

Gila Chapter

Back Country Horsemen of New Mexico | MINUTES

Meeting date | time 10/8/2014 6:00 AM | Meeting location Gila Regional Medical Center

Meeting called by Doug Dexter

Type of meeting Monthly business meeting

Note taker Cindi deCapiteau

Attendees

Susan Austin, Dawn Byrum, Cindi deCapiteau, Joan Dewbre, Dixie Dexter, Doug Dexter, Gerry Engel, Mary Beth Folia, Mickey Lemon, Rawlings Lemon, Carey Matthews, Ted Miles, Fran Rawllins, Stan Rawllins, Cheryl Roth, Teresa Smergut, Ellen Snoeyenbos, Donna Tillmann, Laurie Wlosinski

AGENDA TOPICS

Agenda topic *Call to order* | Presenter *Doug Dexter*

Promptly at 6:00, Doug Dexter called to order this enthusiastic and unruly group by banging on the table with his shoe (just kidding). He observed that the meeting would be a short business meeting because the number of attendees was relatively small.

Agenda topic *Recognize guests and new members* | Presenter *Doug Dexter*

At the moment this topic arose, no guests or new members had arrived on the scene, but presently new faces (one of which claimed she isn't a new face after all) hiked in to join the meeting. The folks were Carey Matthews, Teresa Smergut, and Ellen Snoeyenbos (who is indeed a chapter member and neither a new one nor a guest!). Dawn Byrum subsequently joined Ellen. Dawn is also a member, but whom the preoccupied secretary did not recognize since the secretary's own face is chronically buried in her keyboard.

Agenda topic *Additions or changes to agenda* | Presenter *Doug Dexter*

Doug Dexter admonished the group that the state BCH effort to obtain liability insurance—a directors and officers policy for BCH officers, as well as third-party liability insurance for BCH members (payable for incidents while members participate in BCH activities) will result in an estimated per-member dues increase of \$6 or \$7. Apparently there is still some uncertainty about this at the state level, but more information is expected soon.

Action items

Persons responsible Deadline

Announce amount of dues increase and total dues per member/per family that will be payable in December.	Doug Dexter, Jean Hill	December 1, 2014 (if possible)
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Agenda topic *Secretary's report of minutes & approval* | Presenter *Cindi deCapiteau*

Joan Dewbre requested a change to the August meeting minutes, noting that the correct spelling for the name of the there-mentioned horse clinic presenter is Lanny Leach, not whatever spelling the secretary happened to apply.

Agenda topic *Financial report* | Presenter *Jean Hill*

Jean Hill summarized the current chapter financial situation (see attachment 1). She observed that the exorbitant wealth indicated by the October 7 online balance includes reimbursement from the Forest Service for trail work completed by the chapter this year. The reimbursement bucks will reimburse participating members for mileage and the tons of food they consume while working. The Forest Service money does not include equipment because the Forest Service itself paid for equipment (and presumably retains ownership thereof).

Jean noted that Gerry did a good job scrambling for the grant money, given the tight deadline (which amounted to fewer than six weeks) by which the government required the dollars to be allocated and spent.

Agenda topic *Membership* | Presenter *Jean Hill*

Jean Hill reported that chapter membership remains at 60 souls (a handsome number indeed).

Agenda topic *Publicity* | Presenter *Ted Miles, Mara Miles*

Ted Miles commented that Gerry Engel wrote a press release—with photos—detailing the chapter's trail work in 2014 (see attachment 2). Ted added that he has sent the document to all the publications and newspapers—*The Grant County Beat*, *Glenwood Gazette*, *Desert Exposure*, etc. and we can expect it to start appearing soon. The release is also posted on the chapter web site at [2014 Trail Report](#). Ted noted that the Mimbres community publishes a flier ("a nice little paper") and he will get in touch with them to promote the chapter's work.

Fran Rawllins commented that Gale Moore's recent passing (she was the publisher of the *Glenwood Gazette*) necessitates a new publisher for this periodical and that one has been found—so the *Gazette* will continue.

Action items

Person responsible **Deadline**

Contact Mimbres newspaper to promote GBCH work

Ted Miles

Agenda topic *Public Service/Communications* | Presenter *Gerry Engel*

Trail Work. Gerry Engel reported on the chapter's 2014 trail work, which is now complete for the year. The last pack trip, from Woody's Corral to Little Spring and McKenna Park in the Gila Wilderness (map 1, attached) was cut short when persistent rain gave everybody wet feet and the rain-swollen Little Creek gave everybody cold feet. The trip was a feather in the chapter's hardhat; we packed in with a total of 11 animals, of which five were pack animals. This was the first time the chapter has had the ability to do that; we now have enough packing-capable animals and equipment for such an ambitious endeavor.

Chapter members cleared a total of 80 trail miles throughout the forest and wilderness, including trails not only along Little Creek, but also from the Little Spring base camp toward McKenna Park (also on map 1), as well as trails in Rocky Canyon (map 2), Gallinas and Railroad Canyons (map 3), and in the Burro Mountains (map 4). To see the big picture, review the excellent map posted on the GBCH web site at https://gilabchnm.files.wordpress.com/2014/10/gilaaldotrailmaint2013_14_36x68land_20140926opt.pdf

Members devoted some 750 hours of volunteer time to maintain trails in 2014.

Gerry also confirmed a rumor that the chapter received a request to pack in equipment for the Rocky Mountain Youth Corps to support its work on McKnight Peak, but the request was cancelled when the Corps discovered that the McKnight Road is passable by motor vehicle, so their equipment could be delivered that way.

Doug Dexter explained that he attended a meeting of a Grant County trails group, an organization that has been around for 15 years and is currently trying to solidify its mission statement. At the meeting, Doug encountered

Chris Schlaubagh, from the Gila Hike and Bike shop. Chris expressed interest in working with the Gila Chapter on maintenance of the Tadpole Ridge trail, which Chris has adopted. Chris is thinking of making an effort in November to clean up the tails on the north face between the Tadpole Ridge and Sheep Corral Road. Christa Osborne (from the Forest Service) was there to promote the Rocky Mountain Youth Corps, a group that is also interested in working with us. The Aldo Leopold charter school in Silver City has also expressed interest in working with the Gila BCH on trail maintenance.

Agenda topic Equine Evacuation – mapping status | Presenter Doug Dexter, Laurie Wlosinski

Doug Dexter and Laurie Wlosinski admitted that nothing has happened on this project since the last report. However (to clarify the topic for newcomers and old comers who want a reminder), equine evacuation is an endeavor taken up over the last 18 months by the GBCH chapter. The purpose is to assist members in preparing for the dreaded emergency (wildfire mostly) that requires us to evacuate our animals from their customary living quarters. The chapter prepared a roughly 20-page checklist—a document that has been well received in the Grant County emergency preparedness community. An adjunct to the document will be a set of maps that show where animals are usually housed, as well as locations to which they can be evacuated. This is a work in progress; the mapping team hopes to have something developed by Christmas.

Agenda topic GCSAR – mounted training update | Presenter Laurie Wlosinski

The GBCH chapter has formed a mounted auxiliary unit to the Grant County Search and Rescue (GCSAR) organization. GCSAR conducts periodic training (usually on the first Saturday of every other month). Laurie Wlosinski reported that the next session would be in December. That session, now being designed, will be a joint exercise involving both mounted and ground forces.

Laurie also advised that the Little Creek pack-in riders were shanghaied for a SAR mission as the packers were preparing to leave Woody's Corral in September. Two hikers, whose Texas-registered SUV was parked at Woody's Corral, were 12 hours overdue. GCSAR began forming search teams at daybreak and asked the GBCH folks at Woody's to help with the search. The hikers found the next day, stranded about eight miles away on the wrong side of the flooding Gila River. Laurie commented that Marc Levesque, GCSAR president, upon witnessing for the first time how much territory horses can cover in a short time, was impressed.

Laurie continued her report with details about the GBCH packers' trip out of Little Creek, which looked more and more like a big creek as the riders travelled downstream. Gerry Engel, the trail boss—who was worried because the group had to travel across a lightning-prone ridge—assumed a military bearing and issued emphatic orders, behind which was his intention to get everybody back to Woody's Corral safely. Clouds built up, turned an ominous grey, and began leaking, so Laurie requested permission for the troops to don rain gear. The packers stopped and without a single word or dismount, the riders retrieved their slickers and whirled them over their shoulders in unison. Gerry gave the "forward" order and the line moved up toward the ridge with thunder and lightning all around. The storm dissipated before the packers got off the ridge.

Agenda topic November Election conversation | Presenter Doug Dexter

Doug Dexter mentioned that this meeting provides an opportunity to think about the upcoming GBCH elections. The positions of vice chair and education coordinator went unfilled this year, which puts a heavier load on the chairperson. These positions need to be filled. Doug admonished the group to consider taking an officer's position and if anybody is interested, say so.

Agenda topic *Christmas Party discussion* | **Presenter** *Doug Dexter*

Doug has spoken with the people at Bear Mountain Lodge, where the chapter held its Christmas party last year. He asked for a vote of those in favor of using the venue again this year. The vote passed without much discussion or any dissent.

Joan Dewbre agreed to coordinate the event under two conditions:

- 1) The party would be held on Sunday, December 14, and
- 2) Mickey Lemon would provide guidance and assistance.

The event will begin at 12:30 p.m. to accommodate the churchgoers among us. The meal will begin serving at 1:30 p.m. and the party will end early enough in the day to accommodate equiids expecting to be fed.

Joan was authorized to hire a planning committee—Dixie Dexter, Mickey Lemon, and Fran Rawllins offered to serve on the committee. Doug will contact the lodge and secure the December 14 date, then turn further contact about the affair over to Joan.

The event will be potluck and a 50/50 raffle will be held.

Action items	Person responsible	Deadline
Call Linda to schedule December 14 at Bear Mountain Lodge	Doug Dexter	
Schedule planning committee meeting	Joan Dewbre	

Agenda topic *2015 dues increase* | **Presenter** *Doug Dexter*

A potential dues increase, necessitated by state BCH-level changes in insurance, remains unresolved. We should have more information soon and will talk about the matter in detail next month.

Agenda topic *Education pending: Using and enhancing the Gila BCH website*

The promised review of the GBCH web site has also been lurking around for several months and will probably be put off until after the first of the year, as the education segment for November is expected to be fulfilled by the fire chief (see below).

Agenda topic *Education pending: Tim Heidrich*

Tim Heidrich, the new Silver City fire chief and an enthusiast about the Gila Back Country Horsemen, will address the assembled masses at the November meeting, unless something happens to prevent his attendance, in which case we'll review the GBCH web site.

Agenda topic *Education pending: Trail surveys for possible clearing projects*

How to conduct a trail survey is a topic of interest to GBCH members. Gerry Engel will plan on providing instruction in this arena next spring.

Agenda topic *Education pending: 'Survivor' fire starting ideas*

Gerry Engel has recently become a fan of the "survivor" genre of reality TV shows—specifically *Naked and Afraid*—which inspired him to think about the best way to start a fire when wet and rainy conditions prevail. This is expected to be an interesting and fun event, even though clothing will be required of all participants.

Agenda topic Next BCHNM State Meeting – Fran & Stan to attend

Stan and Fran Rawllins will attend the next state BCH meeting, January 24, 2015. Fran reported the latest news from up north: The state rendezvous was attended by 48 BCH members and made a profit of \$1,533 on the event, which was a success not only in terms of monetary gain, but also in being well-organized, safe, and enjoyable. The organizers have volunteered the GBCH chapter to host a future rendezvous and are considering the Celebration group site for a venue.

During the ensuing local discussion, Gerry Engel noted that Celebration is becoming popular and is sometimes noisy and crowded. He suggested holding the rendezvous at Quemado, which is more centrally located both for us and for people coming from the north, although the campground there is small, as noted by Rawlings Lemon. The Quemado site does have a nice, open pasture, but it's unknown if the pasture is suitable for pulling in rigs. Rawlings added that Quemado also offers the benefit of proximity to the Continental Divide Trail and several different riding possibilities. The Rawllins's will suggest alternative locations when they attend the January meeting.

Later this month the 50th anniversary of the Wilderness Act will be celebrated in Albuquerque. The Forest Service will conduct a crosscut saw demonstration.

Regarding the lingering and much-ballyhooed insurance matter, the state BCH leadership is trying to get information from the insurance provider for rules about what needs to go into the state bylaws.

NMBCH has recognized a new BCH chapter—Lincoln County, New Mexico.

According to Stan Rawllins, Oscar Simpson, the state BCH's public lands and legislative chairman, keeps a close eye on and applies influence about political issues relating to America's back country. On Oscar's agenda is increasing the size of New Mexico's wilderness areas. One strategy for this is to designate as wilderness intervening non-wilderness parcels, thereby connecting now-isolated wilderness lands. Oscar has offered to visit the GBCH chapter to talk to us about it.

A current worrisome issue is that military institutions are taking over state lands, thereby taking that land out of the running for wilderness designation. Oscar is adamant that such issues be brought to our attention, and particularly certain ideas that are being floated by the U.S. Congressional Western Caucus (see attachment 3)—proposals for federal legislation that would permit divesting the federal government of its vast land holdings [to pay] down the deficit and reduce spending." Oscar maintains that if such legislation, as endorsed by New Mexico Congressman Steve Pearce, gets through "it will be the biggest land grab the United States has ever seen. Lands now held by the Bureau of Land Management (for example) would be sold to oil, forest, and mining interests and on which the public would never be let on again. Stan advised that Oscar will tell Steve Pearce "no, hell no."

Stan mentioned that the proposal was mentioned on an MSNBC report, where the "land grab" observation was also made.

Our voices need to be heard about this matter and Stan encouraged GBCH members to study Representative Pearce's letter, then let him know that we don't want this legislation. Susan Austin suggested that the legislation, if it goes beyond the proposal stage, could stipulate that public access continues on now-public lands divested under the law. Gerry Engle commented that when he worked at the Forest Service, Mr. Pearce attended a meeting in which he was asked about his stand on public lands. Mr. Pearce responded, "There should be no public lands."

Doug Dexter thanked the Rawllins's for their attendance at the state BCH meeting and for their robust reporting about what goes on there.

Agenda topic *Ken and Colleen Poole* | **Presenter** *Fran Rawllins*

Fran Rawllins announced that longtime GBCH members Ken and Colleen Poole are moving to South Carolina. Ken served as treasurer from the time the chapter was formed until last year. The Pooles have sold their house. Fran would like to acknowledge their BCH participation and friendship. The group voted to send them a greeting card and a \$100 Wal-Mart gift card, which they could use for expenses on their trip east.

Agenda topic *Upcoming ride, clinic* | **Presenters** *Dawn Byrum, Joan Dewbre*

Dawn Byrum announced that she is hosting a ride in Las Cruces November 15-16. The ride is sponsored by the American Competitive Trail Horse Association and includes six milers and six obstacles. Only the obstacle course has a time limit. Half the proceeds from the event will be donated to the horse rescue in Chaparral. The event venue offers six hookups for trailers. Visit the ACTHA web site, <https://www.actha.us/>, for more information.

Joan Dewbre is hosting another Lanny Leach clinic, also on November 15 and 16. Contact Joan for details.

Agenda topic *2013-14 Trail clearing map, trail crew, saddle bags*

Gerry Engel advised that the Forest Service has produced a map (mentioned above) that highlights the trails the GBCH and the USFS Wilderness District maintained during the last fiscal year. Gerry will send out an electronic version of the map. Ted Miles has posted it on the GBCH web site (find the map at https://gilabchnm.files.wordpress.com/2014/10/gilaaldotrailmaint2013_14_36x68land_20140926opt.pdf).

Gerry warned that the Forest Service might eliminate its already-miniscule trail crew due to lack of funding. Gerry hopes to influence the agency to keep the crew on board and sought approval from the group to support his actions.

Susan Austin has leather saddlebags she hopes to sell. Contact her if you're interested.

Agenda topic *Announcements: - Next meeting and adjournment November 12th 6:00 PM at GRMC Conference Room* | **Presenter** *[Name]*

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 12, 6:00 p.m. in the conference room at the Gila Regional Medical Center.

The October meeting was adjourned.

Attachment 1: October 2014 Treasurer/Member Report

Gila Chapter BCHA **October 7, 2014** Treasurer/Member Report
(note: last bank statement is taken to BCH meetings in case someone needs to see it.)

Bank Balance	July 15/16	\$ 1,626.74
Credits		
8/17		\$.22 interest
Debits		
7/22 #1259	\$ 40.00	2nd quarter dues paid to State

Bank Balance August 17, 2014	\$ 1,586.96
Credits	
Sep 15	.19 interest
Bank Balance Sept 15, 2014	\$ 1,587.15

Transactions Cleared after Bank Balance Sep. 15, 2014:
credits

Oct 6 FS payment	\$ 1,475.80
Oct 6 FS payment	<u>\$ 2,291.50</u>
Online Balance as of October 7, 2014	\$ 5,354.45

Membership Update/Email List

There have been some updates to phone/emails, Jean sent list via email to membership on Oct 7 for any further updates. Mackie Redd wants to rejoin and since we are in 4th quarter we asked him to pay in December for 2015, he's been added to our email list now. We still have two non-members on email list to coordinate with other BCH chapters, Dan Key & Pat Buls.

Our 2014 paid membership is now 60. We have 20 single and 20 family memberships. Last year's membership was 64. We had no new memberships during 3rd quarter so owe nothing to State.



GILA CHAPTER BACK COUNTRY HORSEMEN COMPLETE TRAIL MAINTENANCE SEASON

The Gila Chapter Back Country Horsemen of America located in Silver City, NM recently ended this year's trail clearing season by packing into Little Spring in the Gila Wilderness for 3 nights and working on the Little Creek trail and the trail towards McKenna Park. Rain and high water in Little Creek cut the trip short, but the trail mileage completed, brought the total for the season to approximately 80 miles of trails maintained. In 2014, trails were cleared both inside and outside of wilderness including about 32 miles of the Continental Divide Trail.

Gerry Engel, Public Service Chairperson, said that "this year's season started in March with Forest Service provided first aid training, and chainsaw and crosscut saw training to

members. By April, we were clearing trails in the Burros. Eleven projects later we had completed the season. It was kind of a strange season with the dry conditions, the fire at Signal Peak and some intense rain in late summer and fall. We ended up kind of starting and stopping and some of the trails we cleared burned over or were closed due to flooding, but over all we had a good year. We put in about 750 accident free volunteer hours and contributed over 160 days of stock use. We rode into many beautiful parts of the Forest, had many wonderful nights out under the stars, ate great food, enjoyed each others company and experienced a wonderful feeling of accomplishment at the end of each day when we rode back into camp on a trail that was in better condition than when we started in the morning."

The Gila Chapter of the Back Country Horsemen is one of 8 Back Country Horsemen chapters in New Mexico. Nationally, Back Country Horsemen of America has chapters in over 25 states.

The purpose of the Back Country Horsemen of America is:

1. To perpetuate the common sense use and enjoyment of horses in America's back country and wilderness.
2. To work to ensure that public lands remain open to recreational stock use.
3. To assist the various government and private agencies in their maintenance and management of said resource.
4. To educate, encourage and solicit active participation in the wise use of the back country resource by horsemen and the general public commensurate with our heritage.
5. To foster and encourage the formation of new state Back Country Horsemen's organizations.

In assisting with trail maintenance, Back Country Horsemen improve trail recreational opportunities for not only horseman but for hikers, bikers and others that use public land trails. Nationally Back Country Horsemen contribute more than \$14 million annually in volunteer time to keep trails open on public lands. Nationally, there is a huge trail maintenance backlog. Locally, as a result of recent fires and floods, trail travel on the Forest is becoming more and more difficult. Many individuals and groups volunteer to help keep trails open. These volunteers are becoming more important as time goes on.

The Gila Chapter of the Back Country Horseman of America meets once a month at 6:00 pm in the lower level of the Gila Regional Medical Center. For information call 757-590-3497.



Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

November 26, 2012

The Honorable John Boehner
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
The Capitol
Washington, D.C.

Mr. Speaker:

As negotiations continue regarding the so-called "fiscal cliff", we are pleased with your position to oppose job-crushing tax increases. The federal government has a spending problem, not a revenue problem. Increases in marginal tax rates would grow government spending, cost our economy 700,000 jobs¹, and would slow an already sluggish economy.

The latest October spending report is telling. The October deficit was \$120 billion, up from \$98.5 billion for the previous year². This deficit was not the result of revenue shortfalls. Revenues rose 13% over the same period from a year ago. Instead, the deficit was fueled by out-of-control government spending. Spending during the month of October increased 16% above October FY2012 levels. This dismal monthly report means the Obama Administration is on track for yet another trillion dollar deficit, the norm under its watch.

The President's plan to increase taxes on small businesses and other Americans does little to close these trillion dollar deficits. It was reported in July that ending the Bush-era tax cuts for top income earners would raise about \$80 billion in 2013³. Aside from the negative impact the increases would have on the economy, this total falls short of the revenue needed to close these trillion-dollar-plus deficits.

¹ Drs. Robert Carroll and Gerald Prante of Ernst and Young (July 2012) Long-run macroeconomic impact of increasing tax rates on high-income taxpayers in 2013. Retrieved November 16, 2012 from <http://www.nfib.com/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=OMV7uZczVaM%3d&tabid=1083>

² US could be on path to fifth straight \$1 trillion deficit after government runs \$120 billion October deficit. Retrieved November 16, 2012 from <http://www.foxnews.com/politics/2012/11/13/us-government-runs-120-billion-october-deficit/#ixzz2CPHlx553>

³ Montgomery, Lori (July 19, 2012) Ending Bush tax cuts for rich would save about \$80 billion in 2013, analyst says. Retrieved November 16, 2012 from http://www.washingtonpost.com/business/economy/ending-bush-tax-cuts-for-rich-would-save-just-28-billion-in-2013-analysts-say/2012/07/19/pJQAW0m0vW_story.html

Finally, Congress could liquidate excess and surplus assets. Government audits have estimated that the federal government holds more than 55,000 unneeded properties⁹. The proceeds from the sale of these excess properties, along with operations and maintenance savings, could save billions of dollars annually. This idea was also championed by the bipartisan Simpson-Bowels Commission.

Again, the federal government has a spending problem, not a tax problem. We reject the notion that tax increases will tackle our exploding deficit. Instead, we support a combination of spending reductions and revenue-expanding policies that create jobs and grow the economy. Thank you for your service and leadership. Please contact us directly for more information or to discuss these ideas further.

Sincerely,



Rob Bishop
Immediate Past Chairman
Congressional Western Caucus



Stevan Pearce
Chairman
Congressional Western Caucus

⁹ GAO testimony before the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. Federal Real Property: Progress Made on Planning and Data, but Unneeded Owned and Leased Facilities Remain. April 6, 2011. Retrieved from <http://republicans.transportation.house.gov/Media/file/TestimonyEDPB/2011-04-06%20Wisc.pdf>

Map 1: Little Creek and McKenna Park (red circle on the trail shows the location of the base camp at Little Spring)



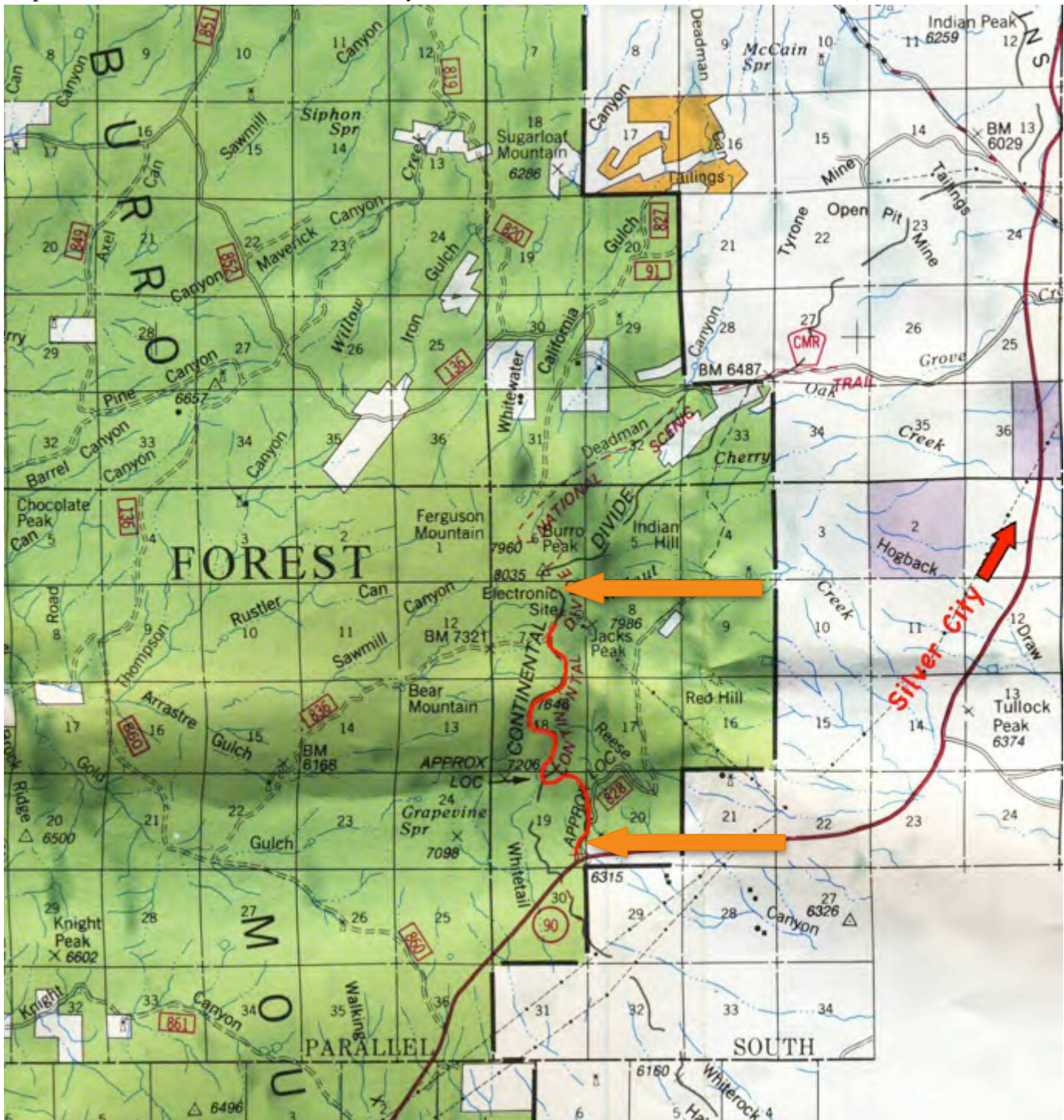
Map 2: Continental Divide Trail, Rocky Canyon to Brannon Spring



Map 3: Gallinas and Railroad Canyons



Map 4: Continental Divide Trail from Hwy 90 Trailhead to Jack's Peak (Burro Mountains)



Map 5: Location of Tadpole Ridge Trail (off Hwy 15, north of Piños Altos)

