

Feb. State Board Meeting

Education

Membership has continued a downward move but not as great as last year. We have lost about a total of 400. Last year 300 and so far this year 100. Dues increase probably was one reason. We are encouraged to follow up on non-renewals with phone calls and notes to discuss reasons for these actions.

Only one unit has not turned in their volunteer hours as of Feb. 28th. Totals are not available yet.

The new saw policy is finally down on paper and awaiting signatures. We hope to have it out by July. OSHA is not in favor of it and wants to retain the old system.

The Masters Course will be held June 8th through the 12th 2015 at Bowerman Barn in Weaverville, Ca. That's the Trinity National Forest. They will have a Stock course and a Trailhead Camp course. Cost is \$550. Bring no stock or dogs. Contact Ruthie Heuer at rmheuer@gmail.com or 559 568 1260.

Los Padres unit created a grant program to help with attendance costs for future students and will accept donations. It has cost the state \$4,400 so far to get this program on track and there has been \$1,500. in donations.

Wilderness Rider training will occur Sept. 7th through the 11th this year at Granite Creek northeast of Fresno. The cost is \$350. and interviews will be held at Rendezvous. State is requesting ideas to excite youth in our organization.

Rendezvous is right around the corner. Please offer to help if you have any free time. Notify the state desk of available times. There will be crosscut evaluations for interested individuals as well as youth classes. There are few sign-ups for many classes. Next year's Rendezvous will be Mar. 18,19,20 in the same location. We are looking for a new venue for 2017, possibly Bishop.

Leadership training failed this year again due to lack of coordination. Redshank Unit held the only training. Next year should be better organized with dates for the training this Oct.

The awards given at Rendezvous for Newsletter, Volunteer hours and education will no longer have a perpetual trophy just the plaque given to the winners.

The regional forest office is creating a new program to address conditions at high use trailheads. This year's Hot Spots are Point Reyes and Ventana. They hope to have staff and volunteers to educate visitors on all aspects of public use areas.

Public Lands

The Sequoia, Sierra, Inyo forest plans are finally completed with alternatives. Two of the alternatives are stock friendly. Some alternatives open up meadows that have been closed due to poor unsupported reports of tree girdling, but they also close areas to cattle grazing.

HR5204 has little support as it was specifically designed to protect the rights of packers.

HR485 National Trails Stewardship is very well supported. Become informed and write your congress person.

HR3606 last year's designation for the Emigrant Wilderness Bill protected commercial packers. BCHA supports this with some rewording.

Cuyamaca State Park plan has passed and reservation problems were noted.

The trend in creating National Monuments was discussed and it is felt there is a plan behind it but it has yet to appear. Be vigilant.

Our position on bikes on trails hasn't changed but some members are leaning more towards multi use trails with education.

There is a Desert Renewable Energy Plan out and the impact on trails is unknown. One of our members found that their property was in the plan area.

All the effects of the draught have given the State Water Board visions of total control of water resources. This would include a meter on every well in the state private or otherwise. Every county has to have a water plan or the state will write one for them.

The Sequoia/Kings Cyn. Stewardship Plan has many detrimental ideas. Close 7 more meadows for "Social value" No one knows what this means. There are already 25 meadows closed. There are new trail classifications 3 of which will have no maintenance parameters which means eventually closed trails. They want to remove all drift fences and hitching rails in keeping with back to nature but not ranger cabins.

State Board

Our National Director Pete Krieger is on the Education Committee. The new President has monthly conference calls with all members to keep everyone up to date and reduce errors in communication.

Loss of stock use on public lands is a national issue. Some states are promoting the idea of managing all public lands in their state.

Everyone is invited to the National meeting in Sacramento April 22nd to 26th. Meet and greet is Wed. evening. Thursday will have an Entertainment Social at Jerry Tyndall's facility including a training session, pack scramble, Dutch oven dinner and Cowboy Poetry. Sat. there will be an Auction and they are accepting items. The proceeds can be designated for where ever you request (Education, State, or Unit)

The BBC (that's right England) has approached us on a film project they have to show stock use in a cattle drives and also the use of stock packing in to the back country. This all started from a conversation at Horse Expo last year. It pays to attend these functions.

State has gathered all documents to create a policy paper using all policy issues discussed over the years. They are hoping for volunteers to review the mountain of information.

The insurance agent was a no show so info was limited. The form that is sent out for the renewal policy will request information on known public day events even if the date is unsure. This will help the agent better prepare for the year. Last year she was caught off guard with short notice on some events which created errors. This may address some but not all our own difficulties. Our state VP in charge of insurance somehow wasn't aware of the degree of problems we've had but is now on board. Our waiver question will be reviewed with the insurance agent.

An issue has arisen with individuals that are ask to leave units for cause and then try to join other units. Membership authority lies at the unit level. There was a first reading for an amendment of the state by-laws which will read "Any unit may reject any application for membership". If this problem arises state membership will advise units about the individual.

The multi-year dues payment creates a budget issue for local units. If a member pays for 3 years of membership the unit will receive there portion of membership the first year and nothing for the remainder of year 2 and 3. This requires more diligent budgeting.

A reminder that all monies put into the c3 side are tax deductible. At this time only advertising on the c4 side was deductible. Advertising will be moved to the c3 side.

We currently have no Newsletter Editor due to illness. Help!!!!!!!

Calendars for 2016 are available for sale, well actually the raffle ticket with the free calendar. Last year's sale has generated \$40,000. So obviously it has been well received by the majority of units. We were one of the few units that returned our unsold calendars in a timely fashion and they were sold. All units will receive their payments in about a month with no loss of money because all except a few were sold. Return the 2016 unsold calendars by Oct. meeting so others can sell them. This year there will be no upfront payment for calendars to sell which stops the back and forth payment of the \$5.00 calendar cost now that we have a treasury to draw from. It helps all concerned including state.

State now has a grant writer and units should consider this as a way to generate funds for projects.

There was a second reading of the proposal to with-hold membership funds from units until all yearly reports are in and it passed.

We will attend the California Trails and Greenways Conf. but unfortunately it is during the National Board meeting dates. It is being held at Tenaya Lodge in Yosemite.

Finally Mid Valley Unit is sponsoring an intern this summer to work for the Forest Service through the 501c3 fund. There is a stipulation that the intern work with stock and that the intern plans to seek employment with the Forest service. This will hopefully down the line create Agency staff with knowledge of pack stock needs and benefits for public lands.

Respectfully

Jerry Stone