

Gila Chapter

Back Country Horsemen of New Mexico | MINUTES

Meeting date | time 12/9/2020 6:00 AM | Meeting location Online

Meeting called by Doug Dexter

Type of meeting Monthly business meeting

Note taker Cindi deCapiteau

Attendees

Joan Bacon, Cindi deCapiteau, Dixie Dexter, Doug Dexter, Vicki Dowd, Gerry Engel, Andrea Imler, Dave Imler, Nancy Imler, Russ Imler, Mickey Lemon, Rawlings Lemon, Maureen McLeod, Kristen Munson, Kathy Murch, Charlen Perez, Rebecca Wenger, Sam Wenger, Laurie Wlosinski.

AGENDA TOPICS

Agenda topic *Call to order* | Presenter *Doug Dexter*

This is our second online membership meeting. Previous experience contributed to an atmosphere of diminishing confusion and Doug called the meeting to order at 6:00.

Agenda topic *Approval of November minutes* | Presenter *Cindi deCapiteau*

Charlen Perez attended the November meeting, but her name was omitted from the minutes. Consider her added thereto.

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

The coffers received a check for \$432, representing a refund of the insurance premium for cancelled NATRC ride. The chapter's membership stands at 59 individuals. Dave has received one re-up for 2021.

Agenda topic *Public Lands Update* | Presenter *Gerry Engel*

As the chapter's Public Lands Chair, Gerry assumed official duties for those he has always done anyway; he's been busy. Gerry provided the BCHNM with a list of trailheads in response to some kind of initiative about people camping in horse campgrounds. As we don't have any horse campgrounds in the Gila, trailheads are a suitable stand-in.

Melissa Green is working on the application for grant money from the National Forest Foundation (as discussed at the November meeting—read the minutes [here](#)). Melissa working on, we would be doing trail stuff joint effort on salt cedar.

Doug mentioned that the Forest Service distributed an email about heedless parking at the Dragonfly trailhead, which occurs with eyerolling regularity. Signs point to separate parking areas for cars and rigs, but hikers often park in the rig lot. (If tit for tat were a productive behavior, rigs would be parking in the hiker lot, but that lot is kinda small and the whole idea is just stupid. Anyway, the Forest Service preached to the choir by sending the message to us. One assumes it also went to other trail users.

In a classic form of government bad news delivery, the Forest Service has been dancing around the matter of charging fees at the Gila region's rather spartan campgrounds. The period for public comments has been going on for a while and Gerry noted that the Forest Service has extended the comment period to September 30, 2021.*

Gerry has discussed this with Crista Osborn, the Gila's Recreation Program Manager, because some of the camping fees could have an effect on us. For example, the Gila chapter frequently uses Woody's Corral (map on page 5) as a camping and staging area for multi-day trail projects. Nothing prohibits not-horse-people from taking up space there, which could cause logistical issues for us. Crista wants to talk to us about this stuff. She will be invited to join us at a meeting in the near future.

*You can find out how to express your outrage or support for campground fees at [this page](#) on the Gila National Forest website.

Action items

Person responsible

Invite Christa Osborn to a future GBCH meeting

Gerry Engel

Agenda topic *GCSAR Activity* | Presenter *Laurie Wlosinski*

In a matter of mixed blessings for search and rescue in Grant County (these are people who have lots of access to cool equipment and can order helicopters from distant authorities (which, as any adrenaline junkie ground pounder will tell you, is an amusing diversion from matters of public health and politics), Grant County Search and Rescue has been quiet. We shall see what adventures the coming holidays beget.

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

The next meeting concerning the endeavors of BCH New Mexico will be held January 9, 2021. Mickey and Rawlings, the Gila chapter's representatives to that revered deliberative body, will attend by way of whatever online technology will be in use at that time.

Agenda topic *Review Election Results* | Presenter *Doug Dexter*

Even though the votes have been tallied and the chapter officers are on board, Doug reminded us that he distributed a list earlier of the people willing to assume officer-type duties. He asked if anybody is interested in taking over one of the jobs. Naturally, nobody expressed the slightest interest because the current officeholders have everything under control and since it ain't broke, why fix it? Doug sighed mightily and said if somebody wants one of the jobs, ok, but we're ready to carry on with last year's officers. Those officers are:

- President – Doug Dexter
- Vice President – Vicki Dowd
- Treasurer – Dave Imler
- Secretary – Cindi deCapiteau
- Public Lands Chair – Gerry Engel
- Publicity – Vicki Dowd
- Education Chair – Cheryl Roth

Agenda topic *Survey Review* | **Presenter** *Cindi deCapiteau*

At the brilliant suggestion of Vicki Dowd, we distributed a survey form to poll GBCH members about things that prevent you from coming out on trail projects. Eleven responses eventually came in. The results will be published in an upcoming issue of the Crosscut Saw (our witty little newsletter to keep us revved up in these trying times). If you didn't respond to the initial outreach, here's your chance to get in on the fun. The survey form appears on page X. Print it, fill it out, and mail it to the address shown on the form.

Agenda topic *Membership signups for 2021* | **Presenter** *Cheryl Roth*

In spite of the good news about COVID-19 vaccines, we will engage in pandemic practices for the foreseeable future. In the Before Times, we signed up members and collected dues at the chapter's Christmas Party, but that isn't happening in 2020. At the November membership meeting, those present agreed to an email-snailmail strategy to get this matter handled. Members will receive an email with the 2021 membership application attached. The expected result is that you will print the application, fill it out, and send it by way of US mail to the chapter's post office box. That email will have been delivered to your inbox by the time you read these minutes.

Please return the completed and signed form along with a check for your dues by January 12. If we don't hear from you by that date, somebody will nag you about it.

Action items

Person responsible

Complete the 2021 membership application and cough up your dues	Everybody
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Agenda topic *Highway Cleanup* | **Presenter** *Doug Dexter*

Remember the chapter's section of US Highway 180 west of town, where we get together periodically to clean up litter? Maureen McLeod is planning to arm volunteers with trash bags and instructions on Wednesday, January 20, 2021, 9:30 a.m. Park outside the Wind Canyon fire station, US 180 and the Truck Bypass Road. The date is tentative at the moment, but will be finalized closer to the date in case the weather looks sour.

Action items

Person responsible

Send reminder about the litter detail	Maureen McLeod
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Agenda topic *Miscellany*

Something that's been on everybody's mind is how do we remain charged up when we can't get together in large groups? A couple of suggestions floated around.

- Preliminary responses to the membership survey (see page 6) expressed enthusiasm about training sessions for horse handling and trail-clearing matters.
- Gerry is thinking about a scavenger hunt of sorts. Send out a photo of an attractive place in the region along with a couple of hints about where it is. If a recipient knows where the picture was taken, ride your horse out there and take a picture. The first member who gets it right receives some token—like a gift card for a restaurant (because we imagine they'll eventually be open again).
- Vicki Dowd suggested that if the contest is open to the general public, more people might get involved with the chapter.
- Doug suggested advertising that there is trail work aplenty even for people who are not riding—there's always work to do on the ground for people willing to hike. Vicki will work on that with Doug.

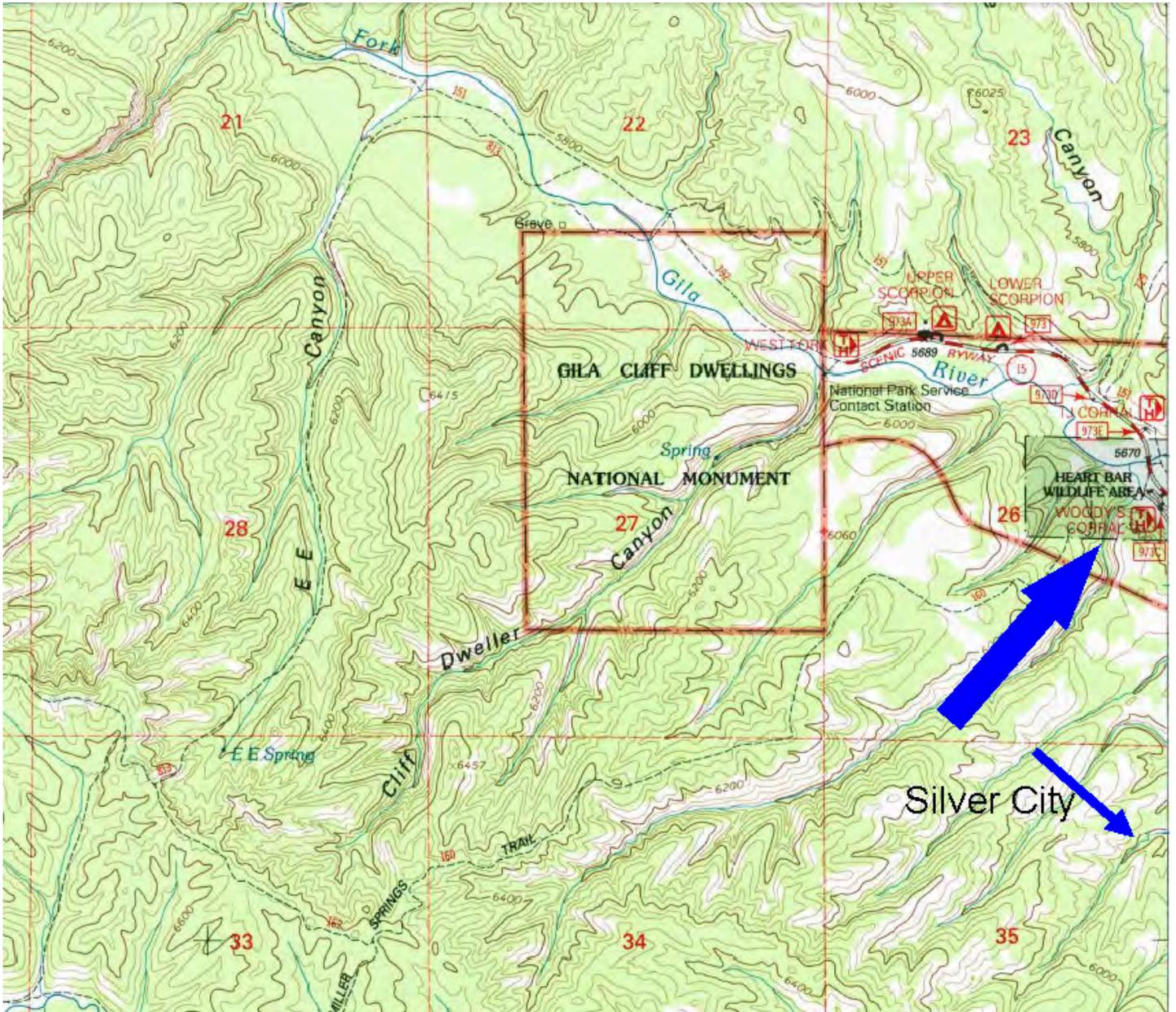
- Vicki also suggested following up with an inquiry from local online newspaper, *The Independent*. There's been lots of trail work completed in cooperation with small crews from GBCH and other organizations. Vicki would like to get together with Gerry to get details about who was involved, why it's important, and other relevant and interesting facts, so she can write the article. Gerry, who wrote a news release for 2019 work (the news release was never used) said he can just update the numbers in the news release, and that will get the article rolling.
- Dave wants to know if anybody knows what Melissa is up to on trail work or is it too early? Gerry and Melissa will compile a list of projects and an associated budget.
- Dave suggested getting input from people who know of trails that need to be worked on. Gerry will distribute an email that asks for that kind of input.
- Doug asked if the Forest Service has identified trails in need of attention, to which Gerry responded that they're expecting us to work on trails they already know about.
- And do you know that the Gila Forest Service now has a year-round trail crew? They're getting a lot done. Doug suggested that the Forest Service might join us at the January meeting. Gerry will contact Christa Osborn or Beth Ihle (district ranger) about getting somebody at the January meeting.
- The water trough at the Badlands Corral (on Ft. Bayard) might be the reason they call it "Badlands." When the trough contains water, it is usually thick with algae. Some GBCH members have cleaned the tank periodically. Ilene Wignall contacted Forest Service to renew permission to clean the tank, but her request was denied. Vicki Dowd asked if there is any way we can take responsibility for that? The water is important for Ft. Bayard riders and at this time, the trough is dry. Gerry responded that we can ask about that in January.

Action items

Person responsible

Plan for scavenger hunt contest	Doug/Vicki/Gerry
Update news release and send to Vicki	Gerry
Compile a project list and budget	Gerry/Melissa
Advertise non-riding trail work activities	Vicki/Doug
Invite Forest Service to the January meeting	Gerry/Doug
Distribute email message asking for info about trails in need of attention	Gerry

Where is Woody's Corral?



Gila Chapter, Back Country Horsemen of New Mexico

Member Activity Survey 2020

The Board of Directors of New Mexico's Gila Chapter of the Back Country Horsemen is looking for ways to encourage participation in chapter activities. To that end, we want to know about barriers that interfere with your ability to help on the chapter's trail projects and social events. Maybe we can help.

Please print and complete both pages of this survey and mail to **Cindi deCapiteau, 7 Buffalo Bur Rd., Silver City NM 88022.**

1. Why did you join GBCH? (check all that apply)
 - New in town and wanted to meet horse people.
 - Recently retired and looking for outdoor activity.
 - Really love hiking in the Gila and get annoyed by fallen trees.
 - Would like to contribute toward excellent trails.
 - Want to experience deep forest and like the security of knowledgeable companions.
 - Used to hike a lot but no longer can do that. Enjoy people with love of wilderness.
 - Other:
2. If you don't come out on GBCH trail clearing projects, why not? (check all that apply):
 - I don't like to camp.
 - I don't have a horse or pack animal.
 - I take care of my pets/spouse/parents/kids/grandkids/neighbors.
 - I work.
 - I don't have camping gear.
 - I don't have a horse trailer.
 - I'm not physically able.
 - I'm not good with tools.
 - I don't want to be away for a week at a time.
 - I've never done that kind of work and I don't know how.
 - Other:
3. Do one-day trail projects appeal to you?
 - Yes.
 - No.
 - Only if they are close to where I live.
 - Only on weekends.
4. Do projects that last for two or three days appeal to you?
 - Yes.
 - No.
 - Only if they are close to where I live.
 - Only on weekends.
 - Only if I can come and go and don't have to camp.

(continued on next page)

5. Do any of these support roles appeal to you? (check all that apply):
- Preparing frozen meals for work crews.
 - Paperwork (keeping track of and reporting volunteer hours and mileage).
 - Recruiting workers.
 - Writing grant proposals.
 - Writing grant fulfillment reports.
 - Feeding and keeping an eye on pets for someone on a work crew.
 - Maintaining equipment (e.g., sharpening saws).
 - Keeping track of equipment inventory.
 - Wrangling horses for sawyers on trail projects.
 - Staying at camp to keep an eye on things while the crew is out.
 - Helping with pack loading at the departure site.
 - Helping unload when the packers return.
 - Organizing social events (picnics, fun rides, Christmas party)
 - Other:
6. What do you think about putting on short basic horse trainings for free or a small fee for the public (to attract new members)?
- A good idea; let's discuss further.
 - A good idea and I'm willing to teach.
 - A good idea, but only if the price is (fill in the blank) \$ or less.
 - A terrible idea.
7. Are you interested in social events (check all that apply)?
- Picnics.
 - Trail rides.
 - Dutch oven cookout.
 - Yes—and I'm willing to organize one.
 - Yes—but I want somebody else to do the work.
 - No.
8. Is it ok for someone to contact you and enroll you in an upcoming project (according to the preferences you indicated above)?
- Yes. If yes, please list your name, email address, and telephone number below.
 - No.

Name: _____ Email: _____

Phone: _____ Best time to call you: _____

9. Your comments please:

Please mail to Cindi deCapiteau, 7 Buffalo Bur Rd., Silver City NM 88022