



December 2023 Newsletter From Your Elk Falls Ranch POA Board of Directors

Board of Directors

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Happy Holidays from Elk Falls Ranch POA

On behalf of the Elk Falls Ranch POA, we extend to you the warmest wishes this holiday season! However you celebrate, we hope that your holidays are filled with joy and happiness. Thank you for all that you do to help make our community a wonderful place to live. We are truly grateful to serve you, our residents!

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Deck the Halls...and the Mailboxes!

By Nick Larche

As a new resident of Elk Falls Ranch, one of the very first things that struck me about our community was the entrance to our neighborhood: the transition from blacktop to dirt road, a custom-built wooden sign, and - of course - the seasonal mailbox decorations. In fact, aside from our unobstructed view of Lion's Head, it was the decorations that we often shared with family and friends that described the place we now call "home." Being new to Elk Falls Ranch, I had assumed that these decorations were the work of our Property Owners Association (POA). However, that is not the case. One of our very own residents, Barbara Wallace, helps lift our seasonal and holiday spirits with these festive and rotating mailbox decorations – and all on her own accord, with some assistance from her husband, Bob. When asked about the origin of these decorations, Barbara shared, "Someone way back used to decorate the mailboxes.

Now, I do. I just enjoy doing it. I have so many decorations, I should own should own stock in Dollar Tree and Hobby Lobby!"



Community means different things to different people. At its basis, it is a group of individuals who live in the same vicinity or share something in common. What it has come to mean to me, as a new resident of Elk Falls Ranch, are the ways we welcome and support one another. It's the wave we exchange as our vehicles pass each other on the road. It's the time and effort we invest in helping each other with our culverts after a heavy downfall. It's the decorations that top our mailboxes, warming our hearts and representing what it means to be a community. Thank you, Barbara, for your creativity and for the cheer you bring to Elk Falls Ranch!

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Elk Falls POA Team Changes

As the year comes to a close, we'd like to express our appreciation for those who've volunteered their time as a contributing member of our POA Board, and our excitement for those who've just recently joined or assumed new roles!

First, we'd like to extend our utmost appreciation to Dave Shaffer as he retires from the position of Roads Chairperson. Dave has done an admirable job these past few years, carefully observing road conditions, measuring snow accumulation, and working with our contractors to prioritize maintenance and improvements to get the most out of our annual roads budget. Dave frequently volunteered his own time, muscle, and equipment into the work effort. He said from the start that he'd give us a few years of his time towards the roads, which he certainly has. Dave will now refocus that time on family, travel, and his many hobbies. Thank you, Dave!

The Board is actively seeking a new volunteer to serve out the remainder of Dave's term as Roads Chairperson. We welcome any interested parties to attend a future board meeting to meet existing members, to see first-hand how POA business is conducted, and to get a feel for the level of commitment needed. If you're interested, or simply wish to learn more, please contact our Board President, Dan Mueller, by phone at (630) 240-9066 or by email at elkfallspopres@gmail.com.

Next, we bid Marta Nelson farewell as she moves from the neighborhood and steps down from her role as Vice President & Architectural Chairperson. To fill that void, Wayne Gneiser has transitioned from his previous position as Secretary. We appreciate your continued contribution, Wayne, and we look forward to how you will continue to support Elk Falls Ranch as our new Vice President & Architectural Chair!

We are pleased to welcome three new members to the POA Team, all new residents to Elk Falls Ranch!

First, Kim Stammer, who works full-time remotely as a paralegal for a large law firm, will bring her years of legal and administrative experience to the Board as our new Secretary. Kim graciously volunteered to step in and fill the Secretary vacancy created by the above shuffle. The Board unanimously approved her appointment to the Board to serve out the balance of the current term.

Joe Stammer, handy, recently retired, and new to Colorado, has volunteered to participate as a member of our Roads Committee. We are always glad to have more help for road maintenance and will put Joe to work as we solicit for a full-time Roads Chairperson.

Lastly, Nick Larche, also new to Elk Falls Ranch, has stepped forward to join our Communications Committee, and will be assuming responsibility for our periodic newsletters and shared responsibility for our POA website. Many of you will recall that Bev Long has handled this responsibility in the past. We thank Bev for her time and efforts on the neighborhood newsletter and other related activities!

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Snow Plowing & Salting

When it comes to snow plowing, we activate our contractor only when accumulation reaches a depth of four (4) inches, as measured at the mailboxes. If snowfall is sufficient, all public roadways will be plowed by our contractor. If the roads become icy, we'll do our best to continue spreading a sand and salt mixture on the most problematic areas in our neighborhood. There are barrels with this very mixture located throughout the neighborhood. Please use them if conditions warrant and do let us know if they need to be refilled. Of course, the best defense against your vehicle ending up in a snowbank is to ensure that it is winter-ready! Snow or all-season tires, combined with slowing down to a safe speed, can make an enormous difference for mountain driving during the winter season.



Upper Ranch Drive

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Staunton State Park plans a Hunter Education Certification Range

Plans are in the works for the creation of a rifle range within Staunton State Park for use with Colorado Parks & Wildlife's (CPW) Hunter Education Program. We wish to ensure all residents of Elk Falls POA are aware and understand how the range will be used. Please review the attached letter from Park Manager, Zack Taylor, which should address many frequently asked questions. A future meeting is being scheduled, at which time CPW representatives will provide a presentation of the program and range safety. This meeting will be an opportunity for those with questions or concerns to speak directly with CPW. Elk Falls POA will communicate information on the forthcoming meeting date, time, and location once available.

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Firewise Update

Congratulations to everyone who submitted their hours and dollars spent toward neighborhood efforts on wildfire mitigations and preparedness. Your cumulative effort in 2023 was measured by 561 hours of work and over \$12,000 of expenditure.

On November 13th, the Firewise Committee submitted an application to renew our certification as a Firewise Community, and our application was promptly approved! Some residents submitted hours and/or expenditures after the deadline. Don't worry! We will automatically carry those hours and dollars forward for next year's recertification. We also learned that some of the fire mitigation recommendations from Elk Creek Fire can be counted towards expenditures. These include the cost of replacing wood siding with Hardie-Board or other Class –A Fire rated siding and/or replacing wood siding at the foundation with stone or other fire-resistant materials.

Elk Creek Fire’s Chipping Program has concluded its activities for the 2023 season. This year, Elk Creek Inter-Canyon Fire Protection District reported twenty-two (22) Elk Falls POA homeowners participated in the Chipping Program. Of the forty-six (46) communities covered by the Chipping Program, Elk Creek had the 6th highest participation rate! Please keep an eye out for an announcement in a forthcoming newsletter this spring to learn how and when to sign up for a chipping visit as part of the 2024 program.

On behalf of our community’s Firewise Committee, we thank you for all of your commitment this year to reducing wildfire risk around your home, on your property, and throughout Elk Falls Ranch. You have made our community a safer place to live!

There is, however, more work to be done. We look forward to expanding participation in 2024 as we begin to focus on wildfire mitigation along our roadways and identifying ways to assist those within our community who lack the physical capacity to take on this needed mitigation work.

Any questions, requests for helpful literature and, of course, reporting of hours and expenditures may be done via email at elkfallsfirewise@gmail.com.

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2024 Annual Members’ Meeting

Although still several months away, the Elk Falls POA Annual Members’ Meeting will be held in May 2024. We will communicate information on the forthcoming meeting date, time, and location once finalized.

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Next Board Meeting: Tuesday, January 16th at 7:00pm

The next scheduled meeting of the Elk Falls POA Board of Directors is scheduled for Tuesday, January 16th at 7:00pm. All POA members are welcome to attend. If you’re interested, please contact a Board member for details on the location and to let us know if you will be joining.

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Neighborhood Directory Update

Several residents have asked about the availability of a neighborhood directory. Many will recall that we used to have access to an online directory through the EFPOA website. However, that application is no longer supported, and the link has thus been deactivated and removed.

There is good news! Our new PayHOA platform does have the capability to support an online directory. This will be made available to all residents as soon as it is compliant with Colorado law, which requires residents to be able to provide or revoke consent to publish contact information within a public directory. Support for this capability is scheduled to be added to PayHOA in early 2024. Once that feature is activated, residents will be notified with instructions for how to provide consent for inclusion within the directory and for how to maintain system preferences. Please note, only residents that provide this needed consent will be included and visible in the directory.

Once available, the directory will only be accessible within EFPOA’s secure PayHOA portal. This directory will never be disclosed or shared with third parties.

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Elk Falls Ranch Facebook Group

In the spirit of community, one of our residents has recently launched an Elk Falls Neighborhood Residents Facebook Group, to which several residents have already joined. We encourage all our residents to build connections within our community. Please note, however, content posted to this Facebook Group, even by Board members not acting in their official capacity, is not shared, moderated or fact-checked by the Elk Falls POA Board of Directors. For all official communications by Elk Falls POA, please refer to the newsletters and announcements distributed through PayHOA and to information published on the Elk Falls POA website (<https://elkfallspoa.org/>).

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New to the Neighborhood?

Are you new to Elk Falls Ranch? We'd love to feature you in a future newsletter! Simply send your name, photo, and some information about you and/or your family (hobbies, pets, etc.) to ElkFallsRanchPOA@gmail.com. This series helps our community better know its neighbors!

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Who do I Contact for...

Roads Issues

Please contact our Roads Committee at elkfallsroads@gmail.com with any issues related to our roads.

Architectural Approvals

Any additions, fences, new construction, decks, additions, garages, sheds, etc. require Board approval. Please contact the Vice President & Architectural Chair at elkfallspoavp@gmail.com.

Mailbox Keys

For any mailbox issues or replacement keys, do not contact the U.S. Postal Service. Please contact Wayne Gneiser at (720) 318-2961 or elkfallspoavp@gmail.com.

Email Address Changes/Additions

Owner contact information such as email address, phone numbers and alternate or additional contacts is now all maintained on our PayHOA portal. Please log in and update your contact information at www.payhoa.com.

Elk Falls POA Web Site

For information about the neighborhood, POA, board meeting minutes, protective covenants, and by-laws, please visit the POA web site at www.elkfallspoa.org.

On behalf of the Elk Falls POA Board of Directors, we wish you a safe and happy holiday season!