

Hurst Named Head Coach



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# Valley Courier

Happy 50th!



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Have you  
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Alamosa  
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registration

**ALAMOSA** — Alamosa School District 2018-2019 registration materials will be mailed out July 20. See more information at [www.alamosa.k12.co.us](http://www.alamosa.k12.co.us).

Sargent  
school board  
meets July 23

**SARGENT** — Sargent school board meets on Monday, July 23, at 6 p.m. for executive session, 6:30 p.m. for work session on armed personnel or school resource officer and 7 p.m. for regular meeting in the high school library.



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SLV WEATHER



A good day to enjoy  
Manassa parade, rodeo  
88/54

Sat: Cloudy 86/55  
Sun: Cloudy 82/55

## New RGNF draft decision grants road access to Village at Wolf Creek



Forest Supervisor  
Dan Dallas

**MONTE VISTA** — Near the top of Wolf Creek Pass a parcel of private property sits landlocked by federal lands. A new draft record of decision from the Rio Grande National Forest is designed to provide reasonable access to the 288-acre parcel via a new road corridor. The proposed road would be approximately 1,610 feet in length and would be within a 100-foot corridor with a total area of about 3.7 acres.

"This new draft decision provides the access that is legally required for private inholdings," said Forest Supervisor Dan Dallas. "Furthermore, this access option was fully analyzed in 2014, so no new analysis is needed."

The draft decision is based on Alternative 3, the so-called ANILCA alternative, as analyzed in the final envi-

ronmental impact statement completed for the Village at Wolf Creek Access Project in 2014. The Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA), a national authority, grants private landowners surrounded by National Forest System lands a right of reasonable access.

"This has been a long,

complex project and I encourage folks to learn more about its status and review the new draft decision for themselves," added Dallas. "It's also important to know that the land exchange option, as the selected alternative, remains on the table pending resolution of the legal process."

The draft Record of Deci-

sion is now available for public review during a formal 45-day objection period. The objection period will run through September 4. To learn more about the project, read previous comments, or to object, please visit <https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=35945>.

A final decision is expected in the autumn of 2018.

## Developers respond

**VALLEY** — "We are aware that the U.S. Forest Service has issued a new draft Record of Decision granting road access to LMJV's private property in compliance with federal law. Despite our opponents' continued misrepresentations that our January, 2018 request

for such road access was an attempt to circumvent the recent U.S. District Court's decision, nothing could be further from the truth," Leavell-McCombs Joint Venture stated. "The lower court set aside the prior Record of Decision granting LMJV's request for a land

exchange. We have appealed that decision and that appeal is ongoing."

The lower court's decision, however, merely set aside what the Forest Service originally selected as its preferred alternative (the land exchange) during the last process, the developers pointed out. During that same process, the Forest Service also analyzed two other alternatives: a no action alternative, and an alternative to grant LMJV road access across Forest Service land to LMJV's private land.

"Our January, 2018 letter to the Forest Service was merely a request that it proceed with granting us the alternative access to our private property regardless of what happens in the appeal on the land exchange," Leavell-McCombs stated.

Federal law guarantees private landowners adequate access to their property for its reasonable use.

"The project that LMJV has proposed on its private land and that was subject to prior analysis has been found to be a reasonable use and previous court decisions, to which our opponents were parties, have held that year-round snowplowed access is required for that use."

Leavell-McCombs concluded, "While LMJV and the majority of citizens favored the land exchange because of its undisputed benefits including jobs, enhanced recreational opportunities, compatibility with the ski area, and environmental benefits, the appeals court will decide if the land exchange will happen. Whether the land exchange is upheld or not, LMJV is still entitled to obtain year-round access to its private property, which we continue to pursue."

"We expect the Forest Service will faithfully discharge its legal obligation and grant such access as set forth in its new draft Record of Decision. We also expect that the new decision will be upheld if challenged because it is required as mandated by Congress in the statute."



Courier photo by Keith R. Cerny

## Veterans, others for the cause

With a torched hillside in the distance, members of a team of 25 volunteers and only two paid staff representing "Team Rubicon USA" are on site in Forbes Park east of Fort Garland as the lead disaster response team responding to the aftermath of the Spring Fire which destroyed more than 140 homes in Costilla County alone. The crew of primarily volunteer veterans were summoned to the scene on July 7th and will continue cleanup through July 22, according to Mark Ambrose, Rubicon's operations section supervisor on scene. For complete details and more photos, see Saturday's *Valley Courier*.

## Ordinance sign of contention

By RUTH HEIDE  
Courier Editor

**ALAMOSA** — Dividing an already diminished council Wednesday night, a 3-1 vote approved a code amendment, primarily to accommodate campaign signs during election season.

Alamosa Mayor Pro Tem Liz Hensley, who conducted

nance approved on Wednesday expands that to vacant lots and increases the size of signs allowed. Previously vacant lots were restricted to one sign of no more than eight square feet. This ordinance permits unlimited signs of up to 32 square feet each on vacant lots during the election period.

Alamosa City Manager

However, Councilman Griego recommended one continuous time period so candidates would not have to remove and then replace their signs. He initially recommended June 1 to November 15 but Councilman Vigil said the June 1 date might not give enough time for candidates before the Primary Election, and Councilor

do not want to do that ... in front of everybody's house."

Griego said having been through more than 10 elections himself he knew how

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## Farm Bureau