



North Fork Landowners Association

Spring 2015 Newsletter

FROM THE PRESIDENT

As we wait for spring to get here, I want to take the time to thank the NFLA Board Members for all of the hard work they have done to promote and maintain our unique neighborhood. I would also like to thank all of the committees that have continued to provide opportunities and support for our landowners.

I look forward to another summer of friendship and experiences that continue to make us the luckiest landowners in The Last Best Place.

The Board and I appreciate your support of our organization and we will continue to work for you.

Karen McDonough, President
North Fork Landowners Association

Square Dancing in the North Fork

By Debo Powers

Residents have been square dancing in the North Fork for a century. The homesteaders looked forward to the times when they met as a community to visit, share food, and dance. There are many stories of meals at midnight and square dancing that lasted all night long while the children slept on the sidelines. We are not as hardy as those early homesteaders, so our square dances are usually over by 11:00pm!!

Square dancing is a wonderful community activity that can be enjoyed by all ages and all ability levels. I usually tell people that if you can walk, you can square dance because it requires only that you follow the directions of the caller and move in the direction that s/he

DON'T MISS THESE:

NEW: *Spring Garden Roundtable June 2nd*

NEW: *Crazy Hat Square Dance August 15th*

CHANGE FOR JULY NFLA BUSINESS MEETING: *July 11th*

CONTINUING: *Firewise Day and Summer Interlocal July 15*

CONTINUING: *Fly Fishing July 8th*

CONTINUING: *Church Services Sundays 10:30 a.m. July 5 through September 27*

NEW: *Date Change for Community Picnic August 23th*

tells you to! All you have to do is check the calendar for the dates, wear comfortable shoes, and show up at 8:00pm! Bringing a snack to share is great too.

The August Dance will be a "Hat Dance." This was a North Fork tradition a few decades ago and we are resurrecting it! Just make a crazy hat to wear. The most creative one gets a prize!

We have been using recorded music for our square dances. However, if there are any musicians who would be willing to play old time music for us, please send a message to debopowers@gmail.com

North Fork History Project *By Debo Powers*

The North Fork History Project has recorded oral history interviews with nineteen North Forkers . . . so far. These recordings can be listened to on the NFLA website at www.nflandowners.com Committee members will continue to record interviews during the summer and fall of 2015.

Thanks to Chris Graff and Monica Phillips who paid for transcripts of the recordings, all of

the interviews can now be read on the website.

The History page of the NFLA website also includes short stories about historical North Fork characters, photos, and excerpts from old letters. If you have historical letters or pictures you would be willing to donate, please send copies to debopowers@gmail.com or North Fork History Project, 11499 North Fork Road, Polebridge, MT 59928.

North Fork Trails *By Debo Powers*

One of the pleasures of living in the North Fork is the abundance of hiking trails in our backyards. The North Fork has a number of superb hiking trails of various lengths. Although many of the best known trails, like Tuchuck, Nasukoin, or Thompson-Seton, are 10-13 miles in length, there are a few trails that are shorter with less elevation gain. These trails can provide wilderness adventure for those who may not think that they can hike all day or handle thousands of feet of elevation gain and loss. When asked about getting into shape to hike the longer trails, I encourage people to try Cyclone, Hornet, and Thoma before attempting the longer hikes.



While it is easy to get maps and directions for these trails in order to plan your own hike, the NFLA Trails Committee will be offering a series of short hikes for those who would rather hike with a group of neighbors. Because the weather can be fickle, we are not posting the hike dates on the NFLA calendar. Rather, we will plan a series of

short hikes starting in June when the trails are free of snow and notify you by email. If you want to be informed about these hikes, please send an email message to debopowers@gmail.com If you do not have email access in the North Fork and would like to be notified of hikes by "snail mail," please mail your request to me at 11499 North Fork Road, Polebridge, MT 59928.

If you are interested in helping with trail maintenance, please contact the North Fork Trails Association (which is a separate organization from the NFLA). See their website at www.nftrails.org

In addition to encouraging hiking, the NFLA Trails Committee has informational books and guides on the flora and fauna of the Northern Rockies. These books can be checked out and returned to the Community Hall during NFLA meetings. Our committee is looking for a small shelf to display these books at the Hall. If you have a shelf to donate, please contact me at debopowers@gmail.com

FIRE MITIGATION COMMITTEE REPORT by Molly Shepherd

2015 Firewise Day

The North Fork has been recognized as a Firewise Community for ten years. One of the requirements for continuing recognition is holding an annual Firewise Day event. The North Fork's annual Firewise workshops have been informative and well-attended, covering a range of wildfire and stewardship topics.

This year, the NFLA's Fire Mitigation Committee will sponsor its Firewise workshop on Wednesday, July 15 2015 from 9:30 a.m. to noon, immediately preceding the

Summer Interlocal meeting. Although plans for the event are not yet complete, the committee expects to show a video of fire behavior during the 2014 Pacific Northwest fire season. Tentatively, presenters will include Lincoln Chute, Flathead County Fire Service Area Manager, and committee co-chair Allen Chrisman. We'll probably also hear updates from the agency representatives with whom we work. More information about the program will be posted on the NFLA website when the agenda is final.

Hazardous Fuels Grants

Since the fires of 2003, the Fire Mitigation Committee has helped numerous private landowners treat hazardous forest fuels on their properties by obtaining cost-share grants. The grants have paid 75% of the cost of an eligible project and the landowner has contributed the remaining 25%.

We are currently working on our fourth grant, this one in the amount of \$91,000. One of our priorities for the grant is to reduce fuel accumulations along the lower stretch of Trail Creek Road, where it passes through private property. Treating fuels there will improve ingress and egress for landowners, allow safer access for firefighters, and afford an escape route over the Whitefish Divide. Committee members are contacting landowners to

discuss the program and to determine their interest in participation.

Lincoln Chute has obtained approval from the Flathead County commissioners to use a county chipper to help dispose of slash generated along Trail Creek Road. We'll need to show substantial, wide-spread benefit to warrant use of the equipment. Landowners also will need to cut slash material to size and align it along the roadside to facilitate handling.

More information about participation in the grant program is available from Bill Swope, who may be reached at 406-250-9812 or at bhswope@gmail.com.

BACKWOODS BOOK LOVERS from Gerry Stearns

The **Backwoods Book Lovers** meet the second Tuesday of each month at 7:30 at Sondreson Hall. **June 16:** *Trapped* by April Christofferson, (*Alpha Female* is the first book in this series.) Transferred from his beloved Yellowstone to Montana's Glacier National Park, backcountry ranger Will McCarroll finds a wilderness worth defending. In this edgy eco- and political-thriller, Will soon learns that Glacier is under siege from illegal trappers, a radio talk show hosting a predator derby, and members of a radical offshoot of the American Rifle Foundation.

July 21: *Badluck Way: A Year on the Ragged Edge of the West* by Bryce Andrews. A gripping memoir of a young man, a wolf, their parallel lives and ultimate collision on 20,000 acres of rangeland that holds giant herds of cattle and elk amid many predators – bears, mountain lions, and wolves. When wolves suddenly begin killing the ranch's cattle, Andrews has to do what he'd hoped he would never have to.

Aug. 18: *Boys in the Boat: Nine Americans and Their Epic Quest for Gold at the 1936 Berlin Olympics* by Daniel James Brown. It was an unlikely quest from the start. With a team composed of the sons of loggers, shipyard workers, and farmers, the University of Washington's eight-oar crew team shocked the world by defeating the German team rowing for Adolf Hitler. Brown has created an unforgettable portrait of an era and a celebration of a remarkable achievement.

Sept 15: *Fools Crow* by James Welch. In the Two Medicine Territory, the Lone Eaters, a small band of Blackfeet Indians, are living their immemorial life. But the year is 1870, and the whites are moving into their land. Fools Crow, a young warrior and medicine man, has seen the future and knows that the newcomers will punish resistance with swift retribution. This is Welch's stunningly evocative portrait of his people's bygone way of life.

WINTER INTER LOCAL MEETING from *Allen Chrisman*

The 2015 Winter Interlocal Meeting was held February 11 at Glacier Park headquarters. The meeting was well attended with excellent Agency representation. Notes from the meeting are on the NFLA website at www.nfladowners.com. Flathead County was the host, and Dave Prunty was the Chair.

Le Grizz Update: Heather Cauffman. Polebridge Mercantile has purchased the Le Grizz 50 mile Ultra Marathon. Race is planned for the North Fork in early October. 100% of race proceeds to be donated back to the community. Email at: runlegrizz@gmail.com website: www.runlegrizz.com

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service: No F&WS personnel present.

MT Fish Wildlife and Parks: Tim Manley, Cris Crane, Tim Thier.

- **Grizzly Bears**

- **Captures:** Three management bears were captured and relocated in 2014; two trend bears were caught and radio-collared; two augmentation bears were captured, transported and released in the Cabinets.
- **Bear Fair:** 2014 Bear Fair at Polebridge was a great success. The 2015 Bear Fair will be held in the Whitefish area.
- **Population:** Estimated at 1,000 grizzly bears in the Northern Continental Divide Ecosystem. Conservation Strategy being worked on by responsible agencies. FWP recommending delisting. Could have a petition for delisting in 2015.

- **Wolves:** At least one collared wolf in the North Fork. Have not met quota of two wolves taken in the North Fork yet.
- **Lynx & Wolverine:** Whitefish Range appears to have a healthy population of both Canada Lynx and wolverine based on track surveys. Research project to capture Lynx has been unsuccessful so far.

MT Department of Natural Resources and Conservation: Brian Manning

- Moran/Cyclone Timber Sale active in Coal Creek.
- Two projects in Coal Creek for Native Fish. Installing culverts to allow fish passage on South Coal and Cyclone Lake Road.
- DNRC will look at making piles available to firewood cutters.

Homeland Security (US Border Patrol): Kip Stratton

- Seeing more traffic on Northside of the Border – related to the logging community five miles north of the Border that he told us about last summer.
- Border Patrol is sponsoring a Border Patrol Explorer Program in conjunction with the Boy Scouts.

Glacier National Park: Kyle Johnson, North Fork Acting Ranger:

- Filling in the vacancy created when Scott Emmerich retired. They have a list of applicants for the position, and should have a selection soon and in place by summer.
- Paul Austin is the new Chief Ranger.
- Status of Inside North Fork Road: Will be doing assessment, soliciting comments. Everything is on the table. GNP is leaning towards repair and re-opening. Comment period will be this summer.
- Will continue with prescribed burning in Round Prairie and a ponderosa pine stand off the Inside Road.

Flathead National Forest: Michael Dardis for Rob Davies, District Ranger.

- Working on Big Creek Blowdown – hope to have that wrapped up by Memorial Day.
- Roads: Will be blading 30 to 50 miles of road this year, Trail Creek is the #1 priority.
- Red Whale – last year of the project.
- Weeds – treated 118 acres, river access points a priority. Released 4,950 biological agents – targeting spotted knapweed, Tansy ragwort, and Canada Thistle. Working with Canada on biological agents.
- Solid Human Waste – Sondreson Meadows – regulations in the North Fork require containment and packing it out. Both FS and GNP (on their respective sides) have issued citations. Call and report violations: Brad Treat, USFS Law Enforcement, btreat@fs.fed.us or 406-387-3829.

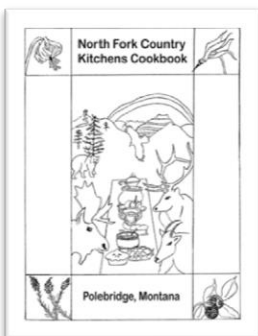
Flathead County: Dave Prunty: This summer looking to extend the gravel south of Camas Creek, some at Big Creek. Road will be in pretty good shape this year. With the deployment of gravel last fall, overwintering improves it so it should be good with blading this summer.

Addition of North Fork Trails Association to North Fork Interlocal: Motion made, seconded and approved unanimously to add the North Fork Trails Association as a party to the Interlocal.

Montana Land Reliance: Mark Schiltz: MLR will be hosting a weeds workshop this August on biological controls for knapweed.

SUMMER INTER LOCAL MEETING AT SONDRERSON HALL:

Date: July 15, 2015 Host: The North Fork Trails Association



North Fork Country Kitchens Cookbook

Still available!! Get Yours Today

Second Printing – Greyscale

Only \$20 – plus shipping.

Order at:

<http://nflandowners.com/north-fork-country-kitchens-cookbook-update/>

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

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*See enclosed 2015 NFLA Calendar for more
exciting events! Something for everyone!*