

A FL Winter Gate Primer:

There are several entities that may open the Fallen Leaf gates, and there are seven locks to represent them. These include the Forest Service, the County, multiple utilities, and our two FL Community locks (one keyed and one combo, both marked with a green stripe of tape). Emergency services use one or more of these. Safe access, security, and understanding of our lock systems are really important to the ecosystem of Fallen Leaf in the winter.

In response to increased use, the upper gate (Tahoe Mt Road) has been improved with a new multi-locking mechanism in place. Seven locks are arranged in a row along the new mechanism. When any one of the locks is opened, the gate locking bolt releases allowing the gate to be opened. Smooth and easy, no more blocking out other locks with a (failed) daisy-chain! In order to lock and secure the gate behind you, please quickly close the gate, line up the holes in the mechanism, and replace the Fallen Leaf lock.

The lower gate (Fallen Leaf Rd) is still locked by a length of chain passing through the gate end and a stationary post. This 'daisy chain' system includes a number of locks. When arranged correctly, any one of the locks can separate the chain system. Until the lower gate is upgraded with the same improved locking mechanism now installed on Tahoe Mountain Road gate, please be sure to reassemble the locks-and-chain series correctly, so that none of the locks are 'locked out' of the system. To operate, all of the locks need to be part of the daisy chain - without any chain lengths or locks excluded.

Each homeowner who wishes to access their cabin during the winter should have a key to the Fallen Leaf key lock. Keyed locks do better in cold weather. The purpose of the combination lock is to allow non-homeowners such as contractors, deliveries, and extended family, etc. temporary access without a key. Please don't rely on the combination alone; it's just for our convenience, and the combination changes regularly. If you need a key, or your copy doesn't work, please let me know. I will have spares at the Security House.

Some cold weather tips:

Sometimes the temperature drops to single digits. In those conditions, the locks will freeze and not operate.

- Do not apply flame to the locks; this will damage the lock.
- Warm the lock by holding it tightly in your ungloved hand, then switch hands!
- Use flame from a lighter to warm the key, or coat the key in Isopropyl Alcohol (i.e. hand sanitizer) or any lock de-icer.

DO NOT FORCE THE KEY TO TURN. When the lock is thawed it will operate normally; forcing the key will only break it off in the receiver, ruining the lock and leaving you (and many others) stuck.

Please plan and think ahead. Winter in the mountains is beautiful, but things can turn dangerous quickly. Always carry a flashlight, a lighter, isopropyl alcohol or lock de-icer, tire chains, a shovel, blankets, food and water, and wear appropriate shoes and warm clothes.

Please be sure to drive S-L-O-W-L-Y. There are now many people using their properties throughout the year, and many, many walking and recreating along Fallen Leaf Road. Everyone should drive the road with the expectation of encountering someone on foot or in a vehicle at any time.