



MVBCH

HORSE TALES

BCHW.ORG
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Mission: The purpose of Backcountry Horsemen of Washington is to perpetuate the legal and moral claim by the American people to use horses and mules for recreation on public lands.

2022 Chapter Officers

- **Director:** DK Williams (360-676-1319)
- **President:** Cathy Upper (509.429.2955)
- **Vice President:** Michelle Schmidtke (206-730-1904)
- **Treasurer:** Bennet Upper (509.429.2955)
- **Secretary:** Michelle Schmidtke (206-730-1904) and Sue Elson 509-997-0430
- **Volunteer Hours:** Kay MacCready (509.996.3969)
- **Membership:** Megan Casey (425-533-5833)
- **Newsletter/Blog:** Linda Seaman (cell 206.909.9676)
- **Budget:** Pete Stoothoff (509.997.7004)
- **Historian:** Jan Ford (509.997.0133)
- **Sunshine:** Betty Wagoner (509.279.8717)
- **Trail Bosses:** Bill Ford (509.997.0133)

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE from Cathy Upper



Cathy Upper

I would like to thank each and every one of our members who attends our club events and work parties—we are what keeps BCHW growing and flourishing all while moving forward! Don't ever forget that this club is what we all make it! Speaking of 'making it', I want to do a separate trails report (see below). Meanwhile, enjoy those ponies—this is the season! Cathy

Trails Report—Please Read!

The Trails Collaborative just had its bimonthly meeting open to all. So exciting to see all the activities happening out there, I'll share a full report at our meeting. As far as our projects, here it goes:

Twisp River trail 440 is logged out all but the last 2 miles as of May 23. Evergreen has paid crews continuing the brushing and I'm working with the FS to improve the signage. South Creek is logged out to Lewis Lake bridge. First impressions of the stringers is hopeful that we might be able to redeck the bridge in June. The Darwoods are being hired to pack in the Timbers and Bill Ford is project leader.

Work is being started on Wolf Creek ahead of Jason Ridlon's Memorial Day weekend project. The trailhead gate is locked so access is available with FS permission only, and plans are underway to check out the bad thread to North Fork meadows.

Work is starting on logging out William's Lake trail before our crew comes in early August. FS is planning to put an additional crew on this trail after ours.

Scatter and North Lake have been logged to the wilderness boundary ahead of WTA coming mid-June.

NSHC is getting a new sign compliments of the FS. The water system is in progress. The Loup ski hill is opening in June to bike rentals and food services and we are working on signage for shared trails with them and the FS.

Work on the Lightning Creek, middle-Beaver and Bear Mountain are starting—all in the Loup area; 'Collaborative' is looking at getting the Lightning Creek bridge rebuilt.

The July Hotshot crews have not yet decided on where they will be working.

Sawyer report: First aid classes were held before Memorial Day. Saw work still to be scheduled.

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MVBCH MAY 5, 2022 MEETING MINUTES

Members in Attendance: Michelle Schmidtke, Bill Ford, Jan Ford, Willie Kemper, Donna Stoothoff, Allen, Rick Jones, Heidi Weston, Kay MacCready, Mark Brantner, Rick Smith, Laura Smith, Ashley Ahearn, Mary Pat Bauman, Betty Wagoner, Pete Stoothoff, Cathy Upper.

Updates: The Golden Doe ride is canceled. Cathy will lead the Patterson Mountain ride if people are interested. Anne Port's volunteer appreciation dinner will be on May 20th at her place up the Twisp River. Allen (?) attended in his new position as trails coordinator for the Methow Trails Collaborative. There will be a Cedar Creek work party with some restrictions due to fire damage.

Director's Report: No report, DK not present.

Volunteer Hours: Kay circulated forms for members to fill out.

Treasurer's Report: (Bennet) Bennet reported that the proceeds from the Spring Ride were comparable to 2019. He will have a more detailed report at a later date. He suggested that the registration and dinner fees should be increased.

Cathy suggested that anyone who has comments/criticisms/recommendations about the Spring Ride should save them for discussion at Anne Port's dinner or the next meeting.

The condition of one of the Utility trailers was discussed. One trailer is in dire need of upgrading. Bill got a quote from Les Schwab for four new tires. He insists that the wiring needs to be fixed before the trailer is useable again.

Rick made a motion that MVBCH spend up to \$1500.00 to fix up the utility trailer. He was seconded by Allen.

Sawyer Training: Pete said that 12 people want to do First Aid. He has an arrangement with Aero Methow and will update everyone when he gets more information from Aero Methow about the one-hour hands-on portion. The CPR/AED portion can be done online through the American Heart Association for \$19.50.

Betty made a motion that individuals needing updated First Aid will pay \$19.50 for the online portion from the American Heart Association and MVBCH will pay for cost of the hands-on portion from Aero Methow. The motion was seconded by Rick. Pete said the present sawyer cards are good until the end of June.

Trail Projects:

- * North Summit Horse Camp: Pete spoke with Jeff McCue about the project to put in the water tank. There are a few problematic boulders that will need to be moved to dig the trench. The estimated cost of excavation is approx. \$1500.00 to \$2000.00.
- * Bennet made a motion to spend up to \$3000.00 to complete the project to put in the water tank. He was seconded by Betty.
- * There was discussion initiated by Ashley about her concern about how much MVBCH has already spent on the construction of the NSHC. Bill pointed out that many other clubs have contributed funds for its construction and several members of MVBCH have volunteered hundreds of hours in its construction so the actual money MVBCH has spent is modest.
- * Rick suggested that MVBCH compile a detailed accounting of costs and volunteer hours spent on construction of the NSHC when it is completed.
- * Allen reported that the Evergreen Bike Alliance has received grants to help with fire-impacted trails. They are currently brushing out the Twisp River trail.
- * On June 18-25th WTA will need MVBCH to log out to the Wilderness Boundaries before they can start their trail work on North Lake, Scatter Creek and Twisp Pass.
- * Friday, May 20th there will be a South Creek work party.

*** Allen said he will be a source of information about trail work that is needed or is being done and he will send out regular reports. If a MVBCH member wants to know about what work is needed on a particular trail or what condition a particular trail is in, Allen will have current information from various groups and the USFS available, and you can contact him via his email:

allenj@trailscollaborative.org.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Michelle Schmidtke.

"There is nothing to be learned
from the second kick of a mule."

Mark Twain



For Sale!!

*Hand tooled Crates saddle
Like new condition!!*

Quarter horse bars
with a 16 inch seat
Asking \$1500.00



Contact for Donna Stoothoff:
509-429-7525

dstoothoff@centurytel.net

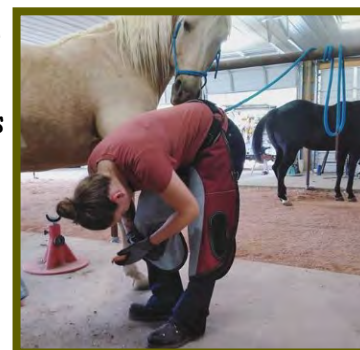
ML FARRIER SERVICES



Offering shoeing and barefoot trimming in the Methow Valley. Melissa Stusinski is a Winthrop resident and graduate of the Equine Lameness Prevention Organization's farrier school.

Contact Melissa:

425-478-4005 or
mlsfarrierservices@gmail.com



The 2022 Spring Ride & Auction

After a two years' hiatus of not having a Spring Trail Ride this Ride was a great success! The number of participants was just right as well as the amount of food we had. We had several 'Newbees' that really stepped up to the plate and provided help exactly where it was needed which was really great! We also had an amazing auction with many beautiful, fun—and some very helpful--items to choose from. And, our musicians were just wonderful again this year too! They came from Bellingham (by plane), Everson, Seattle and Wenatchee! Dave Notter thrilled us by played his fiddle again! Of course, Willie and Donna Kemper did a great job with breakfast on Sunday morning making delicious omelets, and our yummy dinner the night of the Ride was scrumptious! Thanks to everyone for all of your help—this event doesn't happen by itself and each person that contributed was essential and very much appreciated. This includes our clean up crew who did the "above and beyond" to leave Beaver Creek looking better than it looked before the Ride!

Here are a few pages of photos to remind you of that wonderful weekend and give a glimpse of what we experienced to those who couldn't join us this time...



Early arrivals started walking their horses to loosen them up a bit after the journey. Weather was perfect!



There were lots of horses of all shapes and sizes; it was fun to meet the smallest ones too!



We even had a family of 5 who rode together every day! (Yes, there are 5 people in this photo—one is a 2 year old who is sitting behind the Mother in the center of the photo!)

The 2022 Spring Ride & Auction (cont.)



Overall, weather wasn't perfect, but it was certainly OK...



...except for the day of the ride...



...when almost everyone wore rain gear...



Registration went smoothly, the canopies were erected securely and safely for the auction...



...and people felt comfortable to walk about and check out the auction items...



...say hello to friends they hadn't seen in a while, and help unload the buy-it-now items for sale.



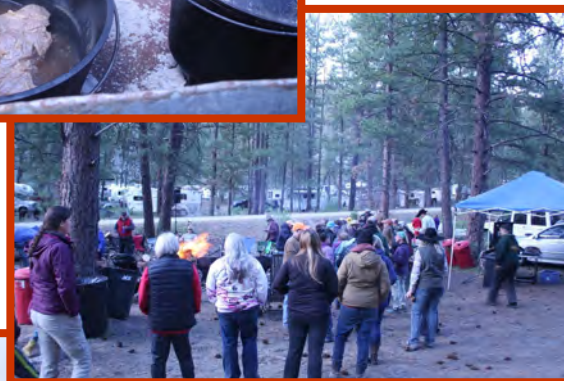
The 2022 Spring Ride & Auction (cont.)



Friday eve Pot Luck



Sunday A.M.
Breakfast



Coffee break
on the Ride



Saturday night mu-
sic entertainment



Auction tables ready for
Bidders to return from the
Ride and make their bids!



Thank You to All Who Worked to Make Our Spring Ride & Auction a Success!!

On May 20th Ann Port shared her home and yard to recognize and celebrate all of the great work our chapter did that made our 2022 Spring Ride & Auction such a big success. After 2 years of NO Ride or Auction, we were in much need of refreshing the funds that keep us going and doing the things we do best—like keeping our trails open. As Betty Wagoner has said: this annual Ride & Auction doesn't happen by itself and each person that contributed was essential and very much appreciated.



The 2022 Spring Ride Auction Story

MVBCH is the local chapter of Back Country Horsemen of Washington (BCHW). This industrious group of men and women are dedicated to keeping trails open for all users and educating horse riders in its "Leave No Trace" practices. MVBCH also provides volunteer service to work on trails with many other agencies. In fact, in the year before the pandemic, over 1,700 volunteer hours were spent on trails and horse camps in the Methow Valley.

Even with pandemic restrictions, over 1,000 hours were spent in 2020 and 2021 working on numerous trails, including rebuilding the Eagle Creek Bridge on Twisp River Trail, which was a casualty of the 2018 Crescent Mountain Fire. One of the crown jewels of the club is the North Summit Horse Campground. Nearing completion, it includes 12 sites for camping with horses and a spacious picnic shelter. It is located on U.S. Forest Service land on Loup Loup Pass at the same turnoff as the ski area. For this project alone, the club has invested tens of thousands of dollars and hundreds of hours of labor. (See mvbch.blogspot.com and click on North Summit Horse Campground for information and photos.)

There is no shortage of projects for the club. A massive amount of work lies ahead on trails that were damaged, not only by the Crescent Mountain Fire, but also by the Cedar Creek and Cub Creek fires of last year. Work will be done on these trails with downed trees, washout and bridge damage, and hazardous standing, burnt trees in conjunction with other chapters of BCHW, the Forest Service, Washington Trails Association, and several other trail organizations.

All of this work requires donations and fundraising for this 503 (c) public charitable organization. The upcoming Spring Ride & Auction on April 29-May 1 at Beaver Creek Campgroup outside of Twisp is a major fundraising event for the local chapter that has not taken place since 2019.

Pulling an auction together when one is a newbie at such a project has had a very extensive learning curve for us. However, as is the usual case with any volunteer group in the valley, there is a strong support system of eager beavers to take on parts of an event, each one utilizing his or her best skill set. Several are champs at soliciting donations. Others' fortes are processing data and paperwork. Many are ready to provide bodies to transport, set up, organize, monitor, collect, dismantle — the grunt work.

The most amazing part of this auction experience has been the willingness of local businesses, artisans and individuals to donate auction items, knowing that they get "hit up" all the time for different causes. As of earlier this week, over 150 items and gift certificates have been donated. Items range from riding gear, cast iron ware, pottery, artwork, theme gift baskets, a kid's John Deere tractor, and the Big Kahuna — a gift certificate for a two-night stay with horse boarding and guided trail ride right here in Mazama. Also a hit is the Buy It Now table where used, but usable, horsey equipment and goods are available at reasonable prices.

The auction takes place on Saturday (April 30) and all persons are welcome to come and participate. It is an opportunity to see what the local horse culture looks like through the horses themselves, music, food and fun. See the website listed above and click on 2022 Spring Ride for more details."

"The Methow Valley Backcountry Horsemen 2022 Spring Ride and Auction enjoyed a sunshiny day for setup at Beaver Creek Campground knowing the ominous forecast for rain (did we hear possible snow?) on Saturday. The rain came, finding its way into the edges of the tents, soaking auction bid sheets and merchandise. Riders headed out with rainwear of all kinds and returned with drenched horses and gear, but smiling!

Even with the less-than-perfect day, the ride and auction were successful and the rain abated for barbeque and campfire in the evening. 'At least' the wind wasn't blowing as it did during the last pre-COVID Spring Ride in 2019. That's spring!"

Excerpts are from the Methow Valley News, Valley Life: Mazama, April 27, 2022 and May 4, 2022. Written by MVBCH member Shelley Smith Jones.

Current and Proposed Work in the Twisp River Drainage—Summer 2022

Collaboration between trail organizations and with the Forest Service is becoming more widespread in the Methow Valley. This should result in more effective use of resources as new trail lead positions and better lines of communication are established. In particular, MVBCH trail leaders would like to thank Landon Decker, Trails Manager for Methow Ranger District and Allen Jircik of the Methow Trails Collaborative and the Methow Ranger District for their active help in coordinating trail crews from different user groups.

Results of this collaboration are already showing up in the Twisp River drainage where work on trails is well advanced for this time of year.

This is particularly the case for MVBCH's adopted trail, the **Twisp River Trail #440**, where only three miles of this key 15-mile trail have yet to be cleared of fallen trees (on May 20th). With the exception of the first mile and half at the eastern end of the trail (from the Buttermilk Snow Park), which has been cleared by a trail crew financed by Evergreen Bike Alliance, the trail has been logged out by members of MVBCH. We hope to complete the log out in the next week or two, and check on a washout in the last stretch.

The Evergreen Bike Alliance has a grant to brush the entire length of Twisp River Trail during the 2022 season. The first part of the trail should be the only part where they have to log out as well as brush. If the trail is brushed along its entire length to the high standard achieved so far, the TRT will look better than it ever has. They are making brushing of TRT their National Trails' Day project on June 4th.

As in previous years, the push by MVBCH is to cut out downfall with chain saws to the wilderness boundaries of trails linked to the Twisp River Trail that Washington Trails Association (WTA) will work on in mid-June. WTA trail crews work only with cross cut saws so it makes good sense to reduce the time taken by them to reach the wilderness where chain saws are not permitted. Priority trails for clearing to the wilderness are **Twisp Pass Trail**, and **North Lake Trail** and **Scatter Creek Trail** (the latter is already done).

Normally **South Creek Trail/Louis Lake Trail** would be another priority for WTA, and it has already been cleared to the wilderness boundary. MVBCH and BCHW had hoped to get the Louis Lake Bridge re-decked in June, but Landon Decker, Trails Manager for Methow Valley RD, checked the stringers on May 19th and found them to be rotten. The bridge is unsafe for use and will have to be demolished and completely rebuilt. It would be good to have as short a time frame on this as possible as Louis Lake is a popular destination. The possibility of interim access by fording the creek has yet to be examined.



Later in the summer, in August, MVBCH plans to be part of a multi organizational team working on **Williams Creek Trail** where work is badly needed on brushing and on tread work. Again it would be good to have the trail cleared of logs throughout its entire length before the various crews arrive.

As well as trails in the Twisp River drainage, MVBCH works on maintenance at **Twisp River Horse Camp**. In the last few years this has meant repairing damage from the Crescent Mountain Fire. There will be a work party there in June.

May 21, 2022

Make A Difference

Volunteer

Update: North Summit Horse Campground May 2022

The horse camp has been checked at intervals. By May 13 the snow was nearly gone and the internal roads were no longer too soft to take trailers.

The gates were unlocked on that date and the wheel barrows brought out of hibernation in the bathrooms. They were dispersed among the manure bunkers, as were both of the remaining TWO forks. (See the current May page of BCHW calendar for a portrait of 'Linda' !)

The bathrooms will not be serviced until at least the end of the month. We do hope the FS will provide toilet paper before then - but, to be on the safe side, BYOTP.

The camp ground may be closed for a day when heavy machinery is brought in to put in the horse water system, hopefully within the next month.

There is more signage to go in, but that should not hinder use of the camp.

There is a broom under the picnic shelter if anyone feels inclined to do some housekeeping and brush off the floor.

**There are quite a few clearing up tasks to be done by small work parties.
Please help when you can.**



It never ends... our Trail Boss Bill Ford taking a short rest after finishing cutting out the most westerly log on the Twisp River Trail near the trail-head at (North Lake).

MVBCH JUNE/JULY 2022 CALENDAR

(THUR) JUNE 2 REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING @ TWISPWORKS PARK. Meeting starts @ 5pm.

Note: We had hoped to be planning the Louis Lake bridge re-decking but Landon Decker, the FS Trails Manager, says the bridge is past its shelf life and would not pass an official FS bridge inspection. That means we cannot move forward with the re-decking project. There are, however, several large diameter Douglas fir trees in the area that could potentially be used for bridge replacement so we may have that to work on that before the bridge can be replaced, and timbers for a new bridge have to be packed into the job site before any work can begin. We also have the Twisp River Horse Campground cleanup so Bill Ford and Tony Karniss will be organizing these projects. **(IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN HELPING WITH EITHER PROJECT PLEASE CONTACT BILL AT 509-997-0133.)**



(WED) JUNE 8 TRAIL RIDE TO THE METHOW RIVER ACROSS FROM BIG VALLEY.

Contact: Heidi Weston weston_heidi@hotmail.com or 425-466-3386. Ride out at 10:00 a.m. from Heidi's home at Lucky Jim Lane. We'll ride across Wolf Creek Road access trails to the Methow River spot across from Big Valley. Directions to Heidi's house: Located off Kumm Road which intersects at Hwy 20 across from Rolling Huts. Lucky Jim Lane is the 2nd right turn; look for a green roofed barn. There is plenty of parking for trailers. Come a bit early if you want to warm up your horse in our round pen. This round-trip ride is about 3 hours so **BRING YOUR LUNCH!** Please RSVP to Heidi if you will be joining the ride.

DATE TBD?? BRUSHING OUT THE TWISP RIVER TRAIL #440 WITH THE EVERGREEN BIKE

ALLIANCE. Dates and times to be decided. Bill Ford 509-997-0133 or Cathy Upper 509-429-2955.

(SAT) JUN 25 WORK PARTY AT TWISP RIVER HORSE CAMP. Starting time: 9 am. Bring your own lunch; we'll be doing log clearing and finishing new campsites. More TBD. Please contact Bill Ford 509-997-0133 or Cathy Upper 509-429-2955 to let them know you'll be helping or for more info.

(THUR) JULY 7 REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING @ TWISPWORKS PARK. AT THIS TIME, OUR JULY MEETING IS "TBD" DUE TO OVERLAPPING ACTIVITIES IN EARLY JULY. MORE INFO IN LATE JUNE.

(MON) JUL 4 "4TH OF JULY PARADE"

(FRI-MON) JUL 1-4 HOT SHOT WORK PARTY #1. Contact: Jason Ridlon 509-964-9260.

(SUN-FRI) JUL 17-22 HOT SHOT WORK PARTY #2. Contact: Jason Ridlon 509-964-9260.

JULY 20, 24 & 29 Connie Mehmel is looking for someone to pack her into Spanish camp (Forest Service might be able to do this), move her from Spanish camp to Pygmy Basin and then pack her out Billy Goat on these 3 dates. She is doing a white-bark pine survey in the Pasayten wilderness.

DATE TBD?? LOG OUT OF WILLIAMS LAKE TRAIL PRIOR TO THE WASH. CONSERVATION CORP COMING AUGUST 4-11. They are hired by us to do thread work on this trail. Contact: ???

Thank you to everyone who contributes photos and stories for our newsletter — the newsletter is a joint effort that we all contribute to.

One person can't do it without all of the feedback and information that our members provide, so keep it coming, please!

Linda Seaman
1709 134th Ave SE #14
Bellevue, WA 98005



June Agenda

Trail Projects + Updates

Future Fun Events!

(Contact President Cathy
if you wish to add
a topic)

Thursday, June 2nd, 2022
5 pm Business Meeting
@ TWISP WORKS PARK OUTSIDE
502 S Glover St, Twisp, WA