

BCHC Intern Policy

BCHC, with support from various units across the state and a grant from the BCHA, sponsored an Intern for the Summer of 2018 to work with the Center of Excellence Pack Stock Region 5; directly working under Forest Service Packers Lee Roeser and Michael Morse. Dennis Serpa, working with Lee and Michael, developed the application and interview process, expectations of the Intern, and benefits of the program to BCHC & BCHA. Mid Valley Unit had sponsored several interns in the past that worked in their local Stanislaus National Forest; but this was the first time many of the units in California had collectively contributed in order to sponsor one intern for the Center of Excellence. This intern was specifically trained in pack stock use, along with many other skills that were learned from Lee and Michael. The main mission statement that Lee and Michael were guided by was as follows: **“To develop young adults to carry on the skills, attitude and fundamentals of packing, partnerships and LNT for the future of BCH.”**

BCHC aspires to support one intern each year. The intern will be located at the Center of Excellence, as they are equipped to best teach the intern all of the goals that we in turn wish this program to achieve. In addition, the Center of Excellence provides consistent, professional staff that work directly with us (BCHC) to accomplish our similar goals. Another advantage of this collaboration with the Center of Excellence, and the Eastern Sierra Conservation Corps, is that BCHC did not directly make payments to the intern, as this would open us to liability, and also require us to pay for Workman’s Comp, as the intern would be considered our employee. By making a donation to the Eastern Sierra Conservation Corps, they then were able to make the payments to the intern in legitimate terms. This keeps BCHC on the up and up with the tax man! The Center of Excellence is actually a combination of a northern and southern facilities, the Inyo and the Shasta Trinity National Forests. However, the regional Master Packer, Lee Roeser, works from the Inyo location, and that is why the intern’s homebase was at the Bishop facility. Feedback from Michael Morse and Lee Roeser states that this is a very worthwhile program, and they were very pleased with the skills that the intern acquired while participating in the program. Interns completing the summer program with the Center of Excellence are well prepared for a position within the Forest Service, should that be the path they choose to follow. Once an intern has completed their time with the CoE, they *could* go on to present, educate, and support local units. There is just not enough time within the internship for the intern to attend local unit functions; they are busy with the day to day duties of the CoE. The benefits of the intern will be returned to the BCH organization on a much broader scale. Ideally, interns will acquire and/or develop a love of the essence of what BCH stands for; a commitment to “...perpetuate the common sense use of horses in America’s backcountry and wilderness.”

Here are just a sampling of the expectations that the Center of Excellence planned to achieve with the Intern program:

BCHC / USFS Pack Stock COE Apprenticeship Program

Goals / mission statement

To recruit and train apprentices that become the new generation of highly skilled packers, trail workers, wilderness managers and volunteers that have a strong desire to protect our public lands, while preserving traditional wilderness skills and maintaining accessibility.

This is an all-inclusive training program in the use of pack stock as a traditional tool, humane stock handling and packing procedures. Horse and mulemanship as well as safety, are the cornerstones that this training is based on. Also included in the program is;

LNT practices for stock users, wilderness management, trail maintenance and all the details that go into a safe, productive and efficient, packing operation.

Safety is integrated into all Pack Stock COE activities facilitating a culture of safety for both people and animals.

Apprentices have the opportunity to work under Michael Morse and Lee Roeser.

The Pack Stock COE Apprenticeship program has a goal of teaching and introducing the following curriculum to its apprentices / interns

- Wilderness skills
- Wilderness regulations
- Leave - No - Trace skills
- Safely packing a wide variety of equipment and supplies on mules
- Building balanced pack loads with all types of equipment
- Methods of training horses and mules for saddle, pack and draft use
- Evaluation of health conditions of stock
- Methods of providing required medical care
- Selection of best routes in rugged mountainous terrain

- Safety methods of riding animals and leading stock in all situations
- Methods of keeping people, animals and cargo safe at all times
- Ability to drive vehicles in mountainous terrain and conditions
- Ranch and pasture management and maintenance
- Management and design of safe, functional stock facilities
- Use of trail tools, ranch, livestock and general maintenance tools
- Humane handling and use of saddle and pack stock
- Properly fitting equipment to saddle, pack and draft animals
- Matching saddles and riding animals to riders of all levels
- Correct shoeing of horses and mules working in mountain conditions
- Repairing riding saddles, pack saddles and pack equipment
- Ability to pack using a variety of hitches on Sawbuck and Decker saddles
- Teaching stock safety, handling and packing classes
- Learn stock safety routines that make for a safe and efficient workplace

BCHC's Goals of the FS BCHC Internship Program:

- That the Intern will develop the skills and knowledge to help perpetuate the common sense use of horses in America's backcountry and wilderness.
- That the Intern will develop the skills and knowledge to help work to ensure that public lands remain open to recreational stock use; whether as an employee of the agencies, or as a private citizen.
- That the Intern will learn the proper use of a crosscut saw, as well as other trail maintenance tools.
- That the Intern will learn/develop the skill of packing; being able to pack various items, using the most efficient hitch for the job.
- That the Intern will develop the skills and knowledge in order to educate and encourage the wise use of backcountry resources by all visitors of public lands.
- That the Intern develop an understanding of the historical aspect of pack stock use in the backcountry and wilderness areas as a means for transportation, trail development, and other functions.
- That the Intern will develop a thorough understanding and appreciation of the principles of LNT, and will be able to lead by example on how to pack stock into the backcountry with minimal impact to the resource.

- ❑ The program will help to continue our relationship-building efforts with the Forest Service.

If the Intern could accomplish all of these goals and objectives during the summer program, they would be a shining example of what the next generation of Forest Service employees will look like!