

WICKERSHAM ROAD NEWS

WICKERSHAM RANCH ROAD ASSOCIATION

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before printing this document.

JULY 27, 2023

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GATE COMBO CHANGE

FRONT GATE: XXXX

MIDDLE GATE: XXXX

DATE OF CHANGE:

8/13/23, SUN AFTERNOON

Combos will be changed by Dave Otero or Martin Dreiling at the end of the day. So if you're leaving late Sunday you may need the new code to exit.

BIG IRON GATE KEYS

As you know gate keys for the Big Iron Gate are available from Dave Otero. Key costs have gone up so the cost is now \$20.00.

DUES DUE

Thank you to the owners who have gotten caught up on past dues recently.

The following Owners are still severely behind and have not made arrangements with the Road Committee to get caught up:

Parcel 34 Shin Amount: \$3,500

David Otero is helping us track down the current ownership and seek some sort of resolution.

THANKS

Thank to Chris Ettling for placing the two markers at the Snot Hill repair.

Thanks to the neighbors that have cleared trees from the road recently.

Thanks to Martin Fornage for the cleanup of snow damage he has done along his section of road.

Thanks to David Otero for helping with Past Due Dues collection.

SAVE THE DATE:

Area of Refuge (AOR) Build Party and BBQ

Saturday, Sep. 2 near Mile 12

Tentative Agenda:

Saturday Morning: an easy build, details to follow

Saturday mid day: Helicopter Test Landing

Saturday Afternoon: Pot Luck BBQ at Moser's

Possibly special guest (see below)

We'll get a detailed agenda out next week. Thanks to the Owners who have volunteered supplies and equipment already:

- David Katz: Location
- Heinz and Agnes Moser: BBQ venue, concrete, water trailer
- John Machado: Dozer and excavator if needed.
- David Otero: Mower and auger
- Martin Fornage: Mower, auger, excavator if needed
- DTA: Signage design and production
- Martin Dreiling: skid steer and excavator if needed, windsock and mounting apparatus
- And those who volunteered to help on the day of.
- Some others I've probably missed.

This should be a fun day. It's actually quite an easy build so we'll probably have more labor than we need. Which means we'll also need to stand around and BS a bit. If you can't make it for the build at least try to come out for the BBQ (and the helicopter... they're cool!!)

GUEST EDITORIAL

SOME RANCH HISTORY

BY DAVID OTERO



Back on July 23, 2020 I received a voice mail from a gentleman named **Ken Barr**. He asked me to call him back informing me that he had some information that he wanted to share with me. When I returned his call he informed me the he was the **Grandson of John and Nora Henderlong** and that he had spent a better part of his childhood out at the Wickersham. He located me on the web at the Wickersham Ranch website that Tami so kindly administers for all of us and the public.

When I returned his call he was very excited about being able to share all of his vast knowledge of the Ranch that was such a large part of his younger life and helped carve him into the man he is today. He then emailed me a photo of several of his family members on the porch of the old cabin when there were shearing sheep. He learned his hard work ethics and his refined hunting skills growing up on the ranch. In 2012 he won the "Conklin Award" <https://www.theconklinfoundation.com/kenneth-l-barr/>

Ken's father, **Bill Barr**, was one of the owners when the ranch was sold to Dynasix Corporation which eventually created Lake Sonoma Ranch's.

Recently we reconnected and I met with him and his grown son (who had never been out to the Ranch) on Sunday July 23, 2023. The three of us spent the entire day out there and it was the most incredible history lesson for me, I learned so many things that day... too many to share in this note.

Ken is now 78 years old and most likely the oldest living historian about that region. I am planning on inviting him to our Summer BBQ, an event you will not want to miss if he is in attendance!

Kens description of the photo above:

Here's a photo probably taken in the mid 50's on the porch of the old house. Pictured from the left is a cousin, Howard Henderlong, an uncle, Lawrence Irwin and my grandparents, John and Nora Henderlong. When the photo was taken we must have been staying at the old house during lamb shipping time, normally the first of June, as that's the only reason I can account for a cousin being present. He, Howard, would help out at that time of year shearing whatever 'woolies' [sheep who had escaped shearing round-up earlier in May] we gathered when again gathering all the sheep for shipping the lamb crop in June.

I thought you might get a kick out of the photo. Brings back lots of memories for me.

Ken

Thanks to Dave for sharing this with us.

Dave has invited Ken to the AOR Build Party and BBQ on September 2.

We look forward to meeting him if he's able to attend.

WILDLAND FIRE PLANNING

LSW: Strategic Control Network Phase 2, Las Lomas / Tombs Creek Road

The next LSW Project funded by the 2023 Sonoma County Ag & Open Space District is scheduled to start in November 2023. A portion of the Work will occur along forested portions of Tombs Creek / Wickersham Road from the Front Gate to the top of Snot Hill.

The Work will be very much like the sample work done near the Big Iron Gate last Spring. It will include removal and treatment of ladder and ground fuels, dead and dying trees, and invasive trees/shrubs. This will result in full cleanup of the debris left from the February snow storm. It will also include a grading component to repair any damage done to the road as a result of the work of the project.

This is not a WRRRA project and all work will occur on private property. There are eight affected landowners. Participation by landowners is voluntary and we will be working with them in August to clarify project scope, address any concerns they may have and get formal agreements for participation.

The project is funded by the Sonoma County Ag & Open Space District out of Sonoma County PG&E settlement funds. The project is sponsored by the Northern Sonoma County Fire Protection District. The project is being designed and managed by DTA (my company) primarily on a donation basis.

A Shaded Fuel Break is a critical first step in renovating forest lands to better tolerate wildland fire. Shaded Fuel Breaks along roads and ridges provide greater opportunities for fire management by Firefighters. They can also stop certain ground fires, cause canopy fires to drop back to the ground in some situations and they are a good place for setting backfires.

These breaks also become excellent anchor points for vegetation treatments on adjacent properties. Subsequent "Tactical Vegetation" treatments performed by land owners can widen the fuel break making it harder for uncontrolled wildland fire to cross. For long term maintenance, Shaded Fuel Breaks serve as useful boundaries for maintenance burns.

A Shaded Fuel Break is a far better solution than permanent dozer lines as they require less maintenance and support forest health, species diversity and stormwater management.

2023 Cal-Fire Fire Protection Grant

Recall that we had applied for a Cal-Fire Grant in the amount of about \$950,000 earlier this year.

We heard through the grapevine that we were not likely to get selected because CalFire was aiming those funds toward more heavily populated areas.

In fact we just received a letter this week stating that we were not selected. That should not be heartbreaking, we don't expect to get everything we ask for.

Area of Refuge (AOR) Work Party and Road Association BBQ

The WRRRA will host a work party and BBQ on Saturday, September 2

Work will include some mowing, installation of corner markers and installation of a sign and a windsock. It will be pretty light work and mostly an excuse to get together. More details to follow when we finalize the scope and the agenda.

We will have a Pot Luck BBQ afterwards hosted at the Moser's. We'll need a Food and Beverage Coordinator to start sorting out what people might bring (so we don't have too much salad... ;)

More on this later.

OTHER FIRE PLANNING WORK

Please look for Lake Sonoma West updates for other Fire Planning work in the Lake Sonoma West Planning Unit. There should be a new one coming out soon.

We are pursuing a substantial Forest Health Grant from Cal Fire that will support a number of Tactical Vegetation and Wide Area Vegetation projects over the next few years. We are in the early stages of this but it will likely provide opportunities for larger fuel treatments at key locations on various Wickersham parcels.

We'll share information about that as it unfolds and we should expect another Planning Workshop as we get into Fall.

CULVERT CONFUSION



Well, there seems to be some confusion about the culverts that are stockpiled at Mile 4.43. First, they are not for sale. We assume the “For Sale” signs were placed in jest and it was pretty funny. But these are pretty valuable pipes and it will only cost more to buy them again.

Several Owner’s have suggested that these pipes are not necessary so we’d like to make sure everyone recalls how we got here.

On The List

This crossing has been on the watch list since the beginning of the Long Term Improvement Program back in 2001. It consists of two pipes, one over the other, neither of which are sized to fit the drainage. Since there were many other higher priorities over the years, this large culvert replacement remained lower on the list.

2019 Storm Failure

In 2019 we had a very large storm that dropped about 30” of rain in about 30 hours. This storm flooded drainages all over the county and closed Skaggs in 13 places, closures that lasted for weeks (one section has still not been fully repaired.) The culvert at 4.43 blocked from flowing debris and overflowed, nearly taking the road section out.

Fortunately several Owners got on it and relieved it quickly so that no road closure occurred at that location. Over the next few days it was partly repaired to the point where the upper pipe was mostly opened. Parts of it remain tangled so flow is still limited. Later in the season when the stream flow was much lower the bottom pipe was opened, restoring the original stream channel. These were emergency repairs.

The 2019 storm moved it up the list. As we get more intense storms delivering more water in short periods several of our bigger drainages have moved up on the list.

Much of this was outlined in the March 2019 and August 2019 newsletters. The Nov. 2019 newsletter has extensive detail about various maintenance plans.

2020 Long Term Plan Update

After the 2019 storm we began updating the Long Term Maintenance Plan and shared it with all of the Owners, via email and in an Owner’s meeting at Clary Hall in December of 2019. Throughout 2019 and 2020 we discussed a number of priorities and 4.43 was always on the list.

Because we had some expensive repairs after the 2019 storm some regular projects got pushed back so that we could make repairs without seeking huge Supplemental Assessments.

Covid and Budgets

When the Covid Pageant came to town and economies got rattled we all talked about reducing financial impacts. On several occasions we asked the Ownership about Supplemental Assessments vs. spreading costs over several years and each time the majority of opinions favored spreading costs over time.

Fortunately we had very dry winters with low demands on additional repairs.

Since 4.43 was going to be an expensive install, we decided to split the costs over several years.

Pipe Purchase

In 2021 we moved ahead with the project by purchasing the four lengths of culvert. We had priced them in 2020. By 2021 the price had gone up as Covid unfolded so we decided to pull the trigger before prices went higher (they have!) By splitting the purchase and the installation by a couple of years we would likely be able to replace the culverts using regular dues rather than a Supplemental Assessment. We advised Owners of this and asked for opinions, especially during Covid where we were all a little short on surplus income.

Since we have had dry winters we have gambled on the functionality of the existing pipes so that we could use WRRRA resources on other substantial projects, such as the full surface grading we did in 2021.

2023 Storm

This year we had another heavy storm dumping lots of water in a short period. The existing pipes at 4.43 once again clogged but did not overflow. Because of the larger capacity of the lower pipe water still passed through and we were able to open it in short order.

The message, however, is clear: we will be seeing more intense storms and the larger crossings will see the highest flow. The stream at 4.43 requires a 6’ pipe just based on the dimensions of the primary stream section.

While we could retain the existing pipes and simply monitor the crossing during storms, this costs real money and adds no value to the road.

Instead, if we install a proper pipe, the annual maintenance on this crossing drops off dramatically and we can put future resources elsewhere.

So... When?

At this time it is likely that we will install the pipes in 2024 at the end of summer. We had hoped to do the install this year but we had several emergency expenses this winter, including tending 4.43. Plus we still have several owners behind on regular dues.

As you all know a couple of Owners circulated a letter demanding that we sell the pipes and keep the 4.43 crossing as is.

We should all be clear that the 4.43 crossing is substandard and has failed on several occasions. Our biggest risk is doing nothing when we know we have a substandard culvert that has already failed.

We should also be clear that this culvert is not located on lands owned by any member of the WRRRA. The actual landowner is very interested in upgrading this crossing and we are obligated to do so as part of our Maintenance Agreement.

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 there is no hunting allowed from the road on the properties of others, unless specific permission has been given by the property owner.

Basic Road Courtesy

Anytime you encounter anybody on the road that you don't recognize it is entirely reasonable to ask them who they are and which property they are visiting. These are all private properties and we are all interested in just who might be fiddling around back here.

When a car approaches that you don't recognize, slow down, roll your window down and act like you expect them to do the same.

If someone asks you who you are, it's not rude. It's a practical way that we all get to know who's who out back.

Please remind any of your guests that they should identify themselves and which property they are visiting. That means they should stop and chat with anyone who looks interested.

We all get a little concerned when cars we don't recognize go speeding past without so much as a wave. And there seems to be more of that going on these days.

Besides how are we going to stretch our drive time out to 2 hours if we don't stop and B.S. with everyone we meet... ;)

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 at the Park and Ride area. Contact:

Ken Wilson

ken@wilsonwinery.com

(We get no response from Ken on any emails we send)

(No phone number available yet)

Please park at the Park and Ride area near Mile 0.20. This way the Owner/Tenants 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 at ALL TIMES.
- 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.

RESOURCES

NORTHERN SONOMA COUNTY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT (NORTHSoCo FIRE)
707 857 3535

FIRE CAMERAS: ALERT WILDFIRE (TWO SITES)
<https://alertca.live/cameras>
Best Cameras: Oakridge 1,2; Pine Mtn.

<https://www.alertwildfire.org/region/northbay/?camera=Axis-Best>
Best Camera: Rockpile

SONOMA COUNTY EMERGENCY INFORMATION (SoCoALERT)
<https://socoemergency.org/>

CAL FIRE INCIDENT INFORMATION
<http://www.fire.ca.gov/incidents/>

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
<http://www.dfg.ca.gov/>
<http://www.dfg.ca.gov/regulations/>

SONOMA COUNTY SHERIFF
<http://www.sonomasheriff.org/>

KEYS FOR THE BIG IRON GATE

Keys are available for the Big Iron gate from the Road Association. The cost is \$20.00 each. Please contact Martin Dreiling or Dave Otero if you'd like one.

INFORMATION

WICKERSHAM RANCH ROAD ASSOCIATION

c/o 1103 Juanita Avenue
Burlingame, California 94010

e-mail:
ct@dtbarch.com

Road Committee:

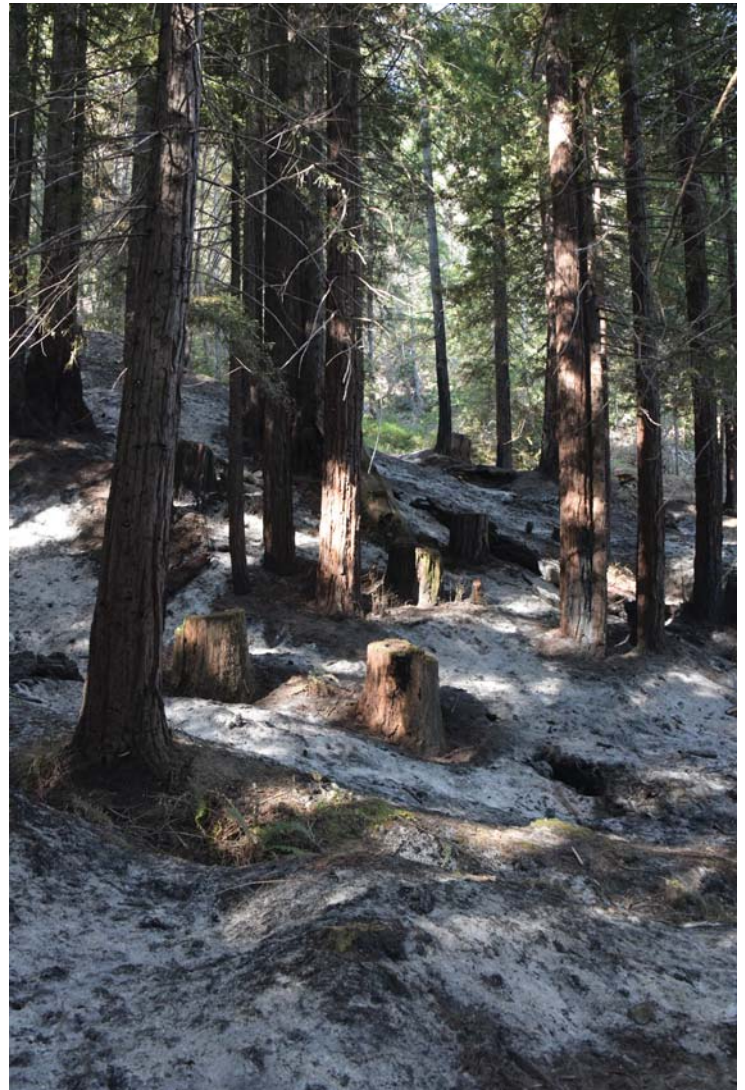
Martin Dreiling, Parcel 8,9, md@dtbarch.com

David Katz, Parcel 25, 26, davidkat@sonic.net

John Machado, Parcel 12, cynmachado@comcast.net

Ranch Website (by Tami Bobb, David Otero)
“<http://www.wickershamranch.com>”

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



The New “Housekeeping”

Defensible Space 2.0

Parcel 8, June 2023