



Back Country Horsemen
of America



THE
WILDERNESS
SOCIETY

WILD RIDERS

A Partnership Between the Back Country Horsemen of America and The Wilderness Society



TWS Mission

To protect wilderness and inspire Americans to care for our wild places.

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BCHA Mission

The purpose of this organization shall be:

To perpetuate the common sense use and enjoyment of horses in America's back country and wilderness

To work to insure that public lands remain open to recreational stock use.

To assist the various government and private agencies in their maintenance and management of said resource.

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.

To foster and encourage the formation of new state Back Country Horsemen's organizations.

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In early 2009, a group of Back Country Horsemen of America and The Wilderness Society representatives came together to identify common ground around wilderness and horse use. As a result, the "Wild Riders" partnership was formed complete with a detailed action plan.

The goal of the Wild Riders is to pursue a plan of action intended to "insure that traditional, historical, and responsible pack and saddle stock use in wilderness areas is recognized, protected, supported and sustained consistent with the capabilities of the land."

WORKING TOGETHER

As part of the Wild Riders Action Plan, BCHA and TWS will work on:

- Common ground paper describing support for horse use on public lands and historical role of this use on public lands and in public lands advocacy
- Forest service wilderness management policy
- Wilderness management plans for specific new wilderness areas
- Federal funding trail maintenance and other priority recreation needs on federal lands
- Outreach and education to agencies and recreationists on horse recreation on public lands



Horse riders in the Methow Valley, Washington state

SUCCESSES TO DATE

- BCHA National Directors unanimously approved the Wild Riders partnership in April of 2009
- Wild Riders Action Plan developed
- Joint press release and media rollout of the partnership
- Joint advocacy in support of Legacy Roads and Trails appropriation for the Forest Service, resulting in FY2010 budget of \$90 million
- Joint scoping comment letter on Wilderness Management Plan in Ely, Nevada
- Joint Advocacy at American Hiking Society's Hike the Hill event in Washington, D.C.



Adolph Murie and Margaret (Mardy) Murie astride Lady, her faithful companion. Mardy Murie was known as the "Grandmother of the Conservation Movement."

Aldo Leopold, co-founder of The Wilderness Society and a preeminent voice in the conservation world defined wilderness as "a continuous stretch of country preserved in its natural state, open to lawful hunting and fishing, big enough to absorb a two week's [horse] pack trip." In his most famous book, *A Sand County Almanac*, he provided two examples of "primitive skills in pioneering travel...one of these is canoe travel, and the other is travel by packtrain."