

The Trailhead News

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Back Country Horsemen of Washington

May/June 2021



www.bchhw.org

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*Cover Photo: Robert Eversole and Ruger overlooking Hog Lake, Eastern Washington.
 Photo by Celeste Eversole*

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Are You Excited for Spring?

By Jason Ridlon, BCHW President

As your President of the Back Country Horsemen of Washington and as someone who lives to ride mules and perform trail work across Washington, I can get kind of excited about spring. This spring brings a lot of excitement with my full-time job at WSDOT as we wrap up a winter that saw 446" of snow on Snoqualmie Pass! My normal winters are spent with my free time working on my stock trailers and pull vehicles performing annual maintenance and repairs. My other activities include cleaning crosscut saws, caring for saddles, and maintaining trail tools. Dang if this winter did not get away from me. What happened? Time sure flies...

This winter had its new challenges as we navigated BCHW without our normal in-person officer training, December board meeting, and another Rendezvous canceled. At the beginning of this pandemic, it was important to me that my presidency would not be seen as a do-nothing event, and like our trail work we perform, we would rise to the "new normal" and hold meetings, trainings, make necessary changes and keep moving forward despite the challenges laid before us on this trail. And thanks to the great team of officers and committee chairs, BCHW can say we stepped up and did our job!

Now to talk about getting excited. It is almost trail work season! (Yes for some people trail season is year-round.) I enjoy dragging stock up and down our mountain trails performing trail work and it's time to plan. It's time to think about engaging our partners and looking for ways to support one another to accomplish our mission of providing open trails to all users.

I want to encourage all members to make this the year that you participate in a chapter work party, or state event and even consider planning such an event. With a winter like we just went through, I imagine log loads on many trails will be slightly higher than normal and the snow may be slower to leave and water damage to our trails will be evident when we get started. So again, I ask how you can provide your help and your full membership to our beloved trails in need of maintenance and care. What's the ole saying, "Many hands make light work?"

BCHW will be returning to the Eastern Pasayten Wilderness this year for our State Wide Work Party [SWWP] to log trails, perform tread work, and, depending on crew size, build a small puncheon. Plans are taking shape. I encourage you to closely watch our BCHW website, www.bchw.org, as more details will be coming out soon. This is an event you may like to attend. Registration will be required.

Another good reason for this BCHW President to get excited is now some chapters are meeting in outdoor settings where safe and county/state permits. My hope is to be able to get out and meet our BCHW members and chapter officers. I look forward to working with our Awards Chair, Susan Sundahl, to personally hand out as many awards as we can during the upcoming months. And now it's time for your BCHW President to get excited about wrapping up the last of the winter vehicle maintenance, getting those saddles cared for, trim/shoe and worm my stock, turn on my irrigation system, finish those last touches to maintain trail tools, and get ready for a heck of a busy summer. I encourage you to do the same. 🐾

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.



Have a Back Country Horsemen Safe New Year

By Chuck Regimbal, BCHW Safety Chair

As we welcome 2021 with open arms and leave 2020 to the historians, do not take a vacation. This year safety is just as important as ever. Although the COVID virus takes center stage, The Back Country Horsemen do things that some might consider unsafe.

We get on the back of a powerful animal and ask that animal, with animal instincts and reactions, to be good and take us up that mountain. Never mind the hikers, bicyclists, motorcycles, rivers to cross – etc. And they do!

We cut down trees, some gigantic, some crossing the trail uphill to downhill, some in shattered condition (and where a saw is not the best tool). Sometimes we are associated with those that use explosives.

In 2020 your safety committee got together and reassembled the safety documents to be more usable. There is great guidance there on how to be safe in what we do in BCHW.

There are a series of Job Hazard Analysis documents (JHA's) that provide the experience of years in one convenient place. What do you think about when getting ready to spray herbicides? If that is your work, read that JHA.

This information is available to all by searching the internet at www.BCHW.org

On the Green Ribbon Line, select programs, and note the dropdown list that includes safety and the sawyer program.

In the Safety for Work Parties tab is step-by-step guidance on how to proceed with agencies and what to look for, and what forms to use.

The Safety for Rides is outlined. Do not make this too hard. Safety for rides includes a briefing on trails/conditions, and either a guide or map for out-of-area guests, a signed liability release, a

communications plan which, could be as simple as the organizer's phone number, a medical kit nearby, and preferably someone with CPR training. Even the contents of the first aid kit are delineated.

Lots of the information contained is familiar and/or redundant to us who have been around our animals for a while. Even so, there are still quick reminders of things we do not think about often.

One important reminder regards the liability release form. In past years it has been part of our membership sign-up form. This year it is separate. This means most have not signed any liability release forms for 2021. For any event that we conduct, make sure all participants, members, and guests have signed liability release forms for the special event. Whether you sign for each event or use the first signed form for the year will depend on your chapter's management of this form.

Have a safe and prosperous year in 2021. 🐾

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Thoughts from an Early Saturday Morning



Newcomers to the Pasayten Wilderness – 2020 – Jenny and Joe Urness

By Robert Eversole

As we slowly begin the process of re-emerging into the post-pandemic world, we may encounter unexpected challenges, particularly those of us who visit remote areas by horseback.

Last year during the height of the pandemic, we visited the Pasayten Wilderness in north-central Washington State. A place of sublime beauty and serenity. The stuff of joy and delight for every hiker, horse camper, and Instagrammer in the Pacific Northwest. I think they were all there, 12 miles from the nearest trailhead which was itself nearly 20 miles down a rutted gravel “road”.

More people than I had ever before seen in the area formed a slow conga line that began in the parking lot and swelled to fill the trail. Heavily used backcountry campsites were filled and, when the users departed, many failed to take their capri-sun straws, water bottle caps, etc. A dirty diaper was left conveniently by the fire ring. In short, it was a shit-show.



Darrell Wallace administering sawyer certifications – 2021

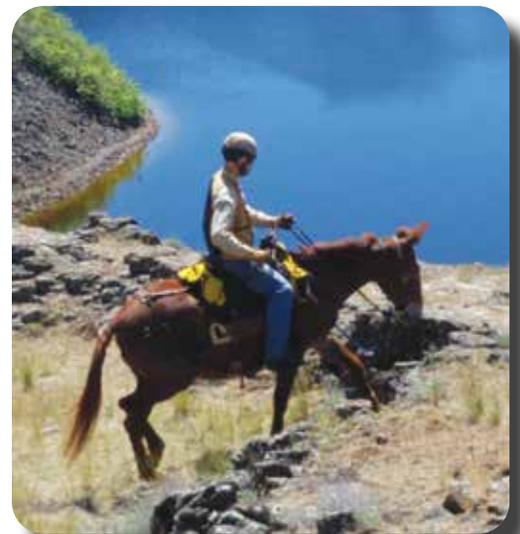
So what’s the use forecast for this summer look like?

I’ve been talking with USFS, BLM, State, and even county land managers over the past few months and, to a person, they are all expecting even more visitors this summer. Far more than the record crowds that swarmed public lands last year in search of a nature fix during the pandemic. Last year the influx of these throngs forced the closure of many areas that were not set up to accommodate the vast numbers of people and the various health and sanitation issues that they bring. Somehow, I doubt our public lands are better prepared this year.

How are you planning on dealing with it?

Hopefully, as vaccines roll out and cities reopen, the quiet wilderness that everyone craved during the pandemic will lose just a little of its luster and welcome solitude will return. This year, with most travel restrictions lifted, we’re planning on heading deeper into more remote wilderness areas where perhaps there will be fewer people and more of the serenity that is somehow lacking while COVID camping at home. ↪

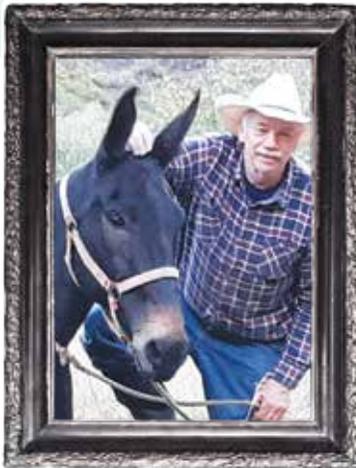
PHOTO BY JOHN HAYS



Robert Eversole and Ruger Above Hog Lake.

BCHW Awards Presentation for 2020

{ Lopper Award }



{ Harold Wiese
Olympic Chapter }

Harold has been a member of the Olympic Chapter for over 16 years. The loppers and saw are always on his saddle. Constantly helping with the BCHW mission, you can find Harold brushing trails, building bridges and doing tread work on the trails at Green Mountain, and helping to keep the Green Mountain Horse Camp maintained. In addition, he volunteers his time, miles, and pack animals to the statewide work parties and puts on packing clinics when asked. If you ask, Harold will be there for you!

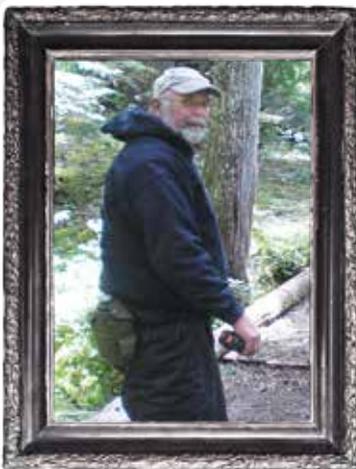
{ Camp Cook }



{ Robert Williams
Northeast Chapter }

Bob has always said that well-fed volunteers will do more and better trail work, and he has worked to prove it by preparing some great meals for large work parties. Bob has been an integral member of the Northeast Chapter since at least 2011 and previously active in the Panhandle (Idaho) Chapter! Bob also participates in trail work, including puncheon building, packing, and youth education. We look forward to many more great meals with Bob!

{ Trail Warrior }



{ Stuart Nieman
Northeast Chapter }

Whether it's sharpening saws, keeping track of chapter tools, repairing equipment, every form of trail work, or shopping for and purchasing new equipment and supplies, Stuart is always involved. He is a founding member of 21 years with the Northeast Chapter and has always been a driving force within local, Chapter, and State-wide events and work parties. A certified "C" sawyer, he educates others, and in addition, conducts the tailgate safety meetings that ensure our perfect safety record. Our Chapter and BCHW are richer because of his talents!



{ Jim Hollatz
Peninsula Chapter }

Falling trees to roughing-in new trails, Jim is your man! He is a stalwart individual who has no problem getting in there and "gettin'er done." Accomplished sawyer, providing pack stock support, teacher, leader, and mentor, Jim is all that and more. We are fortunate to have people like Jim in our group - dedicated souls who endeavor towards the bigger picture and maintain their enthusiasm going forward with the future of our BCHW organization and its mission.

{ Desk Jockey }



{ Tawnya Caldwell
Olympic Chapter }

Tawnya is an unsung hero as the Newsletter Editor for the Olympic Chapter. Prior to and during the pandemic, she has kept us all informed and up to date with all the BCHW information. She always manages to insert her sense of humor in reminding us to get off our xxx and submit our stories for the newsletter every month. We love the stories about her donkey, Minnie Pearl, her border collies, or her new mule, Lulu. When articles are scarce, we can look forward to an educational piece specially chosen by Tawnya. She took this job when no one else would!



{ Don Gonder
Peninsula Chapter }

Don has held just about every position within the Peninsula Chapter. He is the computer expert, initiated the Facebook page, follows legislation, and provides insight for strategizing better. He stepped up to fill in for Director recently in addition to his Secretary roll and too many others to mention. He is Peninsula Chapter's hidden treasure.

{ Backbone Award }



{ Donna Hollatz
Peninsula Chapter }

Every organization needs a “Donna”. In her quiet, unassuming manner, Donna has become the steely backbone of the Peninsula Chapter. Her talents range from Newsletter Editor and steward of the chapter photographs to stripping bark and building the signage for Miller Peninsula State Park with her husband, Jim, and all with a warm cheerful attitude. No matter the project you can be sure that Donna will be a mainstay.



{ Laura Dell
Scatter Creek Riders }

Stepping up as Trail Boss and now as Volunteer hours coordinator, Laura makes sure that we follow proper protocol and BCHW guidelines for work parties and events. Her passions for riding and clearing trails are a shining example for the rest of us. Participation has increased on our group rides and campouts because of Laura. Her attention to detail and desire to do things right has made her an invaluable member of our chapter.

{ Lifetime Achievement }



They work hard, play hard, and make each event they are involved in so much more enjoyable. Volunteering for local, Chapter, and Statewide events, Dan and Karen are always there. Rendezvous’ Tack Sale and parking rigs, LNT, the Wine Ride, Statewide work parties with their pack stock, local projects with Mt. Adams, Lewis, and Mt. St. Helen’s Chapters, and BCHW events and projects all over Washington State and Oregon, they are there! Congratulations Dan and Karen. You are so deserving of the BCHW Lifetime Achievement Award.

{ Dan Stinebeck
Mt. St. Helen’s Chapter }

{ Karen Stinebeck
Mt. St. Helen’s Chapter }



{ Cinch Award }



{ Dana Chambers
Tahoma Chapter }

“They may or may not be very visible – they may be quietly working in the background, reliable doing their jobs.... but they are invaluable at the state level”. Dana is certainly all of these characteristics and more. After revamping the State membership database, she is now working with the National BCHA membership program. Dana assists with many other duties behind the scenes. As a member of both the Tahoma Chapter since 2015, and Pierce since 2019,

she is involved in many Chapter level activities in addition to her State level duties. Acknowledging Dana’s efforts and talents and the gratitude we have for her abilities, strengths, and interest to help keep our organization moving forward. Thank you, Dana, for all you do!

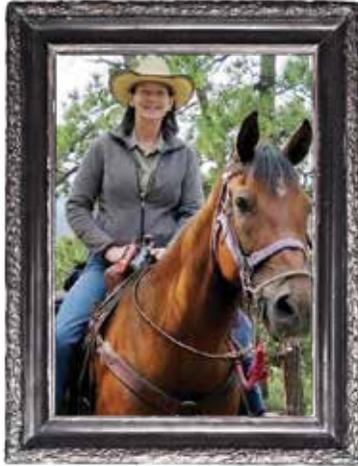


{ Ken Carmichael
Ponderosa Chapter }

Your saddle. Your blanket. You. What keeps them on your horse? Your cinch! BCHW bylaws. Standing Rules. Budget. 501c3. Independent contractors. What keeps them current and effective? The BCHW “Cinch” – Ken Carmichael. As a BCHW member for 30 years, Ken has held positions as Director for the Inland Empire Chapter and was instrumental in starting the Ponderosa Chapter where is currently the Chapter director. He has been invaluable on the Executive Advisory Committee for a few BCHW State Presidents.

With his banking background, eye for detail, and willingness to spend endless hours sitting at a computer, he is an invaluable part of BCHW.

{ President's Diamond Award from President Jason Ridlon }



{ Kathy Young
Tahoma Chapter }

Kathy Young is one of my friends I have known the longest within BCHW. Our work within BCHW has built the kind of friendship that will long outlast my work within BCHW. To list all the accomplishments that Kathy has within BCHW would be impossible, even by me. Kathy has been very busy at many levels within BCHW for at least 10 years. Kathy and I have shared in more conversations than you can count about all things Back Country Horsemen during this 10-year period. I believe there is a reason

people come into your life, and I would give Kathy a great deal of credit for my personal and professional growth. And it's for this reason that I give this Diamond Award. Without Kathy's continued support, passion, and commitment to our BCHW mission statement, BCHW would not be the organization it is today.

Thank you, Kathy Young, I so look forward to many more rides and road trip adventures!



{ Tina Short
Independent }

Picking Tina for the BCHW President's Diamond Award was an easy choice. Tina has a passion for equine and trails like no other I have seen. Tina stepped up to support my role as BCHW president beyond all expectations. Tina shoulders the duties as BCHW secretary during a time that has seen amazing changes within BCHW: many of these changes are largely due to Tina's energy and passion. Tina does all this while maintaining a full-time career during a global pandemic and does so effortlessly. Tina has become

one of my most trusted friends and has taught me an unmeasurable number of skills as I fill the role as BCHW president. She has many life skills as well and has taught me a few tricks in the kitchen that Heather and I both enjoy as a regular part of our lives.

Thank you Tina Short for your outstanding dedication, passion, and commitment to the BCHW mission statement. And our friendship.

The BCHW Awards Committee wishes to give a special Thank You to the chapters and businesses that donated or sponsored the Awards Program. Contributions for an award sponsorship and donations are a necessary part of the continual success of the BCHW Awards Program. Your continued support to our BCHW Awards Program is much appreciated.

Start thinking about your 2021 volunteers and decide who in your chapter will meet the qualifications for one of this year's awards. You might also consider an awards-nominating committee in your chapter to start gathering valuable information and pictures of your deserving volunteers. 🐾



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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

Barbwire Removal Work Party, Building Relationships



By Ken Carmichael

Sometimes BCH work parties are to build and repair trails and trailheads. This work party was about building relationships. It will not directly result in added trails to ride but will help cement the relationship between the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and Ponderosa Back Country Horsemen (PBCH).

For 6 days our task was to remove 6-7 miles of 3 and 4 strands of barbwire fence along the BLM property line where a fire had destroyed much of the fence.

BLM asked us for help with this project. As it was, we had experience as two years ago we had removed barbwire fence in Riverside State Park. The project started with PBCH Trail Boss Doug Bailey previewing the project with the BLM Range Manager. Then PBCH member Don Dyer asked a farmer friend for the loan of the wire winder, a key element in the project. Doug did not want to haul the tractor the distance needed so, instead,

continued on page 10

KALAMA HORSE CAMP located in the Gifford Pinchot National Forest | Near Cougar, Washington

Located just outside the west boundary of Mount St. Helens National Volcanic Monument, on the Gifford Pinchot National Forest. 27 sites accommodate primarily equestrian users. Trailhead from camp provides access to approximately 50 miles of trail.

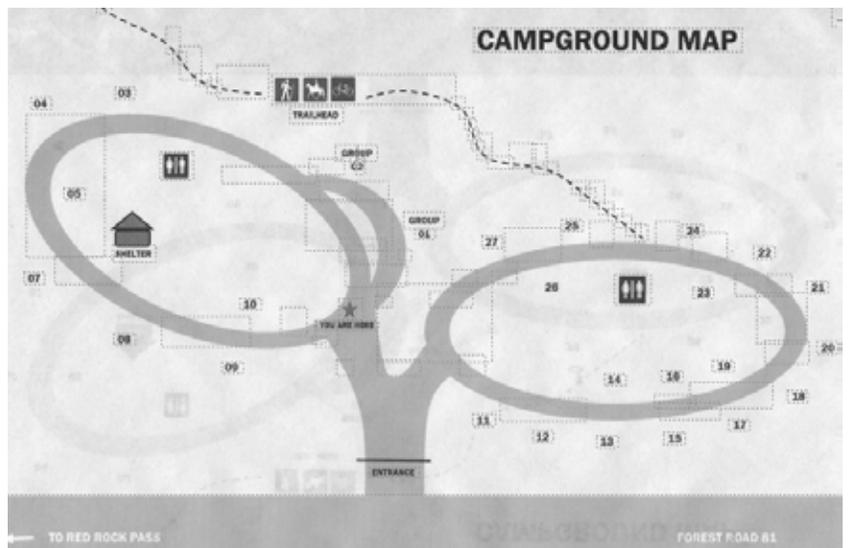
The forest service offers availability through the Camp Host, Rocky Mountain Concessionaires at <https://www.recreation.gov> beginning Fri. May 21, 2021 through Mon. Aug 23, 2021. Fee \$14/night. Fee is \$8/night before May 21 and after Aug 21.

HELP SAVE OUR HORSE CAMP BY USING IT. IF WE DO NOT USE IT, WE COULD LOSE IT.

The trails range in technical difficulty from fairly flat to steep climbs. Spectacular views. Old timber. Kalama River. Red Rock Pass across the lava beds.

Campsites offer picnic tables, two- and four-horse corrals, fire pit, and pull through parking in most sites for bigger trailers. There are manure bins available throughout. STOCK WATER ONLY is available in both the upper and lower campsite water trough areas.

A beautiful log shelter is available for gathering, eating, and getting out of the weather.



Barbwire Removal Work Party, Building Relationships

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invented an unusual and unique way to mount the wire winder on his pickup hitch receiver and power it via his log splitter. This is a case where Doug says, "I think I can do it," and you do not ask how, just be confident it will be done.

Over the span of 17 days, and six days on the job, BCH members pulled staples, removed clips from metal posts, and wound-up wire. Some of the wire was on standing metal posts, some on burnt posts while other was on the ground still connected to burnt posts. Some had to be pulled out of the trees. Tools of the day were fencing tools, bolt cutters, buckets, and heavy gloves. Crews ranged from 4 to 12 people. The more we worked, the more creative we became for pulling long strands of wire, up to a half-mile, around curves and out of the brush. Primarily, we pulled one strand at a time but, in places, it was necessary to tackle four strands at once.



Special Thanks:

Don Dyer for obtaining the wire winder
Doug Bailey for putting together the project and building the frame and power source for the wire winder
Larry Grinstead for miles of work with the four-wheeler and his ingenuity
The six members of the Northeast BCH chapter who contributed their time and labor. It was great having these folks working with us.
Meral and Brian Painter (*they had such a good time they came back for a second day*)
Bud and Sheila Blakely
Brian and Cindi Vance

The other PBCH chapter members who came out to help:

Chuck Rice
Doug Frederick
Melissa Haplin
Tom Birge
Judy Babb
Cindy Miller
Dee Dee Dennision
Carol Klar
Michelle Eames
Linda Grinstead
Sue White
Louise Watson
Holly Elliott

In all, 22 people participated on-site for 252.5 work hours, 104.5 hours of travel, and 3298 miles of travel.

Special note: BLM provides many great places to ride in the PBCH area including: The Escure Ranch, Fish Trap Lake, Lakeview ranch, Telford, Twin Lakes, and others. We enjoy doing work parties at these locations in partnership with BLM. April 17 and 18; we add additional features to the Escure Ranch trailhead in partnership with BLM. 🐾

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

Be sure to shop at Amazon Smile with Back Country Horsemen of Washington as your charity of choice!

community rewards
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Mt. Olympus Chapter



By Sherry Baysinger, Mt. Olympus Chapter

Four years ago, Mt. Olympus Chapter BCHW was formed. Our President, Larry Baysinger was focused on training new members to pack horses/mules with trail tools and become chain saw certified so our Chapter could maintain trails and the Littleton Horse Camp. As a result of this focus, we have several members now who are proficient and confident to take their stock out and clear trail.

Early in January, we discovered that the USFS road to Littleton Horse Camp and Trailhead was completely obliterated with huge windfalls. Several huge trees were down in the campsites as well. Chapter members from the west end spent nearly a week clearing and repairing the road. Chapter members Ray and Rochelle came out on a Saturday with their riding horses and packhorse and spent the entire day clearing windfalls that were blocking stock access on the trail. Larry and I took horses and pack mule a week later and spent the day clearing the remaining windfalls. The trail is now open from the trailhead to the Olympic Discovery Trail.

President/Trail Boss Larry Baysinger called for a work party and, on February 21, ten of us met at the horse camp with tools and personal protective equipment. We replaced rotted hitch rails, weed-whacked blackberry bushes, cleaned up garbage and fire pits, put new tread on existing trails from the campsites, and picked up piles of windfall branches that littered the campsites. We had helpers aging from seven years old to 80+-year-old Mt. Olympus Chapter member Gig Kerr, who still owns and rides her horse.

Later in the afternoon, we enjoyed social distancing around the campfire while we roasted weenies, made chili dogs, and had cake with our cowboy coffee. Everyone agreed that it was so good to be together in person and, like most horse people, we never run out of horse stories to tell around the campfire. Unfortunately, we never run out of trail work either! 🐾



Lilly & Dax partner up for work.



Overflowing garbage at the outhouse.

Backcountry Horsemen: Unsung Trail Heroes



Stewart Mountain work-party.

By Nick Belcaster, Adventures Northwest

At times, it's good to take stock of who's in your corner. Who's willing to go to bat for you. And get dirty. These are friends one should keep. Now a friend that'll brush out miles of your favorite hiking trail, on their own dime, and carry your tools for you? Now you're talking our love language.

If you explore Whatcom County by boot tread, mountain bike tire or shod hoof along our extensive tangle of trails, there's good chance you owe a debt of gratitude to a group you may have never even heard of: The Backcountry Horsemen.

"We may have left a hoof print or two, but we built the trail it's on," says Sharon Hoofnagle, one of the founders of the Whatcom chapter of the Backcountry Horsemen. Existing on both a national and local scale, the Backcountry Horsemen is a group established to ensure that public lands remain open to recreational stock use, as well as assist in the creation and maintenance of these resources.

"We just didn't want to get shut out of the wilderness," says Hoofnagle. Though they have the innate right to ride on public lands, the Backcountry Horsemen know there's no free lunch, and based on the amount of trail work they do locally, they certainly aren't afraid of cutting brush or working a crosscut saw to make it happen.

Earlier last year and looking for things to do that didn't involve being inside my own home, I followed up on a tip of an excellent mushroom foraging spot, nestled in the grove of a seed tree farm on Stewart Mountain.

The bounty proved to be fruitful (King boletes!) but the second surprise came as I was stooped down engrossed in my harvest in the thick timber beside the trail. From a few feet away came the sudden breathy nicker of a horse, to which I could only stammer out a *Whoa*.

Up until this point, the closest I'd ever had to a pack-animal encounter was watching a woman unload two llamas from the back of her hay-stuffed minivan at a Sierra-Nevada trailhead. In fact, I find little that elicits such a sharp pull focus of "human-scale" perspective as being shoulder to shoulder with a half-ton animal.

Mike McGlenn leads a trail ride over Cutthroat Pass in the

North Cascades. Trail rides like these are instrumental in educating members on stock-riding trail etiquette as well as Leave No Trace principles. Photo by Chris McGlenn

Unbeknownst to me I had stumbled upon the crown jewel of the Backcountry Horsemen's Whatcom Chapter: The Y Road Trailhead and its associated network of trails sprawling across the apron of Stewart Mountain. Proudly established with "guidance or funding from any agency," the need for such a trailhead became apparent in the 90s, Hoofnagle says, when large numbers of Backcountry Horsemen members began riding Stewart Mountain, and parking their horse trailers along the road.

It soon became obvious that a more permanent solution was required (after all, it's one thing to be able to shuffle your mud-spattered Subaru into a backcountry parking lot, and a completely different matter to deftly maneuver a truck and horse trailer into one). By 1999 the Backcountry Horsemen had secured the use of an adjacent lot from Whatcom County Public Works, put up the fence themselves, and opened to public use.

The Stewart Mountain system is only one of numerous access projects that the Whatcom chapter has established over its 34-year existence.

"We clear a lot of trail," Hoofnagle says. "People say you've got to be weird, you go out there and get dirty and dusty. But in front you see a mess, and behind you, you say *wow*."

Beyond trail work, their ability to haul heavy loads has made them many friends in the forest management game. The Wilderness Act of 1964 dictated the exclusion of motorized equipment from Wilderness areas, meaning that trail maintenance crews looking to do serious work found themselves in need of a different type of horsepower.

"Helicopters can be used for a good bit of this work, but they are expensive to operate," Hoofnagle says. "Horses are not." Not afraid of getting dirty and swinging a tool, Rodney and Anna Marie Vandersypen, Bob Rathjen and Joe Remenar constructed a bridge by-pass on the Ogallala Trail on Stewart Mountain. Photo courtesy of Backcountry Horsemen Whatcom Chapter

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Backcountry Horsemen: Unsung Trail Heroes

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Backcountry Horsemen groups across Washington maintain working relationships with a large number of forest management and trail building groups, including the US Forest Service, National Park Service, DNR, Pacific Northwest Trail Association and the Washington Trails Association.

Let's say the powers that be need to replace an aging bridge or shore up switchbacks against erosion, which will require bringing in timbers or large amounts of crushed rock. Their crew will also need a small army's worth of supplies to support themselves in the backcountry. Call in the Horsemen.

Once assembled, the group has various and sundry paraphernalia for saddling a horse with a load, from simple catch-all paniers to tilting gravel bags. The loads can often become comical in their size and make-up, with Hoofnagle remembering a particular friend who had long ago been tasked with affixing a ping pong table to a horse to be packed into Olympic National Park for President Kennedy. "You can get pretty ingenious with what you put on these animals."

Once all's said and done and the work is completed, the horses



Mess of Trees on the United States Forest Service Road.

saddle back up with the tools for the trek out. "Hiking groups are delighted to have food and gear packed in to work sites," Hoofnagle says. "And just as pleased to have us pack it back out."

"One of the coolest things is when you have a hiker or a bike rider come by while you are working. It is incredibly gratifying to have people say 'Wow, thank you for doing this.'"

All told, the Backcountry Horsemen's contribution to our local trails is mostly signature-less, residing in the overturned dirt or expertly placed logs, but some numbers may lend insight on their overall impact: Their most recent newsletter boasts 56,497 volunteer hours across the state in 2020, which is already an impressive number, never mind the asterisk reminding that around 30,000 hours were lost to COVID restrictions last year.

Not too shabby for, as Hoofnagle puts it: "a bunch of people who think shoveling manure is fun."



~Reprinted with permission from Adventures Northwest

BCHW Membership Announcement

BCHW Memberships Expired on Dec. 31, 2020. Please go to 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 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

Purple Sage Riders Receives an REI Coop Grant to Help Clean Up Our Historic Hover Park

By Tawny Carrier and Cindy Faith, Purple Sage Riders Chapter

In May, 2020, Purple Sage Riders (PSR) received an REI Coop Gives Back \$2,000 Grant to help clean up our historic Hover Park. Thank you REI Coop! Hover Park was very special to our past PSR Director, Donna Raines, who passed away in April 2019. Donna, who was also a long-time Benton County Park Board member, wanted to bring some “respect” to this park. On March 27th, 2021, PSR hosted a Hover Park Community Clean Up event. Hover Park lies about 6 miles downstream from Two Rivers Park on the Columbia River. The park consists of about 200 acres of undeveloped open space and is near the old townsite of Hover. The town of Hover was named after Herbert A. Hover who purchased 12,000 acres of land southeast of Kennewick around the turn of the century. He then spent many years developing the land, the town, and the surrounding area. Herbert Hover was an adventuresome, enterprising, and pioneering man. This “tiny town” of Hover was one of the first places that transformed the Kennewick desert into one of the most attractive spots in the valley. By 1907, Hover had a population of 300 and possessed wooden sidewalks, a new school, livery stable, a 32-room hotel, opera house, saloon, railroad depot, grocery store, blacksmith shop, church, and post office. Unfortunately, in 1910, a devastating fire struck Hover as described in the March 9, 1910, issue of the Twin City Reporter: “Hover was swept by flame the 5th of March, 1910. Fire destroyed the Hotel, Hover Land Company Office, Post Office and T. H. Dry’s General Merchandise store.” In 1913, the Opera House was destroyed by fire. Most of the buildings that were destroyed by fire never were rebuilt. The first school in Hover was started in 1906 in the Opera House. A separate, small sturdy brick building was built the next year. A new larger school building was built in 1923, a two-story brick construction; but it burned down during Christmas vacation in 1924. Hover seems to have been mostly abandoned when the Army Corp. of Engineers started building the McNary Dam on the Columbia River in 1947. The Army Corp. had purchased much of the land then called Hover in preparation for building the McNary Dam, which all knew would effectively wipe Hover off the map. And it almost did. Construction of McNary began in 1947 and wasn’t completed until 1954 and included relocating the rail line. The town of Hover was effectively drowned by Lake Wallula, the reservoir created by the McNary Dam backing up the Columbia River. The community of Hover ceased to exist – except what you can see now are the remaining foundations of an abandoned ghost town, and the site of Hover Park. This park has, sadly, been



the point of illegal dumping of all types of trash for many, many years! In 2018, PSR cleaned up this park, removing a boat, appliances, auto parts, tires and trash. This year was minus the boat, but there was overwhelming trash, recliner, a freezer and 50 + tires. Basin Disposal donated a dumpster and one free dump towards our efforts. Thank you!

Also, thank you to Benton County Parks for their “Partners in Parks” programs in Benton County. This program allows “recreators” of all kinds to enjoy the parks. Partners in Parks supports a variety of recreators, Rattlesnake Mountain Shooting Facility, and Higgins Field for radio-controlled miniature aircraft. Rattlesnake Ridge Riders is also a Benton County “Partner in Parks”. This program allows us to help care for our local Hover Park.

Dear Mr. Hover, our horses are honored to help cleanup Hover Park, on the site of the town you literally built from the ground up so many years ago.

Thank you for your contributions to our community and its history. One last “Thank you”, to all our members and volunteers for all your hard work! You all have made a difference! Happy (and clean) trails!

Sincerely, Purple Sage Riders, a chapter of Back Country Horsemen of Washington 🐾

Killer River



By Ryan T. Bell, Contributing Editor for Western Horseman, January 2014

Many thanks to Bob Williams of the Northeast Chapter for providing this article for reproduction in Trailhead News.

A River might be the most lethal obstacle a horseman encounters in the backcountry. Whether through the danger of drowning or the risk of hypothermia, a frigid mountain stream can truly take your breath away.

Raul Castillo, a gaucho I worked with in Argentina, almost learned that lesson the hard way. We worked together on Estancia dal Cielo, a cattle ranch in the Andes Mountains. The headquarters was a three-hour ride into the mountains from the closest road, so one of our jobs was to make weekly supply runs with pack horses. On the return leg of the trip, the last hurdle was to ford the Trocoman River, a sizeable body of water with deep runs, cascading riffles, and wide pools that stretched 100 feet across.

It was springtime on the day Raul and his brother Luis were sent on the supply run. While they were gone, unseasonably warm temperatures caused snow to melt in the high country. The brothers returned to find the Trocoman running dangerously high. Though the gauchos couldn't see the river bottom through the turbid water, they forded along a gravel bar, the contours of

which they knew by heart. Or so they thought. Half way across, Raul was in front when his horse stumbled into a sinkhole where the gravel bar had been blown out by the high water. The current swept them downriver, the horse submerged up to its neck with Raul clinging to its mane.

What happened next is an illustration of how, when fording a river, a sequence of decisions can create a deadly situation. First, Paul and Luis didn't know how to swim. Second, the brothers had taken the river for granted, thinking of its shape as a fixed entity. And third, a factor that nearly proved fatal for Raul, they both rode with the lead ropes of their pack horses tied fast to their saddles.

Initially, Raul's saddle horse was able to swim across to safety. But as the horse and rider climbed out of the channel, the floating packhorse yanked them back in. In the tumult, the tied off lead rope swept across the saddle, clothes-lining Raul broadside

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Content Deadline for the July/August 2021 Printed Newsletter is June 1st

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!

Killer River

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against his horse, with his head underwater. The tangled mess of gaucho, pack, and saddle horse floated downriver in a thrashing mob.

Oddly enough, the frigid water temperature was the best thing going for Raul's survival. The human body has a "diving Reflex;" a physiological response when the face is exposed to water temperatures below 70 degrees, which increased Raul's chances of survival. Before going under, the shock of the cold water caused Raul to gulp a large quantity air into his lungs. Then his heart went into bradycardia, dropping his heart rate by 10 to 25 percent. A slow heart rate conserves oxygen. Also, the capillaries constricted in Raul's extremities, further conserving oxygen by reducing blood flow. Altogether, Raul's body was helping him survive a prolonged submersion.

The diving reflex has a downside. Raul couldn't think clearly or make proper use of his arms and legs - not that it mattered with his body pinned by the lead rope. Instead of grabbing his knife to cut himself free, Raul clung to the rope, trying to pry himself loose.

From shore, Luis watched Raul go under. Acting fast, Luis released his packhorse, drew his facon knife and galloped after his drowning brother. Endangering his own life, Luis spurred his horse into the raging Trocoman, slashing at the lead rope as it floated by. Luis's knife did cut through the rope, but also sliced a four-inch gash across Raul's palm, narrowly missing the radial artery. Luis towed his brother to shore, bandaged the hand with a neckerchief, and fetched the horses that were now scattered downriver.

In hindsight, Raul's near-drowning is a cautionary tale about how to safely ford a river. Backcountry horsemen can avoid their own close brush with death by committing to memory the following key points.

How to Ford a River

- **View from above** – the contours of a riverbed can be seen from a high vantage, where the sun doesn't cause a glare on the water's surface. Rivers follow predictable sequences of riffles, runs, and pools. Even in turbid water, a rider can "read" a river to determine the safest crossing. The brightness or darkness of the water indicates depth and remember the adage that "calm waters run deep." An easy way to find a safe crossing is to look for game trails to determine where animals entered and exited the water.

- **Shallow is Safest** – Shallow depth is the first priority, followed by slow current speed. For every inch a horse's legs and body submerge, the force of water against them increases exponentially. And buoyancy actually works against a horse's ability to maintain contact with the riverbed. A fast-moving riffle that's only 12 inches deep might be safer than a slow-moving pool that's three feet deep.
- **No Restrictions** – Before entering the water, remove whatever tack could hamper your and your horse's movements: lead rope, mecate, lariat, martingale, chaps, spurs. Kick your feet out of the stirrups and pull your knees up towards the pommel. Too often, riders sweep their legs behind them. Which rocks their bodies into a precarious position that's difficult to get out of if a horse capsizes. As a rule, in case of an emergency, eject from the saddle and get clear of your horse.
- **Downstream and Diagonal** – Anyone who's gone river walking knows that it's easiest to walk with the current, not upstream against it. The same goes for horses. As a four-legged animal, when a horse walks downstream its back legs break water for its front, creating a pocket of calm water for the front hooves to walk in. Use this to your benefit by fording in a diagonal direction downstream. If upstream is the only option, maintain a sharp diagonal bearing. The worst a rider can do is ride perpendicular to the current, which lets the river blast all for of the horse's legs.
- **Eyes Fixed Ashore** – Rushing water can give a rider vertigo. Dizziness is especially dangerous because it compromises your balance in the saddle and causes you to give your horse miscues with your reins. Combat vertigo by focusing on a fixed point on the far shore. If dizziness encroaches, take hold of the saddle horn and close your eyes.
- **Free Rein** – The worst thing a rider can do is use his reins to micromanage a horse's movement midstream. Fording is an exercise in trust; the horse can "feel" the riverbed, even if you can't see it. Give a loose rein, making only broad directional cues. At a certain point in a river crossing, a horse commits to getting across. Trust that he'll get you there. 🐾

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, 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.

Meeting Minutes

BCHW Special Board of Directors' Meeting

February 13, 2021, Held Virtual through Zoom

By Tina Short, BCHW Secretary

The meeting was called to order by President, Jason Ridlon. Roll Call attendance was taken and a quorum was present.

The agenda was adopted. As is the usual practice, items noted on the agenda were posted for Directors to read prior to the meeting on the BCHW Secure site. The main purpose of the special meeting was to review and approve changes in the bylaws and some standing rules to allow the BOD to meet virtually. Our previous bylaws did not account for the pandemic and the state-wide regulations/restrictions for not meeting in large groups.

A few things to note were:

The Executive Advisory Committee (EAC) 2020 Action report (Jason Ridlon and Ken Carmichael) discussed actions and recommendations taken in 2020 as BCHW BOD directors could not officially meet but BCHW still needed to continue with some business. Some of the main items acted upon with the support of EAC were (a) decision to drop YM (Your Membership) and have Dana Chambers (BCHW Membership chair) identify a new solution, which is JotForm, decision made to move forward with adjusting the executive directors duties to reduce the amount of admin and focus on grants/sponsorships based on that current existing contract.

Later in the year, the EAC reviewed the executive director position and determined that the best option was to break the position into 3 separate independent contractor positions. Smaller committees will develop job duties for these positions. Emails were sent to all BCHW membership notifying them of the opportunity to submit their applications. It was also posted on Facebook and the BCHW website. Two of the positions (Grants and Event Planner) are now filled by our independent contractor Jen Bond.

The EAC and Dick Yarboro reviewed the Washington Media Contract to make a cost-saving effort by designing a new contract that allows us to have 2 printed publications and 4 electronic versions of the Trailhead News. The new contract allows the opportunity to return or remain electronic in 2022.

Probably one of the largest sets of time spent by the EAC was on how to move the "proposed bylaw changes" forward given that the BOD could not meet in person and proposed the call of the February Special BOD meeting. The adoption at the Special BOD meeting of the proposed new bylaws allowed us to hold legal board meetings via electronic meetings.

EAC also recommended supporting the following standing rules: BCHW Contracts and Assets, Lifetime Memberships, and Timelines for Fiscal Year and Memberships. The most notable change about membership dues is starting in 2022 they will be due and payable by January 1 of each year. Any renewing member who does not pay prior to January 16 will be dropped from the membership rolls and their subscription to the Trailhead News will be canceled. Please contact your Chapter Director or Alternate if you need more details regarding the current bylaws and standing rules.

Treasurer Report (Teri Starke) the 2021 budget was approved as presented.

Alpine Lakes Chapter Funds (Teri Starke) history was pro-

vided regarding these funds. A motion was approved to move the restricted funds to the BCHW General Fund.

Willapa Hills Chapter dissolving (Ken Carmichael) provided information about the Chapter and a motion was approved to dissolve the chapter.

Governance/Bylaws (Ken Carmichael) reviewed the 2021 proposed Accountable Plan and Reimbursement Procedure and Taxable Income Payments to Volunteers Standing rule. Ken discussed the difference between mileage rates (business vs charity). He described the process of when a 1099 would be sent to volunteers for certain types of reimbursements that will be taxable. BCHW members who expect reimbursement for those specific items will need to submit a W9 at the beginning of the year unless they have a current one on file. Both the Accountable plan and the standing rule were approved by the BOD. For more details, contact your Chapter Treasurer or Chapter Director.

The following standing rules were approved by the Board: BCHW Standing Rule of Restricted Funds, BCHW Standing Rule of Youth Membership, Application of New Chapter Standing Rule, Standing Rule for Application of New Chapters from Sept 2010 are replaced, and Dissolving a Chapter Standing Rule. For questions regarding these items, email Ken Carmichael (Gov & Bylaws Chair) gov_and_bylaws@bchw.org

Nomination for BCHA Position #2 Director (Jason Ridlon) the term for Position #2 ended and then the position was filled temporarily by the Alternate BCHA Director (Doug Stewart). Jason asked for nominations from the BOD for position #2. Doug Stewart was nominated and was voted by inclination. Jason asked Directors to go back to their Chapters to find individuals who would like to run for the BCHA Alternate Director position that needed to be filled. He asked the Board to bring those nominations to the March BOD meeting.

Nomination Committee (Jason Ridlon/Ken Carmichael) informed the BOD that the majority of the BCHW head leadership (President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer) will all be stepping down at the end of 2021. Jason asked that a committee be created earlier than normal as so many positions will be open. The motion was passed to approve the appointment of the following Nominating Committee for 2021 BCHW Elections. The members are: Ken Carmichael, Lori Lennox, Dave Jackson, and Barb Thomas. If you are interested in running for one of the positions, please contact these individuals.

Good of the Order/Announcements:

Louise Caywood is working on an accomplishment video. Peninsula is looking for a new Chapter Director. Chuck Regimbal (Olympic) BCHW Safety Chair provided information about CPR training. He indicated a possible resource is your local fire department or there is training online cprcare.com. If you know of an interested individual who would like to be the BCHW First Aid/CPR Trainer, contact Chuck. BCHW has all the equipment. There was an extension on sawyer certifications. The timeline provided was until October 2021. Contact Tony Karniss or Tom Mix for questions regarding possible classes. Meeting adjourned at 10:35 a.m. 🐾



The Trailhead News BCHW
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Ellensburg, WA 98926-1132

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CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

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.

Trail Fund Raiser On-Line Auction

Saturday, May 8 thru June 20, 2021

(Mother's Day thru Father's Day)

On-line bids

Item: Blue Stained Pine Wooden Bench with Running Horses Carvings, seat 14" back 21" length 4'. disassembles for easy moving, comes with a Denali "Running Horses" Blanket 60" x 68"

Dana Chambers, BCHW will monitor & advance bids
Deb Wesselius:

360-736-6106 • wesselius@wildblue.net

Note: picture of bench will be avail. NLT April 25.
Contact Deb Wesselius for picture of comparable bench before then.

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 • 509.699.9927

Grays Harbor Chapter Fund Ride

Saturday, June 26

Green Diamond timberlands west of Matlock, WA
\$25 registration fee includes hot lunch, 1 ride coupon, and 2 prize tickets

Flier posted www.graysharborbchw.com/

Beth Branshaw,

bbranshaw@hotmail.com • 360-581-6535

Regional Work Party-Gifford Pinchot National Forest Keenes Horse Camp & Surrounding Trails

Thursday-Saturday, July 8, 9, 10, 2021

Location: Keenes Horse Camp

On-line Registration opens June 1st

Pass Required: NWFP

Camping: waiving camping fee

Meals: Register thru On-line Registration

Tony Karniss,

360-520-5697 • tkarniss@gmail.com

Note: RTP Grant Funding guidelines and documentation will apply.

Trail Fund Raiser - Garage Sale

Thursday-Saturday, July 8, 9, 10, 2021

Keenes Horse Camp

Pass Required: NWFP

Deb Wesselius, 360-736-6106

wesselius@wildblue.net

Note: lots of fun and useful things both new & slightly used, horse tack to household items bring cash!

Ponderosa Chapter Poker Ride

Sunday, July 11, 2021

First rider out 9:00

Raffle

Pre-registration by July 2 \$20

Register at ride \$25

Riverside State Park, Spokane

Camping available

Ken Carmichael 509-466-2225

Kcarmichael2225@gmail.com • www.pbchw.com

The 5th Annual Vicki Gish Memorial Ride

Friday-Sunday, July 23-25, 2021

Calispel Basin in the Colville National Forest out of Chewelah, WA out Sand Canyon Road

First riders out at 10am.

free camping, port-a-potties and stock water are available.

Saturday night is a potluck so bring your favorite dish to share.

Marian Carson, mca9590561@msn.com

509-999-1547.

Please contact before July 19 as after that she will be up at the Basin and there is very little cell service and no email available.

Regional Work Party-Wenatchee N. F., William O. Douglas Wilderness Cowlitz (Soda Springs) & Surrounding Trails

Thursday-Sunday, August 19 thru 22, 2021

Cowlitz Horse Ramp (Soda Springs)

On-line Registration opens July 1st

Pass Required: NWFP

Free, dispersed camping

Meals on your own, wilderness type setting

Tony Karniss or Slim Mardock,

360-520-5697 (Tony) or 360-520-5588 (Slim)

tkarniss@gmail.com or Almardock56@gmail.com

Note: RTP Grant Funding guidelines and documentation will apply.

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 • 509.699.9927