

Mt. Hood Forest Homeowners Association

Spring / Summer 2010



ANNUAL MEETING INFORMATION

The Annual Meeting will take place June 26th at the Zigzag Ranger Station property. Sign-in 11:30 Lunch 12:00 Meeting 12:45

MHFHA will supply the main course (hamburgers, both real and otherwise, along with hotdogs and all the fixings.)

Bring a salad or dessert to share with others, non-alcohol drinks will be offered. Please bring your own chairs and be prepared to enter the discussion of the proposed House bill and how it might affect your permit fee.



Guest Speakers will include:

- ✓ Pete Bailey of Tacoma, Washington, NFH Board Member and Coalition 2 Leader
- ✓ Representatives from Zigzag Ranger Station addressing Road Maintenance and other pertinent information
- ✓ David Jacob, Water Master
- ✓ Fran Lanagan, Forest Service Special Use Administrator

MHFHA Board

President

Paula Hoiland

Vice President

Scott MacCaskill

Secretary

Carolyn Raz

Treasurer

Daryl Phillippi

OFHA Rep

OPEN

Board Members

Ken Hoiland

Joel Grayson

Mark Schwebke

Dietrich Wieland

Deb Price

Tom Reynolds

Gene Comfort

President's Message

by Paula Hoiland

My husband and I recently had a long weekend at our cabin and we were happy to see snow on the ground when we arrived late on a Friday night. We only had light snow this winter so it was fun to see the white cover on the ground and trees. The snow didn't last long and by Sunday afternoon, it had virtually all melted.

We took a long walk the next day and were happy to see the first Western White Trillium of the season! Each year when I see the first trillium near our cabin I am reminded of Mother Nature's cycle. I grew up with my own mother teaching me never to pick a trillium because it takes seven years to flower again. When I look at a trillium, I wonder if this is one of the first times it has flowered since 2003?

In 2003, I doubt many cabin owners were too concerned about the cabin permit fee that we paid each year. At that time it was around \$800 per year and the fee hadn't changed much in many years. Now in 2010 we pay close to \$2000 with continued increases promised.

I believe our voices have been heard and we need to continue speaking out.

By the time of printing this newsletter, most cabin owners should have received the results of last year's appraisals. As land values continue to escalate (although Mt Hood was not as high as other cabin areas) we must continue to fight and support a better way to assure the cabin program continues at an afford-

able rate.

The Cabin Act of 2010 will be held before the House Natural Resources Subcommittee, April 22, 2010. Our work as concerned cabin owners is not done. We have been asked over the years to write to our congressmen and many times I heard from cabin owners that they didn't think their voices were being heard. I believe our voices have been heard and we need to continue speaking out. Please familiarize yourself with the proposed fee model that is outlined as H.R. 4888 and continue to write those letters!

I am so proud of the Mt. Hood cabin owners as you have generously donated \$12,000 which was given to the Coalition efforts over the past 1 ½ years.

As the NFH President Anderson recently stated, "This historic legislation will establish a new fair and reasonable structure for determining the annual permit fees paid by cabin owners throughout the country."

continued on page 2

The Cabin Fee Act of 2010 will replace the Cabin Fee Fairness Act of 2000, which required that permit fees for cabins on the national forests be determined by appraisals comparing them with fee simple private property. Such appraisals fail to consider fully and fairly the extraordinary limits and restrictions on the use of these cabins. Recent appraisals have resulted in many annual fees increasing more than 500%.

Our newly revamped website, www.mhfha.com has links to all the pertinent documents regarding the Cabin Fee Act of 2010. While you visit our website, please note the new forum format to aid in connecting cabinowners to

share information, pose a question or start a dialogue.

The MHFHA board has been working hard to upgrade all modes of communication for the benefit of all our members.

I look forward to seeing everyone at this year's annual meeting to be held June 26th at the same location as last year – the parking lot of the Zigzag Ranger Station. We are pleased that Pete Bailey, C2 leader and NFH Board Member, will be our special guest speaker to bring us all the current information regarding the Cabin Fee Act of 2010. Plan to attend!

In the meantime, as you see trilliums pop up around your cabin – remember to just look, don't pick!

See you on the mountain!

This chart shows the "Flat Fee" proposed in the Cabin Fee Act of 2010 as outlined in House Bill 4888. This bill was recently presented to congressional representatives. This annual "User Fee" would be adjusted each year based on the IPD-GDP Index. The "Appraisal Value Range" is based on the most current appraisal.

Tier	Appraisal Value Range	Proposed Use Fee	Current CUFFA Fee
1	\$0 - \$19,999	\$500	<\$1,000
2	\$20,000 - \$45,999	\$1,000	\$1,000 - \$2,299
3	\$46,000 - \$119,999	\$2,000	\$2,300 - \$5,999
4	\$120,000 - \$199,999	\$3,000	\$6,000 - \$9,999
5	\$200,000 +	\$4,000	\$10,000+

2010 Census and our cabins

Cabin owners were informed of the impending visit by the Census Bureau via the FORUM and in a general email. Each cabin was to be visited by a member of the bureau and a census form would be left at your cabin. MHFHA and the Forest Service met with census representatives and encouraged them **not** to leave door hangers on the cabins. We tried to impress upon them that these cabins could not be used as residences so therefore the census bureau would not collect any information to aid them. We discussed the security issues we have when it appears that a cabin has not been visited regularly.

But, they prevailed so we suggested that the cabin owners should remove any door hangers they find on their cabin or a neighboring cabin, and write across the form "Vacation Cabin" and mail it in the envelope supplied. We were informed by the Bureau that this is very **legal** under the circumstances.

If you have removed the envelope and destroyed it, you will be considered "Non-Responsive" and they will return up to 5 times to try and make contact with you. Each time they will leave another envelope or door hanger. This process will continue until sometime in late July.

So, please remove yours and any of your neighbors' forms and return them as previously stated.



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.

Concerned about the “Historical Significance” of your cabin?

Have you thought about your cabin falling into a Historical District or that your cabin could be designated as “historically significant?” If you are not concerned, you should be, as these designations could have a huge financial impact on you as well as place multiple restrictions on your cabin far beyond those we already face from the Forest Service. Norman Goetz, a former member of the MHFHA board, has done extensive research on this issue as well as having devoted countless hours in discussion with the Forest Service.

The subject does not make for entertaining reading,

Walking with Nature

Each morning for the past 20 years when I’m at our cabin, I step out into the forest. You may be thinking that “sometimes it is raining or cold.” To me this is the perfect way to start my day at our little piece of heaven. With a hot mug of coffee in hand, I walk down to Still Creek and if it is dry, I sit on a rock and listen to the sounds of nature or just stand by the water. Each day I am thankful for the opportunity to enjoy nature on the mountain. Hearing the music of the birds, smelling the forest and watching the sun rays stream through the trees or the mist rising off the rippling stream. Each season brings a slightly different feeling from chilly and wet to warm and comforting. I revel at the mystery of the returning salmon in the fall or watching the dippers flit from rock to rock and dive in the water.

This feeling of “place” - is our place - that so many people before us helped to build this program

and maintained the forest so we could enjoy it. Since we first purchased our little cabin 20 years ago, I have felt blessed to have this unique experience and want to do what I can to preserve it for generations to follow. This is the reason I became involved in this association. But, there are forces that would take all this away from us or make it so expensive that the common person could not or would not want to invest in it. It would then become only a memory.

Each day I am thankful for the opportunity to enjoy nature on the mountain.

but it may be enlightening to learn how this could affect you. If your cabin is in sight of a historical designated area you could be affected. The effect could be that you would be required to remove modern additions to be in compliance. Are the designations valid? Maybe not!

We have had his writings posted on both the web site and the FORUM without much interest. This is a concern that should be addressed as a group rather than as individuals to have a greater impact.

Today finds us in a hectic world with too little time to be concerned with programs and policies that might have an effect on our lives. But, --- “if we don’t take a stand and work for something we enjoy, then someone else will take a stand and take it away from us.” Once it is gone or drastically changed, the opportunity to preserve it is gone.

You may be a person who feels the same way but has chosen not to get involved, so you do what you can on your own. You may have written letters to our congressional representatives and connected with the Forest Service. Think how much more effective this would be if you coordinated dozens or hundreds of correspondences. This is the mission that MHFHA is dedicated to providing but we need people who have the passion and want to get involved.

Think about “stepping up to the plate” not just in name but in an active role. “Together we can make a difference,” this is not just a feel good statement, it is the truth. It will become possible if the next time you are on the mountain you look around and observe, smell the mountain and wonder what it would be like if you had to give this up.

Daryl Phillippi . MHFHA Treasurer

20% How much your short-term memory improves after you commune with nature.

Mark Berman PhD, an author and a researcher at the University of Michigan, notes a boost in brain power after running psychological testing on study participants following an hour long walk. This rejuvenation process - which also increased attention capacity - only worked when participants walked in natural environments, not by strolling down busy city streets.

Bottom line . . . Enjoy a long walk or hike while at your cabin.

Cabin Roads

The Forest Service no longer has a “Road Maintenance Crew” and therefore we must address the condition of our roads following several tough winters. Burnham Chamberlain, Zigzag Road Manager, informed us that there are some “stimulus” monies available as well as regular budgeted funds for a limited amount of necessary road work during this operating season.

Burnham has submitted proposals for “blading” to be done on Roads 24 & 26 and also 32 & 34. These roads will also have limited brush cutting done on the road sides. Road 20 will see asphalt patch work continuing on the project started last year.

Asphalt work will be accomplished on Roads 29, 31 & 35 to patch some major pot holes. Roads 35A & 35B require some erosion control where the winter weather has caused some washouts as well as surface improvements and regular maintenance.

Road 12 landslide should also be addressed within this operating season.

Work will be done to move the road into the hill and slope the lower side down to 12A rather than build a retaining wall along the lower road. This should provide proper drainage and eliminate the potential to have another land slide.



Although Burnham has proposed the aforementioned work, there is no guarantee it will all be approved. Fran Lanagan, Forest Service Special Use Administrator, had encouraged us to form a committee to discuss how we can work together with them to maintain our roads. The FS wants

to remind us that we cannot just get a truck load of gravel and spread it on our roads to fill pot holes due to the problem with invasive species. The FS must approve the project and products prior to use.

If you are interested in helping with the “MHFHA Road Committee,” please contact us at info@mhfha.com.

65
Percentage of cabin owners contributed to this organization in 2009

16
Percentage gain from previous year.

21
Percentage of cabin owners we have not heard from for several years.

66
Annual number of days for typical cabin use

Notes from the Treasurer:



This past year we have seen more interest in the process now taking place with the increasing permit fees.

We had an increase in the number of cabinowners signing up to be a “dues paying member” of this association. The interest is not only shown by

paying the low \$10 membership fee but also the overwhelming support financially of the C2 (Cabin Coalition 2.) It was because of your response, we were able to deliver \$7000 to C2 to help defray their costs involved in lobbying Washington on our behalf. Last year we contributed \$5000 to C2.

Our costs are kept down by having volunteers support our local efforts and this allows us to be a financial

supporter to the greater effort that benefits us all.

Please take a moment and look at your address label on the accompanying card. Be sure your address is correct but also look at the right side of the top line. You will see a two digit number. **If this is “10” you do not need to send in a membership contribution** this year. Anything else means you are not current for this year. If it is “XX” this means we have not heard from you in a very long time ... but would like to.

Email addresses ... They become more important in our everyday existence. PLEASE . . . keep us updated when there is a change. This is our way of passing important information along in a timely manner. It beats the heck out of snail mail for getting the word out. Remember, you may register other email addresses of your family or friends that use your cabin and would like to be informed.

Send us an email with your road and cabin numbers.

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 or send a note to: MHFHA ... PO Box 82351... Portland, OR 97202