



SIS-Q-TRAILS

Backcountry Horsemen of California
Top of the State Unit

Volume 29

Issue 4

Fourth Quarter, 2025

<https://tos-bchc.com/>

<https://www.facebook.com/bchctopofthestate/>



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Normally, in this space, I would update you on the fantastic projects we've worked on in the past few months and highlight any hot topics that need addressing. Instead, I'd like to use this space to ask you all a question: **Why did you join Backcountry Horsemen of California?** Was it to meet new, like-minded equine enthusiasts? Was it to learn new skills for riding, camping and packing in the backcountry? Was it to volunteer to help maintain trails and equestrian campgrounds? I can say these are all of the reasons I joined the BCHC Top of State Unit in 2018 when I moved back to the area after living in Nevada, Louisiana and Texas for more than 25 years. I didn't plan on becoming the Newsletter Editor or becoming President of this Unit. I've enjoyed these leadership positions, but they are time-consuming and challenging at times. I've taken on other roles within this Unit when chairpersons stepped down, which has also led to a bit of burnout.

I was one of the lead organizers of the 2025 Rendezvous in Corning, and I took great pride in helping plan that event. However, when the event arrived, my involvement as a "volunteer" felt more like being an "employee", courtesy of the treatment received by the BCHC State Executive Leadership in attendance. That experience made me think differently of BCHC and our overall mission. We were under great pressure to make Rendezvous a big money-making event; the educational aspect of the event seemed to be a lower priority. My enthusiasm for BCHC has diminished since April and I've made the decision to step down as President of this Unit after five years in this role. I'm confident that someone within our membership will step up and help keep this Unit going strong in 2026. I plan to continue in several of my current roles, including helping build our relationship with the Klamath National Forest and local trail stewardship non-profits. I think we can continue to do great work in our area forests. I just want more time to enjoy this work, riding and hiking on these beautiful trails.

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GRIDER UPGRADES

In the photo above, Jeff McCabe helps add cement powder to secure a new campfire ring at Grider Creek Campground in July. Installing these new fire rings was one of several improvements our Unit members helped the Klamath National Forest recreation staff with at the campground. See page 5 for more details.

Our Unit is going to close out the year with some fun events. See the two flyers in this newsletter for more information. But back to my original question. If you joined BCHC to learn, meet people, and attend great events, **we would love to get your feedback on new learning opportunities for 2026.** As we close out the year, please be thinking about submitting your volunteer hours by the end of December. We'll send out an email soon regarding gathering volunteer hours.

Happy Trails!
Michele Machado Woods
Unit President and Newsletter Editor

SIS-Q-TRAILS

**A publication of the Backcountry Horsemen
of California Top of the State Unit**

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DISCLAIMER: Articles and advertisements that appear in SIS-Q-TRAILS do not necessarily reflect the position or opinion of the BCHC, TOS Unit or its officers and members. Nor does publication of said articles and advertisements constitute an endorsement of views or of the goods or services offered therein that they may express. Accuracy of all material is the sole responsibility of the authors. BCHC TOS is not responsible for unsolicited material of any kind.

SUBMISSIONS AND DEADLINES: The Top of the State Unit welcomes new member contributions, club news, events, calendar dates, and items of interest that you wish to have submitted in the next issue of the newsletter. These need to be submitted by the 15th of the month and will be printed as space is available. This newsletter is edited and published four times per year.

Submission deadline dates: March 15, June 15, September 15, and December 15

Publication dates: January 1, April 1, July 1, and October 1

Send all information (text, photos and/or images) to newsletter editor/publisher mailing or email addresses listed above.

PHILOSOPHY AND PURPOSE

This newsletter is a document of communication that disseminates information of the Top of the State Unit of the BCHC covering schedules, information, philosophy and historical materials pertinent to the participants of the back country of Northern California.

1. Perpetuate the common sense use and enjoyment of horses in America's back country and wilderness.
2. Assist the various government and private agencies in their maintenance and management of said resources.
3. Educate, encourage and solicit active participation in wise and sustaining use of the back country by horsemen and the general public.
4. Work to ensure that the public lands remain open to recreational stock use.
5. Foster and encourage the formation of new state backcountry horsemen organizations.

Unit bylaws, membership form and more:
<https://tos-bchc.com/forms>

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Unit Briefs

Board of Directors election

Have you considered being a part of our Unit's Board of Directors? We will fill any vacancies on our Board in an election to be held at our November 6 Membership meeting.

Board of Directors responsibilities and requirements:

- All Directors must be BCHC members in good standing
- Attend monthly meetings (first Thursday of each month)
- Help manage the affairs, property, business and control of policy of the organization
- Bring new, fresh ideas and fill open chairperson roles

Contact Unit President Michele Machado Woods at meechele418@gmail.com or 817-308-0258 for more info.

Tax deductible donation information

Your Unit leadership is often asked how members can donate funds to help support our Unit and our projects. You can certainly donate directly or, if you would prefer to give a tax-deductible donation, please go to the BCHC website, www.bchcalifornia.org, and scroll to the bottom of the home page to find a "Donate" button. That will take you directly to a fillable form where you can choose to donate any amount once or on a recurring basis. If you want to designate your donation for the Top of the State Unit, select Education Fund and add a note that your donation is for our Unit's Education Fund. The donation site will automatically send a thank you letter to you acknowledging receipt of the donation. Contact us with any questions.

Welcome new members!

Aysha and Eric Falconer
Brian Hayes

TOP OF THE STATE UNIT 2025 ACTIVITIES

Please watch the Unit website, Facebook page and Unit emails for continued updates.

- Oct. 2 BOD Meeting, Mayten Fire Hall, Big Springs, 7 p.m.
- Oct. 4 Group ride & BBQ, Bacigalupi Ranch, see flyer
- Oct. 4 BCHC Fall BOD Meeting, Hilmar, CA
- Oct. 18 Halloween Obstacle play day, Big Springs, see flyer
- Nov. 6 Membership Meeting, Fort Jones City Hall, 7 p.m.
- Dec. 4 BOD Meeting, location TBD, 7 p.m.
- Dec. 6 Christmas potluck dinner, Fort Jones City Hall, TBD

Visit the Top of the State Unit website at
<https://tos-bchc.com/>

Visit our Unit's Facebook page at
<https://www.facebook.com/bchctopofthestate/>



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- You'll get great travel prices!
- Each time you book travel a portion of the travel commissions will go to support BCHC!

It's that simple!

**Advertisers needed! Contact Michele at
meechele418@gmail.com for more info.**

RIDE THE BACIGALUPI RANCH!

Group trail ride and BBQ potluck lunch - October 4, 2025

Please join us for a group trail ride and lunch at the Bacigalupi Ranch.

When: PLEASE arrive no later than 9:30 a.m. so we can start the ride at 10 a.m.

Address: 13632 Ball Mountain Little Shasta Road, Montague; follow BCHC signs to trailer parking and potluck lunch location.

Members only? Yes, for this ride on private property we'll require all riders to be current BCHC members. Non-members wanting to ride will need to sign up to be a member before or on the day of the event.

BBQ potluck lunch at the ranch: If you want to stay for lunch after the ride, please bring a potluck side or dessert to share. We anticipate the lunch will start around 1 p.m. for anyone planning to join just for lunch.

RSVP: YES by October 1 if you plan to attend the potluck lunch. We'll need a firm headcount so we can purchase enough hamburgers and buns.

Questions and RSVP: Reach out to Robert Robustellini at 530-468-5636 or Michele Machado Woods at 817-308-0258.



Members aid Klamath NF with Grider Campground updates

Article by Michele Machado Woods

At the start of this year, we met with our Klamath National Forest recreation partners and they asked if we could help with projects beyond trail clearing. On July 26, we helped with such a project, as four Unit volunteers, Jeff, Michael, Alan and Michele, joined KNF staff to install new campfire rings, a new campground sign and an information kiosk at Grider Creek Campground near Seiad Valley.

This project and other campground clean-ups we've done this year may not be equine related, but they help our Unit continue to build a positive relationship with the Klamath National Forest. Projects like this aid with planning for other projects in the future that are equine related. That said, Grider Creek Campground is equine friendly – we're happy to report the stock corral we helped build at the campground last year has been used at least once.



Photos courtesy of Jeff McCabe and Michele Machado Woods



Deer Mountain ride features great weather

Article by Michele Machado Woods

Fall is an outstanding time to gather for a group trail ride. With temps in the 70s and recent rains keeping dust at a minimum, September 13 proved to be a perfect weather day to ride at Deer Mountain on the eastern side of the Klamath National Forest.

We had about 12 riders out for a 4-mile ride that included a fun card game and lunch potluck. The ride, which featured a mixture of trails and seldom-used Forest Service roads, was suitable for all skill levels and all ages. We had two youth members attend with their grandparents for this ride.

The "high/low" card game, which had riders picking cards at three stations during the ride, was won by ride volunteer Robert Robustellini.

Thanks to Robert, John and Alan for helping with handing out the cards during the ride. We couldn't put on a group ride like this without our volunteers on the ground.



Photo courtesy of Alan Woods

We need your ideas!



Your Unit leadership is seeking to schedule more educational and family-friendly events in 2026

Such as:

- Backcountry education demos for high-lining, packing, camping, trail clearing, etc.
- More trail rides
- Mule/horse training
- Work events that also include plenty of time to ride horses and mules
- Equine bodywork demos by local clinicians
- Speaker events on local interest topics
- Basic farrier skills
- Backcountry first aid
- Emergency preparedness
- Your ideas!

Contact the following with your ideas:

Unit President

Michele Machado Woods meechele418@gmail.com

Education Chair

Debbie Bacigalupi dbacigalupi@gmail.com

BCHC Top of the State Unit



SPOOKY OBSTACLE PLAY DAY

Come play and practice on our Halloween theme course with more than 25 obstacles for all skill levels! Come and go all day.



October 18, 2025

Course opens at 9:30 a.m.

7330 Sterchi Lane, Big Springs, 96064



Youth riders 17 and under must wear a helmet.
BCHC members and non-members welcome!
No cost to attend, but donations to our Unit are welcome.

Questions? Call/text Michele @ 817-308-0258

Backcountry Horsemen of California



MAIL TO: BCHC
MEMBERSHIP
1280 State Rt. 208
Yerington, NV 89447

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

A Family & Youth
Oriented Organization
Release 4 2025 (11 Feb 25)

☐ New ☐ Change
☐ Renewal

PARENT UNIT AFFILIATION: (Select and CHECK a Unit as your Affiliation)

- | | | | |
|--|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Antelope Valley | <input type="checkbox"/> Los Padres | <input type="checkbox"/> Redshank Riders | <input type="checkbox"/> Sierra Freepackers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Eastern Sierra | <input type="checkbox"/> Manzanita Riders | <input type="checkbox"/> Redwood | <input type="checkbox"/> Sutter Buttes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> High Country | <input type="checkbox"/> Mid Valley | <input type="checkbox"/> San Joaquin Sierra | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Top of the State |
| <input type="checkbox"/> High Sierra | <input type="checkbox"/> Mother Lode | <input type="checkbox"/> Santa Ana River | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kern River Valley | <input type="checkbox"/> North Bay | <input type="checkbox"/> Sequoia | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kern Sierra | | <input type="checkbox"/> Shasta Trinity | |

DCTR (Your Membership Number): _____

MEMBER'S NAME - No Business Names, Print Clearly

SPOUSE/CO-MEMBER'S NAME - MUST SHARE SAME ADDRESS

Street Address/PO Box

City _____ State _____ Zip Code (full 9 digits if known) _____ Area Code _____ Phone Number _____

Email Address: _____

Email Address: _____

Donation to BCHC Education Fund (Tax deductible) \$ _____ Enclosed: _____ Check No. _____

Parent Unit Membership Types (Check One)

- | | | | |
|--|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Year Individual \$60 | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Year Family \$75 | <input type="checkbox"/> Young Adult (18-25 years old) \$15 | <input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor \$100 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Year Individual \$110 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Year Family \$140 | Include Date of Birth / / | <input type="checkbox"/> Patron \$250 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3 Year Individual \$160 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 Year Family \$205 | | <input type="checkbox"/> Mt. Whitney \$500 |

Associate Membership: An Additional \$15 PER UNIT is added to your Parent Unit Dues

Associate Membership Unit Affiliations MAY NOT BE FOR THE SAME UNIT AS YOUR PARENT UNIT

Associate Membership for: _____ \$15/Unit
Unit Name (from above list)

Associate Membership for: _____ \$15/Unit
Unit Name (from above list)

Please clip form along dashed line and keep the below portion for your records.

Parent BCHC Membership Types

Individual, Family, (Shared**), Benefactor, Patron, and Mt. Whitney

A Parent Membership is with a single Local Unit.

**A SHARED Membership is for two adults with differing last names who share a common address.

Associate Memberships

These special Memberships are only available to persons already holding Parent BCHC Membership. No one may sign up for an Associate Membership without 1) having registered one of the Parent Membership types, and 2) having selected Parent Unit affiliation.

Young Adult Memberships MUST include date of birth on application. The year you turn 24 is the last year you may renew under this membership.

Complete information regarding BCHC Membership is available on the MEMBERSHIP TAB at bchcalifornia.org or call (775) 463-3634

KEEP FOR YOUR RECORDS

I submitted an Application Form for a -

- | | |
|--|-------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Year Individual | \$60 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Year Individual | \$110 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3 Year Individual | \$160 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Year Family | \$75 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Year Family | \$140 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3 Year Family | \$205 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Young Adult (18-25 years old) | \$15 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor | \$100 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Patron | \$250 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mt. Whitney | \$500 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> On that form, I also requested: | |

_____ Associate Memberships

My Total Remittance: _____

My Check Number: _____

Date Mailed: _____

Verifying BCHC Membership by

- 1) BCHC Unit President's reports
- 2) BCHC Membership VP reports
- 3) a self-addressed stamped envelope submitted with this form
- 4) a valid email address