

# Beartooth Back Country Horsemen Trail Tales

## President's Pen

October 2022

We've finished the packing and trail clearing projects. Thanks for all the help from all the members. We had a lot of good rides and a few overnight trips. I hope everyone was able to get out and enjoy the warm weather and do a lot of riding in the mountains. Personally, I'm glad the heat is over and cooler weather is here. I enjoy the cool mornings.



On our last pack out on Labor Day we were already seeing early fall colors. But autumn just came in with a blast at my place in the last week. And it was time for mud at my house with the recent rains. The single deciduous tree at my place (which is mostly pine) is in full autumn yellow as I write this column. It's a good time to ride to see some fall colors.

We have some good educational programs coming up. I know we were all looking forward to the equine dentistry program that was cancelled due to the flooding in June. That's rescheduled for November. We have elections coming up in November as well. We are always looking for volunteers to serve on the board in any capacity. And we are looking for a newsletter editor. Step up and volunteer.

I do want to remind everyone about the April BCHMT State Convention (April 14-16) followed immediately by the BCHA National Convention (April 16-20) in Kalispell. These dates are pretty firm. Note this is a little later than usual for our state meeting.

### BBCH DIRECTORS



President- John Jenkins  
855-0238  
Vice President- Dave Heinle  
321-4326  
Treasurer- Melissa Codner  
308-390-0465  
Director- Keith Brighton  
425-1122  
Director – Ray Longstreth  
406 224 5185  
Director- Bob Knutson  
698-0290

### STATE DIRECTORS



John Jenkins  
855-0238  
Randy Thomsen  
425-0204  
Keith Brighton (Alternate)  
425-1122

### NATIONAL DIRECTOR



John Chepulis  
322-4823

At the recent state directors meeting we were all encouraged to pass along to the chapters a *request to stay for the National Meeting*. Montana is where it all started. The upcoming National Convention is the 50<sup>th</sup> and a Montanan will be installed as president. The issues we face with trail access and maintenance in the Rocky Mountain West is different than those faced in other parts of the nation where there is much less back country. All states, whether there is one local chapter or two dozen has two National Directors. Meaning we are a little underrepresented in this body. A good presence from Montana at the national meeting of our chapter members will help keep the “back country” issues we deal with at the forefront of the BCHA.

Happy Trails

John Jenkins

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## **VOLUNTEER - WANTED**

BBCH is looking for a volunteer Editor for the monthly Newsletter, starting January, 2023. The Editor will provide oversight for the existing newsletter, curating or writing newsletter content as needed; collate and format articles, photos, BOD meeting minutes; and, email the completed newsletter, by the 10<sup>th</sup> of each month, to the membership. A template of the existing Newsletter will be provided, and the selected Editor will have the freedom to “make it their own.” Contact: Robin Morris, [junkerette@msn.com](mailto:junkerette@msn.com), or John Jenkins [john.k.jenkins@gmx.us](mailto:john.k.jenkins@gmx.us) or any board member.



**October 17<sup>th</sup> - 6:30 P.M. Potluck – General Meeting @ 7:00**

**Columbus Fire Station  
944 E Pike Columbus**



Dear John and Louise,  
Thank you for volunteering at  
Nye Community Foundation's Nye  
Goes Nuts. We so appreciate your  
support. We know your presentation  
was a huge hit with the young and  
old alike. Your help supports our  
efforts to provide scholarships  
to area students and to support

other local organizations. You make  
the difference for us and we  
are grateful!

Sincerely,  
The Nye Community Foundation

Bonnie and John Chepulis, Louise and John Jenkins, Melissa Codner,  
Laura Conner and George (Chepulis) the Mule gave a packing demonstration  
at Nye Goes Nuts.

## 2022 SUMMER RENDEZVOUS

















## FALL TRAIL CONDITIONS

*Provided by Sylvan Peak Mountain Shop – Red Lodge*

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FRIDAY OCT. 7TH UPDATE AND CHANGES:

SLIGHT CHANGES, UPDATES AND NOTICES. PEOPLE ARE GETTING OUT THERE AND ENJOYING WHAT WE HAVE. GET CREATIVE, ALTER YOUR PLANS A BIT, AND SEE SOMEPLACE NEW!

SUMMARY OF RECENT CHANGES:

BEARTOOTH HIGHWAY: BEARTOOTH HIGHWAY IS CURRENTLY OPEN, AFTER RE-OPENING MONDAY MORNING. EXPECT AREAS OF ICE AND SNOW, AND DRIVE SLOWLY. THE NEW BRIDGE BEYOND BEARTOOTH LAKE IS COMPLETE, AND WORTH A STOP TO SEE THE ENGINEERING - ITS BEAUTIFUL!

THE BEARTOOTH HIGHWAY (US 212) PASS WILL CLOSE FOR THE SEASON ON OCTOBER 11, 2022 AT 8:00AM. CHIEF JOSEPH SCENIC BYWAY WILL REMAIN OPEN TO ACCESS COOKE CITY. THE ROAD FROM COOKE CITY/ SILVER GATE INTO THE PARK AND THROUGH LAMAR VALLEY IS EXPECTED TO OPEN OCT 15TH, WITH NEW ROAD CONSTRUCTION BEING COMPLETED.

AREA CAMPGROUND STATUS: BASIN CAMPGROUND CLOSED OCTOBER 2<sup>ND</sup>, PALISADES OPEN UNTIL WE GET A GOOD SNOW. PINE GROVE IS CLOSED AND GATED, EMERALD LAKE'S GATE IS OPEN BUT THERE ARE LIMITED SERVICES AS IN NO WATER OR TRASH. PARKSIDE CLOSED OCTOBER 2<sup>ND</sup>. JIMMY JOE CAMPGROUND WILL REMAIN OPEN.

HUNTING SEASON IS OPEN, SO WALK AND HIKE WITH BRIGHT COLORS AND BE AWARE OF HUNTERS IN THE AREA.

ROAD IS OPEN COMPLETELY TO MYSTIC LAKE TRAILHEAD AS OF SEPT 23. IT IS NO LONGER NECESSARY TO PARK AT WEST ROSEBUD LAKE AND WALK TO THE TRAILHEAD.

NOTICES:

BEARS ARE ACTIVE. THERE HAVE BEEN MULTIPLE SIGHTINGS OF BOTH BLACK BEAR AND GRIZZLY BEARS IN MOST AREAS, SO CARRY BEAR SPRAY AND KNOW HOW TO USE IT. KEEP A CLEAN CAMP, DON'T LEAVE ANY FOOD IN YOUR CAR AT THE TRAILHEAD.

THE BEARTOOTH DISTRICT AREA AROUND RED LODGE HAS A LOT OF CLOSURES, UNTIL BRIDGE WORK AND ROAD WORK CAN GET COMPLETED. SOME WILL BE QUICKER THAN OTHERS, SO BE AWARE BEFORE PLANNING A BACKCOUNTRY TRIP. STOP IN, OR CALL US AT [406-446-1770](tel:406-446-1770) FOR SPECIFIC DETAILS, OR CALL THE BEARTOOTH RANGER DISTRICT AT [406-446-2103](tel:406-446-2103)

**HIGHWAY 212** THE BEARTOOTH HIGHWAY (US 212) PASS WILL CLOSE FOR THE SEASON ON OCTOBER 11, 2022 AT 8:00AM. THE TARGET OPENING DATE FOR 2023 IS THE FRIDAY OF MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND, WEATHER DEPENDENT.

**BEARTOOTH LAKE/ ISLAND LAKE:** FIRST SNOWFALL THIS PAST WEEK, SO EXPECT ICY AREAS AND COLD NIGHTS. HIGH GRIZZLY BEAR USE AREA, SO CARRY BEAR SPRAY AND KEEP A SUPER CLEAN CAMP.

**COOKE CITY AREA HIKING:** HIKING/ BIKING ALONG THE PARK ENTRANCE ROAD HAS BEEN SHORTENED TO 1/2 MILE, DUE TO THE START OF CONSTRUCTION AND REPAIR OF THE ROAD, AND AN ADDITIONAL ROAD REPAIR NEEDED CLOSER TO SILVER GATE. THEY HOPE TO HAVE THIS ROAD OPEN BY OCTOBER 15 THRU THE PARK.

LADY OF THE LAKE TRAILHEAD, DAISY PASS, CRAZY CREEK, ETC. ALL BEAUTIFUL HIKING.

UPPER STILLWATER TRAIL HAS HAD SOME RECENT LANDSLIDES, AND LOTS OF TRAIL WORK DONE BY FOREST SERVICE TRAIL CREWS. BUT BE AWARE THAT THERE ARE MANY UNSTABLE AREAS ALONG THIS TRAIL, AND STOCK MAY GET TRAPPED IF A SLIDE HAPPENS. THIS IS A POPULAR AREA FOR BOW HUNTING AND AREA HUNTING PERMITS THIS TIME OF YEAR.

**LINE CREEK PLATEAU:** EAST SIDE BRIDGE ACCESS OPEN, LINE CREEK PLATEAU IS NOW FULLY ACCESSIBLE FOR HIKING AND MOUNTAIN BIKING.

**FACE OF THE MOUNTAIN:**

RECENT TRAIL WORK, FROM THE FIRE FROM LAST SUMMER IN THIS AREA. TRAIL CREWS HAVE MADE IT TO GOLD CREEK, BUT BEYOND THAT, THE TRAIL IS WIPED OUT BY A LANDSLIDE. TEMPORARY BRIDGE ACCESS RESTORED AT METEETSEE TRAIL FOR PUBLIC ACCESS.

**MAURICE CREEK TRAIL:** WITH THE OPENING OF A TEMPORARY BRIDGE ON THE NORTH END OF EAST SIDE ROAD, THE MAURICE CREEK TRAIL, AND CORRAL CREEK TRAILS ARE ACCESSIBLE.

**WEST FORK ROAD:** ROAD IS CLOSED TO VEHICLES AT BASIN CAMPGROUND. YOU CAN PARK, AND WALK UP THE ROAD IF YOU WISH. PLEASE DO NOT WALK ON ANY BRIDGES, AS ALL ARE CONTINUING TO FALL APART. BASIN CAMPGROUND CLOSED ON OCT 2. SILVER RUN TRAILS, NICHOLS CREEK, WILLOW, PALISADES TRAILS ARE ALL OPEN FOR HIKING AND BIKING. HIKERS HAVE BEEN UP TO TIMBERLINE LAKE, AND TO THE WEST FORK TRAILHEAD. THE WEST FORK TRAIL ITSELF HAS LOTS OF TREES DOWN, AND WATER RUNNING DOWN THE TRAIL. HIGH LEVEL OF BEAR ACTIVITY, BOTH BLACK AND GRIZZLY, IN THE WEST FORK DRAINAGE - PLEASE CARRY BEAR SPRAY, AND BE AWARE THAT EMS CAN'T EASILY GET TO YOU FOR A RESCUE.

**LAKE FORK AREA:** THE TRAIL IS ACCESSIBLE BY PARKING IN THE LARGE MEADOW BELOW THE LIONS CAMP (RICHEL LODGE AREA) AND HIKING THROUGH THE LIONS CAMP AND UP THE "WINTER" TRAIL TO THE MAIN TRAIL HEAD. WATER IS LOWER, BUT STILL A VERY CHALLENGING CROSS/FORD AT THE OLD BRIDGE AREA - IT ALMOST TAKES LESS TIME AND EFFORT JUST TO WALK THE EXTRA MILE FROM THE MEADOW PARKING AREA. TRAIL IS WASHED OUT IN A FEW PLACES, BUT WASHOUTS ARE EASY TO NAVIGATE UP TO LOST LAKE AND BEYOND. BRIDGE ABOVE LOST LAKE IS INTACT, LOTS OF BEAR ACTIVITY. CARRY BEAR SPRAY AND KEEP A SUPER CLEAN CAMP.

**BEARTRACK TRAIL:** TRAIL IS OPEN AND HIKEABLE, VERY LITTLE TO NO NEW SNOW ON THE PLATEAU. THERE IS NO WATER ON THIS TRAIL WITH A SHUTTLE, IT IS NOW POSSIBLE TO HIKE THE BEARTRACK/SILVER RUN AREA UP AND OVER.

**GLACIER LAKE ROAD:** ROAD AND BRIDGE DAMAGE. AREA IS CLOSED TO VEHICLES. IT IS POSSIBLE TO WALK INTO GREENOUGH LAKE BY PARKING AT PARKSIDE CAMPGROUND. GLACIER LAKE ROAD AND HELLROARING ROAD ARE WALKABLE, BUT EXPECT FAST MOVING CREEK CROSSINGS WITH NO BRIDGES AND RUBBLE STRETCHES WHERE ROADS HAVE WASHED OUT. MANY PEOPLE HAVE BEEN WALKING AND MOUNTAIN BIKING INTO THE GLACIER LAKE ROAD AREA. WITH MULTIPLE CROSSINGS OF CREEKS AND RUBBLE SLIDES.

**RED LODGE CREEK TRAIL:** TRAIL IS OPEN UP TO THE PLATEAU, TRAIL ACCESS TO EAST ROSEBUD, OR SENIA CREEK ON WEST FORK IS CLOSED DUE TO NO ACCESS TO THOSE TRAIL HEADS, SO BE PREPARED FOR AN OUT/BACK TRIP. WEAR BRIGHT COLORS DURING HUNTING SEASON.

**EAST ROSEBUD:** PLEASE BE AWARE OF PRIVATE LANDS VS FOREST SERVICE LANDS! THERE HAVE BEEN MULTIPLE REPORTS OF TRESPASSING, CAMPING ON CABIN LAWNS AND PORCHES, AND WALKING THROUGH THE EAST ROSEBUD CABINS. THIS AREA, AND ACCESS TO THE LAKE, IS PRIVATE PROPERTY AND UNDER TIGHT SECURITY

DUE TO THE FLOODING OF THE VALLEY. PLEASE RESPECT THE HOMEOWNERS....

LOTS OF ROAD, BRIDGE, TRAIL AND HOME DAMAGE IN THE VALLEY. THE ROAD IS NOW OPEN TO JIMMY JOE CAMPGROUND, AND THE CAMPGROUND IS OPEN (WITH A CLOSED SECTION IN THE CENTER). THE ROAD TO EAST ROSEBUD IS NOT ACCESSIBLE BY VEHICLE, 4-WHEELER OR BICYCLE DUE TO EXTREME DAMAGE. HIKING THIS SECTION FROM JIMMY JOE TO THE EAST ROSEBUD TRAILHEAD IS EXTREMELY DANGEROUS, WITH DEEP AND FAST RIVER CROSSINGS AND 5 MILES OF RUBBLE AND BOULDERS. THE "BEATEN PATH" TRAIL CAN BE DONE AS AN OUT AND BACK TRIP FROM THE CLARKS FORK TRAILHEAD, WITH A TURNAROUND PLACE OF RAINBOW LAKE. THE BRIDGE AT RIMROCK IS OUT, AND TRAIL WASHED OUT TO EAST ROSEBUD FROM THERE.

**WEST ROSEBUD:** FISHTAIL BRIDGE IS FIXED, SO ACCESS TO FISHTAIL AND WEST ROSEBUD ROAD HAS BEEN RESTORED. WEST ROSEBUD ROAD (#2072) IS OPENING TO WEST ROSEBUD LAKE. PINE GROVE CAMPGROUND IS CLOSED FOR THE SEASON, AND EMERALD LAKE CAMPGROUND IS OPEN WITH LIMITED SERVICES.

**MYSTIC LAKE TRAIL:** MYSTIC LAKE TRAIL HEAD IS ACCESSIBLE ALL THE WAY TO THE TRAILHEAD, WITH THE REPLACEMENT OF THE BRIDGE AT CHICKEN CREEK (AS OF 9/23) THE TRAIL IS IN GOOD SHAPE, WITH A BIT OF WATER WASHOUT, TO THE LAKE. TRAIL CREWS HAVE RECENTLY CUT OUT THE DOWN TREES FROM MAJOR BLOWDOWN EVENT EARLIER THIS SPRING. AROUND THE LAKE, THE HUCKLEBERRY CREEK BRIDGE IS OUT, BUT STILL NAVIGABLE ON LOGS TO CROSS. THE LOG JAM AT ISLAND LAKE HAS WASHED OUT, BUT THE OUTLET OF ISLAND IS EASY TO WADE ACROSS MAKING IT MUCH EASIER TO KEEP HIKING TO ISLAND AN SILVER LAKES ABOVE MYSTIC.

**STILLWATER VALLEY** - AREA IS CLOSED, DUE TO ROAD AND BRIDGE DAMAGE. PLEASE STAY AWAY FROM THE PRIVATE ROAD ACCESSING THE STILLWATER MINE, AS IT IS ON PRIVATE LAND. STILLWATER ROAD (#2400) INCLUDING WOODBINE CAMPGROUND AND THE STILLWATER TRAIL HEAD WILL REMAIN CLOSED. THIS INCLUDES THE TRAIL TO SIOUX CHARLEY LAKE. PLEASE MAKE SURE TO OBEY ALL CLOSURE SIGNAGE IN THIS AREA. WEST FORK STILLWATER ROAD (#2846) IS CLOSED. WOODBINE CAMPGROUND, TRAIL HEAD AND PARKING LOT ARE INTACT BUT NOT ACCESSIBLE. WOODBINE TRAIL BRIDGE WAS DESTROYED ALONG WITH STILLWATER TRAIL PARKING LOT.

THE COOKE CITY SIDE - THERE HAS BEEN A MAJOR SLIDE IN THE AVALANCHE LAKE AREA, SO ACCESS TO THE STILLWATER DRAINAGE FROM COOKE CITY IS VERY CHALLENGING. TRAIL WORK IS CURRENTLY BEING DONE BY FOREST SERVICE CREWS.

**BOULDER RIVER** - SOME ROAD WORK BEING CLEANED UP, BUT ROAD IS OPEN TO THE END AND TRAILS ARE OPEN. NATURAL BRIDGE AREA IS OPEN.

**PARADISE VALLEY** - ALL TRAILS AND FOREST AREAS OPEN, EXCEPT MILL CREEK AREA. MAIN MILL CREEK AT MILE MARKER 14.4 (PASSAGE CREEK) AND WEST MILL CREEK ON NATIONAL FOREST SYSTEM ROADS ONLY. GRIZZLY ACTIVITY AROUND TOM MINER BASIN, SO BE AWARE AND CARRY BEAR SPRAY, EVEN WHILE FISHING THE RIVER.

- SNOWBANK CAMPGROUND - CLOSED ALL SEASON, BRIDGE WASHOUT AND SIXMILE ABOVE GOLD PRIZE CLOSED.

**Pryors:** Beartooth Ranger District also includes the Pryors, for those looking for an alternative place to explore. The Big Ice Cave has recently had a new observation deck and stairway built. Please as we head into the long holiday weekend - call the respective local ranger district to learn specific site information, conditions and questions:

Ashland Ranger District - [406-784-2344](tel:4067842344)

Beartooth Ranger District -406-446-2103

Bozeman Ranger District - [406-522-2520](tel:4065222520)

Gardiner Ranger District -406-848-7375

Hebgen Lake Ranger District - [406-823-6961](tel:4068236961)

Sioux Ranger District -605-797-4432

Yellowstone Ranger District - [406-222-1892](tel:4062221892)

Also open, but not included in the Sylvan Peak Mountain Shop report:

**Myers Creek/Pass creek.** Pass creek has 13 trees across the trail, but you can make it to Picket Pin Creek by riding over and/or around.

**Island Lake, Benbow Road**

**Jim's Gulch to Deer Creek Cabin**



Beartooth Highway planned closure for the season is Oct. 11th. Access to Cooke City will remain open through Chief Joseph Scenic Byway.



## MINUTES – AUGUST 4<sup>TH</sup>, BBCH BOARD MEETING

In attendance: John Jenkins, Melissa Codner, Dave Heinle, Randy Thomsen, Nancy Thomsen, Keith Brighton, Bob Knutson

Called to order at 7:02 at Chamber of Commerce in Columbus

Minutes- Dave Heinle moved to approve July minutes as corrected. Randy Thomsen second. Motion passed.

Treasurer's Report has been filed in Minutes. There are 66 total members. Membership letters have been sent out to over 30 past members. A new debit card was received and has been activated. Keith Brighton moved to approve Treasurer's report. Bob Knutson second. Motion passed.

Education- The next club meeting will be October 17. Discussion on selecting a speaker.

Communication- Robin Morris set up "Gaggle" for the newsletter membership email list. "Gaggle" should better handle the list and email process. Posts on Facebook should communicate road and trail closures due to flooding. John Jenkins will write an article, Dave Heinle will send pictures to the Newsletter for ABW pack trips.

Activities- There were 6 riders on the fun ride to Island Lake to hang the new sign.

Discussion on the next 3 pack trips, Fox Lake, East Fork Mill Creek and Fish and Game packs.

Emails should be sent to enlist more help and pack animals. Directions may be needed in emails. Some trips are overlapping.

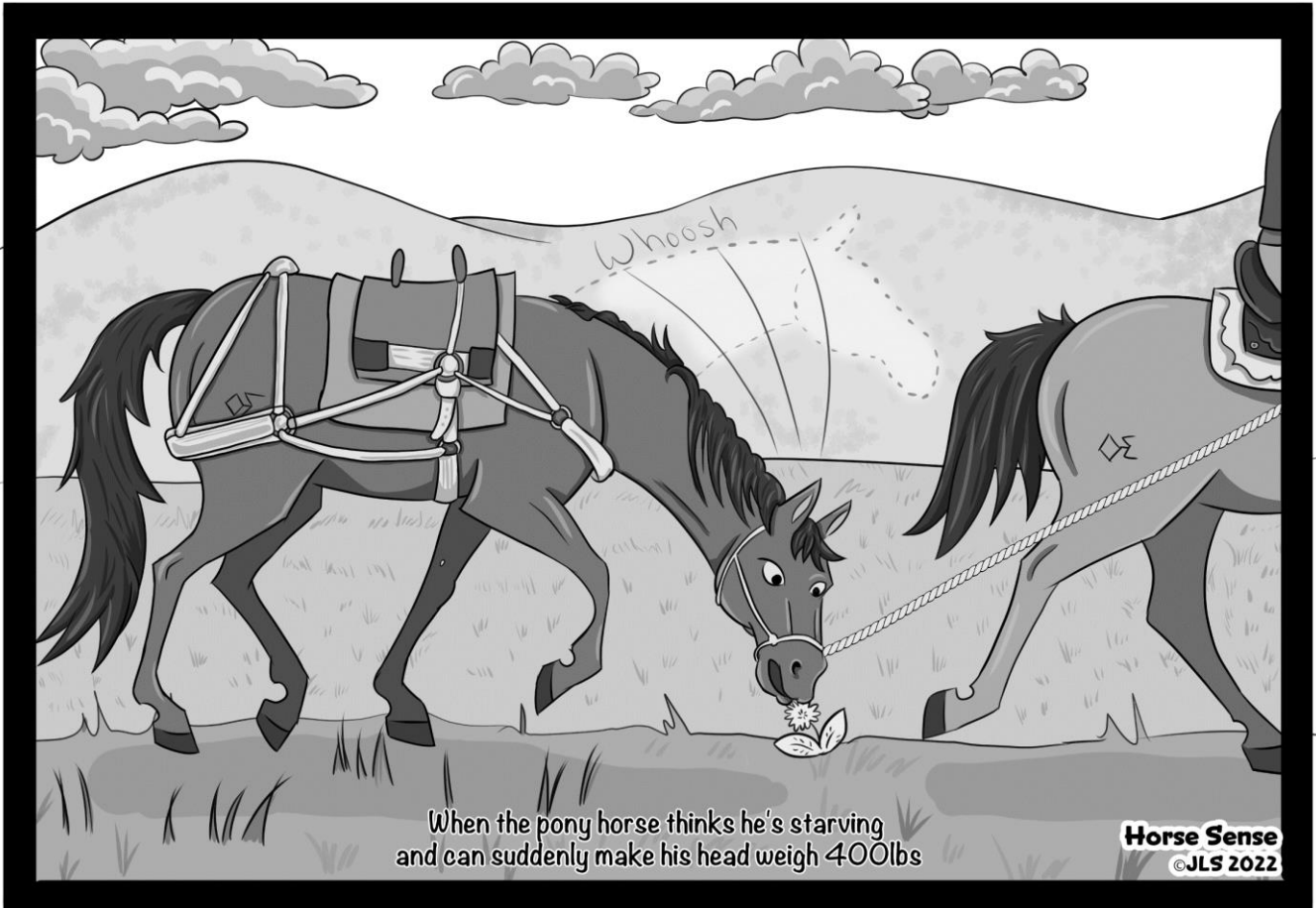
New Ernie Strum sign needs to be posted. Discussion on lack of parking, no cattle guard gate. Dave Heinle will contact Northwestern Energy about access. Randy Thomsen contact Allie Wood about Forest Service boundary.

Meyers Creek Campout- Melissa Codner volunteered to be chair. Dave Heinle moved to allow \$500 for prizes. Randy Thomsen second. Motion passed. Monies for food are in the budget. Membership only. Discussion on competitions, food, fun rides, scheduling. Advertisements in Newsletter and Facebook.

Graveling at Meyers Creek trail- Allie Wood is asking for the club to buy gravel for some parts of the trail. The Forest Service has gravel pack bags the club could use. The club could purchase gravel from Keith Martin. John Jenkins will contact and coordinate with Annie Smetts.

Meeting adjourned 8:30pm

LAUGHING STOCK





September 1, 2022: Lake Cameron, Cameron, Montana

Lake Cameron is south of Ennis, riding from the Bear Creek Campground Trailhead.

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Please send any submissions for the Newsletter to Robin Morris, [junkerette@msn.com](mailto:junkerette@msn.com),  
by the 5<sup>th</sup> of each month. Thanks!


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**Thank you to these local businesses for their continued support!**



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*Dan & Emily Aadland*  
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Absarokee, MT 59001  
406-328-4159 <http://my.montana.net/raa/>

**Stillwater Veterinary Clinic**

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557 North Montana Avenue  
Absarokee, MT 59001  
406-328-4159

**Broken Fiddle Ranch**  
**Dave & Chris Heinle**  
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