



**RUBY RANCH**

# Bringing Our Community Together via Communication

## August, 2022 Newsletter



### Sleep Better Tonight!

The Eagle's Nest Fuel Break has been cut and the work has been approved by the US Forest Service. The project has been widely acclaimed as a model for private-public partnership in meeting an urgent fire mitigation need.

Ruby Ranch owners previously approved a three-year tax of 20 mils per year, generating about \$400,000 to pay for this work.

Subsequently, we received a commitment for a Federal contribution of \$125,000 to the project, along with a Summit County grant of \$175,000, lowering what we paid to about \$200,000. The idea that we could get this work done for that low an amount of money is almost as amazing as the quality of the work done by the loggers who completed the project!

### Early Fall Edition

The Willow Brook Metro District (WBMD) Board recently adopted a formal communications policy (attached) and included this newsletter as one of several ways in which they will inform Ruby Ranch owners.

Hereafter, this newsletter will communicate on behalf of the WBMD Board by putting Board business first in each publication and highlighting those matters in blue. In general, anything dealing with financial expenditures, fees, taxes, etc., will receive priority herein.

The Board met on Friday, August 26 and dealt with several matters of substance. The primary purpose of this newsletter is to report on those matters.

The WBMD is responsible for Ranch infrastructure and has taxing authority to keep the infrastructure and land management in good shape. These are busy times on Ruby Ranch.

And once again, thanks to John Longhill for his excellent pictures of wildlife. We really do live in our own National Park!

### A New Well 1

The Metro Board authorized a new Well 1 to be drilled just above South Ruby Road and just below the Wherry home, with work beginning in early October and to be completed by the end of the year.

Ruby Ranch gets its water from two wells on the Ranch, known as Wells 1 and 2. Well 1, which provides water for the south side of the Ranch, ran dry last summer, and returned to low-level production last fall. Meanwhile, Well 2 near the Barn has provided adequate water for the entire Ranch but relying on Well 2 alone is not an acceptable solution. Our hydrologist recommends replacing the existing Well 1 by drilling a new well just above the old one (see the star on the adjacent map.)

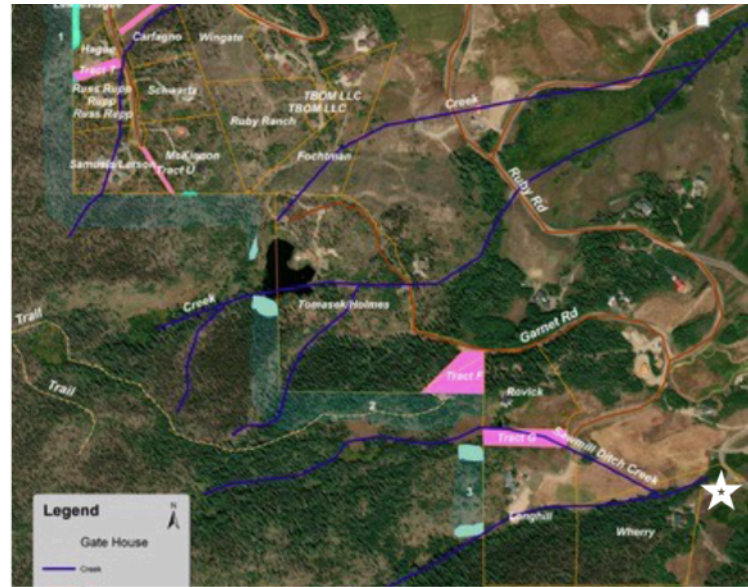
Our water storage tanks for the south side of the Ranch remain full at about 50,000 gallons of water, available to fight fires if needed.

### Clearing the Sawmill Ditch

The Metro Board also hired the same Oregon loggers who cut our Fuel Break in the Wilderness to clear trees from our Sawmill Ditch up to its head gate on Willow Creek. Not only does that ditch irrigate our hay meadows, but it also raises the water table and recharges our water wells.

This ditch runs through the Eagle's Nest Wilderness for about 2 miles before it reaches the Ranch, so the US Forest Service requires maintenance work be done using hand saws. The ditch has been badly impacted by beetle kill trees, which can rip out a ditch sidewall and completely disrupt water flow.

Over the years we have attempted to maintain good water flow by hiring local loggers and using volunteer labor, but the Oregon loggers worked their magic, completely clearing a five foot swath on either side of the ditch all the way to the head gate. So good that we could put them to work on this perennial problem!



*New Well 1 located at "white star" on map*



### Communication

The Metro Board emphasized the need for a clear path of communication with the Ranch Manager when owners need work done on their properties, due in part to the Colorado laws concerning public records. Please file a work order using the updated website, [rubyranch.com](http://rubyranch.com), but not on [rr-general](http://rr-general.com). Our Ranch Manager will reply promptly and CRS, our district manager, will maintain proper records of all transactions. In truly urgent matters, please email Jim at [ranchmanager@wbmetro.org](mailto:ranchmanager@wbmetro.org) or call him at (970)485-4342.

Along a similar line, CRS has charged several thousand dollars for work done answering questions from individual owners. The Board has directed CRS not to work on inquires that have not been directed to it by the Board. Any such question should first be addressed to the Board at [wbmetro.org](http://wbmetro.org)

### A good deal on RAP

The Town of Silverthorne offered the Board recycled asphalt (RAP) for future year's use on our dirt roads for the cost of trucking it onto the Ranch, with the material for free. Historically, we spent about \$10,000 or more annually @ \$680 per truckload for RAP. This will cost us \$60/load and will be stored over the winter at the foot of Tract F on Garnet Road.

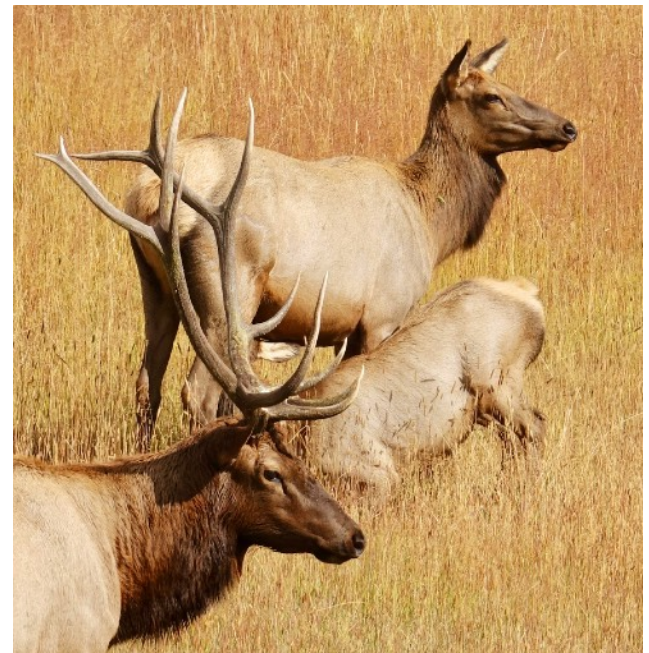
### Hay Cutting

Our hay cutters are busy cutting hay elsewhere but confirm they will be on the Ranch soon. The delay in harvesting this year may be a blessing since constant rain could create moldy hay which can be fatal for horses. September usually brings clear weather. So our hay is uncut but not for long.

### Water and General Fund Fees

Legal counsel for the Board confirmed that both the Water and General Fund Fees enacted by the Board this year were properly noticed and legal under Colorado State law. Our district manager, CRS, will advise any owners who are in arrears on those fees of the amount they owe.

Individual owners have expressed a preference for converting fees to tax-deductible taxes where possible and the Board will place such a conversion of the General Fund fee on the November ballot for voter approval.



### Signs, Way-finding, Monoliths, Solar Lights

The Board also approved a minimal amount of funding (about \$3,000) for signage, to include “Ruby Ranch” on the front gate monolith.

Previous issues of this newsletter described the excellent signage package recommended for the entire Ranch by our signage expert, Carli Barnhart.



### Culverts

Our recent culvert crisis on Emerald Road reminds us of two facts. First, our infrastructure is as much as 40 years old and will fail periodically, so adequate reserves are essential. Many culverts were replaced during our water line reconstruction. The Emerald Road culvert was not replaced. Hence the need for rebuilding the General Fund.

Second, if you have a culvert under your driveway, please remember that the culvert is your responsibility to maintain and if necessary, replace. Periodic removal of debris and “power washing” is recommended as a preventative a measure. This should be done prior to the onset of winter to prevent a backup of ice and snow on public roads, as well as a more difficult “fix” to clear the problem.



### Snowplowing your driveway

The Metro District plowed 15 privately owned driveways for the first time last year, charging market-based rates. New contracts will shortly be offered to those owners for the 2022-23 season and our Ranch Manager, Jim Neilsen believes a few additional contracts/driveways will be possible.

Your snowplowing money stays on the Ranch and contributes to the Metro District budget. Jim has many years of experience snowplowing roads for the Town of Silverthorne, so the work will be in competent hands. Please advise Jim at [ranchmanager.wbmetro.org](http://ranchmanager.wbmetro.org) if interested.



### Road Maintenance

And speaking of roads, our maintenance this summer was turned over to Scofield, Inc., a local firm who did a superb job which has held up well to the unusual amount of rain we have experienced. Scofield combined experienced operators with all the equipment needed for giving us the best road surface in memory...a heavy duty road grader, water truck and impact roller. Dirt roads done right!



*Happy fall!*