

Squaw Butte Back Country Horsemen

Chartered 1992



Newsletter

July 2009



Featured Articles

Presidential Ponderings
Exploring the Grand Canyon with Back Country Friends
The Back Country Traveler Part 1
Monthly Meeting Minutes
Coming Events



July Presidential Ponderings

By
Ellen Knapp



We had a fabulous turnout for the 4th of July weekend at the Bull Trout Lake area. I was quite surprised, really, since it was a holiday and our weekend was billed as a “work” weekend. However, two weeks later, we had only 4 folks spend the weekend at Peace Creek. The only question I can ask is WHY? We did have 5 folks come up for the day. We have 51 family and individual memberships for a total of 88 members. Why did we have only 9 members turn out for the Peace Creek weekend? I do understand that folks have other obligations and peoples’ schedules are very full. But one of the reasons we schedule 2 project weekends a month is to try to accommodate those schedules and enable you to attend at least ONE weekend a month.

Back Country Horsemen is a SERVICE organization. We are not a riding club. While we do have fun rides, the core purpose of our organization is service. We work to maintain access to trails and trail heads. And it takes folks attending these scheduled weekends to help with that work. It is not going to get done if only a few folks attend. We don’t schedule these project weekends in a vacuum. Much communication happens between SBBCH project leaders and the associated agency to coordinate dates and project work. And we are expecting a turnout to be able to accomplish the project goal.

As I wrote in the February newsletter, we are a volunteer organization; we don’t kill ourselves in pursuit of this work. And we have lots of fun and fabulous food while performing the work. Food is a core value of our chapter and figures prominently in our work weekends. We make work a social event. Work weekends are a great way to get to know the various SBBCH folks.

I am very disappointed in the low turnout for these project weekends. As a volunteer organization, I understand that usually 20% of the folks do 80% of the work. So given that statistic I should expect to see at least 14 folks attend a project weekend. I am seeing a handful of core people attend each project. We have committed SBBCH to perform a certain level of work at each project weekend with the managing agency of that area. And in the past, SBBCH has been able to meet its commitments. I have a great concern this year that we will burn out the handful of participants in pursuit of meeting the commitments that we have made. This low level of attendance for our committed project weekends is not sustainable. If turnout doesn’t improve, we will have to drastically reduce our 2010 commitments.

Every person and every equine that attends a project weekend is counted toward the annual contribution of equated dollars of volunteerism effort to the national managing agencies of these lands. That dollar value, nationwide, for 2008 was \$6.6 MILLION dollars.

I am sorry for the depressing article from your SBBCH president. But I truly do not know how to increase participation in our project weekends. SBBCH already provides communal breakfasts and potluck dinners to foster camaraderie and ‘get to know you’. SBBCH provides the paper products and utensils for meals. Attendees offer caravanning and trailer sharing. SBBCH provides certified hay so our members don’t have to purchase and haul it themselves. Attendees have extra high lines and electric corrals available. Attendees readily and happily share items, knowledge, and support. SBBCH tries to remove barriers and enable our membership to attend the project weekends. I am at a loss regarding what more SBBCH can do to foster participation.

I certainly hope we have a better turnout for our projects in August and September. Otherwise, we will seriously have to reconsider our 2010 commitments with our various partnering agencies.

Thank you all for reading the above lament. I hope you take to heart the core purpose of Back Country Horsemen and make an effort to attend at least one of the project weekends scheduled for August or September.



Exploring the Grand Canyon with Back Country Friends April 2009



A Land to inspire our spirit
Chronicles from Back County Horseman of Idaho's Roving Reporter

February 2008: Bill and Marybeth Conger along with Doug and Teri Argo made their reservations with Xanterra Parks & Resort so they could ride to the bottom of the Grand Canyon on mules and stay at the Phantom Ranch. There was much pre-trip discussion about bringing their own stock but opted not too, due to the long trailer ride from Emmett, Idaho and other expenses required when transporting stock out of state. The trails they would be on are the Bright Angle Trail and the South Kaibab Trail, both of which at that time they went were open to recreational stock use.

April 19, 2009 at 7:00pm: The foursome met at the Grand Canyon's Village South Rim which is about 7100 ft. The temperature was 79 degrees. After getting weighed in (there is a 200lb limit and Bill was sweating it) they checked in at the Bright Angle Lodge. They each received a yellow slicker which identified them as paying customers. Many photos of the sunset and rock forms at the South Rim were taken by the group. The Grand Canyon truly is one of the most inspiring landscapes and it overwhelms ones senses. After returning to the lodge, one in the group had a bath in a claw foot tub, while enjoying a Heineken and started thinking about Bright Angle Trail.



April 20, 2009 7:00 am: The temperature was 60 degrees. Arriving at the mule corral the head trail boss had only four rules: 1. Stay on your mules until the trail guide was there to assist, 2. Keep tight in the string 3. Let the trail boss know if a mule potty break is needed and 4. Listen to the trail boss. They got mounted on their assigned mules and the adventure began. There were 9 in the group. It was interesting that trail boss, Mike Brown put the women first in the string, followed by the men. Anyone who might have thinking about the trail height stopped, due to the breath taking views of the rock layers which are windows into time.

The group shared the Bright Angle trail with many hikers. At times these encounters were quite close on the trail, but the mules weren't bothered by anything and all users extended courtesy. Lunch and potty stop was about 3 hours out and the box lunch food was good. Mike got everyone back on the mules and back on the trail. About 3 hours later they were getting close to the bottom and started seeing the Colorado River, which for the past 5 or 6 million years has carved the Canyon. The temperature was rising and all drank plenty of water on the trail to keep hydrated. There was a dark tunnel they traveled through, to get to the stock bridge that passed over the Colorado, but these mules know their stuff.



They arrived at Phantom Ranch about 3:00 pm which is at the bottom of the Angle Bright Trail on the Colorado River. Some ancient Indian ruins were seen, showing how the Grand Canyon has sustained people for thousand of years. They had several hours to relax before dinner was served. The temperature now was 90+degrees. The cabins even had air conditioning, so this roving reporter is giving the rooms at Phantom Ranch a 5 star rating. Bill decided to take a nap, but the rest of the group found a stream, got in their bathing suits and enjoyed the cool water. They almost had a flip flop casualty due to the current of this tributary of the Colorado River. Dinner was served at 7:00 pm and it was a

fabulous Steak dinner with all the fixings and since it was Doug's birthday, there was even some cake with singing.

April 21st 2009 7:00 am: Temperature was 70 degrees. A gourmet breakfast at the Phantom Ranch was served family style and it was very good. By 8:00 am the group had stated back to the Rim on the South Kaibab Trail. Our trail boss let us choose where to ride in the string, as long as Bill rode behind him so they could share packing stories and jokes. Mike pointed out a lot of memorable sites along the trail, even some fossils. The view on this trail really showed the geologic layers of the Grand Canyon. The mules were given many stops on the way. After many Kodak moments, the group arrived at the South Kaibab trail head and each becomes a member of the renowned order of the Master Mule Skinners of the Grand Canyon Trails.



Closing comments: There are some things in life, that are hard to describe, but experiencing the Grand Canyon on a mule allowed all of us to see how the geologic process played out over time showing the size, color, and dazzling erosional forms along the rugged landscape of the South side of the Grand Canyon. The cost was \$738.00 a couple, which might seem extravagant for a few days, but the trip was an experience of a lifetime.



The Back Country Traveler

By
Ellen Knapp

This month, I'm going to address the planning and preparation considerations when camping overnight with your stock, either at the trail head or in the back country.

Pack stock groups must be even more conscientious about Minimizing Impact, since the animals tend to produce greater impact than backpackers and llama packers. The foot of a horse or mule generates about 1500 pounds per square inch. Horseshoes intensify this pressure and the shearing effect on soil and vegetation. The goal is to minimize the number of stock I need to take. Using lightweight and compact gear will help reduce the number of stock needed, as will proper planning and preparation ahead of time.

What do I consider when planning?

- I determine the purpose of the outing. Is it a fun ride, fishing, hunting, trail maintenance, or something else?
- I need to determine where I am going, when I am going, and how long I will stay.
- If I am planning for a group I need to consider the level of ages and experience – both rider and stock- of the group and then plan to the LOWEST level. That helps ensure a safe and fun time for all.
- I have to consider the potential weather conditions. I have encountered snow storms in the mountains in August.
- I get out my maps and go over the routes and potential camping areas as well as determine alternative routes and campsites.
- I have to gain knowledge of the area by either doing Web searches or talking with the agency responsible for the area I plan to visit. I need to know, at a minimum, if stock is permitted where I plan to go, if grazing is permitted, what other restrictions there might be – like campfires or group size, do I have to consider bears, how heavily is the area used?
- I need to check for trail conditions and whether stock is allowed. Some areas are closed to pack animals due to overuse or because the environments are fragile.
- I plan the meals focusing on dried and dehydrated foods to reduce the weight of the food. An excellent source of easily dehydrated food recipes is Easy Dehydrated Gourmet Meals by Marybeth Conger and Reba Hendrix. I repackage food into reusable containers or plastic bags. This reduces the amount of I have to deal with in the backcountry. Carefully planned meals also reduce waste from leftovers and minimize the amount of extra food carried.
- I make an equipment list. I use lightweight gear, like the backpackers do, such as compact stoves and nylon tents and sleeping gear, to reduce the number of horses required.
- I also decide how I will contain my stock for overnight and for feeding/grazing.

Once I have planned where and when I am going I need to prepare for the trip. What are some things I do when preparing for a trip?

- First and foremost I get myself and my stock in shape. I take only experienced stock. The trip is NOT the place to train my inexperienced riding or packing animal.
- I make sure the worming and vaccinations are up-to-date to help minimize any health issues.
- I practice at home the containment methods I plan to use. At the backcountry camp is not the time to find out my horse goes ballistic in hobbles.
- I fit any new gear on my stock and try out my panniers and practice the hitches.
- I get new shoes on my stock. I've had too many 'OK-looking' shoes come off when on the trail. I don't take a shoeing kit because I don't know how to replace a shoe. If you take a kit, make sure you know how to use it. I use easyboots instead. But I make sure I have easyboots fitted for each animal – both front and rear hooves. If you take easyboots, make sure you have fitted them properly.
- I begin feeding my stock the food they will be eating on the trip 3 days before leaving. I am careful to introduce the new food slowly, so as not to cause colic. And I want to make sure they will eat it. We all have to use weed free hay at both the trail head and in the backcountry. Feeding 3 days prior to leaving ensures all the weed seeds have been passed out of the horse's digestive tract..
- I make sure everything has all its parts, works, and is in good repair. Setting up camp is not the time to discover that I have left the tent poles home. In the dark is not the time to discover I have no clue how to get my new stove to work.
- I make sure I know how to use my GPS or my compass. Even if I know the trails well, I always bring a map in case I have to take an unplanned route.
- I prepare for extreme weather, hazards, and emergencies. I carry a folding saw for trail clearing. I make sure my first aid kit is complete and that I know how to use everything in it. I include a card listing normal human and equine vital signs.
- Finally I get all my gear together that I plan to pack and weigh it. Does it match with the number of stock I plan to take? Hopefully, I have planned well enough that it does.

Good planning and preparation greatly increases my chance of having a great and safe experience in the backcountry. It also helps me reduce the number of stock I take so I can spend more time enjoying my experience rather than tending to stock. Next month I'll take about stock containment methods for use at the trail head and in the backcountry.



Rattle Snake Point Trail by Ellen Knapp

Charles and I rode 2/3 of the Rattlesnake Point trail (#032) at the summit of the Peace Creek road.

We parked at the bottom of the trail head road. Plenty of room for us to get off the road. Looks like there is room for about 3-4 rigs at the lot at the trailhead as well.

Trail is fairly steep at the beginning. Then it gradually climbs, hugging the side of the ridge. We crossed one little creek. (That is the only water on the trail and of course there is no water at the trailhead since that is at the summit of the road.) The bridge was maybe 18" wide, right at the inside of a hairpin turn. Pecos slipped off. There was a section where the trail was very narrow, no vegetation on the outside edge of the trail and very vertical a long ways down. I walked that section. Past that the trail tops the ridge and weaves its way toward the point. We probably made it 2/3 of the way to the point. The views are simply fantastic. Shoes are not needed.



7/2/2009 REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

Regular meeting called to order at 7:04 PM by President Ellen Knapp.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS AND NEW MEMBERS

Lorraine & Charles Chick, Carl Irminger

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Motion to approve the Previous Meeting Minutes by Rob Adams, 2nd by Bill Holt and carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Beginning Checking Account Balance: \$ 10,355.52

Deposits: \$ 510.00

Expenses: \$ 639.92

Ending Checking Account Balance: \$ 10,225.60

Motion to approve the Previous Treasurer's Report by MaryBeth Conger, 2nd by Chris Holt and carried

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Calling Committee Report – Phil Ryan – forgot to call regarding trash pickup. Emails have gone out.

Education & Foundation Reports – Bill Conger, Bill Holt – nothing to report

Public Liaison Report – Tony Buthman – starting to push the wilderness bill again. Big push to get the US Fish & Wildlife Service to manage all wilderness areas and state parks.

State Directors Report – MaryBeth Conger (alt) – Meeting July 11th. Agenda on state website, www.bchi.org. MaryBeth got liability release forms from each chapter. She has selected one that is very comprehensive which she will submit to the state directors to be used for the state of Idaho. Under our insurance each chapter is covered for two events per year and each chapter must submit info to state. Proposal for deadline to submit event info at Nov BOD meeting. State Secretary will send out reminder notices to each chapter. Each chapter will be responsible for extra insurance fee (\$45/day) if they do not submit their events by new deadline. Additional cost of \$20 if entity wants to be listed on policy.

MaryBeth will not be able to attend the state directors meeting due to family issues. She recommends that Kay Ryan be her proxy.

Resolution from Priest River Valley Chapter – BCHI encourages congressional delegates to support the reauthorization of the Recreational Trails Program.

Phil – calendars will be distributed at the state directors meeting

Work Projects and Rides Report – Rob Adams

Reports:

National Trails Day Projects (TO BE RESCHEDULED)

Gem Cycle Park Clean-up (7/1) not much trash. Shannon went, suggests that we make it a twice a year event rather than each month.

Peace Creek Project (TO BE RESCHEDULED)

Upcoming:

Bull Trout Fun Rides (7/3-5) meeting High Desert Chapter there (20 from our chapter, 6 from Twin Falls). Won't be able to ride up to Alpine Lake, it is closed due to snow, mud.

Wilson Corrals Trail Project (7/18&19) going to try to work on trail

Arling Trail Project – Tony - (8/1&2) near Tamarack, coordinating with New Meadows group, may have to put it off until next year due to roads, etc.

Gem Cycle Park Clean-up (8/5) Rob will contact them to suggest that it be just twice a year.

Sign project on the Payette Forest – they got funding today. Won't have signs in time to do sign project in August, it will probably be in September.

We will have to be flexible with projects. All of the dates scheduled for projects will have something, just not sure which ones at this point.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Advertising Updates – Ellen – complete, 22 advertisers on the web, all paid

Newsletter – Linda H – not been able to get together on it. Please submit articles/pictures to www.newsletter.org.

Web site updates – Rob – working on it

State Communications – Ellen requested that we be able to use their stations, no response yet.

NEW BUSINESS

Bill Conger – has been contacted by Cabelas's. Fall outdoor days August 23, they would like us to bring live animals for demonstration. The chapter decided we would not bring our stock into that situation and most members are in the woods during that time. Bill will notify them.

Bill Conger – For sale - decker saddle, virtually brand new if anyone interested.

Jake Lemon – was told by Verizon that you can dial 911 with your cell phone and get reception off of a satellite even if no bars on your phone, no GPS component. He wanted to know if anyone else has any information on this. No one knows for sure.

Program –

Notices – still have BCH items for sale

Door prizes – Linda Hays won picture frame

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn the meeting by Tammy Buthman, seconded by Chris Holt and carried.

Regular meeting adjourned at 8:08 PM by President Ellen Knapp.

Respectfully submitted by Secretary Linda Phillips



Bull Trout Lake July 4th 2009



Clearing Trail



Yvonne Clark



Ron – High Desert BCH

Coming Events

West Mountain - Wilson Corral Project Weekend – August 1 and 2
West Mountain – North Project Weekend – August 15 and 16
Warm Lake – Yellow Jacket Trail and Bridge Project Weekend – August 29 and 30

Contact: Rob Adams at projects@sbbchidaho.org



Tess Lytle enjoying the view

Squaw Butte Back Country Horsemen Meeting

First Thursday of every month at La Costa Restaurant, 517 N. Washington, Emmett, ID
Social hour and no-host meal begins at 6 PM

For information about joining contact Ellen Knapp, 208-365-0737 or president@sbbchidaho.org



2009 SBBCH Officers and Board of Directors

President	Ellen Knapp	president@sbbchidaho.org	208-365-0737
VP	Tami Buthman	info@sbbchidaho.org	208-549-2054
Secretary Team	Linda Phillips	secretary@sbbchidaho.org	208-585-3019
	Linda Hays		208-571-0376
Treasurer	Kay Ryan	treasurer@sbbchidaho.org	208-398-8993
Education/Foundation	Bill Conger	education@sbbchidaho.org	208-365-9864
	Bill Holt (alt)		208-398-9825
State Board	Rob Adams	state.board@sbbchidaho.org	208-584-3780
	Marybeth Conger		208-365-9864
	Phil Ryan (alt)		208-398-8993
Projects & Rides			
Boise National Forest Emmett & Cascade NFS Districts	Rob Adams	projects@sbbchidaho.org	208-584-3780
	Terry MacDonald		208-584-3767
Payette National Forest Hells Canyon & Weiser NFS Districts	Tony Buthman		208-549-2054
Public Lands	Tony Buthman	public.land@sbbchidaho.org	208-549-2054
	Chris & Bill Holt		208-398-9825
	Robbin Schindele		208-365-1789
Newsletter	Linda Hays	newsletter@sbbchidaho.org	208-571-0376
Webmaster	Robbin Schindele	webmaster@sbbchidaho.org	208-365-1789

Note from the Editor

Please submit articles for the next Newsletter by the 10th of each month.

1. Articles of interest, short stories about our rides, Include pictures you would like to go along with it.
2. Favorite photos, send your own or favorite pick of the month from our web site.
3. Personal pack trips and vacations you would like to share with others.
4. Favorite potluck dish or Dutch oven recipes.
5. Clever antidotes or jokes related to Cowboys or Mule skinnners, Packers, etc. for the month.
6. Monthly Packing, Riding, Safety tips for the month.
7. News items of importance to BCH and SBBCH



Squaw Butte Back Country Horsemen
P.O. Box 293, Emmett, ID 83617