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Cabinet Resource Group Newsletter

Protecting our natural resources through education and action

March 2013

CRG board meetings are held monthly. This is where all the cool stuff CRG does comes together. We would love to have you join us and share your input.

Contact us at 847 - 2024 to join.

Give us your email address if you would like to receive notifications of board meetings,

ACTION alerts, and car pools.

Your concerns, interest and energy are welcome!

CRG BOARD

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ANNUAL MEETING APRIL 6

Hasn't every one of us wondered at some time about how the landscapes of Mother Earth came to be shaped and sculpted?

CRG is happy to present Dr. Anthony Lewis, of the Ice Age Floods Institute as our featured speaker at the upcoming annual meeting, April 6, at Bighorn Lodge on Bull River. Dr. Lewis is an engaging speaker, sharing his expertise on Glacial Lake Missoula and the major impacts to the landscape of the northwest U.S. from the torrential floods unleashed when the glacial dams would break.

CRG is known for bringing in top quality speakers, which contributes to the fact that our annual meetings are always

a real treat. Plan to join us for potluck, friends old and new, silent auction, and excellent conversation, as well as what

promises to be a very informative and interesting presentation about our local geologic landscape!

Bighorn Lodge is 7.2 miles north on Bull River Highway 56 (between the 7 and 8 mile markers), on your right if travelling north, on the left if coming from the Troy/Libby area.

The entry is a fairly steep one lane driveway—but the beautiful lodge is definitely worth making the trip!

For more information on the Ice Age Floods Institute and the interesting work they are doing, go to :

www.iceagefloodsinstitute.org

CRG Annual Meeting!

Where: Bighorn Lodge
What: Board elections, club business, silent auction, potluck feast!

When: Saturday, April 6
Social 4pm, Potluck 5 pm.
Business Meeting 5:45
Featured Speaker: 6:45 pm
Dr. Anthony Lewis, on Ice Age Floods

See you there!

Trout Minton timber sale proposal in Trout Creek area

On October 6, 2012 the Cabinet R. D. hosted a field trip to discuss the proposed Minton Trout Timber sale and fuel reduction project. The trip was well attended by a diverse group of mostly local landowners near the project site.

The Forest service team, headed by Ranger John Gubel, gave an excellent presentation and response from the group was very positive. This project is well planned and will be a great benefit to the local economy as well as forest health. It will reduce fuel loading and provide improved wildlife habitat.

The plan also includes an improved trailhead access to the Trout Creek Roadless Area via the Black Peak Trail. This trail receives a considerable amount of horse and ORV use and the new trailhead would likely be a great improvement.

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Troy Mine Update

Collapse raises more questions about Rock Creek proposal

By Kim Matthew

The Troy Mine has suspended underground operations since a major rock fall in early December. This was followed by a series of nine earthquakes and aftershocks about a week later, all on the Bull Lake fault which runs through the mine. The connection between the rock fall and the earthquakes is not known but Revett has installed geophones to detect future earth movement.

According to the Revett website, the upper haulage road is blocked but underground equipment and mechanical areas were not damaged.

Crews have completed a development drift to the lower haulage route and have access to the Lower Quartzite bed. This will allow them to connect to the A and C bed mining areas.

Inspection from the south adit (Ross Creek side) found no damage in the East ore body upper and middle quartzite mine workings.

The company is working on a revised plan to submit to the Montana Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) that would enable them to complete development work to access the A and C beds. They hope to resume operations in April 2013.

It is amazing, and very good news, that no miners were injured or killed in this major incident. Revett has continued to keep its employees working since the closure, doing maintenance and other improvements.

CRG has been following this all closely and has been in contact with Revett officials. (See insert). CRG is very concerned that this catastrophic type of mine collapse shows that there are major problems with the design and engineering of the room and pillar

mining system. Major changes will need to be made in the mining plan for Troy. How this will affect plans for the proposed Rock Creek Project, which lies on the same fault system, remains to be seen. CRG will stay abreast of the situation and take whatever action is necessary to ensure that what is learned at Troy will be applied to the Rock Creek mine analysis.

Oh, those mysterious barrels...

On March 4, 2013 Bill Martin and Kim Matthew met with John Shannahan, President and CEO, and Tim Lindsay Chairman of the Board of Revett Minerals Inc. in Sandpoint as a followup to the barrels excavation of January 2012 and to discuss other issues relating to the Troy mine. The meeting was very productive and informative.

We learned that Revett has drilled two new monitoring wells near the anomalies that are the most likely site for the buried barrels, the contents of which are unknown, but could potentially be toxic wastes. Revett acknowledges that there were barrels buried, but still contends that the contents probably are not hazardous. They are committed to monitoring these sites and will take what ever action is necessary should toxic waste be detected.

We commend Revett for their actions in this matter and are amazed that the DEQ representative who attended the dig, refuses to address this issue or include it in the Troy reclamation plan. Even if DEQ is not paying attention to it, this is still an issue.

Seen the new CRG website? Check it out!

The CRG website has been updated. Many changes were made and more will occur after the election of a new Board director and new officers. Ernie did a good job getting the history of CRG and information on a number of local issues all in one beautiful spot!

The most recent information available on use of the website is that an average of 22 people view it each day. Each month we were averaging 3 new persons viewing it per day.

You can see the website by going to www.cabinetresouregroup.org.

Remembering Our Roots . . .

Cabinet Resource Group members can be proud of our thirty-seven year legacy. CRG is a locally-driven, truly grassroots organization, focused not on being against anything, but being FOR so many of the things that make northwest Montana a quality place for people to live, such as clean water and air, abundant wildlife and healthy forests. The newsletter will be featuring a series of articles helping newer members and those interested in joining us understand the values CRG was founded upon and the effective advocacy for natural resources the organization has accomplished. As we dive into the future, it is important to understand where we came from, because, as nature teaches us, everything is connected.

RETROSPECTIVE: PART ONE, BEGINNINGS

by Bill Martin

Excerpt from Spring 2002 CRG Newsletter

For me, it may have started in Viet Nam, the first time I stepped into a shower, hot, sweaty, and covered with red dust. Luxuriating in cool running water, I lathered up with soap, and then the water went off. It did not, that day, come back on. Among other attitudes that I returned with from that country was a keen appreciation of the primal importance of water to our lives.

A few years later, living amongst a large mass of humanity amidst vast square mileages of concrete and what not, I got thirsty one night, and went to the kitchen for a glass of water. When I turned on the tap, the pipes clunked and shuddered. The faucet spit air before the water came out, slightly cloudy. I had a post—no, not post—I had a traumatic stress moment.

I had a vision of water—precious water, without which death is only days away—coming to me through a tinker-toy construct of leaky, rusty pipes from out of darkness, from God knew where, with God know what in it. Thirst developed a new meaning for me.

That thirst, and other dreads, aversion, and dreams led me to my home here beside Lake Creek, in

Lincoln County, Montana. It is a wet place, and I know where my water comes from.

I had a couple years of peace. I

Damn it , I just want a good drink of water! Is that too much to ask for?

was content to watch the sunsets, to listen to the birds calling in the silence, and not minding if sometimes in the cold, the pipes from the spring would freeze, and I would have to go with buckets to the creek.

Then a decision was made in a boardroom in New York that changed my lifestyle again. In 1975, I first heard of ASARCO and its intention to mine and put the tailings pile next to the creek, upstream from me. *[This is the Troy Mine, now owned by Revett. — ed.]*

The more I learned about mining and water quality, the more apprehensive and frustrated I became. Damn it, I just want a good drink of water; is that too much to ask for?!!

I felt powerless, with no influence on decisions affecting my life. Running away had not worked. No place was safe; no one was looking out for me, but me—and I wasn't

doing it. In near hopeless desperation, I sent a letter to the *Western News*—to the cosmos; to people that I hoped existed, who had similar feelings, asking them to come to a meeting to talk about what we might do, and how we might do it.

They came. Over twenty-five [now 37] years later, we are still here.

CRG Scholarship Available

The Cabinet Resource Group is offering one \$600 scholarship to a Noxon, Plains, Thompson Falls, Troy, or Libby High School Senior wishing to further his/her education. Eligibility requirements include Montana residency, minimum GPA of 2.5, and enrollment in an institute of higher education to pursue a course of study in natural resource issues.

Students who are under the age of 18 must have a parent signature to allow for publication in the newsletter, newspapers, and the CRG website. The application deadline is Friday, April 12, 2013.

For application information please contact Kari (208) 627-2716 or wzripper@hotmail.com.

A Word from the Prez...

With my term as president of CRG coming to a close, it is fitting to make some remarks about the past year:

Efforts have been made to improve the infrastructure of CRG, clarifying board roles and procedures.

More committees were created and empowered to act this year than in the last six years, including one pursuing rebuilding our education program.

A determination was made to publish a newsletter four times a year beginning with this issue, to keep members updated.

A membership email list is also in the works, for those who would like to be alerted to actions where help is needed, and informed of meetings.

Each Board member agreed to recruit at least two new CRG members.

A plan is being pursued to undertake an extensive education program. More on this in next newsletter.

The plan to have another organization undertake payment of the mining claims for two years came to fruition. Wilderness Land Trust will reimburse CRG for annual costs for maintaining claims.

We have published a new CRG flyer.

There was a great improvement in Board attendance.

There is much that still needs to be done, as always, but CRG is on the right track.

Ernie Scherzer, outgoing CRG President

Your donations are tax deductible. CRG members receive our newsletter and special updates on natural resource issues. Members are invited to public forums, our annual membership meeting and monthly board meetings. If you care about the Cabinets, our natural resources, and the community of people who live here, we are just the grass roots group for you.

The CRG Newsletter is compiled, edited, and designed by CRG. All contents © 3/2013 CRG. If you would like to send a comment or have questions, contact a CRG board member listed on the front of this publication.

**The Cabinet Resource Group
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