

Glastonbury Landowners Association Newsletter

Summer 2010

What's the Significance of Blue & Green Road Signs?

Recently, it came to the GLA Board's attention that there are certain color classifications included in county/state sign standards. Blue road signs indicate private roads. Green signs designate public roads. Given that all Glastonbury roads are private roads, the GLA Road Committee is replacing green road signs with blue ones as funds allow. We wanted to share this information with all Landowners, especially those who may be planning to name their private roads.

Cheating on Cheat Grass or Weeds Can Be Costly

As you may know, that reddish purple color grass we see on our land is Cheat Grass (*Bromus Secalinus*), an annual grass that overwinters as seedlings. In the spring, these seedlings shoot out of the ground and take their lion's share of the moisture and nutrients before the native vegetation can be established. The problem with this grass and other noxious weeds, which have proliferated in North and South Glastonbury, is that they both destroy the native species and they are a fast burning fuel in the case of a fire.

When new Cheat Grass shoots appear in the fall, spraying can be done to kill the new shoots. Two contractors that may assist you with spraying are:

Stu's Chemical

Ed Schilling (406) 686-4747 (agtech@mtn.net)

Dennis Tilton (406) 223-0120(dtilton800@aol.com)

Some Landowners prefer to use natural methods of control vs chemical control. At this time, the GLA is not aware of an effective natural method, but would welcome receiving information about specific ones that have worked for Landowners.

Mowing the cheat grass before it goes to seed can stall its proliferation, but is not an effective way to eradicate the weed. In the spring, turning the soil and planting regular grass seed can assist in eliminating the cheat grass.

If nothing is done about this problem, the cheat grass and weeds can spread to your neighbor's property and beyond. According to Road Committee member, Gerald Dubiel, some properties now have a negative market value because Cheat Grass and other noxious weeds have proliferated to such an extent that the remediation costs are prohibitive.

Preparations for November 13, 2010

Annual Meeting and Elections

All Glastonbury Landowners are invited to attend and participate in this important event in November. Prior to the meeting, the Election Committee sends two mailings to Glastonbury Landowners. Please keep a lookout in your mail box for: (1) The August mailing (enclosed with this newsletter) which includes nomination forms and explains details and timelines associated with nominating new Board members and Ombudsman., and; (2) A mailing in early October, which provides ballots with the names of candidates, who have been nominated to serve in these same positions. These ballots can be used either as sample ballots (for those who will attend the Annual Meeting) or as absentee voting ballots for those who cannot attend and wish to mail or fax their votes. If you believe that you and/or another owner(s) have the skills and the time to serve the community as a Director or Ombudsman, please consider this opportunity and send in your nomination form. (see enclosed) Thank you.

Real Estate Listing Service for Landowners

Part of our nearly finished re-designed website includes a revamped section to advertise Glastonbury homes and properties that are for sale. Please check it out, and be sure to tell anyone interested in moving to Glastonbury about this feature. Glastonbury Landowners can list their land or homes on the GLA website for just \$60/year per listing or \$5/month. The post includes five images (no larger than 50k each for upload) and room for complete details about the home and/or property. For more information and to sign up for this service, go to www.gla-mt.org/properties/list-details or www.mygla.org. Or send an email to forsale@gla-mt.org

Community Garden Starting at GAV

Rock clearing and soil leveling is underway for a new community garden on Sirius Road near Golden Age Village. At this time, about half an acre is being prepared. This garden has been spearheaded by the North Glastonbury Teaching Center (NGTC), which is private property, but will be made available for use by the entire community of Glastonbury. Orchard trees will be planted in 2010, and specific garden plots will be available in 2011. To reserve garden space for 2011, call Charlotte Mizzi at 333-4643. Based on need, the garden site will be expanded.

Glastonbury Landowners Association Newsletter

Summer 2010

What can we afford to do for our Roads?

Every year, nearly 80% of your GLA property assessments are invested in road maintenance, and yet the number one request of Glastonbury Landowners is - "Can't you improve the roads?" With this in mind, members of the GLA Road and Weed Committee met on May 20, 2010 with a group of Landowners to brainstorm and discuss future road planning.

To set the stage for discussion, William Smith gave an overview of the GLA's road budget and assessment history. Participants at the meeting also learned about specific details associated with our road expenses, namely: (1) Road grading costs are \$1,500/mile; (2) Graveling a section of road costs \$17,600/ mile; (3) The use of magnesium chloride to hold the fine binder together with the gravel costs about \$4,000/mile; (4) Paving costs about \$60,000/mile (plus maintenance); (5) The 2010 road budget is \$83,008, and; (6) \$30,225 of each annual road budget is already allocated towards payments on our 16-year loan taken out in 2001 to pave Dry Creek in South Glastonbury, and Sirius, Aires and Capricorn roads in North Glastonbury. With five more annual payments, that loan will be satisfied in 2016.

When discussing various methods of preserving our roads, it was noted that the practice of using a water truck and roller when grading has made a big difference in the roads. However, when speed limits are not observed and rapid breaking on hills occurs it causes "washboards" to develop quickly, especially after gravel has seen its second year. Speeding causes dust and a loss of fines (clay and silt) that bind the sand/gravel together. Usually, when rolled, fines absorb water and bind sand/gravel tightly together to form a durable driving surface. Unfortunately, after a couple of years of tire wear, especially at 15-20 mph speeds, the clay is lost as dust; then, even when the sand/gravel is wet and rolled, it does not hold together and throws the gravel from the roads. At \$17,600 per mile to gravel the roads, the importance of driving at lower speeds cannot be emphasized enough if we all want to preserve this big investment. It was suggested that some speed limits on hills be changed from 25 to 15 mph might help.

Another discussion explored how Landowners might be able to hire, at a reduced rate, the same contractors that the GLA hires to grade our common roads twice a year. If this type of arrangement could be made with the contractors when they have their equipment in Glastonbury, there could potentially be a "win win" situation for all.

After reviewing two successful neighborhood road improvement projects in Glastonbury (i.e., the 2008 upgrade of Hercules Road in High South and the 2009 chip sealing project in North funded by residents and investors) a

Landowner suggested that a survey might be sent to all Glastonbury Landowners to determine what the majority of

Landowners are willing to spend on roads. The Road Committee felt this would be a constructive move and plan to mail a road survey to all Landowners in the near future. Survey results will serve as valuable tool for use in future road maintenance, budgeting and planning. (Results will be made available at the Annual Meeting, on our website and will also be mailed to all Landowners) When you receive the survey, please take the time to fill it out and return it to the GLA so that your comments can be considered in the road planning process. Thank you.

After the meeting, Road Committee Members commented that they were heartened by the deep interest and concern expressed by the attending Landowners. Board members and Landowners gave the meeting a "Thumbs Up!" (Past GLA newsletters containing additional road history and assessment information will be posted on our new website.)

Landowners: We Welcome Your Input!

GLA 2011 Budget. The GLA Board is in the process of developing the 2011 budget. Board members are very aware of the economic challenges of the times and will do everything in their power to keep assessments at the current rate. Landowners are welcome to send budget related ideas *in writing* to the GLA Budget Committee, Box 312, Emigrant, MT 59027 no later than September 8.

Questions, Comments, Concerns? Landowners are welcome to send these in writing to the GLA at our Emigrant address above, at our website at www.mygla.org or www.gla-mt.org or via a brief message left on the GLA's Message Service at 406-451-0033.

Website Development. Our website is currently in the process of being updated and improved to better serve the needs of Landowners. If you have ideas or can volunteer design or web development experience, please contact Daniel at 595-9509.

How You can Help cut GLA Expenses

In the past few years, we have been gratified to receive positive comments from Landowners concerning the GLA newsletters. The newsletters have become a practical forum for keeping the membership abreast as to what the Board is working on and for sharing helpful and sometimes timely information pertaining to the community. Please consider receiving your newsletter via email instead of by regular mail. If enough Landowners authorize this change, it is possible that the expense of postage, paper, printer ink and labor can be significantly reduced. To subscribe by email, go to www.mygla.org or www.gla-mt.org. Thank you.