
BCH of Tennessee Report of 2025 events



The 53rd National Board Meeting, Kansas City, MO

April 13-15, 2026

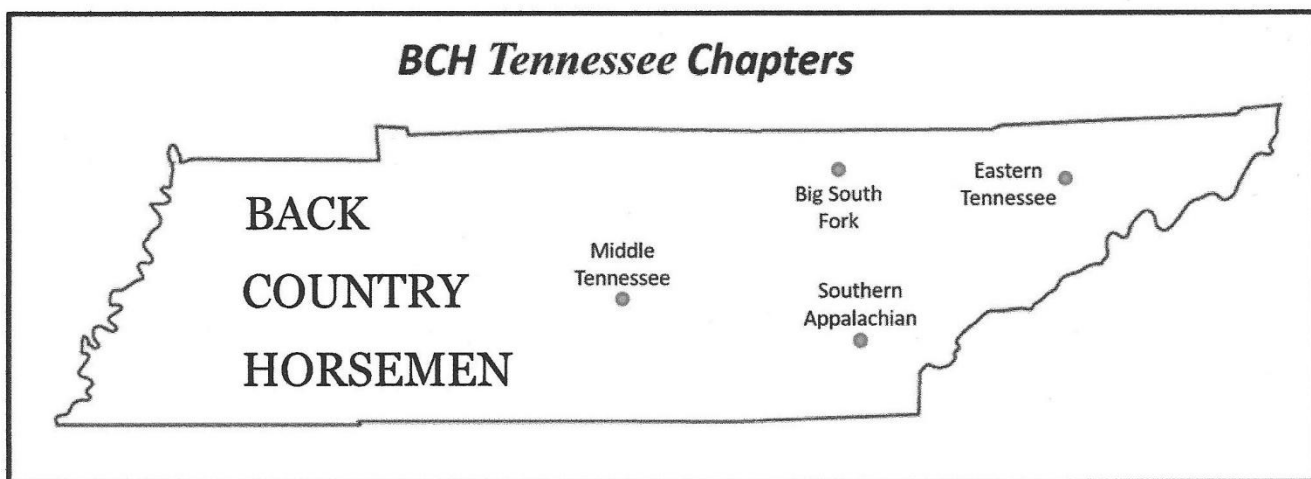


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STATE OF TENNESSEE BACK COUNTRY HORSEMEN (BCH-TN)-2024

Organization & Outreach

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

Our annual state meeting was held Friday June 27, 2025 at the Department of Agriculture Extension office, west Knoxville.

Issues & Problems

Lack of youth involvement; difficulty with chainsaw certification with the National Forest; and difficulty with the Forest Service in keeping and enlarging the equine trails.

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
Back Country Horsemen Big South Fork	BCHBSF	NPS – Big South Fork National and Recreation Area
Middle Tennessee BCH	MTBCH	Various State, City and County parks, No National Forests in Nashville area

State Total 2025 Tennessee Volunteer Hours

Tennessee Chapter	Volunteer Hours	Equivalent Value
BCHET	1,422.15	\$79,635.86
SABCH	2,30.50	\$91,319.97
MTBCH	14.00	\$1,138.86
BSFBCH	2,747.00	\$154,274.05
Tennessee Total	6,486.65	\$326,368.73

2025 BCH-TN Leadership

Chairperson	Terri Haver	SABCH	Until December 31, 2027
Vice Chairperson	Michelle King	BCHET	Until December 31, 2026
Secretary	Kayla Snyder	MTBCH	Until December 31, 2027
Treasurer	Rick Smith	BSFBCH	Until December 31, 2026
2025 National Directors	Kayla Snyder Terri Haver Steven Corely (Alternate)	MTBCH SABCH BSFBCH	Last Year
2026 National Directors	Keith Holley Kayla Snyder Joanne Mitchell (Alternate)	BSFBCH MTBCH SABCH	Current
State Saw Director	Richard Jamison/Keith Holley	BSFBCH	Forever
Historian	Joanne Mitchell	SABCH	Forever
Volunteer Hours	Joanne Mitchell	SABCH	Forever
Website Committee	Joanne Mitchell Pam Corley	SABCH BSFBCH	Forever Foreverb
South East Public Lands	Joanne Mitchell Keith Holley	SABCH BSHBCH	Forever Fe

Accomplishments (sort of)

1..In mid February 2025, Cumberland Gap National Historic Park contacted Joanne Mitchell about a packing opportunity for the week of March 17 2025. Plan was to pack out wooden disks of various sizes, anywhere from 4" to 20" diameter, 4" thick. The distance was 4.5 miles in, 4.5 miles out. After MANY phone calls, texts and emails, the result was that ONE packer from KY (Edith Conyers) could make it. Horse camping was arranged at Rock Bottom Horse Camp. Project went smoothly, except for the snow but project completed. Everyone happy.

2..As a statewide worktrip, we tried to get a project planned after Hurricane Helene. Got camping arranged, projects planned but it was not to be. Project cancelled.

Back Country Horsemen of East TN became a BCHA Affiliate in 2001.

NBM TN attendees

2001 Jackson, WY

2002 Santa Fe, NM Thomas and Karen Isaacs

2003 Coos Bay, OR Betty and Mike McClelland

2004 Durango, CO Thomas and Karen Isaacs

2005 Park City, UT

2006 San Diego, CA *Southern Appalachian BCH formed*

2007 Prescott, AZ

2008 Elko, NV *Big South Fork BCH formed*

2009 Fort Worden, WA

2010 Branson, MO Joanne and Bobby Mitchell (TN became a State organization)

2011 Butte, MT Bobby Mitchell and Thomas Isaacs

2012 Eugene, OR Joanne and Bobby Mitchell

2013 Rapid City, SD Joanne and Bobby Mitchell

2014 Chattanooga, TN Bob Escota and Larry Jeffers also Joanne and Bobby Mitchell, Jesse Johnson

2015 Sacramento, CA Joanne Mitchell and Jesse Johnson

2016 Las Vegas, NV Jesse Johnson and Susan Kiley; Joanne Mitchell as Alt

2017 Great Falls, MT Susan Kiley

2018 Spokane, WA Susan Kiley

2019 Asheville, NC Richard Jamison, Bill Watson also Joanne and Bobby Mitchell, Terri Haver

2020 via Zoom Joanne Mitchell and Terri Haver

2021 via Zoom Joanne Mitchell and Terri Haver and Steve Corely as Alt

2022 Kansas City, MO Terri Haver and Joanne Mitchell

2023 Kalispell, MT Terri Haver and Deb McDonald

2024 Casper, WY Terri Haver and Deb McDonald

2025 Prescott, AZ Terri Haver and Kayla Snyder

2026 Kansas City, MO Kayla Snyder and Keith Holley; Joanne Mitchell as Alt

Chapter: BACK COUNTRY HORSEMEN OF EAST TENNESSEE-2025 (BCHET)

Accomplishments

1. Trails & Facilities: Cherokee NF (Northern 2 Districts - Unaka Mountain and Watauga horse trails)
 - a. Existing trails: 2025 was primarily devoted to Hurricane Helene clean up. Nearly every trail in our region of the Cherokee National Forest was affected. Many were impassable. Thanks to a dedicated few, almost every trail has been cleared and is usable.
 - b. BCH Outreach Experiences: BCHET Tack Swap and Shop is open to the public. This event brings out horse lovers of all types. We frequently gain new members at these events.
 - c. Worked with other Organizations: USFS, Holston Mtn Hiking Club, SAWS, Johnson County Trail Association

2. Education:
 - a. CPR, Chainsaw Cert Course held in February 2025. Ron Rice attended BCHA Missouri course to acquire certification to teach chainsaw cert classes. Also obtained his cross-cut sawyer cert while there.

Organization

1. The chapter is a 501(c)(3) organization.
2. Website professionally maintained: www.BCHET.org
3. Internal Communications
 - a. Held 2 Chapter Meetings.
 - b. Email updates to membership.
 - c. Held 3 Board of Directors Meetings.
 - d. Chapter Website: www.bchet.org. Webmaster is Mollie Ingle
 - e. Chapter Facebook Page has 4117 likes and got 212,396 in last 90 days. The administrator is Michelle King
 - f. Committees: Buckaroos Committee is chaired by Michelle King and Mollie Ingles.
4. Common Chapter membership expiration date is December 31
5. Annual Membership Dues
 - a. \$35 Individual Membership
 - b. \$45 Family Membership
6. Certifications
 - a. 12 Members are certified chain sawyers.
 - i. Deb Armentrout Ayers until 2/28 (B)
 - ii. Mike Beard 2/28 (B)
 - iii. Adam Ebbing 2/28 (B)
 - iv. Whitney Ebbing 2/28 (B)
 - v. Thomas Isaacs 10/26 (B)
 - vi. Richard Jamison 10/26 (B)
 - vii. Larry Jeffers 2/28 (B)

- viii. Mike McClelland 2/28 (B)
- ix. Ron Rice 11/28 (C bucking)
- x. Shane Woodson 2/28 (B)
- xi. Ed Pumphrey 2/28 (B)
- xii. Kara Pumphrey 10/26 (B)
- b. One member is currently certified as a cross-cut sawyer.
 - i. Ron Rice 11/28

7. BCHET Committees

<u>Position or Committee</u>	<u>Individual(s)</u>	<u>Term Ends</u>
Webmaster	Mollie Ingle	Current
FB Administrators	Michelle King	Current
Nomination Committee	Deb McDonald	Current
	Larry Jeffers	Current
Buckaroos Committed Chairperson	Michelle King Mollie Ingle	Current
Education	Deb McDonald	Current

BCHET Officers New officers assume positions Jan. 1

<u>Position</u>	<u>Individual(s)</u>	<u>Term Ends</u>
President	Ron Rice	12/2026
Vice President	Karen Isaacs	12/2025
Secretary	Michelle King **	12/2026
Treasurer	Theresa Symonds	12/2025
Chapter Board	Richard Jamison*	12/2026
	Thomas Isaac	12/2025
	Dean England	12/2026
	Mollie Ingle	12/2026
	Jan Gentry	12/2026
	Roby Lay	12/2026
Chapter Representatives	Richard Jamison*	2025 & 2026
	Ron Rice	2025 & 2026
	Michelle King	2026
Volunteer Hours Coordinator	Ron Rice	2024 and 20254

*2025 State Saw Coordinator

**State Vice Chair

Current & Future Projects (Goals)

1. Trails and or Facilities:

- a. Our 2025 goal was to reopen all our trails. The only trail we have not cleared is Rogers Ridge Trail in Laurel Bloomery, TN. Work has begun on that trail and will hopefully be complete in time for spring riding.
- b. We continued work toward the completion of the connector trail on Walnut Mtn that will create multiple loop options for that trail system located in Roan Mtn, TN. Final signatures and approval were obtained on the latest route mapped out by our volunteers and USFS.
- c. We continue to support the Johnson County Trail Association in their work to redesignate 20 miles of the Iron Mtn Trail as multi-use. This trail was also destroyed by Helene and the USFS continues work to clear trees and repair stump holes within the trail bed.

2. Issues and Problems

Outside organizations: Illegal trail use continues to be a growing problem for our area trails. Off road vehicles are continually cutting through forest to bypass FS gates or yanking the gates completely out of the ground. The Dark Hollow loop contains one stretch of road that is open to ORV. They have used that road to access horse trails built by BCHET and the mountain biking community. Additionally, some vehicles have recently started entering the lower section of Unaka Mountain Wilderness Area on illegal trails. Trails that were pristine are now road wide, muddy, eroded and littered with trash and auto parts. Because it is not built for ORVs they continually get stuck and cost the USFS thousands of dollars to recover which comes directly from trail funds. We are seeing the same type of activity on the Holston Mtn trail system.

The USFS has announced, received bids, and signed a contract for hazardous fuel removal on Holston Mtn in the area from the Griffith Branch trailhead up the FS road, Chestnut Flats trail, Chestnut Flats Connector, Holston West, and Furnace Branch. We have been told that this section of forest will be closed to us during the logging project which historically has never happened. During previous logging projects signage was posted to use caution and be aware of logging traffic. These are trails we worked to clear post Helene. Expected trail closure could last two to three years.

1. Elemental:

- a. Still have exponential damage from Hurricane Helen

2. Goals for membership increase: Continue spreading the good news. Would like to see more frequent gatherings to keep members involved.

Membership and Volunteer Hours History

2000 - Incorporated as East TN Trail Riders	
2001 - Joined BCHA; 367 Members; 335 hours	
2013 - 85 Members;	1,225 hours
2014 - 94 Members;	1,672 hours
2015 - 94 Members;	1,286 hours
2016 - 115 Members	551 hours
2017 - 98 Members;	878 hours
2018 - 94 Members;	1,651 hours
2019 - 84 Members;	2,237 hours

2020 - 84 Members;	1,740 hours
2021 - 93 Members;	1,577 hours
2022 - 77 Members;	550 hours
2023- 76 Members	865.35 hours
2024 – 47 Members	1,143 hours
2025-- 57 member	1,422.15 hours

Chapter: SOUTHERN APPALACHIAN BACK COUNTRY HORSEMEN-2025

1. Accomplishments

- a. Trails & Facilities: We maintain trails in two districts of the Cherokee National Forest (Tellico and Ocoee-Hiwassee districts). We also help the BCH of North Georgia in the Chattahoochee National Forest. We work every Thursday, year-round.
 - i. Existing trails: In Cherokee National Forest South mostly, we still had 2,303.50 volunteer hours for a dollar value of \$91,319.97 for all work performed.
 1. In 2026, we sawed out 651 total chainsaw trees. In Wilderness, 100 total crosscut trees. Combined chainsaw and crosscut total of 751 trees!
 2. We maintained the following horse trails: all horse trails on Starr's Mountain, (horse zone) in the Ocoee-Hiwassee District. We also work the Tellico District including Tavern Branch/Miller Ridge. We maintain 66.6 miles in O/H and 48.2 miles in Tellico for about 125 miles total maintained to standard. We also work numerous hiking only trails with our partners.
 3. We started a new Adopt-A-Trail program in 2023. Some trails were worked almost every month. Others only three times and some not at all (since no hours were turned in).
 4. We revised our Volunteer Agreement with the Forest Service. This is done every 5 years. Next revision expected 2030.
 5. Technology—We received four radios from the FS at a value of \$3,000.00 each. The individual is responsible for \$1,500 to the FS if lost. These are used on our weekly workdays. Barb Childress has one, Ken Jones has one, Larry Daughter turned his back in due to health issues and the other one is a "floater". Sometimes we break into two groups and work a trail from either end. Most of our crew members are ham radio operators and had the old analog radios we had, the FS no longer monitors (safety issue).
- b. SABCH Outreach Experiences
 - i. We also participated in the Tellico River Cleanup and the Hiwassee River Cleanup sponsored by Trout Unlimited in the spring.
- c. Collaboration with Other Organizations
 - i. Our chapter often assist our partners, the Benton MacKaye Trail Association, a hiking association. We work on many hiking and multi-use trails.
 - ii. We also met Feb 5, 2025 for our annual meeting at the Ocoee Ranger Station.
- d. Membership: Did a separate e-mail blast for the membership including a membership packet. Membership was \$35 Individual, \$40 family.

2. Organization

- a. # Chapter Meetings held: 6, on even numbered months.
- b. # Board of Directors Meeting held: 2 (June and December) were held prior to the regular membership meetings.
- c. # Newsletters: 12
- d. Volunteer Hour Collector: 2025 and 2026-Joanne Mitchell

- e. In 2025 we had 9 certified chain sawyers. One got certified at the Missouri BCHA event.
- f. We have 7 certified crosscut sawyers. One got certified at the Missouri BCHA event.
- g. We have two certified Trail Machine operators who have their own machines. (\$20kish)
- h. Website Name: www.SABCH.org (Webmaster: Madison B.)
- i. We have an on-line (PayPal) way to pay dues from our website
- j. Facebook Page # likes: 1.4k likes, 1.4k followers; Reached weekly:2,790 engaged (6 FB Administrators are Jim Holland, Barb Childress, Rick Harris, Joanne Mitchell, Larry Daugherty and Linda Norton. It is used to report downed trees or clear trail. Only Administrators can post. Anyone in the world can comment. Suspicious comments are deleted by Admins. Most posts are reported in the monthly newsletter since some members do not FB.
- k. Our weekly workdays are reported on our FB page (by FB administrators). Sometimes we have enough people to break into two or three teams, so each photographer goes with a different team. We always try to get a picture of the safety meeting before we start the day. This helps us fill out the required FS report.
- l. Committees
 - i. Nominations Committee - Linda Norton Chairperson
 - ii. Public Relations/Membership Committee – Linda Norton
 - iii. SE Public Land Committee - Joanne Mitchell
 - iv. Hurricane Helene Disaster Relief: Terri Haver, Jenny Bennett, Madison Baldwin and Janey Lynch.

3. Current and Future Projects: (Goals)

- a. We still need to DOUBLE our volunteer hours in four years to meet the National Forest Stewardship Act requirements, signed into law in the fall of 2016.
- b. Working on incorporating the younger members at the working and administrative level.
- c. Specific Trails:
 - i. We got the OK to reopen the closed section of Conasauga River Trail #61 which was burned out, over 7 years ago. It is a connector trail from the FS road down to the River on the West end. Applied for Legacy Grant but did not get it in 2022.
 - ii. The Blue Ridge Horse Trail #62 needs is logged out and is clear from Sheeds Creek Rd to #99.
 - iii. Sylco Tail #75, has healed itself and does not need another culvert due to Easter Flooding 2021, (totally washed out). The new carconite signage installed by SABCH was destroyed by a prescribed burn in Spring 2025. Some have been replaced by painted blazes on trees left after the prescribed burn. Also, there is still a large sinkhole over a culvert on the old RR bed. The Forest Service is dragging their feet on this repair. It has been patched, not repaired.
 - iv. Signage both parking and/or directional for most trails, including Miller Ridge, Cooper Gap, Yellow Creek, Bullet Creek, Sylco, Conasauga River Trail, Iron Mountain, Starr Mountain, and Tellico area.

4. Issues and Problems

- a. The FS does not appear to want to maintain or add horse trails, and feels equestrians will age out in a few years. The weekly work crew works on more hiking than horse trails. They are not responsive to our email or calls.
- b. Goals for membership increase: Hope to work more closely with the local McMinn County Saddle Club for recon purposes. McMinn Saddle Club have several rides in the Cherokee National Forest and know where trail problems are.
- c. The Tellico District still does not have a Recreation Manager since Brandon Burke left in November 2023.
- d. The FS is working with us on signage as much as possible. They have given us carsonite posts and stickers, AND the driver to put them in. We also now have a gate key. This is an accomplishment! We also have permission to paint correct blazes as well. (They really have tried since the controlling person has been reassigned.)
- e. Hurricane Helene happened September 24-27, 2024. Devastation and Destruction. SABCH raised funds to assist the people of our sister chapter (BCHET) and beyond. This is huge the way we came together. We had several flatbed loads of hay, fencing and other farm equipment the destitute animal owners.
- f. SABCH a. We sent letters about a proposed road rally from a scoping letter.
b. We commented to Hamilton County when Enterprise South was endangered losing trails.
c. We made several phone calls regarding the sale of public lands.
2) Our Adopt A Trail program is being managed much closer by a member who has interest and time. This creates awareness and a sense of purpose in the club

Had 6 day rides, with a trail leader as incentive to ride. These were in February (Citico), March (Sylco with 10/15 mile options). Some parts sketchy after prescribed burn, which melted some trail markers and trees with markers.

Dues Cost and Structure

1. Common Chapter membership expiration date is December 31
2. We do have an online option for renewal since 2023. (PayPal)
3. Annual Membership Dues for 2024 was increased in June 2023 by \$5, anticipating National Increase.
 - a. \$35 Individual Membership
 - b. \$40 Family Membership

Organization Details

- g. We have been a 501c3 since 2010

Chapter: BACK COUNTRY HORSEMEN BIG SOUTH FORK-2025

Big South Fork Back Country Horsemen Tennessee State Report for 2025

January 2026
Keith Holley
BCHBSF President
bsfbchpresident@gmail.com
(423) 802-5760

Back Country Horseman of the Big South Fork
<https://bchbsf.org>
Big South Fork Back Country Horsemen Of Tennessee, Facebook

Membership: 2025
106.

Officers and Board of Directors: 2025

President: Keith Holley - Elected December 2024
Vice President: Mary Jo (MJ) Krutak - Elected December 2024
Treasure: Rick Smith - Elected December 2024
Secretary: Susan Riggan - Elected December 2024
Board Member: Robin Wilcox - Elected December 2024
State Representatives - Steve Corley and Pam Corley
Alternate: Mary Jo Krutak

Officers and Board of Directors: 2026

President: Keith Holley - Elected December 2025
Vice President: Mary Jo (MJ) Krutak - Elected December 2025
Treasure: Rick Smith - Elected December 2025
Secretary: Tammy Holley - Elected December 2025
Board Member: Robin Wilcox - Elected December 2025
State Representatives - Keith Holley, Rick Smith - Elected December 2025
Alternate: Robin Wilcox - Elected December 2025

Partners:

Big South Fork River and Recreation Area.
Great Smoky Mountains National Park.
Appalachian Trail Conservancy.
Pickett State Park.

Coordinates and Project accomplishments: 2025

Chainsaw window in Great Smoky Mountains National Park.
Packing for the Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

Packing for the Appalachian Trail Conservancy.

Installed horse panels in ten sites at Station Camp Campground in the Big South Fork River and Recreation Area.

Trail work in the Big South Fork River and Recreation Area. I have been approved with my qualifications to use chainsaws on trails.

Volunteer Hours: 2025

Hours - 2747

Total Value - \$151,513.76

Training: 2025

Working with Mark Himmel (BCHA), Dan McLaughlin (NFS Region 9 RSPM) Pickett State Park, Big South Fork Recreation Area, setting up Chainsaw training.

Sawyers: 2025

Keith Holley - C Bucking, B Felling.

Goals for 2026:

Continue working with other partners to improve and open trails and campgrounds for the equine family. Setup chainsaw training and train BCH Sawyers.

Keith Holley

BCHBSF President

bsfbchpresident@gmail.com

(423) 802-5760

Membership and Volunteer Hours History

Year	Number of Members	Volunteer Hours
2010	31	
2011	35	
2012	35	
2013	35	
2014	35	100
2015	18	1,593
2016	17	107
2017	29	375
2018	44	446
2019	44	136
2020	44	389
2021	54	1,577
2022	74	1,296
2023	100	1885.50
2024	120	1298
2025	106	

Chapter: MIDDLE TENNESSEE BACK COUNTRY HORSEMEN-2025

Accomplishments

1. Had two workday cleanups for a total of 20 hours.

Organization

1. We are a501(c)(3) Organization since we incorporated in 2015.
2. Internal Communications
 - a. Held 2 Chapter Meetings
 - b. Chapter Website: none
 - c. Kayla Snyder attended the 2025 annual state meeting and NBM.
 - d. Kayla Snyder is the 2025 State Secretary.
3. Certifications
 - a. No member is a certified chainsawyer or crosscut sawyer.