

# Mt. Hood Forest Homeowners Association

Fall / Winter 2011



## President's Message

by Paula Hoiland

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Winter will be here soon which means it's time to winterize your cabin. Drain the pipes, put the RV antifreeze in the toilet and make sure to prepare for the upcoming snow. Winter is also a time to sit in front of the fire and read a good book and remember the treasure that you have in your cabin. It's a scene worth fighting for.

The fight to keep the cabin program affordable is not over.... and now is not the time for complacency. We need every single cabin owner and their extended family to continue keeping abreast and active in the current situation. If you are not a member of the Mt Hood Forest Homeowners Association (MHFHA) then join today. We

should have 100% of all cabin owners as dues paying members and yet we only have 60%. The yearly cost is only \$20. If you are not a member of the National Forest Homeowner's Association (NFH) then you should also join and continue your membership for as long as you own your cabin. The cost to join NFH is \$40.

The Cabin Fee Act of 2011 (CFA) has been introduced November 10th in the House of Representatives by Natural Resource Committee Chairman Doc Hastings (R-WA). Senator Jon Tester (D-MT) has introduced a similar version in the Senate. H.R. 3397 is very similar to the 2010 Cabin Fee Act that was introduced last year.

The CFA has been reviewed time after time by the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) for the cost implications to the government. The C2 Coalition has worked very hard to continually modify and upgrade the bill to satisfy its Congressional sponsors, the Forest Service and the CBO. The process has been long, difficult and continues to need every cabin owner to be engaged and active. C2 (Cabin Coalition) is under the guidance and

direction of the NFH who has funded the majority of the expenses for C2. Cabin owners have also generously donated money and it has been needed and appreciated. The need for financial support is not over – your dues and participation help.

At the beginning of this year, Congress passed a moratorium on Cabin Permit Fees. If the moratorium had NOT been passed, we would have been billed approximately \$2000-\$2500 for the 2011 permit fee for your Mt Hood cabin. If a similar moratorium is not passed, we can expect the 2012 Permit Fee Bill from the Forest Service to be even more when it arrives in our mailboxes in December.

I urge each of you to remain active and engaged in promoting efforts to get the Cabin Fee Act legislation passed by Congress and implemented into law this year.

Cabin owners have played a key role in bringing the Cabin Fee Act to this point. The C2 and all its volunteer cabin owners have done a great job moving the CFA toward eventual success. Your continued pressure on Congress has made success possible.

Let's join together and keep fighting for our cabins!

See you on the mountain...

### **Your subscription to this Newsletter may be in jeopardy.**

This Newsletter may be the last that you will receive. If we have not heard from you in quite awhile and you have not financially supported this organization, you will be dropped from our newsletter mailing list. If you receive your letter by US Mail and your address label has XX in the line above your name, our records show that you have not communicated with us in a very long time and are in jeopardy of being dropped.

Dropping your name from our mailing list will also eliminate communications through our e-mail list. You will not be updated on current events, except the Annual Meeting, nor will you receive important notices like water shut-off or road work. You can continue to receive this important information by sending your support.

There's talking about it ... Then there's doing something about it.

## **From Your Permit Administrator –**

by Fran Lanagan

As the days grow shorter, cabin owners' thoughts turn to closing up the cabins for the winter season. This however, is the best time to begin planning for next summer's projects in order to get them approved in time for spring or summer implementation.

The Forest Service approval timeline can be lengthy and often takes cabin owners by surprise, resulting in frustration, and sometimes the inability to get a project done before the rainy season hits.

The Zigzag District asks cabin owners to submit project requests by April 15, 2012 for approval during the summer months of 2012.

### **Tips for getting your 2012 project approved for summer implementation!**

1. Start early - Start now! Submit your project request by April 15 for approval in time to implement it over the summer months. Talk to the Forest Service about material options and other project aspects to develop your proposal. Don't hesitate to ask questions about the approval process.
2. Read your Operation and Maintenance Plan (appendix A to the Permit) before developing your proposal. These guidelines may help develop your proposal. This does not substitute for approval of your project – you must still get written approval specifically for your project before you begin.  
(check our web site for a copy under the Forest Service tab)
3. Know the approval timeline requirements. The Forest Service reviews ground-disturbing project proposals once a month. Multiple departments may be involved in this review. It may take five or six weeks to receive the approval letter after the review. Most excavation cannot take place during periods of much rainfall, so it is important to start early! Some projects may be simple to process.
4. Be aware that the approval timeline may be 45 days or longer if you are in the historic Mile Bridge, Still Creek or Zigzag Ski Club tracts, or if your cabin is individually eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). In this case, the Forest Service may be required to consult with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). We review project proposals for historic cabins or cabins in historic tracts every two weeks. We also may need to

work with you to find approvable materials that meet your needs, and this can take several weeks in addition to the 45 days.

5. Don't change horses mid-stream if possible. Some cabin owners get project approval and then propose significant changes during the course of the project. We try to get "change requests" done in a timely fashion, but there may be a new review requirement and it can make it go back into the project approval queue.

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"I have a contractor who can start on Monday" will probably not help! Please realize that processing your proposal out-of-order would delay someone else's approval.

### **National Meets In Vancouver, Wash.**

Mark your calendars and plan to attend the National Forest Homeowners Annual Convention to be held at the Heathman Lodge in Vancouver, WA on Saturday April 12<sup>th</sup> 2012.

It has become increasingly important for all FS cabin owners to become involved at the local, state and national level to stay informed on all issues pertinent to you as a cabin permit holder on National Forest Land.

MHFHA would like to see a large turnout at this annual event! Check the registration information on the NFH website [www.nationalforesthowners.org](http://www.nationalforesthowners.org) and by checking our website at [www.mhfha.com](http://www.mhfha.com)

We hope to see many of you at the Heathman on April 12, 2012 – please make every effort to attend!

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### **Highway 26 Project Nears Completion**

ODOT has completed the repaving of Hwy 26 from Rhododendron east to Road 39 by the end of October. They have added a westbound passing lane, updated signage and paved a large area outside FS Rd 35 for chaining and unchaining.

ODOT hopes this improvement will create safer driving conditions along this stretch of Hwy 26. This should also prove to be safer for MFHAH while they do their annual highway clean-up!

## Notes from the Treasurer:



Back in 2009, I posted an article on our Forum about the importance of supporting this organization. The article would have only been accessible to people who visited the web site. However I feel that it is every bit as appropriate today as then. The following is a reprint of that posting.

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Neighborhood associations and fraternal organizations are founded on the precept that individuals can make a difference by joining an association of other individuals, so they can work collectively for the good of their own community.

It is really unusual for an individual to accomplish what they seek to accomplish working on their own. Things work better as a team effort. There is strength in numbers. These are not just pithy phrases... they are valid reasons to belong to MHFHA, OFHA, or NFH.

One cabin owner recently stated that they didn't renew their MHFHA annual support because it didn't appear to gain them anything. He was not thinking of helping his fellow cabin owners who really needed his support to control their increasing fees or provide a working environment with the Forest Service. He was not thinking of what fee increases might be proposed next year. He was thinking simply of his \$10. Its an

investment ... and a small one at that.

The CUFFA discourse is an example of how a collective group can make a difference. We have asked cabin owners to correspond with their congressional representatives ... and they have in great numbers. At a time like this it is also important to meet them face to face. Therefore our representatives of the Cabin Coalition traveled to Washington to discuss options with Congressional representative on behalf of all cabin owners. This "face time" was accomplished with a price tag that was met by donations from individuals and various associations.

During my tenure of 7 years as treasurer of MHFHA, we have seen a participation of 50% to 60% of cabin owners that financially support our efforts. This means that 40% to 50% of cabin owners are hoping that the rest will step up and protect their interests.

There is no law on the books that will protect our interest in our investment on the mountain. It requires vigilance, dedication and perseverance to protect what we enjoy. If there is no organization willing to fight to protect this asset we may easily lose it.

Please consider becoming involved and join your local cabin owners association.

Daryl Phillippi ... MHFHA Treasurer / WebMaster  
Nov 2, 2009

### Reviews Available for .... Arborist to Handyman to Painters and Plumbers to Septic Service .. and most things in between.

Angie has her list and MHFHA has ours. Our "List" is available on our web site and is a recommendation of various contractors on the mountain. This "List" costs nothing to access and like Angie; contractors cannot pay to be on it so you can trust the information. A recommendation from cabin owners for completed work is the only way a contractor can be added.

We have not seen recent activity on the "List" like we did when it was started. This could be due to people

finding their own contractors or people using the "List" and not updating it. You could help all other cabin owners by sharing the good or bad work of contractors that have worked on your cabin.

Check out the "List" on the web site under Cabin Repair Contacts. Make your recommendations and additions by sending an email to [info@mhfha.com](mailto:info@mhfha.com). Tell us what type of work was performed and a brief comment of performance.

### Have You Recently Moved or Changed Your E-mail Address?

Please don't forget to keep us informed of any changes. You can email us at [info@mhfha.com](mailto:info@mhfha.com) or send a note to: MHFHA ... PO Box 82351... Portland, OR 97202

## **Wild Creatures In Our Midst**

by Carolyn Raz

Over the past year, there have been a number of sightings by cabin owners of coyotes, bears and cougars, particularly of bears in the Rhododendron area, drawn by the smell of garbage in the dumpsters of the restaurants and grocery store.

A cougar was spotted on the power line by Road 34 last fall and a cabin owner on Road 34 found fresh cougar tracks in the snow around their cabin this past winter. A bear has been reported seen on Road 35. It seems fitting that all of us should be knowledgeable about avoiding encounters and what to do if an encounter should happen.

Mt Hood Forest Service wildlife biologist Alan Dyck says, "Cabin owners and residents rarely report sightings to him or the Forest Service office at Zig Zag." He did say there have been no attacks on humans by bears, coyotes or cougars in Oregon. However, pets are at great risk, particularly from coyotes and cougars.

A little background on our two most formidable wild forest neighbors is outline here with more in-depth information available on our web site.

**Cougars:** Their range can vary from 10 to 370 square miles. Just because you've not seen one doesn't mean they don't live in your neighborhood. Male cougars can weigh up to 165 lbs. and reach more than 8' in length. Females weigh about 100 lbs. and produce two to three young per year. Although deer is their meal of choice they will take advantage of pets. They may resort to carrion but they like to chase down their own dinner.

If you do encounter a cougar, never play dead. Instead, make yourself appear as large and fearsome as possible and pick up a large object to wield, if available. The cat will usually flee unless they have cubs in the area. Keep your cats and dogs in at night.

**Bears:** There are lots of bears on Mt. Hood. The bears are coming farther down the mountain in search of food due to the low snow level the past few years. They will rarely attack humans and if they do, it's usually because they've been approached or people have been feeding them.

Bears may suddenly and without warning become aggressive in defense of their space, cubs or food. They will definitely eat a human they have killed. Black bears come in a variety of colors - black, brown, blond, rust or cinnamon.

Adults measure about 3' at the shoulder and 5 to 6' when standing and weigh usually in the 125-145 range, but can grow up to 700 lbs. Bears can run up to 35 mph, are very agile, climb trees well and are good swimmers. They love a chase so don't run if you encounter one, just slowly back up and give them a chance to leave. Do not make direct aggressive eye contact.

When asked what advice to give cabin owners, Mr. Dyck strongly recommended looking around your cabin and yard before going in or out of your cabin after dark. Both bears and cougars are generally nocturnal. Be aware of your surroundings

Carolyn Raz is Secretary of MHFHA

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## **SURRENDER TO RELAXATION**

by Scott MacCaskill

For me, the best setting in the entire world is found in a comfortable hammock nestled creek side at my summer cabin.

The experience I seek is common; a break from professional responsibilities, beeps, tweets & buzzes, honey-do's, and the suspension of my endless to-do list.

I simply want to escape to the comforting experience of sipping a cold beverage, reading a great novel, and taking long

slow uninterrupted naps.

Nothing is more pleasurable than lying motionless in my hammock gazing up at the blue sky and listening to the sounds of the creek, blue jays squawking, hummingbirds buzzing, and the chipmunks scrambling about while I lazily drift in and out of slumber.

The benefits are enriching - therapeutic and heal the stresses of life.



It's a thing of beauty to "surrender to relaxation" in your mountain hammock.

Scott MacCaskill is V. Pres of  
MHFHA and owner of  
Dassant Gourmet Mixes

MHFHA newsletter is published twice a year.

We are always looking for people to write articles of interest for this newsletter. If you are interested in contributing, contact Daryl Phillippi at [darl\\_p@juno.com](mailto:darl_p@juno.com).

Comments may be made to any newsletter article by emailing [info@mhfha.com](mailto:info@mhfha.com)