



Pine Brook Press

A Quarterly Journal for, about and by
Pine Brook Hills Residents

AUTUMN 2012



Boulder Mountain Handmade 2012 Art, Crafts, and Baked Goods Sale Our favorite fall event is back!

Have you noticed that autumn crispness in the air? It must be close to the time for your Fire Department Auxiliary's fall fundraiser, the art, crafts, and baked goods sale: Mountain Expressions. Well, almost true. It is indeed getting closer to fall and the sale is the second weekend in November this year. However, as you've undoubtedly already noticed, Mountain Expressions has been replaced with a fresh new name, Boulder Mountain Handmade.

This seems fitting since the profits from the show support the best volunteer fire



department for miles around: Boulder Mountain Fire. Our emergency responders have had a particularly

busy summer, so we hope you will bake, and shop, and spread the word, and shop, and volunteer to work at the show, and shop, all in appreciation for their efforts. The money you spend on art, crafts, and baked goods will in turn be used by the Auxiliary to reward, feed, and equip your very own emergency responders.



Yes, there is a dusting of snow on that little pine cone in our new logo. Just imagine coming in from a late fall, brisk day into the cozy feel of the Station 1 firehouse community room – with cold punch or warm spiced cider to enjoy, and lots of talented neighbors displaying their unique fine art pieces and handmade crafts. Ranging from inexpensive to elegant, there are gifts for everyone on your list, cards to go with them, and undoubtedly something special to adorn yourself or decorate your home.

Last but not least, if you missed our record setting bake sale last year, don't make the same mistake twice! Our fire district is chock full of scratch bakers who pull out all the stops in support of their fire department. Cookies and candies, cakes and cupcakes, pies and tarts: they will all be waiting for you.

So, please add Boulder Mountain Handmade to your calendar and plan to stop by, tell your friends from town about us, and better yet – bring them. We'll be open rain, snow, or shine.



A NON-PARTISAN POLITICAL EVENING
PBH HOA will hold a unique pre-election event on October 9, at 6 P.M., at the Fire House. See pages 3 and 7 for more details.

SUMMER FUN
ICE CREAM SOCIAL AT THE FIRE HOUSE

Photographs by James Baker (see page 8.)



COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Meetings are at the Community Center/Firehouse unless otherwise noted.

HOA MEETING, Tuesday, October 9, 6 P.M.

A Non-Partisan Political Evening

All THREE candidates for Boulder County Commissioners, Maureen Denig (R), Deb Gardner (D), and Elise Jones (D) will join us and present their views on local issues, including, but not limited to, the roads issue.

They will be joined by representatives of the League of Women Voters who will present a non-partisan analysis of the ballot issues we will face on the November ballot. Also our own Cindy Lindsay will briefly outline the current state of the Roads Problem and Allen Saville will discuss the upcoming mill levy increase for BMFPD. The meeting will be moderated by HOA Vice President Bill Alexander. So that we have extra time for questions, we will not be having the usual potluck and business meeting. The formal meeting will start at 6:30 P.M. after wine and cheese at 6 P.M.

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW COMMITTEE - Meets the 2nd Tuesday of every month at 7 P.M.

BOULDER MOUNTAIN HOMEMADE - Arts, Crafts and Baked Goods. November 10 and 11, 10 A.M. to 4 P.M. (See page 1).

FIRE BOARD - Meets the 2nd Monday of every month at 6:30 P.M. at either the Pine Brook or Boulder Heights Firehouse. Call 440-0235 for specifics.

FIRE AUXILIARY - Generally meets the first Sunday of every month at 7 P.M. Call 444-9851 for confirmation.

HOLIDAY PARTY - Saturday, December 1, 7 P.M., 12 Boulder View Lane (See page 6).

WATER BOARD - Meets first or second Thursday of every month at 4:30 P.M. Call Water Office at 443-5394 for dates.

PRESIDENT'S PATTERN

By Dave Davies, HOA President

As you can see from the headline above, we are well into the "political season" and therefore we are glad to host the candidates for Boulder County Commissioners at the Fire House for the General Members meeting.

The topics for discussion are strictly local issues, including a focus on the road maintenance problems. I have had the chance to talk directly to the Commissioners on several occasions on this topic. It is not a pleasant topic for them or us. On one side it could be looked at as a bunch of affluent middle class folks trying to minimize their own taxes while dumping on the poor; on the other side many of us feel outraged that after paying taxes for roads for years we discover that



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they were not being used for our community at all.

One thing is clear is that Boulder County allocates about \$20 million for roads out of a budget of \$300 million. This is less per head or per mile than our neighbor counties. Boulder County Transportation Director George Gerstle will on the other hand argue that Boulder has less road mileage than its neighbors, and so it should be less. Either way as it stands at early September it seems unlikely that this issue will hit the November ballot, so we will have to wait even longer for resolution. A county wide LID (Local Improvement District) seems the most equitable answer, a LID is just a flat per lot tax. It is however not unique to this issue but is being used increasingly as a way to fund such items as roads, without impacting the general fund of the counties. Larimer County, for example, has more than 30 LIDs already in place and indeed every contiguous county to Boulder has some road-related LIDs already in place.

Another road related issue we are discussing is that of the “speeders” on PBH roads. As with the road issue, there are strong views on either side. Many people are asking the HOA to “do something.” Well please understand for a start that despite the fact that the county is no longer maintaining the roads, it still “owns” them. What we can do is recommend and perhaps contribute financially; we cannot by ourselves groove pavements or put up stop signs for example. One thing we can do is measure and see the scope of the problem and with the help of Cindy Lindsay and Rich Fozzard we are taking steps to determine the degree of the problem. Our very steep terrain and road layout make simple answers such as speed bumps or gullies potentially dangerous.

All these burning issues have pushed back the awareness of the most burning issue, that of fire mitigation. With the possible (note I said possible, and perhaps temporary) lessening of the beetle threat we have for this year at least removed the beetle-related restrictions on fire mitigation activity and are moving forward with the planned programs. We are still using the original Anchor point study to help direct the efforts that the HOA funds, as well as special situations that our Mitigation crew feel important under the direction of Steve Lynn with Bill Alexander from the HOA as our coordinator.

This year we did fund the clearing of the Linden verges (the over grown road edges) and are planning

on doing that next year also with a deeper cut further back into the easement. Note that as I previously said, Boulder County “rules” here. We had to get explicit permission from the County; they did however waive the need for a permit process. In the light of the efforts of our BMFPD – which include not only fire protection and fire mitigation, but also public safety and emergency response, Allen Saville will be talking about the need for a mill levy increase (YES another tax increase) for BMFPD at the general meeting also. The number of incidents they respond to has increased year after year and although the vast majority of the responders are unpaid volunteers, costs have increased significantly.

Talking of beetles, Bruce Benninghoff, a noted consultant in the field of beetle infestation recently wrote a detailed and highly technical article for the US Forest Service & Colorado Forestry community mentioning the PBH effort as one of the most outstanding in his experience. The “BeetleBusters” is yet another all-volunteer effort!

So far this year we have had good meeting attendance, our Ice Cream Social was so well attended we ran out of ice cream! (Some PBH board members were however seen going through the line twice), and with Pam Creswell back in town I am pleased to say we will also be having a Holiday Party, so mark down the date of December 1 (see more details elsewhere in this Press).

Last but not least let me wish you all a good fall and late summer time experience, my wife Jo and I will spend three weeks in Europe but we will be thinking of PBH. Roads, beetles, fires, speeders, and the polite discourse on the Yahoo chat room will be in our thoughts as we meander the rivers and canals of Alsace Lorraine and the Saar. See you at the October meeting—Oct 9 at 6pm.



TREASURER'S REPORT

By Jim Woodruff

Hope you all had a great summer and will take advantage of autumn, one of my favorite seasons of the year. Your response to our requests for annual dues has been steady and very much appreciated. To date (9/11), 243 households have responded with an average contribution of just over \$100.

Did you enjoy the Ice Cream Social like I did? How about these Pine Brook Press journals? And aren't you

glad we can get the new Pine Brook directory to you? I know I feel a little safer knowing that the fire mitigation work continues in part with the financial help of our dues.

If you are one of those who just can't seem to remember to put that check either in the mail or in the HOA box in the community center parking lot, why not do it now? As always, checks made out to Pine Brook Hills HOA and sent, if by mail, to 1907 Linden Drive are always welcome.

Hope to see you October 9 at what promises to be a jam packed HOA meeting.

ON THE WATERFRONT

With Bob de Haas

VOLUNTARY WATER REDUCTIONS LIFTED ON SEPTEMBER 1

The voluntary water reductions can now be considered part of our history. Thanks to everyone's better use of water over this summer in combination with the actions taken by the District, the reservoir is back up to acceptable levels. So the voluntary water reductions are no longer needed.

As of September 4, 2012, the wells were turned off and so now everyone is getting their water from our filter plant as normal.

Meter Pit Access

The District is studying whether we need to upgrade/replace our metering system. Why?

1. Most of the meters are 14 years old and may be reading less water than what is actually being used.
2. This is evidenced by the fact that of the water we produce, around 20% of it is unaccounted for, or not showing up on the meters.
3. The goal is to have 10% or less of the water produced being "unaccounted" for.
4. Once a decision is made on what meters to use to replace the current meters then the District will need to get into each meter pit to replace the meter. The new meters will probably be phased in over several years.

What do You Need to Do?

1. Clear the area around your meter pit so that District personnel can easily access it.

2. Easy access means that we have to be able to lay down by the meter pit so that we can reach into the pit to replace the meter.
3. This does not mean we should be laying on rocks, bushes, flowers, etc., or fighting tree limbs.
4. If we find that we do not have easy access, then we will remove the materials in the way to make easy access and we will set that material aside for you to dispose of.
5. So keep your landscaping away from the meter pit and the tree limbs cut up high enough that there is easy access, think about what it would be like if you had to get to the meter pit.

It's Budget Preparation Time for 2013

The Pine Brook Water District Board will be discussing the budget needs for the District for 2013. A proposed budget has been submitted and will be discussed at the October 11, 2012, and November 8, 2012, Board meetings. These meetings will start at 4:30 pm and will be held at the Pine Brook Community Center. Anyone is welcome to attend and/or give their input and comments. Copies of the proposed budget can be obtained from the Pine Brook Water District Office.

ROADS COMMITTEE UPDATE

By Cindy Lindsay


On the first Tuesday of each month at 11:30am the Boulder County Commissioners hold an "open mike" session where residents of Boulder County are invited to address the commissioners on any relevant issue. On Tuesday, Sept 4, PBH residents attended to continue to express our concerns about subdivision roads. The specific topics addressed were the options currently under consideration by the commissioners (LID, PID, hybrid LID), the timeline for a decision, the plan for public meetings to discuss proposed solutions, and the amount of money the county will contribute to any solution proposed.

Attending from PBH were: Dave Davies (HOA president), Bill Alexander (HOA vice president), Cindy Lindsay (Roads Committee), Peter King-Smith (Roads Committee), and John Seward and Judith Isern (long-time PBH residents).

The only action taken by the commissioners was to inform us that the next presentation of options for subdivision road rehabilitation by the Department of

Transportation will be on September 20 on the third floor of the courthouse.

As usual, information will be posted on the Yahoo Groups once it becomes available.



PROPOSED MILL LEVY INCREASE FOR OUR FIRE DISTRICT



SHALL DISTRICT TAXES BE INCREASED BY \$150,000 ANNUALLY BY AN ADDITIONAL MILL LEVY OF NOT MORE THAN 2.723 MILLS (FOR A TOTAL GENERAL OPERATING MILL LEVY OF 8.912 MILLS) COMMENCING IN TAX YEAR 2012 FOR COLLECTION IN FISCAL YEAR 2013?

The language above is a paraphrased version of the question that all of us within the Boulder Mountain Fire Protection District (BMFPD) will see on the upcoming November ballot. The purpose of this pro-posed increase in the mill levy (property tax) is to provide more revenue to our Fire District so that they can continue to provide the high level of emergency services that we enjoy. The following is a fact sheet prepared by the BMFPD Board of Directors to guide residents through the proposed mill levy increase.

BMFPD – Maintaining Our Current Level of Services Our Residents Expect No Less

Ballot Proposal: Increase the General Property Tax Levy rate for BMFPD to 8.912 mills; this tax increase would generate \$150,000/year for BMFPD in order to restore Capital Equipment Funding and maintain our current level of services. (The supplemental water supply sub-district mill levy would re-main unchanged at 1.809 mills.)

Impact: For an individual property owner, the new mill levy rate would increase the annual tax bill by about \$108 per year for homes with a market value of \$500,000; \$217 per year for homes with \$1 million market value.

Current Situation:

- Tax Revenues to BMFPD are down due to falling property values; No change expected in 2013
- There has been NO RATE INCREASE in the BMFPD General Property Levy since 2000
- All insurance premiums paid by BMFPD are up sharply
- Vehicle Replacement Costs are much higher (3-4% each year)
- Some fire trucks are approaching 30 years of age
- Repair and Maintenance costs are up due to heavy usage and age

- Monies previously allocated to vehicle replacement have been applied to cover the increases in operations expenses; this has compromised our capital reserve funding
- Approval of Ballot Proposal is necessary to maintain the current level of services
- Significant reduction in grant revenues for equipment purchases and mitigation services

Important Trends:

- Emergency Calls have increased significantly: formerly 100-120 calls per year; 2011 = 168; 2012 estimate is over 200 per year (now at 168 calls in August)
- Wildfire Incidents are up – more patrols and early attack have helped us keep fires from becoming catastrophic
- Increased training and equipment costs are up due to full roster of volunteer fire department personnel
- Watershed damage from Four Mile Fire has resulted in significant new call volume to deal with flooding

How BMFPD Ranks in General Property Tax Rates:

- Last BMFPD Rate Increase was in the year 2000
- BMFPD has lowest Mill Levy rate among all surrounding Fire Districts
- If Ballot Proposal is approved, the BMFPD tax rate will still be below the average for Boulder County Fire Districts

Conclusion: \$150,000 increase in general property taxes allows BMFPD to maintain current level of services to our District. \$108/year for a \$500,000 market value home.



SAVE THE DATE!!

*Pine Brook Hills Holiday Party
Sponsored by the HOA
Saturday, December 1, 7:00 PM
Where: 12 Boulder View Lane
Home of Pam Creswell and Marshal Swanton
Please bring a yummy "finger food"*

RSVP preferred but only if you WILL be attending: Pamelasuzzane@gmail.com

**OCTOBER 9, POLITICAL EVENING -
LEARN BEFORE YOU VOTE!**

Please consider coming to our PBH HOA Pre-election Political Meeting on Oct 9.

Drinks at 6pm (please bring appetizers.) Meeting starts at 6:30pm. For this meeting, there will be no potluck because we want to:

- Maximize the space available for attendees by having lots of chairs but no tables
- Maximize the time for our political candidates and issues to be heard

Please RSVP to billalexmail@yahoo.com and let us know how many are coming.

Why you should come:

- There is a major party choice between Boulder County Commissioner candidates this election and they all will be at this meeting talking with us. This will give you an “up close and personal” chance to evaluate them before you vote! They are: Maureen Denig (R), Deb Gardner (D), and Elise Jones (D).
- As moderator of their debate, I (Bill Alexander) will be asking them your questions, so email me the questions you want me to ask them to billalexmail@yahoo.com (about Roads or other local issues or anything else County related).
- Also, Boulder County League of Women Voters will be discussing Colorado State ballot initiatives, so this should help you decide how to vote on them.

Please come to get better informed before you vote!

See you there,

Bill Alexander, PBH HOA Board of Directors

HOA AT WORK

Trimming the verge on Linden to reduce fire hazard.



Before



After

NEWCOMER NEWS

Compiled By Jo Wiedemann

Mike and Julie Hughes, along with their miniature Schnauzer, Embry, just made the move from southern California to Pine Tree Lane in September.



They have one adult son, Andrew, who lives in Dallas and is a pilot for American Eagle.

Mike’s job with a medical device company in Broomfield brought them to Colorado. Mike is Senior

Vice President of International Sales. His territory is anything and everything outside the United States. His recent business trips have taken him and Julie to Costa Rica, Italy, Spain, Greece, and France.

When not traveling with Mike, Julie loves to read, scrapbook, and walk.

They are very excited about their new community and are ready to get involved!

Meghan Miller moved to South Cedar Brook in February, most recently from Niwot where she perched after eighteen years in Ellensburg, Washington. Then she found the perfect spot to live in Pine Brook Hills. Her younger daughter will be off to college in the fall; her older daughter often visits from Claremont where she too is in college.



Meghan directs a lab in Boulder that supports scientists who use GPS to do everything from measuring how mountains pop up to studying how ice flows and surges as the ice caps waste away to imaging evaporated water in the atmosphere as hurricanes evolve in order to better predict their intensity and landfall. In her previous life, she was a professor of geology at a small state university.

Meghan loves to hike, ski, snowshoe, read books, and, from time to time, get away to low latitude or high altitude destinations. Her father lived in Boulder for a few years when he was a little boy in the 20’s, but her roots are mostly in the Pacific Northwest, California, and New England.

LEARNING ABOUT RISKS IN A NEW WAY OF LIFE

By James Baker

*** New PBH resident James Baker shares a glimpse of his first months in our community.*

June 19, we've just closed on our house and driven up to PBH to start our new life. It's lunchtime, and it's hot. Not everything has gone to plan: delays in our shipment from London mean we will spend a month essentially camping in an empty house. But it won't spoil our mood.

On the way up Linden, I notice the fire danger is Extreme, but we don't worry because we've studied the PBH website and forum and know about fire risk. We even have BMFPD's mitigation team booked for the next day.

But their chipper breaks and they postpone. Meanwhile, every hour another email emphasizes the need to mitigate and the next day the chipper remains broken.

Following everyone's cries for the need to cut grasses – and never having managed more than 200 sqft of land – we call the professionals. They come, they estimate, but they're too busy to do the work and after more panicked emails arrive, I decide to do it myself.

The weedwacker works, but by the time I've filled twenty sacks with cuttings, my back has taken on a new shape and it will be weeks before I can walk straight again. And those emails keep coming.

I used to think we knew about risk. We spent twenty years in big metropolises: London, New York, Paris. I was the other side of the street when the towers fell on 9/11; we travelled by Tube on 7/7. We've lived with risk – not just terrorism, there's burglaries, muggings,

shootings, and riots to keep in mind – and even though these urban risks are over-stated they must still be accommodated.

But lightning strikes on June 26, the air fills with smoke, and we don't know what to think. It's difficult, immersing yourself in a new set of risks. You don't know how to read the panic from neighbours and the authorities. Are they understating? Exaggerating? Are people joking with you? It takes time to learn to interpret the messages.

Before long, the rains arrive, the fire risk becomes Moderate (not that I know what that actually means), and the forum shifts focus to risks from bears, moun-



The view from our bedroom in London. Bearskins are on the Buckingham Palace Guards.

tain lions, even rattlesnakes. Then it becomes speeders. It seems the foothills are like the metropolis: there's always something to

fear.

I've never seen a dangerous animal – the biggest nuisance in London is the fox. And there are so many speed cameras there that everyone respects the limit.



The view from our bedroom in PBH. Bearskins are on bears.

I find these new risks alien and difficult to comprehend.

Then one evening a bear walks past our window, looking as bored as we are excited. But it's real and it's big enough to have the potential for mischief and it's clear some of those risks are real.

We still haven't seen a mountain lion, but that's okay, and something tells me they've seen us.

Right now, with temperatures coming off their summer highs, my focus is on how to stay warm this winter. When I first arrived in New York and someone told me temperatures could fall as far as zero, I assumed they meant zero Celsius and figured it wasn't anything to worry about. I won't make the same mistake here.

CANOEING AND WILDERNESS CAMPING IN BOUNDARY WATERS

By Jo Davies

Established in 1964, the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness (BWCAW) has changed little since the glaciers melted. With over 1,500 miles of canoe routes, nearly 2,200 designated campsites, and more than 1,000 lakes and streams, the BWCAW is part of the Superior National Forest. Permits are required year-round for day and overnight visitors to the BWCAW. Minnesota's BWCAW is the second largest wilderness east of the Rockies and surprisingly easy to access.



Exotic Dawns

Dave and Jo Davies joined their daughter, son-in-law and two grandsons for a fun but challenging five-day-day trip this summer. Here are some highpoints and challenges of taking a multi-generation family

in two We-no-nah Kevlar Canoes, each weighing 42 pounds.

Highpoints

- Four bald eagles (2 pairs) roosting most of the day on nearby trees. One eagle stopped by the camp to pick up the remains of a fish we caught and ate.



Still smiling after 5 days



Heavy load for HOA Prez...



also for Grandma

- Watching the older grandson catch small-mouthed bass for dinner. Dad fileted them; Grandma cooked them.

- Watching beaver swim small branches across the lake and take them into the lodge.
- Watching the incredible dawns.
- Roasting marshmallows round the campfire.

Challenges

- Portaging everything in -- no vehicles or motorized boats are allowed.
- No chairs, no table, no regular pillows were a challenge for the older bodies. Sleeping on the ground was especially challenging for Grandad.
- A strong head wind combined with new equipment and new paddling partners made for a difficult first day.
- The biffy!
- A malfunctioning water filter made the last day a challenge.
- Mosquitoes.
- The two young men we politely



The Biffy...throne of Gods



"Our" eagle

let go ahead of us at the first portage, who then took the last campsite, leaving us with one more portage and two very tired children. All the other paddlers we met were considerate of our extra load.



GARAGE SALE 2012 STILL AT RISK

We have had a few people that responded to our plea for help that ran in the summer 2012 issue of the Press. A great big "THANKS" to each of you. But the future of the sale is still in jeopardy.

Right now, the biggest need is for people to do pricing. If you are fairly familiar with the retail prices of things, you are qualified and we can use your skills!! Maybe you know all about the prices of sporting goods or tools or furniture or artwork and frames or decorative accessories or ... you name it. If you have this knowledge and some time to help during the days leading up to the sale (that would be May 13-16, 2013, if we are successful in getting the needed help), PLEASE let us know.

The Markeys

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NEIGHBORHOOD HERB WALK

By Aria Seidl

On Saturday, September 1, fifteen friends and neighbors attended a herb walk through the big meadow and pine trees at Earthstar Farm, just west of PBH. The walk was led by Erin Smith of the Center for Integrative Botanical Studies, a new school opening in Boulder next spring.



Erin Smith

Erin is a medical herbalist and ethnobotanist and has been studying medicinal plants for 20 years in locations all over the world. She shared her wisdom and plant medicine stories about the local herbs growing wild right here in our backyards.

Topics included homemade cough

syrups, medicinal decoctions, herbal poultices, teas for fever, infused oil for ear infections, and edible wild plants. After the two-hour herb walk, a delicious potluck lunch was shared at Ben and



Young herbalist in training

Aria's house at 151 Wildcat Lane. It was a perfect sunny day and a fun, educational time was had by all.



Herb walk class



Potluck

DOES IT PAY TO BE PROACTIVE AND MITIGATE FOR MOUNTAIN PINE BEETLE?

(Based on a Paper of the Same Name by Bruce Benninghoff, Consulting Forester.)

Can the impact of mountain pine beetles be mitigated by taking a proactive approach to forest management before the beetles arrive and aggressive direct control of the beetles after they arrive?

It is often said that the current mountain pine beetle (MPB) epidemic is a natural event, that it is too big to do anything about, and that we should just accept whatever happens. Given the value of our property and lifestyle, as well as the potential for increased wildfire activity, should we accept these views or should we try to manage the situation in the hope of improving the outcome to some degree? Bruce Benninghoff, a consulting forester who is very familiar with Pine Brook Hills, recently prepared a paper on the success of the Pine Brook Hills proactive BeetleBuster effort. That paper will soon be posted on various websites, including www.beetlebusters.net. In the meantime, here's a quick look at the highlights of his report.

In 2007, based on US Forest Service information, the MPB population was at endemic levels in our region. MPBs had moved across the continental divide and were primarily impacting lodgepole and limber pine west of the Peak to Peak Highway.

By 2009 MPBs were attacking lodgepole and some ponderosa east of the Peak to Peak Hwy.

By 2010 (Figure 1) MPBs were munching steadily eastward directly toward Pine Brook Hills, and attacking both lodgepole and ponderosa pine.

By 2011 (Figure 2) there were no attacks of significance to draw the attention of the aerial survey spotters in the Pine Brook Hills vicinity. There may be several possible explanations for this:

- Good fortune.
- A significant portion of suitable host material upwind (west) of Pine Brook Hills had been scorched in the Fourmile Canyon fire (2010) and thus was no longer suitable host material for MPB.
- The volunteer group known as the BeetleBusters had been actively combatting MPB since 2004.
- A combination of any or all of the above.

The BeetleBusters volunteer effort was organized by Pine Brook Hills resident, Suzanne Adams, in 2003. The early focus was on awareness of the epidemic in

Grand County and education about the beetles, their habitat requirements, long term mitigation strategies, and short term control methods.

The long term mitigation strategy was to emphasize the need for:

- Thinning the forest back to lower tree densities that allows each tree to be more vigorous and better able to defend itself if attacked
- Maintaining species diversity
- Promoting age-class diversity

All this was generally compatible with the defensible space recommendations from the equally proactive Boulder Mtn. Fire Protection District.

The short term control methods recommended were defensive spraying of key trees and aggressive direct control of beetles. Trained volunteers surveyed properties on request, and educated landowners about their findings and treatment options.

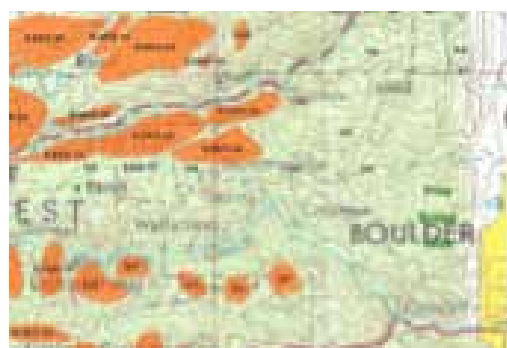


Figure 1. US Forest Service aerial survey showing MPB activity around Pine Brook Hills (2010). Pine Brook is near the right edge.

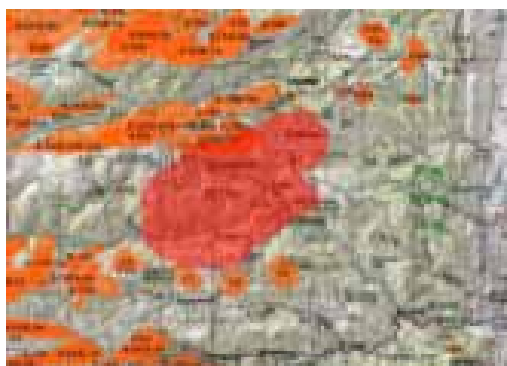


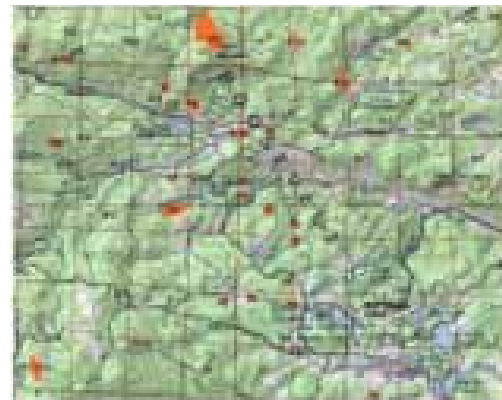
Figure 2. By 2011 the attacks were more concentrated to the west, north and south of Pine Brook Hills. (The red area is the Fourmile Canyon burn area.)

kill off enough beetles to keep the population static. By detecting new infestations of MPB right after the annual flight is over, and achieving the treatment of at least 75% of the newly attacked trees, the MPB population has been kept in check.

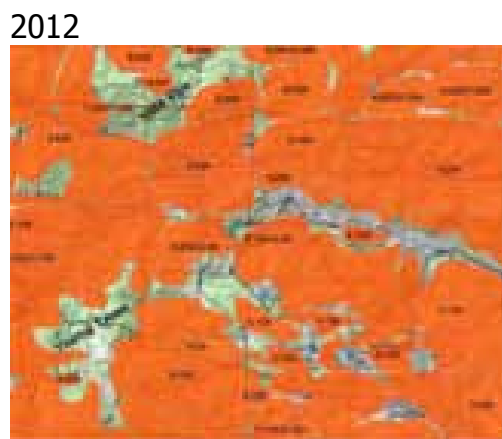
Thanks to the large number of residents who took the time to become educated and to the excellent community-wide education efforts via community newsletters and websites, the message did not fall on deaf ears. Most residents opted to join in the effort and as a result have managed to

The BeetleBuster effort may or may not be responsible for the lack of MPB attacks in and around Pine Brook Hills; however, a simple visual comparison of Pine Brook Hills with a similar community is educational.

Here are two images that show MPB activity in 2007 and 2011 for a similar area on the Front Range.



In this area, there was no organized effort to mitigate or control the epidemic until 2011. Educa-



tion efforts were hampered by a higher proportion of non-resident owners, and less effective communication via community newsletters and web sites than was the

case in Pine Brook Hills. This BeetleBuster program may prove to be a valiant effort that started too late to have a large impact.

In comparison, Pine Brook Hills had a lower forest density before the MPB arrived. And when the beetles did arrive, landowners identified and treated more than 100 trees every year. Such efforts were not initiated in the other community until after the MPB were well established.

Does this comparison prove that the Pine Brook Hills effort was effective as the map suggests? NO! Is it all over in either community? NO! The final chapter has yet to be written.

What we can say with some certainty, however, is that landowners need to continue to be proactive. Species diversity, age-class diversity, and appropriate forest density can't be achieved overnight. It is an ongoing effort, as is identifying and treating infested trees.

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Nature's Camouflage. Lion guarding its kill on Old Stage Road.