



# NORTH FORK LANDOWNERS' ASSOCIATION

## SPRING 2020 NEWSLETTER

### FROM THE DESK OF THE PRESIDENT

Greetings from the snowy North Fork! Still, Spring is on the horizon, the eaves are dripping, and we are all ready for summer to arrive. The North Fork is a special place, where even with our differences, we find the time to come together and enjoy each other's company. As always, this newsletter and our calendar are packed with articles and events reflecting that diversity. There is something for everyone included in these pages!

Please note that, given the evolving situation with the COVID-19 virus, **events on the calendar are subject to change**. We'll try to make any necessary adjustments in a timely fashion. Please keep an eye on the NFLA website (<http://nflandowners.com>) for announcements and schedule updates.

A big "Thank You" to our Board, our committees, our volunteers, and to YOU, the members, for all the time, support, and contributions you've given that help to preserve our North Fork traditions, history, and Sondreson Hall. We look forward to seeing all of you this summer!

**Bill Walker, President**

### DON'T MISS THESE!

Star Gazing	TBA
Hall Cleanup	TBA
1st Aid/CPR/AED Class	May 19 at 9am
***Reservations required	
Gardener's Roundtable	May 20 at noon
Ford Roof Project	June 1-5
1st Wernick's Market	June 3 at Noon
1st Church Service	June 7 + ea Sunday 10:30am
NFLA Mtg & Presentation	June 14 at 7pm
***also July 12, Aug 9, Sept 13, Oct 11	
Game Nights	June 22, Aug 3 at 7pm
Fire Training	June 24 at 9:30 am
Parade, Picnic	July 4 at Noon & 3pm
Firewise/Interlocal	July 8 at 9:30am & 1pm
Square Dancing	July 11, Aug 8, 15, 22 at 7:30pm
Crazy Hat Dance & Auction	July 18 at 7pm
Ice Cream Social & Dance	August 1 at 7pm
Annual Thanksgiving Dinner	Nov 26 at 4pm
Annual Christmas Dinner	Dec 25 at 4pm



### THE NORTH FORK IN CARTOONS

North Forkers can be known for their sense of humor. It can be wry, quirky, pointed or subtle, touching or irreverent, and in many cases just downright funny. Sometimes we poke fun at ourselves, and sometimes others find us amusing and enjoy making fun of us. Either way, it draws attention to issues that North Forkers have historically faced. If you know of other cartoons based on the North Fork, please send a note to Lois Walker so she can add them to the archives ([lewalker@nvdi.com](mailto:lewalker@nvdi.com)).

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service  
**2020 Grizzly Bear  
Hazing Guidelines**  
INSIDE  
**Stay safe. Be Bear Aware.**

## **FIRE MITIGATION COMMITTEE: PLANS AND PROSPECTS FOR 2020**

Mark your calendars, the Fire Mitigation Committee will sponsor its annual Firewise Day workshop at 9:30 a.m. on Wednesday, July 8, 2020, at Sondreson Community Hall preceding the Summer Interlocal meeting. The feature will be a compelling documentary about the 2018 Paradise fire in Northern California. The documentary examines the causes of the devastating fire, as well as the emergency response to the disaster and the factors that led to the loss of life. We also will hear timely presentations on Flathead County's newly-revised Community Wildfire Protection Plan; on the 2020 fire season projections; and on hazardous fuels grants and opportunities. Landowner responsibility will be a focus of the presentations.

In addition to the Firewise workshop, the committee is planning to sponsor another basic fire training session, with fire equipment available for purchase. We also hope to schedule a presentation on property insurance on the North Fork, perhaps before one of the regular NFLA meetings. Work continues on our revision of the North Fork Fire Plan, including updating fire history and hazardous fuels treatment maps.



### ***2020 North Fork Firewise Day***

North Fork Landowners Association Fire Mitigation Committee

***Wednesday, July 8, 2020 0930 - 1200***

***Sondreson Community Hall, Whale Creek***

Time	Presenter	Topic
0930	Allen Chrisman	Welcome & Introductions
0935	Allen Chrisman	Fire in Paradise Video
1045	Break	
1100	Lincoln Chute	Flathead County Community Wildland Fire Protection Plan Update
1115	Allen Chrisman/ Molly Shepherd	North Fork Community Wildland Fire Protection Plan Update
1120	Deb Starling/ Carol Daly	FEPC Hazardous Fuels Grant Status and Opportunities
1135	Andy Huntsberger	2020 Fire Season Projections
1145	Molly Shepherd	Wrap-up and Adjourn

Finally, the committee asks North Fork landowners to keep track of the time and money that they spend in Firewise activities. Qualifying activities include reducing fuels and creating defensible space around homes. Firewise USA requires the data for membership renewal. We'll collect the information in the Fall.

Thank you from Molly Shepherd and Allen Chrisman.

#### **Informative and useful weblinks:**

##### **-FireSafe Flathead:**

<https://fireadaptednetwork.org/member/firesafe-flathead/>

##### **-FireSafe Montana:**

<http://firesafemt.org/>

##### **-Firewise USA: [www.firewise.org](http://www.firewise.org)**

##### **-Northern Rockies Coordination Center:**

<https://gacc.nifc.gov.nrcc>

## **RESTORATION OF THE FORD SCHOOLHOUSE by Lois Walker**

In June, the Forest Service will resume work restoring the former Upper North Fork Schoolhouse near Ford Station. Last year, during Phase I, the building additions that were added when it was a privately-owned cabin were removed to restore the structure to its original schoolhouse configuration. The windows were removed and shipped to the Forest Service historic preservation facility in Missoula to have lead-based paint stripped and the wood restored.

This year, the metal roofing will be removed and replaced with wood shingles. Future projects over the next three to four years will involve stabilizing the foundation; rebuilding the porch; removing the ceiling which was not original to the school; replacing the floor, which likewise was not original, and replacing rotten floor joists; restoring the exterior of the building logs and removing the kitchen window; remediating lead-based paint on the interior walls; and finally installing exhibits, a wood stove, blackboard, lighting, bookcases, and other furnishings appropriate to the schoolhouse.

Funding for the project is provided through the Heritage Stewardship Enhancement program, a regional Forest Service program that individual forests compete for annually. It enables them to tackle worthwhile heritage projects that typically wouldn't be funded at the forest level.

The Forest is developing a plan for use of the restored schoolhouse. Most likely, it will be utilized as an educational facility. They hope to partner with groups such as the NFLA, NFPA, and Glacier Institute for continuing use and maintenance. When the time comes, they will be looking for donations of appropriate school-related equipment and artifacts.

Volunteer support is welcomed during each phase of the restoration. This year's roofing project will take place June 1-5. Contact Forest Service archeologist Ryan Powell at [ryan.powell@usda.gov](mailto:ryan.powell@usda.gov) or Lois Walker at [lewalker@nvdi.com](mailto:lewalker@nvdi.com) to volunteer your services.

The schoolhouse was constructed in 1918 on land belonging to Harry and Lena Holcomb. It served the community continuously until 1942, except for several years during the 1920s. The structure and surrounding land were purchased by Dr. George and Ruby Rockwell in 1950, who used it as a summer cabin and were active in the North Fork Improvement Association. They added a bathroom and bedroom on the north side of the building. They sold the cabin to Dr. Robert and Micki Funk around 1962, who sold it to the Forest Service as part of the Wild and Scenic River corridor in the early 1990s.



**Jim & Lorna Rittenburg  
help remove siding.**



**Emily Murphree & Kevin Obryan  
apply plenty of elbow grease.**



**Terry Atha helps remove  
roofing from the additions.**

### Yet another FIRE MESSAGE from your Fire Chief, Lynn P. Ogle

We with the NFLA have given people in the North Fork many tips over the years to make sure that you are always safe. With that in mind we've got a few more for you to think about in 2020.

1. Survey your property; not only a legal survey of property lines but also what's on it. If you have just purchased your property, contact Deb Starling at 406-250-7623 (recommended community forester by NFLA).
2. Come to Firewise day on July 8th at 9:30am to learn about what you, as a landowner, should do to protect your family and friends.
3. We ask all NF land owners to make a family escape plan:

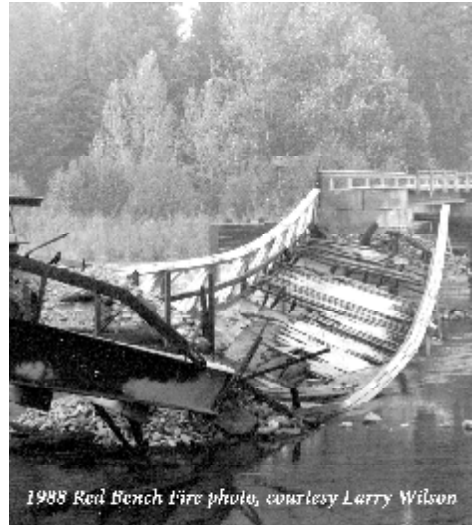
**-Plan an escape route.** Know your property, property lines and where roads and trails go. There will be more fires.

**-Plan an alternate escape route.** It's your responsibility to know where to go in the event of a wild fire. With your family, plan for a driveway blocked by fallen trees or engulfed in flames.

**-If you have family that are infirm, on oxygen or have any kind of medical problems, take them to a safe place EARLY.**

**-If you have livestock, make arrangements early on to move them. Roads to town will close.** If you wait until you are notified, it might be too late.

**-Prepare items of value (generators, guns, snowmobiles, etc.) for insurance reasons. Keep inventory, good photos and serial numbers someplace other than the NF Cabin.**



1988 Red Bench Fire photo, courtesy Larry Wilson

*When and if a Fire Person or Sheriff's Officer comes to your home, DO NOT take your frustrations out on those who are there to help. Try to remember that you are not alone. They will give you information about the Fire that will help in making the best decisions for you and your family.*

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### VISITING GLACIER IN 2020 by North Fork District Ranger, James Dahlstrom

It should come as no surprise that a visit to Glacier National Park in 2020 will be different than any year in recent memory. The coronavirus pandemic is changing not only the way we live as a society, but also how the park operates. Currently, the park is closed to all visitors and most administrative functions are being done remotely to adhere to CDC recommendations for social distancing. There is no clear answer as to when we will return to the normal ebb and flow of summer routines. For our National Parks, 2020 will be a year of adapting to changing conditions, finding new ways to interact socially, and overcoming the challenge of connecting people to parks. Updates about NPS operations will be posted on [www.nps.gov/coronavirus](http://www.nps.gov/coronavirus). Please check with [www.nps.gov/glac](http://www.nps.gov/glac) for specific details about Glacier's operations.

Last year Glacier had over 3 million visitors. Most visitors spent their trip going to places like Logan Pass, Avalanche Lake, and Many Glacier. This year, visiting the Many Glacier Valley will be challenging. For the entire summer, large-scale road construction projects will significantly increase travel times to the area. Visitors should expect travel delays up to 40 minutes each way from Babb, to the Many Glacier Hotel. While traveling through construction zones Monday through Friday, between 10:00 p.m. and 5:00 a.m., you can expect up to a 3-hour delay.

The Going-to the-Sun Road rehabilitation project is scheduled to be completed this season, with a few 20 minute delays in selected areas where contractors are putting the finishing touches on the 10+ year project. NPS road crews have begun their plowing operations for the season.

That leaves some of the lesser known spots in Glacier to enjoy. But I won't say where they are. Though I am certainly biased to the North Fork, with some of the best opportunities for primitive recreation and solitude anywhere in Glacier. Get out and find your own slice of Glacier.



## ***Grizzly Bear Hazing Guidelines***

### **Guidance for Livestock Owners, Homeowners and the General Public**

Grizzly bears are listed as Threatened under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). As such, harassing, harming, pursuing, hunting, shooting, wounding, killing, trapping, capturing, or collecting grizzly bears is not permitted except for self-defense or in defense of others, as authorized by the grizzly bear 4(d) rule. *Harass* in the definition of “take” in the ESA means an intentional or negligent act or omission which creates the likelihood of injury to wildlife by annoying it to such an extent as to significantly disrupt normal behavioral patterns which include, but are not limited to, breeding, feeding, or sheltering. Grizzly bears can pose a threat to human safety and should be discouraged from using areas near homes and other human-occupied areas. Hazing discourages undesirable behavior in wildlife, and when properly conducted, does not create a likelihood of injury to grizzly bears to such an extent as to significantly disrupt normal behavioral patterns.

Individuals may use the methods listed below to deter grizzly bears away from the immediate vicinity (200 yards) of a human-occupied residence or potential conflict area, such as a barn, livestock corral, chicken coop, grain bin, or schoolyard. Once bears have moved beyond the immediate vicinity (200 yards), hazing is unlikely to be effective and should stop. All measures must be taken to ensure proper use of methods and that the bear is not injured or killed. If there is immediate danger of attack, individuals may legally take a grizzly bear in self-defense or in defense of others. This includes lethal removal of such grizzly bears. Any such taking must be reported to the US Fish & Wildlife Service within five days.

Any person who uses the techniques described in these guidelines must use discretion and act safely and responsibly in confronting nuisance grizzly bears. All actions taken must comply with applicable laws and regulations, including local, state and tribal laws.

#### **Acceptable Hazing Techniques:**

**Non-Projectile Auditory Deterrents:** Yelling, clapping, banging pots or other objects, air horns, vehicle horns, vehicle sirens, and P.A. systems (vehicle-based or hand-held) are often sufficient to move bears short distances, and should be employed before other methods are tried.

**Visual Stimuli/Deterrents:** Sometimes simple visual stimuli, such as spotlights or flashing lights can frighten a bear away. Use in combination with yelling so the bear associates the stimuli with human presence.

**Vehicle Threat Pressure:** Vehicles can be an effective hazing tool. By driving vehicles slowly towards bears (without hitting them), it can apply enough threat pressure to get bears to leave the immediate vicinity (200 yards). The effectiveness of vehicle pressure can be enhanced by using it in combination with auditory deterrents such as sirens or horns. Caution must be taken that no contact is made between the vehicle and the bear. As soon as the bear is clear of the immediate vicinity, pressure and noise should be discontinued.

**Dogs:** Dogs, such as Karelian Bear Dogs or trained guard dogs used on a leash can be an effective deterrence tool.

**Water:** The use of water in a large steady stream has proven effective at temporarily displacing some bears from human use areas. Hoses with a nozzle that gives a high pressure, long-range stream, such as a fire hose, can be an effective deterrence tool. As with all deterrence techniques, use of water for hazing should be accompanied by yelling so the bear associates the experience with human presence.



**Stones or marbles:** Can be either thrown or sent out of a slingshot. Wooden balls are also available for use with a sling shot. They should NOT be aimed at the face due to the danger of hitting an eye, but rather aimed at the rump of a bear. The maximum size of projectile should be the size of a golf ball. Range: 15-200+ ft.

**Paintballs:** Paintballs can also be used as a deterrent, avoiding injuring to the bear (when shot away from the face). An alternative to paintballs are rubber balls. Rubber balls are extremely cost effective and can be used repeatedly. Range: 30-150 ft. Note: Bears are attracted to paintball residue, therefore the area must be cleaned up after the use of paintballs.

**Noise-making Projectiles:** This category includes projectiles fired from a weapon that explode, creating a sudden loud noise, such as bangers and 12-gauge crackers. Range: 75-90 ft. (bangers); 180-250 ft. (cracker shells). The explosive noise of cracker shell or banger must occur between the shooter and the bear.

#### **Guidelines for Use of Noise-Making Projectiles**

The improper use of noise deterrents can cause injury to the individuals, bystanders, the bear, or nearby property. The following guidelines MUST be followed to prevent injuries:

- Always fire projectiles from a secure location (inside a hard-sided vehicle or from building).
- Always be aware of the line of fire and the backdrop. Ensure bear has an escape route away from people.
- Ensure the deterrent explodes between the operator and the bear – a noise deterrent that explodes behind the bear may drive him toward you or bystanders.
- All shooters must know the optimal range of their rounds as they can cause death at close distances.
- Noise deterrents should be fired into the air at a 45 degree angle above the ground.
- NEVER fire noise deterrents directly at or under a bear as penetration may occur sometimes resulting in internal explosion (particularly with 12 gauge crackers used at a close distance).
- Be aware of the potential for a ricochet.
- 12 gauge rounds should be used in un-choked barrels only - check the barrel of the gun after each shot to ensure there is no blockage that could result in a misfire.
- NEVER load 12 gauge crackers and lethal rounds into the same firearm. Deaths have resulted from confusion with regard to which round is chambered.
- Bear bangers discharged from a hand-held pen should be avoided as they are inaccurate and have been known to explode in people's hands.
- Cracker shells can start fires. Be aware of any fire related hazards when using explosive devices.

#### **Unacceptable Deterrence Methods**

- Screammers and Whistlers. Erratic flight pattern; higher fire risk in dry conditions.
- Rubber bullets and rubber batons. Higher risk of injury to the bear.
- Bean Bag and Aero Sock Rounds. Short range creates a human-safety threat.

#### **Preventative Methods:**

Livestock owners and homeowners should take measures to prevent or minimize losses from predation through good husbandry and strategic use of pro-active deterrent methods such as electric fence, guard animals, and human presence. More information is provided in the [Loss Prevention Toolkit](#) on the Montana Livestock Loss Board website: [www.llb.mt.gov](http://www.llb.mt.gov).

For more information on grizzly bear deterrence, please contact:

- USFWS Grizzly Bear Recovery Program at 406-243-4903
- USFWS Office of Law Enforcement at 406-247-7355

## THE SPANISH FLU Written by Arne Boveng, References provided by Lois Walker

"Staying at home" in the North Fork during these strange times of quarantine has got me to thinking about poor, old Charlie Wise. Tough as nails, Charlie Wise experienced a tragedy that surely was unbearable.

This isn't the first time the North Fork region has been affected by a global pandemic.

In 1917 the world began to experience what became the largest and most deadly virus pandemic known to mankind. Called by several names, The Spanish Flu coincided with World War I to take eventually between 20 and 50 million lives world-wide.

Charlie had been in the North Fork since at least 1908. He had been living in the Sullivan Meadows community near Logging creek in present-day Glacier Park and along with his chum Chance Beebe, was learning from the great horseman and packer Thomas Jefferson (not the president). After the Forest Homestead Act of 1906 was passed, Charlie and Chance both filed homestead



Mel Ruder photo of Charlie Wise

claims across the river, near today's Polebridge. They were maybe the first to do so west of the river and were so young, Jefferson, or Uncle Jeff, signed the proper papers for the under-aged boys, this according to Beebe family lore. Today, these two homesteads are The Panorama Ranch at Polebridge junction and The Square Peg Ranch, which was Charlie's.

Charlie and his wife, Mabel, had a young daughter, Wanda. She swallowed a button and it turned serious. There are several versions to the story, but one has Charlie with his wife, carrying their little girl in his arms, through the snow, presumably down the Inside Road to Belton or today's West Glacier. There was probably a horse involved though and when they got to Belton, the family loaded onto the train and took it to Kalispell, where they went straight to the hospital.

The hospital was a busy scene then, just like our modern facilities at this very moment. There really was nothing they could do for the little girl. They took an x-ray, the technology being only a few years old, saw and recognized the button. She died. While they were in that high-risk area, Mabel contracted the virus and the flu. So did Charlie and Mabel's sister too. Mabel recovered, then relapsed. She didn't make it. Somehow Charlie came through unscathed but not emotionally. He came back up to an empty homestead. The grief must have been something as he shortly thereafter sold his homestead, and moved up the river north of the border where he lived the remainder of his life. He had a contract to build the bridge for automobiles and trucks across the North Fork River just into Canada and built his cabin there.

By the way, the Spanish Flu and that H1N1 virus continued to wreak havoc for three or four more years with other lives lost in the North Fork. The Columbian newspaper of February 1920 reported that it was another big year for the flu. Schools were closed and the Valentines Day Mask Ball at Polebridge School was canceled.

The flu and pneumonia got old Charlie too but not before he lived a long and colorful life. There are at least several North Forkers who had the chance to know Charlie. He died at the bridge in the middle of the night, after helping a family across, during a rainstorm. Coughing and wheezing his way across the Flathead River, his concern was for others, to the very end.

It's tempting to think these are unprecedented times or uncharted waters and they are to most of us. Humanity has been dealing with calamity for a long, long time.

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



Check out the 2020 NFLA Calendar  
Star Gazing, Dances, Game Nights  
& MORE INSIDE !



Wednesday July 8th, 2020

*Firewise Day  
begins at 9:30 a.m.*

**LUNCH SERVED AT NOON**

*Summer Interlocal  
begins at 1 p.m.  
at Sondreson Community Hall*