



TOWN OF BRECKENRIDGE
OPEN SPACE & TRAILS

Breckenridge Open Space Advisory Commission

November 27, 2023

Council Chambers in Town Hall

150 Ski Hill Road, Breckenridge, CO 80424

THE TOWN OF BRECKENRIDGE IS NOW HOLDING HYBRID MEETINGS. THIS MEETING WILL BE HELD IN PERSON AT BRECKENRIDGE TOWN HALL. ALL MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ARE INVITED TO ATTEND. IN PERSON ATTENDEES MUST NOT ACCESS THE VIRTUAL MEETING WHILE IN COUNCIL CHAMBERS.

This meeting will also be broadcast live over Zoom. Log-in information is available in the calendar section of our website: www.townofbreckenridge.com. Questions and comments can be submitted prior to the meeting to websiteopenspace@townofbreckenridge.com.

5:30 pm	<i>Call to Order</i>	
5:35 pm	<i>Discussion/Approval of Minutes</i>	1
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• October 30, 2023 Draft BOSAC Meeting Minutes	
5:40 pm	<i>Discussion/Approval of Agenda</i>	
5:45 pm	<i>Public Comment (Non-Agenda Items)</i>	
5:50 pm	<i>Staff Summary</i>	25
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Field Season Update• Signage Workplan RFP	
5:55 pm	<i>Open Space Discussion</i>	26
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• New Trail Construction Projects for 2024• Forest Health Updates• Council Matters Related to Open Space Topics• Other Matters	
6:30 pm	<i>Executive Session</i>	
7:00 pm	<i>Adjournment</i>	

I) CALL TO ORDER

Duke Barlow called the October 30th, 2023, regular meeting of BOSAC to order at 5:35 pm. Other members of BOSAC present included Chris Tennal, Krysten Joyce, Nikki LaRochelle, David Rossi, Bobbie Zanca, and Town Council liaison Jeffrey Bergeron. Staff members present included Anne Lowe, Tony Overlock, Alex Stach, Julia Puester, Kirsten Crawford, Ella Garner and Lauren Sawyer. Members of the public included: Josh Dayton, Greg Ruckman, Marika Page, Chris John, Pete Narca, and others. Katherine King from Summit County Government was also present.

II) APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A) BOSAC REGULAR MEETING – September 25, 2023
The minutes were approved as presented.

III) PUBLIC COMMENT (NON-AGENDA ITEMS)

N/A

IV) PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Page: *Delivered packet from Friends of Cucumber Gulch group*

Ms. Page: For the record, my name is Marika Page, and I am a Cucumber Gulch neighbor. We've created a packet for you and wish to highlight a few parts of it. The cover page shows a map that is also displayed on this larger poster board. There are two pretty important things from Tony Boone's proposal that are worth illustrating with this map. The first thing he said was the Option 3 alignment pulls the Toad Alley Trail closer to the disturbances already created by Ski Hill Road. Secondly, the new alignment pulls Toad Alley further away from the large game corridor between the Peak 7 Base Area and Discovery Road. This is a much larger game corridor, and we don't to my knowledge have a camera over there monitoring, so we really don't know what's happening over there. I might be wrong.

Ms. Lowe: We have cameras in some of the wetland areas and other pockets in that zone.

Mr. Bergeron: Is that Claimjumper Lode or "The Wedge" that we bought?

Ms. Lowe: Partially "The Wedge" and the "MBJ" parcel. They were all merged a few years ago.

Ms. Page: What your map doesn't have on it is our hand-drawn, but fairly accurate version of where Toad Alley goes now. When you look at the big picture, the trail already stays relatively close to the perimeter of the Gulch and close to these big developments on Ski Hill Road/Ski Hill Road itself. We also wanted to highlight the size of this game corridor, as opposed to the one we talk about a lot. The third point I'd like to make, this map really illustrates the importance of this

trail to local residents. For residents of Cucumber Patch, the Landing, the Cottages (all in Shock Hill) the Overlook, Christy Heights, Cucumber Creek, and White Wolf this is the only continuous trail remaining that goes around the Gulch in the summer. It's our connection to the Peaks Trail and other trails on Forest land. That's the reason the community cares so much about this trail.

Ms. Zanca: I have a question. You all are using Toad Alley now, really just to get somewhere else?

Mr. Ruckman: Yeah. That gets us to Peaks Trail and all the Nordic Trails. From our neighborhood that is the only continuous trail you can take, and it accesses Peaks Trail and all the old logging roads in the Peak 6 areas. So yes, the answer is yes. Any other questions on that?

Mr. Ruckman: On page 2, you'll see Option 3. We're now looking at "Option 3+" now. Tony Boone's proposal that you received earlier was based on Option 3 put forward by staff in July. Talking with Tony Boone, Bill Mangle, and Tony Overlock, we think we've found a way to expand Option 3 to improve the trail even more and to pull it closer to Ski Hill Road. Option 3 if Tony Boone implements it would be between \$45,000 and \$50,000. We have commitments raised of \$100,000. The money is available to realign and make this trail sustainable. We've been talking with Tony Overlock, who has some good ideas on how to do this, including some additional realignments, pulling it closer to Ski Hill Road, and some other improvements. We all know that that trail has areas that stay too wet, for twenty years we've known that. We want to do everything we can to improve the areas there. We will leave it to you to discuss with Tony Overlock, who is going to speak a little bit tonight on some of his ideas for all the improvements we could make on that trail. "Option 3+" would address all the original concerns with the newly designated wetland areas, would avoid the downside of Option #2, it will improve additional areas of the trail and will maintain the resident's only continuous trail from our neighborhoods.

Ms. Joyce: When you say that "Option 3+" would be even closer to Ski Hill Rd.. are you talking about the part we walked with Tony Overlock or the part of Toad Alley that goes further into the Preserve?

Mr. Ruckman: Both. Yes.

Ms. Joyce: So, in addition to what we walked, you have a vision for the trail being closer to Ski Hill that is below what we walked?

Mr. Ruckman: Correct, that is something that Tony Overlock came up with and we will let him talk through some of his ideas on additional improvements.

Ms. Page: We also wanted to address a little of our understanding of staff's position on this trail, or at least the way it's been communicated to us or the way we've heard it. We'd like to respond a little bit to Anne's summary of Bill Mangle's statement. What Bill Mangle said is "the closer the trail existing disturbances the better", but he's not willing to say exactly how close that needs to be to be considered part the existing disturbances. Tony Boone said something along the lines of 100 to 200 meters. I'm sure that there are actual calculations on what is within the shadow of an existing disturbance. On page 49 of your packet, Anne quotes Bill as saying "a perimeter trail would be most beneficial to Preserve health." We agree and we think this is a perimeter trail. We

spoke with Bill today and his email today said “My recommendation is to try to work with the town to find a new alignment that substantially avoids the wetlands and habitat corridor, while providing a good trail experience, IE not on the road.” Bill admits that he hasn’t been on site in a while, but he believes this can be achieved with more ambitious use of structures and bridges, which our group, and Tony Overlock and Tony Boone, are now calling “Option 3+.” To address the habitat issue we’ve spoken with two people from the Colorado National Heritage Program, two people from the San Diego Zoo who are Colorado Conservation Specialist, one person from “Team Toad” at the Denver Zoo, and 5 people from Colorado Parks and Wildlife (Denver & Hot Sulfur Springs offices). These people gave us general information over the phone, specific information in emails and referred to us to published, peer-reviewed works. In our packet this information is quoted with citations. We also quote EcoMetrics, the staff hired consultants. Finally, we paid for access to scholarly articles published by experts of the Boreal toad and chytrid fungus. Most of these are by Brad Lambert, who has studied Cucumber Gulch Preserve extensively, among many other areas in Colorado. Bottom line, the animals are doing well. The animals are doing well with gondola and the current trail system. Both the gondola and the trails have seasonal closures. The facts show this is working for animals. On page 4 you can see our growth in moose population. On page 5 you can see local deer herd data, which is meeting or exceeding population goals CPW population goals since 1989. On page 6, you can see that EcoMetrics called the beaver ponds highly functional and state that the beavers appear to be increased in both population numbers and extent of activity. We all acknowledge that the toads are an exception to this. That is because of a worldwide fungus that may cause them to go extinct, but the summer trails are not the cause of their decline, which even the staff hired consultants have stated in writing, on page 8 in your packet.

Mr. Ruckman: What are the grounds for making this decision, on whether to shut down this trail? That’s really the big question here. I’ve been talking with Kirsten Crawford over the last couple of weeks about this. I sent her page 10-12 to review. Ordinance 53 from 2003, it is active, and it incorporates the 2003 Master Plan from when the Gulch was created. The 2003 Master Plan set into law 9 goals, these are on page 12 of your packet. These goals address preservation, education and recreation. Four goals that I think are notable in making this decision: #2 – balance recreational access with preservation, #8 – make Cucumber Gulch Preserve a centerpiece for environmental education and interpretation, #9 – maintain a sense of solitude for visitors and users of the Gulch, and #5 – all future management recommendations should maintain and enhance opportunities for approved recreational activities in the Gulch. Further, the 2003 Master Plan set into law that “all future management recommendations that may be developed should be consistent with these goals.” In the executive summary of the 2003 Master Plan says, “the plan should be used as a guide for actions in the immediate future, as well as over long term.” Closing this trail is a huge decision. It’s a change in approach and arguably requires the Town Council to repeal the ordinance that created the Gulch in the first place.

Ms. Page: The naturalists run group tours 10 times a week with up to 8 people per tour on the specific section of trail in question. Those tours are promoted on the radio, on posters, on Facebook, on TripAdvisor, and on TownofBreck.com. The tours are awesome, we see them all the time. The naturalists love doing them, the guests love them. As the graph showed, a lot of locals do them too, which shows they’re interested in educating themselves about the Gulch. After the announced closure of the trail this spring, we asked staff if they would continue these tours on the trail, and they chose to. These tours were done all summer after staff had raised the

issue of whether having people on this trail was causing harm. The tours could have been done on other trails, but staff chose not to. This is a situation where actions speak loudly. Like the residents, the naturalists are the ones spending time around the Gulch on a daily basis. They chose to continue using the trails for the tours and promoting them, just as the residents want to continue using this trail. Hopefully the tours and continue and the trail won't be closed to local residents.

Mr. Ruckman: Moving forward here. It would really help us if we could get some feedback from you. Do you want us to hire wildlife expert witnesses to debate the habitat issues? Do you want us to do mediation with the staff? Do you want us to raise more money? Do you want us to bring more people to meetings? What else can we do to try to work with you and staff to find the best solution here? Can you give us some feedback today, we'd really appreciate it. Thank you.

Mr. Dayton: Good evening. I'm Josh Dayton and my parents and I run the Breckenridge Nordic Center around Cucumber Gulch and Shock Hill and on Forest Service land within the White River National Forest. I want to thank the Town for all the attention you've given to the requests of the local community regarding the summer trail realignment in Cucumber Gulch. I really appreciate that the Town did not jump on moving to Option #2 this summer. I think that's really appreciated by myself and the community represented here. And thank you so much for taking Option #3+ into consideration. My biggest concern that I want to reiterate that I mentioned in June, is that Option #2 places a trailhead right at the base of Peak 8 and the ski resort. There are currently two hotels there, with a third one planned if I'm not mistaken. That is going to be the go-to activity for summer concierge desks – to send people to the Gulch. I think that the impact from that could be exponential and uncontrolled. It's simply just bringing a lot more people into the Gulch in the summertime who are uneducated and don't have the same passion that we as a community do have for that area. Again, I want to mention my appreciation to the Town, Tony, thank you for your time and taking us through the Gulch to show us the options, and thank you BOSAC for your time and thinking through this and inviting us all here.

Mr. John: My name is Chris John. I live at 120 Windwood Circle in the Christy Heights neighborhood. I'd like to make a couple of comments. We love Cucumber Gulch. It's a big deal to us. We don't feel there is a wildlife problem, it's not obvious to us. As we've looked at the different options, we looked at Option #2 and thought it looked more like a "luge run." So, we don't call it Option #2, we call it the Luge Run option, because it will funnel a lot of people down from the concierge up there. They might recommend to people that "a good place to wander around... There's a great trail just right across the street. Cucumber Gulch is a jewel! We recommend you go walk around and enjoy it." Well... that'll funnel a lot of people down there, but... It's a bad idea. So, please avoid Option #2. Thank you for your consideration and thank you all for doing this! This takes a lot of time, really appreciate it.

Mr. Narca: Hi, my name is Pete Narca. I live at 123 Windwood Circle, just near Chris. My wife Gene and I have lived in Breckenridge for a little over two years. In that time, we've participated in three invasive weed pulls and two town clean ups, so we are very interested in keeping this town a beautiful place for everyone to enjoy. We walk the trail in the Gulch often. We think the Upper Part of the trail that heads up near Peak 7, is in fact the best part of the trail, so we encourage you to keep that section open. We understand that there is a delicate balance between

recreation and nature conservation. We think that Option #3 achieves that goal. We are not in favor of Option #2.

V) STAFF SUMMARY

A) FIELD SEASON UPDATE

Ms. Lowe: We are wrapping up our field season, we have four of our seasonals left, but folks are starting to move on to their winter jobs. We're doing a lot of trail maintenance and hazardous tree removal as the weather holds. Just a heads up, HigherGround Earthworks completed all the Golden Horseshoe Road repair work; you can see the list of roads in your packet that were worked on. He is close to finishing Brown's Gulch Trailhead on Tiger Road.

B) PEABODY PLACER FOREST HEALTH PROJECT

Ms. Lowe: Peabody Placer Forest Health Project is almost wrapped up. The contractor was hoping to do some additional restoration work and hauling of trees out of there when the snow hit. We gave them an extension and they believe it will take them an extra week to remove equipment and complete some scarifying on the access road. We'd like them to that now, as opposed to the Spring, when it can be more destructive from wet conditions. This shouldn't interfere with the Nordic season, and it looks like we might get some more warm days here this week. They should be wrapped up and out of there very soon.

C) SIGNAGE WORKPLAN RFP

Ms. Lowe: We have Alex from OST staff working on our Signage RFP. He is currently gathering resources, information, and examples to help frame the proposed signage workplan. Once that is finalized, we will shoot it over to you all for review and to make sure we are capturing everything we want in that workplan. There are a lot of bits and pieces on that one, so we just want to make sure we do it right and frame it correctly. We will bring that back to you once solidified.

Ms. Zanca: You are sending that out for competitive quotes?

Ms. Lowe: We will, once the RFP is finalized.

D) 2023 QUANDARY PEAK & MCCULLOUGH GULCH DRAFT PROGRAM REPORT

Ms. Lowe: Also included in your packet is an amazing program report (still in draft form) about the Quandary Peak & McCullough Gulch area, focused on the stats and highlights from the 2023 season. Allison Morton from Summit County Open Space & Trails does an amazing job putting this together. New this year, we had a single operator who was handling both the shuttle operations and parking reservations. This appears to be a really good system that seems to work really well. They also were able to accommodate dogs on the shuttle and we had over 700 dogs take the shuttle as well. People are using it! What we are hoping to do now is get together with all the stakeholders involved in this Quandary Peak/McCullough Gulch area and take a look at the list of recommendations that were included in the report, and just see what other ideas people

have and what refinements can be made to that. As you know, we've taken an adaptive management approach where we make tweaks every year to allow for a better experience for folks visiting that area. Change is tough. We are a couple of years into the program and are now starting to see some good numbers/ridership. I think we are headed in the right direction this year. I do know that the BOEC is going to be reviewing this on December 5th if anyone is interested in seeing the highlights. County staff will go through a great rundown of the season and everything you see here in the report.

Ms. Zanca: Will you send out something, so we know?

Ms. Lowe: Yes, of course.

Ms. Zanca: I have a couple of questions regarding the program report, I don't know if we want to spend a lot of time on it now... should I email the questions over to you?

Ms. Lowe: Sure. Unless it's for the good of the order. If you all want to take a deep dive into this topic at some point, we can bring it back for discussion and maybe have the County present on this as well.

Ms. Zanca: I felt there were some things in there that weren't consistent and just had some general questions. I will give you a call or email at a later time.

VI) OPEN SPACE DISCUSSION

A) END OF SEASON NATURALIST REPORT

Ms. Lowe: To kick off our Open Space Discussion we are fortunate to have Ella and Lauren here, our two summer seasonal naturalists with us. They are wrapping up their season now and are both amazing at what they do – leading environmental education experiences in Cucumber Gulch Preserve, as well as a couple of other Town trailheads and trails. The last couple of years we've been creating an End of Season Report, which is great to be able to hear it from them and what they've experienced out in the field. Their written report was included here in the packet for you to have as a reference. But I would love to turn this over to Ella and Lauren to walk you through their field report.

Ms. Sawyer and Ms. Garner: Greetings BOSAC members and everyone else in attendance. Thanks so much for having us here this evening.

Ms. Sawyer: Throughout this year, Open Space and Trails naturalists focused on educating the public on the importance of Cucumber Gulch Preserve, as well as assist staff and contractors in the Preserve's natural resource management and provide educational information about local flora and fauna.

Ms. Garner: Cucumber Gulch Preserve is the only nature preserve in the Town of Breckenridge. It's considered by many to be the Open Space & Trails Program's crown jewel. Located right under gondola, it's the obvious wetlands you can see as you travel towards the ski resort. The

Preserve is home to a Nordic Center in the winter and opens for hiking and biking every July. We manage this nature preserve with a focus on biodiversity.

Ms. Sawyer: During the annual closure of Cucumber Gulch Preserve, the naturalists focus their efforts on informing on and enforcing the Preserve closure. When we have our encounters with folks in the Preserve during closure, we use that time to inform them about other trails that are open. We also inform them on why the Preserve is closed, focusing on the importance of fawning, calving, nesting seasons. During this time, we're also doing wildlife monitoring through our cameras and observations.

Ms. Garner: This year during the closure we installed LED signs at the two main entrances of the Preserve with the help of the Breckenridge Police Department. We believe this helped decrease the number of people, as well as dogs, in the Preserve during this year's closures. We only recorded 64 people and two dogs on our trail camera, compared to last year, there were about twice as many people (106 people and four dogs). During the closure, we observed around 53% of trail users accessed the Preserve from the upper entrance at the Peaks Trailhead, whereas 47% were coming from Shock Hill, White Wolf, or the Nordic Center entrances. Of those who entered the Preserve during closure, around 84% were hikers and 16% mountain bikers. After the opening of the preserve, we only observed 19 dogs caught on the trail camera. Definitely a decrease from last year.

Mr. Bergeron: How do most people react when confronted while having a dog with them in the Preserve?

Ms. Garner: Often people will say they didn't see the signs or that they entered the Preserve from a backyard or social trail and there were no signs. We do have lots of "No Dog" signs all over the official entrances to the Preserve. Buck and rail fencing is installed during the closure at all official entrances, as well as popular social trails. On the buck and rail fences, we make sure to also attach "Closed" signage as well.

Mr. Bergeron: The people you catch with dogs... do you get a sense they're visitors or locals?

Ms. Garner: I would say it's a little bit of both. Equally divided.

Ms. LaRochelle: What about an entrance like Pence Miller? Does that have a "No Dogs" sign?

Ms. Garner: Yes. All the main intersections of trails on that side of the Preserve are signed.

Mr. Barlow: Did you find that you had any repeat offenders? People that you talked to once, that violated the closure a second time? Did it feel like those people that you were able to talk with, follow your enforcement?

Ms. Garner: I think when looking at the fact that there were over 100 dogs observed in the Preserve last year compared to just 19 this year... I think that speaks to the success of the enforcement.

Ms. Sawyer: So, I'll go ahead and begin on the wildlife monitoring section of our report. We conducted our Boreal Toad survey monthly, which we partnered with the Denver Zoo to complete. Potentially one day working with the Zoo, we will be able to relocate the species. Unfortunately, this year, we did not find any Boreal Toads in the Preserve. Moving on to our American beaver survey section... We are consistently monitoring throughout the summer at different locations where the beavers are active. As far as general wildlife species monitoring, we're doing that week-by-week to accumulate a wildlife dataset at different camera areas. If you turn your attention to the graph that says Preserve closure, that dataset was taken two weeks before the opening. And the graph that highlights preserve openings is taken two weeks after the opening of the Preserve. This is a compiled dataset from the cameras closest to the trail entrance. So, if you look at the map over here, you can see the locations of the camera to get an idea of where they are in relation to the trails. We focused on moose and deer, because that's what we typically see the most, especially since it was calving season. Looking at the graphs in comparison, you can see there is a decreasing number from Moose in the Trail Cam, Alders and Cam 1 which becomes essentially nonexistent after the opening of the Preserve.

Ms. Sawyer: So here we have another dataset. This is a broader range, which focuses on dates from May 1st to July 5th (the Preserve closure) and a second graph from July 6th to August 31st (after the opening). So not only do these graphs compile all of the cameras in the area, but it also gives a broader range of the species biodiversity in the area. You can see here that not only do the observation numbers decrease on some of the animals, but also the biodiversity of animal observation decreases as well.

Mr. Bergeron: So, there are obviously less animals in the Preserve once it's open to the public, but do we have an idea of where they are going when they leave?

Ms. Sawyer: Great question. Anecdotally, I would say they're moving away from people. Into more densely forested areas and up the mountain towards the resort.

Mr. Bergeron: Does this have correlation with their breeding season or looking for a more remote place to calf?

Ms. Sawyer: We know that CGP is a popular calving area, but they do tend to move out of the area after that.

Ms. Garner: We don't necessarily know where they're going, but there is correlation that they are leaving the Preserve when there is a high density of visitors.

Ms. Lowe: Included in your packet were some of Christy Corrello's numbers of animal observations throughout the year in the Preserve at the different camera locations which display the spike of high animal activity during the closure and another smaller spike during the fall closure.

Ms. Zanca: Why do we have so many moose hanging out downtown with so many people around? Why would they leave the less crowded Cucumber Gulch Preserve to head downtown?

Ms. Lowe: I would direct some of these more species-specific questions to Alex Strasser our local CPW representative to answer after the Naturalist presentation. He is our new wildlife officer here in the County, doing amazing things for us. One thing I will note about the Preserve is that we tend to have a lot of twins, of moose and deer both. Typically, these ungulates will only give birth to twins when they're in a very high-quality habitat area, because that is what can nourish and grow these youngsters.

Ms. Garner: It does also appear from our wildlife captures that the cameras closest to the trail seem to have less observations after the opening of Cucumber Gulch Preserve.

Mr. Bergeron: Do you have a sense of how the gondola affects wildlife in the Preserve?

Ms. Lowe: There is a report included in your packet that is focused on the gondola and was prepared for a joint-working group with the ski resort in 2019/2020 to try to examine the effects of the gondola. Little bit different than a trail because it doesn't run all the time and goes overhead. Lots of additional information is in that report.

Mr. Bergeron: Cliff Notes = ski area doesn't think the gondola affects anything?

Ms. Lowe: The ski resort actually believed that we needed a "dark period" in both the spring and the fall. They agreed to that based on what all of our experts put together and that wildlife numbers were affected when the gondola was running. Spring calving/fawning/nesting is a really sensitive time.

Ms. Zanca: The report was very negative about the impact of the increasing number of days in the year that that gondola is running. And that was the depressing part of this packet... was that report which went into great detail about what's happened in the in the Preserve because of all the disturbances focused on the gondola, but it wasn't just the gondola.

Ms. Garner: The next two graphs show observations throughout the entire season, including every camera inside Cucumber Gulch Preserve. I think this graph does a great job of displaying the awesome amount of animal biodiversity in the Preserve. A big reason we believe that we have this biodiversity is from the broad diversity of habitat in the Preserve, including two types of wetlands, beaver engineered wetlands, as well as fen wetlands. The Preserve also contains dense conifer forest, as well as "forest edge" style habitats. These are very important habitats, as wetland habitats specifically support more biodiversity than any other habitat on Earth.

Ms. Garner: The next graph displays the amount of wildlife captures per month. You'll notice a large spike in April, correlating to less activity/trail use in the Preserve. Again, there is another spike in June, which is related to calving and nesting season, in addition to the Preserve being closed to the public at this time.

Ms. Sawyer: This year we expanded our guided hike program to include additional locations aside from the Cucumber Gulch Preserve. Offering hikes at Iowa Hill and Illinois Creek gave us an opportunity to lead groups larger than 8 users and lead hikes during the Preserve's closure. Guided hikes were offered twice daily in Cucumber Gulch Preserve during July and August, with a variety of topics. With additional locations, we are also able to provide interpretive hikes with

several different topics, such as foraging. As far as demographics are concerned, our survey displayed that participants were largely Summit County residents.

Mr. Barlow: Do you think that's indicative of the true representation of Cucumber Gulch Preserve users? That most were local?

Ms. Sawyer: I think this season we were able to get the word out a bit more, especially locally. We had Summit Daily running ads for us, which is a wonderful way to bring in more local residents.

Mr. Bergeron: Is there a Naturalist presence on the weekends? Like for events and functions?

Ms. Garner: This season we worked Tuesday – Saturday to give us that presence on the weekends.

Ms. Garner: We also continued doing our interpretive naturalist stations this year, primarily during the shoulder seasons when we weren't leading as many hikes. Naturalist stations are informal opportunities for trail users to learn about topics like Leave No Trace policies, trail etiquette and local flora and fauna, while already out hiking a trail. Our stations were mainly focused at the Illinois Creek Trailhead, near the Troll, which is a heavily trafficked area. In June and September, we hosted stations weekly and had over 1,200 participants.

Ms. Sawyer: This year we also assisted with a number of Friends of Breckenridge Trails (FOBT) volunteer events. These volunteer events were comprised of noxious/invasive weed pulls and trail restoration sessions. We worked a total of six events this summer, including four weed pulls days and two trail restoration days. During the "County Wide Weed Pull Day" in which we pulled approximately 500lbs of false chamomile and musk thistle. In addition, we also planted around 300 willow stakes along different river corridors, focusing on Illinois Creek and the Upper Blue River.

Ms. Zanca: How are the willow stakes doing? Was that successful?

Ms. Garner: Yes! In this photo you can see some willows that were planted last year and if you look closely, you'll notice some new growth from this summer, meaning the willows successfully took and are growing.

Ms. Garner and Ms. Sawyer: That concludes our presentation. Thanks everyone!

Ms. Joyce: I was just curious about your personal perspectives on what initiatives are working well? What's going well? What would you change?

Ms. Garner: I really enjoyed the naturalist station tables, because we get to interact with a very high volume of trail users, especially at Illinois Creek because we see such a variety and quantity of people who are going to see the Troll. Another rewarding thing has been seeing a decrease of dogs in the Preserve. It really feels like the signage and approach we took this summer made a difference.

Mr. Bergeron: We are always kind of debating whether there needs to be more of an enforcement style response from our naturalists... do you have any thoughts on enforcement and how that could be helpful for your position?

Ms. Garner: I personally feel that informing users from an education standpoint helps them understand why we have these regulations in place and motivates them to not break any rules after the interaction. We also try to make sure all our interactions are positive and offer other trail suggestions when we run into folks in the Preserve during a closure.

Mr. Bergeron: So do you believe enforcement to be necessary or unneeded?

Ms. Garner: I think most people are quite receptive to us "informing" as opposed to "enforcing." We haven't really had anyone resist us when we approach them and most interactions are receptive and respectful. Not many negative interactions.

Mr. Tennal: Thanks so much for your presentation. It's always one of our favorite meetings. My question is: as we exit this season, is there anything strikes a chord for an area of improvement? Where can we advocate for you? Are more "official" uniforms something you think would help?

Ms. Garner: We currently wear items with the Town of Breckenridge logo on it, as well as name tags. I do think that maybe a more "official" looking uniform could be advantageous.

Mr. Barlow: In favor of more staffing? So that you could have presence out there 7 days a week?

Ms. Garner: We used to stagger our schedule, which meant there was a naturalist in the field every day of the week. I do think it's nice to have a presence every day of the week, but also have enjoyed having a joint effort between two naturalists as well.

B) CUCUMBER GULCH PRESERVE UPDATES

Mr. Strasser: Firstly, thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak with you. The question regarding the moose and where do they go... those moose are pretty interesting. In a more natural setting where there isn't as much human impact, they'll follow similar travel patterns to other ungulates like elk and deer. Migrating with food availability and what not. Their main movement pattern is North and South along the 10 Mile Range, all the way to Frisco and even traveling further North than the interstate. They will also travel south into Blue River and even over the pass to Alma. Otherwise, the moose really are hanging out around Town almost year-round, because of the food availability. Not much pressure from predators and they aren't scared of humans. Especially in the winter, they'll stay close to town and Highway 9.

Mr. Bergeron: Is there a sense of overpopulation of moose here in Summit County?

Mr. Strasser: I wouldn't call it an overpopulation issue; I would certainly call it a healthy population. What Anne was saying earlier about the number of twins observed, that's a telltale sign that they're doing well, there is enough food and habitat for them. Overpopulation might be a harsh word, but with that being said, we have increased our number of moose tags just to

compensate for the number of moose we're seeing struck by cars and overall increase in human conflicts. There is certainly a healthy population of moose in Breckenridge.

Mr. Bergeron: Are moose tags even desired? Do people want to hunt moose?

Mr. Strasser: Absolutely. There are two separate moose tags available: a cow moose tag (female) and a bull tag (male). A cow tag is more readily available. I'm not sure how familiar everyone here is as far as tag distribution goes, but there are preference points. Each time a hunter applies for a tag and is unsuccessful they accumulate a preference point. So, for example a cow tag might take around 3-4 years to draw, while a bull tag is more like 20 years.

Mr. Barlow: I think what we'd like to get out of this discussion is some feedback to the neighbors, but what else do we want before we move forward with a recommendation for this? We are not doing that tonight, but let's figure out what's between here and there.

Mr. Bergeron: Well, we are still waiting for CPW on this one, correct? I'd like to have Kelly Owens weigh in on this one. Do we need to have a wildlife expert talk about this? Someone that does this for a living. Personally, I'm not ready to offer an opinion or offer a suggestion at the moment, but as it stands right now, I like Option #3+. That said I don't have all the information and I would like to run it by Kelly. I don't think there is a need for a mediator, but I would like to have a second opinion from a wildlife expert. What resonates with me, is that I don't think there is wildlife issue here if these numbers are accurate. Moose are all over the place, ungulates aren't suffering. I don't think any option does much to change the Boreal Toad and the wetland situation. Now, if we were talking about the beaver population and the ponds, I'd be more concerned. Right now, I'm leaning towards Option #3+.

Bobbie Zanca: I have a question on the overall health of the Gulch. When I read the EcoMetrics report at the end of our packet, one thing that struck me is when it said "The Cucumber Gulch ecosystem is not headed toward some threshold where it will suddenly collapse into a state of ruin, rather as human disturbances accumulate habitat quality will continue to decline and the risk of weaking or displacing species will continue to increase. Even as ecological stressors mount, there will still be some habitat and some wildlife, there will just be less of each and what is left will be less natural, more artificial, and less biodiverse." I don't think we should be minimizing that impact that all the people in that Gulch and that gondola are having on the health of the Gulch. It went into great detail about the collapse of birds in the Gulch and we are getting parasites that we did not use to have. We don't have the Boreal toads we used to have. Yea, we got a lot of moose, but there is a big impact from human use in the Gulch. We can't dismiss this as not being a big deal. It's not all good in the Gulch as far as the natural resource that it is.

Mr. Bergeron: I fought not to have the gondola go through the Gulch. I wanted it to go up Ski Hill Road or 4 O'Clock ski run. They said that's not going to affect the health of the Gulch. I fought to have the gondola only run in the wintertime and have it closed in the summer. And they said "Oh no, that's not going to change anything. The Gulch can withstand that." And now the line in the sand is now what I think is a small trail realignment and that's what is going to cause the habitat degradation. The big question is: is the Gulch a recreational amenity or is it a Preserve?

Ms. Zanca: Primarily, it's first a Preserve. Isn't that what it is?

Mr. Bergeron: Well, it's a Nordic center. It is a recreational area. It's an area that has trails and group hikes. I think it's a little of both. I don't think it has to be one or the other. I do think you have to lean in one direction or another.

Ms. Zanca: The first goal in the document is: insure the protection of natural resources within Cucumber Gulch Preserve. Then, the second goal is: balance recreational access with the preservation and enhancement of natural resources.

Mr. Bergeron: Well, that's what this discussion is. It's about the balance. I'm more concerned about the new development on Peak 8 and how that is going to affect sediment into the 60-inch pipe. That is something that worries me more than the Peaks Trail portal.

Mr. Barlow: One thing I want to clarify, we are referring to the 2003 Cucumber Gulch Plan, but there is a 2012 Plan with a much different spirit. Does that mean that the 2012 Plan is our guiding document?

Ms. Lowe: Yes. The 2012 Management Plan replaced the 2003 Cucumber Gulch Plan. Here is the resolution from 2012. It set forth a number of goals, including #1 – to protect the sensitive natural resources that may need additional conservation, provide for limited, managed public access, and monitor those resource values. So that's the approach that staff have been using in managing this Preserve, adhering to the 2012 Management Plan. It's really why we brought this to you a couple of years ago, because we have continued to study and monitor and are starting to see changes. That's why we recommended putting the trail on the perimeter in the first place. Another interesting thing we've compiled is our Preserve numbers. Since 2009 we've been monitoring visitor use and this is the first time ever, we've tipped over 50,000 observations in the Preserve from July 6th to September 30th. We've had data missing at points, but we've seen a steady increase yearly to a very large number.

Ms. LaRochelle: Can you go back to the 2012 Management Plan priorities? So these are in essence replacing the 2003 priorities?

Ms. Lowe: Yes. It says right here that this plan is adopted as the Town's plan for the current and future management of the Preserve. That is the latest plan of record that we follow.

Question from public about CGP visitor observation numbers (inaudible)

Ms. Lowe: We monitor visitor use while the Preserve is open, so those numbers are from July 6th to September 30th of each year. We've been monitoring with TRAFx trail counters at 4 different trail portals in Cucumber since 2009. Those are the numbers that were coming back on our counters. They are trail counters, and it is an imperfect system, it's possible that people are going out and back and hitting them more than once.

Mr. Barlow: What's the difference between Option #3 and Option #3+?

Mr. Overlock: They're very similar. We are looking at doing another partial reroute to avoid another section of fall-line section of trail. And looking at not only the existing trail as it connects

down into the wetlands, but also what improvements we can make; whether that's drainages or improving erosion. In general, it's an overall improvement of the trail. It's something we've always wanted to do, just waiting on what's going to happen with these realignments. I feel like the approach in improvements in Option #3+ also needs to be more of a broader look into the Gulch as well, not just this specific trail. We should consider; how does the signage look? How does the fencing look? How is wayfinding? That's just more of the overall approach. So, Option #3+ would be the route we walked and an additional reroute. *Shows Option #3 and Option #3+ on map* We then looked at potentially rerouting this fall line section of trail that goes down here and is really wide and eroded, and instead doing a lateral traverse. And then just looking at the overall trail system and how we can improve it sustainably wise and improve drainages.

Ms. Zanca: Does Option #3+ reduce habitat fragmentation?

Mr. Overlock: No. And that's the thing. We all could agree when we walked it, that this was a really nice trail alignment and it's a big improvement from the existing trail, but it does not reduce wildlife fragmentation.

Mr. Tennial: But it does improve the hydrology and the drainage?

Mr. Overlock: That it does. And it improves user experience, and it provides better trail sustainability. The existing fall line section of the trail has lots of roots and erosion, it's constantly wet and muddy in those areas.

Ms. Joyce: There was also some talk about how more dollars from BGV or others, would be able to push this even further to the road, without this being a paved trail. Is that still something on the table to consider?

Ms. Lowe: That is what Bill Mangle clarified today. A perimeter trail is his recommendation, but if there is a way to get it from Peak 8 to Peak 7, which we assume would be highly engineered, that's what Bill considers a compromise in still trying to get folks to Peak 7. We aren't engineers, so we don't know how feasible that is or how much it would cost. That would be one way to keep the trail in the Preserve and off the road, while still protecting the bulk of habitat and wetlands.

Mr. Rossi: We talked a few meetings ago about the topography just beneath the road. What is that like?

Ms. Lowe: I don't have the topo map available right now, but it is extremely steep. That's why I think that anything that would go in that area would have to be highly engineered. It's really steep with that existing sound wall there now.

Mr. Bergeron: Mr. Mangle is an ecological planner, correct? Is there a difference between a wildlife habitat expert, for lack of a better phrase, and what Mr. Mangle is?

Ms. Lowe: There are folks who are much more wildlife specific, or even focused on certain types of wildlife, compared to what Bill does. He tends to compile much of the information he gets from experts as well, which he did with our Master Plan process. He was looking at Forest Service data, Colorado Natural Heritage Preserve data, and all kinds of information.

Mr. Bergeron: Would he look at data from the Gulch specifically? Would he be boots on the ground in our Gulch to evaluate that? Or is he more looking at statewide trends?

Ms. Lowe: I assume he's a bigger perspective. He's put together a lot of regional plans in Colorado. He put together all the components in our Master Plan.

Mr. Tennial: Thank you guys for lots of great information. Greg and Marika, thank you for driving the process and all the additional information, feedback, and everyone's enthusiasm. My first year on BOSAC was 2012, which was the year the most recent guiding document for Cucumber Gulch was published. I just want to speak about the evolution and timeline that we tend to look at Cucumber Gulch. It has changed so much and there are different pressures now. 2003 was obviously a different time. There wasn't a gondola and there wasn't nearly the same amount of development. 2012 was again, a different time. We've seen major flooding events that changed our outlook on Cucumber Gulch. A lot of how I look at this, is in the same type of timeframe. I don't think we are rushed in making a decision on this one, in my point of view. I want to take in all the information we can gather. We have a lot of great information from EcoMetrics and others. As I'm looking at it, it's the health of the Preserve first. The wetlands and the fens are something that is not replicable anywhere in Colorado. There are not many examples of this. Balancing that with sustainable recreation and wildlife habitat, which we all know is such a challenge. Third, look for any opportunities to expand the footprint, like when we acquired "The Wedge." That's kind of BOSAC's primary objective is to acquire as much open space land as we can wrangle and protect in perpetuity. I don't really have anything for your questions Greg, but I don't think we require much more, because I do think we are getting a lot of information on this, but more just a note on the cadence and timeline that it takes to make a decision on this. I'm looking at it in decade long type of metrics, as opposed to what we need to do before the end of the season.

Ms. Joyce: I echo what Chris said. I really appreciate you guys all coming here and it's really helpful to hear from the community on this one. I hope you know we care a ton about this as well, which is why we are taking so long with this. We've requested a lot of additional data, multiple times. I look forward to reading this new packet in detail. Option #3+ to me can make some trail improvements and I agree that I do not like the trail popping out at Peak 8 on Ski Hill for a variety of reasons. You mentioned some of them, I don't think it's the best place. I also do want to be really respectful that this is a Preserve and we do really need to understand what this is doing to the wildlife corridors. I think we've gotten a little information that isn't all that clear as we might need to make a final decision. How much impact does moving this trail have versus closure, which at this point is not my preference. I'd like to keep this available. There is a good point made on the access issues for locals. Some parts of our Master Plan in addition to preservation is trail connection and popping out at the Peaks Trail does achieve that. I don't think we need a whole lot more information and I think we should not be rushing this. We don't have to make a decision right now. Look forward to hearing more from CPW, I know that's one outstanding question and want to understand how moving the upper section of trail impacts wildlife or not. We have a good understanding of the impact on the wetlands, but less so for wildlife. Moose are obviously the easiest ones to see and track, we know that there is a lot, but it's a lot harder to anecdotally make decisions about smaller wildlife. I'd defer to the experts on that one.

Mr. Bergeron: I was just hoping for some clarification of the 2003 Plan vs the 2012 Plan?

Ms. Crawford: I was just looking at this but would say we need to do a little more homework. I agree that the 2003 Document is probably still in effect, but that was the Recreation Master Plan. The 2012 Document is entitled the Management Plan. When looking at page 8 of the 2012 Management Plan, it does precisely talk about balancing needs, but the primary purpose is to preserve the wetlands.

Mr. Barlow: Do we add the layer of the most recent Master Plan too? Do you have expertise on how you should lean on each of these documents.

Ms. Crawford: Mr. Ruckman has presented you with a 2003 ordinance. That ordinance was the vehicle that adopted your Cucumber Gulch Recreation Master Plan. In that document there were goals, one thing I had talked to you about last time I was here is there is a significant difference between a "vision goal document," like the one Mr. Ruckman is presenting to you and was adopted in 2003, versus your development code or your codes that have more enforceability based on criteria. So, I do think that is something you can take into consideration, this 2003 document, but it is also true that in 2012, the Town Council adopted by resolution the Cucumber Gulch Preserve Management Plan. In that document, on page 8, it talks about balancing the primary purpose of preservation with the historical use/recreational purposes. It sounds like you have some great expert advice on the impacts. If there is anything I said about that 2012 document that needs to be corrected I will follow up with you, but that's what I'm reading here.

Mr. Rossi: Jeffrey, were you and I both on BOSAC in 2003? Well, it feels like we were arguing about this in 2003, and in 2012, and every year in-between. I think that's the hard part. One of the interesting comments in the email from Brad Johnson was debating whether the Gulch is to be managed foremost as a habitat preserve or a recreational resource. We have debated that back and forth. You all being here is a sign of the balance that we have to strike because some of us do want the "either/or," but I don't know that we are ever going to get there. I just don't think it's possible. All the years we've be dealing with this... we've had Jess (Doran) here, Christy Corello, etc... it's always been conversations about the cowbirds and the impacts of the gondola. At one point, I think the argument was "well, let's just let it go," because we are spending a ton of money on it and still seeing declining numbers. I was one of the proponents of what Chris called "the Luge." I think you've made a compelling case on why that actually isn't a great idea. I wanted to find a way to preserve the recreation aspect, without the impacts. I agree with Chris that this is going to take a while. I think the compromise is probably going to mean something that's going to take some time and treasure, if we do decide that we want to be closer along the road but still maintain an experience for you and everyone else. The 50,000-person figure really strikes me as crazy, kind of out there, but it does show how this place has changed. Anything we can do to maintain some of the things that make this place special. I worked on this trail and helped build it and that was a long time ago. Thank you for coming, thank you for presenting these things, thank you for raising money; I think it's not going to be enough for the ultimate solution, but I do think we have the resources to actually put towards this and it's important that we do. I do want to hear from some more people. Like Chris and Krysten said, it's going to be a long journey, but I'm confident we will get there. I really appreciate you guys bringing this and fighting for it.

Ms. Zanca: I do think that community input is critical and you're community. You all can give us ideas that we might not have come up with or that we would have seen in a different light. That's so important when trying to make a big decision on a very precious resource that's used by a lot of people, 50,000 apparently, and it's showing its wear and tear. We do need to take into consideration both the value for people to use, as well as its Preserve nature. I think we can, it's just that it's not a "one and done" type of thing. We need to think about all this and see what the best compromise is to get everybody as much as we possibly can, both protecting the Preserve and making it a good place for people to recreate in.

Ms. LaRochelle: I'll echo the appreciation and you've clearly put a lot of time and energy into this. Thank you for that. I would just add, the thing I'm eager to hear about is CPW's perspective on smaller animals. I think moose have overshadowed the smaller creatures we haven't talked about like pine marten, heron, mink, geese, and porcupines. I do want to hear more about those animals specifically. Broader thoughts are... this place is a Nordic center for 6 months out of the year and we need to keep that in mind as we have this conversation. It's easy to forget and it's really important. I think the function of the trail is going to be totally different if we do this perimeter reroute vs the 3/3+ alignment. They're totally different functions and experiences, one is a thoroughfare in essence, while the other is creating a user experience. I feel really torn on this one. I go back and forth a lot. But what is clear to me is that preservation seems to be the highest calling for us. I think we need to orient around our Master Plan. I think clarity on which takes priority. This is a Conservation Overlay, we only have 8 of those in our whole Master Plan area, that means something. Is that more important than the Recreation Plan? Or a prior management plan? I don't know. I'd like to understand that better, because I think we can voice our personal opinion, but we need to look to the Master Plan for guidance.

Mr. Barlow: I don't feel like we need additional CPW resources, that's just me. I feel like, well, Brad Johnson said it, it's not really about if there is impact on wildlife, it's more how do we balance that with recreation. Same with the gondola study, which said "you have two conflicting conclusions, but they're not disputing the fact. It's where you draw the line in the sand and how much impact is bad vs good." To me, what I'm seeing is a consensus on that, maybe I'm misreading it.

Ms. Joyce: I think it's important that as we are going through this exercise with staff, BOSAC, and the community... this isn't a black and white decision where we are choosing either wildlife or recreation. I think we all understand that. Even if preservation is our "North Star" as some of these documents are pointing out, I think there is hopefully a way we can reach a balanced perspective on this. I don't think many of us feel that it is a black and white decision and that's why it's taking so long, because we care so much about both. To be able to find that compromise is going to take some time and some additional information. I do look forward to hearing from CPW and putting this all together. We've heard so many different types of experts, its hard to grapple with what is the true story regarding the wildlife piece.

Ms. LaRochelle: Anne, could you speak to what CPW would provide for us?

Ms. Lowe: It's really what we ask of them. They have boreal toad experts and experts well versed in other areas more focused on habitat. I think it's worth asking what all they can offer to this picture of the Preserve.

Mr. Barlow: I just want to answer a few more questions from the Friends of Cucumber Gulch. Like everyone has said, thank you. Your participation has made the process better. Now we are realizing how complicated it is and didn't close anything this fall, aren't in any hurry to do so in the future. No matter where we wind up, I think that's a credit to you being here. So I would say to your question of "if you need more people?" I don't think so, but we want you to stay involved people. I'm not sure we need a wildlife expert. I don't know about money. I'm feeling confident we will work through this and don't need mediation, that's my opinion as well. I feel like we are able to keep getting the pieces that we want and then can make a recommendation. I feel like the process is working and if it's slow that doesn't mean that it is failing. Can we compile a list of what other information we want for the next steps? CPW, whatever we can get from them, like you said, there is a range of stuff.

Mr. Tennal: A hierarchy of the ruling documents?

Mr. Duke: Yes. If this is realistic, I would love a little more understanding of the compromise, the "engineered trail." Right now, all we know is it would be really expensive and tricky to engineer. Is that unrealistic though? Just getting a rough idea of what this would look like and what it would entail?

Ms. Lowe: I think it's highly conceptual, but worth exploring. We can start having some of those conversations for sure.

Mr. Bergeron: I would like to bring Kelly into the equation and see her opinion or another local expert. Wouldn't have to be a serious document, just kind of an overview of what their thoughts are.

Ms. Zanca: Will we see Option 3+ marked in the field?

Mr. Overlock: It's pretty much what we walked before, with an additional smaller reroute and what other enchantments we can do to the existing trail structures.

C) 2024 TOB OPEN SPACE GRANT REVIEW

Ms. Lowe: As many of you may recall, the Town has a very robust grants program. It provides funds to area nonprofits and other groups who are doing great things in our community. We have historically supported two organizations that have come back year after year – The Colorado 14er's Initiative and Friends of Dillon Ranger District. Both have come back this year at the exact requests for funding that they did last year. What's included in your packet is a little spreadsheet displaying those requests. The Colorado 14'ers are asking for \$10,000. They do tons and tons of trail maintenance on the Quandary Trail, hardening the surface and putting in steps at high, high elevations. They do a lot of education and trail counts. They do a lot with that \$10,000. We're always happy to have them as a partner for the work that they do up there. Friends of the Dillon Ranger District is asking for \$15,000, like they did last year. This is the group we haven't gotten the final report from how they've used the 2023 dollars. I would like to request that report before any of this is finalized, to see what they've done with that funding. This year they're requesting funding for now is a lot of trail maintenance, wildlife habitat, and forest stewardship projects. I

think the Spruce Creek area was called out in particular, which is a very congested trailhead in our area. BOSAC makes a recommendation on funding these two organizations, which then goes to the Town Council, who ultimately decides which organizations are getting funding and at what levels. We do always budget \$25,000 out of the Open Space & Trails budget to fund this particular Town grant program. We have asked for these funds; we know these organizations very well. Would love your feedback on funding them or any other feedback regarding the organizations.

Ms. Zanca: On the Colorado 14'ers Initiative Report, it has a lot of words and says that they did a lot of stuff, but it doesn't tell us what they did. I'd kind of like to know what the result was, other than just the number of days they were on the mountain.

Ms. Lowe: This is just a quick summary. There is a lot more information on their application. I can send you more detailed information.

Ms. Zanca: Their metrics on Quandary visitation are really different from the Summit County shuttle report.

Ms. Lowe: It's tough with the parking. We don't count the number of people in the car if they have a parking reservation. The total number of people isn't captured on the Quandary parking report. We rely pretty heavily on the 14'ers trail counts that they do higher up the trail.

Ms. King: Katherine from Summit County Open Space & Trails here. We used CFI's trail counter data in the report as far as actual hiker numbers goes. To be honest, I don't have both sets of numbers in front to compare how similar/dissimilar they are. There are also counts based on the number of reservations bought and shuttle data. Anne is correct in saying we don't know the exact numbers of people in each car. We do generally rely on CFI's trail counters for people on the trail actually hiking up to Quandary, those numbers as far as people should be similar.

Ms. Zanca: When I looked it at it, CFI has 22,000 hikers in 2022, while the shuttle report showed 18,000 hikers. It seemed like there was a pretty big disconnect between the numbers in the two reports.

Ms. King: I'll have to look into that. I'm happy to chat with them about why those numbers might be different.

Ms. Zanca: Potentially different time periods?

Ms. King: We generally are summarizing the data that coincides with our shuttle and parking season. Whereas they are maybe looking at winter use and it's surprising how much winter use occurs on Quandary. That's a great point, that could be it.

Mr. Bergeron: Did FDRD specify what they want to do on Spruce Creek Trailhead?

Mr. Overlock: A lot of their work has been focused on drainages and new bridge structures on the Spruce Creek Trail. Nothing with the trailhead.

Mr. Bergeron: What needs love is the parking.

Ms. Lowe: That is part of an ongoing effort. The Forest Service has hired the Volpe Center, part of the US Department of Transportation, to look at trailheads across the county. Spruce Creek is high on the priority list of trying to solve that parking issue. Maybe it becomes like Quandary with a parking and shuttle system. Not quite sure if there is room there to expand parking. We also expect that area to see more use as it's an entry point into the new National Monument.

Mr. Rossi: I am struggling a little bit with CFI's conclusion on their numbers. I think they are making an assertion about why the numbers have dropped, that I don't particularly love, because I think it does go after our program. I think that's fair, and we should be open to criticism. However, I think their visitation numbers across the state declined broadly after the pandemic. The Town of Breckenridge's sales tax numbers have gone down, visitation has gone down countywide. I really disagree with this, and they've been vocal in the media about this, and I think it has done a disservice to the Town and the County in this regard, because I think both entities worked really hard on this shuttle program. I'm disappointed this conclusion was reached without any evidence whatsoever.

Ms. Lowe: My thoughts and from what I've heard, is that they've spent all this money and resources which we've given them over the years to harden the trail surface on Quandary to support large numbers of people. Our parking and shuttle system is self-limiting; it can only accommodate so many people. So, what is the sweet spot? I don't think we know exactly, and we are always trying to figure out capacity and how we define that. That's a really challenging thing. I think CFI's opinion is that whatever that capacity is, we don't want 2022 numbers when we were the number one visited 14er in the state, with 50,000 people. But still, maybe a little bit more than the 22,000 people we saw this last year.

Mr. Rossi: What I don't like is that they use 2020 as the reference point. It would be much more worthwhile if they shared 2019. People can argue whether or not additional impacts to a trailhead or additional traffic are always a good thing. I know that their mission is to have as many people as possible climbing the 14ers as possible, it's admirable. I think people could disagree, but I think using the pandemic as their starting point makes me skeptical of their conclusion.

Ms. King: That was a great point, David. I wanted to say that OSAC also picked up on that. Regarding some of the press that's been out about the shuttle, they also felt it was a little disingenuous using the COVID era numbers. They would like to have some more staff level discussions, that's really where those conversations should be happening. It's more than just the media saying, "it's a direct result of the shuttle/parking program." There are a lot of other factors at play. We can do more to work with their staff about and talk about some of those limitations. I would also add it's not really clear if CFI's mission is "to get as many people as possible on the 14ers," if you look at their stated mission it really is more about resource protection and stewardship. That has traditionally been their mission, so I am also not sure if focus has shifted a little bit.

Ms. Lowe: So how should we approach this? Would you like me to send that information back; that we feel there needs to be staff level discussion about some of the conclusions they're drawing

that we don't agree with? Do you not want to fund them? Do you want to fund them at a different rate? You have a lot of options available to you.

Mr. Rossi: I am happy funding them and would defer to the staff's judgement on the value. They're a good group, but I think if people were to read this and connect the media that CFI has definitely been apart of pushing out there, then I don't think its supportive of our efforts here. What I'd like to share with them, Mr. Sargent, or whoever, is "help us make it better!" If you have problems with it, help us make that program better. What are your ideas? Not just "it's because of paid parking." I would prefer a solution.

Ms. Zanca: Well, depending on their mission, they're kind of contradicting themselves? Controlling parking does help protect the environment there, so I'm puzzled. Is this the month we have to say yes or no for the grants?

Ms. Lowe: It is, because the Town needs to know to pass it on to Council by Thursday.

Ms. LaRochelle: Anne, you said Friends of Dillon Ranger District didn't send in a final report? I think organizations need to submit a final report. I think it's important and critical for us to be responsible for how we are offering money. I think there should be a contingency of releasing funds if there is no final report submitted, I don't think we should give them money. That sounds like it might be harsh but how many years in a row have they not submitted a report?

Mr. Tennal: They do submit a final report, but it's just not in the cadence of this grant cycle. That could change their entire business model.

Ms. LaRochelle: Could they submit a report up to the point to which we were requesting it? I mean it feels negligible to submit nothing, especially when we request it every year.

Mr. Bergeron: We just did the grants, and we had a few really worthy organizations that we turned down, because they didn't comply to our timeline of submission. We thought we'd give them a pass, but someone up the ladder said "well, if we do that... then no one will do it." I'm with Nikki on that one.

Ms. LaRochelle: The final report doesn't have to be extensive, correct? Generally speaking, they're just a few pages long, it doesn't seem that arduous to expect when we are giving them thousands of dollars.

Ms. Joyce: I agree. Sets a bad precedent for future funding opportunities, that we won't hold them to requirements that we set out to.

Ms. LaRochelle: Is the grant application the same for the county and across the municipalities? A standard application? If that's the case, then a report is required.

Ms. Zanca: Is the report required to be submitted with the application or at another time? In real world contracting, if the reports are not with the application, then the application is tossed.

Ms. Lowe: I'm hearing a lot of "make it contingent." Next year we can say don't apply unless you have a report prepared.

Mr. Barlow: Is the timing ok still? Can we get a final report from FDRD and still fund them?

Ms. Lowe: Yes, it is. The funds aren't released until some time after the 1st of the year, because it goes into next year's budget cycle.

Ms. Zanca: It's October now, what's the deal with the timeline? Why don't they wait until the spring for the grant to be awarded?

Ms. Lowe: The Town grants are dispersed to the different subcommittees before they go to Town Council, so there is a whole process. That's why it happens in the fall, so they can get that final approval from the Council and then funds are dispersed the following year so we can all budget for that.

Mr. Bergeron: We ask them every year to submit a report and they haven't?

Mr. Barlow: We typically get it late.

Ms. Zanca: Time for a little tough love then because the other groups submit reports as they are required too. This group should as well.

Mr. Barlow: I think we have a consensus. FDRD is with contingency of report and CFI we are saying yes but help us find a solution for Quandary shuttle/parking system.

Ms. Joyce: And that we look forward to the staff level conversations about our shared concerns on the data. Also, some better clarity on their mission versus what they're reporting in this letter.

Mr. Rossi: Don't bite the hand that feeds you would be my message to them. They didn't need to put that in there, they've been poking us in the eye in the media for a year now. It needs to stop.

Mr. Tennial: Well, I think some of CFI are probably speaking for some of voices that they're hearing. In the 14er community it's not an overtly popular program. They are going to be a conduit for some of that, even if it's a little bit of a poke like this one.

Mr. Rossi: Bring me the data that's real, this data doesn't work.

Ms. Joyce: They need to come to the table and help us make the shuttle program better.

Mr. Bergeron: I agree, I know it's a pain in the neck, but it's much better now than it was when it was bedlam on Highway 9. Sure, it's inconvenient, but the program the County put together is much better than when it was "Mad Max" on Highway 9.

D) COUNCIL MATTERS RELATED TO OPEN SPACE

Mr. Bergeron: We've been dealing with BGV and are incrementally getting closer to fruition. It's going to take a while, but in a nutshell, it's going to improve what it will be. I think we are going to get some dough out of it when it comes to community development. I got a call from Kelly and Jay Beckerman about the Laurium site visit. A bit of a short notice, but both of them had serious concerns about the proposal and want to learn more about it. I did talk to an excavator and asked him to take a look at it. His quote was "anything can be done with dirt and rock," referring to the West side of the gate. That's about it, we are about wrapped up with this BGV thing which hopefully will mean good things for BOSAC.

Mr. Barlow: For those that couldn't make it (to Laurium) some of the feedback from Jay and Kelly was, maybe if it's going to be inside the gate it could be smaller. Potentially only going half as deep into the Open Space where it was originally flagged, which would be 12 spots, or conceivably look to the South where there are some trees, but relatively flat land. I think Kelly's point was "it's ok to cut some down trees nowadays if that's the best solution." They wanted to vet those ideas as well.

Ms. Zanca: Can I ask a question about the BGV funding? Are they going to make it for something in particular, or just a certain amount of money...?

Mr. Bergeron: Well, a couple of things have been discussed, one is an initial gift to the Gulch, because it's going to be right at the base of Peak 8. Another thought was a nightly rate or in other words, a dollar or two per bed. This is still way in the infancy, but something that was brought up early on to see what the community benefit could be. It would probably be directed, if it was a one-time gift, with the purview of staff and commission how it's spent, but I think the suggestion is that it would be targeted at the Gulch. The same thing with "bed fee," it would also be directed to the Gulch because it's an amenity for their guest as well.

Ms. Zanca: Do they want an access point (to the Gulch) near their new facility?

Mr. Bergeron: No, that hasn't been brought up yet.

E) OTHER MATTERS

Mr. Bergeron: I did talk to Tony Overlock about this earlier, but I was cross-country skiing at Brown's Gulch today and they decommissioned the parking on the other side of the road, but the new parking lot is still blocked off and not open. Once we get a respite from this weather, it would be good to get that finished. That's a preferred, early season location because of the north facing aspect.

Ms. Lowe: That's definitely on everyone's mind and I know Troy was trying desperately to finish that before the snow hit. He is very close to wrapping that up and opening it soon.

VII) EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mr. Barlow moved that BOSAC go into executive session under C.R.S. § 24-6-402(4) for the purpose of determining positions relative to matters that may be subject to negotiations, developing strategies for negotiations, and/or instructing negotiators concerning a property that the Town may be interested in acquiring for open space purposes. Mr. Rossi seconded the motion. BOSAC went into an executive session at 7:44 PM.

The executive session of BOSAC concluded at 8:00 pm. The participants in the executive session were Duke Barlow, Krysten Joyce, Nikki LaRochelle, David Rossi, Chris Tennial, Bobbie Zanca, and Council liaison Jeffrey Bergeron. Staff present included Anne Lowe, Tony Overlock, Alex Stach, and Julia Puester. Katherine King was present from Summit County Open Space & Trails.

VIII) ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn the BOSAC meeting was made by Mr. Bergeron, and Mr. Tennial seconded it. The October 30, 2023 regular meeting of BOSAC ended at 8:01 pm.

The next regular meeting of BOSAC is scheduled for November 27, 2023.

Duke Barlow, Chair

Memorandum

To: Breckenridge Open Space Advisory Commission
From: Open Space & Trails Staff
Re: November 27, 2023 Meeting

Staff Summary

Field Season Update

Our summer field season has come to a close. Our Operations Lead, Joel Dukes, is excited to present this field season's accomplishments at our upcoming December meeting. The last few weeks our staff has completed the following:

- Removed and installed seasonal signage.
- Harvested buck and rail material.

Additionally, Higher Ground Earthworks completed the Browns Gulch Trailhead and started work on the new wheelchair accessible trail that will connect to the Sawmill Reservoir. The new trail will be completed in May, including the addition of two ADA spots the Sawmill Reservoir Trailhead.

Signage Workplan RFP

Staff recently completed a Trailhead Assessment document to accompany our ArcGIS Sign Database and a collection of images displaying the many different sign and kiosk types on open space lands around the Town of Breckenridge. These inventories will be important resources for the creation of the Signage Workplan. The RFP is currently being drafted and staff expects to finalize the document by the first week of December.

Memorandum

To: Breckenridge Open Space Advisory Commission
From: Open Space & Trails Staff
Re: November 27, 2023 Meeting

Open Space & Trails Discussion

New Trail Construction Projects for 2024

In 2020, BOSAC approved six non-motorized trail projects within the Golden Horseshoe. These trails were meant to improve connections between existing routes, create separation between motorized and non-motorized use, and provide alternate access points to alleviate crowding at popular trailheads. These trails included the following: Upper Chantilly Trail connection, extension of the Mineral Hill Trail, Tiger Road to Galena, Rock Island, Upper Flume to Chantilly, and Dry Gulch to ZL. In conjunction with Summit County Open Space and USFS, a National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) was conducted in 2021, and all six trails were approved. These new trail projects were also presented to Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) due to concerns regarding wildlife with the Rock Island connection, Chantilly to Upper Flume, and Dry Gulch to ZL. Consequently, those three trail projects were put on hold until further information could be gained from CPW.

In 2023, staff meet with our local CPW district wildlife officer to review in detail, and walk, the Chantilly to Upper Flume connection and the Dry Gulch to ZL connection. Our local CPW wildlife officer approved of the two trails due to the proximity of the existing trail system surrounding these connections. In 2024, staff would like to move forward with constructing these two connections in partnership with Summit County Open Space.

Please see enclosed Trail Development Guidelines for the two projects and associated maps.

Staff requests that BOSAC review the information above and answer the following questions:

- 1. Does BOSAC have any questions about the two trail projects?**
- 2. Does BOSAC support moving forward with the two trail projects in 2024?**

Forest Health Updates

Peabody Placer Project

The Peabody Placer Hazardous Fuels Reduction Project in the Golden Horseshoe, south of the Highlands in Breckenridge is now complete. This cross-boundary project on lands owned by Summit County, the Town of Breckenridge, and the US Forest Service- Dillon Ranger District was administered by the Colorado State Forest Service (CSFS). All aspects of the Scope of Work were completed in Units 1 & 2, including the rehabilitation of temporary roads and trail crossings. The USFS Unit 328 is fully treated, but the CSFS crew was unable to fully rehab the existing road that was improved before snow fell. Bill Wolf from CSFS will ensure to extend the CSFS held GNA contract and withhold the bond to ensure that this

work gets done next summer. Machine built slash piles at landing areas will be burned in the winter of 2024-2025, as conditions allow.

County Wide Burn Plan

Summit County Open Space & Trails hosted a Summit County Prescribed Pile Burning Information Session on November 15th. They have identified three sites ready for prescribed burning that meet the goals of the Summit County Wildfire Protection Plan, including the jointly owned Bacon Lode Open Space, just east of Breckenridge. There is a priority order based on when treatments were performed and the backlog of piles, but burns will happen opportunistically if one site is in prescription. Summit County Open Space & Trail's Programmatic Burn Plan has been reviewed by multiple wildland fire professionals and was approved by Sheriff Jamie FitzSimons. The operations will be jointly conducted by the Division of Fire Prevention & Control and Summit County Fire & EMS, with support from Red, White & Blue and the Summit County Sheriff's Office. Ideally, only a single burn day would be required at each site. Pre-burn communications will begin 24 hours prior to the scheduled burn with specific communications to neighborhood partners and smoke sensitive individuals. There will also be posts and alerts through various media outlets, as well as VMS boards at neighborhood entrances and exits.

Staff requests that BOSAC review the information above and answer the following questions:

- 1. Does BOSAC have any questions about current or recently completed forest health projects?**
- 2. Does BOSAC have any feedback related to the community-wide communications on forest health activities?**

Council Matters Related to Open Space Topics

Jeffrey Bergeron, in his role as Council liaison to BOSAC, will provide updates on open space-related topics that Council has recently discussed.

Other Matters

This standing agenda item is intended to provide commissioners an opportunity to raise questions for a brief discussion and response, or to suggest items for upcoming agendas.

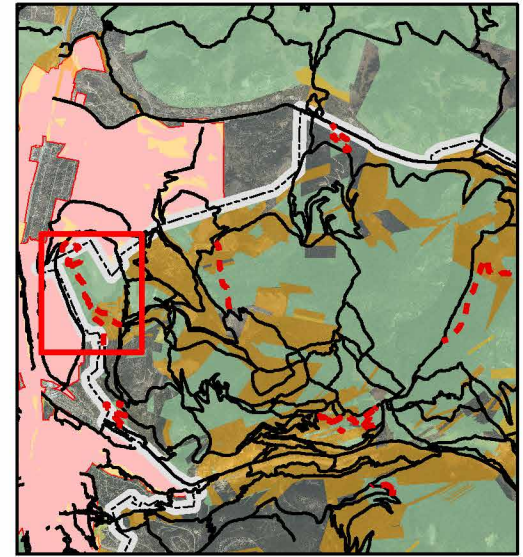
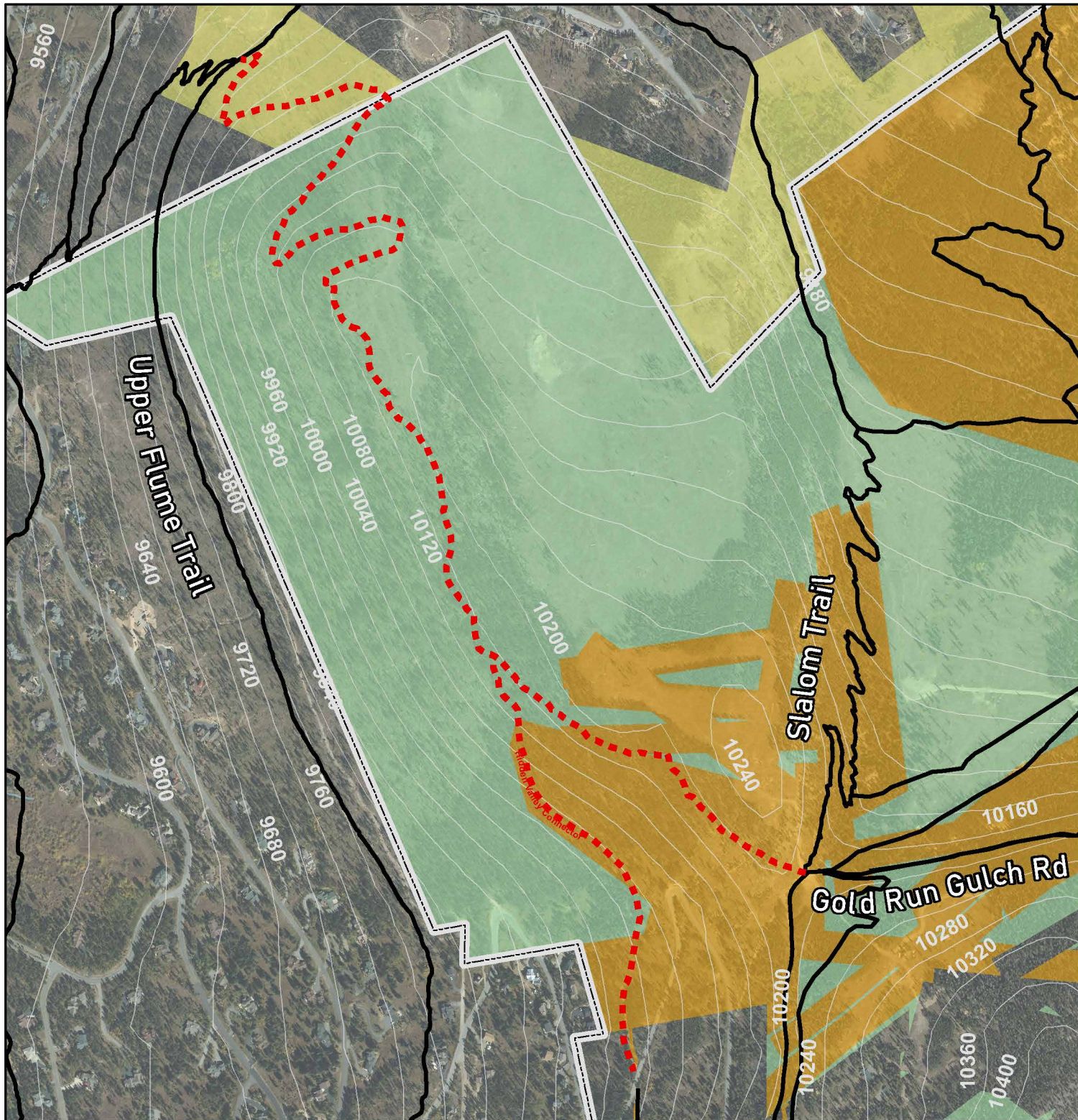
Master Plan Trail Development Guidelines: Upper Flume to Chantilly Connection








Conservation		User Experience		Community Context		Management	
Avoids Sensitive habitat and areas of high-quality natural resources, including wetlands?	Yes	Provide new or unique experience?	Yes	Impact the surrounding area either positively and or negatively?	Positive	How feasible is construction?	Standard construction, no unforeseen problems
Minimize new fragmentation of habitat blocks?	Yes	Provide an experience that the differently abled could benefit from?	No	Provide access to underserved communities?	No	How intense will the maintenance be?	Regular maintenance
Utilize existing roads of corridors?	No	Provide trail access and open space experience for all age groups?	Yes	Partnership Opportunities?	Yes – SC and USFS	Is the proposed trail compatible with the Management Zone in which it falls?	Yes – Frontcountry Management Zone
Provide opportunity to decommission roads or other disturbances?	Work with CPW	Improve user experience and circulation?	Yes				
Habitat Sensitivity	Low	Reduce potential for user conflict?	Yes				
Avoid Scenic Views and Visual Disturbances?	Yes, below ridgeline	Support distribution of users to minimize hot zones?	Yes				

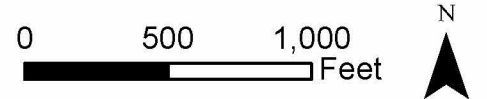
Master Plan Trail Development Guidelines: Dry Gulch to ZL

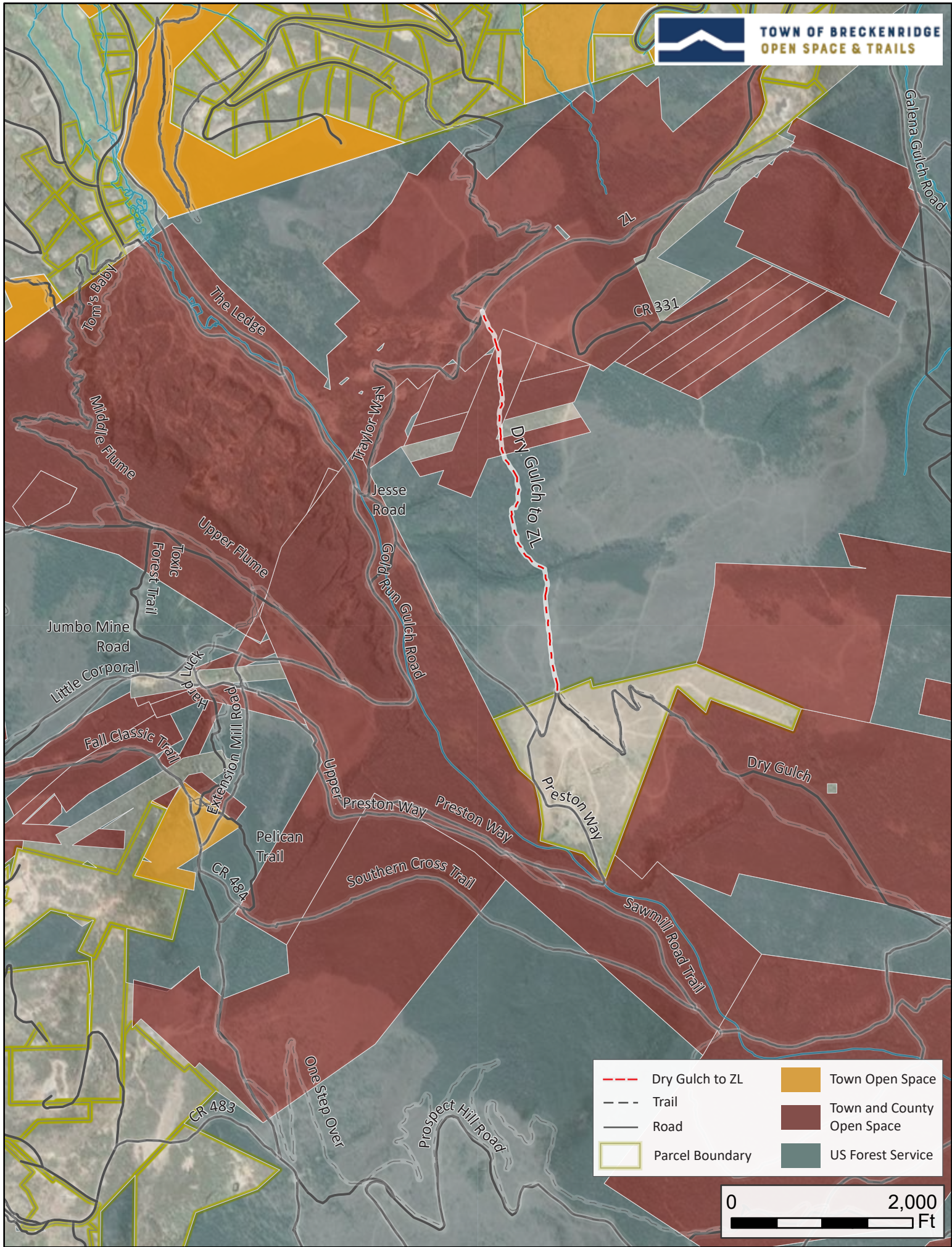
Conservation		User Experience		Community Context		Management	
Avoids Sensitive habitat and areas of high-quality natural resources, including wetlands?	Majority of trail use will occur outside wildlife sensitive time	Provide new or unique experience?	Yes	Impact the surrounding area either positively and or negatively?	Positive	How feasible is construction?	Standard construction, no unforeseen problems
Minimize new fragmentation of habitat blocks?	Yes	Provide an experience that the differently abled could benefit from?	No	Provide access to underserved communities?	No	How intense will the maintenance be?	Regular maintenance
Utilize existing roads of corridors?	No	Provide trail access and open space experience for all age groups?	Yes	Partnership Opportunities?	Yes – SC and USFS	Is the proposed trail compatible with the Management Zone in which it falls?	Yes – Midcountry Management Zone
Provide opportunity to decommission roads or other disturbances?	Work with CPW	Improve user experience and circulation?	Yes				
Habitat Sensitivity?	Low	Reduce potential for user conflict?	Yes				
Avoid Scenic Views and Visual Disturbances?	Yes, below ridgeline	Support distribution of users to minimize hot zones?	Yes				

2021 Proposed NEPA Trails: 4. Upper Flume to Chantilly/Gold Run



-  2021 NEPA Trails
-  Existing Trails
-  40ft Contours
-  Golden Horseshoe SUA
-  Breckenridge Open Space
-  Summit County Open Space
-  USFS lands





- - - Dry Gulch to ZL
- - - Trail
- Road
- Parcel Boundary
- Town Open Space
- Town and County Open Space
- US Forest Service

