

GALLATIN VALLEY BACK COUNTRY HORSEMEN
SUMMER 2022 SUPPLEMENT NEWSLETTER

BOARD MEETINGS:
3rd Thursday, 6:30 PM

GENERAL MEETINGS:
3rd Thursday, 7:00 PM

Springhill Church
4769 West Babcock, Bozeman

OUR PURPOSE:

Shall be to perpetuate the common sense use and enjoyment of horses in the back country and assist the various government agencies in their maintenance and management of the resource and to educate, encourage and solicit active participation by various members of the general public in the wise and sustaining use of horses, commensurate with our heritage and the back country resource.

2022 OFFICERS, 1 YEAR

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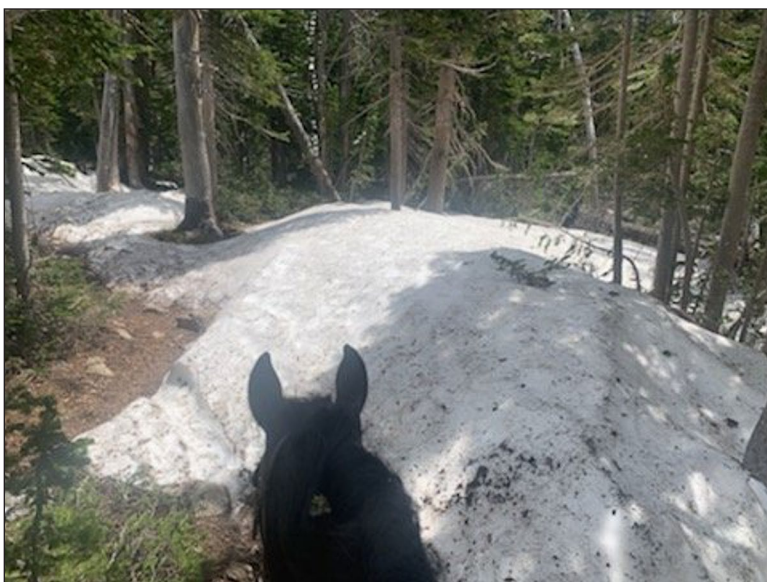
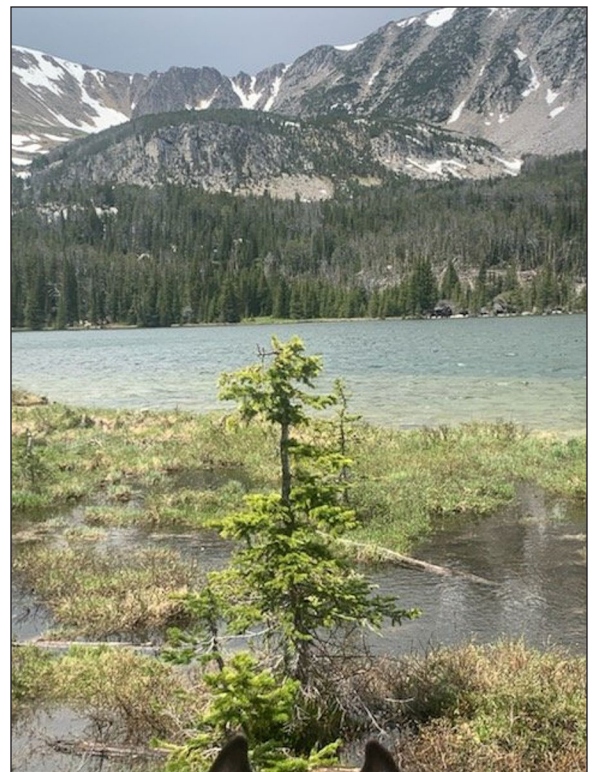
BCH WEB MASTER

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July and August have been very busy months for the Chapter. Some of that work wasn't included in the monthly newsletter. Here are photographs and stories that demonstrate how much hard work has been done by our Chapter during the busy summer months.—Editor

JULY 5: HOLLOW TOP LAKE

Wayne Frederickson and I rode out of the North Willow Creek trailhead, above Pony, up to Hollow Top Lake. Although it's a bit rocky, it's a real easy trail for beginners or anyone that's a little intimidated by steep trails. There can be some motorized traffic on the lower stretches but not on the top. I've never encountered any myself and the lake at the top is gorgeous. Since the lake is only 7 miles from the trailhead, it's a favorite camping spot for hikers and fishermen alike. Wayne and I cleared what felt like 100 trees from the trail. Most of them were leaners and involved several trees in a bunch! Once we reached the top we didn't stay long at the lake. The wind was blowing across a snow field and it got cold out in the open. So, we retreated back into the trees, had lunch and came back down the mountain satisfied with our accomplishment. Another great day in the backcountry! —John Mutter



JULY 11: FOREST SERVICE PACK-IN TO MIRROR LAKE JUNCTION

Dan M, Mark and Henry packed in a Forest Service crew 4.5 miles to the Mirror Lake Junction. They needed to do a lot of rock work on a slide that happened on the Mirror Lake Trail and other trail maintenance. We packed in 130 pounds on my horse carrying the tool boxes, 110 pounds on Henry's horse with the food boxes, and 90 pounds plus a top pack on Mark's horse. On July 14 we went in to pick them up at Noon and got back around 4:30PM. We had to cut a few trees on the way in, but everything went well. Unfortunately, we didn't get any pictures to share on this trip. We made the same trip in June of 2018 to the camp site.

NO PHOTOS AVAILABLE

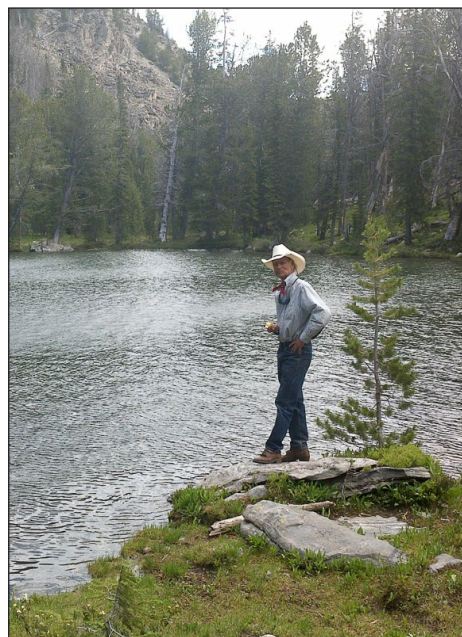
JULY 13: JEROME LAKES TRAIL CLEARING

The Wednesday crew led by Dan M with Kenji, Bruce, Mark, Wayne and Tim cleared the #407 and #410 up to Jerome Rock Lakes. The plan was to meet Nate from the Forest Service who was going to clear down from Jerome Rock Lake and meet us clearing up from the bottom. Unfortunately, Nate was injured and did not get to the lake. We cut out about 30 trees hoping to see him around every bend until we got to the top and figured out, he wasn't going to meet us. We got an early start at 8:45 until Wayne decided to take a bath crossing Spanish Creek at the trailhead. Wayne's horse bumped into one of the boulders in the middle of the creek and tipped over along with Wayne. The crew rounded up his horse who took off downstream under the bridge and then headed for the hills. Wayne was wet but not injured so not to let a little water slow him down, he hopped on and dried off on the way in. The round trip was 15 miles, and we ran into a little snow at the top, but it was passable. Aside from the excitement at the start it was a good day and we got back at 5:00PM.



JULY 18 & 21: FOREST SERVICE PACK-IN DEER LAKE

Dan Marsh and Mark DeOpsomer packed in a Forest Service Crew into Deer Lake 6 miles in with a 9:30AM start after loading the gear. I packed the tools with the hard panniers and Mark packed the Bear Proof Food boxes and a light top pack. If you haven't been up Deer Creek, it is mostly sidehill going from 7411 feet to 10474 feet at a pretty constant climb. The trail is very rocky with a few stretches of dirt. The trail had been cleared up to Moon Lake before, but we ended up having to remove deadfall on the way in and even had one we had to clear on the way out. It is a beautiful ride with lots of cover from the heat and many waterfalls and streams. On one of the steeper slopes, I heard a clang and turned around to see a rock bar had worked its way out and came out the back of the box. Since it weighs 30 pounds that caused my boxes to rotate and here is Merlin with one box on his back and the other under his belly. There was just enough room on the hillside for me to grab the box and shift it back close to where it belonged and retrieve the rock bar and rebalance the load. I tightened up the cinch a little and we moved to a spot that was a little more level to get the pack straightened out. I am very lucky I had such a good pack horse, or the tools boxes and horse would have been at the bottom of the ravine! We got to Deer Lake ahead of the crew and hoped it was where they wanted to camp. The mosquitos were terrible up at the lake, but a little breeze kept the flies down. We got back to the trailers at 3:45. On July 21st we went back to pack them out. We left around 10:30AM and made good time with no load to worry about. Once again, we had to clear 3 big trees with just our 2-foot limbing saw and Mark's Silky. We didn't go another 50 yards and we ran into most of the crew that had decided to head down the hill and work on the trail as they went. We got up to Deer Lake and met the 2 left behind to help us pack up. I carried the toolboxes again and Mark took the food boxes that they filled with hammers and other small tools. The crew had taken some of the tools with them to clear as they went so the load was lighter. We headed down the trail and met up with them and we found a little flat spot and loaded the tools they had been carrying into the boxes trying to balance as best we could. We got back to the trailers at 4:45PM, unloaded and said our goodbyes. The bridge was packed with people enjoying the cool water of the Gallatin.



JULY 27: PORCUPINE ONION BASIN

The Wednesday crew led by Dan Marsh with Laurie Connelly, Tim Butler, and Connie LeHocky cleared the Porcupine Trail 34 up to Onion Basin. It was a 16 mile round trip with about 3400 foot vertical gain. We left the trailhead at 9:00AM and got back at 5:15PM. We cut out at least 40 trees. There is a need for some water diversion work and the trail is hard to find in places near the top. We could have kept going but every time Connie said let's go a little farther we had to cut another 10 trees to get there!



**GVBCH IS INDEBTED TO THE FOLLOWING BUSINESSES & MEMBERS
WHO CONTRIBUTED TO THE SUCCESS OF OUR 2022 POKER RIDE**

Stacie Boswell, DVM
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