

New Mexico Horse Council Board of Directors Meeting
April 6, 2009 – Bernalillo County Cooperative Extension Center
1510 Menaul Blvd. NW, Albuquerque



As announced at the March meeting, at 5:30 attendees were offered pizza, green salad, soft drinks and water. The food was brought by Martin and Rusty Cook; donations were accepted. The meeting room has kitchen facilities.

Directors Present: Jeff Bader, Val Cole, Rusty Cook, Maura Lewiecki, Philip Reppert, Eldon Reyer.

Directors Absent: John Collins, Kristin Darnell, Winona Kennedy, David Kreger, Elsie Shollenbarger, Harry Touloumis, Lori Walton.

Guests Present: Jackie Bouker, Martin Cook, Karen Dunning, Senator Dede Feldman.

1. **Call to Order.** The meeting was called to order by President Rusty Cook promptly at 6:00 PM.
2. **Approval of the Agenda.** The following additions to the agenda sent to Board members were suggested: status of Rio Grande Trail be added under “new business” and a review of recent American Horse Council emailed memos be added under “announcements”. Lewiecki moved, Reyer seconded that the agenda be approved. **Motion carried.**
3. **Introduction of Board members and guests.** All present introduced themselves. In addition to the members of the Board and others present, those invited to the meeting included Karri Sauve of Hoofprints, Nancy Searles of the NMHC Foundation, and Dorothy Vasquez of Bosque Circle Ranch.
4. **Approval of draft March meeting minutes.** Jackie Bouker offered a clarification of the statement on the construction of the North Diversion Channel trail. With this correction, Bader moved, Reyer seconded the March minutes be approved. **Motion Carried.**
5. **Treasurer’s Report.** Cole apologized that this report has not yet been reconciled with the bank statements (which usually arrive the second week of the month) and she thought there was a mistake in one of the deposits. Also, she inadvertently paid the Association Resource Group Dues twice when they sent a second invoice. They will refund. Otherwise, since the March meeting checks have been written to: Qwest (two different bills), Public Regulatory Commission (annual filing fee with report), Equisure (club liability policy) and Equestrian Land Conservation Resource dues, as decided at the March Board meeting. One deposit was made, including individual dues (\$160), Club dues (\$90), Commercial dues (\$60), Donation (\$5) and sale of liability signs (\$575). The only bill on hand is 1st quarter reimbursement to Cole, \$108.66. The checking account April 6 balance is approximately \$9833.74. The Club liability policy is in force from March 27, but dates will have to be sent to Equisure as events are set. NMHC 2009 membership stands at 94 individual and lifetime, 47 club and commercial. Reyer moved, Lewiecki seconded that the treasurer’s report be accepted. **Motion carried.**
6. **Old Business.** Legislative Wrap-up (Senator Dede Feldman). Feldman represents Senate District 13, which includes some of Albuquerque’s North Valley, the west side (east of Coors Blvd.) and extends into the northeast heights. She thanked NMHC for its letter to legislators supporting her SB 222. Observing that Bernalillo County taxpayers provide 68% of the property taxes supporting the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District (MRGCD), and that many of those taxpayers support recreational use of the ditch trails and roads and find the MRGCD unresponsive, her bill would have removed ½ mill and set up a fund to promote recreational use. (She pointed out that four other bills were introduced that would have impacted the MRGCD, one of which would have dissolved it.) Originally, the MRGCD stated that their attitude towards recreational users stemmed from possible liability to the district; however, when Feldman and others pushed through a bill shifting liability to another government entity, they still rejected a two year community project called “Ditches with Trails” after four hours of testimony before the MRGCD Board. Feldman’s bill failed, as did the others impacting the Conservancy. One Senator reminded all that the MRGCD Board was an elected body, and that votes could change directors. Feldman said HB 273, granting law enforcement powers to state trails as well as state parks, also failed.

Feldman introduced Karen Dunning (kdunning99@gmail.com; tel. 898-7493) who has collected enough signatures to run for Bernalillo County Position 3, currently held by Bill Turner. (Of the seven member MRGCD Board, two are Bernalillo County positions; Jim Roberts, former NMHC member, is the incumbent for Position 4.) Dunning, a former city planner, supports recreational use of the trails, although she feels that ditch roads that are completely open to motorized traffic are susceptible to more damage to MRGCD





and to private property. The election will be held June 2. Further discussion touched on Dorothy Vasquez of Bosque Circle Ranch, who has been trying to resolve a permit with the MRGCD for trail rides since November 2008. Lewiecki said the MRGCD did not have a process to grant permission, but is looking at hiring a neighborhood liaison. Reppert asked why voting participation could not be increased by mailing a ballot to all qualified electors? Feldman said response to mail-in ballots is traditionally low. MRGCD has held its elections separate from general elections, which also decreases voter participation.

Other legislative results: the three bills mentioned in the NMHC letter (SB 222, Ditch Trails; SB 471, Create a Rodeo Council, and HB 781, creating an Equine Rescue Fund, all failed to pass. The governor has signed some animal bills, such as HB 593, which sets a procedure to certify "euthanasia technicians", since the only allowable way to put down animals will be by lethal injections. (Note: in this bill, "animal" does not include livestock.) Senate Bill 127, also signed, requires people charged with animal cruelty to be financially responsible for animals taken into protective custody.

Update from Horsin' Around Emporium Planning Committee. In the absence of Kristin Darnell and David Kreger, there was no report. However, there was discussion on whether the silent auction to be held in conjunction with the Emporium June 9 should benefit NMHC or the NMHC Foundation. Donations to the Foundation can be tax deductible by those who use the long form; donations to NMHC are not. Reppert moved, Reyer seconded that the donor specify on the donation form which organization receives the proceeds. **Motion carried.**

Annual Trail Ride. If this event is to be held at the Valles Caldera, it needs a chair who will check on camping status and set up the ride. Suggestion: Cook contact Jennifer and Bill Averill; Jennifer is a former director of NMHC who could not commit time every month but did say she would help on specific projects. Reyer said there are still two positions to fill on the Valles Caldera Preservation Trust Board, and he is under consideration for one of them; therefore it could be a conflict for him to work on the trail ride. He said an endurance ride had been approved for the Valles Caldera.

Update on NMHC Foundation Project. Nancy Searles was not present, although she is working on the project. Reyer said that former NMHC member Sue Crazy Horse is working on the possibility of scholarships to the 4-H Horse School.

Other Old Business. Horse Symposium. Reyer (a presenter) said there was only one paying customer, Nancy Searles. There was attendance at the presentations, but it consisted of vendors and other presenters. NMHC Board member Elsie Shollenbarger was told by organizer Karri Sauve that she should cancel her talk. Discussion followed on how to make such an event successful without putting it at Expo New Mexico. Is Moriarty too far away? It has a large population of horse owners, which did not support the event. Did the \$35/day or \$75/ weekend admission discourage possible attendees?

- 7. New Business.** Report on New Mexico Horse Rescue Coalition Meeting (March 28). Rusty Cook said the main presenter was Dr. Dave Fly, state veterinarian. He discussed body condition scores and animal diseases (similar to Dr. Baker's talk to the NMHC Board). He also said horse rescues should evaluate the possible disease status of any prospective "horse tenant" as the whole operation could be shut down if an animal later found to be diseased is brought on to the property. All the certified rescues (and under NM law, any horse rescue seeking donations needs to be certified by the NM Livestock Board) perceive an increase in neglected and abandoned animals. There is a donkey rescue being set up, and another rescue (which does not yet see the need to be certified) is concentrating on draft horses. Other discussion concerned training offered by FEMA.

Phil Reppert reported that he was working on a website for neglected or wild horses with the executive leadership program of the USDA.

Information on Preparedness and Response to Agricultural Terrorism class (Bader). This course is being offered to community planners "as well as others in the food production chain" by FEMA, and provides information on how to respond to an act of agricultural terrorism. Units at Louisiana State University, including the Academy of Counter-Terrorist Education, the LSU school of Veterinary Medicine, and the LSU Health Sciences centers, will be presenters. The next course is free, and will be held April 14 – 16 at the Route 66 casino. It has limited space left. Bader said that most if not all counties in New Mexico had developed a disaster response plan. Agricultural emergencies could also, for instance, include a natural





disaster such as an outbreak of foot and mouth disease. Although horses do not get this disease, movement of all livestock would surely be stopped for an indeterminate period. Cook said that some horse rescuers are planning to attend the seminar.

Table at Horsemen's Feed Open House April 18. Jackie and perhaps Rusty can help, but this needs an organizer.

Ditch Pony Promenade, May 17. Organizer Melanie Scholer and Dan's Boots & Saddles have several volunteers, but NMHC should have a presence. This event is being held at Topform Arena in Corrales, which allows many people to ride to the event on the ditch trails. It also involves the Corrales Recreation staff and provides insurance.

Lefty Converse Show, August 16 at Topform Arena. Also sponsored by Dan's Boots and organized by Melanie Scholer, this is the planned venue for the NMHC tack swap. However, Melanie Scholer said she has not yet been approached by NMHC to finalize plans.

NMHC Banner at San Ysidro Arena. A new livestock event arena is being built in the village of San Ysidro, the home of two NMHC directors. One proposed an NMHC banner be placed at the arena, but since Darnell is not at this meeting we have no details and will have to table this proposal.

American Horse Council Annual Meeting and National Issues Symposium, Washington, D.C. (Cole) Dates: June 14 – 17. On Sunday, June 14, the State Horse Councils Advisory Committee (SHCAC) will hold an orientation meeting, beginning at 4 PM, followed at 6 PM by a reception open to all meeting attendees. Monday, AHC standing committees and the unwanted horse coalition will meet. The SCHAC meeting traditionally lasts from 9 AM to 4 PM. This is followed Monday evening by the AHC reception. Tuesday is the National Issues forum, with seminars and speakers still to be announced. Tuesday evening will be the Congressional reception. Wednesday is devoted to congressional visits, appointments (if desired) will be arranged by AHC. Cole is attending the convention and would like to be the NMHC delegate, although if other NMHC members decide to attend this can be revisited. Reyer moved, Lewiecki seconded that Cole be the NMHC delegate. **Motion carried.**

Other New Business: Trails update (Bouker). The Mountainair Ranger District of the Cibola National Forest and Grasslands (which includes 4th of July Campground, Red Canyon and the Gallinas Peak area) is proposing changes to its motorized travel system. Open houses will be April 14, 6-8 PM at Belen Senior Center; April 15, 6-8 PM at Corona Senior Center; April 28, 6-8 PM at Mountainair Senior Center.

The Sandia District Travel Management map is at the printers, due back April 15. Then notices will be sent out to those on the list, and published in the newspaper; following that, the FS will start citing violators.

The Aldo Leopold trail along the east side of the Rio Grande from Montano south to the Nature Center is now open. There is a loop on the north end near Montano, and a single trail south along the river to the Nature Center ending at a paved trail just north of the center. This is a dirt trail open to all.

As of March 31, the MRGCD is preparing to replace the pedestrian bridge along the Gallegos Lateral behind Alvarado Elementary School. This change was originally suggested by the Ditches with Trails group.

The Equestrian Land Conservation Resource group (NMHC has just joined) has been awarded a federal grant to develop a national equestrian trail association which will help equestrians communicate with federal land managers such as the National Park Service and the US Forest Service.

(Lewiecki) the Corrales Trail Plan is still not finished. Corrales residents do not want trail users on the levee road in the Bosque, as they consider it part of their nature preserve. However, equestrians are easily able to access that trail, and most Corrales residents are willing to tolerate riders. Other trail traffic may be shifted to Loma Larga, a north/south road west of Corrales Road.

(Lewiecki, Bouker) The Bachechi Open Space group will have a meeting April 15. Bouker will attend, as will some Back Country Horsemen members. The Special Use/Equestrian Center permit has been withdrawn, reflecting the changes in use, and has been replaced with an Open Space permit. Bouker will see that the horse trailer parking space is dedicated and left in place near the round pen intended to warm up trail horses.

E-Extension: Bader reported that the E-Extension Horse Quest is up and running, with many, many topics that include horse ownership, nutrition, body scoring, and many others. All content is peer reviewed, and





there is a regional “ask the experts” section as well. Bader is one of the experts for this region. He suggested that we not re-invent the wheel when this resource is available.

Other Announcements: Next Meeting, Bernalillo, 5:30 PM May 4. Kristin Darnell is to arrange the venue, and as soon as Rusty Cook hears where it is she will put it on the web site.

Future meetings:

June 1, Edgewood, Reppert’s place

July 13, Santa Fe

August 3, Corrales

(Cook) The American Horse Council Website used to have a membership section with no membership form. Due to the efforts of NMHC member Nance McManus, that has been rectified.

(Cole) Recent emails from AHC have covered various subjects where timeliness is important, including: (1) Funding for trails in the stimulus bill; (2) Nominations for trails for awards from the Coalition for Recreational Trails; (3) Release of the 2007 Census for Agriculture; (4) AHC/SHCC Task Force Meeting; (5) Prevention of Equine Cruelty Act of 2009 Introduced in Senate; (6) Department of Labor Withdraws Bush Administration Interpretation on Employer liability for relocation expenses of H-2A and H-2B workers. These may be seen at the AHC website, www.horsecouncil.org.

(Melanie Scholer via email) Dan Christensen, founder of Dan’s Boots and Saddles, has passed away. (The third generation of this family still manages the store;)

Reppert asked if, in future Board meetings, action items requiring a vote be early in the agenda, and any matters interesting only to small local groups be moved towards the end.

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 PM.

