Please note: This is the original proposal received by the rules committee. It was sent to subcommittee for further review and discussion.

POA Rule Proposal:

The following POA members contributed to the creation of this proposal: Jodi and Franklin Thompson; Bob and Wanda Carr; Jessica Carr, John Anderson; and Todd and Missy Corn

Proposal: Seeking to add additional Ranch Classes to promote the authentic ranch horse and provide a wider array of disciplines for our members to compete in with their POA's

Class Proposals:

- 1. Ranch Riding (already a nationally approved class)
- 2. Ranch Rail Pleasure
- 3. Ranch Reining
- 4. Ranch Conformation
- 5. Ranch Trail
- 6. Versatile Ranch Pony Award

6.a: Define the problem and develop as many possible solutions as you can by asking others for input:

The Ranch Horse classes are an expanding discipline in the equine industry. The addition of Ranch Horse classes would allow a wider array of class offerings, thus meeting the interests of a larger margin of equine professionals and enthusiasts; potentially increasing the amount of entries at POA shows. As more entries increase, as will the POA organization's ability to bring in more revenue and provide more opportunities for our youth program.

Ranch Class Rules: (Proposed):

Ranch Riding:

- a. The purpose of the Ranch Classes is to measure the ability of the POA to be a pleasure to ride while also a useful tool to complete one ranch task to another. The POA shall reflect the attitude, versatility, and movement from that of a working ranch horse riding beyond the confines of an arena. The POA should be well-trained, relaxed, responsive, soft and cadenced in all gaits and maneuvers displaying an ability to be ridden with light contact or a relatively loose rein. The ideal ranch POA should have a natural ranch appearance from head to tail in each gait and maneuver.
- b. Ages (horses 3 years old and older)

B. Class Requirements:

- a. Each horse shall work individually, performing each maneuver. Exhibitors will be scored on the basis of 0 to 100 with 70 denoting and average performance.
- Walk/Trot/Lope divisions are required to complete the following maneuvers: walk, trot, and lope in both directions; extended trot and extended lope in one direction; stop; and back.
- Walk/Trot/Lope divisions are required to include at least 13 maneuvers (10 required maneuvers listed in section B.b.; and 3 optional maneuvers listed in section B.f.).
- Walk/Trot divisions are required to complete the following maneuvers: walk and trot in both directions; extended trot in one direction; stop; and back.
- e. Walk/Trot divisions are required to include 8 maneuvers (7 required maneuvers included in section B.d.)
- f. Optional maneuvers may include: 360-degree turn or more; walk, trot, or lope over log(s); change of lead (simple or flying); sidepass; or combination of maneuvers that would resemble activities completed by a working ranch horse. The use of cattle is permitted in pattern. Judge holds final say the use of optional maneuvers offered.
- g. Maneuvers may be arranged in various combinations with final approval by the judge.
- h. Ponies must display free flowing, ground covering gaits and complete transitions with smoothness and responsiveness where designated in the pattern posted.
- No time limit.
- Suggested patterns may be used, however judge is permitted to offer a different pattern that includes pattern requirements listed in section B.b and B.e).
- k. Placing a stop after an extended lope is not recommended.
- Posting at the extended trot is permitted.
- m. Touching or holding the saddle is permitted.
- n. Only one hand may be used on the reins, except for junior ponies showing in an accepted snaffle or hackamore/bosal. Changing of rein hand is not permitted. One finger may be placed between reins when using split reins. Hands must be clear of pony and saddle except for when it is permissible to touch saddle, when pony is in motion.

C. Ranch Class Apparel and Equipment:

Attire should be neat and clean. Working tack is strongly encouraged.

- The following items are highly discouraged: hoof polish, braided or banded manes, tail
 extensions, trimming inside the ears, and silver bridles and saddles
- c. Trimming of fetlocks, long facial hair, and bridle path is permitted
- d. Equipment with silver will not be counted over good working outfit

D. Penalties:

- One (1) point penalties:
 - i. Too slow / per gait
 - ii. Over-bridled
 - iii. Out of frame
 - iv. Break of gait at walk or trot for 2 strides or less
 - v. Split log at the lope
- b. Three (3) point penalties:
 - i. Break of gait at walk or jog for more than 2 strides
 - ii. Break of gait at lope
 - iii. Wrong lead or out of lead
 - iv. Draped reins
 - v. Out of lead or cross-firing more than 2 strides when changing leads
 - vi. Trotting more than 3 strides when completing simple lead change
 - vii. Severe disturbance of obstacle
- c. Five (5) point penalties:
 - i. Blatant disobedience (kick, bite, buck, rear, etc.) for each refusal
 - ii. Use of either and to instill praise or fear
- d. Ten (10) point penalty:
 - Unnatural ranch horse appearance (pony's tail is obvious and consistently held at an unnatural position throughout the entirety of pattern). One time penalty.
- e. Placed below horses performing all maneuvers
 - i. Elimination of maneuver
 - ii. Incomplete maneuver
- f. Zero score:
 - i. Illegal equipment
 - ii. Willful abuse
 - iii. Major disobedience or schooling
- g. Nicks/hits of logs will only be deducted from maneuver score
- h. Over/Under spins will only be deducted from maneuver score

Ranch Rail Pleasure:

- A. Ponies eligible for Ranch Rail Pleasure include any pony three years of age or older
- B. Ponies will be measured by their ability to display the versatility, attitude, and cadence of a working ranch horse while also appearing to be a pleasure to ride. Ponies should have a natural head carriage and show at a forward, working speed, simulating the look of a ranch pony needing to cover long distances, softly and quietly.
- C. The ideal ranch pony must be responsive to its rider and complete smooth and timely transitions when prompted. Ponies moving at an extended trot are permitted to be collected to a trot before moving into the lope. Judges are aware additional cues may be needed when transitioning from the extended lope to extended trot. Ponies are permitted to collect to a trot and then into the extended trot to complete transition from extended lope to extended trot. Ponies completing this transition in three strides calmly and obediently will be rewarded.
- D. To rein a pony is not only to guide them, but also control their every movement. The ideal ranch pony should willingly guide on light contact without displaying any resistance. Ponies shall not be shown on full draped reins. Ponies making any movements without prompts from rider are considered a lack of control.
- E. Gait terminology is as follows:
 - a. Walk the walk is a natural, flat-footed, four-beat gait that is rhythmic and ground-covering. Ponies should display a level, or slightly above level topline, exhibiting a bright, attentive expression.
 - b. Trot the trot is a natural two-beat gait. The trot should be slightly more forward moving than the western jog.
 - Extended Trot ponies should demonstrate an obvious lengthening of their stride and increase in pace. Ponies should display an above level topline and bright, attentive expression.
 - d. Lope the lope is a smooth, relaxed, three-beat gait with a natural, forward moving stride.
 - Extended Lope ponies should display an obvious lengthening of stride and increase in pace while maintaining an above level topline and bright, attentive expression. The extended lope is not a race.
- F. Ranch Rail Penalties: exhibitors will receive a penalty each time the following occurs:
 - Too slow/per gait
 - b. Over-bridled
 - c. Out of frame
 - d. Break of gait at walk or trot for 2 strides or less
 - e. Break of gait walk or trot for more than 2 strides
 - Break of gait at lope
 - g. Wrong lead or out of lead
 - h. Draped reins
 - Out of lead or cross-cantering for more than 2 strides
 - Trotting more than 3 strides when taking lead
 - k. Blatant disobedience (kick, bite, buck, etc.)
 - Major disobedience or schooling
 - m. Spurring in front of cinch

- n. Use of either hand to instill fear or praise
- G. Ranch Class Apparel and Equipment:
 - a. Attire should be neat and clean. Working tack is strongly encouraged.
 - The following items are highly discouraged: hoof polish, braided or banded manes, tail
 extensions, trimming inside the ears, and silver bridles and saddles
 - c. Trimming of fetlocks, long facial hair, and bridle path is permitted
 - d. Equipment with silver will not be counted over good working outfit
- H. Walk/Trot/Lope exhibitors must work both directions at all requested gaits (walk, trot, extended trot, lope, extended lope) extended lope in both directions?
- I. Walk/Trot exhibitors must work both directions at all requested gaits (walk, trot, extended trot) extended trot in both directions?
- J. Posting at the extended trot is permitted
- K. Only one hand may be used on the reins, except for junior ponies showing in an accepted snaffle or hackamore/bosal. Changing of rein hand is not permitted. One finger may be placed between reins when using split reins. Hands must be clear of pony and saddle except for when it is permissible to touch saddle, when pony is in motion.
- L. Ponies may cross enter Ranch Rail Pleasure and Western Pleasure

Ranch Reining

- A. Any pony three years of age or older are eligible for Ranch Reining
- B. The purpose of Ranch Reining is to measure a pony's ability to perform basic handling maneuvers while exhibiting an above level head carriage in a forward looking manner. The exhibitor/pony team will be scored according to their ability to complete maneuvers with finesse, smoothness, quickness, and controlled speeds that are exciting and pleasing to watch.
- C. Ranch Reining patterns will be adopted from the most current ApHC official handbook
- D. To rein a pony is not only to guide them, but also control their every movement. The ideal ranch pony should willingly guide on light contact without displaying any resistance. Ponies shall not be shown on full draped reins. Ponies making any movements without prompts from rider are considered a lack of control and therefore considered a fault.
- E. Ponies may cross-enter in Ranch Reining and Reining.
- F. There will not be a Walk-Trot division in Ranch Reining.
- G. Ranch Class Apparel and Equipment:
 - a. Attire should be neat and clean. Working tack is strongly encouraged.
 - The following items are highly discouraged: hoof polish, braided or banded manes, tail
 extensions, trimming inside the ears, and silver bridles and saddles
 - c. Trimming of fetlocks, long facial hair, and bridle path is permitted
 - d. Equipment with silver will not be counted over good working outfit

H. Penalties:

- ½ point penalty:
 - i. Starting a circle or exiting a rollback at a trot for up to 2 strides
 - Delayed change of lead by one stride where the lead change is required by the pattern description
 - Failure to remain a minimum of twenty feet from the wall or fence when approaching a stop and/or rollback
 - iv. Over-spin/under-spin up to 1/8 turn
- b. 1 point penalty:
 - Out of lead in circles, figure eights or around the end of the arena (per quarter of circle point is out of lead)
 - ii. Over-spin/under-spin 1/8 to 1/4 turn
 - iii. Slipping rein
- c. 2 point penalty:
 - i. Break of gait
 - Freeze up in spins/rollbacks (per maneuver)
 - iii. Failure to stop or walk before executing lope on trot in patterns
 - iv. Failure to lope prior to the first marker on run-in patterns
 - v. Failure to completely pass the specified marker before initiating a stop position
 - vi. Trotting more than 2 strides but less than 1/2 circle or 1/2 the arena
- d. 5 point penalty:
 - Blatant disobedience (kick, bite, buck, etc.)
 - ii. Use of either hand to instill fear or praise
 - iii. Use of two hands (per maneuver)

- iv. Placing more than one finger between split reins (per maneuver)
- v. Placing one finger between romal reins (per maneuver)
- e. Disqualification:
 - i. Lameness
 - ii. Abuse, disrespect, or misconduct
 - iii. Illegal equipment or improper western attire
 - iv. Fall of pony or rider
 - v. Spurring pony in front of cinch
- f. Off Pattern: exhibitors going off pattern will not be placed above any exhibitor completing pattern correctly. Examples of off-pattern penalties:
 - i. Breaking pattern
 - ii. Inclusion of maneuver (over or under spinning)
 - iii. Backing more than 2 strides
 - iv. Leaving arena before pattern is complete
 - v. Repeated blatant disobedience
- I. Exhibitors are permitted to straighten excess rein anytime during pattern as long as exhibitor's free hand remains behind rein hand. Attempting to adjust tension of reins is considered using two hands on the reins, therefore it is a 5 point penalty.

Ranch Conformation:

- The purpose of Ranch Conformation is to select an individual that displays the most positive traits to carryout various activities of a working ranch horse. Such traits include: balance, structurally correctness, and movement.
- 2. Shows offering Ranch Conformation must offer one more approved POA approved Ranch Class.
- Ponies entering Ranch Conformation must also compete in one other POA approved Ranch Class.
 Ponies must be shown in the same division they are competing in for other ranch classes.
- 4. Ranch Conformation Classes will be held after the completion of all other ranch classes.
- Suggested Ranch Conformation Classes are as follows (in an effort to make scoring of Versatile Ranch Pony award more efficient and fair)
 - Walk-Trot Youth Ranch Conformation
 - b. Walk-Trot-Lope Youth Ranch Conformation
 - Walk-Trot Adult Ranch Conformation
 - d. Walk-Trot-Lope Adult Ranch Conformation
- Ranch ponies will still be shown separately according to exhibitors division.
- Ponies must be shown in working tack. The following tack is allowed: rope or braided halter; nylon halter; or plain leather halter.
- Ponies are strongly encouraged to be shown in working tack including: rope or braided, nylon, or
 plain leather halters. Halters with silver are strongly discouraged. Exhibitors will not be
 penalized for the use of silver halters.
- 9. Class routine is as follows: Ponies will walk to the judge one at a time. As the pony approaches, judge will step aside to enable pony to jog to the cone 50 feet away. At the cone, pony will turn to the left and trot to the wall/fence. After jogging individuals will be lined up head to tail for individual inspection by the judge.
- Judges shall inspect each pony from both sides, front and rear, placing the ponies by order of preference.
- 11. In the event that an exhibitor has more than one pony in Ranch Conformation: Exhibitors are permitted to designate handlers to present exhibitor's additional ponies. Youth exhibitors must appoint another youth to present their additional ponies.
- 12. Ponies are permitted to cross-enter in Ranch Conformation and Halter.

Ranch Trail:

- A. Any pony three years of age or older are eligible for Ranch Trail
- B. The purpose of the Ranch Trail class is measure a pony's ability to effectively manage and navigate through a series of obstacles that may be encountered in everyday ranch work. The pony/rider team will be scored according to their ability to work together in completing a correct and efficient pattern. The ideal Ranch Trail pony should exhibit a well-mannered attitude and be responsive to the rider as the pattern is completed.
- J. Ranch Class Apparel and Equipment:
 - a. Attire should be neat and clean. Working tack is strongly encouraged.
 - The following items are highly discouraged: hoof polish, braided or banded manes, tail
 extensions, trimming inside the ears, and silver bridles and saddles
 - c. Trimming of fetlocks, long facial hair, and bridle path is permitted
 - d. Equipment with silver will not be counted over good working outfit
 - Ranch trail exhibitors are encouraged to outfit their pony with a breast collar and back cinch for safety.
 - f. Ranch trail exhibitors are permitted to use romal reins as a get-down rope for the purposes of leading or working on the ground where required in the pattern. The getdown rope may be a neck rope with bosalita that is tied in a manner that will not slide or tighten on the pony's neck. The tail end (lead) of the neck rope may be attached to the front of the saddle with saddle strings or run through the rider's belt loop but should not be tied to the saddle horn.
- C. The ideal Ranch Pony should display awareness and remain calm, attentive, and patient while performing each obstacle. Ponies demonstrating attentiveness to obstacles will receive credit in maneuver scores. Unnecessary delays throughout the pattern will result in a penalty. Ticks, hits, or clips of obstacles throughout the pattern will result in a lower maneuver score.
- D. Walk-Trot-Lope Division: The Ranch Trail class must have at least 6 obstacles and no more than 12 obstacles. Patterns must include a walk, trot, and lope; it is strongly encouraged to include extended gaits as well.
- E. Walk-Trot Division: The Ranch Trail class must have at least 5 obstacles and no more than 10 obstacles. Patterns must include a walk and trot; it is strongly encouraged to include an extended trot as well. Loping shall be prohibited in Walk-Trot Ranch Trail Classes.
- F. The walk can be included as part of the obstacle, or scored with approaching obstacle. The trot must be at least 35 feet and be scored with approaching obstacle. The lope must be at least 50 feet and scored with approaching obstacle. The lope must be lead-specific.
- G. The Show Committee will set up the trail pattern. Individuals will be mindful while setting up trail pattern to avoid obstacles that could be potentially harmful to exhibitors and their ponies; not creating obstacles that may trap or eliminate exhibitors because they are too difficult. An outdoor course is recommended if the terrain is deemed appropriate by the show committee.
- H. Because courses can be lengthy, it is recommended the Show Committee creates a course that can be completed in approximately 4 minutes or less.
- The judge will walk through the course before the class begins and is responsible to remove or adjust any obstacles that may be deemed unsafe or unnecessary to the intent of the class.

- J. In the event that a trail obstacle is deemed unsafe during the class, the obstacle will be removed and the score for the obstacle will be voided from all exhibitors' score cards.
- K. Ponies are permitted to cross enter in Ranch Trail and Trail.
- L. Each obstacle will be scored on the following basis, ranging from plus 1 ½ to minus 1 ½:
 - Excellent: plus 1 ½
 - b. Very good: plus 1
 - c. Good: plus 1/2
 - d. Correct: 0
 - e. Poor: minus 1/2
 - f. Very Poor: minus 1
 - g. Extremely Poor: minus 1 ½
- M. Obstacle scores and penalties are to be assessed independently of one another
- N. Penalties:
 - a. Disqualification:
 - Use of two hands (except for Junior ponies ridden in a snaffle or hackamore/bosal)
 - ii. Illegal use of romal rein
 - iii. Equipment failure that delays completion of pattern
 - iv. Navigating obstacles in different order than pattern states
 - v. No attempt of obstacle
 - vi. Touching pony on the neck to lower head
 - vii. Riding outside designated boundary line of course
 - viii. Entering, exiting, or working obstacle in a different way than pattern designates
 - ix. Failure to perform correct line of travel within or between obstacles
 - Third refusal, balk, or attempt to evade obstacle by backing away more than 2 strides
 - b. 1 point penalty:
 - i. Each bite or stepping on log, cone, marker, or obstacle
 - ii. Break of gait at walk or trot for two strides or less
 - iii. Split pole in lope-over
 - c. 3 point penalty:
 - i. Break of gait at walk or trot for more than 2 strides
 - ii. Out of lead or break of gait at lope (except when changing incorrect lead)
 - iii. Knocking down or severely disturbing obstacle
 - Stepping outside the confines of, falling or jumping out of obstacle with one foot (box, back thru, water box)
 - d. 5 point penalty:
 - i. Dropping slicker or object required to be carried in course
 - First refusal, balk, or attempt to evade obstacle by backing away more than 2 strides
 - Loss of control or letting go of gate, rope, drag or other item required to be handled
 - iv. Stepping outside the confines of, falling or jumping out of obstacle with more than one foot (box, back thru, water box)

- v. Blatant disobedience (kick, bite, etc.)
- vi. Failure to demonstrate the correct lead or gait designated
- vii. Failure to complete obstacle
- Second refusal, balk, or attempt to evade obstacle by backing away more than 2 strides
- ix. Use of either hand to instill fear or praise
- O. Only one hand may be used on the reins, except for junior ponies showing in an accepted snaffle or hackamore/bosal. Changing of rein hand is only permitted when needing to work with an obstacle. One finger may be placed between reins when using split reins. Hands must be clear of pony and saddle except for when it is permissible to touch saddle, when pony is in motion.
- P. Exhibitors are allowed to post during extended trot.
- Q. Each pattern must include 4 mandatory obstacles, one selected from each category except for Walk-Trot patterns. Walk-Trot patterns are not required to include obstacle from category 2, but must include an extra obstacle from the following categories. Show management will set up the trail course, keeping in mind safety and the gait at which each obstacle must be navigated.
 - a. Category 1: an obstacle that demonstrates a pony's ability to be maneuvered over or thru an obstacle. A minimum of 1 obstacle must be included in the pattern:
 - Ride over at least 4 logs or poles. Items may be placed in a straight, zig-zag, raised, curved, or combination formation and do not need to be measured as objects on the trail are random. Show management will consider the gait at which obstacle must be navigated to promote safety and forward movement. Lope-over logs/poles must be set at a minimum of 14 feet.
 - ii. Ride over wooden bridge. Bridges must be at least 3 feet wide and 6 feet long and well-constructed. Bridges can be navigated at a walk or trot. Rocking bridges are permitted, if constructed in such a way that obstacle cannot slide or roll.
 - Serpentine Obstacles. There is no specific measurement of spacing between obstacles, though show management should consider the gait at which obstacle will be navigated.
 - Water hazard (ditch or small pond). No metal or slick bottom boxes may be used.
 - v. Ride over or thru brush, branches, or natural obstacles
 - b. Category 2: An obstacle that demonstrates a pony's ability for rider to handle another object. Walk-Trot patterns are not required to include this category into their pattern. Walk-Trot-Lope patterns must include at minimum 1 of the following obstacles:
 - Drag an obstacle. Ponies must demonstrate an ability to remain calm and in control throughout the entirety of obstacle including preparation. Riders must dally rope around saddle horn (full dally or half dally). Rider and pony should not become tangled in rope at any portion of obstacle.
 - ii. Handling of a rope. Riders may be asked to rope a steer head, throw a rope in front of the horse, and recoil rope, swing a rope overhead, or throw a rope and back up dragging the rope. Exhibitors will not be judged on their ability to handle a rope but on the pony's ability to calmly allow rider to complete task at

- hand. The Show Committee will supply a rope for exhibitors who do not have a rope.
- Move live animals or be guided through live animals that would be encountered on the ranch (cows, goats, or sheep).
- Carry object from one end of the arena to another. Objects must simulate objects that may be carried on the ranch.
- Pick up a slicker, put it on, and take it off.
- c. Category 3: An obstacle that demonstrates a pony's ability to be navigated laterally. A minimum of 1 of the following obstacles must be included in pattern:
 - Navigating Gate. Opening, passing through, and closing gate. Trail gate must be well-constructed and safe for rider and pony. The use of rope gates are not permitted.
 - Side pass. Side pass obstacles may be elevated up to 12 inches.
 - Backing obstacle. Obstacle must include a curve, around obstacles, or a change in directions. Backing straight will not count towards a required Category 3 obstacle.
- d. Category 4: An obstacle that demonstrates a pony's ability to be handled from the ground. If pony is shown in a bridle with romal reins, a neck rope (get down rope) is permitted for the handling of the pony from the ground in ranch trail. A minimum of 1 of the following obstacles must be included in the pattern:
 - i. Ground tie (hobbles are allowed)
 - Mount and dismount. The show committee must have a mounting block present in the event exhibitor needs to use a mounting block.
 - iii. Work a gate while on foot.
 - iv. Load into trailer.
 - v. Pick up feet.
 - vi. Lead at a walk or trot.
- Suggested obstacles: additional obstacles to complete the course may include, but are not limited to:
 - i. Any additional obstacles from the required categories above.
 - ii. Cross natural ditches or embankments.
 - iii. Remove and replace items from a mailbox.
 - Backing straight line obstacle.
 - V. Jumping obstacle
 - Objects representing live animals which would normally be encountered in an outdoor setting but shall not be used in an attempt to spook a pony.
- f. Prohibited Obstacles: the following obstacles cannot be used in any Ranch Trail class:
 - Tarps
 - ii. Water obstacles with a slick bottom
 - PVC pipe to be used as a jump or walk over, tires, logs elevate in such a manner that may roll and risk safety of pony and rider, painted poles, rope gates, and stuffed animals.

Versatile Ranch Pony Award:

- A. All points will be accumulated for each rider/pony combination to determine the winner of the Versatile Ranch Pony award (with the exception of Ranch Conformation when exhibitors are showing multiple ponies in one division.)
- B. The following disciplines will count towards the Versatile Ranch Pony Award:
 - Ranch Riding
 - b. Ranch Reining (Walk-Trot- Lope Divisions Only)
 - c. Ranch Trail
 - d. Ranch Conformation
 - e. Ranch Rail Pleasure
- C. Ponies are permitted to be shown in different ranch class divisions as long as pony is being shown by different riders.
- D. In the event, Show Management only offers one Ranch Conformation Class, the points pony receives will be added to the total scores of all exhibitors showing pony.
- E. Show Management is permitted to combine all divisions to determine one overall Versatile Ranch Pony Award

Additional questions:

I am not sure how to figure the versatility award. I am sure I will get some push-back if a walk-trot youth has their trainer showing in ranch conformation. I want to keep things fair, but easy to understand. I also want to make sure that those families that only have one or two ponies that are being shared within their family have the same opportunity to compete in this award if they want.

Would it be better to say one pony/one rider per division?

On the other hand, how do I make it possible for exhibitors showing multiple horses be able to compete/qualify for the award. Ranch conformation is where it gets tricky because one person cannot show multiple horses at one time, yet ponies cannot be shown by multiple handlers at the same time. I need help clarifying this.