

THE NORTH FORK

LANDOWNERS ASSOCIATION SPRING NEWSLETTER

Hello robins, hello bluebirds, and hello NFLA Spring Newsletter! As the sun continues to rise earlier and lower later we are reminded of the days that are soon to come; days when the air is warm, the flowers vibrant, and the road dusty.

And what better way to spend those days than by checking out the many activities planned by the NFLA social committee! From traditional outings like

book club, weed pulling, biking, floating, and hiking to new adventures in bird-watching, astronomy, bocce ball, fly-fishing, sock-hopping, movies and more!

Enclosed is this year's social calendar that includes dates and times of these activities plus information on the Hall Cleanup, business meetings, guest speakers, holiday dinners and more.

Here's to a great summer!

Don't Forget!!!

- ◆ HALL CLEAN UP
SATURDAY, MAY 26TH
- ◆ POSTER MAKING
PARTY WEDNESDAY
MAY 30TH
- ◆ NFLA BUSINESS
MEETINGS ARE THE 1ST
SATURDAY OF EVERY
MONTH AT 8PM
- ◆ 3rd ANNUAL ROBIN COX
WEED ROUNDUP
JULY 24TH AT 10AM
- ◆ IT'S NEVER TOO LATE
TO BE BEAR SAFE!

NORTH FORK PATROL. Lately, there has been some confusion over when to pay dues for the North Fork Patrol and when those dues expire. Since there is no longer an NFLA newsletter in the fall, it has been easy to forget to pay for the patrol when folks leave at the end of the summer. We would like to encourage interested property owners to pay when they receive this newsletter. The payment is good for one year from when paid...regardless of when that is. If there are any questions about your current status on the patrol or when you last paid, please contact Margaret Heaphy.

READY FOR SPRING MEANS READY FOR BEARS, BIG AND SMALL. Everyone's thinking spring! Bare ground isn't too far beneath all that snow, sunnier skies aren't too far behind those spring squalls, and bears aren't too far from shaking off their winter snooze and coming out to meet the season along with everyone else. And this spring, three of the North Fork's better known female grizzlies - Patti, her sibling Betsy, and their mother - could all emerge from their dens with cubs in tow. That's the word from Tim Manley, grizzly bear management specialist with Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks (MFWP).

For bears, spring is all about finding food. For North Forkers, keeping human food out of a bear's reach is as much a part of spring as rigging up fishing gear or planting gardens. And Patti Bear is still alive and wild thanks in part to everyone who

secured attractants last year, shooed her away when she came too close, or called Manley when she needed extra encouragement. If Patti, Betsy, and their mother all have cubs this year, preventing them from pursuing bad habits they could pass on to the next generation will be all the more important.

Here are some ways to help: Keep garbage, pet food, livestock feed, bird seed and hummingbird feeders out of bears' reach; make noise by yelling or banging pots and pans to haze bears from the yard and discourage them from seeking human sources of food - DO NOT APPROACH OR SHOOT AT BEARS; call Tim Manley at 250-1265 or 892-0802 to report a bear that is frequenting your home, or to learn more on securing attractants.

Contributed by Amy Secret.

HELLO NORTH FORK LANDOWNER! This newsletter comes to you courtesy of the North Fork Landowners Association (NFLA). Just because you receive this newsletter does not mean that you are an *NFLA member*; we send this newsletter to all North Fork Landowners. We invite you to join us! Membership dues are only \$10 a year per person. Your dues help us maintain the Community Hall and organize many exciting activities that bring the community together. We have activities for everyone, whether you are interested in reading, gardening, hiking, biking, dancing, birding, eradicating noxious weeds, or floating the river. [See the calendar events included in this newsletter.] We hope to see you at NFLA activities and meetings this summer/fall. To learn more about the NFLA, please see our informative website at <http://www.nflandowners.org>

Warm Regards,
Debo Powers, NFLA President

JOIN THE NFLA...TODAY!

Membership sign-up form included in newsletter
or visit <http://www.nflandowners.org>

THE NORTH FORK HISTORY PROJECT

began its work last summer/fall. The NFLA History Committee met early last summer to organize the project, create documents, and plan a fundraiser. It was the intention of the committee to raise money to fund the project rather than ask for any funds in the NFLA account. An auction was planned for July and raised \$3600 for the NFLA, ear-marked for the history project. The committee went to the NFLA Board of Directors with a budget proposal to spend \$1500 of these funds for equipment and supplies to begin the oral history project, and funds were approved unanimously. After purchasing a high-quality recorder and other equipment, committee

members began recording interviews with North Forkers. Six interviews were completed in the fall and three of these can presently be listened to on the NFLA website. The committee is posed to conduct additional interviews beginning this summer. The North Fork History Project has its own page on the NFLA website. Besides recorded interviews, you can also read short stories about North Forkers of the past. The committee would also like to set up a lending library of books about the North Fork. If you would like to donate a North Fork book or participate in committee meetings and activities, please contact us at:

NFhistoryproject@gmail.com

THE FIRE MITIGATION COMMITTEE...

The DNRC has awarded a hazardous fuels reduction grant to the North Fork community, its third such grant since the Wedge Canyon and Robert fires in 2003. According to a DNRC spokesperson, "the North Fork project received priority in the grant selection process due in part to the demonstrated willingness of landowners to collaborate in combining treatments across the landscape." Over 100 North Fork landowners have participated in the two previous grant programs. Many of their projects have benefitted multiple landowners.

Approximately \$100,000 in funds will be available for mitigation activities under the grant. Monies will be distributed on a cost-share basis, with the grant providing 75% of the cost of an

agreed-upon project and the landowner providing the remaining 25%, in cash or in kind. Allowable activities include thinning, brush piling, chipping, prescribed burning, pruning, right-of-way vegetation management and education about defensible space.

The total value of the grant, with landowners' share, is about \$133,000.

An application to participate in the grant program is enclosed with the newsletter. A copy also may be downloaded from the Fire Mitigation Committee page on the

NFLA web site. A landowner may simply opt for a free home wildfire evaluation, without further involvement in the program.

The Flathead Economic Policy Center (FEPC) will administer the grant, which unless extended, terminates on September 30, 2014

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HAPPY TRAILS...The North Fork is rich with excellent hiking trails. These trails can offer a few hours of walking pleasure or strenuous all-day adventures that leave you thoroughly exhausted. Last summer/fall, my goal was to hike every major trail in the North Fork. Due to a late snow pack and a subsequent late start in the ability to hike the high country, my hiking buddies and I fell short of this goal by a few trails. However, we hiked about 20 trails, which amounted to about one trail per week. In early summer, when the snow was still deep on the highest peaks, we hiked the lower country, places that are usually overlooked like Lake Macdonald Trail. As the snows melted, we moved higher, Tuchuck Trail being one example. If a severe storm kept us from making a particular summit, we picked another day and made it to the top. The warm fall weather kept us on the trails into November.



North Fork trails are always full of surprises, from the spectacular views to the changeable weather conditions. On many of the Forest Service trails, it is easy to lose the trail requiring hikers to spend time trying to find the way. The best part of hiking North Fork trails, as opposed to Park trails, is that you rarely see other people. High up on top of Nasukoin or Tuchuck, it seems like you are the only people for hundreds of miles. Although this is an illusion, it is an invigorating feeling.

The animals are out there in our wild neighborhood; the big predators and wild game use the trails the same as we do. You can feel their presence and see signs of their passing, but you rarely see them. I have wondered how many times a bear has hidden in the brush while we passed by chatting happily, oblivious to their presence.

We, in the North Fork, live in a beautiful wilderness paradise...a place to enjoy and cherish and hike. *Contributed by Debo Powers.*

BACKWOODS BOOKLOVERS...Four books have been scheduled for the book club this summer; two novels and two non-fiction books. *Chasing Fire* by Nora Roberts, June 19, presents a well-researched story about the Missoula smoke jumpers, one of the most exclusive firefighting squads in the nation. Little else in life is as dangerous as fire jumping. Flying past towering pillars of smoke, parachuting down to the edge of an all-consuming blaze, shoveling and sawing for hours upon hours, days at a time, all to hold the line and push back against the raw power of Mother Nature.

Indian Trails of the Northern Rockies by Darris Flanagan on July 17 features discussion of the Indian trail that crosses Trail Creek Rd. In detailed text, photographs, and illustrations the book notes the dramatic flux of an Indian people in transition from utilizing the high mountain passes of the Northern Rockies to access the buffalo country of the high plains, and the conflict

that brought between them and the Blackfeet, which was, most of the time, ferocious. Several chapters note the journals of the first explorers and surveyors whose names were given to mountains and valleys and streams in the area which includes Glacier National Park. Author Flanagan will join us. The next day, Duke Hoiland will lead a tour of the trail that follows Trail Creek.

Staking Her Claim: Women Homesteading the West by Marcia Hensley will be discussed on Aug. 21. *Staking Her Claim* is doubly rewarding for its wealth of data about women who stepped outside the picture-frame of myth on the Western homestead frontier, and for the pure pleasure of hearing the stories of these women in their own words. On Sept. 11 the group discusses the 1932 Pulitzer Prize-winning classic *The Good Earth* by Pearl Buck, which is still a standout today. Multiple copies of all books are available at the library and are for sale on Amazon and Barnes and Noble. **Meetings start at 7:30 at Sondreson Hall. Discussions are casual and everyone is welcome. Bring a snack to share.**

Flathead Economic Policy Center
Northwest Montana Hazardous Fuels

Project Area _____
Application Deadline: _____

Home Evaluation Application

Applicant Information

Landowner Name (*last, first*) _____ Phone _____

Mailing Address _____ Email _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Contact Person (if other than landowner) Name _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Property Description

County _____ Subdivision or Geographic Location _____

Legal Description _____ Section _____ Township _____ Range _____

Number of Acres _____

Approximately how many homes are within 1000 feet of your property? _____

Yes No

- Is there a house or dwelling on this property?
- Has this property been burned by wildfire? Ever? In the last 20 years? 50?
- Are you interested in a home wildfire risk assessment? (or defensible/survivable space evaluation)
- Would you like to receive specific information regarding fuels reduction assistance?
- Are you interested in cost-share assistance for fuels reduction work?
- Are you receiving or applying for hazardous fuels reduction cost-share from other sources
If so, please list them _____

- _____
- We prefer to have the homeowner present when we perform a exterior hazardous fuels evaluation. If you are unable to participate for any reason, however, do we have your permission to enter your property and perform the evaluation in your absence?

Please provide a map or directions to your property, including any distinguishing features or landmarks we can use to identify the property entrance if it is not clearly signed at the point it joins the public road/street/highway.

Authorizing Statement

I (we) herby declare that the information, and all statements attached to this application are true, complete and accurate to the best of my (our) knowledge.

I (we) understand that this application is not a contract or promise of funds from FEPC's Northwest Montana Hazardous Fuels Program.

Applicant Signature _____ Date _____

Co-Applicant Signature _____ Date _____

Send Completed Application to: FEPC, NW Montana Fuels Reduction, 919 Elk Park Road,
Columbia Falls, MT 59912-06, 892-8155

North Fork Landowners' Association

Membership Sign-up/Renewal Form

The North Fork Landowners' Association was founded in 1947. The Association owns Sondreson Hall at Whale Creek that serves as a center for business and social functions on the North Fork.

Only property owners of record, their spouses and adult members of their immediate families are eligible to vote. Associate Members (non-property owners) may not vote. Annual dues for Active Members are \$10 per person; dues for Associate Members are \$5 per person. Dues may be paid by mail or in person at any NFLA meeting. **Additional contributions are welcome.**

To join the association or renew your membership, complete the form and mail it with your check to the secretary-treasurer at the address below. If you are unsure when your dues expire, contact the secretary-treasurer.

Name(s) of applicant(s) _____ Date _____
 (must be property owner(s) shown on deed, spouse, and/or adult member of immediate family)
 Name(s) of non-voting associate members _____
 Mailing address (if new, or write "same") _____
 North Fork property address (if new, or write "same") _____
 E-mail address _____ Telephone(s) _____

I will access the newsletter and schedule electronically from the website. Please don't mail it.
Even 50% of the members getting their newsletter from the website will result in a significant savings for the association.

Please make your check(s) payable to the North Fork Landowners Association and mail to:
NFLA Secretary-Treasurer
P.O. Box 1603
Columbia Falls, Montana 59912

Voting members (\$10 per person)	
Associate Members (\$5 per person)	
Members additional contribution	
Patrol (\$10) *** and sign up below ***	
Patrol additional contribution	
Total Amount Enclosed	

*** North Fork Patrol Sign-up Form ***

We of the North Fork Patrol hope you return to the North Fork to find your place intact. If you find a problem with criminal mischief, theft or burglary, report it immediately to the Flathead County Sheriff's office at (406) 758-5585 and to North Fork Patrol Chairman Mark Heaphy. In addition to patrolling properties, the North Fork Patrol pays a reward of up to \$500 for information leading to the arrest and conviction of any wrongdoers on the North Fork.

*** The North Fork Patrol is asking for donations of \$10 or more to provide funds for rewards and to compensate patrollers for gasoline and other expenses. To participate in the North Fork Patrol, **complete the entire form below and indicate amount contributed in the box above.**

***I, _____, give the North Fork Patrol complete permission to enter my property to inspect the **exterior** of all buildings to detect evidence of a break-in or other crime and to report suspicious activity to proper authorities.

Signed _____ Date _____ Telephone(s) _____
 Property address and directions to property _____

Mailing address _____ E-mail address _____

North Fork Landowners' Association
Secretary-Treasurer
P.O. Box 1603
Columbia Falls, MT 59912

SPECIAL BIRDING EVENT WITH THE CASEYS

On **July 14**, Dan and Susannah Casey will lead a birding tour of some of the North Fork's birds. Currently the Northern Rockies Bird Conservation Region (BCR) Coordinator, Dan has conducted baseline bird surveys throughout the western U.S. He spent 16 years with Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks, where he designed and directed research on the effects of habitat management practices on forest breeding bird communities, as well as projects directed on waterfowl, Ospreys, Bald Eagles and elk. Dan was awarded "Montana Conservationist of the Year" in



2006. Susannah is a GIS Technician with American Bird Conservation for the Northern Rockies and is an expert birder in her own right. Both are looking forward to spending time in the North Fork. Join the Caseys and hosts Randy Kenyon and Donna Harrison at 8:30 am at the North Fork Road and the entrance to Schnaus Cabin. Bring binoculars, bird book and water. Beginners welcome. A list of birds commonly found on the North Fork will be provided.

ALERT LANDING SITES. These locations are wired into the alert helicopter GPS system. If you have a medical emergency that requires the ALERT helicopter, you'll need to know which site is closest to you and who your closest neighbor is that has a phone or radio. An ALERT site map can be found at www.nflandowners.org. If ALERT is needed, dial 911 and tell them which site is closest to you.

USE COMMON SENSE FOLLOW THE RULES HAVE A SAFE SUMMER