

# Yellowstone River Ranch Landowners' Corporation

PO Box 452, Columbus, MT 59019



July 1, 2012

Dear Members,

The Board of Directors of Yellowstone River Estates (YRR) has been developing a long term road plan for the ranch. This issue has been discussed for some time in the past but a plan has never been implemented. This spring after receiving input from the road committee as well as road builder Dean Bursema, Central Excavating, we have developed a comprehensive plan that encompasses all of the roads on the ranch. We have prepared a chart which listed roads in order of priority for future work. This list and schedule is certainly subject to change in the future depending on the weather's impact on individual roads, however you can at least get an idea as to when roads that most affect access to your property are scheduled for maintenance. As I'm sure all landowners are aware, we have limited funds available and cannot maintain all the roads over short periods of time. We must use your dues wisely and spread out the road work over time. Nor do we want to just respond to a crisis of significant road damage after the fact. Preventative road work is one of the keys to long term maintainability.

This road "plan" is just that, a plan. As I mentioned earlier it is subject to change. However it will help future boards as well to know where we have been in terms of road maintenance and repair as well as where we are proposing to go.

Please take a look at the spreadsheet while referencing the breakdown of the roads below to get a good idea of where and when we are planning on spending your dues dollars in the future. As always, if you have any areas of concern, please bring them to the attention of a board member.

There are 24 roads in Yellowstone River Estates. The following is a list of all the roads in the Ranch.

**Winding River Road** - Winding River Road is the main entrance to the Ranch and runs from the front of the ranch to the intersection of Cougar Trail and East Granite Peak. This road has been broken into 4 sections. Entrance to Wild Horse Run, Wild Horse Run to Owl Canyon, Owl Canyon to Balfour Loop, Balfour Loop to Cougar Trail

**Elk Horn Road** - Elk Horn is the secondary lower entrance to the ranch and starts on the north side of I-90. It runs under I-90 and intersects Winding River Road at Wild Horse Run. This road has been broken into two sections. Entrance to tunnel, Tunnel to Winding River Road

**Night Hawk Road** - This road is off of Winding River Road and has been broken into two sections. Lower Night Hawk – Winding River Road to Old Cowboy, Upper Night Hawk – Old Cowboy to end of road

**Old Cowboy Trail** - This road is off of Night Hawk

**Wild Horse Run** - This road branches off of Winding River road and has been broken into four sections. Lower Wild Horse Hill – Winding River to Appaloosa Ridge, Appaloosa Ridge to Lost Cache, Lost Cache to Palomino Trail and Palomino Trail to end of road

**Lost Cache** - This road is a branch off of Wild Horse Run

**Palomino Trail** - This road is a branch off of Wild Horse Run

**Buckskin Trail** - This road is a branch off of Wild Horse Run

**Balfour Loop** – This road is off of Winding River Road and loops through the second meadow.

**Owl Canyon** – this road branches off of Winding River road and has been broken into two sections. Winding River Road to Cougar Trail, Cougar Trail to Haystack Coulee

**Sunrise** – This road is off of Owl Canyon

**Granite Peak Road** - This road is off of Cougar Trail

**Granite Peak Place** – This is a small road off of Granite Peak

**East Granite Peak** – This road is off of Cougar Trail to the east

**Cougar Trail** – This road runs between Winding River Road and E. Granite Peak to Haystack Coulee and Harrier. This road has been broken into two sections. Cougar Trail between Owl Canyon and E. Granite Peak, Cougar Trail between Owl Canyon and Haystack Coulee

**Lynx Lane** – This road is off to the north of Cougar Trail

**Northern Harrier Road** – This is the back entrance to the Ranch off of Brumfield road. This road runs from the upper portion of Brumfield road to the intersection of Cougar Trail and Haystack Coulee. This road has been broken into three sections. Brumfield road to Kestrel Trail, Kestrel Trail to Jacobs Hill, Jacobs Hill through BLM section to Cougar Trail

**Kestrel Trail** - This is a small road off of Harrier.

**Jacobs Hill** - This is a small road off of Harrier

**Haystack Coulee** – This road runs between Cougar Trail and Owl Canyon. This road has been broken into two sections. Cougar Trail to lot 91, Lot 91 to intersection of Owl Canyon and Coyote Pass.

**Coyote Pass** – This road starts at the intersection of Haystack Coulee and Owl Canyon and ends at the back of the ranch. This road has been broken into four sections. Lower Coyote – Haystack Coulee to lot 144, Lot 144 to Arrow Head Ridge, Arrow Head Ridge to State Section, State section to end of road.

**Arrowhead Ridge**- This road is off of Coyote Pass

**Pelican Point** – This road is off of Arrow Head Ridge

**Following is a detailed explanation of the road work scheduled for this summer:**

1. Winding River Road from the front entrance and for a distance of approximately 1-mile will receive road mix, vibratory roll, and smooth.
2. Winding River Road: From a point past Owl Canyon will receive road mix in several low spots, repairs to drainage, and smooth.
3. Night Hawk Road: The last ½ mile of this road will receive road mix, crowning, vibratory roll, and repairs to drainage.
4. Wild Horse Run: From the intersection at Winding River Road for approximately 1,900 ft... Road mix, calcium chloride mix, vibratory roll, grading, smooth, and repairs to drainage.
5. Coyote Pass: In several low spots, road base will be used to raise the road, smooth and repair drainage. Further down the road for approximately 1,060 ft., add road mix, vibratory roll, smooth, and repair drainage. This area of the road has experienced a great deal of damage from run-off filling in the ditches, thus directing the water across the roadway.
6. Haystack Coulee Road: At Haystack Coulee and Cougar Trail intersection for approximately 200'; repair drainage and add road mix, smooth. Moving down Haystack Coulee on steep grade near Paul Payne's shop, and for a distance of approximately 1,350 ft., add road mix, vibratory roll, smooth, and repair drainage.
7. Owl Canyon: At the intersection of Owl Canyon and Haystack Coulee add road mix, vibratory roll, and smooth to repair low spot.
8. Arrowhead Ridge Road: Add 3" of road base in several low spots, vibratory roll, smooth, and repair drainage.
9. East Granite Peak: Starting at the intersection with Cougar Trail and stopping at the end of the Feldt property. Add road mix, vibratory roll, and smooth.
10. Granite Peak Place: Starting at the intersection with Granite Peak Road to the end of the road. Add road mix, vibratory roll, and smooth.

## **Board Response to Mr. Riensche's Plan.**

Dear Members,

Mr. Riensche recently sent out a letter to some landowner's detailing a plan to separate the ranch into a number of maintenance zones. The assessments collected would be divided in some fashion to each zone with some unspecified portion being allocated for the non roadwork portions of the assessments. While on first look this plan might sound promising, it adds unnecessary complexity for the accounting of the plan and fails to adequately detail how such a plan could work.

Mr. Riensche is correct that the roads that are used the most are the ones that get the most maintenance. Why? Because the most used roads are the roads that receive the most damage and wear year in and year out. With Mr. Riensche's plan an owner who owns land in the back of the ranch is probably going to be driving on the major roads such as Winding River Road to get to and from their property. Under Mr. Riensche's plan that owner's assessments would only be used for road in his zone, yet owners in this zone need to utilize roads that will cross multiple zones causing wear and damage to those roads and not have contribute to those roads.

The road budget for 2012-2013 is approximately \$46,000, divided into 5 zones leaves \$9,200 per year available per zone for maintenance. What will happen is that the zones that have the most utilized roads will not be receiving amount proportionate to the actual usage of those roads. Cases in point; let's say that Zone 1 will encompass the front of the ranch to Wild Horse Run. Last year Winding River road was resurfaced from Nighthawk almost to Wild Horse Run at a cost of approximately \$26,000, for less than 1 mile of roadwork. Obviously it would take three years of rolling over the assessments to be able to pay for this repair and this does not take into consideration that Winding River road from the main entrance to Wild Horse Run usually requires at least one instance of grading because of the heavy usage at a cost today of approximately \$5000 per grading. Taking grading into consideration it would take 6 years of roll over to have enough funds to do this repair to this road only. This would not allow any road work on Elk Horn, Old Cowboy or Nighthawk.

If we do not maintain the heaviest used roads in the ranch they will deteriorate to levels that will require major repairs not the resurfacing or road mix repairs that we are doing now. We cannot afford major repairs with the assessments we have.

Mr Riensche's plan also fails to address any unforeseen emergencies such as we had with the Saunders fire which melted many of our culverts in the burned areas and the sever erosion that occurred after the fire which filled many of the drainage ditches etc. Under Mr. Riensche's plan it would appear that the less used roads will have an excess in funds or spectacularly maintained roads while the main thoroughfares will be suffering and deteriorating.

This ranch is a whole. It is not 4 or 5 zones. The Board is tasked by the bylaws and members to maintain the entire ranch roads and amenities. It is impossible to predict all of the forces that can affect our roads and amenities such as the park being flooded last year or the fire of 2006.

Each year the Board meets with the road contractor and members to determine which roads need attention and the priority of each project. Once bids are received road work is approved based on those priorities and available funding. This system has worked very well for over 10 years and in fact, this is exactly the manner in which all roads were maintained while Mr. Riensche served on the board Mr. Riensche served on the board up until 2010 when he resigned.

This Board fully understands the need for ALL roads to see some attention on a regular basis and that is why we have worked with Central Excavating to come up with both a shorter term plan and a plan that extends out to 2015. Roads that are seldom used will not require much if any work other than to keep the grasses down. Other roads such as Wild Horse and Winding River Road will probably require some attention on a yearly basis just because of usage. This plan will be available on the website. Projected projects include the resurfacing of Winding River Road from Wild Horse to Owl Canyon as it is nearly impossible to grade as there is no road mix. The road base is in good shape but it needs road mix or topping. The other large project is to attack Owl Canyon in a similar fashion. None of the projects could even be considered under Mr. Riensche's plan. By the time the funds were saved to do these projects the roads would most likely be in terrible shape thus requiring even more work. As with any road work all plans are tentative and subject to change do to the many things that can affect our roads.

In closing while we appreciate the Mr. Riensche's time to formulate his plan we do not see it as something that could work out. The plan that has worked for many years in the past still works today and is simple. There is no need to bring in so much complexity into road maintenance. If Mr. Riensche or any other member has ideas for the ranch we would encourage contacting the board directly.

Sincerely,

Your Board

# Yellowstone River Ranch Road Work Plan

FISCAL YEAR	2009 / 2010	2010 / 2011	2011 / 2012	2012 / 2013	2013 / 2014	2014 / 2015
<b>Winding River Road</b>						
Entrance to Wild Horse Run	Graded	Major re-surfacing	Grading	Review/Grade	Review/Grade	Review/Grade
Wild Horse Run to Owl Canyon	Graded to lot 108			Major re-surfacing		
Owl Canyon to Balfour Loop			Repair			Review
Balfour Loop to Cougar Trail					Review	
<b>Elk Horn Road</b>						
Entrance to tunnel		Small Repair Drainage			Review/Resurface	
Tunnel to Winding River Road						Review/Resurface
<b>Night Hawk Road</b>						
Lower Night Hawk – to Old Cowboy						Review
Old Cowboy to end of road		Small Repair	Re-surface			
Old Cowboy Trail		Repair				Review
<b>Wild Horse Run</b>						
Winding River to Appaloosa Ridge			Re-surface			
Appaloosa to Lost Cache						Review
Lost Cache to Palomino Trail	Repair/Resurface	Small Repair				Review
Palomino Trail to end of road			Weed Spray roadway		Review	
FISCAL YEAR	2009 / 2010	2010 / 2011	2011 / 2012	2012 / 2013	2013 / 2014	2014 / 2015
<b>Lost Cache</b>					Review Repair/Resurface	
<b>Palomino Trail</b>		Small Repair	Weed Spray roadway			Review
<b>Buckskin Trail</b>			Weed Spray roadway			Review
<b>Balfour Loop</b>		Small Repair	Weed Spray roadway			Review
<b>Owl Canyon</b>						
Winding River Road to Cougar Trail		Repair			Repair/Resurface	
Cougar Trail to Haystack Coulee	Repair/Resurface		Small Repair			Review
<b>Sunrise</b>	Repair/Resurface					Review
<b>Granite Peak Road</b>	Repair/Resurface					Review
<b>Granite Peak Place</b>			Repair/Resurface			
<b>East Granite Peak</b>			Repair/Resurface			Review
<b>Cougar Trail</b>						
Owl Canyon and E. Granite Peak	Repair/Resurface					
Owl Canyon and Haystack Coulee		Major Re-surfacing				
<b>Lynx Lane</b>						
				Review		

FISCAL YEAR	2009 / 2010	2010 / 2011	2011 / 2012	2012 / 2013	2013 / 2014	2014 / 2015
<b>Northern Harrier Road</b>						
from Brumsfield road to Kestrel Trail				Re-surface		
Kestrel Trail to Jacobs Hill	Repair/Resurface					
Jacobs Hill to Cougar Trail	Repair/Resurface					
<b>Kestrel Trail</b>						Review
<b>Jacobs Hill</b>						Review
<b>Haystack Coulee</b>						
Cougar Trail to lot 91			Repair/Resurface			
Lot 91 to intersection of Owl Canyon	Small Repair					Review
<b>Coyote Pass</b>						
Haystack Coulee to lot 144			Repair			Review
Lot 144 to Arrow Head Ridge					Review	
Arrow Head Ridge to State Section						Review
State section to end of road			Repair/Resurface			
<b>Arrowhead Ridge</b>						
			Repair			Review
<b>Pelican Point</b>						
						Review