

# WICKERSHAM ROAD NEWS

WICKERSHAM RANCH ROAD ASSOCIATION

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FEBRUARY 10, 2015

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### KEYS FOR THE BIG IRON GATE

Keys are available for the Big Iron gate from the Road Association. The cost is \$5.00 each. Please contact me (Martin) if you'd like one.

## THANKS

Thanks to Rob Weinstock for coordinating the stabilization work for the culvert at Mile 6.9 over the holidays.

Thanks to Dave Schaeffer for providing part of the equipment and labor for that effort.

Thanks to Dave Otero for his efforts in coordination and communication (and for the photos on page 2).

And thanks to everyone for driving carefully at Mile 6.9 until we can get the culvert fully replaced in the summer.

Thanks to all the Owners for catching up on back dues in 2013 and 2014. This has allowed us to do substantial work and retain a comfortable reserve for emergencies.

## THE CULVERT SITUATION

Well the storm of the century of the week happened in December and other than the Culvert Situation, the road performed very well. Aside from the normal surface gullies and minor ditch spills the road still shows normal wear for the type of use and the level of service we require.

See 2015 Road Work below for the likely chores we'll take care of during the coming year.

We did see a partial failure of the big culvert at Mile 6.9. This failure was not really caused by the storm but by the original installation conditions of the culvert.

### Background

For those who recall our efforts in 2007 to pursue a grant for various upgrades to the road, this culvert was one of the subject projects of that grant.

During the application process for the grant we discovered that the culvert was bigger on the downhill end than it was on the uphill end. In fact the original installation of this culvert included the use of two different size pipes with no transitional bushing at the joint. The pipes were simply backfilled.

At the time of the grant application it was clear that there had been minor erosion internal to the pipes around the joint area. The extent of erosion posed no immediate threat of failure and we chose to keep the project in the grant.

Estimated cost for replacement of the culvert was approx. \$21,000, far beyond our resource capabilities at the time.

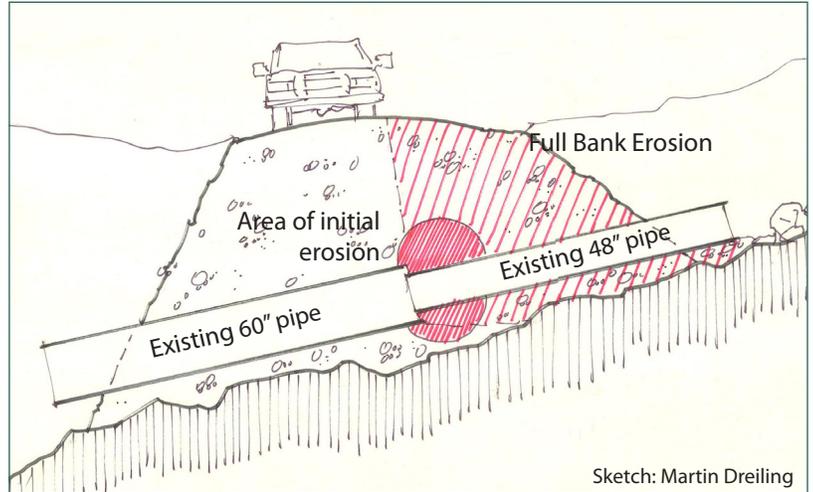
For the next several years we kept the project on the wish list in hopes that grant resources would eventually become available. Rather than spend our own resources on this project we chose to use them for the other road upgrades that have occurred over the years.

We have inspected the culvert each year and found no progression of the erosion condition at the pipe joint.

**Current Condition**

The week before Christmas this year we had a huge storm and the peak flow in the subject creek was so high that it eroded the culvert from the interior at the joint. This was not a typical culvert blockage caused by upstream debris filling a culvert and overflowing onto the road. Instead the grade around the joint was so eroded that the upstream culvert was bypassed and partially thrown out of the stream course. The downstream pipe continued to carry water. Limited damage was done to the remaining bank from high flows but it appears the big pipe was able to handle most of the flow. (After all, with the smaller pipe out of the way the full 60" culvert was finally available.)

Emergency repairs were initiated by the Road Committee and included removal of the smaller pipe and application of rip-rap to the exposed bank area.



The current channel is still intact and all water is flowing through the remaining pipe.

The road is somewhat narrower at this location but appears to be stable and fully capable of carrying traffic. Of course caution



should be used. Any traffic right on the edge can cause minor collapse and send a vehicle into the stream course.

**Planned Repairs**

Because this is an active stream course we cannot make repairs that involve working in the stream bed until the stream is dry in summer. We may add additional rip-rap and some temporary fill as we see how the bank performs in remaining storms.

This summer we will pursue full replacement of the culvert with a proper installation of a 72" pipe capable of handling all likely peak flows. We will re-estimate the project and advise the Owners regarding our budget capabilities and the potential need for a supplemental assessment to cover costs.

Fortunately we are in pretty good shape financially (see attached Annual Report.) We do want to reserve resources for regular maintenance so a supplemental assessment is likely.

**Why The Hell Wasn't This Culvert Replaced Sooner?**

Because it was not as important as the other culverts we did replace.

Culvert 6.9 was in fact on the list to be replaced somewhere within the next three years. The design problem with that culvert was considered less critical than the high number of undersized culverts over the whole road. (Keep in mind we have 83 culverts on the road and about 35 of them are substandard.)

As everyone is aware our management philosophy for the road focuses on the most pressing long-term needs. We avoid spending the majority of our resources on comfort grading and other non-essential regular maintenance and instead focus on projects that will reduce regular maintenance costs over the long term.

Over the last 10 years we have performed a number of critical grading chores to adjust the road so that we have fewer failures and lower damage during the rainy season. This is part of the reason we see so little damage to the rest of the road during the

recent storms.

Because we are generally done with the most critical grading problems, we have now shifted to culvert repair and upgrades. Last year we replaced 8 culverts that were severely undersized. That work included the large stream crossing at Mile 1.6 that consisted of three 24" culverts ( a recipe for failure.) Those were replaced with a single 72" culvert and had that not been done we may have seen a far worse failure at that crossing given the nature of these storms.

Due to the heavy rain this year and subsequent failure of parts of the 6.9 culvert it will now be replaced this year.

## DUES DUE

2015 Road Dues are due and payable to the Wickersham Ranch Road Association. Checks should be sent to:

Wickersham Ranch Road Association  
c/o Dreiling Terrones Architecture  
1103 Juanita Avenue  
Burlingame, California 94010

Invoices are included in this issue for those who have not beat us to the punch and paid already.

## ANNUAL REPORT

The Annual Financial Report is included with this mailing. Thanks to everyone who got caught up on dues last year.

## 2015 ROAD WORK

Aside from the repairs to the culvert at 6.9, we are looking at the following project types for next year:

- Surface Grading at areas of highest need, including rock renovation
- Rock installation at corners and stream crossings
- Rock installation near Tombs Creek Bridge to better stabilize the road surface
- Incidental repairs, berm removal, drainage cuts and catch basin cleaning

The culvert program will resume in 2016. Because mobilization costs for culvert installation are so high (they require a bigger equipment and manpower kit) we prefer to do culvert upgrades in a year when other regular maintenance costs are low. That way we can do at least 8 pipes and spread the mobilization costs over a larger work product.

In 2013 we did almost no work on the road in order to build up resources. This allowed us to do 8 culverts last year at a cost of

approximately \$30,000.

## ROAD COMMITTEE ELECTION

Road Committee Members are chosen by election every 2 years. Committee elections occur in odd years so it's time for us to conduct a Committee Election (actually a little past time...)

Any Owner is eligible to serve on the Road Committee and can be placed on the ballot by nomination of another Owner. If you would like to nominate an Owner for service on the Committee please send nominations no later than February 18, 2015.

Send nominations to:  
wranch@dtbarch.com

Elections are conducted by mail with one ballot sent to each Primary Owner. Committee members are selected based on a majority of the votes cast.

The current Road Committee is:

**Martin Dreiling, Parcels 8, 9**  
**Rob Weinstock , Parcel 30**  
**David Katz, Parcel 25**

Each member of the current Committee is happy to serve for another term.

## ROAD USE REMINDERS

The following is the regular reminder about use of the Road. Please share this with all guests and vendors.

Please advise all road users that the road crosses private property and is maintained for access and egress only. All safety is the responsibility of the road user and no liability is assumed by any property owner or any member of the Road Association or the Road Committee.

All road use is explicitly at your own risk. Opening of the front gate and entry by any property owner, their guests, or any other individual constitutes acceptance of these terms.

Please remind all guests that the road crosses private property and that there is no hunting allowed from the road on the properties of others unless specific permission has been given by the property owner.

### The Usual Stuff:

- Always lock the gate; regardless of whether it was unlocked when you got there.
- Make sure the combo is NOT left on the lock or the lock will not lock. Spin the numbers before locking and test the lock to make sure it is locked.
- If you wish to leave the gate open for a car that may be following, please wait at the gate while it is open.

## RESOURCES

### SOTOYOME RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

<http://sotoyomercd.org>  
(707) 569-1448

### CAL FIRE

<http://www.fire.ca.gov>

### SONOMA COUNTY SHERIFF

<http://www.sonomasheriff.org/>

### CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

<http://www.dfg.ca.gov/>  
<http://www.dfg.ca.gov/regulations/>

## INFORMATION

### WICKERSHAM RANCH ROAD ASSOCIATION

c/o  
1103 Juanita Avenue  
Burlingame, California 94010

e-mail:  
[wranch@dtbarch.com](mailto:wranch@dtbarch.com)

#### Road Committee:

Martin Dreiling  
[md@dtbarch.com](mailto:md@dtbarch.com)

David Katz  
[davidkat@sonic.net](mailto:davidkat@sonic.net)

Rob Weinstock  
[Robert.Weinstock@ejgallo.com](mailto:Robert.Weinstock@ejgallo.com)

Ranch Website  
“<http://www.wickershamranch.com>”

Thanks to Tami Bobb and Dave Otero  
for their efforts in sharing space on their  
personal ranch site for our benefit.

- Please pick up litter and debris that does not belong on the road. If you are at the Front Gate and see litter, please assist in picking it up for removal. This makes the Front Gate more attractive for all users.
- Please remove rocks or trees that have fallen onto the road. (If you remove a large tree or perform other substantial work in keeping the road open, please advise the Committee so we can say thanks.)
- Please get permission from the owners of the front ranch to park cars inside the front gate. Contact:  
**Dean and Kelly Falkenberg**  
(707) 431-1517  
[dktfalken@aol.com](mailto:dktfalken@aol.com)
- Please park between the front gate and the second green-post and chain fence. This way the Owner can tell that you are a guest and not a trespasser.
- Please drive slowly and carefully.

#### Guests:

- Please advise guests that they are traveling over private property and that they should respect the privilege to do so. It is not appropriate to stop for sightseeing or personal relief on other's property.
- Please advise your guests regarding Road Etiquette including basic driving methods for rural roads and basic courtesies.
- Please ask guests to say “Hello” and readily identify themselves and who they are visiting when meeting someone on the road. (It's always nice when I encounter a stranger on the road and they tell me who they are without me having to ask.)
- Please advise all of your guests regarding the importance of locking the gate. It is your responsibility to ensure that your guests understand how to operate the gate.
- Please advise guests not to litter the area around the gates. (I pick up trash there almost every time I enter. This is not road trash but it came from people using the gate.)
- Please advise guests to assist with Road maintenance by removing rocks or trees that are in the path of travel should they encounter them.

#### Also note:

The chain at the Big Iron Gate does not have to be tight for the gate to do its job. It's OK to leave a little slack in the chain and it will make it that much easier for the next person to open the lock.