

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
Vacant ... 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 : SEPTEMBER 2, 9, 16, 23, 30

SATURDAY TRAIL CREW : SEPTEMBER 5, 12, 19, 26

BOARD MEETING : SEPTEMBER 17

First Security Bank

GENERAL MEETING : SEPTEMBER 17

First Security Bank

BCHMT BOARD MEETING : SEPTEMBER 19

Deer Lodge Elks Lodge



PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

The dog days did not stick around long this year. We had the heat and the smoke when nobody wanted them, and then the back end of August turned cool and wet, which is hard to complain about given it's still fire season. However, it does feel like fall is showing up early. Some of the best riding of the year is still in front of us, cool mornings and gold in the aspens, and then winter will arrive the way it always does in Montana, earlier than anybody planned for. Get your rides in while you can.

Thank you to Janice for hosting our summer meetings and for the saddle fitting program. If you have ever wondered whether your saddle actually fits the horse you are riding, that was the evening to be there. Clint and Dan Porter even got a close up view. Thanks as well to Stacie for walking us through West Nile vaccination and the pigeon fever going around the valley right now. Both are worth your attention.

The Sweet Pea Parade on August 8 went well. We had 14 riders and 15 animals, plus the truck, the float, and the pooper scoopers, who were once again a hit with the crowd. Thank you to Mark DeOpsomer for coordinating our entry and to Chris Day for leading out with the signs. Janice was busy on this one, too. She hosted desensitization clinics beforehand for us and our horses, hosted the float decoration, and supplied the red, white, and blue ribbons and flowers that dressed it up for this year's America 250 theme. We all looked sharp in our white shirts, new vests, and red, white, and blue decorations on our equines.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE...

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Just over twenty of us made it out to Henry and Molly Glenn's place in Wilsall for the club BBQ on August 29. The weather did not cooperate. It was cold and wet, and we spent the evening cowering in the workshop to stay out of the rain, which turned out to be no hardship at all. Lew cleaned up at cornhole, maybe it's those long arms or just the height advantage, but he killed it. Henry grilled the chicken left over from the Poker Ride and, as usual, it was an excellent meal. The sides you all brought were something else, everything from smoked salmon to a zucchini bake carrying about as much cheese and cream as it did zucchini. Nobody went home hungry. Thank you to Henry and Molly for opening their place to us after Spanish Creek Cabin fell through.

One item needs your attention before or just after our next meeting. The Forest Service has proposed rescinding the 2001 Roadless Rule in its entirety, and the public comment period closes at midnight on September 21. That rule currently governs roughly 45 million acres of national forest, a good deal of it the country we ride. This is the window where public input actually counts, and it is a short one. Comments go through [regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov) under docket FS-2025-0001. At this time, I'm not sure if BCHMT or BCHA has an official position but I'd encourage each of you to do your own research and submit a comment. It's an opportunity to let the Forest Service know how you feel. You should also consider reaching out to our elected officials' offices.

One cancellation to pass along. The Reese Creek ranch ride on September 19 is off. Erin Lyons let us know. I promoted it in last month's letter, so please take it off your calendar.

Wild Montana is setting log cribs on the Indian Ridge trail September 19 and 20, and the Forest Service is delivering the logs to the site. The section worked benefits equestrian users directly. If you would like to lend a hand either day, contact Dean Center at mgadoptatrail@gmail.com. They have requested that we ride somewhere else those two days.

We are still looking for a volunteer to fill Devon's recently opened seat on the board as a director. There are 16 months remaining on the term. If you have been thinking about getting more involved, this is a good way in and it's not much more of a commitment than showing up 30 minutes early and helping us guide this organization. Speak to me or to any officer or director.

September 17th puts us back at First Security Bank, 2046 Cattail St. Board meeting at 6:30, general meeting at 7:00.

See you soon, —*Sid Boswell, President, GVBCH*



BOARD MEETING MINUTES
AUGUST 20

GENERAL MEETING MINUTES
AUGUST 20

Roll Call: Sid Boswell, Henry Glenn, Elizabeth Heppler, Kathy VanDyke, Chris Day, Laurie Connelly, Lew Goodpasture, Maddie Mason, Dan Marsh, Chris Nygren

CALLED TO ORDER BY SID BOSWELL.

MINUTES

Sid noted that the July minutes require two corrections (DC Stark is listed twice and Elizabeth Heppler's name is misspelled). Chris N. moved to approve the minutes as corrected; 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 additional receipts from the Poker Ride, the parade, and shirt sales. Chris D. moved to approve the report; Laurie seconded; the motion passed.

OLD BUSINESS

Sweet Pea Parade: Sid reported that we had 14 riders and that it went very well.

Wilderness Trip: The planned August 17 trip to the Buffalo Fork cabin was cancelled.

The Fall BBQ: will be held on August 29 at Henry and Molly's place in Wilsall (the Spanish Creek cabin being unavailable).

NEW BUSINESS

BOARD VACANCY

Devon Kerley has resigned from the board. Hers was a 2-year term with approximately 16 months remaining. The board will need to appoint someone to complete the term, and Sid will mention it at the general meeting.

ELECTIONS

A nominating committee will be established at the October meeting.

ROADLESS RULE CHANGES

Chris N. told us about a proposed rescission of a section of the Roadless Rule and noted that the public comment period ends on September 21. At this time we do not have a consensus statement for our chapter, however anyone can submit their comments on a personal basis.

AB TRIP EXPENSES

The Forest Service has not reimbursed Henry for food costs from any of the cabin trips. Chris N. made a motion to reimburse those expenses; Laurie seconded; the motion passed.

ADJOURNMENT

Sid adjourned the meeting.

—Submitted by Kathy VanDyke

Program: Janice discussed and demonstrated saddle fitting on several of her horses. Stacie then discussed "pigeon fever" which is occurring around the valley. Fly control is the best defense, and she recommended strong fly sprays, Tail Tamer Belly Balm (available at Four Corners Saddlery and online at www.bigdweb.com), and Fly Predators (www.spalding-labs.com).

CALL TO ORDER:

Sid Boswell called the meeting to order.

MINUTES

Sid noted that the July minutes require two corrections (minutes of the June, not the May, meeting were approved and Stacie's name is misspelled). Janice moved to approve the minutes as corrected; Corinne 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 net income from the Poker Ride was \$5,019. Henry moved to approve the report; Janice seconded; the motion passed.

OLD BUSINESS

Sweet Pea Parade: The parade went well and was a lot of fun for the participants.

Wilderness Trip: was cancelled.

Fall BBQ: The fall BBQ will be held on August 29 at Henry and Molly's place in Wilsall (the Spanish Creek cabin being unavailable).

NEW BUSINESS

Board vacancy: Devon Kerley resigned from the board. Hers was a 2-year term with approximately 16 months remaining and the board will need to appoint someone to complete the term. Please talk to Sid if you're interested in serving on the board.

Roadless Rule change: The Forest Service has proposed rescinding of a section of the Roadless Rule. The public comment period ends on September 21.

PROGRAMS:

Please let Janice know if you have ideas or suggestions for future programs.

ADJOURNMENT:

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

—Submitted by Kathy VanDyke

DESENSITIZATION TO OBSTACLES

JULY 29

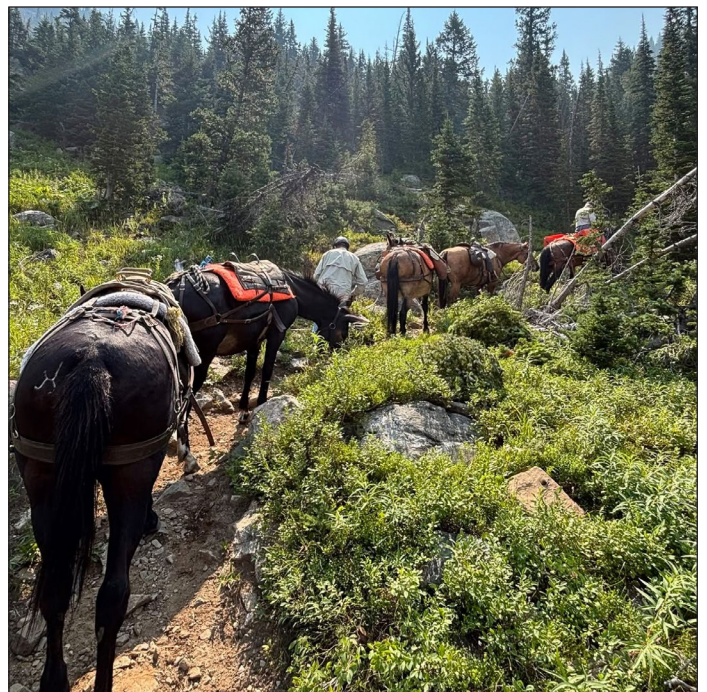


Great evening ride just before a rainstorm rolled in.
Thank you Janice R. Cartwright for setting up the
desensitization obstacles. Sid's horse Queue really
understood the assignment!



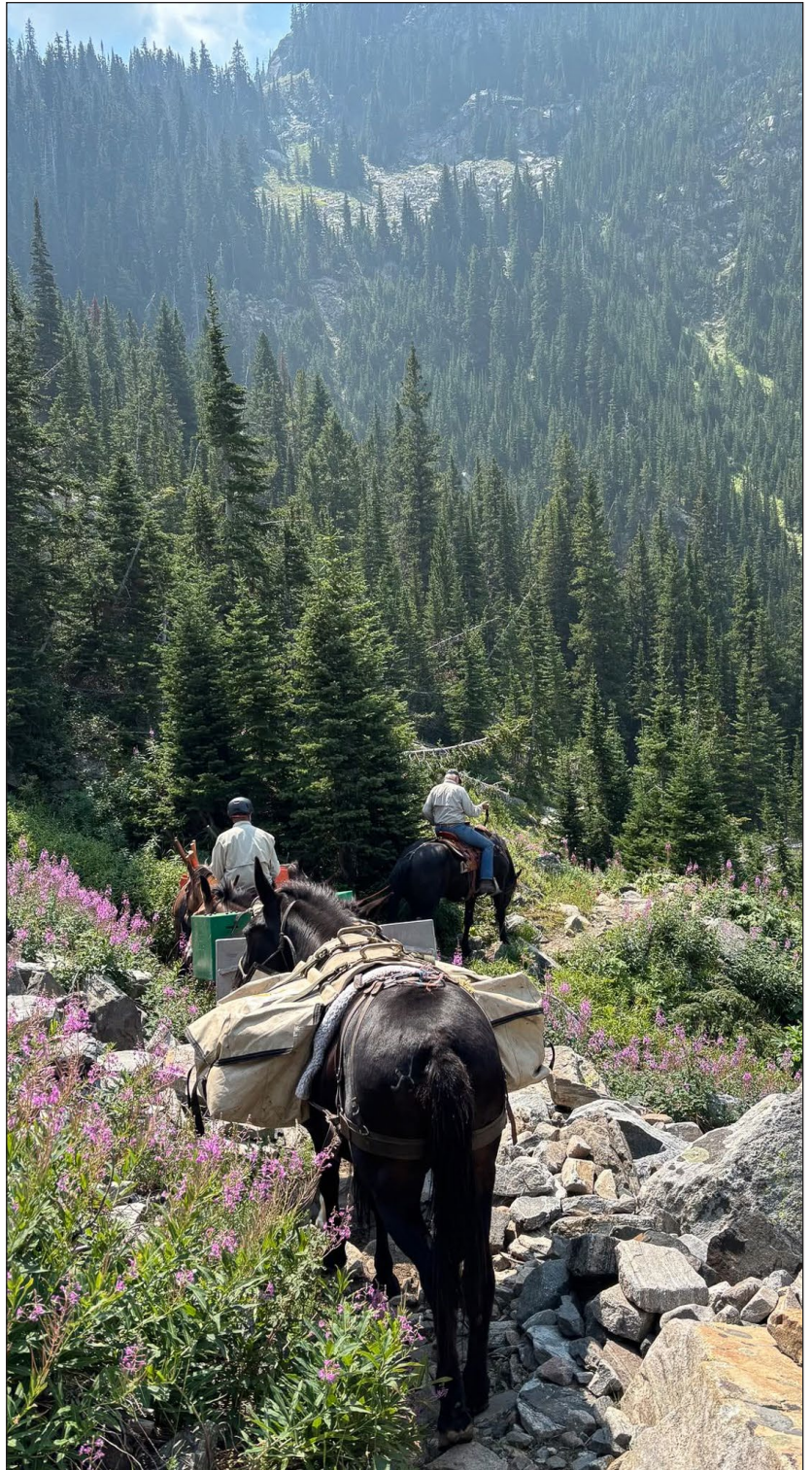
MIRROR LAKE PACK OUT AUGUST 3

On August 3rd we packed out the Forest Service crew that has been working on the Mirror Lake trail up and down from the lake. The crew consisted of Dan Marsh with a pack horse, Lori Stavropolus with a pack horse, and Rick Ramler with 3 pack mules. We were supposed to pick them up at Noon but we were ready to ride at 9:00AM so we headed up the trail for the 6.5 mile trip up to Mirror Lake. The weather was great and the temperature started out around 50 degrees and only got to around 70 degrees on the way out. There was a little breeze blowing and no flies the entire trip. We left the Forest Service crew with the food boxes and a soft pannier so we only needed to bring the hard panniers that were repaired with some locktite and one more set of soft panniers. We arrived before Noon and we met all the crew except 2 coming down early. They had packed up the food boxes with some of the tools and the soft panniers so we loaded up the long and heavy tools in the hard panniers and we headed down the trail a little before 1PM. The crew had done a fabulous job on the trail and it was much easier going up and down to the lake this time around. I'm sure you will notice the difference if you head up to Mirror Lake! We got back around 3PM unloaded the gear and were gone by 3:30PM. It was one of the most pleasant trips we have taken to Mirror Lake. Now it is time to get ready for the Sweet Pea Parade on August 8th and the pack in to Thompson Lake on August 11.—Dan



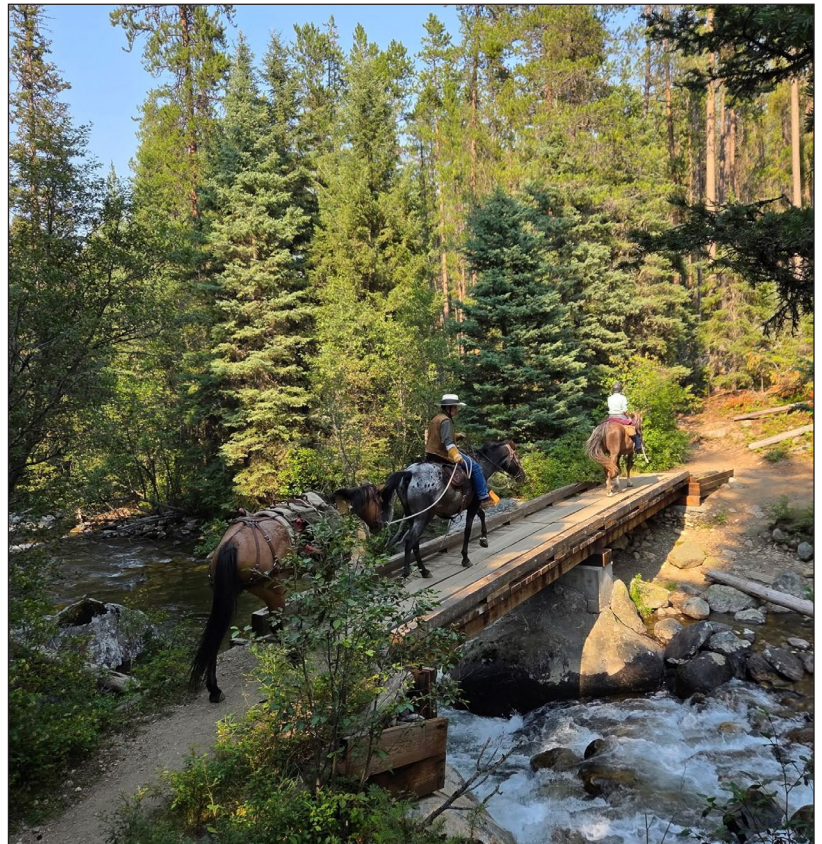
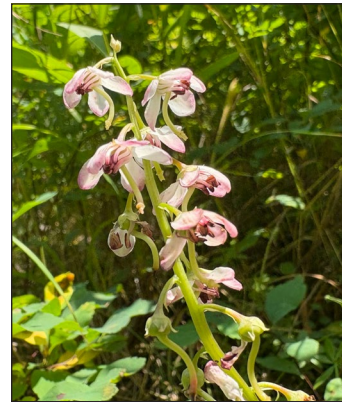
MIRROR LAKE PACK OUT AUGUST 3

Our Bozeman District Forest Service crew did a great job on the Mirror Lake trail in the Lee Metcalf Wilderness.



HELLROARING CREEK AUGUST 3

Four GVBCH equestrian partners agreed to load up and meet for a day of trail riding and maintenance. After staging at the Four Corners weigh station, the GVBCH members Carmen, Marianne and Dan Porter trailered us to the Hellroaring trailhead. Saddled and loaded for deadfall, snags, saplings, and brush, we were on the trail by 10am with Luke leading, myself (DJ) next with packer Poncho following, and Ruby bringing up the rear and watching for shifting panniers. We arrived at the first trail junction around noon time having feasted on as much wild timothy, Canadian thistle, etc. as we could reach when our riders weren't looking. The trail was quite rocky in places but our farriers had done a good job and we lost no shoes. The bridge and puncheons were mostly in good condition with the exception of one that was in serious need of new planks. Our riders enjoyed a nice lunch break before walking back down the trail trimming encroaching brush. We hate when that brush slaps at our legs! We headed back down the trail at about 1pm, stopping several times to allow our GVBCH members to clear brush and a few snags, drink from various containers, and admire the surrounding forest of lush understory and huge towering old growth fir and spruce. They were also taking snapshots of flowers and them selves riding. I heard mention that they felt they had cleared approximately one quarter mile of trail. We arrived back at the trailhead having done our job well with no mishaps and no injuries. We stood around for a while as the members talked and drank and ate leftover poker ride cookies, then loaded up and headed home with the satisfaction of knowing we had done our jobs well. —DJ (*aka Traveler*)



HELLROARING CABIN A-B WILDERNESS AUGUST 3-8

A great week spent at Hell roaring cabin in the A-B wilderness. Lots of little tasks were accomplished. Leading a pack horse prevents picture taking on the way in and out, but here are a few photos of the jobs we did, including enjoying some time at Carpenter Lake north of the cabin.



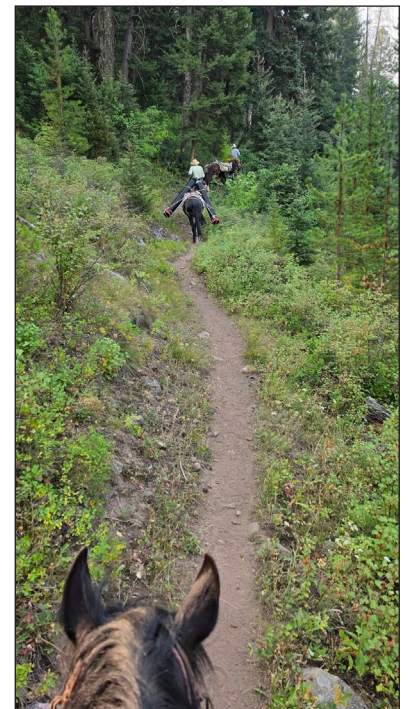
SWEET PEA PARADE AUGUST 8

What a fun morning!! All horses were very brave. Thank you Eva, Janice, Sid, Dan Marsh, @Dan Porter, Elizabeth Baker Heppler, @Mark DeOpsomer, @Marianne Meyer, Carmen Matzick, Denise Stark



THOMPSON LAKE PACK IN AUGUST 11

The GVBCH packing crew consisting of Dan Marsh with one pack animal, Mark DeOpsomer with a pack animal, Rick Ramler with three pack mules, Lew Goodpasture with one pack animal, and Clint Schwalm helping us load and get down the trail. We met Arianna Knight of the Gardiner District and an enthusiastic MCC crew at 8:30AM at the Thompson Lake Trailhead at the end of the West Fork Mill Creek Road. The smoke we had in Bozeman faded by the time we got to the trailhead. We loaded up their tools in 2 sets of hard panniers, their 2 sets of food boxes, 2 six-foot plastic culverts, and a set of soft panniers with their gear. Arianna headed out to make sure there were no trees blocking our path and we left shortly thereafter at 9:30AM after loading up the pack animals. Their project of putting in a turnpike was only three miles in so we dropped off all the tools at that site then continued on to where they were setting up camp at the end of Thompson Lake 5.4 miles in arriving at 11:40AM. We unpacked and had lunch at the lake expecting them to show up but they decided to work on the turnpike and set up camp later. We headed back down the trail at 12:50PM and met up with the crew at the bog they were going to work on for the week. We made good time getting back and arrived back at the trailhead at 2:30PM. Overall we traveled 10.7 miles averaged 3.4 mph and went from 5600 feet to 8400 feet with a lot of up and down in between. We met some nice folks at the trailhead from Kansas that were staying at the Yellowstone Bible Camp at the Mill Creek junction with the West Fork Mill Creek. They had a 6-door custom-built Ford with a short box which had us all wondering if it was a new model. It was a pleasant day, and Rick spotted a large Black Bear across the valley from our trail on our way in.



SAGE CREEK TRAIL AUGUST 15

Three members from Gallatin Valley Backcountry Horsemen met at Sage Crk Trailhead for a day of trail clearing. Clint Schwalm, Lew Goodpastue and Tim Butler departed at 9:45 onto Sage Creek trail and then onto Skyline Trail #151. Lots of use on the early parts of those trails due to lots of use by horses and hikers from local resorts. We found that both trails had been cleared recently and very competely. We had inquired with two of the resorts in the days prior, but had no response. But, we made a nice day of it and had a good ride in some really stunning countryside.



THOMPSON LAKE PACK OUT AUGUST 18

GVBCH packing crew of Dan Marsh with one pack horse, Rick Ramler with 2 pack mules, and Kevin Voller with 2 pack horses and we packed-out Arianna and her MCC crew from Thompson Lake. We packed them in on August 11th to build a new turnpike and they were still working on it when we got in to pick them up. They did a terrific job on the new turnpike along with cleaning up an old one. It rained on them every day they were there. Rick and I arrived at the trailhead minutes apart at 9AM and got tacked up and ready while waiting for Rick who got there shortly thereafter. We had to dodge large boulders that had come off a rockslide during the week we were away. We arrived at the turnpike, and the crew was still hard at work finishing it up. We went on to their campsite where they had left their food boxes and soft panniers loaded with their gear. They had weighed everything out before, so we had a bite of lunch and loaded up three of the pack animals. We got back to the turnpike, and they were still hard at work on the trail, and they had already loaded up our hard panniers with most of the tools so all we had to do was load up and hit the trail. Arianna said they needed a couple of more hours to finish up and told us to just drop everything off near their trucks. We had a little rain on the way back under mostly sunny skies. The trail was certainly wetter than when we brought them in but aside from a few slippery spots it was good. This was Kevin's first trip to Thompson Lake and he enjoyed the views. —Dan



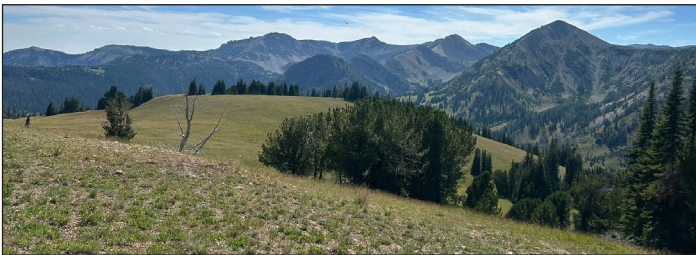
BACON RIND TRAIL AUGUST 19

We headed out up Bacon Rind Trail inside YNP about 9:30am and ran into blocked trail about 1/4 mile in so the day started out cutting first thing. We cut 5 trees inside Yellowstone NP within 2.1 miles of YNP, then the trail turns to Lee Metcalf Wilderness. Lew, of course, had his mule Yukon packing all the trimmers and 2 handed cross cuts and an extra Silky Katanaboy 500.

The Bacon Ride trail winds through the beautiful endless timothy grass along Bacon Rind Creek for the 2.1 miles. The trail then starts switching back up to the plateau on top which levels out at about 9500 ft. The views are amazing looking west at the ridge between Cone Peak and SnowSlide Mountain. There were about 25 goats up on the ridge just south of Snowslide Mountain. We sat there at the junction of Bacon Ride and the Skyline Trail watching the goats for about an hour. Hard to leave a place that wild and so peaceful. We didn't see any elk, but there were some impressive elk wallows up there on top and plenty of elk beds from a cooler time of day. Riding up to the top we cut another 22 trees, some big, some small mostly related to the recent burn up 5-6 years ago.

No complaints, another day in the mountains, great crew. Thx to Lew, Eugenia, Clint and Evan and the livestock. Great day to be alive.

Final note, this was one of Wally Becker's favorite rides. He called it the Elk Bugle Ride and did it every fall. Hat's off to Wally and all the trail clearing he and Chic did in the Lee Metcalf. Happy Trails, —Mark



SADDLE FITTING PROGRAM AUGUST 20

From last night's saddle fitting program. Joe Peterson from Three Forks Saddlery provided us with 2 saddle trees for demonstration purposes. (THANK YOU JOE!). Janice put these trees on 4 of her older horses with saddle fitting issues. Then, they were all tacked up with saddles that almost fit them and the extra padding that was needed to make it all work for each horse and the why behind those decisions. Various types of pads and shims were shown. (Thank you Tutti, for picking up these trees.)—Janice



NORTH FORK SPANISH CREEK

AUGUST 22

New members Kayla and Taylor joined Lew and I for an easy ride to the North Fork of Spanish Creek. Lew brought his mules with Yukon packed for trail maintenance. I rode my “new” quarter horse Poncho for our first time in the mountains together, Kayla rode her paint horse “Domino” and Taylor rode my Appy/Walker. Keeping up with the mules was a challenge from the start but we played catch up all morning and arrived at the North Fork with no mishaps. All did well and Lew made short work of one snag that had been shortcut previously as well as a leaner that might have been a head banger for a tall rider on a tall horse.

The trailhead was well occupied by equestrians but not too crowded. We met and talked to Royce and Sue Johnson from Minnesota who had been riding trails in the Gallatin for several weeks. They had met Phil and Melvina Adolf (former GVBCH members) many years ago and have remained close friends. I also talked to “Jim” Liam of Liam’s Concrete in Three Forks and his daughter. They had ridden the loop up the 401, across the 409 and around past Jerome Rock, returning down Hermit Creek trail and the 407.

Everyone we meet at the Spanish Creek Trail Campground is appreciative of the work we do to maintain our local trails.

—Dan Porter



BLACKMORE TRAIL—ELEPHANT HEAD FOREST SERVICE PACK-IN AUGUST 24

The packing crew comprised of Dan Marsh with one pack horse, Lew Goodpasture with a pack mule, Rick Ramler with 3 pack mules, and Clint and Evan Schwalm came along to help pack. We had planned to have 4 pack animals available but ended up with 5 when Rick's mule recovered faster than he expected. The Hyalite Road is under construction with big sections of the road missing pavement. We met the Forest Service crew that were going in until Friday at 8:30AM at the Hyalite Day Use parking area where we were packing them about 4 miles to a campsite near Elephant Head on the Blackmore Lake trail. We were entertained by a couple having a photo shoot with their horse and trailer all dressed up in their "Sunday go to meetin's." We headed down the trail around 9:30AM for the about 4-mile trip to their campsite. We didn't get very far when the second mule in Ricks string hit the brakes at the sound of the bridge we needed to cross near the beginning of the trail. Then I messed up and missed a turn, and the packers could not turn around on the trail at that point, so we had a short detour. We finally got going in the right direction and headed down the trail. The elevation climbs from 7300 feet to 9300 feet at the campsite, so the pack animals were worked pretty hard. Feet before the campsite my pack with all the long-handled tools and spud bar rolled to the downhill side on the last steep switchback and just about rolled under his belly. Luckily my pack horse didn't panic and with Evan's help I got the pack in the middle of him again and we continued to the campsite. I was lucky to not have a garage sale on the side of the mountain! We got to the campsite at Noon unpacked the gear, had some lunch, shot the breeze and headed back down. We got back to the trailers just before 2PM and removed the tack, had a cool beverage, continued shooting the breeze, and headed home. The road out now had flagmen and one lane closed for a short section. It looks like we will have the same issue when we go to pick them up on Friday.



**ELEPHANT HEAD—BLACKMORE TRAIL—FOREST SERVICE PACK-OUT
AUGUST 28**

With a light rain falling, the packing crew of Dan Marsh with one pack horse, Clint Schwalm with a pack horse, and Rick Ramler with 3 pack mules packed out the Forest Service crew that had been in Blackmore for four days. They wanted to be picked up at 1PM so we met at the trailhead at 11 tacked up and headed out at 11:30AM. We arrived with 2 minutes to spare at their campsite about 4 miles in and over 2400 feet higher. The Bozeman District Custer Gallatin National Forest crew had been busy and completed two new turnpikes and a lot of tread work on the switchbacks. They had already weighed the boxes and got them close, so we did some minor balancing and loaded the boxes up and headed down the trail. The crew headed back while we loaded up. I was at the tail end because my horse is still figuring out how to go downhill. Just before Blackmore Lake I spotted a green lid from one of the food boxes alongside the trail that luckily stopped before rolling down the cliff. I picked it up and headed back down the trail meeting up with the others and they were about to turn around to go find the lid. We were almost to the trailhead, so we went the rest of the way, unpacked all the gear and bid a fond farewell to the hard-working Forest Service crew. This was the last packing trip for the Forest Service crews, but we have one more trip on September 3rd to pack out roofing supplies at Cabin Creek. We had a great bunch of packers this year and all the gear made it in and out, so it was a successful year.—Dan



**GVBCH IS INDEBTED TO THE FOLLOWING BUSINESSES & MEMBERS
WHO CONTRIBUTED TO THE SUCCESS OF OUR 2026 POKER RIDE**

Poker Hand Prizes:

Four Corners Saddlery
Rocky Mountain Hat Co.
Montana Canvas
Murdoch's Ranch and Home

Silent Auction Items:

Rikki's Furniture Gallery
Tactic
Janice Cartwright Montana Horse Sense
Bonnie Hammer
Dan Marsh & Alice Pilgeram
Dan Porter & The Hager Family
Taylor Equine Massage
James Erickson
And all 34 member volunteers!!



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