

Photo by Kari Schiffman, Bitter Root BCH

Decker Dispatch



Beartooth Back Country Horsemen and Absarokee-Beartooth Wilderness Foundation Team Up For Trail Maintenance

By John Jenkins, Treasurer, Beartooth Back Country Horsemen

OUR PURPOSES

- To perpetuate the common sense use and enjoyment of horses in America's back country, roadless backcountry and wilderness areas.

- To work to ensure that public lands remain open to recreational stock use.

- To assist the various government and private agencies in their maintenance and management of said resource.

- To educate, encourage and solicit active participation by the general public in the wise and sustaining use of the back country resource by horses and people commensurate with our heritage.

- To foster and encourage formation of new state Back Country Horsemen organizations.

- To seek out opportunities to enhance existing areas of recreation for stock users.

The BBCH had a pretty busy summer working with the Absarokee Beartooth Wilderness Foundation or ABWF (abwilderness.org-also linked in the advocacy group section of the BCHMT home page). The ABWF is a Red Lodge, Montana-based nonprofit wilderness stewardship organization that fosters appreciation for the AB Wilderness and engages in projects to help maintain this particular wilderness area. There is a similar mission to ours, just without the equines. According to David Kallenbach, the CEO, this was the busiest and most challenging year yet for the ABWF. The volunteer projects include trail building and maintenance, weed eradication, LNT education at trailheads and many others.

The ABWF has been in existence for several years, and our chapter has assisted them for a few years now. As they have become busier, so has the BBCH. The Beartooth Chapter of the Back Country Horsemen of Montana was largely started to assist in reopening the main Stillwater River trail in the AB Wilderness after the 1988 fires. This was a multi-year project by the founding BBCH chapter members. Most of

our projects are in this wilderness area and the surrounding non-wilderness public land. So the BBCH and the ABWF are very similar in their focus on the Absarokee Beartooth Wilderness.

For many of the ABWF projects volunteers fly in to Montana from all over the country (and world) to assist in trail building and maintenance and other projects.

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Packing out old puncheons.

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Words Matter

By Greg Schatz, Rich Carl, Ally Pike, Elle Eberts, Marion Willmus and Melissa DiNino.
Although this article is written in first person, all six of us had a hand in writing it.

I was sitting in Smoke's barn one afternoon with Smoke and four young women. A trip to Missoula isn't complete without a stop at Smoke's barn. As we were talking, I asked the women why they all responded so enthusiastically when I asked them to come along. Their response was instant and all the same, they said that I am aware, aware that words matter.

A couple of weeks prior to this day Ken Brown, VP of the BCH Missoula chapter, asked me to come to their general meeting and talk with them about getting youth involved. I thought that it might be kind of boring to have an old guy stand up and drone on about youth. I saw Melissa a couple of days later and she offered to help with whatever I needed. That gave me the idea to have a panel discussion with youth and I would be the moderator. I thought with four people on the panel no one would have to take center stage and there would be space for us to panic a little if we needed to. A couple of days after talking to Melissa I asked Elle if she was interested and she immediately said yes. Ally heard me talking to Elle and she asked if she could join in. One of them suggested I get a hold of Marion and she immediately agreed to help out.

Again, why do I have such an easy time getting young friends to work with me? I make it a point to be very aware of the words I use. Words matter. How I treat others, regardless of their age, matters. I am very aware of the subjects we talk about when we are driving down the road. I never, ever, tell them what to do or tell them my opinion of anything unless they ask first. Even then I may not tell them absolutely everything I think. Words matter.

I have been the co-chair of the BCHMT youth program since Rick Potts threw down the gauntlet in 2013. He looked around the room of BCH members and said, "If I were you I'd be gettin' some young colts in my string." At the 2019 BCHMT convention I heard some rather annoying comments made by several different people. I felt it was time to say something to the BCHMT Chair Rich Carl. I assumed I was overreacting and Rich would say everything is okay. When I brought the subject up, Rich immediately said, "Yes, we have had some issues with language and comments." So Rich and I knew we had a problem, but we didn't really know how to describe it or what to do about it. Rich deals with human resources VVVVVes and I own a building company. On the jobsite dealing with bad behavior can end up with someone getting fired. You always hope it doesn't come to that. It's much harder in a volunteer organization, you can't

really fire volunteers.

As I rode down the trail this summer with Ally, Elle, Marion and Melissa I began to realize why BCHMT has a hard time keeping young members involved. We get them to come to our gatherings once or twice, then we don't see them again. As an organization I feel we need to change how we treat others. Words matter. If we use the phrase "kids these days" to degrade young people, they are not going to hang around. If we need to debate who is being too sensitive and who is not, they are not going to hang around. If we complain about the time young people spend using technology they will not hang around. If men call women "girls" they will not hang around. Women can call women girls. Men can never call women girls. Ever.

Are we teaching or mentoring? Teaching tells them I'm right and they're wrong. Mentoring shows them how I do something, and then lets them do it the way they choose and see the results.

Do they help me or do we work together? Remember, words matter. If they help me, they're subordinate; if we work together we're equal.

I have sat around many BCH campfires the past 30 years all across the state. Sometimes the subject matter at these campfires is totally inappropriate. Why are we talking about anything besides horses and wild country? Words matter.

So you want to start a discussion with a new member. How about what kind of horses do you have? Where do you like to ride? Have you been riding long? Have you been in the Bob? Where is your favorite place to camp?

One thing I have become very aware of the past few years is that young people aren't going to hang around and put up with the rude comments that I did when I was that age. My wife Deborah and I were in our 20s when we joined BCH. There were a lot of inappropriate comments made and people saying things that never should have been said. A lot of the same thing is still happening today. I expect that with what I know today, if I were to go back, I would not have stayed a member of BCH.

I expect that the way to keep young people involved with BCH is to be kind and to make them feel like welcome members of the BCH community. As you see from our new members, words matter. Words like sugar, sweetie and reference to female or male anatomy are no longer accepted today. Touching inappropriately is not accepted today. Looking at someone inappropriately is not accepted today.

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Letter from the Chair

By Rich Carl
Chairman, BCH Montana

As we move into 2020 BCHMT has a lot to be thankful for. There are a lot of great partnerships BCHMT is a part of, mostly to protect our public lands. At our most recent meeting both the Montana Wilderness Association (MWA) and the National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA) with the Wilderness Society (WS) spoke. MWA's Emily Cleveland talked about the partnership they have had with BCHMT and how important it is for both groups and the state of Montana. Many years our two groups have worked side by side on trail projects, stewardship and travel planning. Michael Jamison (NPCA) and Jennifer Ferenstein (WS) discussed the Badger-Two Medicine and asked us for our support to protect this special place. More is to come on this. BCHMT is a part of the Montana Trails Coalition that has acquired state funding for recreation projects around the state. We are a part of the Montana Outdoor Heritage Project, another group looking for funding to protect the areas we all love. I think this is just a sample of all the things BCHMT and its 1,100 volunteers are a part of. Every chapter plays a role that makes BCHMT successful. Thank you for that.

You will see an article written by Greg Schatz from the Flathead, one of our youth coordinators, on why words matter. Please read his article and see how each of us can make a difference with attracting new members and why words matter.

This will probably be my last news article as chairman. I want to thank everyone who has helped me along the way. Brad Pollman, our past chairman, has given me a lot of support,

along with his wife Nancy. Connie Long, a former chairman, always encouraged me to move up in the organization. Thanks to Mack Long who has bailed me out a few times. Sherri Lionberger, our current vice chairman and future chair, has been a great resource. She is going to do well going forward. Dan Marsh, our treasurer, has done a fantastic job. I would be lost without mentioning the great Keni Hopkins, our secretary. I was so nervous coming into this position knowing Nancy Pollman was stepping down after such a great run. Keni came in and took the bull by the horns. She is amazing. I also need to mention Greg Schatz. Greg and I have conversed on several topics over the last two years and I appreciate his perspective and support. The job Greg and Kathy Hundley have done with the youth program is awesome. We would be lost without Deborah Schatz, our newsletter editor. She has pushed me for every article! I know there are many more who have helped me along the way, but I have to give the biggest thank you to Mark Himmel, our senior national director. Mark is the one who encouraged me to become a state board member at my local chapter, Charlie Russell Back Country Horsemen. Then he kept nudging me to each position to where I am today. No chairman would be successful if it weren't for the people around them supporting the direction. God Bless our great organization and thank you all!

Rich

Contact Rich at btr@3rivers.net.



Words Matter

[continued from page 2]

Inappropriate jokes are not accepted today. We are BCHMT, the organization that started it all. We are professionals at what we do. Thinking about how words matter will bring us to the next level and increase our younger membership.

Why are each of you involved in BCHMT? What has kept you coming back? How has it enhanced your life, what can you do to make new, young members feel and appreciate those same qualities of our BCHMT community?

My friends who have made sure I am aware, helped with the panel discussion and this article are:

Rich Carl, BCHMT Chair 2018-19
Ally Pike lives in Whitefish and

is a crew leader for the Bob Marshall Wilderness Foundation in the summer. This winter she is working as a carpenter apprentice. Ally loves riding fast horses, skiing deep powder and climbing steep mountains. Ally rides my young horses for me.

Elle Eberts is the 2019 recipient of the BCHMT scholarship to Long's Packing Skills Class. Elle is a packer who has the good fortune to live with her parents, grandmother and pack string on her family homestead in the Flathead. Elle doesn't ever remember not having horses and has become very proficient at packing. Unfortunately she never had the chance to talk about packing with her grandfather who was also a packer in the Bob and Glacier National Park.

Marion Willmus is the 2017 recipient of the BCHMT scholarship to

Long's Packing Skills Class. Marion is a senior at the University of Montana and also doesn't ever remember not having horses. Marion is working on two degrees, one in Resource Conservation and the other in Biology. She plans to work with people living in the area around the Wilderness. She has taken most of her classes in the wild country of Montana. Marion also rides my young horses for me.

Melissa DiNino is the 2018 recipient of the BCHMT scholarship to Long's Packing Skills Class. As a range rider she has lived in some of the most beautiful spots in Montana, intimately learning every drainage and peak of places like the Centennial Valley, Ruby Valley, and Tom Miner Basin. Melissa is training her horse, Willa, while living on a ranch near Potomac and working as an artist.

Beartooth Back Country Horsemen [continued from front page]

By John Jenkins, Beartooth Back Country Horsemen

These are usually multi-day projects that are coordinated between the ABWF and the USFS trail management personnel. Frequently there are both volunteers and USFS personnel working side by side. When we assist, our job is to pack in the gear for the volunteer trail crew on the trail maintenance projects. The ABWF makes it easy for their volunteers. You just drive or fly in with your backpack, hiking boots and work gloves, and they do the rest. They provide the tools and grub. I think it's called working for "room and board," or maybe just a vacation.

We usually meet the ABWF volunteers and their crew chief at the trailhead first thing in the morning. We get all the gear together and they head out, hiking up the trail with small day packs. We'll pack in the tools in Utah bags, the gear in soft panniers or mantled loads, and the food in hard panniers. We'll usually pass the hikers along the trail somewhere. Four to six days later, we'll meet at the trailhead again, ride in and pack them out.

The Beartooth Chapter did several of these projects this year. Coordinating between different volunteer organizations can be a challenge. Then there is the "coordination" for packing out a crew when they are in the mountains and cannot be reached with two-way communication. "Did anyone remember to coordinate the pack out before they went in?" I might be a bit of an organizational control freak, but that flew out the window this summer. I learned that 9AM at the trailhead is a pretty universal concept between hikers, horsemen and packers. I'll run through a few of the "adventures", errr, projects, here.

At the end of spring, mid June, four of us with four pack animals rode up Paradise Valley (Yellowstone River Valley north out of the Park). This is quite a drive from our usual stomping grounds. We were tasked with packing out old pungeons from a foot bridge on the West Fork of Mill Creek. The ABWF had two years earlier repaired a section of this trail leaving behind a pile of old timbers. Well, I had never packed anything like this, or close to it. Or seen it done. I don't think my partner had either. Sure we were game. Going in I almost rode right past the pungeons piled on the side of the

trail in thick spring undergrowth. They were heavy. And there were just two of us to do the heavy lifting for a pile of about 90 timbers. Needless to say, we didn't get it all done.

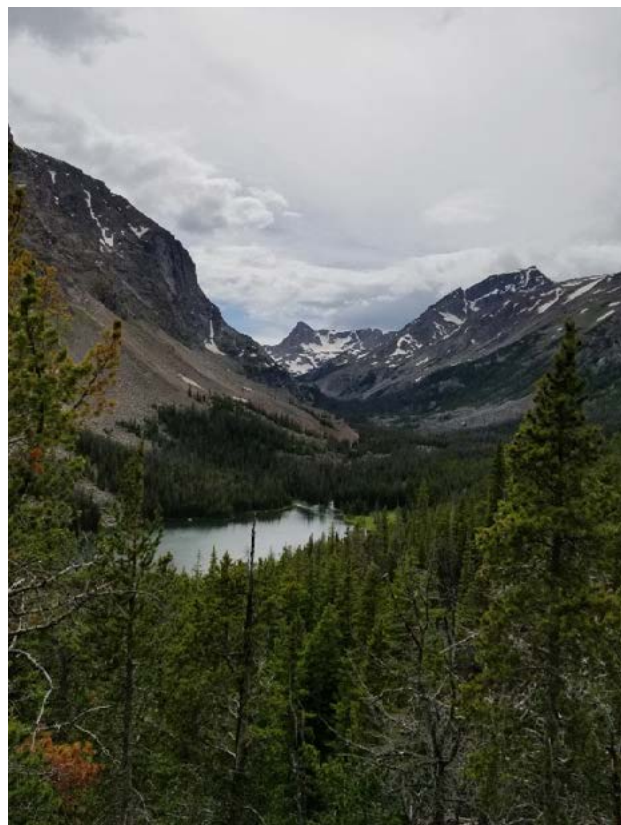
The hillside was very steep where we loaded, and was generally steep from side to side on the trail as well. Our club's youngest member, Josie Thomsen, only 12 years old, held stock while her father Randy and I loaded in a light drizzling rain. Or maybe she just blocked the trail and kept our stock from trotting back to the trailhead. We needed a seven-foot tall man on the downhill side and a four-foot tall man on the uphill side for loading the pack stock. But we managed. On the trail out our uphill load of two pungeons tended to drag the steep uphill side of the trail. Fortunately the ride was only about a mile and a half. The upside is that it rained on us to cool us off, and my wife's saddle horse learned to pack. And he learned to pack pungeons. And he learned to do it with a borrowed pack saddle that was too small for him. And too small for the pungeons as well.

And so the summer went. We were a little short on pack animals for some of these trips. A BBCH past president Dave Heinle (who it seems to me has lots of pack stock) has led many of these trips with the BBCH-ABWF in the past but was unavailable for some this summer. He also gave me some pointers on the pungeon packing when I told him my problem later in the summer. So this novice and a few others stepped up and did the best we could using a combination of many packing methods.

The next project was an early summer trip to September Morn Lake near Red Lodge. This lake is high up in the Beartooth Mountain Range about 1,300 feet under Sundance Pass, which is at 11,037 feet. The trailhead is a few miles south of Red Lodge before heading up the Beartooth Highway and Pass. It initially follows the raging Lake Fork

of Rock Creek headed west. It tops out over Sundance Pass and turns north-east, ending at the West Fork of Rock Creek. This cirque is surrounded on all sides by plateaus at about 10,000 feet (Silver Run, Red Lodge Creek, Hell Roaring and East Rosebud Plateaus). This trail is a 26 mile, one-day ride, if you are up to it and can leave a vehicle at each end of the trail. The Lake Fork of Rock Creek is aptly named for the lakes along the way. A mile in is a rocky creekside beach good for watering stock on a hot summer's day. A little farther up is a shallow, slow moving wide spot in the creek called Broadwater Lake. I've ridden this trail yearly for a few years to within two miles of September Morn Lake for trout fishing in Lost Lake and Keyser Brown lakes which are just a little ways off the trail, but had never ridden up to September Morn or the pass from this side. There are other lakes off to the south of the trail that I haven't yet explored.

We packed a nine member trail crew in to September Morn to work with an FS crew already in. The crew was helping with water bar maintenance on the switchbacks up to the pass above September Morn. Then we packed them out five days later.



Our view going up to September Morn Lake.



National Director's Column

By John Chepulis (Beartooth BCH)
National Director, BCH Montana

In 2019, Back Country Horsemen of Montana surpassed last year's total of \$933,759.09 in donations of volunteer hours, miles, equipment and stock. Well done!
Contact John at barcdiamond@gmail.com.

\$1,147,436.62

Back Country Horsemen of America Volunteer Hours Report

BCH MT

2019

	Totals	Rate per hour/mile/day	Total Value	
Total Basic Hours	5926	\$25.43	\$150,698.18	Calculated per hour
Total Skilled Hours	6845	\$38.15	\$261,102.53	Calculated per hour
Total Trail Recon Hours	1155	\$25.43	\$29,365.29	Calculated per hour
Total LNT - Education	2955	\$25.43	\$75,145.65	Calculated per hour
Total Public Meetings	2219	\$25.43	\$56,416.46	Calculated per hour
Total Administrative Service	3831	\$25.43	\$97,409.62	Calculated per hour
Total Travel Time	4398	\$25.43	\$111,833.51	Calculated per hour
Total Hours	27327.45			
Wilderness Trail Miles	607			
Other Trail Miles	1512			
Total Trail Miles	2119			
Personal Vehicle	74858	\$0.90	\$67,372.20	Calculated per mile
Stock Hauling	65029	\$1.10	\$71,531.90	Calculated per mile
Total Travel Miles	139887			
Power Equipment	669	\$26.00	\$17,394.00	Calculated per hour
Heavy Equipment	73	\$81.00	\$5,913.00	Calculated per hour
Total Equipment Hours	742			
Total Stock (Pack and Saddle)	1253			
Total Stock Days	1949	\$100.00	\$194,900.00	Calculated per day
Total Donations	\$8,354.29		\$8,354.29	
		Total	\$1,147,436.62	

Three Rivers Back Country Horsemen's year in review

By James Hollifield, Three Rivers Back Country Horsemen

BLM Centennial Valley Trail Clearing Projects

Most people are unaware that a nearly 50-mile-long segment of the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail is located on lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management-Dillon Field Office. This portion of the CDT extends from Red Rock Pass in the east, following the Montana/Idaho border to Bannock Pass (at Monida) in the west along the spine of the Centennial Mountain Range. At several points along the route there are breathtaking views of the Centennial Valley floor with the Red Rock Lakes and Black Mountain to the north, as well as Island Park Reservoir and the Grand Teton range to the south. In 1840, Father Pierre DeSmet traversed part of this route on his way to establish St. Mary's Mission in the Flathead country, commenting on the beautiful scenery and supposedly carving an inscription on an exposed limestone rock face. Access to the CDT trail in this area is limited to three to four primitive trailheads along the south Centennial Valley road.

In the spring of 2019, the Three Rivers Chapter contacted Jason Oles, Outdoor Recreation Planner for the BLM-Dillon Field Office, and developed a formal group volunteer agreement to assist the BLM with trail clearing projects in the Centennial Mountains. Oles provided the chapter with a priority list of trails in need of clearing and included the following: the Nemesis Mountain trails to Lillian Lake, Blair Lake, and the CDT; the Winslow-Tipton Trail to Brenneman Lake and the CDT; and Odell Creek Trail to Odell Lake, the CDT. As part of the agreement, the BLM also provided the chapter with access to required safety equipment including chainsaw chaps and hard hats.

During the summer of 2019 members of the Three Rivers Chapter performed a brief reconnaissance of the Centennial Mountain trailheads and examined the condition of trails at various points. Members also assisted the BLM trail crew in clear-

ing out the first three miles of the Winslow-Tipton Trail, and returned to finish clearing the remaining nine miles of the Winslow-Tipton trail to its confluence with the CDT. The trail spur to Brenneman Lake was difficult to relocate and too blown in to clear out and will be placed at the top of the trail maintenance list for next year. For this effort in 2019 the Three Rivers Chapter volunteered over 50 hours of labor and over 600 miles of personal vehicle use.

Due to old forest fires and bug killed trees, maintenance of these feeder trails to the CDT will be an ongoing concern. The BLM and Three Rivers Chapter expect to renew the group volunteer agreement and continue with trail clearing efforts each year as needed.

Rock Island Lake Ride

On July 27, 2019, six members of the Three Rivers BCH rode to Rock Island Lakes.

The trailhead is west of Jackson Hot Springs in the Beaverhead



Mountains. The trail is gradual most of the way, passing through a lot of timber with little creeks for horses to drink from.

There is a campground at the trailhead along with some parking just beyond. Better to take a smaller trailer as it was crowded.

The trail is between four and five miles one way to the first lake, which is where we stopped for lunch.

It is very pretty and a good trail to start the season with to get your horses in shape.

Sheep Lake Ride

In July, the Three Rivers BCH headed up to Sheep Lake in Madison County, MT. This ride has quickly become one of the group's most popular rides. Access to this trailhead is off MT Hwy 87 south of US Hwy 287. This is FS Trail 218. The trailhead is a couple miles off the main road and is easily accessible with your trailer.

This year we had 11 riders. This beautiful trail is approximately 6.5 miles one way to Sheep Lake. You cross Sheep Creek at least six times, so water is easily accessible. There is a 2,600 foot elevation gain, so make sure you and your horse are legged up! The diverse terrain also makes this an absolutely breathtaking ride, with the high mountain lake the reward at the end! The trail was in excellent shape when we rode in July.

We are all looking forward to this ride again in 2020! Hope you can join us!



Safe Trail Riding

By Henry Glenn, Gallatin Valley Back Country Horsemen



Safe trail riding makes for fun riding. When there are unsafe conditions for either rider or horse then no one is having fun. Let us review some common problems we see on our trail rides.

Horses:

So often I see inappropriate tack headed into the back country. What looks good in an arena or around the barn, where the consequences are a trip back into the tack room, may not work in the wilderness. Remember, Murphy lives in the back country so those bridles with pretty spots and Chicago screws could leave you with an uncontrolled horse or worse no horse as he runs toward the trailer without his bridle or you. Reins that snap on are a no no. They seem to come unsnapped at the most inopportune time. The best bridle is a working or ranch bridle with a brow band and a throat latch. The throat latch is important because it keeps the horse from rubbing the bridle off on a tree. A curb strap is also important to keep the bit from pulling through the mouth. I prefer split reins with a keeper tied on with a leather string. Should your horse step on the rein, all that is broken is the string and I know that you have several with you.

Halters are another piece of equipment that we take for granted. I only use rope halters with a tied on lead rope—no snaps or buckles, they break at the most inconvenient time. More specifically I use the best 8MM climbing rope halter and a yacht rope lead 12' long. This way I can tie my

horse securely or pony him if need be. I know that this is an expensive halter and lead but it will not break.

Something I see all too often is a loose horse because the person changing from the bridle to the halter doesn't have control of their horse. Never let your horse go loose in the back country or you may get to test your choice of boots. The proper way to transition from the bridle to halter is to tie the lead rope around the horse's neck near the ears and then remove the bridle and replace it immediately with the halter, always maintaining control of the horse. Some riders prefer to simply ride with a halter underneath the bridle. This is ok provided the halter does not rub or sore your horse. Do your training before you go into the back country.

Hobbles are a part of my gear; so often when we get to the most beautiful high places there is nothing to tie to so I hobble my horse. Also, sometimes you need to hobble your horse to keep it from pawing and damaging the soil. Back Country Horsemen encourage you to practice Leave No Trace. Be sure you and your horse are trained in the use of hobbles or a wreck is sure to happen.

Now let's move back to the saddle pad. A good saddle pad is essential gear. Natural materials are best such as wool fleece or wool felt. The saddle should be one you have ridden in

several long days to make sure it fits your horse and you. Good natural fiber girths are a must. I have had several bad experiences with neoprene girths making horses sore. They are great for the arena and training horses because you can wash them, but have no place in the back country. Cruppers or a breeching to keep your saddle in place on steep slopes are a good thing but must be tested at home to see your horse's reaction to them. You don't want your horse bucking when you are going down a steep rock slide nor do you want your saddle slipping over your horse's head. Guess where you might be?

Most horses do best with some type of shoes on. Remember you can't just go around the rock slide. A sore footed horse is no horse at all. Yeah, you get it, you brought the horse to ride, not lead, and you wore good boots just in case, not to really walk ten miles in.

I have attempted to help make your next trip into the back country safe and enjoyable by sharing some ideas with you. This is not the final authority on back country travel with horses, nor is it the only way to outfit you or your horse. I hope it has opened your mind to evaluate your gear and make your next trip into Montana's back country memorable for the scenery, not the things you forgot.





Past grizzly encounters near Shedhorn Ridge

By John Simmons, Beartooth Back Country Horsemen

Ridge was the far southeast corner of an older local, dominate Grizzly boar's home range. He had lived for many years in the valleys and ridges adjacent to the two 15-mile-long streams that dominated the nearby landscape. He had the typical 13-inch long footprints. He traveled a lot, and we would see the evidence of his wandering. He left behind lots of excavated pine nut caches on our ridge, but he was not always present in this immediate territory. Each fall the tracks in the snow showed that the cub was living close by and growing—each year his tracks were much larger. I believe it was the year 2005 when the old Grizzly did not come out of his den; we never saw anything of him again. Then in 2006 the FWP biologists asked my fellow hunter, John Chepulis, if we knew of this young Grizzly boar that lived in our Shedhorn Creek Valley. Of course, John did confirm 'yes,' we knew this young new acquaintance. He was becoming a force to be reckoned with. He was claiming his territory.

That fall we had seen his 11-inch-long tracks where he circled our camp. One of our neighbor campers saw him checking out the perimeter of our campsite early one morning. I watched him from a mile away up on the ridge digging for gophers. We have continued to see him nearly every year we visited. He never gave up his old hide-out, but as he aged, he did move his more permanent bed very close to our campsite, but sometime during the week he would retreat up the old trail.

After he was several years old, on our first trip up one year we quietly rode up on our horses and surprised him and us when he was digging for gophers in a shallow swale near our camp. He was nearly hidden until he stood up and looked me straight and level in the eye from 30 feet away; and I was setting on my horse. He was as big as my horse and standing up on his hind legs. A 20-foot jump straight away and then on, he quickly disappeared.

We haven't been back up to the old camp now in the last two years. The FWP says our resident bear is now 19 years old. He has now increased his range considerably. They say now in the daylight he is easy to recognize. He doesn't run away much anymore and he has one tooth that shows out of

one side of his mouth, from an injury. These boars fight for territory. They call him Snaggle-Tooth. He ranges to the west in the Gravelly mountains and east to the Gardiner area—probably 50 miles, the center being our Shedhorn ridge. He has lately started stealing food when he visits a backcountry camp, probably because of his age and the old broken jaw that shows his snaggle tooth. He invades the camps just one time and doesn't come back. He is still smart but it's hell to get old.

For many years I have enjoyed elk hunting trips up in this now old bear's original home. We and our neighbors also had many other bear incidents there. In the early 1990s I was over the top of the Shedhorn near the head of Tumble-Down Creek, hunting Rocky Mountain goats. I visited Mark Matheny's camp the day before he got chewed up by the now notorious Sow Grizzly of that creek. I packed out my goat and walked on top of hers and her cub's tracks, on the trail not too many yards above Mark's camp. It turned into a fast walk! Mark is the hunter that was chewed up by the sow when he strayed into her and her cubs feeding on an elk carcass. Later Mark developed the bear pepper spray U-DAP.

I and my partners have not yet had any serious bear problems. We may be lucky, but always attempt to keep a very clean camp. We have had concerns and close calls, the racing heart and loose bladder events. Near this Shedhorn Meadow camp the boar mentioned above still spends much of his time. I have encountered him and others when riding my horse; all these bears have always turned and ran away. I have never run into a sow with cubs. Through the years, several times, I have watched the now old boar acquaintance come out of the woods and bound toward our camp in an evening of the first day or two when we first show up to camp. I have felt he has mistaken our horses for a group of elk. When he realizes we visitors have come back, he runs away into the timber cover. But according to his and others tracks in the snow the boars (with tracks of 6 inches wide and 13 inches long) have visited us through the years in the quiet times in the night. Never more than one bear in a year, the dominate one. He has usually

I live and hunt in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem. On many summer trips I have camped in a tent along the Beartooth front in the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness backcountry. In the fall many years I/we have a hunting camp area in the Lee Metcalf Wilderness east of Ennis.

One enduring acquaintance in my life, I first met in the year 2001. It was opening morning of the fall hunting season. Our relationship started out when he weighed probably 120 pounds. We were up on the side of Shedhorn Ridge in the Lee Metcalf Wilderness when a nearby hunter started the season off a few hundred yards above my setup site. Two quick shots at the elk and out of the timber rocketed a ball of black and silver fur dodging in and out of sage brush taller than he was, thus creating a small ground blizzard in the new snow. Following a faint game trail, this one-and-a-half-year-old grizzly cub raced straight down the hill toward me. About 200 feet in front of me the trail divided, one up hill and one on down. When he reached the divide, he chose to turn up the hill. It was a 90 degree corner—he never slowed down, so his speed forced him into a 360 degree role. His legs never stopped moving; all four feet were churning the air and snow just like a speed boat that had hit the shallow water too close to a shoreline.

For the next four years when I passed this same area, and many times I would see his tracks on or near this same trail. It led up to a small, rock bound, sparsely covered, scrubby timbered basin, a good place to see from but a challenge to see into. Not a desirable place to be unless you were trying to hide. All indications were that he had lost his mother that past summer. But he was a survivor.

At that same time the Shedhorn

come in every second night each time circling closer toward the living area of our camp; nearly every year the old comrade will make one of his last visits as close as 5 to 10 feet from our tents—we have heard him in the night. Then after that inspection he will move back out to the perimeter. Our horses tolerate these bear visits and never nicker but a moose or a lion visit is a great deal of concern for them. A bear visit they generally will stand and watch; I have felt that to them a bear is like a very large dog. But the moose or lion is cause for them to run or nicker excitedly if they are tied on the highline. It's hard to ignore a series of excited nickers from your animals especially after dark.

Three years ago, one snowy dark morning, we once again surprised the now old Snaggle Tooth. John C walked around the tree that supported our food storage pole when Snaggle jumped away on the other side and on toward our cook tent. I saw his shape and image quickly sprinting past less than 20 feet away through the swirling snow, not unlike the first time I saw him. This time I was starting the cooking fire. He continued down the hill. We could hear him breaking up the ice as he ran up through the frozen creek just 100 feet away. When John showed up with our breakfast chow, I asked him if he saw the loose horse run by. He answered, "I think it was some elk. You can hear them running down in the creek." We weren't worried much until the dawn came and we were able to see the tracks. We were grateful he had a good exit route. (This is the last time we have seen him.)

Even though these events can be stressful, it is comforting to know that this dominate boar loans us his valley when we visit, and he keeps other bears out. I have seen where other smaller boars have come to challenge his ownership, they don't stay long, and never does a sow with cubs enter this 3-mile circle, she is afraid for her cubs. He doesn't seem to mind the local pair of wolves; they never tarry long here. We have seen where he has apparently taken away their elk kills. Three kills I saw one year each had one of the hind legs taken away and they were cashed near his day bed.

Wade the outfitter who camps and hunts just below us has lost his client's elk to bears. Year 2009 he lost

two complete elk and a quarter of two others to a sow still running with three 2-year-old cubs. She challenged and charged the packers in the daylight when they were butchering and loading their horses. This happened in the vicinity of the trail where I first saw Snaggle Tooth as a cub. Now later there have been three different incidents where bow hunters have called

in hungry sows with cubs and then have been charged and /or even bit.

Still living and hunting near these nighttime boogeymen can't be any worse than if we lived in a large city and had to dodge the local boggy men in their city parks.

My thoughts are that we make sure we don't mess with mama bears. They are the ones with an attitude.

Dear Friends of The Bob,

In 2020 we get to celebrate 80 years of The Bob!

In 1940, a year after Bob Marshall passed away, the United States Forest Service first administratively designated the Bob Marshall Wilderness. That designation, which started protections for the incredible place we all lovingly call The Bob, recognized the special value that this wild landscape would represent to Montanans and the country.

In 2019 the team here at the Bob Marshall Wilderness Foundation continued to connect Americans to the wilderness idea through service of The Bob. Your support made it an incredible year, and our volunteers made a real difference.

In 2019 we:

- Completed seventy-three projects in and around the Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex
- Engaged three hundred eighteen volunteers in service
- Launched or built upon eleven partnerships
- Provided internship opportunities for six young adults
- Provided over eighteen hundred service days for The Bob
- Continued our Packer-Apprentice program with two new packers trained
- Brushed over two hundred miles of trail
- Cleared over three thousand trees from the trails

Places like The Bob contribute to the richness of our Northern Rockies ecologically and economically. This wild landscape represents not only what makes Montana, well Montana – it is part of what makes our country so special.

The generosity of our community of support contributes to what it means to be a steward of our public lands, and allows us to be there for The Bob – year in and year out. Your continued support makes the numbers above possible – it also allows us to find new ways to keep The Bob wild and accessible.

As we jump into the 80th year of The Bob, please consider growing with us, celebrating with us and recognizing what wilderness means in the next decade.

For The Bob!

The Staff and Board of the Bob Marshall Wilderness Foundation

Editor's note: Back Country Horsemen from around The Bob made twenty-four pack trips for the BMWF!



2020 BCH Montana State Convention - Hamilton, Montana

The Bitter Root BCH chapter invites you to attend and participate in this year's state convention March 20-22. Hope to see you there!

2020 BCHMT Convention PHOTO CONTEST

- Register your photo Friday evening or Saturday morning before 9:00 a.m.
- Photo contest will have 5 categories. Members limited to 2 entries in each category.
- Categories: (Convention attendees will decide the winner)
 - 1) **Stock & Wildlife:** Horses, Wildlife, Dogs, Cats, etc.
 - 2) **Montana Landscape:** Scenery, Mountains, Lakes, etc.
 - 3) **Kids Old/Young:** People Young, Old, Not So Old
 - 4) **Back Country Horsemen at Work:** Work Projects, Club Projects, Activities
 - 5) **Laugh Out Loud:** Comical, Funny, Make Ya Giggle
- Photos are to be taken by amateur photographers only and must be BCH members.
- Photo size shall be 5 X 7 or 8 X 10 and must be mounted or matted (no frames, please).
- Photographer's name and address shall be attached to the back of the photo.
- Photos may also be mailed to:

Christy Schram-Duggan, 4780 Hoover Lane, Stevensville, MT 59870



2020 BCHMT Convention CHAPTER DISPLAYS / SLIDE SHOWS

We're returning a bit towards the old-school displays ... BUT WITH OPTIONS! One benefit is nothing needs to be sent in prior to convention this year.

Tables will be set up in the convention area for chapter displays. Chapters are encouraged to bring a **photo display** of their activities, history, etc. and/or a **slide show** to be presented on a laptop you bring (also bring an extension cord). Convention attendees and visitors will be able to view your chapter's work and learn more about what BCH does around this great state!

The displays/slide shows can be set up after you arrive on Friday or Saturday. They should be taken down on Sunday.

*Security will be provided at the convention center,
but we encourage those who bring a laptop to take it with you at the end of each evening*



2020 Back Country Horsemen of MT

State Convention Raffle Items



3 CHANCES TO WIN!

➤ **TWO 2020 NATIONAL FINALS RODEO TICKETS**
plus \$600 cash for travel expenses

- ✓ NFR takes place December 3-12, 2020, in Las Vegas, NV
- ✓ Tickets are for the last night
- ✓ Donated by Bitter Root Back Country Horsemen
- ✓ Value: \$1,355



➤ **7-DAY PACK TRIP in the Bob Marshall Wilderness**

- ✓ Hosted and Donated by Bob Marshall Outfitters
- ✓ August 5th – 11th, 2020, 7 days and 6 nights
- ✓ Horseback, excellent fishing, outstanding scenery
- ✓ Value: \$2,853
- ✓ For more information:



https://bobmarshallwildernessoutfitters.com/pack_trips/excellent-fishing-and-scenery-tour-2/

➤ **18" STIHL CHAINSAW + PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT**

- ✓ 251 cc 18" Bar Stihl EZ Pull Chainsaw
- ✓ Protective Equipment: helmet, safety glasses, hearing protection, & chaps
- ✓ Value: \$500
- ✓ Donated by Evans Ace Hardware and Montana Saws
- ✓ What more could you want?!



Winner need not be present to win

Tickets \$5 each or 5 for \$20

Draw Date: March 21, 2020 in Hamilton, MT

Order online at: bitter-root-bch.square.site

Hosted by Bitter Root Back Country Horsemen Chapter www.bchmt.org/bitterroot

Need more raffle tickets? Questions? Contact Christy Schram-Duggan
(text) 406-360-5947 or (email) synbarranch@msn.com

BACK COUNTRY HORSEMEN OF MONTANA 2020 STATE CONVENTION
 Hamilton, Montana March 20-22, 2020
 Hosted by Bitter Root BCH



Your BCH Chapter _____

Attendee #1 Name _____

Mailing Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Voting Delegate? _____ Yes _____ No

Position(s) Held, if applicable (i.e., Chapter President, State Director, etc) _____

Not attending Friday's State Board meeting? Join us for a free tour of the historic Daly Mansion, Friday 1-4pm (Limited slots - Sign up now) _____ Yes / No

FULL REGISTRATION: (ALL-INCLUSIVE - includes all meals and registration packet)

Payment made before March 1: \$95

Payment made on/after March 1: \$105

... OR ... INDIVIDUAL CHOICES

(Only choose from these choices if Full Registration was not selected)

Saturday lunch: \$20

Saturday banquet: \$40

Sunday breakfast: \$20

Total for Attendee #1 _____ \$

Attendee #2 Name _____

Mailing Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Voting Delegate? _____ Yes _____ No

Position(s) Held, if applicable (i.e., Chapter President, State Director, etc) _____

Not attending Friday's State Board meeting? Join us for a free tour of the historic Daly Mansion, Friday 1-4pm (Limited slots - Sign up now) _____ Yes / No

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... OR ... INDIVIDUAL CHOICES

(Only choose from these choices if Full Registration was not selected)

Saturday lunch: \$20

Saturday banquet: \$40

Sunday breakfast: \$20

Total for Attendee #2 _____ \$

PAYMENT DETAILS:

Total Paid \$ _____

Check # _____

Credit Card (online or by phone) _____

Make check payable to BRBCH. Mail completed form and payment to: Nancy Pollman, 3777 Eastside Hwy, Stevensville, MT 59870
 (Payment by check is preferred, but credit cards also accepted, at bitter-root-bch.square.site or by phone with Nancy: 406-546-6492)

GENERAL INFORMATION:

All events take place at Ravalli County Fairgrounds

REGISTRATION FORM/PAYMENT:

If not submitted in full online, mail or email to Nancy Pollman (see below)

QUESTIONS? Please contact Nancy Pollman

406-546-6492 bch2020convention@gmail.com
 3777 Eastside Hwy, Stevensville, MT 59870

LODGING: Blocks of rooms are available until Feb. 20 under name MT BCH at:

HOTELS:

- Bitterroot River Inn 406-375-2525
- Quality Inn 406-363-6670
- Super 8 406-363-2940

CAMPING:

- Black Rabbit RV Park (full hookups) 406-363-3744
 - Ravalli County Fairgrounds 406-363-3411
- (Both dry camping and electrical hookups are available on the fairgrounds)

Focus on the Future

By Wade Murphy, Upper Clark Fork Back Country Horsemen

We have a pair of wonderful young ladies in our Chapter that are a joy to watch as they mature with their horse related education. Leah and Olivia Hamilton are both horse crazy young ladies and they have both shown a huge interest in packing. I thought I would take a quick moment to write about their progress.

At 16, Leah is the older sister. She is an honor roll student and was the Valedictorian for her 8th grade class. She has also been very active in 4-H. This will be her sixth year participating in the packing class at our local county fair. To date, she has received five championship ribbons while showing off her packing skills and knowledge. Leah gained her knowledge though help from lots of different people within the BCH ranks. On a local level the Upper Clark Fork BCH has taken her on multiple pack trips and given her lots of hands-on help. On a formal level she has participated in three hands-on packing classes in Bozeman and also the BCHMT Youth Packing Summer Camp held at Indian Meadows and Heart Lake. Leah is currently the president of her local 4-H chapter and is now in a roll where she is giving packing presentations to other kids in her chapter.

Olivia, also an honor roll student, is 11 and is quickly following in her older sister's footsteps. She loves horses and the outdoors and did a great job competing in her first year in the 4-H packing program. She has also attended the organized packing clinic in Bozeman. She has been on multiple pack trips and is looking towards 2020 to ramp up her packing education.

Our lifestyle as Back Country Horsemen is very unique and has some interesting challenges for young people. Both of the Hamilton girls love horses and packing. As long as they are in their parents' house I expect that they will continue packing and improving their horsemanship skills. They will also both likely head off to college in time and then

likely start careers and families of their own. The reality of life is that there is a good chance that they won't have time or money for their own horses and packing equipment for many years. But the seed has been planted. The love of horses and packing into the back country is part of who they are. Most of us in the BCH get active in the organization later in life as money and changes in life's priorities allow us to follow our dreams. Leah and Olivia's "glory days" of packing with their own animals and equipment could be in the year 2040 or 2050, long after many of us have hung up our spurs. Only time will tell.

I have a lot of confidence in the younger generation. There are a lot of fine young people learning the art of horsemanship. The world of horse training has gone through amazing changes in the last few decades, and all of that information is so easily accessible with today's technology. One thing that remains constant is the need for mentors in young people's lives. The internet or a DVD can never replace the experience that can be gained with actual time in the saddle and coaching from an experienced horseman. As Back Country Horsemen we have so much collective knowledge to pass on to the next generation. I challenge everyone reading this to find young people in your life that YOU can share your knowledge with. Who can YOU take on their first trail ride? What young horseman in YOUR life is ready for their first pack trip? How can YOU make this a reality for them? What can YOU do to "focus on the future" of the Back Country Horsemen?



Bitter Root BCH celebrates its young members

By Karen Philips, Outreach Committee, Bitter Root Back Country Horsemen

The BRBCH chapter is fortunate to have members who are in their teens (and younger) and who are involved and active in our organization. We highlight three of those members in the following article. The first paragraph, written by Christy Schram-Duggan, describes the accomplishments of her sons John Renner and Beau Duggan. The second paragraph features member Colter Kirkland, who we asked to summarize his activities and accomplishments.

Christy's story:

Some of the youngest Bitter Root chapter members were very successful and active this past year. John Renner, 12, and Beau Duggan, 14, are very active in the Trail Riding and Packing Project of the Ravalli County 4-H program. They both received a blue ribbon in the Trail Riding Project, Level 1.

John won Grand Champion Packing, Level 1, and Beau received Reserve Champion in Packing, Level 1. They both advance to Trail Riding, Level 2, and Packing, Level 2.

Not only are these two amazing boys active in 4-H but they also volunteer as packing support with their parents (Ed and Christy Duggan) for the Montana Wilderness Association and the Selway Bitterroot Frank Church Foundation.

They participated in almost all the chapter's projects this past year. To put it in perspective, Beau did 680 miles and John did 574 miles on horseback, leading their pack animals. A part of the 4-H Trail Riding program is tracking how many miles they did for the year.

To top it off, John was fortunate to attend the BCHMT Youth Packing Summer Camp, held at Indian Meadows. John was very excited to see the Ninemile Pack String in action and is hoping to attend again this coming summer.

Beau won the chapter's scholarship to attend Smoke Elser's Packing Class which starts in January. Beau is super thrilled to learn and grow his skills even more. It's impressive what these two boys have accomplished.

We are excited to see what these two will become. Both boys are looking forward to this upcoming season's challenges.

Colter's story:

"I moved to Hamilton, Montana, in August, 2018, after living in Billings for the first 15 years of my life. I started my freshman year at Hamilton High School and joined the cross-country team and a local 4-H club where I participate in archery. I had been a member of the 4-H in Billings since I was eight and had participated in horse and animal projects. My family has four horses and two mules that we use for packing while hunting and trail riding.

My freshman year I took 9th at the state cross-country meet and took 6th place for the mile and 8th for the two-mile at the state track and field meet. I also played basketball and Legion baseball for the Red Sox my freshman year. This year at the state cross-country meet I took 2nd place and I'm currently playing high school basketball. I have maintained good grades and I am on the honor roll. Through sports and 4-H, I have done many community services projects including noxious weed control, nursing home visits and

helping at the veteran's cemetery on Memorial Day. I'm hoping to participate in more trail projects this year with the BRBCH and continue with my running."

With their great work ethic and positive attitudes, these three young men have bright futures ahead. We are mighty proud of them!

Photos:

John and Beau and their 4-H ribbons.
Colter Kirkland.



The Mules' Strategy

By Sherry Caldwell, Wild Horse Plains Back Country Horsemen, ©1999

I've trained mules for many years,
There's nothing more beautiful to me than those
long ears.

But as it is in so many a profession,
Business is either a feast or famine.
I would say it was in a feast mode,
When a man brought me six to be rode.
He wanted them to lead ride and pack,
With a decent rein, also a good back.

Three were green, one was old,
Two had never been sat on or rode.
The green three had learned some good old mule tricks,
These of course, I was asked to fix.
I put 'em together in my biggest pen,
In the morning I would separate them.
But, for tonight, with tank water and plenty of hay,
I would let them frolic and play.

I go to bed, and am sleeping sound,
When my eyes fly open wide and round.
New mules on my mind, and I'm in fright,
Did I close the gate, is everything all right?
Slowly and quietly I slip out of bed,
Putting each foot on the floor with dread.
No need to wake hubby for this,
I'd just have to explain my neurosis.

I creep outside under the moon of three quarter,
All of a sudden, I stop in short order.
A voice, I hear a voice, well I'll be!
I don't believe my ears or what I see!
Why those dirty rotten mules,
I don't think this is the rules!
It's easy to see they're discussing strategy,
Oh how to get rid of me!

Five feet tall, if at all,
I wonder, can she take a fall?
My legs are long,
And I am strong.
I can jump, kick, back and spin,
All at once, and do it with a grin!
Throw my head down just for fun,
Pile drive her, then I'll run!

Some rank mules that were sent to me.

The guy who trained me, declared a raspy voice,
Had no reasoning, I was never given a choice.
He showed no kindness, taught me fear,
For any small wrong, he'd twist my ear.
Miss Jenny can jump and dive,
The way I no longer can at age twenty-five.
Three ways at once is how a mule should,
When I was young, I used to could.

Well I'm wild and woolly and full of fleas,
Never been curried below the knees.
My eyes are wide in hopes she'll see,
She'd best never throw her saddle on me!
One guy tried, I bucked high and did I beller,
He was a flyin' and a shoutin'; "You bad ass feller!"
I scared him plenty, but he climbed back on.
Ready for more of the same, I reckon.

Now Johns and Jennys, can't you see,
She smelled alright, and spoke to us kindly.
Her touch was gentle, but sure,
I think it's time we all concur.
Let's give her a chance, let her prove,
Whether or not the talk is true.
Will she listen, can she think like a mule?
I'll do my best to follow her rules.

I shook my head in disbelief,
My heart was fallen, yet full of relief.
I saw something tonight all trainers suspect.
When mules or horses get to intersect,
Gossip and ideas pass, plans are hatched,
Strategies and personalities are matched.
Each is different, yet they're all the same,
How can we get this Dad Gum Human trained!!



Decker Dispatch



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Charlie Russell BCH
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East Slope BCH
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BCH of the Flathead
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Judith Basin BCH
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Last Chance BCH
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Mile High BCH
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Mission Valley BCH
PO Box 604, Ronan, MT 59864

BCH of Missoula
PO Box 2121, Missoula, MT 59806

NorthWest Montana BCH
PO Box 23, Kalispell, MT 59903

Selway-Pintler Wilderness BCH
PO Box 88, Hamilton, MT 59840

Three Rivers BCH
PO Box 251, Dillon, MT 59725

Trout Creek BCH
PO Box 1435, Trout Creek, MT 59874

Upper Clark Fork BCH
PO Box 725, Deerlodge, MT 59722

Wild Horse Plains BCH
PO Box 640, Plains, MT 59859

If you would like to join us, please contact a chapter in your area.

Find more information on our website:
www.bchmt.org

Web Extra Page

Nature Conservancy sale adds 16K acres to Lolo

By Patrick Reilly patrick.reilly@missoulian.com. Submitted by Chuck Miller, Bitterroot Back Country Horsemen

Lolo National Forest just grew by 16,400 acres. That's the amount of former timberland that The Nature Conservancy recently sold to the U.S. Forest Service. "It's a pretty big sale I would say," said Chris Bryant, land protection specialist for the nonprofit Conservancy. "Really what this does more than anything is ensure that public access."

The land lies below the southeastern boundary of the Flathead Indian Reservation. One chunk straddles Gold Creek and lies just east of the Rattlesnake Wilderness area. The rest lies in a checkerboard pattern to the northeast, between the South

Fork Jocko Tribal Primitive Area and Placid Lake.

It's among the nearly 117,000 acres of land that the Conservancy purchased from Plum Creek Timber Company in 2015. The group has been buying Plum Creek land for more than 30 years to conserve it and protect public access. Currently, Bryant said, the group has about 124,000 acres, mostly in Missoula County, that it aims to place under permanent protection.

"Really the purpose of the sale of the (Lolo-area land to the) Forest Service was to clean up that checkerboard pattern," Bryant said. "It

makes management quite a bit easier for a land manager when it's not divided up into 1-mile squares."

The Forest Service paid \$11.9 million out of the Land and Water Conservation Fund for the land. This summer, it and the Conservancy expect to complete a second phase of the transfer, in which the Conservancy will sell an additional 12,000 acres around Gold Creek to the Forest Service.

This transfer comes on the heels of a November sale of 7,300 acres of former Plum Creek land near the Blackfoot River to the U.S. Bureau of Land Management.

Weyerhaeuser agrees to sell Montana timberland

By Seaborn Larson, seaborn.larson@missoulian.com

U.S. timber giant Weyerhaeuser Company on Tuesday announced it has agreed to sell its Montana timberland to a private timberland investment company.

Weyerhaeuser has agreed to sell 630,000 acres of Montana timberland to the company for \$145 million in cash. The deal puts 110,000 acres into a conservation easement, according to the announcement. The company did not name the prospective buyer.

A longtime agreement with the state had opened that acreage to public use, a tradition since the land was owned by Plum Creek and earlier Champion International. A media contact for Weyerhaeuser declined Tuesday to comment on details of the deal; the public access status of the land outside the 110,000 acres in conservation easement was not clear.

According to the news release from Weyerhaeuser, the company's

three manufacturing facilities in Montana will "not be affected by the announcement."

"The sale of our Montana acreage is part of our ongoing effort to strategically optimize our timberland portfolio," Stockfish said. "The transaction includes a diverse mix of softwood species and an existing 110,000-acre conservation easement which preserves public access in perpetuity."

Montana Outdoor Heritage Project

By Ralph Hopkins, Flathead Back Country Horsemen

The Montana Outdoor Heritage Project has completed their state survey and have published the results. Please click on the link below to access the results and/or download a copy of the survey. We asked that you take the survey in early summer and want to make sure you see the results.

<https://montanaheritageproject.com/support-for-conservation-funding-high-among-montans/>

