



Nag News

Bitter Root Back Country Horsemen

June 2022 Issue #06



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BACK COUNTRY HORSEMEN MISSION STATEMENT

- To perpetuate the common sense use and enjoyment of horses in America's backcountry and wilderness areas.
- To work to ensure that public lands remain open to recreational stock use.
- To assist the various government, state and private agencies in their maintenance and management of said resource.
- To educate, encourage and solicit active participation in the wise and sustaining use of the back country resource by horsemen and the general public commensurate with our heritage.
- To foster and encourage the formation of new back country horsemen's organizations.
- To cooperate with other BCHA organizations.

A Message from our BRBCH President

Greetings Members!

Well, I am finally over my Covid experience, and I sure am glad of that! Being sick and having to quarantine for 3 weeks sure does set you back on chores. But I am back in the saddle and ready for a great summer. I hope you are too! Our first project has come and gone with the work on Coyote Coulee. Lots of water bars were fixed and a few trees were taken out. Thank you all for your help! Our next project was Saturday, June 11 at the Bass Creek Recreation area at Larry Creek. Trails were cleared, water bars repaired, and a very boggy area was filled and two culverts were installed. More projects are coming up. You are welcome to join us on any project even if you do not have an equine and even if you cannot hike! There is always something to do like man the radio, explain to visitors what is happening, plus preparing, and serving food for hungry workers. We have received a generous grant from a local business to provide all the food for our projects this summer! We plan in having the Back Country trailer at each trailhead that has tables, cooking surfaces, plates, cups, etc. One job that we would like to fill is someone to prepare, cook and serve the food! We will mostly have hotdogs and hamburgers with all the fixings, chips, drinks, salads, and dessert. If you are interested in doing this, please get hold of Gene Merrell. He is buying the food and delivering it to the trailheads. Mules Days has come and gone, and I know some of you attended and enjoyed it. Some of you even helped by selling tickets and staffing the gates! Thank you! Let us hope we can help those folks continue to bring this fun event back to Hamilton every year. And speaking of gates, we are now having folks sign up to sell tickets at The Ravalli Count Fair. We have been doing this for many years now and it is our main source of income. Please look at our website to put your name on the list. If you work a 4-hour shift, you will be rewarded with a ! free day at the fair! Contact Christy Duggan for information. Those of you that still need First Aid /CPR/AED training to be allowed to use saws on our project will get one more chance to be certified. Our last First Aid class will be held on June 19 in Stevensville. Unfortunately, this is Father's Day but it is the only day we could have it. Talk to Bonnie Morgan if interested. And finally, I will be setting up some fun rides this summer when we meet next. This is a great way to learn the Trails around our valley and have some fun and camaraderie! Our next meeting will be at the Three Sisters picnic site at Lake Como. Come enjoy some great food and maybe bring a little wood for the fire. See you then.

Regards, Jan Bullock

**DEADLINE FOR THE
July 2022
NAG NEWS is
5 p.m. July 13, 2022**

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 Philip & Pam Torgerson
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 Susan Slempe
 Cindy Beck
 Jan Bullock
 Bonnie Morgan
 Nancy Pollman

Bitter Root Back Country Horsemen 2022 Officers & Board

Chapter Officers

Position	Name	Term	Contact
President	Jan Bullock	2022	(907) 242-9853
Vice President	Christy Schram-Duggan	2022	
Secretary	Kathy Stroppel-Holl	2022	
Treasurer	Barbara Walker	2022	

Board Members

Name	Term
Ed Duggan	2021-22
Travise Grinnell	2021-22
Joe Kirkland	2021-22
Katie Williams	2021-22
Julie Schram	2021-22
Dan Brandborg	2022-23
Carol Johns	2022-23
Dan Maiyo	2022-23
Karen Philips	2022-23

Past President: Gene Merrell**State Chairman:** Sherri Lionberger

State Directors: Brad Pollman (2022-23)
 Taylor Orr (2021-22)

Alt State Director: Chuck Miller (2022)

JUNE 16THst 2022 GENERAL MEETING

(Potluck, bring a dish!) BRBCH Monthly meeting

Thursday, 16th Lake Como Three Sisters Group Site

Social: 6:30 pm

Meeting: 7:00 pm

Back Country Horsemen host their monthly meeting on Thursday, June 16th at the Como Lake Three Sisters Group Site. Potluck dinner will be served at 6:30 p.m. Bring your own chair and drink. The meeting runs from 7-8:30 p.m. The guest speaker is Ian Davidson of the Selway Bitterroot Frank Church Foundation. He will speak on his group's conservation efforts. Members do not need to own a horse or mule to be part of our group. Several of our volunteers hike to clear trails and there are many jobs that we do for the community that don't require an equine partner. We welcome guests and new members. For more information, please call Gene at 208-310-6326 or check out the website at www.bchmt.org/bitterroot. Find us on Facebook at: Bitter Root Back Country Horsemen (BRBCH).

Continuing signups for the projects that are scheduled for this summer. Check our website at www.bchmt.org/bitterroot. Find us on Facebook at: **Bitter Root Back Country Horsemen (BRBCH).**

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

Clinton & Cougar Kidd of Darby, Jamie Gronlund of Hamilton

Darrell Reese provides funds for food. Darrell Reese, Founder and CEO of the Sagemont Investment Group and Branch Manager of the Hamilton Raymond James office, is providing /sponsoring food at project trailheads for our returning project participants. Gene had requested Darrell to fund food for the Coyote Coulee project. His response was "I would like to sponsor the food for every trail you guys fix up. I use these trails too."

Darrell presented Gene Merrell with a check for \$3,000 based on a request for \$2,900 to pay for project food for participants returning to the trail head at the end of a project AND for food at overnight project camps.

Last First Aid Class

Our last First Aid class will be held on June 19 in Stevensville. Please contact Bonnie Morgan if you need to sign up.

Wilderness Skills Weekend, May 21-22

Wilderness Skills Weekend was a successful event despite the rain and cold temperatures. Montanans are tough! BRBCH members, new members and other folks learned new skills, ate good food and enjoyed the camaraderie of a shared interest in the outdoors. Thank you Bonnie, and all your helpers and for your hard work in organizing this event! We appreciate your efforts!



Coyote Coulee Project May 28

A great turnout on a rainy day resulted in 53 out of 84 water bars improved. Thanks to Project leader Julie Schram, Gene and Carolynne Merrell for food prep and Kathy Stroppell-Holl for grilling the burgers, and to Darrell Reese who paid for the lunch supplies.

Larry Creek Trail Project June 11

Once again, our members showed true grit and with a show of force overcame the rain to repair water bars, cut and clear downed trees, and install two culverts in a soggy bog area. Thanks Jan Bullock for project leader organization, the Forest Service, and to all for a successful day of work, fun and food! Please note pictures of culvert operations before, during and after! Jan was our first customer!



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CLOVER TOXICITY IN HORSES

Taylor Fabus, [Michigan State University Extension](#), and Lisa Skylis, MSU animal science student - August 25, 2017



Fresh summer [pastures](#) may provide your wallet some temporary relief with lower feed and hay bills. The cooler, wetter weather provides the perfect breeding ground for [clover](#) and, unknowingly, the fungi and toxins that may come with it.

The most typical fungus to infect clover is *Rhizoctonia leguminicola*. More commonly known as black patch for the bronze to black spots it creates on the stems and leaves. The fungus is likely to be found on either white or red clover. The clover plants themselves are non-toxic and it is the fungus that contains the toxin [slaframine](#) that causes the undesirable symptoms in horses.

Slaframine is known to stimulate the salivary glands of a horse and lead to an excessive amount of drooling, or “slobbers.” While it is a nuisance and rather unpleasant, the condition is not life threatening. The toxin slaframine can be found in pasture or dried hay. Once identified, the fungus can be effectively eliminated by removing the horses from the infected pastures and using a pasture-friendly broad leaf [herbicide](#) to eliminate any remaining broadleaf plants, such as clover.

Another clover likely to grow in your pastures as fall weather begins is [alsike clover](#). Although similar-looking to other clovers, alsike clover can be identified by its flowers, which are dark pink at the

base and light pink towards the tip. Unlike the relatively non-toxic red and white clovers, alsike clover is known to cause two more serious conditions in horses: photosensitization and big liver syndrome.

The toxin in alsike clover that causes these two severe conditions remains unidentified. Photosensitization occurs with short-term exposure and clinically appears to look like sunburn that becomes crusty, dies and may slough off entirely. Horses that remain inside for the day or are blanketed while outside may not show these more typical symptoms and, in these cases, photosensitization can present as oral lesions, diarrhea and even colic.

Long-term exposure to the alsike clover may lead to big liver syndrome, which is the progressive destruction of the liver. Symptoms of liver failure due to alsike clover consumption include loss of appetite, weight loss, depression, jaundice, colic and death. It goes without saying that if you observe any of these changes in your horse, contact a veterinarian immediately because liver failure is often fatal.

With spring weather comes changes in pasture vegetation and you should always be on the lookout for significant clover growth. Pasture management plans should be reviewed annually, especially if you continue to notice a problem with [toxic plant](#) growth. The easiest way to prevent your horses from consuming toxic plants is to know what you grow and watch what your horses eat.

A HORSE MATTERS

Baxter Black's final column

I like living someplace where a horse matters.

There is just some country where horseback is the only way to get the job done. Places where the four-wheeler is a poor second, not to mention a noisy, track-leaving unnatural conveyance. Besides, it's hard to throw a rope from.

Helicopters can spot and scare, if that's what you need, but it's helpless when you have to doctor a calf. It is a great feeling to be pushing a cow out of a mesquite thicket, packing a dude down the Grand Canyon or tracking a mountain lion on a high ridge, knowing you're on the perfect tool for the job. You look at a horse different when he's on the payroll.

I like being a person to whom a horse matters.

It puts me in such good company, Robert E. Lee, Teddy Roosevelt, Rudyard Kipling, Ray Hunt, Queen Elizabeth, Jerry Diaz, Casey Tibbs, cowboys, Mongols, Gauchos, teamsters, Lipazzaners and vaqueros of all kinds. Granted being a horse person doesn't make me easier to get along with, better at spelling or richer. It simply gives me a direct connection to one of the most ancient, mutually beneficial interspecies relationships on the planet.

Winston Churchill said, "There is something about the outside of a horse, that is good for the inside of a man."

I like being there when a horse matters.

When you can't do the job alone; a cow in the bog, a race against time, a boulder to move, a detour to take, a mountain to cross, a crevice to leap, a war to win, a sweetheart to impress, or...when you've gone too far to walk back.

Shakespeare's King Richard III said when fate hung in the balance, "A horse! A horse! My kingdom for a horse!"

I've also come to believe that you either are a horse person or you aren't. Many who are, never know it because they never have the chance. It's a primitive acceptance, often mutual.

A lack of fear. You see it in some children when they are first introduced to the horse. It always gives me a sense of wonder to be there and help them make their acquaintance. I believe the horse can sense the child's innate trust. It is the beginning of a natural bond.

I count myself very lucky that I get to be a part of the wonderful world of horse sweat, soft noses, close calls and twilight on the trail.

I like living a life where a horse matters.

Baxter Black was a nationally popular cowboy poet, former large-animal veterinarian, entertainer of the agricultural masses, storyteller, and philosopher of rural life in America. He died Friday June 10th at the age of 77. He was a resident of Benson in Cochise County Arizona. Back in January, a Facebook posting by Baxter's wife Cindy Lou noted he was suffering from blood leukemia and a form of dementia. Learn more at www.baxterblack.com

BITTER ROOT BACK COUNTRY HORSEMEN **(DRAFT) GENERAL MEETING MINUTES, MAY 19, 2022**

The May 2022 general meeting of the Bitter Root Back Country Horsemen (BRBCH) was called to order by Vice President Christy Schram-Duggan at 7:02 pm. The meeting was held at the Corvallis School Cafeteria. Approximately 35 members were present; with a Board quorum (Barb Walker was present via phone). Christy led the Pledge of Allegiance to start the meeting.

Guests: Judy & Ross Posey; Nick & Elinor Pasqualini (Nancy's folks); Jenna & Mark Wright; Clint Kidd

PROGRAM

Sheriff Steve Holton: Christy introduced Sheriff Holton, who spoke about how the increased valley population is affecting recreational activities. Staffing is doing well, but need dispatchers. New and improved phone app (black background) is now available; has a submit-a-tip function. There was an uptick in forest use last year, with lots of camping. Some folks out there with no business being in the hills – calls came in every week for assistance. Increase in crime with so many folks in the forest. BE CAREFUL AND SAFE. He noted the gate is down at Hughes Creek, with public access on the road. The FS and County law enforcement have a very good relationship - the County can address most crimes that occur in the forest. There is a robust fire evacuation plan. They will do early warning for stock owners to evacuate by using door to door, Sheriff's app, Ravalli County hyper-reach (reverse 911), and landlines. If dispatch knows you have horse property and stock, they may call you if there is a horse problem in your area (e.g., loose, missing).

BUSINESS

Minutes: The April minutes were printed in the Nag News – there were no updates. **Gene Merrell motioned and Bonnie Morgan seconded to accept the minutes of the April 2022 general meeting as published. The motion carried.**

Treasurer's Report: Christy presented the May treasurer's report – there were no updates. Ravalli County Fish & Wildlife Association and the Bitterroot Backcountry Cyclists sent \$200 each for the 2022 Calf Creek porta-potty rental. **Ed Duggan motioned and Nancy Pollman seconded to accept the treasurer's report. The motion carried.**

CORRESPONDENCE AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Safety Moment: Christy noted there is an equine flu virus going around. Let it run its course in 3-7 days; provide food and water. Weanlings and yearlings are most susceptible.

Silent Auction: Kathy spoke about 9 items leftover from the cancelled 2020-21 BCH MT convention that are available for members to bid in a silent auction. There is a minimum bid indicated on the bid sheets. She would like the items to find a new home (not hers)!

MT Mule Days: Christy said BRBCH is covering the East gate on Thu, June 2, and the main grandstand gate on Fri, June 3. A signup sheet was sent around. BRBCH will be paid \$300/day.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Issues: Carol noted a BRBCH comment letter on the Bitterroot Front Project is on the tables for members to review and discuss later in the meeting. Christy introduced Steve Brown, the Stevensville District Ranger, who spoke about the BR Front Project that stretches from Florence to Darby and encompasses 144K acres on highly complex lands. He showed a video about the project, then talked about it. The project is for a landscape-level action plan to help restore the forest to a historic fire regime of more low intensity, frequent fires. The project was started in 2019 with public meetings, halted during the pandemic, and is now restarting. The FS has a 10-yr Strategy for Wildfire Risk Reduction across the US, to treat fire shed areas on 20M acres of public lands and 30M acres of non-public lands. Ravalli County is ~75% public lands, and has the most homes built in high wildfire areas in MT. Public field trips are planned for June and July. A draft Environmental Assessment will be published in Aug/Sep with a 30-day comment period, a Draft Final EA published in Nov/Dec, a 45-day objection period and comment resolution in Dec- Jan, and a signed Decision Notice in April 2023. Carol pointed out the Project's stated purpose also encompasses recreational and road improvements. Steve noted this is not a logging project in disguise, and he addressed several comments from the group.

Projects: Coyote Coulee project is May 28 with Dan B doing chainsaw recert for some members.

Arrive at the trailhead parking at 8:30 for a safety meeting at 9. Gene said that Darrell Reese with Sagemount Investment Group has sponsored all project food with a \$3K donation. Project leads will need to coordinate what their food needs will be. **IMPORTANT** – let a project lead know if you can help with meal planning and prep.

State Directors: BCH MT met May 14 and talked about the new Volunteer and Cost Share Agreements. It should reduce BRBCH paperwork since we currently do more paperwork than needed. The 2023 State Convention will be in Kalispell on April 14-16, followed by the national BCHA meeting April 17-19. BCHA celebrates its 50th anniversary in 2023 in Kalispell where it all started.

Education & Training: Wilderness Skills Weekend is Fri-Sat, May 21-22; open to the public with free lunches. Bonnie also spoke about saw certs that will happen at the Coyote Coulee project, with more saw training in June. Members wanting to carry a firearm on projects for stock euthanization should talk to Bonnie about registering with the FS.

Membership: There are 84 memberships and 145 members. See Leslie for membership cards.

Outreach: No update.

Program: The June speaker is to be announced.

Sunshine: If anyone knows of a member who needs a get well, congratulations, or condolence card, let Cindy Beck know.

OLD BUSINESS

BCH MT Volunteer Agreement & Volunteer Sign-up Sheet: Christy passed around the signup sheet that will be good for all projects. Need to only sign it once if you'll be working on a project.

NEW BUSINESS

Bitterroot Front Project Comments: Carol presented the BRBCH comments for the BR Front Project. The comments are stock specific, recreation focused, and support the BCHA mission. She briefly explained each of the 11 comments. If folks have questions or additional comments, they need to contact Carol ASAP as comments are due to the FS on May 23. Carol also provided several proposed dates to do Lick Creek Project reconnaissance with the FS (Erica Strayer, Mark Smith, and Abbie Jossie).

OTHER BUSINESS

Julie did a great job presenting Leave No Trace/Light on the Land principles as 1 of the 10 learning stations at Conservation Days for 6th graders at Lake Como from May 16-18.

Kathy handled distribution of auction items after the meeting. Auction winners contributed \$250 to the chapter, and helped to finally disperse these items from Kathy's home!

Ed Duggan thanked everyone who helped out at the first BR College packing class. It was a success!

Next Meeting: June 16 at the Three Sisters Pavilion, Lake Como, 7:00 pm.

Karen Philips motioned and Travise Grinnell seconded to adjourn the meeting at 8:49 pm. The motion carried.

Kathy Stroppel-Holl, Secretary BRBCH

BITTER ROOT BACK COUNTRY HORSEMEN (DRAFT) BOARD MEETING MINUTES, JUNE 2ND, 2022

The June 2022 Board meeting of the Bitter Root Back Country Horsemen (BRBCH) was called to order at 7:07 pm by Jan Bullock at the Daly-Leach Chapel. Present were President Jan Bullock, VP Christy Schram-Duggan (via phone), Treasurer Barb Walker, and Secretary Kathy Stroppel-Holl. Also present were Board members Ed Duggan (via phone), Travise Grinnell, Dan Maiyo, Karen Philips, and Julie Schram; State Director Brad Pollman; and Past President Gene Merrell. Absent

were Board members Dan Brandborg, Carol Johns, Joe Kirkland, and Katie Williams; and State Directors Taylor Orr and Chuck Miller. Bonnie led the pledge. Committee Chairs present: Bonnie Morgan, Nancy Pollman.

BUSINESS

Minutes: The May 2022 meeting minutes were published in the May Nag News – there were no updates. **Gene Merrell motioned and Julie Schram seconded to accept the minutes as published. The motion carried.**

Treasurer's Report: Barb provided an update on the account balances – there were no questions on the report. Julie asked that additional "garden" tools used on Coyote Coulee be purchased. **Travise Grinnell motioned and Gene Merrell seconded to accept the Treasurer's report. The motion carried.**

CORRESPONDENCE AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Christy and Ed Duggan are working gates at MT Mule Days June 2-3. All gates are covered by volunteers. Dan Brandborg is teaching an electric vehicle class at Bitterroot College on June 2.

Western Heritage Days, Stevi is June 24-25 – no parade this year. Monture Weekend is the same dates.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Issues: Bitterroot Front Project Scoping Comments were submitted on May 23 electronically and in hard copy. Several folks will recon the Lick Creek Area on June 13 with Erica Strayer (FS).

Projects: Gene will get with the FS radio shop to get a new version. In the past, project leaders are supposed to call dispatch the night before the project, then call dispatch the next morning with the number of folks working the project, and every evening if on an overnight. Brad noted that under the new statewide agreement, this action could be revisited. The next project, Larry Creek, is June 11. Discussion occurred about whether FS liability coverage still happens if the FS is not contacted first for an emergency. Brad suggested a committee be formed to discuss our safety questions with the Forest Supervisor. Other chapters do simpler actions with the FS for their projects. Jan asked that Gene follow up with the FS about the radios, and Gene will talk to Matt Anderson about safety concerns. Christy noted the Project Chair needs to gather safety info for discussion with the FS, and that Mark Smith is aware that we need a functional radio. Gene suggested that an FS radio shop person talk to project leaders about radio use.

Christy filled out a project report form for Coyote Coulee – 20 folks, 4 chainsaw recerts, 53 waterbars cleared, and 3 trees cut. For Larry Creek, two project reports will be done, one for the trails work and one for the boggy area. Gene mentioned at the general meeting that we have a generous sponsor for project food. For Coyote Coulee, \$195 was spent for food. Gene will procure food again for Larry Creek – still need a menu and a cook (post-meeting update: Max Stroppel will cook). Project leaders need to think about their project food needs. Gene will also be available for food procurement for the East Fork projects. Dan M will put an article into the newsletter about this

topic. Kathy asked that the project leaders send an email to the membership on the Monday before a project. Kathy will email the project leads about the above project discussions.

Project mileage is from home to trailhead using an odometer reading. Jan asked if the old project forms are still being used – Travise will take them to Christy. Tailgate Safety Briefing Notes are similar to the current JSA. Job Hazard Analyses have been updated for saw work. Question and discussion about advertising the food sponsor on Facebook. FB and website are for the members and advertising will only be in the newsletter. The food sponsor will be advertised in the newsletter with their banner/logo, and the FB page will show "Project Food Sponsored by {Name}".

State Directors: Brad discussed the Fish, Wildlife & Parks flyer showing 2021 Summary Projects and 2022 Proposed Projects. It has what grants were/will be given out. Gene noted the food sponsor asked what else he can do, to which Gene said we need younger help hired to work on trails. Brad provided additional info on getting grants similar to what was done with RTP. Money is out there and money is available. Jan will contact Taylor regarding his State Directorship.

Membership: Leslie provided the names of new and renewing members for approval. **Karen Philips motioned and Travise Grinnell seconded to approve the new and renewal memberships. The motion carried.** There are 87 memberships and 149 members.

Outreach: Karen has gathered photos from Wilderness Skills Weekend and Coyote Coulee. She will organized them and get them to FB and the Google Drive.

Program: Ian Davidson from the Selway-Bitterroot Frank Church Foundation will talk about the foundation and what they do at the June meeting. Christy will also speak on project leader training at the June meeting under Training. Brad will do a trailer safety program at the July meeting.

Education & Training: Bonnie said Wilderness Skills Weekend went well, with great speakers, 32 folks on Sat and 21 on Sun. Food went over budget. Thank you, Bonnie for all your hard work! The Board discussed doing the event over 1 day, at another venue, and on a different date. First Aid training will be on Sun, June 12th or 19th at Stevi Fire Station. Bonnie will get the use form. Dan B recerted 4 chainsaw folks, and Brad will get the info to the Stevi RD so the cards can be signed. Brad has the newest FS saw policy.

OLD BUSINESS

BCH MT Volunteer Sign-up Sheet: Brad noted the volunteer sign-up sheet needs to be turned into Region 1 – the recipient is on the Volunteer Agreement paperwork. On future projects, new volunteers start a new sign-up sheet and it gets turned in after the project. Jan has the original sign up and will get it turned in. Two folks on the Coyote Coulee project need to sign the form.

NEW BUSINESS

Fair Sign Ups: Christy said fair signups are on the website. The East Gate volunteers will be handpicked and trained. Previous day managers will be contacted again. Christy will attend a fair meeting on June 8. She sent Leslie an email notifying the members of the signups.

OTHER BUSINESS

Discussion about length of the last general meeting. Presenters and report need to be more concise in the future if there are two speakers.

Gene Merrell motioned and Julie Schram seconded to adjourn the meeting at 8:50 pm. The motion carried.

Kathy Stroppel-Holl, Secretary BRBCH

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Bitter Root Back Country Horsemen



NEXT BRBCH MEETING

Thursday, June 16, 2022

Location: Como Lake Three Sisters Group Site
Social at 6:30pm Meeting at 7:00pm

Visit our Website:

bchmt.org/bitterroot

*Bitter Root Back Country Horsemen
P.O. Box 1083
Hamilton, MT 59840*