



Willow Brook Metropolitan District

C/O Community Resource Services of Colorado
7995 E. Prentice Avenue, STE 103E
Greenwood Village, CO. 80111

March 1, 2025

Important Message from the Willow Brook Metropolitan District

Dear Ruby Ranch Residents,

We are lucky to live in an incredible place- a low-density community surrounded by natural beauty. But as we all know, it takes work and money to manage, maintain, preserve and protect our community.

The Ruby Ranch is operated by the Willow Brook Metropolitan District (WBMD), and operations are guided by the Ruby Ranch Owners Association. The WBMD, a special governmental district is managed by five elected officials who have a fiduciary responsibility to manage Ruby Ranch roads, water system, wildfire mitigation, meadows, and infrastructure to ensure the long-term sustainability of our community.

The WBMD would like all members of its community to understand the current situation facing them and the WBMD's thinking on how to respond.

Low Estate Sale

During the summer of 2024, it came to the WBMD's attention that the Town of Silverthorne and Summit County were under contract to buy the Lowe Estate property on the north side of Ruby Ranch, between our community and the Willowbrook neighborhoods.

The Lowe Estate includes a 1915 access easement along our Tract K, which raised serious concerns that the town and county could create a trail from Smith Ranch into the Eagles Nest Wilderness over Ruby Ranch property. The acquisition raised further concerns that the Lowe Property could be developed to include housing or parking along Ruby Ranch's north boundary.

This change in ownership and use of the Lowe property presents a major threat to our local wildlife. Ruby Ranch is a natural buffer between Silverthorne's urban development and the public lands that surround us. Many of us have seen firsthand the decline in our elk population, which has dropped from over 100 to fewer than 30 in recent years due to increasing development pressures. Our Ruby Ranch is also home to moose, lynx, and other threatened or endangered species that would be harmed by change in use of the Lowe property.

The WBMD board believes its land stewardship duties obligate it to take all reasonable steps to protect the natural beauty of Ruby Ranch, including taking steps to protect its wildlife habitats.

WBMD's Response & Unplanned Expenses

To protect our property rights and preserve the local wildlife, the WBMD took decisive action in 2024. Among other things, the district:

- Engaged legal counsel and a public relations firm to represent our interests in dealing with the county and Silverthorne;
- Developed alternative conservation and trail plans and formally submitted them to town and county representatives;
- Proposed a three-way intergovernmental agreement with Silverthorne and Summit County to secure permanent protection of this land, including contributing 1/3 of the funds to preserve the Lowe estate as open space; and
- Negotiated a memorandum of understanding with Silverthorne to set a framework for future actions;

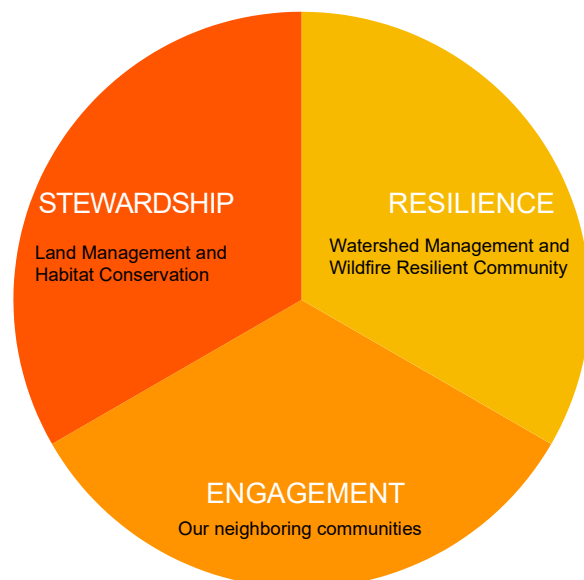
Despite its best efforts, the WBMD was unsuccessful in securing the long-term protections it sought. However, this process required significant unplanned expenditures on legal and public affairs support, fencing, relocating of an emergency access gate, wildlife biologist, landscape and urban planning, mapping, surveying and administrative costs which, to date, total over \$110,000. The district does not have a large budget for these sorts of expenses and paid for these efforts from the district's general reserve fund.

Community Challenges During Legal Negotiations

Throughout this process, the WBMD has prioritized protecting Ruby Ranch interests through legal negotiations with the Town of Silverthorne and Summit County. Due to the sensitive nature of these discussions and attorney-client privilege issues, many of these conversations took place in WBMD board executive sessions, which limits how much information that can be shared with the community in real time. While this is necessary to ensure the best possible outcome, the board recognizes the importance of transparency and is committed to keeping residents fully informed as it move forward.

Next Steps & Ballot Questions

The WBMD is now developing long-term plans to protect our legacy and the natural beauty and open space of Ruby Ranch. The plans are intended to restore the district's reserves and ensuring it can fund future effort. The WBMD board plans to place two ballot questions before voters in the upcoming May 2025 election:



1. A Tax Authorization Measure. This would allow WBMD to raise revenue for the next five years to cover (1) past legal expenses and (2) support ongoing land & water stewardship and wildfire mitigation efforts. The tax rate will be adjusted each year as needed to minimize financial burden on owners.

2. A Short-Term Borrowing Measure. Since new tax revenues would not be available until 2026, this measure would allow WBMD to borrow against future revenues to ensure that our conservation plans can move forward without delay.

Copies of the current drafts of the questions will be sent out to everyone by separate email from the district.

How You Can Help

If you are a registered voter in the district, please vote in the May 2025 election.

In addition, to reduce reliance on tax revenue, we have also established a charitable donation system for owners who wish to contribute directly to our wildlife protection and conservation efforts. The board will be actively fundraising to offset costs and lessen the financial impact on the community.

We appreciate your support, involvement, and feedback as we work to protect the land, wildlife, and quality of life that make Ruby Ranch so special. For any questions or to learn more about how you can help, please contact EJ Olbright or Mat Sherwood.

Sincerely,

The Willow Brook Metropolitan District Board of Directors