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Comment:

Copyright owners should owe the public at large the minimum duty to identify themselves and that they still wish to maintain their ownership of their works.

If it is impossible to locate an owner to request use of a work for republishing or the creation of derivative works then the work should be declared abandoned and put into the public domain.

Copyrights were granted to encourage the creation of works of benefit to society. The continued "protection" of the copyright of abandoned works serves no such purpose.

Perhaps a mechanism could be created where people wishing to use a work for which they can't locate the copyright owner would publish clear identification of the work on a public website. After a period of residence on the list the work could be declared abandoned and return to the public domain.

This site should be publicized so that copyright owners could access it and register their continued desire to maintain ownership.