



# Cabin Tracks

[Chinook Pass Cabin Owners' Association](http://www.cpcoa.com)—December 2021

[www.cpcoa.com](http://www.cpcoa.com)

## President's Letter 2021- Ralph Berthon

Dear Fellow Cabin Owners,

2021 has been another strange year! After 2020 I did not think it could have gotten crazier, but alas, it has. As president of your association, I was hoping 2021 would have brought us more meetings, a few field trips and maybe some new association board members, and for sure a new President. Sorry to say we were only able to have one meeting, no field trips, and no new board members or officers. And we also lost a friend, Sue Buchholz, wife to Carl Buchholz. She was a long-time member of the association and a friend to all. If we have had any other member who has passed this past year, please let me know. Thank you.

Without a fall annual meeting we did not hold board elections to elect new officers. We have retained the current slate of board members and officers. This is not a preferred method of running a board or electing its officers. It is my hope to be able to hold elections at the annual meeting the fall of 2022. If we cannot meet in person due to COVID we will hold the elections by a mail in vote.

So, what have we done in 2021? We manage to not only re-enlist old members but grow the association's membership to 135 members. In 2020 we dropped down to just 40 members which was way down from the 97 members we had in 2019. In 2021 we saw many of our past members come back to the association. And, we have added 19 new members for a total of 135 members. So, thank you all for your efforts to recruit your neighbors in spite of the impact of COVID. Your efforts increase our voice in the cabin owner community here in Washington State and in Washington DC. Together, we will be able to sustain our efforts in keeping our presence at the USFS table, in Congress and more important, in the forest.

I urge you to visit the local and national cabin owner's web sites for updates on current matters. We tried to keep you as informed as possible on local matters such as the fires that threatened many of our cabins to criminal activities that occurred during the closures and reopening of the forest lands along Chinook Pass. I am aware of the national's efforts to keep abreast of the proposed changes to our permits.

All in all, COVID has impacted us but it has not stopped us. As the President of your association, I have a number of high hopes. I hope that you all remain safe and healthy this winter; I hope that you all are able to enjoy your cabins a bit after being unable to access your cabins for so long. And lastly, I hope you all have a Happy Thanksgiving, a very Merry Christmas, and a Happy New Year.

Thank you for allowing me to be your President,

Ralph Berthon

## NFH Conference Information Review from Doug Gann

I sat in on the NFA President Doug Gann's Quarterly message to cabin association's presidents so I could write a review for you. Doug had 3 main concerns for cabin owners:

1. The loss of cabins mainly due to wildfires.
2. The fee retention beginning in 2024. This is new and a part of our Cabin Fee Act (CFA)
3. The Cabin Fee Act renewable in 2028

Doug is very concerned that we have lost 440 cabins since 2018 because of trees falling on them, wildfires, cabin neglect, and high permit fees. About 50% of cabins lost are rebuilt because of insurance and cabin owners financially are able to rebuild. However, the Nation Forest Homeowners' Association (NFHA) retains an attorney and a lobbying firm to look after cabin interests in D.C. and to negotiate our Cabin Fee Act. The more cabins lost the less money cabin owners have to protect cabin owner interests. Also, we have a number of cabins in need of repair. Some of these cabins get to the point where owners abandon their cabins and they are removed from the cabin count. Doug encouraged cabin owners to become friendly with other cabin owners in your area tract. Each year our cabins become more desirable and more valuable. We need to encourage owners of cabins needing repairs to either make the repairs (increase cabin valuable), pass it on to a family member, or sell the cabin. That way, we will not lose cabin numbers.

The fee retention part of the CFA starts in 2024. Presently our permit fee paid yearly goes into the national pot of money. In 2024, that amount of money will be returned to the local Naches Ranger District minus 10% which is retained by the Regional Office. The Chinook Pass and White Pass Cabin Associations combined are the 2<sup>nd</sup> most cabins on any Ranger District. This means the Naches Ranger District will receive considerable funds returned to them. The money is to be spent on improving the cabin program with input from the Naches Ranger District and the Chinook Pass Cabin Owners' Association. Examples of use might be to improve fire prevention around cabins, to improve cabin driveways, or roads leading to cabins or to improve recreation uses in the forest near the cabins. Your voice in this matter may be of value to you. The particulars of this program have yet to be determined but lots of discussions have taken place at the national and local levels

Our contract or Cabin Fee Act is up for renewal in 2028. The National Forest Service has already sent a list of their wishes (changes) to our National Cabin Association and Doug has responded. Doug believes there will be minor adjustments to our present CFA. However, he is concerned about one proposed change and that is each cabin can only one listed owner. That means a husband and wife cannot be listed as co-owners and a trust would be listed as a single owner. This would mean in case of a death of a spouse, a divorce, or sale of a cabin, the Forest Service would charge a transfer fee (I believe this fee is in the \$1200-\$1500 area). Doug believes that since we live in a community property state that this request is not going to fly. We certainly hope so!!! He thinks that other requests will end up in a "give and take" negotiations.

Last but not least, Doug says that it is very important that cabin tracts and associations become united, work together, and cooperate with each other. He said there is strength in numbers. We need to make an effort to include all cabin owners in both local and national association as the NFHA program as we know it today is under attack. We need to unite to retain our cabins.

Our local cabin association treasurer Jim Lundeen reports that the CPCOA has a new record number of members. Remember when you join CPCOA you also join the Washington State Cabin Owners Association and the NFHA. The national membership is most important because they negotiate our CFA and hire those who look after the cabin interests in D.C. Renewal forms will be sent out after the new year. Please communicate

with other cabin owners and especially new cabin owners so they understand the importance of joining CPCOA.

This has been a very unusual year for cabin owners. The Schneider Springs Fire prevented many of us from entering our cabins in August and September. Seems like we have had our share of fires lately. First the Norse Peak Fire, The American Ridge Fire, the Rock Creek Fire, and now the fire this year. What is left to burn? Hopefully, the next few years will be better. During elk hunting season, a deputy fire chief from Seattle became lost up the Spring Creek Road. Huge numbers of people joined in the search for him. I donated one day of my hunting season to help search. I have never done this before but let me share with you, it is different walking through the woods looking for an animal than it is looking under logs and trees for a human body. Hopefully a one-time experience.

Take care and be safe.

Wayne Bell, CPCOA Board member & newsletter editor