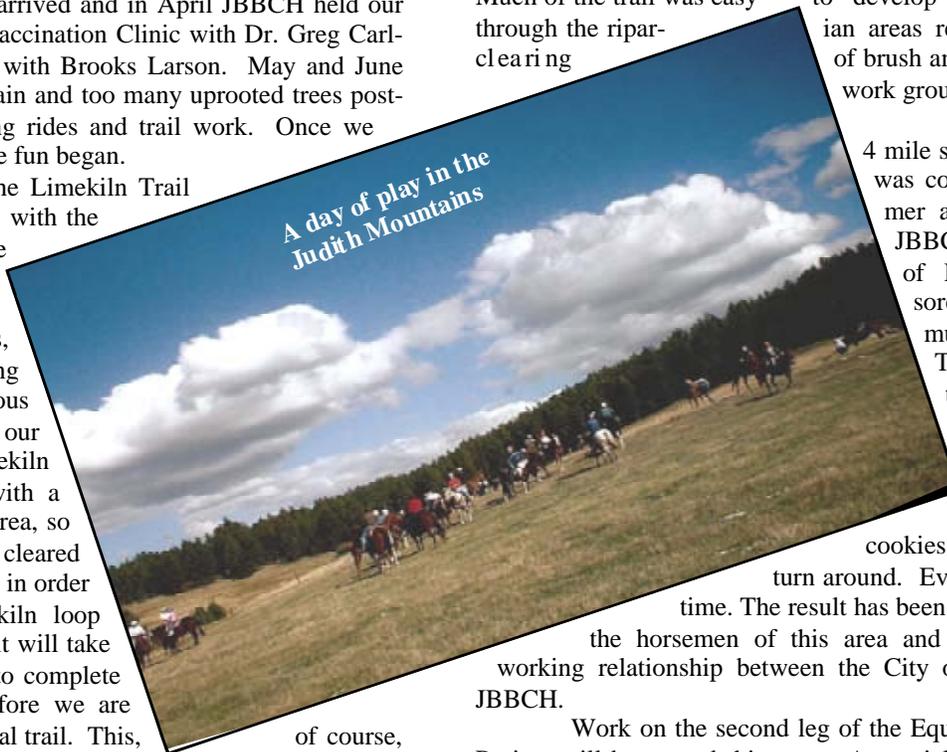
Work on the first 4 mile segment of the trail was completed this summer and on August 23 JBBCH, with the City of Lewistown, sponsored the first community trail ride. There was a great turn out. The City Parks and Recreation Department provided hot dogs, chips, cookies and drinks at the

turn around. Everyone had a good time. The result has been a nice addition for the horsemen of this area and also an excellent working relationship between the City of Lewistown and JBBCH.

Work on the second leg of the Equine Rails to Trails Project will be started this year. A special thank you to Jim Chalmers and his hard working crew of JBBCH and Will Patterson, trails coordinator for the City of Lewistown, for all the work they have put into this project. The City of Lewistown provided the signage for trail use. The Lewistown airport has property adjacent to the rail corridor access area and has agreed to allow the community parking privileges. JBBCH will be in charge of maintenance of the parking area and the trail. We are tentatively planning a benefit ride in 2009 for the St. Jude's Children's Hospital. This will be a community event that will be held on the Equine Rails to Trails.

As I said, it was a good successful year for JBBCH. Not only did we get our work projects completed, we also had fun on weekend rides, potlucks, fund raising projects and learned/benefited from our educational presentation and clinics. Our meetings are held the first Monday of every month. Prior to each business meeting we have a thirty to forty five minute educational presentation.

From JBBCH, we wish you all a safe, happy and prosperous 2009. Let's go ride.



More photos on page 13



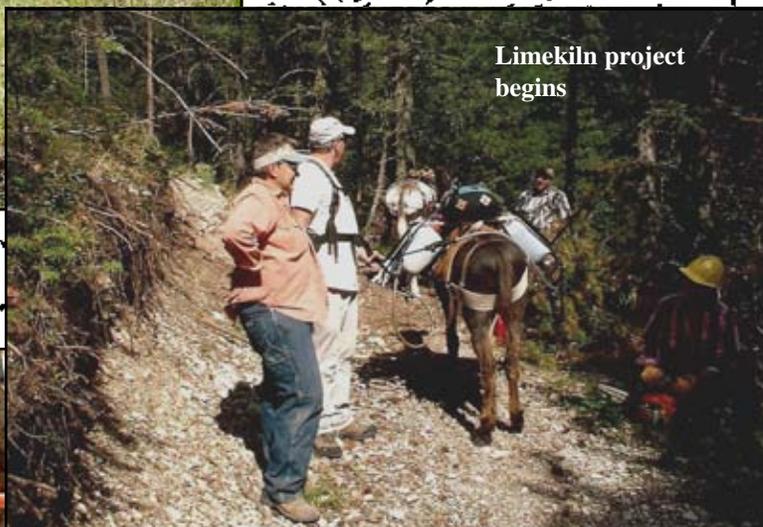
Rails to Trails



Cottonwood Work Project



Packing out noxious weeds



Limekiln project begins



Moccasin barbed wire crew

Recommendations For The Effective Use Of Bear Spray

Friday, August 15, 2008

Submitted by: Dan Marsh

Gallatin Valley BCH

The Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee recommends the use of bear spray and reminds hunters and others that despite its proven effectiveness, it is not a substitute for using proper bear safety techniques in the first place.

The IGBC provides these guidelines...

When to use bear pepper spray:

Bear pepper spray should be used as a deterrent only in an aggressive or attacking confrontation with a bear. Bear pepper spray is only effective when used as an airborne deterrent sprayed as a cloud at an aggressive animal. It should not be applied to people, tents, packs, other equipment or the surrounding area as a repellent.

How to use bear pepper spray:

Each person should carry a can of bear pepper spray when working or recreating in bear habitat. Spray should be carried in a quick, accessible fashion such as in a hip or chest holster.

In your tent, keep bear pepper spray readily available next to your flashlight. You should also keep a can available in your cooking area. Spray should be tested once a year.

Do not test spray in or near camping area. Be sure to check the expiration date on your can of bear spray.

- Remove safety clip
- Aim slightly down and towards the approaching bear. If necessary, adjust for cross wind.
- Spray a brief shot when the bear is about 50 feet away.
- Spray again if the bear continues to approach.
- Once the animal has retreated or is busy cleaning itself, leave the area as quickly as possible (don't run) or go to an immediate area of safety, such as a car, tree, or building.
- Do not chase or pursue the animal.

Selecting a bear pepper spray:

Purchase products that are clearly labeled "for deterring attacks by bears," and that are registered with the Envi-

ronmental Protection Agency (EPA). The EPA Bear Deterrent web site lists registered bear pepper spray manufacturers.



Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks' wildlife managers say the minimum requirements for the effective use of bear spray include:

- A minimum spray distance of 25 feet.
- A minimum six seconds of spray. A burst of two to three seconds will create a cloud of orange. It may be necessary to spray a second burst if the bear continues, or if the first cloud disperses in the wind.

- A minimum of 7.9 ounces of a one to two percent solution of oleoresin capsicum and related oils per can.
- Other features that impact how the pepper spray works include the weather and the wind's force and direction.

The can must be carried in a quickly accessible location such as a hip or chest holster or hand held as FWP bear managers do when walking through an area known to have bears.

No deterrent is 100% effective, but compared to all others, including firearms, bear spray has demonstrated the most success in fending off threatening and attacking bears and preventing injury to the person and animal involved, said the IGBC.

The proper use of bear spray will reduce the number of grizzly bears killed in self-defense, reduce human injuries caused by bears, and help promote the recovery and survival of the grizzly bear.

For more on living with bears and being bear aware, see the FWP home page at fwp.mt.gov and click on Be Bear Aware, or go to www.BeBearAware.org

You can also read your newsletter on-line at www.bchmt.org.

About Your Newsletter

Back Country Horsemen of Montana News is published three times a year by BCH of MT, PO Box 4864, Butte, MT 59701.

Publication dates are June 1, October 1, February 1. Deadline for submission of advertising and articles is the 10th of the preceding month (May 10, September 10, January 10).

The newsletter has three main emphasis areas: (1) issues (2) club activities/volunteer projects (3) light material (i.e. Humor, history, etc.). Please submit a copy that is type-written or legible handwritten copy is acceptable. Photos should be prints only (no negatives or proofs). Black & white or color is acceptable. Please do not cut or write directly on the photos.

Submit articles, photos, and advertising to Linda Brewer, 2167 N 4th Rd., Huntley, MT 59037. Phone: (406) 698-5880 e-mail: lbrewer@tctwest.net



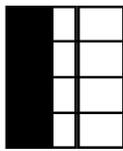
BCH Chapters are once again responsible for submitting articles for publication in this newsletter. Chapter divisions and deadline date for articles is as follows:

May 10/08	Beartooth, Bitterroot, Cabinet
September 10/08	CMR, East Slope, Flathead
January 10/09	Gallatin, Hi-Line, Judith Basin
May 10/09	Last Chance, Mile High, Mission Valley
September 10/09	Missoula, Selway/Pintler, Three Rivers
January 10/10	Upper Clark Fork, Wild Horse Plans, Beartooth

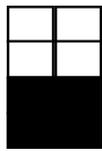
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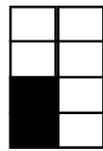
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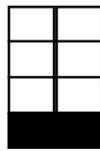
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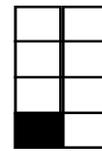
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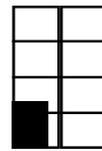
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Submissions can be received from individuals, chapters, or directly from the advertisers.

A 25% commission will be paid to individuals or chapters.

Cost By Number of Insertions

	<u>Once</u>	<u>Twice</u>	<u>Three Times</u>
Full page	\$100	\$200	\$200
1/2 page	\$ 75	\$150	\$150
1/4 page	\$ 40	\$ 80	\$ 80
1/8 page	\$ 25	\$ 50	\$ 50

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If you would like to join, please contact a chapter in your area.