

## Minutes of the 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter EMC Meeting – March 26, 2025

Attending and Present were: Jim Angelillo, Jim Nance, Ron Alcorn, Lee and Paul Kimball, Susanne and Terry Bloomfield, Margaret and Frank Horwich, Brad and Marian Brooks. Meeting came to order at 13:10.

### Fire Mitigation, Prevention and Response

1. **CWPP Progress** – Wendy has completed the BHR Community Wildfire Protection Plan with help from Susanne. This was an epic project that literally required hundreds of hours of research, integration, planning and writing. It has turned out to be an extraordinary document and a must read. Wendy and I are actively driving the formal external review process including changes, recommendations/suggestions by our signatories. We hope to end phase 1 of that on 3/31. We may be reaching out to EMC members for assistance on some of the recommendations.

\* Discussion centered around what a great job Wendy and Susanne did on the CWPP Draft, that it has been sent out for external review and JP Angelillo by all signatories. Other discussion centered on recommendations received by Dr. Ahoma of the CSFS (road accessibility, steepness, width of roads and diameter of *cul de sacs*. Brad asked Jim Nance to provide survey data on the width of roads and cul de sacs. JP asked for more specifics on the recommendations, Brad provided that all of his road comments were based upon his perception that ingress and egress presented a real challenge for EMC, Fire Fighters and Law Enforcement. Additionally, Dr. Ahoma wanted the EMC to fine landowner who refused to mitigate their properties, and wanted us to improve the roads on Bighorn Ranch that serve as an limited emergency exit across Bighorn ranch land. Dr. Ahoma also wanted us to shift some of our information into other sections of the report.

2. **BHR Communications Document** – Anne Ebie (with significant help from Art Jackson) has completed a Draft Communications Document for the BHR POA. It has significant crossover with EMC operations. We will be developing a new EMC Handbook that will include some of the elements of the Communications Document.

\* Discussion centered around several EMC related functions (e.g. radios, fire control, vehicle recovery, that fit more appropriately in a separate EMC Handbook, but need to place a pointer to these elements in the EMC Handbook.

3. **EMC Handbook** - We need to undertake the development of a new EMC Handbook to cover our Purpose, Mission, Operations, Incident Management, Communications, Relationships, Key Performance Indicators and Documentation. The skillset of our EMC Team will be heavily utilized in this endeavor.

\* Discussion centered around the increasing capabilities, equipment and skillsets evolving on the EMC with regard to fire spotting and containment, vehicle recovery, communications, gate guides, radios and interactions with the La Veta and Huerfano County Fire protection districts. We need to take a fresh look at a EMC handbook to include our POA Board Comission, mission, purpose and what we will do and not do with regard to Quadrant Fire spotting, how we will conduct active fire suppression until fire fighters arrive, how we will integrate into the firefighters incident command, etc. How we will decide to engage with recovering landowner vehicles, provide recovery and acces to landowners who are snowed in, etc. Checklist/Guidance will be developed for Fire Engagement, Recovery and Accident Engagement, First Aid. Additional items will integrate with our new CWPP on items such as community and individual landowner fire mitigation. Other sections will delve into integration with the Communications Team, integration of radios and GPS APRS technologies across the EMC and Snow removal operations.

#### **4. Tentative Collaborative Agreement with the Purgatory River Volunteer Fire Department (CK Morey) –**

working with CK Morey, we have completed a draft collaborative agreement with the PRVFD to provide specific response to BHR, wildland fire response training, PPE and tool provision, fire facing volunteer insurance coverage, on ranch guidance on lightning tracking and reconnaissance, after action reporting and water source improvements. It is an amazing opportunity for BHR given this will be provided at not cost to BHR. At this juncture however, this agreement is contingent upon a secondary agreement between PRVFD and HCFPD.

\* Brad presented the case for diminishing potential in this agreement, due to the almost certain rejection of CK Morey's separate agreement with the Huerfano County Fire Protection District. That scenario diminishes what we might accomplish with CK Morey without HCFPD participation with CK Morey. Stay tuned on this, it is a rapidly evolving situation.

#### **5. Calendar and Dates for BHR Community Work Days –** we need to update our Trase work area mapping and develop a calendar for spring/summer/fall community work days. Any volunteers to do this?

\* Much discussion on this fast approaching activity. Current fire restrictions /mitigation restrictions by both Fire Protection Districts. Volunteers were requested to plan the calendar and execute the mitigation operations for this spring and summer. Frank Horwich graciously volunteered to head this important activity up. He will be putting together a mitigation workday calendar for the POA and will also be working with the chipper team to be sure that POA members who want to rent the chipper have the training and proficiency necessary to operate the chipper safely and not damaging the chipper. Subsequent discussion centered around Frank and Jim Nance working together to identify and prioritize TRASE-based mitigation day projects. After much discussion, it was decided that we would shoot for mitigation 50' on each side of the road. JP requested information and talking points in order to educate POA Annual Meeting attendees regarding this. Project.

#### **6. Chipper Status –** Chipper rental tracking template developed for review by Paul and Terry. Chipper rental fee increase to \$40/machine hour, effective April 1, 2025. Huerfano Fire Protection District has rendered a ban on fire mitigation at present. We should consider our options as mitigation is a low risk activity and has never caused a fire on Blackhawk. We have options going forward given our growing fire suppression capabilities.

\* It is likely that we will discuss with the fire protection districts our ability to begin fire mitigation operations shortly after our next heavy (>6in) snow storm. We will continue our ban on uncontained open fires on the ranch. We will continue to review the risks associated with any open fire on Blackhawk.

#### **7. Ingress/Egress access –** We need to plan and execute an evacuation drill for BHR during 2025. Any volunteers? In addition, we need to map our dead-end roads and spurs to document the turning radius available in order to determine the access to Fire Fighting vehicles and ambulances. Jim Nance will also lead us in a discussion on a proposed road project joining North Mountain and South Mountain.

\* We need volunteers to begin planning and will be responsible for executing, an all ranch emergency evacuation drill this summer. Without volunteers, Brad will execute a conscription campaign among EMC members. Jim nance raised the topic of whether the EMC members would support a Road Committee plan to join North and South Mountain roads. After a lively discussion of pros and cons, it was decided that this road improvement/safety issue might not be a 2025 priority due to greater needs on roads elsewhere.

#### **8. Fire Protection District updates**

- Brad is coming up on the end of his appointment on the HCFPD Board of Directors. He can run for election and was asked to do so. There are 11 local candidates vying for 3 open slots, so his chances of election are vanishingly small and therefore could use some Blackhawk votes. More details will be discussed.

\* Discussion centered around whether the EMC saw value in Brad running again for the HCFPD Board (the consensus was yes) and how that vote would take place (physical ballots and voting at the Fire Station on May 6).

- In addition, we may have a chance at some free Wildland Fire Fighting training in the coming months. It is real course work involving both class time and field time more details to come.
- Fire Mitigation Ban vs CWPP and Firewise Commitments
  - \* Brad will discuss the possibility of lifting the ban on BHR Fire Mitigation activities with the Fire Protection Districts following the next big snow fall.

## EMC Incidents Requiring EMC On Ranch Response

### **1. Disabled and/or Abandoned Vehicles**

- One resident requested assistance in removing a snow-mired vehicle from her driveway. Vehicle and driver located and vehicle removed January 28, 2025.
- A vendor driving a truck and 40ft trailer became mired in the snow and mud on Mule Deer Drive on the afternoon of February 14, 2025. A general call for assistance (BHR Facebook) was made by the absentee landowner. An EMC member went to investigate the incident and was informed that a service truck from the vendor was on its way to extricate the mired truck and trailer. **No further EMC assistance was offered.** It should be noted that the incident and recovery did damage to Mule Deer drive.
  - \* A spirited discussion ensued as to whether EMC members are obligated to recover a vendor vehicle especially when the landowner involved did not come to the ranch to oversee the delivery. This type of dilemma will be covered more fully in the upcoming EMC Handbook. The discussion concluded with the fact that no one on the EMC is obligated to respond to a call for help. Any response will be considered a self-deployment by the individual and not an EMC sponsored activity. Furthermore, EMC members who self-deploy will follow the Communications Team guidelines when doing so. Stay tuned, more to come on this topic. All of this being said, EMC members have a history of self-deploying to fires and vehicle accidents.

### **2. Vehicle Accidents** – None reported

## Security Updates

1. The need for Blackhawk property owners to **badge their vehicles** - We need to emphasize the need for Blackhawk ID visible on the vehicles of our owners. We have already tried to emphasize the need for actionable information on See Something, Say Something reporting. Perhaps a nudge in the Communications document and the emergent EMC Handbook?
2. **Trespass Complaints** via Rhett and Liz Cowen on Wapiti – photos were taken.
  - \* Photo not resolved enough to sufficiently identify the person.
3. **Careless Cigarette** disposal complaint – Michele Beasley
  - \* Person identified during the meeting as a visitor. Visitor was counseled.

## Snow Removal Support - any ongoing issues or concerns that EMC can help with?

\* None identified by Ron Alcorn

## **Other Topics of Interest or Concern?**

## **Next Meeting Date?**

\* **May 19, 2025**