

MRR Newsletter

Madison River Ranch Association

Fall, 2014



From the President

John Clark

Happy 25th Birthday Madison River Ranch!

It is hard to believe that it was 25 years ago that I stumbled onto a little piece of paradise in the Madison Valley that would become such an important part of my family's life. I have been fortunate to spend time on the Ranch with my family over the years and am grateful for the experiences and friends we have made. My wife, Jody, and I just completed our dream of building a log cabin and will be spending even more time on the Ranch. Now that I have become the Association's newest President I would like to reflect on where the Ranch has been and where I hope we will go in the future.

When we first started spending time on the Ranch in the 1990's there were very few people around and it felt like you were there on your own and disconnected from the rest of the world. Fortunately we had a few owners who were dedicated to guiding the Ranch on the right path. John Leglar was our first President and his passion for the Ranch started it down the road of being one of the premier properties in the valley. John was always concerned with preserving the natural beauty of the Ranch. He was instrumental in the restoration of our spring creek on the common area and it paid off as it is a prime spawning area for the Madison. John will be missed.

Jeanne Loughrey became our next President and for a time served as the President, Secretary and Treasurer! I can't even imagine how

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I hope you enjoy this issue.

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many hours of her time she spent serving the Association. The Ranch went through a transformation during her time; cabins were built, electric gates were installed, the community well pump was installed, lots were divided and covenants were changed and modified to protect the value and serenity of our little paradise. I believe this was the most important time during the Ranch's history because so many changes were happening and if they were not managed well we could have ended up with a conglomeration of 10-acre lots and doublewides. Thank you Jeanne for all you have done for the Ranch.

Bill Hoolan took over from Jeanne as President, after years of working in the background organizing projects and keeping the Ranch running as the only full time resident, with his wife Sandra. Bill's vision was to maintain and increase the value of the Ranch while maintaining harmony among the owners. He loved the serenity that the Ranch offered and did his best to protect the opportunities for wildlife to thrive. Bill's knowledge of the history of the valley was unsurpassed and I always enjoyed sharing our passion for the valley. Bill has moved on but his legacy will stay with the Ranch.

Mike Wells was our previous President and he did a magnificent job of building a sense of community for our Association. Long passed is the time you can come to the Ranch and have it to your self, unless it is the middle of winter. We have truly become a community and Mike's desire was to create a community that we can enjoy together as good neighbors. Mike urged neighbors to talk to each other if there were any issues to be worked out first before coming to the Board, and I think we have become a better association because of his guidance. He is still a member of the Board and I look forward to having his insight as we make decisions in the future.

Going forward I hope the Ranch can take all the best of what we have done over the years and build on it. I would

like to see us continue to strive to all be good neighbors and preserve the harmony we have with each other and the natural surroundings. The cornerstone to that is for everyone to abide by our covenants. We have a strong set of covenants that have been amended over the years to help preserve the peace and value we all enjoy on the Ranch. It makes it much easier for the Board and Association if everyone follows the covenants or corrects a violation when notified. We all benefit from having a community that is in compliance with the covenants; serenity, safety, value, cooperation and a better sense of community. We are all here because of a passion for our surroundings; please do your part to maintain it. There is a copy of the covenants posted on our website, www.madisonriverranch.org, under "documents". I also ask that you become involved with the Association. Make your voice heard by attending the annual meeting, sending in your proxy, voting on ballot issues and volunteering. Our community will be directed by those who are involved in the decision making process. The Board takes direction from the members and strives to be as transparent as possible in our decisions. Maintaining harmony and value are our guiding principles when making decisions for the Ranch.

The Association is in its last year of our capital improvement plan and all of our projects will be completed by next summer, except for replacing the log entries which have a few more years left in them. We will have the capital funds available to replace the log entries when the time comes and the rest of our infrastructure is in good shape. Our current annual dues have been sufficient to support our operating budget and we have been able to create a viable yearly budget and remain within it.

I look forward to serving the Madison River Ranch Association and still believe the Madison River Ranch is one of the "Last Best Places". I hope we can continue to build on what we have done right in the last 25 years and improve the Ranch for the benefit of all the owners in the future. If you have any questions, concerns or suggestions please feel free to contact me or any member of the Board via the web site, under "Contact Us".

Photo: MRR Association meeting, June 28, 2014



Information Regarding Fuels Reduction on Your Property

This summer at the Madison River Ranch Owners Association meeting there was a presentation and discussion on fuels reduction and forest thinning for individual property owners. At that time it was mentioned that the Madison County Emergency Management Services department may have funding available for grant applications to assist in covering the costs associated with having fuels reduction work done. We received notification recently from Chris Mumme, Madison County Director of Emergency Management that the county does have grant funding now available for cost share applications. Since several ranch members expressed individual interest in having fuels reduction and aspen thinning work done on their properties, the ranch board wanted to pass along this information to all property owners as soon as possible.

If you are interested in the application and standards, email me and I will send them to you. I believe the program is a 75/25 cost share where the homeowner pays 25% of the cost of the work and the county 75% if your application is approved. Please contact Chris Mumme directly with questions. The Madison River Ranch Association is not funding this program and any work being done would be the responsibility of the individual owner.



Forest Improvement Martha Crawley

Those who were at the Homeowners' Meeting this year will recall a talk by Pat McKenna of Centennial Wood Products.

He told us about current forest improvement methods that encourage healthy forests for wildlife habitat as well as reduction of fire risk. The main thrust of his talk was maintaining healthy stands of aspen, since they are fire resistant trees. In the natural cycle, the aspen come first, sheltering the seedling conifers, which are cone-bearing trees with needle-like leaves. The conifers eventually take over the forest and the aspen die out. The next part of the cycle is a wildfire. This burns the conifers then the aspen begin again. We learned that when conifers burn, the fire "crowns" in the tops, which sends burning embers far and wide. Therefore, these embers can travel on the wind and lodge in crevasses in homes or other buildings and ignite them, even some distance from the actual fire.

Dave and I have one of the larger aspen stands on the ranch and had

noticed spruce, pine and fir trees increasing throughout our stand over the years and the aspen dying out. Pat McKenna surveyed our forest and told us that, without intervention, our aspen would be gone in 20 years and our forest would be all conifers, greatly increasing the fire danger to the area. We learned at the meeting that there was federal grant money, administered through the county, for Hazardous Fuels Reduction and Aspen Forest Restoration. We were referred to Rob Spence, who is a Forest Service Fire Fighter, a Major Incident Commander for the U.S.F.S., and he is a "Burn Boss" for controlled burns. In addition, he has a company called Henry's Lake Forestry, which does such forest restoration as we needed. He first inspected our property for "hazardous fuels." Rob put together a proposal for restoration of our aspen stand that included removing 90% of the conifers, as well as mitigation of the fire danger from other hazardous fuels (standing dead aspen). We applied for assistance for our project through Chris Mumme, Madison County Director of Emergency Services, and we were awarded a grant that will pay for 75% of the cost.

Rob and his crew have been working in our forest for the last two weeks, and the work is nearly finished. We feel this is a big improvement, and in the event of a wildfire, will protect not only our property but also much of our beautiful Madison River Ranch. Madison County expects this program to reduce the loss of homes and property and to save firefighting costs in the future. We hope this will encourage other lot owners with "hazardous fuels" on their property to consider taking steps to diminish the risk.

Contacts:

Pat Toalson: ptoalson@sbcglobal.net
Chris Mumme: Madison County
Director of Em.Services, 406-843-4253

Introducing... Ray and Linda Strickland

We are Ray and Linda Strickland. We bought our lot number 123 in 1990. Ray had just retired from the Phoenix fire department. We were living in Tuscaloosa, Alabama at the time and were just finishing our home there. It was the middle of summer and hotter than, well you know. Ray was born and raised on the land where we were building. But, he had forgotten just how hot and humid it could get there in the south. After working all morning on the new barn, he took a break and walked up to get the mail. A field and stream magazine was among the usual ads and bills. Soon he headed for the phone. I asked, "Who are you calling?" He told me "Montana". Well, we had never been to Montana and didn't know anybody that either lived or even visited there. It was the "cool mountain air" in the advertisement for the Madison River Ranch that caught his attention. He made the call and as they say, the rest is history.

We had planned to go to Phoenix in May for our youngest son's (Maisy's daddy) graduation from NAU. We just had Tim climb in the car and we headed north. Our agent brought us here. It was beautiful and cool and clear and green. It was just what we had been looking for. Tim felt the same way, but he hadn't started his job with Microsoft yet. It took him only a couple of years and he bought two lots next to ours.

The next summer we hauled a very old and fragile trailer up to the lot. We had no electricity, water or phone. This was long before cell phones. We bought 6 semi truckloads of logs. Ray had a one man saw mill and cut them into 6" square logs. We had an old bulldozer to lift and haul them into place. We had help from friends and family and neighbors along the way. It took us 4 summers to complete. I designed it and Ray built it. He even took classes and built all of the cabinets. He put the roof on with help from some of our neighbors. We found out, there are a lot of people out there that are afraid of heights.

All of our families and friends have enjoyed the ever-changing view from the screened porch. The animals have thrilled and entertained all of us, even interrupted a dinner party or two. *Linda*



My name is Maisy; well actually, it is Madison Alice Barksdale. Did you know they



named a river in Montana after me? My Daddy's name is Tim and my Mommy's name is Sherri. I have a big brother his name is TJ; well actually, he is Tim Jr. We didn't want to confuse people with two Tim's. The river with my name has been in my family for a long time. My daddy asked my mommy to marry him while fishing there. Then they got married next to it at the Camp Fire Lodge. My daddy is a computer guy and my mommy is a mommy and a writer. We live in Erie, Colorado. My daddy bought lots 124 and 120 a long time ago. We go to see my Nana and Paka (Ray and Linda) every summer. They live in a cabin next to my lot. Well, this year was my first year to catch a fish. Did I tell you I am 4 years old?

It all began with a trip to Cabela's to get me a fishing pole and reel. I found the most beautiful one. It is a princess one and it is PINK! I just loved it on first site.

The day came when daddy said, "Maisy you and I are going to your river and you are going to catch a fish." It took hours to get all the stuff ready. Then we had to walk at least one or ten miles to get to the river. I was tired already and hungry. Daddy did most of the casting and I did the holding and reeling in. Daddy only had to fix my tangled line a few times. We had no luck from the bank. So I put on my lovely pink life jacket and got put on a rock in the middle of my big and fast and deep river. Before long I had hooked the biggest fish ever. I reeled and reeled. It was a big strong fish. My daddy got the net, but he was too slow and my arms were getting so tired. So I just pulled really hard and flung it on the bank. My dad talked to me about being gentle and catch and release. Sorry, 19-inch fish. Hope you recover. Next I caught a little fish about 5 inches. It hardly fought at all and was really no fun. Besides, I was so hungry. My mommy gave us sandwiches and Cheetos.

I had a great time fishing with my daddy. I just love my pink fishing pole and life jacket. Mommy took plenty of pictures of me to show our family how pretty I looked fishing on my river, the Madison.



Henrys Lake Trout

Gene Welch

While passing by Henrys Lake on the way to West Yellowstone, have you wondered

how the fishing is in Henrys Lake? I knew Henrys was productive, so much so that oxygen becomes a problem during winter ice cover, but wanted to learn about its fishery, so I contacted the Idaho Fish and Game. What I found out was surprising.

The fishery in Henrys Lake is intensively managed for Yellowstone cutthroat, rainbow-cutthroat hybrids and eastern brook trout. Regular gill-net catches of all trout have markedly increased in recent years. Population abundance is based on standardized gill-net sets conducted between ice off and the start of fishing season. Nearly 900 trout were caught by this method in 2013. The largest increase (45%) was in cutthroat. The cutthroat increase is considered due to greater natural reproduction of wild fish resulting from restoration projects on tributaries that provided better spawning habitat.

Increased trout numbers is the good news. The bad news is that trout size has declined steadily between 2004 and 2012. A 3 year-old cutthroat in 2004 averaged 18 inches and 2.75 pounds, but only 16.5 inches and 1.8 pounds in 2012. A 10 pounder in 2004 was 7 pounds in 2012. Thus, the increased natural reproduction of cutthroat has probably led to more fish than food produced in the lake. As a result, stocking of cutthroat fingerlings has been reduced by about 62% from 200/acre to 87/acre. The average cutthroat is 14 inches and 2% are over 20 inches; the goal is for 10% to be over 20 inches.

Brooks and hybrids are doing better, exceeding the goals of 5% over 17 inches for brookies and 20% over 20 inches for hybrids; the percentages are now 42% and 24%, respectively. That is an amazing size for such a large fraction of the brookie population. These fish are also stocked at rates of 30/acre for brookies and 15/acre for hybrids. One might ask why Idaho stocks brookies and hybrids when they recognize Henrys Lake as a stronghold for native Yellowstone cutthroat, which is in decline throughout its range? The answer is that anglers like the catch diversity! The stocked fingerling brookies and hybrids are sterile, so are no threat to the native cutthroat gene pool. However, they may represent

competition with cutthroat for the lake's food supply by producing a greater size of more sterile trout left over ("residual") each year. Nevertheless, the state has not reduced the stocking rates for brookies and hybrids.

Henrys Lake is rather large (6,500 acres) - about half the area of Hebgen, but much shallower. Its average depth is 13 feet and maximum is 26 feet, which is too shallow with too long a wind fetch to thermally stratify. That means the whole lake mixes during the summer. The lake was originally much smaller and even shallower before the level was raised 12 feet in 1923. Shallowness normally means greater productivity, assuming similar nutrient supply. Henrys has large areas of aquatic plant beds, due to its shallowness, which allows sufficient light to reach the bottom for plant growth. That's good for fish food production. However, there is a downside. Dissolved oxygen (DO) is gradually depleted, largely through respiration/decomposition of plant-produced organic matter by bacteria, and during the long winter of ice/snow cover with no reaeration of oxygen from the atmosphere and little or no photosynthetic production of oxygen due to light blockage by the ice/snow cover. Fish respiration is responsible for only a small part of the depletion. This problem, which may result in "winter kill", can frequently occur in shallow lakes, because the lake's water volume (and DO) is small relative to the area of bottom sediment where much of the respiration occurs.

The DO in Henrys Lake usually starts out in December with over 12 parts per million (ppm), but by April 1, DO has declined on average to 5 ppm, and by the end of April it has reached 3.7 ppm, a level that becomes stressful to trout. The rate of DO decline varies from year-to-year. If DO reaches 2.5 ppm by April 1, verging on a lethal level, artificial aeration is activated over a 20-acre area section of the lake. The circulation removes the ice cover from a much larger area than the air-release zone allowing reaeration from the atmosphere. Artificial aeration has been necessary in only two of the past dozen years; 2004-2005 and 2013-2014. The extent to which this action benefits trout survival is unclear.

Gene

Information on the Henrys Lake fishery was supplied by Dan Garrin, Idaho Fish and Game.

County Receives Around \$550,000 for Road in South Madison Valley

The 13-mile stretch connecting Highway 287 and Highway 87 – and Forest Service land – will get an upgrade.

By Abigail Dennis, The Madisonian, October 15, 2014

Commissioner Jim Hart received good news from the Federal Land Access Program (FLAP) on Oct. 6. The good news was approximately \$550,000 to complete a road project from Highway 287 to Highway 87 in the south Madison Valley next spring – the road connects both highways with Forest Service land and the highly recreated Cliff and Wade lakes, Hart said.

“I applied for the grant back in February or March,” he said. “Initially, we were not awarded the money, but they changed their minds and approved it. It’s a huge amount of money.” The money will go to adding more gravel to the road, inserting culverts and adding signage.

The FLAP, which is run through The Office of Federal Lands Highway, which is part of the United States Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Commission is intended to “improve transportation facilities that provide access to, are adjacent to, or are located within Federal lands,” according to the program’s website.

Hart said the grant requires a county match of approximately \$70,000, which can be met with in-kind work. In-kind work means man power, equipment and materials, not necessarily funds, Hart explained. “The Forest Service may also become involved,” he said. “It improves access to their land. They may get involved with the engineering.” Kevin Suzuki, Forest Service employee on the Madison Ranger District said the Forest Service is in favor of the upgrade. “It’s a major access point a lot of folks use to get to the lakes,” Suzuki said. “It is definitely one of our heavier use areas.”

Hart said he originally applied for the grant because of increased traffic on the road. “There’s more and more residential traffic back there because of newer subdivisions,” he said. There’s also increased traffic from visitors accessing the forests – the lakes and campgrounds.”

Leona Rodreick, public information officer for the Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest said there has been “heavy maintenance” work on the trail system around the lakes in the last couple years. “All the work has been done by volunteers,” she said. “They’ve really done a lot of work improving the trail system around the lakes... a better road will mean easier access to those trails.”

“Now we can get in there and get to work,” Hart concluded. “We’ll get moving as soon as we can get the snow cleared out next spring.”



Cooking with Martha

By Martha Crawley

Dave Crawley’s Ribs

Ribs
Yellow mustard
Brown sugar
Seasoned salt
Pepper
Barbecue sauce

Buy “baby back” ribs, figure ½ slab per person (that’s generous, but they’re great left over).

Remove the membrane from back of each rack by slipping a table knife under it along the bone on the small end. Grasp the membrane with a paper towel and pull. It should come off in a continuous sheet. If you are having trouble finding it, it may have already been removed.

Put half or quarter racks in a large pot with 3 or 4 inches of water in the bottom and boil for about 45 minutes or until the ribs are tender and the meat flakes a little when probed with a fork. Don’t let the pot boil dry. Note that if the ribs are crowded in the pot, you have to separate them periodically so all surfaces are exposed to the steam. If you have too many for one pot (I find that 2-3 racks are maximum for my stock pot) either do them in batches or use another pot in addition.

When ribs are done, remove them to a large platter or baking sheet and rub each side with seasoned salt, pepper, mustard, and brown sugar. Do this while ribs are still hot so the brown sugar melts a little.

Brown the ribs, both sides, on the barbecue grill and brush with barbecue sauce the last 15 minutes or so. The ribs must be done low and slow. The sugar burns easily so watch them carefully.

Remove from grill and wrap in foil until you’re ready to serve.



MRR Association Board of Directors

John Clark

President of the Board, in charge of fencing, common area maintenance, and ranch gates (with Pat Toalson), up for re-election in 2015, Lot 7

Frank Davis

Vice President of the Board, Lot 34B

Pat Toalson

Secretary of the Board, in charge of safety issues, ranch gates (with John Clark), Lots 93, 94

Sue McMahan

Treasurer of the Board, appointed to fill open position, up for election in 2015, Lot 68

Mike Wells

In charge of road maintenance, easement mowing, weed control, and common area restoration, Lot 112

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Special thanks to Dave Crawley, Sue McMahan, Linda Strickland, and Gene Welch for sharing photos with us all.

<http://www.madisonriverranch.org>

PLEASE sign up for electronic delivery of the MRR Newsletter. Go to the Madison River Ranch web site, click on the "**Contact Us**" tab, and sign in.

Meet your Newest Board Member: Sue McMahan

Hi, my name is Sue McMahan and I am the Treasurer of the Madison River Ranch. I am looking forward to being the only woman on the Board.

My husband, Scott and I bought our property on the ranch in 2000. With the help of our 2 sons, Michael and Brian and our nephews, we built the cabin in June of 2004. Over the years we have had plenty of friends and



family help us with the build and various projects.

We love to fish, hike, snowmobile, and relax at the homestead. I have managed my husband's dental practice for 30 years and have been the church council president for 6 years.

I am used to bookwork and the treasurer job should be a fun adventure to start. I look forward to getting to know more of the ranch homeowners and assisting the other board members to help make the ranch a wonderful place. My husband and I love Montana and the ranch.



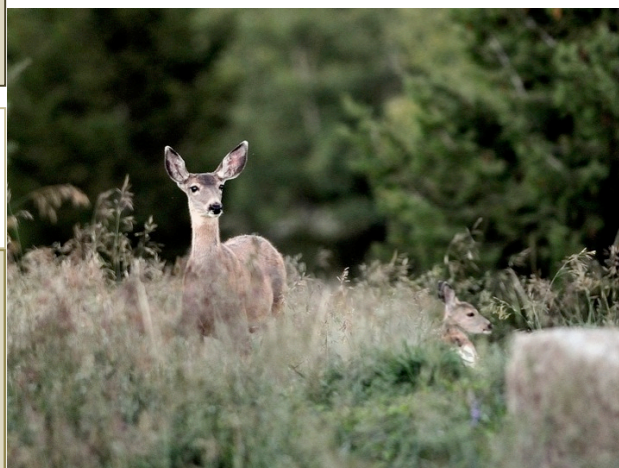
Thank you for your support and I am open to any and all suggestions or comments. *Sue*

For Sale:

1988 Ski Doo Alpine II - \$3500 (Cameron)

More information:

<http://bozeman.craigslist.org/snw/4744199673.html>



Don't forget:
the gate code is 1004