



days at
Dunrovin

March 2019



**Ranch
Talk**



The Dunrovin Webcams



Maintenance is a Twice Yearly Chore



Two of Dunrovin Ranch's web cameras sit high above the ranch on poles. The osprey nest webcam is situated on a pipe that juts up from the platform that holds the osprey nest, which is 47 feet in the air. The ranch webcam is atop a modified flag pole that reaches over 35 feet in the air. Neither of these cameras can be reached without the use of a "bucket truck" that is operated by someone who knows what they are doing.

Luckily, Dunrovin has developed a very good working relationship with a fine gentleman, Bob Evans. He has the right equipment and the knowledge to get Dunrovin staff up and down and positioned just right to maintain the web cameras.

At Least Twice a Year, Every Year!

The maintenance schedule for both these cameras is dictated by the ospreys' migration schedule. They routinely return around the first of April, a few days before or after. They leave in the fall by the end of September. When the ospreys are not here, Dunrovin uses the nest perch for bird feeders, but they cannot remain in place when the ospreys return, as that could easily deter them from using the nest. Hence, our maintenance occurs in mid-March and late-September.

This March, in addition to taking the bird feeders down and cleaning the camera dome, we will install an entirely new webcam, add a second backup camera, and place a goose decoy on the nest to keep nesting geese from occupying the nest. Because of the deep snow this year, Dunrovin will not be able to service the ranch webcam at the same time. A second visit with the bucket truck will be needed.



**Bob Evans and
Jake Miller
work on the
osprey nest
web camera**



Installing the Original Osprey Nest Web Camera in 2011



Before installing a web camera above the ospreys' nest that had been at Dunrovin Ranch for many years, Northwest Energy first had to move the nest off of one of its power poles. Electrical poles are not safe nesting platforms for ospreys as they can be easily electrocuted. Northwest Energy has an active stateside program to minimize the danger of its power lines to ospreys and other birds.

Moving the nest required a crew of six, three big specialized trucks, and a new pole. It was an exciting day for Dunrovin Ranch. The crews first pounded a surplus 50-foot wooden pole into the ground, placing it about 15 feet south of the power pole where the nest was located to ensure that the ospreys would not abandon the nest site. The crew then cut the huge nest off of the original pole. They estimated that it weighed between 350 and 400 pounds. Strapping the nest to the underside of a hydraulic lift bucket, the men reattached the nest to the new pole.



A year after the original webcam was installed, Dunrovin replaced it with a higher quality cam with pan, tilt, and zoom features, and installed an ambient microphone. It later added infrared lighting and a perch, which then lead to using the perch for winter bird feeders. Each year teaches Dunrovin something new that leads to more and more improvements in the system.

Broadcast Date: _____ **Time:** _____

Location: _____