 **Chinook Pass Cabin Owners Association**



June 2017

Dear Forest Watch Tract Sponsor:

Many thanks for agreeing to become a sponsor for your cabin tract! As you know, cabin break-ins have been and continue to be a problem for all tracts in the Naches Ranger District. While we all know that there is no “silver bullet” solution to this problem, CPCOA has developed (in cooperation with other cabin associations) the “Forest Watch” program to reduce the number and magnitude of break-ins.

The Forest Watch program is modeled after the very successful Neighborhood Watch programs which have been implemented nationwide.  The basic premise is that “*WE LOOK OUT FOR EACH OTHER*”.  The simple idea is that if we are all watching out for suspicious activities and report them that the individuals in question will choose to leave our cabins alone.

Our role is ONLY to Observe and Report ***not to intervene***.  If we all are looking out for each other and we can recognize who should and shouldn’t be in and around our cabins we should be able to reduce the amount and severity of the crime that occurs in and around our cabins.

***Together we can make a difference!***

**Sponsor’s Responsibilities:**

As a Tract Sponsor you are agreeing to complete the following initial tasks within 4 months:

* Assemble and distribute Forest Watch Program packets of information for each cabin owner/manager
* Create or update a tract contact sheet, listing the names and contact information for all cabin owners/managers.
* If appropriate, mount a Forest Watch Program sign at each entrance of the tract according to the Forest Service rules.
* Assist tract cabin owners in implementing Operation ID at their cabin by providing information and loaning an etching pen to aid in owners marking their property

In addition, we would like the tract sponsors to provide the following information back to CPCOA as soon as possible:

* Up to date tract contact sheet.
* Tract Location Description
* Information on cell phone “hotspots”

Tract sponsors on-going responsibilities include:

* Represent the CPCOA Forest Watch program for your tract by distributing any updated information/material
* Ensure that Forest Watch sign(s) are properly maintained and visible
* Encourage cabin owners to report all break-ins to both the County Sheriff as well as to the Forest Service
* Report all break-ins to the CPCOA Forest Watch Program Manager

Further information on each of these items is provided below.

**CPCOA’s Responsibilities:**

In return for your assistance for implementing this program within your tract, CPCOA agrees to provide you the following:

* Program description and Q&A documents in both paper and electronic form
* A 12” x 18” Forest Watch sign for up to two entrances.
* Provide replacements for signs which are damaged to the point of not being readable.
* Electronic Templates for cover letters and tract contact sheets,
* Operation ID information sheet, inventory form and window decals
* Electric etching pen to be used by tract cabin owners in marking property
* Incident reporting information sheet with key phone numbers

**Forest Watch Program Information Distribution**

Sponsors are required to take on the responsibility to ensure that each cabin owners in their tract are aware of the Forest Watch program and share the information below. A packet of information must be delivered to each cabin owner/manager in the tract that contains a minimum of:

* Completed Owner Cover Letter
* Completed Tract Contact List
* Incident Reporting Sheet
* (2) Operation ID stickers
* Operation ID Inventory Form

A template of the cover letter, contact list and reporting sheet has been included in your packet. Electronic versions are available on the web at: [www.cpcoa.com/ForestWatch](http://www.cpcoa.com/ForestWatch)

 We understand that it’s often very difficult to contact cabin owners who are no longer actively using their cabin. In those cases, it may be necessary to mail informational packet to cabin owners. CPCOA can assist in this mailing if needed. Contact the Program Manager for further information.

**Tract Contact Sheet**

Communication between all cabin owners in the tract is essential for the success of the program. Therefore it is up to the Tract Sponsors to obtain contact information for all cabin owners in the Tract and arrange for a means of contacting the owners in the event of any that information needs to be shared (e.g., break ins, downed trees, flood warnings, tract social events, etc.). A sample contact sheet has been provided in your packet. Once the information has been gathered, a copy is included in the packet of information that you distribute to each cabin owner/manager.

The Association would greatly appreciate it if a copy of the tract contact listing is sent on to the Program Manager to assist in supporting future sponsors of the tract. As CPCOA respects the privacy of its members, this information will not be shared with other organizations.

**Forest Watch Signage:**

CPCOA will provide a maximum of two Forest Watch notification signs for each tract that wishes to participate. Additional signs can be obtained for a nominal cost

The Forest Service has agreed to allow these signs to be posted as long as they are mounted on an existing sign post or on the tract’s gate. However should it be necessary to mount the sign anywhere else, the tract sponsor must obtain permission from the Forest Service prior to installing any signs.

Any Tract can participate and NOT post the signs. There is some thought that if a Tract entrance and cabins are not clearly visible from the Highway that posting a Forest Watch sign may just let people know that there are cabins beyond the sign. Therefore sign posting is at the Tract’s discretion as is the location of the sign (as long as the Forest Service agrees with the location and method).

**Tract Location Description:**

In order for law enforcement and other first responders to easily find your tract, it is essential that they have a good description of how to find you. Therefore it’s essential that each Tract Sponsor provide a simple description on how to locate the entrance to your tract and which cabins that entrance serves (in the event of multiple entrances).

For example for the Pleasant Valley Tract the description would be something like:

***Pleasant Valley Cabin Tract’s gated entrance is located on the south side of Hwy 410 at mile post 82.3. All seven cabins (Cabins # 1 – 7) in this tract are served by this common entrance. The gate is normally left closed but unlocked when owners are present. The gate is served by both a Forest Service and private lock.***

This should be the description that all affected cabin owners use in the event that they need to call for any type of service and so should be shared with all cabin owners in the tract.

**Operation ID:**

Operation ID has been implemented in various communities nationwide with success. It’s comprised of 3 parts: marking valuables, list valuables and post notices.

1. **Mark Valuables.**  All portable valuable property (electronics, tools, generators, chain saws, etc.) should be properly marked in some indelible manner (engraving, permanent paint) with the property owners Washington State Driver’s License Number (for example – “*WSDL# SMITHME502CZ”*). By proving this information any law enforcement agency will be able to properly and rapidly locate that rightful property owner. It also does have some deterrent value.
2. **List Valuables.** It is also a good idea for cabin owners to keep a current inventory/listing of valuable property that is in their cabins at a separate location. In the event of a break-in the owner can adequately describe any stolen property to the Yakima Co. Sheriff’s office. It will also help with any insurance claim that they may wish to file. An excellent way to do this inventory is to take photos of the valuable items and add any unique information (serial numbers, model number/year, estimated value) on a sheet. A form has been provided to assist the cabin owner/manager with this task.
3. **Window Stickers.** The Association has provided in your packet a supply of small window stickers for each cabin in the tract that inform anyone considering breaking in that the property has been marked and will be traceable as stolen property. Additional stickers can be provided as needed. Contact the Program Manager for more details.

**Other Information**

Finally, Tract sponsors are encouraged to provide information regarding any known cell phone “hot spots” to the Association so that information can be shared widely with cabin owners. This will aid in the reporting of EMS or other urgent information by cabin owners.

If you have questions about the program please contact the Program Manager: contact Gary Jackson, Cell 509.952.8498.