

BCH of the Virginia Highlands: Making a Difference in SW Virginia

By Nancy Sluys



In 1989 Hurricane Hugo raged through southwest Virginia wreaking havoc on the forests of the Mount Rogers National Recreation Area. The Forest Service was able to salvage millions of board feet of timber from the area surrounding a meadow on the Virginia Highlands Horse Trail. They erected an interpretive sign commemorating the event. The area became known locally as Hugo's Meadow and was a popular meeting and picnic spot for trail riders and hikers.

The sign, a beloved landmark, eventually rotted away and fell down, much to the dismay of area users. BCH member Linda Meyer took the initia-

tive to have a replica of the sign face made and dropped it off at the FS to be replaced. Because the FS did not have the time or manpower to complete the job, months later they asked the BCH of the Virginia Highlands (BCHVH) if we would take on the project. Retired sign man Bill Sluys crafted a frame around the sign face and a work day was proposed to erect the sign. At the same time, we planned to restore the meadow, which had become overrun with invasive autumn olive, briars and honey locust. The FS had stopped mowing meadows due to budget constraints.

BCHVH negotiated with the FS at

Mount Rogers to use their heavy equipment in the maintenance of trails. We were able to get this written into our volunteer agreement. The meadow restoration project seemed like the perfect project to test the waters. Members provided an excavator, two tractors, a pick-up truck and four UTVs to get the job done. Many hours went into planning the project hand-in-hand with the FS. The FS was not even on site for the project because they have so much trust in the abilities of BCHVH.

Twenty volunteers, including members of BCH Eastern Divide from Blacksburg, VA and Warrior Mountain BCH from Alabama, made the trek a

mile up the trail to the meadow and in a little over four hours cleared the 3-4 acre meadow, restoring it to its former beauty. The interpretive sign was erected for all to see and enjoy.

This project and another completed two weeks prior (clearing blocked culverts and improving drainage on the Virginia Highlands Horse Trail) were designed to commemorate National Trails Day. The BCHVH look forward to planning another project on the trails with the help of heavy equipment and hope to be an example that others can use when negotiating with land managers.



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Interested in Joining?

Contact BCHA or the organization nearest you for more information.

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Public Lands Update Great American Outdoors Act Becomes Law

By Randy Rasmussen, M.S., Director, Public Lands & Recreation

As many of you know, the **Great American Outdoors Act** was signed into law in early August (see BCHA's Summer 2020 and Spring 2020 newsletters for details about the Act). Thank you to those BCHA members and volunteers who reached out to their members of Congress to voice support for this important legislation. Thousands of organizations from across the nation rallied in support of the Act, which the Department of Interior, for example, described as "the most consequential conservation legislation that has been implemented in decades."

TAKE ACTION:

It is never too late to call your U.S. representative and senators to **thank them for passing the Great American Outdoors Act (GAOA)**. For contact information for your congressional representatives, go to: <https://www.govtrack.us/congress/members>

The GAOA will immediately steer significant resources to all federal land management agencies to address priority deferred maintenance needs, including trails. It will direct up to \$9.5 billion over 5 years to address the maintenance backlogs of the following agencies:

- National Park Service, 70% of funds (or \$1.33 billion/year)
- U.S. Forest Service, 15% of funds (or \$285 million/year)
- U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, 5% of funds (or \$95 million/year)
- Bureau of Land Management, 5% of funds (or \$95 million/year)
- Bureau of Indian Education, 5% of funds (or \$95 million/year)

It is the intent of this funding to be "additive" to year-to-year operational budgets approved by Congress (i.e., the appropriations process). Thus, BCHA and its allies will continue to prompt Congress to retain robust funding for agency operations during the appropriations process. We also will be prepared to raise a public hue-and-cry if Congress or the Administration propose funding cuts to these agencies under the guise of needing to "offset" funding gained via the GAOA.

Next Steps of GAOA Implementation

Year 1 of GAOA funding begins with the new fiscal year (October 1st). So, the recipient agencies already scrambled to line up, and secure approval for, projects that could begin immediately. As a result of the rush, one requirement was that projects selected for Year 1 GAOA funding must

be compliant with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). In other words, the agencies could only put forward projects that had either been cleared via the NEPA process or didn't require NEPA analysis. Often, trail maintenance and reconstruction fall into the latter category.

In response, the US Forest Service issued a preliminary list of projects in early September for public comment. See: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/managing-land/gaoa>

The list was divided into Forest Service regions and included many trials or trails-related projects. These projects comprised 37 percent of the deferred maintenance list of projects for Year 1.

TAKE ACTION:

This fall, the agencies will begin to develop their list of projects for the following fiscal year (Fiscal Year 2022, or Year 2 of GAOA implementation). **This represents an important opportunity for BCH chapters to compare notes with local federal land management leaders on what projects should be funded.** BCHA encourages your chapter to put forth its "priority deferred maintenance projects" for this and the remaining four years of GAOA funding and share it with your local agency contacts.

In the near future, we should expect the agencies to formally invite the public and stakeholders to submit their GAOA project nominations (for Years 2 through 5) by either holding public listening sessions or seeking formal written requests. With nearly five years remaining, there should be ample time to encourage the agencies to conduct and complete NEPA analysis for more complex trail maintenance and relocation projects.

We should not limit our thinking for GAOA projects to merely the realm of trail maintenance. The agencies might be amenable to projects that include expanding trailhead facilities, including better parking for our trailers! While the focus of GAOA funding will remain "priority deferred maintenance," packaging such maintenance with other logical and unmet "needs" is always a good idea.

My recommendation is to **start the necessary dialogue with local agency officials now.** Let them know that your chapter has specific ideas for GAOA funding. They already know that your chapter will be there to help with the heavy lifting. So, take advantage of the GAOA funding that will soon flow. This could represent a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for BCHA volunteers to help the agencies make significant strides toward reducing the deferred maintenance backlog. Make it work for you.

Alabama in the News: Wind Creek Cleanup

By Editor Sherry Jennings, PhD

On May 15, The Messenger newspaper featured the work of BCH and BCH member Chad Jones from Alabama. Staff writer Katie Bohannon reported how four Alabama chapters came together to clear the damage caused by a tornado in Wind Creek State Park in Alexander City. Downed trees on the horse trails prevented use of the trails in the park.

Twenty-four BCH members from the four Alabama chapters cleared approximately 20 miles of trails over the course of four days. Three trails were opened in one weekend alone. The post-tornado cleanup included trails used by hikers and bikers. Bohannon quoted Jones who said, "Wind Creek offers things for everyone. We go down there and camp and ride a lot. There are some folks who go with us who don't really ride, but they have a fishing pier and they can go swim if they want to, so they're not stuck at the camp by themselves. The trails at Wind Creek aren't just horse trails, they're multi-use trails." In appreciation, the park waived the fees for three nights of overnight equestrian camping for the entire group.

Certainly, the BCH Alabama members forged a great relationship with the park. But even more, they garnered some excellent publicity for BCH. Bohannon noted the work of BCH chapters across the United States and included these statistics, "In 2018, Back Country Horsemen of America volunteers spent 322,125 hours working to maintain trails on public lands—which equates to a value of 12.1 million dollars in trail work donated to local and federal land managing agencies. Since 1995, BCHA members contributed a value equal to 140.2 million dollars in volunteer hours." Bohannon's article included the mission of BCHA, its openness and inclusiveness to all who use the trails, and noted the BCHA website and Facebook page.



Photo: Pictured above, Duck Springs resident and Back Country Horsemen of America member Chad Jones and his horse Chief get set to clear debris from the equestrian trails at Wind Creek State Park in Alexander City. Photo courtesy of Ponda Jones.



View from the Chairman's Saddle

By Darrell Wallace, BCHA National Chairman

I hope you have been enjoying this riding season. With COVID-19 restrictions, it seems like riding is one of the few things we can do! In Washington state we have hot, dry conditions and wildfires are a big concern. I drove a tender – a truck that hauls and pumps 3,000 gallons of water – to several of them lately. In August, I did get to assist with a trail crew resupply pack trip. We packed about 500 pounds of food for a partner organization 19 miles in to the Pasayten Wilderness.

It's hard not to be excited about some new initiatives from BCHA – we will hold our first ever Members' Webinar November 9 through 12! Watch for an e-blast with details. Also, our Executive Committee approved the concept of assisting BCH states and chapters with financial agreements allowing them more involvement in addressing backlogged trail maintenance funded by the Great American Outdoors Act. You can read more about the GAOA in Randy Rasmussen's public lands update. BCHA is working on ideas for the GAOA that we plan to share during that Members' Webinar in November. Your state's National Directors have been urged to push for discussions within your state regarding what level of involvement your state and chapter will want to pursue.

I think we are all concerned about our BCH organization, when we can't even hold in-person meetings. But better times are coming, and we WILL persist.

Our transition to new management is going well. I am grateful for the cooperation of our state membership coordinators, who have helped Membership Data Coordinator Dana Chambers to rebuild our membership database so quickly. You may want to clip the inset box to help you quickly find who you want to contact at BCHA.

Happy Trails!

Darrell

✂ CLIP AND SAVE!



CONTACT INFORMATION

Updated 09/25/2020

Please contact the appropriate state representative first, thank you.

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1. Contact State Membership Coordinator
2. Not receiving your BCHA newsletter? Contact *Dana Chambers*, BCHA Membership Data Coordinator
memberdata@bcha.org or call 206-498-6952
3. Have an address change or going south for the winter?
Go to BCHA.org and click on the 'Membership' tab.
At the bottom of the page are the forms you can fill out to take care of that.

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1. Contact State PLC
2. *Randy Rasmussen*, BCHA Director, Public Lands & Recreation
WildernessAdvisor@bcha.org or call 541-602-0713

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1. Contact State Treasurer
2. *Mark Himmel*, BCHA Treasurer
markahimmel@gmail.com or call 406-781-8252

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1. *Michelle Wade*, Executive Administrator
michellewade@bcha.org or call 360-443-6996

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BCHA Mission Statement

1. To perpetuate the common sense use and enjoyment of horses in America's back country and wilderness areas.
2. To work to insure that public lands remain open to recreational use.
3. To assist the various government and private agencies in their maintenance and management of said resource.
4. To educate, encourage and solicit active participation in the wise and sustaining use of the back country resource by horsemen and the general public commensurate with our heritage.
5. To foster and encourage the formation of new state Back Country Horsemen's organizations.

Thank you to our Advocacy Partners:

- Equine Trail Sports
- Fannin County Equestrian Trails Association
- North American Trail Ride Conference (NATRC)
- North Carolina Horse Council
- Old Dominion Endurance Rides Inc.
- Pennsylvania Equine Council
- Walkers & Talkers Saddle Club

BCHA Advocacy Partners are organizations, alliances, and coalitions involved in a common goal of Keeping Trails Open. To learn more about your organization becoming an Advocacy Partner email Partners@bcha.org.

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BCHA Grants In Action

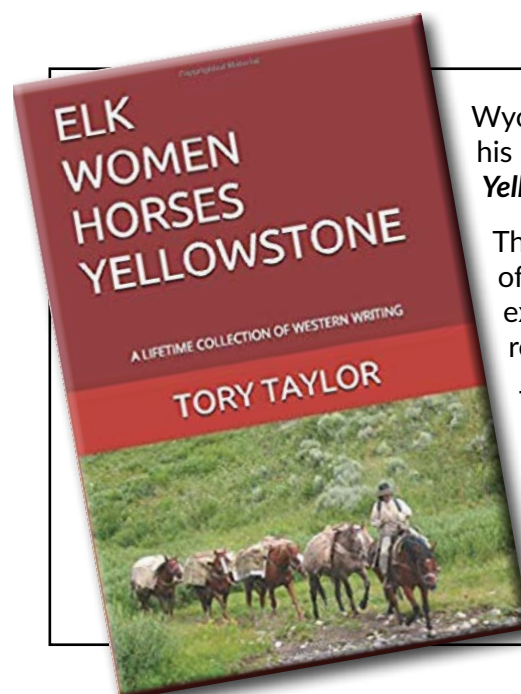
BCH Idaho Cache Peak: Third Annual Memorial Event

By Nancy Ady

On June 20, the Cache Peak Chapter of BCHI hosted our annual Trail Course and Challenge Event. This event included a free two-hour clinic and judged trail class open to all 4-H'ers in the morning. In the afternoon, an open clinic and trail challenge course were offered with an associated entry fee. Thanks to our grants from the Idaho Horse Board and BCHA, we were able to continue our mission to educate youth in horsemanship skills. These grants allowed us to hire a clinician and judge, with three top placing awards and an additional award for Most Improved this year for the 4-H participants. Each non-placing rider received a participant award.

We hired clinician Dana Lovell of Running T Horsemanship and judge Bonnie McBride. Each year the 4-H'ers receive individual attention on obstacles they are likely to see at their county fair class. The horsemanship lessons go much further than completion of an obstacle. One principle Dana taught was "The Power of the Pause" – a concept that encouraged each rider to regroup with their horse if their conversation turned argumentative. This was visible as young riders paused to relax instead of trying to force their horses through the obstacles.

We had ten 4-H participants and 26 adults in the afternoon. Our Secretary Mary Ann Shaff took the reins for organizing and implementation of the event and the rest of the chapter stepped up to fill needed work spots. Several members catered the event while others brought friends and family to volunteer where needed. Cache Peak dedicates this event to honor our members who have passed before us. Thank you BCHA for our 2020 grant!



Wyoming writer Tory Taylor announces his latest book, *Elk, Women, Horses, Yellowstone*.

The book is his lifetime collection of stories, essays, articles, poetry, excerpts from letters, and recollections.

Taylor and his wife, Meredith, recently retired from thirty years owning and operating a Yellowstone back country outfitting business.

available at

Mesa Verde BCH Preserving A Bit of History - Chapter 3!

By Tif Rodriguez



We did it! Mesa Verde BCH strikes again. We applied for a BCHA trails grant at the beginning of this year and were partially successful in our ask. The grant wasn't quite what we were hoping for, so we had to do some other fundraising efforts, but despite COVID-19 and the wonky year that is 2020, we were able to get this project done! Our grant asked for funds to help install a manure bin at the newly renovated Transfer Horse Camp in Mancos, CO on the San Juan National Forest. For those familiar who have been following this story, and those that are new to the game, check out these links for previous articles on this ongoing project.

<https://www.bcha.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/BCHA-winter-WEB-VERSION-final-1-2-19.pdf> - Page 6

<https://www.bcha.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/BCHA-winter-WEB-VERSION-FINAL.pdf> - Page 8

We ordered some concrete redi blocks for the project. The bin will be one block high for now. When I tell you these blocks are heavy, that's an understatement. Luckily some of our members have some heavy-duty equipment. Although the blocks don't look like much, they weigh about 1,720 pounds each. We ordered what our agency recommended and we picked up six. Our agency folks met us at Transfer and offloaded the blocks for us. They have been incredible to work with and are really trying to make this more of a destination site than it already is. For the most part, everyone is really happy and impressed with the new corrals. Some horses and their owners got to the site to camp right before we pulled in to unload the blocks. They couldn't thank all of us enough for what an awesome job that was and is being done.

The agency is adding two more corrals, approximately 16 feet x 12 feet each, one on each side of what's there, for those folks that have horses that need some alone time. That will make a total of seven corrals. Prior to the renovation, there were three. Can you believe it? Bryce, the FS employee in charge of campgrounds on our district,



has been busy upgrading the campground sites. There used to be four sites and a group picnic area. Now there will be five sites designated for horse camping. Each site has its own fire pit and picnic table. We are in negotiations on maintenance of the site, with details to be worked out. Signs have been ordered so folks will know where the manure bin is. Eventually a partnership sign will also be installed, showing our partnership with the Forest Service and Rocky Mountain, the concessionaire that helps manage the site.

What an accomplishment. Years in the making and partnerships is what it's all about.

Some rules of the road:

- Camping in designated sites only
- No highlining or electric fence within the campground
- Use designated corrals only
- Be sure to fill out and pay for use of the site with the designated drop-box
- Soon some sites will be reservable and some first come, first serve
- Please Leave No Trace
- Please clean up after your horse and you
- Please encourage non horse campers to use the campground across the road for those without stock
- If the campground is full, there is quite a lot of disbursed camping available nearby

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BCH Kansas - Teaming Up for Trail Work

By Cheryl Thomas, BCHKS Secretary

In a partnership, skills and resources are pooled to advance mutual interests. In the seven years since the Kansas chapter of BCHA was formed, many partnerships have been created across the state that have helped BCHKS pursue its mission to keep Kansas public trails open and assist public land managers with maintenance of these trails.

The majority of Kansas public equestrian trails and campgrounds are developed around U.S. Army Corps of Engineers lake projects. Several of these lakes already had Friends' groups that had assumed the responsibility of maintaining and improving trails and campgrounds. With the formation of BCHKS and membership in the organization, Friends' group members became part of a coordinated effort to keep a consistent record of volunteer work being done and assign a monetary value to it. Friends' groups partnered with BCHKS and led to the development of two regional BCHKS chapters, the Sunflower Chapter and the Saddle Ridge Chapter. BCHKS members often work alongside park rangers and staff when making campground and trail improvements.

A Kansas Horse Council board member was one of the founding members of BCHKS. Through his efforts, a Memorandum of Agreement was signed by both organizations that made BCHKS the official trails division of the Kansas Horse Council. The two organizations co-sponsor several rides each year that promote equestrian trails on Kansas public lands. Another result of this partnership provides BCHKS complimentary booth space at Equifest of Kansas, an annual 3-day equine expo, reaching between 10,000-15,000 spectators each year.

Two of the founding members of BCHKS are also board members of the Kansas Trails Council. Through this partnership, funding is available for maintenance expenses. The KTC also has equipment and several Trails in a Box equipment trailers that have been used at BCHKS work days. As a result of the KTC connection, two Stihl brush cutters were given to the Sunflower BCHKS Chapter by the Lawrence Mountain Biking Club.

In an effort to smooth over negative feelings about equine sharing trails with bicyclists and hikers on several rail/trails projects, Sunflower BCHKS members joined the Kanza Rail Trails Conservancy and worked alongside the cyclists and hikers on clearing sections of the Landon Trail. On several of those work days, equestrians outnumbered other trail users! Actively working alongside hikers and cyclists has gone a long way toward a mutual awareness and understanding of sharing the Kansas trail experience. Both the Landon Trail and the Flint Hills Trail, a 117-



mile trail nearing completion, are posting the trail sharing signs that BCHKS had made with funding from a BCHA Educational Grant.

Each year, the BCHKS Volunteer Hours Summary is shared with public land managers and officials in Kansas. These hours have been used as the matching portion of several Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks, and Tourism grants. The grants have funded the printing of the Equestrian Trails in Kansas guidebook to trails on public lands and the addition of shelter houses to two state park equestrian campgrounds.

Big Hill Lake, in southeastern Kansas, is managed by US Army Corps of Engineers. Through several Handshake Agreements with USACE, BCHKS has provided extensive work on Big Hill trails and has completely remapped and re-marked the trail system. As part of this agreement, BCHKS pledges \$500 in matching funds and 200 volunteer hours. A current project focuses on new maps of the lake and trails; a smaller map will be available for printed materials, and the larger map will be printed on metal at the major trailheads and include pictures and trail information. Funding is also allocated for machine trail clearing and maintenance and some weed control. The park manager has reported increased equine usage at Big Hill and credits partners like BCHA for the success and continued funding of these grants. The grants recognizes outstanding partnerships that work to

improve and protect parks and natural resources.

The Sunflower Foundation is a non-profit organization that partners with communities to promote healthy living and supports the work of leading trail organizations in Kansas. Through this partnership, BCHKS is invited each year to set up a display at the Trails Appreciation Day in the rotunda at the State Capitol in Topeka. This event takes place during the active legislative session, and representatives of the different organizations have an opportunity to visit with state dignitaries and promote the value and benefits of public trails in Kansas. BCHKS has also been invited the past several years to set up a display at the Friends of Lawrence Area Trails reception held annually and meet other trail advocates in the Ne Kansas area.

Kansas has several active endurance groups that are active through AERC, MODTRA, and NATRC. These members will often partner with BCHKS to keep trails maintained that are popular sites for endurance events. Local saddle clubs also pitch in and support trail work on the public lands in their areas.

If 'many hands make light work', the connections BCHKS has made with other trail advocates throughout the state have resulted in partnerships that have benefited a variety of trail disciplines in Kansas.

Endurance Ride!



Call for a free info packet!

American Endurance Ride Conference
AERC.org • 866-271-2372

Getting Youth Involved

By Greg Schatz, Chair BCHA Youth Committee
Back Country Horsemen of the Flathead, MONTANA

An old horseman Bill Dorrance once said, "What you think your horse will do, he will." A horse reflects the person riding it. I don't train horses, I ride horses. When I ride horses I always have a positive mindset that allows the horse to be successful. I've never trained a horse to cross a bridge. When I come to a bridge, I always make sure I'm thinking that my horse will cross that bridge. The second I think my horse won't cross that bridge, he won't. You can fight your horse all you want, but until you change your mind, and are sure that horse will cross that bridge, he won't.

So now you're wondering what this has to do with you. The Back Country Horsemen of Montana has always had a hard time keeping youth involved. I believe the reason for this is that there are way too many of us who have negative thoughts about youth. For over 30 years, I've heard from members that the reason we can't attract youth is because the cost of acquiring and keeping horses is too high and young people can't afford it. This is flat out wrong! I don't ever want to hear this in BCHMT circles again.

When Deborah and I were in our 20s we joined BCH and we heard those words from members. Darn right, we didn't have the money the old people had. This was our trailer (pictured above), we had five acres with a 380 square foot cabin and an 8' x 10' "barn". But you know what? We rode in the back country.

Regardless of the nay saying members, we rode.

Then after a year or two we got a pack horse and a three-horse trailer, more nay saying members, and we didn't listen to them, we packed.

About this time we went on a month long pack trip in the Bob with one pack horse. Man, did the nay saying members come out of the woodwork as we were getting ready to go on our trip. But you know what? We made the trip and had a great time. And since then we have packed somewhere in the neighborhood of 25,000 miles in the Bob.

Today I ride with young people. This past summer, everyone I rode with was under 35. You know what? They all had horses, a truck and trailer and a place to keep everything. Are their trucks and trailers the same as mine? No. Are their pastures the same as mine? No. Are their living arrangements the same as mine? No. But they ride and pack and they're darn good at it.

Of course, a lifetime later, as we are setting into retirement, we have more money to buy more stuff, more horses, more saddles, bigger and more trailers, more trucks, bigger house, more land and a bigger barn. The only reason we were able to get to this point is because we started out with that one janky trailer and a couple of range horses who got us into the back country. And we didn't listen to the nay saying members.

All of BCH needs to cross that bridge and change the mindset of our members so we never think that we can't attract youth because the costs are too high.



Greg is the chair of the BCHA Youth Committee. If you would like to participate or share your ideas with Greg, please contact him at gregschatzbuilder@gmail.com

WORKING WILDERNESS TRAILS

By Lorraine Farrell, BCH New Mexico Jemez Chapter

Mountains all white with glistening snow that covers the trails down below.
Soon Spring will arrive and melt the snow helping the streams start to flow.

As the snow slowly melts on the trails high up, trees start to show that covered them up.
The wind is unkind, but that's Nature's way; we'll chop and saw them, and pull them away.

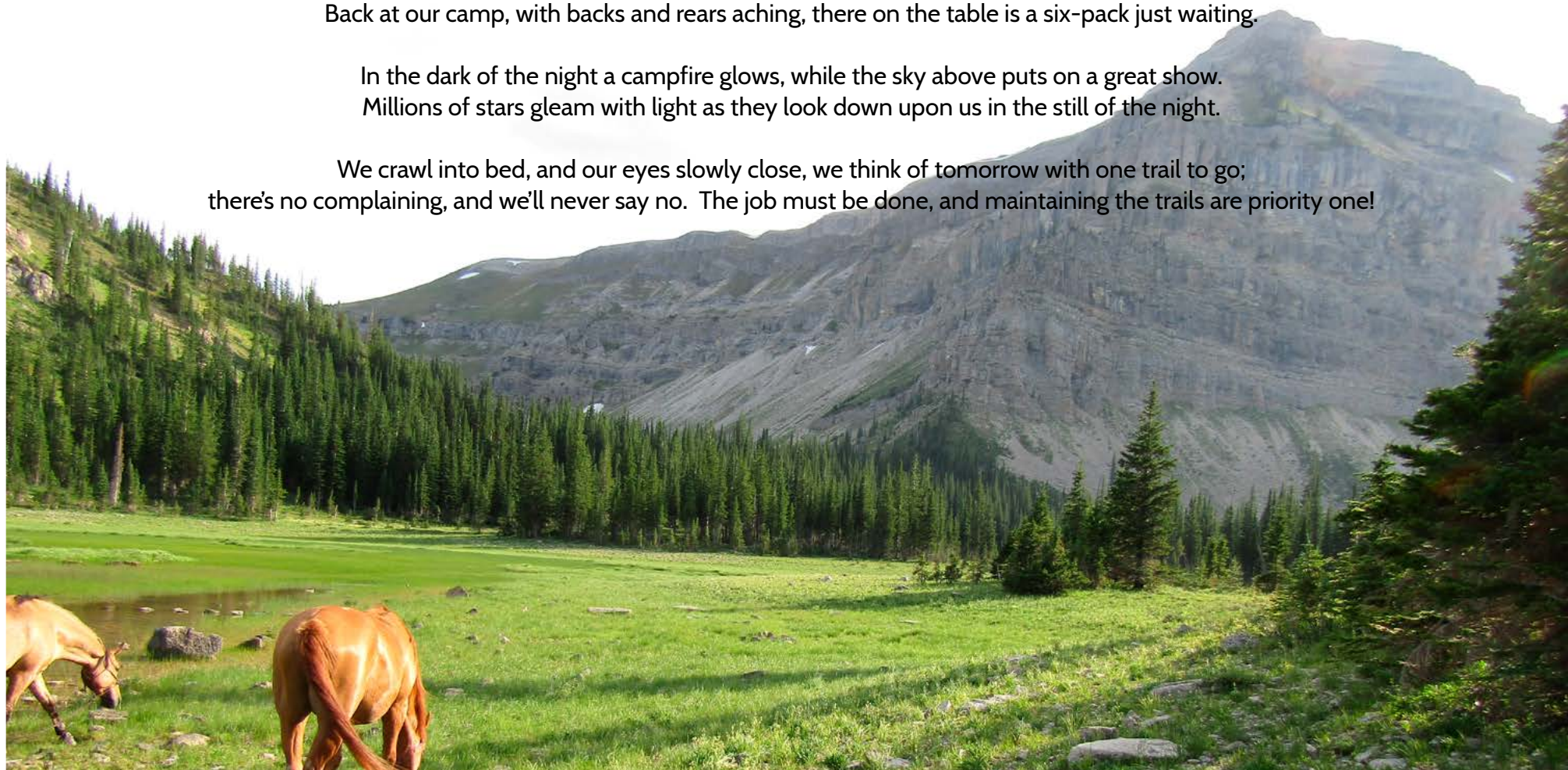
We pull into camp after our drive, our day to start work has finally arrived.
The horses get saddled, and the mules get packed, there's a trailhead to reach that we must be at.

It's been a long ride, now the trailhead's in sight.
We start up the trail counting downed trees, hoping this job will be a breeze.
What a stroke of good luck, only six trees must be cut!

Our work for today is finally done, now back to camp to have some fun.
Just ahead and around the bend our eyes see a welcoming sight!
It's our camp's just ahead in the fading sunlight.
Back at our camp, with backs and rears aching, there on the table is a six-pack just waiting.

In the dark of the night a campfire glows, while the sky above puts on a great show.
Millions of stars gleam with light as they look down upon us in the still of the night.

We crawl into bed, and our eyes slowly close, we think of tomorrow with one trail to go;
there's no complaining, and we'll never say no. The job must be done, and maintaining the trails are priority one!



A note from Tif Rodriguez, BCHA's fundraising chair

As I am, are you wondering when things will be normal again? Is it possible? Or will there be a new normal? What will that look like? Nonprofits have been impacted nationwide and BCHA is no exception. Rest assured, members, not the Coronavirus nor wildfires nor hurricanes will stop our commitment to you.

My apologies for being out of touch during our transition, but we kicked off our National Public Lands Day campaign and we are excited at the prospect of sharing why our members are passionate about their public lands. We are living in extraordinary times, but the beauty of BCHA is that we adapt and overcome. No matter what the picture looks like now, a month from now or a year from now, BCHA will remain because of our work and the extraordinary commitment of our members.

Please consider contributing to our BCHA Spur fund during our National Public Lands Day campaign when we need it most. You can do this on our website at bcha.org or on our [Facebook page](#). All Spur contributions go directly and 100% to our operating costs. Please note that President Darrell Wallace wrote to you last issue that we're working as lean as possible to make your dollars go further. You can also set up a recurring donation so it's taken out every month automatically.

As an option, you can donate to our Trails Forever Fund – 30% goes to our BCHA Grants Committee for chapter and state trails projects. You may also want to choose a commitment to our Legacy Fund, which is dedicated to "Keeping Trails Open For Future Generations." All funds accept a one-time donation or a monthly recurring option, that ensures your impact continues all year long.

Even in these uncertain times, our work continues and your support is vital. Thank you.

- Scan the QR code to make a donation, or
- Visit BCHA.org to make a one-time or recurring donation, or



- Mail your donation to:
BCHA
PO Box 1182
Columbia Falls, MT 59912-1182
- Be sure to tag us in your social media posts
#BCHA, @BCHofAmerica



MAINTAINING ACCESS FOR YOU

Sp Adobe Spark

GUARDIANS OF THE TRAILS

The guardians are those who have named the Legacy Fund in their will and shared with us.

Please consider a bequest to support the future financial security of BCHA.



Contact us at fundraising@bcha.org
All inquiries are private and confidential

Including BCHA Legacy Fund in My Estate Plan

By Edith Conyers, Kentucky BCH

My parents rode horses, so I am a lifelong horse person. My father loved the west. Many of my summers were spent at various guest ranches in Montana, Wyoming and Colorado. My mother loved the west as well, plus fox hunting and trail riding in Ohio where I grew up. I had horses in my life both summer and winter and I rode both English and Western.

As a teenager, I took my first of seven pack trips into the Bob Marshall Wilderness. All seven were 8-10 day trips and the latest one was in 2019. That first trip certainly instilled in me a great love for public lands, wilderness and the trails associated with those areas.

I have been a member of BCHA for about 15 years. Initially, I was member of a Virginia chapter because Kentucky did not have any chapters. When a group of Kentucky trail riders and volunteers decided to start a chapter, I was the first president of Central Kentucky BCH. In a few more years, Kentucky chartered two more chapters. I was tasked with forming a Kentucky State BCH Organization. I became the

first president of the state organization, KyBCH. Along with forming the first chapter and then the state organization, I became one of the BCHA national directors from Kentucky for quite a few years.

Now nearing the beginning of my octogenarian decade, I am continuing to relish my love of the outdoors and the opportunities that equine trails on Public Lands have offered. I believe in the BCHA mission. I was quite involved in starting and getting the Legacy Fund established. I believe strongly that BCHA must plan for its long-term future.

Now I will remember BCHA by including the Legacy Fund in my estate planning to help to keep trails open forever. I hope that my Legacy gift commitment will help future generations continue to keep trails open forever.

If anyone would like to know a bit more about my background, go here for a radio interview: <https://www.horseradionetwork.com/2011/11/02/equestrian-legends-episode-9-horse-woman-edith-conyers/>

