



# HUMBOLDT COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

WILLIAM F. HONSAL, SHERIFF/CORONER

CIVIL/COURTS  
(707) 445-7335

MAIN STATION  
826 FOURTH STREET • EUREKA CA 95501-0516  
PHONE (707) 445-7251 • FAX (707) 445-7298

CUSTODY SERVICES  
(707) 441-5159

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FEB 25 2025

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

March 18, 2024

To whom it may concern,

I am reaching out to express my concern regarding the proposed removal of the gate situated across Fisher Rd in Hydesville, Ca. This gate holds immense significance in safeguarding the community for both residents and visitors to this area. The Fisher Rd. community overwhelmingly support this gate as a public safety measure.

Over time, the gate has played a pivotal role in preventing stray livestock from accessing State Hwy 36, consequently mitigating the potential risks of accidents, injuries, and even fatalities on that two lane highway. Its removal would undoubtedly expose the road to the unpredictability of wandering livestock, thus endangering the safety of the public. The gate has also prevented non residents from driving into this area after hours. Vandalism and Theft related crimes have been reduced due to the Fisher Rd. gate.

A recent incident underscored the critical importance of such protective measures when 25 horses crossed Hwy 36, unexpectedly. Although they crossed without any mishaps, this event serves as a stark reminder of the necessity of barriers such as the Fisher Road Gate, which could have averted such a situation altogether.

It is also important to note that Fisher Rd. no longer has river bar vehicle access due to the roadway washing out. There is no need to keep this section of road publicly accessible, 24 hours a day. I recommend that the gate be shut during the night time hours to assist with the safety concerns on this rural roadway. I respectfully request the county prioritize public safety and retain the gate across Fisher Rd. If you have any questions please contact me at your convenience.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "W. F. Honsal".

William F. Honsal, Sheriff

MCKINLEYVILLE STATION  
(707) 839-6600

GARBERVILLE STATION  
(707) 923-2761

CORONER'S OFFICE  
(707) 445-7242

ANIMAL CONTROL  
(707) 840-9132

TRINITY RIVER STATION  
(530) 629-1025

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BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Dear Board of Supervisors:

I am writing in support to keep the existing gate across Fisher Road in Hydesville, Ca. The gate is vital for prioritizing public motorized safety and safeguarding my valuable livestock, known for their tendency to find ways onto public roads.

The gate's placement is a pivotal tool to uphold safety measures on a fully functional ranch since such as Patton's Ranch in Hydesville. By retaining the gate, we can prevent vehicular accidents and ensure the safety of all road users & the animals themselves each valuing roughly \$3-4,000 per head.

Lastly, given the existing dangerous access point off Hwy 36 to Fisher Rd to the right of a passing lane heading west around a blind corner and to the left with a blind corner of motorists driving down hill traveling east bound only adds to the danger of livestock in the road.

Regards,

Livestock Owner  
Lan Bugenig  
Lou Bugenig

3-14-24

To: Supervisor Bushnell & Humboldt County Board of Supervisors

From: Dan Skaggs

Re: Patton's Gate on Fisher Rd. Hydesville, Ca

Date: March 19, 2024

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We are residents living on Fisher Rd for the past 15 years. There are 15 homes on South Fisher Rd and 10 of them are lived in by people 65 years or older. I belong to that group too. Our home is about the only one with a clear view of Fisher Rd. Since I am a member of the above group, sometimes I do not sleep well at night. So, I get up and I see what goes up and down our road. I can only comment on what I have observed:

### Public Safety

No Gate: 6 vehicle accidents:

- 1- Car coming from the river at night, cracked and knocked down PG&E pole in front of my house.
- 2- Car coming from the river at night, crashed into my fence knocking down three railroad tie posts and destroyed a gate.
- 3- Car crashed, rolling over embankment at my property line.
- 4- Car crashed going towards the river at night into my next-door neighbor's tree.
- 5- Motorcycle going towards the river crashed over the embankment and the rider was killed.
- 6- Car coming from the river, being pursued by law enforcement crashed and rolled over the embankment.

(Yes, six crashes on the short dead-end road)

After Gate Installation:

- 1- "Zero" vehicle accidents, no deaths.
- 2- Illegal Dumping almost eliminated.
- 3- Vehicles at late night hours has become fewer and fewer. Generally, they arrive at the gate and drive back within a minute.
- 4- C.H.P. officer told me, since the gate, there has not been a single stolen car or dumped vehicles.
- 5- Access on Fisher Rd. - My wife and neighbor walk to the end of Fisher Rd towards the river five days a week. Not once has the gate prevented them from walking the entire road.

### Environmental Issues

- |                            |                                   |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1- Standard Garbage Dumped | 4- Refrigerator & freezers dumped |
| 2- Old motor oil dumped    | 5- Old tires dumped               |
| 3- Camper shells dumped    |                                   |

Now, if you do not live here and you drive down Fisher Rd, you see green grass, daffodils and beautiful Redwoods. But as the cliché says you get to walk in another man's shoes, you would see the total picture. Sure, I would like to see everything open, so it could be enjoyed by all, but some people just cannot obey the rules. Just like at Fernbridge. I used to take my grandchildren to ride ATV's. People could not follow the rules and it became a public safety issue. Humboldt County closed the access, Good! At a town meeting, Sheriff Honsal said he could not patrol out here because he lacked manpower. That is why when I called about a suspicious person and vehicle, it took 3.5 hrs for a Deputy to respond.

Sometimes the adults in the room must make decisions that are not popular with everyone. It is time to make that commonsense decision and leave the gate in place, for the safety of all public.

Regards,

DAN SKAGGS

Resident: 3428 Fisher Rd.  
Hydesville, CA  
95547

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FEB 25 2025

Shelby Patton

From: Morgan Doran <mpdor@ucanr.edu>  
Sent: Wednesday, March 27, 2024 12:10 PM  
To: Shelby Patton  
Cc: Kristy N Portillo; Laura L Lovgren  
Subject: RE: Patton Ranch Humboldt County

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

This Message Is From an Untrusted Sender

You have not previously corresponded with this sender.

Report Suspicious

Shelby,

I apologize for the delay in responding. I had a several things to clear off my plate before addressing this.

I did a few internet searches for livestock injuries from cattle guards and I can't find the statistics you're looking for. A search of scientific journals came up with nothing on the topic. A search on Google came up with lots of warnings and anecdotal information about horses jumping over and getting stuck in cattle guards. And even some cattle try crossing and get stuck in cattle guards. It seems to be common knowledge that cattle guards are made to prevent cattle from crossing a specific line, but not horses. If you do have a cattle guard across the road, it is likely just a matter of time before a horse gets out and "tests" the cattle guard, which will result in either the horse crossing uninjured or getting stuck and potentially having a serious injury. There are cattle guards made to prevent animal hooves from going through a slat (example: <https://cattleguardforms.com/>), so if the county insists on a cattle guard, look for this type of cattle guard, although it may require more maintenance to clean the shallow slats of debris.

I did come across this case from Wyoming (<https://caselaw.findlaw.com/court/wy-supreme-court/1321615.html>) regarding a landowner who placed a gate in front of a cattle guard that was installed by an easement holder in order to prevent horses (landowner's) from jumping or getting stuck in the cattle guard. The easement holder filed a claim against the landowner. In this case the court ultimately ruled that the landowner can maintain a gate across the road so long as the facts show it is necessary and does not create an unreasonable interference of ingress and egress with the easement. Although this is based on Wyoming law, similar arguments are at play. I think that if prior to a cattle guard being considered or installed you make a case and notify the county that cattle guards do not adequately contain horses, you would be in a stronger position.

One argument the county could make is that they want to maintain completely unfettered access for the public to the county road and will have to consider whether a gate restricts that unfettered access. Perhaps there are some automatic gates that can be considered.

I hope this helps.

Morgan

Morgan P. Doran  
Livestock & Natural Resources Advisor  
UC Cooperative Extension  
Solano, Yolo, Napa & Sacramento Counties  
Phone: (530) 666-8738  
Mobile: (530) 219-9226

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MENU

# BEEF RUNNER

JUNE 14,

AGRICULTURE 101, BEEF

## How Cattle Guards Work

Cattle g

people who stand out in their field as hired guns, keeping watch c

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and ran

an be made about the term, especially for those who are unfamil  
you may not know what it means, doesn't make it a bad thing. Le



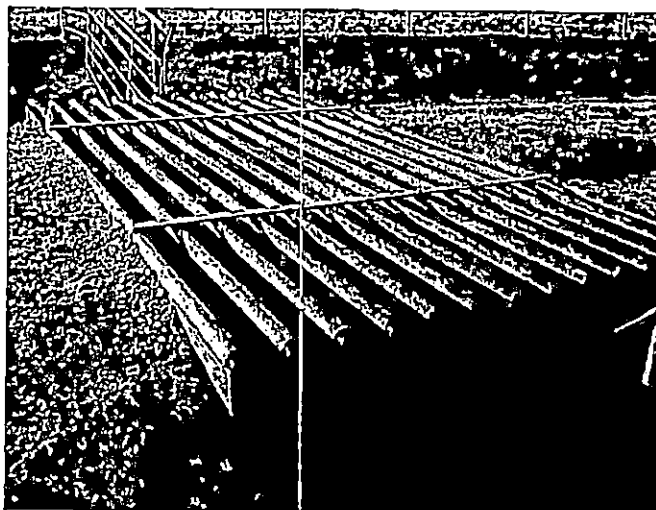
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## What is a cattle guard?

Cattle, horses, and other livestock have a less detailed vision and have difficulty with depth perception. So, instead of putting gates at every road crossing in fencelines, we can use visual barriers that allow a vehicle to pass easily that will also keep animals from crossing. We usually find cattle guards where a road crosses a fence line on farms or ranches, on roads or highways in open range states, or in high-traffic corridors to prevent wildlife crossings.

Cattle guards are usually made of beams (made of steel or concrete, sometimes wood) crossing a narrow hole in the ground. The hole can be dug out or a ditch crossing. Some cattle guards are created by painting lines on the pavement. The goal is to create a visual barrier that prevents animals from stepping across the fence line.

## Do cattle guards work?

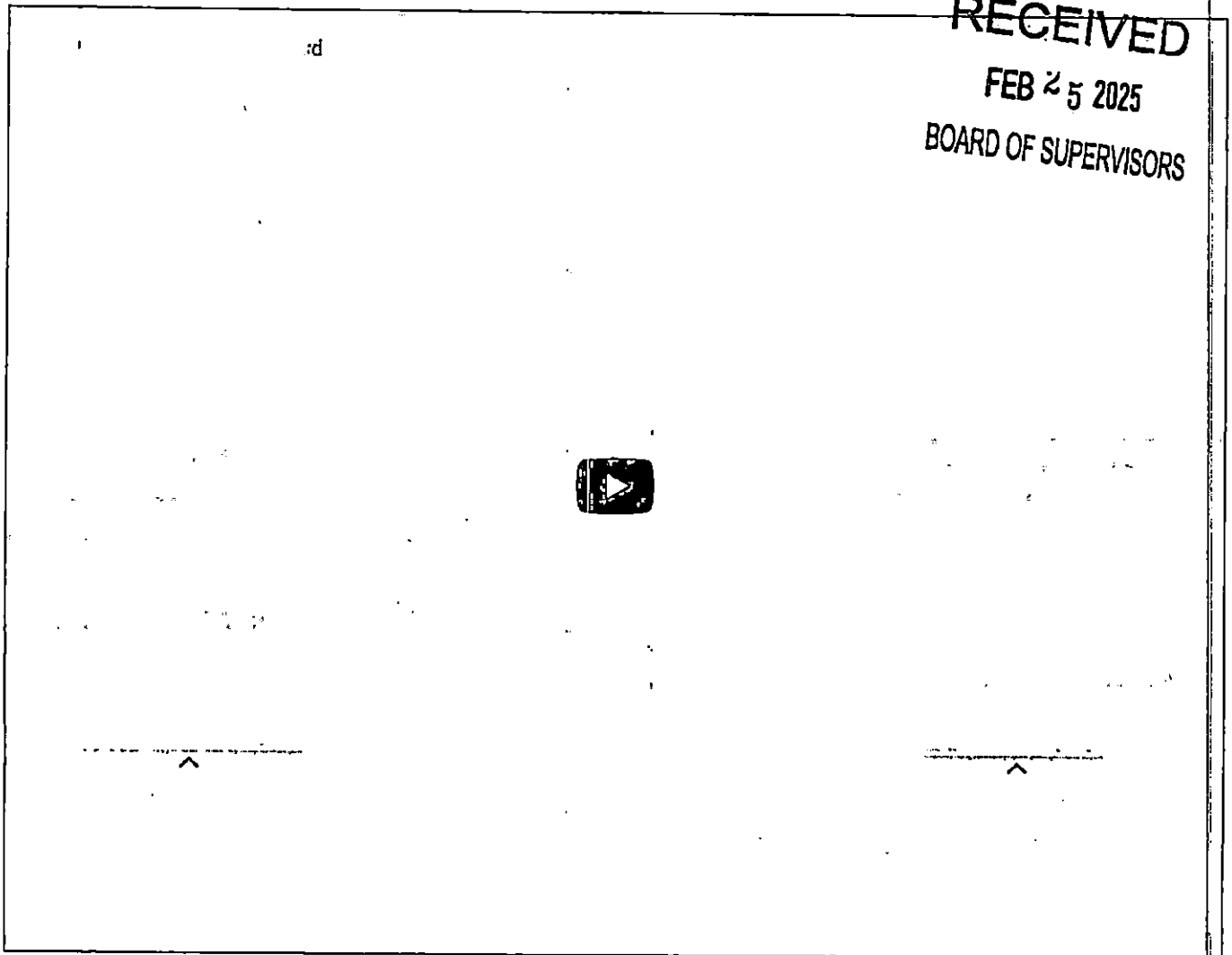
Question about beef or

CONTINUE>

1. German Class
2. Learn German

Through the years, I've had several cattle learn to cross the cattle guard because, as the saying goes, the grass is greener on the other side. I captured this video of one cow who would jump the cattle guard every day to graze. All I'd have to do to get her back in the pasture was walk up and she'd jump back.

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Sometimes the edges of the hole beneath the cattle guard will fill in with gravel or dirt from the road crossing. When this happens, we'd have to dig out the hole under the cattle guard crossing by hand or lift the guard with a tractor for a bigger effort. The Pioneer Woman documented cleaning out a cattle guard on her ranch.

## **Are cattle guards safe?**

A cattle guard is safe for most people and livestock. For people, these are easy to walk over with patience. Vehicles can drive over a cattle guard safely. But it does pose a danger for livestock.

Reports occur of horses or cattle jumping over a cattle guard and getting stuck in the middle. Their legs can slip through the rails, which leaves them in a predicament. If livestock struggle too much, they can break a leg. But most often we can lift them to safety without harm.

✓