



# **BACK COUNTRY HORSEMEN OF MISSOURI**

## **Chapter Guide**

(June 1, 2019)



## **INTRODUCTION**

**This Chapter Guide is intended for use by chapters in the Back Country Horsemen of Missouri (BCHMO) organization to understand the mission, purposes, structure, and responsibilities chapters have to the state BCHMO organization, and Back Country Horsemen of America (BCHA). Back Country Horsemen of America is a volunteer service organization, intent on protecting access for equestrian and stock use, by working with federal, state, local, and private entities, who provide public use equestrian trails. While riding and social events are an integral part of the organization, they are secondary to the primary mission and purpose of protecting access to existing trails through Service, Education, and Advocacy.**

**This guide is an overview, and is to be used as a quick reference tool. For detailed and comprehensive information on the governing of BCHMO, consult the BCHMO By-Laws, and the Policy and Procedure (P&P) Manual, available on the BCHMO website: [www.bchmo.org](http://www.bchmo.org).**

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

- I. Back Country Horsemen of Missouri (BCHMO) - State Structure & Responsibilities**
- II. BCHMO Chapter Structure**
- III. BCHMO Chapter Responsibilities**
- IV. Tips - Best Practices – Expectations**
- V. BCHMO Chapter Checklist**
- VI. Helpful Information Regarding Chapter Formation/Recruitment**



## I.

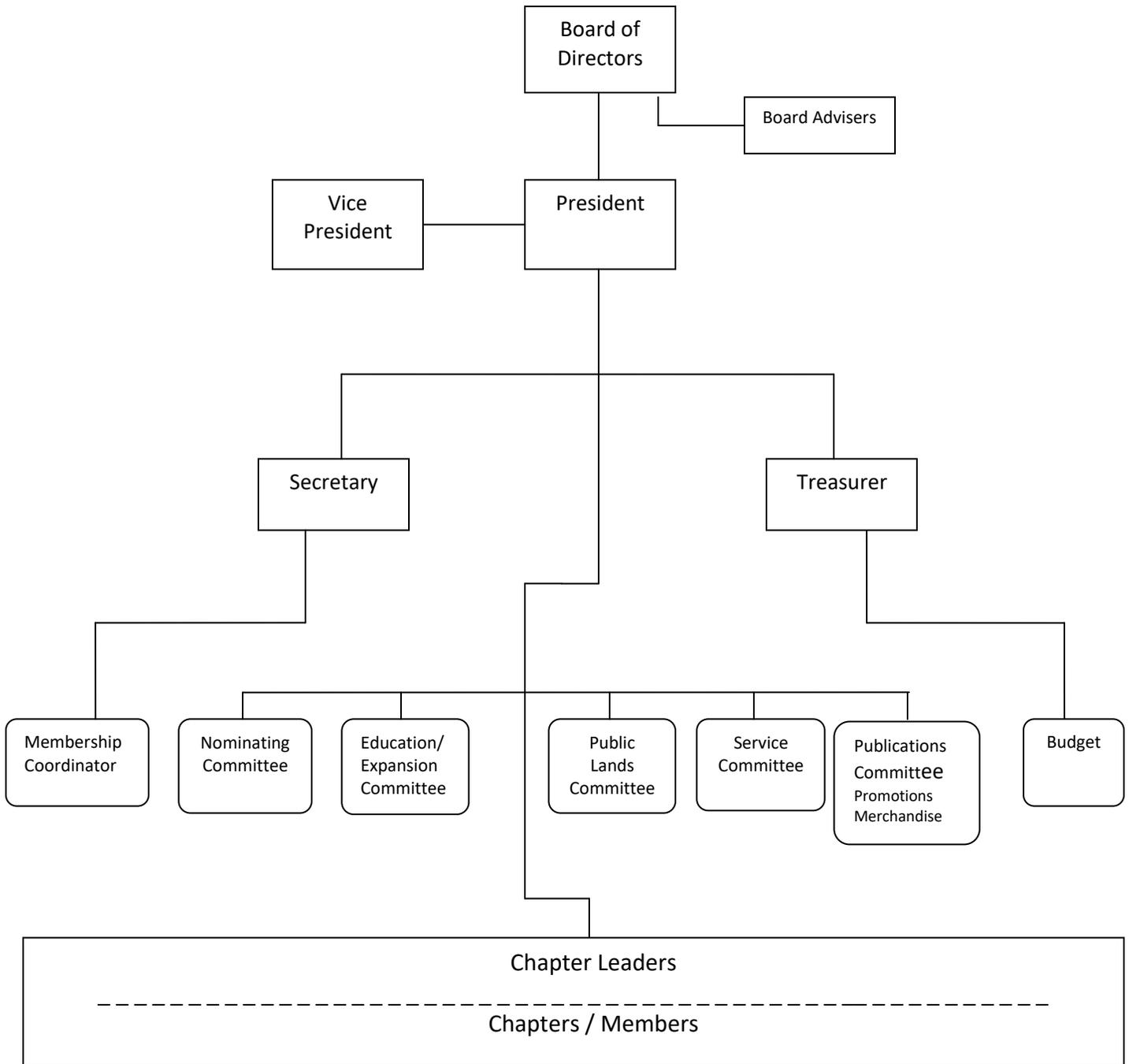
### **BCHMO State Structure and Responsibilities**

- Board of Directors (BOD) consist of seven BCHMO members in good standing. A director on the board serves a three-year term, and is elected by the BCHMO membership at the Annual Membership Meeting, held annually on the first Saturday of November. The responsibility of the BOD is to set policy and guide the organization by applying the mission and principles of Back Country Horsemen of America (BCHA) and adhering to the BCHMO By-Laws. The Board Chair and Recording Secretary are elected by the BOD at the first board meeting of the year.
- BCHMO Officers consist of President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer. Officers serve a one-year term, and are elected annually by the BCHMO membership at the Annual Membership Meeting. The responsibility of the Officers is to carry out and implement board policy.
- Standing Committees: BCHMO has five Standing Committees: Public Lands Committee, Education Committee, Service/Volunteer Hours Committee, Publications and Promotions Committee, Nomination Committee. Chairs for the committees are appointed by the President and approved by the BOD.
- Membership Coordinator. Membership Coordinator responsibility is to maintain an accurate membership roster as well as other duties pertaining to membership. Membership Coordinator is appointed by the President and approved by the BOD.
- Board of Directors meetings are required by the By-Laws to meet a minimum of three times a year. The norm is four times a year.

Detailed information on the duties and responsibilities of the BOD, Officers, Committee Chairs, Membership Coordinator and other policy information can be found in the **BCHMO By-Laws and Policy and Procedure Manual (P&P)**.



## Back Country Horsemen of Missouri - Structure



The above chart is the “organizational structure” for decision making. We encourage any member to bring an item or a concern directly to any level within this structure. This organization depends on the input from its members and chapters to grow and succeed.



## II.

### BCHMO Chapter Structure

**Structure:** Chapters are formed in the local area of members. Chapters identify their local public use equestrian trails and seek to take responsibility for maintenance and access by working with the local land manager(s). Chapters may organize themselves in ways that work best for them. Minimum requirements are:

- Membership: A minimum of 15 paid members in good standing. An individual membership counts as one member; a family membership counts as two members. An organization, business, or club, may join a chapter as an Associate member. Associate membership counts as two members.
- Membership runs from January 1 – to December 31 for the calendar year.
- Chapter Officers: Minimum is three officers. Chapter Leader, Vice-Chapter Leader, Secretary is usually the norm. Titles can be what the chapter chooses to identify the office, e.g. Trail Boss; Paper Wrangler, etc.
- Chapter name is determined by majority vote and should reflect a positive image of equestrians. Official title shall be *(insert name)* Chapter, Back Country Horsemen of Missouri.



### III.

## BCHMO Chapter Responsibilities

- Upon joining, members agree to follow the BCHMO By-Laws and Policies.
- Chapter is responsible to know the status of membership and keep membership at required level. Coordinate updates/changes with BCHMO Membership Coordinator.
- Chapter is responsible to communicate with the state organization (BCHMO). Responsibilities include submitting Chapter Reports for BOD meetings, articles for publication in the *Back Country Horsemen of Missouri Newsletter*, Chapter Report for the Annual Membership Meeting held each November, and submission of chapter information to BCHMO webmaster. Chapter members and especially Chapter leadership is encouraged to attend the Annual Membership Meeting as well as other state events.
- Chapters are responsible for accurately completing the Volunteer Hours Report (VHR) form for Chapter work events and sending it in a timely manner to the BCHMO Service Chair. Members may also record and turn in individual work hours not related to a Chapter scheduled event such as reconnaissance, individuals working on public use trails, etc. VHR forms and guidelines can be found at: [www.bchmo.org/forms/](http://www.bchmo.org/forms/)
- Chapter leadership is responsible for communication with chapter members. Inform them of activities within the chapter, and at the state level. Keep members informed of local, state, and national issues.
- If an issue concerning public land trail access occurs and cannot be resolved through chapter efforts, the chapter will contact the BCHMO Public Lands Committee for assistance. If the BCHMO Public Lands Committee is unsuccessful, they will elevate it to the BCHA Public Lands Committee for assistance.
- Chapter is responsible for awareness of BCHMO resources, policies, programs. All resources can be found on the BCHMO website: [www.bchmo.org](http://www.bchmo.org).
  1. BCHMO By-Laws
  2. Policy & Procedure Manual (P&P)
  3. Trail Maintenance Incentive (TMI)
  4. Recruitment Incentive Program



## IV.

### TIPS – BEST PRACTICES – EXPECTATIONS For EFFECTIVE and STRONG BCHMO CHAPTERS

1. **You Gotta' Believe.** Chapters need strong leaders and members who understand what Back Country Horsemen does, and that a BCHMO chapter and its membership are a vital part in keeping trail access open for equestrians, now, and for future generations. The BCHMO mission is narrow – keeping access to equestrian trails through service, education, and advocacy.
2. **You Gotta' Have Fun.** While the purpose of BCHMO is to protect trail access, and can entail some hard work, it can also be fun and very socially fulfilling. In your planning of work events, take time for social interaction, whether it be a shared lunch or an overnight campout, with the next day designated for pleasure riding. Be creative in planning an event that meets both the need of fulfilling the mission and meeting the needs of camaraderie. Plan and coordinate workdays or fun rides with other BCHMO chapters.
3. **Chapter Communication.** An informed chapter is an effective chapter. Know the regulations of the various public land agencies that you work and ride on. Insure chapter members know what to do and whom to contact should an emergency arise. Safety First!
4. **Know the Maintenance Needs for Your Trails.** Develop a personal relationship with your local land manager(s) and make it known to them that your chapter is there to be of service. **This cannot be stressed enough.** Develop the credibility of your chapter and its worth by making it a personal and positive relationship. Know the needs of the work area, what is allowed under the specific land agency, and plan workdays accordingly. Inform the land managers of the dates and times of work days in their areas. Follow up with them outlining results, documentation with photos, etc.
5. **Member Involvement.** Members need direction and can be involved in many different ways. This is a volunteer organization with a shared purpose and value. Some may only be able to pay dues to be involved. Others can contribute in ways that are not as physically challenging as working on trails, e.g., participating in comment periods (**very important**); meeting with the land manager and developing a relationship that will promote a working relationship; attending and participation at chapter meetings; attending work events in a support role – water, snacks, cook-out; submitting articles for the BCHMO Newsletter or maintaining a chapter Facebook page; distributing BCHMO brochures and encouraging others to become involved. The ways to contribute are many. Not all is done from the back of a horse. Every member is important and vital to a chapter's success.

6. **Take the Right Steps:** Take the “Right Steps” if presented with a trail access issue. If on the chapter level all avenues of resolving the issue has failed, contact the state BCHMO Public Lands Committee for assistance.
  
7. **Member Intent in Joining.** Chapter members must understand that BCHMO is not a saddle club or riding club. BCHMO is not about finding a new place to ride. BCHMO is not a social club. BCHA and BCHMO are national and state volunteer service organizations working to protect access to trails through Service, Education, and Advocacy for our equestrian future.
  
8. **Taking the Next Step.** Chapters are encouraged to have representation on the state level. Volunteer for a position on the Board of Directors or as an Officer. Join a Standing Committee, attend Board Meetings to inform your chapter on issues or happenings. Board Meetings are open to all members. Board Members and Officers, are **YOU**. All are chapter members.

**MOST IMPORTANT: If you have a question or concern, ASK.**



V.

## BCHMO Chapter Checklist

### YEARLY:

Chapter Report for Annual Meeting	Submit to BCHMO President with copy to BCHMO Secretary prior to Annual Meeting (first weekend of November)	Date Submitted
Chapter Elections	Election of chapter officers for the year. Submit results to BCHMO Secretary, Publications Chair and Webmaster.	Date Submitted
Chapter Budget Request	Submit to BCHMO Budget Committee by deadline.	Date Submitted

### QUARTERLY:

Chapter Articles/Photos for BCHMO Newsletter	Submit to Publications Committee Chair via email by the following dates:  December 1 March 1 June 1 September 1	Dates Submitted
Chapter Reports for BCHMO Board Meetings	Submit to BCHMO President with copy to BCHMO Secretary prior to each Board of Directors meeting	Dates Submitted

### AS WARRANTED:

Volunteer Hours Report (VHR)	Submit to BCHMO Service Chair	
Chapter Calendar/News/Information/Photos	Submit to Webmaster	
Pertinent chapter issues or information, questions regarding any aspect of BCHMO chapter may need assistance with.	Submit to BCHMO Officer, Board Member or Committee Chair	



## VI.

### **Helpful Information Regarding Chapter Formation/Recruitment**

#### **Organizational/Recruitment Meeting for Starting New Chapter**

- Pick a central location to your area for meeting. Think about best day, time of day for meeting in order to maximize attendance for potential attendees.
- Advertise meeting in local paper (Community Calendars usually free); article for newspapers (contact BCHMO Education/Expansion Chair and BCHMO Publications Chair for guidance on information and verbiage); radio (again, this may be a free service); flyers announcing meeting date, time and location posted at feed stores, saddle clubs, tack stores, trail ride venues, local businesses (horse associated or not....hardware stores, grocery stores, Post Office, etc.).
- BCHMO Presentation DVD available (contact Education Committee Chair).
- Request attendance by BCHMO Officers, Board Directors, other chapter leaders, to assist with presentation and answering questions.
- Have a sign-in sheet at meeting for attendee's contact information: name, addresses, phone, and email, so that you can follow up with them if need be.
- Make sure to have BCHMO brochures/membership applications on hand.
- Please inform attendees that BCHMO is not a saddle club, trail ride club, or social club, but a volunteer organization.

#### **Recruiting New/Potential Members**

- Word of mouth
- Develop and maintain a Facebook page for your chapter. Keep information up to date, include photos, event and work day reminders. Submit this information to BCHMO website.
- Presentations at local saddle club events, local community events, 4-H groups, schools; flyers at feed stores, trail ride venues and other community areas.
- Distribute BCHMO brochures/business cards (with your contact information on back), at above venues. Leave brochures/business cards with local businesses (with their permission).
- Display chapter banner at work days, events, etc.
- List work events, events, fun rides, etc., in local paper (again Community Calendar is usually free), free radio calendar of events.
- Write articles (or request assistance from Publications Chair), about your chapter for local paper (please have Publications Chair review prior to submission to paper).

- Have an information booth at local fairs, horse shows, community events, other outdoor activity events.
- Invite your Land Managers, interested local business/community leaders to your chapter's events (especially those like National Trails Day or Public Lands Day), provide lunch or snacks. Tell, or more importantly, show them what we are about by showcasing your chapters' accomplishments.
- Refer people to the BCHMO website ([www.bchmo.org](http://www.bchmo.org)) and BCHMO Facebook page (Back Country Horsemen of Missouri) and BCHA website ([www.bcha.org](http://www.bcha.org)).