



**Back Country  
Horsemen of  
Middle and  
South Georgia**  
www.BCHSG.org



Summer 2007

Issue 2 Volume 2

## ***Forest Service to Implement Limiting Horses to Designated Trails—Again!***

In January 2004 the Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest presented their Land Management Plan which included a forest wide mandate to limit horses to designated trails and numbered forest service roads (FW127). This plan reduced our access from 865,000 acres to an eight foot wide corridor of roughly 200 miles of designated trails. BCH of East TN and BCH of America spearheaded an appeal that resulted in the suspension of this ruling in June of 2006. BCHSG was formed with the realization that we needed an organization in Georgia who specifically worked to ensure that Georgia's trail riders were allowed access to public lands.

**Remember in history the native Cherokees who were herded onto reservations far from their homeland "for their own good" by our government so they could be managed? Will this unjust Forest Service ruling be our "Trail of Tears"?**

**Ellen Stara—GA Trail Rider**

The Forest Service has some very specific protocols in place for objecting to their rulings. You must put into writing an objection during their public input period. BCHSG will do that by letter. Then once the ruling has been presented to the FS Southern Region and signed, the Forest Service considers it enforceable. This means that as early as September we may be closed out of the forest, again. Once the Southern Region signs the ruling, it goes to Washington where an appeal may be filed. BCHSG along with BCHNG will file an appeal during this period. Following the filing of an appeal, the ruling will be reviewed and the decision handed down.

BCHSG formed in April of 2006 and now, just a short year later find ourselves in the position to defend our right to ride on the National Forest. Beginning in June of this year, the Forest Service has again presented their intention to limit horse travel to designated trails and numbered forest service roads in the forest. The Forest Service plans to hold meetings in August for public input. To date (August 15, 2007) no location, date or time has been made public for these meetings. As soon as we receive this information we will pass it along. We need to make sure that they hear from the trail riding community to let them know that we enjoy riding in the National Forests and while we appreciate well maintained trails and trailheads there is a considerable percentage of riders who also enjoy cross country travel and primitive camping in the National Forest.

How can you help? Join, renew and tell others about the organization. Numbers count. We are doing well for a new organization but I know how many trail riders we have out there. This is the organization that represents you and what you do. We are not a trail riding club we are a trail working club. We applaud and support all of the volunteer work that goes on in Georgia and vow to continue to work on trails development, maintenance and preservation along side the FS. We know how important it is to you to have public lands to ride and camp on in Georgia.

As we prepare to file this appeal, we will be asking for your support. Anything legal costs money. Our initial appeal will cost \$7500 at minimum and if we continue on with a federal lawsuit, we can expect

## Welcome New Members

Mary & Hank Leslie  
Eddie Tanton  
Jim & Cindy Nesson  
Kerry Trainor  
Joan Grant  
Donnie & Connie Wiggins  
Claudia Alexander

Visit us Online at  
[www.BCHSG.org](http://www.BCHSG.org)

## How Can You Help?

It is imperative that you let your elected officials know how you feel about our right to ride on public lands in Georgia. Call, fax, email and write them to let your voice be heard! We want them to know that we oppose this ban on riding in the National Forest and that we support the Right to Ride Bill and would like to see it brought out of committee. This is a list of officials who need to hear from you!

### Senator Saxby Chambliss (R)

Address: 416 Russell Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510  
Telephone: 202-224-3521  
Fax: 202-224-0103

### Senator Johnny Isakson (R)

Address: 120 Russell Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510  
Telephone: 202-224-3643  
Fax: 202-228-0724

### Governor Sonny Perdue

Office of the Governor, Georgia State Capitol  
Atlanta, GA 30334  
Phone: 404-656-1776  
E-mail: Contact Via 'Web Form

### Agriculture Commissioner Tommy Irvin

19 Martin Luther King Jr. Dr SW  
Atlanta, GA 30334  
Phone: 404-656-3645  
Toll Free 1-800-282-5852  
Email [tirvin@agr.state.ga.us](mailto:tirvin@agr.state.ga.us)

### Regional Forester for the Southern Region, which includes the Chattahoochee and Oconee National Forests.

Charles L. Myers  
Regional Forester  
USDA Forest Service  
Southern Region (R8)  
1720 Peachtree Road NW  
Atlanta, GA 30367  
Phone (404) 34704178  
Fax (404) 347-4821  
Email [clmyers@fs.fed.us](mailto:clmyers@fs.fed.us)

## Thank you for your support in 2006-2007

*If you are listed below, your membership is now due for renewal*

April Joanna Howe  
April Debbie & Lamar Mullinax  
April Jack Garber  
April Randy & Penny Kesler  
April Margaret Brown  
April Dan & Charlotte Strawn  
April Sarah Ross  
April Elizabeth Malcome  
April Lauren Billings  
April Charles Hyden  
April Kathleen Baldwin  
April Gary & Lori Janes  
April Bruce & Tammy Coleman  
April Tom Dixie

April Don Patton  
April Deirdra Selph  
April James Brantley  
April Deb Hilty  
April Allison Altman  
May Jim & Laurie Underwood  
May Donna Yawn  
June Gail Wiley  
July Louise & Lawrence Fisher  
July Gloria English  
July Wayne Provost  
July Anne & Gene Ensminger  
July Flinn Anderson  
July Darryl Tew

## Officers and Board for 2007-2008

### President-Tina Maddox-Owen

Cell-706-319-0239  
Email-[francis@athens.net](mailto:francis@athens.net)

### Vice President-Jack White

Home-706-769-9892  
Email-[kjwhite1@bellsouth.net](mailto:kjwhite1@bellsouth.net)

### Treasurer-Adriane Altman

Home-478-986-4097  
Email-[adrianealtman@aol.com](mailto:adrianealtman@aol.com)

### Secretary-Laine Dreher

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### Randy Brown

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### Ron Cook

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### Gerald Davis

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### Tom Dixie

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### Jimmy Johnson

Home-478-452-5340

### Gene Owen

Hone-770-482-2406

### Don Patton

Home-770-867-4893

# AUCTION, RAFFLE AND FUNDRAISING



**TRAIL RIDE**

## **4 Diamond Saddle Club Fall Trail Ride**

September 7-9  
in Sparta Georgia.

Primitive camping, trail rides both Saturday and Sunday, and a live band on Saturday night. Only \$20 for the weekend or \$10 for day riders.

[www.4diamondsc.com](http://www.4diamondsc.com) or  
706-444-5186 for details

## **Saturday September 8 beginning at 5:30 PM**

Come join us at one of the oldest organized rides in Georgia.

Sparta Georgia's 4 Diamond Saddle Club has agreed to allow us to hold a fundraising auction during their Fall Trail Ride.

Come for the weekend, come for the afternoon or come for the night but come, have fun and help us raise money to help keep our National Forest open to horses.

## **Did you Know?**

*"The Forest Service is currently working on an analysis which will be used to finalize a decision to eliminate cross country horseback travel on the two national forests in Georgia."*

Back Country Horsemen across Georgia are in opposition of this decision and have vowed to appeal this decision should it be presented. All indications are that the decision will be signed this Fall which will immediately limit horseback riding to designated trails and numbered forest service roads. This reduces our available riding from 865,000 acres to an 8 foot corridor around 200 miles of trails. It is our mission to ensure that Georgia's Public Lands remain open for horses. We are raising funds for our legal campaign to stop the forest closure, please help.

**For Information Contact**  
**Tina Maddox-Owen- 706-319-0239**  
**Francis@athens.net**  
**[www.BCHSG.org](http://www.BCHSG.org)**

If you have items to donate to the auction, and will be unable to join us in Sparta, please give us a call and we will arrange to pick up your items. Donations may be made online at our website or mailed to us at PO Box 3535, Eatonton GA 31024.

## HERE IS YOUR CHALLENGE.....

I would like to bring to your attention the "**Did you Know**" which is reflected in the flyer announcing the raffle and auction.

*"The Forest Service is currently working on an analysis which will be used to finalize a decision to eliminate cross country horseback travel on the two national forests in Georgia." Long story short, riding will be reduced from 865,000 acres to 8 foot corridors around 200 miles of trails.*

Back Country Horsemen of Middle and South Georgia it is imperative that we seek out support, financial and/or physical, to obtain legal counsel to

oppose this action. We need your support. As with most organizations, it is the same small few who work and conquer the quest. Let us all make a difference by seeking out support for our current raffle and auction. If each member obtains items for the auction, sells raffle tickets and is present at the scheduled functions, I feel sure we will obtain the funding necessary to support the campaign to stop the forest closure. OK, you have been given the challenge. See ya at the trail ride at Sparta on September the 8<sup>th</sup>.

Happy Trails,  
Kathy White

## New Members Selected For Equine Commission

The ex-officio members of the Georgia Agricultural Commodity Commission for Equine (ACCE) announced their selections for five new members during the Commission's meeting at the Georgia Department of Agriculture August 9.

ACCE members selected were John Clements, Dodge County, two-year term; Jim Gibby, White County, three-year term; Debbie Lanier Guy, Thomas/Brooks County, three-year term; Danny Hogan, Laurens County, three-year term; and Sue Vetsch, Morgan County, two-year term.

Nominations for the five positions were requested to complete the appointments after the Commission's first official meeting at the Georgia Department of Agriculture in Atlanta June 13 and were accepted through July 18.

During the nomination period any equine producer is eligible and can nominate themselves. A producer is defined as any person who owns one or more equine or is engaged within this state in the business of buying, selling, boarding, holding, training, breeding, riding, pulling vehicles with, or otherwise

utilizing equine for similar purposes. Four of the five members selected through the nomination process must be equine producers with three of the members each serving three years and two of the members each serving two years. All Commission members are reimbursed for related expenses.

Commissioner of Agriculture Tommy Irvin and Georgia Farm Bureau President Zippy Duvall serve as ex-officio members of the Commission with one member each appointed by the House and Senate Agriculture and Consumer Affairs Committees, as specified by the Georgia Agricultural Commodity Commission for Equine Act. R. Harry Thompson, State Executive Secretary and Chief Administrator for the Georgia Young Farmer Agribusiness Program in Georgia and an equine producer in Moultrie, was elected by the Senate Agriculture and Consumer Affairs Committee as the ex-officio member representing southern Georgia. Ann Jones, a cutting horse producer in Flowery Branch with over 30 years of experience in the equine industry, was elected by the House Agriculture and Con-

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costs to run much higher. In expectation of this, we will be holding a fundraising auction on September 8, 2007 beginning at 5:30 in Sparta GA. The 4 Diamond Saddle Club has graciously allowed us to use their facilities to have an information booth and fundraising auction during their Fall Ride. Come join us for the weekend and ride one of the oldest organized rides in the state. We are accepting donations of new and used items for our auction. Some of the high selling items last Fall were hand made tack, horseshoe furniture, hand made items and home baked cakes! Check with your local tack store and see what you can find in your own tack room as well. If you cannot join us in Sparta but would like to donate, give one of the members of the Board a call and we will be happy to arrange to pick up items for the auction!

In addition to the auction, we will have a 50/50 raffle at several rides this fall as well as a raffle for a large screen TV. We are also asking that everyone support us in some way monetarily. We have a donation button on our website via paypal and we will have donation jars at several locations this Fall as well. Please remember, this is not just for us, but it is for future generations to enjoy our natural resources.

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sumer Affairs Committee as the ex-officio representing northern Georgia. Both Thompson and Jones will serve until 2009.

The Commission was created by Senate Bill 380, which was passed by the General Assembly in 2006, for the exclusive purposes of promotion, research and education to benefit Georgia's equine industry. Revenue for operating the commission is expected primarily from the sale of a special equine license plate, but the Commission has the authority to accept donations, gifts, grants, and other funds or property.

The next meeting of the Commission is scheduled September 19, 1 p.m. – 3 p.m., in Room 201 of the Georgia Department of Agriculture building in Atlanta; alternate date is September 18, 1 p.m. – 3 p.m. The first order of business for the new commission will be designing and promoting the new equine license plate. Have you bought yours yet?

<http://motor.etax.dor.ga.gov/> and look under plate samples

## ***From the President***

**Now is the time for you to make a difference.** BCHSG was formed to be the voice for Georgia's trail riders and we need you to help us get the word out about our organization. If you donated \$5 via our website and asked three friends to do the same, we would be well on our way to funding our appeal and supporting further growth in the National Forests as well! Please, talk to the folks you ride with and let everyone who will be impacted by this know what is going on.. It's not just riders who will be impacted, but trailer dealers, feed dealers, restaurants, tack dealers, and many others.. They need to know what is going on. Only you can help us spread the word! Act now, get involved, be a part of the solution!

*Tina Maddox*

## **Mission Statement of BCHSG**

The Back Country Horsemen of Middle and South Georgia is a non-profit organization dedicated to perpetuating the common sense use and enjoyment of horses on Georgia's Public Lands. We work to ensure that public lands remain open to equine use and assist the various government and private agencies in their maintenance and management of those resources.

## *SETC to return to Georgia in 2010*

The Southeastern Equestrian Trails Conference will return to Georgia in 2010. Please make your plans to join us at this informative conference. CTHA has volunteered to head up the conference and we look forward to the variety of speakers, seminars and exhibits they will bring on trails issues. Next years conference will be in Charleston, another great vacation get away! For the most up to date information look at [www.southeasternequestriantrails.com](http://www.southeasternequestriantrails.com)

**Visit us Online at  
[www.BCHSG.org](http://www.BCHSG.org)**

**Don't forget our Fundraiser on September 8, 2007 in Sparta GA with the 4 Diamond Saddle Club!**

**FROM ATLANTA AREA** – Take Interstate 20 to exit 138 (Siloam/Union Point) and turn right. Go ¾ mile to the dead end (caution/flashing light) and turn left onto Highway 15 South. Go 19 miles. Look for intersection of Hwy 15 and Hwy 22. Continue straight on Highway 15 about ¼ mile. Johnson Farm is on the left just before the Hancock County High School.

**FROM AUGUSTA AREA** - Take Interstate 20 to exit 148 (Crawfordville) and turn left. Travel Hwy 22 to STOP sign – Turn left onto Highway 15 South. Follow 15 South approximately ¼ mile. Johnson Farm is on the left just before the Hancock County High School.

**FROM MILLEDGEVILLE AREA** - Travel Hwy 22 East toward Sparta. Turn left just past the Courthouse. Follow 15 north approximately 3 miles. Look for Hancock County High School on the left – Johnson Farm is on the right approximately ¼ mile from the school.

**FROM EATONTON AREA** - Travel Hwy 16 toward Sparta. Turn left onto Hwy 15 North. Go approximately 2 ½ miles. Look for Hancock County High School on the left – Johnson Farm is on the right approximately ¼ mile from the school.

BCHSG  
P. O. Box 3535  
Eatonton GA 31024



***Come On, Be a Part of the Solution!  
Join BCHSG Today!***