

State Board Meeting Minutes

Education

State membership is recovering some with 91 new members however we are still 71 short of a year ago. The executive board discussed at length the option of creating a 5 or 10 year option for paying dues in advance at a reduced rate for members. If National were to increase dues which is possible within 10 years, the increase would reduce the remaining dues to be split between State and individual units. It was voted down and so is a dead issue. We continue to have the option of a reduced rate for 2 or 3 year renewals. Some membership applications have been submitted with no check for payment. Please don't forget this as membership is a large volunteer task as it is. Payment of membership will soon be available on the state web page using all normal means i.e. credit card and I believe Pay Pal.

Volunteer hour's reports are coming in steadily with only 6 units still not reporting. Feb. 1st was the deadline and our report was submitted. Thank you Valerie Zera. Don't forget if you are a wilderness rider to include these hours in the unit report as well as the wilderness rider report.

There will be a link on the State web page to Madera County 4H which has a great deal of information on horses for both youth education and general use.

The saw policy regulations have been promised to be signed by this March (Wash. DC) moves in low gear. We have our first Evaluator (Certifier) for this policy. He has been blessed by Reg. 5 Forest Service. He is a Cal Fire employee and has been training there for many years. He will be responsible for evaluations and blessing future Evaluators. You will be required to teach 3 classes under him before being listed as an Evaluator. Our long term goal will be to have one for each unit but first we hope to have a few spread throughout the state. It will be volunteer work so no reimbursements of expenses, but a tax write off. This is for bucking only but we hope to add falling later. Chip Herzig continues to be the lead on this project.

Our first Masters Leave no Trace course last fall was a big success with 12 attendees. The next course is scheduled for April and is already full but they are taking names for back up attendees.

Rendezvous 2016 is taking shape. There will be a youth packing competition which is free. There will be instructors available before the competition for new packers or those that want to brush up. Unit booths are being stressed and they are free as long as you don't sell anything. Also if you just have information pictures and packets they don't have to be manned continually.

Leadership training was good for SoCal this year with 22 even though our unit somehow got left out of the loop for attendance. Everyone there thought it was well worth their time.

Rendezvous 2017 is confirmed for Bishop. We will have the whole fairgrounds. Dave Stamey will be the entertainment for Friday night. If all goes well we will stay for rendezvous 2018. The price of the venue is the major factor in picking a site other than alternating up and down the state. Nominations for awards for newsletter and such have Feb. 8th as a deadline for Rendezvous.

An Emergency card form will soon be on the state web page. This will be a handy form for volunteers to carry with them on service projects.

The National association controls the volunteer hours form so we have data to support our volunteer involvement in maintaining Gov't sites. This is very important when we fight for our right on public lands.

There will be a partnership meeting with PCTA in Sac. on Mar. 5th.

The Kern river Valley Unit will hold a Trail Trial in Keyesville near Lake Isabella April 2nd and 3rd.

Contact Larry Cigainero at 760 379 5920

Public Lands

The National Forest Systems Trail Stewardship has passed the house and is in the Senate as S1110. It has 9 co-sponsors. We encourage you to right our Senators in support of this bill.

The American Land Act HR1931 which supported selling off public lands over 5 years would have sold off 40% of Public lands. It has no sponsors and thankfully is probably dead at this time.

There was a short discussion on letter writing when writing your representatives on issues. Be short and concise. Identify yourself, the problem and what your stand on the issue is. Lengthy discussions lose their impact.

There is a move afoot to increase wilderness acreage in Sierra, Inyo, and Sequoia Forests. The areas talked about have little or no impact in Sierra and Inyo forest because the tracts identified are islands surrounded by Wilderness. The off road community is fighting this with the thought that it is chipping away at their available lands. The comment period ended Feb. 1st.

The current newsworthy standoff in Oregon reference public lands was discussed. Some agree and some don't with their stand but most feel this was the wrong approach. Nevada, where this all started, is 84% public lands. Ca. is 45%.

State Board

The Treasurer reported 2017 Calendars for fund raising will be available at Rendezvous. The balance in the fundraising account as of 12/31/15 is \$72,211.13. This is not a popular effort for some however the money raised is far beyond any other source.

The Education balance has increased approximately \$8,000 to \$65,116.11. All education functions including Rendezvous costs and income are in this account. Education and service projects come from this fund.

The State account increased approximately \$15,000 to \$141,549.81. This account runs the State Org. and it's costs including Insurance, Nat. Dues, and Unit reimbursement.

Top hand cups made in China cost \$15 less than American made cups. A vote was taken and we will purchase American cups at \$40.00 each

Pete Kriger our National Rep. reported on National items. National is pursuing hiring a management Org. to handle various duties including possibly the newsletter. The cost will be less than \$50,000 and it will happen this spring.

The Nat. youth scholarship pack trip last year was won by a CA boy. This project may happen again as it was well received and promotes youth in packing. There is info on this on the State web page. Pete will stand down at the end of this year.

Our insurance policy will renew April 1st. I asked about the possibility of a \$2,000,000 liability policy again. It had not been looked into thoroughly but the State executive board has tasked our 1st VP in charge of insurance to do a thorough investigation. This will also include why our rates are up almost 25% while our membership is down.

Two individuals from AZ and MT have requested to become associate members of a state unit without paying state membership, which is in our bylaws. Discussion involved on how do we know they are active members of their state and could we do the same in their state? We agreed if these two issues are enforced we will make the necessary changes. WA and OR state share their information now.

A move was made to change the length of office of executive board members to two years with half the board being elected each year. This would provide experience on the board at all times. Chip reported that when he became president all the board was new and it took a year for them to really be effective. This was approved for a 1st reading.

The San Joaquin Sierra Unit is in negotiations with Sequoia NF over Big Meadows Horse Camp. The Unit has been maintaining the camp for many years without having to pay any camping

fees. The forest says either they put it out to a concessionaire or close it down. They say it costs about \$10,000 a year to keep open mostly in trash and restroom maintenance. The unit proposes operating the camp on a donation basis with unit camp hosts. This could be possibly opened to other units to host maybe 2 weeks a year. The down side is there is no water. It has 16 pipe corrals and room for 10 to 15 rigs. They ask for any input on this endeavor.

Riding Warehouse will give 15% discount to BCH members and will be put in our state newsletter.

San Diego Unit will host a weekend camp at Cuyamaca State Park May 7th and 8th and they will man the BCH booth at Mule Days this year.

Respectively

Jerry Stone