

Gila Chapter

Back Country Horsemen of New Mexico | MINUTES

[20 February 2024 | 6:00 p.m.] | [Grant County Extension Office]

Meeting called by	Matt Rehani	Attendees
Type of meeting	Monthly business meeting	Joan Bacon, Sharon Brown, Michelle McGorkey (via Zoom), Cindi deCapiteau, Gerry Engel, Dave Imler, Nancy Imler, Mickey Lemon, Rawlings Lemon, Matt Rehani, Cheryl Roth, George Siavalis, Donna Tillmann, Laurie Wlosinski
Note taker	Cindi deCapiteau	

Additions or changes to agenda | Presenter Matt Rehani

Need to schedule a highway cleanup

Approval of minutes | Presenter Matt Rehani

Minutes from the last business meeting (so long ago that nobody's sure when that was) were not disapproved.

Financial & membership report | Presenter Dave Imler

GBCH received income of \$6,497.80 as well as \$8,670 from the US Treasury¹. Expenses of \$3,275 went for banquet charges and stuff that Melissa buys for trail work. We have \$41,921.32 in checking and \$65,758.08 in savings. Most of money on hand comes from the state of New Mexico grant.

The Gila chapter has 44 members, including three new people: Jeannie Fischer, Mike Netharius, and John Wolton. Dave has sent out messages for unpaid members to re-up. He plans to send out more.

Action items	Person responsible
Remind recalcitrant souls to pay their dues	Dave Imler

Agenda topic CDT Days | Presenter Matt Rehani

Silver City's annual Continental Divide Trail Days is coming up in April. GBCH's day of participation is Saturday, April 20 at Gough Park. See <https://continentaldividetrail.org/trail-days-2024/> for details about the event, which celebrates Silver City's 10th year as a CDT Gateway Community.

At this year's event, GBCH is sharing a booth with the organization, New Mexico Volunteers for the Outdoors. We will have the customary crosscut saw activity, in which interested visitors use a crosscut saw (with help from an experienced sawyer) to cut a slice off the end of a Gila forest log and then brand it with the GBCH or CDT logo. The usual suspects who organize this activity are already thinking about materials we need to bring. Gerry Engel

¹ The US Treasury funds will pay an individual who evaluates trails in burn areas for repair. The government is paying him through GBCH.

has most of the stuff we will need (a saw, sawhorse, logs, propane, a heater, etc.). We will also have on hand a canopy donated by Doug Dexter, a GBCH banner, the New Mexico and GBCH parade flags, and whatever else we can think of (sandbags and line to weight the canopy).

We need GBCH members to help with the cross cutting and to answer questions from people who visit our booth. Grant County Search and Rescue will also be there at their own booth.

The April 20 event begins at 9:00 a.m. and goes until about 2:00. GBCH people need to be on scene around 8:00 a.m. to help with setup and stick around until about 3:00 for take-down.

Apparently the liability insurance provided by BCHNM covers public activities like these (as it has in the past), but Joan Bacon will dig up a copy of the policy to make sure.

GBCH doesn't let kids handle the saw unless their parents or an adult caregiver are present and agree to the activity. Note that kids mostly just hold onto the saw handle while a GBCH-trained sawyer does the work. Gerry will figure out a way to cover the very sharp saw teeth near the saw handle.

Action items	Person responsible
Find the liability insurance policy	Dave Imler, Joan Bacon
Cover the crosscut saw teeth with something to protect users	Gerry Engel

Give Grandly | Presenter Matt Rehani

Two weeks after CDT Days, GBCH will be present at the annual Give Grandly event on Saturday, May 4, at the Makers Market <https://www.facebook.com/MakersMarketSilverCity/>

Give Grandly is a multi-day, multi-channel event to raise funds for Grant County's non-profit community organizations. This charitable effort is sponsored by the Grant County Community Foundation. (See <https://www.grantcountycommunityfoundation.org/> for more information.)

Rawlings Lemon and Cheryl Roth have been taking care of GBCH's arrangements for the event. They have registered and paid the modest fee.

On May 4, we will need people to help with setup and breakdown before and after the event. During the event (from 9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.), we will need people to staff our booth, greet visitors, explain what we do, and provide handouts.

As we progress and more info is avail, Rawlings will provide it. If you are available to help, please notify Cheryl or Rawlings. They will develop a schedule so helpers know what time they will be on duty.

Cheryl commented that Give Grandly participants take on many different tasks as part of the event. GBCH has volunteered to do breakdown and cleanup (for the whole site, not just our booth). Gerry expressed a concern about traffic management during breakdown because the space is limited and everybody wants to leave at once. Therefore, we need lots of help for this if GBCH is the only group handling the matter. Cheryl believes that other groups will help with the associated tasks. Gerry suggested that the same people who handled things last year could beneficially handle them again this year.

Give Grandly presents good opportunities for us to get out and meet people. In addition to the GBCH newsletter and the opportunity to raise funds, the event lets the public see what we do who we are, as well as receiving information about our trail work.

Action items	Person responsible	Deadline
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Action items	Person responsible	Deadline
Contact Rawlings Lemon or Cheryl Roth to sign up for a volunteer shift	All members	ASAP

Round-up at Silver City Food Co-op | Presenter Matt Rehani

The Silver City Food Co-op conducts month-long programs in which customers can round-up their purchase price to the nearest dollar. The extra funds go to the particular organization of a given month. GBCH is the organization for April, so encourage people you know to participate on our behalf in April.

Public Service | Presenter Gerry Engel, Melissa Green

The spring trail project schedule has been released (see <https://www.gilabch.org/trail-projects>). The first 2024 project begins on March 8 and clears the Big Bear trail through Lily Park and Woodland Park trails to the Meadows. See details on the electronic form of the trail schedule. The trail was logged last year, so new logging should be minor, but Melissa would like to have some help with any logging.

The Big Bear trail section down to the Gila Middle Fork has been cleared, but might need some logging. It's not the best trail for horses because it is steep and there are few places to tie up, so hikers are welcome.

Another project occurs at the end of March on the Gila Flat Trail #97 and Railroad Canyon Trail #96. The trail has three tanks along its route, but unless there is water at the tanks for stock, this will be a hiker project.

Download the trail project schedule (link above) for details about other work scheduled for the spring projects.

Notify Melissa Green to sign-up.

Storage space | Presenter Matt Rehani

GBCH has collected a quantity of gear and sundry stuff over the years. Trail tools (saws, pry bars, fuel, shovels, Pulaskis, etc.) are maintained by GBCH chief sawyers and trail bosses, but gear for public events (booth canopies (GBCH has three), flags, banners, tables, chairs, posters, coasters, decals, food preparation equipment, files, etc.) are spread out all over the membership. The Gila chapter could make good use of a storage facility to get all this stuff in a central place and to inventory it.

Matt will cast around to local storage facilities for information about costs, items allowed in storage units, the availability of electricity to operate a freezer (for trail food), the reliability of any electric supply, etc. The thought is that the space doesn't need to be large (because tools will not be stored there), so he will also find out about sizes.

Action items	Person responsible
Assess availability and cost of storage facilities to meet GBCH needs	Matt Rehani

Grant County SAR update | Presenter Russ Imler, Laurie Wlosinski

Laurie reported that GCSAR almost had three calls for rescue recently, but they turned out to be false alarms. Jean Hill assisted with help for an Alzheimer's patient. That event turned out well for all concerned. GCSAR had a couple of training sessions and moved the equipment trailer to a storage facility.

She expects that this year's hikers on the Continental Divide Trail will result in an increase of calls for assistance.

Adopt-a-Highway | Presenter *Matt Rehani*

It's time for a highway litter pickup out at Wind Canyon (Gerry says there's lots of stuff that doesn't belong there along the roadway). Matt will coordinate a detail for the end of March; further information will be forthcoming. FYI, GBCH's stretch of highway is between mile markers 108 and 109 on US Hwy 180.

Action items	Person responsible	Deadline
Schedule and announce highway cleanup	Matt Rehani	Before the end of March

State BCH Update | Presenter *Joan Bacon, Cheryl Roth*

The state BCH organization sponsors (but does not operate!) a gathering (Rendezvous) of BCHNM chapters, usually every year. Because the Gila area public lands will have a centennial this year, it seems appropriate for GBCH to host this year's event. Cheryl, who is our de facto Rendezvous coordinator, hopes to hold the event at Ft. Bayard and has sought authorization from the Village of Santa Clara Administrator, Sheila Hudman. The village leases a portion of Ft. Bayard from the state of New Mexico. Santa Clara is now seeking authorization from New Mexico. As the matter plays out, more information will be available.

Dates for the Rendezvous have not been set, but Cheryl is planning for September or October.

Cheryl noted that Santa Clara is eager to host the Rendezvous at Ft. Bayard and has offered the site of the old Ft. Bayard Hospital for trailer parking and horse boarding, as well as the theater building for indoor lavatories and meeting space). Santa Clara is not allowed to accept payments for use of Ft. Bayard, but donations are allowed.

Although overnight camping isn't allowed on Ft. Bayard land controlled by the Forest Service and others that are not Santa Clara, Santa Clara has overnighted (one night only) on land over which it has jurisdiction participants in the Tommyknocker bicycle race, so some precedent for camping there does exist. GBCH is requesting three overnights for purposes of the Rendezvous; remaining to be seen is whether New Mexico will grant permission to hold the event there under our stated conditions.

Rendezvous trail rides will need to be coordinated with the Forest Service if they take place on trails the USFS controls. No permit is required for the use of areas controlled by Santa Clara, but permits from the Forest Service will need to be investigated and answers will need to be found for questions that arise.

BCHNM (the New Mexico chapter of the Back Country Horsemen of America) held a statewide meeting recently. The state has a new chairman (Debbie Spinkerman), and a new secretary (Michele Odom).

Reported at the state meeting was a profit of \$600 from the 2023 Rendezvous and that the next national BCHA conference will be held in Casper, Wyoming.

BCHA has released an e-bike incident report form (see page X), through which GBCH trail users can register discontent or kudos regarding e-bikes they encounter while out and about on public lands. One such report has been submitted by a GBCH member. Cheryl presented the report to Maresa Luzier at BCHNM, from whom it made its way to Randy Rasmussen in Arizona and then up to BCHA. The report was also sent to law enforcement at the Gila National Forest office here in Silver City. Everybody who was supposed to receive the report did indeed receive it.

BCHNM will meet on March 16 to decide whether the Rendezvous will be held at Ft. Bayard or at the other proposed site north of Grants, NM.

Ft. Bayard as an equine destination | Presenter Cindi deCapiteau

Efforts have been bandied about for many years about how to save Ft. Bayard from its continuing deterioration into oblivion. At the moment, a group of people from Silver City and Grant County are looking at ways to renovate the property to spruce up its existing recreational facilities (e.g., a disc golf course). Substantial funds were recently granted to Ft. Bayard by New Mexico to renovate water infrastructure there, so community and state interest exists to get something going. However, current plans do not include any mention of facilities for equine use, which perhaps means only that none of the planners are equestrians and such use isn't top of mind for them.

Cindi deCapiteau is looking to get equestrians and their equines in on the deal. She foresees using now-empty Ft. Bayard land for horse pens and shelters as well as trailer parking. She also notes the benefits to horse tourists who now bypass Silver City because there's not much here for them—we have few boarding facilities or attractions that would make worthwhile the long drive up to the Gila from the Interstate highways. Cindi sees benefits to tourists in the form of proximity to shopping in town, Silver City's historical attractions, and Ft. Bayard's proximity to forest and wilderness trails that are wonderful for horseback riding, as we all know.

She has contacted local movers and shakers in community organizations and government for Santa Clara, Silver City, and Grant County and plans other contacts with local businesses (e.g., JDs and Tractor Supply) who stand to profit from increased equestrian tourism.

GBCH encourages her efforts.

Announcements |

The GBCH treasurer requested two people to serve as auditors for the chapter's financial statements. Laurie Wlosinski and George Siavalis volunteered.

Gerry Engel proposed that the Gila chapter needs to have a membership committee to recruit new people and develop a membership packet. Also, publicity needs to be increased; we have members who don't even know what the chapter's mission is.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, March 19, 6:00 p.m. Grant County Extension Office

E-bike Incident Report Form



E-BIKE INCIDENT REPORT FORM

Consider printing and keeping copies of this blank form in your vehicle or saddle bag

Date: _____ Approximate Time: _____ Day of Week: _____

1. State: _____ Forest, Park or BLM District Name: _____

2. Trail name and approximate location of incident: _____

3. E-Bike type: Class 1, Class 2, Class 3, Out-of-Class, Don't Know (circle one)

4. Is E-Bike use authorized by the land management agency on this trail? Yes, No (circle)

5. If E-Bike use is authorized, what class of e-bike use is authorized? Class 1, Class 2, Class 3 (circle all that apply)

6. E-Bike brand, model and color (if known): _____

7. How did you know it was an electric bicycle (and not a regular bicycle)?

8. Type of Incident: Positive Encounter, Biker Failed to Yield, Excessive Speed, Lack of Trail Etiquette (circle all that apply or add additional information below.)

9. Was any person or your stock injured as a result of this incident? Yes, No (circle) Provide details below.

10. Was a report on the incident filed with law enforcement? Yes, No (circle). If Yes, report # _____

11. How did the incident with e-bike(s) affect your trail experience?

12. Person reporting: Name _____ Email _____

Phone _____ Zip Code _____

Please attach photographs if possible, copy this completed form, and send to: michellewade@bcha.org

December 13, 2023