

“The Idaho Horse Council continues to make a difference in Idaho “, says Marybeth Conger

For those of you that may be new to BCHI, the Idaho Horse Council (IHC) currently is a state member of the American Horse Council, who has a lobbyist in Washington, DC. The purpose of the IHC is to promote every type of horse activity in Idaho, to be a large, loud, and effective equine voice in Idaho, to monitor legislation affecting horse activities, and to be an information resource for equine owners and regulating bodies. Check out the newly updated Idaho Horse Council website for more details. BCHI is a long-time member of the IHC and currently has seven directors on the IHC board. Those members are Phil Ryan, Janine Townsend, Arlynn Hacker, Raenette Didier, Norm Smith, Connie Bowcutt and yours truly.

The Idaho Horse Council goals include:

- Being vigilant and informed about pending equine health matters,
- Promoting equine research and education through our state’s college and university system
- Monitoring trail use, development, and maintenance
- Keeping members involved in decision affecting zoning and land use
- Promoting involvement of youth in equine activities
- Being informed of equine events

2019 has been another active year for the IHC. Did you know that every five years and in cooperation with U of I College of Agriculture, The IHC completes a Horse Census. Members are working to complete one in 2020. This is important to BCHI as the results of the Horse Census prove that horses and equine related events have a tremendous economic impact on our state. I encourage all chapters to use this information to influence public agencies and assist with grant writing efforts. For example, in the last census equine owners contributed over 7.5 million in total horse related sales in the state of Idaho.

Also, several BCHI chapters received grants from the Idaho Horse Board, which was created by the IHC. Members on the Idaho Horse board are appointed by the governor and must be members of the IHC. Grants are used for Equine promotion, education, or research and are funded by the brand check off that is collected and administered through the Idaho state brand office. IHC members continue to meet and give public input on the new brand service fee. This change was needed to align actual equine inspection cost to \$\$ charged. If you are interested in being on the horse board or wish to request a grant visit the IHB page.

Tin 2019, IHC awarded three 1500 scholarships for a total of \$4500 to graduates of Idaho High schools who have been active with some form of equine activity. It sure would be great to see an application in 2020 from a BCHI student promoting backcountry use. The IHC Scholarship page has all the requirements and the scholarship application.

Each year the IHC produces the state’s only equine expo that attracts exhibitors and spectators from across the United States. The Expo features trainers, clinics, equine products, entertainment, seminars, competitions to name a few. Mark your calendar for the 2020 Expo April 10-12, 2020 to be held at the Idaho Ford Center Nampa, ID. More information can be found on the Idaho Horse Expo page.

The IHC Annual Meeting and Banquet is November 9, Twin Falls, ID with more details to follow on the IHC Event Page. IHC President plans a tour of Twin Falls on November 8, and the first ever Officer/ Executive Committee Breakfast meeting on November 11. If you are in the area, please stop in.