

Town of Alta Newsletter



Vol. 2 Issue 8

June 2010

Municipal News

At the June 17th Town Council meeting budgets were passed for the General Fund and the Sewer and Water Enterprise Funds for FY 2010-2011. The budgets can be viewed at: http://www.townofalta.com/gov_budget.shtml

Also at the June 17th meeting, the Town Council approved a Certified Tax Rate (CTR) of 0.001114, which is a 10% increase. This increase, if passed, will raise an additional \$27,819 worth of property tax for the Town of Alta. Additional information on the CTR increase is detailed on page 5.

As a result of adopting this CTR, the Town is required to hold a Truth in Taxation Hearing. The hearing will be on Tuesday, August 3rd, 6pm, at the Alta Community Center Library. All interested citizens are urged to attend and will be allowed to speak. A final vote will be taken on the tax rate immediately following the public hearing.

The 29th annual Little Cottonwood Canyon Cleanup was held June 22nd. Close to 200 volunteers were on hand to enjoy a pleasant day in the sunshine beautifying the canyon. Thanks to the local businesses who contributed prizes for the raffle and to the Alta Lodge for providing breakfast.

Thank you for your patience as we work to open the Summer Road. Grading and road work has been completed and dust control will be applied to the road July 9th. The road will be closed to ALL vehicular and pedestrian traffic July 9th and 10th to allow for the proper application and drying of the Magnesium Chloride that will be applied to the road. The road will open to the public on Sunday, July 11th.



ABOVE: Snowbird's Bob Bonar and Alta Mayor Tom Pollard share a few remarks at the Little Cottonwood Canyon Cleanup

The Summer Road Information Booth will be open for the weekend of July 3rd and the following weekend to provide assistance and information about the status of the road to visitors.

The FREE Summer Road shuttle will begin offering service on Saturday, July 17th, and will operate Saturday, Sunday, and Holidays this summer. It is unknown at this time when the Albion Basin campground will open.

The next Town Council meeting is scheduled for July 8th, 10am, at the Alta Community Center. At this time, no July Planning Commission meeting has been scheduled.

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Marshal's Report

This report covers events from May 13th – June 16th, 2010

May 16th, 3:30 pm: The Hell-gate/Superior area was closed due to warm temperatures creating an increased avalanche hazard. The area was reopened at 6:13 pm.

June 4th, 2:00 pm: High temperatures and heavier than normal spring runoff created a mudslide in the "Toledo" area, undermining drainage culverts along the highway near the Alta Peruvian Lodge. The situation worsened

throughout the night and large amount of road base underneath the highway was washed away. Flooding occurred along the highway and threatened homes in the area (see photos below). Serious flooding and property damage also occurred in the lower canyon and Salt Lake Valley.

A response to the flooding event was made by the Town of Alta, Utah Department of Transportation, Unified Fire and Police Departments, Salt Lake County Emergency Management, the Alta Ski Lifts Company and many vol-

unteers from Alta and Snowbird. With this directed effort, a major disaster was averted. THANK YOU to all of the agencies and volunteers involved in this incident!

June 5th, 8:40 pm: Two snowmobiles were reported stolen from the Grizzly Gulch area. Both vehicles were later recovered in Albion Basin where they had been abandoned after a joy ride.

Misc. duties:

- 141 business and property checks
- 8 contract Forest Service Patrols
- 13 traffic enforcements
- 2 watershed enforcements
- 2 outside agency assist calls
- 2 motorist assist calls

unteers from Alta and Snowbird.



Photos from the Flooding Event.

Pictures taken hours after water levels lowered. More photos can be found on the following page.



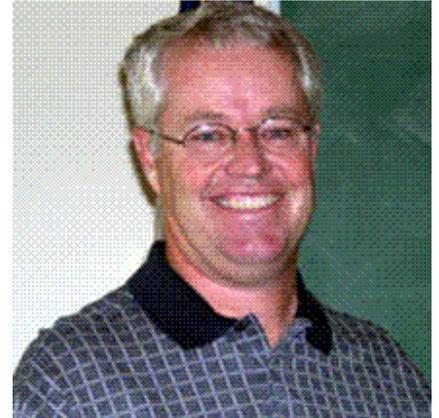
Message from the Mayor

It is finally summertime in Alta! The transition from a rainy cool spring into a sunny warm summer happened seemingly overnight.

On June 4th, the rapid warming led to sudden melting of the snowpack and triggered a mudslide on the slopes north of the Peruvian Lodge. The mudslide clogged the culvert below, causing flooding on Hwy 210 and into East Peruvian Acres Road. The Alta Marshal's Office and Utah Department of Transportation (UDOT) responded swiftly, avoiding what could have been substantial flooding in several residences. Employees of Alta Ski Area and Tim Thomas worked around the clock and were vital in the early morning hours to minimize and mitigate the effects of the flood. Thanks to all the agencies involved, including the Alta Marshal's Office, Town of Alta, UDOT, UFA, Salt Lake County, and Snowbird Public Safety. I also owe sincere thanks to the dozens of local volunteers from our community that showed up within an hours notice to fill and place

sandbags in Town. Its moments like this that make me proud of our community and our ability to mobilize for the greater good.

Councilman Dave Richards and I were invited to testify before the United States House Committee on Natural Resources, Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests, and Public Lands on June 10th. We expressed to the committee that we believe Congressman Matheson's "Wasatch Wilderness and Watershed Protection Act" (H.R. 5009) would have detrimental effects on the public safety of our community. We are supportive of the expansion of wilderness in the Wasatch, but we cannot afford to have any future avalanche mitigation program jeopardized by restrictions on the land above the Town. We hope to work with Congressman Matheson towards finding mutually agreeable language that will preserve our ability to pursue avalanche alternatives in the future. Although it was nerve-wracking testifying before United States Congressman, it



was a great experience traveling to Washington DC, meeting with legislators, and watching the political process in action. For more information on this issue, please read the written testimony submitted as part of my testimony. The testimony, as well as the text of H.R. 5009, can be found on the Town's website under "What's New."

Best wishes for a safe and fun fourth of July!



Flooding Photos continued. Dozens of community volunteers mobilized on short notice to fill sand bags and place them throughout flood prone areas.

Spruce Bark Beetle Update

The Town, with the assistance of various partners, will conduct basic surveys this summer to look for spruce bark beetle infested trees, but land owners are ultimately responsible for managing their trees.

Here are some tips to be proactive about a potential spruce bark beetle epidemic:

Learn how to identify the Engelmann Spruce trees on your property. Here are some telltale clues that you have Engelmann Spruce on your property:

- Bark is thin and scaly, flakes off in small circular plates
- Needles are square in cross section and sharp at the point



Once you have identified the spruces, take a careful look. Are they infested? Here are some clues that they may be infested:

- Crown discoloration (this usually happens within one year of a successful attack)
- Reddish boring dust in bark crevices and around base of tree. Boring dust around the entire tree is the best indication that the tree has been successfully attacked.
- Pitch/Sap tubes. Not all tubes indicate a successful attack. Unsuccessful attack pitch tubes are often a light cream color, and successful attack pitch tubes are often reddish in color due to presence of sawdust in the pitch that is produced as beetles bore through the tree bark.
- Woodpeckering. Woodpeckers and other birds feed for beetles and will often flake off bark layers leaving piles of bark flakes around the base of infested trees.

What if the tree is infested? If a tree has been successfully attacked there is little to no chance of survival and should be removed as soon as possible. Quick removal prevents the successful brooding and further spread of the beetle. Once the tree is taken down, it should be either chipped or burned.

What if the tree is healthy? You have two options:

- Do nothing, but continue to monitor the tree frequently for signs of infestation.
- Hire a certified arborist to spray the tree with Carbaryl. Spraying should occur every two years until the threat of spruce bark beetle attack has abated. Carbaryl is a restricted chemical in the Salt Lake City Watershed and certain restrictions apply. The United States Forest Service recommends trees be sprayed in the fall to minimize environmental impacts. Please consult a Certified Arborist to learn more.

How do I decide what trees to spray? This is entirely up to the landowner. Considering the spraying process can be expensive, many owners are choosing to spray high visual impact trees, older/mature trees and easily accessible trees. A certified arborist can help with this decision process.

What if I'm unsure if the tree is healthy or infested? Call a Certified Arborist.

Additional information can be found at:

<http://www.slcgov.com/Utilities/SpruceBeetle.htm>

Salt Lake City Department of Public Utilities created this website specifically for private property owners.

A list of Certified Arborists can be found at:

<http://www.utahurbanforest.org/certified.html>

Why should I care? Beetles have devastated forests in southern and central Utah, and across the Rocky Mountains. A beetle outbreak and the death of many trees has the following consequences:

- Increased hazards: wildfire, falling dead trees, erosion and avalanches
- Reduced value in: timber, aesthetics and property
- Less privacy/shade
- Decrease water quality due to increased erosion



ABOVE: Example of red boring dust deposited along the base of the tree and in bark crevices as the beetle bores into the tree. Please note in this photo, the tree shown is a Douglas Fir NOT an Engelmann Spruce.

Property Tax Information

PROPERTY TAX NOTES:

At the June 17th Town Council meeting, the Council recommended a 10% increase in the Town of Alta's certified tax rate (CTR). This tax increase will generate an additional \$27,819 for the Town of Alta in property taxes. As noted in the previous edition, 8.6% of total property taxes paid to Salt Lake County actually reached the Town of Alta in Fiscal Year (FY) 2009/2010.

A Truth in Taxation public hearing regarding this increase will be held August 3rd, 6:30pm, at the Alta Community Center Library.

Next month, we will show the percentage of property tax dollars allocated to various agencies, including the Town of Alta for FY 2010/2011. If available we will also compare Alta's CTR to other municipalities in Salt Lake County.

NOTES ON THE CHART BELOW:

Below is a comparison of property tax dollars that would be generated in FY 2010/2011 to the Town of Alta using (1) the tax rate given to us by Salt Lake County Auditor's Office, and (2) the tax rate adopted by the Town Council in the June 17th Town Council Meeting. Tax dollars generated to the Town represent approximately 8.6% of the total property tax paid by a land/property owner. Once other taxing agencies have established their tax rates, we will be able to calculate an exact percentage.

Raw land up to one acre MAY get a residential exemption for property tax. Raw land over one acre is taxed at full market value.

Primary residences are taxed at 55% of their full market value. In the example below, this would be:
 $\$850,000 \times .55 \times 0.001114 = \520.80

Secondary residences and businesses are taxed at 100% of the full market value. In the example below this would be:
 $\$850,000 \times .001114 = \946.90

The first column represents the portion of the property tax dollars paid to the Town of Alta using the tax rate provided by the Salt Lake County Auditor for FY 2010/2011. The middle column represents the property tax dollars the Town of Alta would receive factoring in the proposed 10% increase in the CTR. The third column represents the annual dollar increase to the Town factoring in the proposed 10% increase in the CTR. (Please note that \$850,000 is the average home value in the Town of Alta as determined by Salt Lake County.)

	2010-2011 Tax Rate Issued by the Salt Lake County Auditor	2010-2011 Estimated Tax Rate proposed by Town of Alta	
	0.001009 (1)	0.001114(2)	.001009 vs .001114
	Tax Dollars generated to the Town of Alta	Tax Dollars generated to the Town of Alta	Dollar Increase with the proposed 10% increase
\$30,000 - raw land	\$30.27	\$33.42	\$3.15
\$850,000 primary residence	\$471.70	\$520.80	\$49.10
\$850,000 commercial business with like value or secondary residence with like value	\$857.65	\$946.90	\$89.25

- (1) The actual tax rate provided by Salt Lake County for the 2010/2011 Fiscal Year
 (2) The proposed tax rate for the Town of Alta for the 2010/2011 Fiscal Year

Alta Events Calendar

July

6	5:30pm	ACE Event: Gardening with Utah Native Plants, Our Lady of the Snows, FREE! Join ACE and horticulturist Matthew Utley from Tracy Aviary. You will learn information on collecting, storing, and germinating, planting (outside demo), and identifying plants and where they grow best.
7	1-4pm	Friends of Alta Event: Annual Invasive Weed Pull. Please RSVP to Jen at 801.742.9719 or info@friendsofalta.org . The meeting location will be at the picnic tables just before the summer booth on the south side of Hwy 210. Remember to bring appropriate footwear, sunscreen, snacks and water. Feel free to bring a bag lunch and join us at the picnic tables near the summer booth from 12-1pm.
8	10am	Town Council Meeting, Alta Community Center Library
9	12:30pm	Alta Ski Area Clean Up! The Alta Environmental Center is partnering with the Cottonwood Canyons Foundation (CCF) to conduct a post snowmelt clean up of the ski area. If you are interesting in participating please contact CCF at 801.733.2667 or email volunteer@cottonwoodcanyons.org
12	4pm	ACE Event: Put the WILD back into the WILDflower Festival! Join ACE in celebrating the summer season in our beautiful mountain town! Festivities include a kick-ball game, parade, pot luck BBQ, and hot summer night beach disco. Events details at: www.altaarts.org
16-18		Wasatch Wildflower Festival. Alta's day is July 17 th . Check out the event line up and get additional information at: http://www.wasatchwildflowerfestival.org/
20	5:30pm	ACE Event: Yoga with Stacy, Our Lady of the Snows, Free! Join ACE for an invigorating yoga class geared to stretch and strengthen your muscles. Mats are available.
27	5:30pm	ACE Event: Zumba! Our Lady of the Snows, FREE! Ditch the workout and join the party! This high energy class will get your heart pumping.
28-30	8am-12pm or 1-4pm	Ecological Restoration Project. Alta Ski Area is joining forces with the Cottonwood Canyons Foundation (CCF) to focus on restoration within the ski area in high visual and traffic areas. The first project will be at the Catherine's Trailhead Parking Lot. CCF and volunteers will help set a perimeter trail on the point, designate a picnic area, transplant native plants, reseed, water and put up a short perimeter fence around the revegetation zone. Volunteers are needed Wednesday, July 28 th through July 30 th , 8am-12pm, 1-4pm, or all day! To help out, contact CCF at 801.733.2667 or email volunteer@cottonwoodcanyons.org



August

5	11am-2pm	ACE Event: Herb Walk, taught by Millcreek Herbs. Meet at the summer booth picnic area, \$5. Wear sturdy shoes and bring water, lunch, and herb books to identify some flowers and plants. Please be a bit flexible with the end time as we sometimes get so busy looking at plants, we don't want to have to scramble to wrap up. Questions and to sign up: programs@altaarts.org
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TREE PLANTING PROGRAM

A collaboration with the
Alta Environmental Center



Background

Alta has a rich and notable history intimately tied with its natural resources. Due to mining activities through the 1920's most of the trees in Alta were removed to support mining infrastructure and associated dwellings. In the 1930's when skiing was introduced to Alta and mining came to an end, the high avalanche danger revealed that a larger presence of trees would be needed for public safety.



"Alta: A People's Story" by Dwayne Shrontz

In 1939, Alta Ski Lifts began operation under a special use permit with the US Forest Service. Over the past 70 years this ski area has been dedicated to planting trees to enhance the skier experience, aid in avalanche control and be good stewards of the national forest lands they operate on. For more information visit www.alta.com.

Friends of Alta's stewardship interest in planting trees stems from our goal to protect wildlife habitat areas and help maintain and encourage a healthy watershed. Forested landscapes are a powerful system, cleansing and aiding in maintaining water quality and a healthy ecosystem, they are also aesthetically pleasing.

Bark Beetles

Native bark beetles are causing widespread tree mortality throughout the west and are now making a presence in Alta. Alta Ski Area is being proactive in response to the influx of beetles by disposing of infested trees properly and increasing tree plantings and species diversity. Other stakeholders are also working to minimize the effects of an outbreak; for more information please visit: www.ci.slc.ut.us/utilities/SpruceBeetle.htm.

Bark beetle outbreaks are not preventable, however their impacts can be reduced with proper planning. It is our goal to help minimize the impacts of such attacks. Please join our collaborative effort in addressing this potential devastation to Alta's ecosystem.

Spruce Bark Beetle
Mountain Pine Beetle



Volunteer Tree Planting

Through a partnership with the Alta Environmental Center, Friends of Alta will be hosting half day volunteer tree planting sessions in late summer. Through this program we hope to increasing age and species diversity in Alta tree stands that will aid in resistance to bark beetle attacks and reduce the effects of tree mortality when attacks do occur. Increasing age diversity will also support long term forest succession in Alta and Albion Basin. Today, a good percentage of trees in Alta are of a similar age due to the reforestation efforts following the deforestation from the mining era.

Visit www.friendsofalta.org/educate/tree to see when tree planting opportunities are scheduled.

For everyone's safety and enjoyment we request that volunteers wear long pants, sturdy boots, gloves, sunscreen and bring an appropriate amount of food and water for the duration of the planting session.

Memorial Tree Planting

This opportunity is offered to people interested in having a memorial tree planted in honor of a loved one. These trees will be special ordered upon request; thus a specific tree height can be requested. The cost per tree is determined by height. Participants of this program will receive photographic documentation of the planting and approximate location. Requests for planting location will be considered, however we may not be able to meet all requests. Since these trees are being transplanted to elevation levels above 8,000 feet in a national forest we cannot assure the survival of your tree, but we will take all customary precautions to give your tree a healthy start. Please contact Jen Clancy with further details about this program or to purchase a tree.



Blue Spruce

For questions, to sign up for a volunteer session or order a memorial tree please contact:

Jen Clancy
801.742.9719
info@friendsofalta.org



Town Information and Contacts

Town info

<http://www.townofalta.com/>

Town of Alta Phone:
(801) 742-3522 or
(801) 363-5105

Town of Alta Fax:
(801) 742-1006

Post Office Phone:
(801) 742-2142

Library/Community Center Phone:
(801) 742-2068

Alta Visitors Bureau:
(801) 742-0101

Justice Court Clerk Phone:
(801) 742-2407

Alta Central Info Line:
(801) 742-3403



Town Council contact info

Mayor — Tom Pollard — mayor@townofalta.com — Term expires 2014
 Councilmember — Cliff Curry — cliffcurry@altalodge.com — Term expires 2014
 Councilmember — Steven Gilman — gusgilman@msn.com — Term expires 2012
 Councilmember — Paul Moxley — ptm@pkhlawyers.com — Term expires 2014
 Councilmember — Dave Richards — drichard@townofalta.com — Term expires 2012

ABOVE: Town Council from left to right: Steven Gilman, Tom Pollard, Paul Moxley, Cliff Curry, Dave Richards



Photo courtesy of Ben Williams

Staff contact info

John Guldner — Town Administrator
jhg@townofalta.com

Kate Black — Town Clerk
kswb@townofalta.com

Piper Lever — Assistant Town Clerk,
Justice Court Clerk, Business License
Official
plrem@townofalta.com

Claire Runge — Assistant Town
Administrator, Newsletter Editor
cer@townofalta.com

Sara Madsen — Alta Visitors Bureau
info@discoveralta.com

Mike Morey — Town Marshal
mmorey@townofalta.com

The Town Office is open Monday through Friday from 8:30am to 4:30pm. Please call us at 801.742.3522 or 801.363.5105 or stop in for assistance.