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Created by: Ann Holmes



Rogue machine in action—SPOA has contracted with Rogue Resources to clear road right of ways and common areas in an effort to address the numbers of beetle-kill pine. See before and after pictures on our website: <a href="www.stage-coach.com">www.stage-coach.com</a>. Turn to page 7 for an update on the logging operations and more pictures.

## President's Message

#### By Tom Watts

On a pleasant, cool afternoon last October, SPOA Director Art Fine and I were walking on Halter Trail in the South Station subdivision when we were halted by the bugle call of a male elk. As we watched, a group of elk crossed the road and disappeared into the trees. Art and I were on SPOA business that day, trying to get some idea of the amount of work required to bring Halter Trail up to Routt County standards.

There are seventy five lots along Halter Trail. They are owned by people who reside in Massachusetts, Texas, Georgia, and California, among other places. But there are no houses, no dogs, no cars; nothing to disturb the elk as they move south ahead of the approaching winter.

Some of the lot owners along Halter Trail bought directly from the Woodmoor Corporation in the 1970s. Others bought more recently, when the prices dropped to \$10,000 per lot, or less. And although there are undoubtedly some speculators among the owners, my perception is that most people bought because they wanted to build some day, either a cabin for recreation, or a retirement home, or place in the country where they could live full time. But until the roads are improved, no one can build.

So, we are faced with what I consider to be a basic fairness issue. There are plenty of empty lots in South Shore Morningside, Horseback and Black Horse II, but the owners of those lots have a choice. They can build if they wish, or sell to someone who wishes to build. The owners in the Skyhitches, the South Stations, Black Horse I, Overland and High Cross don't have that choice.

Routt County owns the roads, but they have informed us that they will do nothing to improve

(Continued on page 2)

# President's Message (continued)

(Continued from page 1)

the condition of those roads. On the other hand, they have no objection to SPOA improving the roads. Nor would they object if a lot owner wants to improve the roads leading to his lot. The problem, of course, is the expense. In order to obtain a building permit, the road from the lot to County Road 16 must be graded level and must be at least 12 feet wide with a top layer of 4 inches of crushed gravel ["roadbase"] and 8 inches of coarser gravel ["pit run"] below. The road must also have culverts running beneath the road surface, where necessary, to allow for the free flow of water.

Realistically, no lot owner, particularly a lot owner far removed from the County Road, is going to put in the necessary improvements. So, if the roads are going to be brought up to the County standard, SPOA will have to pay for the construction. And the only way we can pay for construction is to raise the dues.

Those of you who have been SPOA members for a while know that the Directors cannot raise the dues by more than 3% without the affirmative vote of a large percentage of the lot owners. Based upon our calculations, we will need to raise the dues by \$100 per year [to a total of \$151 dollars per year] for five years in order to do the necessary construction. Our hope is to use the money to establish a revolving fund. That way, as lot owners construct their homes, they will simultaneously reimburse

SPOA for a portion of the road construction costs. The reimbursed funds can, in turn, be used to construct additional roads. Currently there is no legal requirement for such reimbursement. However, the Routt County Commissioners are considering the enactment of such a requirement, with the reimbursement to be collected by the County at the time a building permit is issued. If the County Ordinance is passed, we will eventually be able to recover a significant portion of the money spent to improve the roads. This money will then be held in reserve, or used for projects benefitting other subdivisions.

There will be a meeting of the members of SPOA on June 16, 2012 for the sole purpose of discussing and voting upon the proposed dues increase. Within the next several weeks, each of you will receive a packet in the mail describing in much greater detail our plan for building roads. You will also receive a proxy solicitation from the Directors, asking that you authorize the Directors to cast your votes in favor of the dues increase. If you cannot attend the meeting I ask that you give us the authority to cast your vote in favor of the dues increase.

As I said, this is for me a fairness issue. I understand, however, that others may not see it that way. So, I also want to say a few words about what I see as the benefits that will come from increased home construction in the southern subdivisions. My first

thought in this regard is that many of our current residents have some connection to the construction trades, either as architects, builders or landscapers. Increased construction means increased opportunity for work. But there are also more subtle benefits: Stagecoach is not currently what I would call a "community." It lacks some of the amenities that are normally found in a community, such as a school and a community meeting hall and a country store. This lack of amenities is simply a function of population. There are not enough people residing in Stagecoach to support these amenities.

There are over 1000 lots in the southern subdivisions that do not have roads meeting County standards. If only 20% of those lot owners decide to build, there would be a substantial positive impact on Stagecoach. One hundred dollars a year is a good investment in the future. I urge you to support the road building effort.

**ALL NEW STRUCTURES, CHANGES** AND LANDSCAPING MUST BE APPROVED BY THE ARCHITECTURAL **REVIEW COMMITTEE FIRST. FORMS** ARE FOUND ON THE WEBSITE WWW.STAGE-COACH.COM OR CALL 736-1036.



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## Approved Minutes of January 14, 2012, Board Meeting

The Board of Directors of the Stagecoach Property Owners Association (SPOA) met on Saturday, January 14, 2012, at the Stagecoach Fire Station for their regularly scheduled quarterly meeting.

Members Present: Tom Watts (President), Stephanie Fairchild (VP), Arthur Fine, Robert Skorkowsky, Sue Kimes (Treasurer), Kimi Lehman, and Ann Holmes (Secretary)

Staff Present: Ken Burgess (General Manager)

**Also Present:** Tony Stitch (Roads committee and ACC), and Erik Brewen (resident)

Tom Watts called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m.

#### Logging/Road Update - Skorkowsky

Robert distributed a Bark Beetle and Fuel Hazard Mitigation Project handout and will email a PowerPoint presentation to board members. Robert noted the need to divide the project into phases. Phase I includes the Skyhitches and South Station I due to minimal infrastructure.

Robert then asked the board to consider a proposed \$470 per treed acre reimbursement through the Colorado State Forest Service (CSFS) grant. He expects additional grant funds will be coming at the same rate. So far, \$47,000 has been secured to date. Robert has spoken with four potential contractors for the logging. Most bids are for a mechanical operation and one is for a hand/horse operation. Robert reviewed each bid and the pros and cons of each including cost, completion time, impact, and project administration. to construct a home require certain road widths for fire trucks to access a residence. There is a distinction between a driveway and a road. A driveway may access no more than 1 or 2 residences.

There are a couple lot owners who want to consolidate lots and are running into additional building expenses. For SPOA members, any future requirements (see Memorandum Concerning Roads and Consolidations – January 11, 2012). The county, howeve

Oak Creek has offered to do the limb and debris burning. Tom asked for a definition of what will be logged. The contract would remove all trees within the 60ft County Right-of-Way and in the 10-foot lot easements along the roads. Dead trees will be removed between the front easement and 30 feet into lots. The contractors keep any tree material that they want. Left over material will be limbed and available to residents (expecting a significant amount).

Before making a motion, Robert presented options based on the contractor proposals. All proposals will require a short-term outlay of subdivision funds to cover the cost before the CSFS reimbursement. Proposals range from \$135 to \$198 per acre required of SPOA funds. Robert emphasized that now is the time to start logging operations.

SPOA needs to provide between \$2,500 - \$3,750 of subdivision funds for unit layout and mapping of final cutting units. Robert also mentioned a need for \$1,600 for contract administration of a mechanical operation. Robert is still in talks with YVEA about trees along power lines. Finally, Robert mentioned that he believes there will be more funds coming from the state.

**Motion:** Robert moved to adopt the following proposed option assuming Rogue accepts 50 acres: "Two contractors (50 acres to Sunbeam Custom Services and 50 acres to Rogue); \$19,750 subdivision funds; 100 acres; short term expense = \$66,750; CSFS reimbursement = \$47,000. SPOA costs per acre = \$197.50." Included in the motion is that SPOA will provide \$2,500 of subdivision funds for layout and mapping. Also included, if Rogue will not accept only 50 acres, the board accepts alternative the first alternative to use one contractor. Sue seconded the motion.

Tom noted that in the SPOA covenants (Section P regarding exterior maintenance) there is verbiage to support this motion and should be included in the communications regarding this project. A letter will go out to owners identifying that beetle kill is a problem and allows SPOA to go forward with logging unless lot owners

request to log their lots themselves. The owner will then be responsible for removing trees within a defined timeframe. Ken Burgess also asked to clarify that owners are only allowed to remove dead (not live) trees on their lots.

The motion passed unanimously.

**Motion:** Tom moved that the board of directors hereby finds that the hazardous beetle-kill trees presents a danger of fire that effects all Stagecoach residents and therefore according to Article 5 Section P in the SPOA covenant, SPOA may remove all dead trees within 30 feet of the front easement of individual lots. Stephanie seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

#### Roads

Tom updated the board on roads with a memo he e-mailed earlier. There are two kinds of actions that lot owners in Stagecoach should be concerned about per county requirements. The first is anyone who wants to build a residence on a lot. The second is, anyone who wants to consolidate lots to construct a house. Permits to construct a home require certain road widths for fire trucks to access a residence. There is a distinction between a driveway and a road. A driveway may access no more than 1 or 2 residences.

There are a couple lot owners who want to consolidate lots and are running into additional building expenses. For SPOA members, any future requests to build roads require permits and road building that meets the county requirements (see Memorandum Concerning Roads and Consolidations – January 11, 2012). The county, however, decides if they will maintain those roads and so far, they have often chosen not to. Art Fine reported on meetings with the county about building roads in Stagecoach. Engineers are involved and discussions continue. Ken Burgess requested that engineers provide bid documents including specifications so that SPOA can present them to contractors. SPOA can then get bids and understand the costs involved.

There was further discussion about the Horseback Roads Settlement Agreement. Ken mentioned that the county could exempt certain properties or subdivisions from certain requirements. Tom suggested SPOA consider sending a representative from SPOA to begin talks with the county on these issues.

Tom discussed the money in the subdivision accounts. There seems to be consensus that SPOA wants to build roads in the southern subdivisions. There is a need to raise funds to build roads. Tom thinks that raising funds could be done through increased dues to the amount necessary to build and maintain roads. A special assessment won't work due to the language in the SPOA covenants. Tom reported that there is a draft proposed amendment that allows a lot owner to recover certain costs from adjoining lot owners when they build on their lots. So there may be an opportunity for SPOA to build roads and receive funds from the county once residences are built.

Tom would like to propose that SPOA raise assessments for the 2012-13 fiscal year by \$150 with the idea that \$100 of that would be put into a revolving fund for road construction and \$50 to go into a fund to maintain those funds. Tony asked about spreading out the assessment over a longer period of time. He also wants to make sure SPOA gets the best price for building roads and help from the county on material. Tom agreed that there is still a lot of work to be done. He also noted that the need for an affirmative vote of about

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## Manager's Report

#### By Ken Burgess

#### **South Routt Happenings**

On Sunday May 6 from 2-4 p.m. the Tracks and Trails Museum hosts its annual HIGH TEA at the Oak Creek Community Center. Hats and boas will be provided along with music and delectables.

The Taste of South Routt will be on June 30th Decker's Park On the Fourth of July Yampa hosts a pancake breakfast before the parade in the morning. Cowboy polo is at 4 p.m. following

#### **Fitness Center Survey**

family games.

The SOROCO School District is proposing building a fitness center for school and community use that would be attached to the front of the High School. The facility would be built with grant funds. The plan is to provide cardio and weight lifting equipment and classrooms for exercise classes and community meetings. Fees for community use would be used to staff the facility.

The purpose of this survey is to determine the level of community support for this project. Please take a few minutes to answer the following seven questions to help make the best decisions for this project. Understanding your support/lack of support for this project is vital, so please take a few minutes to complete this survey now!

To complete the survey, go to: http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/TPQ66WC

## Stagecoach Park News

#### By Kimberly Lehman

The Friends of Stagecoach partnered with SPOA and the State Park to create the first Nordic trail on the neighboring frozen reservoir. The Winter Loop Trail is over 7 miles in length, 10 feet wide, and is groomed with two cross country ski tracks.

The trail circles the reservoir and is accessible from the Keystone Day Use Area, Morrison Cove, and the parking lot along County Road 14. Please set a good example by following the regulation of picking up after pets, and keep them leashed.

The Friends of Stagecoach State Park hope you will enjoy the new recreation opportunity and would love to hear what you think. The Friends will soon begin planning the beach concert series and other park events for the summer season.

Friends meetings are the second Wednesday of each month at 6 p.m. at the Firehouse and are open to the public. For more information call Tonja at 736-8410.

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The late start on snow coupled with our logging operations curtailed much of the cross-country skiing this year. There were several "bluebird" days with a good turnout and many favorable comments. Our utility snowmobile and groomer are working well and we look forward to expanding the routes next year.

#### **South Routt Nordic Developments for Next Season**

In addition to the Stagecoach 4-mile trail, South Routt now boosts four additional tracks:

- The Stagecoach Parks 7-mile track at the reservoir which Kimi Lehman discusses
- The short but fun Deckers Park track in Oak Creek
- The Rossi 5-mile track above Sierra Vista in Oak Creek
- Approximately 18 miles of track at Lake Catamount Lake.

#### **Kindergarten Next Year?**

**Stagecoach Nordic Trail** 

If you have a child who will be 5 before October 1, 2012, who will be attending kindergarten next fall at South Routt Elementary and is not attending the South Routt Early Learning Center please call Cheryl at the elementary school (638-4558) or email <a href="mailto:csullivan@southroutt.k12.co.us">csullivan@southroutt.k12.co.us</a>

#### Summer Trail Development

SPOA will be working on trail development this summer. If you are interested in volunteering some of your time please contact Ken Burgess at 736-1036 or a <a href="mailto:gmspoa@Zirkel.us">gmspoa@Zirkel.us</a>.



A park visitor tries skijoring on the Friends' sponsored winter loop trail at Stagecoach State Park.

# Park Sponsors Cabin Fever Day in January



Friends of Stagecoach State Park offered free baked goods and had a donation box and information about their volunteer efforts available.

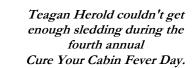


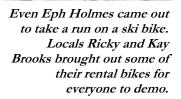
Rob Tomczak ice fishes with his 3-year-old son Davis. Young and old caught many a trout (below).





Maura Karow rides a ski bike ahead of her 10-year-old son Navy during the Cure Your Cabin Fever event on Saturday, January 28.





# Approved Minutes of January Board Meeting (continued)

(Continued from page 3)

800 to get a dues increase passed. Stephanie asked about the amount of road SPOA would get from the assessment. Tom reported that the approximately \$360K in assessment might not buy much more than 1 mile of road. He urged the board to make a decision quickly in order to present this option to the owners. Robert is concerned about setting precedence that SPOA covers road maintenance and about spending down a maintenance fund. Robert recommended a 5-year assessment of \$100 for primary access roads with a specific implementation plan. Ken noted that marketing this plan is key.

**Motion:** Tom made a motion to begin preparation to request a membership dues increase of \$100 for the next 5 fiscal years with the funds increase to be used solely for the construction of primary access roads for the Stagecoach community, and during that period the current base dues remain constant. Robert seconded. The motion passed with 5 affirmative and 1 negative votes.

Art would like SPOA to consider a "what's in it for us" slogan for the campaign.

#### Dog Sled Update - Lehman

Kimi thanked everyone for support of the Dog Sled Races. The funds were returned to SPOA due to the cancellation of the event (due to lack of snow). There will not be another opportunity this season. Kimi reported that she is trying to get on the dog sled association schedule for February 2013. She hopes SPOA will be involved again. Ken recommended that a request for volunteers go out in the summer newsletter.

Call Tonja at 736-8410 for the next Friends of Stagecoach State Park meeting. The snowmobile agreement is complete.

#### **ARC & Rules Committee**

**Motion:** Stephanie made a motion to approve the following members to serve on the ARC and Rules Committee: Frank Murphy, Tony Stitch, Dan Pichiotino, Matt Cary, Bob Woodmansee, Erica Hewitt and John Dodd . Ann seconded and the motion carried.

#### **E & O Insurance Report - Burgess**

Ken spoke with State Farm and they declined to issue E&O (errors and omissions) insurance. Ken is working with another insurance company.

#### **Slash Burning Report - Burgess**

Tony submitted an invoice for Lou Dequine for work done burning slash piles. The invoice is for \$2,105. The fire department put in \$1,000 worth of time managing the project. Currently SPOA has paid Lou \$1,000 per the original agreement—to match what the fire department contributes. There is no doubt Lou put in at least the 11 hours invoiced. Robert recommends working directly with the fire department in the future to avoid problems. There is a concern about people submitting invoices for work done without prior approval.

#### **South Shore Parcel B**

The bus turn around/recycling center/cluster box project has been partially completed. The next step is to agree on a design. Kimi mentioned the need to post signage about "no parking" sooner rather than later. Kimi recommend fencing off the area with orange construction fencing. Tom agreed since it is state park land.

#### October 15, 2011 Minutes

**Motion:** Ann moved to ratify the electronic approval of the October 15, 2011 minutes. Art seconded and the motion carried.

#### **Financial Report**

Tom believes that SPOA does not need to approve the check register at this time. Ann noted that a \$2K+ check to Native Excavating needs a description. She also asked about the Vectra Bank annual service fee.

#### **Budget Track**

Ken noted that he would send out his tracking report to the board for review.

#### **Nordic Trail Update**

Ken reported that the sled is in for maintenance and will be back in operation by the time it snows again. Robert reported that people should not be parking on the county roads. He would like SPOA to carefully consider the trailhead location.

The sled is owned by SPOA and the state park has a business agreement for usage and maintenance of the sled.

#### **Expense Authorizations**

These are pending expenses where monies have not been and will not be spent:

\$7,000 in matching funds to the county commissioners for surfacing of CR16 to CR18A

**Motion:** Robert made a motion to rescind the authorization. Ann seconded and the motion passed.

\$1,500 for Ormega by the Lake signage. Ann asked to keep that allocation active.

Expense for the July 2009 Fireworks.

**Motion:** Robert motioned to rescind the authorization. Ann seconded and the motion passed.

\$3,000 engineering expense for a 2009 meeting with UYWC.

**Motion:** Robert made a motion to rescind the authorization. Ann seconded and the motion passed.

\$1,700 for renumbering the Stagecoach Townhomes.

**Motion:** Robert motioned to rescind the authorization. Ann seconded and the motion passed.

\$4,000 to Alpine Trail & Design to stake out a trail.

**Motion:** Robert motioned to rescind the authorization. Ann seconded and the motion passed.

\$800 to Friends of Stagecoach State Park for fireworks.

Motion: Robert made a motion to rescind the authorization. Ann seconded and the motion passed.

\$1,500 for the dog sled race.

Motion: Kimi made a motion to rescind the authorization. Ann seconded and the motion passed.

#### **Old Business**

Robert moved to rescind the motion that was made and tabled during the October 14, 2011 meeting for a request of \$100,000. Kimi seconded and the motion carried.

#### **New Business**

Ann asked if Amy has agreed to manage the web site. Ken reported that he has not spoken with her. Ann will be looking into a web site redesign and ongoing maintenance. Kimi has agreed to do ongoing maintenance. Tom also asked that there be two members available for ongoing maintenance.

The next SPOA meeting is set for April 7, 2012.

#### **Adjournment**

Robert motioned to adjourn the meeting. Tom seconded and the motioned passed. The meeting was adjourned at 12:50 p.m.

# Stagecoach Fuel Hazard Project Update

#### By Robert Skorkowsky

By now, many Stagecoach residents have probably noticed log trucks rolling by on the way down County Road 16 bound for lumber mills, wood pellet mills, and other destinations. Phase I of the **Stagecoach Fuel Hazard Project** is moving along.

This year's mild winter has allowed contractors to get a jump start on the cutting and removal of trees killed by the mountain pine beetle epidemic. Phase I of the project includes all of Sky Hitch I, II, III, IV and South Station I. Approximately 100 acres of cutting units have been identified in the Phase I project area.

It is anticipated that approximately 50 acres will be cut and removed by May, and the remaining areas cut over the course of the summer and fall. All of the Phase I areas are accessed off of Hock-Eye Way.

We have also received another grant which enables us to start Phase II this spring continuing through the rest of 2012. This phase includes Blackhorse I and II, High Cross, Overland and South Station II.

Due to the safety hazards posed by logging operations, we are asking that property owners, except for local traffic, to stay out of the areas being logged. If you need access please contact the SPOA General Manager Ken Burgess.

This project has been designed to achieve several objectives:
1) Reduce the wildfire hazard by reducing the fuel build up created from the mountain pine beetle epidemic. 2) Fully clear all platted road ways of trees. 3) Clear lot easements to allow future installation of utilities. 4) Clear dead pine up to approximately 40 feet within lots that may fall into roadways. 5) Widen escape routes to allow safer egress in the event of a wildfire, and 6) Clear common areas of dead trees.

These projects are being accomplished with funding provided through grants of \$47,000 and \$25,850 from the Colorado State Forest Service. Additional funding comes from partnering with the Oak Creek Fire Protection district and with approximately \$52,000 of SPOA subdivision funds.

Some property owners have asked if additional tree clearing work can be accomplished on their property in addition to the approximately first 40 feet of the lot. If you're interested in having your entire property included, please contact Ken Burgess, the SPOA General Manager at 970-736-1036 or by email at <a href="mailto:gmspoa@zirkel.us">gmspoa@zirkel.us</a> and ask to be added to the list of SPOA members desiring all of the beetle kill to be removed from your property. Please provide your name, contact information, subdivision and lot number and also identify whether any improvements are on your property.

Other property owners have indicated that they are not interested in participating in the project. If a SPOA member does not want this project implemented on their property in the areas within their lot and beyond the lot easement, we are asking that you 'opt-out' by contacting the General Manager. Members who opt out will be responsible for removing dead trees.

This project, when completed, will directly or indirectly benefit every lot within the 12 southern subdivisions and all of Stagecoach by reducing the wildfire hazard. Given the tremendous fuel hazard in the Stagecoach area, the continued implementation of this project is critical. We appreciate everyone's patience and understanding during the implementation of this project.



Pictures taken in March along Halter Trail (above) show the logging equipment in action. Pictures below are along Halter Trail and Stirrup Way.





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