

BCH of Tennessee Report of 2018

National Board Meeting – Asheville, NC – April 7, 2019

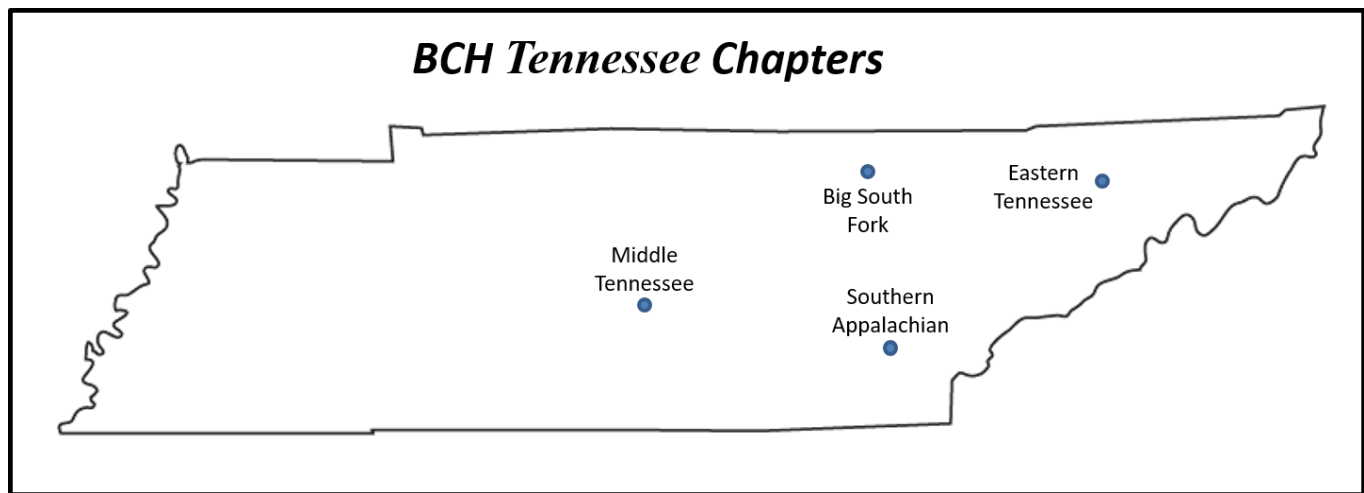


Table of Contents

State of Tennessee Back Country Horsemen (BCHT)..... Page 2

Chapters:

Back Country Horsemen of East Tennessee (BCHET as of 2001) Page 3 - 4

Southern Appalachian Back Country Horsemen (SABCH as of 2006)..... Page 5 - 6

Big South Fork Back Country Horsemen (BSFBCH as of 2010) Page 7 - 9

Middle Tennessee Back Country horsemen (MTBCH as of 2017) Page 9

State Summary

State of Tennessee Back Country (BCHT)

Organization & Outreach

Tennessee has 4 current chapters, all located in the middle and east portions of the state. See the map on cover page.

Our annual meeting was held August 2018, in Knoxville, TN. The main topics of discussions were: 1) The importance of our volunteer hours, 2) Working with other trail clubs, 3) Report on the events and issues of the 2018 National Board Meeting; 4) Voted to remove the new chapter CPBCH for noncompliance/activity with BCHT, and 5) Each chapter reported and discussed issues and trail updates.

Issues & Problems

Communication between chapters and state; lack of youth involvement; difficulty with chainsaw certification with the National Forest; and declining membership.

Organization Details

Chapter Name		Primary public agency & land
Back Country Horsemen of East Tennessee	BCHET	North Cherokee NF, northern two districts, Several State and County Parks
Southern Appalachian Back Country Horsemen	SABCH	USFS - Cherokee NF southern two districts, County Parks
Big South Fork Back Country Horsemen	BSFBCH	NPS – Big South Fork National and Recreation Area
Middle Tennessee BCH	MTBCH	Various State, City and County No National Forests in Nashville area

BCHT Officers During 2018

Chairman: Bobby Mitchell (SABCH)
 Vice Chairman: Tom Connor (BCHET)
 Secretary: Terri Haver (SABCH)
 Treasurer: Jerry Fenstermaker (SABCH)

2018 Total Chapters of Tennessee Volunteer Hours

<u>Chapter</u>	<u>Volunteer Hours</u>	<u>Value</u>
BCHET	1,651.0	\$ 74,396
SABCH.....	3,941.7	\$ 106,621
MTBCH	26.0	\$ 642
BSFBCH	446.0	\$ 11,707

Total Value for the state of **TENNESSEE Volunteer Hours: \$ 193,366** (underestimated)

Back Country Horsemen of East Tennessee (BCHET)

Accomplishments

1. Trails & Facilities: We work in the Cherokee NF (northern 2 districts, Unaka, Watuga), Washington Co, Carter Co, and Sullivan and in 3 TN State Parks.
 - a) Existing Trails: We continue to maintain hundreds of miles of trails as damage is reported. Workdays are scheduled via our 5 Outpost leaders. When damage is reported, it is attended to by the members of the Outpost who live closest.
 - b) Saved a trail: We put out a petition to the Forest Service and successfully saved White Rocks Trail from prohibiting horses. The problem is that it crosses the Appalachian Trail twice.
 - c) Created safe parking lot: Happy Trails parking lot was finished with the partnering of the hiking club, kayakers, and biking club, raising \$17,000, laying mats, tractor work, graveling etc. Still want to finish lighting and gain equine water access to river.
2. Our Outreach Experiences:
 - a) Working with Johnson City uniting all activity groups posting all organized activities on their site.
 - b) Also successfully working with the hiking, biking and kayaking groups for trail head sites.
 - c) Created a "Buckaroo's Committee" that focuses on children involvement.
 - d) Boys and Girls Club held a hands-on clinic at a member riding facility.
 - e) Girl Scout Troop, clinic held at a vaulting farm
 - f) Held an essay contest and awarded 4 riding lessons to the winner.
3. Education: 1 chainsaw and first aid certification class with 5 new people.

Organization

1. Structure: Relative to zip codes, the Membership broke into 5 Outposts and asked a board member to lead each outpost. Our Outpost meetings continue to a great success. By making the meetings closer to each member's home, the bi-monthly attendance increased by 50%. These smaller local groups created more familiarity between members and an increased willingness to help trail maintenance in the areas they ride and reside. Resulting in new members and more volunteer hours.
2. Meetings: There were 24 Outpost meetings, and 3 membership meetings. 6 board meetings
3. Website: Revamping our BCHET.Org site. Includes interactive website with trail and parking information.
4. Facebook: The site is very active. We are attracting people outside of the area. Reaching 4000 monthly. We no longer put out a newsletter, with avid use of our website and FB it is unnecessary.
5. Committees:
 - a. Spring and Fall Round Up Committee: Has been very successful, in bringing in new members
 - b. Buckaroo Committee: Focuses on youth involvement.
 - c. Events Committee: Tack Swap and Potlucks
 - d. 501c3 Committee: Nearly finished we hope

Current and Future Projects

1. Trails & Facilities: (All 3 are in the North Cherokee National Forest, Section 8)
 - a. **Rocky Fork**: The FS is keeping us on the outskirts of the park. There is only one access road through the future Rocky Fork State Park to the National Forest, due to topography. The State Park has now blocked all but one trail access for horses with in the park. This single feeder trail is 8 miles to reach the National Forest trails, where the trails are **overnight** loops, 20 miles or more. We have researched and mapped the area, developed a proposal which is still pending. USFS won't let us mark trails, old FS roads and drag trails which have been used for years, until their (continually delayed) study is complete Proposal includes a trailhead requiring a bridge across Rocky Fork Creek (environmental factors) and access via existing forest roads.

- b. **Roan Mountain State Park:** We still need connector trails between the State Park and the Watauga National Forest. Environmental concerns have rejected previous plans but USFS promises unmet deadlines. Currently the project is relocated to the north east side of Hwy 19e. It includes Walnut Mt, Cherry Flats, White Mt. and Frog Level. There are a lot of FS roads with no connector trails. We are working with Unicoi FS on White Rocks Horse Trail, for approval and getting it printed on National maps. Would like to add another parking area on top of Roan Mt, to get the trailers off the side of the road.
- c. Working on approval of our 501c3.
- d. Fight decreasing membership of aging members by drawing youth in the Back-Country Buckaroo program.

Issues and Problems

- 1. Approval for above mentioned current projects, connector trails and parking areas.
- 2. After many years of working with the USFS, new partnerships with state and local authorities require a learning curve.

Fundraising

- 1. Tack/Swap and shop. Sold booths and generated \$1,800. Plus, a fun social event
- 2. Memory Donations: \$250 in Memory of Duane Lowry
- 3. Raffles through out the year from local business donations.
- 4. Bingo and silent auction baskets for Buckaroos \$800
- 5. Local Vet arrangement: In lieu of a Coggins Clinic, large local vet offered to donate 10% of BCHET members routine maintenance costs. Netted **\$2,000.**

Organization Details

- 1. National Committee John Roop serves on the National Membership Committee.
- 2. Officers -- Fiscal year ends November

President	Vedette Rice			2020
Vice President	Bill Watson			2019
Secretary	Debra McDonald			2020
Treasurer	Jamie Fritsch			2019
Board Members	Bambi Krataush	2020	Vicki Hunter	2019
	Mamie Hopton	2020	Richard Jamison	2020
	Teresa Symonds	2020	Robert Luster	2019
* National Director- Tom Connor Chapter Representatives – Tom Connor, Richard Jamison, Bill Watson				

3. Dues Structure

- a. Individual Membership Annual Dues \$30
- b. Family Membership Annual Dues \$40

4. Membership and Volunteer Hours History

2000 -- Incorporated as East Tennessee Trail Riders	2010 -- 292 Members	1,743 hours.
2001 -- Voted to join BCHA. 367 Members. 335 hours.	2011 -- 133 Members	3,084 hours
2002 -- Officially became BCHET. 427 Members. 1,783 hours.	2012 -- 101 Members	1,225 hours
2003 -- 467 Members 3,063 hours.	2013 -- 85 Members	1,225 hours
2004 -- 628 Members 3,243 hours.	2014 -- 94 Members	1,672 hours
2005 -- 564 Members 3,312.5 hours.	2015 -- 94 Members	1,286 hours
2006 -- 550 Members	2016 -- 115 Members	551 hours
2007 -- 443 Members 1,365 hours.	2017 -- 98 Members	878 hours
2008 -- 440 Members 1,059 hours.	2018 -- 94 Members	1,651 hours
2009 -- 323 Members 1,140 hours.		

2018 BCHET Chapter Volunteer Hours Total Value: \$ 74,396

Southern Appalachian Back Country Horsemen (SABCH)

Accomplishments

1. Trails & Facilities: We maintain trails In Cherokee National Forest, and the Cohutta Wilderness in N Georgia.
 - a. Existing Trails Weekly Work Days (every Thursday):
 - i. Have logged and brushed out existing FS trails totaling 125 miles to FS standards and 100 miles of horse/hiking trail in the Ocoee/Hiwassee District of Cherokee National Forest plus a smattering of city and state public lands.
 - ii. Completed the RTP (Recreation Trails Program) grant and held two grand openings for the two new connector trails, one in the Tellico Ranger District and one in the Ocoee/Hiwassee District.
 - iii. Cut out over 371 crosscut trees in Wilderness Areas plus 340 chainsaw trees in non-wilderness. Did one water crossing with Tri-Lock Block
 - b. Brand New Trail
 - i. Enterprise South: A 17-mile new trail opened at Enterprise South in Chattanooga, TN on the new Summit Knobs horse trail system with Trail Dynamics, completed on June 25, 2018.
 - ii. Completed the Athens to Englewood Rails to Trails (now known as Eureka Trail). SABCH paid and delivered signs, the City of Athens installed.
2. BCH Outreach experience: Co-Manned a booth at the Southern Horse Expo in February 2018 with the TrailMeister. Worked with the Benton MacKaye Trail Assoc (BMTA) on several

Education

1. Co-Taught Leave No Trace trainer weekend in the Great Smokey Mountains National Park by providing a Master Educator for Stock Use in July, 2018
2. Worked with SAWS (Southern Appalachian Wilderness Stewards) in a 5-day packing course in NC.
3. FA/CPR taught to 8 members in March 2018. Crew leader training when FS has school children.
4. Chainsaw training to 5 members in February and March 2018.
5. Crosscut training to 1 member in May 2018.
6. Trail Training by Walter Bready to 5 members in March 2018.
7. Trail Machine training to 1 member in March 2018.

Organization

1. Activities: 12 monthly activities, including one Holiday party with gift exchange and dinner. We had 9 meetings and 3 rides. Our meetings are held in 4 different towns, spread over our geographic area. We had 3 group rides and two grand trail openings.
2. Newsletters: We had 12 monthly email newsletters with national/state/local news.
3. Website is www.SABCH.org.
4. Facebook: more use with 629 Likes; 624 Follows; and 1,892 post reach engagements
5. Committee: Nominating committee for our chapter

Current and Future Projects: (Goals)

1. We need to DOUBLE our volunteer hours in the five years in order to meet the National Forest Stewardship Act requirements, signed into law in the fall of 2016
2. Membership: Our aging membership is investigating ways to involve 4H and grandchildren in our chapter activities for future sustainability.

Issues and Problems:

1. Not much has changed with the Forest Service. Our last annual meeting was 1/25/18 to review our volunteer agreement again. It lasted five hours, with no proof of the meeting. We still must give the FS 3-day notice, before cutting the tree, otherwise it did not happen.
2. Our FS trail technician for the Ocoee-Hiwassee District has moved to another district.
3. The Cherokee Indian Nation has issues with the NFS and all Rails to Trails which go near Indian Land, regarding the Trail of Tears. We have had a stand down until the FS resolves the paperwork

Organization Details

1. National Committees Involvement: Joanne Mitchell is on 1) Volunteer Hours and 2) the Grant Committee. Two FS liaisons: Tazz Reid and Bobby Mitchell.
2. Officers -- Fiscal year ends December 31

President	Bobby Mitchell	2020
Vice President	Tazz Reid	2019
Secretary	Linda Norton	2020
Treasurer	John Zardis	2019
Directors	Phil Hadorn	2019
	Janice Butt	2020
	Larry Daugherty	2019
	Terri Haver	2020
	Jennice Duggan	2020
* Chapter Representatives: Terri Haver 12/19 and Jerry Fenstermaker 12/20 Alternate Chapter Directors: Bo Price & Ronny Anderson		

5. Dues Structure

- a. Individual Membership Annual Dues \$30
- b. Family Membership Annual Dues \$40

6. Membership and Volunteer Hours History

2006 -- Organization formed. 549 volunteer hours.
 2007 -- 575 volunteer hours
 2008 -- 1,341 volunteer hours
 2009 -- 2,200 volunteer hours
 2010 -- 3,133 volunteer hours 65 Members
 2011 -- 2,562 volunteer hours 64 Members
 2012 -- 3,130 volunteer hours 71 Members
 2013 -- 3,259 volunteer hours 80 Members
 2014 -- 3,842 volunteer hours 74 Members
 2015 -- 3,403 volunteer hours 65 Members
 2016 -- 3,439 volunteer hours 44 Members
 2017 -- 3,293 volunteer hours 49 Members
2018 -- 3,942 volunteer hours 53 Members

2018 SABCH Chapter Volunteer Hours Value total of \$106,621

Big South Fork Back Country Horsemen (BSFBCH)

Accomplishments:

1. Trails or Facilities: Territory is Big South Fork National Recreation Area
 - a. Our Chapter, nearly exclusively, and continually maintain the 50 miles of riding and multi-use trails in the Southern portion of the National Recreation Area, including the O&W Trail, Tar Kiln Trail, Long Ridge, Christian Cemetery, Proctor Ridge, Mill Creek Joes Branch and more. Includes chainsaw trees, clearing brush, and preventing trail wash out from an extremely wet year.
 - b. Repaired the Mill Seat Creek trail by clearing it of the dangerous ground stubs.
 - c. Brushed and cleared out the North White Oak Overlook, Long Ridge Overlook, Laurel Falls Overlook.
 - d. Litter pick up and continual upkeep of Zenith Trailhead and Mount Helen Trailheads.
 - e. We had manufactured, and installed, 7 (12" x 16") directional signs at major trail intersections and 5 smaller signs with mileage and direction at key locations to help prevent non-locals from getting lost which is a common problem.
2. Outreach:

Have rode and lunched with a local riding club, The Ridge Riders Club. Attended meetings and are getting new members from this.

Have had T shirts made and sold at equine related stores to raise visibility.
3. Organization:
 - a. 10 monthly meetings were held.
 - b. Active Facebook page. Most communication thru email, text and FB. No newsletter.
 - c. Social Events: Held a trail ride, lunch and potluck supper with the local Ridge Rider group. Developing several new members from this group. Held a Christmas Party and Halloween party with drawing of raffle winner.
 - d. Committees:
 - i. Trails Committee
 - ii. Membership/Activities Committee: Would like to double membership.
 - iii. Grant Writing Committee
4. Fundraisers:
 - a. Held a raffle of "The Judge hand gun" netted \$1,140.
 - b. Had club T shirts made and sell at local stores and private campgrounds.
 - c. Donation buckets with information and membership forms in campgrounds and equine related shops.
 - d. Already purchased next raffle item, Green Egg BBQ for 2019 raffle.

Current and Future Projects

1. The chapter has found a willing seller of private land for a trail that would connect the eastern most edge of Long Ridge Trail (Needles Eye Area) with the rest of the park. Currently working on a Tennessee State Park grant to fund it.
2. Installation of concrete plank extensions at the Zenith water Crossing. Approval finally granted, but not yet completed due to extreme rain this year.
3. Request to lay rock/gravel at Grooms Branch. Awaiting approval from NPS
4. Awaiting approval on Joes Branch Trail, to make the water crossing wagon accessible. Currently it is only horse crossable.
5. Working with the Park Service and Ridge Top Homeowner's Association to permit and raise money to hire bulldozer to reshape the Cumberland Trail and Christian Cemetery Trail.
6. To find and then groom an old long-lost trail (existed on old maps) that would connect Long Ridge Trail to the Zenith Trailhead again. This will prevent the need for bureaucratic lengthy paperwork and long delays.

7. In 2019 we plan to host historical speakers at various venues around the park, that will bring attention to who our club is and what all we do. Other meeting topics will be on safety/trail survival tips, equine care and enhancement of pastures to name a few.
8. We want to install waterproof map containers at trailheads and thank our chapter of the Back Country Horsemen for keeping the trails clear.
9. Planning to create a professional brochure, trifold/ membership application.
10. Organizing a Search and Rescue plan for those who get lost or loose their horses in this confusing area.

Issues & Problems:

1. The slow National Park System, (NPS) approval process for our “Current and Future Projects”.
2. We have all the parts necessary to finish or create several projects, but we must stand down, awaiting a long approval. Sometimes years.
3. Because the geography and location of our Big South Fork National Recreation Area, extensive rains have slowed many of the water crossing projects and workdays.

Organization Details

1. Board of Directors until November 2019

President	Rob Andrys
	Tom Lyons
Secretary	Linda Van Gundy & Elizabeth Karmazin
Treasurer	Sharon Lyons
Directors	Deborah Watts Connie Westphal Cheryl Madson
* Chapter Representatives- Rob Andrys, Connie Westphal Alt: Cheryl Madson	

2. Dues Structure

- a. Individual Membership Annual Dues \$30
- b. Family Membership Annual Dues \$40

3. Membership and Volunteer Hours History

	<u>Memberships</u>	<u>Volunteer Hours</u>
2010	31	
2011	35	
2012	35	
2013	35	
2014	35	100
2015	18	1,593
2016	17	107
2017	29	375
2018	44	446

2018 BSF BCH Chapter Volunteer Hours Value total \$11,707

Middle Tennessee Back Country Horsemen (MTBCH)

Accomplishments

1. We are 3 years old and growing.
2. We are an established 501c3 organization.
 - a. Trails: We ride and work in the TN State Parks, Percy Warner, Peeler State Park.
3. We Cleared trails in Peeler State Park.

BCH Outreach Education

1. Presented a Packing Demo at the TN State Fair
2. Did a presentation to 4-H group
3. Presented a trail challenge course and packing education at TN State Fair

Organization:

1. Had 12 membership rides/membership drives.
Each month we hold a ride with a meeting and a potluck.
2. We have established a Facebook page which we use primarily for nearly all our communications. We are Middle TN BCH, where all our rides, issues, and meetings are posted.
3. We have also created a website as well.

Current and Future Projects

1. We are eager to learn how to work with the State and Federal Park systems to help keep trails open to equine use. We are unique, in that we have no rideable national forests in the vicinity. We are learning our way through the systems of the state, trying to convince them how we can be of service.

Issues & Problems

1. In our geographic location, state parks and state-owned lands. Our main problem is finding the right land manager(s) to work with. This is an on-going effort and we are beginning to make some in roads.

Organization Details

1. Board of Directors

President	Jesse Johnson
Vice President	Jason Lancaster
Secretary	Michelle Steffen
Treasurer	Earlene Johnson
Directors	Anna Fravel-Media
* Chapter Representatives-Michelle Steffen (alternate state rep)	

2. Dues Structure

- a. Individual Membership Annual Dues \$35
- b. Family Membership Annual Dues \$40

Membership History	Membership	Volunteer Hours	Total Value
2015	28		
2016	16		
2017	23	35	\$ 774
2018	23	26	\$ 642