

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

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BCH WEB MASTER

Dan Marsh ... 581-3160
webmaster@bchmt.org
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UPCOMING EVENTS:

BOARD MEETING : OCTOBER 15, 6:30 PM

First Security Bank

GENERAL MEETING : OCTOBER 15, 7:00 PM

First Security Bank

**PRESIDENT'S REPORT:**

Fall has arrived in the valley. The mornings have an edge to them, the aspens are turning, and the horses are starting to put on their winter coats whether we are ready or not. This is some of the best riding of the year, so get out while the trails are dry and the bugs are gone.

Thank you to Ria McCarthy and Lizzi Brewster for the September program. Ria walked us through equine massage and Lizzi showed us the Masterson Method. Thanks as well to Janice for bringing handouts on equine chiropractic from Krista Lorenz. Our horses carry us a long way every season, and it was a good evening spent thinking about how to care for them.

A correction to last month's letter. The comment period on the proposed rescission of the Roadless Rule was extended and it now closes October 6, not September 21. If you have not commented yet, there is still a short window. Comments go through regulations.gov under docket FS-2025-0001, and BCHA has good background information on its website. As before, I would encourage each of you to do your own research and make your own voice heard.

Our October meeting is Thursday, October 15 at First Security Bank, 2046 Cattail St. Board meeting at 6:30, general meeting at 7:00. Julie Cunningham, a biologist with Montana FWP, will present the program. Please bring your trail first aid kits that night so they can be restocked and updated over the winter.

October is also when we form the nominating committee for next year's officers and directors. The slate of nominations will be presented in November and elections held in December. If you would be willing to serve as a director or officer please let me or any other director or officer know. It's a great way to be involved and learn more about what Back Country Horsemen do behind the scenes when we're not on the trail.

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT CONTINUED

The constitution committee will present its proposed amendments at the November general meeting, and the full text will run in the December newsletter ahead of the vote in December.

I also would like to welcome all the new members to the club. We've had a great recruiting year and it is really nice to see the new faces. If you have any questions or want to know the best way to get involved then attend meetings, ask questions, and volunteer where you can. 2027 will bring many opportunities to get involved.

If you plan to do trail work next season, the Defensive Horse Safety course is required. It is online at bchmt.org/wp/education under "Horse Safety," and winter is a good time to get it done.

See you October 15—*Sid Boswell, President, GVBCH*

**BOARD MEETING MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 17**

**GENERAL MEETING MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 17**

Secretary: Kathy VanDyke

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 OF AUGUST 2026 MEETING

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

TREASURER'S REPORT

Elizabeth reported the chapter's savings and checking accounts, and two CDs accruing interest. She also reported some receipts and miscellaneous expenses. Laurie moved to approve the report; Chris N. seconded; the motion passed.

OLD BUSINESS

Volunteer info: Dan needs to receive volunteer hours and mileage by Sept. 30.

Board Vacancy: There is a board vacancy following a recent resignation which has approximately 16 months remaining in the term. The board should appoint someone however we may wait until the upcoming elections to fill the seat. Sid will mention it at the general meeting.

Constitution Committee: The committee will present six proposed amendments in October, notice will be published in the newsletter in November, and voting will occur in December.

Roadless Rule: The public comment period has been extended to October 6.

NEW BUSINESS

PPE: The Forest Service has a program that provides \$625 per chapter for personal protective equipment. Following discussion it was agreed that we would use the money to purchase chainsaw chaps.

Equipment: Lew provided information about silkie saws and some fancy crosscut saws, and noted that the club could use at least two silkies and several blades. This will be discussed further at the October meeting.

Adjournment: Chris N. made a motion to adjourn; Lew seconded; the meeting adjourned.

—Submitted by Kathy VanDyke

PROGRAM

We heard from an equine massage therapist (Ria McCarthy) and a Masterson Method equine practitioner (Lizzi Brewster). Janice also provided handouts describing the benefits of equine chiropractic from Krista Lorenz.

CALL TO ORDER BY SID BOSWELL

MINUTES OF AUGUST 2026 MEETING.

Elizabeth moved to approve the minutes as written; Janice seconded; the motion passed.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Elizabeth reported the chapter's savings and checking accounts, and two CDs accruing interest. She also reported some receipts and miscellaneous expenses. Stacie moved to approve the report; Janice seconded; the motion passed.

OLD BUSINESS

Volunteer info: Dan needs to receive volunteer hours and mileage by Sept. 30. If you were involved in planning set-up, and/or attended the annual meeting in March you should also provide those hours to Dan. He sent links to the forms to all members on Sept. 18.

Board vacancy: We currently have a aboard vacancy. Please let Sid know if you are interested in the position.

Elections: The nominating committee will be formed in October, the slate presented in November, with voting in December.

Constitution Committee: The committee will present six proposed amendments in November, notice will be published in the newsletter, and voting will occur in December.

Roadless Rule: The public comment period has been extended to October 6 and there is good information available on the BCHA website.

NEW BUSINESS

Program: Julie Cunningham, FWP biologist, will present the program in October.

Defensive Horse Safety: The course is required for everyone who will be doing trail work. The online course is available at <https://bchmt.org/wp/education> under "Horse Safety".

First Aid Kits: Please bring your trail first aid kits to the October meeting and they will be updated over the winter.

Adjournment: Chris D. made a motion to adjourn; Janice seconded; the meeting adjourned.

—Submitted by Kathy VanDyke

DEER CREEK TRAIL SEPTEMBER 2

Our plan was to ride and clear the Deer Creek Trail which is where the new bridge has been built. Brenna Kelleher, Clint Schwalm, Tim Butler and I (Lew) were meeting at the Deercreek Trailhead. I arrived first and found the bridge still blocked. Luckily I was close enough to Big Sky to call the others and make a new plan. We met at Asbestos Mine Trail and had a good ride and a productive day. We cleared 27 trees from the trail with all but 5 after we rode into the wilderness. We rode about 7 miles to the junction with Table Mountain Trail. From there we turned back and arrived back at the trailhead about 5:00. It was a great day in the mountains with an awesome group of workers. Also, having grown up right there in that community, Brenna gave us some interesting history of the area.

Thanks to Brenna, Clint and Tim for volunteering. —Lew



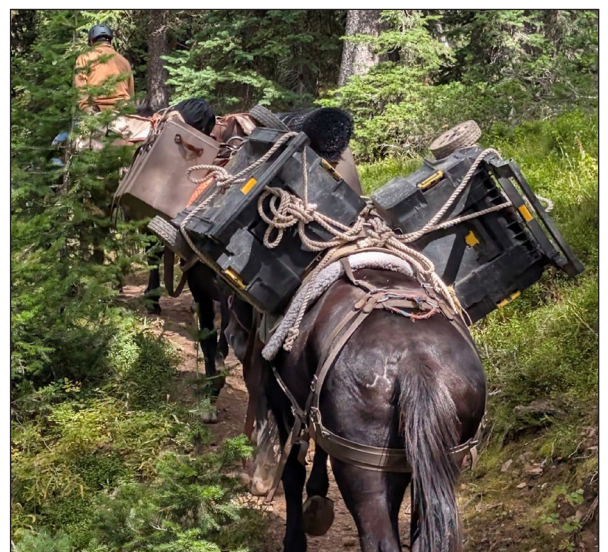
CABIN CREEK CABIN BACK TO RED CANYON TH SEPTEMBER 3

As Gallatin Valley Backcountry Horsemen and in my 10 years of membership I will say that we really try hard to help the Forest Service, not only in keeping trails open but also assisting their work crews by packing tools, gear, and food into and out of the backcountry for their work projects. I have been communicating with Will Bennett from the Hebgen Lake Ranger District to offer our help in clearing trails and, as time goes on, I think we can work into their district even more, as we get more of our members involved. Then I received a text from him asking if we would be able and willing to pack out roofing tools and equipment (several hundred pounds) from Cabin Crk cabin back to Red Canyon TH which is just 3 miles north of Hebgen Lake. That's in our wheelhouse, I said. How soon? Is there a list of tools and equipment? 10 days, he said. And, he sent me a photo of the cabin with roofers still on the roof and it showed some of the tools, an extension ladder, tool boxes, etc. So, I passed the text and picture around to our group to see who would be available to participate. Some of our most dependable folks, Mark Deopsomer, Dan Marsh, Curt Settergren, Kevin Voller had other trips or commitments. Rick Ramler, Clint Schwalm, Tim Butler, and me were in. Clint had to cancel at the last minute to provide equipment support for the fire at Maverick Mountain.

So, on Thursday, September 3rd Rick, with his 3 pack mules, Tim with his mare and me with one pack mule. The trailhead was 75 miles one way for Rick and me and Tim had 90 miles one way. We really didn't know what panniers we needed or would we mantee some of the load or hard panniers. We hadn't seen anything but pictures and the words, "several hundred pounds". Well, we decided soft panniers would be the most versatile so we headed up the trail with that idea. We arrived at the cabin about 2.5 hours from the trailhead, about 5 miles. We had a rendezvous time of 11 am at the divide, which we made almost exactly. Upon arrival at the cabin we took a quick lunch, met some of the guys and started weighing tool boxes, solar charged battery pack, and other general construction items. Of course, we had to shift items out of one box into another to make two for each pack animal that were equal. We finally got the weight distribution right. There were pairs of boxes that weighed 190 lbs, 120 lbs, 150 lbs, 120 lbs, 140 lbs. That's 720 lbs!! As the pictures show, some of the loads were odd looking. But, we rode the 6 miles back to the trailhead without stopping once to shift a load or re-tie a pack. The only stop we made was when Rick's rear mule broke a pigging string.

I must say, it was a fun trip. A special thanks to Tim to get there with less than one day's notice, to fill in for Clint. We could not have done it with 4 pack animals.

I would encourage anyone interested in going along on a trip like this, whether you have a pack animal or not, get in touch with me and I'll try to make it work. —*Low Goodpasture*

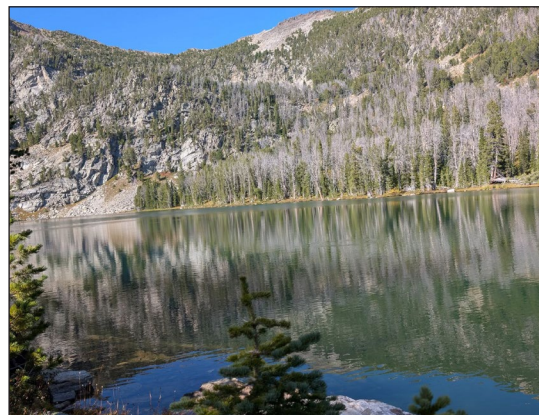


DEER LAKE SEPTEMBER 16

Five GVBCH volunteers met at Deer Crk trailhead to clear the trail to Deer Lake. Tom Lamb, Lew Goodpasture, Clint Schwalm, Eugenia Razzano and Tim Butler packed Lew's mule, Yukon, with two crosscut saws, 4 Silky saws, an axe, wedges, etc.

It was a nice clear, cool morning and a beautiful day for riding in the Lee Metcalf Wilderness. We departed the TH at 9:30am and headed for the lake. The first 3 miles had been cleared by a USFS crew. We found 2 small trees that had fallen since they were there. The last two-3 miles were very different. There were big trees, little trees, and trees that had blown down and grabbed another tree or two on the way down. Quite a few required, 2, 3 or more cuts to get lengths that we could move. We continued toward the lake and made it about 4 pm. We took a short rest, shot some pictures of the very beautiful lake then headed back toward the trailhead, arriving at about 5:30.

Thanks to the volunteers for a productive and enjoyable day.—Lew



SOUTH FORK SPANISH CREEK SEPTEMBER 19

New GVBCH member Tim Davenport and I joined forces on a rainy cool morning at the South Fork Spanish Creek campground/trailhead. Ignoring the weather and dressed for it, we packed a new treated post across the foot bridge, removed the rotted trail sign post remains and replaced the sign marking the intersection of Trail numbers 401 and 407.

We stopped work and took a coffee break at the truck, traded the spud bar, post hole digger, drill, hammer, screw driver, pipe wrench, and wheel barrow for back packs, pruners and combies and marched up the 401 to reclaim sediment blocking water bars, remove berms, and clear drains. We reached the switchback at 2pm and headed back down the trail using the pruners in a few locations. The fall colors and a few remaining wildflowers (Harebells, Silver Leaf Scorpionweed, Pearly Everlasting) added to the incredible beauty of Spanish Creek canyon. Unfortunately the Hoary Allysom continues to move farther up the trail and increase in numbers. Knapweed also is present.

At the truck again we took a short break complete with coffee and home made pumpkin bread Tim provided. Planning to call it a day, Tim headed home but I remembered the old trail sign post. Retrieving it across the foot bridge I installed it in the trail between parking lot and stream to repurpose it as a water dam. Donning my pack and carrying pruners and a combie I then headed out the 407 to check conditions of our adopted trail. I did some light trimming and drained some large pools of water that were pushing users off the trail. At 5pm I headed back and called it a great day on the trail.

—Dan Porter



INDIAN RIDGE TH—TRAIL #444
SEPTEMBER 22

Two members of Wild Montana, Dean Center and Tom Ross, and I met at the Indian Ridge Trailhead at 9am with draw knives, axe, and combies. We hiked in approximately 1.25 miles to the first switchback on trail #444. The USFS had cut and staged green logs for future installation as cribbing on the steep sidehill trail above. The three of us set to work peeling the bark from the six logs. We had finished by about 1 pm and headed back down the trail employing combies to remove sediment from water bars and install two new rock water dams. Only one deadfall was encountered and quickly removed. Two groups of two hikers each as well as one single were the only activity we saw on the trail. Wildlife seen included several grouse and a Salt Marsh Moth in caterpillar stage. Some late blooming wildflowers were noted including Hoary Tansyaster (photo included) and two lighter colored asteraceae species. The trail on this first section ascends gradually after crossing Logger Creek for the first mile before turning up the ridge on steep sidehill where the cribbing is planned. The tread here is fairly rocky in sections and some light brushing would be an improvement. It was a great day to be in the mountains with Wild Montana members who share our love for wilderness and public lands and who care about the condition and safety of our trails.—*Dan Porter*



TAYLOR FORK DRAINAGE
SEPTEMBER 26

Six GVBCH members celebrated National Public Lands Day while riding 10 miles round trip through the National Forest in the Taylor Fork drainage. Dean, Marianne, Carmen, DC, Deb and I spent the day in the saddle enjoying views of Shedhorn, Woodward Mountain, Lone Mountain and the beautiful secluded meadows of native mountain pastures surrounded by evergreen timber and seemingly untouched by man due to retirement of former cattle and sheep grazing leases years ago.—*Dan Porter*



**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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