

WHATCOM CHAPTER



Newsletter of the Whatcom Chapter
Backcountry Horsemen of Washington

TRAIL TALES

September 2023

Notes from the President

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P. O. Box 28607
Bellingham, WA 98228
2023

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BCHW mission statement: To perpetuate the common sense use and enjoyment of horses in America's back country and wilderness. To work to insure that public lands remain open to recreational stock use. To assist the various governmental and private agencies in their maintenance and management of said resource. To educate, encourage and solicit active participation in the wise use of the back country resource by horsemen and the general public commensurate with our heritage. To foster and encourage the formation of new chapters in the state organization.

From: Sharon Hoofnagle

Sent: Tuesday, August 22, 2023 9:02 AM

To: Fran Van Diest <fvandiest@msn.com>

Cc: Sharon Hoofnagle

Subject: Y Rd- Olsen Creek Trail Notice

Olsen Creek Aug 20, 2023

Aug 19 2023 from Sharon Hoofnagle

Y Rd-Stewart Mt-Olsen Creek Trail System

Good news- work has begun on the Y Rd Trails. This system will now be known as the **Olsen Creek Trail System.**

At this point the lower trails on the north side of Olsen Creek are being worked on. You may see red tape across trails. Please stay off- in a short time we will have some great trails. We can still ride the higher trails on the north side and all the south side trails for now.

The following is from Hyden McKown with the DNR on July 31 2023, forwarded by Tim VanBeek

Beginning in 2015, you and your clubs put in a huge amount of time and effort working with the DNR to develop the Baker to Bellingham Recreation Plan. As you know, a Tier 1 priority of that plan was to develop trails in the Olsen Creek Forest Block. I am pleased to let you know that for Priority Area 1 of the Olsen Creek Trail System we have our Letter of Concurrence from the Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, we have our Hydraulic Project Approval from the Department of Fish and Wildlife, and we have our Land Fill and Grade permit from Whatcom County. Today, Finn Hopper is breaking ground on the Olsen Creek trail system. This is a testament to the support we the DNR received from you, our recreation partners. Thank you for your diligence during the planning process, and for your support over the past several years during our search for funding to make this project a reality. We would not have gotten to this point without your guidance and care for developing recreation in Whatcom County. I want to extend an enthusiastic 'Thank You!', to each of you for your patience and commitment to the recreation planning process.

(Continue on Page 2)

(Continue from Page 1)
Stewart Mtn/Olsen Creek Trail

Trail building will ramp up over the next week or two as we get equipment and crews headed toward Olsen Creek. Trail building is limited to areas identified on the Priority Area 1, keep in mind our work is ongoing to obtain permits for trail construction in subsequent priority areas. Our Fill and Grade permit restricts substantial trail construction after September. Our priorities for trail construction this summer are to;

1. Eliminate sections of trail that trespass private property and replace with trail that stays on DNR-managed land.
2. Reduce unnecessary trail in wetlands and across steep slopes (Whatcom County identified critical areas).
3. Establish a multi-use, bi-directional/mountain bike climbing trail route (this trail will be closed to downhill bike traffic).
4. Establish a downhill bike route to eliminate user conflict on multi-use, bi-directional routes.

I will be reaching out to review next steps and to see how your club may be able to contribute to the build-out. I look forward to working with you on this project in the near future. Let me know what questions you may have.

Thank you, Hyden McKown Baker District Recreation Manager Northwest Region
Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR)

2023 TRAIL BOSSES
Rocky Leavitt 360-599-2675
Roger Nelson 360-927-6964
Andy McLeod 360-595-2744
WORK PARTY COORDINATOR
Roger Nelson 360-927-6964
PACKING COORDINATOR
Rocky Leavitt 360-599-2675

North Summit Horse Camp

We were very impressed with the horse camp. There were lots of very large pull-throughs, manure bunkers and wheelbarrows. The very stout high lines had cables with 3 loops at each campsite. Lots of vegetation between campsites and throughout the area. There was plenty of healthy grass up on the hill for us to graze the horses in hand: that was at the end of June. On our side of hiway 20, which was very close, there were easy to follow snow-mobile trails to ride on and we were told there were miles more on the other side. Stock water is available but not potable water. Three of us had the place to ourselves for the first 3 days and the Alwood's and friends showed up near the end of the week. Mike, the Methow member who put the campgrounds in, said it is very under-utilized.

Verna



WBCH General Meeting minutes Aug 9 2023 Misty River Ranch

The meeting was preceded by a potluck. Sharon Hoofnagle gave a brief introduction on the use of triangular band-aids.

The meeting was called to order by Cindy P at 7:26. Past minutes were approved as printed in the newsletter (motion by Roger N, 2nd by Andy M.)

The agenda was approved.

Reports:

Director/legislative: Joe R- a zoom meeting with the State BCH was held on Sunday- Joe, Tim attended, it was with the state on credit card use. There will be a state executive meeting next week.

Liability release: BCHW is adopting a new procedure for the releases. (Currently we sign a release when we renew our membership) The new procedure will require signing a release for every work party. Workers will sign on the back of the form

Records: we need to keep records currently for 7 years,

Donations by WBCH: A previous question on using funds to donate to others was answered by state- we can only use funds for things that meet our mission statement.

Work coordinator: Roger N-

Saxon: there was a work party at Saxon last month. Roger N, Andy, Verna, and Leanne brush cut. There is a problem with gate access at Saxon, it is difficult to get the gravel totes through. We need to coordinate with the land trust. There may be a work party at Saxon on the 19th.

Les Hilde: Joe- there is a work party this Sat using the totes at Les Hilde. Meet at the trailhead at between 8-8:30.

Heady: Roger N- need to move bark at the Heady Rd parking lot- will need to coordinate tractors.

Excelsior: Rocky and Bill will be cutting a log out on Excelsior tomorrow. (Using a crosscut saw) Helpers can meet at 9:30 at the trailhead.

Pasayten trails: Rocky- they are good horse trails, encouraged members to ride them

Volunteer hrs.: Verna M- in July we had 129.5 hrs. It was questioned if the parade could count towards education; it probably can. Ferndale Parade- 7 people participated.

Silver Lake: Cindy - Roger E is researching what needs to be done for the barn remodel regarding permits and work. The board voted to approve his researching. No money will be spent at this point.

We need to decide what is possible and what we want regarding the alteration of the barn. We need a specific type of structural engineer to go over the plans.

Bill- right now there are rows of tie stalls. If we remove the stalls, we can use the lumber to make collar ties for support. (There have been several issues over the years the tie stalls) There are two barns, only one barn is being considered.)

Calendars: Bill has several available

Vedder: 4 wheelers: John Bosman talked to both Roger N and Marie T recently. He has seen 4-wheelers on Vedder, they are accessing it through our trailhead. He asked if WBCH could solve the problem.

Suggestions are- large rocks but those would hamper trail work and lawn mowing. Gates. There is one sign now that says no motorized vehicles or e bikes. At the board meeting Roger E. suggested we try signage first. We can install other measures later if needed. Cindy volunteered to contact Marie who will contact John. WBCH will pay for the signs. (follow-up- this is being arranged by email by Cindy, at least 2 signs are being purchase with John's permission, Mike M. suggested 4, WBCH will pay for them)

Vedder brush cutting- the board has ok's Vince S. to trim back brush at the trailhead.

Saxon: Bill- there is a very large hole alongside one of the trails, possibly from a tree bole. Watch out for it. It was suggested this could be a good use of an interactive map

Good of the order

Ladies Camp-Out: Cindy – Camp-out will be Aug 19-20 at Bryce Creek

Pioneer Camp: Rocky will be taking a light load in to Pioneer Camp for the PNTA

Event: Cascade Horse Club and Traildusters have asked Bill M to do a dutch oven demo at an event.

Andy moved to adjourn; Melinda seconded. Meeting adjourned at 8:36pm.

Submitted by Sharon Hoofnagle, secretary

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<http://www.whatcom-bch.com/>

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April—Sept'23

2023 TRAIL BOSSES

Rocky Leavitt
360-599-2675

Roger Nelson
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Andy McLeod
360-595-2744

WORK PARTY COORDINATOR
Roger Nelson
360-927-6964

PACKING COORDINATOR
Rocky Leavitt
360-599-2675

A Special Thank You to:
Laurel Farm & Western Supply
America's Horse Country
Weylin & Amy Eldred
325 W Laurel Rd., Bellingham 360/398-1216
* 360/398-8050 fax
Hours: Mon– Fri: 8:30am. to 7 pm; Sat:
8:30am.to 6:00 pm. and Sun 9 am. to 5 pm.

Sunshine Committee

If you know someone that needs a little ray of sunshine, please contact Michelle McKenna at 360-599-2526 or send her an email at: wintercreek10@gmail.com.



Free Event!

FARM SPEAKER SERIES

Farm Funding Opportunities

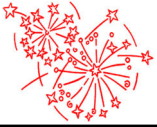
Thursday, September 14, 2023
6:00-7:30 PM
Lynden Library, 216 4th St, Lynden, WA

This event is organized to help local farmers gain an understanding of what grant opportunities are available & what funders are looking for. Get all your questions answered in face-to-face interactions with representatives from local, state and federal programs, agricultural initiatives, & commercial & private foundations. Refreshments will be provided.



RSVP:
Anna Beebe
abeebe@whatcomcd.org
(360) 526-2387
www.whatcomcd.org/farm-speaker-series





CALENDAR



board meeting, date and location to be determined.

Sept 13, 2023—**general meeting**, we will be having a potluck/meeting at Misty River Ranch, potluck at 6pm and meeting at 7pm. **(In October, the meetings will be back at Laurel Grange)**

Oct 28, 2023—**22nd Annual Winery Ride** in Zillah, WA. We have made some changes to the registration forms this year. Only one participant per form unless it is a spouse or child. All additional riders will have to fill out and pay on their own form. For more information and registration options: [BCHW 2023 Winery Ride Info - Back Country Horsemen of Washington](#)

Volunteer hours for July 2023—Basic—14.5, skilled—73.5, LNT—3.5, Admin—16.5, travel—21.5 for a total of 129.5.

Amanda Curtis	Andy McLeod
Bill McKenna	Bob Rathjen
Cathy Rathjen	Diane Kimker
Joe Remenar	Leanne Harmon - nm
Mike McGlenn	Rocky Hooper
Rocky Leavitt	Roger Edmonds
Roger Nelson	Sharon Hoofnagle
Shirley Todhunter	Tim Van Beek
Verna McLeod	

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360-599-2526

Leave No Trace
Bill McKenna
360-599-2526

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Sharon Hoofnagle
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Public lands committee
Tim Van Beek
360-472-5449

Membership committee
Cindy Piccolo
360-961-4839

Sunshine
Michelle McKenna
360-599-2526

Volunteer Hours
Verna McLeod
360-595-2744

Ways and Means committee
Tim Van Beek
360-472-5449



FOR SALE

I am selling my registered paint gelding. Milo. Trail horse. 18 years old.

Lots of miles. Approx 15 hands. \$4500.
Don Pullar
donpullar@gmail.com>



Volunteer Hours:

Report your hours to the volunteer coordinator:
Verna Walker at:
verna@soundengineering.com

EDITOR'S POLICIES

Trail Tales is published monthly. Deadline for submission of articles is the 15th of each month. Non-copyrighted submissions are welcomed (subject to space limitations). Opinions and views expressed in letters or personal articles are not necessarily the opinions of BCH. Send submissions to: Editor, Fran Van Diest, 723 Van Wyck Rd, Bellingham, WA. 98226. Email to: fvandiest@msn.com.

VET NOTES Sharon Hoofnagle D.V.M Wildfire Smoke and Horses

The following is a summary from the University of Calif- Davis Veterinary School- The effects of smoke on horses are similar to the effects on humans and can include irritation of the eyes and respiratory tract, aggravation of conditions like asthma, (recurrent airway obstruction), and reduced lung function. High concentrations of particulates can cause persistent cough, increased nasal discharge, wheezing, and difficulty breathing. Particulates can also alter the immune system and reduce the ability of the lungs to remove foreign materials, such as pollen and bacteria, to which horses are normally exposed.

Assessing and Treating Smoke Inhalation in Horses

Horses exposed to fire smoke can suffer respiratory injury of varying degrees, ranging from mild irritation to severe smoke inhalation-induced airway or lung damage. Knowing what is normal can help you determine whether your horse may need veterinary attention.

Have your horse(s) examined by a veterinarian if any of the following are noted:

- Respiratory rate is consistently greater than 30 breaths/minute at rest.
 - Nostrils have obvious flaring.
 - There is obvious increased effort of breathing when watching the horse's abdomen and rib cage.
- There is repetitive or deep coughing, or abnormal nasal discharge.

Horse people can use the air quality index used in human medicine to apply to your horse. If the air quality is a "orange"- unhealthy for sensitive groups- limit exposure to smoke for horses with respiratory issues like asthma. If the level is a "red" limit exercise for all horses.

Additionally, consider the following actions:

- Limit activities that increase airflow in and out of the lungs (i.e. exercise), which can trigger narrowing of the small airways in the lungs, when smoke is visible.
 - Provide plenty of fresh water close to where your horse eats. Horses drink most of their water within two hours of eating hay, so having water close to the feeder increases water consumption. Keeping the horse hydrated keeps the airways moist and facilitates clearance of inhaled particulate matter. This means the wind-pipe (trachea), large airways (bronchi), and small airways (bronchioles) can move the particulate material breathed in with the smoke. Dry airways cause particulate matter to stay in the lung and air passages.
 - Limit dust exposure by feeding dust-free hay or soak hay before feeding. This reduces the particles in the dust such as mold, fungi, pollens and bacteria that may be difficult to clear from the lungs.
- Contact your veterinarian if your horse is coughing or having difficulty breathing.

Membership

Go to BCHW.org and join or renew online. If online is not an option, please fill out a paper application and sign, (all members **18 and over must sign**) enclose your check made out to BCHW **and mail to:**

BCHW Membership Chair
11404 210th Ave Ct E
Bonney Lake, WA 98391

The new membership forms will be coming out soon, I will send them out when I receive them or you can rejoin online. You can rejoin in October 2023 for 2024. It's a lot easier when you submit your paper-work early.

Fran

Ladies Camp out at Bryce Creek horse camp. Back Country of Whatcom County girls campout was a hit! Not everyone camped but did come up for a ride and some good food and comradery. A little smoky on Sunday so kept that ride short, 3 days of great rides, laughter and the potluck turned into an international delight. Hope that those who couldn't make it, will be able to join us next time.

Happy Trails to all,
Melinda, Cindy and the rest of the gang





More pictures of the ladies campout at Bryce Creek horse camp, August 18th—20th.



Pasayten Airport Pack-In

Vince Stremler, Cheeta, and myself took two horses and eight mules into the Pasayten Airport a couple of weeks ago. There were so many different experiences that it is hard to describe them all. I will give you a few of the highlights.

Normally we would have gone in on the Robinson Creek trail. It is against the Forest Service rules to take trailers up the road to Harts Pass. However, many times in my past twenty years of working with the Forest Service, if they want you to do something, they will bend their own rules. So, we got permission to take trailers up to the pass, a Forest Service person would go ahead of us and divert traffic off the road so we could get by. I was told by somebody that it is a steep road with 2000-foot drop offs. Naturally I thought they meant it was just a long way down. Now that I have driven that road, I do not think 2000-feet is an exaggeration. Going up the road, you just have to open your door and step out. You are literally that close to the edge. The view downward is gigantic. Not for the faint of heart.

The ride in from Robinson trailhead is about 23 miles, from the pass it is about 16 miles. The trail is fairly good, and even in very steep country it is doable because of its layout. So many trails we ride on over here are not laid out for stock. It makes hard country accessible when they are laid out properly.

Getting to the airport before dark was a plus. Lots of folks were there. The Forest Service workers, Pacific Northwest Trail crew workers and us. Plus, lots of stock. Horses and mules. Mules with bells on them. Big bells. Very loud bells.

The two things that you really look forward to when doing Pasayten packing is dinner and a good night's sleep. I hardly had any sleep the night before because I slept on a cot in the parking lot at Robinson creek TH very close to my animals to keep an eye on them. Sleep is the one valuable thing I usually need the most. One of the arts of riding an animal all day is trying to sleep and not fall off. I have had many near misses because of this. One time on another trail I woke up to see a hundred-foot drop down to a creek. My first thought was "Jesus." Luckily as a Christian, I meant it as a glorification and not as a swear word. Plus no one was close enough to hear me and my mule and I have this agreement that what is said between us stays between us...

The Sleep

Normally this would be the boring part telling you what a great nights sleep I had. Not this time. Vince and I slept about ten feet apart in the open meadow. We just threw our bedrolls on the ground. What I didn't tell you is that the Forest Service folks left most of their animals loose all night and to add ice cream to the cake, they left the bells on them. Didn't I already tell you they were very loud bells?

We laid down about ten and I think I got to sleep about one am. About three am I woke up with this ungodly noise coming from this one mule that happened to be standing over the top of Vince. The mule looked like he was looking for grain or something. I recognized right away that some kind of miracle was happening. That noise and Vince was still laying there like a baby in a crib. No one that had ears to hear could sleep through that noise. For the love of God, I spent the next two hours throwing sticks and rocks at him to get him to go away. He would not leave. He was one of those "in your pocket" mules. To him I was just playing a game. Vince got up about 6 and looked like he slept at the Hilton. Some things in life are just not fair. Me and that mule never did make friends.

Cheeta led some of the mules on the way out. For sixteen miles we only stopped briefly for a potty break. I suppose you would say the ride out was uneventful but that would underscore the beauty that we rode through. I will say it one more time, if you haven't ridden through the Pasayten, you owe it to yourself to put it on your bucket list. When you are old and gray headed, the ride will always be in your memories.

Rocky L

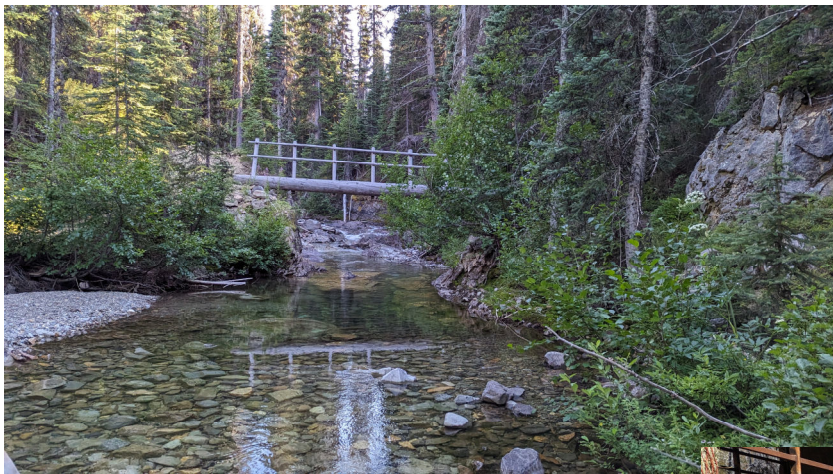
(Pictures on next page)



Airport guard station house



Hart pass to airport-below



Bridge near Pasayten airport



Excelsior Log Out

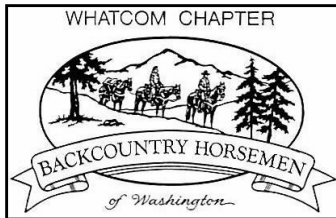
Bill McKenna and I took a couple of pack mules and headed up Excelsior last week to log out a blowdown that had come down in the last wind storm. It was about a mile down from the top and went straight across the trail. Thankfully there were some nice trees to tie up on to keep the stock occupied while we were doing the job. As it turns out, the log was partially rotted out so it made for easier cutting.

Even though it warmed up to over eighty degrees that day, we started the day wearing vests and coats. It was quite cold in the early morning air. However, sawing through a two-foot log warms you up very quickly. Sweat was coming down in just a few minutes and just before I passed out, the cut was through the log.

Bill and I continued up to the top for an early lunch. The fog was so heavy and damp that we could not see over a hundred yards. Kind of surreal. I really enjoyed it though because the essence of a good ride is the overall experience of it. Riding up through the dead silence of old growth forests is one of my greatest enjoyments. The icing on the cake is the pure pleasure I have when riding on an animal that I can absolutely trust. I can enjoy the scenery, my mule keeps her eye on the trail.

Rocky L.





Fran Van Diest
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(360) 734-2567



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Check out the BCHW
Website at:
<http://www.bchw.org>



Next
Whatcom Chapter Backcountry Horsemen

Meeting:
General Meeting:
Sept 13, 2023

Misty River Ranch.
5690 N. Fork Rd. Deming, WA
Potluck at 6pm, meeting at 7pm--8:30pm

