

June 7, 2025 POA Board Meeting Minutes
9:00 am Metro Operations Center

Board Of Directors: Robert L. Scott, Rick Kinder, Bill Nielsen, Joe Richards, Mark Thomas, Bill Latham, David Moore, Tim Storey, Carol Smith

Guests signed in: Claudia Henning, Jerry Peters, John Gerald, Toni Moore, Chad and Kelley Bruns, Doug and Sherry Talbot, Thomas and Amanda Baker, Patty Thomas, Craig Korth, Tim and Pat Nash, Tom and Stacy Sielaff, Sue Downs, Marilyn Calloway, Patty Kinder, Lori Mann, Ann Scott, Jerry Barnes, Robert Dye, Fred and Teresa Wallace, Chris Von Arx, Marc and Sally Wilson, Jerry and Dorothy Kirkwood, Val Allred, Jean Busch, DeWayne Harris, Blair and Kris Peterson, Scot and Mary Stauffer, Randy Wichterman

Call to Order: 9:00 am

Roll Call/Determination of quorum: Bill Latham is absent; 8 directors present; quorum achieved

Proof of Notice: On website calendar since October 2024; reminder notice on SFTR FB
Minutes from April 8, 2025 Approval: minutes approved without changes

Committee Reports:

Communication: John Gerald, chair

To date there are 348 regular website users and 190 SFTR Facebook users. There have been some additions to the website that all are encouraged to check out: a FAQ section being managed by Laurie Nielsen, who is also training under John Gerald to learn to manage the site in the event John is out of town; Historical images to view under the Articles/SFTR photo gallery.

A Social Media Forum is still being evaluated.

Governing Documents Committee/ Adopt-A-Road: Bill Nielsen, chair

Three new Property Owners Association Policies were given to the Board prior to the meeting to review. These policies (2025-01, 2025-02, and 2025-03 are presented to be in compliance with the Colorado Common Interest Ownership Act (CCIOA) to ensure consistent and effective governance of the Association. Motions were made to adopt each of the policies in turn and all motions carried. These policies can be seen on the website for viewing.

Another note of interest is HB 25-1182, which concerns tools to assess risk for insurance companies in Colorado as they underwrite property insurance policies. It will require companies to use some type of models that they would need to explain reasoning for not insuring or raising rates, etc. This will help home owners see what is used to determine costs and coverage, so they might appeal to the company. This House Bill will not become effective until July 1, 2026.

Signs have been placed by the Gallinas ponds and at the Gallinas dumpster as you are entering the area of the Conservancy. These are required to comply with notification that it is a protected area, and all must be aware of possible risks when in the area.

Adopt-A-Road: The lists of areas for owners to adopt for weed spraying are displayed in the MOC and on the web. As of this date, there are still 36 areas needing adoption. Check with Bill Nielsen if you wish to sign up or want more information. Herbicide is available from Bill Latham for the adopt-a road portions only (not for personal use).

An **Owner Education Class** is scheduled for August 16th at 10:00 am at the MOC, led by John Gerald to walk us through the SFTR Website, page by page and show how to drop down to view more, where to find information, etc. This should be a worthwhile event to attend!

Grants/Firewise/ Mitigation: Joe Richards, chair

Team Rubicon (TR), a volunteer group of mainly veterans, came to SFTR May 1-4, to help us do some mitigation work. Originally there was to possibly be 50 people from TR for about a week, but instead we were grateful to have approximately 35 persons for 2 ½ days of work. They were able to cut juniper and cedar trees on .6 miles Timber Park (both sides of the roadway). They were originally to be split into 4 groups for working on 4 different areas of the ranch, but with limited time and volunteers, only the one area was able to be completed.

Behind the TR cutting, Jerry Barnes organized and oversaw a team of volunteers from our ranch to chip after them, meanwhile, Carmen Richards lead a group of ranch volunteers to chip areas on Fisher's Peak (approx 1,000 ft done), and Marty Pachelli had a crew of volunteers working on Cottonwood with cutting and chipping, using his own machines. Jerry and Carmen's group used a chipper owned by the POA for the Mitigation group and one privately owned and donated for the event. The TR folks stayed at the local Trinidad Community Center in the evenings, with lunch foods, dinners, and snacks provided by volunteers from the ranch. This was an effort that included many owners across the ranch and all the food, time, money, machines, prep work, etc was very much appreciated by the Team Rubicon and everyone involved. Thanks were given to all, especially, Jerry Barnes, Carmen Richards, and Carol Smith (for the Women's Group), and to the Metro for the use of the MOC as the command center. Joe expressed his gratitude that no injuries/accidents were reported over this event.

To continue with mitigation on the ranch, it is expressed that volunteer work is great, but slow. Joe suggests the POA invest in mitigation machinery, but realizing that is not in our budget at this time. Landowners helping to mitigate their own properties is needed, and continued volunteers for mitigation work days is great.

Covenants: Rick Kinder, chair

Have had two complaints of loose dogs. It is noted that when the meters are read, if loose dogs are present, the owners will be responsible for reading their own meter.

Slow down on the roads! Not only for your own safety and the safety of neighbors, but the wildlife can be in the roads, and now cattle need to be watched for. They tend to stand in or near the roads and can be a surprise around a blind curve, or your car can slide when braking suddenly if driving too fast.

Roads: Bob Scott, chair

Tom has cleaned bar ditches and filled edge erosion in a number of locations since that late snow and the heavy rains in May. Road base was added on Alpine after metro work, and washboards were graded as the weather allowed. Upper Gallinas and Elk Park have slides

which need to be worked on once the needed equipment is available from our road contractor. The plans include a stair-step type of work on upper Gallinas, and reconfiguring the roads a bit on Alpine and Elk Park. Road base work is stopped until the road repairs are completed as we need to conserve funds.

Finance: Mark Thomas, chair/ David Moore, assistant

A review of the financial statements were presented. 49% of the accounts receivable shown on the balance sheet are those making payments. The state has increased the actions needed before liens can be filed which has been frustrating but Abby has done a great job working with those who are in arrears. It is noted that our budget shows we will be about \$40,000 in the hole after this year if we do not cut back on expenses. We have already tried to cut back on some of the road budget, although recent road slides will have an effect on that. Our insurance also has come in higher than expected this year. We must maintain reserves, because if we eat into these reserves, we have to raise dues. The Board will be working on the budget consistently this year.

The financials will be attached to the meeting minutes for reference.

Common Area/ Community Preparedness: Bill Latham, chair

The annual Weed-Out meeting was held in May. Some chemicals have been distributed across the ranch for use on Adopt-A-Road areas, and more will be distributed when Bill returns. Bill has also posted alternative non-chemical options for weed control. We do need more people to sign up for the Adopt-A-Road program - see Bill Nielsen for more information. A reminder that the Locust should be sprayed when in flower, and some are at that stage now.

The updated version of the Community Preparedness handbook is on the website (see Community/Community Preparedness).

A successful Smoke Spotting Class was held in May and attended by 10 persons. It was a very interesting and worthwhile time spent at the Starkville station.

A CPR / First Aid class is scheduled for August 23rd at 10 am at the MOC. You must RSVP to Bill or Maureen Latham, as class size is limited. Cost is \$50. It is highly recommended to learn CPR and renew your CPR every 2 years. Our Emergency services are at least 15 minutes away from the bridge, so knowing CPR may save a life. Knowing First Aid is essential as we live and work around the ranch as well. It covers such things as falls, tool injuries, snake bites, and others.

A number of dumpster repairs have been completed, which is an ongoing issue. The USPS has been contacted and reminded periodically about our need for the package boxes to be repaired for usage.

Grazing: Marty Pachelli, chair; Tim Storey - report

The rancher, Justin Malespini, delivered 86 cattle in mid-May (40 pair, 2 bulls, and 4 heifers). The number and duration was based on the 2025 lease agreement for grazable acreage and grazing conditions this spring.

On May 10, cow #32 was discovered dead, believed to be from eating noxious weed. It's calf (also #32) was weaned and able to survive on its own. Justin has had to push it back to the main herd. Cow #95 was temporarily missing and its un-weaned calf was observed alone. Justin

removed the calf to bottle feed the calf until the cow was found again. Numerous reports of cattle on or near the RR tracks were relayed to Justin. Thanks to Marty Pachelli, Mark Thomas and David Moore for spending time in May to help repair some fencing by the RR tracks before the cattle came.

It was noted that in the past years, there have been no cattle deaths by the RR but 3 deaths of cattle by ranch residents. Another reminder to drive slowly and carefully on the ranch.

Upcoming SFTR events of note: (Carol Smith)

The Annual SFTR Picnic will be held Saturday, July 12, 11a -2p. Raffle items are needed so contact Carol Smith if you have an item to donate or if you know of a local business you would like to contact to ask for an item or gift certificate. (That way we know if a business has already been approached.) Thank you in advance!

In mid July the nominations will begin to be accepted for POA Board positions which will be open this fall. The three Board positions that will be open are Bill Latham, Bill Nielsen, and Tim Storey. These Board members may be nominated and run again if desired. More information will follow on the website as well as on SFTR Facebook. If anyone has a desire to be considered for an open Board position and would like to send a resume to Carol Smith to keep on record for a position if one comes available, they need to be a one page resume, with information about yourself, what you bring to the POA Board, etc. These will be kept on file.

Rebuttal to Newspapers:

After the Team Rubicon event, there were articles in both the local Trinidad Chronicle and the World Journal written by local journalists regarding the TR event. The articles, however, became controversial due to the fact they had very little information about the TR volunteer group and their mission or the owner volunteers mitigation efforts and awards, and instead concentrated on the negative aspects of our ranch being a high wildfire risk with only one designated exit. The Board created a rebuttal to these articles which was printed on the SFTR website and in the World Journal this week. We are hoping the Trinidad Chronicle will print this as well (it has committed to publishing it based on its rules and space).

From the Floor:

Bill Nielsen read the rules of procedure that the BOD agreed to prior to the meeting to create an atmosphere during the From the Floor comments of respect and to not interrupt. Each speaker was given a limit of 4 minutes.

Kelley Bruns - Kelley stated the newspaper articles were incorrect, and was pleased with the rebuttal. She spoke about the time, money and labor that SFTR Owners have contributed to the ranch with mitigation efforts over the years to improve the safety of the ranch, and that it was not right that the newspaper articles showed the SFTR in such a negative way, and that they seemed more about the lawsuit and to open another exit than the TR and Ranch volunteers. Many statements made in the articles were untrue or misleading, and she was very disturbed how the ranch was presented in a public way. She presented factual numbers of the efforts for Firewise that she compiled in recent past years. In 2023, over \$307,000 in money

was spent toward the Ranch's annual Firewise recertification, which included over 4,400 hours of labor by Owners. In 2024, the amount was over \$358,000 in money with similar hours to the previous year. These hours and money spent by Owners included mitigation work done around Owner's dwellings and in the common areas along the roadways of our Ranch. All of this improved safety for our Ranch!

Thomas Baker - Thomas spoke about the lack of transparency during the recent TR event, especially where the work would be done and how much mitigation we could expect would result during the event. The newspaper articles were very negative and instead of focusing on the TR and volunteerism of the ranch, it focused on the negatives, and he is afraid the insurance companies and prospective buyers will be sure to see this and stay away from purchasing or the insurance companies may increase prices or elect not to insure us. He was disappointed the articles did not mention positives like the water tanks, hydrants, city water and cisterns, Firewise status, smoke spotter classes, and fire station on the Ranch. Thomas apologized for promoting Joe in the elections in the fall, and stated he will begin a campaign to recall Joe as a POA Board member.

*Thomas' full statements are attached to these minutes with permission.

A Motion as made by Board Member Tim Storey as stated:

"Motion to remove Joe Richards from Committee assignments, including mitigation, forest health, and grants. In the interim, the entire Board will oversee mitigation, forest health and grant programs. Joe and other current committee members may continue as owner volunteers but have no decision-making authority in any form. In addition, Co-chair or other lead positions within these functions are hereby eliminated. The Board may continue to have these functions remain as a Board function, or may choose to appoint a Chairman later."

Motion was seconded by Mark Thomas.

Discussion that followed-

Joe Richards said the World Journal (press) has tried to do an article on Exit 2 for a long time now, and we can't stop what the press writes, it is simply a public policy issue. Joe said all that the press wrote was public record. Joe also stated that the newspaper articles did not ruin a chance for selling or for getting insurance on property on the ranch; that problems with selling is because of the 7% interest rates.

Joe then gave a short update on Exit 2, reading parts of letters of support from local first responders and State Forest Service, and that he has contacted politicians locally and at the state level to ask for help in getting BNSF attention, as suggested by the POA lawyer after the lawsuit settlement. No direct answers were given as to any responses to date. Joe said he has been assigned a representative from BNSF, who wants a County or State official to take responsibility for the tunnel, but Joe said BNSF will not negotiate with Bob Scott, or SFTR POA Board. Bob Scott responded that he has a good relationship with the BNSF, and would like to be shown a document that states otherwise, but Joe did not produce one.

Tim Storey wondered if those people Joe has gotten letters of support for opening exit 2 have even looked at the ranch, since Tim feels exit 2 in the southeast part of the ranch may not be the best option for an additional exit. (No response was given by Joe).

Marilyn Calloway said “I am so angry! This article was supposed to be about TR, all the volunteers on the ranch, and to bring our community together. Why would you do this to our ranch? It didn’t do that. It ended up being exit 2. So why would you do this? (looking at Joe) That is my question” (no response from Joe). “My other question is, did any board member bring up red flags as to why reporters would be on our private ranch, and any concerns whatsoever what it would do to our ranch, to our community?”

Tim Storey responded: “ On May 1st, I sent out an email directly to Joe and to the Board telling him there is no freedom of the press as he had indicated on private property. I also indicated I wanted to know who was going to escort the press around, where they were going to go, who they were going to talk to, what pictures would be taken, do they have liability insurance. There were several questions I asked and I never received a response.”

Chad Bruns wondered why, if Joe is the EMC for the county, he only spoke to the press about SFTR and not the whole county and other ranch communities about their similar situations; why was Joe not critiquing all the other ranches as he critiques ours. Joe said he does represent the whole county but because he lives here he was asked specifically for here and that’s what the dynamic of the article was.

Craig Korth asked the Board if there is anything in the covenants that says you have to be careful what you say because you are representing your office and that if they speak, they are speaking for the entire board or ranch; and if so, is there a consequence for that?

Mark Thomas explained there is a “Duty of Care” required for all Board members, whether it is written out or not, just based on the Nonprofit Act in the State of Colorado. He said this means ‘do what’s best’ concept, similar to a Dr.’s ‘do not harm’ principle. As far as a consequence, it would be up to the owners if they choose to do something.

A vote was then taken, and out of the 8 Board members, the vote was 7-1, with Joe Richards against, to carry the motion.

The Meeting was adjourned at 10:15.

Next POA Board regular meeting will be August 2, 2025 at 9:00 am at the MOC.

Santa Fe Trail Ranch POA
Balance Sheet
As of April 30, 2025

Apr 30, 25

ASSETS

Current Assets

MM / General Savings - 67814 389,587.52

Checking - 70815 22,160.36

Total First National Bank 411,747.88

Century Savings 158,608.52

Total Checking/Savings 570,356.40

Accounts Receivable

Accounts Receivable 68,865.25

Bad Debt Reserve \$ (10,000)

Total Accounts Receivable 58,865.25

Total Current Assets 629,221.65

Fixed Assets

Total Fixed Assets 3,992.15

TOTAL ASSETS 633,213.80

LIABILITIES & EQUITY

Accounts Payable \$ -

Equity

Retained Earnings 352,333.02

Transfer of Metro Assets

Transfer of Bridge to Metro -21,640.00

Transfer of Metro Assets - Other -43,000.00

Total Transfer of Metro Assets -64,640.00

Net Income 345,520.78

Total Equity 633,213.80

TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY 633,213.80

Santa Fe Trial Ranch POA								
April 2025 Actuals with 2025 Budget Comparison								
As of 05-12-25								
				Actuals Through 04- 30-25	Final 2025 Budgets	Remaining Budget	2025 Budget Notes	
			Beginning Cash Balance 2025	\$ 280,836	\$ 280,836		Adjusted to Actual 12-31-24 Balance	
			Cash Balance used for Increased Expenses in 2025 over Income (Estimated Revenues less Estimated Expenses)	\$ (40,572)	\$ (40,572)			
			Reserve for Future Projects	\$ 240,264	\$ 240,264			
			<u>General Income:</u>					
			Annual Dues	\$ 427,632	\$ 427,632	\$ -	453 lots at \$944 per lot - This based on the final November CPI of 2.7% which translates to an increase of \$25 per lot	
			Less: Reserve for Bad Debts	\$ (5,000)	\$ (5,000)	\$ -	This will bring the accumulated bad debt reserve to \$10,000 at the end of 2025	
			Total General Income	\$ 422,632	\$ 422,632	\$ -		
			<u>Other Income:</u>					
			Covenant Violations	\$ -	\$ 500	\$ 500	Estimate	
			Processing Fees/Credit Card Processing Fees	\$ 5,920	\$ 2,500	\$ (3,420)	Actuals are higher for 2025 than budgeted as more people are opting to pay over time than estimated	
			Grazing Lease	\$ -	\$ 2,520	\$ 2,520	Cattle Grazing Lease renewal at 2024 rates	
			Interest Income	\$ 2,668	\$ 8,250	\$ 5,583	Consistent with 2024 actuals	
			Finance Charges	\$ -	\$ 900	\$ 900	Estimate	
			Lien Fees	\$ -	\$ 300	\$ 300	Estimate	
			Total Other Income	\$ 8,588	\$ 14,970	\$ 6,383		
			Total Income	\$ 431,220	\$ 437,602	\$ 6,383	Increase in Income over 2024	
			<u>Communications</u>					

[illegible]

Santa Fe Trial Ranch POA								
April 2025 Actuals with 2025 Budget Comparison								
As of 05-12-25								
				Actuals Through 04- 30-25	Final 2025 Budgets	Remaining Budget	2025 Budget Notes	
			Heath Andreatta Excavation LLC	\$ 3,960	\$ 30,000	\$ 26,040	Estimate - this is dependent on actual work needed based on snowfall - Kept at prior year budget levels due to uncertainty	
			Building/Equipment/Signs - Other					
			Other Items - Guard Shack Camera, Computer and Software, Signs, Locks	\$ 353	\$ 3,500	\$ 3,147	Expected lower in 2025 since cameras have been purchased - Place holder for signs, locks and software licensing	
				\$ 353	\$ 3,500	\$ 3,147		
			Trash Disposal					
			Twin Enviro Services	\$ 6,480	\$ 20,000	\$ 13,520	Consistent with 2024	
			Conservancy Lease					
			Annual Lease Fee	\$ -	\$ 775	\$ 775	Consistent with 2024 plus a CPI Estimate	
			Phone/Utilities					
			Al's Gas Service	\$ 2,092	\$ 3,700	\$ 1,608	Consistent with 2024	
			Mobile Email and Guard Shack Starlink	\$ 752	\$ 2,220	\$ 1,468	Consistent with 2024	
			San Isabel Electric	\$ 1,762	\$ 3,800	\$ 2,038	Consistent with 2024	
				\$ 4,606	\$ 9,720	\$ 5,114		
			Total Common Area	\$ 49,871	\$ 352,745	\$ 302,874		
			Total All Expenses	\$ 80,699	\$ 478,174	\$ 397,475		
			Net	\$ 350,521	\$ -			

I want to begin by apologizing to our community. I am truly sorry. I regret endorsing Joe's character and due to the lack of transparency with issues related to personal vendettas, I am unwilling to continue supporting his actions.

On April 1st, Mr. Richards posted a thread in our FB group addressing me about mitigation. He said, “I will also push that insurance companies will not insure us if we do not continue with an aggressive program”. At the time, like many others, I considered this post to be an actionless threat and had no clue why he was involving our insurance companies.

Then after the TR weekend a newspaper ad for The Chronical-News.com appeared. Our insurance companies are sure to see this article when they do their due diligence research to renew us. And more disturbingly, potential buyers will be turned off. The once thought actionless threat of involving our insurance companies on April 1st was 100% followed through with. It is inappropriate for a board member to present our community in a negative light using biased information and partial truths.

The article failed to highlight any of the benefits associated with SFTR. Notably, it did not mention the POA's action plans or the updated preparedness handbook of 2025. It overlooked Fire Station 3's presence on site and the requirement for each developed lot to have a 1500-gallon water storage for fire protection. The article also neglected to mention our three 110,000-gallon tanks, several pumping stations with 64 two-inch clean-outs for quick water access spread throughout our ranch. Additionally, it didn't acknowledge the perennial ponds that aid in firefighting, nor did it include our helicopter pads for emergency evacuations. How many Southern Colorado mountain properties have Heli pads? Most importantly, the article omitted the extensive mitigation efforts made to attain Firewise Community Status, including the establishment of defensible spaces on the ranch. It is evident that the efforts invested in this ranch have surpassed those of any neighboring

communities, and the advantages gained greatly outweigh the associated risks. The organizers of the TR event have been quoted in this article, refraining from discussing any of these benefits.

The article intended to discuss TR and mitigation efforts promptly diverged into an examination of Exit 2 conflict. They described the ranch as "catastrophic" with only one exit remaining operational out of the original four. The newspaper article quotes Mr. Richards' letter dated Feb 10, saying "the probability of a catastrophic fire lies in the fact that SFTR has only one viable exit – exit 6 versus the four initially included by Charles Baldwin in 1992." The irony of this statement is that the author was a plaintiff signatory to the agreement dated October 22nd, where the next step instructions outline plaintiff responsibilities to re-open Exit 2. Those steps did not include belittling the value of our hard work and combined enthusiasm for our ranch.

I, like many, moved to the ranch knowing that exit 6 was our vehicle exit off. This article has caused decades of harm with words that were carefully used to avoid the whole truth while characterizing our ranch as catastrophic. Was it lack transparency or personal vendetta? – September 7, Joe posted on our ranch FB page in a response for voting him onto the board – he said it "was an honor; a huge responsibility" and he went on to say, "a director should work for you and include you in all major decisions". Permitting the media access to private property for interviews and drafting an article criticizing our ranch was a major decision. We should have been involved in this. In fact, he did not even obtain board approval for this action. Although I retract my support for Joe Richards and apologize for the previous endorsement, I am ready to take further measures by initiating this recall petition. You can't defuse a bomb that has already gone off. All you can do is embrace the boom. Let's join to defuse this situation before more damage is done. I assure you it is not counterproductive; it is time to move on from turning every situation into the Exit 2 fiasco.