



A NEW YEAR'S REPORT AND THANK YOU TO FRIENDS OF GRANT CREEK

Fellow Friends of Grant Creek,

What a year it was! But as Mae Nan Ellingson commented recently, the good news is we've reestablished old friendships and made new ones. That's particularly the case with the Friends of Grant Creek (FOGC), which resurfaced this summer after a couple of relatively quiet decades. We'd like to bring you up to date on Friends of Grant Creek activities.

Thanks so much to each and every one of you for encouraging the City Council to uphold the existing zoning at 2920 Expo Parkway (the reclaimed quarry). Three three-story apartment buildings are being constructed on the portion of the property where permitted by the existing zoning. We will inform you if we hear of new plans for "development" of the remainder of the property. And, watch our website: <https://www.friendsofgrantcreek.org/>

We haven't stopped working on behalf of Grant Creek. Notably, we now have a "FOGC Wildfire Risk Task Force" that includes John Langstaff, Tim Hunt, RT Cox, Mike Cole and Rich Lasko. The group is working to encourage development of an evacuation plan for Grant Creek and also to encourage preparations by homeowners and large landowners to reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfire.

There's a lot of overlap between FOGC and the Grant Creek Trails Association (GCTA). Thanks to contributions to GCTA, the County section of the Grant Creek Trail is being plowed as frequently as the City section. The City plows after an inch or more of snowfall, while the County usually plows after three inches of snowfall. The County has only enough funds for six plowings (which have almost all been used), so GCTA will be picking up the costs of the extra plowing this winter.

The GCTA received a \$3,500 grant from the Max and Betty Swanson Foundation. Those funds will be used with a \$3,000 Office of Neighborhoods grant and a \$500 Historical Museum at Fort Missoula grant to design and install interpretive signs along the Grant Creek Trail. Depending on how far the funds stretch, the Association would also like to install another couple of benches. Lots of work to be done and approvals to be obtained, but we're happy that the Séliš-Q̓ispé Culture Committee is preparing two signs for the trail, one showing the tribal place names for the Missoula Valley and the other discussing Julia Grant Higgins, daughter of Richard Grant (our valley namesake), a woman of native heritage who married early settler and co-founder of Missoula, CP Higgins.

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