



Once Upon a Time . . .



. . . there was a groomed ski trail from Twisp up toward the Sun Mountain trails along Elbow Coulee. The Pine Forest (before it was Pine Forest!) entrance was considered one of the public parking and access points before the trail headed off towards a frozen Patterson Lake.

Thank you to James and Janet Klosterman (20 Nighthawk Ridge) for these 1984 photos. Can anyone identify the location of this one, other than that it's somewhere on North Blackjack? What about the building in the distance?



Click on photos to enlarge. Email president@pine-forest.org with any info, and it'll show up in the next PCR.

The Big Project

As everyone knows by now, two fearless groups of Pine Foresters—the Governance Committee and the Board—have undertaken a major revision and update of our almost 50-year-old governing documents, the Covenants and By-Laws. You might well wonder: “Why on earth would we take on such a massive project”? Our aim is three-fold: 1) to adjudicate discrepancies between our governing documents and recent Washington State law regulating Homeowners Associations; 2) to bring the language and context of the documents into the 21st Century, which is both a more litigious and a more inclusive time; and 3) to generate a set of documents that will govern and guide us judiciously for, we hope, the next 50 years.

Thanks to the wisdom of those who wrote the original governing documents, the community has a mandate to oversee the revision process: the current governing documents require the approval

of a majority of the owners—representing 67 lots—for changes to the By-Laws and 60%—80 lots—for the Covenants. The Board’s deliberations have been guided by the express wish to develop documents that will win the support of 90 to 95% of owners. Obviously, we have no hope of achieving such a high approval without providing the opportunity for all owners to review and have input into the revisions.

A few owners have expressed skepticism about the Board’s reluctance to present the working documents to owners before they have been thoroughly vetted. However, to us it made little sense to circulate early drafts before they have gelled into a set of comprehensive guidelines consistent with State Law and in keeping with the spirit of the previous Covenants and the historically shared values of the Pine Forest community. We have undertaken the messy and time-consuming preliminary work of research on legal requirements, decisions about proper organization, and discussions of appropriate language. Trying to include all the owners at this preliminary stage would have made the process unnecessarily complicated and protracted. As soon as we have put together a “final draft,” owners will be provided ample time to review the new documents, provide their input, and suggest revisions. Only then will approval of the new Declarations (formerly Covenants) and By-Laws be put to a vote.

One thing’s for sure: regardless of when it occurs, we welcome your feedback on this project (and anything else we’re doing).

Got Beetles?

Eagle eye forest health observers have noticed that several trees throughout the neighborhood show signs of pine beetle infestation. Besides the top-down die-off that we’ve seen before, we now have a new situation, with whole single branches dying. In each case, close inspection reveals the telltale bark removal from the afflicted trunk/branch by woodpeckers seeking to feast on the beetles. We’ve already let Saul know that another beetle blitz will be necessary this spring, in order to remove and destroy as much of the infestation as possible before the critters emerge from their winter slumber and begin searching for new trees to invade. WDNR advises that removing just the affected branches—when that is the indicator—may be sufficient, rather than taking out the entire tree. Please keep an eye out & let Heather know if you see afflicted trees on your own or other properties.

Fuel Reduction

PFOA is applying for WDNR cost sharing for ladder fuel reduction work in the last of our untreated common areas, specifically the southeast greenbelt and its adjoining perimeter greenbelts, as well as the forested areas at the north and south ends of Bristlecone Hill (east of our pond). We will also be submitting applications on behalf of owners, for ladder fuel reduction and/or bitterbrush thinning. With those who have expressed interest in participating in this round, the vast majority of Pine Forest and all but six of the lots with > 50% conifer cover will have been treated (see attached map). Thank you to everyone who has taken this step to improve our forest’s health and fire resilience and let Heather know if you want to sign up!

[Map of Pine Forest Ladder Fuels Reduction 2014-2022](#)

A Little More Election Excitement?

This May the terms of three Board members—Robin Jeffers, Heather Dean and Bill Ellis—will expire. It's likely that one of us (Heather) won't run again. Please consider running! We'll look to receive self-nominations and accompanying candidate statements by late April so we can share them with owners when we send out the proposed 2021/2022 budget.

The Methownet Project

Maria Converse at Methownet reports that they are still testing to determine which houses/lots can receive a wireless internet signal from the first of the possible new access point in Pine Forest. She reports that they are pleased with initial data and will continue to gather information, following up with a report. As soon as we get that, we'll pass on the news.

Zoom Ahead!

After the Hearing Panel Zoom meeting came off without any glitches, the Board has voted to purchase a Zoom videoconferencing plan (\$149.90/yr), which will allow us to host 100 participants for meetings. The tool also lets everyone identify all the meeting participants. As long as we cannot meet together, at least with Zoom we can see each other's faces for a little virtual fellowship. Even after in-person meetings resume, we think it'll be a better way for remote participants to join in.

Know Your Boundaries

Fresh off its first assignment, the Hearing Panel encouraged the Board to remind owners that knowing where our property boundaries are (especially corner identifications) is an owner responsibility, as is being familiar with the Covenants and how they affect activities undertaken in the greenbelts—which 60% of Pine Forest lots border—and other community property. Greenbelts and rights-of-way belong to all of us; the Covenants state: “Common Areas shall be owned, developed and maintained by [PFOA] . . . as scenic or natural open park areas for the use and enjoyment of all lot owners.” Knowing these things helps to ensure that all members of the Association enjoy the same rights and privileges. We have located many property markers during the course of our fuel reduction work and continue to find them as that work proceeds. If you would like help finding your boundaries, please let a Board and/or the community liaison know.

The Hearing Panel also noted the importance of owners knowing the location of community water mains and other infrastructure that are on or close to their property. The Board will be working on the best way to make those locations known to owners. In the meantime, let us know if you're curious about the locations.

Notice of Upcoming Physics Experiment

This one will be a take on the classic rock-paper-scissors of yore, but use animate objects, specifically skier-sledder-vehicle. Most likely laboratory location will be wintertime Summer

Road, but there are other possible sites. The researchers' hypothesis is that even though there are a variety of options for vehicle type, the other two components of the experiment (i.e., the skier(s) & the sledder(s)) will likely prove to be no match for the car, or truck, or Moderators placed at appropriate intersections could alter the outcome.

Translation: Pine Forest roads have many blind corners and hills, and winter conditions can make it difficult to stop quickly or swerve safely to avoid fast-moving skiers or sledders. Please consider doing that kind of recreating away from the roads.