

VOL. 20 FALL 2025

IDLE TIMES

Newsletter of the Idlewild Community



Letter from the President

The fall colors are fading, and the quiet off-season has begun. That said, the Board is hard at work behind the scenes. I'm fortunate to be part of a dedicated team passionate about Idlewild's future.

Many of you have been part of Idlewild for years - some for generations - helping to shape its rich traditions and deep sense of place. That foundation is something we deeply respect. At the same time, we're seeing a wave of new cabin owners and younger generations stepping into ownership. This brings fresh energy and new ideas, and we think it's the perfect moment to come together and look ahead.

A quick reality check: **Idlewild is a volunteer-run community.**

Our primary funding comes from the annual assessments paid by property owners. These funds cover the caretaker's salary, utilities, insurance, taxes, maintenance and repairs, facilities, roads, and EMS/Fire donations.

Please note that our caretaker, Daniel Helker, is responsible for ensuring roads are clear, reporting fallen power lines, monitoring the property for unfamiliar individuals, and addressing any unexpected issues that arise. For vacant lot owners, the annual assessment is a flat \$100 and includes the same benefits as those provided to cabin owners.

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Letter from the President (continued)

To ensure fairness and sustainability, we've launched a **Revenue Enhancement Committee**. The name might sound formal, but the goal is simple: to reach out to property owners who haven't been paying the annual assessment. This isn't about blame, it's about understanding. We want to hear your concerns and work toward solutions that keep our community strong and equitable.

If your neighbor is new to Idlewild, whether a new owner or part of the next generation, please encourage them to connect with the Welcome Committee or Daniel. We aren't notified automatically when cabins change hands or new ones are built.

I've heard folks say it's always the same people on the Board or that they've never been asked to run. When no one volunteers, the same few people end up doing everything which is frustrating for everyone. **If you want to get involved, speak up!** Let me know where you'd like to serve. I'll make sure your name gets to the right place whether that's the nominating committee, a current committee chair, or a future volunteer list.

Speaking of involvement, a big shoutout to the 20+ cabin owners who stepped up to provide overdue repairs to upper Road 9 and Roads 11 and 12. Instead of just dodging potholes, they organized: donating funds for 209 tons of road base, using their own personal equipment as well as some rented equipment, and volunteering their time. Special thanks to Wes Grigsby for rallying the effort. IWCC helped fund a load of road base, but the real win here was the community spirit. This is the kind of grassroots action that happens when neighbors come together to solve problems. It keeps Idlewild strong, and the Board is here to support these efforts.



Letter from the President (continued)

We know many frustrations were voiced at the annual meeting, and we hear you. I, along with the Board, ask for your trust and patience. Give us a year to show you that we're committed to being more communicative and transparent through the new website, through better stewardship of IWCC funds, and through thoughtful decision-making that reflects the best interests of the whole community.

Finally, this newsletter is full of useful information. Even if something doesn't interest or apply to you, I encourage you to read it anyway. The more informed we all are, the better things run and the stronger our community becomes.

My personal email is not in the current directory, so please make a note of it. Do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns.

See you on the mountain!

Palisades Sill

Casey Bratton, IWCC President
casey.bratton29@gmail.com
214.908.5702



Photo by Doug Couch



Caretaker's Corner

Hello Idlewild Homeowners,

This is Daniel, your Caretaker. As summer wraps up and the trees turn, we head into fall with great anticipation. All is well in Idlewild!

Some roadwork was recently completed on Road 9 by the homeowners who share it—great job making it smoother and more accessible. The State has also improved Highway 127, which now looks and drives better. As you come and go, please remember the 30 mph speed limit. We know you're eager to get here and to head home, but take it slow and enjoy the beautiful fall colors now in full display.

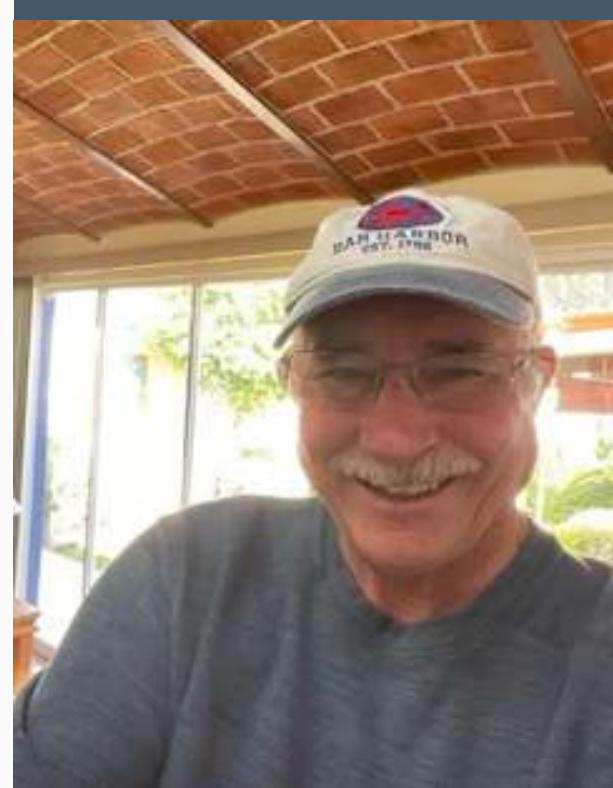
We're hopeful tree cutting will begin soon, which will bring more traffic—please stay alert. A big thank you to everyone participating in this important safety effort. It not only helps protect our community but will also open up some beautiful new views.

The two dumpsters at the community building have been chained for the season to save on pickup costs and reduce winter wear on Road 6. If you plan winter trips, be sure your vehicle is ready—good tires, chains, and a healthy battery make all the difference.

The summer church program was wonderful this year, as were the potluck meals and refreshments after services. Thanks to everyone who helped make them such a success!

Wishing you all a wonderful winter!

— Daniel Helker





FIREWISE

Congratulations, Idlewild!

Our Firewise renewal application was approved in September 2025!

Program Requirements vs. Our Achievements:

- Dollars required (or equivalent): \$10,717
- Amount achieved: \$45,509
- Dollars per dwelling required: \$33.49
- Amount achieved: \$142.22

This outstanding result was made possible by everyone's efforts — from funds spent on removing flammable materials around cabins and adding fire-resistant materials, to the many hours of labor contributed by homeowners clearing pine needles, limbs, and debris. (Remember, your labor counts at \$32.00 per hour!)

Everything we do toward fire prevention after November counts toward our 2026 renewal, so please keep up the great work.

If you have any questions about fire prevention activities or how to record your time and expenses, feel free to contact me anytime.

Fred Montague
602-326-8103
fredmontague2@gmail.com

FIREWISE CERTIFICATE

2025

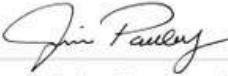
NATIONAL FIREWISE USA® PROGRAM
CERTIFICATE
OF RECOGNITION

The National Fire Protection Association acknowledges that

Idlewild Community

located in Eagle Nest, NM

has successfully completed the Firewise USA® program's annual requirements for 2025
and is a participating site in good standing throughout the 2026 calendar year.


James T. Pauley, President, NFPA



FIREWISE USA®
RESIDENTS REDUCING WILDFIRE RISKS

September 15, 2025

Date Issued



Colfax County Water Alliance

The Colfax County Water Alliance completed 205 site visits on 234.5 acres in Idlewild this past summer. We have about 70% of our Idlewild Residents signed up to participate in the Tree removal and Fire Prevention Grant. One contractor has been hired; however an additional two contractors will be needed to complete all the hand cutting needed in Idlewild. Per Rick Smith, they are still hoping they can get local contractors in Idlewild this fall, but next spring seems more likely at this point. We have also confirmed the Grant money is set aside for Idlewild, and this project will be completed.

All signatures have been completed, for the clearing of the Taos Pueblo land that borders Idlewild. The Taos Pueblo property will use heavy logging equipment and maintain a 650 foot clearance from Idlewild property. They are researching the possibility of thinning the back of Idlewild properties that abut Taos Pueblo's land, simultaneously. **The Taos Pueblo Chief and his crew will be in Idlewild on October 15 to review these properties and develop a game plan for clearing.**

If you haven't signed up, please contact Donna Woolsey to get on the list. If you have signed up and haven't filled out a Landowners Agreement, please also contact Donna Woolsey. You MUST have a Landowners Agreement on file, prior to your property being worked on. Thank you!

Donna Woolsey
806-674-7742
dwoolsey2222@gmail.com



Photo by Stacy Goodwin



Annual Meeting Minutes

Sunday, July 27, 2025

1. Call to order by Kurt Oheim, President, at 12:50 p.m. MT.

2. Invocation by Kurt Oheim.

3. Approval of 2024 Annual Meeting Minutes:

Motion to accept the Minutes by Marcy Swanson; Second by Scott Taylor.

Vote: Motion carried.

4. Election of Board Members:

The 2025/26 Nominating Committee's Slate presented today is:

Melanie Wells

Gabe Thornhill

Kurt Oheim

David Chapman

Motion to approve the Nominating Committee's Slate by Scott Taylor; Second by Chris Herring.

Vote: Motion carried.

5. Treasurer's Report:

Copies of the Treasurer's "Consolidated Idlewild Income, Expenses, and Proposed Budget—Revise 7/24" were distributed.

Presentation by AJ Beretta on behalf of David Chapman.

- Following a lengthy discussion, community members expressed concern regarding the adequacy of financial information provided to support their understanding of the budget.
- Community members recommended that a profit and loss statement be provided at future annual meetings to show how funds are expended, and that the statement be distributed in advance of the meeting to allow questions to be raised beforehand.
- Kurt Oheim suggested holding a Zoom meeting open to all members, with the treasurer participating and relevant documents distributed in advance so that everyone is informed. The suggestion was met with general agreement.



Annual Meeting Minutes (continued)

Motion by Marcy Swanson to reconvene the Treasurer's report discussion electronically at such time when the Treasurer can provide a profit and loss statement and additional information that is needed to understand the treasurer's report and to answer questions; Second by John York.

Vote: Motion carried.

6. Beverly Hart-Inkster reported on the Importance of paying Annual Assessments:

- **Roads** – one of our largest and most expensive ongoing needs.
- **Basic Overhead** – software, utilities, caretaker salary, and other operational costs.
- **Projects & Maintenance** –
 - o Caretaker's cabin repairs, maintenance and updates.
 - o Kitchen supplies for potlucks (plates, cups, utensils, etc.) and storage costs.
- **Unexpected Expenses** –
 - o Tree removal – a tree threatening to fall on the community center (\$2,200).
 - o Leak repair between Preachers' Cabin, Chapel, and Community Center (\$1,600, not including volunteer labor).
- **EMS & Fire Support Safety** – keeping roads maintained so emergency vehicles can access the community, ensuring readiness and accessibility.
- **Community Resources** –
 - o Printing of the community directory and Maps.
 - o Website and Newsletters

7. Committee Reports:

a. **Facilities by Randy Michael:**

- i) Preacher's Cabin: Thanks to an anonymous donation of \$1,000, a new sofa was purchased.
- ii) Community Center: A new deck was added on the south side of the Community Center.
- iii) Upcoming Focus: The Facilities Committee will prioritize addressing the fire safety recommendations provided by the Colfax Watershed Alliance in the coming year.



Annual Meeting Minutes (continued)

b. Firewise:

Fred Montague reported that the Firewise Certificate requires \$21,500 in documented expenditures or equivalent labor/fireproofing improvements to cabins and properties. To date, the Idlewild community has reported \$46,500 toward this requirement. Any fireproofing improvements made by cabin owners count toward the Firewise total, including tasks such as raking pine needles, trimming limbs, and hauling debris to the roll-offs. Owner labor is valued at \$32 per hour. Fred encouraged residents to report any fire-resistant improvements made to their dwellings or property. A copy of the Firewise certificate can be obtained from the IWCC Facebook page or the community website; the certificate will be updated in October.

c. Worship Services:

Laura Oheim submitted a written report which included that this is her 8th year scheduling ministers for Chapel services. For 2025, 13 ministers from 5 denominations and 9 cities are serving, with 6 new and 7 returning. Eleven Worship Leaders are participating, including 3 new volunteers. She expressed gratitude to Sharon McDonald for her music ministry, to Charlotte Burton and Jerri Lynne Porter for assistance with Worship Leader coordination, and to Daniel Helker for recommending Ivy Bucklin, the new housekeeper for the Preacher Cabin. Special thanks were given to Randy Michael and all donors for the successful refurbishing of the Preacher Cabin, which is open for viewing today. A new handheld microphone was also donated, improving worship services. *Residents are encouraged* to provide minister names for next summer.

d. Newsletter:

Kurt Oheim requested volunteers in order to form a new Newsletter team for the upcoming year.

e. Website:

AJ Beretta reported that the IWCC Board of Directors approved a plan yesterday for the redesign of Idlewild Community Website, which will transition the current website into a modern, mobile-responsive WordPress site. The redesign will allow easier updates by board members/volunteers, improve mobile usability, and add features such as PDF viewing, photo gallery, interactive maps, and search functions.



Annual Meeting Minutes (continued)

Due to AJ's relationship with the web developer, the new website startup cost is \$291 and ongoing services are hosting at \$117/year, domain \$35/year, SSL \$18/year. The targeted time to have the new website up and running is fall of 2025.

f. Solid Waste: Chris Herring reported:

- i) Roll-offs: the third slash roll-off has been filled; it will be hauled away and replaced within a few days. Two-and-a-half roll-offs were funded through assessment payments and one-and-a-half through donations.
- ii) Trash dumpsters: Residents are asked to use dumpsters for household garbage, take appliances, etc., to the dump, and flatten boxes to save space and reduce replacement frequency, which also saves IWCC funds.

g. Roads by AJ Beretta:

- i) The Road Committee (AJ Beretta and John Driggers) has focused on sustainable road specifications and related projects.
- ii) Recent work: Road 6: 450 ft repaired, cost \$18,500; Lower Road 9: 895 ft repaired, cost \$25,000; Trash truck turnaround with parking/grading/reseeding: \$8,800; Concrete dumpster pad/coyote fence, cost \$4,400; Work at Trails End/Highway 127 to redirect water (partially successful) at no cost – donated by Lindsey Excavation.
- iii) Thanks expressed for donations to the road fund and noted that costs have risen significantly. Residents are asked to help maintain roads by driving over humps rather than ruts to flatten surfaces.
- iv) Near-term plans:
 - i. Road 10 and Spur 9 considered for repair; due to high costs and low number of residents served, participation from affected homeowners will be requested.
 - ii. Light maintenance with dozer/roller (\$4,000 per day) planned for spring 2026 to extend road life.
 - iii. Road 6 utility pole relocation pending cooperation from Kit Carson and CenturyLink.



Annual Meeting Minutes (continued)

- v) Future consideration: Road 9 Segment 3, and other priority areas as funds allow.
- vi) Community Discussion:
 - i. Residents raised concerns about conditions on upper Road 9, and Road 12, and other high-use roads serving many cabins and emphasized the need for equitable distribution of road work.
 - ii. Suggestions included providing base course material so residents can fill potholes themselves. AJ agreed this was a good, affordable idea, and welcomed community involvement.
- h. **Caretaker:** Daniel Helker reported it was an eventful year, with a tornado touching down spring 2025. There was less snow over the winter which allowed residents to work on their cabins more than in the past. There was a heavy snow in April. Daniel reminded residents to please take anything other than household trash to the dump in Eagle Nest. Daniel expressed that he enjoys working in Idlewild.

8. Community Reports:

- a. Colfax Collaborative Wildland Urban Interface Project (CCWUI Project): Rick Smith, executive director of the Cimarron Watershed Alliance, was invited to speak about the CCWUI Project with regard to Idlewild.
 - i. The CCWUI Project is an \$8 million effort to complete 2,600 acres of thinning in Colfax County, with Idlewild as one of the participating communities.
 - ii. Property owners who previously worked with Chris of the Cimarron Watershed Alliance may need updated practice plans and Landowner Agreements.
 - iii. A proposed 660-foot fuel break with Taos Pueblo will become a high priority once Pueblo approval is received.
 - iv. Thinning work in Idlewild is anticipated to begin fall/winter 2025, with some hand work in summer 2026. Slash will be managed through monitored pile burning, following Firewise guidelines and done at least 30 feet from structures.
 - v. Cabin owners may keep excavated wood for personal use or donate it to the Alliance. Any profits from wood sales will go back into the project.



Annual Meeting Minutes (continued)

- vi. Roads damaged during the project will be repaired and culverts may be added. While grants do not cover capital improvements, Idlewild may provide gravel for workers to spread.
- vii. The Alliance plans to provide certificates/letters for cabin owners to share with insurance companies as proof of thinning work. Mr. Smith is hopeful all Idlewild work will be covered by the current grant.
- viii. Idlewild has seen strong landowner participation, thanks to the efforts of Donna Woolsey and Lance Alford. Donna reported that Idlewild has approximately 236 homeowners and 40 vacant properties, with more than 200 owners participating to date. She and Lance are continuing outreach to encourage cabin owners to schedule their site visits. Donna also expressed appreciation to the Cimarron Watershed Alliance for their excellent work.

b. **Kit Carson Electric Cooperative:** Bruce Jassman, District 5 Board representative, was invited to speak about informational updates regarding Kit Carson's electrical, propane, and broadband divisions in Idlewild.

- i. **Electrical:** Kit Carson will coordinate with the Cimarron Watershed Alliance to address low electrical lines if heavy machinery is brought into Idlewild during the tree thinning project. Repairs will be made promptly in the event of any line damage. Idlewild is also on Kit Carson's list for tree and limb clearing along power lines, with timing to be confirmed. Members are reminded to call 811 before any construction to avoid costly line damage.
- ii. **Propane:** A new propane yard is being developed at the substation on Highway 127, with 10,000-gallon tanks and a dedicated driver for this area.
- iii. **Broadband:** Recent grant funding allows cabin hookups to be done at *no cost to residents*. Service is overhead, and Kit Carson will cover installation equipment. Mr. Jassman emphasized that Idlewild will be supported equally with other communities and encouraged residents to contact him directly for assistance.



Annual Meeting Minutes (continued)

c. Eagle Nest Fire Department/EMS: Tony Pegg, a member of both the Angel Fire Fire Department and the Eagle Nest Volunteer Fire Department, is a new property owner on Road 9.

Leading efforts to improve local Fire/EMS response:

- i. Eagle Nest now has *paramedic coverage* 5 days a week. There were 71 calls last year, approximately 62 of which were EMS. Having equipment in Idlewild will reduce critical response times.
- ii. Old Suburban being converted into *24/7 rescue truck with full medical/fire gear* to be kept on Tony Pegg's property.
- iii. Chief Gibson agreed to the donation of old GMC fire engine for Idlewild, but is still working on *storage solutions* to keep the engine winter-ready. Future goal is to establish a heated pole-barn style substation, which then opens the possibility of housing a brush truck in Idlewild in the future. Grant possibilities are being researched (e.g., NM Fire Fund).
- iv. *Reflective address markers* are critical for responders; some driveways and corners may need tree removal/adjustments for fire/EMS vehicle access.
- v. Eagle Nest EMS has "permanently loaned" an *AED to Idlewild, housed at the caretaker's cabin*. In any emergency, residents must first call 911; Daniel Helker can bring the AED and begin CPR. Community CPR class scheduled for Aug. 9, 2025, to be led by Bev Hart-Inkster.
- vi. Kurt Oheim presented *\$2,500 donation to Eagle Nest EMS, as well as an additional personal contribution*. We are very grateful.

9. Adjourn:

Motion to Adjourn by Earl O'Steen at 3:15 pm MT; Second by Danny Coyle.

Vote: Motion carried.



Community Rules

Please Post This in Your Cabin

1. Let's Be Good Neighbors: Treat others as you want to be treated. Cabin owners are responsible for pets and guests. Colfax County has a leash law for pets. New guests should be informed of Idlewild Rules.

2. Fires and Trash Burning: No outside fires or trash burning. Colfax County allows small fires (less than three feet in diameter) only when no burn ban is in place. Check with the Colfax Fire Marshal. Slash and pine needles can be placed in the large roll-offs available during the summer months.

3. Fire Safety Around Cabins: Please keep roofs, gutters, chimneys, and stovepipes free of flammable material. Trim branches away from chimneys and stovepipes. Check the FireWise page for more information.

4. Firearms and Fireworks: The use of firearms, other than for self-protection, are prohibited in Idlewild. Fireworks are not permitted. Please check with the Colfax County Fire Marshal.

5. Garbage and Trash: Put garbage in the dumpsters near the caretaker's home or, in the summer, near the community center. Take large items and construction waste to the transfer station (dump) North of Eagle Nest.

6. Fireplace Ashes: Fireplace ashes stay hot long after a fire. Cool in a metal container for at least 24 hours before disposal.

7. Noise Considerations: Out of respect for Church attendees, please avoid outside noise (power tools, vehicles, etc.) on Sundays 10:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m., from Father's Day to Labor Day.

8. Wildlife Safety: Do not feed bears or leave garbage and food where they can reach it. Bring in bird feeders at night to avoid attracting bears.



Photo by Stacy Goodwin



Community Rules (Continued)

9. Emergency Calls: When calling 911, give cabin owner's name, road number, and cabin number. If available, also give the ERA Zone (1-8) from that attached Idlewild map or in the Directory. An AED (defibrillator) is at the caretaker's cabin but call 911 first.

10. Address Information: Post your name and Idlewild address near the phone for guests for emergency calls. Example: "24 Rd 6" means House 24, Road 6.

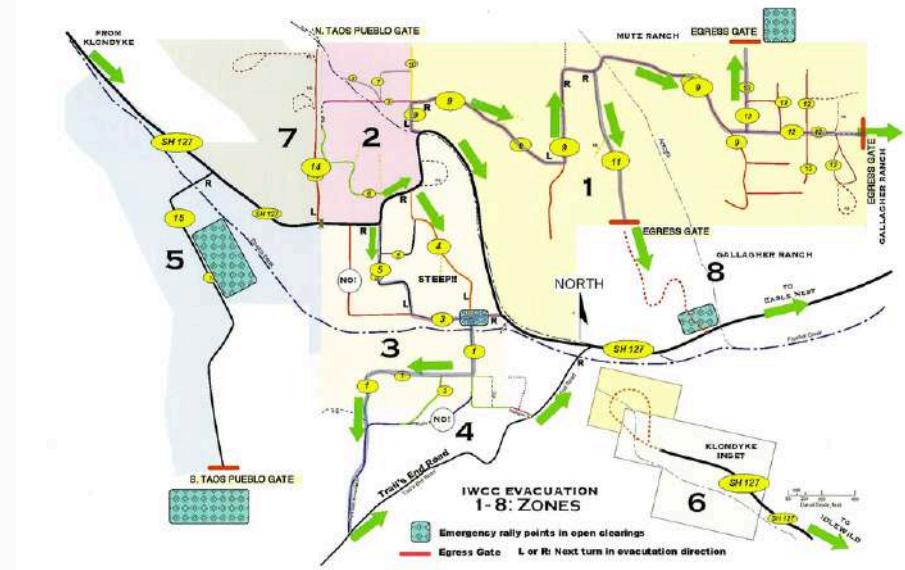
11. Reflective Address Signs: Install an official reflective address sign near your driveway to help emergency responders find your cabin quickly.

12. ATV, OHV, and Snow Mobiles: May only be used on community roads, not on private property.

13. Mobile Homes, RV Trailers or temporary living units: Are permitted only during cabin construction.

Escape routes and wildfire rallying points map:

Rev 9-25





In Memoriam

2024/2025

Keith Couch
Martha Couch
Sue Dorr
Barbara Echols
Carla Carter Gallagher
Dennis Howard
Bob Johnson
Miriam Gwen Laminack
Fred McMann
Carlton McNair
Dennis Milsow
Frank Ray
Percy Reid
Raymond Stahl
David Stone, Sr.
Doug Stone
Robert Vecchio
Sue Vecchio
Woody Wolverton
Caroline Woodburn



GENERAL RELEASE OF LIABILITY

This General Release of Liability (“Release”) made this _____ day of _____, 202____ is by and between Daniel Helker, an independent contractor (“Contractor”) and _____, property owner (“Owner”).

Contractor has been engaged to perform work for Owner. Owner understands that Contractor is not performing this work on behalf of Idlewild Community (“IWCC”) but simply as an independent contractor that has been employed for this purpose.

#1: Owner recognizes that they have no legal ability to seek damages from IWCC for any damages or disputes based upon the work being performed by Contractor.

#2: Owner agrees to release, indemnify, defend, and forever discharge IWCC from all liability, claims, demands, damages, costs, expenses, and causes of action due to injury, loss, or damage.

This Release shall be binding upon the undersigned, and his/her respective heirs, executors, administrators, personal representatives, and assigns.

Daniel Helker, Contractor Date

Idlewild Property Owner Date

Print Name