

TOWN OF BRECKENRIDGE
OPEN SPACE ADVISORY COMMISSION
Monday, December 14, 2009
ADMINISTRATIVE CONFERENCE ROOM, BRECKENRIDGE TOWN HALL
150 Ski Hill Road

- 5:30 Call to Order, Roll Call
- 5:35 Discussion/approval of Minutes – November 16, 2009
- 5:40 Discussion/approval of Agenda
- 5:45 Public Comment (Non-Agenda Items)
- 5:50 Staff Summary
- Hidden Gems Letter
 - White River National Forest Breckenridge Forest Health and Fuels Project Letter
- 6:15 Open Space and Trails
- Josie’s Cabin Proposal
 - Trail Map Update
 - Upper Blue Nordic Master Plan Revision
 - Hoodoo Voodoo Trail and Dogs
- 7:30 Executive Session
- 8:00 Commissioner Issues
- 8:05 Adjourn

For further information, please contact the Open Space and Trails Program at 547.3110 (Heide) or 547.3155 (Scott).

Memorandum

To: Breckenridge Open Space Advisory Commission
From: Heide Andersen, Open Space and Trails Planner III
Mark Truckey, Asst. Director of Community Development
Scott Reid, Open Space and Trails Planner II
Re: December 14, 2009 meeting

Staff Summary**Hidden Gems Letter**

Based on Council direction, staff revised the comment letter regarding the Hidden Gems Wilderness proposal and presented it to Town Council. A copy of the letter is attached for BOSAC's review with Council's revisions as well.

White River National Forest Breckenridge Forest Health and Fuels Project Letter

Attached, please find a letter signed by Mayor Warner and submitted to the U.S. Forest Service regarding the Breckenridge Forest Health and Fuels Project. This letter was submitted to the USFS by the December 3, 2009 deadline.

Open Space and Trails**Josie's Cabin Proposal**

Gene Dayton, who operates the Breckenridge Nordic Center under contract from the Town, has proposed installing a propane-powered stove in Josie's Cabin (in the bottom of Cucumber Gulch Preserve) similar to those in the Kathy's and the Hallelujah Hut. Although any propane-powered stove must meet certain specifications and be approved by the Town Building official, BOSAC must also consider this proposal because it is in a Town-owned facility within the Cucumber Gulch Preserve.

BOSAC has considered this question previously, within another proposal which included sleigh ride tours and dinner service. The current proposal is simply to install the heating element (and associated infrastructure) to heat the cabin and provide daytime shelter to skiers and snowshoers utilizing the trails in the Breckenridge Nordic Center. The major issue that staff feels like should be addressed is whether it would be possible to lock the cabin for evening/non-use hours. It may not be desirable to have people in the cabin with food and no access to bathrooms, much less the potential safety hazard if the stove is left unattended for significant amounts of time.

Mr. Dayton will be present to discuss the proposal, but staff requests BOSAC consider the following questions:

- 1) *Does BOSAC support the proposal to add a propane-powered stove to Josie's Cabin in Cucumber Gulch?*
- 2) *If so, are there other limitations or considerations to be included in this approval?*

Trail Map Update

Staff has initiated an update to the summer trail map and seeks BOSAC's preliminary direction regarding qualities that will help define which trail loops to highlight on the map. BOSAC has previously directed staff to seek to drive trail use away from the Peaks Trail and towards other trails on the system. Staff had considered this direction and is beginning to consider several loops of various ability levels. However, staff has also received comments questioning the strategy of directing more use to currently lightly-used trails.

Staff seeks BOSAC direction regarding two questions:

- 1) *Is there BOSAC consensus regarding identifying recommended trail loops excluding the Peaks Trail?*
- 2) *As was suggested at its December meeting, does BOSAC support the idea of creating a subcommittee to assist with the summer trail map revision?*

Upper Blue Nordic Master Plan Revision

BOSAC has spoken in the past about revising the 2001 Upper Blue Nordic Master Plan. The 2001 plan is significantly outdated at this point, and it does make sense to revise it. The introduction, vision and goals and objectives have probably not changed a lot, but they could be updated to better address our current situation. The process discussion obviously ended in 2001, so there has been a lot that has changed since then, including the operation of Gold Run Nordic Center, the expansion into the Golden Horseshoe, the discussions over the development at Shock Hill and the nature/nordic center, and updated plans for the Peak 7 area.

The 2001 plan also mentions three phases. The first phase was the existing facilities and proposed expansions from these facilities controlled by the Town. The second phase was an expansion of the facilities and trail systems. The third phase was to represent an expansive system of trails (groomed and ungroomed) that would be connected to the nordic centers, directionally marked, and potentially integrated with a system of warming huts. The first two phases were addressed in the 2001 plan and the third phase was left to address later. At this point, there are changes and updates to be made to the first two phases and we are clearly at a point where we have already moved into the third phase.

Lastly, the conclusions are outdated. We have largely acted upon these conclusions and it is time to decide what the next direction is for nordic skiing in the Upper Blue. To this end, staff recommends that a subcommittee be formed that would include representation from BOSAC, TOB (Open Space, Recreation, and GRNC), the Breckenridge Nordic

Center, USFS, Summit County Government, and the nordic community in general (perhaps including a board member from the Summit Nordic Club?).

Questions for BOSAC include the following:

- 1) Does BOSAC agree with the idea of moving ahead with this project? If so, are there particular issues or concern that should be addressed?*
- 2) Does BOSAC agree with the recommended make-up of the subcommittee?*
- 3) Who would like to participate on the subcommittee as BOSAC representatives?*

Hoodoo Voodoo and Dogs

Recreation Department and Gold Run Nordic Center staff requested that this item be brought before BOSAC. When this trail was initially discussed and planned, it was determined that dogs would be allowed, given that they were either on a leash or skijoring. Evidently the dog presence has become a safety concern and the Gold Run Nordic staff would like to discuss a possible change with BOSAC.

Roll Call

Dennis Kuhn called the November 16, 2009 BOSAC meeting to order at 5:40 pm. Other BOSAC members present included Ellen Hollinshead, Erin Hunter, Jeff Cospolich, and Scott Yule. Staff members present were Heide Andersen, Scott Reid, Lynn Zwaagstra, Tony Overlock and Mark Truckey. Bernie Wieland and Bryan Whitcomb from the Warrior's Mark Homeowner's Association were also present. Scott Fortner from the Breckenridge Resort Chamber was also present.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes were approved as presented.

Approval of Agenda

The agenda was rearranged to accommodate the guests present.

Public Comments

Bill Lerch: I would like to pursue the option of volunteer grooming effort for Sallie Barber to accommodate walkers, skate skiers, classic skiing, etc. Would BOSAC be supportive of such an effort? I believe that the grooming would make the situation better for everyone. As proposed, the grooming would only occur about once per week.

BOSAC encouraged Mr. Lerch to work with Summit County to flesh the idea out and to consider the 2011-2012 for an experimental trial period for the proposed initiative. BOSAC did not reach consensus on support for such a proposal.

Staff Summary

Upper Blue Nordic Master Plan Revision

Ms. Hollinshead: Will this plan include ski touring outside of paid nordic areas? (Staff: The current document does not but the revision will likely include such considerations.)

Mr. Yule: What will be the public process for the development of this new plan? (Staff will work on this and get back to BOSAC. Perhaps a BOSAC subcommittee can help oversee the effort.)

Open Space and Trails

Hidden Gems Proposal

Ms. Hollinshead: This letter should be addressed to all congressional representatives and senators from Colorado. I would like to also see an exception to allow chainsaws to be used on the Quandary and McCullough Gulch trails, and others, to ensure more cutting can occur following the mountain pine beetle infestation and resulting blow-downs. Funding commitments for Hidden Gems for law enforcement, management and maintenance should also be included in the bill. These will both help address the fallout from the mountain pine beetle epidemic. The Summit Fate Tire Society is still negotiating with the Hidden Gems representatives on a few specifics. (Staff will follow up on this and clarify with Ms. Hollinshead.)

Mountain Bike Branding/ BRC Discussion

Mr. Reid discussed the genesis of the document. As previously discussed, it is not BOSAC's role to take on marketing and branding of mountain biking for the Town, but instead to manage the

open space resources. During the last BOSAC/Town Council meeting, Council discussed the need for a mountain biking branding document and a joint meeting with the BRC to help direct the BRC's message regarding mountain biking on Town open space. This document meets that need.

Mr. Reid outlined the specific points made in the branding document for the benefit of Scott Fortner of the BRC.

Ms. Hollinshead: This whole issue started during Golden Horseshoe process when someone suggested that Breckenridge should be a mountain biking "Mecca". BOSAC was concerned with this sentiment, because the area is not ready for that type of use. This document should help direct how the area can be marketed by the BRC and others.

Mr. Kuhn: I think it is clear that BOSAC is not responsible for marketing this area, but rather to acquire and manage open space and provide good, factual information for users wanting access to our public lands.

Mr. Fortner: There is a way to be proactive and get the right message across. I have experience with guiding documents such as this in Durango with Trails2000. I appreciate the help in helping us brand the area and get the message right. It is nice to have the terms of use, and getting the message out the right way. I think it would also be wise to have current conditions information about which trails are open and dry, and which are too muddy to use seasonally- similar to a fishing report. I would be happy to help spread that info, but could use more help on the status updates from open space staff or others.

Trails Map

Mr Reid outlined a new trail map proposal, including changing the scale to include the area between Hoosier Pass and Farmer's Korner, and to include routes on the Town, County and National Forest lands. The goal is to develop a map similar to the Park City map, with a shaded relief map background and highlighted loops. Staff seeks BOSAC's approval to move ahead with expenditure for this effort. OSAC has approved their portion of the project. The goal is to sell the map through the BRC and outdoor shops to help offset the production costs. 5000 maps is the currently targeted total for 2010.

Mr. Kuhn: I think this is better than what exists and also better than the current bar napkin approach.

Ms. Hollinshead: Would this work for hikers too? How about winter trails? Would it include Keystone as well? Content on seasonal closures would also be useful. (Staff: Yes, it would work for hikers, scale will be determined through the map scope. This is intended to be a summer, non-motorized trail map. We might need to focus another mapping effort on winter trails. We will work on some good content about seasonal closures of trails.)

Mr. Fortner: Will signage go along with this map? (Staff: That is one of the goals for this winter- to improve trail signage.)

Ms. Hunter: My concern is that putting a map out there will promote more trail use. (Staff: We already have a trail map; this would represent an improvement in terms of scale and wayfinding usefulness.)

Mr. Fortner: Once there is a central place to distribute this information, people will go there. This would be a great help and I think 5000 is too few for production.

Mr. Cospolich: I like the idea, but also think a \$1 one trail map description like what is found in Moab would also be nice. I would suggest not including Keystone, as the resort takes care of that. It will always be hard to hold the hand of someone going into backcountry. Also, it makes sense to include distances on map from point to point.

Mr. Yule: I am in favor of the map. Will it include the Breckenridge ski area trails? (Yes, hopefully.)

Mr. Kuhn: I am in favor of this effort, but it also seems that we need more information on a website, about current trail conditions, etc.

Mr. Fortner: People will come and will use this information. We just need guiding principles to direct use. Websites, blogs, getting the right journalists to get the message out would be our role, if BOSAC and Council support it.

Ms. Andersen: We should probably include Kim DiLallo in this discussion.

BOSAC directed staff to pursue the new map design and to include Kim DiLallo and the BRC on the planning for distribution of the map and other content.

Eagle's View/Burro Trail Access

Mr. Reid provided an overview of access issue. The Homeowner's Association requests the Town remove one dead tree and a medium sized rock to improve skiing access. Staff suggests that with BOSAC direction and landowner permission, the tree removal could occur in a very short time.

Brian Whitcomb: I am part of the Warrior's Mark HOA. I use this access a lot and do not agree that the Town has to ask permission to remove this tree and rock. You would simply be managing your existing easement.

Bernie Wieland: I am also here with Brian and as part of the Warriors Mark HOA. This would greatly help us access the ski area. This is not about cost; it is about making trail safer. The landowner might say okay, but possibly not as she is involved in a lawsuit right now. If Town has authority, we request that they remove this tree.

Ms. Hunter: Is this a safety issue? I don't want this to be a precedent for other homeowners wanting to improve ski area access. Also, procedurally, it makes more sense for the homeowners to ask the landowner before coming to Town to ask for the removal of these things.

Ms. Hollinshead: I am OK with this because the improvements will also improve nordic skiing access.

Mr. Yule: I think it's a good idea to remove just one tree and boulder.

Mr. Cospolich: I agree with Erin procedurally.

Mr. Kuhn: Since we have a trail sign and it is a safety issue, I will agree with this for this particular situation. We do need to get homeowner permission, though.

BOSAC directed staff to proceed with the removal of the dead tree and the rock, once landowner permission is granted.

White River National Forest Breckenridge Forest Health and Fuels Project

Ms. Andersen outlined the White River National Forest Breckenridge Fire Mitigation and Fuels project. Priority issues for discussion include the Barton Creek drainage, Indiana Creek, Western Bench, Lincoln Park, and Claimjumper areas.

Mr. Kuhn: Hand felling in the Cucumber Creek drainage seems the best way to go.

Ms. Hunter: The Lincoln Park clear cuts seem too close to the wetlands. They should not focus on that area with machines and cuts.

Ms. Hollinshead: My concern is wildlife, particularly in Barton Gulch. I am also concerned with the temporary forest roads proposed throughout the area. I think the Mineral Hill patch (112) be switched to hand crew treatment to accommodate skiing.

BOSAC supported staff working on a letter to the USFS for Council review and approval. BOSAC agreed with staff's proposal on the larger proposed areas.

Friends of Breckenridge Trails Update

Mr. Overlock provided an overview of the trail crew's work in 2009 and the Friends of Breckenridge Trails program.

BOSAC thanked Tony for all of its work and looked forward to future volunteer efforts.

2010 Workplan

Mr. Kuhn: Include working with the County to get an access across the Gustafson's property. Is the pump track popular? (Staff: Yes, and hopefully improvements will drive more use to it.) I would suggest a partnership on the restroom costs at F&D Placer with the BOEC.

Mr. Yule: What is the Barney Ford reroute? (Staff- to address the fall line section of trail, but depends on forest health plans.)

Commissioner Issues

There were no commissioner issues.

Next Meeting

BOSAC opted to change its December meeting time to December 14, 2009 at 5:30 pm in the Administrative Conference Room in Town Hall. The regularly scheduled December 21st meeting date is too close to the holidays for many members.

Mr. Cospolich motioned to adjourn the meeting and Mr. Yule seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 8:42 p.m.

Dennis Kuhn, Chair

December 9, 2009

Rep. Jared Polis
Washington, DC Office
501 Cannon HOB
Washington, DC 20515

Hidden Gems Wilderness Coalition
c/o Colorado Environmental Coalition
1536 Wynkoop Street, #5C
Denver, CO 80202

Dear Rep. Polis:

The Town of Breckenridge would like to comment on the Hidden Gems Wilderness Proposal, as presented on the website (<http://www.whiteriverwild.org/>), and as discussed between Coalition leaders and the Summit Wildfire Council on November 4th, 2009.

The Town of Breckenridge generally supports the concept of wilderness and the idea of expanding designated wilderness within Summit County and the White River National Forest. At the same time, we are concerned that , as it stands now, wilderness designation could impede our ability to fight wildfires and protect our watershed in the aftermath of wildfire. These are critical needs, particularly given the potential increased susceptibility of our forests in the wake of the mountain pine beetle infestation. The Town may need the ability to take proactive fire mitigation actions (e.g., firebreaks and other fuels management prescriptions), use roads and mechanical equipment to fight a wildfire, and locate and construct water quality protection structures or ancillary roads within some of the areas proposed as wilderness. Given that this process is dynamic and will take some time, The Town of Breckenridge would like to go on record stating that our elected officials will need to feel comfortable with specific entitlement language written into the wilderness designation legislation that would allow for the necessary proactive fuels mitigation work, immediate emergency wildfire response, and post-fire watershed protection (which may include structures and roads) in order to support the wilderness proposal. We do feel encouraged by statements from the Coalition that these stipulations can likely be addressed to our satisfaction, but we will need to withhold our support for the proposal until it is clear that we will have the ability to take necessary actions without cumbersome processes for the safety of our community.

The other issue of interest and concern to the Town has been the impacts of the wilderness designation on the mountain biking experience in the Upper Blue River basin. The most recent concessions to the mountain biking community, as represented through a memo to the Town of Blue River on October 23, 2009, and as presented on the latest version of the maps on the Hidden Gems website, address the Town's biggest concerns with possible losses to mountain bike trail access within the Hoosier Ridge and Tenmile proposed wilderness areas. At the same time, we do feel like it would make sense to wait until the final White River National Forest Travel Management Plan is released and evaluated before the

Hidden Gems Wilderness proposal legislation is introduced. There are other areas in the County where proposed wilderness boundaries and mountain bike access issues have not been completely worked out. The final Travel Management Plan may help resolve these issues. Once again, we would like to reserve final judgement on the topic of mountain bike access until the legislation is introduced and we can evaluate the associated maps.

At this point in time, the Town also strongly supports the consideration of either an alternative designation, or companion designations, for either the Hoosier Ridge or Tenmile proposed wilderness areas that would allow for non-motorized recreation (including mountain bikes), and any necessary watershed protection, wildfire emergency response, or proactive wildfire mitigation actions. We believe that alternative designations, or companion designations, have been very successfully implemented in other communities and that they make sense to pursue in our area. In any event, the Town of Breckenridge looks forward to continuing to work with our congressional delegation, the Coalition, Summit Wildfire Council, Summit Fat Tire Society, and the International Mountain Biking Association to reach a solution that protects our natural resources to the greatest degree possible while allowing for public safety and welfare.

Sincerely,

John Warner, Mayor

Cc: U.S. Sen. Mark Udall
U.S. Sen. Michael Bennett
State Sen. Dan Gibbs
State Rep. Christine Scanlan

December 3, 2009

Scott Fitzwilliams
White River Forest Supervisor
c/o Peech Keller
P.O. Box 620
Silverthorne, CO 80498

To Whom It May Concern,

The Town of Breckenridge (“Town”) would like to commend the White River National Forest for taking the initiative to address forest health and fire mitigation within the wildland/urban interface in the Upper Blue River Valley through the Breckenridge Forest Health and Fuels Project (the “Project”). The Town agrees with the need to address heavy fuels accumulations that could support large-scale wildfire caused to a large degree by the mountain pine beetle epidemic.

We also agree with the stated purpose of the proposed action, to the degree that it addresses community health and safety, the risk to community infrastructure, and increasing stand diversity and regeneration. At the same time, we do feel like it is very important to look at the specific environmental impacts of each treatment, particularly as they relate to potential habitat fragmentation, wildlife displacement, erosion, and impacts to sensitive ecological systems.

Our comments on specific project areas and their prescriptions are as follows:

101. This is the Claimjumper Parcel, slated to be divested to the Town as a part of the Peru Creek Land Exchange. The soils in this area were disturbed by mining activities resulting in residual heavy metals with potential impacts to human health. The soils with the highest toxic levels and the greatest chance for human contact were removed and taken to a repository site in French Creek to be capped and contained. However, less accessible piles of heavy metals were left onsite. We believe that the potential soil impacts and increased erosion from mechanical clearcutting could be problematic on this site and that a hand/limited mechanical prescription should be substituted. We would like to see that contaminated soils be delineated and represented on maps to ensure that harvest units, haul routes and other ancillary activities do not directly or indirectly impact these areas. We are concerned with increased snow deposition, sheet flow or water delivery to these contaminated soil areas and subsequent surface or subsurface mobilization of toxins. We would appreciate full disclosure of these potential impacts addressed in the Environmental Assessment (EA) or available in the Administrative Record for our review.

102, 103, 104. The drainages in this area have extensive wetlands, riparian areas, and important habitat for species of management interest, such as the lynx, boreal toad, elk and moose. A blanket mechanical clearcut prescription for this entire 654 acre area may have significant direct or indirect impacts to these species. We would like to see and review more specific prescriptions and cutting unit boundary delineations to address both community and ecosystem needs. Given the potential indirect impacts to downstream wildlife and wetland resources, we would like to see that individual harvest units incorporate riparian buffers, and implementation of best management practices to reduce the risk of fine sediment delivery to permanent as well as intermittent water resources. While Healthy Forests Restoration Act (HFRA) forest management activities are exempt from regulation under section 404 of the Clean Water Act, we are concerned about direct and/or indirect impacts to wetland and riparian habitat on-site and off-site and we believe that the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) should present mapping of wetland resources, incorporate buffers and present their methodology in protecting downstream waters and riparian habitats from fine sediment delivery and all-too-common incidental spills from heavy equipment. We are especially concerned with runoff from landings and skid trails where fine sediment mobilization is common, and petroleum based contaminants are regularly spilled. We would also like to see residual trees left to help leave some habitat components for wildlife species, and we would like to see protection of spruce and fir seedlings/saplings from equipment trampling and cutting.

We support an allowance for the creation of firebreaks behind Peak 7 homes in this area, but believe that the higher quality habitat areas with mixed conifer stand components should either be left alone entirely or given a less impactful silvicultural prescription. Although clearcuts may improve habitat for certain wildlife species, they can create detrimental habitat fragmentation for interior forest carnivores and may reduce snowshoe hare utilization in the near-term. We would like for this issue to be carefully studied for this area as a part of the environmental analysis. We also believe that the spruce/fir component and healthy lodgepole stands within this area should remain. In any event, we would like for the Forest Service to ensure that soil scarification is limited within 100 feet of drainages, and the fine sediment transport is limited. While silvicultural activities are exempt from section 404 of the Clean Water Act, we request that no clearing in any riparian areas or wetlands should occur, even over snow. We are concerned with skid roads, roads and landings being placed in proximity to, or crossing, wetlands and/or riparian areas. Best management practices for silvicultural treatments near wetlands and riparian areas should be employed by contractors, with strict oversight by Forest Service staff. Further, Town staff would appreciate the ability to review and comment on individual units which may directly or indirectly impact downstream water resources which may then fall under the regulatory authority of the Town.

Lastly, based on some of the public comments from the November 17th open house, it appears that the development of more specific stand maps would provide a greater level of comfort for area homeowners. We recommend that the USFS staff develop more specific stand maps and cutting unit boundaries to assist with the public education and planning for this area.

105, 120. This is what the Town and Summit County open space programs refer to as the “Western Bench.” There are existing and planned summer and winter recreational trails within this area that are very important to the community. We have attached for your review a map of the trails to be included as part of the Gold Run Nordic trail system expansion. We request that the Forest Service consider a mechanical clearcut with leave trees prescription in this area, as opposed to strictly clearcutting. We also request that the road and cutting activities carried out in this area are done in conjunction with and will not negatively affect the future recreational plans for this area

109-111. Lincoln Park. This area contains very high natural resource values and sensitive soils. We would highly recommend that the USFS leave most of this area in its current state, with the exception of the portion of area 111 on top of the ridge to the north and east of the existing road that connects Spruce Road (as it was known in the Golden Horseshoe process) with Brown Gulch.

112. This area is used for winter backcountry recreational skiing, so the Town would like to request that some remaining healthy tree stands and cover be left.

114. We recommend that this area be included within the prescription for the adjacent area 613.

115. We recommend that this area be included within the prescription for the adjacent area 615.

116. This area is extremely important to the Town as the main water source for the Goose Pasture Tarn. We appreciate the attention given to this area by the U.S. Forest Service, and request that the Forest Service staff study this entire drainage and appropriate silvicultural prescriptions very carefully in its decision-making process. We are concerned that summertime clearcutting may cause connected disturbances leading to wetlands and riparian areas, thus delivering fine sediments to the Towns water supply. Given the importance of this area to the Towns water supply, it will be especially important in this area to leave sufficient buffers from all water sources and wetlands, employ best management practices around wetlands, and increase the protection of all aquatic resources. All wetlands should be delineated and stormwater control systems should be utilized. Appropriate leave trees should be identified and left to the degree practicable. All efforts should be taken to prevent oil spills or leakage from machinery, and the Town would request the ability to review landings and equipments storage areas for spillage. Given that roads are often the greatest generators of erosion and fine sediment mobilization, road impacts need to be minimized to the maximum degree possible. We would therefore request that haul routes not be located within 100 feet of wetlands or riparian areas.

118. We would recommend that the Forest Service consider including this area within area 515 with the associated prescription. Although this area may be within the wildland/urban interface, it seems like a low priority.

201 and 202. These two units are located in areas that were identified for closure in the Golden Horseshoe/USFS travel management planning process in order to avoid additional habitat fragmentation and potential impacts to steep slopes, sensitive aquatic resources, and landscape scale habitat linkage corridors. It is unclear why this plan shows multiple routes entering both of these units. The potential impacts of extending roads and cutting in these units should be evaluated against the benefits of these treatments.

Some other more general comments include the following:

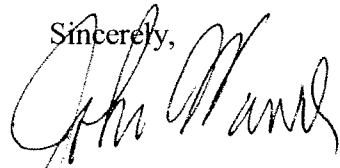
- The Town believes that the road improvements recommended to facilitate the Project will be beneficial for many reasons beyond their basic function as haul roads, including the reduction of environmental impacts from old roads in disrepair, increased serviceability, better access for emergency fire response, and an improved recreational experience. We would like to make certain, however, that all improvements are consistent with the recommendations that came out of the Golden Horseshoe citizens planning efforts and the White River National Forest Travel Management Plan to be released in the near future. This means that any temporary and/or haul roads that will not be left as a system routes need to successfully be decommissioned in order that they don't become unmanaged motorized routes in the future. Any treatment units in the Golden Horseshoe next to designated routes should be adequately closed off to unauthorized recreational use during and following the forest management work. We also believe that erosion control and mitigation should be directly or indirectly built into any roads plan.
- While clearcuts may be the best way to stimulate lodgepole pine generation, we feel that in many areas the protection of water resources, minimization of fine sediment mobilization and erosion, and retention of coniferous habitat components can be better achieved through salvage harvesting and/or more retention of spruce and fir trees where they occur.
- We would like to see riparian and wetland areas delineated and then buffers employed to protect onsite habitat values, as well as downstream water quality and habitat values. , A combination of salvage cutting, leave tree cutting units, and the incorporation of riparian and wetlands buffers will still allow the Forest Service to meet the purpose and needs of this project.
- In general, best management practices should be employed, treated areas should be cleaned up to the extent possible (including stacking and clearing of slash), and habitat fragmentation and edge effects should be minimized
- We would like to see these treatment areas prioritized. The Town feels strongly that defensible space projects should be prioritized first, followed by watershed protection efforts. The backcountry treatments are of less importance to us.
- We would like to see that the Forest Service coordinate the prioritization of these treatments with our local Community Wildfire Protection Plan and other local fire mitigation and forest health plans and projects.

- There should be vigilant oversight of contractors implementing this plan and a communication mechanism for landowners and citizens to contact the Forest Service if they have concerns about the contracted work.
- We feel like it is important that treated stands should be evaluated in 15 to 20 years and potentially thinned to further address the purpose and need of the stated Project.

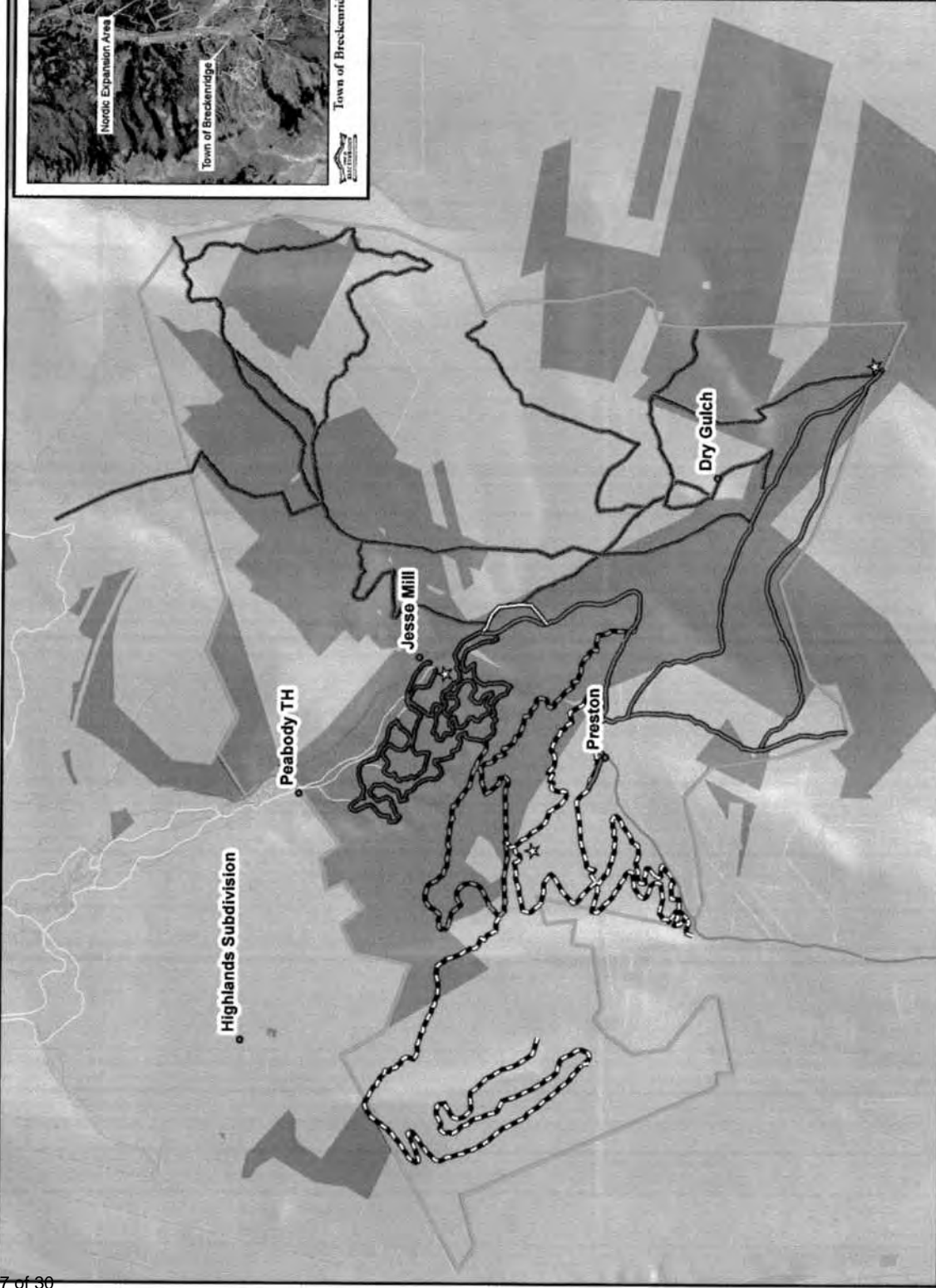
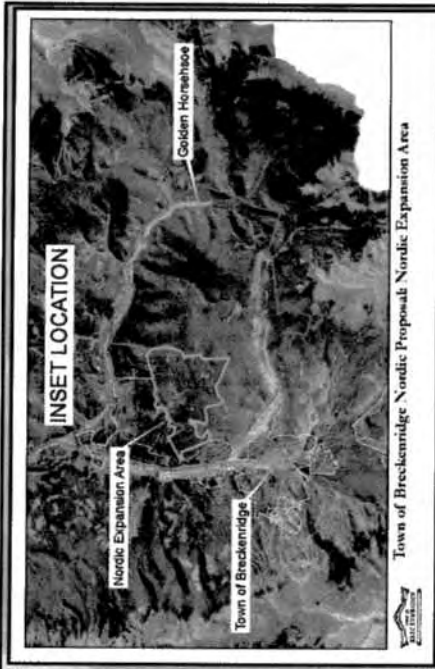
Lastly, the Town requests that we be able to review and officially comment on the draft EA for this Project.

In closing, the Town sincerely appreciates and supports the efforts of the U.S. Forest Service to mitigate the challenging impacts resulting from the mountain pine beetle epidemic, while still producing long-term stand diversity in the area for the benefit of wildlife, protecting our water resources, and maintaining our recreational experiences and the intrinsic beauty of the Upper Blue River Valley. We appreciate your consideration of our comments and recommendations.

Sincerely,



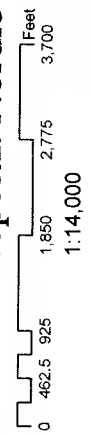
John Warner
Mayor



Legend

- Proposed Gold Run Expansion Area
- White River National Forest
- Public Open Space
- Existing Gold Run Nordic Trails
- Gold Run Road
- Gold Run Nordic Phase 1 Routes
- Existing Grooming Route
- Peabody 5k
- Additional Phase 1 Route
- Gold Run Nordic Phase 2 Routes (DRAFT)
- Phase 2a
- Phase 2b
- Gold Run Nordic Phase 3 routes (DRAFT)
- Gold Run Nordic Potential Facility Locations

Exhibit 3: Town of Breckenridge Nordic Proposal: Nordic Expansion Routes



This map is for display purposes only.
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 The accuracy of the data is not guaranteed by surveying standards and does not comply with National Mapping Accuracy Standards
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UPPER BLUE NORDIC MASTER PLAN

Prepared by the
Upper Blue River Nordic Master Plan
Committee



Adopted
November 27, 2001

Breckenridge Town Council
Breckenridge Open Space Advisory Commission

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 - 1. EXISTING
 - 2. PROPOSED
 - B. TRAIL NETWORKS
 - 1. EXISTING
 - 2. PROPOSED
 - C. CONCLUSIONS

- III. PHASE II: UPPER BLUE RIVER BASIN

OVERVIEW

A. Introduction

The Upper Blue Basin is an area of extraordinary opportunities, with an expanse of alpine scenery and natural habitat and an abundance of recreational resources. The sport of nordic skiing is held in special regard, as the founders of the ski community in the Town of Breckenridge were themselves responsible for introducing nordic skiing from Norway to the local community. The sport has evolved with the times to become a very popular activity for those wanting to have an introduction to the backcountry as well as those training to compete on an international level in racing. Nordic opportunities have existed in the Upper Blue Basin for many years, but access and available terrain have been dwindling.

The Town of Breckenridge has recently taken a position to not only provide for the existing trails within the Town boundary, but to improve the existing facilities and commit to expanding the trails network where possible to provide for an exceptional nordic ski system. For this reason, the Upper Blue Nordic Master Plan Committee was instigated by the Town Council and given the directive to develop recommendations on the size and extent of facilities and trails and the investment of the Town in creating, maintaining and/or supporting these resources, within the Upper Blue Basin, which is bounded by the Dillon Reservoir, the Ten Mile Range, Hoosier Pass and the Continental Divide.

B. Vision

The vision of the Breckenridge Town Council is to provide an exceptional and well-rounded nordic skiing experience. There will be opportunities for the whole spectrum of nordic skiers, including those who have never attempted the sport and need basic instruction and beginner trails, those looking for a respite from an alpine ski vacation, those needing a backcountry excursion, and competitors requiring long distance training and racing opportunities with an array of terrain features.

C. Goals and Objectives

The Town of Breckenridge would like to provide exceptional resources to support the beginner through advanced level skiers. This includes the following:

- Structures with adequate retail, rentals, instruction, food concessions, and changing and relaxation areas.
- Areas that would naturally support competitions at the local, regional and national level.
- Facilities that are appropriate in nature and extent to the trail system they support.
- Opportunities, including instructional programming, meeting local needs as well as those of the destination tourists.
- A system of linked trails that incorporates both groomed and ungroomed tracks and the potential to ski from site to site.
- Backcountry opportunities with marked trails and warming huts.

- Snowshoeing trails and instructional opportunities.

D. Process

The Town of Breckenridge first engaged in support of the nordic skiing community when they assumed the ownership and management of the nordic trails in the Shock Hill development. From that point, the Town has gradually received dedications of other sections of the nordic trail system around the Breckenridge Nordic Center, which have been run by a concessionaire. The same concessionaire has worked with the Golf Course Maintenance Department to groom limited trails at the Breckenridge Municipal Golf Course.

In the winter of 2001, the Town acquired the Preservation Parcel of the Cucumber Creek Estates development. This purchase was the largest expense to date that the Town had invested in open space and trails. The impetus for the purchase was the support by the nordic community for retaining their trail opportunities. The potential for loss of opportunities was brought to the forefront of the nordic community's attention during the Shock Hill and Cucumber Estates development application processes. Following this, the community organized themselves and successfully brought an open space ballot initiative before the general public. The initiative passed, giving the Breckenridge community a .5% sales tax for open space acquisition.

The purchase of the Cucumber Creek Estates parcel represented to the nordic community preservation of very important trails and trail connections, in addition to its important natural resource protection values. The purchase of this property also meant that the Breckenridge Nordic Center would need to be eventually moved from its present site to that designated for the nordic skiing facility on an adjacent lot. Once the Town Council began discussing the Town's investment in the relocation and potential reconstruction of the nordic center, they realized that there may be other nordic facility opportunities that would be more worthy of the Town's investments. In any event, they wanted to thoroughly investigate all potential locations for facilities and trails and determine the best array of sites.

The Council called for the creation of the Upper Blue Nordic Master Plan Committee to accomplish this task. The committee was established with representatives from the Breckenridge Open Space Advisory Commission, nordic ski concessionaires, media, local racing community, local nordic advocacy organizations, and Town Planning Department and Recreation staff. The committee met on a monthly basis beginning in the winter of 2001 to develop the Master Plan.

The Committee developed the concept of concentric circles to handle the Master Plan process. The concentric circles represent the three scopes with which the Town would handle nordic ski opportunities. The first and innermost circle represents the existing facilities and the trails associated with them. The second circle represents the potential expansion of these facilities and trail systems, and the third circle represents an expansive system of trails (groomed and ungroomed) that would be connected to the nordic centers,

directionally marked, and potentially integrated with a system of warming huts. The third and outermost circle would incorporate an area of mixed land ownership (including ownership by the Town of Breckenridge, Summit County, the U.S. Forest Service and private landowners) and involve extensive public involvement extending beyond the nordic community.

The Nordic Master Plan Committee has recommended that the first two circles be handled as part of this initial process and addressed within the timeframe of the 2002 fiscal budget cycle. The third circle will continue to be addressed and focused upon after the first two have been more defined and established. The committee recommends that the evaluation of the third circle be initiated within the coming two years in conjunction with Summit County and Forest Service planning processes.

Once this Master Plan has been approved by the Breckenridge Open Space Advisory Commission and the Town Council, the necessary items will be included in a recommendation by the Planning Department to the Administration Department for inclusion in the 2002 and 2003 budgets. The remaining phase will continue to be addressed over the coming years.

**PHASE I: EXISTING FACILITIES AND PROPOSED
EXPANSIONS WITHIN TOWN JURISDICTION**

A. Facilities

1. Existing

The ***Breckenridge Nordic Center*** includes a lodge of 2,600 sq. ft., which does not include the maintenance building, massage building and employee locker room. The facility is located on 0.33 acres on Lot 2A, Christie Heights Subdivision, Filing 1 Amended. The allowed density is 10,000 sq. ft. The density used for the current building and outbuildings is 3,350 sq. ft. All facilities are currently used for Nordic purposes with some limited nature center activities, primarily tours, in the summer.

The ***Golf Course Clubhouse*** is 6,554 sq. ft., not including the unfinished cart storage area. It is located on 4.88 acres on Parcel B, Highlands Fieldstone and Clubhouse Subdivision. The density is categorized as Special Review, as it is a Town facility. The density used for the facility was 15, 097 sq. ft, which includes the addition and cart storage. All facilities are currently used with golf-associated uses.

2. Proposed

Reconstruction of the ***Breckenridge Nordic Center Site*** is to be located on Lots 2A and 2B, Christie Heights Subdivision, Filing 1 Amended, which is comprised of 2 acres. The allowed density is 10,000 sq. ft. The proposed density will be determined in future programming analyses. Potential building uses may include; ski rentals, ticket sales, retail/concession, restrooms, waxing area, locker rooms with showers, spa, off-season storage, limited employee housing, and a nature center. The nature center would predominantly use the building during the summer, and share the building with the nordic center, until the needs of either require additional space. Site planning and building plans should allow for the future expansion of both the nordic and nature facilities, and associated uses. It has also been proposed to add space for extension to the Town of Breckenridge summer day camp program.

Advantages:

- Proximity to Town and alpine resort
- Variety of terrain
- Use as both nature center and ski resort
- Would help establish a stewardship presence for Cucumber Gulch

Disadvantages

- High cost of redevelopment
- High level of Town financial involvement
- Limited number of trail kilometers, both existing and potential

The ***Shock Hill Nordic Center*** site is to be located on Tract F, Shock Hill Subdivision on 2.27 acres. The allowed density is 8,000 sq. ft. The proposed Density is 8,000 sq. feet, including the homeowners association amenities. Potential building uses may include

automated ticket sales, vending/ concession, lockers, public ski waxing, and restrooms. Other facilities would include low-level, directional lights for those Breckenridge Nordic Center trails located on Shock Hill away from the PMA. At this time, this site is recommended to be used as a satellite facility to the primary Breckenridge Nordic Center site.

Future expansion of this site should be provided for, should additional nordic or nature facilities be needed at the site. Reconsideration of the design and function of this site should be undertaken if the gondola station is approved at the site, as the access and use patterns may change significantly.

Advantages:

- Proximity to Town
- Proximity to potential Shock Hill high density uses and gondola station
- Little cost to Town
- Added amenity of night skiing opportunities
- Provides space for event coordination
- Potential site for additional nature center activities

Disadvantages:

- Possible duplicity of efforts with Breckenridge Nordic Center
- Location within a private residential area
- Combined use with homeowners association needs

The ***golf course site*** would utilize the existing location and building. Proposed building uses include ticket sales, equipment rental, restaurant, restrooms, changing areas, event coordination, and public ski waxing. As this site is predominantly a golf facility, no future expansion on account of nordic needs is recommended.

Advantages:

- Uses high quality building already in existence
- Restaurant facilities already there
- No additional construction costs for Town
- Easily incorporated to Town recreational facilities
- Provides good location for events
- Accessible to both Frisco and Breckenridge
- Minimal financial risk for the Town

Disadvantages:

- Greater distance from Town center
- Town investment possibly required for operation
- Needs of golf course operation need to be incorporated
- Added competition for the Frisco and Breckenridge nordic centers

Vail Resorts Nordic Center – The existing Master Plan for the Peak 7 and 8 areas outlines providing a Nordic facility. The exact density, location and uses has not been detailed leaving room for discussion. In light of the other facilities noted, it is

recommended that Vail Resorts be encouraged to fulfill this commitment through contributions to the other identified sites, trails easements, the creation of a connection between the Breckenridge Nordic Center trails and Peak 7, or trail grooming instead of the creation of another facility.

Advantages:

- Additional support for proposed facilities and activities
- Reduces duplication of efforts

Disadvantages:

- Tied to a private development application
- Uncertainty of specific outcome

The use of the *high school grounds and stadium* may also provide an opportunity for special events, including race starts, finishes and parking. This should be explored as part of the third phase of this nordic plan.

Advantages:

- Proximity to both Breckenridge and Frisco
- Great facility for special events

Disadvantages

- Distance from Town
- Primary use as a school facility would make it difficult to use during peak hours

Block 11 and the McCain properties have potentially viable terrain for use as nordic trail systems. Although at this time the ownership of these lands is pending the results of litigation, they should be evaluated as part of Phase II.

Advantages:

- Provides potential connection between the Breckenridge Nordic Center and the golf course
- Proximity to recreation center

Disadvantages:

- Proximity to highway and associated noise pollution
- Ownership yet to be finalized

B. Trail Networks

1. Existing

The *Breckenridge Nordic Center* currently has approximately 12 kilometers of trails throughout Shock Hill and the Cucumber Gulch area. The network includes beginner, intermediate and advanced terrain. There is also a nordic-cross area emanating from one

of the beginner trails. Also included as part of the system are two underpasses and a skier bridge in the Shock Hill area and numerous snowshoe loops. There are no lighted trails. These trails are predominantly under the control of the Town through land ownership and easements.

Adjunct to the Breckenridge Nordic Center trails are the 15 kilometers of Peak 7 trails, which must be accessed by crossing CR 3. The Forest Service Permit is held by the Daytons, the owners of the Breckenridge Nordic Center building.

The trails at the *Breckenridge Municipal Golf Course* have been groomed on a trial basis for the last two winters. Two years ago, approximately 7 kilometers of trails were groomed, using a combination of greens, tees, fairways, rough and golf cart paths. Once it was determined that there was no subsequent damage from grooming to the fairways and the rough with a foot of snow, a second course for the 2000/2001 season was set with approximately 4 kilometers of trails. The constraints to use of the golf course for a trails network include the fact that snow needs to be removed from the greens in late winter to prevent snow molds from growing, and cart paths are plowed to provide access for the snowblowers to these areas. Additionally, the golf course staff prefers to generally keep the nordic trails off of the fairways to prevent any potential damage.

The *bike path* between Breckenridge and Frisco has been groomed for the past two years. It allows people to ski between the Breckenridge Nordic Center, the golf course, and the Frisco Nordic Center. There are safety problems with illegal use of the groomed path by snowmobilers and residue deposited on the path from snowplows. Despite these problems, it is the only access between these nordic centers and the only location where skiers can bring dogs on groomed trails. Relocation of the bike path due to expansion of Hwy 9 or onto Town-acquired property may help alleviate some of the safety and residue problems.

2. Proposed

Expanded Breckenridge Nordic Center Trails

The Breckenridge Nordic Center lies within the boundary of the Cucumber Gulch Overlay Protection District. A large percentage of its trails lie within the Preventative Management Area (PMA) directed by the District. The PMA limits human disturbance to the Gulch and prevents any new trails from being constructed without a variance application approval from the Breckenridge Planning Commission.

Due to the PMA, the only logical place for any trail expansion would be the Shock Hill area, which lies outside the PMA. This summer there are two new trails have been added to the network -- a relocation of the northern portion of the Black Loop and the Pence Miller Ditch trail, which will add a narrow trail connection that lies below the Black Loop on the historic mining flume. No other specific trails or connections have been formally proposed at this time.

Advantages:

- Variety of terrain
- Connection to County and Forest Service trails

Disadvantages:

- Lack of mileage
- Lack of beginner terrain
- Trail opportunities repetitious

Expanded Golf Course trails

Upon evaluation of the golf course possibilities for an expanded trails network, it appears as though it is possible to increase the distance to approximately 20 kilometers. This would require coordination with golf course operations, and limiting cutting of trees in some areas that separate the fairways. It would also be necessary to have short wetlands crossings to reach twenty kilometers of groomed trails. This access will involve formal approval of a trails alignment and management plan by the Army Corps of Engineers and the Town of Breckenridge. The twenty kilometers would be largely moderate rolling terrain, which is largely missing from the Breckenridge area.

The golf course trails could ultimately connect to the Golden Horseshoe area, facilitating access to a much larger groomed and backcountry nordic ski opportunities. This process will require additional land acquisition by the Town and Summit County and cooperation between existing landowners and user groups. This will be further evaluated in Phase II of the Upper Blue Nordic Master Plan.

Advantages:

- Greater mileage can be achieved
- More beginning and moderate level terrain available
- Proximity to great expanse of backcountry trails in Golden Horseshoe area
- Excellent resource for larger events

Disadvantages:

- Necessary coordination with golf course operation and maintenance
- Lack of expert terrain in immediate area

C. Conclusions

The following points represent a compilation of the most important goals from the Upper Blue Nordic Master Plan, listed in priority after six months of public input:

- 1) Expansion of the Breckenridge Municipal Golf Course trails network to approximately twenty kilometers and utilization of the clubhouse as a nordic center building.
- 2) Reconstruction and expansion of the Breckenridge Nordic Center, and an associated nature center, with future expansion of both incorporated.

- 3) Satellite facility with the potential for future expansion at the Shock Hill Nordic Site. This would include lighted trails, incorporating low-level directional lights.
- 4) An alternative alignment for the Breckenridge to Frisco groomed ski trail.
- 5) Vail Resorts commitment to contributions for proposed facilities, trails and/or grooming. An improved connection between the Breckenridge Nordic Center trails and Peak 7 would be desirable.