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A Family of Four Joins Hands to Build Two Tiny Homes in Washington

Upon relocating to the Methow Valley, a family finds their compact cabin to be a little too cozy—so they roll up their sleeves and break ground.



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A Seattle-Based family found that they could work and attend school from anywhere during the pandemic—so they decided to escape the big city and relocate to their getaway cabin in Washington’s Methow Valley.

The two-room retreat was fine for short trips, but the family of four needed more space if it was going to be their primary home. To make extra room, they pitched a Sibley Bell tent on an outdoor platform, although the Washington winters proved far too cold for sleeping in it.

What the family really needed was more square footage, but permitting and building an addition to the existing cabin would take several years—and they sought space their two teenagers could use once school began in the fall. After much deliberation, they decided to add a pair of 144-square-foot mobile tiny homes to their compound

The homeowners reached out to Forrest Murphy at Cast Architecture to design the structures, and the architect passed along building instructions so that the family could construct the dwellings themselves.



Located on the Chewuch River in northeast Washington, the wooded property is home to a two-room cabin and two 144-square-foot tiny homes. Photo: Benjamin Drummond

The homeowners thoroughly researched their project ahead of time, and they found websites like Tiny Nest Project and the Actually Tiny House Project helpful. The former provided resources for conceptualizing the process, while the latter helped with navigating building details. During the summer of 2021, with the help of family and friends, the family of four constructed the two small shelters.

Each tiny home houses a wood-burning stove, a living space, a composting toilet, and a lofted bed tucked under a slightly pitched roof. Although compact, they offer all the comforts of home—including lights, outlets, and radiant floor heating. Floor-to-ceiling windows and lofted sleeping spaces make the tiny homes feel larger and brighter than their square footage, and the dwellings provide the additional space and privacy the homeowners desired.



The tiny homes were designed by CAST architecture.

Photo: Benjamin Drummond

"Within the constraints of a highway-legal trailer, my main goal was to balance an interior that provides several distinct spatial experiences with a simple exterior geometry," Murphy says. "It was important to make the small volume feel bigger, and for the project to be easy to build by nonprofessionals. Though the two houses are independent, I always thought of them as a pair, with the space between them as important as the space inside."

The family already has plans to expand their compound this summer. Cast Architecture is designing a bath house and a deck to be built in-between the tiny homes, so that the family can enjoy their remote retreat for years to come.

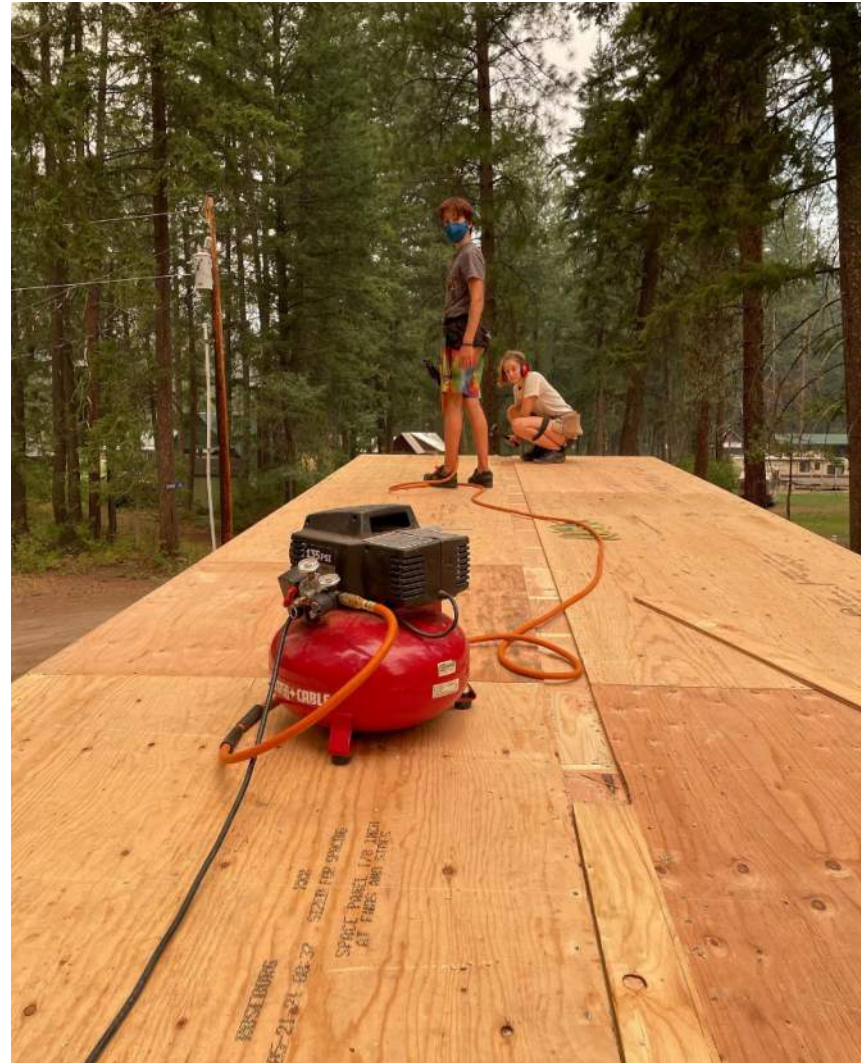


Cast Architecture provided plans for the compact dwellings, and the family of four constructed them with the help of family and friends.

Photo: McCarthyRekart Family

The family's two teenagers helped construct the tiny homes over the summer of 2021.

Photo: McCarthyRekart Family





A tiny wood-burning stove warms each cabin.
Photo: Benjamin Drummond



The walls are covered in six-inch pine shiplap siding painted in a creamy white and soothing green. The ceilings are clad in finished birch, and the spaces are trimmed in D-grade fir to keep costs down.

Photo: Benjamin Drummond



The family plans to expand their compound by building a bathhouse and deck in between the two tiny homes.

Photo: Benjamin Drummond



Clad in shou sugi ban siding and topped with standing-seam metal roofs, the compact dwellings blend into their forested surroundings.

Photo: Benjamin Drummond

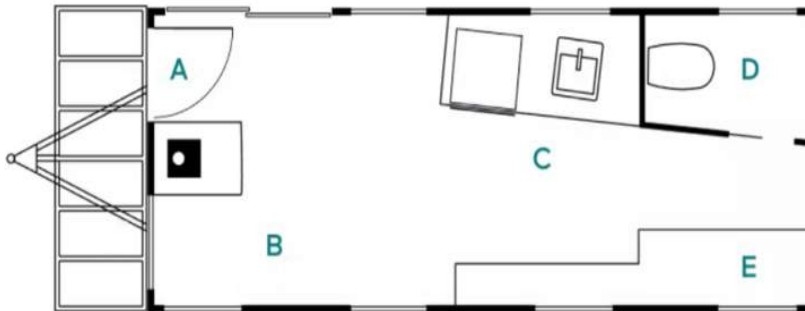


McCarthyRekart Tiny Home

ARCHITECT **Cast Architecture**

LOCATION **Methow Valley, Washington**

- A Entry
- B Living Area
- C Kitchen
- D Bathroom
- E Office/Dining Area



Project Credits:

Architect of Record: [Cast Architecture](#) / [@cast.arch](#)

Builder: Homeowners

Construction Advisor: MTJ Build LLC.

Interior Design: Cast Architecture

Roofer: Jerediah Bauer Exteriors