



Whitefish Pilot

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Doug Sprau, owner of Lumi Powboards, stands with two models of the surfy fun snow sliding board.. (Photo provided)

Council amends Twins lease agreement

By **JULIE ENGLER**
 Whitefish Pilot

Whitefish City Council last week amended a long-term agreement with the Glacier Twins, as well as a related lease agreement with Verizon Wireless.

In 2002, the city and the Glacier Twins American Legion baseball team signed a 55-year agreement for the stadium grounds at Memorial Field that requires the Twins to pay \$1 per year in rent to the city beginning in January 2003. The initial lease is 25 years, and the Twins have the option to renew the lease for two consecutive, 15-year terms.

City staff met with representatives of the Twins several times to discuss the changes and address some of the community's concerns with the long-term lease agreement.

"We were met with willingness from the Twins," Whitefish City Attorney Angela Jacobs said at the meeting. "Unless the Twins were in breach of the agreement, they really didn't have to sit down with us, and they were willing to do that, and I'd really like to acknowledge that."

One amendment to the lease agreement is that it can be renewed only with the written approval of both the city and the Twins.

The city may terminate the lease if the Twins fail to use the property for "baseball or related programs" for more than one year.

The city will no longer be required to inspect the property regularly, although Jacobs said the city may still inspect the property with 48 hours' notice.

Another change clarified that the Twins have priority, the Whitefish School District second, and the general public third, regarding use of the prop-

Whitefish-made boards make for surfy fun in the snow

By **JULIE ENGLER**
 Whitefish Pilot

Looking for a different way to have fun in the snow? A Lumi Powboard pow surfer may be the ticket.

Pow surfers look like a short snowboard without bindings or a large skateboard without wheels. Riders can wear any type of footwear they like, from snowboard boots to work boots.

Pow surfers are a throwback to Snurfers, an early-stage incarnation of a snowboard. Snurfers come with a rope to hold and no

bindings. "So, this is just like a modern version of that," Doug Sprau said of the Lumi Powboard. "Instead of a rope you have a leash and it has no bindings. It's more of a surfy feel and a fun floaty [feeling]."

He said a Lumi Powboard can be used anywhere from the backyard to the backcountry, given there are about 5 inches of powder to make it work. Since they have no bindings, and no edges, they are not for resort use.

"I'll just hike around and run the dog with it and you

find a nice deep hill and it's fun for stuff like that. That's kind of what I based it around," he said. "It's a fun thing to go out and just hang out with a group of people."

The fun-filled nature of pow surfers make up for the learning curve when starting to ride. Catching air is difficult, but big air is not always the point. Sprau describes riding a pow surfer as childish, silly fun.

"You're leashed in so if you do fall, your board hangs out and you just plop," he added with a laugh.

Sprau and his wife, Rebecca, are a couple of snow bums who moved to Whitefish from Colorado eight years ago. Last summer, he started making Lumi Powboards. His business is named after his dog, Lumi, the Finnish word for snow.

Sprau built his own press, and he makes three models of his snow surfing powder board by hand in his Whitefish shop. It takes a little more than a week, from start to finish, for him to complete a board.

The boards begin with a P-Tex base, followed by

See **POWBOARD, A5**

See **FIELD, A6**

Thinning project planned for Big Mountain

By **KELSEY EVANS**
 Whitefish Pilot

Flathead National Forest plans to remove trees on the front side of Big Mountain this summer as part of the 200-acre Big Mountain Fuels Project directly adjacent to Whitefish Mountain Resort infrastructure.

Plans include removing accumulated vegetation and dense trees along Chairs 1, 2 and 4 to reduce the risk of wildfire.

Most of the project, 150 acres, will see improvement cuts, an intermediate level of treatment that will decrease

density and remove fuel ladders, while leaving fire-tolerant species such as western larch and Douglas fir.

Another 48 acres, located primarily along lift lines, will see a more varied, individual selection of tree removal.

Only existing roads will be used for commercial harvest and post-harvest fuels methods.

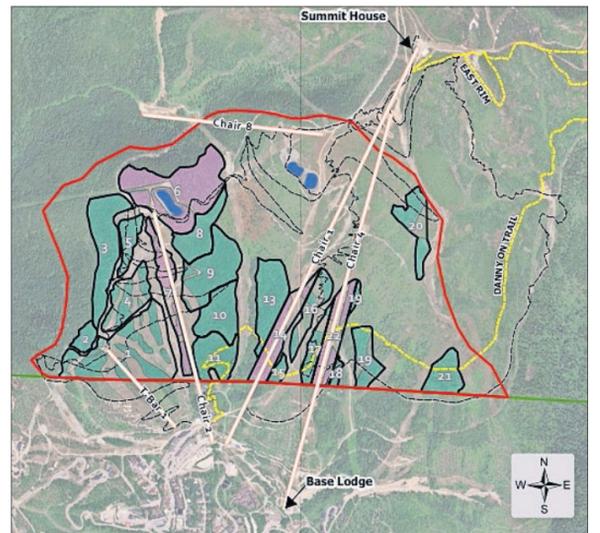
According to the Flathead National Forest, the project will complement recent and planned work on adjacent private lands.

The project's proposal indicates that the project will be categorically excluded from an environmental impact state-

ment, as it fits under a wildfire resilience category of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act.

The project will be doubly exempt from an environmental impact statement because it also utilizes an emergency authorization.

Emergency authorizations are outlined in an April 2025 memorandum by U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Brooke Rollins. The memo designates 112,646,000 acres – 59% of all NFS lands – as an emergency situation due to wildfire risk. The memo follows



See **PROJECT, A6**

A map of proposed treatment for the Big Mountain Fuels Reduction Project.



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46
 Years since USA men's hockey won gold

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