

Cedar Mesa Ranches - HOA Newsletter

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CEDAR MESA RANCHES

President's Report

This has been a busy spring and I would like to thank everyone that has helped with our various projects and given the Board their support. As you will see from the following reports, we are attempting to attack the noxious weed problem and the fire problem. We have had quite a few fires and have been successful in putting them out except for one which required the assistance of a helicopter. The one that almost got away from the team was partially due to the fact that the property had not been mitigated. It cannot be stressed enough how important this is in this area.

Updates

(Much of the Cedar Mesa Ranches Updates are taken from the monthly HOA minutes. The minutes are distributed monthly via email. If you do not receive the minutes please let Ruth Bignell know so she can put you on the email list.)

◆ Fire

Unfortunately we live in an extremely fire prone area. With the seasonal storms of the summer we need to be especially vigilant when reviewing the issue of fire in our community.

A special fire meeting was held in June to address this issue. A plan has been formed to have members of the community take specific tasks to help locate and extinguish fires as they appear. In early June a spring storm triggered six fires within our development. The concentrated efforts of our residents were able to contain the fires until the fire department arrived to put them out. Time is critical to the effort. A lightning strike can create an out-of-control fire in a very short period of time. Due to this risk, Jim Bignell has created a list of residents who are willing to help locate and coordinate the effort of fighting the fire as soon as possible. Residents who have ATV's will be able to get to the fires quickly to do what they can to contain the area and alert the fire department as to the location and severity of the situation.

This strike force will include people who will be spotters, coordinators, fire fighters and fire fighters with ATV's. The fire fighters with ATV's will tackle the BLM land if a lightning strike occurs in the BLM land. A small group has been responsible for putting out several fires but the time has come to be more organized and include others. Therefore, we have several people visiting homeowners and asking them to sign up to help in some way. Once this information is obtained, we will set up the groups and contact everyone. Training will also be provided. This force is being formed for the dire need of rapid response to lightning strikes.

Because of the many fires, evacuation is a concern both for people and animals. A sign up sheet was circulated to those attending to list the animals on their property. For those not at the meeting, you can call Lanita at 565-1462 or email at: Lanita@diamondbackmetal.com to register your animals. An evacuation plan is being formulated in conjunction with the Fire Committee.

If you are interested in helping with this effort please contact Ruth Bignell.

◆ Weeds and Trees

Noxious weeds in the subdivision have been sprayed. Jim Bignell and Gary Brodhagen have spent many hours over the past month spraying weeds on all 10 miles of road. A request was made to purchase 5, 25-gal sprayers for use on ATV's and allocate them to HOA members who are interested in spraying a portion of the

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roads. We have 5 volunteers who will participate. The HOA will also supply the chemicals to each volunteer. This way, it will be done more quickly and not put a burden on a couple of members. The cost of the sprayers is approximately \$100 each. After this year, the cost will only be for the chemicals. This will save the HOA over \$1,000 per year. These sprayers will also be used to fight fires in the subdivision.

Frank Dean of Fire Fence gave a presentation on a new product. It is a containment system for a solid cartridge of Class A wetting agent. Some of the features are: it is used with a garden hose and sprinklers; it forms a special type of Class A foam with excellent wetting ability and protects your home from burning and re-igniting on the surface as well as deep inside. The cost is approximately \$225 per cylinder. For more information, you can call 970-560-2110 or check the website at: www.fire-fence.com

Mitigation is very important in our subdivision. There is a lot of fuel laying around on properties. We realize that those of you that live out of town are unable to clear your property however there are options available. For more information contact Jim or Ruth Bignell.

Noxious weeds have been a problem. There are a lot of lot/tracts that have thistle or other noxious weeds. The HOA is responsible for keeping the road right-of-way clear of these weeds. Homeowners are responsible for their property. Colorado law states that if your neighbor makes a noxious weed complaint against your property, the State can contact you for permission to inspect your property. If you refuse, they can get an injunction and go on your property to check the degree of infestation. They then notify you to clean it up, if you don't respond they will clean it up. You would then be responsible for all charges. It is very important to clear your property of these weeds. Once they bloom, they spread all over the place and infect others property.

◆ Building Advisory Committee

Do you have a number ID on your property? It is important that all lots have the appropriate ID. Number ID's have been placed on 7 properties. Currently, 7 others are in need of number ID's. Letters have been sent to those owners notifying them they have until July 15, 2006 to either put their own numbers on their property or to contact Jim Bignell or Greg Kemp and they will do it for them. The cost is \$20. After July 15, 2006, if we receive no response, a covenant lien will be placed on that property. It cannot be stressed strongly enough that with the fire situation, it is important that the

fire department be able to locate your property if need be. A motion was made to send the letter, 2nd, and passed.

◆ Roads

The recent rains enabled us to do a good grade on the roads. Because of the dry weather, it has been difficult to grade the roads without water. This is an expensive proposition but we have had to use it in order to get rid of the washboard effect on the roads. Currently roads 35 and K.3 have been graded, the hill on Road 35 was redone and water and two loads of gravel were added and rolled. Negotiations are still underway to redo the front entrance. It will be done by the end of summer

◆ Activity and Grounds

Cleanup day was a big success. We had twenty-seven members help with the cleanup. We were able to clean up to the mailboxes. Thanks to everyone who came to help. A special thanks to Jerry Anderson who brought his tractor and to Dorothy Snowball who brought her truck which had an automatic lift. Both transported a lot of debris to the dumpster.

The dumpster was put to good use also. Over 7 ton of trash was taken to the landfill over the 2-week period. The HOA BBQ will be on Sunday, July 23rd at the Bignell's, Lot 55 from 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm. Hot dogs and drinks will be provided. Everyone is to bring a covered dish or dessert and a chair. A flyer is attached to these minutes.

◆ Web Site

Please remember our web site. The address is www.cedarmesarancheshoa.org

Public Lands

People new to our area often are unaware of how our Public Land system works in Colorado. Cedar Mesa Ranches borders land which is managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), is next to a national park managed by the National Park Service (Mesa Verde), and is only minutes away from several National Forests managed by the Forest Service. Each of these governing organizations has specific regulations for our use and enjoyment of these areas. Enjoying these wonderful resources is why many of us chose to move to the Four Corners. Hiking, biking, riding, hunting, fishing and ATV use are all available to us on public land. However there are restrictions that carry fines if not followed. Following is an overview of how the public lands are governed and some of the rules and regulations they carry for recreational users.

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The San Juan Public Lands encompass some 2.5 million acres managed by the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management, stretching across five Colorado counties in the southwestern corner of the state. This terrain ranges from high-desert mesas to alpine peaks, with thousands of miles of back roads and hundreds of miles of trails to explore. These federal lands are managed for multiple uses; visitors are asked to respect each other and the natural resources.

FEDERAL PUBLIC LANDS

One of the largest attractions of the Rocky Mountains is the millions of acres of public land that are available for our use. There is plenty for everyone to enjoy, as long as we are considerate of others and abide by the regulations. Being considerate of others is not just good etiquette. It's also the law.

The primary federal land management agencies in Colorado are the [Bureau of Land Management \(BLM\)](#), the [U.S. Forest Service \(USFS\)](#) and the [National Park Service \(NPS\)](#). National Parks and Monuments usually charge a fee for entry. While camping and many forms of recreation are encouraged, hunting and some other outdoor activities are restricted. Contact local offices for specific information. For more information, contact the San Juan Public Lands Center at (970) 247-4874 or Colorado Division of Wildlife Durango Area Office at (970) 247-0855.

Access to federal public lands

Legal access to federal land is provided by a system of public and agency roads and trails. Public roads are intended to meet the transportation needs of the public user. Generally, a public road is any federal or state highway or county road administered by the state or county. BLM and USFS roads and trails are maintained for the administration and use of federal lands. Although generally open to the public, agency officials may restrict or control the use of these roads. Restrictions may be imposed for protection of sensitive or critical resources or to meet specific management needs. Land management agencies do not always have legal rights-of-way on all access roads or trails entering federal lands.

Bureau of Land Management

There are specific rules applied to use of BLM land. Contact the local BLM or Public Lands office to review these regulations which include off road use, any type of tree cutting or wood gathering, hunting and any type of commercial use.

The National Forest Service

All visitors and users of the National Forests are subject to Federal Regulations. The points of conduct listed are enforceable through Federal Regulations. [CFR Title 36, Part 261 - Prohibitions](#), are applicable to the National Forests. Copies of Title 36 are on file at all Forest Supervisor and District Ranger offices.

Public Property

- Preserve and protect your National Forests. Leave natural areas the way you find them. Practice "Leave No Trace" ethics.
- Do not carve, chop, cut and damage any live trees.

Camping

- If you are staying at a campground, you must camp only in those places specifically provided or marked.
- All vehicles, RVs, and trailers must be parked on your campsite or driveway. Driving or parking off road is not permitted.

Sanitation

- Help prevent pollution by keeping garbage, litter, and foreign substances out of lakes, streams, and other waters.
- All garbage and litter must either be deposited in containers provided, or taken with you when you leave.

Camp Fires

- Obey any restrictions on fires. Fires may be limited or prohibited at certain times.
- Within campgrounds and other recreation areas, fires may only be built in fire rings, stoves, grills, or fireplaces provided for that purpose.
- Be sure your fire is completely extinguished before leaving. Do not leave your fire unattended. You are responsible for keeping fires under control.

The Ins and Outs of ATV Use on the San Juan Public Lands,

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The San Juan Public Lands Center in Durango manages both the San Juan National Forest and Bureau of Land Management land in southwest Colorado. On much National Forest and BLM land, no off-road or off-trail travel is allowed. Consult a San Juan NF or BLM map to determine where, when, and how motorized vehicles can be used on public land. Maps are available at our offices in Durango, Bayfield, Dolores, and Pagosa Springs, and some retail outlets. Hunters and others who use motorized vehicles on public land should keep in mind that U.S. Forest Service and BLM officers can write tickets for illegal motorized activity.

Although detailed maps outline where motorized vehicles can operate legally, keep these general guidelines in mind:

- All OHVs must be registered in Colorado or in a state with yearly or bi-yearly registrations.
- Those who operate motorized vehicles on closed roads, trails, or areas risk fines up to \$5,000, six months in jail, and having their vehicle confiscated.
- Causing environmental damage, even in areas where it is legal to drive off-trail, can result in violations. This includes leaving ruts in wet areas or on slopes, denuding vegetation, and leaving tire tracks.
- If traveling on gravel roads, ATV drivers should use caution, because full-sized vehicles traveling at higher rates of speed may not expect to encounter ATVs. ATV use is safer on unimproved and 4WD roads, where vehicle travel is, by necessity, slower.
- Motorized use, bicycles, and game carts are prohibited in all designated Wilderness areas. In the San Juan National Forest those are the Weminuche, Lizard Head, and South San Juan.
- Trails that allow motorized use are marked at trailheads. However, many of these are only wide enough to accommodate motorcycles. ATV users should check with local Ranger District offices for trails that will accommodate their vehicles.
- Only vehicles less than 50 inches wide are allowed on trails that are open to motorized travel.
- Some roads or trails are blocked by dirt "berms," constructed to close roads or trails to motorized vehicle use. Proceeding beyond a berm is a violation, even if the "Closed to Motorized Travel" is missing.
- There is no game-retrieval policy on National Forest and BLM land managed by the San Juan Public Lands Center. Therefore, hunters are not allowed to drive off roads or trails to retrieve animals shot in areas closed to off-road motorized travel.
- Driving OHVs off-road is especially disturbing to wildlife. Officers of the Colorado Division of Wildlife can write citations for "wildlife harassment." An offense can result in a fine and 10-point wildlife violation. Offenders with 20 or more wildlife violation points in three years can have their Colorado hunting license suspended. Hunters also risk losing hunting privileges in other states that work with Colorado to punish wildlife violation offenders.
- Hunters also are reminded that, driving an ATV, their weapon must be unloaded, and it must be in a closed case. It is illegal to transport a loaded weapon in or on any motor vehicle. It is also illegal to shoot while sitting on or leaning against an ATV.

Hunting and Fishing

Please contact the DOW to familiarize yourself with the rules, regulations and restrictions when hunting on Public Land. There are often free classes offered through the Public Lands Center which can help you learn more about this area.

UPDATES

Please note that the current means of communicating updates is through the minutes of the Board of Director Meetings. You are welcome to a copy of this upon

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request of Ruth Bignell as she sends email notices of the minutes to members.

Newsletter

If anyone has an interesting article or news to put our next newsletter, please email Ruth Bignell at biggyr02@aol.com or mail to 10208 Road 35, Mancos, CO 81328. We would also love a volunteer to take over some of the newsletter duties. If you have some spare time please contact Nancy Schaufele at nschaufele@frontier.net or Ruth at the above address.

Welcome to the new Activity and Grounds Committee. Actually a few of us got together to see what we could do to help our neighbors come together with some common goals in mind. We have discussed a number of possibilities from neighborhood functions to the "upgrading and enhancement" of our front entrance. We're looking into a neighborhood project to do some planting and xeroscaping to make the entrance more attractive. We would love some input or energy into this effort. If you are interested in becoming involved call Ruth Bignell (564-5964), Cheryl Broadhagen (565-4906) or Nancy Schaufele (565-8385). We may have a neighborhood work day in which case we will be contacting you by phone or posting a notice at the front entrance.

IN THE "HOOD"

Bubonic Plague and One Small Cat

Early this spring we noticed that our 9-month-old kitten named Ickle Kitty (real name Mogul) was sick. He was hunched down on our bed for 2 days. We thought this strange since he normally would be tearing chunks of fur from our older cat. Terry took our kitty to the vet who diagnosed Bubonic Plague. Now for most of us, the Plague conjures up pictures of medieval Europe with people dying of the Black Death. So when Terry told me the diagnosis, I immediately got out our medical books and read up on this infamous disease.

Bubonic describes the swelling of the lymph glands (buboes) that become grossly enlarged in response to an infection by the bacteria *Y. pestis*. This bacterium is transmitted from wild rodents to fleas to man, or this case, by our cat ingesting infected animal flesh. It is possible to transmit this bacterium man to man through

inhalation of droplets expelled by coughing. There is 2 to 5 day incubation before symptoms such as fever, chills and enlarged lymph nodes appear. We were told that it presents much like the flu.

We were given a potent antibiotic to give to Icky several times daily and he seemed to recover within a week. However, we had to have him put to sleep for complications due to the medication.

- The veterinarian and the health department called us repeatedly to monitor whether or not anyone in our family was showing symptoms of the Plague, but we were lucky and no else got sick.

If you have any questions on this topic, feel free to call the Montezuma Health Department.

Michelle Micheal, B.A., M.A., D.C.

Thanks for the fun

- Jim and Ruth did a wonderful job hosting our Christmas party. Ruth went above and beyond with her cookie swap (which ruined everyone's diets). Thanks for all your dedication Jim and Ruth.
 - The 2nd Annual HOA BBQ was held on Sunday, July 23rd at the Bignell's. We had 36 HOA members attend. It sure turned out to be a wild one. Hail the size of marbles or bigger, rain & wind that went on for 30 minutes and 3 fires. It was a good thing our fire strike force team was all in one place. The BBQ eventually moved inside. We had several people that own lots and were here visiting from out of town and also several relatives of HOA members. They got quite a show. All turned out well in the end and we all had a good time and got to meet a lot of members that are not normally here, which is what it is all about.
 - Congratulations to new grandparents Chris & Nancy Schaufele. Grandson Cooper Mitchell Herrick arrived on July 19th in Denver.
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ADDRESS CHANGES

Since we are providing much of our information via email, please notify us of any address changes or changes in ownership of your lots so we can make the appropriate correction in our database.

In order to save postage, we would like to email the minutes to as many as possible. Currently, we have 45 that we send by mail.

You should all be receiving the monthly Board meeting minutes via e-mail. If you are not, please let us know.

Email Ruth Bignell at biggyr02@aol.com

Key Phone Numbers

Sheriff-Emergency	911
Fire/Ambulance	911
Assessor's Office	565-3428
Sheriff – Non Emergency	565-8452, option 1
Blue Stake – Locate	800-922-1987 (Allow 2 days)
Montezuma Water	882-2226
Empire Electric	565-4444
Mancos Post Office	533-7754