

Gila Chapter

Back Country Horsemen of New Mexico | MINUTES

Meeting date | time 3/10/2021 6:00 PM | Meeting location Zoom

Meeting called by Doug Dexter

Type of meeting Monthly business meeting

Note taker Cindi deCapiteau

Attendees

Cindi deCapiteau, Doug Dexter, Gerry Engel, Melissa Green, Dave Imler, Nancy Imler, Russ Imler, Mickey Lemon, Rawlings Lemon, Charlen Perez, Cheryl Roth, George Siavalis, Teresa Smergut, Laurie Wlosinski

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

Doug brought the meeting to attention promptly at 6:00.

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

Doug added one item to the agenda, the unfolding drama of SCORP (Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan for New Mexico).

Agenda topic *Approval of Minutes* | Presenter *Doug Dexter*

Minutes from the February 2021 meeting were approved.

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

Payouts:

- \$251.80 for meal prep on the Mogollon trail project
- \$294 for other preparation for that project
- \$474 for the website upgrade

Because only \$400 was authorized for the website, approval was needed for the additional \$74 spent. Cindi moved to approve the amount. Somebody seconded. Everybody approved.

Income:

- Related to the website upgrade, visitors can now make donations to GBCH via PayPal and that capability is beginning to pay off. Donations have amounted to \$250 so far.

Membership:

The chapter now has a total of 61 paid members. Dave is culling non-paying members from the roster.

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

The trail project schedule developed by Gerry and Melissa Green is proceeding along with trail work by other groups.

- Hikers recruited by Melissa cleared Trail #189 (Rain Creek) and Trail #153 (74 Mountain) near Buds Hole (map on pages 6 and 7).

- The USFS trail crew worked on part of Trail #153 (74 Mountain). The Gila Chapter cleared another 3-4 miles up to Trails Canyon, which was last cleared in 2009 (map on pages 6 and 7).
- The Mimbres River project was cancelled because of weather.
- GBCH worked with a crew from Americorps (<https://americorps.gov/>) on the Military Trail (map on page 78).

The contract arrangement with Melissa Green (as authorized at the February meeting) is working out well and the chapter is getting a lot of work done. Nevertheless, Gerry says we could definitely use more horse people. Recruit if you know anybody who wants to ride in the Gila and who's thrilled to do trail work.

Agenda topic GCSAR Activity | Presenter Russ Imler

The Grant County Search and Rescue outfit undertook a late-evening last night. A group of mature hikers was trying to visit ruins south of a Gallinas campground. GCSAR got out there, located the distressed trekkers and spent the day rehydrating and helping them out of the area.

GCSAR has worked one mission so far, but rescue activity is ramping up throughout the state.

Agenda topic BCHNM Updates | Presenter Mickey Lemon, Rawlings Lemon

Liability Insurance. Thanks to Rawlings' persuasive magnetism, the Gila Chapter now has liability insurance under a policy from BCHNM—so chapter members are now covered.

SCORP. The Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) is the result of the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965. That legislation requires each state to develop a SCORP at least every five years and New Mexico is working on its plan now. SCORP is intended to justify state and federal expenditures for outdoor recreation acquisition and development projects. The current effort is a challenge for communities to develop recreational infrastructure and is being worked on by hikers.

The BCHNM lands chairperson believes (naturally enough) that people with interests in equines and trails need to be involved. To that end, New Mexico will hold a town hall meeting via Zoom on March 25 beginning at 5:00 p.m. Doug, Mickey, and Cindi will attend.

Of course, anybody can participate, so you can register here:

<https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJMrfumrj4qHd1JfGVvE-g1vwcLM4lqKgBP>

Agenda topic Highway Cleanup | Presenter Doug Dexter

Last week, Doug and six GBCH members picked up nine bags of trash out on both sides of highway 180 between mile markers 108 and 109. Rawlings came early (because, as Doug confesses, Doug told Rawlings the wrong time of arrival). Since nobody was there when Rawlings arrived, Rawlings left.

The day was windy for the cleanup detail (in March? Go figure!).

The next pickup will probably be in June.

Agenda topic USFS update – programs and grants | Presenter Gerry Engel

GBCH trail administrators (by virtue of Melissa Green) have applied for another grant, this one from the [National Wilderness Stewardship Alliance](#) and worth about \$5K. These funds can be used both within the Gila region's wilderness areas as well as the National Forest (unlike the current status of money promised by the Forest Service (USFS)).





Already awarded, but still in progress is \$50K from the Forest Service (USFS). In the grant agreement, USFS specified that the funds were to be used for trail maintenance only in the Gila Wilderness, so the moolah can't be used elsewhere.

Then there's money that stems from the Great American Outdoors Act, the big bucks from which we hope to have in hand by the first of April.



Also in progress is a grant application to the National Forest Foundation for \$20K. This complex deal is being managed by the Upper Gila Watershed Alliance, which is handling the application and will handle the future paperwork. For this grant, \$10K of which is targeted for the Gila Chapter and GBCH will provide matching funds of \$5K (something the GBCH board of directors discussed during a meeting in December 2020).



The grant funds will be allocated as follows: \$10K for salt cedar eradication and \$10K for trails work.

Agenda topic 501c3 operations & legal Issues | **Presenter** Dave Imler

Legal consultation. Dave discussed with an attorney (Gwendolyn Lacy) about contracting for the services of a trails project coordinator. Dave's questions were answered to his exacting standards for information.

Grant application funds. Gerry mentioned that h needs \$75 for a grant application fee. Doug asked if Gerry has moved ahead to pay the fee and should be reimbursed. Dave needs to talk to Gerry about this.

Liability insurance redux. Dave initiated a conversation about our confusing sidekick, liability insurance, which the USFS requires us to carry. The liability insurance now in force and provided by BCHNM covers only GBCH members. The *whatabout* question, extensively mulled over by the GBCH board, rose once again— to wit, "How's that affect grants from USFS when people are out there who are not GBCH members?" Gerry responded, "I don't have any idea." Gerry's gut feeling is that USFS will authorize us for the upcoming volunteer agreement, but they haven't communicated how much coverage volunteers must have to qualify. That said, Gerry affirmed that non-GBCH-members who work on projects with us will be covered by the volunteer agreement. When working in the forest, Gerry added, we are agents of the USFS. A complication is that we don't know how much coverage we need or what risks are covered. Gerry expressed concern that the BCHNM policy describes GBCH as a "riding club" and says nothing about doing trail work, so we don't know if there's liability associated with trail work. An additional hiccup is that if a liability inducing incident occurred, would it be clear if the problem was caused by a member or a non-member? Gerry mused that it would be nice to know who at BCHNM talked to the insurance people, so we could find out what they know. Rawlings agreed to look into getting some answers:

- What does the liability insurance cover?
- Whom does it cover?
- Will we need a separate policy to cover non-members?

Action items

Person responsible

Talk to Gerry about grant application fee	Dave/Gerry
Find out who at BCHNM can answer our questions and what the answers are.	Rawlings

The chapter's new website is getting attention, as shown in this compilation of numbers from the webserver:



Because GBCH is a non-profit, Melissa suggests that our website qualifies for a domain identifier of “.org” on the site’s address (e.g., <https://www.gilabchnm.org>). The new webserver offers a free .org, which Melissa can set up as a secondary address. That way, if a potential GBCH site visitor types [gilabchnm.org](https://www.gilabchnm.org) instead of .com, they would still end up at our site. Gerry thought it’s a good idea. Doug didn’t see a downside, since visitors would automatically be routed to the .com site. Dave expressed that it “Sounds good to me. I don’t see any downside.” Melissa will do that.

Melissa also reported that the chapter needs to pay \$115 for the year for the website account. She has also purchased a first-aid kit, no-touch thermometer, and a pick to the tune of \$156.13. Melissa requested approval to send an accounting of these expenses to Dave for reimbursement. Gerry moved accordingly and Mickey provided a second. The motion passed.

Finally, until the grant money begins to flow, Melissa requested approval to spend up to \$200 for last minute expenses—so moved by Dave, 2nd by Cheryl, and approved by the gathered Zooming members.

Action items

Person responsible

Set up .org secondary address for [gilabchnm.com](https://www.gilabchnm.com)

Melissa Green

Agenda topic Announcements and oh-by-the-ways

Next meeting: April 14, 2021, 6:00 p.m.

Food for trail workers: Mickey reports receiving a great response for cooking for trail projects. Sixteen people volunteered to prepare meal packets and they’re doing a great job. The cooks are GBCH members who don’t normally participate on the trail, so their participation in the effort to feed the starving workers is particularly satisfying. Melissa says the food gets rave reviews from hikers and riders. Thank you!

COVID rules. Cheryl sought clarification about the current covid rules for interacting in groups. Mickey advised that we’re still sending out food in individual packages. Everybody gets an individual package. On each project, one person is assigned to the kitchen and nobody else is allowed there. The kitchen boss hands

out the food to hungry people. Melissa added that masks are required whenever a worker is within six feet of another.

Kudos for George. Gerry expressed thanks to George Siavalis for help his help recent Mogollon project. Without George, the workers from the Gila chapter and the non-members recruited by Melissa wouldn't have done as much work as we did.

Teresa in Oregon. Teresa Smergut joined the meeting from Oregon. She hopes to be back in New Mexico at some point. Teresa says we do great work.

A post-COVID gathering. Doug observed that GBCH members could use a picnic this summer because we're so interactively deprived, what with social distancing and all. Doug will take the lead to organize something to take place at the USFS Gomez Peak pavilion on Little Walnut.

Fun rides. Gerry suggested some organized rides would be interesting. Cheryl commented that if riders want to meet at the Dragonfly Trailhead, let her know. Parking for rigs is available at the trailhead, but if space is limited there, riders can park in the Boeing 777-sized driveway at Cheryl's house.

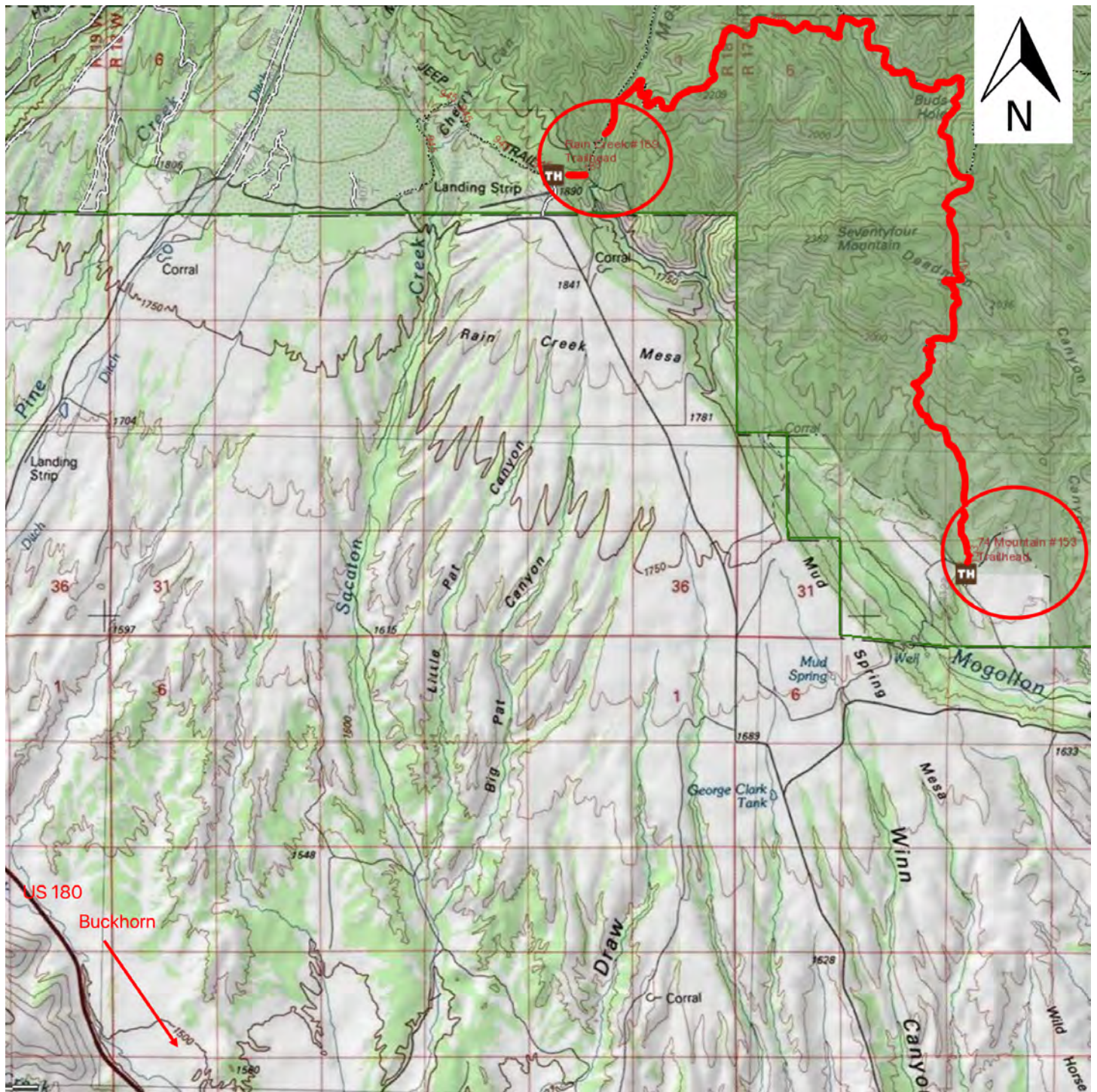
Aeroplane Mesa? Cheryl asked about a project idea that's been tossed around for a while—Aeroplane Mesa up in Catron County. Gerry responded that riders will be camping at Willow Creek in conjunction with the Snow Lake project to work along Iron Creek. Hiker workers will address trails around Clayton Mesa and Trotter flats from their own camp. Click [here](#) to see Melissa's relevant map.

What's next? The trail project season for spring 2021 is scheduled at the end of May. Trail work will slow down starting in June because weather gets hot, but a few projects will occur even in July. To keep apprised of trail projects, visit the GBCH website at <https://www.gilabchnm.com/> and click on the "Gila Trails" link at the top of the home page:

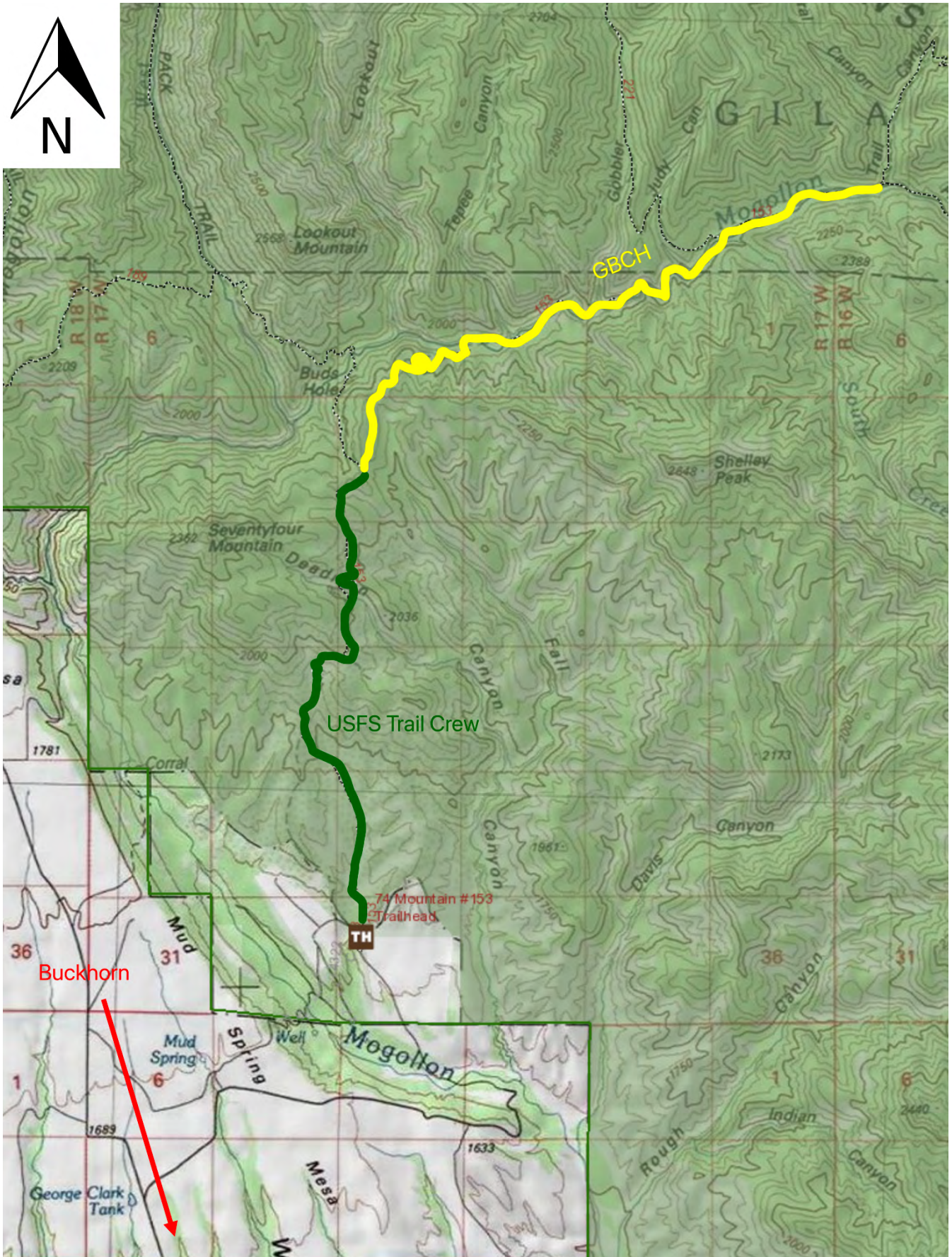


The end. George Siavalis made a motion to adjourn tonight's meeting. Mickey provided a second. One-by-one, the Zoom participants clicked off.

Trail #189 (Rain Creek) and Trail #153 (74 Mountain)



Trail #153 (74 Mountain) (a.k.a. Mogollon Creek) to Trail Canyon



Trail #709 (Military Road)

