

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE EAGLE RANCH WILDLIFE COMMITTEE

A Meeting of the Eagle Ranch Wildlife Protection Committee (ERWPC) was held on May 11, 2026, at the Eagle Ranch Office, 1143 Capitol Street, Eagle, CO 81631.

Committee members present:

Steve Hoffman, Co-Chair
Devin Duval, CPW
Kate Sheldon, Chairperson
Geoff Grimmer, Town of Eagle

Absent:

Kim Hubble
Courtney Harris, CPW

Also present:

Jason Berghauer, Eagle Ranch HOA Assistant Community Manager
Debbie Murphy, Owner
Tom Murphy, Owner
Steve Mairose, Owner

The order of business was as follows:

1. Call to Order. Sheldon called the meeting to order at 1:04 pm MST. A quorum was established.
2. Minutes Approval. Upon a motion by Grimmer, seconded by Hoffman, the Committee approved the minutes unanimously.
3. Adoption of Agenda: Upon a motion made by Hoffman, seconded by Grimmer, the Committee approved the Agenda unanimously.
4. Financial Report: Presented; fund balance \$1,146,756.80 since HOA accounting had not updated this report since prior to our previous meeting.
5. Town of Eagle Representative Report
 - Grimmer reported he will continue to work with Alex Smiley/OS Mgr regarding a mechanism to approve work on ToE property
 - Grimmer said he met with Smiley and is feeling good about Abrams Trout, but there needs to be drainage solutions on the side
 - Liability coverage was discussed for volunteers- baking it into vendor contracts or whomever is the fiscal agent
6. Unfinished Business
 - a. RFP Distribution: On April 27, 2026 the RFP was launched to 11 entities including BLM, USFS, CPW, ERC, ECCD, EC OS, ToE OS, DHM Consulting, MDF, Scott Jones, and Rangewise fencing; deadline is May 27, 2026 with Committee review May 27-July 9; Notice of intent to award July 13, and estimated projects start date would be end of July, 2026
 - b. Bear-Proof Trash Enclosures: CPW determined this would not be a judicious use of the Wildlife Trust Fund, and offered to assist Jason Berghauer in applying for CPW's grant which Courtney Harris had forwarded several weeks prior. CPW identified the best avenue to pursue is enforcement of removal of bear baiting items such as fruit bearing vegetation; and to enforce orders as it is in line with code enforcement and the HOA such as requiring contractors to manage their trash dumpsters; these approaches would in effect address the problem, not the symptom.
 - c. Barbed-wire mapping update: Several more areas of unused barbed wire have been added to the map, including the stretch between Eagle and Wolcott along Union Pacific railroad. Grimmer said he would try to

track down a UP contact thru ToE Public Works, Duval said he would check with the person CPW worked with recently on CO River Road which keeps cattle off the tracks.

d. Designs for educational signage for habitat enhancement projects:

- Large informational sign: it was discussed to continue circulating the working design and text amongst the Committee via email, as well as with Shawn Bruckman of The GroundUp Co, to get it to final status to submit to HOA for approval, so signage may be utilized in projects this summer
- Duval will look for CPW photos of overgrazed areas and healthy areas that are better than the draft
- Small signs: the goal would be to convince people to stay out of the areas so the soil enhancements have best chance for success

e. Future Project Considerations:

- Duval asked about NEPA to get buy-in from federal agencies to entertain doing larger polygons, a field-office wide NEPA to open the door to apply for additional funds in the 5 mile radius
- Categorical exclusion discussed, and interagency collaborations (USFS and BLM) with the idea to invite Nick Jaramillo to the next meeting
- Regarding the copy of Mitigation Plan being received by new owners during real estate closings: Hoffman pointed out that rarely do people sit at the table in-person these days and the question of whether people still receive the binder and the 11 page Mitigation Plan. Sheldon will research how the required Mitigation Plan distribution is being accomplished.
- Grimmer would like to advance Guzzler projects; will call the water commissioner regarding potential guzzlers (Joe Zupanic or Rick Bumgardner), ask about locations, timing of use, water rights, etc for Bellyache & Hardscrabble areas; learn about whether it matters if they're rain fed or spring fed; and ask if other water sources -intermittent creeks- like Trail Gulch, Hernage and Third Gulch. He'll inquire if they could be slowed/dammed up during spring runoff to provide some water into early to mid-summer, and contact Nick Jaramillo/BLM about potential guzzler plans BLM might already have in pipeline. Sheldon will provide previous research, locations and contacts info to Grimmer.
- Harris will dialogue with the federal agencies

f. Procedure for owner's project ideas and suggestions submissions:

- Under current HOA security protocols each email must be tied and managed by an employee; the HOA is not able to create a standalone ERWPC email account at this time but are happy to continue supporting submissions through the existing assn email and assisting with forwarding as needed.
- The Exec Board would like our logo to be distinct and not closely aligned with Eagle Ranch branding
- Sheldon has been working on a variety of logo concepts that the Committee would like to see

7. New Business

a. Undeveloped Land in two zones: the approx 30 vacant lots within Eagle Ranch are owned by people living next to the empty lots, and undeveloped land in our 5 mile range with approaches to potential land acquisitions

Vacant Lots:

- Hoffman outlined potential pros & cons to assisting owners with incentives to keep their lots vacant
- Duval pointed out that avoiding development also avoids additional human footprint such as number of vehicle trips, people recreating and using the land daily
- One scenario could be establishing conservation easements with a conveyance to Town of Eagle Open Space. The CE would state the lots will remain undeveloped permanently and would not be available for recreation race staging, dog parks, dog relief areas, rec areas or rec paths. Wildlife habitat enhancements to each lot would include keeping native plant communities intact, and ongoing stewardship of noxious weed control, an ongoing schedule of soil enhancements, sage thinning, etc.
- Next step is to identify the strategic lots and approach buyers on a one by one basis. Hoffman will draft a letter to circulate amongst the Committee prior to being submitted to ER HOA Exec Board
- Grimmer will ask Alex Smiley/ToE if this would be feasible
- It was brought up that govt entities count on numbers to pay into water & utility use and property taxes
- Duval brought up comparison to Cordillera's PUD where lots lines were dissolved to add an outbuilding or extend a garage
- Sheldon brought up that there are additional entities who can do a CE such as Cattlemen's Assn

- Locations: CPW would prioritize adjacent movement corridors, drainages, the periphery of the development which would include the lower southeast area of Eagle Ranch
- Grimmer asked if there was room for Town of Eagle to not be involved
- Duval said this could also be an education effort to let homeowners know what's out there whether they're conscientious for wildlife or just interested in the financial aspects
- Duval compared to Dowd Junction Interchange work which resulted in positive changes to wildlife they didn't anticipate, within one year modifying gas lines, fencing and trails

Evancho/Brush Creek Stables:

- Duval said 35 acres has marginal benefits as it is a relatively small area
- Cost benefit of recreation vs 35 houses vs leaving it untouched/inaccessible to recreation
- Hoffman said it's not our function to create amenities; Grimmer concurred we are out if it doesn't follow our mission
- Potential use partnership with Walking Mountains as an education center was brought up, but Grimmer said WM has been laying off people at the moment, and for 5 years WM was in conversations with ToE for a East Eagle location but WM is not in a position to move forward at the moment
- Discussed brainstorming with HOA Exec Board of the potential whether it would align or not between HOA and Metro District

b. Next Education Effort for noxious weeds

- Thistle and cheatgrass now; knapweed later; create a map of noxious weeds within 5 miles
- Grimmer suggested an RFP to an expert such as ECCD
- Policy discussion of developers who bring weed seed in on equipment, for decontaminating equipment prior to entry onto construction sites; Grimmer will loop in Town of Eagle Code via ComDev; and will also contact ER DRB
- CPW discussed similarity to superfund legislation: developers pay into a fund- to cover impacts generated by their construction activities
- Hoffman suggested utilizing HOA construction deposits for weed mitigations
- CPW said ToE and DRB follow up should include a 3-5 years followup
- CPW will reach out to previous CPW Director Layton Stutsman on habitat research to leverage organic resources to the group; such as Old Man's Gulch on the east side of Hardscrabble

c. Abrams area unsanctioned mountain bike trails

- It was discussed that VVMTA's proposal did not include a plan for restoration/rehabilitation of decommissioned trails or water crossings; and that full restoration with a specific timeline with listed approaches should be included such as treatments, budget, educational signage and preventative measures such as log fencing, log erosion barriers and blocking logs/slash
- It was discussed why VVMTA would have six bridged crossings
- It appeared VVMTA was asking for the full \$300,000 funding for the trail reroute
- Grimmer brought up the conundrum of throwing money after a potentially endless/fruitless effort
- Duval said there needs to be a more holistic view of the ecosystem within and affected by the 5 miles; and sunken cost fallacy
- It was discussed whether or not decommissioned mileage would truly ever be removed and restored by VVMTA
- Duval will speak with Nick Jaramillo (BLM) regarding efforts for the Cutthroat Trout in this specific Abrams Creek area
- It was discussed to "peel back the layers" to determine if an entity is masquerading as conservation and it's on the ground effects

d. Future News Briefs

- It was discussed to run all future news briefs though the HOA Executive Board, and that the committee's primary focus and time as funding projects, as we navigate through being a new Committee and establishing policy

8. Future Business

- a. Education Effort to reduce water usage:
 - An educ campaign that's not 'in your face'; to explain we are in a difficult spot with water; don't water and the potential to let your lawn go dormant this summer
 - Amplifying ECCD or CO River District messaging by linking to their announcements
- b. Bluebird houses and Bat Boxes:
 - Duval said pollinators are good; need to be conscientious of placement so the boxes don't become ovens
 - Implement a long-term plan for annual cleaning, with volunteers and potentially "adopt a birdhouse" even naming the bird and bat boxes after them
 - Monitoring cameras thru local middle school
 - Duval will check with USFS Jen Prusse who is an avid birder
 - Grimmer will ask Alex if ToE could link this in with OS projects and ToE volunteers
- c. Potential elk crossing seasonal sign covers idea was not advanced, per CPW. Discussion led to signage and communications -specifically the success of the variable messaging sign ERWC purchased in 2024. There have been challenges with the VMS staying in one location too long, too few locations, and the messages not being changed up and rotated as frequently as was agreed when approved in 2024. Sheldon will ask HOA about these issues for next autumn and winter season.

9. There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 3:29pm MDT.

Respectfully submitted,

Kate Sheldon, Chairperson
June 12, 2026