

## Colorado golf course closing after drought; neighbors in Broomfield fight to keep it

watered

Story by Sarah Horbacewicz

Eagle Trace Golf Club is set to close Oct. 3, but neighbors of the Colorado course are working on a long-term plan they hope can keep the property green.

The final rounds are underway at Eagle Trace Golf Club in Broomfield.

For Kevin Kieffer and his son, the course has been part of their lives for the last 20 years.

Now, they're facing the end of an era.

"I'm going to miss having this course around," Kieffer said.

Eagle Trace recently announced it would close permanently on Oct. 3, posting on its website in part, "The drought in Colorado this year left us with very little water available, and has forced us to close as we will no longer be able to maintain the course."

For golfers like Kieffer, the course offered something increasingly difficult to find -- affordable, accessible golf.

"It's attainable at an affordable price. We're not talking about country club golf, and so to lose another place like that with easily accessible, I think hurts any community," he said.

For some golfers, the closure isn't entirely unexpected after water rights concerns over the last few years.

But for neighbors like Bruce Erley, the closing date raises a bigger question of what happens to the property next.

"It's not simple when you have all these lives that are intertwined with this piece of property," said Erley, secretary of the Eagle Trace Community Development Corporation.

Erley helps lead a nonprofit made up of neighbors who are working to connect the property with water and potentially a new owner.

Their concern is what happens if the golf course stops being maintained, and the green eventually turns brown.

"Concerns are inappropriate use of the golf course, dirt bikes," he said. "the grasses growing too tall and becoming a fire risk ... then there's also wildlife issues as well."

The course's owner did not respond to CBS Colorado's request for comment.

For now, neighbors say they're prepared to help keep the property watered if the owner stops doing so.

But Erley says a long-term solution could require a new owner and operator, and early estimates put the cost at about \$5 million.

"I'm hoping an angel swoops in at some point and says, 'Hey, I'll take a chance on it,'" golfer Angie Lull said.

The Oct. 3 closure could mark the end of Eagle Trace as a golf course, but neighbors say they're just beginning to fight over what comes next for the property.

"A lot of things need to be done, but we're looking at it long picture, and so that's why we're all in it to win it, and we will, we intend to win it," Erley said.