

# Gila Chapter

## Back Country Horsemen of New Mexico | MINUTES

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Meeting date | time 3/20/2019 6:00 PM | Meeting location WNMU Watts Hall

Meeting called by Doug Dexter

Type of meeting Monthly business meeting

Note taker Cindi deCapiteau

### Attendees

Joan Bacon, Sharon Brown, Pat Buls, Charlie Coffman, Cindi deCapiteau, Gerry Engel, Deborah Houk (guest), Dave Imler, Nancy Imler, Mickey Lemon, Rawlings Lemon, Kathy Murch, Cheryl Roth, Randy Roth, George Siavelis (new member), Donna Tillmann, Laurie Wlosinski

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Agenda topic *Recognize guests and new members* | Presenter Doug Dexter

Tonight's meeting shed fresh oil among the creaking joints of the usual suspects. Deborah Houk recently moved to Silver City from Denver and was with us to find out what we're all about. Deborah has a horse that she is hoping to move onto her own property soon, pending construction of appropriate infrastructure. George Siavelis joined the Gila chapter this evening. He has packed in the Gila for many years, so let's behave ourselves and not run him off with our outrageous behavior because his experience could be beneficial.

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

Doug augmented tonight's agenda with the item "RAC grant money received."

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

On the basis of a motion by Gerry Engel, chapter minutes from the February 2019 meeting were approved.

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

Financial health continues for the Gila chapter. Nancy reported that grant money received from the Southwest Resources Allocation Committee for work we conducted in 2018 will be distributed shortly.

With the newly added membership of George Siavelis, we now have a potential workforce of 65 people.

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

Three chapter members—Gerry Engel, Charlie Coffman, and Laurie Wlosinski—completed the first work project of the 2019 season in Railroad Canyon up to the Crest Trail at the Holden Prong saddle (map on page 6). This steep and rocky trail received brushing and removal of several trees across the path. Subsequent weather brought snow and wind; it's likely more trees are down and we can't label the trail as "clear." The creek in Railroad Canyon is running at 1000 cubic feet per second, so we won't plan to go up there again for a while. That said, Gerry mused that he will probably have to take another shot at the trail schedule.

Four people completed the first aid training that is a prerequisite for sawyer training. Gerry has received inquiries from members of the Continental Divide Trail Alliance. He sent them information about the requirements for sawyer training and hasn't heard anything since. He suspects those requirements scared them off.

In response to a question from Pat Buls, Gerry noted that he needs to schedule it.

## Money Makes the Trails Go 'Round

The [Land and Water Conservation Fund](#) is now permanently funded and could now represent a source of reliable funding for trail maintenance in the Gila forest and wildlife areas.

**Resource Advisory Committee.** The money traditionally used by the Gila chapter to pay trail maintenance expenses comes from Title II of the Secure Rural Schools Act (SRSA) and funds for expenses incurred in 2017 have been released. If you submitted details about your trail work expenses in 2017, you will now be reimbursed accordingly.

For our neck of the woods, the SRSA program is governed by the Southern (a.k.a. Las Cruces) New Mexico Resource Advisory Committee (RAC), a group of 18 people who review proposals and award funds for them. The Gila chapter has received some \$25,000 over the years via the RAC. We use the money to reimburse expenses for workers' food and transportation. The program was reauthorized in 2018; but that legislation did not reauthorize the program's national charter. As a result, RAC meetings are on hold until the Forest Service gets the charter reauthorized.

In addition, the expiring terms of current RAC members need to be filled and the Forest Service has permission to begin filling them. Our previous RAC members were people from environmental, business, recreational and other diverse interests. None of the previous members are returning to the RAC because their term limits have been reached. The RAC will be seeking people from New Mexico counties across the southern tier of the state, along with the Bureau of Land Management, the Gila National Forest, and the Lincoln National Forest. Gerry noted that he will find out when the recruitment proposal for these positions will be released. The Gila Chapter secretary infers from Gerry's comments that one of our members could serve our interests and those of the Gila region as a committee member.

The RAC meets twice a year in Socorro to review proposals and decide who gets the money, so demands on the time and effort of committee members are not burdensome.

**Heart of the Gila.** At the recent fundraiser put on by [Heart of the Gila](#) (HOTG), our member Melissa Green talked about sources of funds to support trail maintenance. Melissa is taking on tasks that the Forest Service itself should be doing, but never seems to have the energy to get the job done. Melissa helped facilitate New Mexico [House Bill 494](#), "Gila Wilderness Trails," which made it out of the House Appropriations and Finance Committee with 100% approval. The bill, however, didn't continue through legislation. That fact aside, Gerry understands that each legislator gets a pot of money that he or she can decide how to distribute. Rudy Martinez (D-Dona Ana, Grant, and Sierra Counties) is talking about giving his share to Heart of the Gila.

**Forest Service Regional Office.** There's also talk of another \$30,000 from the [Southwestern USFS regional office](#) to get other people (besides the powerhouse that is Melissa Green) organized to conduct trail work.

## 2019 Trail Projects Update

The [Southern New Mexico Continental Divide Trail \(CDT\) Coalition](#) will be working with the Gila Chapter (as coordinated by Melissa Green) to clear and improve the trail from Jordan Hot Springs to The Meadows on the Gila Middle Fork (see map on page 7). We also hope to work with the retired smokejumpers this summer, perhaps on trails tangential to the Gila West Fork.

Gerry believes that cooperating groups of volunteers is the future of trail maintenance, an effort on which Melissa is taking the lead and is key to that future. Thus, any way we can support Melissa in this work is well worth doing. Gerry will put something together to help fund Melissa's work. He stated that it would be nice if the Gila Chapter could contribute something for her too. (Hint, hint: Discuss and make a suitable motion at the next chapter meeting.)

## Imler Fencing

Dave Imler noted that he is building 1,000 feet of four-wire barbed wire, straight-line fencing and modestly asked for volunteers to help. His request was afforded a resounding and stunned silence. Dave sweetened the pot by

noting that he might spring for beer and food. He will start the work when he gets enough volunteers. So do the right thing, everybody, and send Dave an email if you want to help out this steadfast and droll chapter member.

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#### Action items

#### Person responsible

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Schedule sawyer training, pending revisions to trail schedule	Gerry Engel
Consider joining the Resource Advisory Committee	All chapter members
Consider ways to support Melissa Green	All chapter members
Help Dave Imler build his fence	All chapter members

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#### Agenda topic *GCSAR Activity* | Presenter *Laurie Wlosinski*

Remember that interesting bicyclist who was discussed at some length in the February minutes? His impressive-but-abandoned bicycle has been found at the cyclist's camp northwest of Stewart Peak (see image on page 8). The cool part of this story's segment is that the bike was found by a SAR member by virtue of a drone.

The cyclist, by the way, was located, hospitalized for a time, but is now up and around and can walk for a mile at a time.

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

Hold on to your seat for the next chapter meeting, when Mickey and Rawlings report on the March 30, 2019 meeting of the BCHNM board.

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#### Agenda topic *Update on 501(c)3 Status* | Presenter *Dave Imler*

Some months ago, Dave distributed a set of proposed general policies as required by our newly granted tax exempt status. Dave commented that the chapter board of directors needs to have a meeting to discuss the policies.

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#### Action items

#### Person responsible

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Schedule a board of directors meeting to evaluate general policies	Doug Dexter
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#### Agenda topic *Banking changes for 501(c)3* | Presenter *Nancy Imler*

Recent income from the RAC (see above) to reimburse the chapter for trail work expenses in 2017 has been delivered, but was deposited into the chapter's old bank account, which bore an unofficial name for the chapter. A new bank account has been opened and the RAC funds have been transferred thereto. Expense reimbursements will be distributed after checks for the new account arrive.

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#### Agenda topic *Heart of the Gila* | Presenter *Gerry Engel*

Heart of the Gila put on a shindig to raise funds for its trails program. This was an interesting event, characterized by the enthusiasm of lots of people who care about trails. Presentations by Melissa Green and others conveyed information about the condition of trails in the Gila and the challenges faced by folks who use and maintain them. Melissa did a great job putting the event together.

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#### Agenda topic *RAC grant* | Presenter *Dave Imler*

Money comes in for trail work, but sometimes it's not enough. The chapter received a donation from a hiking group to cover our expenses to pack them in for a trail project. As it happens, expenses exceed the money coming

in by about \$600. Laurie Wlosinski moved to draw funds from the bank account to cover the shortage. The motion was seconded by Joan Bacon and passed by voice vote.

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**Agenda topic** *Packing demo and picnic* | **Presenter** *Doug Dexter*

Doug posed a question about whether a social event is still of interest to chapter members. The event would consist of a packing demo and a picnic, to be held at an arena belonging to Doug and Dixie's daughter, Cassie Carver. This function appears to indeed be of interest. Doug said he would supply animals and schedule a date.

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**Action items**

**Person responsible**

Schedule a date for the chapter's picnic

Doug Dexter

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**Agenda topic** *CDT Trail Days* | **Presenter** *Doug Dexter*



The whopping good time we always have at the Silver City trail days festival is coming up in April. Doug asked for a show of hands to find out who among us is willing to man the crosscut saw demo. That's where we, you know, demonstrate the use of the crosscut saw by putting one of the chapter's ace sawyers on one end of the saw and an innocent passerby on the other. This team cuts a slice (affectionately



known as a "cookie") from the end of a log provided by the Forest Service (USFS apparently has lots of logs, but Gerry muses that they are usually old and cheesy, so he will see if he can find some less punky ones). Then the innocent passerby takes his or he cookie over to a fire staffed by one of the chapter's brilliant fire tenders, who has a red-hot branding iron at the ready. The cookie gets scorched with the logo of the Continental Divide Trail and the passerby gets to keep the cookie as a souvenir. Adults turn into grinning children. Grinning children jump up and down with joy. It's quite a thing to behold.

Anyway, Doug said that the job for participating chapter members runs from about **9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at Gough Park in Silver City on Saturday, April 27**. Required tasks are:

- Set up canopies, banners, flags, literature, and stuff like that,
- Help with sawing, log moving, branding,
- Take down canopies, banners, flags, literature, and stuff like that.

Amy Hartell usually organizes several Gila USFS troops for trail days, but she has moved up to the Pacific Northwest and so won't be with us. For that reason, we need people to spread out the work. Doug will contact Brian Martinez, but the secretary failed to note what about. (With any luck, Doug will remember.)

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**Action items**

**Person responsible**

Find suitable logs for trail days

Gerry Engel

Call Brian Martinez

Doug Dexter

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**Agenda topic** *Rodeo Parking* | **Presenter** *Gerry Engel*

Because members of the Gila chapter have an unshrinking commitment to parking cars, the Southwest Horsemen's Association has invited us to assist with parking at the rodeo again this year. The deal is that we park cars for the four nights of the rodeo (usually held during the first week in June) and the association pays us \$400.



Pat Buls asked if we can post a banner so that the community will know exactly who those officious people are out there telling rodeo-goers where to go and how to get there? Gerry responded that, why yes, we can because the



rodeo association is thrilled to have us park cars. Randy Roth, who is a member of the association, says we can put a big banner in the arena for no charge.

The job is kinda dusty and the request for volunteer parkers was a bit tepid, so Doug offered to find out if the association has somebody else who can take on the task—but if not, we will do it. Doug will also send out an email to chapter members to explain the job and solicit volunteers.

Gerry commented that the rodeo officials are glad to have supervise parking, as they should be because we're good at it.

Action items	Person responsible
Find out if SW Horsemen's Association has somebody else to park cars at the rodeo this year.	Doug Dexter

Agenda topic GBCH Identification | Presenter Gerry Engel



Following up on Pat's comments about a banner to identify the chapter at public events like the rodeo, Gerry noted that we have nothing—not shirts, or jackets, or caps, to identify us. Gerry (or somebody) suggested that we might want to get an order of T shirts. Pat said she has a logo from Socorro and we can put our own brand on it and end up with something we can wear, in addition to our banners and flags. Cheryl Roth showed her fancy leather vest that bears the BCHA logo. She noted that the BCHA logo is a bit hard to see on the dark brown leather, but there's no reason we couldn't put the logo on brightly colored vests. Somebody suggested that denim vests are cheap. To get the matter

rolling, Pat will email the Socorro logo to Doug.

Gerry mused that the Forest Service requires hardhats to be worn by people who work in the woods. It might be cool to have white hardhats with BCH stickers on them to give us recognition.

Action items	Person responsible
Send Socorro logo to Doug Dexter	Pat Buls

Agenda topic Announcements



Because the March meeting was delayed by two weeks, we won't have a meeting in April. Instead, we'll meet again on May 8, if that date doesn't conflict with trail work. Cheryl will send her thoughts to Doug about an education segment for the May meeting.

Cheryl also asked for details about the July pack demo/picnic (to be held on a July Saturday around noon). Will it be potluck? Barbeque? Pack demo on live animals or barrels? And even though Doug will supply the location and

arrangements for food, somebody will have to supply pack gear. That somebody turned out to be Rawlings Lemon, and the demo will show off both sawbuck and Decker pack saddles.



Dave Imler suggested that we can use treasury money to do anything we want to, but we have to make sure that chapter members agree and vote on whatever the idea is.

#### Action items

#### Person responsible

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Arrange for food at July picnic

Doug Dexter

Plan gear needed for July pack demo and round up people to supply it.

Rawlings Lemon











