

Indian Creek Ranch

Fire Rocksprings 830-683-4111

Fire Barksdale 830-234-3473

Fire Camp Wood 830-597-6100

EMS Rocksprings 830-683-3305

EMS Camp Wood 830-597-4200

Sheriff & Highway Patrol 830-683-4104

Border Patrol 830-683-2255

Game Warden C. Wardlow 210-416-2513

Game Warden Office 210-348-7375



Arizona Sister butterfly.
Photo by Gwen Lanning.

Ranch Contacts

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Vice President:	Randy Stephen	(713) 823-2785, randy@stephenstephenson.com
Treasurer:	Jo Roberts	(830) 834-0884, jo.roberts@us.pwc.com
Secretary:	Gwen Lanning	(281) 460-3620, gwenlanning@yahoo.com
Wildlife Committee Chair:	David Heft	(830) 683-3289, dsheft82@swtexas.net
Water Committee Chair:	Randy Wood	(830) 683-4537, rw09176997@yahoo.com
Road Committee Chairs:	Ron Itz	(281) 383-2783, cjitz1@gmail.com
	& Ken Wilson	
Webmaster:	Philip Nelson	(210) 863-0360, PNelson@newtek.com

Our website:

<http://www.indian-creek-ranch.org/>

President's Report

By Marcus Wieser

Since the annual meeting, the board has reviewed how the association operates. With the input from board members, committee chairs and landowners we have revised some of the components of our bylaws to closer reflect the changes in the way we conduct the association's business. We also streamlined the structure of our committees, combining and further defining some overlapping responsibilities.

In addition, we looked at the dates of the spring gathering and annual meeting. To make it easier for everyone to plan ahead, we want to have preset, predictable dates. Going forward, the Spring Gathering will be held on the 4th Sunday in April. The Annual Meeting will be held on the Saturday of the opening weekend of archery season, usually the last weekend in September or the first weekend in October.

The Spring Gathering is generally not an official association meeting, but rather a social get-together. However, since the Annual Meeting Agenda usually is quite full, the board felt that it would be advantageous to make the Spring Gathering this year an official Special Meeting to allow us to go over and vote on the changes to the bylaws. We are also planning to elect some of the committee chairs to their position.

The final draft of the proposed changes of the bylaws will be distributed shortly for your review and proper notice of the Special Meeting will be given.

We are filling positions in various committees and need volunteers to help with the roads, the water system and the wildlife management. We hope to have participants from all Phases, but especially from Phase VII. Although Phase VII

has the most tracts, the number of members from that phase involved on committees and the board is the lowest. Involvement from every phase will make it much easier for the association to become aware of issues and allocate its resources appropriately.

I cannot thank volunteers serving on the board and on the committees enough for their participation and hard work. Many of you have contributed countless hours to the association. Indian Creek Ranch is an exemplary and outstanding organization and no other community in Edwards County has the level of quality that our Association has.

All the committee work in our association is done by volunteers and everyone's contribution is greatly appreciated. Please get involved to keep Indian Creek Ranch the exceptional place it is.

Marcus Wieser



Two heads are better than one –
can you help on a committee?
Photo by Jo Roberts.

Vice-President's Report

By Randy Stephen

Alright who turned off the rain! We have had 0" of rain since January 1. We were out at the ranch all but 2 weekends of the hunting season and it seemed like it rained on us every weekend, some of the rain was pretty heavy and did a little damage to our recently repaired roads. Now that the season is over the great weather has shown up but without any rain the ranch is dry once again.

As I write my report TPWD should have completed one of the first prescribed burns on the ranch. I was unable to get out there and observe but I did have a few calls of concern over the burn. As a board we have little control over the burns on private property. We cannot enforce any burn bans that may be in place. We do not have the authority to say yes or no to a burn. All we can expect is that each landowner take the proper precautions to protect the adjoining properties from a burn getting out of control.

Prescribed burns can be used to maintain your wildlife exemption under the habit control activities. I am interested to see how the burns work out because as I sat in my blinds this year I watched quite a few deer pass right by my feeders (with corn/protein on the ground) and go for the new forbs and grasses that the rain had brought and burns can do the same.

Speaking of the board they have really been putting in the hours on the landowners'

behalf. The road repairs were our main concerns after the rains started in April. I hope you will agree that the roads are in much better shape now than in the past. If you know of a road with issues let me know and I will pass on the info to the road committee.

The board has also taken on the task of making changes to the by-laws (some items will need to be voted on at the spring meeting) to bring them in-line with our CCR's. This is no small task and is a work in progress. Marcus and Jo are leading the charge and have each spent considerable time making sure we get it right and that the CCR's and by-laws work together. Jo has also taken on the task of capturing all of the association's old data that has been handed from one board to the next without any organization at all; well now it organized!! Next time you run into Randy Wood or David Heft shake their hand and say thanks, there is not enough room here to list all that they do for the rest of us. Gwen has also been busy taking great notes at all of our meetings, putting together a great newsletter and keeping all of us informed with the e-mails. Ok pencils down (just dated myself didn't I). Looking forward to see everyone at the spring gathering --

Randy



TPWD giving assistance to landowner Roger Lewellyn as he conducts a prescribed burn.

Wildlife Report

By David Heft

2015-16 Whitetail Harvest Summary: We have had 74 of the properties (80%) encompassing 83% of the acreage on the ranch report their harvest so far. This ties the highest reporting rate of any year to date. We had 165 does and 77 (31 spikes) bucks reported harvested. Estimated harvest is 199 does and 93 bucks (37 spikes) (292 deer total). This is only 18 deer fewer than the record harvest of 310 deer. The harvest was less biased towards bucks this year.

Axis harvest was estimated at 40 animals. The ranch overall took an estimated 177 hogs. The highest number of hogs reported for any single tract this year was 16 which is significantly below past years numbers. Hopefully this indicates we are achieving some level of control.

I am including the reporting rate by Phase so you know how you and your neighbors stand in relation to the ranch overall in deriving these figures. Phase 1 (80%), Phase 2 (80%), Phase 3 (80%), Phase 4 (90%), Phase 5 (100%), Phase 6 (78%), and Phase 7 (78%).

CWD Update: The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department tested over 10,000 wild deer this fall and winter. No wild deer were found to be positive for the presence of CWD. There has been one additional positive deer found with CWD in a high fenced hunting operation. This buck deer had been raised in an on-site breeding facility and released into the high fenced area for hunting.

This month's species for discussion are the bobcat and mountain lion which are 2 native cat species which may be encountered on the ranch. I will discuss the bobcat first. The bobcat is a medium sized wild cat which is distributed across most of the

United States. In many areas of the mid-west and the northeast they were extirpated in decades past but due to improved habitat conditions and regulatory protection they have re-occupied historic habitat areas. In many of these areas bobcat populations have now reached levels allowing for some level of hunting and trapping harvest.

The average bobcat is not as large as most people think. In the Edwards Plateau the average female will weigh about 14-18 pounds with males averaging 22-26 pounds. Bobcats are characterized by a pale brown to yellowish coloration on their backs with a distinctive black on white spotting pattern on their underside.

I provided a dietary study in our last newsletter which summarized the diet of bobcats on the Edwards Plateau. Cottontail rabbits and rodents comprise the vast majority of their diet. Bobcats are capable of breeding year round but seem to have a peak in late winter and early spring. Gestation period is approximately 9 weeks with an average of 3-4 kittens being born. Life span in the wild will rarely exceed 7-8 years. Average home ranges in the Edwards Plateau average about 1,000 acres.

Bobcats over the past 40 years have individually been the most valuable furbearing species in North America. Texas is the only state in the United States which does not classify bobcats as a protected furbearer with regulated harvest seasons and/or quotas. Population estimates in Texas range from a low of 220,000 to a high of 1.3 million.

Bobcats are classified as a look-alike species under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) and are required to be tagged by TPWD before they can be sold or exported out of state. Since they are not a protected

furbearer, harvest of bobcats is regulated under the state hunting license rather than a trapping license.

The bobcat population on the ranch is stable to increasing although a recent possible disease issue may have reduced their numbers this winter. I would encourage our members to manage bobcats as a valuable integral part of the ranch fauna and only harvest them in a sustainable manner in the fall and winter months.

Mountain lions are the second largest wild feline in the Americas with only the jaguar being larger. Mountain lions or their sign are occasionally seen or reported on the ranch. There does not seem to be any breeding population on the ranch as they prefer to avoid areas of high human activity unless they have no other habitat to use or are just dispersing through it.

Studies done in West Texas and southern New Mexico report average weights for female lions at 55-90 pounds and 100-150 pounds for adult males. Males exceeding 150 pounds are extremely rare. Males can exceed 7 feet in length from tip of nose to the end of their tail.

Average home ranges for females in Texas are reported at 20-100 square miles and at 80-200 square miles for males. Prey density seems to be the most important factor in home range size. Mountain lions in Texas are found primarily in West Texas and South Texas although the South Texas population seems to be in decline and concerns have been raised over whether it will persist. Due to dispersal movements of up to a 1,000 miles by young males, lions are often reported in areas with no breeding populations.

Mountain lions like bobcats are capable of breeding year round but have much the same breeding peak as bobcats. Females

begin breeding at about 2 years of age with a 90 day gestation period. They have an average of 3 kittens which stay with their mother for an average of 16-18 months before they become independent lions. Life span in the wild rarely exceeds 10 years. Their primary prey are whitetail and mule deer. Most prey taken is less than 200 pounds in size although adult lions are capable of taking adult elk up to 7-800 pounds in size.

Texas is the only state that does not classify or manage mountain lions as a game animal. They are classified as an unprotected predator in Texas with no seasons or bag limits. Intensive predator control especially in sheep and goat ranching areas does not allow for any effort to re-establish populations in much of central Texas. The West Texas population is considered to be secure with immigration from Mexico, New Mexico and Colorado ensuring a viable long term population. Other than humans, lions in Texas have no predators except for other lions which is a significant source of mortality for dispersing younger lions.

Seeing a lion in the wild is a thrilling experience for most people and the opportunity to harvest one as a trophy is often a once in a life time experience for most hunters. Lion attacks are extremely rare, particularly in Texas, and no one should be concerned about the occasional animal passing through the ranch. I have spent a far larger amount of time in mountain lion habitat than most people and consider myself fortunate to have seen an even 30 free ranging lions in the wild in my life. At no time did I consider the animals a threat and was fortunate to harvest several over the years as memorable trophies. I always tell people that Texas and the West wouldn't be the same without the coyote's howl or the occasional lion track in an arroyo.

- Dave

Security Report

by Randy Wood

We are still having problems with non-owners using the owners' lock combination. Recently a real estate agent went through the gate using the owner lock - leaving the gate open. An owner saw this and locked the gate.

Owners have significant investments on the ranch that are exposed to increased theft or damage possibilities and threats of poaching are very real if we are not vigilant with maintaining security of the combinations.

Please only give the contractor combination to non-owners. Do not give the Owner combination to non-owners.

Water Report

by Randy Wood

There have been no significant water problems since the end of the year.

If you experience a problem, call me. (830-683-4537)



Here pine siskins
enjoy the
supplemental water
supply at Jo
Roberts' house.

Reminders

- Please continue to submit your harvest data to David Heft, our wildlife committee chair. You can either use the mailbox at the front of the ranch, or email David directly.
- Please don't forget to turn off your water valves before you leave.
- Please remember that the association water is for wildlife use only and not safe for domestic use.
- Please remember that the speed limit on the ranch roads is 20 MPH. Please do not speed on our roads, as driving too fast is unsafe and wears the roads out prematurely.
- Please remember to pay your dues by March 7, 2016.

Secretary's Report

By Gwen Lanning

Our website is:

<http://www.indian-creek-ranch.org/>

With spring around the corner, the wildflower identification page has been completed, and also the map of the tracts has been added to the landowner files page.

There are also more pictures of the prescribed burn that one of our landowners, Roger Lewellyn, had at his place in early February, at <http://www.indian-creek-ranch.org/2016/02/18/prescribed-burn-february-2016/> .

Roger created a 20-minute informative video of the controlled burn, where he interviewed TPWD's Wesley Evans as they worked. Even if you know a lot about prescribed burns, you might want to take a look at the video – you are sure to pick up a tip or two you didn't know before, and the drone views of the ranch are very cool too.

The video is found at

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i8Oattcvtw> .

I did send a notice of the burn out to all landowners, but I realize there was not much advance notice. I am happy to send out such notices, just be aware I don't check my email every day, and I live out in the Pineywoods and sometimes falling trees cause us to lose power too. My email is gwenlanning@yahoo.com.

Things seem to be running alright with the emails that go out toward the end of the month, alerting everyone to lock combination changes, so we will continue with that procedure. You might want to program my number into your phone so you can call me if you get out to the ranch and realize you haven't brought the gate code with you. (281-460-3620)

Treasurer's Report

By Jo Roberts

During the Board meeting in January we agreed to the budget for this year. Key items:

- Our emergency and general reserves, which were used for road work in 2015, have been replenished.
- Our water system reserve (for significant items) remains at \$20,000; this includes the amounts expected to be spent last year but not incurred. There is no increase this year as the pump expected to be purchased this year was installed in 2015.
- Budget for road work is \$16,000 to allow us to build on the work performed last year.
- Remaining items are in line with our usual budget amounts.

Dues invoices were sent out at the end of last year and are payable by March 7. If you don't recall receiving it, please let me know and I will send it to you again. As a reminder, a \$50 fee will be levied against all landowners who are delinquent with their payment. This fee will be charged if I need to send a landowner a certified letter indicating that their water will be cut off and a lien placed on their property for non-payment.

Income and Expense Report - 2016
The Owners Association at Indian Creek
As of Feb 12, 2016

	2015	1Q 2016	2Q 2016	3Q 2016	4Q 2016	2016 Total	Budget	Remaining
Balance brought forward from 2015:								
		\$ 49,279.71						
Income in 2016¹								
Annual Assessments	\$ 32,957.81	\$ 8,568.99	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 8,568.99	\$ 33,066.73	\$ 22,375.90
Other Income	\$ 31.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Total Income	\$ 32,988.81	\$ 8,568.99	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 8,568.99	\$ 33,066.73	\$ 22,375.90
Expenses in 2016^{2,3}								
Road Work	\$ 26,614.32	\$ 340.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 340.00	\$ 16,000.00	\$ 15,660.00
Water System Maintenance	\$ 1,449.62	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 3,000.00
Water System Reserve ⁴	\$ 1,408.33	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 20,000.00
Wildlife Biologist	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Electric Bills	\$ 3,157.26	\$ 315.26	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 315.26	\$ 3,500.00	\$ 3,184.74
Annual Meeting	\$ 375.37	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00
Grounds Maintenance	\$ 943.10	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 1,500.00
Property Taxes	\$ 920.39	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 900.00	\$ 900.00
Administrative Expenses	\$ 1,894.22	\$ 34.62	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 34.62	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 1,965.38
Attorney Fees	\$ 870.00	\$ 875.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 875.00	\$ 400.00	\$ (475.00)
General Reserve	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 6,000.00
Total Expenses	\$ 37,632.61	\$ 1,564.88	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,564.88	\$ 53,800.00	\$ 52,235.12
Current Balance:								
Emergency Reserve						\$ 56,283.82		
Amount Still Available for Current Year (with dues received)						\$ (28,000.00)		
Amount Available in Total for Current Year (with dues expected)						\$ 28,283.82		\$ 54,346.44

¹ Income is considered received when it is deposited in the ICR bank account.
² Expenses for labor, e.g., well services or road work, are accrued in the month the work was performed.
³ Expenses incurred and submitted for reimbursement by Owners, e.g., plumbing supplies, annual meeting expenses, administrative expenses, are considered incurred upon acceptance of invoices/receipts by the Treasurer.
⁴ Water reserve includes replacement items for wells, i.e., bladders, pressure tanks & pressure pumps. For 2016 includes two bladders & one pressure tank as budgeted in 2015 but not incurred. No new replacements expected in 2016.

Elkwinkle's Corner

Hello, Poetry Lovers. This issue's poem was requested by a certain Ranch Coordinator to help people remember the importance of locking the gate. It was inspired by the Marty Robbins song "El Paso."

Gate Code of the West.

Out near the west Texas town of old Rock Springs
I fell in love with some great property.
Indian Creek Ranch was remote and lovely
I knew right away it was perfect for me.

Sharp and alert were the eyes of the realtor
as he pointed out vistas that cast quite a spell.
I tried to play cool
but he wouldn't be fooled
He had a buyer, he knew very well.

Out on the hillsides I saw lots of wildlife -
Turkey and quail and some deer -
Jumping and leaping
I wouldn't be sleeping
'Til the title was mine free and clear.

So quickly I
jumped back in the truck and I challenged the agent
"Let's run these figures and work out a deal".
My challenge was answered in less than a heart-beat
He took off fast and the tires did squeal.

We drove back to town to sign all of the papers
I said "I think you left open the gate.
That guy Randy will thank us if we do the right thing.
I will lock it if you will just wait."

So now... Out of the city and traffic I run
Out to the Edwards Plateau
I bought a large plot. It seems like a good spot
For all my friends and family to go.

I come for a weekend to just hunt or hide out.
Someday I might retire and stay.

One night I heard that a poacher came in.
'Cause someone did not lock the gate.
The game warden went round but no one was found
Don't know where he went but this was not great.

I've learned not give out the owner's gate code
To a contractor or even your friend
Let them know just the contractor's lock code
From this rule you must not bend.

Lock it up tight but there's one other problem
That causes landowners to make a big stink.
If you short chain it, then no one can reach it –
So remember to use only the very last link.

One time when I left, as I got to the paved road
I felt a burning deep pang in my side.
I could not remember, but I was afraid that
I may have left the front gate untied.

It was so late and my drive would be dreary.
I did not want to turn back but I did with a sigh.
It's important that we all remember to lock up
Or we can kiss our beloved ICR good bye.

- by Bill Lanning and Gwen Lanning



Prescribed burn at Indian Creek. Photo by Roger Lewellyn.

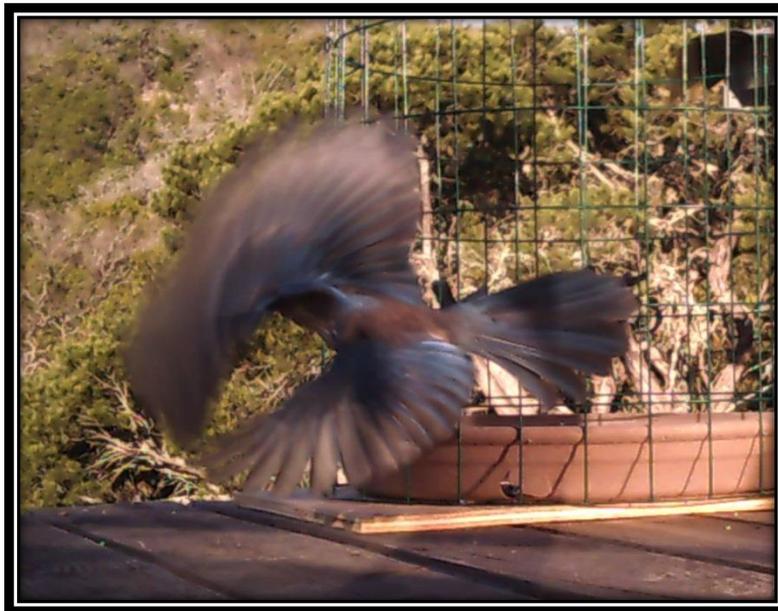
Miscellaneous Business

CALENDAR - Upcoming Events

Lock combination changes will be the first Monday of the month. Emails with the new combinations will be sent out a week before the change, but combinations will not be published in the newsletter.

Spring Meeting – 4th weekend in April, 2016.

If you have classifieds or photos to include in future newsletters, please email them to me at gwenlanning@yahoo.com . Next newsletter – May. 15, 2016 – or thereabouts.



Western Scrub Jay in flight.
Photo by Jo Roberts