

Around the Ranch

Property Owners Assn. of Terlingua Ranch Inc.

POB 638 Terlingua, TX 79852

Telephone: 432-371-3146

TerlinguaRanch.com POATRI.org



2011 Board of Directors

August 2011

Wildfires and Drought are Here !



A Fort Stockton home destroyed by an April 2011 wildfire that moved **23 miles in 30 minutes**.

Protect Your Home from a Wildland Fire

With the current drought conditions and huge fires that have blackened thousands of nearby acres we should all become as fire conscious as possible. Thanks to our adherence to current fire regulations and use of good common sense, we have been spared the horror of a large wildfire to this point. Our great crew from Terlingua fire and EMS has kept the few small fires that have occurred under control.

Every year many families unnecessarily lose their homes and possessions to wildland fire. These losses can be minimized if we take the time to become aware of safety measures to help protect our homes and complete some effective actions.

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Meet Your Roads Foreman

The hundreds of miles of ranch road need to be constantly maintained and our two man crew is working on this and continuously upgrading at the same time.



The Foreman, **Dennis Nance** is originally from Sonora Texas and has worked on road maintenance and construction for his entire career. He relocated to the ranch in 1997 and has worked for the ranch on and off since then.

He and his wife Deborah (Debbie) have a home just off the ranch road and have 2 grown sons.

The other half of the hard working crew is **Chris Leland**.

We asked Dennis some questions about how they maintain the 1500 miles of road with only a 2 man crew.

How do you schedule your workdays?

We schedule by requests and by tract location to make things as efficient as possible.

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According to the National Interagency Fire Center, these are the most important steps that can be taken to ensure the safety of your home. Some of these are obviously not applicable to our ranch, such as having road signs and addresses clearly marked, but the remaining suggestions may help to save your home or that of your neighbors.

Use Fire Resistant Building Material - "The Best Thing That You Can Do"

The roof and exterior structure of your dwelling should be constructed of non-combustible or fire resistant materials such as fire resistant roofing materials, tile, slate, sheet iron, aluminum, brick, or stone. Wood siding, cedar shakes, exterior wood paneling, and other highly combustible materials should be treated with fire retardant chemicals.

Maintain a Survivable Space - "Things You Can Do Today"

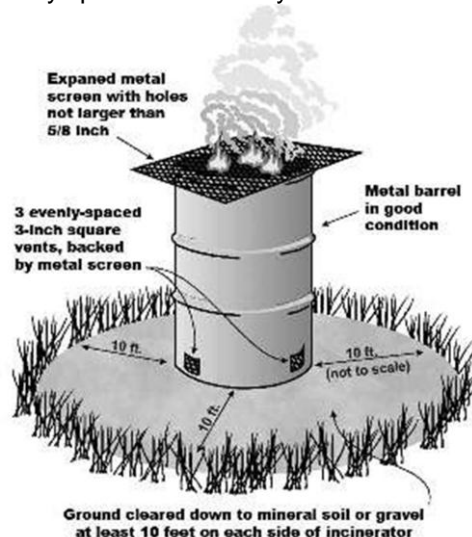
- A fuel break should be maintained around all structures. *Keep area clear of flammable vegetation!*
- Propane tanks should be far enough away from buildings for valves to be shut off in case of fire. *Keep area clear of flammable vegetation!*
- All combustibles such as firewood, picnic tables, boats, etc. should be kept away from structures.
- Store gasoline in an approved safety can away from occupied buildings.
- Maintain a screen constructed of non-flammable material over the flue opening of every chimney or stovepipe. Mesh openings of the screen should not exceed 1/2 inch.
- Clean roof surfaces and gutters of pine needles, leaves, branches, etc., regularly to avoid accumulation of flammable materials.
- Remove portions of any tree extending within 10 feet of the flue opening of any stove or chimney.
- Landscape vegetation should be spaced so that fire cannot be carried to the structure or surrounding vegetation.
- Remove branches from trees to height of 15 feet.
- Dispose of stove or fireplace ashes and charcoal briquettes only after soaking them in a metal pail

of water.

- A Garden hose should be connected to outlet if possible.
- Addressing should be indicated at all intersections and on structures.
- All roads and driveways should be at least 16 feet in width.
- Have fire tools handy such as: ladder long enough to reach the roof, shovel, rake and bucket for water.
- Each home should have at least two different entrance and exit routes.

Preventing Wildland Fires by Smokey Bear

- Burn Barrels – *Don't Burn* if the wind might carry sparks outside of your cleared area.



- Burn Barrels must be made of all-metal construction in good condition (no rust on the sides or bottom) and properly ventilated with three evenly-spaced, three-inch square vents spaced evenly around the rim near ground level. Each vent must be backed by a metal screen. A Burn Barrel must have a metal top screen with mesh size of one-fourth inch or finer to keep sparks from escaping and potentially sparking a wildfire. When burning, layer the different types of debris and stir often. Be careful of sparks escaping the barrel when you stir it.
- Do not build a fire without making sure open fires are allowed, and always follow fire safety protocol.

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Remain With your Fire/Barrel - Stay with your fire until it is completely out. To ensure the fire has been completely extinguished, drown the fire with water, turn over the ashes with a shovel and drown it again.

- Add a spark arrester to off-road vehicles and other small internal combustion engines such as generators.
- Deposit all cigarette butts in proper containers. Never throw a cigarette butt onto the ground.

Note that all burn bans include proper procedures be used in any welding or grinding operations to mitigate chances of a fire that might start from the sparks produced

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Ranch, TFEMS and NPS Fire Prevention Conference

Greg Henington, chief of TFEMS and Jim Kitchen, Fire Management Officer for Big Bend National Park Met with Dean, Dennis, Val and Dori to discuss fire prevention for the lodge area.

Areas for discussion included access improvement, brush clearing and planned burns

Improvements are to fill south of the cabins which would clear to 30 feet and also provide a road for trucks on that side. Dennis also wants to add a road along the new water line to provide a circle around the entire area. Jim and Greg said that our current roads provide very good fire breaks.

We drew out areas on a Google earth map where Jim said we should plan annual burns. Once we have burned through it will be easy to maintain. Both Jim and Greg offered their respective services when appropriate weather arrives.

Jim also recommended clearing all brush from our propane tanks, the area in back of the cabana where the fire pit is and the arroyo near the campground.

Jim and Greg both recommended relocating the TFEMS water tanks as they are currently in an area where they would be consumed if a fire started racing up the mountain, and therefore would be inaccessible and melt. We will be relocating these to the fire station as part of the water project. Greg's preference was to position the tanks near the fire station and use the swimming pool as a draw point.

Jim then talked about the need to adopt a Community Fire Plan. It would include

1. Communication

- a. Where is the command post
- b. Who is notified
- c. Who responds
- d. Phone numbers for all parties and contact info posted in a place that is accessible

2. Treatment Plan

- a. Structure priority-which structures get protected first
- b. Prescription fuel reduction
- c. -30 foot clearing of all brush
- d. -20 foot clearing to all power poles
- e. limb up 3 inch diameter trees to 6 feet (remove all limbs below 6 feet)

3. Water Treatments

- a. Water sources clearly understood
- b. Pump pressures available
- c. Scenario with only gravity feed pressure as you may have no power
- d. Fire extinguishers added to porches

4. Evacuation Plan

- a. Route closure to prevent clogging-someone calls the sheriff for assistance-Brent Sugg at this time
- b. Security-who goes where

5. Execution

- a. Fire team. Our natural team at this point is Dean, Val and Dennis. NPS does one week training programs on wildland fires, there is Fire School in Fort Davis. TFEMS would be delighted to have a responder unit on the Ranch, but they must be trained.

This plan should be detailed and adopted yearly and posted in plain sight.

Jim has offered to facilitate a 2 hour discussion to assist in our adopting a community fire plan. It should include residents along the road at least back to the pavement.

Terlingua Fire and EMS (TFEMS) is looking for volunteers, especially on the Ranch. It is a time commitment as there is some excellent but mandatory training to work fire or EMS with TFEMS.

Water System Update

This is a report on the three phase upgrade for the ranch area water system.

Phase I is to find out exactly how the system works, develop a master water distribution map, find where valves are located, install valves as needed and upgrade to the point where we can fix water breaks without shutting the entire system down.

Phase 2 is to install a line between the laundry and restaurant area. Our water system currently has no loops and is just one long dead end line. Currently when a drop of water leaves the ground storage tank it must flow down the upper road, through the area in front of the cabins, down the road over to Judy's trailer, along the road by the shop and fire station, through the dry campground, around the pool and past the restaurant and finally to the office area.

The head losses through the old pipe are huge and the new connection will eliminate a major part of this problem. When this line is in the same drop of water leaving the ground storage will flow down the upper road and then directly to the restaurant and office. Flexibility for repairs will be enhanced and the system will now be a big loop. Head losses due to friction will be greatly reduced.

Phase 3 will be to build a well house at the new well, install a line from the well to the fire station, install a ground storage tank and a booster pump. Currently we have completed Phase I. We have developed a master map of the water distribution along with detailed instructions of what to do to shut down a specific area. When we started we had 6 known valves. We found 4 unknown valves, and installed 4 valves. We now have 14 operating valves in the system and can isolate 7 different areas for repairs while keeping the rest of the resort in operation.

Phase 2 of the water system work has now been completed. Our staff and Marbert installed a 485 foot 2" line that connects from above the laundry to the line near the restaurant. Valves were put in at each end along with a much needed outside water spigot near the deer storage locker.

Before the line was completed the pressure the pool well was pumping against was 70 psi. Static pressure was 45 psi. After the line was turned on the pumping pressure dropped to 50 psi which is a substantial improvement. The pool well is now pumping about 22% more water than it pumped before the connection.

With the completion of this connection we now have a looped system with the ability turn off different sections of the resort without impacting other areas. We also now have 16 shutoff valves in the system which gives us some real flexibility. We haven't rechecked pressures throughout the system since turning on the new line but we expect some real improvements especially at the restaurant.

Dennis, Chris, Dean, Vern and Marbert all pitched in and did a great job. Chris even spent several hours on a jackhammer breaking out a section of solid rock. The work was completed start to finish in 9 days which included two days off for Memorial Day weekend. Water was off at the laundry and at the restaurant for less than 30 minutes while the connections were made.

A contractors cost for this job would have exceeded \$10,000 and it was completed in house for about \$600.

We also have the status of the new well. Timeline is as follows.

1. We have completed establishing and clearing the right of way for the water and electric line.
2. We need to trench and install the electrical to the wellhead
3. We need to construct the pump house
4. A pad needs to be prepared at the fire station for 3 tanks-the white water tank that is up at our current well, and the 2 tanks for Terlingua Fire and EMS
5. White tank up the hill needs to be relocated.
6. Lay the water line
7. Connect the relocated water storage tank into the distribution line

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Dark Skies Law

Bill Wren from the McDonald Observatory gave a one hour presentation at the Friday workshop. There is a new law in effect Jan 1, 2012 that affects outdoor lighting in counties within 57 miles of McDonald Observatory...here are some links.

<http://mcdonaldobservatory.org/darkskies/>

<http://bigbendnow.com/2011/07/new-law-aims-to-keep-lights-low-in-far-west-texas/>

<http://www.bigbenddarkskies.com/>

From the Treasurer

The financial reports of POATRI as of the second quarter (June 30th, 2011) are posted on the POATRI website. For those owners who cannot access the website, please contact Mary-Annette at the office, and she will try to accommodate your needs.

Also, please refer to the website for the 2010 Audited Financial Report which is now complete. Please be aware of some differences from earlier year end audited reports, as our accounting procedures are evolving so that a more "owner friendly" format can be offered. The report for year 2011, when presented almost a year from now, will feature the complete new format that will facilitate easier presentation of assessments collected.

2011 assessment collections continue to be slightly ahead of 2010 collections. As of July 31st, 2215 accounts have paid the 2011 assessments. In addition, the office has sent out volunteer request letters to remind those exempt owners that their voluntary payment will be most appreciated. And we thank those who have already paid their volunteer assessments.

POATRI continues to be on sound financial ground. All of our staff are well aware that it is their responsibility to the owners to be constantly vigilante where finances are concerned. The Board is very appreciative of their efforts in controlling costs in their day to day operations.

As always, any of you owners who have questions or suggestions, please contact any Director, or myself, Marbert Moore, Treasurer. Thank you.

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New Kitchen Cabinets



Larry Sunderland, son of property owner **Maria Sunderland** offered to build a new set of cabinets for the Ranch office. Larry supervised the installation of the new cabinets earlier this year. The kitchen floor was redone beautifully by **Steve Johnson**. Stop in the office and check out this gift from Larry, and next time you see him say thank you!

From page 1

What are your primary concerns in maintaining the roads?

First is to ensure that all tracts are accessible, then make them as all-weather as possible. We are rebuilding some roads that have completely deteriorated over twenty years of poor maintenance. Along with this we are using new material and regarding all the roads so they have a crown instead of the ditch shape you see currently.

Why is the crown so important?

The crown prevents water from flowing down the road and forces it off the side, promoting natural watershed and keeps the road from washing out easily. Watershed is important for the proper distribution of rainwater to wells and springs which have started drying up in some places.

The original roads were built using 2 Cat dozers with one 10 foot and one 14 foot blade and were wide enough to park 2 cars side by side with room to spare. The berms you see along the road today are what are left of the crown after 20 years of improper maintenance.

What can we do to help you maintain the roads?

If you have trees or shrub s growing next to the road, keep them trimmed back out of the roadway. Any buried lines should be marked with a T-post painted yellow to indicate.

If you don't want washboards and dust, **DRIVE SLOWLY!** When you drive too fast and the dust trail follows you, that's the smooth part of the road blowing away. Ideal speed for gravel roads is **25 MPH or less.**

Think of the tires on your car as a grinding wheel being put down on the road when driving so the vehicle bounces and throws dust. On the other hand, when driving at the right speed the tire tread rolls over the ground acting like a compacting wheel.

If you drive slowly, you'll get to see all the wildlife instead of running over it!

Once we have maintained the roads near your property, use the whole rad when driving, if tracks start to form, drive off them and this will help compact the rest of the surface and prevent future rutting.

What are the long term goals for the road system?

We want to have **all** the roads accessible by 2 wheel drive vehicles and return the all-important watershed to as nearly natural as possible.



Elections are coming in January!

Check the following to ensure that you can vote in the upcoming January election:

- Is my address correct?
- If I am a new property owner, have I completed the process necessary to be included as an owner in the POATRI database?
- Am I current on all my fees and assessments?
- Make sure that to complete the ballot and mail the entire ballot back to the address listed on the ballot for receipt no later than 5:00 pm January 27th, 2012.
- Remember that mail delivery is not consistent during the Christmas season so mail early to ensure receipt.
- Ballots can only be received at the address printed on the ballot. Receipt at any other address will invalidate your ballot.
- If you have not received an official ballot from POATRI by 2 weeks prior to the election, call or contact the Ranch office.
- Make sure that your friends who own properties here have received their ballots, encourage everyone to VOTE.

Candidates for the Board should keep the following information in mind:

Director Packets will be available September 1, 2011. Final submission must be by 5 pm on October 28, 2011. You must be a member in good standing to run and have owned property for more than 1 year You must be willing to sign the Code of Ethics and Standard of Conduct annually.

Summary of July Board Meetings

1. New bylaws have been adopted and are posted on the POATRI website.
2. There are recommended changes to Article 3 which will be on the January ballot for a vote of the members.
3. Flight for life insurance will be provided for all employees who work 20 hours a week or more.
4. A motion was passed to allow members who only owe SAC charges to vote on the proposed changes and in the January election.
5. A revised Director Standard of Conduct and Code of Ethics was adopted to reflect the changes in the bylaws.

Complete minutes of the Board meeting are available

on the POATRI website.

The game wardens also gave a great presentation which is available at <http://www.poatri.org/index.html>

They return at the October meeting for another presentation and Q&A session.

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We would like to give a warm welcome to **Mary-Annette Hunter** as our new fulltime Bookkeeper.

We also offer our deep appreciation to our volunteer CPA who kept the ranch books in order during the search for a new full time staffer.

From the President

It's that time of year again, we're rolling into Director Election time! As you all know every fall we need at least 3 or more property owners to run for a board position. Now that I have almost 3 years of board service under my belt, I thought I would write a little bit about what it takes to be a board member and hopefully encourage some of you new property owners to step up to the challenge.

My first year on the board was interesting, everything was sort of happening around me and I was trying to read all the director books and keep up with what was going on and learning about the lawsuits and getting to know the other board members. Meetings sort of came and went and I tried to watch and learn. It only took a couple of meetings to get a feel for how to best participate and learn how to impact change on issues. My second year, I was willing to jump in to an officer position and was elected President. A lot has changed since that day and luckily I have had a great group of board members to help create that change. As I wind up my third year of volunteering, I have grown to appreciate the ups and downs of board life. It's interesting how it evolves and changes. My first year I felt scared, my second year I felt protective, and this year I feel ready to hand it over to new leadership and I can let go.

As I have watched other directors come and go around me and watched those who stay grow, I can tell you with confidence that you will have some seasoned directors next year to guide POATRI into the future. But these people can't do it without your help. If you have been interested in volunteering at the ranch and are willing to put some time in, I implore you to consider throwing your hat in the ring as a director. It's hard work, it can be overwhelming at times, there is a lot to read and study to get a good feel for the job at hand. The best part of the job is the relationships you build. It's especially great for someone like me who plans to live here at the ranch in about 5 years. I have met people here that I now consider to be part of my family of friends. If you REALLY want to understand the issues, if you want to affect change, and if you want to get to know your neighbors, this is your opportunity. You will quickly see how your volunteer efforts make a difference when you invest some of your free time in the ranch community.

There is no better time than today to join a hard working team of property owners. We have some incredible staff members working hard to keep everything in tip top shape. You have 3 current board officers who are more than capable of continuing a leadership role for the

future while you join the team and give input and learn the ropes. Here is a list of things that I think will help you be the best board member:

1. Ability to be objective
2. Have your OWN opinion
3. Use critical thinking when reading legal documents
4. Thick skin, don't take gossip too seriously (or yourself for that matter, lol)
5. Willingness to compromise when necessary
6. Willingness to work as a team with other board members
7. Attitude of serving others
8. Technology savvy - you will need to read/write emails and give reports
9. Be of ethical and moral behavior
10. A love of our ranch

Below is a little section of the P&P so that you can understand the commitment level necessary:

Time and resource commitments

- The POATRI Board has four scheduled meetings per year.
- The meetings are conducted at the ranch and require a two night stay over.
- Transportation to meetings and meals are at your own expense.
- Two nights lodging is provided at the ranch.
- During each month there will be periodic phone calls and conference calls among directors, at your own expense.
- Email is a primary method of communication.

I encourage you to apply when the applications come out in September. Let's continue to improve the ranch together!

Thanks,

Tanya Phillips, President

POATRI BOD

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POATRI
PO Box 638
Terlingua, TX 79852

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

RANCH POTLUCK

JUDY'S BAD RABBIT CAFE

3RD THURSDAY EVERY MONTH

Bring your favorite dish and utensils

BOARD MEETING

RANCH OFFICE

10:00 LAST SATURDAY - JAN, APR, JUL, OCT

Pre-meeting workshop Friday at 1:00 pm

DANCE LESSONS

AT THE RANCH BUNKHOUSE

BEGINNING TWO STEP

September 6th, 13th, 20th, 27th 6:30-8:30

Singles and couples

\$20/person for all 4 lessons

READING ROUND THE RANCH

JUDY'S BAD RABBIT CAFÉ

1ST WEDNESDAY EVERY MONTH @ 6 PM

MOVIES AT THE BUNKHOUSE

2ND AND 4TH WEDNESDAY EVERY MONTH @ 7 PM

BULK RATE
US POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO.
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Mailing Address
Street Number and Name
City, State 98765-4321