

Road & Spray Report

5/31/19

Written by Kirk Johnson, reviewed and edited by Brett Coffman. Please also see “Road Manager Activity Logs” under the “Reports” section on the 9mileranchhoa.org website for more detailed daily activities.

Assessment Coming Out of Winter

In early April, 2019 and later in May, Road Committee members Brett Coffman and Kirk Johnson toured all Ranch roads for initial assessment. A basic list of specific identified road repairs was made, which is discussed in detail at the end of this report. Otherwise here are some basic observations:

- Between last fall's well-executed ditching, road crowning, culvert cleaning and roadside erosion control repairs, and a relatively low-impact spring 2019 melt, roads are in good shape right now regarding water shedding characteristics. This motivates the Road Committee to spend remaining available 2018/2019 fiscal year road maintenance funds on other things, like gravel and raking if possible. We do not expect to need to spend funds on ditching, culvert cleaning, crowning, and erosion control until getting ready for next winter which will be during the new 2019/2020 fiscal year.
- Adding gravel to roads continues to be the greatest need. Very little rake-able gravel exists throughout the Ranch, so this will continue to cause expenditure emphasis be placed more on on gravel and less on raking.
- Weed control was very thorough and effective last year, particularly noting that the long-troubling presence of Russian thistle (a.k.a. tumbleweed) is being controlled well.

Finishing 2018/2019 Fiscal Year

As you may know, our fiscal year goes from June 1 – May 31, so we're just about to complete fiscal year 2018/2019. Concurrently we're engaged with finishing the last planned road maintenance expenditures for the 2018/2019 fiscal year as follows:

- **Gravel placement.** Next week we will place and limited-machine approximately \$3800.00 worth of pit run gravel on a 500 foot stretch of West Corral in Division 7, starting from the Gold Rush Ridge intersection and working down slope. This work will be performed by Mason's Excavation. This placement was originally scheduled last fall. A notable change is that we are choosing to spend all \$3800.00 at this road section instead of dividing it between there and Point Drive as was previously scheduled last fall. The reason for this change is that it will cost funds to have our contractor move his machining gear from one spot to the other, so instead of spending funds in that way we'll just put all of it into gravel for one location (West Corral) and then later this year we'll put funds and gravel into the location at Point Drive.

This gravel placement will complete the 2018/2019 scheduled gravel placement of approximately \$12,000.00 worth of gravel, the largest single-year gravel expenditure in Ranch

history, also approximately three times more than our historical yearly average. These additional funds for gravel came from last year's Lot assessment increase and from successful past-due collections efforts

- **Other road work.** In addition to the cash flow available for gravel discussed above, there is approximately \$2600.00 in cash flow left from the 2018/2019 collected cash available to be spent on other road work, not including for spraying. For the last month we have been seeking to spend these funds on raking, but it has been challenging to complete that because we've recently discovered our contractor Tim Roberts does not have current business licenses. He is the only contractor in the region who owns a road rake, and he's been unwilling to either rent or sell his rake to us, so we've been working hard to find another raking source. After a lot of effort we found a rake manufacturer locally who is willing to 'rent' a rake to another local contractor to perform some raking for us, but that has also been challenging because that manufacturer uses his rake to perform raking for his clients... all of which needs to be done while roads have been moisturized by spring rains. So we were able to perform about half of our desired raking at the end of last week, but Road Manager Kirk Johnson called off all remaining raking for lack of adequate road moisture present.
- **Weed control.** As of this weekend spray contractor Loomis Ag will perform initial pre-emergent sterilant spray where needed and spot broadleaf spray for emerged broadleaf noxious weeds. \$8000.00 remains in the current cash-flow budget for this fiscal year for weed spray, so we're in good shape for that. The goals of spraying are:
 - keep *driving planes* clear of vegetation growth, whereby making it safe for drivers to drive on roads without hot car exhaust systems starting fires from touching tall growth.
 - Allow non-noxious plant growth to happen and be fostered in ditches, embankments, and slopes up to and away from ditches. This typical industry-standard maintenance action promotes prevention of erosion for roadsides and ditches.
 - spray noxious weeds in ditches, on shoulders, and in close proximity to road edges where it's obvious that road maintenance actions and driving traffic either propagate weed spread or threaten to do that.
- **Tree felling.** Pursuant to HOA legal counsel from last December, the HOA is legally responsible to remove hazardous roadside trees within the 60' wide easements throughout the Ranch (all roads). Last fall volunteer HOA members removed many such hazardous trees that existed because of wildfires in 2015, and that work continues as we speak. In recent weeks and in this coming week the last of the hazardous roadside trees in Division 2 on Allen Drive are being felled and removed. We are very fortunate to have such volunteer work, having saved thousands of dollars in HOA costs so far.

New Work Contractors

As discussed above, we are working with additional new road work contractors. Mason's Excavation is scheduled to perform some gravel placement and road machining (grading), and Jason Reese of Garrett Construction has performed some raking. Both contractors are being considered for continuing other road work to come, as currently being developed by the Road Committee. Both

contractors are licensed, bonded, and insured as required by law and HOA insurance.

Potential HOA Purchase of a Rake

As has been discovered and proven over many years on the Ranch, a gravel rake is the most needed and frequently-used type of road maintenance equipment for us (used for crowning and for removal of washboarding and rutting). We also need to be able to absolutely respond to raking needs at short notice as dictated by weather conditions; it is significantly negatively impactful to our road maintenance if we do not have access to timely raking. As discussed above we are currently left without a secure raking option, which has motivated us to consider purchasing a rake. A rake is a relatively low-cost purchase, potentially in line with our Ranch scale of budget, and it's also a piece of gear that can be easily stored and maintained within options available to us. The Road Committee is currently researching purchase options and feasibility issues and will issue a report with recommendations to the Board of Directors as soon as possible. The issue needs to be resolved before September so we can resume raking as needed before next winter. The Board will make information about the development of this subject available to the membership as it happens, and it is likely the subject will be prominent at the upcoming July Board meeting.

More Gravel is Badly Needed

As cannot be emphasized enough, it is easy to see our roads need much more gravel in order to adequately maintain their surfaces and to perform effective and more affordable snow plowing. Currently most roads cannot be raked for lack of gravel present and also without damaging/deteriorating the existing road base. Also, as has been advised by recent HOA attorney legal counsel, maintaining road gravel is an implied requirement in our CCRs. Our original roads were not constructed to start with having a surface layer of decent gravel with which to rake or grade effectively without continually destroying the base rock content of the road, and added to this is that throughout Ranch history road gravel has been allowed to wear away twice as fast as it has been being replaced; in other words, what was placed there originally is not very effective to maintain and has also been allowed to wear away beyond historical replacement rates. Please see this linked report (<http://assuredcomputer.com/kirk/grav.repl.def.pdf>) showing calculations for current gravel deficits. Being aware of these gravel deficits, the Board continues to focus on gravel placement as a top expenditure priority and is also the main reason for the recent annual assessment rates increase. The Board is also currently working on bringing a Special Assessment vote to the membership asking for immediate additional funds for large-scale gravel replenishment.

General Maintenance Plan for Summer/Fall Season

1. Perform erosion repairs/prevention and ditch and culvert clearing as necessary.
2. Maintain road crowning as much as possible with what gravel we have on roads.
3. Spend as much HOA funds as possible on gravel placement, according to these general guidelines:
 - high traffic areas are a priority.
 - soft road sections that lack gravel for adequately supporting auto/truck tires without causing rutting are a priority.
 - Pit run gravel with good fines will be placed where roads are flatter in slope and where existing base gravel can properly receive this type of gravel. Pit run gravel costs about \$200

per load, being the least expensive gravel option, and will be used where advisable to save on costs.

- 1 1/4"-minus crush rock will be placed where road sections are softer, lacking ballast rock (rock large enough to support auto traffic), abundant in fines, and usually on more inclined road sections. This rock costs approximately \$275 - \$300 per truck load.
 - 5/8"-minus dolomite crush gravel will be used on steep road sections where a strong base ballast rock already exists, and also on flatter road sections where a strong base exists but other types of gravel will not bind well over such a base. This rock costs about \$330.00 per truck load (being our most expensive rock), is the only rock available to us that binds over large pit run base rock roads and on steeper inclines, packs extremely well, and it's inherent extreme hardness resists road wear the best.
 - 1 1/2"-minus screened shale will be used on flatter road sections where existing roads have abundant loose pit run without enough binding fines. Shale is naturally soft and relatively quickly degrades into good fines over time with auto traffic, being a good mix into the existing loose pit run. This gravel costs \$175.00 - \$200.00 per truck load.
4. According to funds available, consider 'capital improvements' projects. This would be work that improves or changes the structure of a road, like widening narrowed sections or installing new culverts.
 5. Remain vigilant for spot-spraying noxious weeds as they emerge throughout the season.

Donations/Volunteers Accepted for Road Inspection Costs

Some HOA members have expressed dislike for the HOA reimbursing volunteer Road Committee members for their auto expense mileage while performing necessary road maintenance duties. If you would like to donate expenses or volunteer to drive the manager and crew please contact the Board.

Specific Identified Road Work

The following repair items were identified during spring assessment drives. The list does not necessarily include all items and will be amended throughout the maintenance season as necessary. While several notes about desired gravel placement are on the list the Road Committee will make final gravel placement lists later in the season.

Division 1

- .25 miles down Point Drive from Nine Mile Road; bolster sandy erosive ditches with rip rap, clear ditches.
- Clear culvert outlet at intersection of Sunset Ridge Road and Canyon Spur.

Division 2

- Complete felling of standing dead burned hazardous trees in the easement.
- No other immediate items for repair are identified. However, it is noted that most of this Division's roads would benefit from placement of 1 1/4"-minus gravel in order to make the relatively soft road base support traffic better, preventing rutting; the roads were inspected in late last fall and early spring during melt-off to see soft conditions. This gravel placement is currently a lower priority, given the relatively low traffic level on the roads and lack of HOA

funding.

Division 3

- No immediate items for repair are identified except a small ditch clearing on the west side of Wagon Wheel Road at .50 miles up.
- It is noted that some 1/4"-minus crushed rock should be placed in a softer spot about .15 miles up Wagon Wheel. This spot was identified last year and should be planned into the upcoming gravel placement budget.

Division 4

- Clear obstructing nuisance rocks in the road plane on Old Tressle.
- Using 5/8"-minus crush, fill the large pit in the road approximately .4 miles up Pine Bluff from Chesaw Road.
- Point Drive (south) Pine Bluff, Sunset Ridge Road, and upper Old Tressle are all in need of gravel placement. Point drive (south), somewhere between Nine Mile Road and the Crest Drive intersection are scheduled to receive pit run gravel placement this coming fall.

Division 5

- Clear ditch of upside road embankment sloughage approximately .3 miles west on Canam from the Blue Grouse intersection.
- Using a combination of pit run ballast harvested from nearby Mallard Drive roadsides and sloughage fines removed from the Mallard Drive creek ravine, build up a low road section .2 miles west on Meadowlark Road from the Mallard Drive intersection; during spring melt this road section heavily submerges under standing water. This will necessarily involve placement of a culvert as well.
- Approximately .6 miles down Meadowlark road from the Mallard Drive intersection fill a low pit spot in the road.
- On the steep, rough pit run road section on Mallard Drive at the Meadowlark intersection, place some 5/8"-minus crush dolomite gravel.
- Re-establish the ditch and fill accompanying road erosion on Mallard Drive, just above the cattle grate about .3 miles from the Blue Grouse intersection. This spot perennially erodes, so we will place rip-rap shale in the ditch to control the strong tendency toward erosion.
- Volunteer pothole filling, using 5/8"-minus dolomite crush, on bad areas on Mallard Drive. If this goes well the Road Committee will recommend performing this on other Ranch roads. If volunteers are not found to perform the labor then a paid contractor will have to be secured to perform the labor.

Division 6

- No immediate repairs were noted. However, we will watch and vigilantly spray Forest Road after the first home because in years past the road was allowed to grow vegetation; its a fire hazard for driving traffic.

Division 7

- On West Corral, above and below the Horsetrail intersection, this road section is soft and lacks rake-able gravel. It's also a high traveled area, being an even stronger candidate for gravel this fall. It would help with the many potholes as well.
- The upper end of Horsetrail needs pit run gravel; the road section is soft and susceptible to rutting.
- The hairpin switchback corner at the West Corral/Gold Rush Ridge road intersection could use some 1 1/4"-minus crush gravel in order to stabilize it better.
- Most sections of lower West Corral, beyond the .5 mile mark from Chesaw Road are high traveled sections lacking gravel and also having large boulderheads sticking up; gravel placement is needed.

Division 8

- On Longhorn Drive, just before the Canyon View Lane intersection, a perennially unstable road embankment needs ditch clearing and bolstering with rip-rap.
- A short steep road section of Longhorn Drive, approaching the last existing home about 1.5 miles up from Chesaw Road, is very bare of gravel and rough, needing 5/8"-minus gravel placement.
- On Longhorn Drive between the .3 mile and 1 mile point could use some gravel placement (higher traffic road section).
- At 1.2 miles down Gold Rush Ridge Road from the West Corral intersection: pre-grade the soft rutted sloped road section just before Lake View Spur and place a load of 1 1/4"-minus crushed gravel. Also grade out the large existing gravel hump at that intersection.
- Monitor Canyon View Lane for roadplane vegetation growth (fire hazard).