

History

The C Lazy U barn was built between 1920 and 1922 by Jack and Gertrude Smillie so they could begin operating the F Slash Ranch (now the C Lazy U Ranch) as a working guest ranch in the 1920's. The barn was originally built as a dairy barn.

In the second photo you can see the barn with one of the two tack rooms that Jack Smillie added later in his ownership of the ranch.

In 1947, Dick and Katie Schoenberger renamed the property, "C Lazy U Ranch" after the shape of Willow Creek, and the barn was re-branded.

By the 1950's the ranch had become a favorite equestrian destination that revolved around the barn, thanks in part to the children's program established by Mare Palmer.



Jack Smillie, third from right, prepares to lead guests on a horseback ride.



When the ranch was renamed to the C Lazy U Ranch, the barn was re-branded. But for a while, you could see both brands on the hayloft doors.



A 1950s postcard shows the ranch was beginning to buzz. The photo was taken from the loft of the barn, looking west.



The barn has been featured in many magazine articles about the C Lazy U, and was a favorite photo op for weddings and other special events.

Donate

Many people have expressed an interest in helping to restore the barn. We are grateful for the outpouring of support. For those of you who have graciously reached out and want to donate we have established a PayPal account for this purpose. If you feel inclined to donate please scan the QR code below with your phone and it will automatically take you to the PayPal account. 100 percent of all proceeds raised will be used to rebuild the barn and each donor will be recognized for their thoughtful generosity.



Learn

Visit the west wing of the Patio House to view a photo gallery from the East Troublesome Fire.



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Raise THE BARN

An initiative to restore the C Lazy U Ranch Barn

On October 21st and 22nd of 2020, the East Troublesome Fire made its way through the C Lazy U Ranch. Eight member homes, Evergreen guest cabin, two staff housing units and the iconic 98-year-old barn were all destroyed in the fire. Additionally, the ranch lost all of its hay for horse feed, including the new hay structure that housed it. All the horse corrals were damaged or burned, as well as several loafing sheds. A significant number of the ranch's pastures and fence lines were impacted as well.



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The East Troublesome Fire

On October 14th, a small brushfire started 13 miles from the ranch but within one day spread to over 4,000 acres. It was named the East Troublesome Fire due to its origination point in the East Troublesome basin west of the C Lazy U Ranch.

Due to its exceedingly rapid growth, the C Lazy Ranch guests, staff, horses and livestock were evacuated along with valuables, saddles, and historical documents. This extraordinary task was completed with the assistance of many local residents and caring individuals who came from as far away as Colorado Springs and Aspen. Horses were evacuated twice: once from C Lazy U Ranch and then again from a private ranch in Granby. Though the C Lazy U Ranch compound was spared early on, the erratic weather and fast-moving pace of the spread left no confidence that it was over.

In a joint effort between the ranch and firefighters, many precautions were taken to protect the property, such as starting controlled burns, removing flammable debris and digging firelines. The ranch compound remaining mostly intact is attributed to these amazing efforts.

On October 21st, the wind shifted and accelerated towards the ranch over Dexter Ridge. At 5:00pm that evening the emergency evacuation was ordered by the Fire Incident Command Center.

On October 22nd, the fire rapidly spread through the entire ranch property including the main compound, member communities and over extensive land and trails.

Firefighters were called in after Sheriff Brett Schroetlin checked in on the ranch on his way home and discovered the barn on fire. Though it was too late for the barn, the fire at the Patio House was put out just in time.

Their timely, valiant efforts saved a majority of the ranch property.



The fire approaching on October 15, 2020



Photo from October 21, 2020 as the East Troublesome Fire approached the ranch.



The horses waiting in the pens for their evacuation rides.



What's left of the barn as cleanup begins.

Rebuilding

C Lazy U Ranch ownership and management have deemed the rebuilding process "Vision 2121."

There are many reasons to be optimistic and excited for the future. We look forward to restoring and reimagining the next 100 years of C lazy U Ranch; hence Vision 2121.



The ranch has created a committee that consists of the ownership group, management and members to manage the task of rebuilding of the barn.

The committee is in the process of enhancing and updating the barn while keeping its original charm. Updates may include features like: state of the art horse stalls, additional space for saddles and tack, more functionality, insulated and heated utilities, bathrooms for guests and staff, adding a second level common area for guests to enjoy. This function space may include amenities such as a meeting room/living room complimented with food and beverage functionalities and viewing deck on the east side to take advantage of the spectacular vista of the Continental Divide and Indian Peaks.

C Lazy U Ranch has secured a temporary barn for saddle and tack storage, to use while the new barn is being constructed. The temporary structure will ensure a smooth operation of C Lazy U's world renowned equestrian offerings during your stay.



The historical plaque rescued from the rubble, singed but otherwise unharmed.