



SIS-Q-TRAILS

Backcountry Horsemen of California
Top of the State Unit

Volume 30
Issue 1
First Quarter, 2026

<https://tos-bchc.com/>
https://www.facebook.com/bchc_topofthestate/

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The 2025 Annual Report will be submitted to the Backcountry Horsemen of California in January 2026. This year, our Unit leadership was proud to help plan and host BCHC Rendezvous in Corning in April. Our Unit-sponsored youth packing teams performed so well at Rendezvous that their success and passion for the craft spawned new ideas and a new local partner non-profit, The Outfitters Legacy Project based in Etna, that will continue the youth packing education program into the future.

BCHC Top of the State Unit 2025 Annual Report: We did not have any Unit events in January, but it was still a busy month. Michael Stapleton and I attended the Wilderness and Primitive Trails Summit on January 9 in Eureka. This event, hosted by the Bigfoot Trail Alliance, was a chance to meet and network with federal and state agency personnel and like-minded area trail stewardship non-profits. This meeting allowed us to make many new connections that would prove valuable throughout the year. Robert Robustellini, Michael Stapleton and I met with Klamath National Forest recreation and trail work partners in Yreka on January 13 to discuss work plans for 2025, including campground and trail work in the Carter Meadows area. On February 13, we received our signed 2025 Volunteer Service Agreement with the KNF.

I, as your Unit Volunteer Hours chairperson, sent in our 2024 Volunteer Hours on January 23.

I attended the Spring BCHC State Board of Directors meeting on February 8 in Bakersfield to help promote Rendezvous and answer any last-minute questions or concerns from State leadership.

Our first Unit event of the year was our February 13 Board of Directors meeting. Unit Treasurer, Caralee Scala, presented our 2024 profit and loss report and we voted to approve our 2025 budget. Caralee reported at our March 6 Membership meeting that she sent in our 2024 Unit Financial Report to BCHC as required.



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FALL RANCH RIDE

On October 4, the Bacigalupi family hosted our Unit for a 7-mile group ride at their beautiful ranch in the Little Shasta area. Ten riders enjoyed the trek through pastures, creeks, and varied hilly, wooded terrain with lava rock outcrops, caves and an outstanding view of Table Rock. After the ride, we gathered at the ranch homestead for a BBQ potluck lunch.

We had nearly 50 members and guests at our Corned Beef and Cabbage potluck dinner on Saturday, March 15, at Fort Jones Community/City Hall. The food was amazing and there was plenty of visiting and catching up done by all as we welcomed Spring and updated attendees on the trail/campground work and riding events we were planning for 2025. The dinner featured a raffle and dessert auction. Our Unit earned more than \$800 from this event and all proceeds helped us sponsor the two youth packing teams that competed at the 2025 Rendezvous.

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SIS-Q-TRAILS

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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 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.

Learn more about Backcountry Horsemen of California: <https://www.bchcalifornia.org/>

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The Top of the State Unit is online and on Facebook!

Important forms are available for download and printing on our website. Go to tos-bchc.com and click on Forms to see the full list of documents. The Top of the State Unit Facebook page can be found at: <https://www.facebook.com/bchctopofthestate/>

TOP OF THE STATE UNIT 2026 ACTIVITIES

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

January 1	BOD Meeting cancelled	June 3-7	Carter Meadows work party/campout
January 8	Regional Trails Summit, Eureka, CA	June 4	BOD Meeting cancelled (Carter Meadows work weekend and Fair month)
January 10	Outfitters Legacy Project fundraiser, Yreka	June 24-28	Siskiyou Golden Fair, Yreka
January 10	BCHC Leadership Training, Oroville, CA	July 2	BOD Meeting, Fort Jones City Hall
January 17	Shasta-Trinity Unit fundraiser, Redding	August 6	BOD Meeting, Grenada Fire Hall
January TBD	Planning meeting with KNF Recreation staff	September 3	BOD Meeting, Fort Jones City Hall
February 5	BOD Meeting, Grenada Fire Hall	September 12	Deer Mountain Group Ride
February 7	BCHC Winter BOD Meeting, Hilmar, CA	October 1	BOD Meeting, Grenada Fire Hall
March 5	Membership Meeting, Fort Jones City Hall	October 3	BCHC Fall BOD Meeting, location TBD
March 20-22	BCHC Rendezvous, Ceres, CA	October 25	Halloween Obstacle event, Big Springs
March 21	Corned Beef & Cabbage dinner, Fort Jones	November 5	Membership Meeting, Fort Jones City Hall
April 2	BOD Meeting, Grenada Fire Hall	December 3	BOD Meeting, Grenada Fire Hall
April TBD	Obstacle Course play day or group ride, TBD		
May 7	BOD Meeting, Fort Jones City Hall		

Welcome new members!

Pam and Chance Baiza

Mathilda Barr

Craig Coggins

Cathy Danel

Karrie Snure

GIVE TO BCHC

If you would like to support our Unit and/or BCHC with 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. **If you want to designate your donation for the Top of the State Unit, please 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.

Jan. 10 Stamey concert to benefit OLP

New backcountry packing non-profit, The Outfitters Legacy Project, is hosting award-winning cowboy singer Dave Stamey and renowned cowboy poet Jeff Carson for an exciting fundraising event on January 10, 2026.

Deadline to buy tickets is January 2. The dinner will be at Rain Rock Casino in Yreka, and there will also be a silent auction with many unique and exciting items to bid on. All proceeds will go directly toward funding insurance and equipment, ensuring that OLP's upcoming season is a success. OLP is a partner non-profit with the BCHC Top of the State Unit and we urge all of our members to support this new organization through attending this dinner and/or donating directly to OLP via their website. Please visit <https://www.outfitterslegacyproject.org/> to learn more and buy tickets to the January 10 event.

Fish Plant and Parades chair openings

Our Unit is eagerly seeking new chairpersons to help lead our Fish Plant program and parade participation. Our Fish Plant program is in partnership with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. The chairperson for this program should have packing experience. Please contact Robert Robustellini at (530) 468-5636 to learn more. Our Parades chairperson is responsible for corresponding with local parade organizers to enter our Unit for parades and then gathering members to ride in area parades. Contact Kelly York at (530) 979-6577 to learn more.



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COMMISSIONS!**



- You will find the same airlines, hotels, rental cars and cruises as on other travel websites!
- 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!



Photos courtesy of Jamie Essex and Debbie Bacigalupi

Our Unit gained three new chainsaw sawyers this Spring when Kyle Adkins, Jeff McCabe and I attended sawyer training and certification in Southern Oregon with the Siskiyou Mountain Club. Seven Unit members earned/renewed First Aid/CPR cards on April 5. The Spring and early Summer were very busy for our Unit. Our Unit-sponsored youth packing teams (large photo above) featuring eight area youngsters ages 12-15 spent January-early April learning and practicing packing skills. That hard work helped them earn first and second place in the Rendezvous Youth Packing competition. The teams were: **First Place, SisQ4:** Aubrey Champlin, Carter Brandon, Clayton Burton, and Raul Ortiz with Coaches Beau Burton and Randy Shinskie. **Second Place, Sky High:** Cale Brandon, JayCee Burton, Aubri Bridwell and Jaiden Nowdesha with Coaches Jamie and Vose Hayden. The youth travelled to Bishop Mule Days to compete, and then joined our Unit on June 6 at Carter Meadows (left photo above) to help log out the Trail Gulch Trail. Shasta-Trinity Unit packer/sawyer, Sam Burrows, mentored the youth on cutting logs with a crosscut saw. Siskiyou County Agriculture Awareness Day (right photo above) is one of our Unit's favorite events to attend because it allows our members to teach fourth-grade students a little bit about packing. Our educational exhibit on May 15 challenged the 287 students to fill

2025 in Review

packing panniers to be weighed, with the aim of having two balanced panniers. At the end of the event, teachers from the 12 school districts in attendance rated our booth a 4.9 out of 5. Big thanks to Robert Robustellini, Debbie Bacigalupi, Caralee Scala, Kathryn Matthews and Gail Lyons for helping.

Our highway cleanup efforts could use an infusion of young helpers. On April 24, only Michael Stapleton, Gail Lyons and Penny Wells-Thomas volunteered to pick up trash and debris on our 2-mile stretch of Highway 3 outside Etna. Michael said if we don't get better participation at the Spring 2026 cleanup event, then we'll discontinue this volunteer opportunity. At the May Unit Board of Directors meeting, I presented Debbie Bacigalupi with our 2024 Top Hand Award. Debbie fills many roles in our Unit, including Vice President, Education chairperson and Programs and Events chairperson. In all of these roles, Debbie never shies away from a challenge and her ideas are endless. As Education chair, she recruits our volunteers for Siskiyou County Agriculture Awareness Day, and in the summer she procures supplies and creates our Unit feature booth at the Siskiyou Golden Fair. As Programs

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Photos courtesy of Michele Machado Woods and Jeff McCabe

and Events chair, Debbie helps organize and decorate for our very popular Unit potluck dinners. These dinners are our main fundraisers for the year and Debbie's eye for decorating always makes the dinners a hit. 2025 saw out Unit sawyers and volunteers help the Klamath National Forest with campground and trail projects in all three forest districts. On May 17, our volunteers gathered to help maintain campsites and trails in the very popular Juanita Lake campground in the Gooseneck Ranger District (left photo above). We bucked any logs that had fallen in campsites and on the trails leading to the lake, trimmed limbs and stobs on live trees, and cleaned out fire pits to ensure the campsites were tidy for future occupants. Each year, since 2023, our multi-Unit work party weekend at Carter Meadows in the Salmon/Scott River Ranger District has grown. This year, on June 4-8, we had more than 25 volunteers young and young at heart from Top of the State Unit, Redwood Unit and Shasta-Trinity Unit working to clear trails, repair wooden stock corrals, tidy up the campgrounds and prepare amazing food for the group. On June 5 and 7, our sawyers and swamper cleared 40-45 deadfall logs and debris from the Pacific Crest Trail from Carter Meadows Summit (Mile 1581.5) northbound to approximately Mile 1586.5 near the Siphon Lake Trail cutoff. Snow drifts blocking the trail stopped the crew from reaching

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Siphon Lake. During our stay we also logged out the Trail Gulch trail and the feeder trails from the campgrounds to the Trail Gulch and Long Gulch Trailheads (large photo above). Big thanks to our Unit sawyers Alan Woods, Jeff McCabe and Kyle Adkins for your help with this trail work.

On July 26, four Unit volunteers, Jeff McCabe, Michael Stapleton, Alan Woods and I, joined KNF staff from the Happy Camp/Oak Knoll Ranger District to install new campfire rings, a new campground sign and an information kiosk at Grider Creek Campground near Seiad Valley (right photo above and right). This project and other campground clean-ups helped our Unit continue to build a positive relationship with the Klamath National Forest.



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2025 in Review

Photos courtesy of Michele Machado Woods and Alan 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 (left photo above). We had 12 riders out for a 4-mile ride that included a fun 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. The "high/low" card game was won by ride volunteer Robert Robustellini.

On October 4, the Bacigalupi family hosted a 7-mile out and back ride on their beautiful ranch in the Little Shasta area (large photo above). Jerry Bacigalupi led us through pastures, creeks and on trails and roads through varied wooded terrain. A highlight of the ride was seeing the rock outcrops and caves that were once used by area Native Americans for shelter, cooking and

hunting. After our ride we met at the ranch homestead for a BBQ potluck lunch and a talk about area wolves. On October 18, Alan and I hosted a Halloween theme play day on our equine obstacle course in Big Springs. Nearly 30 participants came out to ride and enjoy varied obstacles and "spooky" decorations (right photo above). We loved hosting this family-friendly event.

Throughout the Summer our Unit members sold almost 400 raffle tickets for a fundraiser to support our youth and trail stewardship activities. In October, we drew our two winners. Heather Wermington won a fly fishing trip for two worth \$800 and Alice Aceves won a \$500 gift certificate to Shasta Valley Chainsaw in Yreka. We earned more than \$3700 for this fundraiser.

At our November 6 Membership meeting, we discussed Board of Director vacancies (three). At our December 4 Board of Directors meeting we elected a new President (Robert Robustellini) and Secretary (Michele Machado Woods). We voted to review our Unit Bylaws to reduce our Board member numbers and make other updates.

**Happy trails! Michele Machado Woods,
outgoing Unit President**



PLEASE JOIN US!

We're proud of the volunteer work we got done in 2025, and **our goal is to make 2026 even better!** Please join us for one or more of our many volunteer events, from highway cleanup to trail work to youth education. Follow our Unit on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/bchctopofthestate/> or watch for Unit emails for the most up-to-date alerts about upcoming activities and work parties.

We love to collaborate with our BCHC friends to the south, so please also keep tabs on the Shasta-Trinity Unit calendar of events on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/BCHCshasta-trinity>

In 2026, we plan to partner with area non-profit The Outfitters Legacy Project for a variety of events. Stay tuned for more information.

Our volunteer events are always family friendly and feature a mix of work and fun!
All skill levels are welcome.



Photos by Michele Machado
Woods and Jamie Essex



Backcountry Horsemen of California



MAIL TO: BCHC
MEMBERSHIP
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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