



# WRRRA Fall 2017 Newsletter

## White River Recreation Association

REPRESENTING FEDERAL LAND PERMITTEES IN THE WHITE RIVER DISTRICT, SNOQUALAMIE NATIONAL FOREST SINCE 1929

### Highlights:

Fall Dinner Meeting

Norse Peak Fire Recap

WRRRA Elections

Snowplow Update

Metal Roofs

Summer Picnic Highlights

## 2017 Annual WRRRA Fall Dinner Meeting

Saturday October 21, 2017—Greenwater Community Center/Fire Station

Please join us for the annual Fall Dinner Meeting to elect new board members, get updates on key issues, socialize with your fellow cabin owners, and share gratitude as we reflect on our recent wildfire experiences. We are holding the meeting near the cabins at the Greenwater Community Center/Fire Station.

4:30-5:00	Arrivals & Check-In
5:00-5:30	Business Meeting/Board Elections
5:30-6:30	Social Hour & Silent Auction
6:30-7:30	Dinner
7:00-7:45	Updates & Presentation
7:45-8:00	Door Prize Drawing & Adjourn

### Menu

NY Catering is doing a fire-themed menu featuring smoked black forest ham, foil wrapped potatoes, etc. Wine, beer, and non alcoholic beverages are included in your dinner price.

### Fall Dinner Policy & Cost:

Cost is \$35 per person, tax and tip included. Maximum number of WRRRA members and guests that can be served is 100. To guarantee a place at the table reservation must be received by Oct. 16, 2017. Those who miss the deadline but wish to attend will be subject to a \$10 surcharge if space is available. No refunds or cancellations after Oct. 16, 2017.

### Reservations Options:

- \* Online at Brown Paper Tickets <http://2017wrrafalldinner.brownpapertickets.com>
- \* Mail In Reservation form (see page 7)

## Silent Auction Items/Fundraising

We have some amazing items ready for our SILENT AUCTION at the Fall Dinner. We invite everyone to participate again in making this a fun part of our evening. What to donate? Be creative. It can be something new, or a white elephant in good shape. Also because of last year, we will expand on the **baked item offerings**. We need your support though. **Please make that favorite pie, family favorite muffins or delicious plate of cookies. We'll devote an entire table to just baked goods so happy baking.** The funds raised are dedicated to our WRRRA Cabin Defense Fund. We want to continue to build our reserves for this important cause. Thank you!

## President's Message

What an unprecedented time the last month has been for the WRRRA! The Norse Peak Fire has been an emotionally and also physically trying experience for us all.



Personally, I was a wreck as I went up to the cabins many times, first to retrieve pictures and other unreplaceable items, then to put sprinklers on my wood shake roof, and then to check on the fire and defenses that had been erected to keep it at bay, and report back to WRRRA members, family and friends on what I experienced each day. On each visit I kept wondering if it might be the last time I would see the cabin standing.

I saw many other cabin owners doing similar things, and shared a tear or two and a beer or two with some, as we watched the event unfold. I think we all learned a lot over the course of a few weeks – including much about fire behavior, fire management practices, structure protection concepts, cabin wrapping, cabin insurance, retardant use in national forests, and much more!

Hopefully you felt well informed throughout the process. That was actually one of the big “silver linings” that I feel this event produced – the daily fire reports and pictures created very high interest in WRRRA and our Facebook page and email briefings. Since Labor Day, I have approved requests from more than 200 new members for our WRRRA Facebook page; I hope that many of these folks remain engaged and interested in what the WRRRA is doing, whether they be extended family, community members, or friends of cabin owners. I also saw countless examples of cabin owners actively involved in supporting and helping each other, whether with evacuation of items, installation of sprinkler systems, or all the fantastic sharing of updates, information, pictures and statuses at neighbor's cabins. I guess what they say is true, there is nothing like a natural disaster to bring a community together!

Another “silver lining” that will surely come out of this experience is an increased awareness of and ability to conform to Firewise principles on

our National Forest properties. Now that the cabin lots have been brushed and fire lines created, we should strive to actively maintain them. And in a similar vein, this fire on our traditionally wet, west side of the mountains put a definite exclamation point on the importance of metal roofs as key in maintaining our historic cabins. To that end, the collaborative work that the WRRRA has been doing with the Forest Service and DAHP on this topic is nearly complete; please see the other article in this newsletter for additional information.

In the end, it appears that we were both very lucky that the fire spared our cabins, and very fortunate to have had the support of so many wonderful men and women helping to protect our property. Going forward, as the threat from the fire abates, we will form a task force to capture all our learnings and make sure we are better prepared for next time. Please let me know if you would like to participate.

Our upcoming Fall Dinner at the Greenwater Community Center on October 21st will hopefully be a celebration for our community, with the stresses of the Norse Peak Fire really ebbing by that point! We hope that Chief Sowers and some of the local heroes can attend, and we can properly thank them. Please make sure you reserve your spot at the celebration, in order to avoid exceeding fire safety capacity.

Please drop me a note if you have any questions, concerns, or input at [president@wrra.net](mailto:president@wrra.net). I hope to see you at the dinner, up at the cabins or in the mountains soon!

~ Kevin Orth

## Norse Peak Wildfire

On August 11th, a lightning strike in the Norse Peak Wilderness started a small forest fire.

The wildfire slowly grew over the next couple of weeks, heading east toward Highway 410 and the Bumping Lake area. Ultimately, Highway 410 was closed on the east side of the Cascade Crest, from Chinook Pass toward Yakima. The resources to manage the fire were based on the east side of the pass.

Throughout Labor Day weekend, the fire grew in size, but its movements were largely obscured by the huge amounts of smoke created. The winds shifted to a “Chinook Wind”, blowing from the

east, and pushed the fire toward Crystal Mountain and the west side. This phenomenon, though rare, does occur from time to time, usually in late summer. The Yacolt Burn in 1902 was the most noteworthy example.

On Labor Day, the fire was on the ridge behind Gold Hills up at Crystal Mountain and was looking quite large. The small Greenwater Fire Department crew that was monitoring movement in the fire withdrew from the area, fearing being cutoff by the fire if it came down the hill to Crystal base. The night webcam images from Crystal showed many fire spots coming over the ridge; my assumption was that Gold Hills would likely be lost.

During the night, however, the fire stayed on the ridge, and raced down the valley toward the cabins. At 4am on Tuesday September 5th, Alta Crystal Resort and the cabin community were told to evacuate, the fire was close behind. Many cabin owners raced up to retrieve possessions and to set up rudimentary fire defenses like sprinklers. The Greenwater FD volunteer crew continued to monitor and protect the Gold Hills community, and started to monitor the situation behind the cabins as well.

On Wednesday September 6th, the cabin area was very hot and smoky. The Greenwater FD was spraying many cabins with foamy water with fire retardant, and it really felt like the fire was imminent. That evening, at the first community fire briefing in Greenwater, there was a lot of frustration about lack of resources and lack of attention to this fire (as compared to the Jolly Mountain fire near Cle Elum and Suncadia). The fire management team from Florida had been primarily focusing on the fire on the east side, near Bumping Lake Road, and seemed to be caught a bit flat footed by the rapid shift in the fire to the west.

Luckily, the fire lost some steam as it came down the valley, and morphed into a slow-burning ground fire. If it had been a faster, hotter fire in the canopies of the trees, there is little that could've been done to save the cabins with the few resources that were available at that time.

At the urging of the WRRRA board, cabin owners starting calling and emailing elected officials, pleading for more resources and help. Chief Sowers went to the fire command office in Eastern Washington, and pleaded for the same.



Firefighters

The next day, wildland firefighters started rolling in to the area, and the National Guard soon followed, to provide security at road closures and protect resources and property.

The wildland firefighters created fire lines and fire breaks above all the cabin tracts by digging a path through the forest underbrush, and set up hose lines and sprinklers around the most at-risk cabins, plus put pumps in the creeks to draw water. They also removed brush from around all roads and trails, to help create natural fire breaks, and ultimately dug a small fire line around each and every cabin and outbuilding and pump house in all of the cabin tracts. It was a huge amount of work!



Cabin with protective wrap

**ALL IN ONE  
BUILDING & SUPPLY**

General Contractor, Lindal Dealer, Huntwood Cabinets

**CHUCK GILLET**  
Owner

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Auburn, WA 98092

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Meanwhile, some cabin owners purchased and installed protective wrap on their cabin exteriors and wood shake roofs, in order to protect against embers. Others contacted insurance companies, and some of those provided proactive protective services (from Wildfire Defense Systems) including sprinklers and localized fire breaks. As the smoke cleared, we even got some helicopter support, dropping huge amounts of water on some of the hottest parts of the fire, and refilling from a large tub up at Crystal Mountain, or from the White River. Gradually, things began to feel more stable and controlled.

Since that time, the fire has continued to slowly percolate along the ground, directed around the cabins by the fire lines, and has come all the way to Highway 410 just downhill from the Dry Creek (Deep Creek) cabins. The fire crews continue to monitor and manage the fire, but will not be able to extinguish it until we get a lot of help from nature in the form of heavy rain or snow. As long as conditions don't change much, it appears the fire is well managed and posing little threat, so the evacuation orders have been lifted throughout the area.

Most of the roads and trails in the area are closed, and will remain closed until next spring. The fire burned through large parts of the Norse Peak Wilderness, including the popular Corral Pass and Noble Knob areas, and consumed structures there (outhouses, horse ties, the shelter at Ranger Creek, wooden signs and posts, etc). It also came down to, and in some cases across, trails close to the cabins, including Goat Falls and the White River Trail. It will take some time to restore these, but in the short term the real concern is around trees, whose roots have been damaged by the ground fire, toppling over. The entire area behind our cabins is unstable and should be considered off limits to recreation.

As the immediate danger to our cabins has decreased, we have started to turn our attention to the future, what we can learn from this experience, and how to be better prepared next time. There have been suggestions to maintain the fire lines now that we have them, to purchase our own firefighting equipment including hoses and pumps to store in the tracts, and to have a better plan to contact and mobilize community and political leaders in the future.

Although another fire seems unlikely any time soon, the weather does appear to be changing and we are experiencing warmer and drier summers – so it behooves us to be proactive. We will be forming a wildfire task force in the near future to discuss and will pursue actions accordingly; please reach out to the WRR board if you would like to help.

~ Kevin Orth



Goat Falls Trail

## 2017 Board Candidates

WRR Board Elections will take place at our Fall Dinner Meeting on October 21. The following board positions are up for election and candidates have provided information for your review. Nominations will also be accepted from the floor during the business meeting.

### Incumbent Silver Springs Rep Mark Wellington

I have now served multiple board terms and look forward to continued service to our unique cabin association and its members. The recent threat of natural disaster has emphasized how important the cabins themselves are to so many, and also the importance of a strong community organization.



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**John L. Scott**  
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 2355 Griffin Avenue  
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After purchasing Silver Springs #148 in 1970 as the third owners, my parents and now extended family have been the owners at the "Chipmunk Lodge". Begun in 1939 and built by a single man, the main cabin wasn't finished until 1954. I grew up skiing at Crystal Mountain most winter weekends and have many fond memories of childhood summer hikes in the area. I am the oldest of three siblings who now utilize the cabin in the "second generation." These days I am busy as the father of three daughters, ages 9 to 17. I enjoy any time I can spend up at the cabin with them and my wife, Mariko, as we create our own family memories. I look forward to seeing you up at the mountains.

**Incumbent Silver Creek Representative Karen Buhler**

Karen Buhler is a freelance artist working in glass and a lover of projects. Her parents, passionate hobbyists, loved the phrase and lived it, "Busy people are happy people."



Karen studied Architecture in her early college years at Ohio State University and eventually received her BS Agriculture, specialty Horticulture. Education such as this is indicative of her passions for architecture and architectural history, landscape architecture, and the natural sciences of botany, plant taxonomy, hydrology and agronomy. Twelve years ago she and her husband Dave purchased one of the oldest log cabins in the White River built in 1918. Lovingly restored and yet still very rustic, Silver Creek #9 the Snoring Elk, is a place that crystallizes these interests.

**Goat Creek Tract Representative**

To be announced.

**Incumbent Treasurer Kevin Bannon**

My dear neighbors. I am hugely grateful for our community's neighborly spirit. We have certainly been tested. It will happen again and we will be ready again too.



I'm asking you again to allow me to lend my talents managing your WRRRA funds. It continues to be a great pleasure working

for you and helping to make our community strong and sustainable.

Over the past 2 years financial record keeping was ported over to QuickBooks. There are many expected non-profit accounting methods that were not handled well by our former system. By implementing this change, our reporting and documenting is more solid.

Cabin Defense Fund and Copeland Fund assets also have been moved from Wells Fargo to BECU. Interest yields have increased from 0.01% to 0.35%. For the first time in years combined annual interest income can be a 3-digit number.

We can do better still and will do so. There are safe and liquid investment products that will produce better results. To that end with the help of your finance committee we will be working on an investment policy that will define acceptable safe practices and controls.

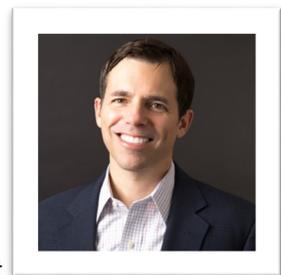
Can't emphasize enough the help from WRRRA members Tom Wood, GC-95 and Eric Carlsen, DC-7, on your finance committee, keeping an eye on things so all continues well. Their service is appreciated. The board should be commended to for their support too.

The finance committee would be pleased to have you to join us. All backgrounds and points of view are valued. email me Treasurer@wrra.net and let's talk. As always, email or call regarding any question.

Looking forward to working for you another 2 years. Thanks again for your support.

**Dalles Tract Representative David Ebel:**

David Ebel is a partner in the Seattle law firm of Schwabe Williamson & Wyatt. When David is not helping clients resolve business or real estate disputes, he is spending time with his wife Molly and their four daughters Scarlett (10), Evelyn (9), Margot (9) and Greta (9). Their favorite place to spend time together is at their family cabin in the Dalles, Lot #31.



David's parents bought the cabin in 1976 when David was 5 years old. The family story is that David, in kindergarten at the time, was so taken

with the cabin that he charmed the sellers into selling it to the Ebels instead of the other interested buyers. Forty-one years later and he loves that Dalles cabin more and more – and so does his family. It is the centerpiece of the Ebel family history. David and Molly are up every weekend in the winter with the kids, who started CMAC last year, and enjoy getting up in the spring and summer whenever possible. All are active members of the WRRRA. They consider the memories created at the cabin, and the strong community of cabin neighbors, as particularly special to them – a sentiment which was highlighted in bold this year with the concern over the Norse Peak Fire.

**Incumbent Secretary Anne Turner**

I have enjoyed serving as the Secretary for the past 3 years, getting to know all the cabin owners and working with the Forest Service. However, nothing prepared me (or any of the rest of us) for the challenges and communication opportunities that would arise during the September 2017 Norse Creek fire event. I was gratified and amazed at our community spirit which grew into its own natural force.



The WRRRA Secretary manages all member communication and is responsible for membership records, with the WRRRA website, newsletters, and directory being key responsibilities of this role. My own background in operations and finance has been helpful, and serving with an energetic and dedicated board has made this a rewarding journey. I look forward to serving the board for another term.

## Snow Plowing - Update 2017-2018

**Overview:** According to the long term forecast, we are expecting a good snowy winter this year. The activities of the fire crews included tree and snag felling, brush cutting and clearing. It is hard to say if this will have an impact on the plowing activities this winter.

This year we will have Randy Iddings plowing the main areas again for us, and the same crew as the last few years will again be working the Deep Creek areas.

As always, we are going to ask people to get driveways marked early this year. We need to make sure we are marking not only the driveways but also anything else to watch for (well heads, large rocks, stumps, etc.). **Ideally, we need to have marking at least 4 feet out of the ground.** We have found that purchasing PVC pipe and either painting it or wrapping it with something reflective works best. Remember lots of plowing is done during the dark, so anything we can do to help crews see the snow stakes is important.

Lastly will be the funding aspect. As last year was a big snow year, we spent about \$36,000 on plowing. This year, the amount we are collecting for plowing will be \$210 per cabin if paid by November 15th and \$250 per cabin if paid after November 15th and before December 15th.

**Cabins that have not paid by December 15th will not be plowed for the year.** The reason for this is that we need to get the “Do Not Plow” signs up as early as possible and this helps facilitate this. Invoices will go out by October 15th via USPS and email.

*~ Perry and Tod Turner, Snowplow*

## The Latest on Metal Roofs

In July, our committee reported that we received a draft Appendix B dated May 31, 2017 from the agencies that are crafting a new language to guide roof replacement decisions. The document, used for guidance, includes three options for metal roof materials for replacements.

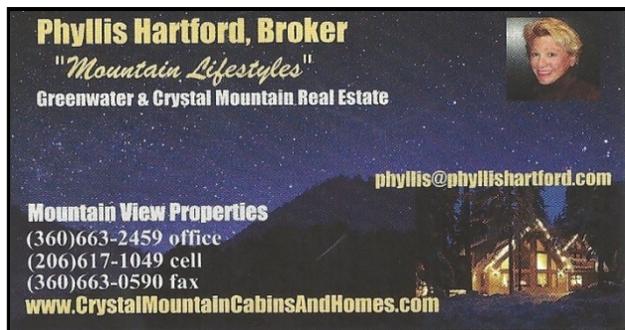
Appendix B was reviewed by the Metal Roof committee (comprised of Tim and Anne Curran,

**Phyllis Hartford, Broker**  
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Albert Pollmar representing WSFHA, Kevin Bannon and myself). We forwarded the document to WRRRA members to get further comment or input. The committee then determined the language acceptable as written and communicated our agreement to the Washington State Department of Historic Preservation (DAHP) and US Forest Service (USFS) in early August 2017.

As I am writing this update on September 25, 2017, we are awaiting the actual approval and signature process. Signatures will include both current presidents of WRRRA and WSFHA.

In the meantime, if you are contemplating replacement of your cabin roof, you will need to

submit your application within the "open period" as outlined earlier in the April 27, 2017 communication to all cabin permittees by our District Ranger, Martie Schramm. **That period is August 15 to November 15.** Brian Lee has committed to process project or modification requests expediently. In the case of metal roofs, you will need to specify the material to be used (just standing metal roof is not adequate as there are 3 different categories according to the Appendix B language). Look on the WRRRA website for the Appendix B document and also for the April letter and project authorization form from Martie Schramm, District Ranger.

*~ Rena Irwin Chair, Metal Roof Committee*

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**RESERVATIONS FORM: WRRRA Fall Dinner Event**

**Greenwater Fire Department/Community Center  
Saturday, October 21, 2015 from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.**

**How to make your reservation?**

**By Brown Paper Tickets:** <http://2017wrrafalldinner.brownpapertickets.com>

**By phone:** Kevin Bannon 206-244-9683 (between 6-8 p.m.)

**By email:** [treasurer@wrra.net](mailto:treasurer@wrra.net)

**By mail:** 4637 S. 168th St., Seattle, WA 98188 (include the form below)

Please include payment, payable to WRRRA, with reservation:

Name(s):			
Number Attending		@ \$35/person	
Total Enclosed:			

**Reservation Policy for WRRRA Fall Dinner**

- Reservations MUST be made by Monday, October 16, 2017
- Fall dinner will be \$35 per person, tax and tip included. Maximum capacity is 100—NO EXCEPTIONS. Please reserve early to guarantee a seat.
- Those who miss the deadline will be subject to a \$10 surcharge if space is available.
- No refunds or cancellations after Monday, October 16, 2017



## WRRR Summer Picnic Highlights and Hwy 410 Clean Up Volunteers

The **WRRR annual summer picnic** in July was a huge success, with lots of fun for adults and kids alike, and much camaraderie with fellow cabin owners and others in the community. And after the picnic, we had another wonderful Cabin Tour, where several owners opened up their cabins for all of us to visit and see. If you were not able to attend these events this year, hopefully you can join us next summer.

Thank you to the following people who made the picnic and cabin tour such a success:

**Bill Vlases** for organizing and supporting the picnic including doing all the shopping, and then hosting the cabin tour at his place after!

**Tom Wood, Tim Curran, and Mark Curran** for hauling tables, setup and cleanup, and cooking during the entire event!

**Becky McAuley** for executing great games with the fun new additions of capture the flag and the water balloon fight.

**Rena Irwin** for managing picnic setup and the pie contest—a record number of 11 pies submitted! All our pie bakers too.

**Kevin Bannon and Mark Wellington** for manning the check in table all day (with **Anne Turner's** help too), selling the cabin tour, and getting new members signed up.

**Mark Wellington and Anne Turner** for executing on a great cabin tour and brochure.

**Karen Buhler** for hosting the board meeting, the highway cleanup and luncheon (and providing Elysian for the picnic).

**Rob Pedersen** for organizing garbage and recycling.

**Cabin Tour Participants:** #21 Dalles, Patricia Sanderson & Teresa Guillien; #34 Goat Creek, Curtis Thompson & Diane DeWitt; #80 Silver Springs, Vlases/McCoubrey Cabin; #66 Silver Springs, Sam & Sybil Hunter; #142 Silver Springs, The Jennings Family, hosted by Phillis Hartford.

These folks made our picnic even more special: Greenwater Fire Department, our USFS friends, Camp Sheppard (for chairs and tables), the Goodman clan (for set up help), Floyd Rogers (for grills). Many more special people helped out who are not captured on this list. Thanks to everyone!

Bill getting picnic supplies



Some winning bakers



Water balloon fun



## Thank you Hwy Clean Up Crew!



Steve Ryan, Klt Ryan, Bonnie Main, Janet Curran, Bob Gardner, Karen Buhler, Anne Kemp, Ed Butcher, Sally Ryan, Dennis Ryan, Jennifer Pruitt, Dennette Wood, Steve Queen

# WRRRA Summer Picnic Highlights—the

Kings of the Grill



Pie Contest Entries



Becky leading the kids' games



Cabin kids!



We love our fire fighters!



Egg Toss Champions



Egg Toss Contest



The Welcome Committee



More water fun



3 generations of the Goodman clan



Pie Contest Judges



## WRRRA

*The purpose of White River Recreational Association (WRRRA) is to promote and protect recreational interests along the Mather Memorial Parkway and throughout the Upper White River Valley; to do any and all things lawful, just and necessary to better the interests of the members of the Association; to secure equitable legislation; and to cooperate with the Forest Service in the protection and administration of all recreational feature.*



## WRRRA Board 2017

**President**

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**Goat Creek Rep #1**

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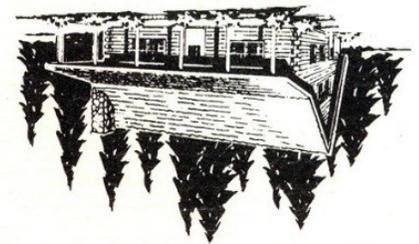
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## WRRRA Fall 2017 Newsletter



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