

9/30/2019 – Alpine Lake Project 2019

This article is being written by Deb Sharbono. Jim and I were thinking that being a packer would be an interesting thing to do. Boy, were we right. We were invited to join the group that went up into the Alpine Wilderness Lakes area to assist in the bridge project in Leavenworth, WA.

So we decided to have a practice time for all the members that were going to participate with their stock. Ron Downing came over to help and instruct us on how one ties on a 4x12x7 plank on each side of a mule or horse. This has to be done with finesse and patience of both the packer and the stock(the four legged one). So that day we spent time and a lot of walking of the mules/horse to make sure that they would accept the long, hard and clumsy piece of wood on their back.

By the end of that day we had several that accepted and carried the planks with not much ruckus.

So on Tuesday, Sept 24<sup>th</sup> we left the Kmart parking lot with Jay, Frank, Sam, Sandy, Deb and Jim from Pierce county chapter of Back County Horsemen. On the way to the Alpine Lakes area to assist with the bridge project.

We got to the camp area, set up camper, set up highline, got the mules and horse fed then set to making supper. It was dark by that time.

The meeting that night was at 8 p.m. They informed us of what paperwork was necessary and when to fill it out. They gave us feed for the stock for the time that we were to be there. We were to get up and get stock ready by tying on the 8ft planks that weighed anywhere from 75lbs to 110lbs.

Our group had 6 stock to load and then get on our mounts and ride up to where the bridge was being taken apart by the other crew of BCH members. That trail ride was 5 miles in.

With our lunches and water on our mounts we started out with anticipation of what the trail will hold with the packing of these long, heavy planks. To all of our amazement our stock did very well and had no crashes. The stock were very happy on the ride back down with nothing on their backs.

This was a learning experience for me as I have only ponied a mule with a load twice. This load could have been hard if the mule or horse gave up halfway up. It could of got stuck on a tree or root. They could of dropped the load but we did not. Please enjoy as we did the pictures of a very successful pack and project.

Of course, we started out with sunny day and ended with rain and snow.

Typical Washington weather just blink, and it will change.

We really want to thank all the Whatcom, Tahoma and other BCHW members that invited us and helped us with our stock during this project.