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From: Greg Articles

Comment:

The point of copyright law is to secure an economic advantage for innovators by allowing them exclusive control of the copyrighted works. In order to obtain the maximum benefit from that advantage, it is critical that those who wish to use copyrighted material be given a low-cost option for discovering the copyright holder.

In the absence of requirements to regularly re-register for copyright benefits, I suggest placing a limit on the damages that can be sought by a copyright holder if their contact information is not kept current at the Copyright Office. After all, if the copyright holder is not interested enough in the economic advantage of the copyright to place it on the market, what is the value to society of extending copyright protection to the work?

The damages limit should be small but non-negligible. The slight burden placed on the copyright holder to keep their information up-to-date (a simple task in the era of the World Wide Web) would be far outweighed by the cultural benefit to our country -- those who wished to use orphan works would then be able to move ahead with a knowable economic risk to using the work without explicit permission, while non-orphaned works would retain all benefits of copyright.