

THE OWNER'S ASSOCIATION AT INDIAN CREEK

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Published by Philip Nelson

EMERGENCY NUMBERS:

Fire
Rocksprings (830) 683-4111
Barksdale (830) 234-3473
Camp Wood (830) 597-6100

Border Patrol (830) 683-2255

EMS
Rocksprings (830) 683-3305
Camp Wood (830) 597-4200

Sheriff & Highway Patrol
830) 683-4104



Message from the Association President:

Hello Indian Creek landowners! This year seems to be going by quickly. We had a great turn out at the quarterly picnic. Thanks to everyone for being there and bringing some food -- I think a good time was had by all. **Our next quarterly picnic will be at the landing strip on June 9th at 12:00.**

We are holding a raffle to help raise money for the ranch -- items to be raffled off are a Weatherby Vanguard 30-06 rifle, a Ruger 45 cal pistol, a power inverter jump box, a \$100.00 gift certificate to Lowes, and 2 \$100.00 gift certificates to Cabelas. All but the Cabelas cards were donated. Please contact me, Mike Ashby, Jimmy or Bill about getting tickets to buy or sell. The drawing will be at the annual meeting in October. Tickets are \$5.00 each or 6 for \$25.00. A maximum of 1250 tickets will be sold.

Water repairs still seem to be a problem, and we are going to have to take some drastic steps to help cut costs. **In the future, all landowners will need to call a board member when a water problem occurs – do not call Emmit King directly.** The board will determine the impact of the outage and determine whether or not it can wait for another problem to occur so we can reduce trips and cut costs. Remember -- Association water is not potable and was designed for Game use only. If you use it for anything else, it is at your own risk. People who live at the ranch on a permanent basis should have their own well to provide their domestic water needs. Also, and as we've stated before, each tract should have their own storage tank -- they should NOT be connected directly to the pressured line on the system. If we do find such connections, we will ask Emmitt to remove the connection and leave a valve for your use. It will be important for each of us to fill our tanks each time we are at the ranch, so emergency repairs can be kept to a minimum. We need everyone's cooperation in this matter.

We need volunteers for a wildlife survey and to fill the office of Secretary/Treasurer. Should anyone be interested in the wildlife survey, contact Mike Ashby, our Wildlife Committee chairman. Those interested in serving on the board as Treasurer, please contact a board member. Bill has really made it easy and has agreed to work with the Treasurer during the transition.

Well it looks like we are finally going to get some road work done. Anyone knowing of trouble spots needs to notify Jimmy Yarbrough ASAP. We would also like to put together a web site for the ranch. Anyone with knowledge and wish to do so please contact me at ddeulich@austin.rr.com.

Combinations should all be changed on the gates by the time you receive this letter. This was supposed to be done at the last picnic (and was in phase 1), but someone didn't read their newsletter and cut the lock and replaced it with another lock with the old combo. The new combo will be **2506**. If you should get to the ranch and you can't get in call a board member.

Dan Delich

VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Hello fellow members,

The rains sure have made the ranch as beautiful as ever. The grass is green and the Mountain laurels were blooming like I have never seen! I hope it will continue for a couple more months.

I have secured a contractor, Edmond Winston, for road maintenance and he plans on starting the first couple of weeks in May. Edmond and I drove the Ranch on April 14th and developed the following game plan. We felt most areas could be repaired by grading the area with a maintainer and using the base material along the roads. The low areas around the water crossings would be worked with a dozer. Once we have completed this first phase of maintenance we will re-evaluate any areas that may need to have fill brought in. We anticipate this process to take just under 2 weeks. If anyone else needs dozer work while Edmond is at the ranch you can contact him at 830-486-6036.

I have not been able to schedule a meeting with Emmitt King on our water system. I will before the next newsletter. I did, however, call around to supply houses and other plumbing contractors for competitive bids. The 2 contractors I was able to speak with were too busy and not interested in traveling that far. I did get pricing and the rates were comparable to what we are being charged by Emmitt.

Edmond Winston will be building the gate at Phase VII during the time he is working on the roads. He has received approval from Bill Cox to bill him directly (again, Thank You Jim Trotter). I have the lock at my ranch and will install it once he is complete.

The gate combinations have been changed to **(2506)**. Please keep this combination confidential to members and guests only. If you have a contractor working on your ranch, install a secondary lock and remove it when they have completed. I am asking you to Please close all gates so we can reduce the traffic throughout the ranch.

It was a pleasure seeing you at the last quarterly get-together and I look forward to seeing you at the next one!

Jimmy Yarbrough

SECRETARY/TREASURER REPORT

It was good to see a lot of you at the Spring gathering – I hope to see you again at the next one! As Dan mentioned, we have had no nominations for Treasurer this year. If you are interested in helping out the Association, please consider running – I've made a number of spreadsheets and invoice templates to make the job a lot simpler. I'll also be glad to work with the new Treasurer for as long as it takes to make sure the transition is as smooth as possible. Help us out and volunteer! Thanks.

I have been aggressively collecting Association Dues this year – we only have a few outstanding balances. I will file liens on any accounts not paid soon, but, at this point, I only expect a couple to be filed. I really appreciate everyone's help in taking care of these payments so quickly!

Below is the report for the first quarter of 2006. As you can see, we've built up our reserves quite a bit, and road work should be beginning by the time this newsletter is distributed. Water system maintenance, however, is still taking a large amount of our budget. In early April (after the end of the quarter), another pump went out and we had to pay nearly \$2,500 to have the pump replaced and the electrical wiring redone. With only a few months into the new year, we have already spent well over \$5,000 on such repairs. As mentioned in the President's section, we can't continue on the pace we're at without making some changes. While the changes may seem harsh, they really are necessary if we're going to keep our dues stable and still do needed road work. We appreciate everyone's cooperation.

If you have any questions, give me a call. Thanks, and we'll see you at the ranch!

Bill Wilson

Treasurer's Report for 1st Quarter ending March 31, 2007

Balance forward from 2006	\$ 1,575.37
Total Income in 2007 (includes prior year collections)	\$ 35,280.25
Annual assessments (includes prior year):	\$ 29,380.25
2006 Special Assessment:	\$ 5,900.00
Total Expenses in 2007	\$ 3,545.41
Road Work:	\$ 0.00
Water System Maintenance:	\$ 2,735.00
Pedernales Electric Bills:	\$ 810.41
Annual Meeting:	\$ 0.00
Grounds Maintenance (signs, locks, etc.):	\$ 0.00
Property Taxes	\$ 0.00
Administrative Supplies:	\$ 0.00
March 31, 2006 Balance (People's State Bank):	\$ 33,310.21
Amount Dedicated to Road Repairs:	\$ 8,300.00
Amount Available for Other Expenses:	\$ 25,010.21

Current Association Dues Outstanding

Outstanding dues from 2003/2004	\$ 718.62
Outstanding dues for 2005	\$ 0.00
Outstanding dues for 2006	\$ 222.98

SECURITY COMMITTEE REPORT

I have not heard of any issues either from running into fellow landowners or through the grapevine, so I hope no news is good news. Now that it's getting warm my trips are less frequent. I have seen the border patrol in greater numbers in our area lately, which can only help.

For those that would like to form a 'watch' type association please contact me. For those who wish to participate I can attempt to coordinate you with adjacent landowners so that you can keep an eye out for one another's properties. I wanted to start a program like this earlier, but doing so during hunting season sure makes me nervous and I thought others might feel the same. No matter which time of the year communication is key.

If you do not wish to be a part of the watch program, at a minimum I would greatly appreciate it if you could email me or call if you experience some type of issue regarding trespassers. Distributing information regarding issues (break-ins, thefts, etc.) can only help your neighbors harden their target.

Chuck Bocock

WILDLIFE COMMITTEE REPORT

ACCOMPLISHMENTS/NEWS

Turkey season is upon us. Good luck and call them in. There are plenty of turkeys on the ranch and it is important that we harvest some turkeys each year to avoid over population and too much competition for food amongst other wildlife.

Discussions held amongst the wildlife committee members on:

1. 2007 Second Elk Harvest Lottery
2. Raffle plans for year
3. 2007 spotlight census surveys and how to conduct – 'do it ourselves approach'
4. Annual meeting agenda and proposed dates for the event

Deer harvest results were submitted by about 40% of the members. The initial review of the results are as follows.

1. 30 bucks were harvested & 20 does were harvested
2. too many young bucks were taken (4 and 6 pointers of low age (2.5 years))
3. too many does taken of low body weight (less than 85#)

Proper harvesting is critical to overall deer management. We need to take older animals and in the right ratios to properly grow the herd and maintain it. It is all up to us to think about this responsibility before pulling the trigger (goals of association and all of us).

Need to continue the year round effort to kill hogs please.

WILDLIFE INFORMATION

The Great Cedar Debate

"A weed is a plant whose virtues have yet to be discovered."-- Ralph Waldo Emerson

"Cedar is an invader of grasslands and a horrendous water hog. It is low in nutritive value, unpalatable to cattle, and altogether unpleasant. It's well-nigh impossible to get rid of. And it's everywhere..." Author unknown

Introduction

To most Texans, cedars are weeds. They compete with grasses for water and sunlight. They harbor annoying cedar flies. Aside from their value as posts, few ranchers would have anything good to say about the prolific shrubs. However, in some areas of Texas (e.g., Edwards Plateau) land value may be more closely tied to recreational enterprises (e.g., hunting) than traditional ranching enterprises. As it does, wildlife considerations become increasingly important in determining land management strategies, especially relative to brush control.

Wildlife Value (FOOD, SHELTER, WATER)

Food

Depending on the species of wildlife and site involved, cedars may provide food and/or shelter. Most deer diet studies conducted in cedar country have documented substantial use of cedar mast or foliage, yet most researchers consider cedar of low nutritional value.

Cedar is a common item in deer diets, especially in the Edwards Plateau region. Nutritionally, cedar provides only marginal browse; crude protein averages about 7 percent for foliage and about 14 percent for seeds.

Shelter

The term shelter (i.e., cover) may denote any of the following habitat needs: thermal, escape, nesting, loafing, screening, etc. Thermal cover allows animals to compensate for temperature extremes. Escape cover is rather generic and can probably be satisfied by any species of brush of sufficient density. Cedar "breaks" certainly qualify as dense cover suitable for escape purposes for deer and other wildlife. The relative need and value of escape cover varies with factors like topography, human disturbance (e.g., hunting), brush density, and wildlife species in question.

Water

Cedar supplies very little water to wildlife. It is a huge drinker of surface and ground water to the detriment of all that is around it be it animal or plant.

Effects of Cedar Control on Wildlife

Vast, dense stands of juniper are not conducive to either wildlife or livestock management. The impacts of cedar control on wildlife depend upon how much cedar is cleared (acreage), how it is cleared (e.g., mechanically, goats), and the subsequent management on the cleared land (i.e., grazing management). Cedars are generally controlled by mechanical, biological, or burning means, either singly or in combination. Mechanical treatments like grubbing or chaining generally increase forage production. Annual forbs respond to the ground disturbance caused by mechanical treatments. Similarly, burning tends to promote the growth of annual and perennial forbs and also enhances browse availability and/or palatability.

Effects on Deer

Ideally, brush should be cleared in order to promote forage availability up to the point that cover (rather than food) becomes the limiting factor. As clearing size exceeds some threshold value (e.g., 50 acres), wildlife use of some portions (i.e., the center) of the clearing decreases. Smaller clearings have proportionately more edge, thus less habitat is "lost." For optimum use by white-tailed deer, clearing size should be no larger than 40 acres. They recommended that 50 to 70 percent of a pasture could be chained in a series of 20-acre clearings. At 70 percent clearing, 20-acre clearings are established with about 70 yards of brush left between them. Clearing up to 70 percent of the brush also improves the distribution of deer across the habitat compared to control areas. Obviously clearing too much cedar (or too large an area) could negatively impact deer, but the other extreme (clearing too little) is also troublesome regardless of the intensity and scale of clearing, herd and grazing management are important for maintaining healthy plant populations. Burning, alone or in conjunction with mechanical treatments, can benefit most species of wildlife. Burning is most effective in controlling junipers less than 5 feet in height. Burning tends to promote desirable forbs and increases the availability and/or palatability of browse. When grubbing and raking cedars with a bulldozer, slash piles should be located on shin oak if possible. The tremendous heat generated under such slash piles will temporarily sterilize the soil on some sites, but rarely kills the shinoak. Deer readily graze the shinoak regrowth on such hotspots.

Land Value

Clearing large tracts of brush may be attractive to some ranchers, but such practices will negatively influence land values. Over most of the Edwards Plateau, land value is more a function of wildlife habitat (i.e., recreational hunting) than land productivity. Clearing operations should take into account the resulting impacts on land value. Clearing can be conducted (to a degree at least) that will be pleasing to the eye and attractive to prospective buyers. Generally, clearing is done in irregular patterns that enhance the features of the land (i.e., landscaping). Follow contours and avoid long straight lines. Preserve brush on the tops of hills and along drainages. Mark and preserve species like Texas oaks, chittam (*Bumelia lanuginosa*), and hackberry. Clearings can be made more habitable to many birds by leaving scattered mottes (e.g., liveoak) within the clearings. The relative amount of cedar to be cleared and preserved varies with the individual landowner and his management goals. Cedar can be managed in such a manner to provide increased forage production for livestock while maintaining and/or improving wildlife habitat. However, for such goals to be achieved simultaneously, it is imperative that the planning start well before the bulldozer does.

Some contacts of note regarding cedar removal

1. Eddie Franco (830-683-3313) – removal by chain saw
2. Mike Groom (830-683-7190) – removal by bulldozer
3. Dalton Clements (361-920-1673) – removal by grubbing
4. Yourself – need Stihl chainsaw (\$300), gasoline and elbow grease - PRICELESS

NEWS AND UPCOMING EVENTS

It is baby deer growing season as well as antler growing time ... it is critical that the 15% protein overall supplemental feed program for your ranch be in full swing at this time.

Next article will be a DEER quiz for you. Future articles will include information on proper deer aging and to cover other topics raised in the wildlife surveys by the owners.

Hopefully an update of the WHIP program status.

E-mail meeting of the wildlife committee to be held in late April/early May.

Our first raffle drawing ticket sales drive will hopefully be in full swing.

OWNERS ASSOCIATION AT INDIAN CREEK CONTACTS:

1. **President** – Dan Delich, (512) 323-2525, e-mail: ddelich@austin.rr.com,
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2. **Vice President** - Jimmy Yarbrough, (210) 362-6320, e-mail: jry4275@aol.com,
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3. **Secretary/Treasurer** – Bill Wilson, (210) 536-1871 or (210) 658-6814, e-mail:
wilsonwr@earthlink.net, 161 Sage Drive, Universal City, TX 78148
4. **Wildlife Game Biologist Consultant** - Michael Gutierrez, (210) 288-0008, e-mail:
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5. **Wildlife Management Committee Co-Chairmen** – Mike Ashby, (972) 335-5893, e-mail:
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6. **Security Committee Chairman** - Chuck Bocock, (830) 415-8040; e-mail:
Bocock5@hotmail.com