



Back Country Horsemen of Alaska

Annual Report 2023

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The two chapters of Back Country Horsemen of Alaska had a busy and productive year in 2023.

In cooperation with agencies ranging from the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge, Chugach National Forest, Alaska State Parks, Kenai Peninsula Borough, Matanuska Susitna Borough, to non-profit organization Alaska Trails our members have attended meetings advocating for continued equestrian access to existing trails, planning for future trails and their use, as well as sharing proper trail etiquette strategies for all user groups. We continue to advocate with Chugach National Forest for horse corrals at cabins, horse friendly campgrounds and parking, safe bridges and proper trail etiquette signs as they rebuild from the devastating 2019 fires.

Volunteer hours were spent by both chapters on trail upkeep as well as establishing new trails. The Kasilof Equestrian Trails on the Kenai Peninsula (with help from the BCHA grant) received new signage with trail maps, as well as establishing new loops to ride. Memorial benches and picnic tables were built and placed on pullouts on the trail. In October a 2acre parking area and access road were cleared by our volunteers for future permanent access to these trails in coordination with the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge. A total of \$67,429.14 of in-kind volunteer hours were reported in 2023.

The Kenai Peninsula Chapter hosted an online Trail Challenge with a total of 5373 miles ridden in our short riding season, with a festive Fall Frolic obstacle course ride to celebrate the end of the challenge and distribute awards. This activity brought in riders that were not previously members. The Mat-Su chapter partnered with 4H to offer a series of 3 trail trials with obstacle clinics in the AM and trials in the PM. Next year they are looking to host an informal competitive trail ride.

Much appreciation is given to all the volunteers that made these events happen. In 2024 we plan to continue these activities while working to grow our membership and continue using and enjoying the back country trails that we love.

Carol Marsh, President

