



Hello Steve,

I am writing you today after returning from our family vacation home in ML. My wife, two daughters and I were awakened @ 0300 on Sunday, January 30 to the eerie sound of clawing underneath the floorboards of the room my daughters were sleeping in. From the combination of clawing on wood, grunting and heavy breathing it was evident the culprit was none other than a bear. Let me tell you it was a pretty traumatizing way for two young girls to be woken up. A short while later, and the girls sleeping in the living room, the bear settled down. For the remainder of our stay we only heard an occasional grunt from our unexpected house guest. The kids nicknamed him/her "Grunter."

Later on the morning of the original discovery I notified Mammoth PD and they dispatched two of their officers. When they arrived I showed them to the only access panel at the rear of the cabin to find it had been screwed shut with about 20 drywall screws. We decided to take down the access panel and let the bear retreat on his/her own. Problem was I had to dig a few feet of snow and find a cordless drill to take out the screws. Enter our neighbor Michael. He offered his Dewalt cordless and the story of how this past fall two male bears were found under the cabin. He stated you and the police were dispatched to our residence on Shady Rest. He went on to tell of how after using pepper spray, not one, but two male bears exited the access at the rear of the house. It was determined that after the two bears retreated, and there were no

others underneath the house, the wood panel was secured in place. Well, I've got news for you, I think those two males had some company and he or she has been there ever since. There has been only one other visitor to stay at the family vacation home since, and after speaking with them, they did not know of the bear incident last fall let alone of the unwanted guest underneath the cabin.

Before leaving for a day skiing on the mountain, I had taken the panel down and left. After returning from a powder day on the hill, it was difficult to tell if the bear had retreated. I secured the panel back in place and went about our evening. The next day I decided to take some digital photos of views under the cabin from an access panel in the kitchen floor (used for turning on/off the water supply when de-winterizing before vacating). Sure enough the photos revealed what appears to be an adult sized bear [see photo here]. Just before leaving town, I took the screws out of the access panel and left it secured by a few small latches. Ones which could be easily pushed out when and if our hibernating bear wishes to leave. Only problem would be if the bear is too big to get out. Enter The Bear Whisperer. Would you be able to check things out when you return to town? I don't know when others will be using the cabin, but it would be nice to know if and when it is safe to return. Thank you for your concern in this matter.

Sincerely,
Scott Bernard
Ventura, Calif.