

FCR Winter Snow Removal Plan and Driving Guidelines

The Colorado Department of Transportation has an extensive website for winter driving information - <https://www.codot.gov/travel/winter-driving>. The site contains a number of videos and brochures on vehicle safety, travel resources, CDOT winter operations and more! It is a good idea for all FCR residents to check this site out for more information!

Specific Falls Creek Ranch information:

Our roads can become snow covered and slippery – quickly. Please give yourself extra time, space and lower your speed appropriately to the conditions you encounter.

For new Ranch residents, the Ranch only clears snow from the Ranch roads; residents are responsible for your own driveway including the snow berm that the plow deposits at the edge of your driveway (part of the plowing process). Many FCR residents contract a private company to clear their driveways. Also note that the section of Falls Creek Main just north of the lake curve is often icy due to the limited sun there; use extra caution when approaching the curve.

We live in a mountainous area with unpredictable and quickly changing winter driving conditions. Here are some suggestions as we head into winter: Keep an eye on weather forecasts. Plan ahead and do errands the day before the storm is expected if possible. Keep a snow shovel and basic emergency tools and a first-aid kit in your vehicle. Downshift to a lower gear on hills. Ensure you have winter rated tires on your car. Two wheel drive vehicles may have an issue on the FCR main hill when icy – consider a set of studded winter tires or chains. Volunteer to help clear a neighbor’s driveway or nearby ranch roads with your own equipment and labor. Adopt your local fire hydrant and shovel it clear after heavy snows. We all need to pitch in!

We keep a close eye on the NOAA weather forecast and develop our snow removal plans based on the expected timing, intensity, and duration of the snowfall. We generally plow when about 4-6 inches of snow is expected or has fallen. It takes the Ranch Manager about 7-10 hours to make one complete plowing cycle through the Ranch.

Our first plowing priority is to clear Falls Creek Main. Once that is passable, we begin work on the major feeder roads. Practicality dictates that the cul-de-sac roads are the last to be plowed. We make a major effort to have as many of the roads plowed as possible during the “going to work” and “coming home” time periods. But please make allowances for unusual situations like broken equipment, extreme snowfall rates, and the need for rest after extended shifts of plowing and volunteer operators not being as efficient as the Ranch Manager. If you have any special issues or concerns related to

snow removal, please direct all questions and input to the Ranch Liaison or Road Chair. They will try to accommodate your request to the extent practicable.

Always yield the right-of-way to snow removal equipment. Our equipment is heavy, not very maneuverable, and must be operated with momentum to be effective. Maintain a safe distance from the equipment and please do not attempt to pass until the operator has acknowledged your presence and signaled you around. If the plow is coming at you, slow down to a crawl (but don't stop too fast as your brakes might lock). If he is coming at you in your lane, slow way down, move to the opposite lane and slowly let him pass you. Changes in the blade angle and position of the equipment on the road are frequent. It is quite dangerous to surprise the operator by driving too close or attempting to pass without the operator knowing you are there. Vehicles traveling up hill have the right of way.

Watch for the snowplow or road grader operating against the flow of traffic. There are some sections of the road which must be plowed from the left-hand lane.

When the silver Dodge truck is engaged in sanding the roads, be aware that the driver might not be able to stop the spreading of the sand when you pass by. Road sanding will only occur when the roads have been plowed and the storm has passed, so be especially careful while driving on corners and grades as they may not have been sanded.

We are also always looking for experienced/qualified volunteers to be trained to drive the silver Dodge plow/sander truck. Please contact the Ranch Liaison if you are interested in helping out. When it is snowing or has just snowed, please do not park on the roads. Plowing and pushing snow back with the grader wing require unobstructed roads.

If you get stuck, try to find a neighbor to help. The Ranch Manager's first priority is to keep the roads open and please do not contact him to assist you. Instead, leave your keys in the car with a note containing your name, address and phone number so we know it is a residents car and when to expect it to be cleared. Four-wheel drive, snow tires and safe speeds will lessen the likelihood of you sliding off the road. There may be periods during which it will not be possible to negotiate our hills with all-weather tires unless you add tire chains.

If you plow your own driveway or have it plowed, please dispose of the snow on your own lot. Please do not push snow across the road. When snow has been packed against the edge, it is difficult to move back with the wing. This means that we cannot make room for the next storm. Plowing across the road also damages the crown of the road causing rutting, potholes and ice buildup.

If we all work together we can handle anything Mother Nature throws at us! Enjoy the winter!

The FCR Road Committee
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