



ELEVATING THE SPECTRUM
FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH AUTISM

Ascendigo Ranch FAQ

To: Missouri Heights Neighbors
From: Dan Richardson
Subject: FAQ Update #2

Date: March 23, 2021

Thank you for taking the time to hear about our hopes and dreams for the Whitecloud/Harmony property in Missouri Heights. We are excited to be your neighbor. Many of you have asked questions or have made comments recently and we thought it made sense to respond as best we can at this point. This update to our FAQ document will hopefully clarify any misunderstandings.

Ascendigo has hired a team of professionals with engineering, law, planning, architecture, and other areas of expertise to develop the information necessary to prepare an application which was recently submitted to Garfield County.

- 1. Is this an educational facility?** – Every program Ascendigo provides is education-based. Our programs revolve around recreational and behavioral therapy that serve as a foundation to teaching life skills and activities for daily living, for individuals on the autism spectrum. Ascendigo also has a published curriculum called “The Ascendigo Method” that we use to educate all of our staff as well as other organizations across the country in supporting individuals on the autism spectrum. Anyone using our proposed facilities will be participating in an Ascendigo education program. We have committed to not leasing the facilities to any other organizations.
- 2. Will Ascendigo move its administrative offices to this site?** – No. Our main offices will remain in downtown Carbondale. The only administrative staff working on-site will be using those spaces for programmatic uses.
- 3. How does the projected impact of Ascendigo Ranch compare to the single-family home option?** – The following table illustrates the significant differences between the two uses.

	Ascendigo Ranch	Single-Family Home Option
Principal Structures	6	21
Septic Systems	6	21
Peak Day Vehicle Trips	210	269
Pet Restrictions (Wildlife)	Yes	Undetermined
Improvements to Harmony	Yes	Previously Completed
Generates Permanent Jobs	Yes	No

- 4. How will Harmony Lane be impacted?** – According to the traffic report, Ascendigo Ranch will generate 6% fewer peak day vehicle trips than the single-family home option. The level of traffic

would allow a gravel or chip and seal roadway, however Ascendigo is willing to pay the extra cost of chip and seal from CR 102 to our entry.

5. **What will Ascendigo do to limit traffic?** – For most of our programs, all Ascendigo staff and participants travel in groups, often in 12 passenger vans, which inherently creates less traffic than single-occupant vehicles. Off-site travel will be significantly less due to many of the activities taking place on the property itself. We have committed to a shuttle system for staff as well as for fundraising events, which will be limited to no more than two (2) per year.
6. **What are the dates and activity level of summer activities?** – Our summer camp currently lasts 8 weeks, from mid-June through mid-August due to limited camper demand and staff availability in early and late summer. While we are allowing for an expansion of the current 8 weeks, we are committing to limit summer-level activities to the June 1 – August 31 time period. We have committed to no more than 20 ‘peak days’ of up to 100 people, which are the days campers are picked up and dropped off. Average days during the peak summer season will have 80 or less vehicles.
7. **What are the dates and activity level for non-summer activities?** – Non-summer activities will take place from September 1 – May 31 with a 20-50% reduction in activity compared to summer. We have committed to limiting non-summer average days to up to 65 people and limiting peak days to up to 100 people for no more than four (4) days per year. We have committed to a reduction in our camper and staff lodges by 44% compared to summer levels. We have committed to limiting fundraising/community events to up to 150 people for no more than two (2) events per year, likely occurring in the Spring and/or Fall. In addition to recreational activities, non-summer use will include therapy sessions, small-group training for staff and other autism professionals, staff meetings, educational workshops, and continuing education programs. Some programs may have a residential component.
8. **How will you address wildfire mitigation?** – Defensible space has been designed into our site design and larger buildings will have fire sprinkler systems. The site currently has fire hydrants that will be enhanced. In addition, Ascendigo commits to complying with and exceeding Garfield County Sheriff fire restrictions and following best practice standards as applicable based on conditions. We also recognize the value of collective effort and consistent policies; as such, we commit to a discussion with adjacent homeowner associations (HOAs) to consider additional restrictions. Furthermore, we will comply with any and all fire restrictions adopted by adjacent HOAs.
9. **How will you address water?** – We have conducted a significant amount of engineering and analysis, including multi-day well tests, to inform our design and operations. We are confident

that our water use will be less than the single-family home option, which is why we haven't incorporated our shares in the Antonides Well into our water system design. We have designed small xeriscape landscapes and are exploring the feasibility of an artificial turf playing field. We are planning to enlarge the existing irrigation control structure (aka pond on the site plan). We fully recognize there is a separate and distinct process to confirm our ability to do so.

- 10. How will you address other environmental and land stewardship issues?** – Ascendigo commits to maintain and implement best practice standards with respect to soil health, weed, domestic animals, and livestock management. We began weed mitigation last Fall and are working with Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to optimize soil health. Since our purchase, we conducted a wildlife study to better understand how to minimize our impacts. Lastly, we have recently secured a CORE grant to study the feasibility of all electric and/or net zero buildings to minimize our impact on climate control.

We encourage you to visit Ascendigo's [website](#), or email COO Dan Richardson at drichardson@ascendigo.org with any questions. Thank you in advance for your time and support.