

Photo by Kari Schiffman, Bitter Root BCH

Decker Dispatch



Words Really Matter

By Kirsten Pabst, Secretary of the Missoula Back Country Horsemen

Gemma Troy summed it up in one plain sentence: Remember your words can plant gardens or burn whole forests down.

One of our greatest challenges as an organization is sustainability. A recurrent theme we hear at state and local meetings is how to grow our membership so that our mission endures into perpetuity, for our children and grandchildren and their children. For our mission to become legacy, it is imperative that we focus on recruiting, welcoming and—most importantly—new members.

How do we do that?

The best way to garner interest is to provide lots of opportunities—volunteer, educational, or just fun—for all skill levels and to include people with and without stock. When someone new shows up, go out of your way to welcome them and introduce them to other members. Be respectful when communicating and avoid inappropriate humor, personal questions, and politics, because that is the fastest way to make sure someone doesn't come back. They probably won't confront you about it—you'll just never see them again. Also remember that as a longstanding member, young, shy or new recruits are intimidated by your vast experience. Approach them with a smile and friendly "hello" every time.



Stay in touch with new members and interested people. Understand that making people feel welcome must be intentional and takes effort. It isn't enough to call once. It is about developing trust in a new person and following through, over and over. Soon enough your efforts will pay off and that newbie will be the next old-timer out recruiting new members too.

Finally, we should consider shifting our approach from teaching—telling others what we know—to mentoring, which focuses on relationships. Mentors guide by showing, demonstrating, and providing feedback.

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OUR PURPOSES

- To perpetuate the common sense use and enjoyment of horses in America's back country, roadless back country and wilderness areas.

- To work to ensure that public lands remain open to recreational stock use.

- To assist the various government and private agencies in their maintenance and management of said resource.

- To educate, encourage and solicit active participation by the general public in the wise and sustaining use of the back country resource by horses and people commensurate with our heritage.

- To foster and encourage formation of new state Back Country Horsemen organizations.

- To seek out opportunities to enhance existing areas of recreation for stock users.

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Words Really Matter

By Kirsten Pabst, Secretary of the Missoula Back Country Horsemen

[continued from front page]

Mentors impart their wisdom and practical insight to encourage learners to develop their own skill set.

I've been blessed to have mentors like Gary Salisbury, Randy Velin and Dan Harper helping me become a better horseperson and public lands advocate. They are

my heroes and the reason I am proud to be an active part of the Missoula chapter. When we invest in people and use our words scrupulously, we are not just planting gardens, we are ensuring that the great work of the Back Country Horsemen will endure long after we are gone.

Packing Planks

By Jim Thramer, Back Country Horsemen of the Flathead



The Spotted Bear Ranger District in the Flathead National Forest had contacted our chapter earlier in the year about packing in 50 planks for a trail puncheon to Danaher Meadows in the Bob Marshall Wilderness. It's a 23 mile one-way trip and since the treated planks weigh about 35 to 40 pounds each, it will require two planks per side of stock and 13 pack stock. Six of our members stepped up to pack the planks but on three separate days due to personal scheduling. We knew our stock needed to be in the best shape for the 8+ hour day so we put in several conditioning miles prior to the plank trip. We all had permission to stay at Danaher Cabin overnight.

Greg Schatz and Elle Eberts made the first trip in using six pack stock on Saturday, June 1st, and came out the next day with no problems. They packed the planks using the barrel hitch because of the four foot length, and also because they knew of narrow trail conditions—one small section of trail past a very narrow rock outcropping that pushed against the load and a good drop off on the opposite side of the

trail. That section needs a little TNT or TLC.

On Sunday, June 3rd, Steve Barker and his wife Verna left to head in with three stock loads of planks and they chose to basket hitch their loads. They had no problem with the outcropping, returning the next day.

Tony Sadino and I left on Tuesday, June 5th, with five pack stock carrying the remaining 14 planks, which left us one side of a pack horse for our personal gear and a fishing pole. We planned on an extra day in to enjoy life's pleasures. Both being in our sixties found us remembering what sitting in a saddle for 23 miles in one day feels like. We barrel hitched our loads and headed to The Danaher, stopping a couple times to adjust our loads and finally reached the unloading pile about 7 pm. The old cabin looked great about 8pm with freeze dried dinners and a bunk bed. Wednesday was a day of much needed rest, relaxation and exploring and a little fishing in the evening. Mosquitoes were annoying but bug spray helped. We headed out on Thursday trouble free.

Letter from the Chair

By Sherri Lionberger
Chair, BCH Montana

First and foremost, I would like to say thank you for putting your trust in me to lead this great organization. I will do my best to continue the good work by so many past chairs and board members, and will rely on them for input and advice. I am very "open door" so please call or email me with any concerns or issues that you may have. A big thanks also to Connie Long for approaching me several years ago about taking on the treasurer position – I would not be sitting in this position without her interest and encouragement.

I would also like to extend a huge THANK YOU to Rich Carl. He has done a great job leading this organization over the last two years, but his patience and knowledge to work through this rather trying time in 2020 has been extraordinary.

A huge reason we are able to be very successful in our mission is because of the strong advocacy, interest and hard work from all of our

members. It is likely this will continue to be a strange and trying year to work with our local partners and land management agencies as we all work within the protocols for the Covid19 pandemic. As I write this, we don't have consistency between USFS districts on how to operate, but it appears that the authority for these decisions is at the district level. Please be patient with everyone, keep communication lines open and stay positive and safe!

And last, a thank you to our two new executive committee members Wade Murphy and Matt Pederson. I'm looking forward to working with them, as well as our amazing secretary Keni Hopkins who has agreed to continue on in her position.

Hope to see you on the trails.

Sherri

Contact Sherri at lionsden01@mt.net



What Do You Do If Everyone Has Cabin Fever?

By Greg Schatz, Back Country Horsemen of the Flathead

After our Back Country Horsemen of the Flathead packing clinic last spring, our friends who pack for the Spotted Bear Ranger District suggested having our annual packing clinic in February, instead of May. Their idea was that everyone will be ready to get out of the house and that it would still be too wintery to ride here in the northwest part of Montana. They were right. We had about 85 people attend, have a great time, and learn some things about packing stock in the remote Bob Marshall Wilderness.

To encourage people to come who might not have a lot of stock experience, we had the Trailmeister, Robert Eversole, open and close the day with seminars on lightweight camping gear and navigation in the back country. Like Robert says, he provides easy access to entry-level packing, but the packers from Spotted Bear live and breathe the hard stuff, something to aspire to once a horseman gains knowledge, experience and confidence.

The packers from Spotted Bear did a great job showing everyone how they mantle loads and pack

stock in the largest Wilderness ranger district in the lower 48 states. We had several Back Country Horsemen members who were able to help, so there was time for everyone to practice mantling, saddling and loading mules.

While we had everyone's attention, we held a Defensive Horse Safety clinic on Sunday. Defensive Horse Safety is required by Region 1 of the US Forest Service for volunteers who want to work around stock on projects. We had the Trailmeister open and close with seminars, and two veterinarians from LaSalle Equine Clinic showed us how to bandage our stock in the backcountry, take care of wounds, and know what to look for if you think your horse isn't feeling good when you're in the back country. We also had BCHF members share what they bring in their first aid kit and a few horse training tips.

We also had the Bob Marshall Wilderness Foundation and Montana Wilderness Association host info booths for the guests. Events such as these help ensure that the tradition of packing in the back country will be around for future generations.



Guy Zoellner of the US Forest Service demonstrates packing techniques.

Do You See What I See?

By Stacie G. Boswell, DVM, DACVS

When working with our horses or mules, it is critical that we understand what they can see. Their ability to focus and to detect light, color, and distance is different from our vision. These differences can result in confusion about why a horse is afraid of something he sees. We need to be aware of the differences so that we can set our animals up for success in doing what we ask.

Horses' eyes are different from human eyes, and from other animal eyes. The way they see is highly adapted for who they are - they are a prey animal, and spend the majority of their time grazing. Since other animals attack and eat horses, it's critical for survival that he detect any new threats in his environment early.

Color Perception

Horses can see color, but not as vibrantly as humans. Generally, their world is muted. They also only see blues and greens or yellows. That bright red bucket - it looks brown to your horse.

Light Perception

Horses have a *tapetum lucidum* in the back of their eye. This is a specialized, reflective surface in the back of the eye. Light enters the eye, stimulates the sensory cells of the retina, then is reflected back by the *tapetum* in order to stimulate the retina again. This is how dogs, cats, and horses all see very well in low levels of light. When you shine a light in the dark at your pets' eyes, you'll see the bright reflection caused by the *tapetum*.

Although your horse's ability to detect light is excellent, it takes a very long time for him to adjust to changing light. You know how it feels to step from bright sunlight into a dark barn - it takes a second for your eyes to adjust. Your horse needs about eight times as long to adjust. When he hesitates, it may be because he is temporarily blinded as his pupils adjust from bright light to darkness.

Eye Shape

Horses have eyes that are larger than any other land mammal, and they are set wide. They have horizontal pupils, which helps them see a wide range, almost the entire horizon. But, because they are set wide, horses do not have great depth perception. They cannot judge distance very well.

Focus

Focus is also known as accommodation. Because of the large size, focus takes more time. Much of what a horse sees at any given time is blurry. If he needs to see something up close more clearly, he may lower his head. For example, many animals need to lower their head and inspect footing before getting in a trailer. If given the opportunity to do so, trailer loading can be a smoother process.

Despite the world being somewhat fuzzy, there is a special cluster of cells in the retina that helps a horse detect motion. Motion is the first sign of a predator, so

that is why horses will spook when something moves unexpectedly.

Check out this video:

<https://www.horsenation.com/2017/08/03/thursday-video-as-seen-by-the-horse/>

Next time you lead your horse in a new area, or have him hesitate on the trail, remember to be patient. Understanding how horse vision is different will help you work with your horse or mule more successfully, especially when loading in trailers or introducing new objects. Allow his eyes to adjust, or let him lower his head for closer inspection. He sees his world in an entirely different way!

Dr. Stacie G. Boswell and her husband Sid are members of the Gallatin Valley BCH. Look for her upcoming book, *The Ultimate Guide for Horses in Need*, a handbook to help with horse care tailored especially for rescue horses. She can be reached at stacie@stacieboswell.com.



Image 1: Close-up of a horse's eye. He has *heterochromia*, with a portion of his iris being a different, blue color. Photo by Susan Conner of Three Forks, MT.



Image 2: A horse closely inspecting new footing before stepping forward onto it. Photo by Stacie Boswell.



National Director's Column

By Mark Himmell (Charlie Russell BCH)
National Director, BCH Montana

With the challenging times we are facing, we sometimes think our personal problems are unique. Well, they're not. No matter which BCH state I chat with, the issues are the same. Just change the state or chapter name and it's the same.

Earlier this year BCHA was faced with issues about the National Convention, to have it or not? Safety issues for our members. Sound familiar? Same thing we were faced with at the state level. BCHA decided to hold a Zoom meeting., I was not familiar with this, but soon became an avid user.

BCHA zoom convention was a 3-day success in that we were able to have 87 members on one call and got our business accomplished efficiently. Voting for officers and directors progressed with no problems. Officers elected were Chairman Darrell Wallace (WA), Vice Chair Sherry Copeland (MO), and Treasurer Mark Himmell (MT). Elected to the Executive Committee were Director Dennis Serpa (CA) and Craig Allen (UT), and non-director Tom Thomas (NC).

Financially BCHA is in a strong cash position, end of year donation campaigns were very successful. Membership nationally is 12,028 members, with 207 chapters in 31 states. Our organization grew to 32 states when South Carolina was voted into BCHA during our business meeting.

Nine of the active committees submitted reports which our State Secretary has access to for your use. I encourage you to read those reports when you have a moment.

BCHA will be very active this summer and I'll be giving you a mid-summer report. Any questions give me a call, Mark Himmell 781-8252.

Photographers:

Remember to take photos at the highest resolution possible. Then, attach your photos to your email as separate .jpg files. Do not imbed your photos within your Word documents.

Schedule for chapters' news article submissions

E-mail to: deborah.bcha@gmail.com

Fall issue: articles due September 5th

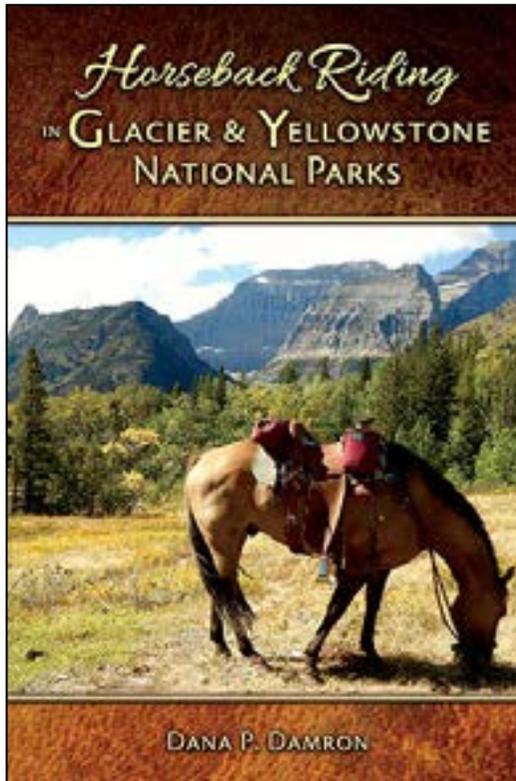
Last Chance, Mile High, Missoula, Northwest Montana, Selway-Pintler Wilderness, and Trout Creek.

Winter Issue: articles due January 5th

Beartooth, Bitter Root, Cabinet, Mission Valley, Three Rivers, Upper Clark Fork, Wild Horse Plains, and convention hosting chapter.

Spring Issue: articles due May 5th

Charlie Russell, East Slope, Flathead, Gallatin, and Judith Basin.



Dana P. Damron shares his expertise and insights on riding on some of the most scenic trails in the world. The Parks' vast trail systems were created with horse riders in mind. This guidebook is designed for novice and experienced horseback trail riders alike; with detailed information about the best trails for horses, trailhead parking, and tips for a safe and enjoyable ride for both horse and rider.

Available for \$15.95 from
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Help Fund the BCHMT Youth Program

In the past, the youth program has been funded by BCHMT members and chapters. But, when the convention was cancelled, we weren't able to have items in the live and silent auctions to fund our program. If you buy the book directly from Greg, \$9.98 will go to fund the youth program and we have a donor who will match that money.

A WILD LAND ETHIC

The Story of Wilderness in Montana

Co-Editors: Dale A. Burk and Wayne Chamberlin

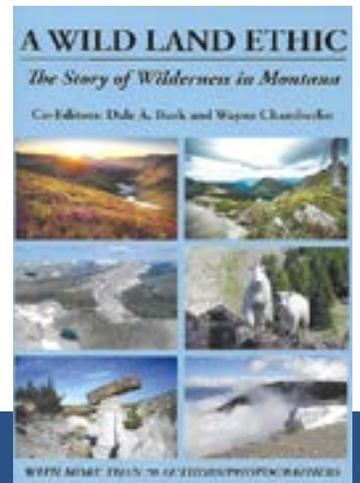
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This new anthology features first-hand accounts from the front lines of wilderness advocacy in Montana. Contributions from over 30 photographers and 40 authors including BCHMT members Greg Schatz and Smoke Elser illuminate the history of wilderness areas across the state. Content ranges from writings on "Idealism Touching the Earth," to "Native Americans and Wilderness," and "Public Lands." Truly a book that will inspire you to protect the legacy and majesty of Montana's wild places. Get one, give one!



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USDA Forest Service announces challenge to increase focus on problems facing nation's largest public trail system

Press Office, (202) 205-1134, WASHINGTON, FEBRUARY 11, 2020

USDA Forest Service Chief Vicki Christiansen today emphasized the need to find innovative ideas to tackle the nearly \$300 million maintenance backlog on the nation's largest public trail system. Christiansen called on individuals and organizations to work with the agency to address trail maintenance and sustainability to improve access, keep people safe, and support local economies.

"In 2019, organizations and individuals contributed more than 1.5 million hours on the maintenance and repair of more than 28,000 miles of trail, and we are extremely grateful for their continued support and hard work," Christiansen told trail advocates during a meeting at Forest Service Headquarters. "However, we must find more ways to erase the backlog. We still have much more work to do, and this is our call to organizations and individuals to share with us innovative ideas and boots-on-the-ground help."

The agency hopes to expand its employee, grassroots, nonprofit and corporate support as part of a 10-Year Trail Shared Stewardship Challenge. Roughly 120,000 miles of the 159,000 miles of trails are in need of some form of maintenance or repair. Working within current appropriations, the agency has strategically focused its approach to trail maintenance, increasing trail miles improved from 48,800 miles in 2013 to

58,300 miles in 2019.

Christiansen shared the multi-layered challenge with agency partners visiting Washington, D.C., to attend the weeklong 23rd annual Hike the Hill, a joint effort between the Partnership for the National Trail System and the American Hiking Society. Hike the Hill helps to increase awareness and highlight other needs of the National Trails System. The National Trails System consists of 30 national scenic and historic trails, such as the Appalachian National Trail and the Nez Perce (Nee-Me-Poo) National Historic Trail, both of which pass through lands managed by the Forest Service.

The agency manages about 10,000 miles of national scenic and historic trails that cross forests and grasslands. More than 32,000 miles of trail are in wilderness areas. The remainder range from simple footpaths to those that allow horses, off-highway vehicles, cross-country skiing and other types of recreation.

The trail maintenance backlog limits access to public lands, causes environmental damage, and affects public safety in some places. Deferred maintenance also increases the costs of trail repair. When members of the public stop using trails, there could be a residual effect on the economics of nearby communities. Recreation activities on national forests and grasslands support

148,000 jobs annually and contribute more than \$11 billion in annual visitor spending.

In addition to trails, the agency is working to address more than \$5.2 billion in infrastructure repairs and maintenance on such things as forest roads, bridges, and other structures that are critical to the management of agency lands and that benefit visitors and communities. The backlog on forest roads and bridges alone is \$3.4 billion.

To get involved with the Trail Challenge you may:

- Contact the nearest forest or grassland office to get more information on what they are doing locally.
- Join or organize a coalition of citizens and work with the agency to address the issues.
- Be mindful of how you use the trails by using Leave No Trace and Tread Lightly outdoor ethics standards.

For more information, email fst-railmanagement@usda.gov. National organizations or corporations can get more information about becoming a Forest Service partner by contacting Marlee Ostheimer, National Forest Foundation Conservation Partnership Manager, at 406-542-2805 or mostheimer@nationalforests.org.



North Fork of Birch Creek Historic (Original) Trail

By Fred Fitzpatrick, East Slope Back Country Horsemen

In 2018 as reported in the Decker Dispatch we mentioned that we were looking at reestablishing a historic trail for another access into the back country. As I have done a lot of research on this particular trail I thought it might be of interest to our fellow back country horsemen as to the how and why this trail had come into being and what had happened to it and that it was never maintained.

As most of us have done much trail work and looked at older forest maps, we have come to realize that there are a lot of older historic trails that have just been left off maps and never seen again and thus over the years have never been used and just disappear for the most part as vegetation grows on trail tread from no use, hiding the trail forever.

And, as we are also aware, it is impossible for the Forest Service to always maintain these older, less used and forgotten trails due to the fact that they do not have the resources or people power. So as stated earlier we were asked to maybe investigate finding and reestablishing this trail.

The first place that I started looking was none other than Google Earth. Now do not laugh unless you have used or seen Google Earth. It can be a very worthwhile and not to mention extremely versatile tool.

As I began doing some looking on Google Earth I actually found what appears to be an actual junction off the main trail that crosses behind Swift Reservoir and links the South and Middle Forks of Birch Creek trail with the North Fork of Birch Creek trail. This particular junction I have ridden by many times and never even noticed it before.

So, using a mapping program along with the coordinates given by Google Earth, I was able to pass the information on to Bob Hermance who was going to be leading a trail crew of ours into the area. Thus, with the coordinates that I had given Bob, he and his crew were able to find the junction and mark it. Having the junction marked they were able to follow parts of the old trail tread in places, but it eventually faded into

obscurity, thus losing the trail.

So, anyway Bob reported back to me what happened, and I said I would try and possibly find the other end of the trail, and then see if we could possibly hook the two points together. Well, using Google Earth again proved to be unrevealing as I could not make out where the trail came out and hooked back up with the original North Fork of Birch Creek trail.

With some research and finding a website where I could procure some old forest maps, I was able to come up with two different maps for the area in question. The two maps are Heart Butte Topo 1914 and Heart Butte Topo 1918. I ended up using the 1918 topo map as it showed better detail and I have reproduced a scan and drawn where the original trail was for your reference.

So as I became aware by studying these older maps it came to my attention that the trail we were trying to find and reestablish was none other than the original North Fork of Birch Creek trail that would eventually take you up and over the Continental Divide at Badger Pass.

As you can see by the subsequent map, it shows Swift Reservoir with two visible Islands. This also got me to thinking that the original dam washed out in June 1964 due to heavy rains in the area on top of heavy snow pack. The new concrete dam, built in 1966 and dedicated in 1967, was higher than the previous earthen dam that it replaced and subsequently flooded the two islands for the most part (although they can be seen in low water periods). And also hidden were parts of the original trail shown on the 1918 topo map.

Also I found out there were no trails on either side of Swift Reservoir in 1918 and the only way to access the North Fork of Birch Creek trail was from using the trailhead at the North Fork of Dupuyer Creek. There was a ranger station at the North Fork of Dupuyer Creek which you can see on the original topo map.

It is also noted that the original trail shown on the 1918 topo map

never ventured onto the Blackfeet Indian Reservation. So in later years newer trails were established along the south side of Swift reservoir and a single lane road was established on the north side of Swift Reservoir which was used for seismology exploration and later the establishment of an oil well on the Blackfeet Indian Reservation. This road would later add a trail that would hookup to the original North Fork trail.

As these newer trails came into existence and with the added water level of the reservoir a newer trail was established from the South Fork of Birch Creek to the North Fork of Birch Creek and this is where the original trail that we are trying to reestablish became lost or no longer used. And this was where I also have a hard time understanding why whomever designed and built the trail would have chosen the crossing site that they did, because the spot where they put the crossing on the North Fork of Birch Creek is in a terrible spot and the crossing itself is narrow and the water is deep and inaccessible during high water.

I presented this question to an uncle of mine who has pretty vast knowledge of the area in question and he told me that there was a suspension type bridge on that trail in the early years. Although I have been unable to verify the bridge's existence, it does answer a few questions as I have looked at how the trail is in that area and it would make more sense if there were a bridge there. It would answer the question of the existing crossing being in an unfavorable place and as to why the trail goes right through a spring area, thus if there had been a bridge none of these problems would have been a factor.

My thinking is that the bridge had been washed out some time or possibly even as late as the 1964 flood and subsequent dam break. And, just as with a downed tree in the trail, some trail user would pick a spot around the obstacle and after a few trips you have a different trail. This is what I propose happened at this

area. After finding the bridge washed out and not wanting to turn around and go all the way back, a new trail and crossing was established by further use. I have seen vast flooding in the North Fork of Birch Creek even in more recent time as by evidence of the high-water marks along the North Fork of Birch Creek corridor.

Anyway we were able to find a suitable crossing on the North Fork of Birch Creek and what we assumed would have been a likely spot for a trail up the opposite bank. Now that I have traced it with my GPS and studied the trail on the map, I am pretty sure that we are not at the right spot for the crossing yet. I have determined that the original trail did not cross the Blackfeet Indian Reservation boundary, and as I have looked at the spot that we actually assumed the crossing was by layering it on the map, it shows our crossing is in fact on the Blackfeet Reservation.

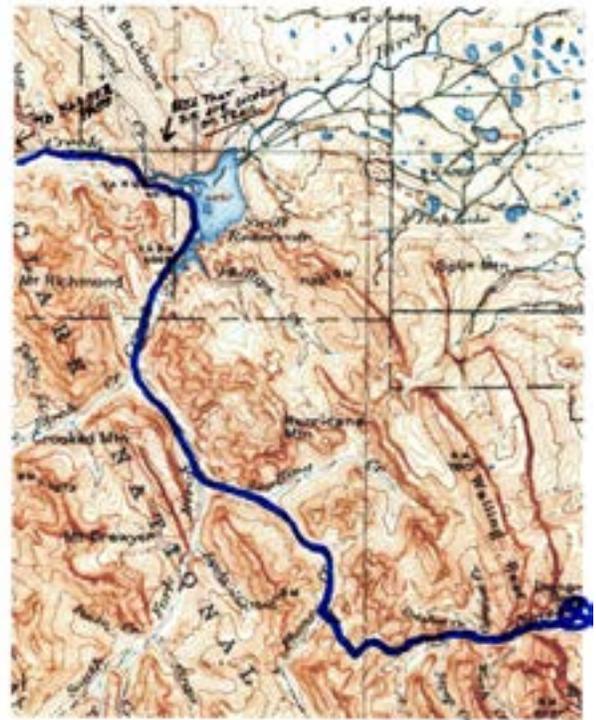
As I look back at the questions that have risen from this undertaking I wish I would have had the opportunity to ask my grandfather about it, as he hunted and packed in the area with his brother and friends from Dupuyer. They once trailed twenty-eight head of horses from Dupuyer to Swift Dam and packed up the North Fork trail into Cox Creek on the west side of the Continental Divide to go elk hunting. Unfortunately, none of these old timers are available to answer some of these questions. If only I would have had the fortitude to have been able to ask the questions to the answers that I am seeking now.

Maybe this summer we will be able to find the right trail junction with the original North Fork trail, so hopefully we can give a completed report next year.

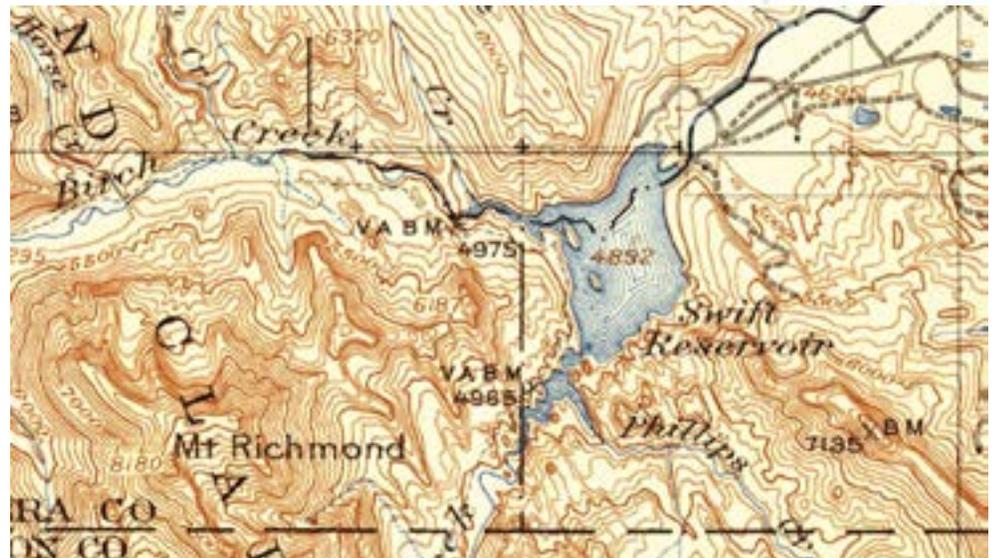
One other bit of history—when the new dam was dedicated in 1967, I was there as a young boy with my grandfather as he was on hand as the mayor of Valier at the time.

This is my grandfather on the grey horse, my great uncle John on the pinto and my uncle Vernon. In the North Fork of Birch Creek hunting camp.

Right: 1918 Topo Map of the original trail to the North Fork of Birch Creek Trail. I traced the trail in blue to see better. And the starting point at the North Fork of Dupuyer Creek Trailhead. (Mark with X circle)



Below: 1918 Topo Map picture of Swift Reservoir. Note the two islands and how the original trail is right on the shore of the west side of the reservoir.



Youth Program Report

By Greg Schatz, Back Country Horsemen of the Flathead

In 2019 we had a very successful summer. We met up with 87 young people from 12- 17 to show them how we pack stock in the back country. Besides our BCHMT youth summer packing camp, we also had packing demonstrations at several summer camps throughout Montana. Thank you to everyone who helped out last summer. We look forward to seeing you again this summer.

Marion Willmus won the Larry Funk pack saddle, riding saddle and other packing gear. She is super excited and will use the gear this summer. She was the 2017 winner of the BCHMT scholarship to the Bob Marshall Wilderness Outfitters packing skills camp.

Ashley Luginbuhl and Scott Waller are this year's scholarship winners. BCHMT Youth Program pays for the travel expenses and Bob Marshall Wilderness Outfitters (BMWO) donates the space in their packing skills class. Ashley and Scott are both very excited to be able to attend. All of the applicants this year had excellent applications, and because of this Long's donated a second place in their class so we can have two winners. Thank you Connie and Mack Long for this generous donation. Several winners from previous years are active in various chapters of BCHMT.

At our BCHMT youth summer camp we had Casey Burns join us at the Indian Meadows trailhead. Casey is the lead packer for the Northern Region Pack string. We also had Elle Eberts join us to help teach. Elle was the 2019 winner of the BCHMT scholarship to BMWO packing skills class. On Thursday afternoon they showed the 11 campers how to mantle loads, care for and handle stock, saddle and load your stock. At our campfire chat that evening Casey shared how he got his start working for the Forest Service seasonally and how it worked for him until he had the chance to get year round work. On Friday the campers mantled their gear, saddled and loaded the mules and Casey lead his string into camp.



Marion Willmus, winner of the Larry Funk packing gear, looks over the Chinese Wall.

The campers hiked into Short Camp at Fickler Meadows in the Scapegoat Wilderness. The campers set up camp and that evening around the campfire they all talked about how they would like to spend their lives packing in the back country. Saturday we hiked into Heart Lake doing some trail rehab on the way. At the lake, besides having fun, we went over the principles of Leave No Trace. On Sunday the campers mantled all of the gear, loaded the stock and we were back at the trailhead by noon to have lunch with the campers' parents. A huge thank you goes out to our cook, Jessica Shaw, who is a member of BCHF. Jessica called me up one day and asked how she could volunteer to help. I mentioned that we need a cook and she said she loves to cook for big groups. The food was excellent and there was plenty for everyone.

I would like to thank Joni Packard for working with us to cover the liability with a volunteer agreement. Without the help of the Forest Service it would be much harder and more expensive to have this camp.

We are planning on having our packing summer camp this summer. Casey is lined up to help us and I've been in contact with Joni and Josh Lattin and the Lincoln Ranger District. Obviously we won't know for sure until about the middle of July. It might be a different version than we have had before.



YOUTH SUMMER PACKING CAMP



SCAPEGOAT
WILDERNESS

HELENA National Forest

AUGUST 6-9

Thursday: Meet us for lunch at Noon at the Indian Meadows Trail Head near Lincoln, MT. Then, VIP guests from the USFS Northern Region Pack String will present a packing clinic followed by dinner and an evening fireside chat with dutch oven dessert.

Friday: Campers continue their packing education by loading up gear, tools, food, and tents on to stock before hiking into Fickler Meadows to set up camp in the Scapegoat Wilderness.

Saturday: Campers hike to Heart Lake to do a rehab project and learn principles of Leave No Trace and stock safety during this trail stewardship day.

Sunday: Campers pack up and return to the trail head by noon. A final lunch will be provided and parents are welcome to join in and hear about the group's adventures before heading home.

**TO APPLY: FIND THE YOUTH SUMMER CAMP APPLICATION AT
WWW.BCHMT.ORG.**



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If you would like to join us, please contact a chapter in your area.

Find more information on our website:
www.bchmt.org