



North Fork Landowners' Association

Spring 2016 Newsletter

FROM THE DESK OF THE PRESIDENT

As our so-called Winter recedes and Spring peeks around the corner, it's time to check out this year's NFLA Newsletter along with the fun-filled calendar to begin planning your Summer activities!

As I approach my second year as President, I've come to realize how vital the dedicated support of our members is to our success. This includes the board, committees, and others who selflessly give their time and energy in keeping our association robust. These efforts are greatly appreciated. With this generous support we will continue the work of preserving and enhancing our beloved North Fork community. We look forward to seeing everyone this Summer!

Randy Kenyon, President
North Fork Landowners' Association

DON'T MISS THESE:

NEW: *Stonehenge Air Museum Outing July 14*

NEW: *Baseball? Horseback Ride/Barbeque? (Interest in New Events will be evaluated at the June Business Meeting)*

CONTINUING: *Firewise Day and Summer Interlocal July 13*

CONTINUING: *Fly Fishing July 6th with Irv Heitz*

CONTINUING: *Church Services Sundays 10:30 a.m. June 5 through August 28 (note new starting/ending dates)*

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 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 "Crazy Hat Dance." This was a North Fork tradition a few decades ago and we started doing it again last summer! Just make a crazy hat to wear. The most creative one gets a prize! Last year's winner was Sarah Ulrichsen. Her hat featured items that might be found in a pack rat's nest and it had a sign for "North Fork Pack Rat Association." (As if the North Fork needed another organization!) Come join the fun!

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 twenty-two North Forkers....so far. These recordings can be listened to (or you can read the transcripts) on the NFLA website at www.nflandowners.com. There are interviews with many of our beloved neighbors who have passed away in recent years. This project is preserving the voices of our North Fork history. Committee members

will continue to record interviews during the summer and fall of 2016.

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 that 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.

Summer Solstice Sunset Hike to Cyclone Lookout ***by Debo Powers***

Celebrate the beginning of the summer hiking season with us! Last year, we started a new tradition of hiking to Cyclone Lookout on the solstice to enjoy the evening sunset. This year, SUMMER SOLTICE ARRIVES AT 4:34 p.m. on June 20. Please join us at the intersection of Hay Creek Road and the North

Fork Road at 7:00p.m. to carpool to the trailhead. Be sure to have bear spray, your headlamp, water, and a snack to share at the top where we will celebrate the return of summer! After the sun sets, our group will head back down and arrive at our vehicles before dark.

Fire Mitigation Committee Report *by Molly Shepherd*

2016 Firewise Day

The North Fork has been recognized as a Firewise community for eleven years. One of the requirements for recognition is to contribute a minimum of \$2 per capita toward Firewise activities. In 2015, we contributed about \$8200, most of it in volunteer time, with a landowner population approaching 500.

Another requirement for continuing recognition is to hold an annual Firewise Day event. The 2015 workshop featured an excellent program and strong attendance. This year's workshop will be held on

Wednesday July 13, 2016 from 9:30 a.m. to noon, immediately preceding the Summer Interlocal meeting. Information about the program will be posted on the NFLA website when the agenda is final.

The North Fork has received some national attention for our Firewise accomplishments. Our community was featured in two articles last year, one in *Planning Magazine* and the other in *Stateline*, a news service of Pew Charitable Trusts.

Hazardous Fuels Grants

The North Fork has received four hazardous fuels reduction grants since the fires of 2003. Monies have been available on a cost-share basis, with the grant paying 75% of the cost of an eligible project and the landowner contributing the remaining 25%. The Flathead Economic Policy Center has administered the grants and provided invaluable technical assistance on our behalf. We have closed out our three earlier grants and have a balance of about \$20,000 remaining on the fourth.

Our priority with the fourth grant has been to reduce hazardous fuels along the lower part of Trail Creek Road, where it passes through private property. The purpose is to improve ingress and egress, allow safer access for firefighters, and afford an escape route over

the Whitefish Divide. We've had a positive response from landowners. Flathead County is assisting us by chipping the slash generated by landowner treatments along the road. County Fire Service Area Manager Lincoln Chute anticipates that the chipping will take place in the Spring of 2016.

The Fire Mitigation Committee will discuss whether to apply for a fifth grant in 2016. Among the considerations are landowner interest and the need for additional hazardous fuels reduction to protect our homes. Committee members welcome landowner input in their discussion. 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.

New Library at Sondreson Hall by Debo Powers

Our library at Sondreson Hall features a selection of books on the flora and fauna of the Northern Rocky Mountain ecosystem. These books were donated by Randy Lakes. The books are housed in a beautiful handcrafted bookshelf built specifically for the library by Kevin O'Bryan.

We have also started a shelf of books by North Fork authors. If you are a local author, please donate a copy of your book(s) to the library. NFLA members can check out library books using the check-out system. Titles of the books are listed on the NFLA website.

If you would like to donate nature books about the North Fork or the Northern Rocky

Mountains, please send a message to debopowers@gmail.com



Photo courtesy Allen Chrisman

BACKWOODS BOOK LOVERS from Gerry Stearns

Another fine selection of books has been chosen for this year's reading. All meetings begin at 7:30, and this year will be held in private homes. **Please check www.nflandowners.com or contact Gerry Stearns at 752-5985 or gsmontana@hotmail.com for details.**

June 21: Winner of the Pulitzer Prize **All the Light We Cannot See** by [Anthony Doerr](#). Carol Vuchetich and Jim Cleghorn hosts. When Marie-Laure is six, she goes blind and her father builds a perfect miniature of their Paris neighborhood so she can memorize it by touch and navigate her way home. When the Nazis occupy Paris they flee to the walled citadel of Saint-Malo carrying a valuable and dangerous jewel. In a German mining town an orphan named Werner becomes an expert in building and fixing radios and soon works for the Nazis. More and more aware of the human cost of his intelligence, Werner travels finally, into Saint-Malo, where his story and Marie-Laure's converge.

July 12: **Notorious RBG: The Life and Times of Ruth Bader Ginsberg** by [Irin Carmon](#), [Shana Knizhnik](#). Janet Leigh host. Supreme Court Justice Ginsburg never asked for fame—she has only tried to make the world a little better and a little freer. But nearly a half-century into her career, something funny happened to the octogenarian: she won the Internet. Across America, people who weren't even born when Ginsburg first made her name as a feminist pioneer are tattooing themselves with her face, setting her famously searing dissents to music, and making viral videos in tribute.

August 16: **Sources of the River: Tracking David Thompson Across North America** by [Jack Nisbet](#). Naomi Hoiland host. Thompson was a fur trader, explorer, surveyor, and mapmaker from 1784 to 1812. His field journals provide the earliest written accounts of the natural history and indigenous cultures of what is now British Columbia, Alberta, Montana, Idaho, Washington, and Oregon.

September 13: **A Man Called Ove: A Novel** by [Fredrik Backman](#). Jane Reardon host. Ove is a curmudgeon—the kind of man who points at people he dislikes as if they were burglars. Behind the cranky exterior there is a story and a sadness. So when one November morning a chatty young couple with two chatty young daughters move in next door and accidentally flatten Ove's mailbox, it is the lead-in to a comical and heartwarming tale of unkempt cats, unexpected friendship, and the ancient art of backing up a U-Haul.

WINTER INTERLOCAL MEETING from Allen Chrisman

The 2016 Winter Interlocal Meeting was held February 17. Notes from the meeting are on the NFLA website at www.nflandowners.com. Long time North Forkers Carl Pittman and Marietta Downes who passed away recently were remembered. Retired Polebridge Ranger Scott Emmerich is undergoing cancer treatments and our thoughts are with him and his family.

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service: Amanda Hendrix: A 12 month review is underway in preparation of listing Fisher as a threatened or endangered species. They are almost extinct in the North Fork.

Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC): Brian Manning:

- **North Moran TS:** Logging will continue in the Home Ranch Bottoms area
- **Brushing:** Brushing will be done this year on 909 road and Coal Ridge
- **Grizzly Bear Habitat Plan:** Habitat Plan was litigated, has been resolved, new rules being written to adjust conservation plan.

Homeland Security: Border Patrol: Kip Stratton:

- Caught and cited illegal border crossers that bragged of duping Border Patrol on social media. Resulted in \$1,000 fine.
- Working with County and USFS to help gravel Upper North Fork Road from border south.

Glacier National Park: Sharon Olsen, North Fork Ranger:

- GNP does not promote the North Fork according to their Management Plan.
- Inside North Fork Road: Plan and document being completed. Road will remain closed to vehicles from Logging Creek to Camas Creek this summer.

Flathead National Forest: Rob Davies, District Ranger, Hungry Horse/Glacier View:

- **Weeds:** Treating recreation sites and meadows along the river. Have been treating Moran Meadows as they use that for fire camp and helibase.
- **Road Maintenance:** Blading planned for Red Meadow, Trail Creek. Brushing planned for Cyclone, Whale, Coal.
- **River Corridor:** Three River Rangers on the North Fork/Middle Fork. Monitored Limits of Acceptable Change. Seemed to be reasonable compliance with trash and human waste.

Flathead County: Dave Prunty and Ovila Byrd:

- **RAC Funding:** There is \$275,000 in RAC this year. Will make application for North Fork.
- **Moran Creek Bridge Replacement:** Plan to replace the bridge at Moran Creek in 2017.
- **Gravel:** Would like to place crushed gravel on five miles from Canyon Creek towards Camas Creek.
- **North Fork Paving:** If the section of the North Fork from the end of the pavement at Canyon Creek to Camas Creek were paved to State standards, the State would assume all maintenance responsibilities including snow plowing. This would be a significant cost savings to the County. The County, however, is in no position to pay for paving.

Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks:

- **Rick: Fisheries:** Bull Trout seeming to hold their own – strong population of bull trout redds in Canada. Low redd counts in Big Creek and Hallowat Creeks. Low flows and fish barrier log jams and beaver dams were blocking upstream migration.
- **Lee Anderson: Enforcement:** Fewer incidents of trespass, shooting from road.
- **Tim Manley: Grizzly Bears:** Have five bears radio-collared in the North Fork as trend bears – four females and one male. Have three male bears radio-collared as Management Bears.
- **Tim Thier: Wolves:** Nine in Dutch Creek Pack, 5 in Akinkola Pack. No anticipated change in the North Fork quota of two harvested. Last year they filled quota.

Special Topics:

- **Federal Lands Access Proposal (FLAP): Gary Danzig, Flathead Forest Staff Officer:** Provides grant money for access through nonfederal lands to Federal Lands. Forest Service and Flathead County will put together a proposal to put base course and gravel lift on last five miles to the Canadian Border, plus approach to Polebridge entrance in the Park. Border Patrol through Kip Stratton would be able to commit \$100,000 as matching funds that will take care of a large portion of the matching funds.

SUMMER INTERLOCAL MEETING AT SONDRERSON HALL:

Date: July 13, 2016 1 P.M. (Potluck Lunch at Noon)

Host: The North Fork Landowners' Association

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

See enclosed 2016 NFLA Calendar for more exciting events! Something for everyone!

Backwoods Book Lovers:

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Aug. 16: *Sources of the River: Tracking David*

Thompson Across North America by [Jack Nisbet](#)

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Last copies of the North Fork Cookbook are available at the Polebridge Merc and Home Ranch Bottoms Store.

Thanks to Lois Walker for this great project!!!

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NEW: *Baseball? Horseback Ride/Barbeque? (Interest in New Events will be evaluated at the June Business Meeting)*

NEW: *Chris Peterson (HHNews Editor/Photographer)*

Presentation 7 p.m. August 6 before Business Meeting!!!

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