



# KERN SIERRA UNIT NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2018

## PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Well I would love to be saying "sure wish spring would get here" but unlike many parts of the country we here in California have had Spring all Winter long. We sure need rain! We have a couple of events coming up that we hope you will take part in. Our Annual Spring Poker Ride on April 7th at the Cattani Ranch in Twin Oaks and the Rendezvous in Paso Robles at the Event Center the April 13, 14 and 15th. Look for more information below and the ride flyer/signup form elsewhere in the Newsletter.

I had the privilege of representing you as the KSU Delegate at the Spring State Meeting the 9th and 10th of this month. I, along with Lynn Joiner, our State Treasurer, and Tammy Bozarth, our State 2nd Vice President in charge of Education, ventured up to Santa Nella for the meetings. As a delegate I was not expected to attend the State Board meetings on Friday evening but could sit in for the Dinner Meeting as there were other no Board Members that wished to attend. I enjoyed the kind of behind the scenes discussions and board votes that took place before the General Meetings on Saturday. Like our two State Officers, they all put in many, many volunteer hours because of their dedication to BCHC. I thank them all for all they do to keep BCHC for all to benefit from.

An update on HR1349 (allowing bicycles in the wilderness) was thwarted, in part by the efforts of the BCHA. Through many hours of meetings and letters from BCHC and BCHA members, like you, it looks like HR1349 will not be voted on because a key Senator for Montana withdrew his support and the EMBA (Enduro Mountain Bike Association) decided against supporting the bill.

Some of the issues brought up before the General Meeting included such things as: Our big BCHC fundraiser event of the year, the Rendezvous, at the Paso Robles Event Center April 13-15th. Because of the high expense of space rental to hold the event we will be somewhat limited this year with our use area being limited to the large covered arena, rented stalls for exhibitors and the building just north of the arena. Being the folks that BCHC members are we will work hard to make the best of situation. This event along with a share of membership dues funds all State expense issues, legal issues, publications, education and Unit help throughout the year.

Paso Robles is an easy drive from our area and the weather should be great so please do your very best to spend the three days there either as a camper (see the Rendezvous packet for camping information), or by taking advantage of one of the many hotels close by or by making a day or two or three trip(s) over to take everything in that is being offered during the three days. Check out the arena events that you would like to take part in or watch. Enter the Art contest, or attend one of the many classes that will be offered. Don't forget the dinners and wine and cheese social. More information can be found in the Newsletter and on BCHC's website [bchcalifornia.org](http://bchcalifornia.org) or on the Kern Sierra website [www.bchckernsierra.com](http://www.bchckernsierra.com).

Tammy Bozarth, our KSU VP and State 2nd VP, came up with a great idea that was discussed voted on and passed. This is for BCHC to develop an official mascot mule. A contest will be held to submit drawings for the mascot mule (something cute). In a separate contest potential names for the mascot mule can be submitted. If we have any artists out there, get your thinking caps on and send us a cute mule. It would be wonderful to have the winning curatorship come from our Unit. (continued on next page...).

## PRESIDENT'S LETTER (CON'T)

Please try to make it to the Spring Poker Ride on April 7th. If not riding just come for a hand of poker cards, lunch and a good visit. We will be gathering at the Community Hall on Caliente Creek Road, so you won't even have to drive off the road if your pickup or car is clean! Check out the flyer in the newsletter for more information. Lunch reservations can be made even if you are not riding and would really be appreciated so we can plan on enough food and beverage.

Be sure to check out the interesting things to see on the State BCHC and National BCHA websites. Check them out sometime and you'll find that you are part of an awesome organization!! BCHA membership is separate from BCHC, which we are part of as KSU members. Anyone wishing to become a member of the national organization. BCHA, is more than welcome to join and may do so on their website.

Hope you make it to one or both our Spring events and our Spring General Meeting that we'll have details on next month!

Happy Trails,

*Sylvia Chavez*

KSU President

## BACKCOUNTRY LIGHTNING SAFETY

Source: [https://www.weather.gov/media/owlie/backcountry\\_lightning.pdf](https://www.weather.gov/media/owlie/backcountry_lightning.pdf)

A lightning strike in a crowded stadium is hazardous out to roughly 50 feet from the strike point, with one or two fatalities and dozens of injuries. People are occasionally injured 100 feet away from a strike. This is roughly equivalent to the kill radius and injury radius of a hand grenade. The mechanisms that hurt us are the millions of volts of electricity, the heat, and the thunderous blast from the rapidly expanding air.

**Ground current** occurs with each strike. You can minimize your exposure to ground current by keeping your feet close together, especially avoiding lying flat on the ground. Ground current contributes to half of lightning fatalities (**Fig. 1**). This is the primary mechanism where we can easily reduce lightning risks.

**Side flash** jumps from tall objects like trees when they are struck by lightning, so don't seek shelter near tall trees, other tall objects, or tall vertical surfaces.

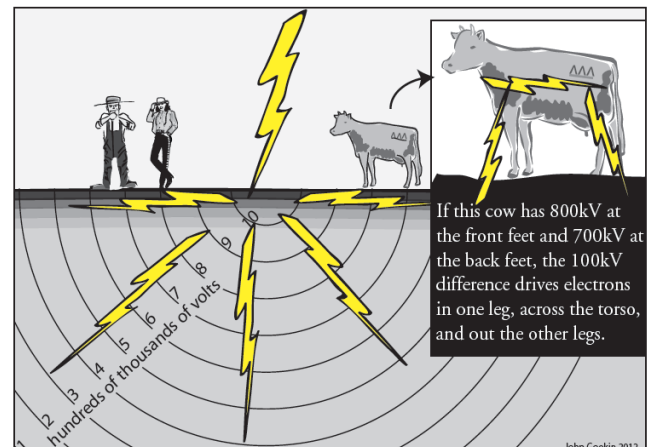
**Contact** is from touching long conductors like railings, cables, and fences. Conduct a web search for *dead cow lightning* to see morbid images of contact and side flash.

**Upward leaders** emanate from high ground and tall objects when downward leaders approach the ground: even if they don't connect with a downward leader, they can be fatal.

**Direct strikes** cause about 3-5 percent of lightning fatalities. Avoid high places and open ground to decrease risk of a direct strike.

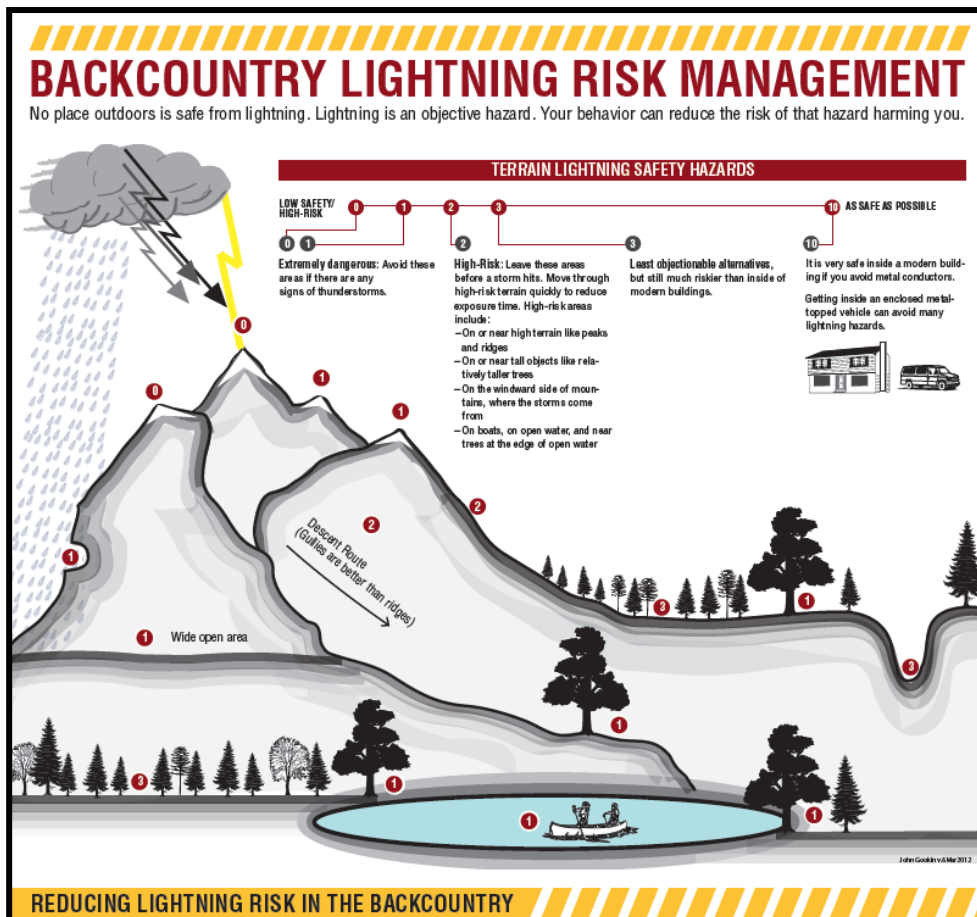
The explosive force of lightning can cause **blunt trauma** resulting in fractures or soft tissue injuries.

**We should primarily focus our efforts on avoiding ground current and side flash.**



**Fig 1. Ground current** causes about half of all lightning injuries. A difference in voltage drives current through us. In this simplified illustration the cow has a 100,000-volt differential, one farmer has a 50,000-volt differential, and the other farmer has her feet together so her voltage difference is minimal.

## BACKCOUNTRY LIGHTNING SAFETY (CONT)



Backcountry settings are at least a 30-minute walk from the nearest vehicles or modern buildings, where you can easily find safe shelter. There are four actions that can reduce your lightning risk in the backcountry, but none of them can make you as safe as getting in a modern building or a metal-topped vehicle. These behaviors are listed in order, and each is roughly twice as important as the next.

#### 1. TIME YOUR VISITS TO HIGH-RISK AREAS WITH LOCAL WEATHER PATTERNS.

Timing activities with safe weather requires knowledge of both typical and recent local weather patterns. There is no such thing as a *surprise* or *break* storm. You must set turnaround times that will get you off of exposed terrain before storms arrive. You need to observe the changing weather and discuss its status with your group. If you have logistical delays, you may need to change your plan rather than summiting a peak or crossing open ground during a thunderstorm. Begin your turnaround if you hear thunder (which means lightning is less than 10 miles away).

#### 2. FIND SAFER TERRAIN IF YOU HEAR THUNDER.

Safer terrain in the backcountry can decrease your chances of being struck. Lightning tends to hit high points and the surrounding terrain. Avoid peaks, ridges, and significantly higher ground during an electrical storm. If you have a choice, descend a mountain on the side that has no clouds over it, since strikes tend to be less frequent on that side until the clouds move over it. Once you get down to low, rolling terrain, strikes are so random you shouldn't worry about terrain as much. Move to safer terrain as soon as you hear thunder, not when the storm is upon you.

Select tent sites that may reduce your chances of being struck or affected by ground current. If you are in a tent in "safer terrain" and you hear thunder, you at least need to be in the lightning position. Lying flat increases the risk of injury by ground current.

If your tent is in a more dangerous location, such as on a ridge, in a broad open area, or near a tall tree, you must exit the tent and get to safer terrain before the storm arrives, and stay there until it has passed.

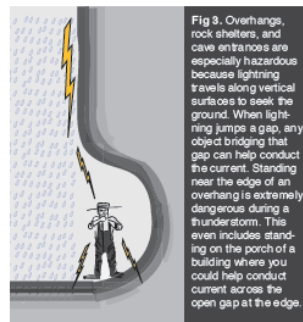
In gently rolling hills, lower flat areas are not safer than the higher flat areas because none of the gentle terrain attracts leaders. Strikes are random in this terrain. Look for a dry ravine or other significant depression to reduce risk.

The flash-bang ranging system measures how far away a thunderstorm is, but sometimes it is impossible to tell which flash is associated with which bang. The flash of light travels fast enough that it is virtually instantaneous. The sound travels a mile every five seconds (1km/3 sec) so ideally you just count the number of seconds between the obvious flash and the obvious bang, and divide by five to determine how many miles away the storm is. Divide the time by three to see how many kilometers distant the storm is. Do not stake your life on the reliability of this ranging system.

#### 3. AVOID TREES AND LONG CONDUCTORS ONCE LIGHTNING GETS CLOSE.

Wide open ground offers high exposure to lightning. Avoid trees and bushes that rise above others, since the highest objects tend to generate upward leaders. Your best bet is to look for an obvious ravine or depression before the storm hits, then spread out your group at 20 foot (7m) intervals to reduce the risk of multiple injuries. Assume the lightning position.

Cavers (Fig. 3) should avoid cave entrances during thunderstorms. Small overhangs can allow arcs to cross the gap. Natural caves that go far into the ground can be struck, either via the entrance or through the ground. People have been shocked standing in water half a mile inside caves. If you are caving near an entrance during electrical activity, don't stand in water, avoid metal conductors like ladders, cables, and railings, and avoid bridging the gap between ceiling and floor.



Boaters need to start getting off the water long before a storm arrives. Avoid tall trees near the edge of the water.

#### 4. GET IN THE LIGHTNING POSITION IF LIGHTNING IS STRIKING NEARBY AND YOU CAN'T GET TO SAFER TERRAIN.

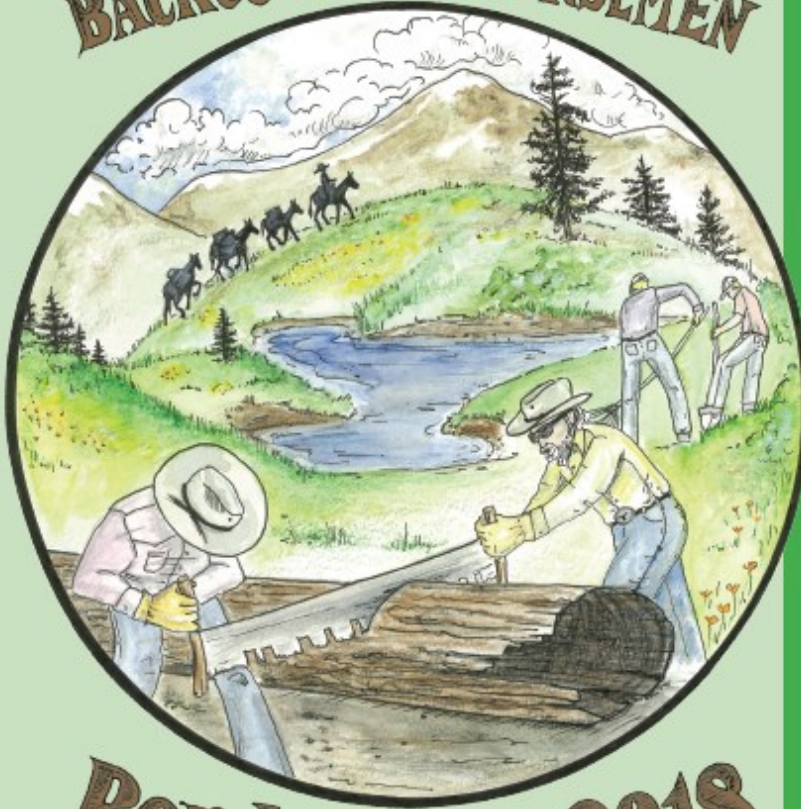
The lightning position (Fig. 4) is for waiting out storms in stationary situations when it is impractical to move to a safer location. It is important to reduce your overall footprint on the ground (Fig. 1).



Fig. 4 Lightning positions. Put your feet together to significantly reduce the effects of ground current. If you have a foam pad to stand on or a pack to sit on, get on it. Crouch or sit to slightly reduce the effects of side flash and upward leaders.



# 31st Annual BACKCOUNTRY HORSEMEN



## Rendezvous 2018

Backcountry Horsemen of California

"We help build and maintain trails to keep them open"

April 13, 14 & 15

Paso Robles Event Center

FREE • OPEN TO PUBLIC • 9-5 daily

*BLM will be there with adoptable animals*

For more info & event packets visit [BCHCalifornia.org](http://BCHCalifornia.org)

or contact Shirley Rasmussen at 805-610-0934

or email [shirleyjras@gmail.com](mailto:shirleyjras@gmail.com)

### Fri & Sat

Happy hour 5pm

Dinner 6pm

### Friday Night

Dinner and Dancing \$55.00

Monte Mills & the Lucky  
Horseshoe Band

### Sat night

Wine, Beer & Cheese

Tasting 3-5pm

(Glass purchase of \$20.00)

Dinner 6pm

Free to attend- Silent and  
Live Auction at 7pm

### Sunday

Cal Poly Colt Breaking and  
Packing Teams

### Vendors

#### Educational Classes:

- How Bits Work
- Weeds, safe or not
- Saws and many more classes
- Matt Sheridan- 3 F's and Better Body Control
- Learn to Pack 101

### Western Art Show

### Kids Corral

#### Events:

- Dutch Oven Demo's and Contest
- Mantee Contest
- Packing Contest
- Pack Scramble
- Trail Challenge

### Fun Games



**Back Country Horsemen of California**  
**KERN SIERRA UNIT**  
**ANNUAL FUNDRAISER**  
**SPRING POKER TRAIL RIDE**

**April 7, 2018**

(Rain Date April 21, 2018)

Sign-up 9:00 am, Ride out 10:00am sharp

**The Cattani Ranch in Twin Oaks, CA**

Take Hwy 58 to the Caliente turn north to Caliente and continue east on the Caliente Creek Rd for 16 miles to the Community Hall.

**COST FOR RIDE AND LUNCH:**

- \$25 Members
- \$35 Non-Members
- \$10 Children (under 12)
- \$15 Non-Rider Lunch



**GENERAL INFORMATION FOR RIDERS AND GUESTS:** We will have water for your horses. No restroom facilities at trailhead. All children under 18 must wear a hard hat when on a horse. No stallions or dogs on the ride. No smoking on the trail. Remember to bring your chairs.



**POKER HAND:**

\$5.00 each. Can buy additional hands when ride is over. Poker money divided 50% to KSU/50% winners. Non-riders may buy into the game also.



**Reservation Form**

**Reservations and Payment Postmarked by April 3rd**

Please mail this form and check to: Sylvia Chavez, PO Box 205, Woody, CA 93287 (Phone: 661-549-8811)

Make checks payable to: BCHC—Kern Sierra Unit

Riders name(s):

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Address:

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Email:

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number:

# Members	x \$25 =	_____
# Non-Members	x \$35 =	_____
# Children	x \$10 =	_____
# Lunch Only	x \$15 =	_____
# Poker Hands	x \$5 =	_____
	Total =	_____



## UPCOMING MEETINGS & EVENTS

**April 7, 2018**

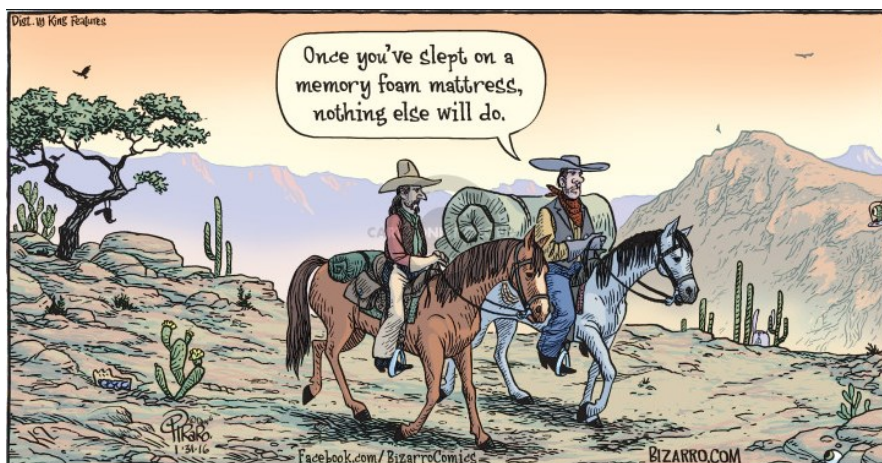
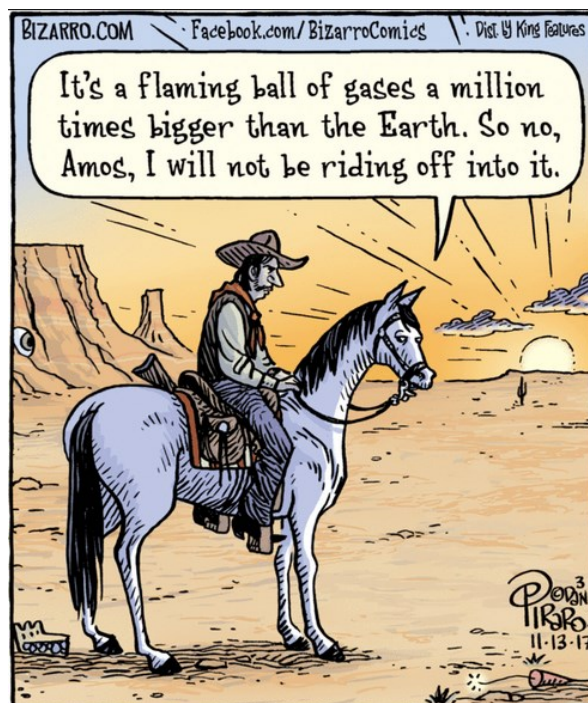
**Annual Spring Poker Ride at the Cattani Ranch**

*See flyer in this newsletter*

**April 13,14, and 15, 2018**

**Rendezvous in Paso Robles at the Event Center**

*See flyer in this newsletter*



Like us on  
Facebook!



BCHC Kern Sierra

## CONTACT US!

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**VISIT OUR WEBSITE!** [www.bchckernsierra.com](http://www.bchckernsierra.com)

## **Backcountry Horsemen of California—Kern Sierra Unit**

### **Objectives and Purpose**

To improve and promote the use, care and development of California backcountry trails, campsites, streams and meadows; to advocate good trail manners.

To promote the conservation and utilization of our backcountry resources in concert with livestock transportation.

To keep the backcountry trails and forage areas open to horsemen on all public lands.

To keep current information before the Corporation membership and its local Units regarding new legislation or management plans related to government regulations of the backcountry.

To support or oppose new proposals, plans and restrictions as related to the interest of horsemen and those persons interested in recreational stock use and enjoying the backcountry.

To promote the interest of people who, due to health or physical factors, need transportation other than by foot on backcountry trails.

To promote public awareness and interest in the historical aspect of horsemen and stock in the backcountry to help educate backcountry users on ways to use the trail and forage in a manner that conserves the backcountry resources.

To assist in keeping the public informed of the vital need for a clean backcountry.

To promote a working relationship with and keep the work interests of the Corporation before our local, state and federal officials.

To assist in the formation and continuation of local Units to carry on these purposes.

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