



Blackhawk Ranch Newsletter

Blackhawk Ranch Communication Information

For all formal POA documents, as well as the minutes and financial reports from the latest business meeting, visit the [Official Blackhawk website](http://bhrpoa.com). (<http://bhrpoa.com>) The only section that needs a password is the member directory.

Address Changes

Please make sure that your personal information is accurate. For changes, complete the automatic change form and submit.

For all social news and events, visit the [Blackhawk Ranch Facebook page](#). If you are not a member of Blackhawk Ranch Facebook Group, email cissy@scw-inc.com.



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Feedback as well as suggestions for articles are welcome! skbloomfield65@gmail.com

No-

Ranch Road Report

The Road Committee identified numerous roads on the ranch that need new road base. With our budget, we were able to put new road base on Rolling Hills Lane from its intersection with Four Mile Canyon to East View Drive and on Four Mile Canyon just south of its intersection with Rugby Mines Road to Brodmore Spur, including the entrance to Brodmore Spur which gets muddy

when wet. We addressed three problem areas that the road committee identified as creating hazardous driving conditions and put down "rotomill" road base on them. These were two curves — one on Rugby Mines Road and another on Four Mile Canyon — and a low spot on Wapiti which gets very muddy and slippery when wet. (By Rick Brandenburg, chair)

More Ute Artifacts Found on Ranch

The area that is now Blackhawk Ranch was once the winter homelands for the Capote/Kapota band as well as other Ute bands and neighboring Native American tribes. While all of Colorado and Utah as well as southern Wyoming and northern New Mexico comprised the Ute hunting grounds, late in the fall, small bands of extended families would descend from the high altitudes to escape the winter cold, living close together for defense and to gather supplies. Since the Utes were one of the first Native American tribes to acquire horses, the lower altitudes also afforded better forage for their herds.



This summer, Dr. James Jefferson, Ute Tribal Elder, and John Anderson, author of *Ute Indian Prayer Trees of the Pikes Peak Region*, visited Blackhawk Ranch to view our many culturally modified trees. During their visits, they pointed out the many bedrock mortars visible in the rock outcroppings, circular holes that Native tribes used for grinding food. The holes served as bowls, and foods, including grains, animal flesh and fat, fruits, and the pinon nuts and acorns found so plentifully on the ranch, were

ground with a smooth stone or blunt stick, known as a pestle, into pemmican, a concentrated, long-lasting high energy food.

The mortar holes observed around Blackhawk Ranch are usually from 6-10 inches in diameter and 4-7 inches deep and often appear in clusters of from two to six on large stone outcroppings. Some sources speculate the grinding was also a social activity for the women, so that is why there are often multiple holes. Occasionally, more shallow, trough-like depressions can be found in nearby rocks. These are more like the typical *metate*. In fact, one Blackhawk couple also found a small, moveable *metate* and *mano* on their property.

Sources: [Southern Ute Indian Tribe](#), [Caprock Canyoneer](#), *Utes: The Mountain People* by Jan Pettit, and John Anderson.

BLACKHAWK RANCH BECOMES A FIREWISE COMMUNITY



Over the past two years, Blackhawk Ranch has applied for and received recognition as an active Firewise Community. Firewise is a national program established in 2002 that now contains a network of 1,200 recognized communities across the United States that are “taking action and ownership in preparing and protecting their homes against the threat of wildfire” and “engaging and encouraging their neighbors to become active participants in building a safer place to live.”

The Blackhawk Emergency Management Committee worked with Firewise representatives in meeting the requirements for recognition. First, the committee members obtained a wildfire risk assessment from the Colorado State Forest Service, and the board created an action plan to implement the assessment. The Blackhawk EMC then took the required actions to address the assessment goals.

First, the committee worked with property owners and the Bighorn Sheep Ranch subdivision to make an emergency exit accessible to the south in case of mandatory evacuation, and they marked that exit and the one on Howard’s Draw with signage. They also encouraged property owners to mark their lot numbers for emergency personnel. Next, they began clearing trees growing close to Four-Mile Canyon Road to allow emergency vehicles clearance and to provide residents with a safer exit route away from burning brush and trees. Then, they met with area fire and emergency personal and provided them with maps of the ranch.

Another requirement was that Blackhawk Ranch invest a minimum of \$2.00 per capita in local Firewise actions. This was met by the grants that we received as well as community mitigation work days. The EMC applied for and received three grants totaling \$131,246 from the Wildfire Risk Reduction Grant from the State of Colorado Forest Service. One of the grants paid \$22,500 for the 9" Vermeer chipper that individual parcel owners can use for their personal mitigation. The rest of the grant money went for clearing trees and brush away from the roads on Brodmore, Rugby Mines, and Four Mile Canyon. In addition, several full and part time residents met monthly for community fire mitigation projects to thin and cut trees and brush for fire breaks. In 2016, when the committee applied for the Firewise designation, residents already had worked three mitigation days that contributed \$2,399.28 in volunteer labor and \$180 in equipment rental. Last, the group had to prepare detailed maps of the Ranch and host a Firewise Day “event,” which we did on the first Saturday of every month from April through October.

What are the benefits of being a Firewise community? Most importantly, it has raised awareness of the value of fire mitigation on Blackhawk Ranch and helped us take steps to prepare individually and as a community. In addition, the Firewise Communities Program offers training workshops and web-based interactive training geared toward homeowners and others on a variety of wildfire safety topics to teach us how to can reduce wildfire danger in our homes and communities. The [Firewise Website](http://www.firewise.org/wildfire-preparedness.aspx?sso=0) (<http://www.firewise.org/wildfire-preparedness.aspx?sso=0>) provides many educational materials on Wildfire Preparedness, such as construction and landscaping checklists, and it publishes a free monthly newsletter, [Firebreak](https://community.nfpa.org/community/fire-break) (<https://community.nfpa.org/community/fire-break>) as well as a Blog. They also have a [Facebook](#) page. Last, living in a designated Firewise community could give homeowners a break on their insurance. Some on the Ranch have already received this benefit.

Our Firewise designation must be renewed to remain active. Each year, our Firewise Board must demonstrate a level of effort equal to at least \$2 per capita in the community. Volunteer hours (worth \$23.56 as of April 2016) count as well as grants, the value of in-kind services, hired help, or loaned equipment. Ken Diehl and Lee Kimball will be the new EMC co-chairs, and it is up to ALL of us on Blackhawk Ranch to keep our community safe for everyone.

For anyone interested, the illustrated “Blackhawk Ranch Forest Health and Restoration Plan” that describes the particular ecosystem of the ranch and forest cover types with field observations is available in the “Information” tab under “General” on the POA website.

The Blackhawk Committee members who worked for the Firewise designation during the last few years include Terry Bloomfield, chair, Mike Wedgworth, Joe Weivoda, Susanne Bloomfield, Paul Kimball, Lee Kimball, Gary Hanks, Ray Butters, Susie Butters, and Diane Wassom. Special recognition goes to Tom and Cissy Severence who started the work of fire mitigation on Blackhawk Ranch.