

# Decker Dispatch

www.bchmt.org

The Newsletter of the Back Country Horsemen of Montana

February 2017



## OUR PURPOSES

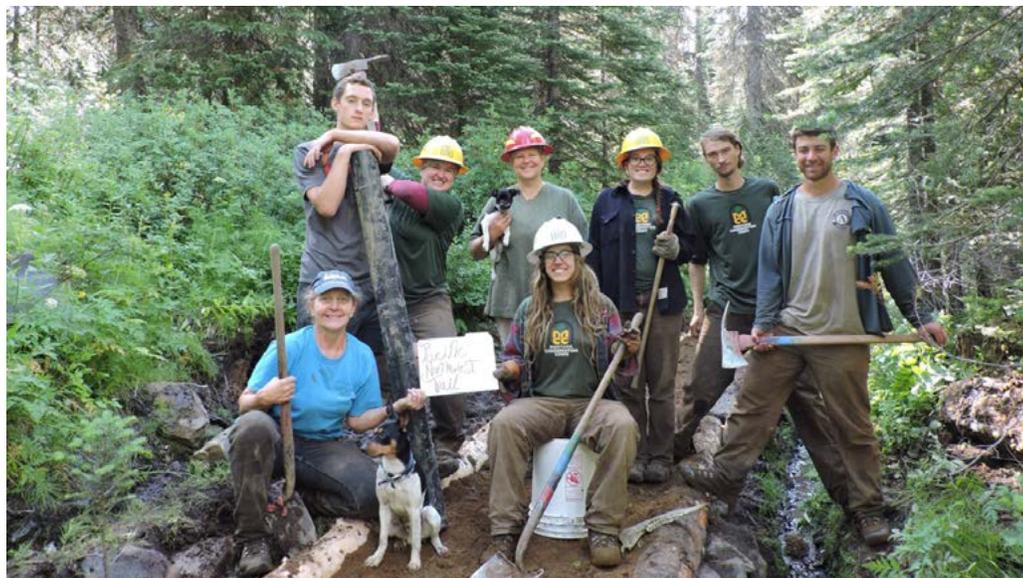
- To perpetuate the common sense use and enjoyment of horses in America's back country and wilderness.
- To work to ensure that public lands remain open to recreational stock use.
- To assist various agencies responsible for the maintenance and management of public lands.
- To educate, encourage, and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

## IN THIS ISSUE

Letter from the Chair.....	3
National Forest System Trails Stewardship Act becomes law .....	3
In the News.....	4
National Director's Column .....	5
Convention Information.....	12-15

## Cabinet Back Country Horsemen and Montana Conservation Corps Team Up to Improve a Section of the Pacific Northwest Scenic Trail

By Deena Shotzberger, President, Cabinet Back Country Horsemen



(Left to right - Josh, Anya, Deena, Kaleigh, Sam and Joe in the back row; Cindy and Anna in the front row)

Three Cabinet Back Country Horsemen and six Montana Conservation Corps crew members spent the first week of August constructing turnpikes and digging drainage ditches to improve a spring laden section of the Midge Creek Trail #177 in the far northwest corner of Montana. Over the course of four long day these nine individuals constructed three sections of turnpike totaling 144 feet, excavated 330 feet of drainage ditches, installed seven culverts, and restored an additional 20 feet of an existing turnpike. In addition to the laborious construction work, each individual had a two mile hike into and out of the work area each day.

A turnpike is a labor intensive structure that elevates a trail above wet ground by building up the trail base so it

is higher than the water table. The construction process includes installation of log retainers to hold fill material, laying filter cloth, filling the structure with suitable material such as onsite soil and on or off site gravel, and ditching to divert water from the structure and to lower the water table adjacent to the structure. This drainage work will reduce damage to fragile habitats around the trail, and will allow hikers and stock users to easily and safely traverse a once difficult section of trail.

The Midge Creek Trail provides access to the Northwest National Scenic Area and is part of the 1,200 mile Pacific Northwest National Scenic Trail that connects the Continental Divide Trail to the Pacific Crest Trail.

[continued on the page 2]

## BCHMT Contacts

### Chairman

Brad Pollman  
406.546.6491  
bpollman20@aol.com

### Vice-Chairman

Rich Carl  
406.899.5248  
rich.carl@transystemslc.com

### Treasurer

Sherry Lionberger  
208.691.6218  
lionsden01@mt.net

### Secretary

Nancy Pollman  
406.546.6492  
npollman20@aol.com

### National Directors

John Chepulis  
406.581.6507  
barcdiamond@gmail.com

Mark Himmel  
406.771-0809  
markahimmel@gmail.com

Connie Long (alternate)  
406.644.7889  
long@montana.com

### Advisory

Connie Long (above)

### Defensive Horsemanship

Smoke Elser  
406.549.2820  
telsler2820@aol.com

### Education

Connie Long (above)

### Expansion/Membership

Ron Stuber  
406-837-0360  
mtsms@centurytel.net

### Issues

Chuck Miller  
406.961.5453  
circlemr@cybernet1.com

### Newsletter Editor

Deborah Schatz  
406.314.1084  
deborah.bcha@gmail.com

### Public Relations

Scott Kiser  
406.260.8398  
scottkiser@centurytel.net

### Travel Plan

Mack Long  
406.644.7889  
aplenglowranch.mack@gmail.com

### Webmaster

Dan Marsh  
406.587.7578  
webmaster@bchmt.org

### Youth Challenge

Greg Schatz  
406.261.5450  
gregschatzbuilder@gmail.com



Many hands make light work!

[continued from front page]

There were three areas between the 1.5 and 2 mile section of this trail that traversed through numerous springs, seeps, and bogs. These areas desperately needed drainage and surfacing to maintain and improve the trail and protect water and recreational resources. This phase of the project completed installation of the turnpikes and drainage structures, but the overall project was far from complete.

Throughout the fall, five Cabinet Back Country Horsemen packed 5,000 pounds of gravel to get the first layer of gravel on the 160 feet of turnpike. Cabinet Back Country Horsemen plan to haul an additional 10,000 pounds of crushed gravel in the summer and fall of 2017 to complete surfacing the structures and also plan to install an additional 25 smaller drainage features to divert water off the two mile section of trail up to the construction area.

While this year's work accomplishments were extraordinary, this project started long before the Montana Conservation Corps crew rig pulled into the worksite on August 1st, and will continue through the summer of 2017. The Three Rivers District of the Kootenai National Forest has been trying to address drainage problems on the Midge Creek Trail for many years and hasn't been able to secure funding to complete the work. As trail budgets continue to decline, Cabinet Back Country Horsemen decided to try and help with some of the more costly trail improvement work. We knew the chapter would need additional funds for these construction projects, so the chapter president (Deena Shotzberger) got serious about writing grants. In October of 2015, the Cabinet Back Country Horsemen were awarded a \$10,000 two-year expense reimbursement grant from the Recreation Trails Program (RTP).

The RTP funds come from the Federal



Upper Turnpike.



John, Elmer and Ross filling and weighing buckets to load on pack stock.

Highway Trust Fund, and represent a portion of the motor fuel excise tax collected from non-highway recreational fuel use: fuel used for off-highway recreation by snowmobiles, all-terrain vehicles, off-highway motorcycles, and off-highway light trucks. RTP provides funds to the states to develop and maintain recreational trails and trail related facilities. In Montana, the RTP grants are administered by Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks. These grant funds are highly competitive and Cabinet Back Country Horsemen were thrilled to have their Midge Creek proposal selected for funding.

The RTP grant allowed Cabinet Back Country Horsemen to fund a Montana Conservation Corps crew for one week to help install the drainage structures and turnpikes. Cabinet Back Country Horsemen members designed and laid out the project, packed all the tools and construction materials, and worked alongside their Montana Conservation Corps partners. The grant also allowed Cabinet BCH to build five gravel pannier sets and to reimburse members for their expenses such as gas, food, horse and trailer use.

Once the surfacing work is completed in 2017, the Midge Creek Trail will provide much easier access to some of the most scenic lands in Northwest Montana.

## Letter from the Chair

Hello, Back Country Horsemen!

I hope this newsletter finds you well and able to deal with the real winter we are having. Even though it's winter, BCH has been busy – some packing food boxes for those who need a little help over the holidays, others preparing for both state and national BCH meetings coming this spring. Okay, can't wait til spring!

By the time you get this BCH will have attended a public land rally at our state capitol. Thank you to all who attended. I also want to thank Greg Schatz for bringing that rally to our attention and Kerry Bartlett for stepping up to attend the meetings in Helena for the Montana Trails Coalition. There are many of you who are doing good things for the mission of BCH in the background. I thank you; your actions are appreciated!

Our 2017 state convention will be upon us in no time. I have heard a flurry of what's on the agenda and the weekend promises to be full of informative and interesting topics. If you have not already registered, please do so right away. Registration forms are already on the state's website; agendas will be added as they become finalized.

As always, if you have any questions, give me a call. See you in Polson!

Respectively,  
Your Chairman

Brad Pollman



**Brad Pollman**  
Chairman  
BCH Montana

## National Forest System Trails Stewardship Act becomes law

By Don Saner, Chairman, BCHA

Dear BCHA member:

I have great news. On November 18th, President Obama signed into law the National Forest System Trails Stewardship Act (H.R. 845/S. 1110, or the "Trails bill").

Your calls and letters of support to Congress over the past few years proved crucial to its passage.

You are receiving this email because your member(s) of Congress signed on early as a cosponsor of this important bill. As such, they demonstrated how important trails are to the American public and the important role that volunteers serve in maintaining these trails.

Would you please take a moment to call or write your member of Congress to thank them for supporting the National Forest System Trails Stewardship Act?

[Contact information for your Representatives and Senators who co-sponsored HR 845 can be found here.](#)

Your correspondence with member(s) of Congress can be as straight-forward as saying:

To members of the House of Representatives:

"I am a volunteer with the Back

Country Horsemen of [your state]. I am calling/writing to thank Representative [last name] for co-sponsoring H.R. 845, the National Forest System Trails Stewardship Act. As you may know, the bill recently was signed into law. It will keep more trails across the nation open and accessible by expanding the use of volunteer and partner organizations, like mine, who assist the U.S. Forest Service."

To members of the U.S. Senate:

"I am a volunteer with the Back Country Horsemen of [your state]. I am calling/writing to thank Senator [last name] for co-sponsoring S. 1110, the National Forest System Trails Stewardship Act. As you may know, the bill recently was signed into law. It will keep more trails across the nation open and accessible by expanding the use of volunteer and partner organizations, like mine, who assist the U.S. Forest Service."

Visit BCHA's website here if you would like more information on the need for, and anticipated benefits of, the Trails bill.

I thank you for being a dedicated member of BCHA and for helping us to gain the attention of Congress.

## Youth Challenge Report

By Greg Schatz and Kathy Hundley



This young lady was a camper at the River of No Return Youth Camp held at the Magruder Ranger Station on the edge of the Frank Church Wilderness. The camp was sponsored by Montana conservation groups involved with the Teller Youth Expo in Corvallis, including chapters of the Back Country Horsemen of Montana. The campers learned how we use stock in the back country, how to use man-ties and panniers, and how to be prepared to leave no trace.

If you have a suitable venue in your area to start a youth packing camp, please contact Greg or Kathy for help and additional information.

# In the News

## Comments sought on proposed action for Revised Forest Plan for the Helena-Lewis and Clark National Forest

[www.fs.usda.gov/goto/hlc/forest\\_plan\\_revision](http://www.fs.usda.gov/goto/hlc/forest_plan_revision)

The Helena-Lewis and Clark National Forest will be accepting public comments on a revised Forest Plan. For more information, visit <http://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/helena/home/?cid=stelprd3798801>.

The Helena-Lewis and Clark National Forest (HLC) is seeking public comments on the recently released proposed action for the revised Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan). Members of the public are invited to review the proposed action on the HLC website ([www.fs.usda.gov/helena/](http://www.fs.usda.gov/helena/)) and submit their comments within the next 120 days.

The proposed action for the revised Forest Plan includes management direction to support a variety of possible actions that may occur on the plan area over the next 15 years, approximately.

The proposed action describes the HLC's distinctive roles and contributions across central Montana, and outlines desired conditions, goals, objectives, standards, and guidelines, on a both forest-wide and geographic area level.

The purpose of the revised Forest

Plan is to provide for long-term sustainability of ecosystem values and desired ecosystem services; and the proposed action identifies suitable uses of NFS lands to meet those purposes. It also identifies priority watersheds for restoration, and includes the evaluation of wilderness inventory areas and eligible wild and scenic rivers.

Members of the public can review the proposed action, along with numerous associated plan revision analyses, maps, forest assessment, public meeting summaries and notes, etc., on the HLC Forest Plan Revision website at: [www.fs.usda.gov/goto/hlc/forest\\_plan\\_revision](http://www.fs.usda.gov/goto/hlc/forest_plan_revision).

Once people have had the opportunity to review the proposed action, we invite folks to join us at one of the following community meetings planned, beginning in January 2017:

Public comments must be received within 120 days from the date of publication of the Notice of Intent (NOI) in



Badger Creek in the Badger-Two Medicine (photo by Tony Bynum/tonybynum.com)

the Federal Register. Comments may be submitted one of three ways:

- E-mailed to <https://cara.ecosystem-management.org/Public/CommentInput?Project=44589>;
- Facsimiled to 406-449-5436; or
- Sent or hand-delivered to the Helena-Lewis and Clark National Forest Supervisor's Office, ATTN: Forest Plan Revision, 2880 Skyway Dr., Helena, MT 59602.

For more information, contact Forest Plan Revision Team Leader Deb Entwistle at 406-449-5201, or go to the Forest Plan Revision website at [www.fs.usda.gov/goto/hlc/forest\\_plan\\_revision](http://www.fs.usda.gov/goto/hlc/forest_plan_revision).

## Devon Energy relinquishes its 15 leases in the sacred Badger-Two Medicine

[www.wildmontana.org](http://www.wildmontana.org)

A historic milestone has been reached in the 35-year-old struggle to free the Badger-Two Medicine from the oil and gas leases blanketing the Badger-Two Medicine.

Devon Energy, the holder of 15 leases in this sacred area, voluntarily relinquished its leases at a signing ceremony with Secretary of Interior Sally Jewell. She was surrounded by Blackfeet Chief Earl Old Person, Tribal Chairman Harry Barnes, Senator Jon Tester, and Devon Energy CEO Dave Hager as she made the announcement.

Senator Jon Tester, who has championed the removal of the leases and the protection of the Badger, said, "This region carries great cultural and historical significance to the Blackfeet Tribe. Today's announcement will ensure that the Badger-Two Medicine will remain pristine for both the Tribe and the folks who love to hunt, hike, and fish near Glacier Park and the Bob Marshall Wilderness."

"It is both spectacular, but more important, a sacred site and very important to the culture and the values and the story of the Blackfeet Nation and its people going back since time immemorial," Sec. Jewell said. "It should not have been leased to begin with."

"Our pursuit to protect the Badger-Two Medicine has lasted more than three decades, and it will continue until all the illegal oil and gas leases are canceled and the area is permanently protected," said Chairman Barnes for the Blackfeet people.

Devon CEO Hager shared that he was an avid and hiker and backpacker, and was now eager to spend some time in the Badger.

"We appreciate how important [the Badger-Two Medicine] is to the Blackfeet people," Hager said. He later added, "We think is a good opportunity to demonstrate we can be a good neighbor in this area."

Devon's relinquishment of the leases offers hope that conservation values need not run in opposition to energy development. Devon's actions should stand as an important lesson to the incoming administration – that there are places on American public lands that should remain off-limits to oil and gas drilling.

On January 10, 2017, thanks to you and your enduring support of Montana's wild places, the Department of the Interior cancelled and refunded payments for the last two of these leases. This is an enormous victory for the people of Montana, especially the Blackfeet Nation, who consider the Badger-Two Medicine the cradle of their culture.

This is also an enormous victory for Montana's wildlife. The fight isn't quite over, since one of the leaseholders, Solenex LLC of Louisiana, is challenging the cancellation of its lease in court. But we will do everything in our power to ensure all of the cancellations hold.



By John Chepulis  
National Director, BCH Montana

### A recap of 2016

The year 2016 started out with the resignation of Peg Greiwe because of health reasons. Association Resources of Hartford CT was hired as BCHA's association management company, effective Feb 1, 2016.

BCHA signed an MOU with the Bureau of Land Management in February, which will promote formalizing trails not currently managed by BLM. BCHA sent public scoping letters in February on the Yosemite Wilderness Stewardship Plan and Mt. Rainier Wilderness Stewardship Plan.

Randy Rasmussen was sent to Washington D.C. February 8-11 to Hike the Hill. He was joined by other groups including The American Horse Council. Randy spoke to 70 people on the need for a trails bill and pushed for co-sponsors. HR845/S.1110 was one of the key topics at Hike the Hill.

Mack Long, BCHMT, was appointed as BCHA's Education Committee Chair in March to replace Pete Kriger from California. The Trails Forever Fund (\$ 5.00 a month club) was established in March with Jerry Bentz, OR, volunteering to be chair. Thirty percent, to be determined annually, will be put into the BCHA Education Fund.

The National Board Meeting was held in Las Vegas. Thirty-one states were represented at the four-day event. The actual value of our volunteer services nationally in 2015 was \$11,238,376.

BCHA Executive Director Jim McGarvey was invited to be in the American Quarter Horse Association Public Policy Committee. He also attended the American Horse Council annual meeting June 12-15.

The new USFS Saw Policy was implemented on July 20, 2016.

Senate Bill S.3205, the Bikes-in-Wilderness Bill, was introduced by Utah Senators. The bill would amend the Wilderness Act of 1964 and would force bike use on most wilder-

ness trails.

Chairman Saner spent four days visiting with land managers and members of Missouri BCHA. His visit was well received and resulted in a stronger relationship with Missouri BCHA and the possibility of MOUs with state organizations, resulting in opening more trails in Missouri.

Jim McGarvey, Executive Director of BCHA has been appointed to the Board of Directors of the Certified Horsemanship Association in Middle Tennessee State University.

Randy Rasmussen went to Washington D.C. joining forces with The Wilderness Society, Pacific Crest Trails Association, American Horse Council, and Outdoor Industry Association in September to help educate members

of Congress about the Bikes-in-Wilderness Bill (S-3205). It may not go anywhere, but represents a high level of threat to the Wilderness Act.

Randy Rasmussen attended the annual National Wilderness workshop in Missoula MT in November. It was hosted by the National Wilderness Stewardship Alliance and the Society for Wilderness Stewardship. While in Missoula, Randy went to the national headquarters for the National Forest Foundation to discuss future partnership opportunities.

On November 18, President Obama signed into law the National Forest System Trails Stewardship Act (HR845/S.1110). Please contact our House and Senate members, thanking them for their support of the Bill.

## Backcountry Horsemen of America

### Volunteer Hours Report

Backcountry Horsemen of Montana

2016

	Totals	Rate per hour/mile/day	Total Value	
Total Basic Hours	5095	\$23.56	\$120,038.20	Calculated per hour
Total Skilled Hours	6079	\$35.34	\$214,831.86	Calculated per hour
Total Trail Recon Hours	387	\$23.56	\$9,117.72	Calculated per hour
Total LNT - Education	3201	\$23.56	\$75,415.56	Calculated per hour
Total Public Meetings	891	\$23.56	\$20,991.96	Calculated per hour
Total Administrative Service	2146	\$23.56	\$50,559.76	Calculated per hour
Total Travel Time	3488	\$23.56	\$82,181.99	Calculated per hour
<b>Total Hours</b>	<b>21287.2</b>			
Wilderness Trail Miles	1543			
Other Trail Miles	2841			
<b>Total Trail Miles</b>	<b>4384</b>			
Personal Vehicle	40276	\$0.90	\$36,248.40	Calculated per mile
Stock Hauling	65427	\$1.10	\$71,969.70	Calculated per mile
<b>Total Travel Miles</b>	<b>105703</b>			
Power Equipment	921	\$26.00	\$23,946.00	Calculated per hour
Heavy Equipment	65	\$81.00	\$5,265.00	Calculated per hour
<b>Total Equipment Hours</b>	<b>986</b>			
Total Stock (Pack and Saddle)	1580			
<b>Total Stock Days</b>	<b>1996</b>	\$100.00	\$199,600.00	Calculated per day
Total Donations			\$58,049.29	
		<b>Total</b>	<b>\$968,215.44</b>	

## Upper Clark Fork Hard at Work

By Cheri Fisher, Upper Clark Fork Back Country Horsemen

Upper Clark Fork (UCF) BCH is a small family oriented club. We do not have a lot of members but the members we do have are very active.

One of our first events in 2016 was educational training at the Blue Ribbon Arena in Deer Lodge. Wade Murphy spent several Sundays working with our club members on horsemanship, focusing on safety. We also worked on improving packing skills. Youth members Kepler (age 3), Kelsey (age 5), Olivia (age 7), and Leah (age 12) practiced with their animals. They sure had fun learning new skills.

Upper Clark Fork annual Mothers Day ride was held at Tyler Creek trail. We had 16 riders and rode about 9 miles. Youth members Kelsey, Olivia, Leah, and Freja (age 14) enjoyed the ride, too. They kept us entertained on the ride with their smiling faces. After the ride Kepler and her father joined us for a potluck dinner. BCH members sure know how to fix a great meal.

Youth member Freja went along on the Monture trail clearing project. We removed over 150 downed trees. It took three days of hard work with Freja helping to move trees from the trail. She also used her saddle saw to cut small trees and branches. Wade Murphy saved the day by showing up to remove a dangerous widow maker. Kepler joined in the hard work. In the morning, while the work crew was getting ready, she rode her Grandma's mule and moved small branches from the trail. Kepler was excited to see bear poop on the trail. The hard working crew got the trail cleared just in time for the Regional Forest Service pack in.

Several club members attended Mission Valley's pokers ride, including youth members Olivia and Leah. It was a great ride and fun was had by all.

Upper Clark Fork's fun ride was held on July 9; we had 87 riders and served over 100 meals. We could not have pulled it off without the help of our youth members. Freja and Tyler (age 15) helped mark trails and man check stations, Kepler, Kelsey, and Kayin (age 5) also worked hard. The kids all worked hard and never complained.

UCF BCH was well represented at the Deer Lodge parade by 14 members

including youth riders Kepler, Kayin, Kelsey, Olivia, and Leah. The youth rode their horses, ponies, and mules while proudly waving American flags.

Kelsey went on her first pack trip. Wade and Lonnie Murphy, Kimm Fisher, and Mike Fisher cleared Baggs Creek Trail while Kelsey helped Cheri Fisher gather firewood and finish setting up the camp. She spent two nights sleeping in the tent she helped put up. Kelsey learned a lot on this trip and had a great time. We all enjoyed watching her dance to Wade's harmonica.

Leah competed in the 4-H packing project at the Deer Lodge Fair. She was awarded Grand Champion Packer! Leah proved she deserved this honor a few weeks later when she helped pack in the CDT trail crew. She did an excellent job weighing out and mantying loads. Leah's packs made it all the way into camp without a hitch. Leah was also a big help on the Eastside trail clearing project. She helped with the stock and with clearing trails.

Freja went on several pack trips last summer, including an eight day trip into the Bob Marshall Wilderness. We rode over 100 miles; Freja helped round up the stock and pack the mules every morning. Freja also took her turn as camp cook - she is a better cook than I am. Freja got to see North Fork Falls, Carmichael cabin, watch beaver swim in the Danaher, listen to wolves howl, and watch a very large grizzly bear go right past our camp. It was an exciting trip for all.

This is just a few of the things we did in 2016. It may seem like I am bragging about these kids, I guess I am. They worked hard, rode hard, and always did their best. They never stopped smiling no matter how hard the job. They are all a joy to have in camp or on the trail. We need to continue educating, encouraging and praising them. They are our future and, after spending time with these kids, I know that the future of Back Country Horsemen is a bright one. I am so very proud of each and every one of these kids.



Top: Kelsey dancing in the backcountry.  
Middle: Kepler helping Grandpa clear Monture Creek Trail.  
Bottom: Leah helping clear the Eastside Trail.

# Bitter Root BCH members tackle multiple trails project near historical Fales Flat Campground

By Karen Phillips, Bitter Root Back Country Horsemen

On the weekend of September 9 through 11, 2016, eleven hardy Bitter Root BCH members tackled three trails up the West Fork of the Bitterroot River from their base camp at Fales Flat Campground.

Trail worker Joe Rogish provided this background on the historical camping area:

“Fales Flat campground is named for Wesley Fales, a trapper, woodsman, and early Forest Service employee, who built a homestead on the flat around 1914. The cabin he built there burned about 1940. Fales Flat was also the site of a CCC camp in 1933.”

And more information on Wesley Fales, from Bitterroot Trails, published by the Bitter Root Historical Society (pages 216-218):

“He came to the Bitterroot Valley in the 1890s and bought a home in Hamilton, after years of successful guiding and trapping in the Bitterroot and Sapphire mountains and the Selway river drainage. He was employed by the U.S. Forest Service as a fire guard, lookout, trail builder and packer...Wes Fales was a respected carpenter and his log work in his cabins was some of the best. His cabin, built on the flat that bears his name on the Nez Perce Trail into the Selway at the southern end of the valley, was an example of his skill.”

Located at Fales Flat Campground is an old blazed ponderosa pine that marks part of the Nez Perce Trail (FS #12). Project leader Dan Brandborg found and pointed out that historical trail sign to the group. Who says we aren't modern day scouts!

The project began on Friday afternoon when Dan, Patty Martin, Bonnie Morgan and Joe Rogish explored the lower section of the Nez Perce Trail from Fales Flat Campground. They got up the steepest part to a lookout by navigating around fallen trees. After a lot of time and effort bushwhacking, they called it a day.

On Saturday morning after trailering to Nez Perce Pass, the crew divided into three groups:

Taylor Orr and Katie Phillips cleared the top section of Sheephead Creek Trail (FS #142) enough that it

was passable on foot or horseback. Carol Johns and Bonnie Morgan started out with Taylor and Katie along the Divide Trail (FS #16) but found little to clear on that trail, so after a few miles they rode back to camp and worked their way up from the bottom of Sheephead Creek Trail (its beginning starts near Fales Flat). With only saddle saws available they were able to clear it for about half a mile before a big tree across the trail stopped them.

In the second group were Mike Foster and Joe Rogish who cleared Castle Rock Trail (FS# 627) partway. Lots of deadfall made it slow going for them and they headed back to camp late that day.

The third group included Dan, Becky Brandborg, Patty and Max and Kathy Stoppel. They spent hours searching for the upper part of the unmarked Nez Perce Trail and finally located its intersection with the Divide Trail near the historic Salish Indian gravesite that is located about ¾ of a mile above Nez Perce Pass. The upper part of the Nez Perce Trail required several hours of tough bushwhacking just to find it.

On Sunday morning, Dan, Joe, Bonnie, Patty, Katie and Taylor headed back to the Castle Rock Trail and cleared it to within a mile of Bear Cone Mountain.

The group camped Friday and Saturday nights and they were especially grateful for the dinners, lunches and breakfast provided by Bitter Root BCH cooks. Max and Kathy fixed breakfast, lunches and dinner Friday night. Rebecca and Dave Jones prepared and brought dinner to the crew Saturday night. It was great work by the cooks and their efforts were much appreciated. There is nothing like a delicious hot meal provided to you before you head out in the morning and after a day working on trails!

A big thank you goes out to Dan and his crew and cooks Rebecca, Dave and Max and Kathy. Everyone worked very hard and the trail crew removed hundreds of obstacles. This was quite an accomplishment in an area of historic trails!



Top: After a safety meeting, the crew met at the historic Salish Indian gravesite before heading out in three groups.

Next: Taylor Orr and his Highlanders are packed and ready to tackle the upper section of Sheephead Creek Trail.

Next: Dan Brandborg makes sawdust fly on the historic Nez Perce Trail.

Bottom: Bonnie and Dan point out Bear Cone Peak to Carol, Becky and Patty. What a view!

# Shosoni-Bannock Trail, also known as the Slip and Slide Trail

By Dale A. Olson, Beartooth Back Country Horsemen

Little has been written about this historic trail leading to the Beartooth Plateau south of Red Lodge, Montana. This trail was historically used by the Shosoni and Bannock Indians to cross the mountains to reach the plains for the purpose of obtaining their winter supply of buffalo meat and hides. As the nickname Slip and Slide Trail implies, the ascent and descent leaves one with the impression that there are steep and rocky places to be encountered.

General Phil Sheridan crossed the mountains from Cooke City in 1882, intending to forge a route across unknown country to Billings where he would take the Northern Pacific train back east, as the railroad had just been built into Billings that spring. His party came down into the valley on the south side of Mount Maurice.

Although not clearly indicated, the first suggestion of the use of the Shosoni-Bannock Trail is by E.E. VanDyke as he traveled from the Cooke City area to Red Lodge. In 1883 his father came out from New York for the summer. Together they blazed a trail over the Beartooths from Cooke City to Red Lodge. They built rock monuments for trail marking which could be seen easily from a distance. This became known as the "VanDyke Trail." Remnants of this famous route are still visible from the Beartooth Highway.

In his book, *Pony Trails in Wyoming*, John K. Rollinson writes of an interesting experience on this trail

while returning to Wyoming after buying supplies in Red Lodge, Montana.

"One night in late August of that summer, one of the stockmen who lived on upper Ghost Creek came up to see me. His name was Bill Greenough, and a better all-around cowman, horseman, and mountain man never stepped in shoe leather. He and I planned to go to Red Lodge by way of the old Sheridan Trail that led across the Beartooth Plateau and the Chain Lakes country. Bill needed some grub, and I was getting short myself. He knew the country thoroughly, as he made the trip several times each summer. I had been as far as Rock Creek, but no further.

We put the camp in order and started out, crowding the horses into a trot where there was level going. We reached Red Lodge late that night. There we met Bill's brothers, Ben and Wright. I also met John and Hank Weaver, at whose stable we left our horses. The next day we purchased supplies and packed up for our return, as we wanted to reach camp that night. We got as far as Tin Can Camp, on the upper end of Mirror Lake, and just as we came to the slide-rock trail we saw it was storming in the low country north of us in Montana. We were then close to the Wyoming line. Almost before we knew it, the storm swept down on us, and the lightning cracked. Bill was riding in the lead of the several pack animals, and I was following. The trail was narrow and all in slide-rock.

The lightning became worse, and it was absolutely pitch-dark between flashes, and the lightning ran across the trail on the rocks. It would, for a second, light up the lake with a weird, greenish-blue light, and the thunder was almost one continual crash. I will acknowledge that I was badly frightened, and I got off my pony. I was wearing my short slicker and a pair of Angora chaps, so I kept fairly dry. I was so rattled that I shed my six-shooter and spurs right there on the trail. The lightning was so terrific. I saw small balls of fire on each of the ears of the pony I was riding. I could not understand, nor even believe my eyes when I would reach out, between flashes,

and put my hands on his ears. The fire would not show on my hands, but as soon as I removed them, the two balls of light reappeared and shone brightly and distinctly on each ear tip, and it was so dark I could not see the horse at all. This condition continued for twelve or fifteen minutes.\* In a few minutes the storm had passed over. I knew it would be useless to go back that night and try to locate my gun and spurs, so we kept on.

When we reached my camp on the lake that night, I asked Bill if he saw anything unusual during the electric storm, and he told me he had seen fire balls on each ear of his horse—and Bill had not been drinking, either! I never had any repetition of that occurrence and never heard of it happening to anyone else. I didn't go around telling of it, because I knew people would not believe me.

The following day Bill packed up his outfit and headed down off the mountain for his cabin on Ghost Creek. I saddled up and rode to the slide-rock trail to look for my spurs and gun, blaming myself the while for being such a coward as to fear a little thunder and lightning. However, bright morning sunshine is much different from a dark, stormy night when one's courage is questioned.

I soon located my gun and spurs, right where I had dropped them on the trail. On my return I stopped at three different sheep camps on the plateau near the head of Line Creek, Bennett Creek, and Little Rock Creek. The herders were all Basques and did not speak much English. These men are said to make fine sheepherders, but they are not very good company for one who does not speak their own lingo. I had to use an improvised sign talk, make pictures, and use the words which they did understand, like "sheep," "camp," "tent," and "water." A bear had killed a few sheep that belonged to one of the men. Some had lost sheep by poisonous plants. I was able to show them a plant of that sort, and with a diagram scratched on the ground, I pointed out the spots where they should use the most caution. All the herders were

[continued next page]



General Phil Sheridan.

[Slip and Slide continued]

armed with .30-30 Winchester carbines. I got a hindquarter of a sheep that had been killed a couple of days before and tied it behind my saddle. I determined to build up a Dutch oven full of slumgullion with leg of mutton, and season it with onion and potatoes I had bought from Red Lodge.

On my way back to my camp I traveled a new route which was previously not accessible, due to old snowbanks. I passed a long narrow lake, and as I had been told of an old log stockade or enclosure there, I soon located it. I do not know what it was used for. It is quite badly rotted down, but it had been a rectangular affair, about eight feet high, built of a double wall of rather light logs, with an eight- or ten-inch space between the two walls which had been filled in with rocks. Three or four old rock fireplaces had once been in use there. All the ax marks were those of a hand ax or tomahawk, as the cuts showed the tool had a narrow bit. I concluded that squaws had done the work. On a line running due north and south, through scattered pine timber, all the trees had been peeled halfway around up to a height of about five feet. North of the stockade the blaze was facing north, and south of the enclosure the blaze faced south. Each line ran a distance of about a hundred yards. Some trees had been belted and were therefore dead. None had any Indian picture writing on them."

\*Note by E. A. Brininstool: This peculiar phenomenon is mentioned in Capt. J. H. Cook's *Fifty Years on the Old Frontier*, during a trip with trail cattle from Texas to the Kansas markets.

The completion of the Beartooth Highway (then called Red Lodge-Cooke City Highway) in 1936 would negate the need to travel this route. However, during the years that the coal mines were operating in Red Lodge there was a need for timbers used in the mines. Many men were

employed during the winter months to ascend drainages near Red Lodge and fell trees and cut them into lengths that were to be used in Red Lodge and Bearcreek. These timbers were assembled in or near the creeks. As spring came, they would be pushed into the tumbling stream and guided downstream to a holding pond on the south edge of town.

As one ascends this trail, there is evidence of the logging days along the way. Although some of the trash left behind may have been left by hunters, the cables would definitely be from logging.

Today this trail is all but forgotten. Only a few hearty fishermen who want to try their luck in Mirror Lake venture up it.

To reach it you have to drive south from Red Lodge on U.S. Highway 212 ten miles. Turn off the highway to your right at Parkside, cross the bridge, turn to the left on the road to Glacier Lake, which follows Rock Creek. There is no trailhead. It is the second drainage on your left, you will have to do a little bushwhacking and looking around some to find the trail. Once you start up the trail you cross Rock Creek, and pass Quintuple Peaks to Mirror Lake. There is a tree at the lake that has 'L. W. Russell, 1906' carved into it. Shortly after the lake is a tree with small hatchet marks and the bark removed from it. From this point you will be going in a southeasterly direction. The trail now leaves the timber and heads towards the Beartooth Highway, intersecting it near the East Summit. Cross the highway and you can descend into Stockade Lake or any way you choose from here. The last time I was up there was in 2003, and Mirror Lake was as far as I went. I feel the urge to go and explore it again next summer. There is lots of scenery to enjoy so make sure to take your time and spend a few nights out in the backcountry.

The Beartooth Plateau



## Back Country Horsemen of Montana State Chapters

Beartooth BCH  
PO Box 614, Absorakee, MT 59001

Bitter Root BCH  
PO Box 1083, Hamilton, MT 59840

Cabinet BCH  
PO Box 949, Libby, MT 59923

Charlie Russell BCH  
PO Box 3563, Great Falls, MT 59403

East Slope BCH  
PO Box 967, Conrad, MT 59425

BCH of the Flathead  
PO Box 1192, Columbia Falls, MT 59912

Gallatin Valley BCH  
PO Box 3232, Bozeman, MT 59772

Judith Basin BCH  
PO Box 93, Lewistown, MT 59457

Last Chance BCH  
PO Box 4008, Helena, MT 59604

Mile High BCH  
PO Box 4434, Butte, MT 59702

Mission Valley BCH  
PO Box 604, Ronan, MT 59864

BCH of Missoula  
PO Box 2121, Missoula, MT 59806

Northwest Montana BCH  
PO Box 9242, Kalispell, MT 59901

Selway-Pintler Wilderness BCH  
PO Box 88, Hamilton, MT 59840

Three Rivers BCH  
PO Box 251, Dillon, MT 59725

Upper Clark Fork BCH  
PO Box 725, Deerlodge, MT 59722

Wild Horse Plains BCH  
PO Box 640, Plains, MT 59859

If you would like to join us, please contact a chapter in your area. More information is available on our website:

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

**Schedule for Chapters' News Article Submissions**  
E-mail to: [deborah.bcha@gmail.com](mailto:deborah.bcha@gmail.com)

### Spring Issue

Articles due May 5th, 2017: Charlie Russell, East Slope, Flathead, Gallatin, and Judith Basin

### Fall Issue

Articles due September 5th, 2017: Last Chance, Mission Valley, Missoula, Northwest Montana, Selway-Pintler Wilderness

### Winter Issue

Articles due January 5th, 2018: Beartooth, Bitter Root, Cabinet, Three Rivers, Upper Clark Fork, and Wild Horse Plains

## The Unexpected Happened

By Eve Gillespie, Northwest Montana Back Country Horsemen

On September 11, 2016, I expected to have a great trail ride with my 14 year old black and white paint Tennessee Walker gelding, Flash. I had been riding him for two years, and he was the only horse that I could ride away from the rest of the herd, and go into the woods alone without a fuss. In fact, he would stand in a park stretch while I would mount, and would not walk until directed. It was a cloudy day and looked like it might rain. I asked myself if I really wanted to ride that day, because of the potential for thunder or lightening, but didn't really worry about it, so I continued getting ready. I tacked Flash up carefully, as usual. He has a short back and is very round so I made sure the saddle was just right. The bridle went on easily, as usual, and he seemed calm and nothing unusual was going on around me. The other horses were still eating their hay about 20 feet from where I mounted. I usually wait a little longer to ride after feeding, but because of the oncoming rain, I started earlier. The last things I remember were fastening my helmet, and tying the reins in a knot, which I do when I mount, then usually untie them when I am riding. I recall stepping onto the mounting block.

We estimate that about 15 minutes later, my husband found me laying on my back. All of the horses, including Flash, were up in a corner about 50 yards away, and none were by the hay where they had been eating. Flash was, of course, on the outside of the fence. My husband, Brian, asked me if I was OK and I said, "no." I knew I couldn't move and asked him to call an ambulance. I did not try to move. The ambulance crew and neighbors arrived. I just kept thinking there was a rock behind my right scapula. I had no headache, and no back or neck pain. If I turned my head or changed position I would vomit. It was at that time that I turned down the helicopter for the ambulance because I was afraid that the motion would cause the vomiting to be worse.

Somehow they got me into the ambulance and took me to Kalispell Regional Medical Center, where I work as a cardiologist. I recall throwing up on just about everyone who tried to move



Eve Gillespie

me, and slightly recall going into the CT scanner a few times. I suffered a concussion, subarachnoid brain hemorrhage, six broken ribs, and lacerated liver. They took my husband into a room and told him they didn't know how good I would "come out" of this.

I was in the ICU for four days, then went to the inpatient rehab unit for a week. The nausea and vertigo subsided after a day, and the double vision lasted for three months but is now gone. I had to take two months off work to recover. The rib pain was substantial and made it difficult to lay down. I have just about totally recovered now, and I am ready to ride again. It is just what I have always done, and always will do as long as I am able. But the question of what happened and the lack of knowledge of the horse's behavior loom as big unknowns for the future.

If there was a forensics team that could come and investigate and figure out what happened, I sure would appreciate that. I have been bucked off about 10 times during my 50 years of riding, but there were no buck marks on my thighs. When I have fallen, I have never fallen on my back. There was one mark on my right biceps from the reins and it is possible that my arm was caught in the loop and I could have pulled the horse down with me. There isn't much he could have done that I couldn't have sat to for some period of



Top: Ron Trippet, with helmet, packing Boy Scouts to Elk Lake.  
Bottom: Kobi Mathies, Patrick Totten, Melanie Totten, Selene Totten and Ron Trippet, all with helmets, packing to Castle Lake.

time, or gotten him out of unless he just reared up and hit me in the head with his head, which would have knocked me out and I would have then fallen on my back. But why would that have happened? There are mountain lions periodically on our property at Ashley Lake, and perhaps one showed up just at that time. Perhaps he made a move towards the horses that were still eating their hay. However, this horse does not even try to nibble grass when I ride him. He once bucked when we first got him when he was scared of a dominant horse that had picked on him, getting too close, but none of the horses were near him. I have to give him the benefit of the doubt, that it was a freak occurrence triggered by something that I will never know. Perhaps there was a bee under his saddle pad.

The neurologist and neurosurgeon kept telling me how good it was that I had been wearing a helmet. The helmet was found about six feet from me. I hadn't fastened it tight enough and it came off, but it did minimize my head

injury. I had written an article about wearing helmets for the Back Country Horsemen of the Flathead about six years ago, because it was a subject that I have always believed was important. I cited some statistics about head injuries in riders, and showed pictures of one of our most experienced packers who never takes his hat, boots or gloves off in public, with an English riding helmet. I think we all had a great laugh but I don't know if I changed the habits of any of the club members. So here I am again giving some statistics and sharing my story.

According to the Journal: Neurologic Focus, the sport that causes the most traumatic brain injuries is horseback riding. The national trauma database found that between 2003 and 2012 horseback riding was the cause of the most brain injuries for adults. Forty-five percent of all traumatic brain injuries in adults are due to horse related activities. Head injuries comprise the leading cause of hospital admission and leading cause of death in people who ride horses. We think of football players getting brain injuries, but they are usually from repeated episodes, whereas in the horse world, it is usually one good one that does it. If you take all of the potential injuries you can get dealing with horses, lacerations comprise 40%, sprains and strains occur 42% of the time, fractures occur 33% of the time, and concussions 27% of all horse related injuries. Collecting the data on this can come from several sources. They are mostly collected from ER information, thus many outpatient visits are not collected. In Oklahoma, surveys were sent out to riders between 1992 to 1994. There was no difference in injuries between men and women. The ages spanned from 3-71. There was no difference according to experience. Most of the injuries occurred during the spring and half of them on the weekend. Ninety-five percent of head injuries were due to falling, 1% of people fell due to a head injury (which could have been me), and 4% were kicked or a horse rolled on them. In some databases English riding was found to be more dangerous than western riding.

So how do helmets work? A riding helmet has an external shell, stiff foam in the middle, and an internal spongy

foam padding. The combination of these three characteristics reduces impact, reduces acceleration, and reduces the amount of energy absorbed by the head. A helmet will not necessarily prevent a head injury from falling, but will reduce central nervous system damage from 50% to 25%, will reduce skull fracture from 40% to 25%, will reduce severity of brain injury from a score of 13 to 2.8, and can reduce ICU admissions and death.

In my case, I have been riding since age nine. Every summer I went to Camp Bobbin Hollow, a horseback riding camp, and they drilled safety into us on a daily basis. I went to Meredith Manor School of Horsemanship for nine months after high school for a Horsemasters degree so I could teach riding during college. I am by no means the rider I was 30 years ago. I did some trail riding in the east but mostly did dressage, jumping and "ring riding" until moving out here 12 years ago. The skill it takes to ride in the mountains in the presence of predators is different. The predominance of walking on trails reduces the skills we may have had when younger, and it is more of a psychological sport now. There are many articles written about middle aged women losing the confidence, braveness and skills, and so many of the natural horsemanship trainers have made careers out of helping middle aged riders continue to enjoy the sports we love. I have done the three day Clinton Anderson clinic with one of my other horses, which was grueling and extremely useful. But as a weekend rider, it is difficult to be successful in maximizing skill and safety.

Nevertheless, I am looking forward to riding again. I will get myself a new helmet, since after impact a helmet must be replaced. I will have a trainer work with Flash before I ride him again. I love to wear a cowboy hat and love the way it looks. But when I ride, I will take it off and put the helmet on. I hope some of you will do the same.

I give great thanks to all the people from Back Country Horsemen of the Flathead and Northwest Montana Back Country Horsemen for their cards, calls, and general support of this unfortunate event. I look forward to seeing you all on the trails.

## Public access upheld on popular Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest trail

Press Release from the Department of Justice  
By Melissa Hornbein, October 24, 2016. [www.justice.gov/usao/mt](http://www.justice.gov/usao/mt)



Judge Sam E. Haddon issued an order finding that the United States Forest Service possesses an easement by prescription on behalf of itself and the public for use of Forest Service Trail No. 328, commonly known as the Indian Creek Trail, in the Madison Ranger District of the Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest. This popular trail provides public access into the Lee Metcalf Wilderness.

The order comes as a result of litigation filed against the U.S. Department of Agriculture under the Quiet Title Act. The Quiet Title Act allows the United States to be named as a defendant in a civil action "to adjudicate a disputed title to real property in which the United States claims an interest." Under the terms of the Quiet Title Act, state law governs determinations of property ownership. Under Montana law, a public easement by prescription is established through at least five years of continuous and open use that is adverse (i.e. not by permission) to the interests of the underlying landowner. The Court found that ample precedent existed in Montana law to uphold a prescriptive right of access by the Forest Service and the public for the Indian Creek Trail, and that the right had been established no later than 1973.

Read more at: <https://www.justice.gov/usao-mt/pr/public-access-upheld-popular-beaverhead-deerlodge-national-forest-trail>



2017

State Convention

# March 24th, 25th and 26th, 2017

“ Your Mission ~ To Protect and Enjoy the Back Country ”

Hosted by: Mission Valley Back Country Horsemen

At The Best Western KwaTaqNuk Resort in Polson, Montana

**Convention Delegate Participant Registration \* Due March 3, 2017**

Back Country Horsemen Chapter: \_\_\_\_\_ Voting Delegate: Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Participant Choice at Saturday Banquet: *(Circle One)* Sliced New York Strip Pecan Crusted Salmon

**Registration Fee: Until March 3, 2017 \$90 per person After: March 3, 2017: \$100 per person**  
**Participant Registration Fees Include: Lunch and Banquet**

**Registration Fee for Participant: *(Circle One)* \$90 before March 3rd or \$100 after March 3rd (Include in total below)**

**Non-Delegate/Spouse/Guest of Participant Registration \* Due March 3, 2017**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Name: \_\_\_\_\_

### Guest Meal Choices

Saturday Lunch	Fee Per Guest Lunch	Number of Meals	Guest Lunch Total \$
Indian Tacos	\$20	X	=
<b>Saturday Banquet Selection for Guests</b>			
Meal Choices	Fee Per Guest Banquet Meal	Number of Meals	Guest Banquet Total \$
Sliced New York Strip	\$35	X	=
Pecan Crusted Salmon	\$35	X	=
Guests Meal Total			\$
Full Participant Registration Fee <i>(From Above)</i> : \$90 or \$100			\$
Payment Details	Check #	Total Paid	\$

**Please make checks payable/mail form to:**



**Mission Valley BCH**

**P.O. Box 604**

**Ronan, MT 59864**

**Registration to be received by: March 3, 2017**

For further assistance please contact:

Charley Hahn - Phone (406)-270-9476

E-Mail: charleyhahn@aol.com

Bonnie Kiser - Phone (406)-253-0177

E-mail: bonniekiser@centuytel.net

**Room Reservations at KwaTaqNuk Resort**

49708 US Hwy 93 E., Polson

406-883-3636 / 1-800-882-6363 [www.kwataqnuk.com](http://www.kwataqnuk.com)

For Special Convention Rate, make reservations by;

**FEBRUARY 24, 2017.**

Please refer to group name **Mission Valley BCH.**

King Lake View: \$89.99/day

DBL Queen Lake View: \$89.99/day

DBL Queen Street View: \$79.99/day

DLX King Suite: \$159.99/day



Attend the **2017** State Convention of the Montana Back Country Horsemen!  
March 24, 25 & 26, 2017 in Polson, Montana

*Our Mission - To Protect and Enjoy the Back Country*  
**“Mission Impossible - NOT”**

The Mission Valley Back Country Horsemen welcome you to the 2017 Convention to be held in the heart of the Mission Valley. On our agenda is an opportunity to learn from our political representatives about their vision for the future of Public Lands in the US. We hope to provide detailed information on how to contact our representatives to let them know our opinions.



**KwaTaqNuk**  
RESORT CASINO  
49708 US HWY 93 E  
Polson, MT 59860  
www.KwaTaqNuk.com  
1-800-882-6363

The KwaTaqNuk Resort will host our event and are offering discounted room rates thru **February 24, 2017**. They will also provide our Saturday evening Banquet. You will have a choice of Sliced New Your Strip or Pecan Crusted Salmon and all the fixins.



There will be dancing to the music of Southern Comfort. A good ole' fashioned country band well known throughout the Mission Valley.



Plan to attend the presentation on Back Country First Aid for people and horses given Dr. Michael Righetti, Orthopedic Surgeon and fellow Back Country Horsemen.

The Downtown businesses welcome Back Country Horsemen members with a Main Street Stroll to be held on Friday, March 24th from 4-5:30pm. Many businesses will be offering appetizers and special discounts to members of the BCH. Visit our local restaurants and thank them for sponsoring our convention.



We have some fabulous raffle items, Connie and Mack Long donated a week-long pack trip for 2 into the Bob next summer, a combined package rifle and revolver and a \$500 gift card good in any Murdochs store. Contact Scott Kiser for more tickets: 406-260-8398. Tickets are \$5 each or 5 for \$20.



Please bring an item representing your chapter and **valued at \$100** or more to be auctioned in the live auction. **Proceeds from these donated items will benefit the State of Montana BCH.** Our auctioneer this is year is Reed Tobol of Ronan. Many of you will recognize him as he travels Montana offering his skills as an auctioneer.

Tired of winter? Want a tropical getaway? Bring your bidding skills!!! During the live auction you might be the lucky winner of a weeks stay on the Island of Maui, Hawaii. Air fare not included in the package.



There will be an abundance of vendors to quench your shopping thirst. Do you know a vendor interested in participating? Please have them contact Connie Plaissay for details.

Please contact us if you have any questions either before or at convention. It is our **“MISSION”** to make YOUR convention SPECTACULAR!!!!

See you there,

*The Mission Valley Back Country Horsemen*  
Connie Plaissay, Convention Committee Chairman  
Phone (406) 240-8099





# Montana State Back Country Horsemen State Convention 2017

~ Photo Contest and Display ~



## Photo Contest Categories

- ◆ **Animals:** Horses, Wildlife, Dogs, Cats, etc.
- ◆ **Scenery:** Mountains, Lakes, Stream, Trees, Prairie, etc.
- ◆ **People:** Friends, Kids of All Ages, Family, etc.
- ◆ **Back Country Horsemen at Work:** Work projects, Club projects, Activities or Events

## Photo Contest Rules

- ◆ Photos taken by amateur photographers & current BCH members only.
- ◆ Photo size 5x7 or 8x10, must be mounted or matted. (no frames please).
- ◆ Please place on the back of photo: Photographers BCH Chapter, Photographers Name and Address.
- ◆ Register your photo Friday evening or Saturday morning before 9:00 A.M.
- ◆ Winning photos will be chosen by convention attendee votes.
- ◆ Awards announced and presented on Sunday morning.
- ◆ One over all favorite photo will be awarded “People’s Choice” of the 2017 Convention.

Photos may be picked up Sunday morning.

Photo Contest contact: Carol McCrum 406-676-8114

## **Announcement - The Convention Slide Show**

Following in the footsteps of last year’s convention, we will be offering an alternative to the “Chapter Boards”. We will compile a digital slide show highlighting each chapter into a combined show, all on one CD and including music. To make this happen, each chapter must send us photos.

**Your chapter photos need to be submitted by February 15th.**

Due to the size of our venue, we will not be displaying the “Chapter Boards”. We know and appreciate how hard the members have worked on them and we thank you for your understanding and cooperation in this decision. Thank you.



## **NO CHAPTER BOARDS WILL BE DISPLAYED.**

An ALL Chapter show will be shown at convention.

For more details, please visit our website: <http://bchmt.org/wp/mission/>

Or contact Bonnie Kiser: 406-253-0177



# Montana Back Country Horsemen State Convention

Drawing held March 26, 2017 - KwaTaqNuk Resort Polson, MT



## Raffle Tickets 1 for \$5 or 6 for \$20

*\*Need not be present to win!!!\**

For Additional Tickets contact: Scott Kiser 406-260-8398

*Please make checks payable to: Mission Valley BCH*

### 5-7 Day Pack Trip in the "Bob" Summer 2017



Donated by Owners of Bob Marshall Wilderness Outfitters  
Mack and Connie Long [www.BobMarshallWildernessOutfitters.com](http://www.BobMarshallWildernessOutfitters.com)

### Rifle and Revolver Combination



*Both guns contributed by the original owner.*

Rifle: 44 Remington Magnum  
Model 1894 with Micro Groove Barrel

Marlin Arms of North Haven, CT

~ And ~

Revolver: 44 Remington Magnum

Super Black Hawk

Strum Ruger Co., South Port. CT



## \$500 Gift Card

Donated by Murdoch's Ranch & Home Supply  
*Good for purchases in your favorite Murdoch's store.*

\$500 Gift Card Donated by Murdoch's Ranch and Home Supply.

Good for purchases in your favorite Murdoch's store.



Back Country Horsemen of Montana  
2130 9th Street W. #109  
Columbia Falls, MT 59912

NONPROFIT ORG  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
BUTTE MT  
PERMIT NO 593

## 6th Grade Campout

By Jean Nemeth, Wild Horse Plains Back Country Horsemen

Wild Horse Plains Back Country Horsemen have been involved with the Plains Elementary *6th Grade Campout* the last five years, and will continue as long as invited.

The *6th Grade Campout* originated in 1989. Since then, that teacher retired in 2011. Could be a coincidence that she was asked back to participate with horses (consequently BCH), just to keep her (me) involved in the rather large undertaking! The *6th Grade Campout* involves 40-50 students being bused to the historical Ben Guard Station. From the moment they step off the bus, they are to be outdoors until time to get back on the bus, about 28 hours. Meantime they attend active classes in outdoor sciences presented by the Department of Natural Resources and US Forest Service. Classes include stream habitat, soils, wildlife, range management, fire ecology, and timber management. Since 2011, Back Country Horsemanship has been included.

Classes are split into optimum student numbers to rotate through sessions

on each subject. Wild Horse Plains BCH presents trail etiquette, introduction to horses, light on the land camping, balancing pannier weight, and simulations of horse and rider.

Trail etiquette is valuable information most of these young people will use at some time.

In the introduction to horses, we learn that several students have been around horses, but *most* students have never touched a horse. We incorporate how to approach a horse, how to groom (which tool and etc.), examples of body language communication, picking up feet and etc. Sometimes we include packing saddle panniers.

Light on the land camping is demonstrated through examples of good camp versus bad camp.

Simulations can involve three students hooked together bunny-hop style to be the horse; representing the head, ribs, and hindquarter sections. The fourth student is the human trying to communicate to the 'horse' through body language, the language of the

horse, *not talking*, to get the 'horse' to do a particular task. Another simulation is one student being the horse (down on all fours), another the rider. The rider is directed through different ways of sitting the horse, which emphatically influences how the 'horse' can move (usually just the front end - the human horse is not packing its rider any distance.) The simulations have a tendency to get rowdy (fun!), but it makes an impression about how a horse feels when a human is not thinking 'horse-wise'.

The volunteers from Wild Horse Plains BCH average four volunteers every *6th Grade Campout*. Some bring horses and stay overnight. It is a commitment of time, horses, equipment, and travel. This program supports Back Country Horsemen's philosophy to educate, encourage, and solicit active participation in the wise and sustained use of the backcountry resource by horsemen and the general public, commensurate with our heritage. We need to involve and encourage younger generations.

# Web Extra Page

## America's Public Lands Explained

Copied from the U.S. Department of Interior website: [www.doi.gov/blog/americas-public-lands-explained](http://www.doi.gov/blog/americas-public-lands-explained) and edited for Montana

Our national parks are America's crown jewels, inspiring awe and wonder. Iconic locations like Yosemite and Yellowstone attract visitors from all over the world, but our public lands are so much more than just the big 59 national parks. They're also scenic rivers, national marine monuments, national battlefields and wildernesses.

Here at Interior, we work every day to protect our nation's special places so current and future generations can experience our natural and cultural treasures for years to come. With more than 400 national parks, 560 national wildlife refuges and nearly 250 million acres of other public lands managed by Interior, there's at least one public land near you.

What's the difference between a national park, national forest and national monument? What about national wildlife refuges, national historic sites or national conservation areas? We're breaking down America's public lands for you:

### National Parks

National parks, like our own Glacier National Park, tend to be large swaths of land that protect a variety of resources, including natural and historic features. National parks can only be created by Congress -- our first national park was Yellowstone -- and are managed by the National Park Service. National parks strive to keep landscapes unimpaired for future generations while offering recreation opportunities.

There are also national preserves -- like Florida's Big Cypress or Lake Clark National Park & Preserve in Alaska. Activities like hunting, fishing or oil and gas extraction may be permitted at national preserves if they don't jeopardize the park's natural resources.

In total, the National Park System has 28 different types of designations, but they're all considered national parks no matter the name.

### National Forests

National parks may protect some of the best-known natural landmarks, but national forests, like the Flathead National Forest, have just as remarkable landscapes. The U.S. Forest Service, which is part of the Department of Agriculture, manages 154 national forests under a multiple use concept -- meaning they provide Americans with a number of services, including lumber, grazing, minerals and recreation.

National forests tend to be located near national parks and frequently are less crowded than parks. For example, Great Smoky Mountains National Park is next to three national forests -- Cherokee, Pisgah and Nantahala. These forests often also act as a protective buffer zone around parks.

### National Wildlife Refuges

If national parks are America's best idea, then national wildlife refuges are America's best kept secret. Ninepipe National Wildlife Refuge along the Mission Mountains is a refuge and breeding ground for native birds.

The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service manages wildlife refuges to conserve America's fish, wildlife and plants.

Created in 1903 when President Theodore Roosevelt established Pelican Island National Wildlife Refuge, the Refuge System has grown to more than 560 sites. With at least one wildlife refuge in every state and U.S. territory (and one within an hour's drive of most major cities), they offer a chance for urbanites and so many others to connect to nature.

While national wildlife refuges work to safeguard wildlife populations and their habitats, more than 500 of them provide a wealth of recreation opportunities, including hiking trails, canoeing and kayaking, auto tours, wildlife viewing, hunting, fishing and more! These natural treasure troves see more than 47 million visits from the public each year.

### National Conservation Areas

King Range National Conservation Area has long been recognized as a crown jewel of the Pacific Coast, preserving 35 miles of the dramatic meeting of land and sea. Established by Congress in 1970, King Range National Conservation Area became the first location in the Bureau of Land Management's National Conservation Lands. Montana has no National Conservation Areas (NCAs).

National conservation areas are public lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management that are set aside for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations. Similar to national parks, national conservation areas are designated by Congress and feature scientific, cultural, historical and recreational features. They're places like California's Lost Coast, King Range National Conservation Area, and Utah's Red Cliffs National Conservation Area.

National conservation areas are just one part of the Bureau of Land Management's National Conservation Lands, a system of public lands that contain some of the nation's most spectacular landscapes. They include 873 federally recognized areas, encompassing approximately 32 million acres, primarily across 12 western states. In addition to national conservation areas, national conservation lands include certain national monuments, wildernesses, wilderness study areas, wild and scenic rivers, and national scenic and historic trails.

### National Monuments

National monuments protect a specific natural, cultural or historic feature. These could be places like Upper Missouri Breaks National Monument in Montana, Devils Tower National Monument in Wyoming, Utah's Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument or Chicago's Pullman National Monument. Some special places -- like Grand Canyon, Badlands and Zion -- were first protected as national monuments before later becoming national parks.

Since 1906, 120 national monuments have been created, and they can be managed by any of seven different agencies -- either individually or jointly.

### Wildernesses

Montana has 15 designated Wilderness areas throughout the state, including the famous Bob Marshall Wilderness in northwest Montana.

Wilderness areas are places untamed by humans. The Wilderness Act of 1964 allows Congress to designate wilderness areas to ensure that America's pristine wild lands will not disappear. Wilderness areas can be part of national parks, national wildlife refuges, national forests or public lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management. There are more than 680 wilderness areas -- protecting over 106 million acres in 44 states -- with the most recent one designated being Boulder White Clouds in Idaho.

The Bureau of Land Management also has 517 wilderness study areas -- lands unspoiled by roads or other development that provide outstanding opportunities for solitude. Often these places have special ecological, geological or scenic values, like Handies Peak in Colorado or Slinkard in California. Some wilderness study areas have been designated as wilderness areas or national monu-

# Web Extra Page

ments, while others have been opened to non-wilderness uses.

## **National Historic Sites**

Although the National Park Service is best known for protecting some of our country's most inspiring landscapes, it is also America's storyteller. Over half the national park locations preserve places and commemorate people, events and activities that are key to our nation's history. National historic sites, like Bear Paw Battlefield near Chinook, contain a single historical feature, but national historical parks, like Glacier National Park, discuss multiple stories from different times. No matter the name, these places tell iconic American stories that define who we are and what we stand for.

## **National Memorials**

National memorials are sites that commemorate a historical person or tragic event. Many national memorials are located in or near the District of Columbia (think the Lincoln Memorial, Washington Monument and Thomas Jefferson Memorial), but several others are scattered across the country. One of the most recognizable: Jefferson National Expansion Memorial in Missouri, which is home to the Gateway Arch (commonly called the St. Louis Arch).

## **National Battlefields**

On August 9, 1877, gun shots shattered a chilly dawn on a sleeping camp of Nez Perce. By the time the smoke cleared on August 10, almost 90 Nez Perce were dead along with 31 soldiers and volunteers. Big Hole National Battlefield was created to honor all who were there.

There are a number of titles used for battlefields -- national military park, national battlefield park, national battlefield site and national battlefield -- but they all conserve our nation's military

history. Protecting places like Shiloh National Military Park or Cowpens National Battlefield ensures that Americans can learn from our past.

## **National Recreation Areas**

The southern boundary of the Rattlesnake National Recreation Area and Wilderness is four miles north of Missoula, Montana. The National Recreation Area (NRA) lies south and adjacent to the wilderness and receives heavy use, particularly in the south, within about three miles of the main trailhead.

National recreation areas are usually lands near large reservoirs that offer visitors a chance to experience water-based outdoor activities -- from swimming and kayaking to fishing and boating. These recreation areas also often include important natural and cultural features. National recreation areas are managed either by the National Park Service or the Forest Service, and several of these are near urban areas, providing great opportunities for Americans to connect to nature near them.

## **Wild and Scenic Rivers**

Congress designated 149 miles of the Upper Missouri as a component of the National Wild and Scenic River System in 1976, calling it an irreplaceable legacy of the historic American west.

The Flathead River contains 138 miles of wild and scenic river corridor, including the North Fork from the Canadian border downstream to its confluence with the Middle Fork; the Middle Fork from its headwaters to its confluence with the South Fork; and the South Fork from its origin to the Hungry Horse Reservoir.

Wild and scenic rivers preserve rivers and the land surrounding them in their natural state -- providing Ameri-

cans with great outdoor recreation. Key to wild and scenic rivers is that they are free-flowing streams that haven't been dammed or altered in any way. While the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968 offers different levels of classification depending on the state of the river, in total it has protected more than 200 rivers in 35 states and Puerto Rico.

## **National Seashores and National Lakeshores**

National seashores and national lakeshores preserve shorelines and some surrounding islands. Plus, they are amazing places for water recreation. While national lakeshores can be on any natural freshwater lake, the four existing national lakeshores are all on the Great Lakes. The 10 national seashores are on America's three coasts: Atlantic, Gulf and Pacific.

## **National Trails**

The Continental Divide National Scenic Trail is considered the "King of Trails" -- more difficult than its sister long distance trails, the Appalachian and Pacific Crest. It navigates dramatically diverse ecosystems through mountain meadows, granite peaks and high-desert surroundings.

National trails fall into one of three groups: scenic, historic and recreation. Congress designates national scenic trails, like the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail, and national historic trails, like the Pony Express National Historic Trail, a historic route that spans eight states and symbolizes the spirit of the American West. When it comes to national recreation trails (including national water trails), the Secretary of the Interior or Agriculture can designate these in response to an application from the managing agency or organization.



The Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument covers about 375,000 acres of BLM-administered public land in central Montana.