



LCBCH Meeting – March 4, 2026

Montana Wild – 7:00 p.m.

PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

March 2026

I was recently asked by a club member – What exactly is the purpose and goal of the Backcountry Horsemen Organization? This message is my condensed summary of why I think our club exists.

By way of background, the LCBCH bylaws summarize our mission statement as:

1. Perpetuate common sense use and enjoyment of horses/mules on Montana's roadless back country & wilderness areas.
2. Work to ensure public lands remain open to recreational stock use.
3. Assist government agencies with maintenance and management of our roadless back country and wilderness areas.
4. Educate, encourage, and solicit active participation by the general public in the wise and sustaining use of horses and people, commensurate with our heritage and back country and wilderness resources.

When I joined the LCBCH two years ago, I had only a vague understanding of our purpose. To be perfectly honest, I became a member for selfish reasons, i.e., I love to horse camp and hunt in the backcountry, and this club provides me a means to learn packing skills from “the pros”. However, I've come to realize that being a member of the LCBCH is much more. *It is a Labor of Love.*

At its core, the LCBCH is a service organization that works alongside the Forest Service, Montana Conservation Corp, and other outdoor-centric organizations. Does that mean that all we do is sweat, curse and slave over clearing downed trees? Certainly not!!! Based on my experience, most of us love to operate our Stihl chainsaws and Silky handsaws. The joy of being in the woods with people we enjoy being with more than makes up for the sweaty saddles and sore muscles. At the end of the day, there is pride knowing that without our club, most of our region's trails would be impassable to livestock, cyclists, and hikers.

Speaking for the Board, we thank you members for being a part of this club. We will work diligently to provide plenty of trail clearing and social venues throughout the year.

Sincerely, John Pavsek, President



Agenda for March 4, 2026 Membership Meeting:

- Introduce guests/new members

Guest Speaker: Sgt Bill Dawson, Montana FWP Game Warden will be our special guest speaker at the March 4th meeting. Sgt Dawson is one of three FWP law enforcement officers assigned to Lewis & Clark County. Besides managing the County law enforcement activities, he spends much of his time patrolling the backwoods on horseback. He will provide an overview of his Department's duties and responsibilities, as well as sharing some interesting experiences enforcing hunting and fishing regulations in the national forest and wilderness areas in the county.

- Approve February meeting minutes
- Treasurer's report
- Old Business
 - 2025 USFS/RAC Reimbursement: mileage \$0.55 per mi. and stock rates \$100 day; pay or donate – member responses received; checks available and/or donation letter (some donation letters emailed)
 - 2026 Planned Projects: reminder have \$23,360 grant to be used in 2026
 - Eagle Guard Station – Elkhorns; June 5 – 7
 - Thompson Guard Station – Big Belts; July 10 – 12
 - 2026 Proposed Projects
 - Gates Wilderness – May, weather dependent
 - Other trails in Elkhorns and Big Belts; trail priority maps received from Mandy
 - Potential for multiple trailhead improvement work
 - 2026 State Back Country Horsemen Rendezvous: June 18 – 21, Monture
 - BCHMT State Convention
 - LC BCH to donate auction item, \$100 value; update
- New Business
 - Member survey/questionnaire
 - First Aid/CPR certification; chain & crosscut saw certification
- Other Business
 - Revised 2025 Convention Audit – net gain \$6,511.29 (was about \$8,040; a few more expenses identified)
 - Annual membership dues reminder for 2026; Single: \$35, Family \$45