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Snow Covered Outcropping in Indian Mountain - November 2020

Indian Mountain Winter Newsletter

January 2021

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

In This Issue:

[Calendar of Events](#)

[IMPOA President's Message](#)

[IMMD President's Message](#)

[IMMD Facilities Notice](#)

[Indian Mountain 2021 Events](#)

[IMPOA Membership Drive](#)

[IM-WSP Membership](#)

[Covenants, LURs, Ordinances](#)

[Indian Mountain Real Estate](#)
[South Park Telephone](#)
[Burn Permit](#)
[FIREWISE Community Update](#)
[Burn Pit Burning](#)
[CO Wildfires - Evacuee POV](#)
[CO Wildfires - Firefighter POV](#)
[Ice Fishing at Tarryall](#)
[Sledding/Snowshoeing/Skiing](#)
[IMMD/IMPOA Responsibilities](#)
[IMPOA Contacts](#)
[IMMD Contacts](#)

CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2021

2021 Upcoming Events

No Upcoming Events

NOTE: Regularly scheduled IMMD/IMPOA Board Meetings are normally held on the 2nd Saturday of each month at the IM Community Center. The IMMD Board Meeting begins at 9am, and the IMPOA Board Meeting follows.

IMPOA PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Greetings to all!

2020 will not be forgotten for many years to come. My hope is most, if not all of you, have escaped the virus so far.

Each year finds new homes and property owners in Indian Mountain, and we hope that soon we can get back to having programs and gatherings that bring us together.

Your Board continues to work for the betterment of Indian Mountain and its property owners. One new project is a chipping program that lets you have your dead trees chipped on your property. Just sign up, follow the rules, and bring the logs to the edge of the road neatly stacked, and it is free. This past year we did chipping on seventy-one properties, and that along with the burn pit, helps us continue to be a Firewise Community. We also donated funds to add new window shades for the upper windows at the Community Center, and will update the audio-visual system for better viewing and sound.

About two years ago at our last in-person Annual meeting, I asked how many of you would be open to becoming a mandatory HOA. The response was positive. In our area, over nine other rural residential developments are mandatory HOAs. About a year after our development started, Colorado state law was changed requiring all developments to have HOAs (Colorado Common Interest Ownership Act 38-33.3-223). It is going to be a long process, and we will keep you informed as we go through it.

God bless you all, and be safe.

~Article provided by: Larry Siverson, IMPOA President

IMMD PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Greetings, Neighbors!

Welcome to 2021! Indian Mountain Metropolitan District is looking forward to the new year and all that it brings to the area. I am ready to begin getting back to normal as the pandemic plays out. We would welcome the chance to reopen the IMMD Comfort Station and Community Center sometime this summer and start holding the normal events.

The Burn Pit has been burned off, and once we do a little dirt work in the pit, we should be ready to open the pit on the regular summer schedule. More details to follow as spring approaches. Thanks to all the property owners who worked so hard to clear slash and wood from their lots. This makes IM a safer place to live. Also, a big thanks to all the volunteers who donated their time and efforts to make the pit run smoothly. This is becoming a routine thing now that we have a couple of years behind us in the mode of smaller piles versus one huge pile.

I would ask that owners be mindful of others' rights and be respectful of others' properties. Nobody comes up here to be aggravated and stressed by the actions of others. We are no longer isolated in our own worlds as more building takes place and land use increases. We have a lot of new owners in Indian Mountain, and hopefully we can all meet at some of the summertime functions this year.

Hoping you have blessed 2021.

~Article provided by: Bret Crouch, Vice President II

IMMD FACILITIES NOTICE

As of the date of this newsletter, all IMMD facilities are still closed. The IMMD Community Center office is staffed Wednesday through Saturday from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. If you need keys, RV registration, or other office related items, please stop by. **MASKS ARE REQUIRED!**

Please check the IMMD website (<http://www.indianmountain.info/>) frequently for the most current information.

INDIAN MOUNTAIN 2021 EVENTS

Due to continued COVID-19 restrictions this year, most normal IMPOA/IMMD events are on hold. We still plan to open the Burn Pit, have Dumpster Day, and continue the Chipping Program this summer as usual. We really miss being able to visit and have fun with our neighbors. Hopefully restrictions will be lifted later this year and life can return to normal!

~Article provided by: Rhonda Cates

IMPOA 2021 MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

The IMPOA 2021 Membership Drive is underway! A huge mailing went out the first week of January. If we have a valid mailing address for you, you should have received your 2021 membership form. The form is also attached here and is available on the [IMPOA website](#) as well. The form can be printed, filled out, and mailed in with a check, OR membership dues can be paid from a PayPal link on the website page referenced above.

The IMPOA Board voted in October 2019 to return to a calendar year membership rather than a fiscal year membership due to an overwhelming number of other activities and business that takes place around the August/September timeframe. 2020 IMPOA memberships were extended until December 31, 2020. If you paid for a membership after late July/August 2020, those dues have been applied to your 2021 membership. We have 47 members who fall into this category. If you have any questions about your membership, please contact IMPOA Membership Director Chad Wilcox at impoa.membership@gmail.com.

IMPOA is a voluntary Property Owners Association. Membership dues are only \$45 per year. Additional donations to help fund IMPOA programs are always appreciated, and this year's form has an option to make a designated donation to the chipping program.

Please click on the link below and read the attached form to discover the benefits of IMPOA membership. We would love for you to join us today!

Thank You!

~Article provided by: Rhonda Cates

IMPOA 2021 MEMBERSHIP FORM

ACCEPTING NEW WSP MEMBERS IN 2021!

Open Enrollment from February 14th to April 30th

Please help us spread the good news that there will be a limited-entry open-enrollment period for IM property owners to join the WSP. HASP has granted permission for IMMD to purchase an additional one-acre foot of water in 2021 which will effectively augment 37 wells; that is, 37 new WSP enrollees.

Maybe you have just bought property in IM, maybe you are looking to build in the next year or so, maybe you want to be part of a community-managed non-profit water augmentation program along with more than 400 of your neighbors, or maybe your contract with Bar Star is soon to expire. Now is the time to join WSP because the open enrollment period only comes around on occasion.

The limited entry will be on a first-come, first-served basis from **February 14th to April 30th**. Remember, the open enrollment is limited to 37 property owners.

Step 1: The first step is to submit a WSP application (found online at: <http://www.indianmountain.info/WSP%20Application.html>) and a \$150 check, money order, or cash to IMWSP. \$50 is a non-refundable application fee and \$100 is a deposit that will be applied to your \$300 water purchase.

Step 2: In May, depending upon the level of interest, IMMD will begin to work with HASP to secure and close on the water purchase.

Step 3: The \$200 balance of your water purchase will be due before July 1. At this point you can begin to make arrangements to have a water meter installed and certified.

Step 4: HASP will communicate to the Colorado Division of Water Resources in late summer as to which IM wells and lots will be joining the WSP.

Step 5: In the late Fall, the WSP will issue you a certificate of water augmentation. This is a valuable document and should be kept, to provide to a future property owner at time of sale.

Once you have submitted your application, we will periodically provide additional details and updates during the year.

During Open Enrollment please return:

- (1) Completed and notarized Enrollment Form,
- (2) A \$150 check or money order (no cash) as a combination enrollment fee and deposit made out to IM WSP. (The \$100 deposit will go toward your \$300 water purchase)
- (3) And a copy of your well permit or summary page from the Division of Water Resources website,

TO:
IM WSP Administrator
31 Keneu Ct.
P.O. Box 25
Como, CO 80432

(or put in the drop box outside the Community Center)

~Article provided by: Glenn Haas

COVENANTS, LURs, AND ORDINANCES

Covenants

Indian Mountain has covenants; they are general in scope and hard to enforce since IMPOA is a voluntary dues paying Association. If a party has a problem with another owner, that party should by phone, in person, or by mail contact the other owner and try to resolve the problem. Failing in that effort, the party can come to the board and ask for help. A last resort may end in legal action. For more information, go to IMPOA.net. Links to [Indian Mountain Covenants](#) and the [IMPOA Covenant and LUR Policy](#) can be found under the Governance tab.

Land Use Regulations

Park County has several LURs, and all property owners in Indian Mountain should be aware of them. A big one is building or other work on the property without county permits. More information on [Land Use Regulations](#) can be found at the Park County website.

Ordinances

Park County is changing many of its LURs to Ordinances to simplify the process of enforcing them. Some examples: campers and trailers left on vacant properties after November 30, cars left without current tags, collection of trash on property, renting your vacant lot for camping, short term rentals, noise, allowing your pets to run loose etc, etc, etc. Let's all follow the rules. If it is not allowed in Arvada, it is probably not allowed here. If the Sheriff comes to look at your property, it could mean fines of \$100.00 or more per day until the correction is made. Information on current [County Ordinances](#) can be found at the Park County website.

~Article provided by: Larry Siverson

INDIAN MOUNTAIN REAL ESTATE IN 2020 AND 2021

Despite all the strangeness of 2020, it ended up being a fantastic year for real estate values in Indian Mountain. Factors which have increased the property values include 1) people are working and schooling from home, 2) there is concern of being too close to neighbors or in cities, 3) folks streaming into Colorado from all over the U.S., 4) mortgage rates are again at an all-time low, and 5) the geographic proximity to Denver, outdoor activities, and a sense of "mountain seclusion." Sales in 2020 have been strong with it being a sellers' market.

Some Indian Mountain Stats explained:

In 2020, Indian Mountain residential home sales realized a Year Over Year (YOY) average value increase of 14.3%. In 2019, value increase was flat with a mild decline of between 0 and -2%. The 2020 increase put IM on track for a 5-year average value increase of 10% YOY.

While the total number of listed homes is generally the same the past 3 years, the number sold has shown an increase: 80 listed / 63 sold in 2018, 94 listed / 53 sold in 2019, and 87 listed / 70 sold in 2020. All but 7 homes sold this year while 10 are currently under contract, and only 1 home is for sale as of this writing Jan 1, 2021.

Months of inventory (MOI) is the current supply of homes offered for sale relative to the number of homes being purchased. The result indicates the number of months it would take to sell all properties currently for sale at the average monthly sales pace. A low MOI dictates an ability to price high and confirms the power of the seller over the buyer. It just so happens that as we speak the MOI is at the all-time low for Indian Mountain. In the biz, low MOI is the biggest piece of news and if played right the whole zip code can experience a considerable boom in long term pricing.

Right now, homes in the neighborhood are closing on average for 96% of the list price. The average Sales price across the neighborhood for 2020 was \$341,661. Highest price in 2020 was \$535k and lowest \$105k.

Will 2021 continue to be strong? Yes, subject to unexpected events like Covid proved to be.

2021 Strategies for maximizing your Indian Mountain real estate investment:

1. Add high speed internet to your home. Internet is highly desirable, and buyers will overlook other things if the internet is solid as school and work from home is the new normal.

2. Declutter the property and home, and clean everything. Keep up on minor maintenance and develop an annual maintenance plan.
3. Be confident in your home value and know its liabilities - whether or not you are selling in the next several years, contact a Real Estate Broker to get a detailed price assessment.
4. Refinance or restructure your mortgage if your current rate is 4% or greater. There are lots of strategies with our current rate structure that will pocket you \$ up front and over time just by changing your rate.
5. Shop insurance every few years, as you know, the rate structures change and can save you lots of \$ over time.
6. Be involved in your neighborhood, use the IM facilities, go to meetings, meet your neighbors, pick up random trash, etc. The overall reputation and appearance of the neighborhood affirms value.
7. Install a water meter because the metering of water consumption is the future of water management in rural Colorado and the West. Plus, join the community-managed IM Water Service Program for long-term cost stability and the strong collective voice of 400+ neighbors.
8. Develop a piece of land! I apologize for this article focusing on residential property. Land development deals with many technical issues, so please call or email me if you have questions.

Note About Dan Windmueller. Dan has been volunteering his time and talent to the IMMD Board. He generates a monthly list of IM sellers and buyers which enables the Board to provide timely welcome information about the IM Water Service Program. Dan provides us this real estate information several months prior to what is available from the Park County Assessor's office. Kudos to Dan from the IMMD Board. If you have any questions about buying, selling, building, refinancing, or are interested in the charts used to develop the statistics, please reach out to Dan directly at danwindmueller@gmail.com or call him at 406-544-2375.

~Article provided by: Dan Windmueller



SOUTH PARK TELEPHONE

Greetings, IMPOA Residents and Happy New Year!

South Park Telephone (SPT), Park County's local voice and internet provider for over 20 years is excited to announce the expansion of services to the Indian Mountain area.

Over the past few months, you may have noticed SPT crews installing fiber optic cable along County Road 15 (Elkhorn Road) from Hwy 24 to Hwy 285. The objective is to close the digital divide and offer broadband technologies to residents in the area. In addition, SPT installed a fiber optic cable along Remington Road to the cellular site at [300 Falcon Road](#). The company is in the process of constructing a point of presence (POP) to offer a fixed wireless broadband and voice service to the IMPOA community and surrounding areas.

The internet equipment is designed to provide up to 55 Meg, however Internet speeds will vary based on the Line of Sight (LOS) to the tower, and in most cases, a site visit is necessary to determine the maximum available speed.

South Park's Reliable Service Includes:

- o Unlimited Data (NO DATA CAPS-STREAM, GAME AND CONNECT WITH NO LIMITS!)
- o No Hidden Fees
- o Local Business / Friendly Local Staff
- o 24/7 Technical Support
- o Voice Customers Are Able to Retain their Current Telephone Number

Available to Residents by March 1st, 2021! Reserve Your Install by February 15 and Get 15% Off Your Subscription!

Call Now and Reserve Your Installation (719) 837-6400

~Article provided by: David Shipley, South Park Telephone

IT'S ALMOST CAMPFIRE SEASON!

Are you looking for information on having a campfire at your property? Do you want to understand the current rules and regulations regarding open flames in Indian Mountain? Do you want to purchase an annual burn permit?

The Jefferson Como Fire Protection District website is where you want to go! Check out https://www.jcfpd.org/sign_up for all the information you need. The webpage includes links to the current County Burn Ordinance, JCFPD Stage 1 and Stage 2 Burn Ban information, and a link to the paperless online Burn Permit process. *This calendar year permit is required before any burning can be done on your property!*

If you have never had a burn permit, but think you want a campfire this summer, you must set up an account and purchase the \$10 permit. If you have already set up an account, then all that is needed is a renewal.

As a reminder – Once your permit is paid for and approved, you can call 1-833-935-1189 to register your burn (call each day you expect to burn). This number will also give you risk level and burn ban status. More information is available on the website link above.

~Article provided by: Jeff Mason



FIREWISE COMMUNITY UPDATE

Summary

The Indian Mountain Fire Mitigation program supports property owners in their efforts to clear their properties of slash to reduce the risk of wildfire through reduction of fuel load. This effort is supported by the Indian Mountain Metropolitan District, which owns the community burn pit, and the Indian Mountain Property Owners Association, which piloted a new chipping program this year. These results reflect the success of both programs:

Total Loads of Slash Disposed:	1488*
Total Volume of Slash Disposed:	1,102 cubic yards
Total Volunteer Hours:	5504
Dollar Value of Volunteer Hours:	\$139,912**

*load defined as 20 cubic feet ~ a short-bed pickup load
** per \$25.43 hourly rate defined by FireWise

Thanks to the hard work of the community, we exceeded the minimum requirement to maintain our FireWise certification by a factor of 6.5.

Burn Pit

The pit was open on Fridays and Saturdays from 9am to 5pm from June 5 to July 11. The pit was then closed due to lack of space. Demand was high throughout the period, even over the July 4th holiday; about the same number of loads were brought in over the last two days of the season as in the first two.

We cannot predict exactly when the pit will open this year since that depends on weather – sometimes the pit temporarily becomes a shallow lake as the snow melts. Of course, operating the pit is dependent on availability of volunteers. As we did last year, we will register volunteers online. This allows people to view the calendar to see available time slots and sign up when it fits their schedule, and to remove themselves from the schedule if their situation changes. Requests for volunteers will be issued via NextDoor and the link will also be posted on the community web sites.

Chipping Program

Last year we piloted a chipping program sponsored by IMPOA. The results of the pilot were impressive. A total of 71 properties were chipped, accounting for an estimated 350 cubic yards of slash. To make better use of the good weather for 2021, we plan to follow a split schedule:

- First pass: Open registration from April 1st through May 7th. All slash piles to be ready for chipping by 1 June. Slash will be chipped as weather allows beginning in June.
- Second pass: Re-open registration from June 1st to July 2nd. All slash piles must be ready for chipping no later than 1 August. Slash will be chipped as weather allows through August and September.

As we did in 2020, sign-ups will be done via an on-line form. The only difference this year is that rather than specifying a date when your piles will be ready, all piles will need to be ready by the deadline for the first or second passes. The registration link will be published on NextDoor and the community web sites.

~Article provided by: Dwight Cates



BURNING OF THE BURN PIT!

On short notice, and with an approved exemption from the Jefferson Como Fire Protection District in hand, IMMD was able to round up volunteers and take advantage of high moisture levels to ignite the burn pit piles on October 30th.

The day started out early – Bret and Carla Crouch were in charge overall, and along with some help from Kevin Scofield, they lit the first pile at 6:45AM and kept lighting piles until 10AM.



Photo Courtesy of Dwight Cates



Photo Courtesy of Kevin Scofield



Photo Courtesy of Kevin Scofield



Photo Courtesy of Kevin Scofield

Throughout the remainder of the day, a small crew of volunteers assisted in overseeing the piles, including making sure that fires did not spread beyond the pit perimeter, and stirring up the piles to add oxygen and to aid in completing the burns. It was hot, dusty/ashy work!



In total, 30 piles representing almost 1,500 property owner loads and 1,100 cubic yards of slash.



This was a great opportunity to clear the burn pit and make space for the 2021 slash program. Doing this early in the winter season, before the piles were covered in snow and added moisture, made the burn process more efficient, and the entire pit was burned in one day.

Volunteers that made this year's burn happen also included Keith O'Brien, Jeff Mason, Jannene Sherrill, Gary Fletcher, Kim Novitch, and Larry Siverson. In addition, thanks to Samantha Bertin for recognizing the window of opportunity and contacting the fire department for their blessing and getting the ball rolling.

~Article provided by: Jeff Mason



2020 COLORADO WILDFIRES - EVACUEE'S POINT OF VIEW

At 8:05 am on October 22 my cell phone rang, and I heard the voice of a friend of mine – “Hi kiddo, it’s serious. The fire came over the divide last night and it’s now 6 miles from Estes. Pack up and leave.” My heart jumped and my mind started racing. The call I was expecting, but hoping would never come, had just happened. The East Troublesome Gulch Fire had blown up overnight from ~25,000 acres to over 125,000 acres – driven by extreme winds into Rocky Mountain National Park and headed towards Estes Park.

Back up to August 13, 2020 when word came that a fire northwest of Fort Collins had been discovered. It was named the Cameron Peak Fire. Given how dry everything was and the reality that there had already been serious fires on the Western Slope, it was not surprising. I was concerned about who and what was going to be impacted and said a short prayer that it would be controlled in short order. As the weeks went by, the fire grew and there were evacuations of people and livestock. Motels and hotels in Fort Collins, Loveland, Longmont, etc. were being used to house evacuees – Covid19 restrictions prevented the usual shelters from being used. In addition, there were several other smaller fires that erupted in North Central Colorado during September.

Then on October 14, the East Troublesome Gulch fire broke out on the other side of the Continental Divide near Grand Lake and Granby. On October 17, the Calwood fire exploded in Boulder County and destroyed 28 structures in a matter of minutes. Highway 36 from Lyons to Boulder was closed; Highway 36 and Highway 7 from Estes to Lyons were also restricted. Highway 34 was intermittently closed to the east and completely closed to the West over Trail Ridge Road. Estes was surrounded on three sides by wildfire and the only escape routes that existed were, or could be, shut down. I decided I needed to get serious and prepared to leave, just in case. My awareness of preparedness began years before in the early morning hours of December 1, 2012. I was awakened by the screaming sirens of a flotilla of fire equipment racing west through Estes on Highway 34. The Fern Lake fire in Rocky Mountain National Park had blown up and burned through 3 acres of the Park in 30 minutes. The west end of Estes was evacuated with almost no time for anyone to be properly prepared. Thankfully, the fire was stopped within the Park and I decided to pack most of the things I would want to keep and moved them to a storage unit in Fort Collins. In the intervening years, the urgency of finishing that task faded until the week of October 12th when I took more things to the storage unit and in subsequent days made multiple trips from Estes to Fort Collins.

The Cameron Peak Fire continued to expand in October and moved into the Glen Haven area, which is a few miles north of Estes. A voluntary evacuation order for Estes had been enacted, as the southern boundary of the fire was Estes Park. During the afternoon of October 14th, incredible plumes of smoke appeared northeast of the town – black, gray, or white columns that were frightening and intriguing at the same time. The color of the smoke indicated what fuels were being consumed...black would include structures, gray and white had burned everything else. I had been texting with my daughter in Greeley (who was worried) and midafternoon, she asked me “What will make you decide to leave?” I told her “I don’t know – something will tell me.” About 5:00 pm, flames jumped over the ridge on the “Estes side” of Signal Mountain. That was my signal – no pun intended! Since I had “prepared” after the Fern Lake Fire, I felt I had things pretty well organized but I decided I would create a list of categories of things to take with me just so I had a “cheat sheet.” It took me several hours to round up all my prepared categories! I left for Greeley about 8:30 pm that night. The flames on the “southern boundary” of the voluntary evacuation zone lit the Estes sky that night. I unloaded the car at my storage unit in Fort Collins the morning of October 15 and went back to Estes. There was barely a whiff of smoke when I got back. However, the wind re-energized things on October 16 and the plumes of smoke reappeared so I spent that weekend in Greeley with my daughter. At this point I had all the last-minute things I wanted to evacuate with me already loaded in the car – only my overnight bag went into the house with me.

On October 19th, I returned to Estes – the back-cargo area of my car still packed with “my life”. About 4:00 pm on October 21, friends noticed a black cloud was making its way towards Estes from the west. Headlights on cars came on, there was an ominous grayish/orangeish pall over the town and it was soooo smoky. I hunkered down in my house and about 3:00 am I woke up with burning eyes, stinging nose and throat, and feeling nauseous from the smoke that had permeated my totally closed-up house. I flipped on the exhaust fans in the bathrooms and the stove to try to remove some of the smoke. That helped a little and I decided to take a shower and get ready for the day. I also decided that I would finalize the packing of my overnight bag and set it by the front door. I loaded up my computers and some last-minute things – just in case. I also decided to spend some time in my car since I could control the amount of smoke I had to deal with, and I could listen to the radio. A snowstorm was forecast to hit Estes during the weekend. I thought I would make some homemade soup. That shows how addled my brain was...first off, I was in the car because I couldn’t stand the smoke in the house. How was I going to make soup when I didn’t want to be in the house??? As I was sitting in the car planning what I was going to do, I received the phone call from my friend...“Hi, kiddo.....pack up and leave.” I went back into the house and grabbed the bags I’d set by the front door and loaded them into the car. I made one last trip into the house and tried to calm down...telling myself to make conscious decisions, be rational, don’t do anything

stupid. I tried to clinically evaluate the house – was there anything else I wanted to save (yes there were many things, but I had no way to move them so some hard decisions were made), turn the water off and drain the pipes, leave the thermostat where it is in case the power goes off and the furnace wouldn't function – the house would retain some residual heat; decided my concern over the unopened gallon of milk I had purchased the day before was STUPID!; and I took one last look at the different rooms of my house and then went out the front door. I locked the door and thought about the fact this could be the last time I would do this, and I might lose everything still inside. Surprisingly, I was numb and felt nothing as I walked to the car. That calmness was a coping mechanism. I never looked back as I headed for Highway 34 and the 20+ miles down the Big Thompson Canyon to Loveland. Once I got to Loveland, I went through McDonald's drive-through and got a cup of coffee. I pulled into a parking place and tried to regroup and started making some phone calls to let family and friends know where I was and that I was okay. I was really wound up and couldn't go to my daughter's and just sit. I ended up driving to Fort Collins and spent time there – picked up some supplies for the anticipated round 2 of shortages because of Covid19 and took them to the storage unit (multi-tasking disasters!!!). The black/orange cloud was even worse in Fort Collins than in Estes. It was late morning, and everyone had lights on – it looked like it was almost evening...very eerie. About 2:00pm that afternoon, Estes Park got the mandatory evacuation order, and EVERYONE had to exit via Highway 34 through the Big Thompson canyon. There was a bumper-to-bumper line of cars all the way to Loveland, and it took 2-3 hours to make the trip. I was lucky on my trip as it was earlier in the morning and no one was following me, so I made it to Loveland in about 25 minutes.

On Sunday, October 25, the prayed-for snowstorm arrived, and it helped dampen the fire and ultimately was the event that helped put the fire out. The mandatory evacuation order for Estes Park was lifted on October 29. I made the trip home on October 30 but didn't unpack my things and put them back where they "belonged" until early December!

During all aspects of this experience, I continued to think about what I would do if the location were changed from Estes Park to my cabin in Indian Mountain. In some ways, the cabin would be easier as I'm not there all the time. But on the other hand, it would potentially be more difficult for evacuation. As a summer activity a few years ago, my daughter and I drove ONE of the escape routes to get to Highway 24. There were plans to drive some of the other possible routes, but I never did. That will be a high priority on my to do list for next summer! We are fortunate to have the volunteers and the priority IMMD and IMPOA have put on fire mitigation activities. The adage "it's not a matter of IF, it's a matter of WHEN" is certainly true and figuring out your plan will be of utmost importance....do it when you are clear-headed and not in a panic-provoking situation. My heart is saddened by the loss of life in Grand Lake and the incredible destruction of the fire on other communities but very grateful for the blessings I've received. If this first-person account motivates you to make an evacuation plan for yourself, then that will be an additional blessing and that plan just may save your life.

~Article provided by: Marcia Logan



Photos Courtesy of Marcia Logan

Clockwise from left: Town of Estes Park with Cameron Peak Fire on ridge north of town; Marcia's home is in lower right corner of picture. Estes Park covered with choking, horrible smoke. The Stanley Hotel engulfed in smoke.

2020 COLORADO WILDFIRES - FIREFIGHTER'S POINT OF VIEW

When my wife let me know she volunteered me to write a companion article to Marcia's first-hand wildfire evacuee experience, I both jumped at the chance and wondered where to begin. I have been a firefighter my entire adult life, which is now more than half my life, and while every situation is different, I can certainly say the fire conditions and behavior we experienced in Colorado last summer were remarkable – and not just because they were so close to home.

As a wildland firefighter, each year I am available and called across the country, and theoretically, the world. Historically, much of my time has been spent out of state, with short and relatively small fires in Colorado. My seasons also typically ensure that I will be gone for most of the summer. Last year started out unique because my first call was to Arizona, and much later than usual, in June. After two weeks away, I spent an unprecedented and somewhat rainy July in Colorado, working to mitigate my own property, and with the lack of work, contemplating the need to find a new job.

As we all know now, early August changed everything in Colorado, and but for a two-week assignment in Utah, I was fighting Colorado Fires from August 4 through the end of November. Colorado experienced its three largest fires in recorded history last summer, overtaking the Hayman fire from 2002, and I was on each of them. Pine Gulch, the first historically large fire of Colorado's season, foreshadowed for me and everyone else, what was to come. We all study "typical" fire behavior; what we experienced in Colorado last summer was consistently unusual. For most, firefighter or not, the best example of this was the East Troublesome fire jumping over the Continental Divide, an area that would be considered something of a natural fire containment line.

Just one of the remarkable experiences we had on the Cameron Peak and East Troublesome fires was, as Marcia noted, the snowstorms. Most often, sleeping accommodations on fires are in tents on the ground, and typically, we struggle with heat and insects. Last summer, we also faced single-digit temperatures and wet, heavy snow. I remember the first snowstorm of the season when we experienced record high temperatures on Saturday and snow falling Monday over Labor Day weekend. On a fire, personnel are broken into divisions – divisions meet regularly to discuss the fire conditions and the plan for firefighting activities. This includes discussing the weather, how it will impact the fire, and the techniques to fight it. For example, high winds, hot temperatures, and low humidity call for different responses and rule-

out certain activities (such as the use of aircraft). The discussions leading up to and throughout those several days of snowfall included our expectation that the snow and cold temperatures would significantly slow the fire, and in some areas, extinguish the active flames. We anticipated having several days where we could move closer to the fire line and conduct activities that were not possible just a few days earlier. Just as so many “typical” behaviors before and after this, the fire did not cooperate. I remember standing with several colleagues, marveling as the snowfall began to end and the clouds cleared. We could still see the bright, active flames from the fire as if nothing had changed.

Atypical or not, what is consistent about fire is its inevitability and how indiscriminate it is. Inevitable in part because we need fire to regenerate land and keep our forests healthy. Ideally, this is done in controlled scenarios where flames can be maintained and prevented from burning too hot, rendering the land useless for years to come. Indiscriminate, because just as I mentioned above, we study typical behavior, we plan for as many possible scenarios as we can imagine, but ultimately, fire does what it wants to do. This may mean that your perfectly mitigated and maintained home is the landing spot for an ember that ignites immediately, and your neighbor’s house, which has trees touching the roof and growing through the deck, is spared. Because of these two realities, I couldn’t agree more with Marcia’s advice – be prepared and have a plan. And remember, as you make your plans, you may have several days or weeks of watching a large fire move toward your home, but you also may have a matter of minutes. For example, wind events like what IM experienced recently are often the culprits of new fires, as power lines blow down and ignite nearby vegetation or structures. It is essential that you are just as prepared to evacuate if this happens next door or down the road. What can buy you some time (even if only an extra minute or two), and certainly peace of mind is mitigating your property.

Both my wife and I were born and raised in Colorado. My family has lived for generations on the other side of Guanella Pass, in Georgetown. We both understand, and have experienced first-hand, the harsh and unpredictable realities of mountain living. Living where we do has a significant risk/reward relationship, and wildfire is a risk. Fire risk mitigation is just that, mitigation – something to reduce the severity, not remove it. We know that regardless of the work we put in to protect our home, there are no guarantees, and we have plans in place that prioritize life and safety above property. That said, we have and continue to do everything we can to give our home the best chance possible when a fire comes through.

When we purchased our home in Indian Mountain, we had a lot of work to do from the fire-preparedness side. The property surrounding our home appeared never to have been mitigated. Our location is heavily treed and had standing dead and dead-and-down aspen and pine covering much of the ground. I started with our cabin’s foundation and worked my way out. I’m regularly clearing (not clear-cutting) trees, removing the dead and down debris on the ground, trimming tree branches that touch the ground, and cutting and removing the dead standing trees. In addition to an evacuation plan and having a prepared list of your evacuation needs, I’d encourage everyone to take a close look at your property. Use the resources of the community and aggressively mitigate the land around your home. Yes, it can be hard to cut that one tree you love that is next to your deck, but the fire safety (and often avoided home insurance costs) will be worth it.

I want to close on a positive note. First, while we all must take the lessons learned from last summer, remember, Park County and Indian Mountain are also different from the locations that experienced wildfire in 2020. We have our unique challenges, just like any community, but we also have incredible fire departments in Park County and around the state, starting, of course, with our local Jefferson-Como department. Wildfire is a reality of life for anyone living in the mountains and increasingly in communities bordering the mountains. But, with a personal evacuation plan, strong fire mitigation measures on your property, and qualified firefighters ready to respond to emergencies, I am confident in the ability of our community to face whatever comes.

~Article provided by: Mark Abrahamson



WINTER FUN IN/NEAR INDIAN MOUNTAIN!



Tucker and Mike Novitch Ice Fishing at Tarryall Reservoir - January 2021

ICE FISHING AT TARRYALL RESERVOIR

We had been waiting a few weeks and finally decided that Wednesday was the day. It was worth the wait! The day was bright and sunny with blue skies for miles and only light wind – almost unheard of in South Park. Mike drug the sled with the shelter and gear onto the ice, while I followed closely behind with the cooler and Tucker. Half the battle was setting everything up with the shelter being the most difficult, but once it was up, it was definitely worth the trouble. For those that say that it is too cold to ice fish, check out a shelter with a propane heater inside! I was so warm that I had to take my jacket off.

I got our chairs set up and put a blanket on the ice for Tucker, so his puppy paws wouldn't get too cold. We drilled four holes through the ice – it is amazing to look down through the hole at the clear ice sides. You can see the plants at the bottom, and if you are lucky, some fish! We had a variety of baits from worms to spoons, jigs, and power bait. Then the waiting began. I must admit that I always bring a book, because I am not patient with jigging the entire time. Oftentimes, Tucker jumps up on my lap to warm up.

I call Mike the Fish Whisperer because he NEVER gets skunked when fishing! This day only one fish was caught, and that one almost got away. The fishing line broke, but Mike was quick to submerge his hands into the sub-zero temperature water and got it out on the ice. WOW! It was a HAWG!! Just over 2 pounds, and it was so tasty! We left early, before the winds picked up (as they always do!), but it was a great day overall.

~Article provided by: Kim Novitch



Photos Courtesy of Dwight Cates

Cates Family and Friends Enjoying the Sledding Hill at Indian Mountain Park.

SLEDDING/SNOWSHOEING/SKIING IN IM PARK AND NEARBY

So, you want to get away...

One of the advantages to living in Indian Mountain during the pandemic is that “social distancing” is a way of life up here. Sometimes, though, you just need to get out of the house, stretch your legs, and enjoy the fresh air. Luckily, we have plenty of resources readily accessible from our neighborhood.

First, we have Indian Mountain Park, located at [1996 Chief Trail](#), which hosts a great sledding hill and offers a network of five trails ([map](#)) that are ideal for snowshoeing and cross-country skiing. You can choose a trail that suites your fitness level and schedule, including a hike all the way to the top of Indian Mountain which includes a climb of over 700 feet and passes through a couple of different forest zones. Views from the top are spectacular in any season of the year!

Conveniently close to Indian Mountain is the Pike National Forest, which can be accessed from Longbow Drive in Indian Mountain, just east of the intersection with Chief Trail. This connects you with a network of off-road trails suitable for snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, as well as snowmobiling – even winter camping for the hardier outdoor enthusiasts. Keep in mind that snowmobiles must be properly licensed, and camping is by permit only. A wealth of information can be found on the [Pike and San Isabel National Forests](#) site. Detailed maps can be viewed and printed from the [Nature Atlas](#) site, and paper copies are available at the Forest Service District Office in Fairplay.

Also, in the National Forest, but just a bit further afield, are the trails heading up towards the Continental Divide. A good example is the Gold Dust Trail. The southern trailhead is located near Como, off Church Camp Road. Just follow the signs towards Camp Como and you'll see the trailhead sign at the left of the church camp gate. The slopes are rather gentle on the lower part of the trail, but if you're up for a challenge, the trail climbs nearly 1500 feet before it ends at Boreas Pass Road, just south of the top of the pass.

For much more information about Indian Mountain facilities and recreational opportunities, please consult the sites for the [Indian Mountain Metropolitan District](#) and the [Indian Mountain Property Owners Association](#).

~Article provided by: Dwight Cates



Photos Courtesy of Dwight Cates

Rhonda and Granddaughter Colleen Snowshoeing on the Gold Dust Trail in Como.

IMMD AND IMPOA RESPONSIBILITIES

The IMMD and IMPOA Boards have separate and joint responsibilities. The responsibilities of the IMPOA and IMMD Boards are often confused by property owners. Here is a chart that might help you decide where to go to get information or help.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN IMMD AND IMPOA?

IMMD	Joint Activities	IMPOA
Indian Mountain Metropolitan District		Indian Mountain Property Owners Association
Public, non-profit special district of the State of Colorado funded by property taxes paid by all property owners (~2000)		Voluntary Association, no enforcement authority, not HOA, funded by voluntary payment of annual dues by about 750 property owners
Five board members are property owners elected by property owners for staggered 3-year terms		Seven board members are property owners elected by members in good standing for staggered 3-year terms
Meets 2 nd Saturday of month 9:00 a.m. at Community Center		Meets 2 nd Saturday of month after IMMD meeting at Community Center
Amenities		Activities
Community Center	Annual Picnic	Wildfire mitigation efforts
Ski Lodge	Annual Community Meeting	Fencing cattle out
Comfort Station	Annual Chili Cook-off	Dumpster Day
Indian Mountain Park Lodge, Comfort Station	Water Litigation	Facilitate compliance with covenants & LURs
Administer Water Service Program (WSP)		Represent IM before government entities
Pasture Golf	Newsletter	Maintain owner data base
Gold Pan Park		Road signs
Burn Pit	Burn Pit Operations	Speed control
RV Dump Station		
RV Storage Lot at Burn Pit		
Disc Golf & Trails at IM Park		

IMPOA BOARD OF DIRECTORS CONTACT INFORMATION

Name	Position	Term	Phone	Email	Mailing Address
Larry Siverson	President	2022	719-836-1771	l.siverson2@gmail.com	P O Box 452 Como, CO 80432
Kathryn Abrahamson	Vice President	2023	303-709-2669	kathryn.abrahamson@gmail.com	P O Box 466 Como, CO 80432
Jim Scherrer	Secretary	2023	720-370-6203	eagle43470@gmail.com	1394 S Simms St Lakewood, CO 80232
Jeff Mason	Treasurer	2021	720-335-5031	jmason@trailseeker.com	-----
Chad Wilcox	Membership	2023	720-470-4577	rcing3111@gmail.com	12932 W 80th Place Arvada, CO 80005
Rhonda Cates	Communications	2021	719-836-1442	rgcates54@gmail.com	P O Box 191 Como, CO 80432
Harry Hill	Director	2023	303-916-4403	hiii3@msn.com	1230 S Ivanhoe Way Denver, CO 80224
Samantha Bertin	Business Manager	-----	719-836-9043	impoa01@hotmail.com	-----
IMPOA Contacts	-----	-----	www.impoa.net	impoa01@hotmail.com	P O Box 196 Jefferson, CO 80456

IMMD BOARD OF DIRECTORS CONTACT INFORMATION

Name	Position	Phone	Email	Mailing Address
Glenn Haas	President (Temporary- acting)	970-498-9350	glennehaas@comcast.net	3403 Green Wing Court Fort Collins, CO 80524
Carol Darland	Vice President I	-----	cdar139783@aol.com	-----
Bret Crouch	Vice President II	719-836-3431	bcrouchk@gmail.com	P O Box 171 Como, CO 80432
Karen Goodman	Treasurer	303-912-1063	kkmbq1@comcast.net	-----
Marcia Logan	Secretary	970-586-9194	ep.mjlogan@yahoo.com	1360-C Raven Circle Estes Park, CO 80517

Samantha Bertin	Business Manager	719-836-9043	indianmtn@hotmail.com	P O Box 25 Como, Co 80432
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