

Bridger Canyon Property Owners' Association

"... 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. "

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From the Chair

Hi Neighbors,

It's been a quieter year, with the legislature out of session and short-term rentals working their way through the courts. We've taken the opportunity to work on BCPOA's infrastructure, with a new committee system and IT infrastructure that will help us work smarter and faster.

A key part of our infrastructure is financial. I'd like to acknowledge the long service of our Treasurer, Mitch Miller, who has kept BCPOA's engine running through more terms on the board than he'd probably care to count. Thanks Mitch!

The year wasn't entirely without controversy, with a large arena proposal in Aspen Meadow and a few other controversial Conditional Use Permits before the P&Z Commission at various times. Those revealed some weaknesses in the zoning regulations that we're addressing with a proposed update (see following pages).

I hope you'll join us at the General Meeting to let us know what you think, meet your neighbors, share your hopes for Bridger Canyon, and find out what's happening. This would be a great time to join your neighbors on the BCPOA board!

Tom Fiddaman, Chairman

Annual General Meeting June 9th, 7pm

BCPOA's annual General Meeting of the membership sees the election of directors to represent you, and covers a variety of news from the year.

We'll be meeting in person at the Bridger Canyon FD Community Room, 8081 Bridger Canyon Road. Remote participation, especially voting, is difficult, so we hope to see you in person.

Agenda

- Adopt the Agenda
- Minutes of 2025 Annual Meeting
- Treasurer's Report
- Introduction of current board members
- Review of Year
- BCPOA business
 - Zoning text amendment proposal
 - Long term planning
- Elections
 - Retiring Board members
 - Review of Board work and meeting times, dues requirement for voting
 - Board Chair election
 - Election of new Directors
- New Business
- Canyon Groups
- Other Business

Members unable to attend the general meeting may vote by proxy; see <http://bcpoa.net/about-bcpoa/bylaws/>

BCRFD

From the desk of Jon Gileen, Chief BCRFD:

Calendar year 2025 saw approximately 120 calls. The breakdown was 50% EMS, 20% Outdoor/Wildland fire, 10% Alarms (smoke/CO/hazmat), 5% Structure fire, 10% vehicular accidents and 5% Misc. service.

We ended the year with 12 active firefighters, 2 reserve firefighters and 1 new recruit. We currently have 5 resident firefighters at Station 1, which includes 1 licensed paramedic and 4 licensed EMTs. The Board is currently looking at options to add 2-3 residential quarters at Station 2 (Brackett Creek). Recruitment of volunteer younger firefighters within a reasonable distance to our district continues to be a challenge.

We continue to provide and receive mutual aid and support as needed from nearby partners including Central Valley, Fort Ellis Bozeman and Hyalite.

BC Women's Club

Founded in 1917, the Bridger Canyon Women's Club is a long-standing community organization dedicated to supporting and strengthening the Bridger Canyon community. For more than a century, the club has brought neighbors together through volunteerism, service, and shared purpose. Our 90 members organize volunteer efforts such as roadside clean-up, provide meals for the Bridger Canyon Volunteer Fire Department, coordinate the annual Bridger Canyon Community Picnic, and offer support to neighbors in need. Through service and connection, the club continues its tradition of fostering community in Bridger Canyon while responding to the evolving needs of those who live here. For more information about the Bridger Canyon Women's Club, upcoming events, or how to get involved, please visit

BridgerCanyonWomensClub.com.

BC Men's Club

To help promote gender equality but primarily for fun, several male Canyon residents started the Bridger Canyon Men's Club two years ago. The group is informal and meets once a month for dinner at a member's home. Each meeting often includes a speaker on a topic of interest or we gather and share updates on the canyon. Members have organized activities of mutual interest such as hiking, fishing, golf, skiing, backcountry activities, and trivia. No dues, no oath of office, no secret ceremonies – just good comradery and fun.

Anyone interested in joining should contact Eric Erickson

at erickson.ea@gmail.com

BC Historic Preservation Association

BCHPA's mission is to preserve and restore the historic Lower Bridger Schoolhouse at the corner of Kelly Canyon Road and Bridger Canyon Road. Dues are \$10 per year. (Additional donations are always welcome.) Your membership provides us operating and maintenance monies to keep our little school house going. If you would consider joining, please send dues to:

Bridger Canyon Historic Preservation Association
P.O. Box 3311, Bozeman MT 59772

Please encourage your friends and neighbors to support us too! We would be happy to answer any questions or give you a tour of the schoolhouse if you have never been inside. Sincerely, BCHPA Board: Sharon Davis, Ann Chase, Eva Veltkamp, Maria Fahrner, Jane Huffine

Bridger Canyon Propane Buying Group

Are you already a member of the Bridger Canyon Propane Buying Group (BCPBG)? The cost-saving program includes an annual, competitive, fixed-price term contract for residents of Bridger Canyon who elect to participate in the buying group. The 2026-2027 contract bids should arrive soon and will start June 1st. New participants or applicants can save 30% or more in propane costs. If you are not yet signed up and are interested in receiving more information, please email Kim

at: bridgerpropane@gmail.com. This group includes owned and rental tanks.



Weeds

Just a reminder as things green up -- check for undesirable sorts of green. See our new article on Weeds & Biocontrol at <https://bcpoa.net/2026/05/weeds-biocontrol/> - an excerpt:

Natives and desirables are not nearly as competitive as weeds—weeds will quickly fill any empty niche left by herbicides. Spot spraying will work better overall, and in the long run, since broadcast spraying also kills desirable plants. You may get rid of one weed temporarily, but another one just as noxious will most likely take over that empty niche. A way to avoid this is to immediately seed with a native. Since natives tend to be slower to establish, planting a quick growing annual along with native seeds can fill that niche until the natives can establish (barley is a good option). The deer and elk will browse the barley heads while pressing the seeds into the earth with their hooves (along with the added perk of fertilizing in the process).

Biocontrol insects are well established in the Bridger Canyon area. Leafy spurge, knapweed, Canada thistle, St. Johnswort, toadflax, and common mullein all have insect populations present. Our climate can be quite challenging, so some years the insects may only survive and not flourish. Adding to these populations is usually not economically feasible. Once established, the insects will move to new weed infestations on their own.

We also maintain a page in the Resources section of BCPOA.net—check it out:

<http://bcpoa.net/resources/weeds/>

Dark Skies



A nighttime bobcat in the eerily snow-free woods, January

With a little neighborly cooperation, let us learn to embrace our darkness as a friend and leave the **dark skies** to the wild creatures that help make this canyon so special: owls and bats, night insects and small mammals, large mammals too such as deer, elk, lions, and bears, migrating birds, hidden predators and prey—all that are active from dusk to dawn. <http://bcpoa.net/resources/dark-skies/>

Budworm Spraying

BCPOA hasn't heard of any outbreaks or specific plans for spruce budworm aerial spraying, but safety concerns as well as courtesy dictate that you should let your neighbors know when spraying will occur—you never know who's at elevated respiratory risk. See the budworm page on bcpoa.net for details:

<http://bcpoa.net/2015/05/spruce-budworm-bt/>

Zoning Update

Several recent CUP hearings have highlighted some language in the BC Zoning Regulation that would benefit from improvements. We've worked with members and our attorney, Erin Arnold of Gallik Bremer & Molloy, on a text amendment that proposes six targeted changes to clarify contested provisions, reduce unnecessary permitting burden, and close regulatory gaps. Generally the goals of these changes are to provide clarity and reduce administrative workload, without fundamentally changing standards or entitlements.

1. Recreational Housing (Base Area) Moves regulatory language (e.g., that Recreational Housing rentals are for lodging only) out of the definition and into a new General Development Standard (Sec. 12.14). Closes an ambiguity that allowed unrestricted Hotels. Mentions short term rentals as a synonym, conforming with recent CUP decisions. Preserves the status quo with respect to short term rentals in the rest of the Canyon.
2. Large Accessory Building CUP Threshold Raises the permit-free threshold for accessory buildings to 3,600 sq ft (permitted use), reducing administrative load; structures above that size require a CUP. Adds concrete CUP criteria: rural character preservation, screening from roads and neighbors, and an expanded setback equal to the longest dimension of the building.
3. Accessory Dwelling Unit - Statement of Purpose Adds a purpose clause to Sec. 12.2 clarifying that ADUs are intended for occasional guests or relatives, and that impacts of additional occupancy should be borne by the owner -- reinforcing the single-family-per-parcel General Plan principle.

Zoning Update, continued

4. PUD Purposes Made Enforceable Adds mandatory language to Sec. 11.5 requiring that a PUD shall serve the purposes in Sec. 11.1 (open space, rural character, wildlife habitat, etc.), making these aspirational goals binding approval criteria.

5. Road Setback Clarification Eliminates inadvertent duplication in setback tables and clarifies that setbacks apply from public road right-of-way or easement edges, resolving ambiguity where easements exist for nonpublic roads.

6. Definition Consolidation Deletes the standalone "Arterial Road" definition (Sec. 3.64) and folds the list of designated arterials (Bridger Canyon Rd, Kelly Canyon Rd, Jackson Creek Rd) into the consolidated setback tables.

The full text is at <https://bcpoa.net/2026/04/draft-zoning-amendment/> We'd love to have your comments on the draft at that page, via email, or in person at the General Meeting.

Property Tax Relief

Enrollment is now open for tax relief on homesteads and long term rentals—see the MT DOR portal at <https://revenue.mt.gov/property/property-tax-changes/homesteads-and-long-term-rentals>

There may be a glitch, as a constitutional lawsuit over the tax framework in SB 542 is working its way through the courts. <https://dailymontan.com/2026/03/31/montana-supreme-court-denies-governors-request-to-take-up-property-tax-case/>

Resources

Chances are, one of your neighbors is a BCPOA director. Our contact information is at [BCPOA.net](http://bcpoa.net) . Our web site is also a good resource for zoning documents, Canyon history and links, and news.

We maintain a page of **links to zoning documents**, at: <http://bcpoa.net/bridger-canyon-zoning/> and added a page about **contacting the County**: <http://bcpoa.net/resources/contacting-the-county/> as well as a **zoning FAQ**: <http://bcpoa.net/bridger-canyon-zoning/zoning-faq/>

We have an extensive list of resources on the **Post-Fire Recovery** page: <http://bcpoa.net/2020/09/post-fire-recovery/>

The **Bridger Canyon Fire Department** web site, www.bridgercanyonfire.org/, lists volunteer resources, burn permit procedures, contact and other useful information.

Envision Gallatin is the hub for the Gallatin County Planning Department's *Long-Range Planning* efforts. Long-range Planning involves engaging communities to develop plans that guide land development patterns and *comprehensive* changes to improve regulations over time. <https://envisiongallatin.com/>

Join the **[Canyon] email list** to receive news from BCPOA and other Bridger Canyon organizations, concerning local events, zoning actions, and the occasional stray horse. Sign up at bcpoa.net/mailman/listinfo/canyon_bcpoa.net .

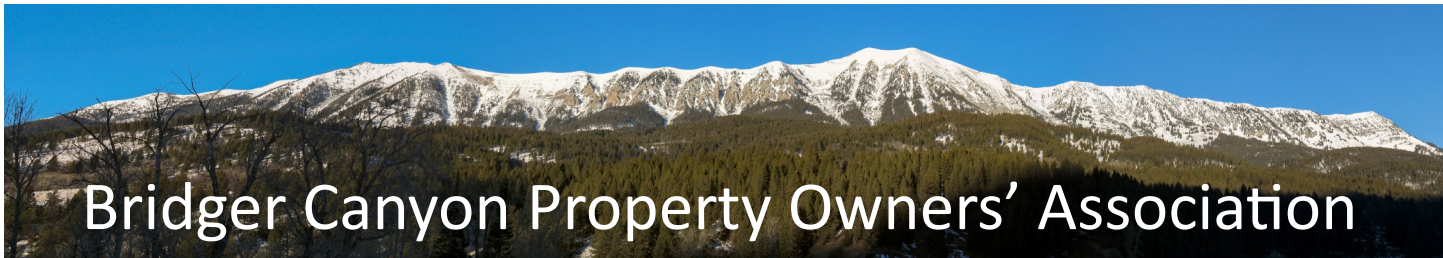
Membership, Dues Notice & Payment Form

BCPOA membership is for landowners in the Bridger Canyon zoning district, from (roughly) Ross Peak Ranch at the north end, south to the fish hatchery at the mouth of the Canyon, east to Interstate 90 on the Jackson Creek Road, and east from Bridger Canyon Road to the zoning boundary just beyond the summit of Kelly Canyon Road.

Membership supports a variety of community resources, including BCPOA.net, the [Canyon] email list, and occasional postal mailings. Every dollar of funding BCPOA receives leverages many hours of volunteer time provided by BCPOA directors and members, which in turn provides planning assistance, fora on topics of interest to the Canyon and other outreach.

In 2021 at the General Meeting members ratified a dues increase to \$50 per household. One obvious reason is inflation: the original dues of \$20 in 1971 dollars is \$130 now. The increase improves our ability to access professional services; in the immediate future, we expect to incur legal and professional fees for drafting and submission of a BCPOA-initiated zoning text amendment.

Furthermore, the costs of opposing developments adverse to the Canyon have increased. Even at the terrific rates we get from our attorneys (Gallik, Bremer & Malloy), our cash balance could be exhausted by a single appeal. Should urgent action be necessary, as was the case (twice) when the Canyon successfully opposed methane development, and (three or four times) when we opposed Base Area developments, we should have an adequate war chest available to act forcefully and immediately, without the delay for an emergency solicitation. We thank you for your support over many years!



Bridger Canyon Property Owners' Association

Note: we mail dues notices separately to current and recent members. You may wish to check your records before submitting this form (we'll let you know in the event of a duplicate membership however).

Annual Dues Notice

2026

Remit To:

BCPOA
PO Box 10514
Bozeman MT 59719

Bill To:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip _____

Email: _____

This is a new mailing address

This is a new email address

Description

Amount

Bridger Canyon Property Owners' Association Annual Dues

\$ 50.00

Additional contribution

\$

Supports professional assistance and legal defense; leveraged by hundreds of volunteer hours each year.

Total enclosed

\$

Please check appropriate boxes:

I am a new member

I am renewing my membership

Please Email future Dues Notices and Newsletters

Please return a copy of this notice with your remittance .

Thank you for supporting your Property Owners' Association!

For more information about BCPOA, visit our website :

www.BCPOA.net

This may be your last paper dues form, because we're now doing most renewal invoicing and payment electronically!