

# Mt. Hood Forest Homeowners Association

Spring / Summer 2011



## MHFHA Board

### President

Paula Hoiland

### Vice President

Scott MacCaskill

### Secretary

Carolyn Raz

### Treasurer

Daryl Phillippi

### OFHA Rep

OPEN

### Board Members

Ken Hoiland

Dietrich Wieland

Tom Reynolds

Gene Comfort

Mark Schwebke

Joel Grayson

OPEN

## Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting will take place June 18th at the Dorman Center. Their building is located behind the Subway shop in Welches at 25400 E. Salmon River Road.

Sign-in 11:30 Lunch 12:00 Meeting 12:45 - 2:30

MHFHA will again supply the main course (hamburgers, both real and otherwise, along with hot dogs and all the fixings.) Bring a salad or dessert to share with others, non-alcohol drinks will be offered. Bring a chair and prepare to join the discussion.



We will hear from the following guest speakers:

Sharon Karr - NFH Treasurer and representative for C2 and a wealth of knowledge on the fee proposals

David Jacobs - Water Master for both of our water districts

Fran Lanagan- Forest Service Special Use Permit coordinator

Guest speaker - from Friends of Timberline

## President's Message

by Paula Hoiland

As the snow has begun to melt and the ferns begin to unfold from winter's cold, we know that you will be spending more and more time at your beloved cabins. Everyone received their 2011 Special Use Permit fee and paid it in 2011 – the fee was the same as in 2010 plus the annual index – still not reflecting the increase from the 1999 appraisal nor of course, the results of the 2009 appraisal. But please don't be lulled into complacency – the fight is not over yet!

A recap of what has been happening in the way our fees are assessed: The following is an excerpt from the National Forest Homeowner's Association lobbyist, Aubrey King:

"Following nearly two years of intensive effort - during which cabin owners have received an education in the twists and turns of the legislative process in Congress - the Cabin Fee Act of 2011 (CFA) will soon be introduced in both the House and Senate. CFA 2011 will be very similar to the Cabin Fee Act of 2010, which was introduced in the Senate last fall by Senator Jon Tester (D-MT) as S. 3929, too late in the session for passage. A slightly different version, championed by Representative Doc Hastings (R-WA) was approved earlier in 2010 by the House Natural Resources Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests

and Public Lands. Senator Tester and Representative Hastings are expected to introduce CFA 2011. Both House and Senate bills last year received strong bipartisan support.

CFA 2011 will replace the CUFFA appraisal based fee system, which cabin owners have found to be so inconsistent, unfair and costly. Instead of basing fees on inappropriate appraisals that fail to value fairly the unique circumstances of cabins subject to a wide range of limitations and restrictions on use, a tier-based fee system will be followed. There will be nine fee 'tiers' with a low annual fee of \$500 and a top fee of \$4500. Cabin owners believe the new CFA system will preserve the cabin program as a cherished source of family recreation for future generations.

*continued on next page*

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

*(Presidents message cont.)*

Once introduced, CFA 2011 will be considered in the next few months by the respective Congressional Committees. If all goes well, by the end of this year, a new day will arrive for all cabin owners with an improved, fairer and more reasonable fee system.”

Please continue to support this fight by sending in your 2011 dues – additional donations are also gladly accepted to support the CFA bill passing. Our dues have increased this year after much thought and deliberation. We are proud of the efforts that our BOD puts in to keep you informed through emails, newsletters and website. The increased support of the CFA battle along with necessary Association Liability insurance has forced us to increase our dues – we know you will understand and continue to support YOUR association!

MHFHA is also continuing to look for cabin owners to join our board of directors. We meet 5 times per year and are looking for people who would be willing to help us maintain our website with current information.

Please let us know if you are interested in serving.

See you on the mountain!

---

## Membership Dues Increased

The Mt Hood Forest Homeowners Association was formed in 1992 as a way for cabin owners to come together and stay connected on topics that affect and/or concern Forest Service Special Use Permit holders. Our annual membership fee has been at \$10 per year for more than 10 years.

The MHFHA Board of Directors recently voted to increase the annual dues to \$20 per year. The reasoning behind the increase was discussed at length. The battle in Washington DC to change the way our permit fees are assessed has been a drain on our funds. Since 2008 we have donated \$12,000 to the “Cabin Coalition 2” or “Cabin Fee Act” with another \$4,000 donation committed for this spring. Of this \$16,000 we have received \$9,000 as donations since 2008 from fellow cabin owners. The struggle at the congressional level is expected to cost an additional \$75,000. We will be expected to help in all ways possible in the future until the new Cabin Fee Act has been passed.

Another motive for the increase is the cost of liability insurance. MHFHA has not had any liability insurance coverage and unfortunately in this day and age of litigation, we must carry the basic coverage for such events

as the highway clean-up and other association events. This cost is \$1405 per year.

The 2010 data shows that only 62% (340 cabin-owners) of Mt Hood Forest Cabin Owners are paying members of the association. The other expenses that we incur yearly are printing and mailing newsletters, upkeep of our website, sponsoring the annual meeting picnic and sponsoring the highway clean-up.

We ask your continued support of our association and spread the word to your fellow cabin neighbors – we need everyone’s support!

---

## Highway Cleanup – 2011

The MHFHA volunteers annually clean-up sections of Highway 26 along many of our cabin roads.

This year’s clean-up will take place on Saturday, May 28th. We will have two sessions – the morning session is from 9:00-11:30 and the afternoon session is from 12:00-2:00.

This event has become very popular and therefore we need you to sign up in advance by emailing [p.hoiland@comcast.net](mailto:p.hoiland@comcast.net) and let her know the session and number of volunteers.

You must be 16 years or older, wear sturdy shoes and bring your own gloves. We will provide the mandatory safety video, a safety vest, bags and pickers along with water, juice and light snacks.

Join us on May 28th at TOLLGATE CAMP-GROUND east of Rhododendron to pick up trash from what has been a very busy ski season – there will be lots to clean up!

### **New National Forest Board member**

MHFHA President, Paula Hoiland, has just been elected as a Director for the National Forest Homeowners Association. Having a representative from Mt Hood will help keep our issues on the forefront at the national level. Please do not hesitate to contact Paula at [p.hoiland@comcast.net](mailto:p.hoiland@comcast.net) with any questions or concerns that you want her to be aware of.

How is it one careless match can start a forest fire, but .... it takes a whole box to start a campfire?

## Power Surges and Your Cabin

by Carolyn Raz

A number of you have expressed concern about the recent power surges that have caused damage even when surge protectors were in place. My husband, Buz, made some inquiries to find something that would prevent damage.

Buz contacted a friend who builds computers and asked how “big” of a surge protector is needed for a cabin’s computer. He explained that the power poles bringing electricity to our cabins have a high voltage line on the uppermost portion of the pole. That power (voltage) is transformed down to household current level at various points along our roadway, and then sent to the cabins.

If something happens to cause the high voltage line to connect (touch) the lower voltage line going to the cabin (such as a tree falling across the lines), a surge will occur that essentially cannot be stopped from damaging a computer connected to that line or possibly other equipment connected with computerized components. (For example, phone answering machines, wireless phones, TVs, refrigerators, microwaves, dishwashers, and even cell phone charging units.) He said there is no surge protector large enough to stop the computer damage, period!

He did say that the outlet surge protectors purchased at the electronic stores MAY protect the equipment from lightning strikes and minor surges caused by work on electrical lines in the area, but a high voltage surge cannot be stopped before damage will occur. He was, pardon the pun, shocked to hear that, and felt he should check further by contacting PGE’s Power Quality Department to learn more. They essentially said the same thing! They used to install surge suppressors that connected to the meter base outside the cabin but do not offer that service any more.

If you want a “whole house” surge protector, you need to hire an electrician who can install it at or near the main electrical panel. Even then, it may not be as effective as you want due to the poor soil conditions that exist by many of the cabins.

They explained that a “whole house” surge suppressor (or protector) is designed to direct voltage spikes above about 330 volts to the ground to dissipate it and sometimes the soil is too sandy (or loose) in our area to transmit that current so it may instead jump through the surge protector. Also, even if it works, 330 volts can still damage a computer or appliance with computerized components.

When asked if turning off the circuit breaker in the cabin when not present would help, they said a high voltage spike could be strong enough to jump through an open circuit breaker. They suggest UNPLUGGING whatever you want to protect when you leave your cabin. (At the same time, PGE is liable if they caused or failed to properly contain a power surge. To find out if that is the situation, you may obtain a form from their Customer Service Department and submit a request for reimbursement of damages caused by the surge. They will review all requests individually.)

We certainly didn’t like the “unplugging” protection plan since a surge doesn’t always happen when you’re away from your cabin. It could fry anything connected while you’re there! We should follow their advice, though, and hope technology will bring a better answer in the future.

I guess it’s the price we pay for spending time in the pristine forest, especially during winter when the snow seems so tranquil, beautiful, and beckons thrills on the hills, but may also cause tree limbs to break and power lines to surge.

Carolyn Raz is Secretary of MHFHA

## Notes from the Treasurer:



Emails have become a way of life for many of us. Here at MHFHA, it has become a means for communicating information to our cabin owners on short notice.

The two water services rely on us getting the word out when they will be working on the systems. We can target a small area that is affected.

This may seem like a small item, but you will appreciate having this advance notice if you have ever driven up the mountain to spend some relaxing time only to find a notice posted that the water was shut off.

This past winter we have passed along several emails with information dealing with road conditions.

We have 553 cabins on Mt Hood and 28% of owners have not taken advantage of registering an email address with us.

Of those with no email registered, 50% have had no contact with us for many years. Occasionally we will hear from a cabin owner seeking information dealing with a problem although they have not financially supported this organization.

When passing information along, we do not differentiate between those that financially support MHFHA and those that do not.

We feel that it is more important to get the information disseminated for the good of all.

If you are among those who do not have email service, you could have a close family member that might be interested in using theirs, so you can receive the latest info.

**We’re counting on you ... just as you count on us. Please pay your annual membership dues now!**

## 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

## Mt Hood Rivers Gone Wild

During the month of January the weather caused many cabin owners to rethink having a scenic piece of property near the water. The Zigzag River did claim one of our cabins on Road 3, and put many more cabin owners' nerves on edge.

The January high water event on the Zigzag River caused significant bank erosion to MHFHA board member Gene Comfort's cabin on Road 29. A number of large trees were uprooted and fortunately fell away from their cabin. This is the second time they have experienced these results when the river has lived up to its name and carved new channels through his site.

The previous time resulted in their moving the cabin back fifty feet from the edge of a twenty foot embankment to the river's normal flow. Obviously this was stressful and expensive.



Road 3 Lot 7 Photo by Jim Sauser, U.S.F.S.

As cabin owners are aware, there is virtually nothing that can be done to "rip-rap" the bank of a stream flow on US Forest Service lands.

Gene felt it was time to evaluate their insurance coverage should the erosion continue to the point of endangering the structure. They were advised that normal home-owners coverage would not apply, since the damage would be caused by a "FLOOD" event. The cost of flood insurance coverage for their site would be very substantial.

A \$5,000 deductible policy for a site determined to be in a flood plain – although 20-feet above the river's normal flow – would have an annual premium of over \$1,600.

Most homeowners policies cover many natural perils that qualify as acts of God, but check your details. Floods and earthquakes are typically covered only with specific plans.

It's incumbent upon property owners to look carefully at their policy's exceptions.

---

## The Latest Northwest Invaders.

They don't come across our borders, but they arrived on our shores from Europe. They were brought here by well-meaning pioneers as a herbal remedy. It's the dreaded garlic mustard. But guess what, it's here, and it's here to stay. It is currently one of the most serious invaders in forested areas of the northeastern and midwestern United States.

*Alliaria petiolata* is one of the few non-indigenous herbaceous species able to invade and dominate the understory of North American forests. Presently, Corbett is the epicenter for garlic mustard in our area and it has spread from Corbett into the Columbia River Gorge. Some garlic mustard plants were recently discovered at the south end of Welches, the closest sighting next to the Mt. Hood National Forest. As far as we know, there is no garlic mustard in the Mt. Hood National Forest - yet.

Garlic mustard seed can be spread by animals (e.g., deer, elk) and people. The seeds are believed to be dispersed on the fur of animals such as deer, horses, and squirrels, by flowing water and by human

activities. Your boots are capable of transporting the seeds from a hike to your cabin area.

These plants may grow to a height of 4 feet, and in their early growth stages could be confused with other well-meaning native plants such as Violets and Creeping Charlie ground ivy. A quick test is to crush the leaves between your fingers and you will get a strong smell of garlic from the plant.



This species is quite detrimental to the health of our forests as they release allelopathic chemicals that disrupt beneficial mycorrhizal associations between native plant species and fungi. Many fungi that live in our forest soils, benefit conifer tree species (e.g., Douglas-fir, western hemlock, Pacific silver fir.)

If you become aware of a plant of garlic mustard and want to help eradicate it, pull the plant out and dispose of the complete plant. Do not just pull it and leave it to die, as the seeds will survive and sprout on site.

Read the complete report posted on our web site by David Lebo, Westside Zone Botanist, Mt. Hood National Forest.

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)