

Living Here

Welcome to Falls Creek Ranch! Living at Falls Creek Ranch (FCR) is a truly special experience and privilege. FCR is a unique community of neighbors that relies on a strong commitment of member volunteerism to help manage our operations and amenities. FCR has a variety of committees that report to our Board of Directors (BOD); these committees manage our 840 acres of common property, amenities, fire mitigation efforts and assure compliance with our Covenants and committee rules. Member volunteerism and participation on committees or short-term projects is both valued and encouraged. This is a great way to contribute to our community, share ideas and meet your neighbors and new friends. All committees, other than the Architectural Control Committee, are established and maintained at the discretion of the Board of Directors. To join a committee, members are encouraged to contact the committee chair directly to share your interest and any relevant experience you can bring to our community. See our Committees page: http://fallscreekranch.org/?page_id=1481 for more details. We have a full-time Ranch Caretaker employee whose responsibilities include our water system management and road maintenance. All other common property management is conducted by our member volunteers and some seasonal workers or contractors.

Our Board of Directors typically meet monthly with all members welcome to attend. Board member names and contact information is found on our Board/Contact Us page http://fallscreekranch.org/?page_id=22 .

This section provides a variety of important and helpful information for all members:

- New Residents
- Vehicle Decals and Guest Vehicle Hang-Tags
- Speed Limits
- Member Directory
- Emails
- Mailboxes and Communication/Newspaper Tubes
- Mailing Payment Checks to FCR
- Trash/Dumpsters/Recycling
- Fire/Emergency Information
- Our Water Supply
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- Horse Stables and Pastures
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- Walking in High Meadows Ranch
- Our Pets and Wildlife Interactions
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New Residents

We have a Welcome Committee that contacts new residents initially via email with some basic information, then schedules to meet personally to deliver vehicle decals, guest tags, member directory, fire route map, and other helpful information. If you have any questions in the meantime, feel free to contact the Board President at: president@fallscreekranch.org .

Vehicle Decals and Guest Vehicle Hang Tags

Per our Road Committee Rules, FCR residents' vehicles must display an official FCR parking sticker on the front driver's side lower windshield. (Please remove if you sell your vehicle). Guest vehicles must display either a yellow (day pass) or a green (house-guest) hang-tag when parked anywhere on Common Property. Unmarked vehicles may be towed.

Speed Limits

Please observe posted speed limits. Speed limits on the Ranch are 15 mph except on Falls Creek Main from the entrance north to Oakcrest Drive where it is 25 mph. Keeping a low speed helps keep dust to a minimum, maintains the condition of our gravel roads and increases safety. Watch for wildlife, cyclists, people and pets walking on the Ranch. Pets are required to be under the owner's direct control at all times (by leash, voice or electronic collar) per our Covenants. Homeowners are responsible for informing guests and contractors to comply with our speed limits.

Member Directory

Our membership directory is updated periodically as needed by the FCR Database Coordinator and emailed to all members. This directory is not to be shared outside of the Ranch.

Email

Email is FCR's primary form of communication for BOD agendas, meeting notices and minutes, monthly water billing invoices, annual HOA dues assessments, general announcements and Ranch activities. Please be sure you notify the Database Coordinator or Board Secretary (secretary@fallscreekranch.org) of any email address changes including your "away" mailing addresses, phone numbers or other contact info. (Also please be sure FCR emails are not being blocked by your spam filters.)

Mailbox and Newspaper Tubes

Our USPS mailboxes are located near the entrance at the lake parking area. Mailboxes are assigned by address by FCR and the US Postal Service. **New residents should obtain their mailbox key and mailbox number from the previous resident.** If this is not possible, contact the Board President. Note that Federal Express and UPS usually deliver packages to your home. Newspaper Tubes are provided for newspaper delivery; the tubes are also used for internal Ranch communication items among members, so be sure to always check your tube! The newspaper tubes are labeled by member's last name and are managed by our Welcome Committee. Parcel boxes are also located behind the Newspaper Tubes.

Mailing Payment Checks to FCR

FCR has two separate mailing addresses:

- For **check processing**: (monthly water usage payments, HOA dues, etc.) use: FCR Check Processing Center, P.O. Box 577, Durango CO 81302
- For **general correspondence** use: Falls Creek Ranch Association, Inc., 6350 Falls Creek Main, Durango CO 81301

Trash/Dumpsters

Located near the entrance south of the Fire Station. The brown dumpsters are for trash/garbage and have bear-proof locking access. **Always** secure the dumpster lids and never leave trash or items next to the dumpsters. These also have doors on the back side that must be closed after

trash has been placed inside. The blue dumpsters are for single stream recycling. Please separate trash from recyclables. See <https://www.durangogov.org/675/Single-Stream-Mixed-Recycling> for recyclable item guidelines. We have been notified that if blue recycle dumpsters are contaminated, we will be fined and may lose this service.

ACCEPTABLE for recycling: plastic bottles and containers (clean #1-7), food and beverage cans; non-glossy paper; flattened aluminum, tin and steel cans, cardboard and paperboard; food and beverage cartons; junk mail, office paper, phone books, brown paper bags, newspapers.

NOT ACCEPTABLE for recycling: Plastic bags, food or pet waste, garbage, glass bottles and jars, foam cups or packing, waxed cardboard, wires, hoses, yard waste, diapers, clothing, construction debris, tree limbs, etc.

Note: None of the following types of items are allowed in either our trash or recycling dumpsters: glass containers, batteries, light bulbs, electronics, paints and other household hazardous waste substances. The Durango Recycling Center will take glass containers, batteries, light bulbs, electronics, paints, and other household hazardous waste substances. See details here: <https://www.durangogov.org/710/Durango-Recycling-Center>.

Trash dumpsters are emptied on Thursday mornings and Recycle dumpsters on Wednesday mornings. Please do not leave any trash next to dumpsters. If no room for trash, please take it back home until dumpsters have been emptied. The lids must be kept down and latched.

Fire Emergency/Safety

It is very important for all members to be fire aware and fire safe in our forest environment. FCR has a long history of fire prevention/fire mitigation efforts to help protect our property. A map of the Ranch is provided to all members by the Welcome Committee or the FireWise Ambassador which shows the location of the emergency fire exit route in the event the main road is not usable, "safe" meadow zones and fire hydrants. FCR maintains a very proactive fire mitigation environment and is a recognized "Firewise Community". A lot of great information for home protection, fire safety, local and national fire education resources are found on the FCR website, Fire/Safety page: http://fallscreekranch.org/?page_id=3040 .

Additionally, FCR member volunteers comprise a Rapid Response Team who are ready to respond to fire emergencies on the Ranch. These volunteers participated in specific wildland firefighting training and have been provided equipment and supplies to support their efforts. Several residents also serve as CPR/AED certified responders for emergency medical issues. They have current first aid training and are trained in the operation of our AEDs. Please call 911 and they will contact our volunteers and others to provide assistance until professional first responders are on scene, which can take 45 minutes.

All FCR members should register with La Plata County Code Red system for notifications of emergency conditions in our area. Register at: <https://public.coderedweb.com/CNE/en-US/BFEA18547A8D> .

Our Water Supply

FCR has a community water system that provides our association's potable water. Our water source is groundwater originating from snow in the mountains above the Ranch. The system includes wells, storage tanks, chlorine disinfection facilities, pumps and piping which complies with all State drinking water regulations. FCR has a billing system in place that charges property owners a monthly "base" service fee as well as a monthly "actual usage" fee. For more information, see our Utilities Committee documents on our website:

http://fallscreekranch.org/?page_id=2733 . Potable water is a valuable resource, particularly in high desert mountain environments such as ours. Water conservation practices are expected from all members. Conservation tips are provided in the Utility Committee documents at the above noted link. Irrigation water is available from our lake via a pump which members may use to fill their own or shared water tanks for home irrigation. We strongly recommend that our potable water not be used for home irrigation needs.

Our Common Property Amenities

FCR is fortunate to have several amenities for the exclusive enjoyment of its members and their guests only. These include our 40-acre lake as one of our greatest assets. Our lake (aka Turner Reservoir) is fed by Falls Creek which originates in the mountains high above the Ranch. Year-round use of the lake is managed by our Lake Committee and includes swimming, fishing, non-motorized boating, paddle-boarding, ice-skating, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing and just relaxing on the sand beach. For more information see our Lake Committee rules on our website: http://fallscreekranch.org/?page_id=2725 .

Other amenities include our entrance gardens, community orchard, member vegetable garden, tennis/pickleball court, picnic area, hiking and bicycling trails. For more information on these activities, see Common Property Committee – amenities:

http://fallscreekranch.org/?page_id=1481 .

Horse Stables and Pastures

Horses are welcome at Falls Creek Ranch. A portion of our Common Property has been set aside to stable and pasture a limited number of horses. Horse owners are responsible for maintaining their own animals as well as the facilities and grounds allocated for this activity. The FCR Horse Committee oversees the management of the stables, pastures and grazing conditions according to its Board approved rules and regulations. For more information see Horse Committee rules: http://fallscreekranch.org/?page_id=2723 .

Weed Control

FCR is required by the State of Colorado to control undesirable plants and noxious weeds on our property. Accordingly, we have an ongoing program which is managed by the Common Property Committee in collaboration with the La Plata County Weeds office which administers the program for the State. Our program complies with the State of Colorado requirements to control weeds and maintains the beauty of our property. The Ranch appreciates all members helping to control such weeds on their private property as well as on common property projects.

Walking and Hiking Trails

Falls Creek Ranch members enjoy walking out their front doors into beautiful open meadows and wooded trails that traverse the Ranch Common Property. National Forest lands adjoin our Ranch on three sides affording even more walking, hiking, birdwatching, snowshoeing, cross country skiing and bicycling experiences in a natural setting. Trails include easy walking trails as

well as longer, steeper trails leading to waterfalls, mountain views, meadows, aspen forests and, in spring, wildflowers.

Walking in High Meadows

FCR and High Meadows Ranch (HMR - our neighbors to the north) have a legal agreement that allows for reciprocal use of our properties for non-motorized recreation. This includes cross-country skiing and snowshoeing in their open meadows – away from sight of homes to protect privacy – and walking in designated areas. FCR members may walk on the HMR main road north to the two-track dirt trail that leads to the northwest up into Tripp Gulch and Forest Service land, and to the northeast to the HMR fire exit road into Forest Service land. In the event there are locked gates in these areas, we may go through, over or around the gate as long as we stay on the designated road/trail (and of course be careful not to damage fencing). We also may walk the trail along the east ridge through Forest Service land but are not to cross through HMR resident lots or on their driveways back to the road. We can access the east ridge Forest Service land from the end of Oakcrest, by walking through our north meadow up the hill to the east (staying on FCR property) or walking up the HMR road to their fire exit road. Dogs must be kept leashed or directly under voice or electronic control per La Plata County Regulations. As good neighbors, we ask that all FCR residents abide by and respect our agreement with HMR. Following is a summary of the joint agreement with HMR: <http://fallscreekranch.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/FCR-and-High-Meadows-Agreement-and-Summary-of-Agreement-1988.pdf>

Our Pets and Interaction with Wildlife

Falls Creek members have many opportunities for wildlife watching. It is not unusual to watch a mother bear with her cubs munching on acorns and wild berries, deer roaming the entire area eating your garden flowers, turkeys gobbling, bobcats searching for a meal, a coyote walking through a meadow or howling at night, a variety of birds and even an occasional mountain lion tracking a wintering elk in the forest. FCR Covenants require pets to be kept within the boundary line of the owner's lot or otherwise under direct control (voice, leash or electronic) of the owner at all times when on common property as to not harass or harm wildlife or become hurt themselves. Pets are not permitted to run at large or otherwise become a nuisance.

Living with Our Bears

Bears are commonly seen in Falls Creek Ranch. Usually starting about late March-early April, the adult males and females with yearlings (1-2 years old) start waking up, leave their winter dens and start looking for food. Females with new cubs will stay near their den site usually until mid-late May until the little ones get a bit bigger to travel around. Yearlings just leaving their mothers (usually in late May) are very curious and learning their way in the world by themselves. They will snoop into anything looking for food! We humans need to do our part to keep bears from getting into any trouble or causing any damage. We all need to live here peacefully together! Below is some general information that we should all pay attention to. This is especially important for newer residents including kids.

1. Note that our brown trash dumpsters have bear proof lids. If you have trouble opening or reaching the top levers to open the dumpsters, note there is a sliding door in the back of each dumpster for easier access. Always be sure those lids are closed at all times. Never leave trash outside of the dumpsters. If the dumpsters are full, bring your trash home for disposal another day.

2. Don't leave bird seed in accessible bird feeders. This is the first thing bears will go after. Ideally, don't feed birds seed in the summer. They like insects and flower nectar instead. If you have hummingbird feeders in the summer, bring them inside at night and when you're away.
3. Don't leave trash cans or garbage bags outside. Even if empty they give off a smell and bears will tear them open leaving a mess for you to clean up.
4. Don't leave garage doors open with pet food or refrigerators inside. Bears know how to open a refrigerator.
5. Close all windows and doors when you leave your home, especially on the ground floor. A bear can, and will, climb 2 or 3 stories with ease.
6. Don't leave BBQs outside unless they are clean – burn them off after each use so yummy smells don't attract bears.
7. Don't leave food or garbage in your vehicle. Park cars in locked garages if at all possible; if not possible, then be sure all food (even sweet smelling gum!) is out of the car, windows are up and car is locked.
8. Bears love to sit in hot tubs. Keep them covered and locked and hope for the best.
9. As always, keep your dog under control or leashed at all times. Dogs will naturally chase bears and a mother bear with cubs will not be friendly to your dog or you. No one wants wildlife or pets to be harmed.
10. Most important, do not make them feel welcome. Do them a favor and chase them away. Shout, make noise, ring a bell, bang a pan, throw rocks to scare them away. Do not let them feel comfortable around a residence or a vehicle.
11. Enjoy them, but at a safe distance. This is their home too!

Bears generally do not want to be near people or dogs. However, if a bear is not afraid of people or is breaking into houses, garages or shows obvious signs of aggression toward people, Colorado Parks and Wildlife should be contacted for advice. Good references to learn more about bear behavior can be found at the following websites:

BearSmart Durango: <http://bearsmartdurango.org/>

Colorado Parks and Wildlife: <https://cpw.state.co.us/bears>

Other Rules and Regs

FCR owns and manages 840 acres of common property. This is a large undertaking overseen and managed by our Board of Directors and committee volunteers. FCR is regulated by our governing documents and committee rules which all members are expected to be aware of and comply with. There is a lot to know about living here - such as our common property usage, being fire-wise in our forest environment, water usage and conservation, Architectural Control Committee requirements, living with dark skies, winter snow removal, driving guidelines, speed limits, lake usage, etc., all of which can be found on the "Governing Documents" and "Committees" pages on our website.

History

FCR has existed for many decades. Learn more about our beginnings at this link:

<http://fallscreekranch.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/FCR-Original-Sales-Book-Wyckoff.pdf>

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