

Gila Chapter

Back Country Horsemen of New Mexico | MINUTES

Meeting date | time [Date | time] | Meeting location WNMU Watts Hall

Meeting called by Doug Dexter

Type of meeting Monthly business meeting

Note taker Cindi deCapiteau

Attendees

Jean D. Alexander, Joan Bacon, Cathy Brett, Sharon Brown, Zack Crockett, Cindi deCapiteau, Vicki Dowd, Gerry Engel, Dave Imler, Nancy Imler, Jane Larson, Joel Larson, Mickey Lemon, Rawlings Lemon, Charlen Perez, Cheryl Roth, Randy Roth, Becky Shumway, Donna Tillmann, Matt Wheeler, Nat Williams, Laurie Wlosinski

AGENDA TOPICS

Agenda topic Call to order | Presenter Becky Shumway

Our esteemed El Presidente (you remember, Doug Dexter) was attending to business elsewhere, so Becky Shumway (El Vice Presidente) opened the meeting, thereby silencing the enthusiastic chatter and laughter that rattled the light fixtures in the Watts Hall room that's big enough to hold us all. Ms. Shumway called the meeting to order early (is that allowed?) at 5:57.

Agenda topic Recognize guests and new members | Presenter Becky Shumway

Becky noted that we have a new member, Debra Hoke, who wasn't present tonight, but having paid her dues, deserves a mention. While preparing these minutes, the secretary observed an unfamiliar name on the sign-in sheet, that of one Jean D. Alexander, who must have been a guest because the name doesn't appear on Nancy Imler's *ex cathedra* Excel membership file.

Tangentially, the secretary apologizes if she failed to read properly the full Alexander name and this person is actually Sean D. Alexander. Grumble, grumble. Please PRINT when you write your name on the sign-in sheet.

Agenda topic Additions or changes to minutes | Presenter Becky Shumway

The minutes from the chapter's January meeting were approved by unanimous vote (moved by Shumway, seconded by Williams) as submitted.

Agenda topic Financial & membership report | Presenter Nancy Imler

The vast wealth of our tidy little group (actually, it's a BIG group by New Mexico BCH standards) remains stable. Nancy noted that we started January with \$9000+, received nearly 200 smackers in income, and (because we are such magnanimous people, donated \$60 to the [Give Grandly](#) operation. The ending balance was \$9000+.

Becky noted that Nancy's Excel file shows several members who haven't forked over their dues for 2019. Becky said she's on good terms with these folks and would give them a call urging them a call. Gerry Engel commented that what the chapter has done in the past in this situation is to send out a message and a membership application, producing a gentle extortion to keep the coffers full or get crossed off the rolls.

Send out message to not-yet-paid members requesting payment of dues for 2019 Doug Dexter

Agenda topic *Publicity* | Presenter *Becky Shumway*

Becky commented that she handled publicity for the February 2 public event at Tractor Supply by sending information to radio stations, the newspaper, and looking for brochures in the feed stores.

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

The Gila chapter has partnered with [Heart of the Gila](#) to raise funds for and complete a set of ambitious trail projects for 2019 (see schedule on page 7). Work will begin in April and Gerry asked members to let him know if they plan to participate.

Gerry noted that Melissa Green was not present tonight because she was in Santa Fe for a meeting of a committee sponsored by Rudy Martinez. The purpose of the meeting was to examine the matter of granting \$50K to Heart of the Gila (HOTG). You'll recall that HOTG is organizing other groups with interest in recreational trail maintenance. Since that's the future of the Gila Chapter's work, it's something worth our support. Melissa has 10 years of employment with the US Forest Service and is now volunteering her time and talent to HOTG. She's doing a fantastic job of organizing and Gerry said he hopes this will lead to some kind of salary for her.

Gerry gave a set of talking points to HOTG to present at the committee meeting.

Gerry also mentioned the important fundraiser event HOTG will conduct on March 1 (see details on page 11) and noted that an invitation was planted on each table in the meeting room tonight.

HOTG expects to receive \$30K from the Forest Service, but that requires a service agreement and the associated red tape. If HOTG gets that money, they plan to share it with the Gila chapter. Gerry noted that he met with the Gila Forest Supervisor (Adam Mendonca) and told him that we could use the money for this year. Even though Mr. Mendonca seemed enthusiastic about the matter, Christa Osborn (Forest Recreation Program Manager) isn't wild about it, so the funds might not come through.

For 2019 we have four projects planned – three with HOTG and one with WNMU (see schedule on page 7). In connection with the WNMU project, Gerry has spoken with Kathy Whiteman (Director of WNMU's Outdoor Program) about a project in Gallinas and Railroad Canyons in early March. Dr. Whiteman advised that no students have signed up, so that project might not happen

(Update: The project will proceed on March 9-12 (see a copy of Gerry's email on page 8) although without the youthful muscle of WNMU students. Workers will camp at Upper Gallinas where several corrals are available for stock and the river is right there for water. The campground is close to town, so workers don't have to camp, but can come up to work each day. Gallinas Canyon, Gerry mentioned, hasn't been cleared in two or more years, so probably needs lots of work. Gerry will ride up there next week to assess the situation.).

Gerry has also spoken with a Black Range official who would (naturally!) love to have us work on trails up there. No details at the moment.

The HOTG schedule (page 7) lists a project for 74 Mountain and Upper Mogollon Creek. That project was to be staffed by Gila chapter members and members of the [National Smokejumpers Association](#) – but the smokejumpers, (retired old folks like us who don't ride horses) don't think they can handle the hiking distance. So Gerry is pursuing other avenues to get support for that project. The original goal was to get to Turnbow Canyon and establish access to the Gila wilderness from the west side. Melissa Green reports that the trail has 80 logs down along with tread deterioration resulting from floods that followed the 2012 Whitewater-Baldy fire. The USFS has done no work in this area since.

The NOLS (National Outdoor Leadership School) project is still on board for April 22-27 in the area of White Creek Cabin going up toward Lilley Park (although the Gila Chapter won't necessarily be involved). The Gila chapter was going to pack equipment in for that project, but Gerry is concerned about the 17 mile trip in. So Becky Campbell (a Gila wilderness outfitter) will pack in and some other folks from Mimbres will pack out.

From May 3 through 8, an HOTG project will clear and rebuild trail from Jordan Hot Springs to The Meadows. Pack-in and pack-out support will be provided by the Gila chapter, the Continental Divide Trail Alliance, and Zack Crockett (another Gila wilderness outfitter and one of our members). The trips in and out can each be completed in a single day and the trail up to Jordan Hot Springs is easy, but has numerous river crossings. Rawlings Lemon and Gerry are cooking for the workers.

Gerry reported that he's looking for a less strenuous project for the smokejumpers, ideally near a trail junction so the workers can go in several different directions. Joan Bacon observed that EE Canyon (see map on page 9) might be a good alternative; Gerry concurred because from EE Canyon, the trail crews could work on the nearby Little Creek and Thousand Mile Ridge trails.

Zack Crockett mused that the trail from the Mogollon box up above Cliff, from the Nature Conservancy up and over the ridge to the Oxbow trail are also good candidates. Lots of brushing is needed along that trail, but the route needs to be flagged because high water has interfered with a clear path. In addition, water crossing points need to be marked; thereafter, trail use will keep the trail open. Workers can park and camp at the Mogollon Box and ride up from there. That area is also close to town, so workers who don't want to camp can come out for a day. Gerry agreed to add this project to his list.

Gerry promised to organize the schedule and publish it before the March meeting.

Action items	Person responsible	Deadline
Organize and publish a trail project schedule	Gerry Engel	ASAP

Agenda topic GCSAR Activity | **Presenter** Laurie Wlosinski

Grant County Search and Rescue conducted a weird mission that didn't involve our mounted members, had all the entertainment value of a circus. The story began on January 25 when a 76-year-old visitor to Silver City embarked on a bicycle ride, using an apparently unidentifiable highway. He wore himself out on the ride and contacted his wife via [Tracfone](#). He told his wife to pick him up on Little Walnut Road, but he was actually on Forest Road 858.

Seems like every not-SAR person out in the woods that day saw the guy and everybody asked him if he needed a ride, but he asserted that his wife was picking him up. Zack Crockett mentioned that he encountered a four-wheeler who had seen the cyclist and who asked the SAR folks if they were looking for him. The four-wheeler said he saw the cyclist on Forest Road 858, two or three miles from Bear Mountain Road. A work crew bumped into the cyclist, who was standing by a bulldozer. By the time the four-wheeler returned to that location, the cyclist wasn't there.

The cyclist was operating from a 2001 map of the Continental Divide Trail (draw your own conclusions). Nobody knows exactly where the cyclist was, given the description he gave to his wife about his location. He claimed to have found an 8' waterfall and said the CDT crossed a creek (actually, it does. See details on page 10). Laurie Wlosinski dispatched SAR to every possible road branching off Little Walnut, with no satisfying result.

Eventually the Border Patrol found the cyclist, who decided it was a good idea to accept a ride from them. The Border Patrol turned the cyclist over to SAR. Cyclist was transported to Gila Regional Medical Center, where he rested up for six days.

Some 33 people searched for the cyclist for a total of 279 man hours.

The cyclist left his (expensive) bicycle somewhere up there. If you find it, it's yours. Free of charge. The wife says he will never touch a bicycle again.

Agenda topic *BCHNM Updates and Rendezvous* | **Presenter** Mickey Lemon, Rawlings Lemon

Liability insurance for the Back Country Horsemen. The business matter that will never be settled.

Mickey reported that minutes from the January meeting of BCHNM were distributed via email.

The meeting focused on BCHNM's liability insurance, for which each chapter pays part of the annual premium. The matter came up (again) because BCHNM said there wasn't enough money to pay this year's bill, even though the relevant profit-loss statement seemed to imply otherwise. The state's vice president (Dick Rahal in 2018, maybe somebody else now) will contact the insurance company to determine how they compute the bill. That matter led to a question about whether the organization actually needs to have liability insurance. That question led to this explanation: Some time back, BCHNM held a rendezvous at Ft. Stanton. The Ft. Stanton authorities insisted that liability insurance was required for the event. So because it might be required in the future, the liability insurance policy continues.

BCHNM has a directors and officers liability insurance policy, which is basically liability insurance for all state and chapter officers. That policy is handled appropriately. The cost is divided by the number of chapters, so each chapter pays \$70-\$80 a year for it. There is also third-party liability insurance for work on public lands (US Forest Service) that protects us against suit by someone who is not a GBCH member is injured on a GBCH project.

Laurie Wlosinski commented that she remembers a discussion similar to this one from five or six years ago in which it appeared that if somebody was injured on a GBCH project or event, the state's liability policy covers us.

Gerry commented that outfitters pay 10% of their gross receipts for such insurance, as justified by the number of injuries and claims. He added that the only reason for us to have liability insurance is because it's too hard to get other kinds of insurance without it. Participants can sign liability waivers, but those don't always holdup in court.

On another topic, Mickey reported that BCHNM has a new chapter —Jemez—but lost the now-folded Socorro chapter.

Mickey said she just laughed when she was asked if the Gila chapter would put on the 2019 rendezvous, so the Pecos and Northwest chapters will join forces to put it on.

Derek Tucker, BCHNM chairman, asked chapters to send in photos to be posted on the BCHNM website. Derek also offered a form so that when a chapter has a project, the chapter fills out the form and sends it in for website posting. That way, other chapters can know about the event and chip in if they want to help. A copy of the form is in Gerry's hands. He will complete it and send it to Derek when Gerry finalizes the trail schedule.

Derek also asked for photos of our work, but we have reasons to be reluctant to comply.

The national BCH organization is pushing for what they call a "legacy fund," as explained in an article ("What Will Be Your Legacy") in the recent BCHA newsletter. The idea is to have BCH members donate a chunk of money for a fund so that the organization can continue to operate into the future, thereby giving our kids and their kids the opportunity to ride on public lands in the future. Mickey has a full description of the program, as well as pledge agreement forms. You can also review the BCHA article about the program on page 5 of the winter 2019 newsletter at this link [BCHA Newsletter](#).

Action items	Person responsible	Deadline
Fill out BCHNM event form for upcoming trail projects.	Gerry Engel	As soon as trail schedule is final.

Agenda topic *Bylaws and 501(c)3 Status* | **Presenter** *Dave Imler*

The last hurdle between us and a 501(c)3 tax-exempt status has been cleared. Dave reported that all the paperwork is done. Now we are official.

Agenda topic *1st aid certifications and sawyer training* | **Presenter** *Gerry Engel*

Gerry sent out an email asking for the names of members who want to be certified or recertified as GBCH sawyers, an effort that requires certification in 1st aid/CPR as well as demonstrated capability with chainsaws and crosscut saws. So far he has received three responses.

Liz Holguin, a trainer certified by the American Heart Association, can conduct a class for a few folks. This certification must be done fairly quickly. It costs \$60 a person (estimate), a cost borne by the Gila chapter.

For first-time sawyer certification, the sawyer class occurs over two days and consists of classroom, as well as practical instruction and skills evaluation. Melissa Green and Gerry are certified as sawyer instructors by Aaron Jones (Glenwood ranger district). Members who are currently certified need to present themselves for the sawyer evaluation to get recertified.

Laurie Wlosinski mentioned that she will contact “Karen,” who conducts 1st aid training for Grant County SAR. Gerry noted that we need to find out who Karen is associated with so he can make sure the USFS approves that agency.

Action items	Person responsible	Deadline
Contact Karen about 1 st aid training	Laurie Wlosinski	ASAP
Make sure Karen’s agency is approved by USFS	Gerry Engel	

Agenda topic *Tractor Supply Event* | **Presenter** *Cheryl, Laurie, Cindi, Randy*

On Saturday, February 2, GBCH grouped up in the Tractor Supply parking lot with local firefighters and emergency medical personnel for exhibits and demonstrations of our vaulted philosophies and skills. In spite of Becky Shumway’s diligence at public announcements about the event, the turnout from the public was meager— but the volunteers had lots of fun talking to each other.

Laurie Wlosinski distributed information about evacuation for family pets and noted that the ASPCA has an app for that.

Randy Roth showed off his drone-enabled video of the event.

Agenda topic *Give Grandly* | **Presenter** *Gerry Engel*

Some conversations have been floating around about entering the Gila chapter in Grant County’s “Give Grandly” effort now that the chapter has tax-exempt status. Doug Dexter noted on the agenda for tonight’s meeting that we’ll not be doing that this year.

Agenda topic *Revised 1st NM Bank account and 501c3 issues* | **Presenter** *Imlers*

Our new 501(c)3 status increases the need for an accurate paper trail concerning Gila chapter financial matters. Nancy Imler reported that when the chapter’s banking account was originally opened, the account bore a name that’s different from the name we have now. Nancy suggested that we need to fix that.

Mickey Lemon moved to close the chapter’s current account and open a new one under the proper name. The motion was seconded by Nathan Williams. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

On a related matter, Nancy noted that signature authority will be required for the new bank account. Becky Shumway moved to authorize financial signature authority for Nancy Imler, Jean Hill, and Doug Dexter. Nathan Williams seconded. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

Agenda topic *Heart of the Gila Event* | **Presenter** *Gerry Engel*

Heart of the Gila, a group of dedicated outdoors enthusiasts, is organizing trail work in the Gila region for 2019. The work will be funded by various agencies. Heart of the Gila hopes to raise an additional \$10K over the funds requested from other sources, so is holding an event on March 1 at A-space gallery. See the invitation on page 11.

Agenda topic *Suggestions for future education segments* | **Presenter** *Cheryl Roth*

April or May – packing demo and picnic at Doug Dexter’s daughter’s place – who’s interested? Doug needs to decide on date and time and then send out an invitation. Event needs to have a hands-on approach so we can learn to tie knots. Probably needs to have more than one teacher so that instruction can proceed one-on-one. Participants can also bring examples of stuff they like to pack. Zack uses Decker packs and saddles. Gerry uses cross-bucks. Can demonstrate both. There’s also the not-a-knot packing system, which some GBCH members use and those can be shown off too. About 11 people demonstrated their interest by a show of hands. Becky will follow up with Doug.

Action items	Person responsible	Deadline
Set up GBCH picnic with Cassie	Doug Dexter	April or May meeting
Follow up with Doug about the picnic	Becky Shumway	Soon

Agenda topic *Announcements* | **Presenter** *[Name]*

Silver City’s annual trail days festival is coming on April 27. The Gila chapter is signed up. The event will be held at Gough Park.

Next meeting: March 13, 2019 Watts Hall.

Motion to adjourn made by Cindi deCapiteau, second by Vicki Dowd. Motion passed unanimously.

Heart of the Gila Trails Partnership

2019 Spring Projects & Plans

To maintain wilderness trails, we develop partnerships with volunteer organizations, job corps programs, and other groups that value the Gila Wilderness. These relationships allow us to leverage resources and multiply the effect of funds we raise. Our volunteer agreement with the Gila Wilderness District provides equipment and logistical resources for our crews. We are currently working with the Forest Service on funding for our partnership model and to demonstrate on-the-ground-success. This fundraising campaign will launch our 2019 trail season and support work beginning this spring.

Project 1

Trail: Reopen **74 Mountain** and upper **Mogollon Creek** (Trails # 153 and # 301).
When: Early April, 8-day project.
Partners: National Smokejumper's Association and Gila Back Country Horseman (GBCH).
Why this trail: Provides southern access into the Gila Wilderness and has water.

Project 2

Trail: Reopen switchback on the **Trotter Trail** leaving **White Creek Cabin**.
Partners: National Outdoor Leadership School, Gila Hot Springs Ranch (GBCH).
When: April, 21 – 28.
Why this Trail: Key access connecting Gila Wilderness north and south. High use for outfitters.

Project 3

Trail: **Middle Fork Trail** between **Jordan Hot Springs** and the **Meadows**
Partners: NM Volunteers for the Outdoors, Continental Divide Trail.
When: May 2nd – 8th.
Why this trail: Popular backpacking loop in the Gila Wilderness, CDT Alternate, day hike from Jordan Hot Springs.

Project 4

Trail: **Iron Creek to Turkey Feather Pass to Jerky's** (Trails # 151 and #164).
Partners: Tramps Trail Crew (National Smokejumper's Association) (GBCH).
When: May 15th-22nd.
Why this trail: Major hunting and outfitting area that provides wilderness access from the north. Alternate route to sections of trail that have been obliterated by post fire flooding.

First BCH Project will be March 9-12 (weather permitting)

inbox X

Gerry & Jean

Sat, Feb 16, 4:44 PM (3 days ago)

to Gerry-Jean -

First off, the dates of this could change depending on weather. Part of this is relatively high elevation so we could still get snow on the area.

We had originally planned to do a project with WNMU spring break folks but that did not work out. Instead, I am planning our first project to be to clear the Railroad Canyon/Gallinas Canyon loop in the Black Range. We would camp at Upper Gallinas Canyon Campground. The Campground is closed now but I am trying to make arrangements for us to get a key to the gate and the restroom. We would water horses in the creek. There is no potable water at the campground so folks would have to bring drinking water. We could keep horses in the corrals we built a few years ago. Everyone would need to bring their own food.

According to the Forest Service, the Railroad Canyon trail (128) was cleared last year so it should not be too bad. The Crest trail (79) and the Gallinas Canyon Trail (129) have not been cleared in several years so I anticipate lots of work on those trails. There will be lots of logs to cut and a lot of brushing needed. We can use a chainsaw on these trails so that will help. We can also use our cordless hedge trimmer to help with the brushing.

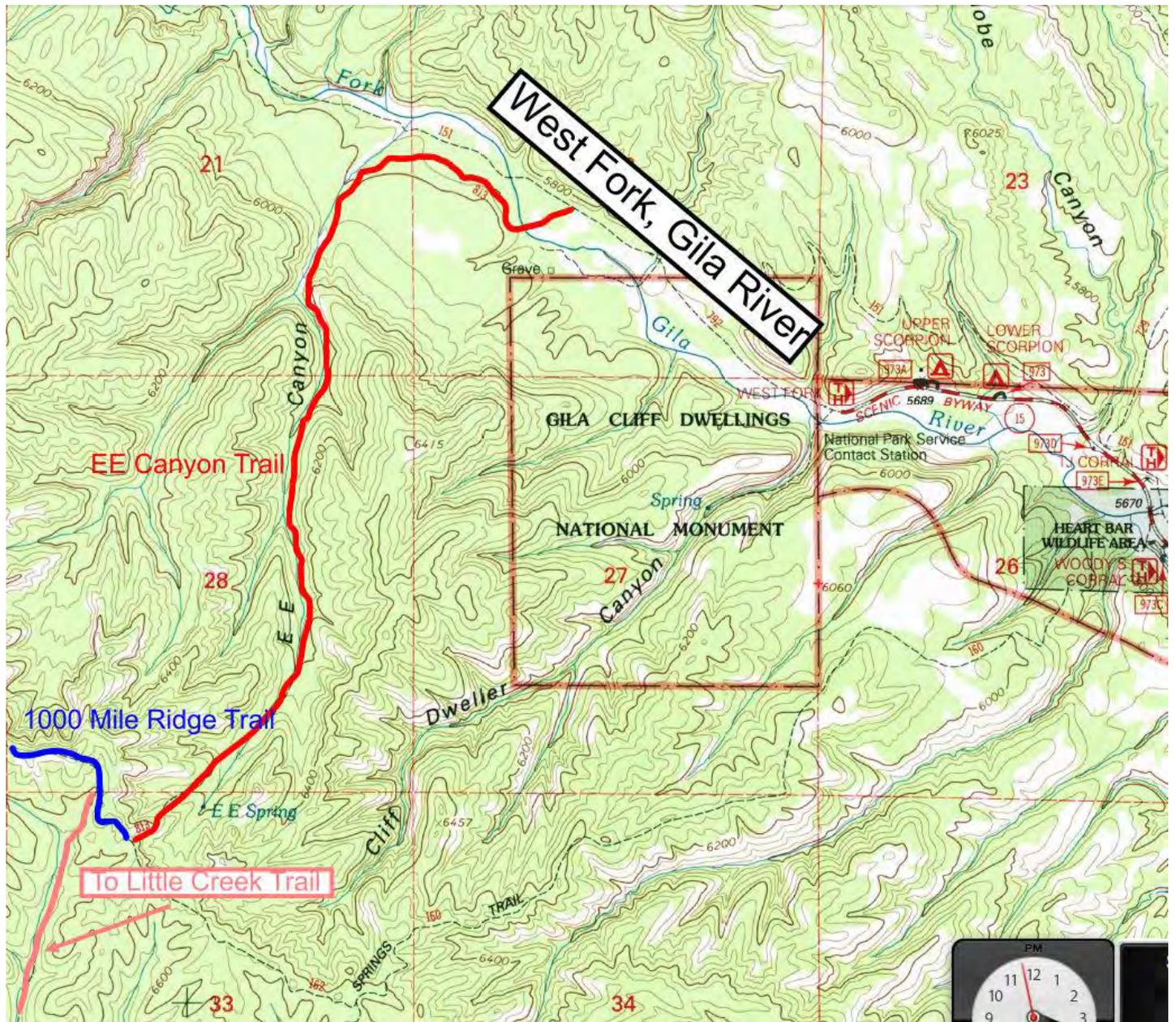
For all of you that have not ridden these trails in the past I would put them on the difficult end of the trail difficulty scale. Both the Railroad Canyon trail and the Gallinas trail have some steep narrow sections. The switchbacks from Railroad Canyon up Gallinas are steep and really rocky.

Just wanted to give you a heads up on this project since it is not all that far off. There are a number of stream crossings so we will have to see how the weather goes. Right now, I am thinking we could go on the 9th, work on the 10th, 11th, and 12th and go home on the evening of the 12th.

Upper Gallinas Campground is actually close enough to town so the people could come out for the day or camp.

Please let me know if you are interested in helping out and what days you might help.

EE Canyon and adjacent trails



One theory about the subject of the January SAR mission

1. Cyclist thought he was on Little Walnut, but was actually on Alabama/Cottage San.
2. Cottage San becomes Bear Mountain Road.
3. Bear Mountain Road connects to Forest Road 858 (a.k.a. Walnut Creek Road).
4. Forest Road 858 eventually arrives at the Continental Divide Trail.
5. The CDT is marked with trail signs in this area.
6. Forest Road 858 crosses Walnut Creek.
7. Cyclist thought he was on the CDT, but actually continued on 858.
8. Forest Road 858 crosses Walnut Creek.



Join Heart of the Gila & the Host Committee



Gila Back Country Horsemen
Sam & Betsy Holdsworth
Shelby Hallmark & Lindee Lenox
Melissa Green
Larry & Chris McDaniel
Jay & Siah Hemphill
Alexandra Tager & Keith Knadler

**Fundraiser to support
Heart of the Gila Trails Partnership
Friday, March 1st, 5pm-7pm at A-Space Gallery**

110 W 7th St. Silver City-(enter through north-side parking lot)

Featured Program by **Melissa Green, HOTG Trails Manager**

~Why Wilderness Trails? ~

Special Guest: Phil Connors ~ Author of "A Song for the River" & "Fire Season" ~ Talks trails

Gila Landscapes ~ Slideshow by Jay Hemphill

Appetizers & Refreshments (beer and wine too!)

Raffle Items (*must be present to win!*)

Suggested Donations: \$500*\$250*\$100*\$50*\$25

(any size donation accepted - everyone welcome) **Can't make it? [Donate Now online](#)**

Must [RSVP](#) to be on the Guest List! [online](#) or call/text: 575-519-8217



heartofthegila.org

heartofthegilatrails@gmail.com