

Minutes: CPCOA Fall Meeting September 21st 2019

Location: Nile Community Church

11:30 Welcome and Potluck began

11:50 Called to order with introduction of Speakers Board:

- a. Erin Black, acting Ranger in Kelly's absence
- b. Lee Ellis, USFS Special Uses
- c. George Marcott
- d. Board Members

Carl Buchholz, Bill Hopkins, Gary Jackson, Tamra Johnson, Winona Rombough. Jim Lundeen and Scott Miller were mentioned but not present.

Ralph announced that Vicki Wenham had resigned due to plans for selling her cabin and other matters that are demanding of her time. Vicki was thanked for her service. A thank you card and gift will be mailed to her.

Carl and Sue were recognized for the 14 years Carl served on the board. Sue was thanked for allowing Carl to spend so much time in service to the organization. Carl was thanked for all the field trips that he has put on. They were given tokens of the Association's appreciation; two books, "*Natural History of the Pacific Northwest Mountains*" by Daniel Mathews, and a second book, "*Roadside Geology of Washington*" by Marli B. Miller. Sue was given a handmade wall hanger. Also included was a \$50.00 gift card to be used for whatever they choose.

12:00 George Marcott (North Yakima Conservation District)

George spoke about the North Yakima Conservation District's winter chipping program. He circulated a sign up roster for those who would like to have him come to their lot for chipping of limbs and other vegetation. He addressed the proper way to pile up your vegetation for chipping asking that we do not put needles, duff from the forest floor, rocks, and trash in the pile. Keep the piles limited to limbs and small trees only. Put all the limbs in one direction and keep the piles within 12 feet of the roads. Please contact George now to get on the list for Chinook Pass as he will be on the pass in October. His number is 509 969 4035.

George also asked that we mail thank you letters to the district office as those letters make a big difference in securing grants to keep the project alive and well. George explained the crews are young part time workers who are paid a small wage and can get college credits. For the most part they are building their skills for future work in forestry type of positions or other related fields. The crews are new each year but the foremen are generally well seasoned staff and do an excellent job of training the new staff. The program is valuable to the community, the forest service and the young crew members. The thank you letters help insure that these benefits continue. Please send your thank you letters to:

North Yakima Conservation District
Board of Supervisors
1606 Perry Street Suite 6
Yakima, WA 98902

Ralph asked us to send him an electronic copy of our letters as well. He will then forward them on to the Washington state Forest Home owners Association. They in turn will write a special letter to the district thanking them on behalf of all cabin owners who use the program. The goal is to flood the District with support of this program.

12:30 Erin Black (Ranger, Naches District)

Erin spoke about her current temporary appointment as the “Acting Ranger” for the Naches District as Kelly is on assignment in Arizona. Kelly is expected to return in the near future. Erin is originally from this area and her parents had a cabin on Chinook Pass so she is keenly aware of our issues. She is supportive of a common sense approach to the Recreational Residence Program and indicated that the District is working hard to streamline processes where they can, and to work closer with the cabin owners. The USFS considers cabin owners to have a vested interest in the health of the forest and, as such, are the best stewards of the areas in and near our tracts. She spoke highly of the value of being in an association like the CPCOA. Erin said there is strength in numbers and those large numbers have a bigger voice when it comes to working with the USFS. She also spoke in a similar way about the state wide and national associations.

She was asked to clarify the cutting of danger trees and down wood in and around our cabins. We can clean up down wood and cut down hazard trees if we follow the new guidelines of taking pictures before and after the tree removal and sending that information to Lee Ellis at the USFS. The cut wood can be used for cabin heat or in our fire pits only.

More controlled burns are scheduled for the next few weeks so do not get alarmed by the smoke. They have authorization to burn up to 11,000 acres. DNR may begin to burn in some areas as well. The issue of fuel reduction in our tracts is also a big concern for cabin owners. THE USFS is in discussions about that and as mentioned earlier, there is support for taking action on reducing the fuels in tracts.

From the national level they are not looking to grow the agency and the local district is shorthanded. Lee is trying to keep up to date with all the calls and the backlog of requests for project approvals.

1:15 Lee Ellis (Recreational Permits Manager)

Lee said he appreciates all the calls and looks forward to continuing to work with the cabin owners on getting timely approvals on projects. Lee reports a high number of complaints by cabin owners regarding infractions by neighboring cabin owners. With limited resources it is difficult to respond to all the reports, but they do take them seriously. Those calls that are outside of the USFS’s law enforcement capacity are forwarded to the Deputy Sherriff, Justin Swale. The district has a new law enforcement officer who will be starting his job in October. One area of concern within the USFS’s jurisdiction is the dumping of trailer sewage/graywater waste into our outhouses. That practice is not allowed and people need to be aware of it and not engage in the practice.

Lee said that in 2024 our fees will start to come to the UFS instead of the general fund. He indicated that approximately 2 million will be allocated to the Okanogan Wenatchee District.

They are looking for feedback on how to best use that money. It is tentatively targeted at areas such as forest health and recreation.

1:45 **Treasures report:**

Jim Lundeen was not available, Ralph presented the report. We have \$5,197.48 in our general fund and \$9,851.00 in our defense fund. We have 17 new members for 2019 which is a good sign we are doing things right. We still have some members who have yet to pay their fees. We encourage folks to get them paid. Almost all of our bills are paid for this year. We still have to pay or dues to the State Association.

20)19 Goals: Ralph

1. Fire wise program. We have seen some movement by a couple more tracts. We need everyone to get on board. We heard George talk about having a defensible area around or cabins and how it helps protect the cabins. We heard Erin speak about how important the cabin owners are in managing forest health. And we learned from Lee and Erin the USFS is beginning to work closer with cabin owners regarding cleaning up our tracts. Ralph encouraged all tracts to get on board with fire wise. Ralph encouraged us to be that one person who coordinates our tracts.
2. Membership, we need to continue to encourage growth and retention. Ralph referred back to the fact we have 17 new members in 2019, over a 10% increase. Ralph thanked the members for talking up the organization, and again referred back to Erin's remarks on the association.
3. Increase Tract communication and involvement: Forest Watch and Fire wise: We need volunteers to chair these efforts in our tracts. Ralph encouraged folks to step up and take on this challenge. He also asked for a volunteer Editor to work with Scott on Cabin Tracts. It will take about 8 hours per year. The volunteer needs limited computer skills. Please contact Ralph for more information. Improved communication with USFS is getting better as evidenced by the hazard tree program changes.
4. Field Trips; Carl is retiring from the board and we have Tamra Johnson who is taking over that role with Carl's help and of course all your help. If you have ideas send them to us if you want to lead a trip let us know.
5. Elections to the board.
Again, thanks to Vicki and Carl for their service: Vicki played a very large roll in developing an accurate Chinook Pass Registry. It was deeply appreciated.
6. Nominations from the spring meeting were: Doug Mayo (new) term 3 years, Ralph Berthon, Winona Rombough, and Scott Miller returning for 3 year terms; a motion was made and 2nd to approve the slate of officers. The motion passed. There were no nominations to fill Vicki's one year term.

2:00 **Drawings**

1. 10 \$2.00 Lotto ticket were given out via a drawing.
2. We never got away was given to Glen and Tamra Johnson to read
Asked for information on a lost book, "*Nothing in life is Free*"
3. **Set meeting dates for 2020: Spring 6/20/20; Fall 9/19/20.**

2:15: **Meeting adjourned**