

September 2025

Meadows Monthly

A monthly newsletter for residents of beautiful Elk Meadows in Ridgway, CO

Meadows Monthly-September Edition

I hope everyone is enjoying this lovely fall season. In my opinion, it's the best time of year! The rain, snow, and cool temperatures have been a welcomed reprieve from our hot, dry summer.

It's truly a magical time of year with the brilliant fall colors and a dusting of snow on the peaks to remind us why we're so lucky to call this place home.

There's not a lot of HOA business to share this month, so I'm taking the opportunity to include some stories and information about our broader community. I hope you'll find them interesting!

In This Issue:

- Ouray County Wildfire Risk discussion
- Cows and fences
- The Weber family ranch
- Thank you!
- Dogs
- Bears
- Meet our new neighbor – Megan Kimmel!
- Town waterline project

Ouray County Wildfire Risk Discussion

For anyone who might be interested, there will be a short film and panel discussion titled Facing Wildfire Risk in Ouray County on Thursday, October 9th at 6pm at the Sherbino. The event is free and open to the public. Participants are asked to RSVP at this link, which also provides more details about the event: [Wildfire Risk in Ouray County](#)

Cows and Fences

As usual, we saw an increase in cows visiting the neighborhood late this summer. We assessed our fence line and found several areas where the cows had pushed through. Now that the herds have returned to their winter pastures on the valley floor, we'll address these fence repairs in the spring. Because Colorado is a fence-out state, we make every effort to maintain secure fencing. However, it is important to understand that keeping cows out 100% of the time simply isn't realistic. Hungry cows are remarkably determined, and even well-maintained fences aren't always a match for a mama cow who spots greener grass on the other side. This is part of living in a working, ranching landscape, and we

need to work cooperatively with our neighbors. We know the cows can be a nuisance, but we appreciate everyone's patience.

The Weber Family

Did you know those cows wandering into our neighborhood belong to the Webers? You've probably seen their beautiful ranch on the valley floor between Ridgway and Ouray—the one with the massive American flag in the hay field.

Louis and Lena Weber started the ranch in January 1951, and five generations have since grown up on that land. The cows spend winters grazing in the pastures, but when those fields are needed for hay production, the Weber's lease land from neighboring property owners adjacent to Elk Meadows. The herd moves up to "the Mountain" (that's us!) to graze on wild vegetation during the summer months.

During dry years like this past summer, food becomes scarce up here, making the green grass on our side of the fence irresistible. Once the Weber's finish putting up their last hay cutting, they open the gates and the cows head back down to greener pastures and their winter home.

As neighbors to ranching families with deep roots in this valley, understanding this seasonal cycle of historic land use and exercising a little patience, goes a long way to maintaining good relations within our extended community.



The Weber cows are out of the neighborhood and back in their winter pastures

Thank you!

The Board would like to extend a heartfelt THANK YOU to those who take it upon themselves to help out their fellow neighbors. A number of people pitched in to cut trees ahead of the fire mitigation chipping project. In particular, we would like to thank Helen Bowers, Eric Faust, and Doug Berg for their efforts.

Dogs

We have received a number of complaints about dogs running loose in the community. Once again, please keep your dogs on leash and/or under control to keep them from running through (and pooping in) other people's yards. Thank you!

Bears

As fall arrives, bears are driven by an overwhelming biological need to pack on fat stores before winter hibernation. This is called hyperphagia — a period of intense feeding where they can consume up to 20,000 calories per day, which is roughly 10 times what they eat in summer. They'll eat nearly around the clock, foraging for up to 20

hours a day on anything calorie-rich they can find - acorns, berries, insects, and unfortunately, unsecured garbage, pet food, and bird feeders. This makes fall the time when human-bear conflicts peak. Please secure all attractants, bring in bird feeders, and lock up trash until bears den up for the winter, typically by late November or early December.

Meet Our New Neighbor – Megan Kimmel!

You may have noticed a new home under construction at 124 Alpine Ln. We would like to extend a warm welcome to Megan Kimmel, who will hopefully be moving into her new place by winter with her dog, Pablo.



Megan is a native Coloradoan who moved to the Western Slope as a student at Fort Lewis College in Durango. After living in Silverton, she moved to Ridgway in 2015 and purchased land in Elk Meadows in 2022. She now works as a massage therapist

with a private practice in town that includes massage, structural integration, visceral and neural manipulation. Welcome to Elk Meadows Megan and Pablo!!

Town Waterline Project

You may have noticed the stack of blue pipes and heavy machinery in the parking area near the mailboxes.

Last summer (2024), a flash flooding event caused significant damage to areas and drainages in and around Corbett Creek. In addition to covering CR17 with debris and making it impassable, the floods washed out part of the forest road just above Elk Meadows, cutting off vehicular access to the Burn Hut and Moonlight Park/West Dallas trail. The same storm also destroyed the town of Ridgway's water infrastructure in nearby Beaver Creek. The diversion dam that directed water into Lake Otonawanda - the town's water supply - was completely washed out. The construction equipment and blue pipe you're seeing are for rebuilding that critical infrastructure, which is accessed from CR5. The town of Ridgway has been relying solely on stored reservoir water all summer. Rebuilding work began late this summer and is now underway.

Contact Us

If you have anything you would like to see in upcoming newsletters, please contact us at emhoa.secretary@gmail.com.

