

INDIAN MOUNTAIN WINTER NEWSSETTER

January 2024

A Joint Publication of the Indian Mountain Property Owners Association (IMPOA) and the Indian Mountain Metropolitan District (IMMD).



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IMPOA PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Indian Mountain Community,

Welcome to 2024! I am thrilled to extend a warm welcome to all our new neighbors and members who have recently joined the Indian Mountain community. Today, I'd like to introduce you to some remarkable individuals who have stepped up to serve on the IMPOA board.

Becca Wilhelm, our new Communications Director, is a Colorado native with a deep passion for the outdoors. Throughout her work and life experience, Becca is committed to communicating helpful information to everyone she interacts with.

Next, we have Shannon Graff, who graciously agreed to serve as our Board Secretary. Shannon's extensive background in education and technology (including graphic design!) makes her an invaluable asset to the board and we are so excited to welcome her to the board.

Our third new board member, Jeanne Wells, joined us by jumping in with both feet, serving as our Membership Director & taking over the role of newsletter writer for this joint IMPOA & IMMD newsletter (a job that is as much herding cats as it is writing, editing, etc.). We are so excited to have Jeanne's thoughtful dedication to our community on the board.

And last but not least, we're pleased to have Will Graff join our ranks; while not officially a board member, Will has agreed to fill an extremely critical role as our FireWise Coordinator and will be working hand-in-hand with all of us as we continue our wildfire mitigation and preparedness activities.

I hope you will all join me in both welcoming and thanking these incredible individuals for stepping up and volunteering for our community – we are truly blessed to have them!

Finally, I encourage everyone to take some time and read through all of the wonderful information and valuable insights shared in this newsletter. While doing so, please make note of the upcoming community events and plan on attending (and even volunteering to help)!

Here's to a fantastic 2024,

Kathryn Abrahamson

President, Indian Mountain Property Owners Association (IMPOA)

IMMD PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Happy New Year to all!

Our budget planning process for 2024 faced several challenges and delays due to Proposition HH and last-minute legislation. As a result, there was a delay in the assessor certifying our final valuation for assessment. Based on the numbers provided to us, we estimate the districts property tax revenue to be \$297,000 for 2024.

What does it take to operate the district and basic day to day maintenance of our facilities, approximately \$180,000 for 2024 excluding the Water Service Plan. Budget documents for both the District and the Water Service Plan are posted on the District's web site. Our facilities are aging, and the cost of repairs, replacements, utilities, services, and improvements are subject to the same inflationary numbers that we are all experiencing. In addition, usage of our facilities is increasing as our community continues to grow. Last year we caught up on overdue indoor and exterior painting, replaced the boiler at the comfort station, replaced the breaker box at the lodge, repaired the heater in the lower level of community center and many other smaller projects and improvements. 2024 maintenance needs include replacing the water heater and interior painting at the lodge as well as resealing and grouting of the community center floor.

For the last couple of years, any funds over and above operating expenses have been focused on resolving the critical issues at the RV dump station. That project is now nearing completion. Please see the frequently asked questions article included in this newsletter.

For 2024, our highest priority for any available funds is mitigation and forest health on the 265 acres at Indian Mountain Park. As many of you are aware, there are large numbers of down

and standing dead trees which pose both a wildfire risk and safety concerns in the community. In addition, we are currently experiencing a Western Spruce Budworm Infestation throughout Park County and surrounding areas. There is a separate article on this topic included in this newsletter. The District will be developing a Request for Proposals and required formal contract process to begin mitigation efforts this year. Based on the information we currently have on estimated costs and available funds, we hope to be able to mitigate approximately 10% this year focusing on the most at-risk areas.

For additional information or questions about the District, please visit <https://indianmountain.info/> or attend a District meeting. District board meetings are held at 9:00am the second Saturday of each month at the Indian Mountain Community Center located at 31 Keneu Ct.

~Article provided by: Carol Darland, IMMD President

IMPOA ANNUAL DUES

\$45.00

IMPOA dues help provide many benefits, here are a few:

- Provide fencing to keep cows out of Indian Mountain.
- Coordinate wildfire mitigation. Since 2013, IMPOA has coordinated more than \$110,000 of forest treatments in Indian Mountain, including grants from the Coalition for the Upper South Platte, matched with cash and in-kind labor from property owners.
- Assist IMMD to ensure reliability and continuity of augmentation for the water wells in Indian Mountain.
- Assist property owners in complying with building, zoning, fire protection and public health regulations.
- Team with IMMD in publishing quarterly newsletters.
- Provide community events throughout the year.
- Maintain lists of dues-paying members and property owners.
- Collaboration with IMMD in recreational activities.
- Liaison with Park County officials.
- Speak for the community before governmental entities on matters that affect the community, such as water resources and land use regulations and livestock issues.

- Fund materials for street signs installed by Park County.
- Sponsor an annual Dumpster Day to help control trash in the community.
- Promote activities that improve the sustainability of our community.

IMPOA's fund raising activities include the sale of merchandise with Indian Mountain logos.

PAYPAL OR CREDIT CARD

You can pay your annual dues online with credit card or PayPal by going to IMPOA.NET

More PayPal Options!

Posted on Dec 6th, 2023

You can use our PayPal e-commerce page for [Membership, Donations to IMPOA, and Merchandise Sales.](#)

We are working on updating our website. You may see the new website with an icon for paying membership or donating.

BY CHECK

Another option is to stop in and see Jackie during business hours (Wed - Sat 9am - 1pm) at the community center or by mailing a check to IMPOA, PO Box 173, Como, CO 80432. Please include

your name, email, phone, IM address (including, Filing, and Lot), mailing address. If you would like to include a donation please let us know if you would like it designated for something specific (chipping, fencing, events)

2024 COMMUNITY EVENTS

March 9th: **Hot Chocolate at the Pavilion** 1PM to 3PM

March 23rd: **Chili Cook Off** 4PM to 6PM [contestants and tasters needed!!]

May 25th: **Volunteer Info Session**

July 6th: **Summer Picnic & Music on the Mountain** 11AM – 2PM

July 27th: **Dumpster Days** 8AM

August 10th: **IMPOA Annual Meeting** Noon – 1PM

August 31st: **Volunteer Luncheon** 1PM to 3PM

September 30th: **2025 Photo Calendar Contest**

October 5th: **Annual Craft Fair** 10AM to 3PM

December 14th: **Tamale making w/Nick Rinaldi** Noon to 3PM

Visit **IMPOA.NET** for more details and updates

~Article provided by: Jeremiah Davidson, IMPOA Events Director

Jefferson Community Church meets at Indian Mountain Community Center every Sunday service is at 10:45 am.

Join us early for conversation, coffee, tea, or cocoa at 9:00 am.

Sunday School is at 9:30 am.

Contact us at:

<https://www.facebook.com/JeffersonCommunityChurchSouthparkColorado>

~Article provided by: Jefferson Community Church

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

**Come to the session on May 25th at the
Community Center to find out more
about volunteering and to sign up for events.**

~Article provided by: Jeanne Wells, Newsletter/Membership/Volunteer Coordinator

Thank you!

Litterbug Patrol

IMPOA and IMMD would like to acknowledge and thank all the volunteers on the Litterbug Patrol for their time and effort to keep Indian Mountain roads clear of trash in 2023! We have several roads which are used by multiple subdivisions; Arrowhead, Chief, Pinto, Neosha and Warrior, to name a few. The shared roads contained the largest amount of trash from people traveling through the subdivisions. The Litterbug Patrol was created by Jannene Sherrill to keep these major and other well-used roads clear of the things that are tossed, blown or dropped as people come and go through our mountain paradise.

The Litterbug Patrol includes 20 families that have adopted 19 roads covering almost 30 miles of Indian Mountain. These hardy souls filled up 19 bags of trash during the 2023 summer months.

We are most appreciative for Janenne and the families for their continued dedication to our community, keeping our roads clean and beautiful!

The Litterbug Patrol will continue to grow and we would love to add volunteers to the project. If you are interested in participating and want to adopt a road, please contact Jannene Sherrill via email (jksherrill263@gmail.com) and provide the following: First and Last Name, cell or land phone number, and Indian Mountain address. You will be contacted with instructions.

We look forward to another successful year of the Litterbug Patrol!

IMPORTANT MESSAGE

DOGS AT LARGE

As more and more people move into Indian Mountain, dogs are unfortunately seen running around unaccompanied more frequently. Just because we live in the “wilderness” doesn’t mean this isn’t a problem because:

- Dogs can easily get run over and/or cause a traffic accident

- Dogs can get lost to never be found again. We live in vast country here.
- Dogs can get attacked and eaten by cougars, bears, and coyotes. Small dogs are prey for bobcats and large birds as well.
- Dogs are territorial when they are loose on their own property. They can charge/attack anyone walking or biking by, especially if accompanied by their own dogs.
- Dogs can trespass on the property of others and destroy their ducks/chickens/small dogs and cats.
- Dogs can harass wildlife and livestock and such dogs may be immediately destroyed by any peace officer if necessary to prevent damage or harm to wildlife, livestock or any person.
- Dogs can get killed or maimed by elk, deer, moose, and livestock.
- When dogs pack up, hunting together is even more likely.
- Dogs leave their excrement everywhere. This is more of a risk than coyote excrement for instance, as the diet of most pet dogs is anything but natural and therefore contains different and more harmful bacteria than the excrement of wild canids.

The [Park County Animal Control Resolution](#) of 1995 Microsoft Word - AC Resolution 95-11 (parkco.us) states:

It is unlawful for any owner or keeper of a dog to fail to control such dog so as to prevent the dog from:

1. Running at large
2. Becoming a danger to persons or property
3. Trespassing on the property of another
4. Being a public nuisance.

Even though giving your dog more freedom is tempting, please keep them under control for their own safety as well as the safety of others. We all like to have the freedom to walk, bike and walk our dogs around the neighborhood without having to worry about being charged and/or attacked by dogs of our fellow Indian Mountain residents.

FENCING UPDATE

Livestock grazing in Indian Mountain continues to be an issue for some property owners. Indian Mountain board members as well as the Community Manager, attended a working meeting of the Park County Board of County Commissioners to better understand how to guide property owners in addressing the issue.

The points taken from the meeting were:

- County Ordinance 03-01 had been revoked in years past and is not being enforced by the sheriff's office.
- Colorado is a "Fence Out" state and as such, there are several statutes that address requirements for residents to be able to hold ranchers accountable for damage done by livestock.
- IMPOA covenants do allow for residents to erect a fence specifically to keep livestock out, but the fence must meet the state definition of a "legal fence" (i.e. 3 strands of barbed wire supported by posts no more than 20 feet apart).

For context, when Colorado established the Fence Out laws, the area was largely owned by neighboring ranchers. As the Park County demographic has changed, the laws have not kept up and the Fence Out statutes are still the law of the land. IMPOA board members will be engaging the Board of County Commissioners in the coming months to see how we can affect change to the laws and county Land Use Regulations (LUR) to encourage community members and ranchers to be good neighbors to the growing community.

IMPOA spent last summer repairing the fence along the western boundary of the community. The board will be discussing the next phase of restoring community fencing to a "legal fence" status in the coming months. This is where community members can support this effort, first by attending the monthly meetings and have your voice heard and second, by becoming a member in good standing.

IMPOA is a voluntary Property Owners Association (POA) with minimal dues of \$45/year. Those dues are what allow us to make the needed repairs to our fences and boundaries so please consider contributing in order to support you and the community. In the meantime, all we can do is continue to report livestock incursions to the State Branding inspector, who will then contact the livestock owner. The IMPOA and IMMD do not have the resources, authority, or skills to remove livestock from the community. And while livestock appear docile, please exercise care around them if they are on your property. Charging livestock can cause severe injury to you and your pets.

FACILITIES UPDATES

The Dumpster at the Community Center

REMINDER - *The dumpster at the Community Center is not for public use.* The dumpster is locked for that reason. Please do not put your trash in front of the dumpster, and if you own a short-term rental, please tell your guests not to do so either. We appreciate it very much.

~Article provided by: Jackie Middelhoek, IMMD District Manager and IMWSP Administrator

BURN PIT

We received the go-ahead from the Jefferson Como Fire Chief Trent Smith to burn the burn pit on Sunday January 21st. We are so grateful for all our wonderful volunteers. Thank you Gary Fletcher, Tim Higgins, Jeff Mason, Piotr Holysz, Shannon and Will Graff, Barb Holden, Craig Colborg, Gary Horn, Nick Rinaldi, Renee Anderson and Ken Polka, Shawn Sheppard and Shaun Smith. Everyone worked extremely hard to accomplish a successful burn. Because of everyone's efforts, the burn pit will be able to open in early June. We are planning to have the burn pit open Fridays and Saturdays, with two shifts of volunteers:

From 8am – 11am

From 11am – 2pm.

In May, please be on the lookout for our sign-up genius form on the Burn Pit page under the Facilities tab on our website <https://indianmountain.info>. There you will be able to sign up to volunteer for the shift of your choice. Volunteering at the burn pit is so much fun. It is a great opportunity to meet your neighbors, give back to the community, and to enjoy the beauty of the expansive mountain vistas of that location. To be able to drop off slash at the burn pit, please come get your 2024 burn pit permit in May at the Indian Mountain business office at the Community Center, (not to be confused with the annual burn permit from the fire department).



Photo by Jeff Mason



Photo by Pat Smith

*~Article provided by: Jackie Middelhoek, IMMD District Manager and
IMWSP Administrator*

RV DUMPSTATION FAQ'S

When will the new station open?

Our intent is to have the new station operational by Memorial Day weekend. We are currently awaiting a contract and timeline from CORE to complete the electrical components. We hope to receive the contract no later than the end of January. They informed us that once the contract is complete it would be another 4 – 6 weeks before the actual work would be completed.

Will my existing key work at the new station?

Yes. The new station will utilize the same lock. If you have a key and your contact information or address has changed since the key was issued, please send your current information to indianmtn@hotmail.com. This will allow us to proactively contact you in the future with any updates or issues.

Will there be potable water?

No. Potable water is defined as water that comes from surface and ground sources and is treated to

levels that meet state and federal standards for consumption. Unlike your home, untreated water

from a well cannot be represented as potable.

In Colorado, potable water systems are managed by the Department of Public Health & Environment.

They have regulatory authority under the Colorado Primary Drinking Water Regulations. The full criteria

for potable water systems can be found at WQ-DW-Policy-DW005-2022 Design Criteria for Potable

Water Systems.pdf.

Will there be non-potable water?

Not currently. The high-level cost estimate is a minimum of \$50,000 and would likely be more once a

detailed plan was created. The IMMD board continues to evaluate future possibilities for water at the

new station as budget and priorities allow.

Why did the new station require more tanks than the old one?

There are several reasons for this. The old station was a two-vault system with no leach field. This

required the vaults to be pumped on a frequent basis. The new station does have a leach field. Leach

fields consist of an underground system of perforated pipes adjacent to the septic tank. After contaminants and liquid waste have been broken down by bacteria in the septic tank, it will then flow

into the leach field through underground pipes. As liquid travels through the leach field pipes, it will

seep into the ground below and be naturally filtered by the soil. RV waste is highly concentrated unlike

the waste from a residential system. It also contains agents that help to break down the waste while in

the RV storage tank. Regulations require that this type of waste be more thoroughly treated before

being released. This is the function of the additional tanks.

Will the station be open year-round?

No. The station will be closed from November 1 until Memorial Day each year.

What will the hours of operation be?

Our county conditional use permit requires the station to be closed from 10:00pm to 6:00am each day.

~Article provided by: Carol Darland, IMMD President

UPDATED LEASE AGREEMENT LODGE, CENTER AND PAVILLION

There have been some big changes to the Lease Agreement for the Lodge and Community Center, including the addition of the Picnic Pavilion to the Lease Agreement.

Since more and more folks are moving up here, the Community Center and especially the Lodge have seen increased demand.

The Lodge and the Community Center are community assets for all Indian Mountain property owners and their family and friends to enjoy. When people cancel within two to three weeks of their reservations, most other property owners that might have stayed at the Lodge or might have wanted to have an event at the Community Center will already have made other plans. So as a result, the Lodge and Community Center sit empty. Unfortunately, because of last minute cancellations, the Lodge sat empty for Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's two years in a row!

Many property owners have expressed frustration that they were blocked from the Lodge by reservations that then were not honored, especially for the Holidays. Because of that, some changes to the Lease Agreement include:

- Reservations are limited to two weeks in a row.

- To hold a reservation, we now need to receive up front: a Lease Agreement, in addition to the total rental fee as well as the security deposit of \$250. Please do not date the checks if the reservation is more than 70 days in the future. Checks are only valid for 90 days.
- If the reservation is cancelled within 30 days of the reservation, the total rental fee will be forfeited. In other words, we will deposit the rental fee check and no refunds will be given. This policy may be waived at the discretion of Indian Mountain, only for serious extenuating circumstances, such as illness or severe weather, etc.
- A Lease Agreement and security deposit of \$250 are now also needed to reserve the Picnic Pavilion, and those reservations will be added to the Events Calendar. No rental fee will be charged for the Picnic Pavilion.
- The rental fee for the Community Center has been increased from \$100 per day to \$150 per day. Kitchen use is still \$50 per event.
- The rental fee for the Lodge has been changed from \$85 for the first two nights and \$75 per night thereafter, to \$85 per night for the duration of the reservation.

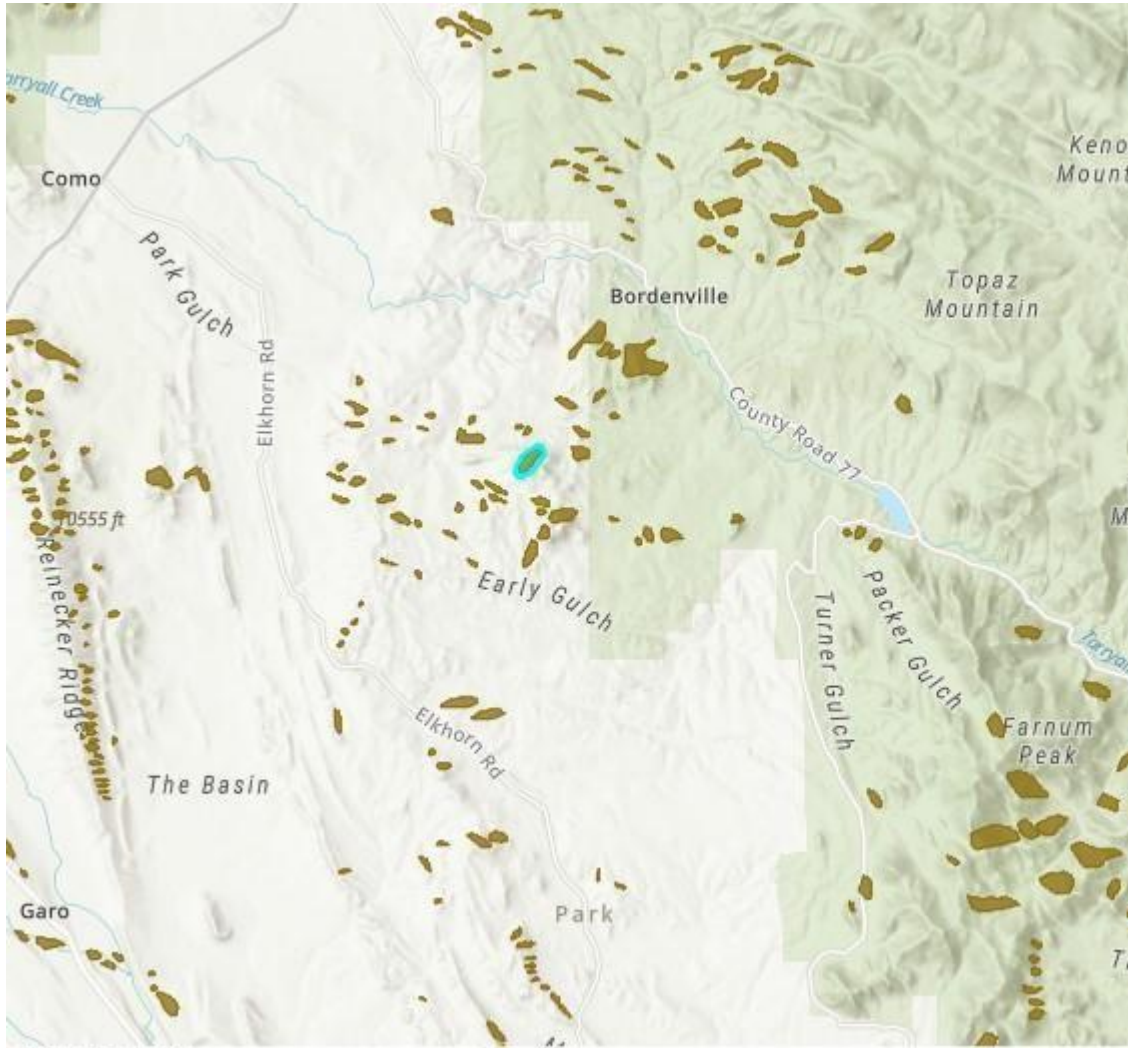
The hope is that because of the new cancellation policy, more Indian Mountain property owners will be able to enjoy the Lodge.

~Article provided by: Jackie Middelhoek, IMMD District Manager and IMWSP Administrator

WESTERN SPRUCE BUDWORM

The western spruce budworm is a defoliating insect of Douglas-fir and spruce. Depending on the intensity of defoliation, budworm may damage or kill the host tree. A severe outbreak of western spruce budworm in the late 1980s damaged or killed large areas of Douglas-fir throughout the region. Trees with dead branch tips or those with forked or dead tops are legacies of the previous epidemic. Many of the dead Douglas-fir were first weakened by budworm and then killed by Douglas-fir beetles. Below is a map created by the Colorado State Forest Service showing the 2022

estimate of Budworm infestation in our portion of Park County. The area outlined in blue is the west side of Indian Mountain (Thank you Jeff Mason).



Information from the US Forest Service:

Natural predators or severe winter weather helps control budworm populations, which keeps them at non-threatening levels. Spraying with *Bacillus thuringiensis* may be useful to protect high value trees but is not practical on a large scale.

Bacillus thuringiensis var. *kurstaki* (Btk) is a microbial insecticide specific to lepidopterous larvae that is registered for use against the western spruce budworm. It may be used to suppress budworm populations and minimize foliage loss on the areas where it is applied, having short-term effects generally lasting one to two years.

Bacillus thuringiensis var. *kurstaki* (Btk) applications are not effective for halting or altering the course of budworm outbreaks. *Bacillus thuringiensis* var. *kurstaki* (Btk) is most appropriately applied to well defined, high-value areas, giving careful consideration to minimize non-target effects. More than one application may be necessary to protect selected areas throughout the duration of a prolonged outbreak.

Information from Jefferson County, CO:

Treatment of high value trees with *Bacillus thuringiensis* var. *kurstaki* (Btk) may be beneficial when populations of western spruce budworm are increasing. The timing for treatment needs to coincide with the early feeding stage in May. You should monitor your trees beginning when the buds emerge.

Forest-wide treatment is not recommended.

Information from Colorado State Forest Service:

The Colorado State Forest Service recommends spraying only high-value trees with *Bacillus thuringiensis* var. *kurstaki* (Btk), such as those near homes, businesses, or recreation sites, and not using insecticides to treat more broadly at a stand level.

Overuse of insecticide sprays may have negative environmental impacts on water supplies and wildlife; also, these sprays are not cost-effective on a landscape scale.

Recommendations:

All the boards' research shows agreement by multiple agencies that ongoing management of forests is the most effective long-term strategy for reducing tree losses from western spruce budworm. Approaches to managing the budworm long-term focus on reducing the component of true firs and other host species in mixed-conifer forests, instead favoring non-host tree species such as pine and aspen. Create wider spacing between trees to reduce the likelihood of larval dispersal to adjacent hosts. Remove young potential host trees growing under or directly adjacent to the canopy of older trees.

These same recommendations hold true for fire mitigation with the addition of removing dead and fallen vegetation and clearing out smaller brush and low branches.

IMMD's Plan

The district's plan is to adopt the recommendations for the western spruce budworm and fire mitigation to create ongoing management targeting both issues on our 265 acres at Indian Mountain Park. Our first step will be to draft a Request for Proposal to solicit bids to begin mitigation this year. Updates will be provided at Indian Mountain Metropolitan District Board meetings and in future newsletters.

If we identify any single high value trees near our facilities, we will evaluate treating these trees with *Bacillus thuringiensis* var. *kurstaki* (Btk).
