

# The Trailhead News

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Back Country Horsemen of Washington

January/February 2021



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*Cover Photo: Our guide Elaine, Heidi, and Geri Jo. Left Elaines place "Ears the Place" in Driggs Idaho, a short haul and crossed into Wyoming on the west side of the Tetons. Photo by Kathy Young.*

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Please submit to: [bchw@wamedia.com](mailto:bchw@wamedia.com) or mail to: PO Box 7184 • Olympia, WA 98507 • 360.754.4543

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# Optional Members

January/February 2021

Back Country Horsemen of Washington expresses its gratitude to those who contribute to BCHW as "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](mailto:membership@bchw.org).**

Name	Chapter	Name	Chapter	Name	Chapter
<b>Lifetime Members</b>					
Mitch Baird .....	IND	Leslie Coey .....	IND	Joanna Ellington & Dennis Clifton .....	NOR
Scott Bauer .....	CHC	Stephen & Michelle Cooper .....	TAH	Ken & Pam Evans .....	MTA
Amanda Biles .....	TAH	Patrick Dolan .....	MSH	Carol Finney .....	MSH
Penelope Booker .....	IND	Robert & Celeste Eversole .....	NOR	Robert Gish .....	NOR
Caleb Canby .....	MET	Bruce & Kathy Foreman .....	NOR	Kevin & Lisa Graese .....	NOR
Janis Collett .....	PIE	Margo Forstrom & Earl McNally .....	PIE	Peg Greiwe & Dale Kelley .....	PIE
Missy Day .....	TAH	Dawn Graham .....	MTO	Deb & Ron Hall .....	CAP
Marianne Finrow .....	LEW	Karl Kaiyala & Kathy Rafferty .....	MET	Kris & Don Hand .....	PSR
David Jackson .....	PSR	Mary Kane .....	TAH	Butch & Jaima Havens .....	IND
Lori Lennox .....	GRH	Tony Karniss .....	LEW	Carrie Heltemes & Carolyn Kruckenberg .....	LEW
Kim Merrick .....	NIS	Bill Kehner .....	PIE	Judith & Bob Hoyle .....	BUC
Heather Moorman .....	PSR	Cindy & Dean Kobetich .....	BUC	Diane Kamacho .....	CHC
Dave Seibel .....	MTO	Joanne Lacy & Dale Bamford .....	PIE	Cris Kantor .....	TAH
Bob Shonka .....	IND	Rob & Barbara Lathrop .....	IND	Edris Kenan .....	TAH
Teri Starke .....	IND	Kris Lenke & Dave Peterson .....	BUC	Tracy Ketchum .....	TAH
Cathy Upper .....	MET	Kathryn & Steve Lewandowsky .....	CHC	Beau & Kelly LaCrosse .....	IND
Carol Wilcox .....	WEN	Kay & Dan MacCready .....	MET	Ed & Teri Letcher .....	TAH
Pat Wyers .....	MTA	Gudrun Mahrt .....	MSH	Teren & Norman MacLeod .....	BUC
<b>2020 Annual Meeting Head Table</b>					
Dr. Jack Gillette .....	PIE	Mary McIntyre-Lee .....	IND	Tim Main .....	IND
<b>2019 Annual Meeting Head Table</b>					
Dave & Gail Sunde .....	FER	Al & Marcy Norrbom .....	TAH	Paul Mellick .....	RRR
<b>2020 Benefactor Level</b>					
Terry & Suzanne Smith .....	IND	Mary & Dennis Owens .....	GRH	Kris Moran .....	GRH
Dave & Gail Sunde .....	FER	Kendra Pardy .....	OLY	Jeanette & John O'Keefe .....	MET
<b>2020 Patron Level</b>					
Kelly Bolen & Blake Madden .....	TAH	Becky & Christopher Penoyar .....	OAK	Sarah Pearl & Batty Sack .....	MTO
Kelly Bolen & Blake Madden .....	TAH	JoAnn Reider .....	TAH	Robert Powers .....	OLY
Lisa & Tom Cohen .....	TAH	Kathy Russo .....	IND	Danielle & Carlos Ramos .....	IND
Greg Johnston .....	IND	Nancy Rust .....	MSH	Jason & Heather Ridlon .....	IND
Michael Torok .....	IND	Laurel Saville .....	WHA	Leonard & Kathy Rolph .....	MTA
Barbara Woo .....	CHC	Boyd & Mikki Sharp .....	PEN	Julia Seymour .....	WHA
<b>2020 Sustaining Level</b>					
Connie & Eugene Baugher .....	MTA	Bob Showalter .....	RRR	David Smith DVM .....	TAH
Sandi Berg .....	CCR	Lynda Stafford .....	SCR	Danny & Karen Stineback .....	MSH
Robert & Sheila Blakely .....	IND	Jane & George Storrs .....	IND	Rachael & Matthew Tuller .....	CAP
Sandra Boe .....	PIE	Barb Talbot .....	IND	Linda & Bryant Tiffany .....	TAH
Mark & Erin Borden .....	ISL	Darrell & Kristy Wallace .....	NOR	Rick & Phoebe Trocano .....	MET
Steve & Lynne Bridge .....	GRH	Louise & Peter Walton .....	NOR	Ann Van Duren-Molloy .....	WHA
Donald & Christina Campbell .....	PIE	Brenda & Greg Wiebe .....	MTA	Wendy Walsh .....	OLY
Mike Celestres .....	TAH	JoAnn Yost .....	GRH	Dolly Watkins .....	FER
Ron & Marty Celestres .....	TAH	<b>2020 Contributing Level</b>			
Danny & Jeanie Chappel .....	RRR	Earl & Dorothy Aalseth .....	CHC	Marlaine & Matt Watson .....	WEN
Joe & Cindy Chenier .....	LEW	Jim & Terri Anderson .....	MSH		
Christina Cline .....	MET	David & Carrol Bainter .....	WIL		
		Andy & Debbie Bales .....	TAH		
		Bonnie Bentz .....	PIE		
		Bart & Velma Bradshaw .....	MET		
		Gene Brent .....	TAH		
		Gary & Kathy Collins .....	MSH		
		Jan & Jim Craghead .....	CCR		
		Thomas & Sandra Eddy .....	IND		

## 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. ➔

## Ken Wilcox BCHW

*In Memoriam*

BettyRae Shonka

Trygve Culp

Jim Murphy

Teunis Wyers

## 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](mailto:tstrk21@msn.com).





## Can Back Country Horsemen Own It?

By Jason Ridlon, BCHW President

It's been a year serving as BCHW president. In a lot of ways, I still think of myself as a new person in the organization. It seems like just yesterday I joined this organization in pursuit of finding a group that would represent my interests as an equine enthusiast and trail rider. The interesting thing about belonging to an equine advocacy organization like BCHW is our pursuit to protect our ability to recreate on public lands with our stock is mixed with a certain amount of nostalgia; it's a need to protect an era. Sometimes when I talk with members, I cannot be sure if their interests in belonging to BCHW are not more for nostalgia rather than for their children or grandchildren? Is the wanting to protect an era getting in the way of seeing the future?

The Future? As someone who has ridden motorcycles, mountain bikes, hiked and hunted all my life on public land, I know my stock and decker pack saddle has not been replaced yet. Without the help of stock, the future of our trails does not look promising. Technology and modern mechanical devices cannot replace stock and a simple pack saddle and some rope. I say this because it screams of someone that does not want to lose the nostalgia of owning and using stock on our trail system within our forests and wilderness areas.

So, what I am about to say is something we need to think about. The year I graduated high school BCHW had 2,000 members. The following 14 years have seen a high point of 3,500 BCHW members. Now in 2020, our BCHW membership is around 1,500 members. What happened? Are we owning our shortcomings or inability to adjust to this place in history? I hear

all the time it's just too expensive for young folks to own horses, and/or there just are not as many horse owners. This just might bear some truth. But then when you look at some recent economic studies released by user group, equine still ranks in the top 15 for revenue producers. So clearly there are still a lot of folks recreating with their equine.

I recently had a BCHW friend ask me why so many chapters in Washington? The average chapter takes an average of 7 officers, many of our chapters are less than 30 mins travel by vehicle apart from one another. I say the vehicle in case a few are still hitching a horse-drawn wagon (in this case you might be an hour apart). I know of chapters that share the same meeting hall on different weeks in the same month. Many of these chapters recreate on the same public property and share the same land managers. If I was an outsider looking in and wanting to be involved, what does this look like? I know what some land managers think because they very candidly share that our message or request is not always consistent; they are not sure who they should be talking to. How about our trail partners? Do they see us as one, or do we look like a herd of horses running circles in the pen? What if two or three chapters joined resources and became one, what would that look like? Or perhaps a region of chapters becoming one? Then, if we operated from a state to regional approach, would that simplify our organization? Would our horses running in circles start to look like a pack string with a leader and stock following?

*continued on page 4*

### 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 insure 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.



## BCHW-Volunteer Hours Report

By Deb Wesselius, BCHW Volunteer Hours Chair

The BCHW volunteer hour's Summary Report covers the reporting period from October 1, 2019, thru September 30, 2020. 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.

2020 BCHW  
VOLUNTEER HOURS = 56,496.5  
(2019 - 85,696)  
2020 TOTAL VALUE =  
\$1,969,927.41  
(2019 - \$3,143,825.83)  
See Chart on next page.

We had 32 out of 32 chapters recording their volunteer hours, making this a 100 percent reporting year. By working

around the COVID restrictions, we are down around 30,000 hours for the 2020 reporting year. A big thanks and hats off to everyone on a job well done. Volunteers are the best. We call this the year of Zoom.

*By working around the COVID restrictions, we are down around 30,000 hours for the 2020 reporting year. A big thanks and hats off to everyone on a job well done.*

Big thanks go out to the BCHW VH Regional folks: Louise Caywood-PCC, JoAnn Yost-GHC & Barbara Vache'-CHC worked extremely hard reviewing and assuring accuracy in their chapters' final VH. The BCHW VH Program couldn't complete our accomplishments without their help.

If you have any questions regarding the volunteer hours report please contact me.

NOTE: If you or someone you want to recommend would be interested in joining the BCHW Regional Volunteer Hours team let me know. 🐾

### Can Back Country Horsemen Own It?

*continued from page 3*

A friend of mine asked if this approach would be more sustainable, to move us into the future?

So, if you were a 40-year-old parent of two kids with horses and a full-time career who walked into many of our chapters, what would you see? Would you see an organization committed to its mission statement and with the diversity to accept and welcome new ideas presented by this young new member that had new ideas? Or would you see a few passive-aggressive members still hanging on to the way we have always done it, with no idea how to move BCHW into the future? Another fact is that our directors' email group is Directors and Alt Directors and between 50 and 60 percent of them open their emails. Can you direct or support an organization, as a director, if you don't read the information made available to you? Asking as your president.

My friend asked do chapters get along? I explained what I hear far too often is, "I would attend that chapter meeting but there are personality issues;" or "we would combine chapters, but there are issues with the other chapter." Are we are talking about chapters of BCHW as one organization committed to its mission statement, or are we talking about a local saddle riding club?

The definition of a club is "an association or organization dedicated to a particular interest or activity." The definition of a chapter is "a chapter-based organization is any organization

that has local branches in multiple areas and shares a mission". Can I say as BCHW president, with confidence, that we belong to an organization with multiple branches that make up chapters sharing our mission statement, looking beyond our trivial issues making one strong unified voice that is heard across our public lands and hallways of our government? I think I know the answer to this, but maybe it's time that each of us takes the time to reflect or check in on this question.

So now what? I think the first part of fixing any problem is accepting we may have a problem and then own it! We have so much work to do and so many users who need our service. Land managers and partners are counting on us to remain strong and involved. I did not join BCHW for nostalgic reasons, I joined for children and grandchildren. I want to protect an era and at the same time remain relevant and active in the future. I will continue to apply new technology to our work and learn new methods to engage membership and our partners. I am willing to accept we might need to change the way we do business to keep doing our business. I will work daily on being more accepting and tolerant of things I don't much care for or don't understand, and do what I can to not be an obstacle in meeting the challenges of serving our mission statement now and into the future.

What are your plans? How can you help? 🐾



## Back Country Horsemen of Washington Volunteer Hours Report State Summary



2020 ~ Final prepared by: Deb Wesselius, BCHW VH Chair

Washington State Chapter	Trail Work			Admin		Total Volunteer Hours	Personal	Total	Total Dollar Value
	Basic	Skilled	L.N.T.	Public	Travel		Vehicle	Stock	
	Trail	Trail	Educ.	Service	Time		Miles	Days	
Buckhorn Range Chapter	364	52.5	43	200.5	237.5	897.5	4174	18	30,891.30
Capitol Riders Chapter	22	0	26	130	67.5	245.5	2338	3	9,198.70
Cascade Horse Club	72.5	80	0	352.5	127	632	2314	2	20,676.70
Crab Creek Riders	25	7	43	70.5	33	178.5	894	2	5,999.70
Ferry County Chapter	94	30	0	77	51	252	841	30	11,061.35
Grays Harbor Chapter	968.5	318	54.5	1131.50	545.5	3018	15123	98	110,581.25
Independent	56	356	42	2585	218	3257	10770	201	123,763.50
Inland Empire Chapter	284	15.5	0	40	77.5	417	2112.5	4	13,960.08
Island County Chapter	86	81	0	150	49.5	366.5	1566	0	12,558.10
Lewis County Chapter	330.5	510	356	2053	486.5	3736	11950	43	124,207.70
Methow Valley Chapter	746	611.5	27.5	193	358.5	1936.5	8911.5	67	76,155.13
Mt Adams Chapter	0	0	24	165.5	13	202.5	708	0	6,180.60
Mt Olympus Chapter	519	515	37	443	232.5	1746.5	1739	43	60,460.85
Mt St Helens Chapter	411	68	35	727	401	1642	9891	6	55,583.65
Nisqually Chapter	53.5	0	39	331.5	144.5	568.5	2661	8	18,791.15
Northeast Chapter	492.5	264.5	159	332.5	357.5	1606	8980	95	65,311.40
Oakland Bay Chapter	123	60	0	109	79.5	371.5	2190	9	13,901.30
Okanogan Valley Chapter	10.5	2	50.5	61.5	63	187.5	1904	0	6,936.00
Olympic Chapter	684	0	22	4687	233	5626	5023	49	162,699.05
Peninsula Chapter	4772.5	1255	384	2316.5	960.5	9688.5	26668	174	323,329.80
Pierce County Chapter	564.5	776	884.5	2071	803	5099	23602	124	184,068.30
Ponderosa Chapter	219.5	19	175	759.5	268	1441	5921	7	45,778.55
Purple Sage Riders	63	0	55	734.5	201	1053.5	7320	21	37,709.20
Rattlesnake Ridge Riders	164.5	25	257	1406.5	321.5	2174.5	10211	17	70,886.85
Scatter Creek Riders	381	107.5	19.5	384	227	1119	5912	10	38,515.20
Skagit Chapter	291.5	54	56	602.5	402	1406	9497	48	52,799.75
Tahoma Chapter	298	291	167.5	1810.5	357.5	2924.5	10043	53	98,344.85
Traildusters Chapter	95	177	47	422.5	150.5	892	2847	2	29,574.25
Wenas Chapter	12	0	57.5	351.5	95	516	2026	0	15,959.90
Wenatchee Valley Chapter	0	0	0	17	12	29	520	0	1,282.80
Whatcom County Chapter	237	809	118	576	505.5	2245.5	14689	238	109,834.55
Yakima Valley Chapter	64	0	60	716	181.5	1021.5	3938	14	32,925.90
Totals	12505	6485	3240	26008	8260.5	56497	217284	1386	1,969,927.41

State Agency Report									
U.S.F.S. (A)	4239	3578	91.5	320	2193	10421	57170	780	464,416.70
State DNR (B)	2316	788.5	2	39	846	3991.5	20816	252	164,267.60
State Parks (C)	472.5	203	1	134	268	1078.5	4414	29	39,189.30
National Parks (D)	508	466.5	9	4	140	1127.5	2641	76	47,121.35
Education & LNT (E)			3046		1006	4052	25619	16	136,152.45
Dept. Fish & Wildlife (F)	66.5	12		3	17	98.5	472	12	4,490.80
Administrative (G)				25217	2622	27839	76994	34	833,765.10
BLM (M)	118	11.5		5	42	176.5	1195	11	7,192.45
NOLT (O)	687	77.5			82	846.5	1462		25,467.70
Private Timber (T)	1794	921	84	205	764	3768	18533	152	147,821.55
County (W)	2304	427	6	81	280	3098	7968	24	100,042.40
<b>Totals</b>	<b>12505</b>	<b>6485</b>	<b>3240</b>	<b>26008</b>	<b>8260</b>	<b>56497</b>	<b>217284</b>	<b>1386</b>	<b>1,969,927.40</b>

## BCHW Membership Development for 2021

By Ken Carmichael, Membership Development Committee Chair

**M**embership Development, what is this and how does it differ from Membership Processing? Membership processing involves taking the membership application, making deposits, and putting the member on a list. Membership Development is to identify and document the benefits of BCH membership and develop marketing materials and methods to attract and retain members by using chapter resources and talent.

In 2018 the Membership Development Committee was formed. A manual was prepared and seminars were held across the state. In addition, classes have been presented at Leadership Training.

To accomplish the above goal, 5 objectives have been developed. They are:

- Develop leadership in the chapters and BCHW
- Elevate public awareness of BCHW and its mission
- Increase prospective member first visit traffic
- Enhance retention, through both second visit and annual renewal
- Augment attendance at chapter events

We recognize that to have a strong and healthy BCHW we must have strong chapters and increase BCHW membership. We must also have active members. Developing a strong membership first requires leadership and public awareness. Therefore, they

are addressed first.

When I started to write this article I intended to write about one objective per issue of THN. I found that there is just too much material to cover in the newsletter, even breaking it into five parts. Instead, I am encouraging members to refer to the Membership Development Manual found in the Director section of the BCHW website under Chapter Guideline (number 4). Also, those chapters that attended the seminars, or the Leadership Training have hard copies of the manual. If a chapter, or group of chapters, would like a repeat of the seminar, this can be done. The interaction of ideas and enthusiasm is always good. We encourage chapters to add your ideas to those in the manual and set chapter membership goals.

This type of information needs constant review to stay fresh in our minds. In addition, we have many new leaders since 2018. This is the BCHW membership renewal season, which is critical; but we should remember that Membership Development is a year-round activity. A chapter member should be appointed to take the lead on developing and managing the Chapter Membership Development program. It does not need to be the person responsible for processing applications.

Throughout this program, we emphasize the importance of our message resonating with our audience and aligning with their goals and priorities. Our message must be vibrant, moving, and current to excite our audience about BCH. BCH members must be knowledgeable and show enthusiasm when talking about BCH. 🐾

*Let's Increase and Enhance the BCH Membership Together*

## Membership Ideas

By Ken Carmichael

**S**haring good ideas is always beneficial. Here is one from Peggy Swanberg of the Okanogan Valley Chapter.

Create an information packet regarding BCHW and contact information. Provide this to local realtors that specialize in rural properties, or in small markets. They can provide

this information to buyers of property that will accommodate horses.

Let me know your good ideas and we will share them. Or go to the BCHW website under Directors to find the Membership Development Manual for more ideas. 🐾

Add Back Country Horsemen of Washington to your awards account. See the Donate page at BCHW.org for more information.







## BCHW Public Lands

By Kathy Young, BCHW Public Lands Chairman

It sure was great to see everyone on Saturday the 12th, in the ZOOM General socially distanced meeting of Back Country Horsemen of Washington. I believe I saw that 90+ members had called in to spend a couple of hours of their afternoon catching up on what BCHW managed to accomplish over these past challenging months. It's good to know that, even when everything in the world slowed down, closed down, and people were sent home to work, the agencies and organizations that we work with on public lands did manage to make some things happen and move forward. BCHW accomplished an amazing amount of work in this sideways year, we continue to move forward. Congratulations!

Here are some brief updates on a couple of our hot button public lands issues.

**THE GREAT AMERICAN OUTDOORS ACT:** GAOA was initially put forward as a bill to fund deferred maintenance, and was primarily aimed at National Parks. Lobbying and input from recreation user groups and other organizations helped to add the Forest Service to this landmark funding bill.

Immediately after the signing of the Great American Outdoors Act on August 4th, the Forest Service went to work to identify deferred maintenance projects that could be accomplished in Fiscal Year 2021. Almost immediately after submitting the 2021 list, they started to work on the 2022 projects list. Stakeholder organizations like BCHW did have an opportunity to comment on the lists, but it was a really short and informal comment period, due to the timeliness of getting the project lists submitted. The Act provides \$285 million per year for five years to address priority deferred maintenance on Forest Service properties. It is imperative that BCHW members keep it top of their mind, and communicate with their Forest Service Districts about deferred maintenance projects that will benefit stock. Projects for submissions in 2023, 2024, and 2025 should also be identified as soon as possible. This opportunity to clear deferred maintenance may never be repeated.

NON-Equestrian use of horse camps is becoming an increasingly bigger concern for stock users. This is occurring in Washington State and nationally. This issue will be a primary focus of

*continued on page 8*

**NEW RATES!**

## Donate Money to BCHW by Buying an Ad in The Trailhead News

**BCHW The Trailhead News Ad Insertion Rates (Design Extra Cost) Email Ads to: [bchw@wamedia.com](mailto:bchw@wamedia.com)**

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April 1 .....	May/June	Inside Back Cover	10" H x 7 1/2" W	\$496.00
June 1 .....	July/Aug	Full Page	10" H x 7 1/2" W	\$496.00
August 1 .....	Sept/Oct	3/4 Page	6 1/4" H x 7 1/2" W	\$331.00
October 1 .....	Nov/Dec	Half Page (Horizontal)	4 3/4" H x 7 1/2" W	\$248.00
		Half Page (Vertical)	10" H x 3 5/8" W	\$248.00
		Third Page	3 1/2" H x 7 1/2" W	\$166.00
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## BCHW Public Lands

continued from page 7

Back Country Horsemen of America for 2021. At BCHW you can help by providing information to the BCHW PLC Committee any time that you observe non-stock users occupying horse camps. This is information gathering for BCHA at this time, please provide the name of the horse camp, the name of the forest that it is in, dates and numbers for non-stock users that you observe. We want to capture all the information that we can.

BCHW Chapters should also be having conversations with their agency contacts regarding the use of horse camps by non-stock users. We need to generate ideas and solutions, and we need the agencies to understand the necessity for these camps to remain available and accessible to stock users.

This remarkable year has led to an incredible influx of new users to public lands. In April I was invited to join 12 other organizations to discuss an idea, to talk about how to provide guidance to neophyte outdoorsmen; people who were heading outside because everything else was closed. It was also a discussion forum for those of us who wanted to find a way to get back out in organized groups to work on trails. We wanted to find a way to continue to operate under the guidelines for gatherings that were put into place due to COVID. That little idea grew into the #RecreateResponsibly coalition which in turn has become a movement that now includes dozens of members in Washington and that has spread across the nation. See more at [www.recreate-responsibly.org](http://www.recreate-responsibly.org)

#RecreateResponsibly just wound up for the year but will pick things up again in January. We understand that this increasing number of users brings both opportunity and challenges, and they are not going to go away. One of my goals for BCHW within the coalition will be to turn more attention to how we teach and promote better stewardship of our public lands.

I have been involved in a number of groups, partnerships, and coalitions in the past year. I have been a member of the Teanaway Community Forest Advisory Committee for several years now. At this time, Tena Short and I have been providing input to the TCF subcommittee that is starting the work to create a designated trail system in the Teanaway Community Forest. The work is currently focusing only on the southwest area of the TCF. There will be opportunities for members to comment and to provide information after the initial plan is drafted. <https://www.dnr.wa.gov/managed-lands/forest-and-trust-lands/teanaway/teanaway-community-forest-advisory-committee>

I have also been engaged with the East Cascades Recreation Partnership, a recreation collaborative that is working to craft and implement a sustainable recreation strategy for Kittitas County. I would really like a BCHW member who is a resident of Kittitas County to step in to fill the spot for equestrian representation. I will happily step aside. It is important for BCHW to be involved in this effort. <http://eastcascadesrecpartnership.org/>

The Checkerboard Partnership - This is a group of individuals, organizations, and government entities that is coming together to start a conversation about the future of 27,000 acres of privately owned forest in the Central Cascades. This collaboration is in the process of trying to establish a new Community Forest. If you are interested in learning more about this effort please check the website. <https://www.checkerboardpartnership.com/>

Your Public Lands Committee members are Kathy Young, Chairman; Pete Erben—Peninsula area; Bob Iddins—Northwest; Jim Anderson and Gary Collins—Southwest; Danny Chapel—Southeast; Bill Ford—Methow; and Ed Letcher—Central. Our Northeast Region position is currently vacant. It had been filled by Ken Elliot, who recently passed away. I so valued Ken's work and input on the PLC committee, he will be sorely missed. 🐾

## BCHW Membership Announcement

**B**CHW Memberships Expired on Dec. 31, 2020. Please go to [BCHW.org](http://BCHW.org) and click on the "Members/join/renew" tab. You can take care of things online or print off a paper application for specific chapters. If you have any questions, issues or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact Dana Chambers, your State Membership Chair at [membership.bchw@gmail.com](mailto:membership.bchw@gmail.com) or call 206-498-6952, She is there for you!!

### PRICING FOR OUR MEMBERSHIPS

*In Addition To Chapter Dues*

Single .....	\$41.00
Family .....	\$54.00
Contributing .....	\$75.00
Sustaining .....	\$125.00
Patron .....	\$250.00
Benefactor .....	\$500.00
Lifetime (Single) .....	\$1200.00



# Why I Joined BCH

By Ken Carmichael, Director, Ponderosa Chapter

To tell the truth, I do not remember. One night in 1988, Monte Robertson and I went to a meeting, liked the people, and thought it was a good idea at the time. I really did not know what I was getting into. It ended up being a great idea. Participating in BCH can probably be broken down into several categories.



- I cannot count the number of good rides and new places that I have experienced. Each year it is a challenge to decide how we will get to all the locations.
- One big benefit is the education. This includes at chapter meetings and special seminars at the state and chapter levels. Some are just fun, and some have made my riding safer and easier.
- It is a great feeling to participate in an organization that is making a difference. It is my feeling that there is a job for

everyone from making a meeting better with good cookies to being president, everyone is needed. My first job was chapter librarian. I worked my way up to chapter president and director and have enjoyed every step of the way.

- BCH provides the opportunity to represent equestrians on public land committees and general meetings. If we want to have the trails, then we need to be at the table when the decisions are made. It is interesting to hear all the perspectives.
- The work parties sometimes require a little sweat but primarily are fun to plan and to participate in. When we ride a trail or are at a camp, it is a good feeling to know that we had a part in making it happen.
- I seem to like paperwork, probably more than using a shovel. One of my greatest feelings of satisfaction is working at the BCHW level. There are so many great activities, opportunities, and challenges. There are many people working behind the scenes making it all come together.
- I am not known as a social butterfly but will never pass up a potluck and BCH seems to have many of those. Fortunately, several members do Dutch Oven cooking. Then, several years ago, I saw a lady at the BCHW rendezvous. Then I suggested she be chapter secretary, then it was the chapter Christmas party. Now we are married. Maybe that alone is a great reason to belong to BCH. 🐾



Please clip out and mail



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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](mailto:membership.bchw@gmail.com)

# So Many Accomplishments Even in a COVID-19 Year!

## Members deserve our recognition, more than ever.

By Mary Jo Krutak, BCHW Awards Committee Chair

**S**tart the process of gathering information for the nomination packet now.

Award categories, descriptions, list of past recipients and the nomination form are at [www.bchw.org](http://www.bchw.org). Award categories are given out only once to a volunteer BCHW Member.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Susan Sundahl is the new Awards Committee Chair, please see Susan's contact information below when submitting your packet. Susan has been a member for 12 years, actively involved in the Olympic & Grays Harbor chapters, serving in a variety of ways, from Committee Chair for the New Year's Ride at Green MTN for 10 years, to Chapter Secretary, trail boss and chairing the Western Dream Ride. Welcome Susan and thank you for taking on this responsibility!

### 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, fundraisers, 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 important in keeping the chapter, organization, or 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 members, or an UNELECTED 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 🐾

Susan Sundahl Contact Info: [pappihorse@wavecable.com](mailto:pappihorse@wavecable.com) or 253-380-0343



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# Back Country Horsemen of Washington Award Nomination Form

(one form per nominee)

Lifetime Achievement \_\_\_\_\_ Desk Jockey \_\_\_\_\_

Lopper Award \_\_\_\_\_ Junior BCHW \_\_\_\_\_

Camp Cook \_\_\_\_\_ Backbone Award \_\_\_\_\_

Trail Warrior \_\_\_\_\_

Nominee's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Chapter(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Submitted by \_\_\_\_\_

Chapter(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

## 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.**

**Must be received before Feb. 8, 2021.**

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

# Make Plans to Get Into the Backcountry



By Beau Lacrosse, Independent Member

I am sitting here tonight thinking of what I have been hearing about membership decline in horse clubs, including Back Country Horsemen. I guess I don't understand why, when people are fleeing from the city to get outdoors, they might be missing the opportunity to join an organization like ours. It is a perfect opportunity to get outdoors into the backcountry. Wilderness rules could not be better written to address the needs of these individuals. There is the opportunity for individuals and families to camp, or learn to camp, the option to spread out and have small groups (heartbeat rules), and practice or learn more about Leave No Trace (LNT). We have thousands of miles of trails and millions of acres across the state for them to explore.

This year I have ridden over 150 miles volunteer packing and doing trail work for BCHW and was able to follow our state and county guidelines regarding COVID. Yes, groups were not large, sometimes just me and my daughter or my dad, and we enjoyed it! This spring, my dad and I went on a small BCHW state work crew to a new area we had never been to. To meet COVID guidelines, our trail leader kept the teams small. We had teams go in different directions and camp locations. The plan ended with my dad and me on our own crew together, allowing us an opportunity to hang out in the mountains and, yes, tackle some trail maintenance work, which brought back great memories.

Later in the season, I went on a trip with one of my daughters doing equine volunteer BCHW packing to another new area in our beautiful state. We had a good time, and she did great! She had her own packhorse. She is now 17 and I hope she will be one of our youth who grows into a BCHW member with her own family someday. She has been riding with me since she was very young. During this trip, I even put a back-packer's pack on one of my mules to help someone out on their trip. They found having an equine carry the pack to be much

better! I can't tell you how many people said they wished they had a horse.

Well, it's easy to say as we horse people know it takes a lot to make it happen. The good news is that most of you probably already have a horse or mule and maybe a truck and trailer, or know someone who does. I know many of our members prefer front country rides or prize rides but currently, that is hard or not possible to do with the pandemic restrictions. I challenge you to consider planning a backcountry pack trip or a longer day ride somewhere you may have thought about before but figured you didn't have time or know-how to get there while still being safe.

We have many members, like myself, who will help someone experience the backcountry if they're willing to learn and help during the trip. As a kid, I had a lot of great experiences riding, camping, doing trail work, and fishing/hunting around the state. Many of these trips were with other BCH members, as well as family. These people were my mentors through life on the trail and otherwise. As I look around now being in the middle of my life for riding years, where are our young people? Are they being left at home to play on the computer?

Yes, it is hard to bring that 10-year-old kid or teenager who might complain about a long ride or no phone service. But after a couple of times, I bet they will be pestering you to let them go the next time. After you get there (wherever that may be) take time to enjoy the peace and quiet of the great outdoors, have fun, and explore! There are so many places you can go and camp and enjoy the many options to have day rides out of camp, fish, or find a warm rock to read a book. This is where our BCHW mission comes in to ensure you have the right to be there and have a trail passable to stock. Thanks for your continued support! Dust off that saddle this winter, and I hope to see you on the trail soon! 🐾



# An Epic Women's Trip to National Parks Part 2

PHOTOS BY HEIDI STAHLEI



Grand Canyon of Yellowstone. Taken as a tourist, not a horseback rider.

Grand Canyon of Yellowstone. Taken as a tourist, not a horseback rider.

Visit to Old Faithful, Mary Jo, Geri Jo and Heidi.

By Heidi Staheli

This article is a three-part story and is continued from the last issue of The THN. Part two.

The most memorable ride in Yellowstone was to Mary Lake. There is a forest service cabin above the lake that can be rented with corrals for horses just outside the cabin. The ride was challenging in places with a big mud bog that sunk several horses to the belly and a rocky, steep climb to the lake. As we were having lunch at the cabin, a large bison walked through our group on his way down the trail we had just come up. He paid us no mind and went along his way. We had to ride the same way out as we rode in, which meant passing through the mud bog again, but we all made it successfully and no one was injured.

Saying goodbye to all my new friends was bittersweet as they headed home, and we headed to our next location.

## Ears The Place

Less than a 100-mile drive brought us to our next adventure, Ears the Place (Driggs, ID), an equine inn owned by Elaine Johnson. Ears the Place provides dry camping for humans and large

paddocks for horses. Our horses were happy to be able to move around, lie down, and roll. Elaine was an entertaining and gracious host, riding with us every day to show us the best locations. We even saw two moose on our first ride out. There is endless riding just a few miles from where we were camped and though we were parked in Idaho, we did all our riding in Wyoming. Ears the Place lies to the west of the Tetons and provides a stunning view of the mountain range. We were blessed with beautiful sunrises accented with hot air balloons drifting overhead every morning.

A short 10-mile ride proved to be the most difficult but also the most rewarding. We started at the South Leigh trailhead and headed straight up to 9,400 feet. The footing was precarious, very rocky, and steep. We had to cross several footbridges, obviously meant for hikers, not horses, since they were very narrow. We crossed through vast open meadows full of orange and yellow

*continued on page 14*



Elaine Johnson, owner of Ears the Place



At the Grizzly and Wolf Discovery Center, Brandi, Geri Jo, Mary Jo, Kathy and Heidi. Photo taken by another tourist.

## An Epic Women's Trip To National Parks, Part 2

*continued from page 13*

PHOTOS BY HEIDI STAHELI



*Sunrise at Ears the Place.*

PHOTOS BY HEIDI STAHELI



*Heidi, Brandi and Kathy at Ears the Place, cocktail hour.*

and through narrow treed trails. Cresting the top, we viewed some strange round rock formations. Later research revealed that, 500 million years ago, the Teton range was created by a slow, upward push and that the round rock formations that we were seeing used to be on the ocean floor. They are called Cambrian stromatolites and were formed by layers of algae growing on the ocean floor. They are now almost two miles above sea level! We were able to see the Teton range but, unfortunately, it was hazy due to the smoke from the fires in Northern California. Our descent was also beautiful and treated us to a loop ride. The return trail was not well used and tested our horses' choice of footing on a long downward side hill.

Driggs, ID was a great restocking point for our group. There is a nice grocery store, feed store, and a laundromat nearby. Just down the road is a vodka distillery that we felt "obligated" to tour and Jackson Hole is a few miles to the east over Teton Pass. We spent one day touring Jackson Hole, starting the day by tagging along with Elaine to an estate sale. We sampled all the tourist activities that Jackson Hole has to offer, shopping, getting our picture taken under the antler arch, and sitting on the saddle bar stools at the Million Dollar Cowboy Bar. A rowdy dinner at a nice restaurant led to another patron motioning us to be quiet but it was an unsuccessful attempt that resulted in our invitation for her to join us. It was declined. 🐾



*The rocks that used to be on the ocean floor but are now at 9,400 feet with the Tetons in the background, hazy due to the Northern California fires.*



*Tourist photo under the antler arches at Jackson Hole. Heidi, MaryJo, GeriJo, Brandi and Kathy. Photo taken by a tourist.*

PHOTOS BY HEIDI STAHELI



*Ride from South Leigh through colored meadow.*

PHOTOS BY HEIDI STAHELI



*Some of the rock formations on ride from South Leigh.*



# The Spruce Railroad Trail Has Just Opened



*Ellie, Larry and Sherry Baysinger on bridge.*



*Fivey enjoying the view.*



*Larry and Sherry Baysinger at tunnel.*

By Sherry Baysinger, Mt Olympus Chapter

There is a beautiful new multi-user trail in the Olympic National Park. The Spruce Railroad Trail, part of the 135-mile-long Olympic Discovery Trail (ODT) has just opened. The ODT will eventually cross two counties, connecting from Port Townsend through Sequim, Port Angeles to Forks, and then LaPush and the Pacific Ocean. The segment from Forks to LaPush will be underway in 2021.

The trail follows the historic Spruce Railroad grade, which was constructed in 1918 to transport high-quality spruce for aircraft during WW1. This 10-mile trail also has two beautifully rebuilt tunnels adding an unusual challenge to horse riders.

The trail was funded by several grants from various sources and is the only Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) trail on the Olympic Peninsula. The trail construction was a partnership between Clallam County and Olympic National Park with management and contract oversight performed by the Federal Highway Administration.

In addition to eight feet of pavement is a four-foot tread of crushed asphalt beside the paved trail making excellent footing for horses. Walkers, runners, bike riders, wheelchairs, and stroller pushers can easily share the trail with horses.

We chose to ride the trail on a weekday and parked our horse trailer on the Camp David Road at the west trailhead on Lake Crescent. We rode approximately four miles, through both tunnels before turning around for an eight-mile round trip ride. We encountered numerous walkers, runners with kids and dogs, many bicycle riders, (e-bikes are allowed), and two recumbent bicycles. Our horses/mule were surprised by the low-riders, but as soon as the people spoke, our stock realized they were not predators, just some weird-looking humans. Everyone seemed delighted to be on this beautiful trail and pleased to see horses there, especially


the kids. We found a nice place to tie up our horses and have our lunch beside the lake.

Pictures just cannot capture the spectacular beauty of Lake Crescent and the mountains surrounding it. There was no wind or rain until the late afternoon, so there was a perfect reflection of the mountains in the clear blue water of Lake Crescent.

The Piedmont/Lyre River Trailhead on the northeast side of the lake has room for three horse trailers to park. We chose to start on the west end past Camp David. There is very little access for horse trailers here. You will need to turn around with limited space and park alongside the road, which we were able to do with a seven-horse gooseneck stock trailer. However, during weekends and summer season when cars park along the road and fill up the car parking area, you could get stuck with no way to turn around.

Connected to this piece of the ODT are the USFS Littleton Horse Camp and the twelve-mile Littleton/Mt. Muller trail with spectacular views of Mt. Olympus, the Straits of Juan de Fuca, and a birds-eye-view of Lake Crescent and the Soudoc Valley. You will reach 2,800-foot elevation in three miles, so horses and riders need to be fit and prepared for a long, steep mountainous trail ride.

The new Spruce Railroad Trail is appropriate for seasoned trail horses that can handle lots of activity, bridge crossings, and dark tunnel passages. Riders must practice Leave No Trace principles--No horse manure on the pavement of the Olympic Discovery Trail PLEASE!

It would be a good idea to contact the local Back Country Chapter members before heading to this trail or whenever you plan to ride a trail that you've never ridden before. Several BCHWA Chapter members may be able to help you with your plans. Just one more benefit of being part of the BCHWA family. It's a good outfit to belong to! 

# Scouts Learn Trail Safety Skills



*Linda Morin teaching 3S Trail Safety to Girl Scouts.*



*Scouts learning about pack mules with Del Sage & Donna Hollatz.*

By Donna Hollatz, Peninsula Chapter

**O**n Saturday, November 14th, eight girls from the “Mac and Cheese in the Trees” patrol of Sequim Boy Scouts Troop 1498 met at Layton Hill Horse Camp for an overnight campout and volunteer trail work party. This girls’ patrol of the BSA is chartered by the Sequim Elks and usually meets outside Thursday evenings with masks on.

The girls braved chilly, damp, windy weather while setting up tents and cooking dinner. Their trail work consisted of trimming native roses, blackberries, and brush along the trails at Layton Hill.

Members of the BCHW Peninsula Chapter took several horses to Layton Hill on Saturday morning to teach the Scouts some horsemanship information and then presented BCHW’s trail safety program. Named “3S” for “Stop, Stand, & Speak”, this program teaches simple communication skills to assure that

hikers, cyclists, and equestrians can safely share trails, avoiding interactions that might alarm the horses. Some of these Scouts plan to continue their learning by working on the Horsemanship Merit Badge.

The patrol is an active group of eight young ladies who love outdoor adventuring and have many outdoor activities planned for 2021. They had a productive weekend, practicing camping skills and completing some requirements towards their Trail to Eagle. They gladly spruced up the trails at Layton Hill. It is great to have young people helping to preserve our beautiful outdoor spaces. Scoutmaster Mrs. Kathol said the Scouts were really interested in learning about horses and practicing their camping skills in inclement weather and appreciate the Layton Hills Horse Camp for providing the camp for Scouts to use. We also appreciate the BCHW members for networking with the Scouts and bringing horses. 🐾

## Prepare Before You Go

By Lori Lennox

**B**CHW wants to remind you how important it is to be prepared before heading out on a trail ride. Do you need a permit to park, camp or ride where you’re going? Different land managers need different passes, learn which one needs what.

And what about Weed Seed Free Feed—is it required where you are going? Is the camp you are heading to maintained just for horses or is it open to all users? Is it managed by a concessionaire and under a reservation system or is it first-come, first-served? Is there a fee or is it free? What amenities does it offer—or not?

You might have to be self-contained (bring your own potty and water), along with providing your own stock water, high-lines or corrals and have to take your manure home with you.

Or maybe it’s all provided.

What are the current road and trail conditions? What is the snow level? Do you have a trail saw with you? What about the ten essentials? Do you know how to leave no trace?

what you need. There are a couple of good YouTube videos too. For road and trail conditions contact the specific land manager’s websites. And there are several Facebook pages available where you can ask questions about a trail, road or camp.

Best yet, join a chapter of BCHW—members are always willing to share what they know. Being prepared means being safe; being safe means you will have a great time! For all the latest BCHW info visit the official BCHW state Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/public.bchw](https://www.facebook.com/public.bchw). 🐾



# Escure Ranch Improvements



By Ken Carmichael

In the November/December issue of the THN, Marty Hilton provided a vivid view of the BLM Escure Ranch ranging back millions of years. No doubt about it this is a beautiful place about 20 miles south of Sprague, Washington.

Now I am going to provide the reasons why the Ponderosa chapter is leading the way for more improvements in the equestrian campground. Let's start with where you will ride as you cover this open rangeland. Here are six unique rides.

- **The falls** – This is a nice, short ride to loosen up the horse's legs after being in the trailer. Especially pretty in the spring when Rock Creek is running high.

- **Southeast loop** – After entering the ranch buildings turning south, eventually you will turn east dropping back down to Rock Creek. This requires crossing Rock Creek so best in the fall. There is always deep grass here. Ride along the southern border to the southeast corner of the ranch. After riding north along the east fence, we drop down to the trail leading to the falls. This can be an exploratory ride.

*continued on page 18*

## Maintaining Trails When Muddy

By Ken Carmichael

Recently I was one of many recipients of an email from Paul Knowles of Spokane County Parks. In part, it said:

"We have a huge favor to ask of you! Would you mind putting out to your organizations' members through your social media or other avenues a reminder that Spokane County's trails are closed when muddy? We've been experiencing some spring-like freeze and thaw conditions, which can cause some of our trails to be more prone to damage by trail use than others, in particular:

- Any location where we have newer trails
- Areas where soils and exposure make them more susceptible to freeze/thaw.

We really appreciate your help in preserving and protecting the significant investment in volunteer hours needed each year to build and maintain Spokane County's trails."

When I read this, I realized that this applies to all our lands, thus this general plea going out across our state. This applies on all our lands, city, county, state, federal and private. Let's apply Paul's ask of a "huge favor" to everywhere we are on the land.

Last year several recreational groups were asked to provide input to a county signage program. Through this cooperation, the following sign was created. I think it applies beyond the county so will quote here:

"Trails Closed When Muddy. During periods of rain and spring thaw, use of these trails leaves deep tire ruts, hoof and footprints resulting in severe or permanent trail damage. Spokane County relies heavily on community volunteers to build and maintain these trails for YOU to enjoy. PLEASE, help us thank our volunteers by choosing to recreate when the conditions are right. If you are leaving a visible tire rut, hoof or footprint more than one inch deep, the trails are too muddy to use."

Back Country Horsemen is one of many groups that work to keep our trails open for multiple users and we fully support Paul. Therefore, the plea goes out to everyone to be conscious of the impact we can have on wet and muddy trails.

In 2020, we have seen a significant increase in the number of people using our public lands, and specifically the trails. Some of these people may not be aware of the effect they are having. Education can be a part of preserving our trails. If you are on a trail and look back to see imprints you are making it is a good time to select another trail or time to recreate.

We can all do our part in maintaining our trails, even if you are not using a shovel. If you want to help further with trail maintenance and construction, please contact your local Back Country Horsemen chapter. 2

## Escure Ranch Improvements

*continued from page 17*



- **Southwest loop** – After going through the corrals, we turn south through the middle of the ranch. This is a longer ride over flatter ground but encountering some deep draws before seeing the ranch buildings at the south end of the ranch. We touch the southwest corner of the ranch before winding our way north then east back to camp. Best done in the fall as with a wet year there can be some wetlands to navigate around. Take a big lunch and look for gates.
- **Windmill** – This is an easy ride west out of camp toward an old windmill. On the way, you can find Wall Lake and maybe run across Turtle Lake. Come back the same way or lengthen the ride and go north a ways.
- **Northwest loop** – This ride takes us west out of camp then northwest to the corner of the ranch and the Palouse to Cascade Trail. We ride west along the north boundary and, with some skill, find our way down to Rock Creek. This is exploratory. Here is a good lunch break with water, grass, and a place to put our feet in the creek. It is a nice ride back along the west side of the creek until we need to climb again to enter the ranch headquarters from another angle. There is an alternative of crossing the creek and climbing up the hill to the east.
- **The mounds** – As we drove into camp we saw mounds to our right. These appear pointed but by climbing to the top we find a wide-open space for riding and a fantastic view. This ride puts your breast collar to good use but think of the view. And now we have touched all four corners of the ranch.

If those six rides do not satisfy your desire to explore, then just pack a big lunch and head out of camp. There are miles of gullies, draws, and open land to explore. The ranch has some fences so expect to get off your horse to open (and close) gates, especially as you navigate through the holding pens near the ranch headquarters.

With so many places to ride it is worth the effort to camp at the Escure. Did I mention that there are very few trees and none in

camp? Here comes the pitch. We are going to install eight more corrals, three tables, and two fire rings in the spring. Those, along with the wide-open space to camp, restroom, horse water, two current corrals, and highlines for seven horses make for a great camp for individuals or groups.

We can use help with this project. BLM is going to match our funding for materials and the Ponderosa chapter will do all the labor. If you, or a friend, want to contribute we welcome your support. Donations can be sent to Ponderosa Chapter PO Box 1184 Airway Heights, WA 99001. Of course, I am always ready to talk about the Escure. Be safe, enjoy riding, and see you at the Escure. 🐾

## Riding In Western Washington



*Volunteer Copy Editor/Proof Reader Sondra Johnston*



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## 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: [bchw@wamedia.com](mailto:bchw@wamedia.com).

### 1st QTR BCHW Board of Directors' meeting

Saturday, March 20, 2021  
Kittitas Valley Event Center  
901 E 7th Ave, Ellensburg, WA  
BCHW President Jason Ridlon  
[president@bchw.org](mailto:president@bchw.org) • 509.699.9927

### 2nd QTR BCHW Board of Directors' meeting

Saturday, June 19, 2021  
Kittitas Valley Event Center  
901 E 7th Ave, Ellensburg, WA  
BCHW President Jason Ridlon  
[president@bchw.org](mailto:president@bchw.org) • 509.699.9927

### 3rd QTR BCHW Board of Directors' meeting

Saturday, September 18, 2021  
Kittitas Valley Event Center  
901 E 7th Ave, Ellensburg, WA  
BCHW President Jason Ridlon  
[president@bchw.org](mailto:president@bchw.org) • 509.699.9927

**Our newsletter (Trailhead News) will be electronic to all members in 2021, with the exception of the May-June and Sept-Oct issues, which will be printed and mailed out to all memberships. This is due to the unforeseen reduction in revenue in 2020.**

**Starting in January 2021, please go to [bchw.org](http://bchw.org), Trailhead News, to view your publications.**

**This decision was not made lightly and we are sorry for any inconvenience it may cause.**

**As always, please continue to send all articles and/or event announcements to: [bchw@wamedia.com](mailto:bchw@wamedia.com).**

## Content Deadline for the March/April 2021 Newsletter is January 18th

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](mailto:thn@bchw.org) as soon as possible.

**ATTENTION!**