

WICKERSHAM ROAD NEWS

WICKERSHAM RANCH ROAD ASSOCIATION

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before printing this document.

MARCH 8, 2019

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GATE COMBO CHANGE

The gate combo will change on:

Sunday, March 17

Notes: Last time we did the combo change there was some confusion and we ended up with conflicting codes.

This time we have a specific person who will make the change so if you are inclined to help please leave it up to us.

Thank you

DUES DUE

Well this is late notice but you all know the routine.

2019 Dues are due now. Invoices will be sent to Primary Owners under separate post for each parcel and will include Commercial Assessments where they apply.

Thanks to the Owners who sent dues already. If there are any questions about the invoice please contact Carol at my Burlingame office. She handles all fo the billing and accounting.

Please note that DTA donates Carol's time for all

THANKS

Big thanks to David Otero and Heinz Mozer for clearing a big rock out of a culvert on Snot Hill in December. Dave and Heinz spent a morning out there pushing and shoving, and likely saved that section of road from failure in the rains that followed shortly after.

Big thanks to the Owners who helped with communication, logistics and actual road work after the storms last week.

Thanks again to Rob Weinstock and his guys for cleaning culverts last week.

And big thanks to Dave Schaefer for jumping in immediately to help out with the initial fixes as well as ones that came up this week.

Thanks to all the invisible owners and guests who continue to clear downed trees and rocks from the road as they come across them.

This is a neighborhood effort and when everyone helps, we keep costs down.

ROAD UPDATE

We provided a detailed update on road conditions via email last week so I won't repeat that information here. I will be inspecting the road again next week to see how conditions are and to look at completed repair work.

Please note: All road work that we do needs to "burn in" for at least a winter.

We don't have the resources to place systematic lifts, compact between each lift, use specifically graded materials and do other things that CalTrans might do to make roads fully ready for immediate heavy use. (We don't have anything near a CalTrans budget.)

We need winter (and some traffic) to lend a helping hand.

When we grade shoulders they aren't fully driveable until after a winter. When we set culverts they settle for the first year.

The major repairs we are doing this season will perform the same. The repair of the outboard slips, especially the one on Snot Hill, will continue to settle for the season and may drop as much as a foot.

Owners should stay off the repaired areas until the road is dry in late spring.

There is enough room to get around so please stay away from the edges so the material can lock in naturally.

ROAD WORK FOR 2019

As you all know we have had a very wet winter so far. Hopefully we have seen the worst of it.

Because of the difficulties we had last year much of the work we wanted to do in 2018 was not completed. That means our backlog is thicker than usual and we now have expenses related to emergency repairs for this year.

We are looking at several new vendors who may work with us on ongoing work and we'll report on that as it unfolds over the next month.

In the mean time the Needs List (STIP List) for the near term is being assembled.

Hot items for the near term are:

- Adjustments / completion of emergency repairs initiated last week. Includes post-burn in items.
- Installation of rolling dips utilizing existing rock stockpiles. (This will reduce on-road runoff, a key ingredient to this year's problems.) (And get those damn piles out of the way...)
- Corrections to last year's grading at 2-Mile Hill. Grading was not performed as specified so 2-Mile Hill suffered increased damage this year.
- Repairs at Upper Snot Hill where extreme gullies and rock wash have occurred. These resulted in part from over-use by 2WD vehicles associated with commercial operations.
- Deep cleaning at all catch basins
- Rock Restoration at Snot Hill: Restoration of surface rock at various "bleeder" locations.
- Inboard ditch re-configuration at Lower Snot Hill.
- Addition of culvert at Mile 3 at existing inboard stream crossing.
- Replacement of "shiner" culvert at 2 Mile Hill.
- Rock placement at large culverts and construction of Critical Dips at those culverts.
- Rock production at Quarry: Re-configuration of quarry edges and summit to generate more rock and improve access for equipment.

This outline is part of a master list that is not currently prioritized. All work will be done based on current resources or proposed Supplemental Dues (if necessary). Some tasks may not be done this year but will remain on the list for subsequent years.

ROAD USE REMINDERS

The following is the regular reminder about use of the Road. Please share this with all guests and vendors.

Please advise all road users that the road crosses private property and is maintained for access and egress only. All safety is the responsibility of the road user and no liability is assumed by any property owner or any member of the Road Association or the Road Committee.

All road use is explicitly at your own risk. Opening of the front gate and entry by any property owner, their guests, or any other individual constitutes acceptance of these terms.

Please remind all guests that the road crosses private property and that there is no hunting allowed from the road on the properties of others unless specific permission has been given by the property owner.

The Usual Stuff:

- Always lock the gate, regardless of whether it was unlocked when you got there.
- Make sure the combo is NOT left on the lock or the lock will not lock. Spin the numbers before locking and test the lock to make sure that it is locked.
- If you wish to leave the gate open for a car that may be following, please wait at the gate while it is open.
- Please pick up litter and debris that does not belong on the road. If you are at the Front Gate and see litter, please assist in picking it up, even if it's not yours. This makes the Front Gate more attractive for all users.
- Please remove rocks or trees that have fallen onto the road. (If you remove a large tree or perform other substantial work in keeping the road open, please advise the Committee so we can say thanks.)
- Please get permission from the Owners of the front ranch to park cars inside the front gate. Contact:

Hugh Reimers

hugh.reimers@outlook.com

831 682 0245

Please park between the front gate and the second green-post and chain fence. This way the Owner can tell that you are a guest and not a trespasser.

- Please drive slowly and carefully.

Keep our Road Washboard Free

- All vehicles using the road should be All Wheel Drive or 4WD. Please use 4WD or set your All-Wheel Drive to 4WD/ increased traction mode. (This may require you to turn a knob to a picture of trees or a snowflake on some

cars...) Don't let the vehicle decide or you may still have micro-slips that generate washboards.

AND THIS

There has been some confusion and questions regarding the recent problems we have had on the road.

We have heard from a couple of Owners about concerns that the road failures might indicate that we need to increase the level of road maintenance.

I'd like to offer some perspective on the last couple of years of road maintenance that may clarify the situation some.

Recent Vendors / Road Work

From 2011 to 2017 Darrel Rodgers provided grading and excavation services to the Road Association for most of our needs.

Beginning in 2014 Darrel became increasingly unresponsive. Schedules were not met and by the time work was done instructions were lost or misinterpreted. On numerous occasions I toured the road to lay out annual work and then that work was not started for as many as 6 months. In a couple of years I had to repeat the road tour three times to make sure the guys assigned to the current work had the right info.

In 2017 a wide ranging scope of work was only partially completed and some of that was completed with errors that required repairs.

We had difficulty getting those repairs done and were surprised when crews showed up in the middle of winter and started working portions of the road. This resulted in a sloppy road during the winter of 2017-2018.

At the end of 2017 we decided to suspend the relationship with Darrel and seek a new vendor.

Last year we tried working with Tony Crossetti. That work did not go well from the start. Initial requirements for the work on Two Mile Hill were disregarded. Specific requirements to out slope portions of the road, add rolling dips and remove berms were ignored.

Tony then shifted to work on private parcels and a similar pattern occurred, including substantial disregard for my instructions on my own parcels. There were disagreements about costs, questions about allocations of mobilization expenses to particular parcels and a general difficulty in dealing with the contractor.

With the anticipation that releasing more work to this vendor would deliver similar results (refusal to follow instructions, very high costs and communications issues that were unacceptable) we chose to terminate the vendor, primarily to protect the Ranch Owners from ongoing failures.

Results Coupled with Recent Storm

The result of this is a back log of maintenance work that has piled up (literally as you all see the stockpiles of rock at the sides of the road that were intended for rolling dips in 2016.)

This left portions of the road more vulnerable than they might have been.

Specific unfinished tasks that were scheduled over the last couple of years:

- Addition of rolling dips at key locations
- Construction of critical dips at large culverts
- Renovation of rock on portions of Snot Hill
- Adjustments to grade and drainage on Lower Two Mile Hill
- Multiple locations where culvert inlets required adjustment to better catch uphill water and keep it off the road. Includes a number of seeps adjacent to culverts.
- Repairs to culvert discharges where banks have shown erosion over the past 20 years.
- Several culvert replacements.

Most of these items were non-critical in a normal year. In fact many of these items were not sources of failure this year. Many of the subject areas showed few substantial problems after this storm.

Of course, a few did.

Our biggest failure this year was our omission of a culvert cleaning effort just before or during the rains. That would have prevented some of the problems we had but not all of them.

Last week I personally looked at every culvert on the entire road. Many of the culvert clogs I observed were due to actual debris that came from this storm, high flows of limbs and duff, not from material present before the storm. Most of these were easily cleared.

There were 4 culverts I observed that were blocked before the rainy season and one of those was partially responsible for the slip on Snot Hill. That slip was also related to original fill that was not placed properly for such a steep slope. We lost a portion of that about 12 years ago. The others generated limited surface damage to the road and bank erosion across the road.

There were also fully clear culverts that overflowed simply because the volume of water exceeded the pipe capacity.

The large culvert at Mile 4 was blocked by tree limbs that had flowed down the stream (one of them was 16 feet long!)

In short, many of our problems were caused by an extreme weather event. Some of our problems were caused by the fact that our vendors were unable to complete the work we asked them to over the last few years. And some were caused because we didn't dip all the culverts last fall.

What's Next

The work outlined above is still on our To Do list. There is new work included as a result of the recent storm.

RESOURCES

SOTOYOME RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

<http://sotoyomercd.org>
(707) 569-1448

CAL FIRE

<http://www.fire.ca.gov>

SONOMA COUNTY SHERIFF

<http://www.sonomasheriff.org/>

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

<http://www.dfg.ca.gov/>
<http://www.dfg.ca.gov/regulations/>

PACIFIC WATERSHED ASSOCIATES

Experts in rural road management as a watershed stewardship strategy.

<http://www.pacificwatershed.com/>
(website resources still available)

KEYS FOR THE BIG IRON GATE

Keys are available for the Big Iron gate from the Road Association. The cost is \$5.00 each. Please contact me (Martin) or Dave Otero if you'd like one.

INFORMATION

WICKERSHAM RANCH ROAD ASSOCIATION

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Road Committee:

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Robert.Weinstock@ejgallo.com

Ranch Website
“<http://www.wickershamranch.com>”

Thanks to Tami Bobb and Dave Otero for their efforts in sharing space on their personal ranch site for our benefit.

We are currently looking at two new contractors that may help us with the road. We'll be interviewing them, assessing their capabilities and their willingness to meet our schedules and budgets.

The construction industry in general is fully booked these days. There are fewer people available and even the worst contractors are busy.

That may mean that we need to pay more for the work we do. It may mean that we use more creative means to do some of the work ourselves or within the neighborhood.

Cost

It has always been our goal to keep costs at a minimum and use very intentional management of the road work to get the most bang for the buck. Much of that is achieved by our long time policy of doing long term work that reduces maintenance costs over the coming years.

In fact that policy is why the road did as well as it did in what was a record setting storm.

When necessary we have used Supplemental Assessments to achieve larger goals. We did this with the bridge in 2011 and have managed to avoid the need since.

Since we have some catching up to do we should, at the very least, anticipate a Supplemental Assessment later this year to cover costs. We will try to avoid that if possible.

If the current trend in the local construction industry continues, we may have to raise dues to cover higher ongoing costs.

I would like to avoid that and am willing to work hard to manage work in an effective way so that we get what we need within the current budget. I think that is still quite possible.

If anyone has any questions or concerns please let the Road Committee know. Our vendor last year rekindled a trend of rumors and back stories like we have not seen in years and all that does is spread misinformation and take the joy out of working as a neighborhood.

So let's keep talking to each other and not let contractors with other agendas rattle the hood.