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Be Cool

ISSUE 009 of Sharetrails Magazine features two-wheeled vehicles. Two-wheels constitute a big part of my happy place. I’ve been riding bicycles and motorcycles in the woods since my age was still measured in single-digits. These days I’m just as likely to be found off road on a mountain bike, an electric pedal-assist mountain bike or a dirt bike. This issue’s articles include a long-term review of an electric-assist mountain bike, a mountain bike helmet review and reviews of a few motorcycle accessories that I use in the course of my daily rides.

First things first: our organization is hitting on all cylinders. Our legal team has worked very hard to successfully advance your interests in several contentious issues. Better yet is the fact that over the past few months we’ve had unprecedented access to Federal policy makers (more on that in this issue). Part of this is attributable to the current political environment but it’s also due to support from various members of our organization with the ability to get us in the room with people who are in a position to help us. I never get tired of travel on behalf of Sharetrails.org when I think that it’s doing us some good. And I’ve never felt better than I have recently concerning our prospects.

None of our progress would be happening without each of you, our members and supporters. You are the lifeblood of our organization. When I or another member of our organization are sitting in a meeting with a member of Congress or an agency official it was you who put us there. The reason that Federal officials are interested in what we have to say is because your support allows us to hire smart and effective people like Don Amador, Del Albright, Jack Welch, Randy Block and Ric Foster to work on access issues. When all else fails your support of the Sharetrails.org/BRC Legal Fund allows us to pay our attorney, Paul Turcke (the best at what he does), to represent us. All of this is on you. We literally could not do our work without you.

We will be having another legal fundraiser in the fall to give our legal team more resources to work with. We have to make hay while the sun shines, and right now is that time. In the meantime we’ll have our second annual Sharetrails Challenge over the summer months to help us through our annual lean period and continue with our ongoing Riders Unite initiative. Details on both events are in this issue.

I’d like to now address my motorcycle friends in the spirit of this two-wheel themed issue. Even though I’m confident that those of you who are reading this are considerate and respectful riders...
who are tremendous ambassadors for our sport, I’m equally sure that you know those who are not. Friends, we have some issues regarding this lack of consideration and respect. In the past few years I’ve reluctantly come to the conclusion that motorcyclists will be the last modality in our coalition to gain widespread acceptance as users of public land. This is because when it comes to positively influencing other users we are often our own worst enemy.

My family and I live in the mountains on several acres bordering public land. It is a mixed blessing. Though we never get tired of the view and the access to great trails we do get weary of the constant annoyance from the multiuse trailhead parking lot about 60 yards from our front door. In some ways it’s a relief when the trails close each fall because even though it means that winter is coming it also means that the noise, dust and needless aggravation all stop for a few months and we can live in peace.

About 80% of our problems come from people with motorcycles. From guys with bikes in the back of diesel pickups doing doughnuts in the dirt parking lot to loud bikes being revved at all hours of the day and night to no regard for no-trespassing signs it’s an ordeal. And it doesn’t end at the trail head either.

Twice in just the last month I’ve been needlessly buzzed by passing motorcycles – once during a photo shoot for this magazine (while parked well off to the side of a trail) and once while riding my mountain bike with my son in his bike trailer on a wide dirt road with plenty of room to pass.

The second incident, in particular, infuriated me. The road was very wide and vision was not an issue. The first of two riders passed safely with plenty of room and a friendly wave. It was his riding partner, about 10 seconds later, who clipped my left handlebar and, for bonus points, sprayed us with gravel.

I want you to imagine how folks with no connection to motorcycles would likely feel if they went out for a ride with their 13-month old toddler on what should be a perfectly safe dirt road and for no good reason in the world have it turned into a near-death experience. For those folks something like this would be a life-changing experience and probably not in a good way. I can all but assure you that this would be very unlikely to convince them to advocate for your right to ride a motorcycle on public land.

When a rider buzzes other trail users, rides a needlessly loud motorcycle or displays any other inconsiderate or illegal behavior in the woods they are hosing all of us. If this were just a minor problem we’d be more popular than we are. Behavior like this is not only providing ammunition to our opponents but loading it into guns and handing them over pointed right back at us. We all have our work cut out for us to change this behavior.

It is my job to advocate for motorcyclists and I myself ride almost every day. Yet more than a few of the many interactions I routinely experience with fellow riders in the woods make it difficult even for me, at times, to view us in a fair context. That means trouble. We must do better.

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1. Join and renew your membership
2. Sign up for alerts and use the info to contact the agency mentioned
3. Contact your representatives, let them know you support trails
4. Thank the National Forests and BLM agencies in your riding area for keeping trails open
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6. Add BRC as your charity of choice when shopping on Amazon.Com
   
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SUMMER IS HERE and I did not get the things done to my Jeep that I had planned this past winter. Time moved just a little too fast for me again. Sometimes it is the exact opposite in the land use arena though. It can take years to get a decision from a land manager or the courts. With the new administration, and the people the President is putting into place in the land management agencies, I hope that will change.

Martin was invited to D.C. in early June for a meeting with a who’s who list of advocates and agency managers. He attended this meeting to have the opportunity to represent our members and to let the agency folks know what we do to represent YOU, our members. From the list I saw of who is invited, I think Sharetrails.org was one of the few land access advocates present. This is a huge feather in our cap to be invited. The things that we have been doing over the years has gotten us the attention to get us invited to this two day meeting and some face time with the Secretary of the Interior and the Chief of the Forest Service with the chance to share our concerns for the future. The work that Don Amador, Paul Turcke and Martin have been doing is what has allowed us the opportunity to attend this meeting. When you see them, please thank them for the hard work that they do for our organization.

I think I finally have all the dust out of the Jeep from Pirate Cove and the trails that I did in that area. For those that made it to our first ever event, thank you for attending. This was a great event that Martin and the office staff did a tremendous job of putting together. The staff at Pirate Cove Resort bent over backwards to ensure this event went off without a hitch, many thanks to Art and Jim and their staff.

As I look at my calendar and the Facebook OHV Calendar that was created to help track the hundreds of events across the country, I see that I could be busy every weekend if I had the funds to travel to them all. If you have the time, find an event hosted by one of our member organizations and attend to show them support and also support the vendors and sponsors that help them make their events a success.

Something new that we rolled out not too long ago, is the “Riders Unite” initiative (https://sharetrails.org/ridersunite/). We have already garnered a bunch of support from the two-wheeled industry side of the aisle. By the
time you read this, we will have rolled this out to the 4x4 and SxS industry, individuals and organizations.

We will keep innovating and keep the press on land managers to ensure access is available for everyone to recreate, and even more so if your preferred method includes a motor.

Keep following our Facebook page and our Email Alerts for things that are going on. You can tailor the alerts to just your area or to the national level. There is a lot going on in the land use arena at the moment and our staff and contractors are busy keeping an eye on it. If you see something in your area though, we have a specific spot on our web page for you to report an issue in your area. This link will take you to the “Report a Land Use Issue” page (https://sharetrails.org/pli).

Until next time, be safe, and have fun on our public lands.
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WE ARE STILL closely watching the new Administration for signs of progress on the public lands front. Tangible progress has been slow to develop. There are still conspicuous vacancies throughout our government, including in public lands management agencies. Still, there has been talk about broader reforms that might affect public lands, such as a preference for state/local control that might translate to land ownership adjustment. Let’s take a closer look at this issue – how does federal land transfer work?

There are good reasons to look at reconfiguring land ownership. Even out West, close study of what feels like “public land” usually reveals what looks like a tossed salad of actual land ownerships. A typical block of land includes ownerships of the United States, Tribes, States, corporations, other private entities and individuals. There are “landlocked” parcels inside other ownerships. Land consolidation can better match landowners to the potential/challenges of specific lands, can increase land management efficiency and decrease management costs. On the other hand, federal land transactions are controversial, often raising concerns about short-changing public interests or short-cutting conservation of important uses/resources. These aren’t new issues. These tensions have existed since the settlement and disposition era in the 1800s.

It takes more than intelligence and desire to analyze this issue. However badly one may think the existing system is broken, the fact is the system is complex. A lot of enthusiasts, and more than a few recently elected/appointed officials, think that common sense and a handful of guiding principles are the key ingredients for long-overdue reform. They are in for a rude awakening. As with nearly anything in our government, land ownership adjustment entails an elaborate system of laws, regulations, and bureaucratic culture.

A good part of the debate has focused on “transfer” of federal lands, particularly to States. FLPMA authorizes sale of lands to States or local governments (section 211) and more broadly, including to individuals (section...
FLPMA further authorizes both BLM and the Forest Service to exchange federal lands (section 206) for nonfederal lands. There are many requirements under the statutes and voluminous implementing regulations. These generally include that transactions be in the public interest, exchanges be of equal value, and the agency receive not less than market value for any lands transferred, determined through detailed documentation and appraisal standards. Planning processes must occur, not only to identify potential lands for exchange, but to evaluate alternatives and disclose effects for any particular transaction or assembled transactions. These processes are subject to public comment, appeal, and litigation.

Today’s debate includes new voices and new passions. It might be surprising to know that from 2006-2015 BLM alone disposed of 159,130 acres of federal land and acquired 193,663 acres of nonfederal land through its exchange program. See, https://fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R41509.pdf (November, 2016). This was an average of 31 annual transactions, which was a marked decline from the 1989-1999 period which saw 238 annual exchange transactions. We are not writing on a blank slate.

The ultimate point is that meaningful change will not come easily or quickly. Frustration is high and talk is cheap, but it is unlikely that new solutions will magically appear to long-standing and heavily regulated issues. Any opportunity for change highlights the need for knowledge, experience and wisdom in navigating any path that will resemble progress.

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LETS FACE IT, most of us live in a world of subdivisions, shopping malls, and the daily slog to work. Its easy to forget that in reality, the vast majority of the globe is tiny towns, open spaces, and narrow back roads. Dual-sport motorcycle trips are a fantastic way to experience these places and the Kentucky Adventure Tour is the very definition of what a great dual-sport trip should be. The Kentucky Adventure Tour (KAT) is the brain child of Kentucky native Jeff Stoess. After riding the Trans-America Trail, Jeff had the idea to design a dirt-oriented dual-sport motorcycle route that formed a loop and could be completed in a week. As an experienced off-road rider, Jeff believed that such a route was possible in his home state. Armed with Delorme's Kentucky Atlas/Gazetteer and Garmin's Roads and Recreation CD, Jeff went to work. He focused on the southeastern region of the state where he knew great scenery, old county roads and remote countryside rich in history would make his Kentucky Adventure Tour a special ride. In 2014, the KAT became a reality after six years in the making. Since then it is estimated that on any day, three adventurous motorcyclists are out riding the 1000-mile route and enjoying all its challenges. Well, maybe not enjoying the challenges but at least struggling through them to the next lunch stop!

Part of the genius of the KAT is the broad range of riding styles it offers. The route consists of a "Main Loop" (green track) and thirteen optional "Hard" sections (red tracks). The main loop is a 50/50 mix of twisty pavement and gravel roads covering approximately 900 miles. You'll notice it's not called the "Easy Loop" and there's a reason why. While 90% of the miles are twisty backroads and easy cruising gravel, the remaining 10% can be very challenging! These sections have rock gardens, mud, water crossings, steep hills, and overgrown trails. A rider of average skill on a 600cc class bike with aggressive tires will find these sections challenging. A big adventure bike will be in heaven on the twisty narrow roads but you'll definitely need to be a confident, skilled rider to pilot a 600lb bike through the tough parts! That said, no one should be afraid to tackle this route. If you come to a section outside your comfort zone, zoom out on your gps and find a road that reconnects you to the track. If you've ridden the Trans-America Trail through Tennessee and Deals Gap in North Carolina you'll feel right at home on the main loop of the KAT. Climbing to, and riding across, the reclaimed mountaintop...
mining areas puts one in mind of riding in Colorado - they have a similar "top of the world" feel.

If you opt to try the "Hard" sections, be aware they are designed for lightweight enduro bikes on full knobby tires. Expect difficult single track, downed trees, tight switchbacks, and muddy creek crossings! It's pretty cool that of the thirteen "Hard" sections, only the Hatfield Extreme segment requires a trail pass. Some of the Hard sections that lie in the Daniel Boone National Forest feature excellent dual and single tracks along the Sheltowee Trace. These trail sections are open to multiple uses including motorcycles. Here you'll find yourself immersed in lush vegetation and creeks aplenty while tackling some tight, technical, demanding terrain. If you like these sections, please let the Forest Service Office in Winchester, Kentucky, know. Your input helps Forest Service personnel understand the type of riding the public enjoys.

In addition to the wonderful riding, the KAT travels through many areas of historical interest. The Hatfield-McCoy Feud, Matewan Massacre, Mingo County Coal Wars, and Battle of Blair Mountain all occurred in the Williamson, WV, area. A stop at the Hensley Settlement in Bell County and the town of Sterns, KY, are also highlights. Beautiful scenery is also plentiful on this trip. The 900ft Nada Tunnel and Natural Bridge/Red River Gorge area near Slade are not to be missed. Spanning the Kentucky/Virginia state line, the Breaks Interstate Park is home to the "Grand Canyon of the South", the deepest gorge east of the Mississippi - it's quite a view! The KAT crests the highest point in Kentucky (4145’) on Black Mountain Rd in Harlan County and is home to a huge FAA radar dome. Just down the road is the Little Shepherd Trail, 38 miles of narrow, abandoned roadbed that runs the crest of Pine Mountain. There's a good chance you'll see a black bear crossing the road in these parts.
Speaking of wildlife, the Rocky Mountain elk was reintroduced to eastern Kentucky in 1997 and has flourished into herd of 7500 animals. Absence of predators, mild winters, and plentiful food has produced an elk that weighs 15% more than their western cousins. The program has been so successful that Kentucky exported a herd to Wisconsin in 2016. Big critters mean big predators, and cougar sightings are not uncommon in the area these days.

Here are some nuts and bolts of the route. The KAT actually travels through four states: Kentucky, West Virginia, Virginia, and Tennessee. It’s laid out to start and finish in Slade, KY, going counter-clockwise (you can of course jump on anywhere). The Lil’ Abner Hotel in Slade is a great place to stay and will let you park your truck while you’re on the route. The western half of the loop has a bit more gravel/dirt roads while the eastern side skews toward pavement. Jeff Stoess has marked lots of waypoints for lodging, fuel, food, and points of interest. Riders on the "Main Loop" can expect to cover 150-200 miles per day and will pass opportunities for lunch and fuel along the way. Good towns to overnight are London (KY), Jellico (TN), Harlan (KY), Big Stone Gap (VA), The Lodge at Breaks Interstate Park, and Williamson (WV). Navigating the route requires a GPS that can display GPX tracks (not routes!). Make sure you download the tracks and load them in your GPS sufficiently ahead of time to confirm they are displaying correctly. As with any trip the weather can be a big factor. Spring rains can turn 6" water crossings into 2' bike drowners, and hard packed trails into greasy, sticky mud. Fall will generally be drier. Kentucky is hot and humid in the summer, while spring and fall offer temps more comfortable for fully suited riders. It's not out of the question that December and March could offer nice windows to ride.
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Martin Hackworth
Executive Director
Sharetrails.org/BRC

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READY 2 ROCK is a member club of Cal4Wheel. The members live around Tulare, California, and support Cal4Wheel (see the Organization Spotlight, issue #008) and the local community.

This is a new club in the area and has grown from just a concept to 30 families in about a year.

Last year they helped the Hanford Trail Busters on their annual event/run where they take special needs folks up to the Dusy Ershim trail and they get to camp, boat and fish for the weekend. Ready 2 Rock stepped up when the call went out for a few extra Jeeps with trailers were needed to help haul gear and wheel chairs up the hill from Clovis to the trail. Members also helped on the annual Toys for Tots run through the valley that brought over 150 Radio Flyer wagons to Children's Hospital in Madera.

The club is working with the Sierra National Forest to adopt a trail and help maintain trails in the Sierra National Forest for all users.

The club also helps on the different Cal4Wheel Central District events to ensure that fellow event participants have a good experience at the event. Club President Ed Moore is always willing to help spot someone through a tough section of a trail when they think their Jeep or 4x4 is not able to make it. Everyone in the club is always willing to help out a fellow off-roader when they need a little work done on their vehicle. Richard & Lynn Giotto have a well-stocked shop at their business and the shop is almost always open.

by Todd Ockert
President
Sharetrails.Org/BRC

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open for a club member to install a new modification to their 4x4.

Ed Moore said that “The club was formed of like-minded people who enjoy the outdoors and want to help the organization, Cal4Wheel and the community.” As mentioned previously, the club has shown great support for the community with the Toy Drive for the Children’s Hospital, and taking part in the community activities when asked or needed.

Despite being one of the newest clubs in Cal4Wheel, Ready 2 Rock has grown by leaps and bounds and already includes 30 families. Most of the people in the club had been in other clubs when they heard about Ready 2 Rock, they came over to check them out and saw that they go out on the trails a lot and have fun while doing it. One of the club mottos is “I can’t keep calm, I am Ready 2 Rock!”

http://ready2rock4x4.org

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I wrote a short-term review of my first ebike – a Specialized Turbo Levo FSR Comp 6. As much as I liked the bike at that time it’s since grown on me even more (and my entire family). We are, in fact, purchasing another. I’m going to go out on a limb here and predict that within a decade ebikes will be ubiquitous.

I ride street bikes, dirt bikes, regular mountain bikes and my Turbo Levo mountain bike daily – so I have a good basis for comparing them all. The one thing that I can tell you for sure is that even though Federal agencies have begun the process of designating pedal-assisted ebikes as a type of motorcycle they are just plain wrong. I’ve recently had the opportunity to make that very case with Federal policy makers and we’ll see where that all goes. Whatever ebikes are, they are not motorcycles.

So why shouldn’t ebikes be considered lightweight motorcycles? Well for one thing about 36,000 less watts of power. Six inches less suspension is another. There’s also about a 200lb riderless difference in weight. They are very quiet. The similarities really stop at the number of wheels. Going further is like comparing a hang glider to a SR-71 Blackbird. They are most similar to regular bicycles. I believe that Federal agencies that are concluding otherwise are being poorly informed.

Ebikes do come in a variety of configurations and some are more bicycle-like than others. The nice thing about the Turbo Levo FSR Comp 6 is that it feels like any other reasonably equipped mountain bike – albeit a bit heavy. The difference is that you feel like a really fit 20-year old pedaling. The pedal-assist, while not completely unobtrusive, is predictable and becomes familiar after a very short amount of time.

The Turbo Levo has some specific features designed to accommodate additional torque and power. The tires are fat, the wheelbase is long and the gearing relatively high. It’s got some heft that you will discover if you ever run out of battery at the bottom of a canyon with, say, four miles left to go (don’t ask me how I know). But in nominal circumstances it’s just a big old friendly mountain bike that makes you feel like you absolutely can pedal up that long, steep hill.

On the most aggressive level of pedal assist, “Turbo” mode, I can do a 20-mile 3000’ loop pulling a Thule Chariot bike trailer and a 30 lb toddler without any concern about battery life. On “Trail” mode I can go hard for about half a day. In “Eco” mode I haven’t yet found the end of battery life in a single ride. The cellphone-based controller software may be used to ensure that you get through your entire ride with at least some level of intervention. The battery is alleged to be good for about a thousand charging cycles – a good thing
because replacements are around $700.

The area around my home contains a mix of single track trails, ATV trails and Jeep roads – some quite steep and technical. All of these are much easier on a dirt bike than the ebike and it’s really not even that close. You’re on the wrong side of rolling inertia and angular momentum on the mountain bike. The forces of both of static and kinetic friction work against you on the lighter machine. A dirt bike is slower to jump out from beneath you in most circumstances and does not accelerate as rapidly on steep downhills when you let off the brakes. The ebike’s lone clear advantage in gnarly terrain comes when you have to pick it up. It’s marginally easier to jump off of as well.

According to my tracker app I’ve put nearly 1000 miles on my Specialized Turbo Levo FSR Comp 6 and am closing in on 100,000’ vertical. I’ve enjoyed every minute of it. As I said in the last article you should demo one of these as soon as you can. Just make sure to take your check book with you when you do.
IT IS APPARENT when snowmobilers gather together that their frustration with the Forest Service is at an all time high. I share the frustration but I think it is important to find out what is driving the bad decisions. Our problem is not with the people in the Forest Service, it is with the laws and politics that got them into this unworkable position. In the modern-day Forest Service it is next to impossible to get anything done, not because the agency’s people are incompetent or lazy, but because the work environment they operate in assures conflict and failure. Once upon a time long, long ago, the Forest Service actually made decisions in a reasonable time frame and in a relatively uncomplicated way. But this is not the case today. Nothing is simple, easy or quick. In fact, few goods and services now come from the forests. The problem lies in the framework in which the Forest Service personnel must work. Politics is injected into the most basic decisions from the top down, controlled by the administration. Every decision is appealed or litigated by opposing interest groups, meaning that federal judges who could not tell a Douglas fir from a mink fur now make major land management decisions. Every action is second-guessed by other agencies. Land managers find themselves subject to threats and hung out to dry if they do not make the “right” decision.

So what got us to this sad state of affairs? Where once there was one law directing the activities of the National Forest System now there are many. For 64 years, under the prime directive of The Organic Act the Forest Service managed amazingly well. In 1960, Congress decided to tighten the cinch a bit and passed the Multiple-Use Sustained-Yield Act. While still fairly straightforward, this change upset the agency’s comfortable and steady course. Congress had also flexed its land management muscles, and it apparently felt good. Now new legislation began to pour forth.

- In 1964 the Wilderness Act became law, setting aside certain primitive and undisturbed lands to remain forever wild.
- The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act passed in 1968 basically aimed at protecting rivers from construction of dams but it also inserted the heavy hand of the federal government deeply into management of private and state lands along these waterways as well.
- The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1970 required evaluation of the effects of man’s activities on his environment.
- The Endangered Species Act of 1973, one of

RIDERS UNITE is an idea born of a partnership between business, advocacy groups and riders all united to dramatically change the manner in which the Federal Government (and other land use agencies) see OHV interests.

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the most powerful, invasive and sweeping laws ever, was passed by Congress.
- The Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) and the National Forest Management Act (NFMA), became law in 1976.

Endless federal regulations, all carrying the force of law themselves, were produced to guide implementation of these complex, often conflicting and sometimes vague laws. With the laws and regulations came Forest Plans, interdisciplinary teams, intense public involvement, appeals, endless litigation and management by judicial decree. These regulations, combined with case law from the inevitable litigation, have created a quicksand into which the Forest Service finds itself sinking.

Times today are different. We have the benefit of new science. New technology has revolutionized the way we work and play. This science and technology has led us to more closely emulate natural processes in our management activities, recognizing the interaction of plants, animals and people with our environments. We still need natural resources for our reasonable use and enjoyment. Everything we are and everything we have ultimately comes from the land—food, fiber, metals, plastics, paper, wood, recreation, comfort, wealth—everything! We can and should wisely use our public lands to meet the needs of the American people. Qualified professional land managers could assure the wise, long-term use of our National Forests if they were given that opportunity, but this cannot happen in the current political and legal context.

Obviously, change is not going to come easily. But we can help and we must never give up. We can stay involved in the processes mandated by the present laws, even if it requires appeals and litigation. This is the context we have and it is in this context we must work. We can also work to change that context by encouraging the Raul Labradors, Mike Crapos, Mike Simpsons and Jim Rischs of Congress to pursue simplification of the terrible morass of laws and regulations. We can push for depoliticizing the Forest Service, restoring it to a professional organization dedicated to the long-term management of our public lands. We can work with the people in the Forest Service constructively, recognizing that they are decent, caring people who did not make the mess in which they must work.
KLIM, a top-tier manufacturer of soft goods for snowmobilers and motorcyclists, is a company well-known to the majority of our members. What is less known is the degree to which KLIM supports our access advocacy in the best manner possible – by helping to raise a lot of money. KLIM (along with Rocky Mountain ATVMC and others that we’ll be profiling in future issues) is a company with skin in the game. KLIM is all about riders being for riders. It’s much more than just a slogan for them.

KLIM’s roots go back to 1994 when founder, current CEO and President Justin Summers came up with a plan to sell inexpensive seconds from some well-known outdoor clothing manufacturers to fellow students on the University of Utah campus. Starting out under the name Teton Outfitters, Justin quickly moved into designing modern clothing that featured layering and high tech materials for snowmobilers, ski patrollers and other winter sports enthusiasts at a time when bulky, unbreathable garments still prevailed. At one point a contract with a ski area fell through and the surplus of materials that needed to be moved spurred the creation of some designs that were at that time more familiar to mountaineers than snowmobilers.

A few years later, in 1999, Teton Outfitters changed their DBA name to KLIM – an aggressive sounding name that mirrored changes that were occurring in the sport of snowmobiling around that same time. KLIM quickly developed relationships with GORE and INVISTA (makers of Cordura) and became well-known for both innovative designs and quality of manufacturing. As Director of Marketing John Summers notes: “When you are way out in woods on a snowmobile in a storm and it’s getting dark, your gear could literally be your life.”

Around 2005 the folks at KLIM, who are also motorcycle enthusiasts, had grown tired of motorcycle riding gear that was more suitable for a motocross track than long adventures on trails and began manufacturing clothing for dirt bikers. By 2009 KLIM had established a reputation as a premier manufacturer of clothing for adventure and enduro riders. Helmets and other accessories soon followed.

In 2012 KLIM was acquired by Polaris Industries. Despite this acquisition, which was viewed with some concern from enthusiasts...
outside of the company, KLIM continues to employ over 100 in its newly refurbished headquarters in Rigby, ID.

When I first became aware of KLIM (about nine years ago) the days of clunky specialty clothing for Powersports enthusiasts were already waning. But there is no delicate way around the fact that KLIM gear occupies higher than average tiers of pricing with many perfectly good alternatives available for less for those who ride more casually. Even with my extensive background in mountaineering, where one’s gear can literally be their life, I had wondered if KLIM items were worth the premium. I had to be goaded into finding out.

Ace counterman Brian Jablonski of Pocatello Power Sports insisted that I try out a pair of KLIM pants for an early Tour of Idaho with a guarantee that I could bring them back used if I was not satisfied. The Tour is sufficiently hard on equipment that I’d often had to replace clothing as it wore out from day to day. The KLIM outfit I bought easily made it through an entire Tour without even a stitch coming loose. It was cool and comfortable during the day, warm at night (while sleeping under my bike trying to stay warm with the vestiges of radiated heat from my engine case).

A few years later, near the end of my Physics career, I ended up doing some outside consulting with KLIM. I’m even more impressed after working with them from the inside than I was as an enthusiastic customer because it’s completely apparent from both perspectives that they really are concerned about getting things right. KLIM is truly a company run by enthusiasts for enthusiasts.

When it’s really important to have the absolute best stuff for an adventure, KLIM has few peers.
THE CLEAN SNOWMOBILE CHALLENGE is an annual snowmobile event where teams from colleges and universities from across North America build and modify existing snowmobiles and compete in multiple events based on improvements in design, emissions, noise, fuel economy, cold start ability, acceleration, handling and overall performance.

The SAE Clean Snowmobile Challenge began in scenic Jackson Hole, Wyoming, at Flag Ranch near the south entrance to Yellowstone National Park in 2000. The Challenge was created by co-founders and organizers Dr. Lori Fussell and Teton County Commissioner Bill Paddleford. Their collective vision was to engage students from colleges and universities across North America to design, engineer and create, using existing snowmobile platforms, machines that would meet and resolve the growing concerns about the environmental effect of snowmobiles on Yellowstone National Park.

The Challenge was in Wyoming for the first three years and Sharetrails.org/BlueRibbon Coalition was one of the first sponsors and continues that sponsorship today. As the Challenge grew in participation and public interest, the Challenge was moved to Michigan Tech in Houghton, Michigan, and for the last fifteen years has been hosted there.

This year, 13 teams competed...
with internal combustion engines, 6 with diesel engines and 5 with electric sleds—a record number of competitors. I think Jay Meldrum, Director of the Michigan Tech’s Keweenaw Research Center, said it best in his description of this year’s very competitive event, “Students had to battle ice, wind gusts greater than 50 miles per hour and single digit temperatures at this year’s Clean Snowmobile Challenge," he continued, “Despite the challenges, the teams—hailing from many northern US and Canadian universities—overcame the wintry conditions.”

The overall winners are: internal combustion—École de technologie supérieure, from Montreal, Canada (tied for first), University of Wisconsin–Madison (tied for first) and the University of Minnesota–Duluth (third); diesel—École de technologie supérieure (first), North Dakota State University (second) and University at Buffalo (third); zero emissions—Michigan Tech (first), Clarkson University (second).

As a judge at this year’s SAE Clean Snowmobile Challenge I was pleased to join and help. It was great being part the formative years of the Challenge, and I look forward to judging again at the 19th Challenge in 2018.
TOWARD THE FUTURE: Making it easier to donate, join and support Sharetrails.org/BRC

ONE OF OUR BIGGEST PRIORITIES here at the office has been to bring Sharetrails.org/BRC up to speed with modern online practices. I’ve asked each member of the staff to detail changes in their area of responsibility that are either in place or coming that will benefit you and make our operation more efficient.

—Martin Hackworth
Executive Director

Mary Jo Foster - Although we have had the online payment option available for Lifetime Memberships for some time, we have taken this opportunity to simplify and streamline the process. So if the $500 dues seems daunting, consider spreading that out over a year. The option of $125 per quarter or $41.66 per month may be a better fit for your budget.

Also for those members who wish to make regular monthly donations, we have that available on our website with updated and simplified forms. I want to thank all of our existing Pledge Partners, whether you donate by credit card, invoice or online, you are all awesome.

As part of our plan to make renewals simpler and easier for our members and still make the best use of our funds, we have added an Auto-Renew option online. This means no more renewal notices; your membership will be renewed automatically each year. Of course, you may discontinue this at any time.

We will also be improving our Thank You Letter system. In the future, when you donate online, you will receive your Thank You Letter/Receipt as part of the transaction confirmation. This will allow you to receive your letter immediately and save us postage. If you mail in donations and would prefer to receive an End of the Year Tax Letter summarizing your donations instead of a Thank You Letter for each donation, just either make note of that with your donation or contact Mary Jo at:

1-208-237-1008 ext 0
or at brmaryjo@sharetrails.org.

Ric Foster – It’s very easy to sign up for our Alerts & Land Use Updates at http://sharetrails.org/subscribe. We also have significant online resources available on our website under the Advocacy menu. Members can also now inform us of address changes right on our home page at http://sharetrails.org.

Barbara Larsen - Bookkeeping has updated the way it bills advertisers. Invoices are now sent electronically by email and can be paid with one click by credit card (if preferred). This is more convenient for advertisers and helps us collect ad revenue more efficiently.

Michael Patty - We’ve made the forms available on our web pages quite a bit easier to use. Much of the information we once asked for has been made optional and you won’t have to deal with it unless you want to (though this information is still very useful, so if you have the time then we welcome the additional input). PayPal is no longer required in order to donate, renew or join Sharetrails.Org/BRC. Although this payment option is still available for those that wish to use it, we can now charge your credit or debit card directly, greatly lessening the number of forms that must be filled out.

Special thanks to REKLUSE for their continued support...

Supporters like Rekluse allow Sharetrails/BRC to continue with its vital mission to protect YOUR recreation access!

— Sharetrails Magazine (#006-2016) Voice of the BlueRibbon Coalition
IT’S SUMMER TIME! To herald the arrival of the fun season and to continue our celebration of Sharetrails.org/Blue Ribbon Coalition’s 30th year we are embarking on our 2nd annual #Sharetrails Challenge! This is our only summer fundraiser and we can sure use the money to help us through a traditionally lean period.

The goals of the #Sharetrails Challenge are to promote Sharetrails.org, the preservation of access through social media and to raise our profile. Lawmakers know about us, as do our opponents, but most OHV recreationists do not. Though we are growing at a healthy rate our membership numbers (compared to those of our opponents) hinder our ability to raise the money that we need to compete.

So please participate in the #Sharetrails Challenge by liking and sharing the challenge on social media and by convincing others to do the same. #SharetrailsChallenge - Like, share, join, get others to join, donate and spread the word! Show the preservationists and extreme environmentalists that you care just as much as they do about public land. Please visit http://sharetrails.org/sharetrailschallenge for more details. Thank you.
As Our Deadline for this issue approaches, Sharetrails.org/BRC Executive Director Martin Hackworth is on his way back from a few days in Washington, DC, to attend the American Recreation Council’s 2017 Partners Outdoors Conference. This trip was funded by Sharetrails.org, Riders Unite and Martin himself.

Martin reports that the trip was a wonderful opportunity to directly engage the Acting Deputy Secretary of Interior James Cason, the Acting Head of BLM Michael Nedd and numerous other highly-placed folks in various agencies for the cost of a plane ticket and hotel. From Martin:

With this wonderful opportunity for direct engagement comes some responsibility to produce so I’m compiling the data these folks requested to send out as soon as I get back. Everyone in the room knew who we were and a lot of them were up to speed on what we’ve been doing. That’s good stuff. I sense many opportunities ahead for collaboration with other groups and direct engagement with Federal officials. I really like the fact that we are perceived as adults in the room - credit Paul Turcke and Don Amador for that.

I was very impressed with some of the other groups who attended. There are a lot of good folks out there in land use and Powersports – completely solid. The more that we can get to know each other and cooperate where we can the better off we’ll all ultimately be.

Think about it. Over the past year I, only one person in this organization among many, have met with three members of the U.S. House of Representatives, one Senator, a Governor, dozens of highly placed folks in various agencies and have exchanged emails with others in similar positions to help us. That’s a lot of access for a small organization that spends zero dollars on formal lobbying. It’s a credit to the wonderful work that all of you do that establishes our credibility day after day.
SHARETRAILS.ORG/BRC is a membership-based non-profit organization. We don’t sell widgets, so we have to raise money outside of the parameters that govern for-profit businesses. We generate revenue from several sources: membership dues (individual, organization and business), ad revenue from this magazine, grants, events, legacy giving and donations. There are other revenue streams as well, but the aforementioned eight are the most significant.

There are two destinations for revenue generated by our fund-raising activities: the General Fund or the Legal Fund. The Legal Fund pays our retainer with MSBT Law and above that may be used for specific legal actions as long as we can raise the money required to pay for them.

The General Fund is what we use to pay staff and contractor salaries, to pay for travel, to pay our rent and overhead, to run the alert system and to provide all of the infrastructure required to run a 50-state organization (this magazine generates a modest profit). Even though our organization is often perceived as primarily a legal organization from the outside, it isn’t entirely so. Sharetrails.org/BRC does a huge amount of useful work outside of the courts or the legal system that is of great benefit to you, our members, that’s far less expensive than litigation. Support for the General Fund is crucial because without infrastructure there would be no organization.

We earmark all revenue collected in legal fundraisers for the Legal Fund. If a donor requests at any time that their donation go to legal that’s where it goes. All of it (contrary to rumor we do not siphon off a “tax” for the General Fund). We also solicit money specifically for various legal projects that go into the legal fund though they may be earmarked for a specific cause. Most of the money that we receive for the legal fund comes without strings attached which is very good. Our legal team is frequently able to leverage austere resources by picking battles that we are likely to win. Put plainly, you might stand a better chance of getting what you want in your backyard if we fight the battle in someone else’s.

We’ve done well raising money over the past few months but we still need to do a lot more. Despite the fact that we now find ourselves in a political environment which favors our goals we still have to have the resources to get things done – and money is the key to all of that. We are still outspent by our opponents by more than 10:1, and when the political winds change that’s going to make life tough for our side.
In the past few months we’ve had several members of our organization go to DC to represent your interests. Most of the money for this did not come from our General Fund because we just don’t have enough to cover all travel (it was paid for by the individuals themselves). The sidebar (at right) is a letter that was requested of us by a Congressman and subsequently by officials in the Department of Interior. We are doing everything in our power on your behalf to inform, advocate, engage, negotiate and when all else fails, litigate.

One final thought. Litigation is the most expensive resource we deploy. Negotiation is cheaper. Since our resources are not endless we have to be very careful with them. Though we can always go to court and roll the dice on the outcome it’s generally going to cost us even if we win (the Equal Access to Justice Act frequently does not apply to us). In some cases it’s much better to get most of what we want, guaranteed, through negotiation. In my opinion this is the wisest use of our limited resources. As long as I’m Executive Director we’ll continue with this “most efficient use” model.

I completely support our legal team and the decisions that they make in this context even when it involves discussions with groups with whom we generally have an antagonistic relationship. As long as we have to squeeze every penny I’m going to support them going where they can do the most good.
A NEW HILLCLIMB EVENT in Colorado was created this year by the Rocky Mountain States HillClimb Association. The event, located at Powderhorn Resort near Grand Junction, was held April 7th, 8th and 9th. Local snowmobile dealer, Dennis Durmas, provided Sharetrails.org/BlueRibbon Coalition (BRC) with a free booth for the event.

The event enjoyed mild temperatures, in the mid-forties, and had average attendance for a first-year event. I am sure attendance at the event next year will be much stronger.

The event was very successful for Sharetrails.org/BRC and provided an outstanding location for outreach on issues affecting snowmobilers in western Colorado. At this event, I was joined by Evan Pedersen, a member from Colorado Springs, who helped me at the booth.

In addition to the new Wilderness and related snowmobile issues, I talked to snowmobilers from across western Colorado about becoming a Sharetrails.org/BRC members. As a result, several of the folks showed great interest in joining.

In closing, I would like to thank Dennis Durmas, and the Rocky Mountain States HillClimb Association (RMSHA), who put on the Powderhorn Resort hillclimb event and for providing us with a free booth at the event.
Get the low-down on fine off-highway products reviewed by the staff of Sharetrails.Org/BRC...

**PRODUCT:** KLIM Arsenal Vest ($189.99)

**MANUFACTURER:** KLIM

**www.klim.com**

**REVIEWED BY:** Martin Hackworth

**Executive Director**

Sharetrails.Org/BRC

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**THE KLIM ARSENAL VEST** is a hybrid vest/backpack that is similar to offerings from OGIO and Troy Lee Designs. The advantages to this type of setup over a conventional backpack for riding are load distribution and convenience. The disadvantage is space. For single-day outings I’ve found the KLIM Arsenal to be just the ticket.

The KLIM Arsenal is fully adjustable with a plethora of shoulder, side and center straps. It’s simple to dial in a custom fit. It has some light padding in the shoulder area and features no less than eight compartments (including one with a pistol holder!), a removable tool pack and a nifty 3 Liter hydration bladder. It’s got an attachment for a beacon and places for everything that you need where you’d like to have them.

The most commendable feature of the KLIM Arsenal, and the thing that sets it apart from it’s competition, is the use of mesh throughout the vest. I’ve ridden with vests ever since they became available about 10 years ago. As much as I like them for convenience they tend to be uncomfortably hot to wear in warm weather. The Arsenal is orders of magnitude better on this account because of the enhanced airflow allowed by the liberal use of mesh in the parts of the vest that don’t need to be solid fabric.

The KLIM Arsenal is available for $189.99. KLIM provided me with an Arsenal for this review.
I'M BIG ON BEEFY RIDING JERSEYS. Most of the year it's cool rather than warm where I live (in Idaho) and I'll take the extra heft. Nothing sucks worse that having a twig rip a hole in your new jersey.

The KLIM Tactical Pro is an update to the Dakar Pro that was popular for many years. Its fully ventilated, more comfortable than its predecessor and very, very durable.

The Tactical Pro is constructed of 4-way stretch Cordura® that features an athletic cut that I like quite a bit (no more baggy fit). It features multiple stretch panels to ensure that it moves with your torso. It's highly resistant to abrasion. There is a zippered chest pocket with a detachable soft cloth for cleaning glasses or your cellphone screen.

I wear my Tactical Pro over soft body armor when riding dirt bikes and it feels and moves great. But my favorite use of the Tactical Pro is as a downhill mountain bike jersey. The Tactical Pro is reinforced with material in the shoulders, elbows and sleeves that's designed to take the sting out of getting whacked with branches. For mountain biking it's an effective semi-armored jersey.

The KLIM Tactical Pro Jersey is available for $139.99. KLIM provided me with a Tactical Pro for review.

MOSt StAndArd MoUntAIn BIke HeLMets are unsuitable for high-speed impacts that you may suffer at speeds encountered in aggressive downhill riding. Downhill specific helmets afford much more protection but are too hot and intrusive for general riding and certainly climbing. Enter hybrid helmets, such as the Bell Super 3R, with a removable chin guard. For general riding it's worn just like a standard helmet. But at the top of a gnarly descent you pull the chin guard out of your pack, snap it on, and you have much of the protection of a dedicated downhill helmet.

The Bell Super 3R helmet is an upgrade to the 2R that addresses the biggest complaint of the older
helmet – the ability to dial in a good fit. The 3R, though better than the helmet that it replaces, is still not as comfortable as most lighter weight mountain bike helmets I’ve worn. But the differences are minor and pale in comparison to the added levels of protection afforded by the 3R. Even with the chin guard off the 3R affords more protection that many mountain bike helmets I’ve worn with only a miniscule weight disadvantage. Buckle the chin guard on (three buckles) and you are ready to fly. My only complaint is that the padding in the chin guard is too thick for anyone other than an emaciated waif.

Additional features of the Bell Super 3R include an adjustable visor that works with goggles, a breakaway camera mount and a MIPS rotational impact system liner.

The Bell Super 3R may be found for around $230.00 at most mountain bike shops and is widely available online. I bought mine at Barrie’s Ski and Sports in Pocatello, Idaho.

For more information, please call 1-866-628-2277
(Denver area: 303-308-2400)

Supporters like ISMA allow Sharetrails/BRC to continue with its vital mission to protect YOUR recreation access!
WE REVIEWED THE Doubletake Enduro Mirror a few issues back. It's a great mirror in terms of optics, durability and everything else that matters. I was on the phone with Ned Suesse, the owner of Doubletake, discussing the Enduro mirror and he offered to send along a couple of his new compact Trail Mirrors.

My only regret concerning any of this is that I let the Trail Mirrors sit around for a few weeks before I found the time to get them out and use them. I'll be succinct. G.O.A.T. That's it. These are the best mirrors for their purpose in existence. The design is simple, the functionality superb and one cannot possibly fault ingenuity of the design. Optics, size and weight, ease of installation and use are all peerless.

As bodacious of a job as Ned did of designing a great motorcycle product, I think that he may have also come up the greatest bicycle mirror of all time. You'd be crazy to use anything else. Bicycle specific mirrors generally cost just as much (if not more) and comparing them to this is like putting a naked man up against a freight train.

Doubletake Trail Mirrors are available at http://www.doubletakemirror.com for $25. Doubletake provided mirrors for this review.

I SPEND A LOT OF TIME sawing trail. In Idaho the overall health of the forests has been in jeopardy for many years and winters result in brutal amounts of blowdown that must be cleared each spring and early summer.

Over the years I've experimented with just about every saw and motorcycle mount configuration available. A few years ago I settled on a combination of Silky hand saws and small arbor chainsaws and a rear rack. But with my recent introduction of the Trail Tech Motorcycle Chainsaw Mount I've changed my thinking. The front-mount TT system is now my clear favorite.

The TT saw rack is CNC machined from polymer composite with aluminum mounting brackets and bar slot guard. It's relatively quick and easy to install (and remove) but it does require removal of either your headlight or number plate. After that it attaches
in the same spot to your front forks. It’s very light, very rugged, clean and simple. Although TT advertises this for use with a specific saw - the Stihl MS192/193 T-CE arbor saw, I’ve found it to work well with a variety of similarly sized saws.

This is, hands down, the best system I’ve used for sawing trail on a motorcycle and is available from Trail Tech for $200: http://www.trailtech.net/hard-parts/chainsaw-mount. Trail Tech provided a unit for us that we used for this review.

THE CENTRAL IDAHO TRAIL RIDERS ALLIANCE (CITRA), formed in 2017, exists to preserve access and to protect and maintain our trail network. Our membership is nearing 100 members.

CITRA is working closely with the Payette National Forest to create an interactive trail map on the Forest Service website to show recently cleared trails that have been opened for public use. This is an ongoing partnership to rehabilitate trails that have sustained winter damage and to create a sustainable environment for long term use. Our club recently spent five days helping the Forest Service to clear trails in the Krassel Ranger District. This allowed over 70 miles of riding in an area that had sustained substantial winter damage from trail erosion and downed timber.

The West Central Mountains of Idaho are home to millions of acres of Wilderness designation. Recently the Forest Service opened a conversation regarding future management of Recommended Wilderness Areas of Needles and Sesech that could potentially result in the loss of a number of off road trails for public use.

The Payette Forest Coalition Land Allocation Committee was formed with members from local off-road and environmental groups to explore ways to find common ground to preserve and create sustainable multi-use trails for the future. CITRA will partner with the Forest Service to keep these trails maintained and in use by the OHV community. Too often trails are determined no longer in use and viable because of the inability to maintain the trail and lack of budgets that allow for paid trail maintenance.

Another area of concern is private land in our area. Historically Valley County has been home to a number of large timber companies which owned large tracts of land. As timber has moved on, these parcels are being sold to buyers who’ve eliminated trail and access points for public use. CITRA helps to provide information and communicate with the public about these easements and helps to secure and ensure access by finding new easements and/or re-write existing easements. Clubs have the ability to make huge impact at public hearings when word is sent out that a topic of conversation needs the support of the trail users to help impact public policy.

Another of our goals is to mentor the next generation of riders with proper trail etiquette and skills. Educating kids ensures our favorite pastime continues.

It takes collective action to protect and defend our right to ride. Please join our mission at https://citrainc.wildapricot.org.
WE GET A STEADY STREAM of welcome invitations here at Sharetrails/BRC to attend various events. We’d like to have the time, staff and funds to attend them all but unfortunately we do not. In an organization as lean as ours we have to make decisions on how to allocate scarce resources. That being the case we have to figure out how to place travel to most events in the mix with maintaining our alert system, paying our staff and contractors and funding the legal program. We really want to devote every resource possible to keeping public lands open so travel has to somehow pay for itself.

Much of the travel that does occur in this organization comes out of the pockets of our staff and contractors. Our entire annual travel budget is about what a hard-working Uber driver could pull down in a few months. So when one of us does come to your event it’s generally on our own dime (I personally have spent nearly $10K out of my own pocket on travel-related expenses in my time here).

Even if travel money were no object our entire organization has about a half-dozen folks who can travel to events on our behalf. It’s a big country, and that’s a lot of territory to cover with not very many people. That’s why it’s extremely difficult for us to attend events, even really worthy ones, unless we can figure out a way for the organization to come out ahead.

Outside of travel to meetings, most of the events to which we do deploy staff have some component of fundraising built in specifically for Sharetrails.org/BRC. With enough notice we can almost always work something out for an event that’s likely to pay for itself and generate some income – the more the better. A few events that we attend each year generate a total of around $100K in income. Events like that have a high return on investment and are absolutely worth whatever it takes for us to get there. If you are planning something along those lines we’ll figure out a way to get someone there.

A way to think about all of this that I believe makes a good deal of sense is to simply consider what you would rather we spend your money on – travel to an event somewhere (besides your own) or fighting to keep trails open.

We can always help you with your event even if we cannot attend by sending along information, brochures and other items that you can give away on our behalf. Please Contact Ric Foster (brrichard@sharetrails.org) for more information about how we may help support your event.

As always, thanks for your continuing support.
I WAS OUT FOR A FATHER’S DAY mountain bike ride recently with my 13-month old son behind me in his Thule trailer. We were climbing a dirt road that winds several miles up to the top of a mountain behind our farm. This road, which is entirely on BLM land, is lightly traveled which is good since it’s windy, steep and features dramatic drops off the shoulders in a few places.

I heard the sound of an ATV from all the way down in the valley coming up the road at high speed and did what I routinely do – brace for the close pass, the flying gravel and the dust. But the rider on this particular ATV did something really exceptional. He slowed way down as soon as he saw me (actually some distance back), waited for a safe place for both of us to make his pass, went all the way to the opposite side of the road, waved as he went by and waited until he was about a quarter of a mile up the road before he rolled on the throttle again. That was really cool.

If I could have caught up with the gentleman I’d have comped him a membership in our organization. At a time when we have to work to encourage OHVers to be good ambassadors to their respective sports this fellow provided a clear example of how easy it can be to make a good impression on other trails users. It’s mostly common courtesy. Treat others the way that you would like to be treated. Unfortunately though that’s easily said, it’s harder at times to translate into action.

This morning I discussed this encounter in our weekly staff meeting and a new idea was born - #SharetrailsPeople. We want you to think about people that each of you know who are great representatives of their OHV modality and who are not currently members of our coalition. Then please visit https://sharetrails.org/people
and find the form to nominate them for a free one-year basic membership in Sharetrails.org/BRC. That’s it. This does not cost you (or them) a thing except the time required to fill out the nomination form (less than 5 minutes).

We will screen these nominations so make sure that you give us a compelling reason to gift your nominee a free membership. You may nominate more than one person if you wish simply by filling out a form for each nominee. Make sure that you have the permission of the person that you wish to nominate. If you supply us with a picture we’ll feature them on the Sharetrails People page and on our social media under the hashtag #SharetrailsPeople.

There is no set limit on the number of nominees we’ll accept because good ambassadors are always welcome at Sharetrails.org/BRC. Thanks for your time and don’t be bashful about nominating anyone you feel is deserving.

sharetrails.org/people
#SharetrailsPeople