

# Gila Chapter

## Back Country Horsemen of New Mexico | MINUTES

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Meeting date | time 8/11/2021 6:00 PM | Meeting location WNMU Watts Hall

Meeting called by Doug Dexter

Type of meeting Monthly business meeting

Note taker Cindi deCapiteau

### Attendees

Joan Bacon, Maria Biando, Charlie Coffman, Cindi deCapiteau, Doug Dexter, Vicki Dowd, Gerry Engel, Dave Imler, Nancy Imler, Mickey Lemon, Rawlings Lemon, Matt Rehani, Cheryl Roth, Donna Tillmann, Deborah Whittemore, Laurie Wlosinski

## AGENDA TOPICS

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Agenda topic *Call to order* | Presenter Doug Dexter

The first in-person meeting in at least a year (due to you-know-what) was called to order.

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Agenda topic *Recognize guests and new members* | Presenter Doug Dexter

There's a new member, greatly appreciated by all, Maria Biando. Oh, you're in for a good time, Maria!

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Agenda topic *Additions or changes to agenda* | Presenter Doug Dexter

To the agenda for tonight, let's add the gobsmacking notion of the Gila Chapter's 20<sup>th</sup> year (count 'em) anniversary, as well as a report on the stickers being developed for the helmets of trail workers (certain to become a collectible artifact receiving more respect than those green water bottles from the Rendezvous a while back) .

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Agenda topic *Additions or changes to minutes* | Presenter Cindi deCapiteau

No changes were requested to the minutes from the July meeting.

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Agenda topic *Financial & membership report* | Presenter Dave Imler

We're still rolling in our version of riches. Dave received a grant check for the National Wilderness Alliance for \$3200. So, we are left with our customary bank balance of around \$8K at the moment, to soon be reduced by a fuel bill and then increased by funds from other grants. If you're a worker on one of the scores of trail projects this season, be prepared for a reimbursement check.

Our membership count stands at 66 hearty souls.

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Agenda topic *Publicity* | Presenter Vicki Dowd

Following up on Vicki's recent sizzler article about GBCH trail work, which was published in the national BCHA newsletter, Vicki has sent even more news-that's-fit-to-print to the national organization. It might be published or not, but if it is, Vicki speculates that the new material won't appear on the first page. Which

makes sense because we are modest people (in spite of our astronomical success) and don't want to hog all the attention.

A couple of gals recently returned from a sojourn with friends, who happen to be influential members of an Arizona BCH chapter, reported that Vicki's article generated angst among those who haven't accomplished the things we have. In fact, the Arizona people are coming to Silver City in September so they can learn the secrets of our success from our own influential members.

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Agenda topic *Public Service/Communications* | Presenter *Gerry Engel*

A bunch of work projects are coming up in 2021:

- U August 19-24, Iron Creek Mesa (project changed to Gilita Creek trail to Snow Lake)
- U September 25-27 Bear Creek north of Ft. Bayard (probably will change to McKnight Canyon)
- U October 2-7 Flying V
- U October 14-19 Turkey Creek
- U October 27-31 Rain Creek

See maps beginning on page 6.

Gerry noted that trail food is all lined up for the August and September work projects.

According to Melissa, the next issue of southern New Mexico's publication, *Desert Exposure* will discuss GBCH's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

Gerry is coordinating with the Forest Service to update a poster from a couple of years ago that illustrated the Gila Chapter's accomplishments on 100 miles of trail. The poster's format will be the same, but will feature new photos and information.

Gerry still wants to do a booth at county fair.

The Forest Service grant money we're using now must be spent on work in the Gila wilderness areas. Gerry and Melissa are working on a \$25K state tourism grant proposal so we can have money for non-wilderness trails.

As reported earlier, the Forest Service is floating a proposal to begin charging for use of USFS campgrounds. The fee now under consideration is \$10/night. The revenue would be used for campground maintenance, but the proposal has unforeseen consequences for horse people. BCHA is concerned that campground fees will squeeze non-horse people into horse campgrounds. For example, the Forest Service is considering fees for the two campgrounds nearby (Scorpion and Forks), but not doing anything at Woody's and TJ, so it's possible that people without horses will move into Woody's and TJ to avoid paying fees at Scorpion and Forks.

The USFS SW regional office [website](#) provides information about the fee increase proposal and has a map of campgrounds. You can click on a given campground and get information about what's going on.

Some day-use areas will also be affected. As we get the Middle Fork trails in better shape, there will be more traffic at Snow Lake.

Joan Bacon asked if a fee would be imposed to park at trail heads. Gerry mused that the Forest Service doesn't realize people camp at trail heads, but Gerry says he set them straight. He noted that although most trailheads would not be affected, Aeroplane Mesa is under consideration for fees, along with Pueblo Park, where campground rules prohibit horses in the campground. When Gila Chapter members work at Pueblo Park, we camp with livestock outside the campground. The areas we use will be susceptible to crowding by non-horse users because there's no fee to camp there.

Fees for many of USFS campgrounds can be paid via [Recreation.gov](https://www.recreation.gov). The Forest Service is also considering an “Enchantment Permit at \$5 for trailhead camping or \$40 for year-long camping. Joan asked if sign up for the permits will be online (like it is for the National Parks). Gerry responded that online permit application is not in the current proposal, but is a good idea.

He noted further those campers and equestrians who simply park their vehicles and trailers and into the wilderness consume only parking space and don’t use up campground resources. It’s probably not a good policy to charge \$10 a day for parking. It’s likely, Gerry observed, that the Forest Service probably hasn’t thought it all out.

The related public comment period closes September 30. Action on the fee proposal will come later.

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**Agenda topic** *GCSAR Activity | Presenter Laurie Wlosinski/Russ Imler*

Recent missions by Grant County Search and Rescue involved a helicopter evacuation for an overheated hiker. In addition, five ATV users were lost along the San Francisco River. Another bunch was caught by high water on the wrong side of the San Francisco River.

A satisfying outcome occurred on a mission to find an unaccounted-for member of the US military. Members of GCSAR’s mounted unit rode seven miles to Jordan Hot Springs for a person described as depressed. Gerry and Dave contacted the individual. Gerry talked him down and other SAR members walked him out.

In light of our 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the Gila Chapter’s total trail mileage is 1,200 miles, comparable to the distance between Silver City to some place in Wyoming.

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**Agenda topic** *BCHNM Updates and Rendezvous | Presenter Mickey Lemon, Rawlings Lemon*

State Rendezvous, Ft. Stanton October 21-24, 2021

Decisions and planning are ongoing for the 2021 BCHNM Rendezvous. The view of the hour is still to hold the event at Ft. Stanton (but nothing set in stone). Emails are floating around the ether, the subject being a Rendezvous fee structure.

Rendezvous planners have been keeping in mind the New Mexico Covid rules set out in June, so whatever you knew, whenever you knew it will change.

In an apparent effort to take all the fun out of everything, the 2021 Rendezvous will allow no cookouts, no potlucks, no group feeds, no sharing of wine or hors d’oeuvres, no handshakes or other touching. People who attend any meetings must maintain the trusty six feet required by social distancing.

Registration will be handled for only one person at a time. Anybody else still willing to register must get in line and maintain a distance of six feet from the person ahead.

In a policy that’s sure to please somebody, the use of masks left to individuals.

A campground having 27 sites has apparently been reserved or is available exclusively for BCHNM. The campground has an overflow area, but it’s not clear if users of overflow will be charged some kind of camping fee. One couple suggested that they know of private property where the Rendezvous could be held, but nothing came of it.

There will be riding, but details are not available about that. There will also be a tour of the fort, for which participation might or might not involve a charge.

Nobody knows yet what this will cost. The campsite fee might be \$6 day and maybe per person.

BCHNM wants chapters to pay for pumping out the vault toilets at beginning and end of the merrymaking. Of course, everything is subject to change.

Gerry observed that the Rendezvous dates fall between a couple of big GBCH trail projects. October will be a ripe and full melon of a month.

Mickey requested an email from Doug to assess the number of GBCH members planning to attend.

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**Action items**

**Person responsible**

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Email blast to assess interest in attending the 2021 Rendezvous Doug Dexter

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**Agenda topic** *Highway Cleanup* | **Presenter** *Matt Rehani*

Matt Rehani put together a highway cleanup out at US 180 MM 108-109. Nine of you picked through the weeds, stones, broken glass, food wrappers, and the occasional unmentionables and filled five bags of trash.

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**Agenda topic** *NATRC CTR Status* | **Presenter** *Vicki Dowd*

The date has been set for the third periodic competitive trail ride (CTR) at [NAN Ranch](#). This informative and thrilling event will take off on the fourth weekend in April 2022 (the weekend after Easter). The dates have been confirmed by both NAN Ranch and [NATRC](#).

Vicki wondered if under the new Gila Chapter Bylaws, the membership needs to authorize the ride. If so, the vote needs to be held soon because the ride judges need to be confirmed. Everything else is done.

If such a membership vote is needed, Vicki will provide a roster of volunteers before the vote is scheduled. Vicki will contact and confirm volunteers with help from Maria Biando. Dave will send a current GBCH roster to Vicki so she can have up-to-date information. Dave will send.

Dave, ever vigilant, asked if GBCH is obligating any funds by potentially approving the project. If so, we need to know how much. Vicki answered that most funds received for the cancelled 2020 ride have been returned. Vicki will ask if NATRC will honor our sanction fee since we didn't use it in 2020, but other large amounts have been returned. Vicki added that we still have ribbons and trophies purchased for 2020, so that money is already paid. Additional expenses will be insurance, (possibly) the sanction fee, and payments to ride judges. Vicki noted that NATRC supports CTRs with \$1000 in seed money. Doug and Vicki need to talk by phone to come up with a list of expenses.

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**Action items**

**Person responsible**

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Discuss NAN Ranch Ride expenses with Vicki

[Presenter]

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**Agenda topic** *Helmets and Stickers* | **Presenter** *Melissa Green/Gerry Engel*



Creative minds throughout the US collaborated to come up with a new logo for GBCH. Gerry passed around a sample logo that grew from Melissa's idea for a helmet decal for trail workers.

The decal has the slogan, "Keeping Trails Open for ALL," which originated from . Gerry found the prototype image. Melissa coordinated technical development with Cindi. A buncha people took a look and recommended changes.

Lots of people are working with us on trail work and support. Many others benefit from what we do. Why not advertise?

It's likely that the decals can be paid for with grant money.

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**Agenda topic** *GBCH Booth at Grant County Fair* | **Presenter** *Cheryl Roth*

September 22-26, 2021

The Grant County fair is coming up and the Gila Chapter might just as well be there with a booth for one or both fair days. Doug will look into who's in charge so Gerry can find out scheduling options and other details. Gerry will contact the appropriate fair authority to determine hours, fees, and what's involved. Nobody objects to doing a booth.

Tangentially, Gerry says he's thinking about having a GBCH branding iron so we can do cookies without need for the Forest Service's irons.

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**Action items**

**Person responsible**

Get details about Grant County Fair

Doug/Gerry

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**Agenda topic** *Prep for November elections* | **Presenter** *Doug Dexter*

Elections for officers are coming up in November. Doug admonishes us to think about candidates.

Mickey and Rawlings are retiring as representatives to BCHNM. Think about this too. That bunch up there in Socorro needs our influence!

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**Agenda topic** *Possible Gomez Peak picnic* | **Presenter** *Doug Dexter*

We have been poking at the idea of having a GBCH picnic in October, but by golly October is too busy so we're not gonna do that.

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**Agenda topic** *Christmas Party* | **Presenter** *Doug Dexter*

Doug will check with the [Buckhorn Saloon](#) about our Christmas party. Cheryl wondered how any new rules on Covid precautions would affect us in the Buckhorn's cozy confines. We'll have to find out what the new restrictions are and decide what to do then.

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**Agenda topic** *Trail Workers' Barbecue* | **Presenter** *Gerry Engel*

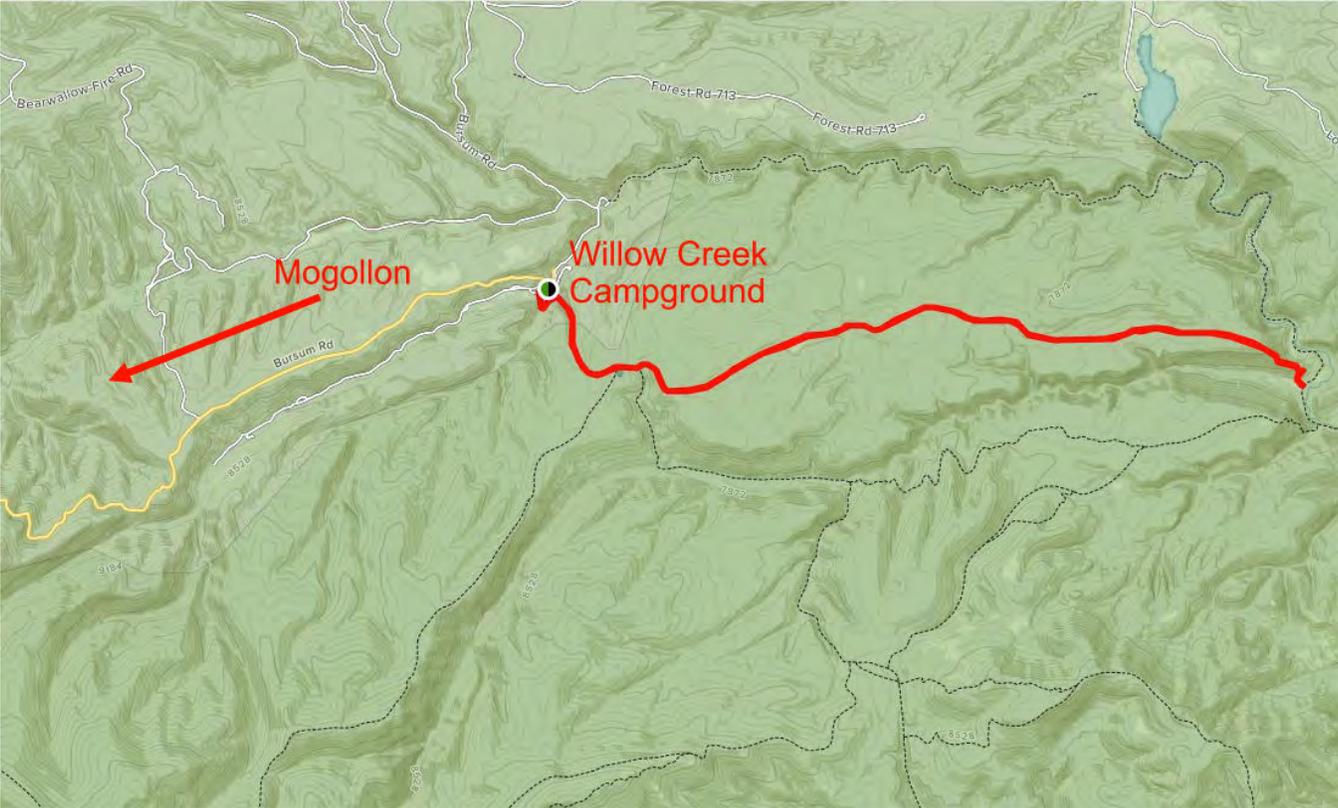
A grateful US Forest Service is planning a barbecue to express its appreciation for trail workers. He expects the event to happen sometime in September. Watch your email for more information.

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**Agenda topic** *Announcements*

Discussion Next meeting Wednesday September 8

Iron Creek Mesa Trail

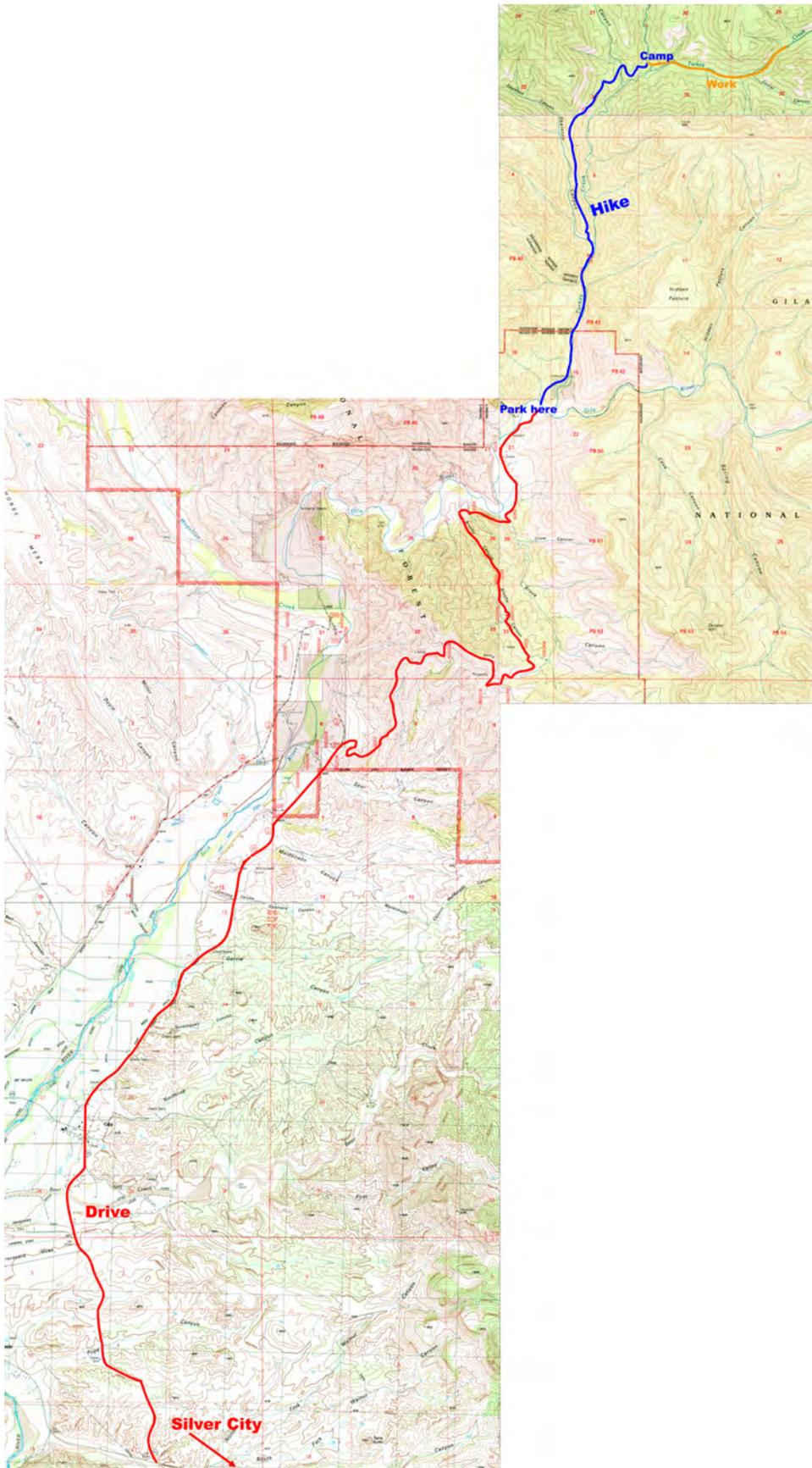




Flying V Trail (sources: 1999 USGS Loco Mountain and Lilley Mountain maps)



Turkey Creek Work Project (sources: 1999 USGS maps, Cliff, Canteen Canyon, Canyon Hill, Diablo Range



Rain Creek Work Project (source: Cal Topo, Melissa Green)

