



ANNUAL NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2012

The BCPOA Chairman—Tom Fiddaman

Dear Neighbors,

I look forward to the day when BCPOA can focus more proactively on promoting good development, resource management, and communication, and less on zoning crisis management.

Toward that end, we continue to invest in the zoning update process, which is happening at a good time. We continue to enjoy a bit of a respite from the prospects of large-scale development and oil and gas exploration, but at the cost of a slow economy and real estate market. Hopefully, as we begin to see the light at the end of the economic tunnel, we will also see the zoning updates completed, so that future growth will be guided by a better implementation of the General Plan.

In the meantime, we have to work with the zoning we have, which on the whole has served Bridger Canyon well for forty years. Our commissioners have shown that, when there's an overwhelming display of public support for something like meaningful enforcement of regulations, they'll stand by us. The county, with BCPOA intervening on its behalf, successfully defended the appeal of the commission's denial of a permit for a barn outside a designated building site (now headed for Montana Supreme Court).

From our recent density survey, it appears that there is overwhelming support for low-density development. It will be tricky to achieve an appropriate blend of minimal infringement on private property rights (as in the 1-dwelling-per-40-acres option we now have) with incentives for higher quality development in so-called Planned Unit Developments. Toughest of all will be to achieve a new compromise for the Bridger Bowl Base Area, where density allocations have fluctuated wildly in a struggle between Base Area developer interests and the broader canyon, at one point taken all the way to the MT Supreme Court in a landmark case, in which BCPOA established the simple principle that zoning regulations ought to conform to General Plans.

Once the Zoning Advisory Board has sorted out some of the complex options, we'll be looking for your input. So, we'll hope to see you at the fire station community room to discuss the future of Bridger Canyon. And we hope that we'll see you again, to testify before the commission in favor of a good rewrite.

Keeping abreast of zoning issues, and keeping in touch with neighbors needs and visions, is important work for a small community like ours, so please join us at the May General Meeting and seriously consider serving on the BCPOA board.

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BCPOA 2011/12

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*Deb Stratford -
Zoning Chair
Sharon Erickson
Mitch Miller
Mary Boscamp*

Jackson Creek

*Mary-Martha Bahn -
Secretary
Rick Anderson
Greg Cummins*

Lower Canyon

*Colleen Carnine
John Shellenberger-
Treasurer
Kent Madin
Charlie Hager*

BCPOA and Zoning

Zoning , Zoning, and More Zoning.....

On April 1st, our Chairman Emailed association members, (do we have your current Email address?) a "quick update on some zoning issues". For those of you who might have missed it, it went like this:

Dear neighbors,

Here's a quick update on some zoning actions:

- In a conditional use application, county analysis placed structures in the wrong zoning district and failed to cite relevant setbacks and definitions.
- The zoning was amended to convert the right to transfer density into the Bridger Bowl Base Area into an absolute right to build 200 houses there.
- To evade requirements that parcels in a Planned Unit Development be contiguous, the commission approved a project including a strip of land, not a legal parcel, 10 feet wide and 2500 feet long.
- In response to a zoning complaint, an enforcement agent concluded that nailing a few old boards to a new building constituted preservation of 25% of the value of the original structure, then took over three months to respond to challenges to this rationale.
- While legally defending its decision to deny an extension of a building envelope onto a visible ridgeline, the commission approved the extension of a building envelope onto a visible ridgeline. I wish I could say "April Fools," but sadly all of these things really happened, some this year, some in years past. BCPOA has often been the only voice for rule of law and preservation of the natural beauty of Bridger Canyon.

BCPOA has a long history advocating for the protection and preservation of the canyon's resources, its natural beauty, environmental qualities and rural character, which provide an environment for our chosen life style and the recreation activities our residents and visitors enjoy. As many of you know, our organization was created by those property owners who sought out our citizen initiated zoning district more than 40 years ago. BCPOA has had a number of success stories, some more notable than others; the favorable decision by the Montana Supreme Court when County's decisions were overly beneficial to a few. an attempt to extract coal bed methane from the Jackson Creek area was abandoned, and more recently the barn built contrary to our regulations was confirmed by the County and upheld by the District Court (this too has been brought to the Supreme Court by the builder; a decision expected in a few months). However, as the Chairman points out - *It's not cheap defending the zoning. BCPOA legal costs this year exceeded \$10,000. This was met in part through \$25 memberships, but substantially through additional donations of up to \$1000. A few residents are doing an exceptional share of the heavy lifting when it comes to legal defense. So, when you send in your BCPOA dues (notice included with this mailing), please consider pitching in an extra \$50, \$100. Your membership and contributions support 100s of hours of volunteer work, plus maintenance of communications like this list, sharing of information on topics like weeds and forest management and our continued efforts to retain the credibility of our zoning to preserve an area residents and so many others enjoy.*

Whether you're a long-term resident of Bridger Canyon, a more recent arrival or a non-resident owner of property in the Canyon, you share with all other property owners a concern for the future of the Canyon; its appearance, environmental quality, and overall character. Your voice is important and has a significant impact on the success of our efforts. We hope non-members will join, members will renew, and that everyone will get engaged and join us at the Annual Meeting!

*****BCPOA*****

Annual General Meeting

Monday, May 21, 6:30 P.M.

BCR Fire Station

Community Room

(Refreshments will be served!)

Agenda items of particular importance...

*** Board elections -**

Lower Canyon— 1 Director
Jackson Creek - 3 Directors
Upper Canyon— 2 Directors

*** District regulations re-write**

Progress update
Moving forward

BCPOA's Bylaws state: "The purpose of this corporation shall be to do everything in its power to preserve the rural character and the natural beauty and resources of Bridger Canyon and the State of Montana; to use its best efforts in guiding and directing orderly growth and development; to maintain, through organization, a definite influence in all matters which may affect residence or property rights and enjoyment thereof by its members; and to hold regular meetings for open discussions of problems of mutual interest and concern to those land owners."

News and Announcements

... BEARS, Oh My!

The bears are waking up, so don't forget proper management of bird feeders, garbage and other attractants. Allied Waste now has bearproof garbage cans. They cost a few dollars extra to pick up, because the driver has to jump out of the truck to unlock the can. Our Chairman has one and finds the peace of mind well worth the money. Allied will let you keep your regular can and switch rates for winter use. For more information, or to order a bearproof trash container you can contact Allied Waste at (406) 586-0606.

Be Safe....Be kind to our bears

Bridger Pines County Water & Sewer District gets go-ahead for new Wastewater Treatment System

In March of this year the Bridger Pines County Water & Sewer District, located in the Bridger Bowl Base Area, received approval of their plans to construct a new wastewater treatment system. The new system replaces the existing, long-time problematic, system designed for the Bridger Pines Subdivision in the early 1970's. The approved plans site the primary treatment process within the boundaries of the district, the Bridger Pines Subdivision; a 13.88 +/- parcel of land purchased from Bridger Canyon Partners located on the bench above Bridger Creek and outside the district's boundary, will be used to store effluent over the winter for disposal by spray irrigation to produce a grass (most likely hay) crop on the same parcel during the summer months.

An Environmental Assessment (EA) required by the approval process of the new treatment system deemed an upgrade by the regulatory agencies and funded with public dollars, resulted in a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI). Area residents and BCPOA protested the EA for several reasons including insufficient public notice. An amended EA and FONSI was published reopening public comment. At the end of February the DEQ published an EA explaining away neighboring area residents concerns, along with a Final Finding of No Significant Impact.

The Bridger Pines County Water & Sewer District creation in 2005 was initiated by 3 Bridger Pines residents and approved by the Gallatin County Commissioners and a favorable majority vote of area residents within the district's boundary. A primary focus of the District was to resolve the long-time problematic wastewater treatment system currently servicing the existing residents in the Bridger Pines subdivision. The creation of the district provided access to public funding and the use of its property contrary to zoning regulations. The approval will lift a building moratorium allowing full build-out of the 58 units originally approved for the Bridger Pines subdivision.

Bridger Base Water Systems, Inc. the principals, as of November 2011, being Will Holmes, Randy Newberg, Pete Steffen, James Nickelson, John Kravetz and John Barkow, was granted a Certificate of Water Right for the purpose of "Water marketing". Bridger Base Water Systems, Inc. successfully argued that water marketing is a valid beneficial use for the appropriation of ground water utilizing the exception under MCA 85-2-306(3). The exception limits water use to 35gpm and 10 acre feet per year. It is the first beneficial use water marketing permit granted in the state since a previous water marketing permit was voided in 2008 as the result of litigation.

Bridger Base Water Systems, Inc. will use the permit to service the water demands of Bridger Park Subdivision aka Ross Peak, resolving the water rights concerns of existing homeowners in the subdivision approved in the late 1990's. Nearly two-thirds of the 30 homes approved remain undeveloped.

Burn season started March 1st, but the Bear Trap Canyon fire shows that conditions are potentially hazardous, with dry fuel, low humidity and wind, so please be careful. Burn permits are required in the BCR Fire District; to obtain a burn permit and other related information go to:

<http://bridgercanyonfd.com/burnpermit.aspx> or
http://www.gallatin.mt.gov/public_documents/burnPermit_for_permits.

THINGS TO REMEMBER

- Update the Emergency Preparedness Form if you haven't all ready- its on pg 6
- Have a Burn Permit in hand before you light the fire
- Check out the back page for important dates and information
- Become a new member of BCPOA or renew your membership—the Dues Notice accompanied the Newsletter
- Attend the Annual Meeting—there'll be deserts!
- Smile -Have a Great Day!

Bridger Canyon Community Organizations'



2011 Year End Newsletter

B2BC activities for the year 2011 included:

- Monitoring Water Quality: B2BC finished their 4th year of monitoring water quality in Bridger Creek under the auspices of the Greater Gallatin Watershed Council (<http://www.greatergallatin.org>). The data collected will prove valuable in understanding the evolution of the creek as the population of the canyon increases. A video of the Bridger Creek team in action can be viewed at the MSU Extension web site:
(<http://waterquality.montana.edu/docs/videos.shtml>).
- Housing for HawkWatch (<http://www.hawkwatch.org/>) volunteers: B2BC helped locate housing for the volunteers and helped defer the costs of housing. We thank John Schellenberger for providing the housing.
- Wildlife monitoring: B2BC coordinated with MSU to provide access to property in Bridger Canyon for wildlife management classes to conduct field training.
- B2BC hosted a presentation by the Gallatin County Extension for people interested in weed control; this included scheduling individual visits to owner's properties by a county extension agent to assess best approaches to weed control and possible financial assistance for weed control.

Plans for 2012

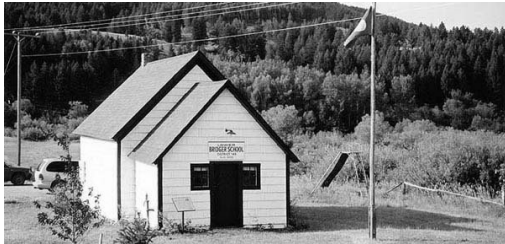
B2BC is looking for new board members. Our current board members have served two or more terms and would like to see new blood in the group. Board member activities are light, including several board member meetings per year and coordination of one activity (arranging one educational event, participating in water quality monitoring, helping with highway cleanup, helping with HawkWatch or). B2BC often coordinates with non-profits, educational and government agencies to leverage their efforts in the B2BC local area. Board membership is not limited to canyon residents. Those interested should contact Gary Sager at: gsager@bclodge.com.

- B2BC plans to continue with activities similar to those of 2010.
- We have the opportunity to work with the Gallatin County Weed District to help land owners deal with weed problems, including possible financial help if funding is available.
- We expect the amount of activity on Base Area Development to be minimal, as we are not aware of any ongoing commercial development initiatives at this time. However, we are prepared to participate in public comment if issues arise.

News and Announcements

BRIDGER CANYON HISTORIC PRESERVATION ASSOCIATION

This has been a good year for BCHA. We were awarded a grant from the Gallatin County Historic Preservation Board which enabled us to put a new roof on the schoolhouse. Our December Open House was fun. We will be part of a One-room school house historic tour in October and will send out more information closer to the date. We encourage everyone to become a member of BCHA, dues are only \$10 per year and should be sent to:



Ann Chase
Treasurer
BCHA
P.O. Box 3311
Bozeman MT 59772

The Bridger Canyon Women's Club first originated in Bridger Canyon back in 1917 as a Red Cross chapter. Over the years the women's club has been invaluable acting in the capacity of community outreach from performing services in civil defense, doing various charitable works, and helping with a variety of worthwhile projects for the improvement of life in Bridger Canyon.

Supportive and caring friendship is a hallmark of the group and we always look forward to extending a welcoming hand to new families moving into our canyon and help them to quickly feel a part of our community.

Today we are still invaluable and while primarily a social organization, we are very much involved in improving life in the canyon we so dearly love. We have many special interest groups; from book club and bridge groups to hiking and needle arts—there is something for everyone to get involved in. Our gourmet dinner club we call Cork and Fork, is a great way for us to get to know each other better and involve our significant others. We even maintain a stretch of road through the Adopt a Highway program, and have pulled many noxious weeds from along our roadways.

The BCWC is here to support the community. Our members have initiated many projects which have blossomed into additional independent organizations such as the BC Historic Preservation Association which maintains the Lower Bridger Schoolhouse and the Woman's Auxiliary which supports the Fire Department. We are also responsible for putting together our annual picnic which is usually held in late August.

We are here for the community, whether an individual or a group—our goal is still the same—the improvement of life in Bridger Canyon. The BCWC meets the third Wednesday of every month September through May. Anyone interested in attending a meeting or receiving more information about the group should contact the club's President, Heidi McLoughlin at 522-1508. We always welcome new members and look forward to meeting new neighbors!

Bridger Canyon Community Organizations'

Bridger Canyon Rural Fire District Auxiliary
Return to Valerie Gould
1600 Place Creek Road
Bozeman, MT 59715
406-582-1605
vgould@littleappletech.com

We are updating our records for the Bridger Canyon Community and this information is strictly for the use of the following organizations. Bridger Canyon Rural Fire District, Emergency Preparedness Committee, Bridger Canyon Property Owners Association.

To prepare for an emergency within our community please fill out completely. This information could prove invaluable in a time of emergency.

Name (Owner) _____

Renter's Name (If applicable) _____

BC Physical Address _____

Mailing Address _____

Telephone # Local _____

Telephone # Non Local _____

Cell Phone #'s _____

Email Addresses _____

Expertise for emergencies. For example are you a doctor, nurse, first responder?

Do you have equipment that could be useful in a community emergency? (Horse trailer to move horses, snow mobile etc.) _____

If you have an alarm who is the local contact # _____

of Adult Residents _____ # of Children (Under 18) _____

The BCRFD has dedicated fire fighters and they need more. (Check if applicable)

_____ Yes, I am interested in joining the BCRFD, please contact me.

_____ I know someone that might be interested in joining, please contact me.

News and Announcements

Bridger Canyon Rural Fire Department

From The Chief,

Dear Canyon Residents,

Thank you for your support during our 2011 season.

About the Department

As of March 1, 2012, we have 27 fire fighters and 4 recruits to be pagered by April 15th. Five of our fire fighters are nationally recognized as certified at the Fire Fighter 1 level and we are currently training 10 more to test for their certification this summer. We also have eight EMT-Bs and 3 EMT-Is which helps provide a greater level of medical care to the canyon.

Our fire department is made up of men and women who not only live within the district but outside as well and 25% of our force are women which is the highest ratio we've ever seen.

The department is currently running six vehicles in its fleet, five of which are at the fire station and one stationed on Jackson Creek. We have two Command/Medical vehicles, two Wildland Fire Trucks, one Water Tender and a Structure Engine. Three of our vehicles were purchased in the 1990s and two from early 2000, with our newest truck already eight years old, which means our fleet is aging quickly and some of our trucks will need to be replaced in the near future. Our newest addition is a 1980s brush truck which is on loan from the DNRC.

As many of you know Assistant Chief Dennis Guentzel retired this past fall. Denny served on the department from 1999 – 2011. When I started on the department Denny was my mentor, we served many hours together on calls at trainings and at the station. Denny has always been a pillar on this department and his dedication and devotion to the Bridger Canyon Fire Department is second to none. We at BCFD wish him all the best, and thank him for his service.

There have been some administrative changes at the department this past year. With the retirement of Dennis Guentzel our Training Officer Don Daniels has now taken the role of Assistant Chief. We also want to welcome Mike Conn as our Training Officer and Jim Klos as our Health and Safety Officer. Mike Smith is still our Maintenance Officer and we welcome Jon Gilleen as his assistant.

Thank you to all Canyon residents, Brackett Creek residents and other supporters who worked with the Bridger Canyon Rural Fire Department Auxiliary to help plan and attended the second BCFD potato dinner and let us not forget the third annual pancake breakfast / art show last summer and all who helped to make it a huge success. The fire fighters and Department greatly appreciate your support. We look forward to seeing you again at our next pancake breakfast which is scheduled for June 23rd.

To help residents in our district obtain up-to-date information, please visit our website at —www.bridgercanyonfd.com— to find our the latest information about what is going on with your Fire Department. Please note that we will be losing our website on April 30th, we are currently looking for another web host.

Homeowner Tips

Can we find you? Is your home clearly marked? One issue we have is finding your home especially at night. Help us find you quickly with reflective house numbers. These are available locally through Dennis Guentzel. The cost is only \$25 installed! Call 582-1640 or 581-2106 today!

With the recent changes in home address numbers and street names we have found that alarm companies have not received this information and so at times we are dispatched to old addresses. This makes it difficult to locate the correct home and takes away valuable time in our response. Please contact your alarm company and provide them with your new address this will help us in responding in a timely manor.

Again, for those of you with central alarm systems, we highly recommend you have at least three key holders listed with your alarm service. In the event of an alarm call, we must make entry to confirm whether an incident is occurring, and without someone to allow us access, we sometimes must enter a residence forcefully, which may cause substantial damage.

As spring and summer quickly approach, questions, such as “What can I do” to help protect my home or make my property defensible to fire, arise. We encourage you to review www.firewise.org which has a wealth of information to guide you in protecting your home and property. You are also welcome to contact us for suggestions at 586-6427 or by email at bctd@3riversdbs.net.

And one more friendly reminder—outdoor burning is restricted during the winter months. Burning resumed as of March 1st by permit only. You can purchase and renew burn permits, as well as view current burning, by logging on to www.burnpermits.mt.gov.

As always, we are looking for men and women who would like to volunteer in their own community. If you have any interest in volunteering as a fire fighter or in another capacity, please contact us at 586-6427 or by email at bctd@3riversdbs.net.

On behalf of the Bridger Canyon Fire Department, we would like to wish you all a safe and happy 2012!

Dates to Remember

- *BCPOA Annual General Meeting May 21st, @ 6:30 P.M.; BCRF Community Room.*
- *BCRFD Pancake Breakfast June 23th*
- *BC Zoning updates Advisory Committee meets the first Monday and following 2nd Wednesday of each month at the County Court House 5:30—7:30 P.M*

See you there!

Help Control Noxious Weeds

Noxious weeds pose one of the greatest threats to the environment in Montana. Most noxious weeds are on private property, and landowners can do a great deal toward helping to curb and control these unwelcome visitors. Six noxious weeds species are common in Bridger Canyon: Canada Thistle, Oxeye Daisy, Hounds tongue, Leafy Spurge, Spotted Knapweed and St. John's Wort.

The Gallatin County Weed District provides assistance identifying and controlling these weeds to property owners, rents spray equipment and offers a cost sharing program (subject to available funds) towards the purchase of herbicides.

For additional information, contact the District at 582-3265 or their website at

www.gallatin.mt.gov

Gathering Information can be Interesting and Fun!

What you can do that's fun, educational and builds a foundation of data that will help protect the canyon and underpin the zoning regs

- The USA National Phenology Network @ usanpn.org allows people to share what they observe in the outdoors. On your next wildflower hike take some notes along the way.
- *For Everything There Is a Season: The Sequence of Natural Events in the Grand Teton-Yellowstone Area* by Frank C. Craighead, Jr. is a paperback read and a great way for canyon residents to stay tuned in to the nature in the canyon. Check out our local bookstores and internet resources for a copy.
- Our own B2BC for fun activities for all ages; they often sponsor educational hikes focusing on weed identification and Raptor enthusiasts.
- Not nearly as much fun as the previous— well maybe for info-geeks, are the various governing agencies. The internet has made it much easier to be informed of the laws, policies and procedures, and accepted guidelines that can be attributed to decisions we and others make. Check out BCPOA's website for links.

SAVE \$\$ - SAVE A TREE

Sign-up to receive your Annual Newsletter by Email

Add a note to your Dues Notice or the bottom of your Emergency Preparedness form, we'll update our records and next year you'll have saved BCPOA some dollars by reducing our operating costs and helped the environment.

Be sure to note your current Email address



BCPOA on the web

BCPOA.net is a source for zoning documents, news, board contacts, and other useful links on life in Bridger Canyon. Join the Canyon email list for notice of upcoming events, zoning updates, and other developments. List traffic is low, and it's a great way to stay in touch.

For open discussion and more background on zoning, visit the Bridger Canyon Forum. We've provided these resources on our links page, at **<http://bcpoa.net/resources.html>**.