

BOARD MEETINGS:
3rd Thursday, 6:30 PM

GENERAL MEETINGS:
3rd Thursday, 7:00 PM

First Security Bank
2046 Cattail St & 19th St

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.

2026 OFFICERS, 1 YEAR

PRESIDENT

Sid Boswell ... 595-7197
sid@sidboswell.com

VICE PRESIDENT

Henry Glenn ... 578-2084
sedancowboy@outlook.com

TREASURER

Elizabeth Heppler ... 209-2063

SECRETARY

Kathy VanDyke ... 209-0613

DIRECTORS

TWO YEAR TERM
Laurie Connelly ... 579-2859
Lew Goodpasture ... 575-639-9091
Devon Kerley ... 704-562-5021

ONE YEAR TERM

Chris Day ... 580-3005
Maddie Mason ... 540-940-4890
DC Stark ... 307-690-9905

STATE BOARD DIRECTORS

Dan Marsh (2 year) ... 581-3160
Chris Nygren (1 year) ... 546-7550
Sid Boswell, alternate (1 yr) 595-7197

NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Brant Robey... 223-3077
pbrantr@gmail.com

BCH WEB MASTER

Dan Marsh ... 581-3160
webmaster@bchmt.org
<https://gvbch.bchmt.org>

UPCOMING EVENTS:

WEDNESDAY TRAIL CREW : JULY 1, 8, 15, 22, 29

SATURDAY TRAIL CREW : JULY 4, 11, 18, 25

BOARD MEETING : JULY 16, 6:30 PM

1655 Harper Puckett Road

GENERAL MEETING : JULY 16, 7:00

1655 Harper Puckett Road

POKER RIDE : JULY 11

FS PACK-OUT FROM MIRROR LAKE : AUGUST 3

Spanish Creek Campground



PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

Summer is here, and our calendar is full.

First, a big thank you to all the members who turned out for our National Trails Day project at the Sage Creek corrals on June 6. We got real work done and had a good crew doing it. Special thanks to Jim Martin for bringing his tractor and to Dean Vine for donating the rails. Projects like this are the heart of what we do, and the agencies notice when we show up ready to work and the equine public notices the improvements we make.

Please also join me in welcoming Maddie Mason to the board. Maddie will fill an open director seat and was appointed at our June meeting. We are glad to have her.

A warm welcome too to all of our new members this year. Thank you for joining GVBCH, and a special thanks to those of you who jumped right in and gave your time at the National Trails Day project. That is exactly the spirit that keeps this club going.

Now to the main event. Our 38th Annual Poker Ride is Saturday, July 11, at Bridger Bowl. This is our biggest day of the year, and we host it. That means we need our members on the volunteer side, making the day run for everyone who comes to ride. It is a great day to be out at the mountain with good people, and there is a job for everyone.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE...

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The ride does not happen without the work that comes before it. Mark your calendars:

Trail clearing at Bridger Bowl is Wednesday, July 8

Flagging, setup, and potluck are Friday, July 10

Ride day is Saturday, July 11

Friday the 10th is our setup evening. Meet at Bridger Bowl at 5pm. We need folks there to get everything ready for Saturday. After setting up, we'll wrap up with a potluck, so bring a salad, side, or dessert.

Most of the major volunteer positions are filled, but we can always use more help, both before and during the event. You can pitch in with setup, stations, the auction, lunch, assisting at the base, or teardown so show up ready to work.

This year the ride also includes a charitable donation to a horse-related cause, with the recipient chosen by the riders who join us that day. It is a fun way to give back.

A few other notes. Trail crews are working most Wednesdays and Saturdays through the summer. Watch for announcements from your trail bosses, or reach out to them directly if you want to get out and contribute.

Our July and August meetings are at Janice's property, 1655 Harper Puckett Road, with the board meeting at 6:00pm and the general meeting at 6:30pm. Come and enjoy the summer evening.

Sid Boswell

President, GVBCH

SADDLE UP! THE 38TH ANNUAL GVBCH POKER RIDE AT BRIDGER BOWL ON SATURDAY, JULY 11

Ride the long or short route through some of the best mountain scenery in Southwest Montana, draw your poker cards along the way, and try your luck at prizes donated by Kenetrek Boots, Four Corners Saddlery, Madison River Propane, Montana Canvas, Murdoch's Ranch & Home Supply, and Rocky Mountain Hat Company.

There is plenty to do besides ride. Browse the silent auction, take a chance on the 50/50 raffle, and stick around for a BBQ social lunch from 11:30 to 2:00.

\$35 adults, \$15 kids under 12, lunch included. Check-in and departure run 8:00 to 10:00 am.

Limited to 250 riders, so do not wait.

Register online and save \$5. Online registration closes July 9.

<https://bchmt.org/wp/gvbch/pokerride>

BOARD MEETING MINUTES**JUNE 18****GENERAL MEETING MINUTES****JUNE 18**

Roll Call: Sid Boswell, Henry Glenn, Elizabeth Heppler, Kathy VanDyke, Chris Day, Laurie Connelly, Lew Goodpasture, DC Stark, Chris Nygren

Called to order by Sid Boswell.

MINUTES OF MAY 2026 MEETING

Henry moved to approve the minutes as written; Laurie seconded; the motion passed.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Elizabeth reported the chapter's savings and checking accounts, and two CDs accruing interest. She also reported that she purchased our annual liability insurance policy, and that she has received a number of Poker Ride registration fees. Chris D. moved to approve the report; Laurie seconded; the motion passed.

OLD BUSINESS

Board Vacancy: Maddie Mason has agreed to fill the vacant position on the board for the remainder of the term. Henry moved to appoint Maddie to fill the remainder of the term; Laurie seconded; the motion passed.

National Trails Day: Turn-out was good on June 6 with twenty-three people attending and repairing the corrals at Sage Creek. Much manure was removed and many corral poles replaced.

Poker Ride: Laurie has become aware of a potential conflict with Crosscut Mountain Sports Center. Their members use some of the same trails as we use for the Poker Ride, and they are usually on bicycles and often have dogs. Henry indicated that BCH has a permit for trail use that day, and he will contact the Forest Service (Kat) to find out if anything can be done to minimize Crosscut's access to the trails while the Ride is going on. This will also require that signs be placed at intersections warning any cyclists of potential equine encounters.

Laurie suggested that GVBCH T-shirts be purchased for volunteers and also for sale at the event. Laurie moved to approve spending up to \$2,000 on T-shirts; Chris D. seconded; the motion passed.

NEW BUSINESS

Livingston Parade: The parade is on July 2, and Mark DeOpsomer will do some participation planning if anyone is interested.

ADJOURNMENT

Henry made a motion to adjourn; DC seconded; the meeting adjourned.

—Submitted by Kathy VanDyke

Program: Tonight we had an ice cream social.

CALL TO ORDER

Sid Boswell called the meeting to order.

MINUTES OF MAY 2026 MEETING

DC moved to approve the minutes as written; Chris N. seconded; the motion passed.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Elizabeth reported the chapter's savings and checking accounts, and two CDs accruing interest. She also reported that she purchased our annual liability insurance policy, and that she has received some additional convention funds and a number of Poker Ride registration fees. Janice moved to approve the report; Dan P. seconded; the motion passed.

OLD BUSINESS

National Trails Day: Turn-out was good on June 6 with twenty-three people attending and repairing the corrals at Sage Creek. Several members also did some work on the Spanish Creek corrals.

Board vacancy: Maddie Mason has been appointed to fill the vacant position on the board for the remainder of the term.

Wilderness trips: The first trip starts on June 22. The August 3 trip to Hellroaring still has some vacancies, however the August 17 trip to Buffalo Fork is full.

Poker Ride: Trail clearing will be on July 8 with Henry; flagging, set-up and the potluck will be on July 10; the ride is on July 11. The sweep riders will pick up flags, signs, etc. on Saturday. There have only been twenty-eight registrations so far, so everyone should put out the info on their social media accounts. Janice is working with KBZK in hopes of putting out a PSA.

Trail Crew report: Quite a few groups have gone out this spring and many a fallen tree has been removed.

State board report: Chris N. reported several legislative issues pending at this time.

NEW BUSINESS

Meeting Guests: Several guests introduced themselves and noted an interest in joining the club.

Livingston Parade: The parade is on July 2. Reach out to Mark DeOpsomer if you are interested.

Sweet Pea Parade: The parade is on August 8, and we are planning to participate again this year.

ADJOURNMENT

Laurie made a motion to adjourn; Janice seconded; the meeting adjourned.

—Submitted by Kathy VanDyke

CEDAR CREEK
JUNE 3

A group of members met at the Cedar Creek Trailhead in the Paradise Valley at 8:00AM. Cedar Creek runs along the famous OTO Ranch which was deeded to the Forest Service in 1991. The Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation had purchased the 3,265-acre property in 1989 and donated it to the Forest Service using Land & Water Conservation Funds to preserve it as prime wildlife habitat. The group turned into 11 folks led by Rachel of the Gardiner District. We had three folks bring pack animals including Lew, Rick and Rachel with new-to-packing mule Mildred. Mark brought an extra horse for Quinn and Dan M., Kevin Voller, Clint & Evan Schwalm, and Euginia Razzano rounded out the crew with a friend of Mark's from Gardiner who rode in on Bicycle. We got saddled up and packed by 9:30 and started our trip. Rachel's horse didn't like Mildred with her crosscut bowed over the panniers bouncing around so Clint led her in. The first couple of miles is Forest Service, so we were able to use our chainsaws to remove a bunch of logs. We discovered the Wilderness Boundary sign on the ground next to the trail and used the crosscuts and Silky saws through the Wilderness. Rachel left the chainsaw at the Wilderness boundary to pick up on the way back. The trail had not been cleared for a while and was barely wide enough in places to get the pack animals through. We stopped around 3PM when we ran into a shale rock slide that did not look like it was a good place to cross. In all we cleared around 40 trees and did a lot of brushing and limbing along the way. The total trip was 9.8 miles and we averaged 3.4mph going in with an elevation gain of around 2000 feet and averaged 3.8mph on the way back. I took Rachel's mule Mildred back since her horse was still not that fond of all the action behind her. Mildred was a good mule and did a great job of avoiding trees and was great at water crossings. We had to adjust the packs a few times because of leaving the chainsaw behind and keeping the crosscut tied down. It was a pleasant trip and if you are interested in seeing the OTO Ranch there is a 1.3-mile trail from the Cedar Creek Trailhead but vehicles are restricted so please contact the Gardiner District if you want to visit. —*Dan Marsh*



CEDAR CREEK—CONTINUED



BEAR CREEK TO KNOX LAKE
JUNE 4

Mark Deopsomer and Lew Goodpasture traveled to Gardner and then on to Jardine to meet up with Rachel Crump, Forestry Technician, Wilderness/Trails with the Custer/Gallatin National Forest in Gardner, Montana. Rachel was accompanied by Scott Seaton, a Jardine resident and volunteer. We trailered horses and mules to the Bear Crk Trailhead. We saddled and loaded crosscut saws and Silky saws onto one of the mules and hit the trail. From there we rode Trail 64 for about 3 miles, encountering many downed trees, large and small. Lucky for us, it was a beautiful day, and we were all enthusiastic about getting to Knox Lake for lunch. Well, it was soon apparent that the plan for Knox Lake for lunch was just not going to happen. I mean, really, about 4 miles shouldn't be a problem with four capable sawyers! Again, wow, were we wrong. We cut, drag and carried trees for several hours and finally hit a blockage of one large tree that knocked down four smaller trees and buried under the mess were several 1"-3" live trees that had to be removed. It was about an hour long project to clear it. Rachel had brought a saw with her that probably saved us an hour overall for the day. It cut through anything about 40-50% faster than our standard crosscuts. What a time saving tool that was! We cut/cleared 42 trees from the trail, arriving back at the trailhead about 4:30. All in all, it was a very enjoyable and productive day in the wilderness. Thanks to Rachel and Scott. —Lew



NATIONAL TRAILS DAY
JUNE 6

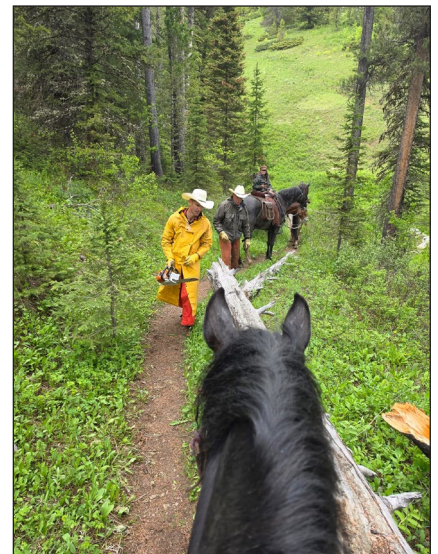
For National Trails Day, over 20 members of the Gallatin Valley BCH repaired our first corral project we built at Sage Creek. We hauled and cleaned up manure that had built up over the years. We removed the bad rails and replaced them with new treated rails. Dan Porter took a crew up the trail and dropped off and installed some water bars. We had hamburgers and Brats cooked by Chris Nygren when we finished. Lew and Dan then went to Spanish Creek with the remaining rails and replaced a few broken rails on that corral. Overall, it was a productive National Trails Day!



NEW WORLD GULCH JUNE 10

We had a fall experience this past Wednesday June 10th. It rained, snowed and sleeted as we eagerly rode the New World Gulch Trail and Moonshine Trail. Our group consisted of Eugenia Razzano, Mark Deopsomer, Rick Ramler, Dan Marsh, Lew Goodpasture, Clint and Evan Schwalm, and Curtis Settergren. We followed Moonshine on the way up and NW Gulch on the way back down. We cut 6 small trees along that trail. A lot of downed trees had been cut and cleared in the past, possibly 3-4 months ago by the cross-country ski groups. These two trails are in bad shape; deep ruts, water drainage non-existent, bushy trees close to the trail were common.

Our route took us to Mystic Lake and cabin, where we stopped for lunch. We then followed the New World Gulch trail back, which was similar to Moonshine and in bad condition. We all enjoyed being out but it was not a productive day. Much appreciation to the volunteers that braved the weather and contributed. *—Lew Goodpasture*



NORTH FORK TRAIL #16

JUNE 11

Clint Schwalm and Lew Goodpasture parked at Lone Mountain Ranch and rode onto North Fork Trail #16. We carried a chain saw and crosscut as the lower 4 miles was National Forest. The USFS crew had cleared some of the lower trail but experienced some trouble with their saw. Half mile past the Jct of Beehive Basin Trail we encountered a big tree just across the North Fork crossing. It had been partially cut out so we guessed that was where the forest service crew had trouble. The North Fork crossing there was blocked for us by a down 20' green spruce that was hung up in the rocks and a log jam. 50' downstream from there was a steep drop off. The water was moving fast and we couldn't risk horses slipping. After much thought and "what if" scenarios we arrived at a plan. Clint grabbed the halter off Zeke and tossed a loop on the halter over the 5" bottom trunk of the tree which was pointing upstream. We pulled hard and gradually the swift current dislodged the tree and washed it downstream leaving us knee deep water and big rocks to get the animals across. Once across, we tied up and continued cutting through that 20" tree. Once through it and cleared from the trail we continued on, cutting 7 more trees, most being over 12" diameter. We finally made it to the last significant tree 1/4 mile from the wilderness boundary, where both batteries were finally exhausted. So we left it for another day. Just across into the wilderness our last clearing effort was a huge tree that had thick limbs holding it about 8' above the ground with limbs hanging under it that blocked the animals from passing through. We could just reach enough of them to cut to the height that, by ducking, we could pass under it. By that time it was getting late and we left it for another day, which happened to be the next day.

It was a beautiful day, and an exhilarating ride. -Lew



BEAR BASIN JUNE 13

On June 13th Clint, Curtis, Jessica, and Euginia finished clearing trees at Bear Basin all the way to the basin.



BUFFALO HORN-DAILY PASS & TEEPEE PASS

JUNE 17

We rode out of the 320 / Buffalo Horn TH about 9:30am and returned at 6:30pm.

The Trail Crew consisted of the following riders; Rick, Elizabeth, Eugenia, Tim, Brenna, Chris, Clint, Sam, Shannon and me. We split up into two groups. One group rode up and over Daily Pass, the other group took the Teepee Pass route. A few riders turned back at Teepee Pass, Tim kept riding and met up with us in the Daily Pass group east Teepee on the ridge. Teepee group cut 20 trees, Daily Pass group cut 52 trees and we cut 6 trees before we split up : total 78 trees. The full loop was about 12.5 miles.

An amazing day in the Gallatin National Forest. Once the trail hits the YNP border its panoramic views of the Taylor Hilgard's, Monument Mountain and YNP.

We met up with some wranglers from the 320 Ranch, who were riding out with a chainsaw to cut the Wilson Cutoff trail. They said the Covered Wagon wranglers had to cut the trail to Ramshorn Lake. From what we saw on the trail before we turned off towards Daily, not really a true story. So next Wednesday (June 24th) we're planning on riding towards Ramshorn Lake and if that's all cleared, keep riding and do the Buffalo Horn Loop. —*Happy Trails, Mark*



SPANISH CK-FALLS CREEK-JEROME ROCK LAKES-HIGH LAKES TRAIL-TRAIL 407
JUNE 19

GV BCH members had a good day on Friday June 19. Eugenia, Tim, Clint and Lew met at the Spanish Creek Trailhead, packed our Silky Saws and two crosscut saws and departed the trailhead about 9:30. We headed up Trail 407 to Falls Creek Trail 410. We cut 12 trees on our way up to Jerome Rock Lakes. After lunch there we rode from the Lakes onto High Lakes Trail 413 and followed that down Hermit Creek Trail to the junction at Trail 407, cutting another 16 trees. We followed that back toward the trailhead. Our last tree cleared was right at the South Fork crossing. We all got down and started cutting. Well, from there, sorry to say, Tim's horse and my mule decided it was time to head on down the trail. In our excitement about the late afternoon tree clearing, we both failed to tie our rides. As we watched them go out of sight Tim took off at a fast gait. I followed shortly behind. About 30 minutes later Tim came back, riding the mule and leading his horse. It all worked out and could have been much worse. Luckily, they stopped after a mile or so and Tim grabbed them. We both are getting a bit old for too many more lessons, but I think we'll remember this one for a while.

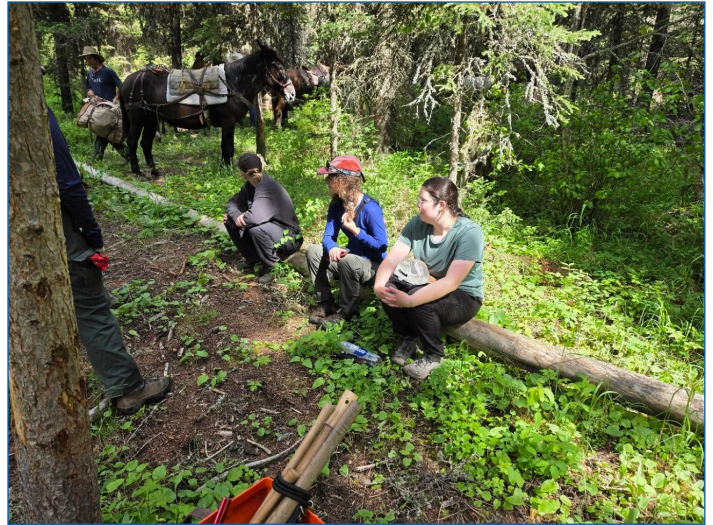
All in all, it was 17 miles and a great day in the mountains.—Lew



PACK IN FOREST SERVICE CREW

JUNE 22

On June 22nd we packed in a Forest Service Crew up Hellroaring Creek about a mile and a half before the North Fork Junction. We had Dan Marsh with a pack horse, Tim Butler and a pack horse, Mark DeOpsomer with a pack horse, and Rick Ramler with his horse and 3 mules. We had 2 sets of food boxes one set of hard panniers for tools and three soft panniers loaded with personal gear and other goodies. We went in about 4 miles to where the crew was going to build a turnpike over a real boggy area. A couple of weed specialists were going up to Thompson Lake to map and identify the weeds they came across. Mark and Rick will pack them out on Thursday.



BUFFALO HORN TO RAMSHORN LAKE

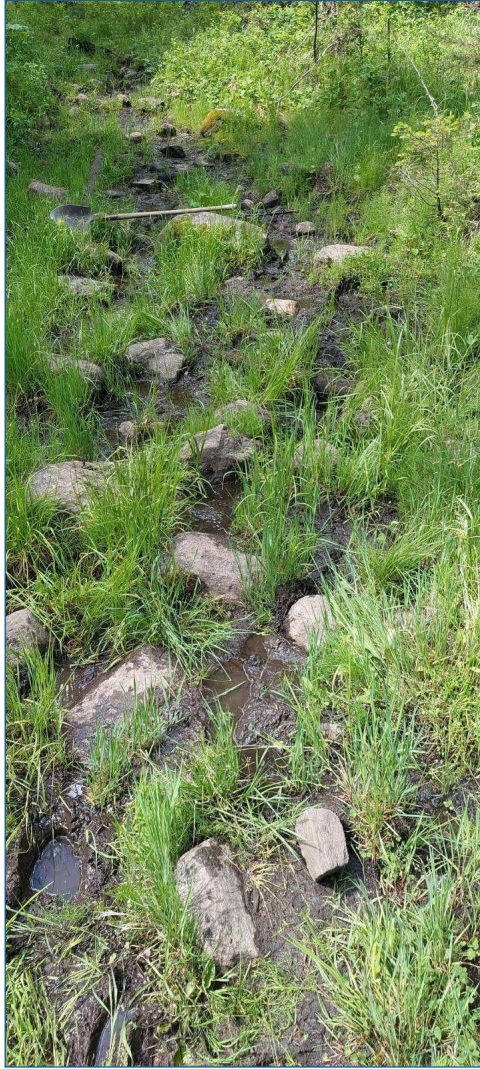
JUNE 24

The Wednesday Crew of Dan Marsh with a pack horse along with Tim Butler who brought a horse for Jerry Kawasaki, Euginia Razzano, and Mark DeOpsomer went into Buffalo Horn. We got going at 9:00AM and thought we would make good time to the lake because it was supposedly "cleared" up to Ramshorn by the Covered Wagon Crew. We cut out 25 BIG trees on the way to the lake. It seems their idea of clearing is if you could get around the tree somehow you didn't need to cut it out. We got to the lake around 1PM and had a short lunch. We stopped and turned around at 4PM after running into a large snarl of trees. We ran into a juvenile Bald Eagle that swooped up in front of us just before Ramshorn. Overall, we cut out 60 trees and were down to 2 batteries and it looked like rain. We got back at 6:30PM and headed back in the rain and slow traffic on the Highway.



FOREST SERVICE CREW PACK OUT
JUNE 25

Mark DeOpsomer with a pack horse and Rick Ramler with a horse and three mules packed out the Forest Service Crew we brought in on Monday. Mark got some good pictures of the new turnpike where the bog used to be. It was a great job done by the Bozeman District trail crew.



**GVBCB IS INDEBTED TO THE FOLLOWING BUSINESSES & MEMBERS
WHO CONTRIBUTED TO THE SUCCESS OF OUR 2025 POKER RIDE**

Carter's Boots
City Brew (Cattail St)
Double Diamond
Four Corners Saddlery
Kenetrek Boots
Madison River Propane
Montana Canvas
Montana Horse Sense
Montana Silversmiths

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