



June 2, 2021

Attention: PGA WEST Homeowners and especially Homeowners along Palmer Course 14th hole.

The Peninsular Bighorn Sheep ("bighorn sheep") in our midst is a serious and growing problem. Their constant presence is unnatural and sometimes deadly for them and unhealthy and costly for us humans. The Coachella Valley Conservation Commission ("CVCC") has a \$2.1 million contract with American Fence Co. to extend the sheep barrier from SilverRock to Lake Cahuilla. That route requires PGA West Club to grant an easement over its large land tract west of the canal. Negotiations over the location and style of the fence on PGA West land have gone on since 2018 and are nearing agreement. Starting at SilverRock the fence will run about 1000 feet parallel to the 14th hole of the Palmer course, hidden 35 feet behind the canal levee and then move westward up the mountain for about 750 feet until it is out of sight behind the mountain ridge. CVCC will work with your HOA to reduce its visibility and blend it into the mountain landscape as best as possible.

That is the plan. Work is estimated to start in the summer of 2021. The full story follows. It explains how we have reached this resolution.

Bighorn Sheep at PGA West in Trouble

PGA WEST is comprised of three Homeowners' Associations (HOAs), with approximately 3,000 homes. Additionally, many homeowners are also PGA WEST Club (Club) members. As such, many of you have likely encountered the bighorn sheep up close. While this is a thrilling and unique experience, it is also unnatural and potentially dangerous for both sheep and humans.

The bighorn sheep have become accustomed to a diet of lush HOA plantings and water from the lakes and swimming pools. Neither are healthy options for the sheep. Not only does this practice make the sheep less likely to thrive in their natural habitat, but it also exposes them to the possibility of ingesting poisonous plants such as oleanders.



Sheep Presence Unhealthy and Costly for Residents

Furthermore, the HOAs are spending a significant amount of money on plant materials that are being consumed and/or damaged by the bighorn sheep. Sheep droppings are present on the HOA grounds and on homeowners' hardscape, which creates a sanitization hazard for the residents and workers.

It is difficult to feel safe walking, biking or even driving some of the streets on the Palmer side of the property, due to the possibility of a stampede of bighorn sheep. This safety issue must be addressed before any person or sheep is injured.



Sheep Drownings

We know that there have been several bighorn sheep drown in the canal and at least one in a swimming pool. Again, this situation must be rectified before another sheep is lost in this senseless manner.

Solution Is A Barrier Fence

A leadership team from each of the Associations, as well as the Club, have been collaboratively working directly with representatives from Coachella Valley Conservation Commission (CVCC), and indirectly with the Big Horn Institute, US Fish and Wildlife, Sierra Club and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, to formulate a solution. The best solution is a barrier fence that protects the bighorn sheep by keeping them in their natural habitat, while incurring the least visual impact upon the PGA West homeowners and golfers.



In Rancho Mirage and Palm Desert barrier fences have kept the bighorn sheep out of built-up areas. When hotel and condominium construction was planned at SilverRock, a fence was installed along the edge of the golf course to keep the sheep off the course and out of the construction areas.

A fence from SilverRock to Lake Cahuilla and the Quarry golf community is essential. The Environmental Impact Report on this project in 2017 outlined three alternative routes for this

fence. Its analysis considered cost, visual impact on residents, loss of sheep habitat and other environmental factors.

PGA West Club Easement Required

The fence from Lake Cahuilla to SilverRock cannot be built without crossing PGA West Club land. The Club owns land west of the canal extending nearly ½ mile up the mountain parallel with the Palmer golf course 14th fairway ("Palmer 14").

Negotiations with CVCC Begin In 2018

In 2018, CVCC chose Alternative A which would extend the SilverRock fence into PGA West, running on top of the levee along the length of Palmer 14 and beside its green and then proceed near Palmer holes 15, 16 and 17 and possibly Nicklaus Private holes 2, 3 and 4. The HOA and Club representatives vehemently opposed this option because it would have been so obtrusively visible and a persistent eyesore, just like the SilverRock fence.

Following many meetings and site visits in 2018, an alternate route, called A2, was developed. This alternate route was to be located behind the levee and from there move up and over the mountain, distantly visible as it proceeded along the wash area to behind the mountain ridge. Though there were some concerns about its impact upon resident and golfer views of the mountain, over all it seemed to be an acceptable solution.

Negotiations Resume In 2020

In February 2020, CVAG (parent organization to CVCC) entered a contract with the American Fence Co., for \$2,091,658.58 to build the fence from Lake Cahuilla to SilverRock.

On July 27, 2020, CVCC backed away from the 2018 understanding and proposed placing the fence on top of the levee because the Coachella Valley Water District wanted added and special protection for the levee costing \$238,000. The PGA West HOAs and Club could either put up the \$238,000 or accept the fence on top of the levee. The HOA and Club representatives strongly opposed that fence location and any contribution to additional costs.

After consultation among HOA and Club representatives and inconclusive messages back and forth with CVCC, the HOAs and Club sent a letter on October 13, 2020 to Tom Kirk, Executive Director of CVAG and Katie Barrows of CVCC. The letter, drafted by Club lawyers, made it clear that any fence was not to be visible from anywhere on PGA West property except from where it begins and that any easement from the PGA West Club was conditional upon meeting this requirement. Further, neither the HOAs nor the Club would contribute any funds to the installation of the fence. The CVAG reportedly has a \$5 million contingency fund for projects like the fence. The letter suggested that Alternative B from the Environmental Impact Report would meet our requirement.

Less Visible Fence Routes Considered

On January 5, 2021, CVCC reported that Alternative B would add \$475,000 to the cost of the fence. The HOAs and Club asked for more detail, and on February 3, 2021 all parties – HOA Board members and management, Ben Dobbs for the Club, Katie Barrows for CVCC and Tim McKeon for American Fence-- met at HOA Residential 1 and explored fence routes using a projected satellite map of Lake Cahuilla to SilverRock. An Alternative B2 appeared more feasible and less costly than Alternative B, and CVCC and American Fence agreed to explore its precise route and cost. A month or more later, they offered ballpark estimates of \$300,000 to \$400,000 in added cost, but no detail on the route location or its precise costs.

Fence Route Resolved

CVCC then returned to their previous position on Alternative A2 and offered a route location from SilverRock 35 feet behind the levee at their expense. They then installed a pilot fence mock-up 20 feet in length on the route up the mountain, beginning roughly even with the first sand trap alongside the canal on Palmer 14.



At a gathering on site of HOA, Club, CVCC, and American Fence representatives on April 15, 2021, it was agreed that the mock-up fence was minimally intrusive on the mountain view, though the actual fence will extend about 750 feet up the wash area and will be visible to residents along Palmer 14 and golfers. At that point the HOAs and Club concluded that further extended negotiations were unlikely to result in a better solution and would only delay installation of the barrier.

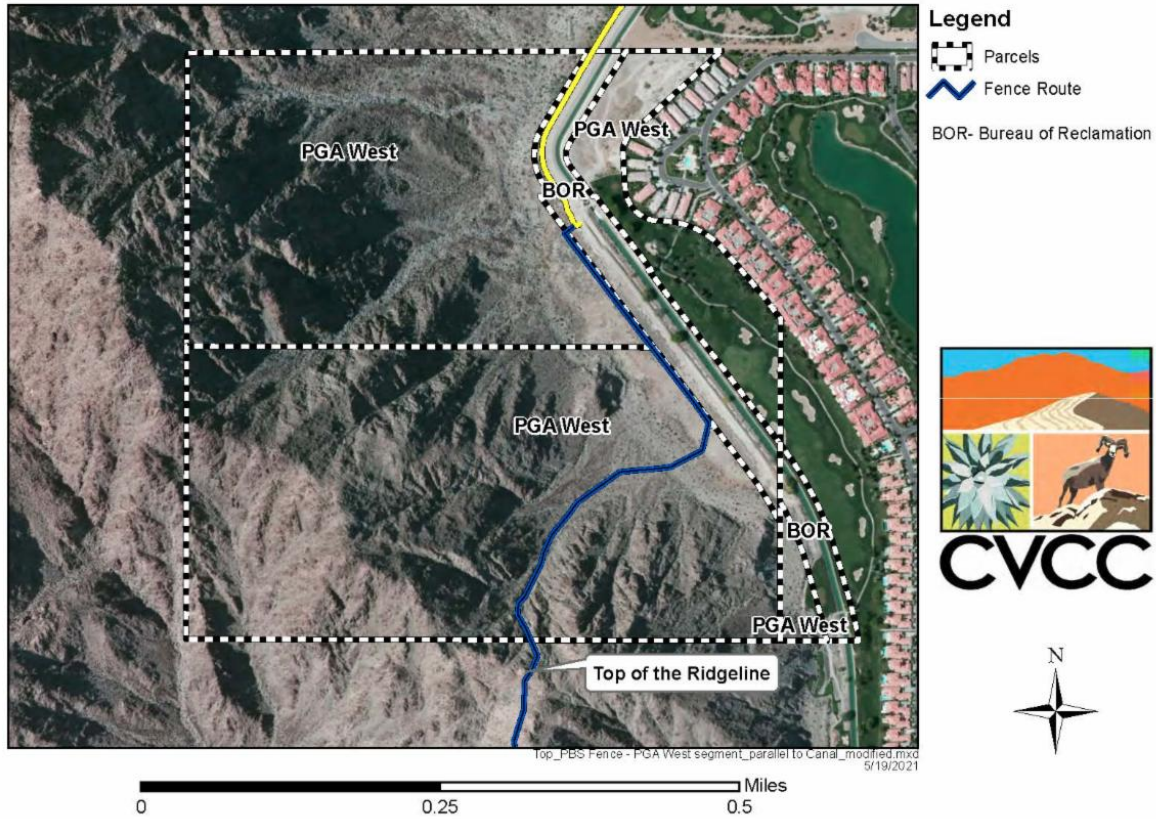
The Club is now working with CVCC on the easement agreement for the portion of the fence erected on Club property. CVCC has committed to engage with HOA representatives on the location and coloration of the fence posts and fabric as it is installed in order to camouflage and blend the fence into the mountain background and make it as minimally intrusive on the view as

possible. We are working to ensure that any PGA West Club agreement with CVCC enforces that commitment.

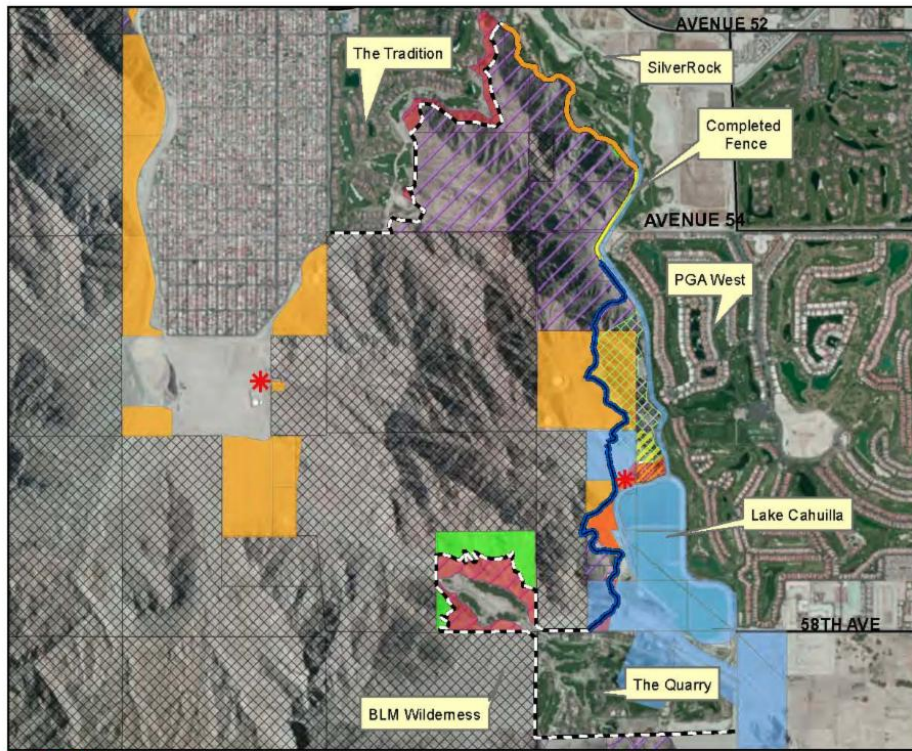
Once the agreement is in place, CVCC will finalize construction plans. Construction of the barrier starting in the Lake Cahuilla area, may commence in summer of 2021 but is unlikely to be completed and bar the sheep from our midst for a year or more.

From where this process started, the interests of PGA West residents and golfers have seen improved protection. The final decision is not ideal, but it is workable. We certainly look forward to the bighorn sheep returning to their natural habitat and the preservation of this endangered species. With our continued engagement and CVCC's and American Fence's cooperation, we hope to realize the twin goals of protecting both the sheep and our lovely natural setting.

Bighorn Sheep Fence – PGA West segment



La Quinta Peninsular Bighorn Sheep Barrier Project



Legend

- Alternative A
- Alternative A2
- SilverRock Fence Built
- CVWD Fence Built
- Habitat Outside Fence AltA
- Habitat Outside Fence AltA2
- Bureau of Land Management
- Bureau of Reclamation
- City of La Quinta
- CVWD
- Private
- Riverside County
- Proposed Staging Area/Helipad



Coachella Valley
Conservation Commission



La Quinta PBS Barrier A2_version3.mxd
5/17/2021