

Gila Chapter

Back Country Horsemen of New Mexico | MINUTES

Meeting date | time 8/14/2019 6:00 PM | Meeting location WNMU Watts Hall

Meeting called by Becky Shumway

Type of meeting Monthly business meeting

Note taker Cindi deCapiteau

Attendees

Joan Bacon, Sharon Brown, Pat Buls, Cindi deCapiteau, Gerry Engel, Dave Imler, Nancy Imler, Mickey Lemon, Rawlings Lemon, Charlen Perez, Becky Shumway, Laurie Tavonatti, Donna Tillmann, Laurie Wlosinski

AGENDA TOPICS

Agenda topic *Call to order* | Presenter *Becky Shumway*

Becky Shumway substituted for our fearless leader, Doug Dexter, this evening. She called meeting to order promptly at 6:00 and stated her intent to have fun tonight in Doug's absence.

Agenda topic *Recognize guests and new members* | Presenter *Becky Shumway*

Becky peered around the room and noted that no guests or new people—only old people—were present at the meeting. The assembled old people nodded in agreement.

Agenda topic *Additions or changes to minutes* | Presenter *Cindi deCapiteau*

While Cindi was furiously typing away, Becky polled the group to assess the need for changes to June minutes. There were none. Laurie Wlosinski. moved to approve the minutes as submitted. Nancy Imler seconded.

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

Nancy reported that between June and now, she used chapter funds to pay the premium for directors' and officers' insurance, as well as dues to the national office. The bank balance will be around \$7800 after Nancy issues reimbursement checks for trail projects.

Our zoomy little chapter of back country fanatics now has 75 members.

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

Gerry stated that Gila chapter members—with welcome participation from Heart of the Gila volunteers—have cleared almost 90 miles of trail so far during the 2019 season (see the list on page 6).

Gerry also presented a map on which he marked these trails (see maps beginning on page 7).

He noted that the trails from Willow Creek, to Iron Creek, to the Cooper Trail, to Clayton Mesa—a distance of about 4 miles—posed over 200 trees to remove. The effort was aided by four Heart of the Gila volunteers who cleared the smaller trees and brush. GBCH cut about 60 trees from the trails in the area. The trail crews camped about 4 miles from Willow Creek and enjoyed running water in Iron Creek.

All trails through whitewater baldy burn and trees have come down now and trails haven't been cleared since the fire. Only went in 4 miles to camp with running water in iron creek. This was a worthwhile trip, Gerry mused. It seems to have sparked a will for more work; Gerry said he wants to clear the rest of Clayton Mesa. He proposes

that we could camp on the Middle Fork and go up to Clayton Mesa from there. Clearing trails up there would be helpful for search and rescue.

Gerry reported on a ride over Iron Creek Mesa that he took with Rawlings Lemon. They noticed that the effects of fire were apparent, but the area nevertheless still sported live standing trees and regeneration of new growth. They also rode into the Whitewater-Baldy burn and found nothing but dead trees and no growth regeneration except weeds and New Mexico locust. They saw acres and acres of that.

The Gila chapter has completed several trail projects with Heart of the Gila. The effort works out such that Gila chapter members remove bigger trees from the trail while Heart of the Gila volunteers take care of brushing, tread work, and smaller trees that block the trail. The cooperation makes a big difference and enhances the effectiveness of both groups. The trails worked in this way look really nice and we will try to do more of them.

The next pack-in project is planned for the end of August at McKenna mesa. An outfitter will pack in feed for the stock and for the workers. We will pack in our camping gear and we'll have sufficient pack stock so that we can carry out the kitchen gear and leftover food without calling the outfitter back.

On the recent pack-in from Willow Creek, the outfitter lent us a mule so we could pack her out when we finished.

The national BCH cooperates with us by paying outfitters to pack in feed, food, and the kitchen. The outfitters then turn over to the Forest Service 2% of whatever they charge to clients. For work with us, outfitters get \$30 per stock animal, as well as 54 cents a mile from the Forest Service and they are satisfied with the arrangement.

Gerry noted that he's pondering a project for the Granny Mountain trail in October, but he couldn't find the trail when spent four days up there last week. Gerry said it would be nice to clear that trail because it would open up travel from Sheep Corral and bypass the hour it takes to get to the Sheep Corral trail head from Highway 15. Granny Mountain would also ease travel to Miller Springs and from there to any place in the forest. The map on page 7 shows where the Granny Mountain Trail is supposed to be.

Gerry said he would still like to work the Mogollon Creek trail (map on page 8), maybe this fall. He wound up his report by saying he has provided information about the chapter's trail work to the forest. Rachelle Huddleston-Lorton (District Ranger for the Wilderness Ranger District in Mimbres) extends her thanks.

The next project is scheduled for McKenna Mesa. It requires a 16 mile ride to Becky Campbell's campsite there. Gerry noted that Becky Campbell will pack in food for the stock and the trail crew. The trail crew will be packing their own gear, lunch food, and tools. After all the food is gone, the packs have sufficient room to accommodate kitchen equipment that needs to be packed out.

Gerry said if you're going on this trip, bring a pruning saw if you have one. Melissa Green will hike ahead of the packers, clearing smaller trail obstructions as she goes.

Action items

Person responsible

Announce plans for trail projects this fall

Gerry Engel

Agenda topic GCSAR Activity | Presenter Laurie Wlosinski

Laurie Wlosinski reported that the summer has been quiet for search and rescue mostly because the 2019 monsoon rains have been scanty, so the Gila River hasn't flooded. The regiment has been called out for several missions that ended up with no boots on the ground.

Laurie added that Grant County SAR is having training in the Burros on Saturday.

She also cautioned that bow hunting season for elk starts on September 1.

Agenda topic *BCHNM Updates* | **Presenter** *Mickey Lemon, Rawlings Lemon*

Our beloved Mickey reported that she doesn't have much to report from the state. A state conference in October is still happening and the bigwigs up north are lining up speakers. Other than that, nobody wants to say much about it until plans firm up.

The next meeting of the state BCH will occur on September 28.

Mickey, Rawlings, Cheryl, and Cindi attended the 2019 Rendezvous (in the Santa Fe National Forest, with rides into the Pecos Wilderness). The plan at the event was to hold a silent auction, for which Donna Tillmann and David Allen donated a headstall. The Rendezvous was put together in a rather loose fashion, however, and the auction didn't happen as scheduled and the headstall is still in the Gila chapter's possession. Joan Lattner, president of the BCHNM Northwest chapter (which hosted the Rendezvous) hopes to sell it and if she does, the proceeds will still go to BCHNM.

The Northwest chapter is also raffling off a luxury encounter in Taos, but the chapter wants to collect a certain amount of money and that hasn't happened yet, so the raffle didn't happen either.

What did happen, however, was that Joan Lattner and our own Rawlings were champions of the Cornhole Contest. Enough said.

Agenda topic *July Picnic – success?* | **Presenter** *Becky Shumway*

If you didn't attend the chapter picnic (held at the Little Walnut picnic area – see map on page 9), you missed an abundance of wonderful food and friendly conversation with the chapter members who showed up. Since attendance was, er, below the number of chapter members and well below the capacity of the picnic pavilion, it's likely that the leftover food fed chapter families for a couple of months.

Becky requested ideas to get more people to come out.

Action items

Person responsible

Think about how to raise attendance for chapter events and communicate your ideas to Doug Dexter.

All members!

Agenda topic *Smokey Bear – crosscut saw demo volunteers* | **Presenter** *Donna Tillmann*

Donna delivered a charming report on the Smokey Bear birthday celebration in which the Gila chapter participated. She noted that since school has started, the event—held at a facility located between the helicopter and the hospital on the road to Ft. Bayard—didn't attract as many kids as expected. However, a lot of disabled people showed up and Doug was the picture of grace. Doug made things happen by putting folks on the saw no matter what their limitations seemed to be and getting assistance from others as needed. His assistance made the event shine for people who wouldn't have been able to have that experience otherwise.

Mickey noted that no brochures were distributed at the event. She also commented we have money and can afford to put together a bookmark with our information on it—and we can also purchase quantities of brochures from BCHA. Cindi moved that we do that. Pat Buls seconded. Cindi will compile a couple of designs for the bookmark and submit them for review at a future chapter meeting. An outfit called “Copies on the Run” in Silver City has reasonable prices. Jean suggested that we could set up a non-profit account with them.

Action items

Person responsible

Design bookmark for future meeting.

Cindi deCapiteau

Talk to Doug about brochure purchase.

Cindi deCapiteau

Agenda topic *Meal prep for trail crews – What we need to do* | **Presenter** Mickey Lemon

Mickey reported that six volunteer cooks will be at her house in the next few days to organize menus for the upcoming trail work pack-in to McKenna Mesa. The food is under control.

Agenda topic *Suggestions for future education segments* | **Presenter** Becky Shumway

Cheryl Roth, the chapter's efficient and cheerful education chairwoman, regularly asks for suggestions of things we want to know about. Becky prodded the attending members for input.

Gerry suggested talking about public lands and legislation, an idea met with a good level of enthusiasm. There is an individual associated with New Mexico Wild (a.k.a. The New Mexico Wilderness Alliance <http://www.nmwild.org/>)--Nathan Newcomer, who is NM Wild's grassroots organizer for the Gila region. Pat Buls says she has Mr. Newcomer's phone number and will pass it along to Cheryl.

Gerry mused that the Forest Service is currently at work to change national environmental policies. He warned that GBCH members might see stuff on line from Forest Service entities and the New York Times about a move to shortcut public input on matters pertaining to public lands (see <https://www.fs.fed.us/emc/nepa/revisions/index.shtml>). Gerry noted that he read the proposed legislation, which seeks to add to and change "categorical exclusions" with limits on how big the project could be. Gerry wasn't shocked by what he saw, although the proposal, if adopted, means the USFS won't be making a big public reach-out effort. The proposal actually makes a lot of sense, Gerry commented.

Not education related, but important anyway: Pat Buls asked about the probability that the Forest Service will improve parking around trailheads. Gerry said he has been talking to them about it and support could be available from the southwest Resource Advisory Committee (RAC). We have received money to, for example, build the corrals at the Upper Gallinas campground, as well as to reimburse trail project expenses.

That said, the current RAC has reached its sunset date and is now being reauthorized. New members are needed for the new committee and outreach has occurred to get new members. If the new RAC can be put together, it will probably solicit proposals this fall.

Pat said she ran into Brian Martinez (in charge of Recreation at the Silver City Ranger District) and asked him about parking at Little Walnut. She didn't get a satisfactory answer from him. She also commented that the turnaround on Bear Mountain Road needs to be graded and widened and could then accommodate three or four trailers. Gerry responded that if we really want such things to happen, we need to write to the forest supervisor or the district ranger. Right about this time, the current ranger for the Silver City Ranger District, Beth Ihle, walked into the room. Pat asked her directly about new parking areas because the existing ones are inadequate.

Beth listened carefully and responded that we need to go look at the Bear Mountain Road area and that the Forest Service is working on Little Walnut trailhead. She suggested that the Forest Service can put together a field trip to identify problem areas and to query nearby landowners for a sense of who approve and who doesn't. Pat and Beth set a tentative date for such a field trip.

Floating around in the atmosphere of money is the proposal to collect fees at campgrounds, something the Gila region doesn't currently do. The region's recreation fund, however, is totally depleted. If the Forest Service is going to charge fees, the public needs to get something for the money. Any fees assessed will go directly back into the recreation program.

Revisiting the organization of the new RAC, Beth said there was a call for applications that produced 9-10 applicants for 15 positions, so they need a couple more people. Funding applications could be submitted by midwinter if the committee members are in place. Beth will talk to "Julie" and ask her to call Gerry, who is interested in being on the RAC, submitting a proposal and learning what categories of people are needed.

Action items

Person responsible

Tell Cheryl contact info for Nathan Newcomer

Pat Buls

Watch for contact about RAC positions from "Julie"

Gerry Engel

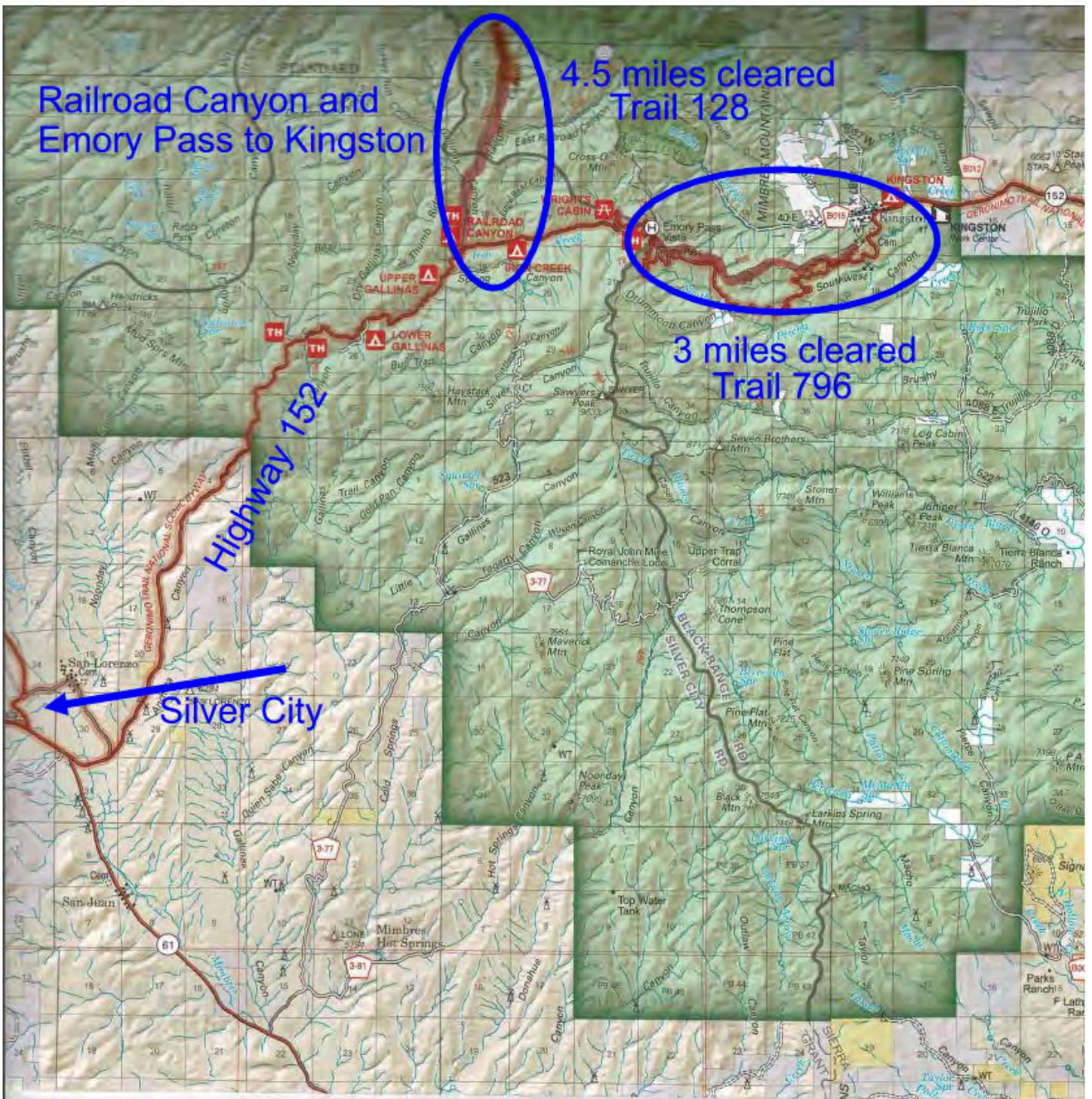
Agenda topic *Announcements*

Discussion Next meeting September 11

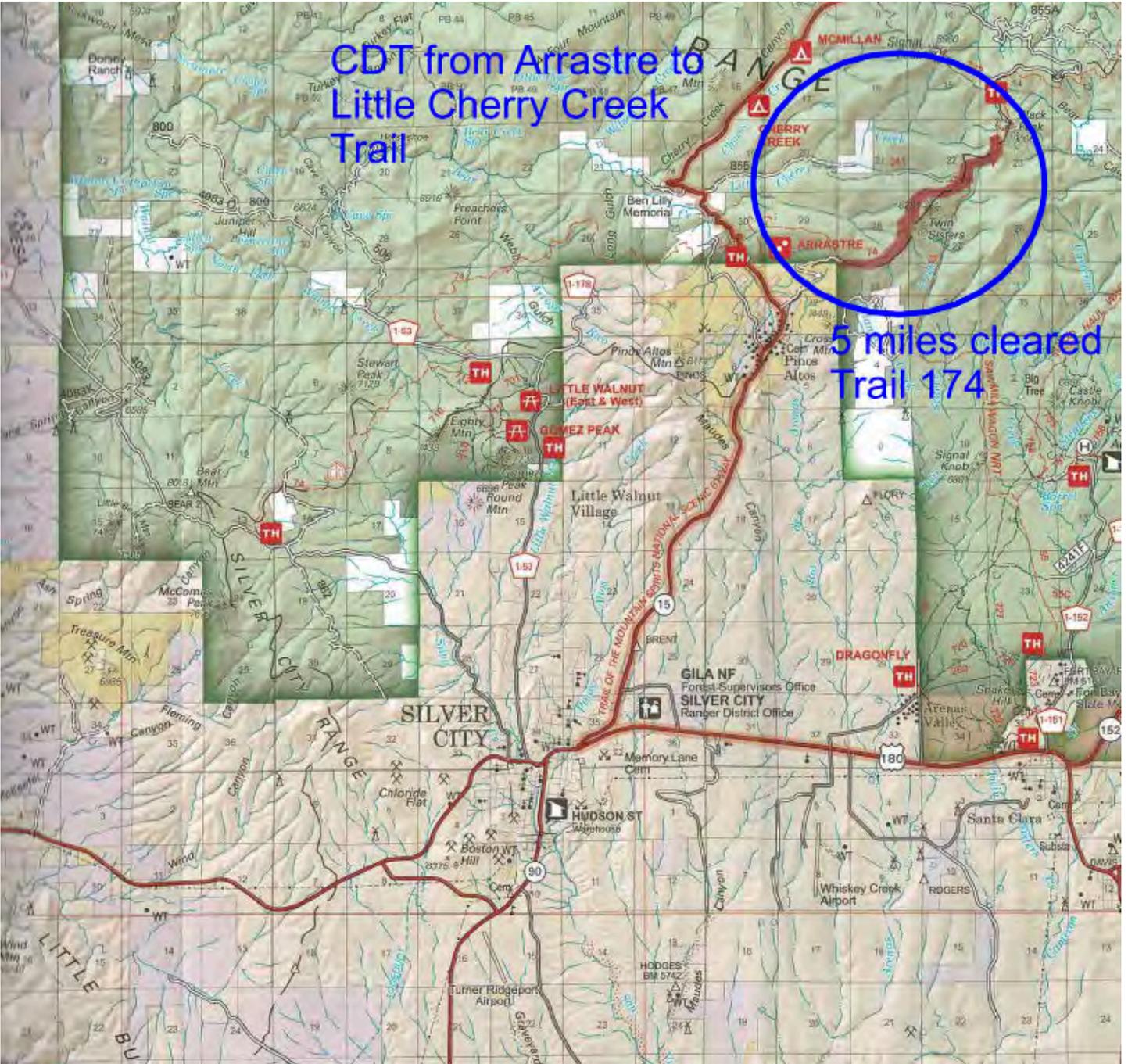
Special notes: Dave Imler reminds us that GBCH is an official nonprofit organization and Doug Dexter is our only authorized speaker. Dave cautions that when speaking in public, the best policy is don't represent yourself as speaking for GBCH because our charter has strict guidelines about lobbying. Nonprofits aren't allowed to advocate for candidates or causes.

Trails cleared as of 8/14/19

TRAIL	DESCRIPTION	MILES WORKED
Trail 128	Railroad Canyon Trail	4.5
Trail 74	CDT from Arastra to Little Cherry Creek Trail	5
Trail 28	Sheep Corral trail to river	5
Trail 181	Holt/Apache Trail from Sheridan Corral	4
Trail 160	Miller Springs Trail – Woody's Corral to Little Turkey Park	8
Trail 232	Tadpole Ridge trail to Tadpole Lake	7
Trail 77	Mimbres River Trail – trailhead to 1 mile up river	3
Trail 163	EE trail to Little Creek	4
Trail 157	Middle Fork Trail – 1 mile before Jordan Hot Springs to 1 mile before Meadows. Partnership with Heart of Gila, NM volunteers for outdoors and CDT coalition	7
Trail 161	Little Creek Trail from trail 789 to Little Spring. Partnership with Heart of Gila	5
Trail 150	Granite Mountain trail – Little Spring to Granite Mountain. Partnership with Heart of Gila	1.25
Trail 155	Diablo Trail – Granite Peak trail junction to McKenna Spring. Partnership with Heart of Gila	4.5
Trail 724	Gila River Trail – Mogollon Box to Turkey Creek Road	5.5
Trail 151	Iron Creek Trail from Willow Creek to Cooper Canyon. Partnership with Heart of Gila	4
Trail 141	Cooper Trail from Cooper Canyon to Junction with Clayton Mesa Trail. Partnership with Heart of Gila	3.5
Trail 175	Clayton Mesa Trail from Turkey Feather Pass toward Clayton Mesa. Partnership with Heart of Gila	1.5
Trail 796	Scenic Trail – Emory Pass toward Hillsboro. Partnership with Southwest Trail Alliance and Heart of Gila	3
Trail 151	West Fork Trail – Cliff Dwellings trailhead to 1 mile past Nat Straw Canyon	7.5
Trail 247	Lower Spring Canyon Trail from Sapillo Creek to Highway 15	6
TOTAL		89.25 MILES



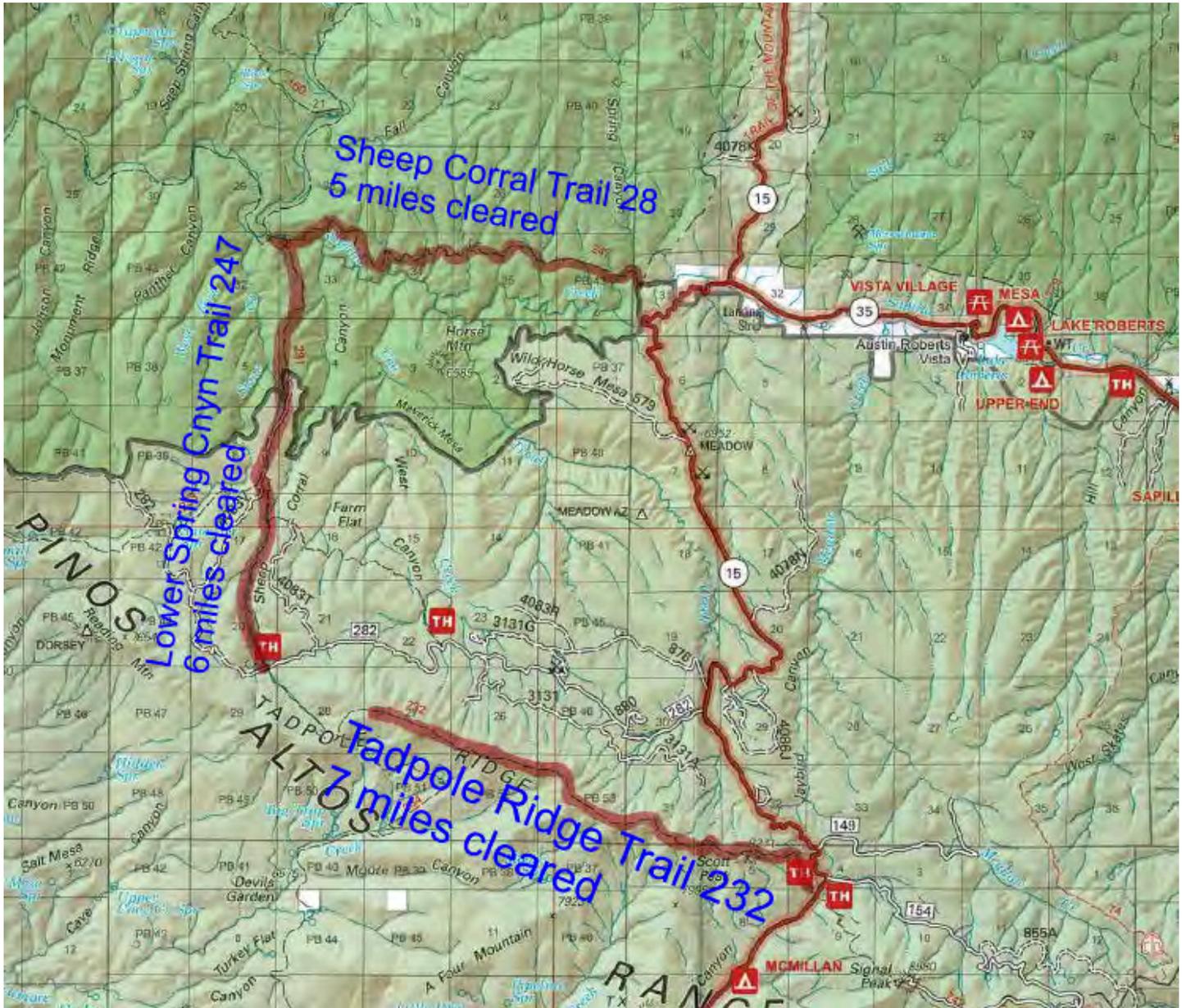
CDT Trail 74 from Arrastre to Little Cherry Creek Trail



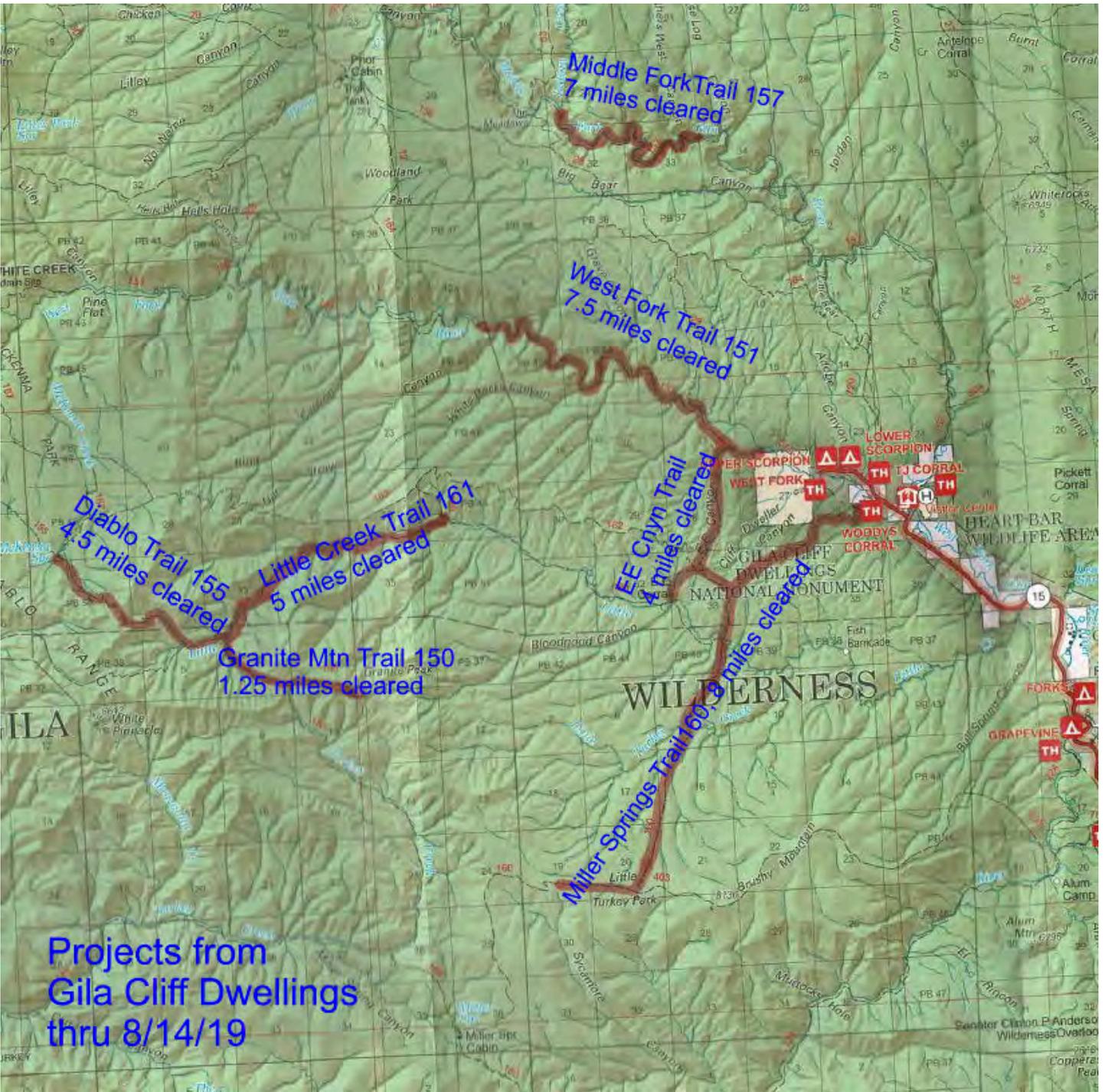
Sheep Corral Trail 28

Lower Spring Canyon Trail 247

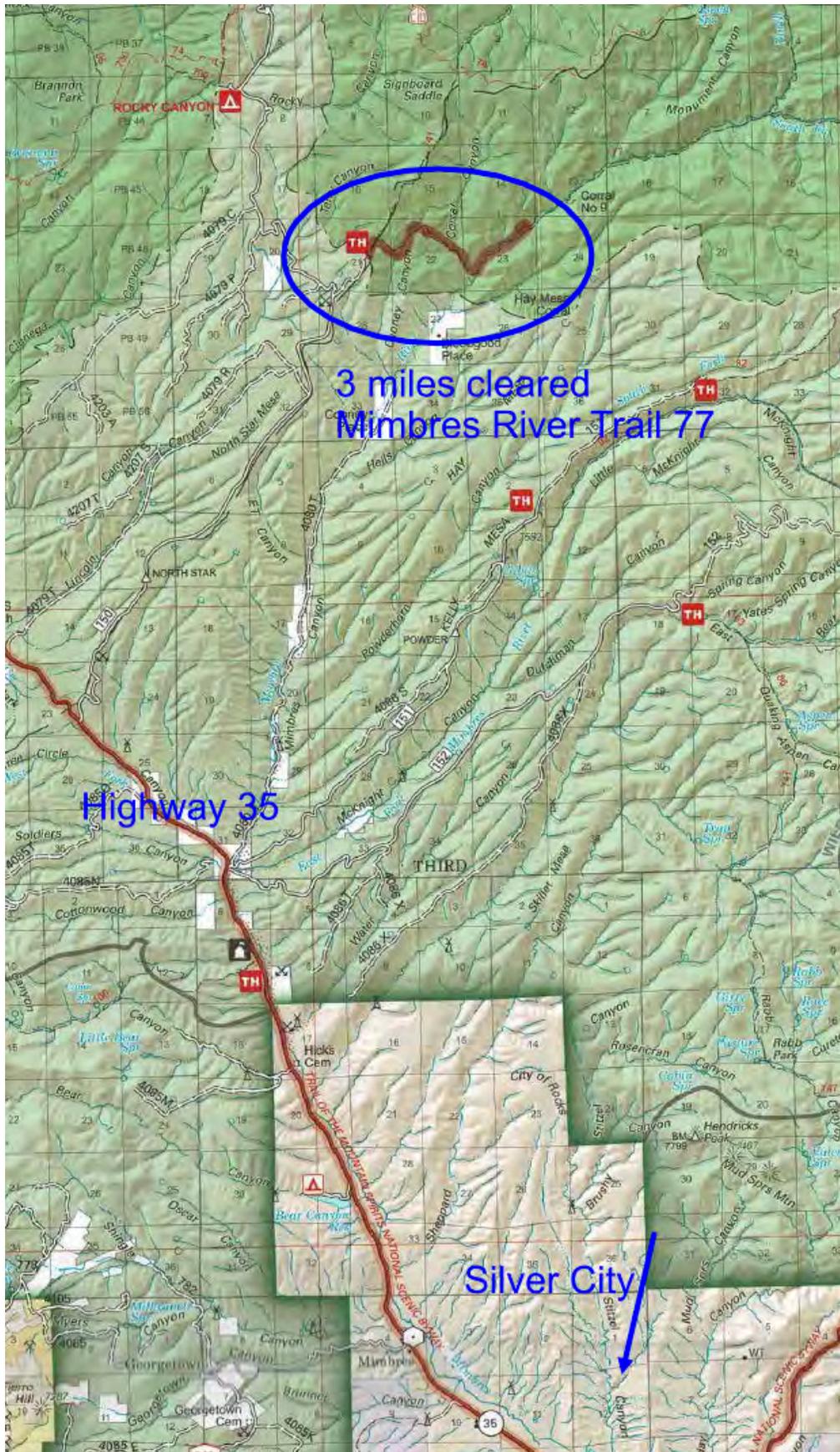
Tadpole Ridge Trail 232



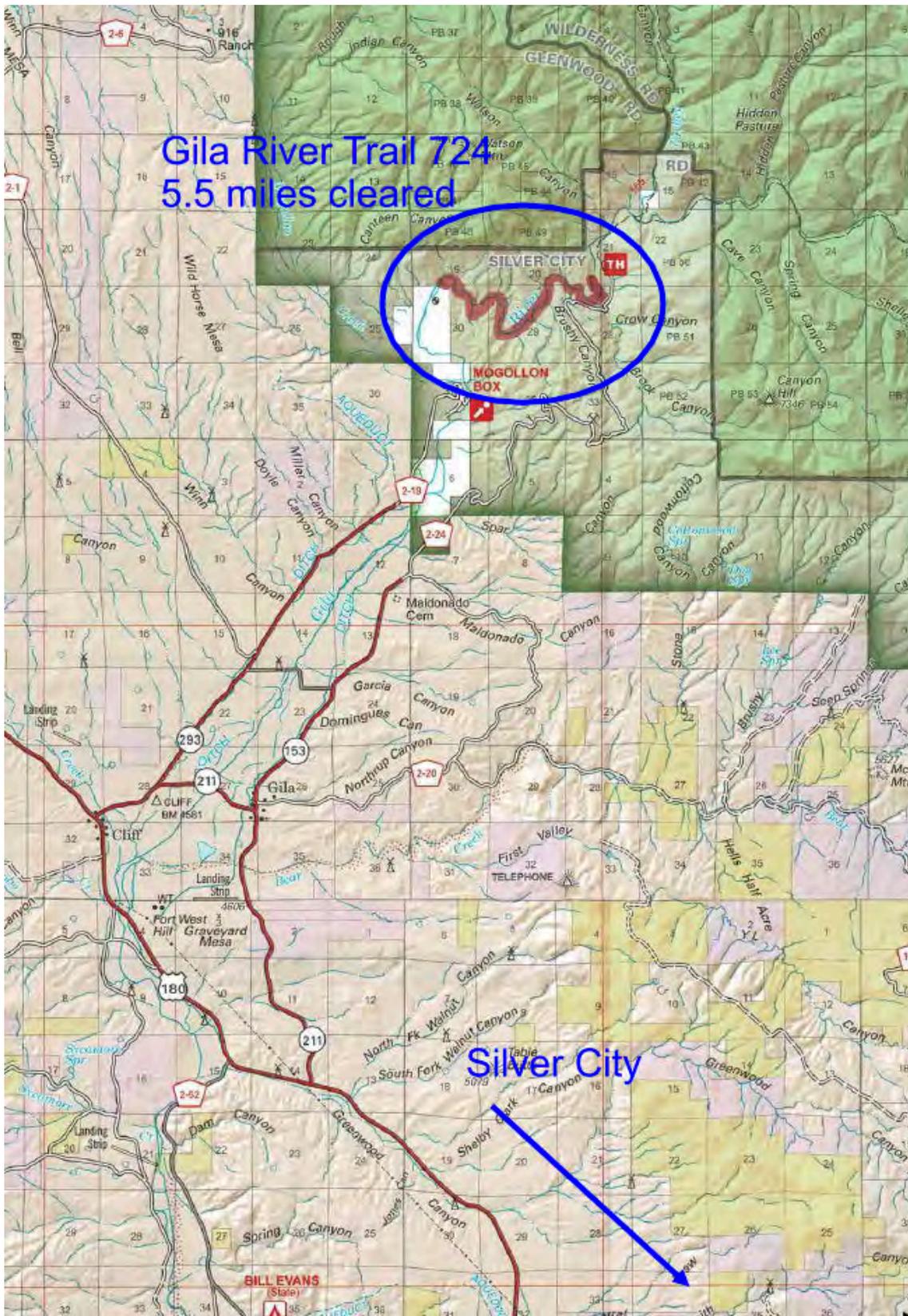
Projects from Gila Cliff Dwellings



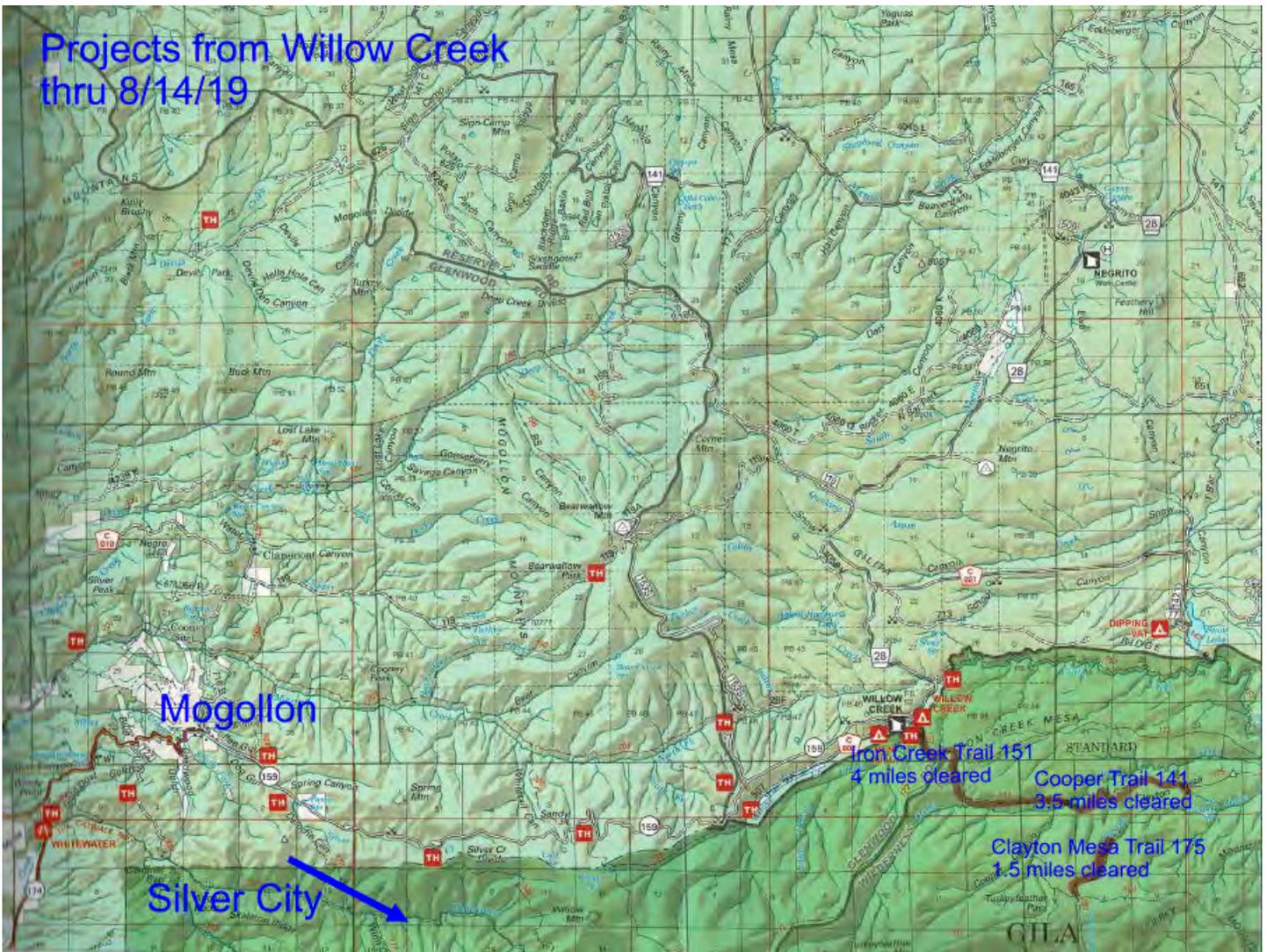
Mimbres River Trail 77



Gila River Trail 724 from Mogollon Box

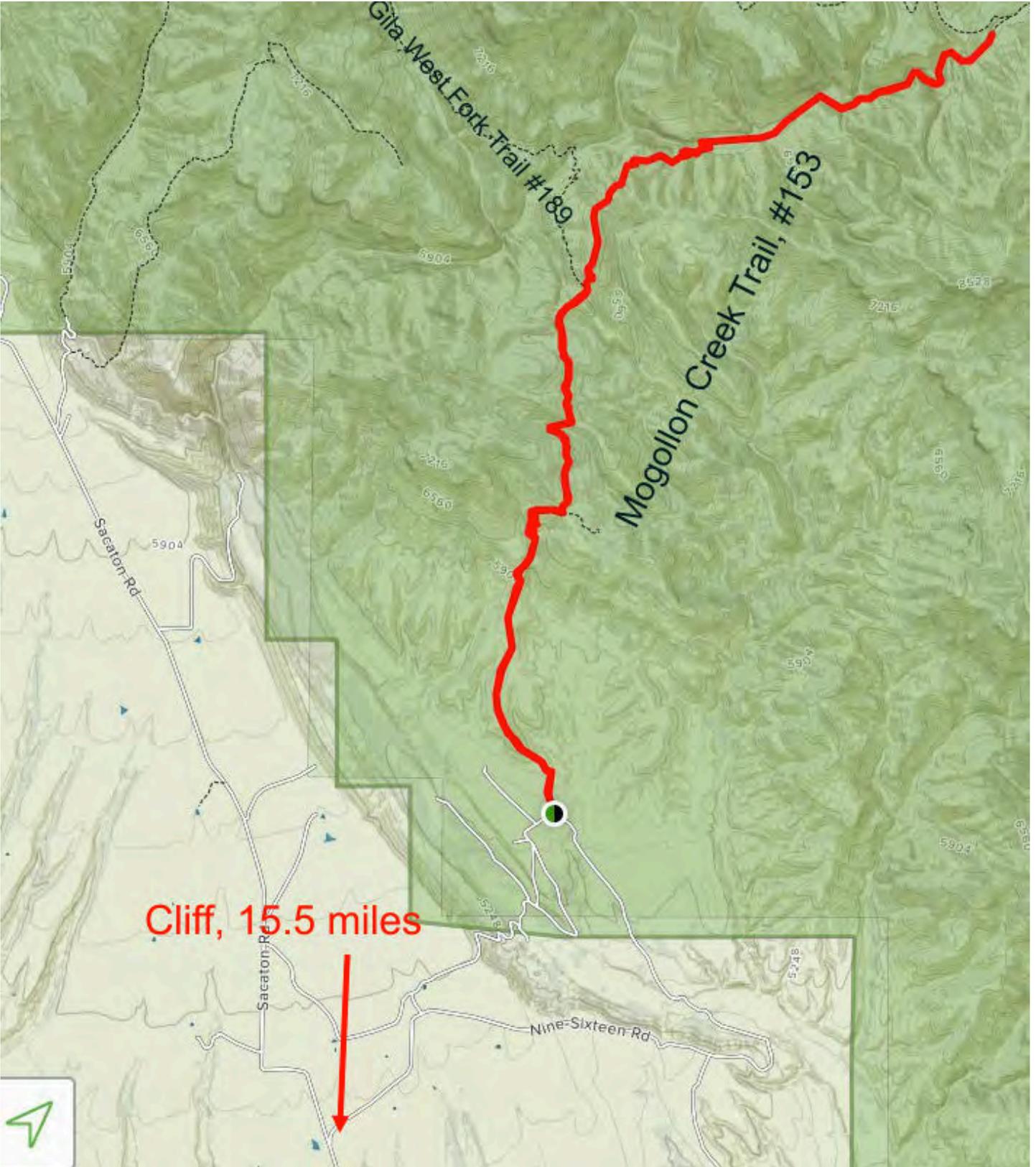


Projects from Willow Creek

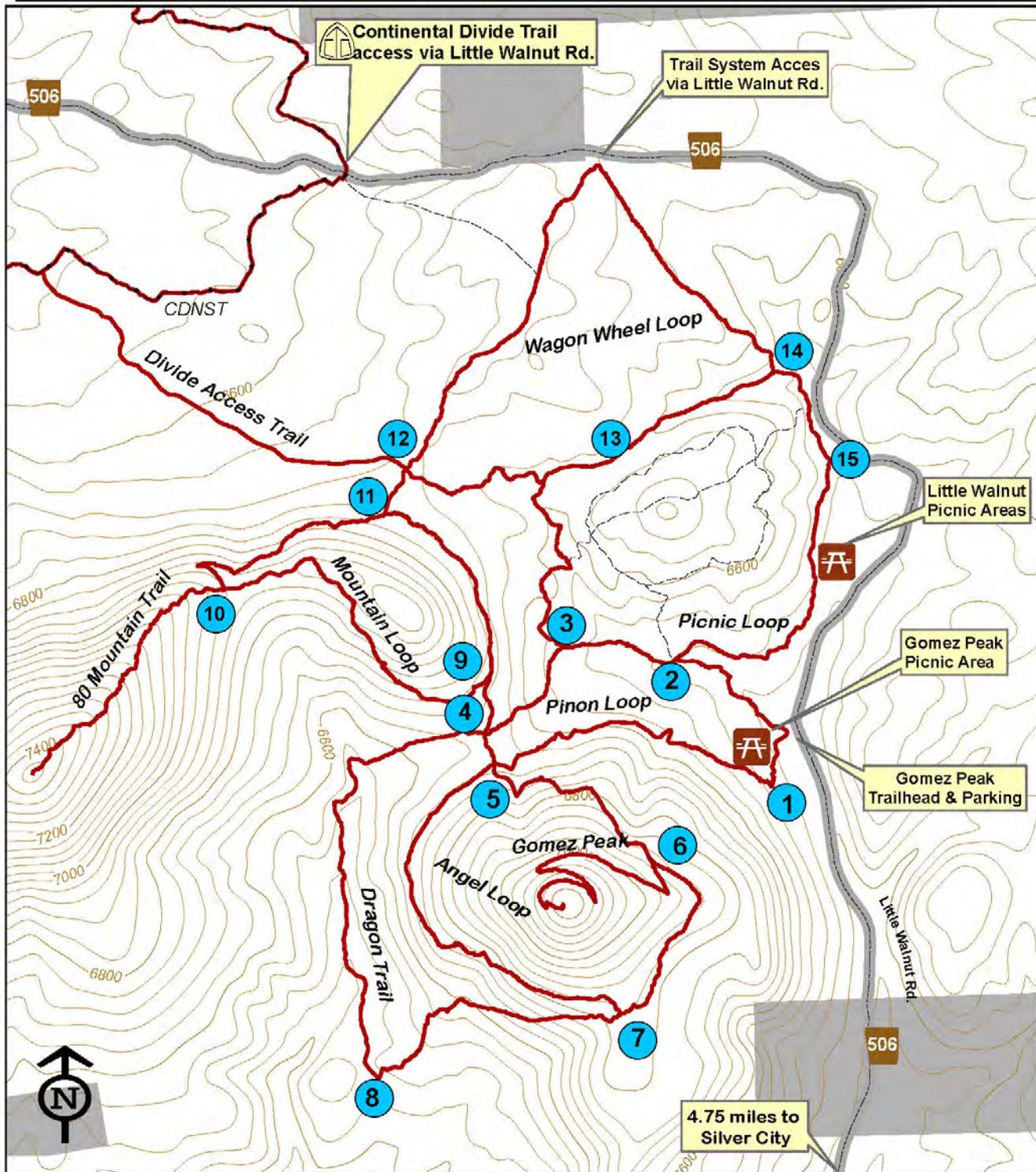


Where the Granny Mountain Trail is supposed to be





LITTLE WALNUT TRAIL SYSTEM



- Forest Service Trails
- - - Non-System Trails
- FR506 Little Walnut Rd
- Non-FS Ownership
- Major Junctions

0 0.25 0.5 0.75 1 Miles

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