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
Mark DeOpsomer … 406-585-7835

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:

BOARD MEETING : NOVEMBER 19, 5:00 PM
Social, Board Meeting, Business Meeting, Elections, Dinner
First Security Bank

GENERAL MEETING : NOVEMBER 19
First Security Bank

BCHMT STATE CONVENTION : APRIL 2-4, 2027
Billings

STATE STATE BOARD MEETING : DECEMBER 12
Missoula

CHRISTMAS PARTY : DECEMBER 19
Eagle Mount



PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

November is here, and the high country is starting to tuck in for the winter. There is still good riding in the valley on the dry days, and this is a busy month for the club.

Thank you to everyone who put in trail time this fall. Lew and his crew cleared 27 trees on Deer Creek and the Asbestos Mine trail, and Lew, Rick Ramler and Tim Butler packed 720 pounds of roofing material out of the November is herecabin creek cabin for the hebgen lake ranger district. Tom Lamb, Lew, Clint Schwalm, Eugenia Razzano and Tim Butler cleared Deer Lake. Dan Porter and new member Tim Davenport put the South Fork Spanish Creek sign back up and worked on drainage, and Dan joined Wild Montana peeling cribbing logs on Indian Ridge. Our work with the Hebgen Lake District keeps growing, and Lew would like more members on the packing trips, pack animal or not. Outriders are always welcome so don't feel that you can't participate if you are new to packing. It's a great opportunity to get some miles in on your horses or mules.

A big thank you also to Julie Cunningham of Montana FWP for her annual wildlife talk in October, and welcome to Mark Deopsomer, who has joined the board to fill the open director seat through 2027.

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Our November meeting is Thursday, November 19 at First Security Bank, 2046 Cattail St. Board meeting at 6:30, general meeting at 7:00. John Pavsek, president of the Last Chance Back Country Horsemen in Helena, will join us to talk about the Monarch Trail Bridge, a project he would like our help with next summer. He is also asking the Mile High chapter to pitch in. If you are looking for a big project to be part of in 2027, see some country we don't typically get to ride in, come hear what it involves.

This is an important meeting. The nominating committee will present its slate of officers and directors, and nominations will also be taken from the floor. The final slate and absentee ballots will go out by November 28.

The Constitution Committee, Chris Nygren, Kathy VanDyke and I, will also present its proposed amendments. Our constitution has not been revised since 2012. The amendments let the board vote by email between meetings, set the board quorum at a majority of the board, and clean up errors that have been in the document since it was adopted. The full text will be sent by email prior to the November meeting and will be published in the December newsletter.

Both votes take place on Saturday, December 19 at Eagle Mount, where we will hold our Christmas party along with the December board and general meetings. We will vote on the amendments first, then hold elections. The amendments need two-thirds of the members present in favor to pass. Please put December 19 on your calendar and plan to be there. Setup and decorating starts around 4pm and we'll have a social and appetizers from 5pm. The board will have a short meeting at 5:30pm and we'll have a short business meeting and elections before dinner. More details to come.

Winter is a good time to take the defensive horse safety course. It is required if you plan to do trail work with us next season, and it is worth taking even if you don't, because it will make you a safer around your horse or mule. It is online at bchmt.org/wp/education under "horse safety." when you finish, call Janice Cartwright at 406-579-3445. She will go over the material with you, sign your card, and let Dan Marsh know so our records are up to date.

Some of you have asked about the Gllatin Forest Partnership's comment letters. GVBCH is a member of the partnership, and in September the partnership filed two letters with the forest service, one supporting the current travel management rule and one supporting the roadless rule. Both list the partnership's member organizations, GVBCH included. Copies of both letters are in this issue.

See you November 19,
Sid Boswell, President, GVBCH

September 21, 2026

Secretary Rollins
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20250

Chief Tom Schultz
U.S. Forest Service
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20250

Re: ***Travel Management Rulemaking - Notice of Intent***

Dear Secretary Rollins and Chief Schultz:

We, the Gallatin Forest Partnership, write to strongly urge the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Forest Service to retain the existing Travel Management Rule and abandon the changes outlined in the Notice of Intent.

The Gallatin Forest Partnership is a coalition of local hunters, anglers, mountain bikers, horseback riders, skiers, paddlers, business owners, and other citizens who care deeply about the Gallatin and Madison Ranges in Southwest Montana. While we come from diverse backgrounds and hold different perspectives, we've come together around a shared goal: finding durable, community-driven solutions for our public lands that benefit all.

Since 2016, we have worked to develop a balanced, locally created and supported proposal to enhance the management of the iconic Gallatin and Madison mountain ranges. Our plan addresses longstanding community concerns, safeguards access for all forms of recreation, reduces the risk of future litigation, resolves one of Montana's largest Wilderness Study Areas, and provides a positive, unifying vision for the future.

The proposal ensures the Gallatin and Madison Ranges are protected from unchecked development while remaining accessible for hiking, hunting, fishing, horseback riding, mountain biking, snowmobiling, dirt biking, skiing, and camping. It also conserves the critical big game habitat and fisheries that make this region a world-class destination.

Travel management provides the rules of the road for our national forests and grasslands. The existing rule allows local land managers on the Custer Gallatin National Forest to establish clearly mapped systems of roads, trails, and areas that provide dependable motorized access while protecting wildlife, clean water, cultural resources, public safety, and the many other ways people use our public lands. Just as communities have streets, sidewalks, bike lanes, and rules of the road, the Forest Service needs clear standards governing where motorized vehicles can travel.The proposed changes would undermine our locally determined travel management and threaten public access, wildlife, clean water, cultural resources, and the many ways Americans use and enjoy our national forests.

September 21, 2026

Director, Ecosystem Management Coordination
U.S. Department of Agriculture
U.S. Forest Service

Re: Support for the 2001 Roadless Area Conservation Rule

Dear Director,

We, the Gallatin Forest Partnership, write to express our strong support for the 2001 Roadless Area Conservation Rule and our opposition to rescinding the Rule or otherwise opening currently protected roadless areas to expanded road construction and commercial logging.

The Gallatin Forest Partnership is a coalition of local hunters, anglers, mountain bikers, horseback riders, skiers, paddlers, business owners, and other citizens who care deeply about the Gallatin and Madison Ranges in Southwest Montana. While we come from diverse backgrounds and hold different perspectives, we've come together around a shared goal: finding durable, community-driven solutions for our public lands that benefit all.

Since 2016, we have worked to develop a balanced, locally created and supported proposal to enhance the management of the iconic Gallatin and Madison mountain ranges. Our plan addresses longstanding community concerns, safeguards access for all forms of recreation, reduces the risk of future litigation, resolves one of Montana's largest Wilderness Study Areas, and provides a positive, unifying vision for the future.

The proposal ensures the Gallatin and Madison Ranges are protected from unchecked development while remaining accessible for hiking, hunting, fishing, horseback riding, mountain biking, snowmobiling, dirt biking, skiing, and camping. It also conserves the critical big game habitat and fisheries that make this region a world-class destination.

For nearly 25 years, the Roadless Rule has provided a durable and balanced framework for conserving some of our nation's most intact National Forest lands, including the Gallatin and Madison mountain ranges of Southwest Montana, while maintaining flexibility for necessary forest management, wildfire response, community access, and other important activities. These lands provide significant benefits to counties and communities across the West, including clean and reliable water sources, wildlife habitat, hunting and fishing opportunities, and the undeveloped landscapes that support our outdoor recreation economy and quality of life.

We recognize the importance of active forest management, wildfire preparedness, responsible access to public lands, and a strong natural-resource economy. We also recognize that more roads and development are not necessarily the answer to these challenges. Rescinding the Roadless Rule could instead create substantial new costs and risks for local communities and taxpayers.

BOARD MEETING MINUTES
OCTOBER 15

Secretary: Kathy VanDyke

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

Called to order by Sid Boswell

Sid noted some corrections to the September minutes relative to dates for the constitutional amendment timeline. Chris D. moved to approve the minutes as corrected; Laurie seconded; the motion passed.

Treasurer's Report

Sid reported the chapter's savings and checking accounts, and two CDs accruing interest. Stacie moved to approve the report; Laurie seconded; the motion passed.

Old Business

Board Vacancy: Mark DeOpsomer has agreed to serve the remainder of the vacant board seat term. Chris N. moved to approve the appointment; Stacie seconded; the motion passed.

Constitution Committee: The committee will present eight proposed amendments with notice to be published in the November newsletter and voting to occur at the December meeting.

Christmas Party: The party will be on December 19 at Eagle Mount. Stacie made a motion to hold the December board and general meetings on that date; Chris N. seconded; the motion passed.

PPE: The Forest Service program to provide funds for personal protective equipment is on hold. Accordingly we will not purchase chainsaw chaps a previously discussed.

New Business

National Trails Day, June 5, 2027: Sid suggested that we repair the Window Rock cabin corral.

Nominating Committee: The nominating committee will consist of Henry, Maddie, DC, and Chris D. The positions to be filled include four officers, three 2-year directors and one 2-year state board director.

Gallatin Forest Partnership: Henry reported that they corresponded with the Sec. of Agriculture opposing doing away with the roadless rule. They are also opposed to changes to the travel plan.

Light on the Land: BCHMT has brochures to be distributed to the chapters by the end of the year.

Adjournment: Henry made a motion to adjourn; Laurie seconded; the meeting adjourned.

—Submitted by Kathy VanDyke

GENERAL MEETING MINUTES
OCTOBER 15

Program

Julie Cunningham, wildlife biologist with FWP, gave her annual presentation on Gallatin area wildlife.

Call to Order

Sid Boswell called the meeting to order.

Minutes of September 2026 meeting

Janice moved to approve the minutes as printed; Whitni seconded; the motion passed.

Treasurer's report

Sid reported the chapter's savings and checking accounts, and two CDs accruing interest. Janice moved to approve the report; Chris Day seconded; the motion passed.

Old Business

Board vacancy: The Board has appointed Mark DeOpsomer to serve the remainder of the vacant board seat term.

Christmas Party: The party is set for December 19 at Eagle Mount. The December meeting will be held at the same date and location.

1st Aid Kits: Bring your kits to the November meeting and they will be "refreshed" for the next riding season.

New Business

Board Nominations: A nominating committee has been appointed and will present a slate in November.

National Trails Day, June 5, 2027: We will repair the Window Rock cabin corral.

Gallatin Forest Partnership: A letter was sent to the Sec. of Agriculture opposing doing away with the roadless rule and opposing changes to the travel plan.

Light on the Land: BCHMT has brochures to be distributed to the chapters by the end of the year.

Programs: We do not yet have a program for the November meeting. Contact Janice with any suggestions.

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

—Submitted by Kathy VanDyke

GVBCH 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
Murdoch's Ranch & Home
Northwestern Energy
Owenhouse Ace Hardware
Rikki's Furniture Gallery
Rocky Mountain Hat Company
Tactic
Dan Marsh
Alice Pilgrim

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