Riders' Roundup



STAR
Sisters Trail Additions and Realignments

By Pat Marquis, Central Oregon Chapter

Hello to everyone out there in "OET" land. A few months ago you may have read in the "Roundup" about the above topic: STAR! Well I am here to tell you the "Rest of the Story". A story that began many years ago and came to fruition last September, when Ian Reid, Sisters District Ranger, called a meeting to disclose that the NEPA study had been completed and he wished to disclose the results of this effort. Unfortunately the study only covered a portion of the original "ASK" as transmitted to the District in 2022, with Scoping that began in July of 2023 and the results transmitted in 2025. But the results of our efforts is astounding in that 29.7 miles of trails will be added to the equestrian landscape.

The story begins in 2016 when the Sisters District engaged the public in the "Whychus Creek Roads Project" wherein they wished to close or decommission over 50 miles of existing roads to enhance the watershed and provide better wildlife management. The equestrian community lobbied for closure on some of the roads, rather than decommissioning so that we could continue our use, transitioning to trails. Kinda like the rails to trails program nationwide. And we were successful, thus sparking our interest in converting other roads prior to their leaving the inventory.

Unfortunately, as we were to find out, we had roads to travel on but converting them to trail corridors was a whole "nother" issue! We could ride these roads, but we couldn't map them with a designation of trails, nor could we put signs or diamonds up to lead folks in the right direction. We had to get them officially approved as equestrian trail corridors. For those of you that have camped and stayed at Whispering Pines Horse Camp, you know of what I speak. Are you aware that at this moment there are no official trails leading out of or returning to the campground. That is soon to change!

Over the next 5 years (2016-2021) we went to many meetings and met many folks that were in this same pickle. We met bikers, hikers, runners and a host of folks

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Riders' Roundup

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organization.

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President
Melissa McLaughlin



Stepping into the role of President of Oregon Equestrian Trails is an honor, one that comes with both excitement and trepidation. I enjoy hiking and cross country skiing but being on a horse in nature has a magic to it that calms the mind and heals the heart like nothing else. That is why OET is so important to me. We're not just riders, we're stewards, advocates and a community that cares deeply about keeping Oregon's public lands open, accessible and welcoming for equestrians.

As I begin this year, my focus is simple: strengthen our chapters, support our volunteers, and celebrate the people who make this organization what it is. Our work parties, our partnerships with land managers, our chapter gatherings, and our shared commitment to responsible trail use are the heartbeat of OET. I want to help amplify that work, make it easier for members to get involved, and ensure every chapter feels connected to the larger statewide vision.

One of my goals this year is to visit each and every chapter-whether at a meeting, a ride, or a work party- because OET comes to life at the chapter level. I'm also excited to share that I'm declaring March as OET Safety Month, a healthy reminder to review and update your First Aid kit, CPR training, Saw skills, PPE, riding helmet, trailer wheel bearings, et al and the 10 essentials in your saddle bag. Work parties will be starting up in April-let's have fun and be safe out there.

I'm excited to meet more of you. Every member brings a story, a skill, and a perspective that enriches this organization. My hope is that this year feels like a shared adventure, one where we build on our strengths and create new opportunities for connection, stewardship, and fun.

Thank you for the trust you've placed in me. I'm looking forward to the miles ahead and to the work we'll do together to keep Oregon's trails open, beautiful, and horse friendly for generations to come.

See you out there!

Attend February OET Board Meeting

Sunday Feb. 22, 10AM
Roth's Fresh Market · Rm #3116 · 1130 Wallace Rd. NW · Salem

Online via Google Meet

Meeting ID meet.google.com/wpv-pkvs-xxm
Phone Number: 1-208-741-3899
Pin: 414 831 267#

VP of Field Service



Matt Dolphin

Celebrating Our Volunteers at the Annual Members Meeting

The greatest strength of OET is its people.

At our upcoming Annual Members Meeting on February 21, 2026, we'll be taking time to recognize the volunteers who make our trails, programs, and community possible. In 2025 alone, OET members contributed an incredible 12,705 volunteer hours—a testament to the passion, commitment, and generosity that defines this organization.

These hours represent everything from trail building and maintenance, to events, planning, education, and behind-the-scenes work that often goes unseen but never unfelt. Every hour mattered, and every volunteer made a difference.

At the Annual Members Meeting, we'll be offering special recognition to volunteers whose extraordinary commitment helped power OET forward in 2025. We hope you'll join us on February 21 as we celebrate the people that make OET possible.

The following OET members contributed 30 or more volunteer hours, with special appreciation for those who dedicated 100 or more hours in truly remarkable service. Whether you gave a few hours or hundreds, your efforts strengthened OET and helped move our mission forward—thank you for showing up and pitching in.

30+ Volunteer Hours

Dave Alward, Liz Akar, Josh Bair, Sally Bayliss, Kishiko Bennett, Alan Borrud, Rita Bowne, Judi Booth, Ginnie Cassil, Brenda Coats, Frank DeWeese, Anita Elsey, Colene Everett, Lee Fischer, Sue Gillilan, Kathryn Godsiff, Dwight Greiner, Kim Grabill, Richard Grabill, Vern Hartness, Fabianne Head, Tricia Hedges, Henny Hennessy, Kathy Hensley, Rhonda Hjort, Judy Johnson, Karl Kline, Dodie Kauffman, Judy Kell, Kieta Lee, Lynda Harding, Lauri Malone, Nanci Melton, Robert Meyer, Ann Moser, John Nelson, Heather Nelson, Annette Parsons, Drew Prindle, Robin Montgomery, Rob Soule, Jana Swedo, Jennifer Steele, Scott Hendy, Sue Turner, Wendy Zurcher.

100+ Volunteer Hours

Barb Adams, Dave Adams, Mary Blankevoort, Micheline Black, Cindy Dale, Marty DeVall, Matt Dolphin, Donita Elbert, Finn Esbensen, Collette Hayes, Suzanne Heskett, Doris Hills, Scott Hills, Jon Hjort, Iva Holmes, Loyce Krogel, Elizabeth Llem, Pat Marquis, Rhonda Marquis, Kim McCarrel, Janet Miller, Kyle Miller, Gayla Nelson, Bob Rice, Gloria Rice, Sandra Rosencrantz, David Somann, Fran Somann, Jill Talburt, Sandy Tetz, Leslye Wing, Dani Wright.

A long overdue Thank you to Kim McCarrel. She generously allows us to use her beautiful photos in the Riders' Roundup. If you do not see a credit on a stunning photo it probably was taken by our VP Public Lands, Kim.



2026 - Year of the Fire Horse

The year of the fire horse in traditional Chinese Astrology begins February 17, 2026.

The Fire Horse symbolizes courage, enthusiasm and an independent spirit. Strong momentum, bold action and intensity!



This could be a great year for our membership and developing volunteers into new roles.

Maybe you will ride a new and challenging trail with your own fire horse, or set some training goals to make your rides more enjoyable. What feels impossible now might be reality by summer.

VP of Public Lands
Kim McCarrel



In early January, OET submitted letters to our Congressional delegation urging them to support trail funding in the 2026 budget, and we asked our members to write letters as well. We asked for a modest increase in trail funding over 2024 levels. Congress has now passed a budget bill that funds our public land managers in 2026. Hooray!

Also in January, we signed on to a letter, sponsored by the American Hiking Association, petitioning Congress to support extending funding for the Legacy Restoration Fund. This fund, which was established by the Great American Outdoors Act, provided five years of funding to address the maintenance backlog on public lands. The Act paid for things like replacing the roof at Crater Lake Lodge, repairing the aging heating system at Timberline Lodge, replacing bridges, and restoring damaged trails. But now that the five years are up, Congress is considering whether to extend funding for another five years. We strongly support this legislation.

A quick heads-up for our members in southern and eastern Oregon: Representative Cliff Bentz is the only one of Oregon's senators and congressmen who does not consistently support funding for recreational use of public lands. If you live in Rep. Bentz's district, it's critical that he hear from you. Otherwise, he'll never know how much his constituents care about our trails.

Trails Day
February 9th at the Capitol

OET will be bringing a substantial number of concerned people to Trails Day at the Oregon legislature on February 9th. We will be meeting with state legislators to promote funding for trails and to lobby in favor of improving Oregon's liability release laws.

The views and opinions expressed by our members and contributing authors to *Riders' Roundup* may be personal and may not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of Oregon Equestrian Trails as a whole.

VP Marketing Outreach
Collette Hayes



Thank you all for being a part of OET!

Please make sure to either buy a ticket for the banquet or email me if you plan to pay at the door. This is quite important so that we are able to take care of all attendees! It sounds like we are going to have a fantastic turnout!

I look forward to meeting many of you whom I feel like I already know through email!

See you soon!

Annual Membership Meeting
February 21, 2026

Don't miss it. Hear about all the great things our chapters have done over the past year.

Enjoy continental breakfast, lunch and dinner! Bar opens 4 p.m.

We have 3 speakers, live auction, silent auction and raffle. The final raffle will be the work party kit (See page 22). Tickets will be available at the door.

It is a big year...we will welcome a new President of Oregon Equestrian Trails as Frank DeWeese retires (after eight years!!).

We will have limited reservations. See back page for more info.





OET Tech Corner
Moving Beyond "Hey Siri"

By Marty DeVall, OET Web Master

Meet the New "Super-Assistants" That Can Actually Think

We have all gotten used to shouting **"Alexa, set a timer," "Hey Google, turn on the lights,"** or **"Hey Siri, what is the temperature?"** as we rush around the kitchen or the barn.

That is great for simple tasks. But recently, you have probably heard the news talking about **"AI" (Artificial Intelligence)**. It sounds scary, but for us, it just means computers have finally learned how to have a real conversation.

Think of the difference like this:

The assistants you have used for years (Classic Alexa, Siri, and the old Google) were like a **Reference Librarian**. They could look up a specific fact, but they couldn't help you plan a complicated project.

The NEW assistants (Chatbots) are like a **Travel Agent, a Vet Tech, and a Secretary rolled into one.** They don't just "look up" info; they understand context, summarize long documents, and can answer very complicated questions.

Two Apps You Can Try

The two easiest ways to try this "New AI" right now are on your smartphone.

1. For Android Users: "Google Gemini"

If you have a newer Android, your "Google Assistant" may have already upgraded itself to **Gemini**. If not, it is a free app in the Play Store.

- **Why it's best for you:** It connects to Google Maps, your email and other office Apps.
- **How to use it:** Just say **"Hey Google"** or open the Gemini app and tap the **Microphone**.

2. For iPhone Users: "ChatGPT"

Siri is still catching up. For now, the smartest tool you can put on your iPhone is the free **ChatGPT app**.

- **Why it's best for you:** It has a "Voice Mode" that is incredible. You can literally talk to it like a person on the phone, and it talks back instantly.
- **How to use it:** Download the "ChatGPT" app from the Apple store. Open it, tap the little **Headphones icon** next to the text box.

The "Complicated Questions" Test

The old assistants would fail these questions. The new AI Bots shine here. Try asking these exact things:

Example A: The Trip Planner

Don't ask: "Weather in Bend."

Ask this: "I am planning a horse camping trip to Sisters, Oregon next July for 3 days. I have a 30-foot gooseneck trailer. Can you suggest a packing list for the horses, and tell me what the average high temperature is that time of year?"

The Result: It will write you a full itinerary, a checklist (Hay, Water, First Aid), and warn you about the heat—all in seconds.

Example B: The "Vet Prep" (Disclaimer: Not a Vet!)

Don't ask: "Horse colic symptoms."

Ask this: "My horse is 25 years old and acting lethargic. He didn't finish his grain this morning and keeps looking at his flank. I am calling the vet, but can you tell me what vital signs I should check while I wait for them?"

The Result: It will calmly give you a list (Heart rate, gums, gut sounds) and tell you how to check them safely.

Example C: The Volunteer Letter Writer

Don't ask: "Forest Service address."

Ask this: "I need to write a polite but firm letter to the Forest Service. I want to tell them that the pothole at the Gibson Prairie Horse Camp trailhead is too deep for trailers and needs gravel. Can you write a draft for me?"

The Result: It will type out a perfectly professional letter. All you have to do is sign it.

These new tools let us do **heavy lifting** just by using our voice.

Your Challenge:

Download **ChatGPT** (iPhone) or open **Gemini** (Android). Tap the microphone and ask:

"I have some leftover carrots, apples, and molasses. Can you give me a simple recipe for homemade horse treats using these ingredients?"

You will be amazed at what happens next!

Our Mission Statement

OET advocates for recreational access, partners with land managers to care for trails and horse camps, and unites equestrians through opportunities and information related to trail riding.

2026 Calendar of Events

Date	Time	Chapter	Event	Location	Information
February					
Feb 2	6:00PM - 7:00PM	State	Meeting	Virtual. Google Meets or call in to 601-688-3254 PIN 290189192#	OET Field Service/Public Lands Call. https://meet.google.com/iqw-kjtu-tuc
14-Feb	12:00PM - 3:00PM	Eugene	Ride	Elijah Bristow State Park, Dexter, Near Eugene	Come Ride with us! Chocolate Provided!
17-Feb	11:00AM - 3:00PM	Northwest	Ride	Reehers Camp (45.706922 -123.338142), 57700 NW Sunset Hwy, Timber	NW Chapter Ride followed by no host lunch Questions? email: northwestoff@myoet.org
Feb 18	10:00AM - 1:00PM	Mt. Hood	Ride	Sandy River Delta https://maps.app.goo.gl/YLGsQksZcXwyjw7x5	Foot in stirrup 10:00 AM. Lunch to follow. Bring lunch and a chair. Contact Sara Faulkner, (971) 274-6516
Feb 21	10:00AM - 6:00PM	State	Meeting	Roth's Fresh Markets, 1130 Wallace Rd NW, Salem	All membership meeting. Join in a roundtable discussion, go to a breakout session or just hang out and talk with friends you only see once a year! Hear about all the great things our chapters have done over the past year. Continental breakfast, lunch and dinner! Bar opens 4pm. Welcome a new OET President.
Feb 22	10:00AM - 4:00PM	State	Meeting	Roth's Fresh Catering, 1130 Wallace Rd NW #3116, Salem	BOD meeting 10am-2pm ish
Feb 28	11:00AM - 3:00PM	Northwest	Ride	Reehers Camp (45.706922 -123.338142), 57700 NW Sunset Hwy, Timber	NW Chapter Ride followed by no host lunch Questions? email: northwestoff@myoet.org
March					
Mar 2	6:00PM - 7:00PM	State	Meeting	Virtual. Google Meets or call in to 601-688-3254 PIN 290189192#	OET Field Service/Public Lands Call. https://meet.google.com/iqw-kjtu-tuc
Mar 14	11:00AM - 3:00PM	Northwest	Ride	Milo McIver State Park, Estacada	NW Chapter Ride followed by no host lunch Questions? email: northwestoff@myoet.org
Mar 18	10:00AM - 1:00PM	Mt. Hood	Ride	Sandy River Delta https://maps.app.goo.gl/YLGsQksZcXwyjw7x5	Foot in stirrup 10:00 AM. Lunch to follow. Bring lunch and a chair. Contact Sara Faulkner, (971) 274-6516
Mar 21	8:00AM - 1:30PM	Public	Special	Clackamas Co. Fair & Event Center 694 NE 4th Ave, Canby	Clackamas County 4-H Tack Sale. New and used tack & other horse-related items. Parking $5, admission $1 per person.
Mar 28	10:30AM Start	Columbia County	Ride	Forest Park Hwy 30 Saltzman	Contact Trail Boss Nancy 503-875-4699

April					
Apr 6	6:00PM - 7:00PM	State	Meeting	Virtual. Google Meets or call in to 601-688-3254 PIN 290189192#	OET Field Service/Public Lands Call. https://meet.google.com/iqw-kjtu-tuc
Apr 15	10:00AM - 1:00PM	Mt. Hood	Ride	Sandy River Delta https://maps.app.goo.gl/YLGsQksZcXwyjw7x5	Foot in stirrup 10:00 AM. Lunch to follow. Bring lunch and a chair. Contact Sara Faulkner, (971) 274-6516
Apr 18	10:00AM - 11:00AM	North Valley	Work Party	Milo McIver State Park, Estacada	Contact Marty DeVall, northvalleyoff@oregonequestriantrails.org
Apr 25		North Valley	Ride	Milo McIver State Park, Estacada	Trail Boss: Brent Branch
Apr 25	10:30AM Start	Columbia County	Ride	Nehalem Divide, CZ Trail	Contact Trail Boss Nancy 503-875-4699
May					
May 1-4		Northwest	Work Party	L.L. Stub Stewart State Park, Buxton	All chapter members are invited! Come Friday and stay thru Monday. Saturday - clean up horse camp and prep for the Sunday Prize Ride!
May 3		Northwest	Ride	L.L. Stub Stewart State Park, Buxton	Come join the prize ride! Ride a 6 or 10 mile loop. Great prizes and a raffle! Join OET and receive 1/2 price entry.
May 6	6:00PM - 7:00PM	State	Meeting	Virtual. Google Meets or call in to 601-688-3254 PIN 290189192#	OET Field Service/Public Lands Call. https://meet.google.com/iqw-kjtu-tuc
May 8-10		Northwest	Work Party	Reehers Camp	
May 9		Eugene	Ride	Elijah Bristow State Park Dexter	Trail Blazer Pace Fundraiser, Cosume Contest - Tentative
May 20	10:00AM - 1:00PM	Mt. Hood	Ride	Sandy River Delta https://maps.app.goo.gl/YLGsQksZcXwyjw7x5	Foot in stirrup 10:00 AM. Lunch to follow. Bring lunch and a chair. Contact Sara Faulkner, (971) 274-6516
May 22-25	10:00AM - 1:00PM	North Valley	Campout	Graham Corral, Sisters	More info to follow
May 30	10:30AM Start	Columbia County	Ride	Whipple Creek Washington	Contact Trail Boss Nancy 503-875-4699
June					
Jun 1	6:00PM - 7:00PM	State	Meeting	Virtual. Google Meets or call in to 601-688-3254 PIN 290189192#	OET Field Service/Public Lands Call. https://meet.google.com/iqw-kjtu-tuc
Jun 6		Central Oregon	Ride	Sisters Cow Camp	Saddle Up for St. Jude -Tentative
Jun 7		Central Oregon	Ride	Sisters Cow Camp	Jimmerson Trail Poker Ride -Tentative
Jun 13		North Valley	Ride	Howards Mill	Trail Boss: Faith Roney

Jun 24-28		State	Work Party	Quinn Meadows Horse Camp	More info to follow
Jun 17	10:00AM - 1:00PM	Mt. Hood	Ride	Sandy River Delta https://maps.app.goo.gl/YLGsQksZcXwyjw7x5	Foot in stirrup 10:00 AM. Lunch to follow. Bring lunch and a chair. Contact Sara Faulkner, (971) 274-6516
Jun 27	10:30AM Start	Columbia County	Ride	Stub Stewart State Park Buxton Trailhead	Contact Trail Boss Nancy 503-875-4699
Jun 27	9:00AM - 11:00AM	Roseburg	Ride	Mildred Kanipe Memorial Park, Oakland	Poker Ride. First hand out at 9:00 a.m., last hand out at 11:00 a.m. Lunch and drinks available by donation.
Jun 28		Mid-Valley	Ride	TE Ranch, Philomath	Jokers Wild Ride - Tentative
July					
Jul 6	6:00PM - 7:00PM	State	Meeting	Virtual. Google Meets or call in to 601-688-3254 PIN 290189192#	OET Field Service/Public Lands Call. https://meet.google.com/iqw-kjtu-tuc
Jul 11		North Valley	Ride	Hardy Creek	Trail Boss: Brent and Sandy Branch
Jul 15	10:00AM - 1:00PM	Mt. Hood	Ride	Sandy River Delta https://maps.app.goo.gl/YLGsQksZcXwyjw7x5	Foot in stirrup 10:00 AM. Lunch to follow. Bring lunch and a chair. Contact Sara Faulkner, (971) 274-6516
Jul 25	10:30AM Start	Columbia County	Ride	Reehers	Contact Trail Boss Nancy 503-875-4699
August					
Aug 3	6:00PM - 7:00PM	State	Meeting	Virtual. Google Meets or call in to 601-688-3254 PIN 290189192#	OET Field Service/Public Lands Call. https://meet.google.com/iqw-kjtu-tuc
Aug 19	10:00AM - 1:00PM	Mt. Hood	Ride	Sandy River Delta https://maps.app.goo.gl/YLGsQksZcXwyjw7x5	Foot in stirrup 10:00 AM. Lunch to follow. Bring lunch and a chair. Contact Sara Faulkner, (971) 274-6516
Aug 29	10:30AM Start	Columbia County	Ride	Camp Wilkerson	Contact Trail Boss Nancy 503-875-4699
September					
Sep 7	6:00PM - 7:00PM	State	Meeting	Virtual. Google Meets or call in to 601-688-3254 PIN 290189192#	OET Field Service/Public Lands Call. https://meet.google.com/iqw-kjtu-tuc
Sep 16	10:00AM - 1:00PM	Mt. Hood	Ride	Sandy River Delta https://maps.app.goo.gl/YLGsQksZcXwyjw7x5	Foot in stirrup 10:00 AM. Lunch to follow. Bring lunch and a chair. Contact Sara Faulkner, (971) 274-6516
Sep 19	10:30AM Start	Columbia County	Ride	Ft. Stevens, Delaura Bech	Contact Trail Boss Nancy 503-875-4699
Sep 26-27		Columbia County	Campout	Stage Coach Campground	Contact Trail Boss Nancy 503-875-4699

Please visit OregonEquestrianTrails.org/calendar for more details of scheduled Events.

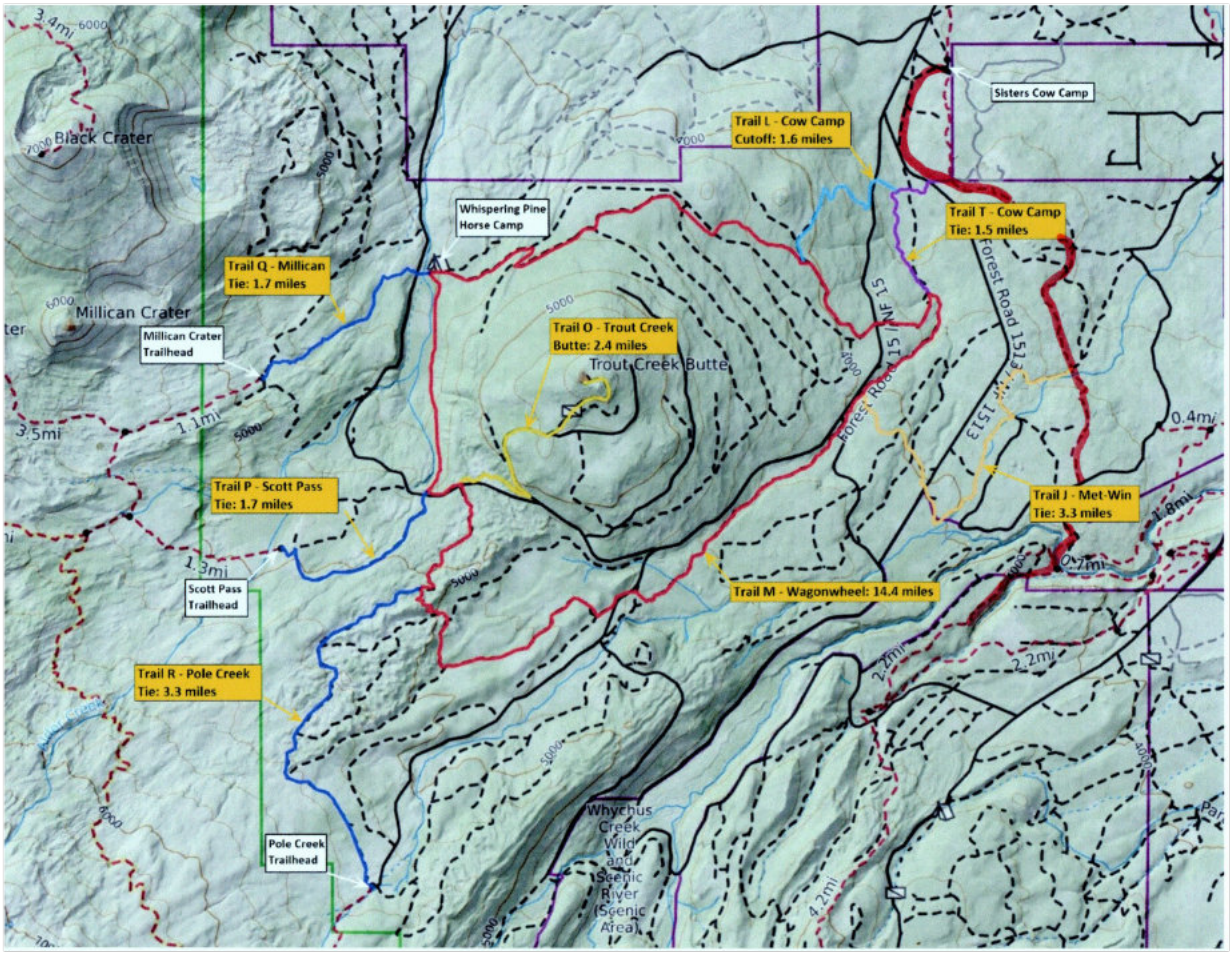
...Continued from first page

STAR

that wished the District could be persuaded into creating additional trails throughout the area. It wasn't a waste of time but it was a frustrating time. You see...there are a dearth of trails for equestrians throughout the District and especially around the 5 equestrian campgrounds. The Metolious-Windigo (Met-Win) trail passes next to or through 4 of them.

So we travelled, walked and rode many roads and then scouted potential corridors for a single track trail to link up the roads and create a likeable lineage that would take the rider out of and thence right back to the campground. We used maps from the last century to find the applicable roads and then we linked them together with GPS tracks to create a system of trails. In 2022 we presented our maps and write-up to support our choices, as did the other user groups. Unfortunately the District limited their review, and eventual NEPA study, to just those trails in and around Sisters Cow Camp and Whispering Pines Horse Camp. Unknown to us at the time was that they had a NEPA study active in the Sheep Springs area, dealing with dispersed camping. At Three Creeks they were rebuilding the road into the area and making additional changes around the lakes. We don't know when they will tackle these areas next because of the turmoil within the USFS and its direction to focus on logging and not RECREATION!

What we now have is the authorization to make this combination of roads and trails near to Sisters Cow Camp and Whispering Pines Horse Camp into trails for the use of our friends, neighbors and visitors. This fall we initiated a Grant request for a Recreational Trails Program grant to help fund this massive amount of work. We partnered with the Central Oregon Trail Alliance (COTA), Sisters Trail Alliance (STA) and a hiker group to try and muster a greater impact of our funding and efforts that will enhance and embrace the community. Those groups have many miles of trail to construct as well. While we await the outcome of the grant and USFS directions we are busily planning and strategizing our efforts to make these trails a reality. I am expecting our efforts to extend into 2027 to complete all of our wish list. We have requested a number of campsite reservations to accommodate our workers during the latter months of summer and the beginning of fall, as we await funding and timing for a hired trail crew to join us. We will post the work party efforts once we have them finally planned and scheduled, so stay tuned to the OET calendar if you should wish to participate. When done we hope to have a total of 66 miles of trails to ride out of these two horse camps, and that's not to mention the nearby wilderness trails.



NEPA map - Each trail in a solid color were approved for construction.

Public Lands/Field Services Meeting Notes

January 2026

In attendance: Kim McCarrel (VP Public Lands & Central OR), Matt Dolphin (VP Field Services & West Valley), Gloria (Columbia County), Mary Kamm (Eugene), Cindy Albrecht and Bonnie DePriest (Silver Falls), Bianca Chevalier (South Coast), Ashley Lertora (North Coast), Jodi Knutson (Mid Valley), Gayla Nelson (Central Oregon).

Eugene

Mary is the new Chapter Chair. Eugene had a booth and brochures at the Intercollegiate Horse Show Association (IHSA) event to recruit younger riders.

Elijah Bristow's projects are on hold due to the weather.

The annual First Day Ride was held on the last day of the year (15 riders). Trail Blazer Pace organizer is stepping back this year so need to determine replacement and current structure for event.

Columbia County

Camp Wilkerson: Gloria is gathering quotes for new corrals to be installed in the spring.

Trail maintenance: Significant trail widening and clearing are needed at Camp Wilkerson.

Considering contacting Trail Keepers of Oregon (Steve Krueger) for sawyers/crew support; possible donation or paid engagement discussed.

Other options: youth crews/AmeriCorps (typically expensive, hire-by-the-week), landscapers with a pull-behind brush hog, a local high school natural resources/FFA class (Scappoose HS starting a natural resources class), and local volunteers. The chapter will coordinate with County Parks to confirm permissions.

South Coast

The chapter had a work party on the North Spit trails to clear encroaching undergrowth.

They hosted a hot chocolate booth for the sheriff's posse ride at Wild Mare Campground to continue building a relationship for joint work parties.

After COVID, the campground's condition had declined; the chapter cleaned it up and obtained a grant for improvements (host site, new corral). The Forest Service previously opposed having a host but has reversed its position and posted a volunteer host opportunity on its volunteer website.

Current need: funding for site amenities (water, other services), pending PA/NEPA approval. Bianca is seeking funding ideas and recruiting a volunteer/host (considering a monthly host term and advertising through RV groups, horse forums, Facebook groups, RV newsletters).

Silver Falls

The Buck Mountain and 214 Trails at Silver Falls State Park are cleared. The Perimeter and Racket Ridge Trails are likely still blocked.

Molalla River Corridor has large, technical downfalls (rootballs/entangled trees) on steep terrain, requiring experienced sawyers and pack support. Bonnie is offering swamping help (tool packing, lunches).

North Coast

2025 Christmas party was a big success. Northrop Creek Horse Camp is closed for winter.

They're hosting open-arena rides at the Clatsop County Fairgrounds on Sundays and Tuesday nights. These fun events are open to the public.

The condition of the Fort Stevens trail is unknown following the recent storms and high tides.

Mid Valley

They're hosting three winter social rides (Jan–Mar), with the public invited to participate.

Poker ride is scheduled for last weekend of June in Philomath at a private ranch.

Jodi intends to pursue a grant for South Pyramid Horse Camp and Santiam Wilderness trails; paperwork to be started late Jan–Feb.

Outreach efforts include handing out flyers and encouraging membership at public rides; they have resulted in some membership conversions.

Central Oregon

The chapter historian is producing an annual photo book for members.

Major project for 2026 and beyond: STAR trails near Sisters Cow Camp and Whispering Pine. Will be a multi-year effort involving trail building, signing, grant writing); Forest Service recently approved it after several years of work.

More trail signing on Corral Flat trails in the Ochocos will be accomplished this year.

The new Middle Butte Trail at Cline Buttes was built by COTA with funding from an RTP grant)

The Dry Canyon Trail, which will separate horses and motorcycles, will be built this spring.

Peterson Ridge: Kim proposed purchasing "No Bikes / No Motorcycles" signs for trail crossings due to encroachment issues; BLM volunteer agreement signed by OET (awaiting BLM countersignature);

Forest Service agreement updated and signed by Gayla.

State Field Services

Statewide volunteer hours: over 13,000 hours reported and some chapters may still submit hours. Matt will finalize by the month's end, and encourages attendance at the annual membership meeting for recognition.

Training & certifications: Upcoming saw/crosscut training opportunities (chainsaw, May 2–3; crosscut, May 16–17) are being circulated. Three main volunteer organizations offer saw training: Cascade Volunteers, Trail Keepers of Oregon, and COTA

Reminder: Sawyer work requires up-to-date first-aid/CPR certification; first aid typically expires every two years.

Matt offered assistance to chapters needing help entering volunteer hours into the spreadsheet.

Matt explained the national sawyer certification program under USDA/Forest Service: regionally administered saw coordinators deputize organizations to provide training (Trail Keepers, COTA, Cascade Volunteers), so certifications may be issued via these deputized organizations rather than solely by on-staff FS personnel.

Matt described his personal involvement with political efforts to protect the proposed 17-mile multi-use Yamhill Westsider Trail and prevent its removal from the county transportation plan, including collecting signatures and pursuing initiatives to preserve the trail corridor.

Public Lands

Backcountry Horsemen of America (BCHA) alerted OET that USFS is considering rescinding the Travel Management Rule (which limited motorized access, including motorcycles, on national forest roads). If rescinded, more roads could open to motorized use. Kim will follow up and report back; this presents potential impacts on trail riding.

February 2026

January was a light month for trail work statewide, but some of our chapters had fun events and everybody is planning for the spring work season. Here are the highlights from the meeting:

North Coast

Ashley Lertora reported that their chapter sponsored some public rides at the Fairgrounds arena, which were well attended. They're planning an Anniversary Ride at Northrop Creek Horse Camp to celebrate the chapter's 25th birthday.

South Coast

Bianca Chevalier noted that in January, the chapter had a gymkhana day that included a lively game of broom polo. Looking forward, they have prepared their calendar for the coming season's work, which includes alternating work days with "recreation days" aimed at getting members out on the trails to have fun. On August 8th and 9th, the chapter plans to host other OET chapters at a campout at Wild Mare Horse Camp. Stay tuned for details.

Silver Falls

Bonnie Depriest reported that the chapter is working on developing its ride schedule for this year. In other news, one of the trails at Hardy Creek was damaged by a recent storm, but the trail has been cleared and repaired, and is now open. Cindy Albrecht, OET's former Treasurer and the chapter's field services officer, broke her femur. Ouch!

Columbia County

Gloria Rice commented that Camp Wilkerson had some big trees down on its trails, and the chapter so far has cleared all the trees from the hiking trail and most from the equestrian trails. They've ordered the last two sets of corrals to complete Camp Wilkerson's conversion from log to steel corrals.

They received a grant from the Oregon Community Foundation that has enabled the chapter to work with a community service crew on the trails the chapter has created on State Forest land just outside Camp Wilkerson. The community service crew's biggest challenge can be getting the men and their equipment to the work sites. But the chapter members know all the shortcuts and logging roads that will enable them to get the workers to where the work needs to be done.

Northwest

Northwest has been actively recruiting new members while also adding in monthly weekend and weekday ride opportunities to best meet member ride availability.

NW is helping to host a prize ride at Stub Stewart on May 3rd in conjunction with other chapters. Expanding our community connections, NW is also pairing up with an all inclusive scouting group to clean up Reehers Camp on May 9th. Scouts will tackle the tent sites while OET members care for the horse sites.

To help improve trails in our area, NW will be reaching out to Metro to ask about the possibility of laying bark chips alongside a notoriously rocky section of Chehalem Ridge Nature Park. Looking forward, NW will be contacting local horse organizations to share in hosting clinics over the summer while recruiting new members!

Continued next page...

Eugene

Nobody from Eugene chapter could attend the meeting, so they submitted updates via email. Mary Kamm announced that the chapter is hosting a Valentines Day ride on Saturday, February 14th, at Elijah Bristow State Park. The ride will run from 12:00 to 3:00 and will feature a fun trail, after-ride chocolate, and a rider- and horse-decorating contest where the winner will take home Bailey's Irish Cream brownies. Yum! Della Webb revealed that OET is distributing a survey to explore public interest in establishing a permanent trail in the North Bottom area of Mt. Pisgah.

Mt. Hood

Via email, Barb Adams noted that a prolific poacher who slaughtered wildlife in the Sandy River Delta (among other locations) has been arrested. The chapter and all SRD wildlife are cheering this development!



Law-enforcement arrested a major poacher. Some of the deer killed were from the Sandy River Delta.

The Tack Box
Saddlery & Apparel
28970 Hwy 34 Corvallis Oregon 97333
(541) 753-3049

Central Oregon

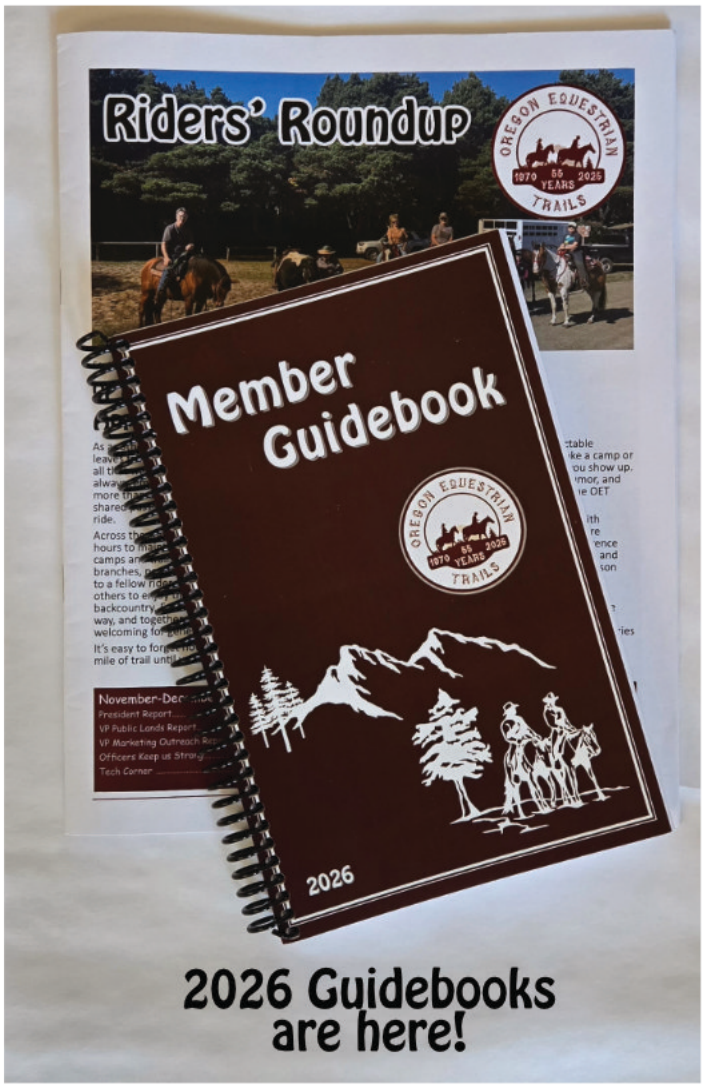
Barb Smith reported that planning work is continuing for the trails out of Skull Hollow Trailhead and Cyrus Horse Camp. The plan calls for new downhill bike trails, some additional horse trails, and some realignments of other multi-use trails that will make them safer to share.

Signing of the Corral Flat trails will continue (and should be completed) this year. Kim McCarrel announced that the trail contractor who has been hired to build a trail in the Cline Buttes area is ready to start work this spring. The new trail will separate horses and motorcycles in Dry Canyon.

The chapter is also planning to build and sign some new trails out of Whispering Pine Horse Camp and Sisters Cow Camp. This project is discussed in more detail in the front page article of this issue of the Riders' Roundup.

Public Lands

Kim McCarrel reported that she's pleased to see so many OET people signed up for Trails Day at the Oregon legislature on February 9th. They'll be meeting with state legislators to promote funding for trails and to lobby in favor of improving Oregon's liability release laws.



Recognizing Colic

Reprinted from January 21, 2026 by American Association of Equine Practitioners

Colic indicates a painful problem in the horse's abdomen (belly), which can be caused by a number of different conditions. Less than 10% of all colic cases are severe enough to require surgery or cause the death of the horse; nevertheless, every case of colic should be taken seriously because it can be difficult to tell the mild ones from the potentially serious ones in the early stages.

Horses show signs of abdominal pain in a wide variety of ways, and usually a horse shows only a few of the signs during an episode of colic. A good rule of thumb: the more obvious the signs of pain, the more serious the problem.

If you suspect the horse is suffering from colic, we suggest that you:

• Alert your veterinarian immediately.

• Remove all hay and grain from the horse's surroundings.

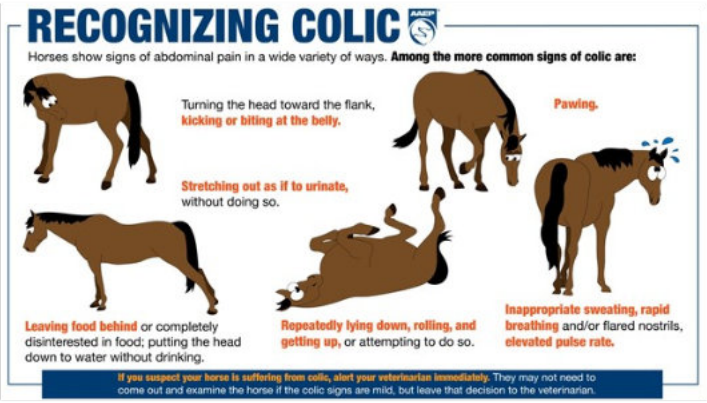
• Don't medicate without your veterinarian's approval, as pain medications can mask clinical signs.

• Walk the horse around if it's continually rolling or in danger of hurting itself, but do not tire the horse with relentless walking. Don't approach the animal if it's not safe.

• Keep the horse under close observation until the signs of colic resolve or the veterinarian arrives.

The key to increasing the chances of a good outcome is to identify the problem early and get your veterinarian involved from the start.

Please note that this is not an exhaustive list of colic signs. Horses are individuals and may display signs of pain in a variety of ways. Always consult your horse doctor for more information.



Horse Teeth Floating

It's that time of year many equine veterinarians offer dental specials.

Horse teeth floating is the process of filing down sharp enamel points, hooks, and overgrowths on a horse's molars using specialized rasps (floats) to prevent pain, mouth ulcers, and difficulty chewing. Because horse teeth grow continuously and wear unevenly, this routine dental procedure restores a comfortable, balanced bite, typically required once or twice a year.

Signs a Horse Needs Its Teeth Floated

Eating Issues: Dropping feed (quidding), slow eating, or tilting the head while chewing.

Weight Loss: Inability to properly grind food, resulting in weight loss or undigested food in manure.

Behavioral Changes: Resistance to the bit, head tossing, or soreness in the mouth/jaw while riding.

Physical Indicators: Foul breath, excessive salivation, or nasal discharge.

Benefits of Floating Horse Teeth

Improved Digestion: Enables proper mastication (chewing) of feed, improving nutrient absorption.

Pain Reduction: Removes sharp points that cause painful ulcers on the tongue and cheeks.

Performance Enhancement: Eliminates pain caused by the bit, allowing better training responsiveness.

Prevents Long-Term Damage: Stops the development of severe hooks that can cause structural jaw issues.

Frequency and Procedure

Frequency: Most adult horses should have their teeth checked at least once a year. Young horses (under 5) and senior horses may need more frequent, sometimes bi-annual, checkups.

The Procedure: Performed by a veterinarian or qualified equine dentist, it often involves sedation and the use of a speculum to keep the mouth open for safe, thorough work.

Risks: Over-floating, or removing too much tooth material, can damage the pulp and shorten the functional lifespan of the teeth.

Aftercare

Horses can usually resume normal eating shortly after the sedation wears off.

Monitor for any signs of discomfort or inability to eat in the 24 hours following the procedure.

Disclaimer: Dental care should be performed by a veterinarian or trained professional to avoid injuring the horse's mouth.

OET Chapters

Chapter	Meeting Time	Meeting Location	Contact
Central Oregon Chapter	First Tuesday Doors Open: 6:00 p.m. Meeting: 6:30 p.m.	Pleasant Ridge Hall 7067 SW Canal Redmond, OR	Gayla Nelson centraloregon@oregonequestriantrails.org **(541) 549-9177**
Columbia County Chapter	Second Wednesday Dinner: 6:00 p.m. Meeting: 7:00 p.m.	Warren Moose Lodge 57317 Old Portland Rd. Warren, OR	Bob Rice columbiacounty@oregonequestriantrails.org **(503) 366-3736**
Eugene Chapter	*New Day!* Third Tuesday Speaker: 6PM Meeting: 7:00 p.m.	EPUD Meeting Room 33733 Seavey Loop Rd. Eugene	Mary Kamm eugene@oregonequestriantrails.org **(607) 434-5295**
Mid-Valley Chapter	Second Wednesday Dinner: 6:00 p.m. Meeting: 7:00 p.m.	Sizzler 2148 Santiam Hwy SE Albany	Mark Lehnert midvalley@oregonequestriantrails.org **(541) 730-1653**
Mt. Hood Chapter	Second Thursday Dinner: 6:00 p.m. Meeting: 7:00 p.m.	Elmers 1590 NE Burnside Gresham	Mary Blankevoort mthood@oregonequestriantrails.org **(503) 703-1232**
North Coast Chapter	Second Tuesday Meeting: 5:30 p.m.	Clatsop County Fairgrounds 4H Clubhouse - across from main complex 92937 Walluski Loop, Astoria	Ashley Lertora northcoast@oregonequestriantrails.org **(503) 325-2733**
North Valley Chapter	First Tuesday Dinner : 6:00 p.m. Meeting: 7:00 p.m.	Jimmy O's Pizzeria 1678 S Beavercreek Rd Oregon City	Brett Branch northvalley@oregonequestriantrails.org **(503) 913-2943**
Northwest Chapter	Third Monday Dinner/Social: 6:00 p.m. Meeting: 7:00 p.m.	Prime Time Sports Bar & Restaurant 4450 Pacific Avenue Forest Grove	Melissa Wolf northwest@oregonequestriantrails.org **(503) 550-2048**
Roseburg Chapter	*New Day!* Fourth Thursday Meeting: 6:00 p.m.	Douglas Co. Electrical Co-op 1931 N. Stephens Street Roseburg	Lynda Harding roseburg@oregonequestriantrails.org **(559) 696-7601**
Silver Falls Chapter	Third Monday Meeting: 6:30 p.m.	Salem Saddle Club Mtg Rm 7005 Lardon Rd Salem	Bonnie DePriest silverfalls@oregonequestriantrails.org **(503) 981-8124**
South Coast Chapter	Third Wednesday Meeting: 6:30 p.m.	Dave's Pizza 740 Kooz Bay Blvd Coos Bay	Kimi Larkin southcoast@oregonequestriantrails.org **(541) 321-2092**
West Valley Chapter	First Thursday No-host dinner: 6:00 p.m. Meeting: 7:00 p.m.	American Legion Post 21 126 NE Atlantic McMinnville	Kim Grabill westvalley@oregonequestriantrails.org **(503) 538-0679**

Chapters may need to alter meetings or events.
Please contact Chapter Chairs for up-to-date meeting locations and times

Chapter Reports

Central Oregon Chapter

While we are on hiatus doing trail work during the winter, much is planned for upcoming better-weather months. Kim McCarrel will lead more signing work parties at Corral Flat (in the Ochocos) in the spring. Pat Marquis is heading up the Sisters Trail Additions and Realignment (STAR) project, which involves signing and trail development work between Sisters Cow Camp and Whispering Pine horse camp.

Lee Fischer has installed "Please do not put hay in manure bin" signs for Cow Camp and Whispering Pine, as some campers have dumped great amounts of only hay into them. This is a problem for cleaning them out, so we would like everyone to be aware of the issue.

Lee and Pat are discussing Swamp Wells horse camp with Deschutes National Forest officials, as the road in has been impassable for several years. It's a wonderful camp with beautiful views from the trails and access to Newberry Crater trails. As a constructive ray of hope, Kim noted that Deschutes Trails Coalition is going to do project planning for that area, including where trails would go, camping facilities, and wildlife corridors.

Our fabulous new chapter historian, Camille Wood, has created both a printed and online (Facebook) yearbook for 2025. Please look at and 'like' the page, as the more the active the page use, the more Facebook promotes the page. (Our new member Berly noted that our online presence is the reason she is joining our chapter.) Camille will change the page banner biweekly with landscape photos we submit to her.

As a start to the summer, please come over the hill to the state OET campout and work party at Quinn Meadow, June 24-28. While you're here, ride out of the Fryrear and Tumalo Canal trailheads, where, thanks to Kim's efforts, shiny new updated trailhead signs have been installed.

Columbia County Chapter

We got right to business in our first meeting of 2026. We are all set to send the down payment for the last two Noble metal corrals to finish corral replacement at Camp Wilkerson. We are also prepared to pay to have the trails maintained this year, yeah! We are very appreciative of the work Gloria Rice has put into pursuing the grants we received for these 2 important projects. Sandy Tetz, our Field Services officer, is ready to schedule the work parties. Now we just need the nice weather to be here.

We continue focusing on getting the word out about OET and fundraising. We hope to supply OET banners to display at several public events and to participate also.

Our 2025 Holiday Dinner at Warren County Inn was a huge success and we are thinking of having our dinner there again this year. We are planning to host a fun ride at a ranch in St Helens, along with a tack sale and things to eat, to be held this summer. We hope to hold a spring scavenger hunt, and have the date set for our annual Trick or Treat ride (Oct 3, mark your calendars).

We certainly want to plan for good times with our horses, and thanks to our new trail boss, Nancy Melton, we have monthly rides planned beginning in March! The information is on the OET website and RR calendars. Plan to come join us, rides start at 10:30!

Eugene Chapter

Twang! Zing! Does the horse mind the sound as the archer releases the arrow from the bow? Our speaker from the Ridgeline Mounted Archery Center would know. We had a lesson about mounted archery at our meeting. With history going back to the Mongols, mounted archery could be an exciting new discipline for riders and horses. They train down between Creswell and Cottage Grove and new riders are welcome.

Peeling our thoughts away from the danger and romance of mounted archery was our new Chair, Mary Kamm's task. Our potential projects down at Elijah Bristow will be on hold until the winter rain lets the creek settle down. We need to have rock installed at the crossing that will foil the dam-building picnickers and swimmers so we have a safe crossing spot. It sounds like we have some letters to write, about drones, and we have to figure out the best ways we can support the National Park Service through all their budget cuts.

The State Park's First Day Ride got re-scheduled to a foggy Last Day of 2025 Ride in an effort to avoid the downpours on Jan.1. Did you see this year's pin? Quite pretty. We also had to settle on a permanent meeting day, time, and place. We have been moving things around and we need to get more settled so we can recruit new, possibly younger members. We are going to try the third Tuesday at EPUD at 6:30 pm.

Our biggest preoccupation was figuring out how to keep the Trail Blazer Pace event momentum going while Dani Wright, the project's primary sparkplug takes time to heal from hip surgery. Finally, after hashing out lots of ideas, Melanie Kate Mason decided that with lots of support and info from Dani she could spearhead it. The show must go on!



Mt. Hood Chapter

In 2025 volunteers from Mt. Hood Chapter OET and Friends of the Sandy River Delta donated 882 hours. Mt. Hood Chapter OET is focused on trails, signs and other maintenance. Friends is focused on trash collection, communication, and fundraising. In April, our two nonprofit groups will meet for our yearly partnership get together.

The Sandy River Delta continues to be enormously popular, with most of the visitors bringing their canine companions. On weekends you will see entire families, often with little kids and strollers, and of course, a dog.

In order to further our education concerning Equestrians at the Delta, we are adding signs and looking at other ways we can remind people that they may meet horses on these trails.

Sara Faulkner continues to lead monthly rides at the Sandy River Delta, usually the second Wednesday. Riding with a group is an excellent way to get acquainted with the Trails and visitors. We welcome Riders from other OET chapters.

Our chapter has worked at the Sandy River Delta since 1997 when we were the Columbia Gorge chapter and cattle grazed the meadows. Lots has happened since then, but we are steady in our commitment to this year round riding opportunity and the best dog show around.



Northwest Chapter

Our Chapter has had a few rides already this year and many more planned along with other activities. Check the OET calendar or reach out to our chapter at northwest@oregonequestriantrails.org.

We are creating our Banquet auction basket and putting together some donations for the raffles and auction.

We are excited to say we have a few new members so far this year!

Melissa Wolf, our new Chapter Chair is working with an all inclusive scouting group who are interested in working with us at Reehers Horse Camp clean up day Saturday May 9th. Everyone is welcome.

Our chapter has several fun rides already on the calendar and lots more fun and activities in the works. Next meeting February 16th 7pm, come early and enjoy some conversation and a no host dinner.





Northwest Chapter members enjoying some winter rides.

North Coast Chapter

Members in the Northwest corner of Oregon are gearing up for the summer, despite having been deluged by over 30 inches of rain in early winter! Thankfully January gave us a rest and allowed us to get our and play with our ponies!

We finished 2025 with a lovely Christmas party at McMenamin's in Gearhart. Linda Brim organized the festivities and handed out sweet goodie bags. Nichole Warwick created and presented a fantastic horse themed Jeopardy game which challenged the crowd's knowledge base! Good food, festive atmosphere, fun activities and wonderful camaraderie made for a stellar gathering!

An important piece to our longevity is reviewing our past endeavors. While we are game to try many things, we want to put our energy into those that produce the most good. In 2025, we were able to invite the public to a trail ride on the first Saturday of every month! Not so easy in the winter, but we managed 11 out of 12 months! At least one member volunteered to lead a ride those Saturdays, most often at Ft. Stevens State Park, and introduce non members to our excellent selection of trails. Getting word out is always a challenge and we found that only a handfu of non members showed up for those rides during the year. So moving forward, we will not offer the Saturday rides, but we do encourage members to post on our Facebook page when and where they want to ride and to invite others to join them.

Another project we invested in 3 years ago was to host open rides at our local fairgrounds. our chapter provides a member most Sundays December through April who ensures riders sign liability release forms and collects the county fee. Of course, we set up our North Coast OET information board and have OET info for all who come. We have been hosting the rides on Tuesday evenings as well. However, we find this year the Tuesday night rides are not popular so will postpone them through February.

Our main focus for 2026 is celebrating Northrup Creek Horse Camp's 20th anniversary! We have been compiling ideas on how to show off the camp that our member, Diane Berry, was so dedicated to and which many members have spent countless hours improving, cleaning, cleaning, and coordinating with Oregon Dept. of Forestry. We will have plans in place by the February state OET meeting. Stay tuned!



Nichole Warwick with her horse Jeopardy board.



North Coast Chapter Christmas party in December.



Equine Harmony Connection
Reward Based
Clicker Training
Mary Kautz
541 929-2457
www.EarthTreasureFarm.com

North Valley Chapter

The NVOET January meeting was held at Jimmy O's Pizzeria, Oregon City OR. Our December meeting was the Holiday Party and Potluck, at Tamarind Ranch.

Introductions were made and members shared their favorite geek-out pastimes. Among those were TV shows, movies, books, computers, and planning equestrian events.

The Field Services Report was presented by Marty DeVall. At McIver State Park, there were several gully washouts due to heavy rains. We will need a work party to clear Scotch Broom from the meadow by the equestrian parking lot. The Gate Training Station support posts have been reset. The Balance Beam will eventually need a total replacement. No update on the Parking Sign. It has been ordered.

Tamara Glover reported that the New Year's Day Ride had 7 riders. We had donuts and warm drinks available.

Lindy Rutherford will Chair our new Horse Camp Education Committee. Willamette Mission State Park was chosen as the first site on June 6.

We will have a booth at the 4-H Tack Sale at the Canby Fairgrounds on March 21. Donations and volunteers in the booth are needed.

Deb DeLorenzo will create a basket and its contents for the State Meeting on February 21.

We have several events on the calendar for 2026.

Group Horse Camping -

May 22-25 Memorial Weekend: Graham Corral. Deb DeLorenzo, Faith Roney, and Shonda Smith as Trail Bosses.

July TBD: Whitefish Horse Camp

August TBD: Paulina Horse Camp

Work Parties –

February TBD: Hardy Creek Trail Cleanup. Karen Frogner

April 18: McIver State Park. Scotch Broom removal.

May or June: Timothy Lake. Logout on PCT, support TRBCHO

June 24-28: Quinn Meadow Horse Camp – State OET Work Party

Group Rides -

April 25: McIver State Park. Brett Branch Trail Boss.

June 13: Howards Mill. Faith Roney Trail Boss.

July 11: Hardy Creek. Brett and Sandy Branch are Trail Bosses.

August TBD: Frog Lake. Susan High Trail Boss.

September TBD: Beach Ride.

Oct. 17: McIver State Park. Tamara Glover Trail Boss.

The Rascal Rodeo will be held in Molalla OR on July 1 at 10 am (9am for volunteers). Volunteers are needed with a safe horse, to be side walkers, or to just volunteer.

Tamara Glover will create a Rack Card Calendar to hand out with a QR Code.

Other Projects being considered are 1) Graham Corral Horse Camp needs an update and corrals need to be fixed; 2) Potentially adding another training station at McIver State Park; 3) Ongoing maintenance and repairs at McIver State Park; and 4) Potential work parties for trail clearing on Port Blakley lands

South Coast Chapter

South Coast OET hosted a hot chocolate and spiced cider drink/hydration station at Wild Mare Day Use area to share with Coos County Mounted Sheriff Posse and some public riders to warm us up at the halfway point of our CCMSP annual New Year's Day Ride. This is the third time our OET chapter has hosted a halfway break for CCMSP trail rides. Each rider that came through got their name in the hat for a prize of some local fresh beef donated by one of our OET members, Kellie Beaton and her husband Preston.

A few members came out to serve up hot refreshments. This is always an appreciated event by CCMSP and the public riding with us. And, so much fun.

Here's to a great 2026.



West Valley Chapter

NO JANUARY MEETING. The December meeting was held at Melissa's home where we gathered for dinner and refreshments to celebrate the holidays. A white elephant gift exchange was held with clever and wholesome gifts. There was no shortage of sweets and warm smiles.

Our meeting was short but productive as we held officer elections. Kim Grabill was nominated as Chapter Chair due to Melissa accepting the position of state chair. Sharon will continue to hold her place as vice chair, Cheyenne as Secretary, Richard as Treasurer and Frank was nominated for field services.

It is with heavy hearts that we share the passing of a beloved and long time member of OET. For many years Lloyd Wilde was a dedicated volunteer and supporter of OET. We extend our deepest condolences to his wife Sharon, his family and all those that were blessed to know Lloyd.





Lloyd Wilde working and riding with OET.



Grab the Camp Host Position at Wild Mare Horse Camp

Siuslaw National Forest Service/Oregon Dunes is seeking a volunteer for the on-site Camp Host position at Wild Mare Horse Camp 1/22/2026 - 10/14/2026.

Wild Mare Horse Campground is located on the Oregon Coast, 2 miles north of North Bend. Horse campers come here to explore the Wild Mare Horse Trails and is less than 1 mile from the Pacific Ocean. It is surrounded by Shore pine, Douglas fir, and huckleberry. Each site is set up with corrals, picnic table, and a fire ring. This is a seasonal campground May 2026 - September 2026. The Campground does not provide electric, water, and sewer for the camphost.

Required Days: Monday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday, 20 hours per week. Reference and background check required.

For further information you can email christina.ojeda@usda.gov or Visit volunteer webpage. https://www.volunteer.gov/s/volunteer-opportunity/a09SJ000008jEGkYAM/oregon-dunes-camphost-wild-mare-campground



Equestrian Trail Etiquette

By Cathy Springman, Central Oregon Chapter

What makes a great trail ride? Good trail riding etiquette, for one, so in preparation for spring riding, here are a few reminders:

When scheduling a ride with others, be sure to specify whether your meeting time is trailhead arrival time or boots in saddle time. Also discuss each rider's goals for the ride to ensure you are all compatible and no one is taken by surprise during the ride. For example, you may be expecting a nice walk and your fellow riders want a speedy outing. Confirm you can bring your dog along on the ride, as not all horses are dog-friendly, and some wilderness or preserve areas do not allow off-leash dogs. Be sure you have the necessary permits or permissions to access the trail you plan to ride.

Park in designated parking areas in such a way that maximizes access for other users, keeps horses out of traffic flow, and allows safe access for all.

Horses and riders need warm up and cool down time, so walk your horse for the first 10-15 minutes of a ride, and for the last half mile or so. Talk with your fellow riders to determine the best positioning in the queue of horses on the trail, based on speed, consistency, gait, horse disposition, etc. Allow riders to change positions throughout the ride. Everyone should have the opportunity to lead and follow, if they desire, and usually no one wants to eat the group's dust for the entire ride. Ride at the level of the least experienced or least capable rider. For safety, no one should be riding out of control or be left behind.

Remember to verbally confirm all riders' readiness and willingness to move out or speed up before doing so. As possible, alert each other to hazards on the trail, like overhanging branches, holes or rocks or other obstacles, other trail users ahead, etc. If moving a branch, lift it straight up and don't let it swing back into the horse or rider behind you. Alert riders behind you when you are slowing or stopping by raising your hand and/or calling out. Walk across roads.

Patience is a virtue, so be sure to wait for gate openers and closers, for all horses to drink before leaving a watering area, for all riders to make a water crossing, for horses who have stopped to urinate, for riders who have dismounted or are not prepared to ride at that time. Move downstream to allow other horses ample room to drink. Ensure all riders have safely passed obstacles or navigated a downhill or water crossing before speeding up. Travel at an even speed if possible, pass on the left when safe at the same gait the group is traveling after alerting the rider you are overtaking, and don't crowd the horse in front of you or run up behind or alongside other riders unexpectedly. If your horse needs special consideration, indicate this with a colored ribbon tied to his tail and inform the group before you depart. A green ribbon indicates a novice horse or rider, a red ribbon for a kicker, and blue for stallion. On a two-track trail, keep your horse in his own lane and allow others to ride alongside you as desired.

When you meet another trail user on the trail, stop, speak, and smile. Though equestrians are to have the right of way over other trail users, be willing to move off the trail if it is easier and safer for you to do so than the other user. Yield to uphill riders and walk your horse past other trail users so everyone has time to be prepared or react if it is needed. Educate other trail users in a friendly way about safe interaction on the trail; for instance hikers and cyclists should be visible, standing quietly in a group or line on the downhill side of the trail as possible, and speak calmly and moderately until the horses pass. Share the number of riders in your group and ask them how many are with them. Dogs should be restrained by their owners a safe distance off the trail in the event they bark, lunge or charge, which can frighten horses.

In preparation for a safe ride, desensitize your horse at home to obstacles you may encounter on the trail.

Reduce your impact on the environment and wildlife, so stay on the trail single file as much as possible, and don't detour around puddles, snowbanks, or other obstacles if you can go through them. Don't take shortcuts or cut across switchbacks; this tramples and tears out more plants and creates additional trails prone to erosion. Keep your horse moving as he passes manure on the trail, and do your own "business" off the trail, away from water sources, bury it and pack out t.p. Enter waterways at designated crossings, and do not allow your horse into mountain lakes, as other trail users drink from those water sources. Avoid muddy trails as possible, so as not to deteriorate the trail, but if you must pass through mud, do so at a walk. Obey all signage, respecting closed areas or trails where horses are not allowed. Leave gates as you found them. If you must travel "cross country," spread out your group and do not ride single file so you don't create a trail.

At trailheads, be sure to pack out your litter and dog feces. Clean up or scatter manure and weed-free hay into the bushes. Follow Leave No Trace ethics.

He Didn't Give Up. Neither Did They.

Reprinted from Facebook. Horse & Rider Jan. 29, 2026



Seven Months Lost. One Miracle Rescue. For more than seven long months, the Wyoming mountains kept a secret.

Deep in the brutal cold of the Wind River Range, where snow piles six to seven feet high and silence stretches for miles, a lone horse named Mouse was fighting to survive.

He vanished in July 2025 during a backcountry trip near Moon Lake. Searches followed. Hope faded. Seasons changed.

But somewhere out there, Mouse endured.

Then, on January 18, a snowmobiler spotted him. Standing in deep snow. Thin. Exhausted. Alive.

GPS coordinates were marked. Hope came rushing back.

Volunteers returned again and again, bringing food, watching over him, planning the impossible. Walking wasn't an option. The snow was too deep. The terrain too unforgiving.

So they did something extraordinary.

Using snowmobiles, a snowcat, and a whitewater raft, they carried out what they called a "one-horse open sleigh."

Mouse stepped into the raft. Calm. Trusting. Too tired to fight anymore.

He lay down as he was gently pulled across the frozen wilderness toward home.

By mid-afternoon, the mountains released him.

When Mouse was reunited with his owners, there were tears. Relief. Gratitude. A silence that said everything words could not.

Against all odds, Mouse survived seven months alone in one of the harshest landscapes imaginable.

This rescue is a reminder that hope should never be abandoned.

Lost does not mean gone.

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Sharalyn Hay member of PNER and the OET Central Oregon Chapter riding her gelding Rio at the 2025 Mary & Anna Memorial endurance ride

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A monthly publication from Oregon Equestrian Trails, a non-profit trail and horse camp organization

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