

RECOA Friday Update: November 12th

A Debrief on this Summer's Cattle Problems

On a Saturday evening back in July, we were sitting on our back patio with out-of-town guests. Earlier we had seen deer, quail, and even a heron from our deck, but were shocked when three large black cows meandered through our neighborhood. Our visitors laughed, but I didn't. Besides the frustration of the situation, I knew that the cows were likely to cause damage and there would be a number of upset owners.

Last month, Liz Lopez set up a meeting with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) manager responsible for leasing land to ranchers for cattle and the rancher who has a lease to use the land. They invited me to join. The purpose of the meeting was to do a debrief on issues this past year with the cows coming onto our RECOA property. We were very direct with our concerns and the impact on owners.

The BLM is a federal agency that manages much of the land adjacent to us and it's their mandate to look for opportunities to best utilize that land. Leasing the land to ranchers for grazing is a common strategy across their operations. In our case, we benefit from the cattle eating grasses that are fuel for wildfires. That benefit is offset by a number of negatives when the cattle manage to venture into RECOA property.

One reason the cattle issues were worse this year is because of the drought conditions on the BLM land. This resulted in the cattle being drawn to the green grass of our lawns and common areas. Evidently, they travel over ten miles from where they are released to get to our land. If the drought persists into 2022, the rancher may either shorten her season for grazing on BLM land, reduce the number of cattle, or not bring her cattle here at all.

Although we might wish the cattle could just go away, that isn't likely to happen. However, our discussion that day with the BLM manager and the rancher did give me hope that the situation can be better managed in the future. Here are some key items in the debrief:

- The fencing we invested in earlier this year worked. As you know, RECOA invested \$28,000 to reinforce fencing we own to protect our land from unwanted cattle. Those fences were our responsibility and there were no major problems this past year.
- BLM and the Rancher will reinforce fencing near the west entrance. One problem fencing area was along Eagle Crest Boulevard near the west ridge gate. Fencing here was old and frequently breached by the cattle. This line of fencing is 1.8 miles in length, and we don't own or control it. The BLM manager committed to work with the rancher to get this fence fortified by March 1, 2022 (a month and a half before any cattle would arrive). We will monitor that process. (We had originally budgeted for a cattle guard at the west entrance gate on Eagle Crest Boulevard. The BLM manager indicated that the reinforcement of the fencing by the rancher would make a cattle guard unnecessary).
- Users have illegally accessed BLM land off Cline Falls Highway. This area is near Turnstone and Cinnamon Teal Drive and has access from dirt roads off Cline Falls Highway. The problem here is that people have intentionally cut the fence in order to gain access. In one case, the perpetrator cut the fence and tied it back with zip ties. This, of course, is illegal and likely not the work of our residents. The BLM response is to work with the recreation and enforcement side of their agency to improve signage

and enforcement patrols. This is an urban interface issue they've successfully used in similar situations to deal with BLM land near Bend.

As long as there are cattle on BLM land, the potential for these types of issues is present. The management office is committed to watch all these issues moving into 2022 with the goal of minimizing any problems.

Elections Update

Voting closes just over a week from now on Saturday, November 20 at 10:00 a.m. Owners have plenty of time to review the candidate bios and videos on the RECOA website and vote on the candidate of their choice. Votes received by the deadline will be tallied and announced at the Annual Meeting. No RECOA owner, staff or board member has access to the electronic ballots.

If you haven't received a ballot via email, contact ECM right away. There is still time to coordinate having an electronic ballot sent to you before the voting deadline. Notify ownerservices@eagle-crest.com if you need a ballot.

In the past few weeks the management office has handled dozens of requests from owners to make sure they have access to vote. Those requests have lessened this week as owners have gotten access. If you haven't yet cast your ballot, Simply Voting will be sending reminder emails.

What can I do if I haven't voted yet?

- Owners who've received emails with a link to vote can use that link until Saturday morning, November 20 at 10:00 a.m.
- Owners without email addresses that received a letter via USPS can vote by telephone or website until Saturday morning, November 20 at 10:00 a.m.
- The Management Office will have a computer available between 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m. on Saturday morning, November 20 for in-person voting.

IMPORTANT: Owners must bring the unique access codes (Elector ID and PIN) that they received from Simply Voting. Staff will not have access to and have not been provided with these codes.