

The Trailhead News

Back Country Horsemen of Washington

Vol. 51 Issue 1

January/February 2026



www.bchw.org



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The Trailhead News is the official publication of Back Country Horsemen of Washington (BCHW).

The Trailhead News is published bimonthly by Back Country Horsemen of Washington, PO Box 1132, Ellensburg, WA 98926-1132. Annual membership dues include a subscription to **The Trailhead News**.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to: The Trailhead News, PO Box 1132, Ellensburg, WA 98926-1132. © 2010 Back Country Horsemen of Washington.

EDITORIAL: Printed Newsletter, maximum word count for articles is 700 plus two (2) photos as space is limited. Digital Newsletter does not have maximum word count plus more than two (2) photos can run with article. Photos must be accompanied by the location, name(s) of person(s) in photo and the name of the photographer. The Trailhead News is published bimonthly and delivered electronically with the exception of Mar/Apr and Sept/Oct issues, which are printed and mailed to members.

Please submit to: thn@bchw.org or mail to: PO Box 7184 • Olympia, WA 98507 • 360.754.4543

Article, Photo & Ad Deadline Dates	Publish Date of Newsletter
December 1	Jan/Feb
January 18	Mar/April
April 1	May/June
June 1	July/Aug
August 1	Sept/Oct
October 1	Nov/Dec

Advertising Information Call: 360.754.4543

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Chapter Directors: This list is taken from the BCHW Directory located online at bchw.org.

Optional Members

January/February 2026

Back Country Horsemen of Washington expresses its gratitude to those who contribute to BCHW as "Lifetime," "Contributing," "Sustaining," and "Patron" members.

The Optional Membership Program is available to all members for renewal or new membership. Members in this program pay only the optional membership fee, which includes the Family or Single Membership. The optional membership information on this page is provided by the BCHW Membership Committee. If you have any corrections or questions, please e-mail membership@bchw.org.

Name	Chapter	Name	Chapter	Name	Chapter		
Lifetime Members							
Mitch Baird	IND	Danny & Jeanie Chappel	RRR	Daren Moorman	PSR		
Scott Bauer	CHC	Leslie Coey & Curt Fuller	IND	Kris Moran	GHC		
Amanda Biles	TAH	Kathy & Bob Cole	MSH	Sheila Richards	NEC		
Penelope Booker	IND	Patrick Dolan	MSH	Leonard & Kathy Rolph	MAC		
Karen Briskey	PCC	Sherrie Elliott	NEC	Harold Rosenbach & Cindy McAlpin	GHC		
Caleb Canby	MVC	Robert Eversole	NEC	Carol & James Russo	TDC		
Tawney Carrier	PSR	Bruce & Kathy Foreman	NEC	Paul Silvernail	RRR		
Janis Collett	PCC	Peg Greiwe & Dale Kelley	PCC	David Smith DVM	TAH		
Steven & Carol Crapson	CCR	Mary Kane	TAH	Michael Torok	MVC		
Missy Day	TAH	Lorraine Karmen	CHC	Craig Volosing & Karen Stevenson	PON		
David Jackson	PSR	Bill Kehner	IND	Joan & Ben Wildman	PNC		
Kris Lenke	BHR	Cindy & Dean Kobetich	BRC	Sonja Wingard & James Matthies	WCC		
Lori Lennox	GHC	Jennifer & Terry Maestas	GHC				
Kim Merrick	NSC	Mary McIntyre-Lee	IND				
Heather Moorman	PSR	Al & Marci Norrbom	WEN				
Jason Ridlon	IND	Jeanette O'Keefe	MVC				
Kathy Russo	IND	Mary & Dennis Owens	GHC				
Samantha Sandford	MSH	Kathleen Parshall	TAH				
John Scherrer	CHC	Drew & Rachel Scott	CCR				
Dave Seibel	MOC	Lynda Stafford	SCR				
Bob Shonka	IND	Larry & Felicia Wachtel	IND				
Teri Starke	IND	Darrell & Kristy Wallace	NEC				
Cathy Uppen	MVC	Bob & Lyris Wooldridge	MAC				
Barbara Woo	CHC	JoAnn Yost	GHC				
Pat Wyers	MAC	2026 Contributing Level					
2026 Benefactor Level							
None		Earl & Dorothy Aalseth	CHC	BettyRae Shonka			
2026 Patron Level							
Christina Cline	MVC	Jim & Terri Anderson	MSH	Carol Wilcox			
Greg Johnston & Catherine Johnson	GHC	Carol & David Bainter	GHC	Doc Wesselius			
Mike & Chris McGlenn	WCC	Gene Brent	TAH	Jim Murphy			
Dale Merten	LCC	Ken & Patti Carmichael	NEC	Laarin Lee Barber			
Bob Showalter	RRR	Gary & Kathy Collins	MSH	Marianne Finrow			
Heather Spencer	PNC	Jan & Jim Craghead	CCR	Teunis Wyers			
Brenda & Greg Wiebe	MAC	Sue & Greg Duffy	RRR	Trygve Culp			
Nancy Wiest	PCC	Ken & Pam Evans	MAC				
Bonnie Wittrak	TAH	Clay & Allyson Forenpohar	WEN				
2026 Sustaining Level							
Sheila & Bud Blakely	NEC	Bruce & Gigi Hiebert	TAH				
Ron & Marty Celestres	TAH	Judith & Bob Hoyle	BHR				
		Robert Humes	PCC				
		Julie & John Lundy	FRC				
		Paul Mellick	RRR				
		Bob & Rani Merz	MAC				

Tax Deduction

Please be informed that membership dues, paid at the state as well as the chapter level, are tax deductible for the calendar year and subsequent years. Deduct your dues as a charitable contribution under authority of IRC Section 170 (assuming the person paying the membership dues itemizes their deductions when computing their federal net taxable income) or as a business deduction under authority of IRC Section 162 (assuming the person paying the membership dues has a "trade or business" and the payment of the membership dues is directly related to this "trade or business"). When making a donation, ask for a receipt.

Your volunteer mileage is also deductible. Make copies of your volunteer hours logs with mileage for your taxes.



A Gift To Honor or In Remembrance

Donate in memory of a friend, family, or loved one. To make a donation in their name to BCHW, please contact Teri Starke, BCHW Treasurer, at: 253.709.5052 or tstrk21@msn.com.

President's Corner



Happy Holidays from BCHW!

By Dana Chambers, BCHW President

As the year draws to a close, I want to take a moment to thank each of you for the time, energy, and heart you've given to Back Country Horsemen of Washington. Whether you've joined us on the trail, supported community events, or helped behind the scenes, your contributions have made a real difference.

The holiday season is a time to celebrate friendships, reflect on accomplishments, and look forward to the adventures ahead. We wish you and your families joy, peace, and plenty of saddle time in the new year!

BCHW Mission Statement

BCHW is affiliated with Back Country Horsemen of America (hereinafter "BCHA") and therefore adopts the BCHA mission statement as follows: The mission of this organization shall be:

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

Membership Renewals

Membership renewal is now open! By renewing, you ensure that BCHW continues to have a strong voice in protecting trails, supporting equestrian access, and building community across Washington.

Why renew?

- Stay connected with your local chapter.
- Support statewide advocacy and trail maintenance.
- Enjoy BCHW events, rides, and training opportunities.

Renewing is quick and easy — visit the state website under Membership to renew online or print out a paper renewal form.

Leadership Training and Member Education in January
We're excited to announce that BCHW's Leadership Training and Member Education will take place on the weekend of January 17th and 18th. This annual event is designed to empower chapter leaders, volunteers, and members with the tools they need to succeed.

Whether you're a seasoned chapter officer or a new volunteer eager to step up, this training is the perfect way to start the year strong.

More information will be emailed out in the first week of January.

Looking Ahead

Together, we've accomplished so much in 2025 — and 2026 promises even more opportunities to ride, volunteer, and grow. Thank you for being part of the BCHW family.

I Hope You Had Happy Holidays, and we will see you on the trail in the new year! 🐾

BCHW Volunteer Hours

By Deb Wesselius, Volunteer Hours Chair

The BCHW volunteer hours Summary Report covers the reporting period from October 1, 2024, through September 30, 2025. These are the year-end totals, and they represent a job well done by chapter members, officers, and your Volunteer Hours Coordinator. The Excel document represents the totals by Chapter and by Agency.

**2025 BCHW VOLUNTEER HOURS = 55,683
(2024 – 55,502)**

**2025 TOTAL VALUE = \$2,568,507.41
(2024 - \$2,476,837.56)**

The overall hours have increased slightly from the previous year's totals. All the BCHW Volunteers put in a great effort, accumulating over 55k of volunteer hours. This is a time to give the entire BCHW-Volunteers a big thanks and hats off to everyone.

This needs to be said every year: the success of the BCHW Volunteer Hours program is due to the assistance of your BCHW VH Regional Committee. I couldn't get the volunteer hours reviewed and accurate without their help. Big thanks go out to Louise Caywood-PCC, JoAnn Yost-GHC & Kathy Iddins-SKT, who worked diligently to review and ensure accuracy in their chapters'

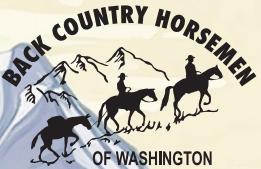
quarterly and final reports. We welcome Peggy Swanberg back to the 2026 BCHW VH Regional Committee.

Throughout the year, we continued to collect and report the BCHW Volunteer Hours on a quarterly basis to assist with chapters that struggle to complete the reports accurately. Quarterly reporting is also beneficial for chapters to keep up with VH data entry and make it easier to meet the final-year-end reporting deadline.

The BCHW Summary Report will also be provided to your chapter VHC for your chapter records. If you have any questions regarding the volunteer hours report, please contact me.

This year, we will be working on another virtual Volunteer Hours Training (scheduled Zoom Training class). Watch for details from the BCHW President, Dana Chambers, who will send the Zoom invites. Please remember that it's important that your chapter's Volunteer Hours Coordinator attend, or plan to send a representative. We have six new VHC this year, and it will be especially important for them to attend.

Finally, if you or someone you want to recommend would be interested in joining the BCHW Regional Volunteer Hours team, let me know. I think it's important that we continue to look forward and embrace change, and new volunteers can help with that. 🐾



Rendezvous 2026 April 24-26

Reservations are NOW OPEN for the Catered Dinner and Camping.

For more information go to BCHW.org or scan the QR code below

clinics **used tack sale** **vendors**

catered dinner & auctions

Line dance lessons & dancing **general membership mtg**
saw competition



Back Country Horsemen of Washington

Volunteer Hours Report

State Summary 2025 ~ Final

prepared by: Deb Wesselius, BCHW VH Chair



Washington State Chapter	Trail Work			Admin		Total Volunteer Hours	Personal		Total Dollar Value
	Basic	Skilled	L.N.T.	Public	Travel		Vehicle	Stock	
	Trail	Trail	Educ.	Service	Time		Miles	Days	
Buckhorn Range Chapter	394.5	55	155	387	274.5	1266	7621	1	55,414.49
Capitol Riders Chapter	136	0	113.5	179.5	105	534	1786	15	22,863.96
Cascade Horse Club	200	112	9.5	674.5	140	1136	3135	59	53,077.49
Crab Creek Riders	93	0	17.5	169.5	95.5	375.5	2811	10	18,108.50
Ellensburg Valley Chapter	307.5	202.5	189.5	1053	371.5	2124	8244.5	19	90,922.54
Ferry County Chapter	170.5	17	153	458	355.5	1154	5935	43	53,830.04
Grays Harbor Chapter	795.5	892	79	621	732	3119.5	20558	215	178,676.51
Independent	31	79	0	1189	52	1351	4566	0	54,539.99
Lewis County Chapter	848.0	1098	290	660	731.5	3627.5	19929	202	197,459.40
Methow Valley Chapter	139	113	0	0	9	261	314	28	14,970.29
Mt Adams Chapter	72	22	18	18	48	178	1268	13	9,912.22
Mt St Helens Chapter	851.5	520	249.5	834.5	612.5	3068	18623	55	147,799.77
Nisqually Chapter	127.5	0	180	986.5	338	1632	7599.5	8	68,036.61
Northeast Chapter	216	100	41	429.5	408	1194.5	6609	56	59,218.81
Oakland Bay Chapter	216	19	100	537.5	133.5	1006	4022	37	45,384.04
Okanogan Valley Chapter	202	220	124	496.5	260	1302.5	4939	98	68,059.63
Olympic Chapter	254.5	55.5	111.5	1048.5	175	1645	5828	101	78,688.05
Peninsula Chapter	5231	2471.0	472	491.5	1707	10372.5	13629	61	429,878.83
Pierce County Chapter	785	395	64	1450.5	500.5	3194.5	12406	79	144,632.76
Ponderosa Chapter	5	15	15.5	54	173	262.5	94	5	10,145.28
Purple Sage Riders	322.5	8	489.5	1438.5	511	2769.5	16186	80	128,341.21
Rattlesnake Ridge Riders	19	130.5	274.5	194.5	129	747.5	2976	35	36,668.83
Scatter Creek Riders	143	5	49	431	160.5	788.5	4693	3	34,229.47
Skagit Chapter	389.5	155	0	1198.5	417	2160	13561	6	96,900.75
Tahoma Chapter	228.5	292.5	378	1929	439.0	3267	10918	13	135,112.73
Traildusters Chapter	97.5	42	5	125	118.5	388	2890.5	2	18,381.50
Wenas Chapter	495	271	144.5	1398	338	2646.5	12057	37	117,689.09
Wenatchee Valley Chapter	89	316	195.5	29	99.5	729	1502	59	40,263.01
Whatcom County Chapter	497	587	128.5	691	496.5	2400	12365.5	71	119,278.23
Whidbey Island Trail Riders	123	108	7.5	626.5	118	983	2942	0	40,023.38
Totals	13479	8301	4055	19799.5	10049	55683	230007	1411	2,568,507.41

State Agency Report						Total Hours	POV	Stock	Total \$\$ Value
	Basic	Skilled	Edu	Admin	TT				
U.S.F.S. (A)	3777	3690	284.5	226	2466	10443.5	51019	642	572,820.81
State DNR (B)	1880	677	122	176	794	3649	20335	189	189,805.76
State Parks (C)	1026	361	0	186	426	1999	7311	48	91,696.46
National Parks (D)	911	756	0	0	313	1980	1545	18	86,374.35
Education & LNT (E)	0	0	3125	0	937	4062	20669	55	176,095.13
Dept. Fish & Wildlife (F)	194	67	44	49	89	443	2358	21	22,386.07
Administrative (G)	0	0	0	17756.5	2740	20496.5	78344	138	835,762.64
BLM (M)	114.5	0	0	0	43	157.5	1168	10	8,306.23
NOLT (O)	7	2	0	0	4	13	92	0	611.27
Rendezvous (R)	0	0	413.5	989	434	1836.5	15869	0	86,950.12
Private Timber (T)	2046	1271	0	286	956	4559	23552	251	245,495.95
County (W)	3523	1477	65.5	131	847	6043.5	7745	39	252,202.62
Totals	13479	8301	4055	19799.5	10049	55683	230007	1411	2,568,507.41

2025 BCHW Awards Program

Never too early to start the list

By Susan Sundahl, BCHW Awards Committee Chair

Start the process of gathering information for the nomination packet now. Nominations are due by February 1, 2026 and will be awarded at Rendezvous in April. There are so many deserving BCHW members that should receive one of these awards. If your Chapter does not have a nominating committee for Awards, please put it on the agenda for your next meeting. I am more than happy to assist you with your nominations. In addition, BCHW appreciates donations from individuals and Chapters for these awards. For more information and to see past award winners, please visit the Awards page at bchw.org/programs/awards.

BCHW AWARDS CATEGORIES

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT This award is for the BCHW member or couple who has shown a lifetime of dedication to BCHW by actively pursuing and promoting the organization and the BCHW Mission Statement in a variety of ways.

This award is for recognition, not a contest.

Lifetime = 1, max 2 awarded



LOPPER AWARD This award is for a BCHW member who has demonstrated outstanding commitment and dedication to their chapter or to BCHW by participation and promotion of what the BCHW Mission Statement stands for. This is kind of an “all around” award, with the nominee being active in several different aspects of the many things that make up BCHW.

Lopper = 3, max 4 awarded

CAMP COOK This award is for the BCHW member who willingly keeps the campfires burning and the kettles hot and full of delicious food to share with others. Whether it is at meetings, work parties or social functions, they are in the kitchen making sure all are well fed.

Camp Cook = 1 awarded

TRAIL WARRIOR This person may not make all the chapter functions or even own a computer, but they are out rain or shine, day in and day out, working on the trails.

Trail Warrior = 3, max 4 awarded

DESK JOCKEY This person is one of the behind-the-scenes people, always at a computer or running from meeting to meeting. They keep the wheels of our organization turning.

Desk Jockey = 2, max 3 awarded

JUNIOR BCHW Our future! Who stands out in your chapter? This person would participate in chapter events such as work parties, fund raisers, LNT/education, training or BCHW promotion such as parades.

Junior BCH = 1, max 2 awarded

BACKBONE This award is to recognize that special member who is always there when needed, ready and willing to do some special job that no one else can or will do, sometimes at the last minute. This is a member who is very important in keeping the chapter, organization or an event operating smoothly.

Backbone = 2, max 3 awarded

CINCH AWARD The BCHW Board of Directors nominates this award and the President nominates five directors to make the selection. It was created to recognize those hard-working BCHW members who have consistently and competently carried out jobs at the state level, year after year. Recipients shall be Volunteer Committee Chairmen, Volunteer Committee member, or an UN-ELECTED state officer - they keep the wheels of this great organization running smoothly. They may or may not be very visible - they may be quietly working in the background, reliably doing their jobs. They may or may not be active or hold an office in a chapter or even be a chapter member, but they are invaluable at the state level.

Cinch Award = 1, max 2 awarded

PRESIDENT'S DIAMOND AWARD The BCHW President awards a person or persons “In recognition of outstanding dedication, passion and commitment to the BCHW mission”. The President’s Diamond Award is decided autonomously from the BCHW Awards Program.

President’s Diamond Award = 1, max 2 awarded

SPONSORSHIPS Thank you to all the Chapters and Harbor Saw for your sponsorships. These sponsorships, partnered with the BCHW award budget, resulted in nineteen volunteers being recognized in eight categories. Please encourage you, your chapter or businesses to support the BCHW Award Program for one or more of the award categories. Also remember that with our 501(c3) there is a tax advantage for award donations. 

2025 BCHW

Award Nomination Form

(one form per nominee)

Lifetime Achievement	_____	Desk Jockey	_____
Lopper Award	_____	Junior BCHW	_____
Camp Cook	_____	Backbone Award	_____
Trail Warrior	_____		

Nominees' Name _____

Chapter(s) _____

Submitted by _____

Chapter(s) _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Please clip out and mail

Information to include in your nomination presentation:

- In 75 words or less, give an opening statement telling why this person is deserving of special, statewide recognition for this specific award.
- Then separately, on as many pages as you need, create a presentation detailing WHY this person should receive this award.
- Chapters this person has belonged to and for how long
- Positions or job titles this person has held
- An estimate of his or her volunteer hours (Chapter Vol Hour Chairs can help with this)
- Awards this person has won
- Trails or camps this person has worked on
- A little family history
- Include anything which will make your nominee stand out! (Letters of recommendation from land managers, news clippings, photos, etcetera.)

The presentation you submit will be given to the recipient.

Mail nomination forms with your presentation via the US Post Office to: BCHW Awards Committee Chair

Susan Sundahl
15188 Stevens Rd. S.E. Olalla, WA 98359
Questions: pappihorse@wavecable.com or 253-380-0343

Must be received before February 1, 2026

BCHW Sponsorships Program

We are now offering annual sponsorships!

Sponsorship Levels will be for a calendar year and include the benefits listed below.

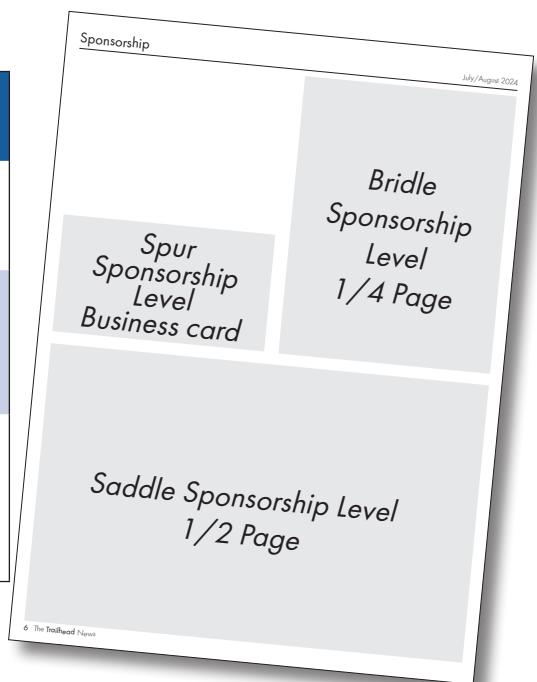
All levels of sponsors will be listed on the Sponsors' page of our website.

- Back Country Horsemen of Washington Facebook page has 8.6K Followers

Sponsorship Level	Benefits
Spur \$500	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business card-size listing in all 6 editions of our Trailhead News • Your banner displayed at our statewide events
Bridle \$1000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quarter-page listing in our 6 editions of The Trailhead News • Your banner displayed at our statewide events. • Booth at our statewide events (if desired)
Saddle \$5000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Half-page listing in all 6 editions of The Trailhead News • Your banner displayed at our statewide events. • Booth at our statewide events (if desired) • Posts on BCHW Facebook page

Contact president@bchw.org for more information

- The Trailhead News publication goes to 2100+ members
- Rendezvous Three-day event gathers 400+ members and 100+ public attendance



BCHW Membership Announcement

BCHW memberships expired on December 31, 2025 and the renewal season starts on October 1st. Please go to bchw.org and click on the Membership tab to join or renew. If you have any questions, issues or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact me, Dana Chambers, at membership.bchw@gmail.com or call 206-498-6952. I'm here for you!

PRICING FOR OUR SINGLE AND FAMILY MEMBERSHIPS ARE INCREASING.

In Addition To Chapter Dues

Single	\$45.00
Family	\$60.00
Contributing	\$75.00
Sustaining	\$125.00
Patron	\$250.00
Benefactor	\$500.00
Lifetime (Single)	\$1,200.00
Lifetime (Family of 2)	\$2,000.00

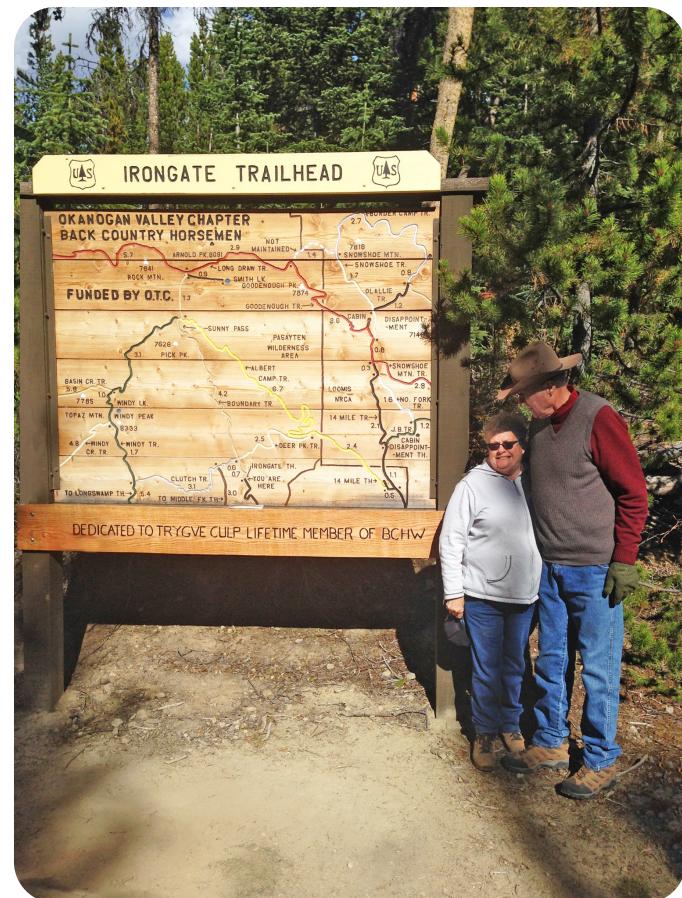
A BCHW Legacy

By Darrell Wallace

Anyone who has ridden in the Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest has probably seen at least one of the large trail map signs that Dave Swanberg manufactured and erected with the help of the Okanogan Valley Chapter. These beautiful, colorful signs display the trails and mileages from trailheads at Discovery, Fourteen Mile, Fourth of July, Irongate, Whistler Canyon, and Windy Peak/Cathedral Drive. All of them proudly display the name of the Back Country Horsemen.

I was privileged to be present when the Okanogan Valley Chapter dedicated the Irongate sign to Past BCHW President Trygve Culp. The sign still bears that dedication.

Those of us who knew Dave and Trygve remember them with fondness and respect. Both left a legacy that guides BCHW today and for many years to come. 



Trygve and Janet Culp at the Irongate sign dedication October 1, 2016.

Time to Share Your Voice

Ecology administers an annual survey on behalf of the Tri-Party Agreement Agencies (Ecology, U.S. Department of Energy, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency) to collect data on the public's perception of outreach and engagement related to cleanup of the Hanford Nuclear Site. We are striving to get as many responses as possible and want to hear from everyone we can. The agencies are especially focused on increasing participation from communities we haven't historically reached, which is why we are reaching out beyond Richland, WA.

The survey will be open from Jan. 12 to Feb. 26, 2026, and is available in both English and Spanish.

Thank you for any assistance you are able to provide for helping us collect this valuable input. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Please follow this link to the survey: The survey can be found at this link: <https://forms.office.com/g/m3iKhmBc7k>.

Remember, the survey will open January 12th and be available through the 26th of February 

Project Name: Pack Forest Parking Lot - Gravel Base Layer

Chapter: Nisqually 14

Chapter Lead/Contact: Diane McCuin, Joe Barcomb, Sam Nora, Kelly Parsons, Tanara Reynolds

Project Location: 9010 453rd St E, Eatonville WA- equine Trail head parking lot

Project Land Manager: University of Washington – contact email – Jerome - lamo2634@uw.edu

Project Description: Pack forest (4300 acres) has been the focus of many equestrians since the Nisqually Mashell State Park has been under construction. Equestrians and like-minded groups have taken on the labor and some of the materials to build additional trails and clear 8 miles of trail loops in the first quarter of 2025. The parking lot was very small, and BCHW members brought in equipment to level and open additional parking areas. The expanded areas are 140' x 101' and a strip parallel to the road, being 140' x 21'.

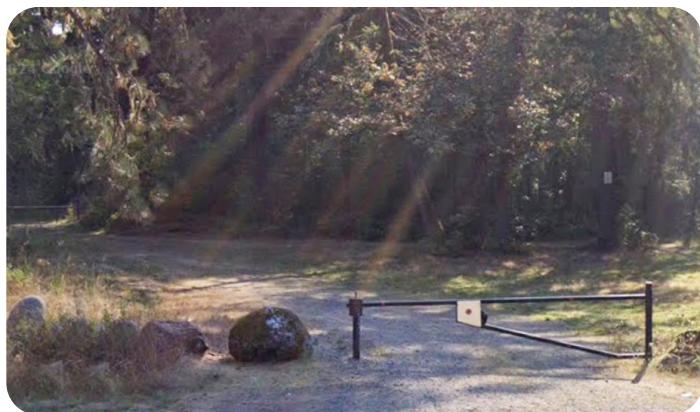
This request is to provide gravel and base materials to support the additional parking space that has been expanded. This is a joint effort between multiple groups.

Funding Need Estimate: The estimated need is 205 tons of gravel. Price estimate for delivered gravel to be hauled in is \$620 +/- per transfer truck load of 22 yards. This estimate is based on a value of 1.3 tons per yard, which equals approximately 8 combo loads to be delivered. Members with equipment will provide the labor to spread the parking lots and layer it 3"-4" thick. This request is for \$5,000.00 to be spent on gravel and hauling, which will begin the parking lot's layering.

Partners (if any): The labor came from chapter members of the Nisqually BCHW chapter, the Pierce County BCHW and WCMO.

Below are pictures of the project starting in March and April of 2025 - before the grant was applied for to provide the gravel.

continued on page 11



Please clip out and mail



Permanent or Temporary Address Change Form

Name: _____

Current Address: _____

New Address: _____

Temporary Address for Snow Birds: _____

Start date: _____ Return Date: _____

Mail to: Dana Chambers, State Membership Chair, 11404 210th Ave Ct E, Bonney Lake, WA 98391

Email to: membership.bchw@gmail.com

Project Name: Pack Forest Parking Lot – Gravel Base Layer

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Work to start the expansion was donated by Pierce County Chapter members prior to the application being submitted.

Thank you to BCHW for approving the 5K\$ grant application for the gravel to finish this work.

The Nisqually Chapter was awarded a grant in May to purchase the gravel, and members of both chapters have donated time and equipment to spread and compact it.

Recognition and a Big thank you to Diane McCuin for spurring us on this endeavor. Diane hosted a large work party with WCMO and BCHW members on April 6th, 2025, to add a loop through the existing trail system. This is what began the need for more parking in the area for horse trailers.

PCCBCB members Sam Nohra and Rob Humes coordinated with the forest managers to begin the expansion. Sam provided the equipment, and sidekick Dillon and others labored to clear, level and expand the area. Sam also has graciously made and provided a knee pad at the gate – for us OL FOLKS so we do not have to kneel in the gravel to open the lock.

Thank you to Amy Prummer and Kelly Parsons for finding Tellier Stump Grinding, getting bids, and working with Pierce County members to approve funding to have stumps ground out and removed in April of 2025.

Thank you to David Boe for providing equipment and coordinating with Pack Forest to meet for the delivery of the materials and for securing a compactor donated by Jim Sharbano. David did the spreading and compacting.

Thank you to Lynch Creek Quarry in Eatonville and Randles Sand and Gravel for the generous price reduction to keep the total within budget for the area with 5/8 minus gravel.

Jim Sharbano donated a very large commercial road compactor that needed to be transported via a lowboy and semi-truck, which was donated by Jerry Flowers, to move the equipment and complete the work.

A really big thank you to Jerome from the University of Washington for obtaining the approvals for the work and for being readily available to let us use this area.

Jerome LaMontagne, Forest Manager
Center for Sustainable Forestry at Pack Forest. School of Environmental and Forest Sciences

On a side note: We are presently unable to ride in the Nisqually Mashell State Park area, as it is under construction until next year. The members of the Nisqually and Pierce County chapters of Back Country Horsemen wish to express our deepest appreciation for this opportunity to improve the area and use it in the coming years. Thank you to all, and if I have missed any, understand that your hard work and dedication are very much appreciated. Thank you again.

Respectfully submitted , Tanara Reynolds
Financial Manager, Pierce County chapter, Nisqually chapter.

Pierce County removing stumps in February thru March of 2025

continued on page 12

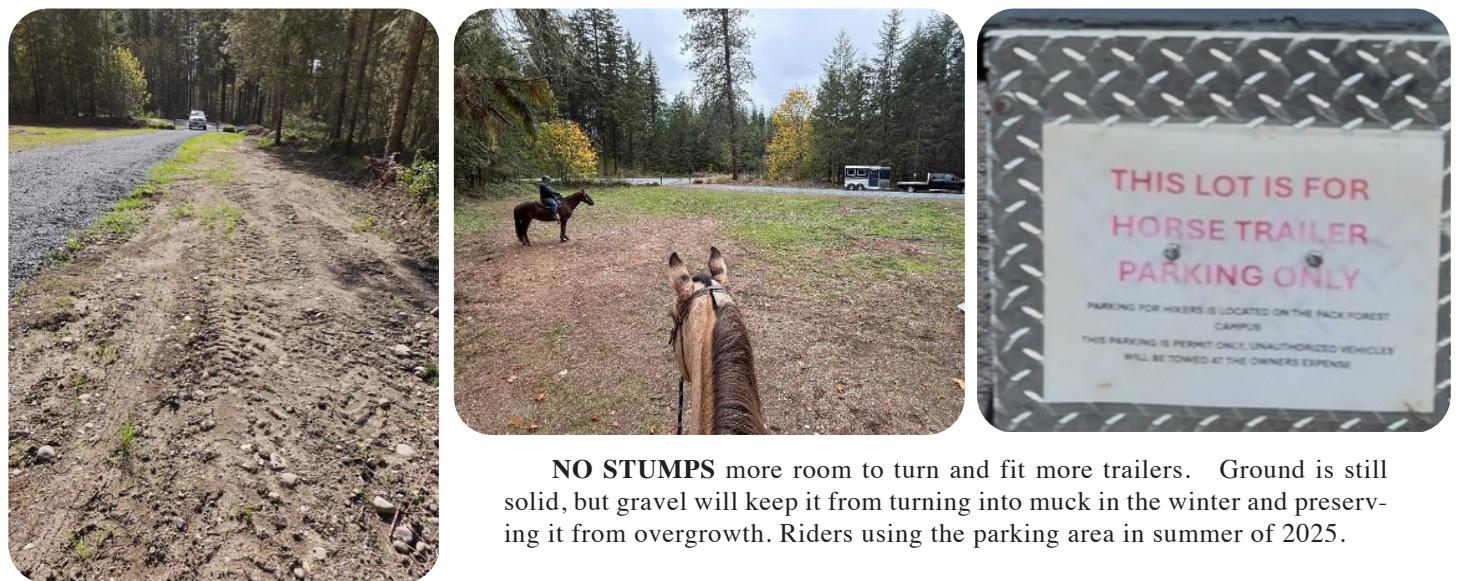
Sooo. Another fine day working in the Equestrian parking lot at Pack Forest. Dylan was with me for a half day for the hard stuff, then I spent the rest of the day moving dirt. Dylan was goofing off carving mounting blocks while I was picking up branches and rocks. He said he wanted his volunteer hours to be "Skilled Labor " hahaha! Just kidding. Fun day we got a lot done.



Project Name: Pack Forest Parking Lot – Gravel Base Layer

continued from page 11

Gravel Request being submitted April to provide gravel for this area. Approved Grant May of 2025



NO STUMPS more room to turn and fit more trailers. Ground is still solid, but gravel will keep it from turning into muck in the winter and preserving it from overgrowth. Riders using the parking area in summer of 2025.



November 2025 – Gravel spread and compacted, providing more space for Horse trailers to park and ride out to the trails in the forest here. Kneeling pad – now secured and bolted down – This first one grew legs and walked away. A

12 The Trailhead News

second one has been installed and bolted to the ground. New sign stating “Parking for Horse trailers only” and how to apply for access through the Forestry application. 

The Evolution of BCHW Trail Work



Billygoat Tread2: Rob DeBoer and Mary McHugh widen tread on Billygoat trail"



NYC Soda Springs: "Tony Karniss instructs NYC crew on Soda Springs trail"

By Darrell Wallace, BCHW Grants Chair

When BCHA was first proposed – in the Flathead Valley, back in 1973 - one of the stated intentions was to assist land managers with trail maintenance. At the time, it was always assumed that meant BCH volunteers would go out and work on trails, and for many years that was the case. As we entered the new millennium, we in BCHW began to receive out-of-pocket reimbursements from grant funds for volunteering on trails through our chapters.

In the early 2000s, several chapters continued to maintain trails, with or without grant funding. We also had several very successful statewide work parties, and a few teams not affiliated with chapters did some serious trail work as well. We migrated to a contract to handle the paperwork, and Jen Bond continues to do so and coordinate trail work on the Olympic Peninsula.

A few years ago, through Trail Operations Manager Tim Van Beek's efforts, BCHW was able to use grant funding to hire youth crews, who cleared many miles of trail for stock use! As we succeeded in securing additional grant funds, we earmarked more funds to pay for paid crews. As many BCHW members have observed, those young people can work closer to the ground than our aging membership! We continue to con-

tract with trail crews through their parent organizations for trail work, and we are determined to manage those resources so that the money is well spent.

Largely based on the experience of Barb Talbot, Diane McCuin, and the rest of the Black Pine team, we have developed a model that uses "Field Coordinators" to provide oversight and direction to crew leaders and their crews, and to coordinate pack support when appropriate. These Field Coordinators may receive reimbursement for travel expenses and, when sufficient grant funds are available, small stipends. Again, Tim Van Beek's coordination makes all this happen.

Our Trail Operations Team is helping the Grant Committee to evaluate where we can get the "best bang for the buck" while first supporting chapter and other volunteer team efforts, even in the face of declining volunteerism, an aging membership, and fewer qualified packers. Personally, I hope we never lose our personal involvement in trail work, even as more trail miles are opened by contracted work crews. BCHW is a volunteer organization, but the reality is that we can accomplish a lot more by spending grant money to support volunteers AND by contracting with work crews, Field Coordinators, and our Field Operations Manager and Grant Administrator. 

Grays Harbor Chapter Grant Update



By Lori Lennox, Grays Harbor BCHW Chapter

The Grays Harbor Chapter wishes to thank the BCHW Chapter Grant Program committee for awarding us a \$1500 grant in 2025. It was put to good use.

Since 2018, thanks to our affiliation with BCHW, our chapter has leased 4700 acres of timberland from Green Diamond Resources. Located in the north Grays Harbor County area, just west of the town of Matlock and south of the Olympic National Forest. This area is referred to as the Schafer Grade.

Under this lease, which covers a non-motorized area, we have been allowed to put in approximately 35 miles of trails and signage, use the property for our annual Fund Ride without any additional charge, and camp overnight whenever we wish. Chapter members can buy keys to the three access gates and bring friends and family, as long as a BCHW Liability Release is signed and in their possession. This area is also open to non-motorized users free of charge, with no permits required. They are not allowed inside the gates except during hunting season. There is ample parking for trailers outside the main gate, with a good, safe ride around. We call this the Nokey Trail.

Our overflow parking and camping area inside the gates has been limited because the most popular area, an easy-to-access gravel pit, had previously been used as a shooting range. There was broken glass everywhere. Even though we picked up all the big pieces, the smaller pieces remained. Luckily, the tie-up areas for the horses were not affected, only the area where we parked rigs and rode to get from one end to the other. We were limited in safe spots to park and camp. Thanks to the grant, we were able to purchase and have delivered two large dump truck and trailer loads of gravel. Member Gary Falk brought out his tractor, and with our Schafer Grade chair, Beth Branshaw spotting for him, they got all the glass covered. Parking and camping for the summer of 2026 just got better! 





BCHW Rendezvous 2026

By Teri Starke, BCHW Treasurer

I hope everyone had wonderful holidays and is ready to help with the planning of BCHW Rendezvous 2026. We are looking forward to a warmer weekend and have several things in place:

- Midstate Ag supply donated a Traeger pelleted grill for the end of night drawing on Saturday after the auction. If you purchase a dinner ticket, and are present you will be entered in the drawing after the live auction.
- Moonshine Line Dancing will be teaching line dancing and spinning the records from 7:00 pm to midnight in Armory on Friday. There will be a bar and concessions.
- Our new bank WaFd has donated swag bags to everyone who purchases dinner on Saturday night. We are working on filling the bag, if you have any ideas, let us know.
- The used tack sale will be in the Draft Horse Barn; Elensburg chapter expects to use every inch of that barn!

- Lufts is a BCHW Rendezvous Sponsor and is sponsoring Purple Sage Riders truck trailer rodeo in the Bloom.
- Wenas chapter is sponsoring the X-cut saw competition outside the annex.
- Cascade Mountain Grilling will provide concessions and the wonderful Prime Rib dinner on Saturday night.
- Barb Thomas's group is taking over the Bloom Annex with all things you should know about camping with horses.

The Ronde schedule will be updated on the Rendezvous page at BCHW.org, and extra copies will be at Registration because we will not be ready for publishing in the THN for the March/April issue.

We have so many spaces for clinicians, demos and vendors to fill, get a hold of me to schedule something. Let me know if you want to be part of the upcoming Zoom meetings and I will get you on the list. Teri-253-709-5052 



WaFd
Bank



Content Deadline for the March/April 2026 Print Newsletter is January 18, 2026

Cover Photos can be sent anytime, 8x10 Vertical orientation is best (300 dpi).

You can send articles, photos and calendar of events early!

Please email your articles (700 word maximum) and 3 or 4 photos with caption and photo byline to thn@bchw.org as soon as possible.

ATTENTION!

FREE Listing on BCHW Chapter Events Calendar

Be sure to:

- Contact the ride host to check for updates on the event.
- Check to see if dogs are welcome.

Note: The BCHW Trailhead News represents as many events as possible; however, it makes no guarantees an event will be published. The calendar of events is subject to change. Please check with ride contact for most updated information. Please send calendar corrections to: thn@bchw.org.

1st QTR BCHW Board of Directors' Meeting

Saturday, March 21, 2026
9:00am, Armory
Kittitas Valley Event Center
901 E 7th Ave, Ellensburg, WA
BCHW President Dana Chambers
president@bchw.org • 206-498-6952

Grays Harbor Fund Ride

Saturday, June 20, 2026
Shafer Grade in Matlock
8:00am, 5:00pm
Long and short routes. Child and novice rider friendly.
Food available for purchase. Prizes and raffle offered.
Please no stallions or dogs on the trail.
Contact Beth Brenshaw 360-581-6535

2nd QTR BCHW Board of Directors' Meeting

Saturday, June 20, 2026
9:00am, Armory
Kittitas Valley Event Center
901 E 7th Ave, Ellensburg, WA
BCHW President Dana Chambers
president@bchw.org • 206-498-6952

3rd QTR BCHW Board of Directors' Meeting

Saturday, September 19, 2026
9:00am, Armory
Kittitas Valley Event Center
901 E 7th Ave, Ellensburg, WA
BCHW President Dana Chambers
president@bchw.org • 206-498-6952

2026 Rendezvous

Friday-Sunday, April 24-26, 2026
Kittitas Valley Event Center, Ellensburg, WA
treasurer@bchw.org

25th Annual Winery Ride & Halloween Costume Contest

Saturday, October 31, 2026
Zillah, WA
BCHWwineryride@gmail.com
for Sign-up and additional information, visit:
www.bchw.org/

Example

Your Chapter Ride or Event Must Be Open To All BCHW Members To Have A FREE Listing

Lines in the listing have a maximum character count of 32, including spaces. Please keep this in mind.

Please submit the following information with your event listing to thn@bchw.org.

Chapter Name _____
Name of Ride _____
Date _____
First Rider Out _____
Location _____
Register _____
Lunch _____
Name of Pass Required (if needed) _____
Weed-Seed-Free Feed Required _____
Camping (if available) _____
Cost to Member _____
Cost to Non-member _____
Contact Name _____
Phone _____
Email _____
Website _____

Free Entrance Days in the National Parks



February 16: Presidents Day
May 25: Memorial Day
June 14: Flag Day/President Trump's birthday
July 3-5: Independence Day weekend
August 25: 110th Birthday of the National Park Service
September 17: Constitution Day
October 27: Theodore Roosevelt's birthday
November 11: Veterans Day