



THOUSAND PEAKS RANCH ASSOCIATION

NEWS

April, 2009

The Thousand Peaks Ranch Association (TPRA) is pleased to announce the purchase of an OSHKOSH H2318 SNOW BLOWER (shown above) for use in helping to keep the roads on the Ranch clear during the winter season. As has been previously reported by the Board of Directors, TPRA spent approximately \$120,000.00 on private contractors during the 2007 and 2008 winters for snowplowing. Since there are 338 lots on the Ranch, and with the assessment being \$100.00 per year per lot, the expense of snow removal wiped out the Ranch income and savings. The problem was not only that the Association could not afford those kind of expenses, but snow "plowing" was proven to be really ineffective since it created a berm on either side of the road and when the wind blew (which is most of the time) the snow filled the road back in with the snow that used to be in the fields. The solution that the Board of Directors arrived at was that we needed to look for a snow "blower" to blow the snow into the fields and to keep from creating the berm/snow trap on the roads. The Board of Directors looked for several months until an affordable industrial sized snow blower was found in Akron, Ohio. Kudos to Board Member At Large Rusty Evans and Ranch property owner Jim Ross (both of whom work in construction and are familiar with large equipment) volunteered their time to fly back to Akron to inspect the machine. Even though the machine is of 1983 vintage, the report to the Board of Directors was that the machine had less than 1,000 hours on it and was in very good shape. It was also reported that a demonstration of the machine during the East Coast's 2009 winter snow/ice storms showed that the machine would blow snow & ice 100-200 feet away from the roads. The Board of Directors also hired an independent appraiser to inspect the machine and he reported: "It is this Appraiser's opinion the condition of the machine, taking into consideration to its age, I found the unit to be in very good condition. The prior owner, Emery Air Freight Co., did very good maintenance on the machine; the low hours on the engine and the low hours on the machine will allow it to be of service for at least eight to ten years." Based upon these reports, the Board negotiated a price of \$38,500.00 with the owner and secured a loan for \$34,500.00 from

Colorado East Bank and Trust in Fairplay. The terms of the loan are one annual payment of \$6,486.61 for 7 years, with no prepayment penalty. It is hoped with several mild winters, the Association will be able to pay off the loan in a shorter period of time, which will reduce the future cost of snow removal.

Fortunately this winter, the Ranch has only experienced a couple of heavy storms. Prior to the purchase of the snow blower, the first storm hit in December 2008, along with windy conditions, and the roads were lost again. The Association tried to keep the roads open by plowing, but the roads quickly filled in with the snow & ice that could not be effectively plowed. We were blessed with warmer months in January and February and much of the snow melted. Many full time residents volunteered their time and personal equipment to remove the remaining snow on the roads so that they could use the roads to and from their own residences. Following the terrible winters of 2007 and 2008, most residents have purchased snowmobiles or other similar equipment to be sure that they have ingress and egress during the winter.

After the Association purchased the snow blower, a mild storm (approximately 1 foot) arrived in late March. The Association put the snow blower to work and the entire Ranch was cleared in less than a day. And there were no berms on the road to catch the snow when the wind began blowing shortly afterwards. The roads stayed clear!!!!

As usual, it is impossible to please everyone. The Board has received criticism from very few residents regarding its snow removal policy. Most understand the financial and weather restrictions that the Association is under in regard to snow & ice. Some have voiced complaints about the Board's Snow Removal Policy issued last May 2008 where the Board stated that there is not a "right" to have snow removed (particularly on demand) because it was economically infeasible based upon the Association's income and the equipment used by the primary contractor used in 2008 and years prior. The Association simply cannot afford to spend \$120,000.00 in 2 years when the dues brings in only \$60,000.00 in 2 years. The math is fairly straightforward. At last year's annual meeting, one resident stated that when snow on the roads was plowed, the berms were put on the wrong side of the road. While the correct side of the road on which to place berms depends entirely upon which direction the wind is coming from (and who can really predict that ???), the purchase of the snow blower will eliminate those complaints because there will be no berms. The Ranch has now purchased a piece of equipment that the "outside contractors" did not and does not have, and will do the job for 1/4th of what we spent the last 2 years. And once it is paid off, the costs will drop dramatically. We have been told that prior Board's did not want to purchase equipment for fear of "liability". This concern is easily addressed by purchasing insurance on the machine, as well as general liability insurance for the Ranch.

As previously stated, the winters of 2007 and 2008 virtually bankrupted the Association. It is our hope that with the purchase of the snow blower, future winters will not have this effect. But all residents that live on the Ranch during the winter must still remember the cautions stated in the Association's Snow Policy. The Association cannot afford 24/7 snow removal. The Ranch is in a rural area with very few County services. Everyone must still be prepared to survive on their own. The Association will provide what it can reasonably provide in terms of road maintenance and snow removal. But there are over 58 miles of road on the Ranch, and funds will only stretch so far.

Nevertheless, in addition to the purchase of the snow blower, the Board of Directors is aware that the prior winters have taken a toll on some portions of the roads. We are looking at the condition of the roads and will stretch your dues dollars as far as possible to repair and maintain them during the summer.

If you have any questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact us at:

Email: president@tpracol.com

Snailmail: TPRA
PO Box 817
Fairplay, CO 80440

All questions or comments will receive a response

Sincerely,
TPRA Board of Directors

Dennis Kist, President
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