
NEWSLETTER

Bringing Our Community Together via Communication

Patrick O'Flynn to be Ruby Ranch Manager

Yesterday, the WBMD Board hired Patrick O'Flynn to be our full time Ranch Manager. 83 people applied for the job and six were interviewed before the Interview Committee settled on Patrick and the Board voted to hire him. Patrick officially begins his new job on June 1.

Patrick is originally from the Kansas City area (Overland Park). His dad is from there and his mom is from Ireland. A majority of Patrick's family is in Ireland and in Delaware. Patrick is married and his wife teaches at Summit Cove Elementary School. They are expecting their first child in mid-June.

Patrick brings good experience in working with meadows, roads, snow and related equipment. Patrick attended Kansas State University where he earned a degree in horticulture with the intent to work on golf courses. He interned three years in Colorado in the Vail Valley area and one year in Hamilton, Montana on the Charles Schwab private course. His most recent job entailed directing all night snow plowing for the Town of Breckenridge and doing both winter and summer roadwork, after doing similar work in previous years for Avon and Beaver Creek.

Patrick is a pleasant, high energy, out-going person with an interest in learning and a knack for conflict resolution. Our Metro Board president, EJ Olbright, will oversee Patrick's initial training on the Ranch, which will center on ditch maintenance and irrigation, working alongside Jon and Becky Rovick to open the ditches for this summer. The plan is to introduce Patrick to various functions on Ruby Ranch one step at a time, working with experienced Ranch people to become familiar with key Ranch infrastructure; meadow maintenance, roads, the water system, the gate and gatehouse, trash, the barn, fencing, security, etc.

Initially, Patrick will focus entirely on the public aspects of Ranch Management. Longer term, following the training period, Patrick will likely be available for private work such as snow-plowing driveways under terms yet to be decided.

Your Metro Board asks you to help Patrick succeed in this job, not just next year or the year after but for decades to come. As one of them said yesterday, "let's show Patrick a lot of love." That captures the spirit needed for this entire enterprise. Thanks in advance for your neighborly assistance.

The Metro Board would also like to thank the members of the Interview Committee who found and recommended this outstanding person. They were Kevin Boylan, David Wingate, EJ Olbright, John Longhill, Jon Rovick, Sue Blair and Eric Kircher.



Firewise: More on flying embers

The nearby picture shows a person taking a video of a roaring wildfire only 45 feet from their home. It can be watched at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dq6wy_tffpg. Believe it or not, this video provides a basis for optimism. The heat is very uncomfortable for the person but not sufficient to ignite the wood in the home, which survived intact.

But the flying embers associated with the fire are a real danger, if they land in combustible material like pine needles, dried branches or an old woodpile up next to the house. As you do your spring clean-up, think about taking the following preventative actions:

1. Clean your gutters
2. Trim branches touching your roof and walls so they don't trap embers
3. Buy non-flammable yard furniture
4. Move woodpiles away from the house
5. Remove any other flammable objects away from the house
6. Use spring plantings near the house that stay green all summer w/o dead branches
7. Review the Ruby Ranch Evacuation Guidelines (www.rubyranch.com) and print out copies to have on hand at home.

The Metro Board has agreed to install Emergency Exit signs on non-combustible poles as needed to point the way to the Willow Brook exit from all parts of the Ranch. These should be particularly helpful to short term renters and should be highlighted as a part of short-term rental agreements.



A sure sign of Spring

Spring Clean Up on the Ranch

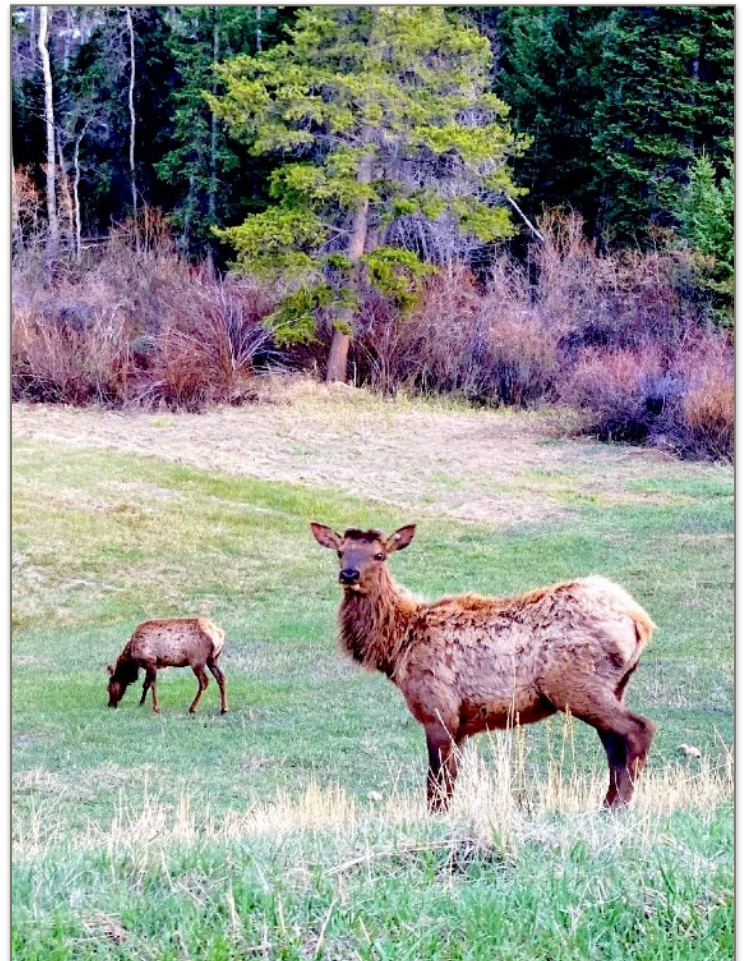
And speaking of spring clean-up, as the snow melts it reveals the “flotsam and jetsam” of a long high-country winter. As you are out and about, your neighbors would appreciate it if you kept a sharp eye out for trash and picked it up as you went along. For example, we understand there are many tennis balls along the roads and in the meadows, suggesting we need fewer balls or dogs that are better at finding the balls! Take your pick.

Summer Haying Plans

Our Stable/Irrigation/Haying Committee, ably chaired by the Rovick’s, will once again hire neighboring ranchers to harvest the hay in our meadows; Mike Bohrer and Leonard Causland from Maryland Creek Ranch. Mike and Leo have harvested Hay on Ruby Ranch for many years in the past.

They have agreed to harvest the following meadows – Lower K, O, P, and the northern portion of B. The hay will be baled in “squares” which is the most usable form for our horse owners and sold back to our owners at “valley prices”.

Our Ranch Manager will be in charge of irrigating our meadows and maintaining our ditches but will not be doing the hay harvesting at this time.



Skyrocketing Lumber Prices

Lumber prices have increased an astounding 375% in the last year according to Forbes Magazine. And we still have lots of dead trees on or next to Ruby Ranch, so we are exploring whether we have a chance to turn our historic problem into an opportunity. Three places stand out.

First and foremost is the Eagle's Nest Project, but those trees are the property of the US Forest Service. However, we expect the USFS will ask Ruby Ranch to pay at least a significant part of the Project's cost and if so, the value of the wood might help offset the cost.

Second, Lots 1 and 2 are sizable in acreage and heavily covered in dead trees. The Colorado Forest Service (Ashley Garrison) is helping us explore the possibility of a "timber sale" on those lots, to reduce (or even eliminate the cost.)

Third, Lot 32 just below upper Emerald has about 2,000 downed trees on the hillside which should be removed and now that may be affordable. The Lot 32 owners are in touch with a person who may be willing to remove the trees at no cost.

Cross your fingers and maybe most or all of this will come to pass!

Service Request Process

The Metro District is considering adoption of a Service Request form and process to help the Board, the Ranch Manager and the District Manager (Sue Blair) to provide you even better service, both on a routine basis and in emergencies. If, for example, you had a problem with the road near your home, this is the process you would use to get the road fixed. A draft of the proposed Process is attached to the email transmitting this newsletter. As always your input at the next Metro Board meeting will be appreciated.

Thanks John Longhill!

For all the great wildlife photos which remind us that Ruby Ranch is indeed a special place.

