

2021 National Board Meeting

April 25 – April 28

By Danny Riddle & Sheryl Schmalz

National Directors – Nevada

The 2021 National Board Meeting (NBM) for Back Country Horsemen of Nevada was held via Zoom on April 25 – April 28. We attended the orientation sessions offered on Sunday, April 25th. Takeaways from this session were as follows:

- National Directors are the liaisons both ways between their state organization and the national organization.
- National Directors are voting members of the National Board of Directors for BCHA
- National Directors perform in a legal, moral, and fiduciarily responsible manner governing in the best interest of the BCHA organization ensuring the organizations actions are consistent and in compliance with BCHA objectives and purposes

The NBM kicked off on Monday with housekeeping items & committee reports. Takeaways from this session were as follows:

- BCHA has continued to thrive on the whole through 2020
- The Executive Board (EB) is working with the USFS to allow more efficient tools in the Wilderness i.e. chainsaws
- The EB is working with State and National parks to better regulate Equine Only camp sites. Currently, there is a lack of enforcement in this area
- Mark Himmel, Treasurer, reported that BCHA is no longer outsourcing accounting, BCHA has changed banks to US Bank where they have electronic deposit capabilities.
- Mark Himmel, Treasurer, presented the current Profit and Loss statement and the Balance Sheet.
- The Executive Board (EB) made some changes to their finance contract which resulted in the EB taking on more responsibilities and a change in mindsets
- All other contracts will be automatically renewed on their renewal dates.
- Randy Rasmussen, Director, Public Lands and Recreation and the only paid BCHA employee, was reviewed. His notable successes are: Recognized as the national lead for defending trails from incursion by e-bikes, defeated “Bikes in Wilderness” bill in Congress, made significant contributions to trails community’s annual appropriation request to Congress, inclusion of USFS in Great American Outdoors Act, and continued visibility for advocacy and its value to equestrians. The contracts committee recommended a 5% annual salary increase for Randy which is included in the 2021 budget and will be voted on when ratifying the budget.

- BCHA Chapter Support Grants reported that 42 chapters applied for BCHA grants. \$14,000 were awarded to 21 applicants. Important to note that the window for applying for grants is between January 1 and March 15.
- The education committee reviewed and revised the Secretary training. Each national officer was given a link to distribute to their counterparts at the state level. The state officers were to make those resources available at the chapter level. I will send out that link to chapter officers.
- The expansion committee reported that 2020 was a challenging year for their efforts although they persevered. They were able to bring back a few chapters in Illinois and South Carolina. They believe the Northeastern U.S. has the most potential for expansion and are engaged in conversations with Vermont and New Hampshire. The committee is willing to travel to help new/struggling states expand.
- The BCHA fundraising committee is on fire! They educated us on monthly giving programs that can be set up for as little as \$5/month. Donations can be directed to specific programs within BCHA. Their online giving campaigns have been very successful especially via Facebook. From May 1, 2020 to April 13, 2021 the fundraising committee took in \$96,500. The National Directors have been challenged to set up a birthday donation challenge on FB. Last year, BCHA received raised \$11,000 with 7 out of 64 National Directors participating. Top Trail gives a portion of their proceeds to BCHA for each participant. The link to join the challenge is <https://toptrailjourneys.com/>
- BCHA's main Media and Marketing efforts are focused on our website, Facebook, We Ride Sport and Trail magazine, Liz Hughey children's books and our quarterly newsletter.
- The Membership committee stressed the importance of a Membership Development and Retention committee at the chapter levels. Our "working" population is aging and we need to pass this information down to our new members, as well as, keep them excited about our organization. We currently have about 8,000 members nationwide.
- The BCHA Public Lands Committee, this year, has discussed and dealt with many items including E-Bikes, non-equine users in horse camps, GAOA funding for trails and trail heads, Forest Service trail funding, coalitions with other trail user's, BCHA saw program issues, time studies being conducted by the Forest Service comparing chainsaws to crosscut saws to help determine when an MRA should be used, access issues involving our public agencies and many others. The Public Lands committee is organized using a Regional concept. Every BCHA member is a member of this committee and is encouraged to participate.
- The Public Liaison committee sends funds to the following agencies/organizations
 - National Wilderness Stewardship. \$200.00
 - American Horse Council \$5,000.00
 - Coalition for Recreational Trails \$100.00
 - American Trails \$100.00
 - Partnership for National Scenic Trails \$750.00

- The Volunteer Hours committee is working to simplify the Volunteer Hours worksheet to make it more user friendly. Based on volunteer hours submitted in 2020, BCHA's in-kind donation came to \$8.5 million. This number is very powerful when our representative, Randy Rasmussen, speaks on our behalf.
- The BCHA Youth Committee is a newly formed committee. They sent out a survey and are currently compiling the information for future recommendations.
- If you are interested in joining a national committee or setting up a local or state committee, please contact your state's National Director who will direct you to the correct committee chairperson or help you find the resources you need to get your committee set up.

The BCHA Board took the following actions:

- The Board voted to change the name of the Public Liaisons committee to the Partnership committee and updated some of the language regarding this committee in the Governance documents.
- The Board voted to take the newsletter to a digital format with the exception of one issue each year.
- The Board voted to accept the Investment Policy Statements for the Legacy Fund

Mark Himmel, BCHA Treasurer, presented the 2021 – 2022 Budget

On Wednesday, we were treated to a Past BCHA Chairmen Discussion. Each available past chairman spoke briefly about their accomplishments and challenges during their tenure. This was fascinating, and Sheryl would be happy to share her notes.

The Lifetime Achievement Award was given to Mike McGlenn, BCHA Chairman from 2011-2013.

The Board listened to a presentation from the British Columbian BCH. They experience many of the same challenges that we do in the States.

The Double Diamond award was presented to BCH of Virginia – Highlands Chapter.

The Board approved the 2021 – 2022 BCHA budget.

The Board elected new executive board as follows:

- Sherry Copeland – Chairperson
- Mark Himmel – Vice Chairperson
- Latifa Rodriguez – Treasurer
- Brad Pollman – Non-Director EC Member
- Jim Allen – Director EC Member

Additional comments:

BCHA website provides a wealth of information about Back Country Horsemen. The website provides information for new members, and it has information on current issues, challenges and accomplishments.

BCHA has a Google cloud drive available to all members. It has even more information.

Our super employee, Randy Rasmussen was considered to be of such high importance to BCHA that at the time he was hired, the then BCHA Chairman donated funds to pay Randy's first year's salary.

Committees are extremely important to achieving BCHA purpose. By participating on committees within the chapter level, the state level, and the national level, we will help solve our dilemma of continually seeming to reinvent the wheel for solutions to every little problem.

Possibly the most important committee to fully vest at every level, is the Public Lands Committee.

BCHNV DELEGATE REPORT

In response to the National Board of Directors request form each State to state our #1 accomplishment, and our #1 challenge, the Nevada Delegates, Sheryl Schmalz and Danny Riddle presented the following:

Nevada's #1 accomplishment is that we have gained recognition for accomplishing more than what we do.

Nevada's #1 challenge is to continue this efficiency.

This follows Darrel Wallace's observation that *"we currently have the best creditably with the Forest Service as ever"* and Randy Rasmussen's comment that *"BCH punches well above our weight"*.

There are several reasons for BCHNV to achieve exceptional high success. The main source could arguably be our partnerships with other organizations. This is synergism of accomplishing more from working together than what either of us could alone, from associating with partners who have good reputations, working on popular projects and directing energy & momentum to trails.

Nevada's #1 challenge is to keep this up. Nevada has a small membership with a lot of public land. Our problems are as enormous as the universe. We cannot foresee all

obstacles.

To overcome these obstacles, we must be smart, like the martial arts of judo and jujutsu. They use an opponent's weight and momentum to throw them off balance. If we resist a more powerful opponent, we will be defeated. By adjusting to and evading an opponent's attack we will cause him to lose his balance, his power will be reduced, and he will be defeated.

This applies to more than personal defense. This applies to BCH issues of aging demographics, exponential competition for public lands, motorized infringements, and need for new members.

There are numerous examples of successful partnerships where we have cooperated with others to help their causes, and in so doing, we direct momentum and energy into the purposes for which BCHA was organized.

For example, This September 2021 is Back Country Horsemen's 2nd year of a 3-year wilderness fish restoration in the Great Basin National Park. We invited Trout Unlimited to partner with us for momentum and weight.

At first glance, a reasonable question is, what does fish restoration have to do with Equestrian Trails? Great Basin National Park is horse friendly but without equine infrastructure. Several trails are open to horses, but there are no facilities in the park for horse camping.

To successfully implement the fish restoration project, we had to camp overnight in the park with our horses, we used our horses to pack gear into sensitive environmental wilderness areas with endangered or threatened/listed plants. Park security closed roads and trailheads for us to drive on one lane roads with room to turn around. We showed "*Leave NO Trace*" skills proving that horsemen can camp without an impact. What we were able to do in just a few days will provide a longer lasting, favorable memory of equestrian use than what we could accomplish with years hard work with a pick & shovel or by making numerous public comments on proposed environmental assessments.

Our request for fellow Back Country Horsemen is to use our public lands more. There are numerous agencies in Nevada who are "Horse friendly but lack infrastructure". It is by calling these agencies and asking managers where we can go, and by showing how responsible we are, that we will perpetuate the commonsense use

and enjoyment of horses in America's back country and Wilderness areas, and work to ensure that public lands remain open to recreational stock use.