



Sun Mt. Ranch Club Newsletter Spring/ Summer 2020



2020 Spring/Summer Newsletter

Hello All-

Well – things have really changed since our last communication with all of you.

We figured it was time to pass on some information about what is happening in our neighborhood as well as add some updates to the website. Please visit our new and improved website - <http://www.sunmountainranchclub.org>

People have had many questions about how the Covid 19 crisis is affecting our area. Many businesses in Winthrop and Twisp are still open – like the grocery stores, hardware stores, gas stations – and many bakeries and restaurants are open for takeout. Pubs and bars are still closed. It would take far too long to detail everything in this newsletter, but we have tried to hit the highlights for our members.

We welcome your comments – you can contact us through the website.

<http://www.sunmountainranchclub.org/contact>

Keep well and safe everyone!

Karen Mulcahy, Secretary, Sun Mtn Ranch Club

SO – WHAT'S UP WITH THE POOL???

We want to let everyone know that the pool at Sun Mountain Ranch Club will not be opening Memorial Day Weekend due to the pandemic. The pool will remain closed until further notice. We hope to use some of this downtime to do some much needed maintenance on the pool and park area.

The bathrooms will remain open as always. Please wash your hands and maintain proper social distancing.

Naturally, we can't close the picnic tables and grounds area BUT please read the condensed version of the Governor's recommended re-opening phases below. We are just entering Phase 1 and social distancing is still the rule. We anticipate the pool will remain closed most likely throughout the summer as we cannot possibly police the area and the pool itself adequately, to maintain social distancing. As well, non-essential travel is forbidden until Phase 3 to decrease any burden on our health care facilities, so we expect many of you will not be here till Phase 3.

Stay Safe - Stay Healthy!

Governor's Re-opening Phases

The Extension of the Stay Home, Stay Healthy order will be through May 31.

here: <https://coronavirus.wa.gov/what-you-need-know/covid-19-risk-assessment-dashboard>

While state parks and state land are re-opening May 5, before traveling, check with your destination. More information: <https://parks.state.wa.us/1177/Novel-Cor..>

The state is entering into Phase 1, with some aspects starting on May 5. The governor has already allowed some construction to resume as well as reopening of some recreational activities including day use at nearby state parks, playing golf, fishing and hunting.

When COVID-19 disease burden is low and decreasing and the four capabilities described below are met, the governor will move from Phase 1 to Phase 2.

These 4 capabilities are: health care system readiness, testing capacity, ability to do contact investigations, ability to protect high-risk populations.



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Phase 2: Expansions of outdoor recreation activities would be allowed, as well as small gatherings of 5 or fewer people, new construction and in-store retail purchases with health restrictions. Restaurants could reopen with 50 percent capacity and table size no larger than 5.

► Phase 3: Gatherings of 50 people or less, including sports activities, would be allowed, and non-essential travel could resume. Restaurants - up to 75 percent capacity - tables up to 10 people - bars at 25 percent capacity; gyms, movie theaters - 50 percent capacity; retail, libraries, museums and government buildings could reopen. Recreational facilities like pools could open at 50 percent capacity. Nightclubs and entertainment venues would still not be able to reopen.

► Phase 4: Would involve resuming the majority of public interactions. Gatherings of more than 50 people would be allowed, but still while practicing social distancing.

A larger version of the chart, which is also screen reader compliant, can be found at:

<https://coronavirus.wa.gov/sites/default/files/2020-05/PhasedReopeningChart.pdf>

Watch the full press conference here: <https://www.tvw.org/watch/?eventID=2020051012>

RECREATION INFO

The rules for where you can go are changing often – right now, National Forest trails are all open, but trailheads are not, so you must park on the road. Most government offices are closed but some can be reached by phone. All have websites. See below
Methow Valley Ranger District: 509-996-4003. <http://fs.usda.gov>

DNR: <http://dnr.wa.gov>

Washington State Fish and Wildlife: <http://wdfw.wa.gov>

Physically distance yourselves from others. Health officials are recommending that we stay at least 6 feet apart when outside and recreating only with those you live with.

Be conservative. Do not do anything that has the potential to get you injured or in need of further medical attention. Our health care system needs to stay focused on the Covid-19 response.

Leave if a trail is busy. If you are out recreating and you cannot safely maintain at least a 6-foot distance from others go home.

Check for specific trail and park closures before you go. As of May 5, 2020, most State lands and parks are open for day use only

TREASURER'S REPORT

Our Treasurer is currently doing an audit of all the Dumpster/Poolhouse access cards and Locking Mailboxes in the possession of and being used by SMRC lot owners. An e-mail was sent on April 11th requesting the 1st 5 digits of your card numbers in your possession and if you use a locking mailbox, it's location and box number. Thank you to those who have responded already. If you haven't done so, please email her at Treassmrc@gmail.com with your information. Having an up-to-date listing will assist our volunteers in tracking valid cards and mailbox owners along with availability of boxes.





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REMINDERS ABOUT BURNING IN SMRC

We have added a great page about burning in the Methow Valley and SMRC to our website written by Rick Rottman, volunteer firefighter for OCFD6. See our website:

sunmountainranchclub.org – SMRC information tab, then Firewise Information tab. It is the first line – May 2020 Burning information!

Burn bans can be instituted by several different governmental agencies. This can be confusing when you try to decide if it is legal to burn at a given time.

OKANOGAN COUNTY, DNR, STATE DEPT OF ECOLOGY AND THE LOCAL FIRE DISTRICT, OCFD6 can all impose burn bans.

If you want to determine if it is legal to burn on a given day, the easiest way is to go to the Okanogan County Web Site:

<https://okanogancounty.org/Commissioners/index.html>

There you will find both the county's burn status, links to DNR's burn site, and the Department of Ecology's Burn Ban site, which can all give you more info.

FIREWISE INFORMATION

MAY IS FIREWISE MONTH!!

Back in the early 2000's our development received a grant to help Firewise our community, and much was done to mitigate the fuels in our neighborhood. But we haven't done much since as a group.

At our March board meeting we invited Jake Hardt from the WA DNR Landowner Assistant Program NE Region, to present Firewise information. He gave some details about programs and resources available to communities like ours.

It is easiest to do projects as a group and they have a cost share program that can help our members Firewise their properties. Individual assessments and advice are available, and Jake could work with members interested. Karen Mulcahy (board secretary) was working on a free assessment for our whole community and the greenbelts, and then COVID HAPPENED! She will continue to work towards helping our community become a full member of Firewise USA.

SO – WHAT CAN WE DO NOW???

For the next few weeks, FIREWISE USA will be offering you webinars, presentations, and tips and tricks to help us all be a bit more resilient and prepared for wildfire season – all through media channels that allow us to maintain a safe distance apart.

For more info check the National Fire Protection Association at their website: nfpa.org

Please visit the SMRC website for more information on the coming Burn Pile video, Fire Resistant Landscaping video and other tips. <http://www.sunmountainranchclub.org/firewise>

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN HELPING WITH FIREWISE IN SMRC, CONTACT KAREN @509-996-2769



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THE ONGOING GARBAGE/RECYCLING SAGA

We are still seeing illegal dumping of non-household waste – please be aware that we have you on camera and could cancel your access card for these violations. Household waste is NOT futons, plywood, hoses, cabinets, furniture or car batteries. So please DO NOT throw these items in our household garbage dumpster – that increases costs for all of us.

Right now, because of so much illegal dumping and increased usage, our dumpster has to be emptied twice weekly. Wastewise, the company that does the service for the whole valley is increasing the rates this year by almost 30%. It will help all of us to keep our costs down if we use the area wisely and appropriately.

In these difficult times due to the pandemic, our Twisp Transfer Center is fully open to the General Public as of May 5, 2020. They will take all your non-household waste such as yard debris, old furniture, and metal. Cascade Concrete is no longer taking metal waste and there won't be a metal drive this year. Questions? Call the Twisp Transfer Center: 509-997-2025 or try this site - <https://wastebits.com/locator/location/twisp-transfer-station>.

The Methow Recycle center in Twisp is open on Thursdays and Saturdays from 10am-4pm, and they do charge a fee for recycling – \$5/carload and \$10/truckload. We are lucky that SMRC takes most recyclables except GLASS. Please check the poster on the back wall of the recycle area that details what we accept – and remember – EMPTY, CLEAN, AND DRY! Questions? Call Methow Recycles @ 509-997-0520 or visit their website at <http://www.methowrecycles.org>

RESIDENTIAL SELF-HAUL recycling is OPEN

Thursdays & Saturday only, 10am-4pm. See what's changed here.

BUSINESS SELF-HAUL recyclers are asked to call 997-0520 to make delivery appointments.

Take it or Leave it & The Tool Library are OPEN Fridays only, noon-3pm.

We are awaiting a new Recycling Flyer from Methow Recycles that we will post on the website.

We also have a small team in our neighborhood that can help answer your recycling questions. Our numbers are posted on our website - <http://www.sunmountainranchclub.org/recycle> - look under SMRC information tab.



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AND IN CLOSING.....

COMMENTS FROM YOUR NEIGHBORS!

Wow – I have never seen the garbage area look as clean as it does now. Great work!

There sure is a lot of building going on in here. I have seen some lovely new houses. And met some great new neighbors.

Hey – can people try to tone down their lights at night and turn them off when they leave if they are part timers? A lot of full timers want to enjoy their dark sky at night and see the stars.

Please, please keep your dog under control and pick up their waste.

These are just some of the things we have heard.

There are some real bonuses about living here. The wildlife, (yes, even the turkeys), the beautiful green hills in springtime and the glorious balsamroot and lupine blooms, the cool refreshing spring weather, the birds migrating through, the fishing (I hear it's been amazing!!!!).

Especially in this weird pandemic time, we realize – we are all in this together. We need to take care of each other, keep safe, follow what the experts say – and we will get through.

We appreciate any comments on this newsletter and the website.

Thanks!

With contributions from:

Steve Giambone: website developer and newsletter guru, Kitty and Ryan Ryker: garbage and recycling info and maintenance, Kathi Cherrier: treasurer's report and governors report, Karen Mulcahy: editor, pool info, recreation info, burning and firewise info.

One Last Reminder!

THE 2020 GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING WILL BE HELD AT 9AM ON SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 2020
AT THE CHURCH ON THE RISE (LOCATED AT SOUTH ENTRANCE TO THE DEVELOPMENT).
DOORS WILL OPEN AT 8:15 AM TO ALLOW MEMBERS TO REGISTER AND PICK UP THEIR BALLOTS.
MEETING WILL START PROMPTLY AT 9:00 AM.