

Dragonfest of Colorado  
July 11, 2012

## ***Dragonfest Cancels 2012 Retreat Due to Safety Concerns***

*Press Release:* The Board of Directors of Dragonfest of Colorado, after many discussions with local authorities and the land owner who hosts our Retreat, are officially cancelling Dragonfest 2012 for the safety and well-being of the membership, as well as the land we use in this extremely dry climate. We did not arrive at this decision lightly, especially considering Dragonfest has held the retreat for 26 years in a row without a cancellation of any kind. This year, the only reason we are canceling is for your safety and the safety of the Earth.

As most are aware, this is one of the hottest and driest years on record, which has already resulted in severe wildfires that have consumed thousands of acres across Colorado (as well as many other states), with hundreds of homes destroyed, and has taxed the resources of all of Colorado's fire departments as well as many from around the nation. We, as pagans, feel that to continue to host a huge gathering, where open flame is part of our nightly ritual and a source of daily cooking, would be dishonoring the Earth as well as ourselves, the landowner, and the already exhausted authorities.

The Board met at the beginning of July to discuss how a potential disaster could impact us, including evacuation plans, the status of the vegetation, the current availability of resources to help mitigate such disasters, as well as the time needed to inform our members of any potential cancellation and what that might mean to them: money spent in the last few weeks to prepare for Dragonfest, time to cancel travel plans and vacations, and time needed to potentially create alternate plans for this year. We would have needed a substantial amount of rain to fall continuously every day for more than 2 weeks for us to feel that the Dragonfest retreat could continue safely. Though there have been rains recently in the Denver metro area, as well as in some mountainous areas; to date there has not been enough precipitation on the land we would be using to rehydrate the vegetation and ground to a level sufficient enough to elevate it out of its current tinderbox status.

**We will be holding an Open Meeting on Saturday, July 21<sup>st</sup> at 10am at [Full Moon Books](#) to answer any concerns or questions our members might have.**

We will also be contacting the already registered members via telephone or email during the evenings of Monday, July 16<sup>th</sup> and Tuesday, July 17<sup>th</sup>. If you are a registered member and have not heard from us after this date, you may contact [board@dragonfest.org](mailto:board@dragonfest.org). The registered members will have a choice of the following:

1. Dragonfest will hold your membership fee for the 2013 retreat. This is the simplest method as it gives the member the ability to already have paid for the next year and allows us to still make required payments such as a cancellation fee to the landowner, our accountant fees and yearly storage. If you opt for this method, you will be sent a postcard in February, reminding you of your paid status along with our annual "Dragons are coming" mailer (which is sent to all our members reminding them of upcoming Retreat information including registration deadlines).

2. You may elect to donate a portion of your 2012 retreat fee back to Dragonfest so they can make their annual payments. The rest will be refunded back to you in the form of a check or reimbursement via PayPal .
3. You may choose to receive a full refund less \$2.50 to cover postage and handling (envelopes and checks cost money).

Dragonfest Board and Staff will be creating a free public ritual honoring the Earth and its hopeful regrowth later this fall. As we have more information about this special event, we will be posting it here on our website.

Blessed Be,

Sheána Heartsong, President

Dona Carroll

Joseph Davalt

Cecelia Thomas

Christine Childs

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*For further inquiries regarding this Press Release or other Dragonfest topics, please contact the Corporate Communications Officer, [Cecelia Thomas](#)*