

North Fork Landowners' Association

October Meeting Minutes

October 3, 2009

I. Call to order

President Betsy Holycross called to order the regular meeting of the North Fork Landowners' Association at 8:19 p.m. on October 3, 2009 at Sondreson Community Hall.

II. Roll call

President Holycross conducted a roll call. The following board members were present: Margaret Heaphy, Steve Berg, Lee Secrest, Valerie Cox, Molly Shepherd, Richard Hildner, and Jan Caldwell.

III. Approval of minutes from last meeting and Treasurer's Report

Valerie Cox read the minutes from the last meeting. The minutes were approved as read. The Treasurer's Report was approved as read. (See attached.)

IV. NFLA Committee Reports

- a) Trails: John Frederick reported that the Thoma Lookout Project has been delayed by active fires.
- b) Fire Mitigation: Molly Shepherd reported that the Border Patrol will use National Guard helicopters during the first week of October to replace the repeater on Mt. Hefty.
- c) Road Committee: Margaret Heaphy provided an update on the county's plans and progress on the North Fork Road project as per Dave Prunty. Rock crushing, ditch clearing, and road shaping is taking place. The countywide road plan is still in progress. Prioritizing roads will be necessary due to limited funding. One criterion for prioritization is number of vehicles on each road. From September 4 through September 10, there were 324 vehicles counted north of Big Creek, 444 north of the Camas Junction, 480 south of Polebridge Junction, and 266 north of Polebridge Junction. Jim Lynch of the Montana Department of Transportation discussed the possibility of a feasibility study followed by a required environmental process before dust abatement treatment. If the county requests the study, the Forest Service will complete the 8 month process. Current goals of the committee are to summarize and post research findings on the NFLA website. Alice Caldwell, Matt Nerdig, AnnaMarie Harrod, and Dennis Groebe will help with dust abatement research.
- d) Weeds: Valerie Cox reported that the committee will work to hold a Weed Roundup next summer, and will apply for a Resource Advisory Committee (RAC) grant to help locate and mitigate weeds in the North Fork. They will also investigate forming a Cooperative Weed Management Area (CWMA).

- e) Cell Phone Service: Jon Elliott reported there is no interest on the part of providers to offer service to the North Fork due to the limited number of potential users. Also, Homeland Security would support cellular service but Glacier Park would not; neighborhood zoning both declares service unnecessary but allows communication infrastructure. A member noted that Wilson Electronics booster devices only work for residents who receive at least one bar using a Verizon or AT&T device, and that reception was spotty within a 50 mile range.
- f) History: Morgan Hart announced a committee meeting will take place at the Hall at 3:00 p.m. on October 6. NFLA members are welcome.
- g) Webmaster: Patti Hart noted that documents of interest are available on the left-hand side of the NFLA webpage. Users can access old stories on the archives. Richard Wackrow suggested a page of procedures in case of an emergency. Members were asked to let Patti know of changes or requests for the website.
- h) Newsletter: Jon Elliott requested that articles be submitted quickly for the newsletter to be published in October rather than the first part of November. Members can opt for electronic delivery.

V. Non-NFLA Entities

- a) Flathead Basin Commission: John Frederick and Annamarie Harrod attended a meeting in Fernie, British Columbia to hear two United Nations presenters lead a discussion regarding threatened impacts to Glacier and Waterton Parks. President Holycross asked for a volunteer to take Ed Heger's place on the Flathead Basin Coalition.
- b) Fire: Larry Wilson announced that the Ninko Fire is now 700 acres. It was difficult to fight with intermittent heavy fuels, but slowed at old clearcuts and previous burns. The Ninko cabin was never in danger. The date to begin open burning has been delayed.
- c) Resource Advisory Committee (RAC): Larry Wilson announced that RAC will have \$300,000 in federal dollars. Half is for Flathead County roads, trails, and water quality improvement. The committee looks for projects with the biggest impact for the dollars. The committee consists of representatives from three groups – environmental, timber, and outdoor recreation. RAC is under the U.S. Agriculture Department and has been in existence for 6 years on a two-year renewal basis. He noted that the North Fork Road will probably not receive much more money.
- d) North Fork Land Use Advisory Committee (NFLUAC): John Frederick reported the committee is discussing definitions and will meet again on June 5, 2010.

VI. New Business

- a) Food Drive: Bob Grimaldi and Jan Caldwell will deliver our contributions to the Columbia Falls Food Bank on October 6th. Donations can be made until then at Bob's house. President Holycross thanked Bob and Jean Grimaldi for their initial \$100 cash donation. Bob suggested a monthly collection from June through October. He will weigh the food contributions and report the results.
- b) Auction: An auction will be discussed at the June meeting.
- c) Noise Issue: Larry Wilson reported he met with the offending party with little result. However, there are nuisance laws, and laws that apply to nuisance noise on rivers and lakes. A member stated that since the state has no noise ordinances, the counties cannot pass them.
- d) NFLA and Policy: President Holycross explained that the NFLA is not governed by policy, but that groups such as ours operate by customs and practices. Montana statutes govern our type of organization. Molly Shepherd provided a handout with more information on those statutes and explained them. (See attached).
- e) Flag Project: Ray Brown has the new flag which has flown over the capital. He read the accompanying certificate, and suggested that a ceremony be held to fly the flag. Concrete has been poured for the flagpole and the base is ready. Ray will present the bill. In addition, a motion was made and passed to purchase parts for the flagpole.
- f) Ford School: The Ford School and former Funk cabin is threatened each spring by flooding. Ray Hart requested moving the schoolhouse to his land. Larry Wilson suggested setting the cabin up at the Community Hall volleyball court as a museum to house historic artifacts.
- g) Hall Rental: The North Fork Road Coalition for Health and Safety (NFRCHS) will rent the hall on October 12 from 3:30 to 5:30 to meet with an attorney from Bozeman to pursue litigation against the county for failure to address dust abatement on the North Fork Road.
- h) Special Announcement: Pat Elliott reported Ruth Sondreson is in assisted living. Ruth and others initiated the first Thanksgiving dinner at the Hall in 1975. Pat asked members to send cards to Ruth.

VII. Adjournment

President Betsy Holycross adjourned the meeting.

Minutes submitted by: Valerie Cox, Secretary/Treasurer _____ and
approved by Betsy Holycross, President _____.