



Game Trail TAILS



Game Trail Vision: To preserve this extraordinary, private environment of nature for all the years to come.

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Denny Witte, GTA Board President

Roads, Water, Finances and Communications Dominate Board of Director's Recent Actions

I am in my second year on the Game Trail Board, and in my first year as association President. It's been a great year with several major projects benefiting from outstanding leadership and efforts by our many volunteers.

One major project this past year has been road system improvement. It began with the Road Task Force report, followed by the assessment approval, and now the beginning of work on our road system. This work is being managed by our very capable Commons Committee Co-Chairs, Mike Arnold and Dave Nelson.

A second major project has been transitioning management of the water system from the 17-year leadership by volunteer Walt Lafford to new Water Committee Co-Chairs, outsourcing routine management responsibilities, and distributing many tasks to volunteers. The new Water Committee Co-Chairs are Sandy Long and Sylvia Arnold.

The third major area of work has been fiscal planning. Dick Sorce has played a pivotal role in this area. He began as a member of the Road Task Force, where he was the financial wizard behind modeling the seven different scenarios considered. Once the road assessment project was approved, Dick continued his efforts in updating the financial planning and reserve analysis for the capital and operating resources Game Trail will need for the next 20 years. This provided valuable information for the Board to set annual fees and the 2020 budget.

The Game Trail Association (GTA) Annual Meeting will be held Saturday, September 12, with the business meeting beginning at 11:15 a.m. in

the BV Community Center. Lunch will be served afterward. We hope to have some home tours in the morning that day, but with the uncertainty of the COVID 19 pandemic, people with new homes have been unwilling to make commitments at this time. Details for the meeting, lunch and possible home tour will be distributed to owners later this summer.

Finally, to save administrative and mailing expenses, a change in communications was enacted at the April Board meeting. The Board decided to expand its use of the GTA website as well as the existing email system.



Denny Witte, GTA Board President

Effective May 1, 2020, HOA newsletters will be posted on the GTA website www.gametrailassn.org (and not mailed via the post office). Newsletters, Board meeting agendas and meeting minutes will continue to be posted at the mail center bulletin board as well as on the GTA website. Please note that HOA legal notices will still be provided via U.S. mail. The Board encourages all owners to stay informed by emailing your current email address to communications@gametrailassn.org.

I really do appreciate feedback and questions about our association. Please send them to president@gametrailassn.org. We respond very quickly to these contacts.

Have a great summer!

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- **Denny Witte**
President
- **Robin Ziperman**
Vice-President
- **Clare Tarcha**
Treasurer
- **Vern Bass**
Assistant Treasurer
- **Laura Deer**
Secretary

FINANCIAL/ ADMIN ASSISTANT

Jan Johnson
719-395-2742

janlmenj2014@gmail.com or
GTAAdmin@gametrailassn.org

Mike Arnold & Dave Nelson, Commons Committee Co-Chairs

Commons Committee Initiates Summer-Time Improvement Projects

The Commons Committee is beginning road improvements and other projects for 2020, although some work may have to be put on hold or delayed due to the Covid-19 virus pandemic.

ROADS & DRAINAGE

Activity has started on Elk Meadow and other roads in lower Game Trail. As the weather improves and snow melts, the work will move into upper Game Trail.

The road work is expected to continue through the summer months and into the fall. There is going to be more heavy equipment than usual on our roads this spring and summer. Please SLOW DOWN and watch for heavy equipment, signs, piles of dirt, debris, and large rocks, which could be on the road.

For details about the road work and related issues, please visit the Game Trail website where you can find the road work report authored by the Game Trail Road Task Force <https://gametrailassn.org/2019/10/04/gta-board-special-meeting-october-3-630-p-m/>.

We will be using the slash pit to mix road base materials and to stockpile materials. Please deposit all slash materials on the north side of the pit area in the existing piles. Try not to deposit slash outside the



current pile. Put stumps or large logs in the area on the east side of the pit, which is designated for that use.

We will post updates in the News section on the Game Trail website <https://gametrailassn.org/news/> as we progress with road improvements. Thanks to all Game Trail residents for your support. Please inform your guests and renters about this matter.



WEED SPRAYING

Weed spraying has been completed on both sides of Great Peaks Drive. A combination of pre-emergent and long-term weed control agent has been applied and should get us through the summer. As we do our road work, we may want to spot spray some areas if noxious weeds become an issue.

RESEEDING DOG CORRAL

Reseeding the western most dog corral with new grass seed will hopefully begin in the next 2-3 weeks. Mike Arnold and Carla Seyler have been working on this project along with other Commons Committee members.

Steve Miles has volunteered a tractor and equipment to prepare the soil for reseeding. Mike will run all of the equipment. We may be asking for some help spreading mulch once the seed has been applied. Of course this will be in accordance with any Covid-19 restrictions at that time.

We expect the western corral to be closed for at least two years so the new grass can get established.

Clare Tarcha, Board Treasurer

Annual Meeting & Member Lunch Set for Sept 12

The annual Game Trail Association (GTA) business meeting and lunch will be on Saturday, September 12, at the Buena Vista Community Center. Later this summer, GTA members will receive a packet of information with details about and RSVP forms for these events along with biographies and ballots/proxy forms for the Board elections, the member directory and the annual financial report, etc.

Help is needed for the meeting and lunch set-up and take-down. Caterer suggestions are also needed. If you can help, please contact Clare Tarcha 970-819-8390 or CTarcha@hotmail.com.

Directory & Email Lists Are Being Updated Now!

GAME TRAIL MEMBER DIRECTORY

The membership directory is being updated in time for the annual publication and distribution in September. If you have additions or updates, please send your information to communications@gametrailassn.org. You may also use the form on the website <https://gametrailassn.org/forms-links/>. **If your information is unchanged, you do not need to send anything, and your listing will remain the same.**

NEWSLETTERS ONLY AVAILABLE ELECTRONICALLY

To save administrative and mailing expenses, newsletters will no longer be mailed and will only be available via an email notice and on the website. If you are not already on the alerts-notice and/or news email distribution lists, to stay informed, please provide your email address to communications@gametrailassn.org.

Carla Seyer, Commons Committee Member

Noxious Weeds a Potential Threat to GT's Native Environment

A weed is considered any plant that is growing where it is not wanted. Some weeds achieve the added distinction of being a "noxious weed." Kayla Malone -- Chaffee County Noxious Weed Program Supervisor -- provided some insight during her talk to Game Trail residents last September.

Noxious weeds are non-native aggressive invaders that replace native vegetation, reduce agricultural productivity, cause wind and water erosion, and pose an increased wildfire threat to communities. The office of Colorado Parks and Wildlife explains that "Because these species are outside their natural range, they no longer have predation. This allows them to adapt very successfully to our environment and gives them an advantage over native species. Noxious weeds outcompete native plants for foods, space, light and nutrients and over time form unproductive monocultures that cannot support the diverse wildlife the native species could support."

Noxious weeds can be introduced by contaminated feed or hay, escaped ornamental plants, and can be carried on shoelaces, vehicles, bikes and pets. With Game Trail's roadwork requiring fill and other materials, noxious weeds can hitch a ride on the earth-moving equipment and be in the dirt itself.

Ms. Malone identified cheatgrass, also known as Downy Brome, as Game Trail's main problem weed. It is designated as one of the "List C" species on the Colorado Noxious Weed Act. Such plants require



eradication, containment or suppression as much as possible. <https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/agconservation/noxious-weed-species>.

Cheatgrass is an annual, and amazingly prolific. Each plant produces 25 to 5,000 seeds in one season, which are viable for up to three years. The flowers are a loose, branching, drooping cluster of slender spikes. Although cheatgrass can grow up to 36 inches, it is usually about 12 inches high or shorter in Game Trail.

Wildlife can't survive on a diet of cheatgrass, and it displaces a variety of other grasses that can sustain them. When it dries, the sharp seed can injure grazing animals and get caught in the mouth, nose and eyes.

Dry cheatgrass is also excellent tinder for fires.

Begin looking for cheatgrass now, before the seeds form on or are disbursed by the plant. To access photographs of cheatgrass and other noxious weeds, use this Google folder provided by Ms. Malone. Search for "Downy brome fact sheet." <https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/agconservation/downy-brome>.

Bill Silvestri, GTA Member

Mold Can Flourish Anywhere; Work to Prevent It; Learn How to Treat It

The local scuttlebutt is that our climate is too dry for mold. Nothing could be further from the truth. Mold is everywhere: in the dirt, in the air, on every continent, and in every environment. Mold spores are tiny (3-40 microns, less than half the width of a human hair) and aren't filtered by our normal breathing processes or the filters in air conditioners and furnaces.

Even in a dry environment mold spores exist, waiting for the right conditions. As we remember from high school biology classes, organic things need three things to grow: moisture, nutrients, and the right temperature range.

As an example, combine 1) a wet/moist crawl space with 2) nutrients like wood-composite joists and construction adhesives, with 3) optimum temperatures from an average heated house, and you could get mold that may literally eat your home.

Once mold is present, "just drying it out" or a couple of squirts of bleach won't cure the problem. When we discovered mold in our home, we used two professional companies to clean out the mold, coat all surfaces with a microbial coating, and lay down sealed plastic sheeting over all dirt surfaces.

To preclude mold happening in the first place, here are a couple of things you can do: make sure all wood construction materials are stored covered and installed dry, ventilate crawl spaces and attics with intake vents and exhaust fans, and cover all dirt with heavy plastic sheeting.

If you do discover mold, contact a professional company and deal with it immediately. You'll sleep better at night knowing you have a healthy, safe house.

If you have questions, feel free to contact me, Bill Silvestri 480-239-6214 or freediver330@yahoo.com.

Sylvia Arnold & Sandy Long, Water Committee Co-Chairs

Water Committee Transitions to New Leaders; Offers Updates & Reminders

WATER UPDATES & REMINDERS

After 17 years of managing our water system and leading the Game Trail Water Committee, Walt Lafford is transitioning the committee leadership to new Co-Chairs Sylvia Arnold and Sandy Long. We are extremely grateful to Walt for his work over the years building a robust water system and providing us with quality water.

As you know, annual fees were increased this year in part to pay for water system management. To that end, in addition to transitioning committee leadership, Walt will also be training Game Trail's newly hired vendor, SourceWater Consulting. SourceWater will conduct state required tasks such as tank inspections and reporting. They are a local company with licensed operators who also will monitor our water system daily.

The Game Trail Water Committee will continue to do monthly meter readings, weekly chlorine checks, address issues in a timely manner, and manage outside contractors.

After Walt's training, later this year Sylvia and Sandy will recommend to the Board tasks best suited for outside contractors and tasks best aligned for Game Trail volunteers. Walt will then move to a consulting role.

Both Sylvia and Sandy can be reached by email at water@gametrailassn.org.

"We are extremely grateful to Walt for his work over the years"



WATER USAGE: April 1 begins our summer season when we have **limited** outside water usage. Each lot is allowed 2,939 gallons per year. Keep in mind that a hose left running can use up to 600 gallons in one hour. Any kind of automated outside watering system is prohibited as they can consume very large amounts of water in a short time.

Full-time residents should be receiving an email from Game Trail with a graph depicting your 2019 water usage compared to the Game Trail average. Most excess water usage is caused by leaking toilets. Also, the older top-loading washing machines use 3-5 times more water as compared to modern front-loading machines.

PRESSURE-REDUCING VALVES: All Game Trail houses have a pressure-reducing valve. It is a device designed to prevent too much water pressure from entering your home. This is separate from your meter or back-flow device. The Water Committee recommends replacement of valves that are over 10-years-old. Old devices may fail, leading to a possible flood when high-pressure water is supplied to the fixtures. We have a high mineral content in our water likely contributing to older valve failures.

VACANT HOMES: Remember to turn your water off when you are not staying at your house. Even if you have a water heating system, it is okay to turn off the water. The best practice is to have someone check your house once a month. On their visit, they should turn on the water and run water in all the sinks and tubs and flush the toilets. This maintains water in the drainage traps and keeps your house from smelling like a septic system. They can turn the water back off before they leave.

MEET SYLVIA

My name is Sylvia Arnold. My husband Mike and I moved to Chaffee County in March of 2019 from Littleton. We are happy to make our home in Game Trail. This is a beautiful area, and we feel lucky to be able to live here. I believe in volunteering my services when and wherever possible. Presently I work at Ark Valley Humane Center one day a week cleaning cat cages and giving TLC to all the homeless kitties. When I heard of the need for a Water Committee Co-Chair, I decided to give it a try.



Sylvia Arnold
Water Committee Co-Chair

I am a retired Registered Nurse. My background does not include any electronic or water experience. However, I am willing to do what I can to help organize this committee. It will be a big learning curve for me, but I know Walt, Sandy and the other knowledgeable people on this committee will help me learn. I am looking forward to this challenging and rewarding position.

MEET SANDY

My name is Sandy Long. My wife Cindy and I built our Game Trail house in 2004. We were regular, part-time visitors until we moved here full-time in May of 2019. I grew up in Colorado, and my family is in the Denver area. Even though Cindy is a Texan by birth, she is a complete convert to the mountains, and we are very happy to have found this wonderful place to live.



Sandy Long
Water Committee Co-Chair

This February I retired after 35 years in the telecom and power industries. Although I started work as a test engineer, most of my career was spent as a Product Manager. I joined the Water Committee last year and am still learning about the system. I'm looking forward to working with Sylvia as Co-Chair, along with the committee members including Walt. In my spare time, I plan to work on climate advocacy, and we hope to travel (although that will have to wait several months at least).



Be Educated! Be a Good Neighbor! All GTA Members are Responsible for Knowing and Following the Rules

Website links to some of GTA's rules-related documents are below. If you do have a concern, please contact the Game Trail Board President at president@gametrailassn.org. The Board will look into your concern and address it appropriately.

- **Be a Good Neighbor-Policies Quick List** <https://gametrailassn.org/dev/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Good-Neighbor-Policies-Quick-List-July-2019.pdf>
- **Living in Game Trail Pamphlet** <https://gametrailassn.org/dev/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Living-in-Game-Trail-Pamphlet-July-2019-1.pdf>
- **Renters / Visitors Guide** <https://gametrailassn.org/dev/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Renters-Visitors-Guide-08-31-2018.pdf>
- **Consolidated Architectural Polices** <https://gametrailassn.org/gta-committees/>
- **Covenants, Rules & Regs** <https://gametrailassn.org/governing-documents/>

MOST COMMON CONCERNS

- Exterior lights, including solar pathway/landscape lights, may not be left on all night. Use dark-sky fixtures only.
- Take down snow fences and/or webbing by no later than May 1.
- Do not allow dogs off-leash unless they are always under immediate command of their owner. Do not allow dogs to chase wildlife; it's illegal. Picking up after your dog is required in Colorado.
- Recreational shooting within Game Trail is not allowed, nor is shooting in the National Forest within 150 yards of a residence.
- It's illegal to feed wildlife, except birds.
- Keep your lot and exterior of your home clean, orderly, and well maintained.
- Maintain your trees for forest health and safety.

GTA Board Members

Board Business & HOA Decisions Cover Multitude of Topics

In case you missed it . . . here is a brief synopsis of the major decisions and Rules and Regulations that were adopted or changed by the Board and by Game Trail owners from January 2019 through March 2020.

Remember, it is an owner's responsibility to stay informed. Game Trail Board minutes are posted on the website, www.gametrailassn.org. The Board of Directors page includes monthly meeting agendas and minutes. Minutes prior to 2020 are posted in the archive. Covenants and Rules and Regulations are also posted on the Governing Documents page.

January 2019:

- Modified "Water Services" Rule and Regulation (R&R) 12-09 to reflect that the homeowners are responsible for the cost of any water line repairs on the homeowner's property, from and including, the curb valve to the house.

May 2019:

- R & R 15-01 was superseded by "Allowable Use and Restrictions for Signs" 19-02. Adopted change: from "permitted" to "require" visible address signs.
- Approved "Excess Water Usage" R&R 19-01. It increased the water available for home use per month from 7,000 to 7,500 gallons. The monthly usage fees were changed from \$25 to \$50 per 7,500 to 10,000 gallons; from \$50 to \$100 over 10,000 gallons; and \$100 for each 1,000 gallons thereafter.

November 2019:

- Approved "Prohibited Storage on Un-Built Game Trail Lots" R&R 19-02. "The following rule is hereby estab-

lished to more fully define and express the complete intent of the Covenant provision." Covenant: "No storage of any kind shall be permitted on an un-built lot, (i.e., a lot without a fully completed home), including, but not limited to, outdoor recreational vehicles, (e.g., RVs, boats, ATVs)."

- Approved administrative fees. \$50 for new homeowner water hookup. \$50 fee for owners selling homes.
- The Road Improvement Assessment ballot to repair and maintain all Game Trail roads was approved overwhelmingly by Game Trail home and lot owners.

December 2019:

- Approved new Homeowners' Association dues effective in January 2020. \$561 for lots; \$986 for homes.

February 2020:

- Vern Bass was appointed to fill the remaining term of Jon Aardal on the Board of Directors.

March 2020: The Finance Committee's recommendations were approved to:

- Cover the budget shortfall from 2019 (snow removal line item), by moving \$19,600 from the Operating Expense Reserve to Operating Expense;
- Move \$75,000 from the Repair/Replace Operating Reserve to a separate Road Restoration/ Improvement line item in the Operating Reserve for the purposes of tracking road expenditures separately from other Operating Expense and/or Operating Reserve line items;
- Transfer \$54,810 of Road Maintenance Operating Expense to Reserve in order to support road tasks that are in the Reserve.

Andy & Donna Childers, Presentation Attendees

State Forester Reviews Threat of Western Spruce Budworm

On March 2, 2020 the Forestry Committee sponsored an informational meeting for Game Trail Residents presented by JT Shaver of the Colorado State Forest Service. The Western Spruce Budworm infestation was the main topic with minor mention of the Mountain Pine Bark Beetle.

Forest Service brochures related to the presentation are on the Forestry Committee page of the GTA website. <https://gametrailassn.org/gta-committees/>

WESTERN SPRUCE BUDWORM

The Western Spruce Budworm has been impacting Douglas Fir in our neighborhood for the last 3-4 years. According to Mr. Shaver, this particular infestation is difficult, and lack of sufficient natural predators (i.e. birds) leaves individual owners with limited options:

1. Do nothing. Mr. Shaver noted that it is possible the infestation is at its peak and could taper off.
2. Spray Insecticides: These are met with limited success because the entire tree must be coated. Additionally, timing of the spraying is very difficult and a critical issue. The new growth on the Douglas Fir must be sprayed as the buds begin to open. If not timed **exactly** the spray is totally ineffective.
3. Defend the shorter trees from the "parachuting" worms, and let the taller trees fend for themselves. (the range of most sprayers will simply not reach high enough for the taller trees).
4. Thinning/removal

Mr. Shaver suggested a call to the CSFS for an inspection to determine the exact time for bud opening.

Forestry Committee Chair Fred Balmos also offered to perform an inspection if CSFS is unavailable. Buds normally open mid-April to early May, but they are highly variable and difficult to time. Jetco is a local company that can provide spraying services.

MOUNTAIN PINE BARK BEETLE

There was not a lot of discussion regarding the MPB. However, property owners were encouraged to review the CSFS brochures on the Forestry Committee page of the Game Trail website to determine the appropriate actions to take. If spraying is anticipated, the best spray to use is also addressed. The group was reminded, if the use of spray is determined to be the best option, do so for only a few successive seasons as most sprays can be indiscriminate killers.



GAME TRAIL COMMITTEE CHAIRS

ARCHITECTURAL CONTROL

Larry Gleeson & John Hulkonen

COMMONS

Mike Arnold & Dave Nelson

COMMUNICATIONS

Volunteer Needed

FINANCE & AUDIT

Dick Sorce

FORESTRY

Fred Balmos

NOMINATING

Jerri Caskey

SHORT-TERM RENTAL

Laura Deer

WATER

Sylvia Arnold & Sandy Long

Chaffee County Reverse 911 & Public Health Information Available



Emergency notifications are critical should there be a wildfire or other urgent situation in the county. To ensure that you are contacted, sign up for Chaffee County's "reverse 911" system.

The county uses a third party called Everbridge to contact individuals regarding fires, evacuations, floods, etc.. You may decide if you would like to receive a call or text on your mobile phone, an email, a call to your home, or any combination thereof.

For more information, and to sign up for this service, go to the Chaffee County website <http://chaffeesheriff.org/communication/everbridge>.



Chaffee County Public Health also has COVID-19 information including public health orders, guides and resources. <http://chaffeecounty.org/public-health>

Jerri Caskey, Nominating Committee Chair

Nominations Being Sought for Board of Directors

The Nominating Committee is charged with nominating one Game Trail Association (GTA) Member for each vacancy on the Board of Directors. This September, there will be one, three-year term to be filled.

Under Rules and Regulations #2004-01, GTA members may also directly nominate candidates to be included on the election ballot. Nominations must be submitted in writing, must be signed by the Member making the nomination,

must be signed by a separate Member seconding the nomination, and must be signed by the nominee signifying his/her willingness to serve, if elected.

Nominations should be sent to: Game Trail Association, P.O. Box 4110, Buena Vista, CO 81211 by no later than **June 15**.

Although a specific form is not required, a sample form is on the forms page of the GTA website, www.gametrailassn.org.

Communications Committee In Need of a Chairperson & Website Manager



The Communications Committee is currently without a chairperson and website manager. Training and transitioning can be provided for each role.

The chairperson leads the committee, attends or schedules attendance to Board meetings, maintains a healthy membership, leads initiatives, etc.

The website manager ensures that the website content is current; is the contact for our website hosting service, and keeps email forwarding lists current. Posting of materials is not necessary; we have a webmaster that covers this task.

If you would like more information or can help, please contact president@gametrailassn.org.

Fred Balmos, Forestry Committee Chair & CCFPD Volunteer

Home Access Necessary During a Fire Emergency

The Chaffee County Fire Protection District (CCFPD) recently responded to an alarm in Game Trail where (a) the absentee homeowner was out of state, (b) the driveway was inaccessible due to accumulated snow, (c) the nearest fire hydrant was buried in snow, and (d) the local contact for the property could not immediately be reached. In this particular case, the alarm was false and there was no fire.

This incident is an important example for Game Trail residents. Why?

1. Impassible driveways and buried hydrants increase set-up time and make it more difficult to establish a high-flow, secure, reliable water supply. They also place fire personnel at greater risk of injury.
2. For absentee owners, having local contact information (called a "keyholder") at the Chaffee County 911 dispatch center (non-emergency 719-539-2596) helps CCFPD quickly gain home access.

Stating the obvious, it is very important that Game Trail homeowners

- Keep their driveways passable during the winter
- Know where the nearest fire hydrant is to their house
- Help keep fire hydrants clear and accessible
- Keep their Game Trail directory information current and provide any local "keyhold" information to CCFPD.

Thanks to all of you in helping CCFPD in their efforts.

Fred Balmos, Forestry Chair

Build Defensible Space; Address Insect Infestations

Keep up the good work on fire mitigation efforts. We have been under several red-flag warnings already this spring. At this point the moisture that we need for an average-or-less fire season has stopped.

There are several Colorado State Forest Service wildfire mitigation resources on the Forestry page of the Game Trail website <https://gametrailassn.org/gta-committees/>. We encourage you to check them out.

Now is a good time to do some thinning of your tree stands and remove some of the Dwarf Mistletoe that you can reach. However, it is not recommended that Piñons be trimmed at this time-wait until later in the fall.

It is okay to do some planting as well. Just make sure that the small trees have a good water start, within Game Trail's outside watering limits, and have some protection from sun and animals.

Finally, Forestry Committee volunteers are available for consultation and site visits, as is JT Shaver, CSFS Forester for our area.

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GAME TRAIL ASSOCIATION

**PO Box 4110
Buena Vista, CO 81211**

WEBSITE
gametrailassn.org

FINANCIAL/ADMIN ASSISTANT
Jan Johnson
719-395-2742
janlmenj2014@gmail.com or
GTAAdmin@gametrailassn.org

GAME TRAIL TAILS
Kari Allen, Editor

**Larry Gleeson &
Carolee Litvay, Proofreaders**