

TOWN OF BRECKENRIDGE
OPEN SPACE ADVISORY COMMISSION
Monday, April 19, 2010
BRECKENRIDGE COUNCIL CHAMBERS
150 Ski Hill Road
*****Note Location Change*****

- 5:30 Call to Order, Roll Call
- 5:35 Discussion/approval of Minutes – March 15, 2010
- 5:40 Discussion/approval of Agenda
- 5:45 Public Comment (Non-Agenda Items)
- 5:50 Staff Summary
- Hidden Gems Update
 - 2010 Breckenridge Recreation Center and Heritage Alliance Tour Schedule
- 6:15 Open Space and Trails
- Cucumber Gulch Summer Trail Use and Gondola Hours
 - Summer Trail Map Review
 - Xcel Tree Clearing Request
 - Upper Blue Nordic Task Force Discussion
 - Elect BOSAC Officers
- 8:30 Commissioner Issues
- 8:35 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: April 19, 2010 meeting

Staff Summary**Hidden Gems Update**

On April 6, 2010, the Town submitted our Hidden Gems Wilderness Proposal comment letter to Rep. Polis and the Hidden Gems Wilderness Campaign. A copy of this letter, signed by Mayor Warner, is included in your packet. Staff is now working with both the International Mountain Biking Association and the Hidden Gems Wilderness Campaign to develop language for the accompanying companion designation, likely to be a Special Management Area.

2010 Breckenridge Recreation Center and Heritage Alliance Tour Schedule

As requested, please review the attached 2010 schedule of Breckenridge Recreation Department outdoor & education program hikes and Breckenridge Heritage Alliance historic hikes on open space.

Open Space and Trails**Cucumber Gulch Preserve Summer Management**

The issue of managing summer use in Cucumber Gulch Preserve is currently in front of BOSAC because Town Council has requested the commission review cumulative impacts from the potential changes to use types and levels this coming summer. Changes include the occupation and use of Crystal Peaks Lodge, the Grand Lodge at Peak 7, and One Ski Hill Place; summer gondola operations (likely with bike transportation); and potentially a Breckenridge Ski Resort hiking program. BOSAC should consider these potential impacts and discuss proactive measures to protect the natural resources of the Preserve.

Background

The area now considered Cucumber Gulch Preserve was the impetus behind the creation of the Town of Breckenridge Open Space program, including the open space sales tax initiative and the creation of BOSAC. Cucumber Gulch was identified as containing rare high altitude fen wetlands and exceptional wildlife habitat qualities that were threatened by both developmental and recreational pressures. Town citizens recognized the value of this wetland complex and committed an additional .5% sales tax to help raise funds to acquire and protect this important area. Since that time, approximately \$5.5 million has

been spent acquiring land as public open space in the Preserve. In addition, Breckenridge Ski Area deeded 56 acres of the area to the Town as public open space. To date, the lands protected by the Town within Cucumber Gulch Preserve amount to 122 acres, and the Town is working cooperatively with both Summit County Government and the U.S. Forest Service to acquire the “Cucumber Wedge” parcel through a federal land exchange.

The Town has also protected the sensitive wetlands in Cucumber Gulch through overlay zoning in the creation of the Cucumber Gulch Overlay Protection District and the Preventative Management Area. As a result, the type and location of impacts that can occur in the wetland areas in Cucumber Gulch are significantly restricted.

Managing recreational use in the Cucumber Gulch Preserve has also been the focus of both staff and BOSAC as the Town is the identified stewardship entity for the Gulch. After over a year of planning and research, the Cucumber Gulch Recreation Master Plan was approved by BOSAC in June 2003. This document established policy direction for the management of recreational use in Cucumber Gulch. Since that time, staff and BOSAC have worked to complete the vision outlined in this document, including building, hardening and maintaining recreational trails; installing interpretive and regulatory signage; monitoring resource and recreational impacts; and overseeing the management of the nordic ski operation. The vast majority of applicable recommendations from the Recreational Master Plan have been completed pursuant to the guidelines set forth in the guiding document.

Current Issues

Cucumber Gulch Preserve is currently the only Town open space that has garnered “Preserve” status, which implies a higher level of resource protection than any of the other Town open space parcels. Given the existence of the overlay zoning, the Town ordinance outlawing dogs and off-trail travel in the area, the intensive ongoing natural resource monitoring, and the recreational resource design utilized to prevent resource degradation, the Town has demonstrated a strong commitment to preserving the important values of Cucumber Gulch.

As mentioned above, several changes within and on the outskirts of the Preserve have the potential to change the type and levels of human use in Cucumber Gulch. First of all, three lodges at the Peaks 7 and 8 base areas will be fully operational. Secondly, BSR has proposed to operate the BreckConnect gondola in the summer from June 18th - September 6th, 2010 during the hours between 8:45 am and 4:30 pm (the Council is currently reviewing this proposal). The gondola may transport mountain bikes. Lastly, BSR has proposed hiking tours in Cucumber Gulch Preserve during the summer of 2010 from the base of Peak 8.

Analysis

As with most land protection and management agencies, including the U.S. Forest Service, the National Park Service, and Colorado-based county and municipal open space programs, the dual mandate to preserve natural resources while providing public

recreational access is a very delicate balance to strike. On one hand, the natural resource values of Cucumber Gulch are extremely high and the community has deemed them worthy of protection. On the other hand, public recreational access is a primary reason for the expenditure of public open space funds to preserve this area. The Preserve is close to the center of Town, accessible to many local subdivisions, and the additional bed bases added to Peaks 7 and 8 will only increase recreational pressure on this area. The existence of the BreckConnect gondola only serves to make Cucumber Gulch Preserve more visible and accessible to locals and visitors alike. Both Christy Carello and the BSR biological consultant, however, have identified increased human activity, primarily hiking and biking, as having the greatest potential impact in the Gulch.

The recent and proposed changes force the management dilemma with which BOSAC and the Town is faced in terms of questioning how we best protect the natural resources while providing appropriate public access. Certainly the intensive monitoring undertaken by the Town helps inform staff and BOSAC regarding the strengths and weaknesses of the current management practices in the Preserve. Staff recommends that BOSAC rely on the ten years of ecological monitoring data and analysis to assist with this important management decision, because it is the best empirical information we have. Both the annual natural resource monitoring program for the Preserve and the Visitor Experience Resource Protection (VERP) study undertaken in 2009 should be utilized to help guide BOSAC in this endeavor.

Drainage Update

Town staff, including the Engineering Department, is reviewing the two drainage issues identified by Dr. Christy Carello at the March BOSAC meeting and will keep BOSAC updated of any progress. Barbara Galloway from ERO Resources will be present at the meeting to provide her ideas with respect to the issues and possible solutions.

Staff requests BOSAC answer the following questions to help advise Town Council regarding summer management of Cucumber Gulch Preserve:

- 1. Should the Town allow the Breckenridge Ski Resort, or any other organized commercial tour operation, to lead hiking tours in Cucumber Gulch Preserve in 2010? If so, should there be any conditions to this approval?***
- 2. The Ski Area is proposing a charge to take bikes up the gondola this summer as a way of controlling their use, particularly in Cucumber. Should the Town be looking at other restrictions for mountain bikes to limit the level of additional use that might occur through the Preserve? On a related note, what steps should we be taking to monitor different uses like mountain bikes going forward?***
- 3. Should the Town consider limiting access to portions of the Preserve for certain uses?***
- 4. Are there other natural resource or recreational-based impacts that should be evaluated for additional monitoring in Cucumber Gulch Preserve?***

Summer Trail Map Review

Staff will provide BOSAC with the most up to date draft of the summer trail map for review. This will be the final opportunity for BOSAC as a whole to review the trail map if we are to remain on the proposed production schedule and have the copies in hand by Memorial Day.

Xcel Tree Clearing Request

Xcel Energy, working in conjunction with Asplundh tree service, has submitted a proposal (attached) to Town and County staff to cut and chip many of the trees adjacent to the transmission lines that cross open space parcels in the Golden Horseshoe and other areas. As owners of 150 foot-wide rights-of-way beneath most the high-voltage transmission lines in the area, Xcel clearly has the ability to clear these areas of vegetation to protect the lines and help ensure consistent power to the Breckenridge area and beyond. As it currently stands, the proposal indicates that most trees to be cleared would be masticated on site, and an additional clean up of the existing lop and scatter woody debris would be cleaned up to accommodate passage of the heavy logging machinery.

The attached proposal also requests permission to clear an additional 125 feet (on average) on both sides of the existing Xcel rights-of-way so that a total of 400 feet can be cleared adjacent to the lines. This 400-foot clearing width would match the USFS granted approval.

Staff requests BOSAC consider the following questions:

- 1. Should the Town, in cooperation with Summit County, allow Xcel and its contractor to clear an additional area outside of the existing 150 foot right-of-way (typically) on open space? If so, what is the appropriate width of that clearing?*
- 2. Are there other questions or concerns that staff should convey to Xcel and its contractor regarding this initiative?*

Upper Blue Nordic Task Force Discussion

Staff will provide BOSAC with an update on the Upper Blue Nordic Master Plan task force progress.

Elect BOSAC Officers

Staff requests that BOSAC elect a Chair and Vice-Chair for the coming year.

Roll Call

Dennis Kuhn called the March 15, 2010 BOSAC meeting to order at 5:40 pm. Other BOSAC members present included Peter Joyce, Scott Yule, Monique Merrill, Ellen Hollinshead, Erin Hunter, and Jeff Cospolich. Staff members present were Heide Andersen, Scott Reid, Mark Truckey, Peter Grosshuesch and Scott Cline. Dr. Christy Carello was also present, as was Lori Kennedy, Dale Wilks and Janet Cox from the Breckenridge Ski Area.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes were approved with one revision.

Ms. Hollinshead: I would rather just perform trash can maintenance at the B&B Trailhead during the months of June, July and August. Please amend the minutes to reflect this.

Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved as presented.

Public Comments

There were no public comments.

Staff Summary

Hidden Gems Update

Mr. Kuhn: Is there a name for the companion designation? (No, because the citizen proposal is not yet complete, and the details have not been finalized.)

Ms. Hollinshead: Summit and Eagle Counties are the primary targets, but we are not in 100% agreement yet. We need to get more specific on the boundaries; that meeting did not go into enough detail. Countywide there are still one or two issues to be resolved.

Ms. Andersen: This issue is going to Council for a final decision next week. Support language will allow for minor boundary adjustments. Council will get the broad conceptual boundaries, but the wilderness proposal process will result in many revisions before it goes to vote in Congress. My understanding from the Mike McCormack and Kurt Kunkel is that the issues have been resolved and we are ready to proceed with Council review.

Dog Waste and Other Signage Update

Ms. Hollinshead: Could we just place shovels and buckets at the trailhead for people to pitch and or bury the dog waste away from the trail? It may not be good because it increases nitrogen in the soil, but it might be easier for people. If we get household or other trash in the dog waste trash can, that would be considered a failure of the system.

Mr. Kuhn: We need to have people remove the waste, not just pitch it away from the trail.

Mr. Yule: Could we possibly place the bag/trash can installation farther down the trail to reduce other trash being placed in the trash can?

BOSAC directed staff to continue with the plan to install a dog waste station (including trash can) at the B&B Trailhead on a trial basis.

Open Space and Trails

Breckenridge Ski Area Hiking Proposal

Lori Kennedy, Janet Cox and Dale Wilks representing the Breckenridge Ski Resort presented their proposal to offer a hiking program, partially in Cucumber Gulch Preserve. In the afternoon, we expect less conducive weather, especially higher on the ski area and we seek a covered area to offer hiking programs. Sawmill Trail and Cucumber Gulch Trail are the trails we would like to have permission to use. We would limit the group size to seven people per guide, and no dogs would be allowed, to meet the rules in the Preserve. Start time for these programs would be 1 pm. Our operation days are Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday and a maximum of two hiking programs would be offered on those days.

Mr. Cline: This proposal is in direct competition with a Town program already on Sawmill and Cucumber Gulch Trails. We ran 13 hikes in 2009, with a total of 233 hikers. We offer hikes once a week on Wednesdays. We are targeting the same demographic and charge \$12 per person in order to offset program costs. We work with the concierges throughout the area and this program would be our direct competition. We hike in conjunction with the Heritage Alliance as well. Typically, we hike twice a summer in Cucumber Gulch Preserve and twice in Sawmill Creek throughout the summer.

Ms. Hollinshead: My concern is that this is to, many hikers being directed this area.

Mr. Joyce: How much would the Town charge for such a license? (Typically, the Town charges 5% of net for a concessionaire to operate on open space under a license agreement.)

Mr. Cospolich: There will be a lot of use already in the gulch this summer if the gondola is running.

Ms. Kennedy: If three or more people don't sign up, we won't run a program. The heritage alliance also offers hikes and we are trying to respect their schedule.

Ms. Carello: My concern is the sustainability of trails. If you are hiking in the rain or in other inclement weather, this will result in increased erosion and runoff.

Ms. Kennedy: We want to educate people in Leave No Trace ethics. We would likely not run a program in muddy conditions.

Mr. Cline: We teach very similar info, including mining history, Leave No Trace, flora and fauna are all taught on our hikes. Both hikes are about an hour and a half. My biggest concern is that the Cucumber Gulch hikes are very successful. I'm concerned that we would have too many people in the Gulch at one time. I am also worried about more impact to the trails in the Gulch.

Ms. Andersen: If a partnership between the two entities could be developed, that would be preferable.

Ms. Hunter: Four hikes per week, one per day? (Yes, that is the proposal, with some latitude to add an additional hike during the week of July 4th and other busy times.)

Mr. Wilks: We would meet at Peak 8, then ride the gondola to Peak 7 to access the Gulch via the Peaks Connect Trail, across from the Peaks Trailhead.

Mr. Cospolich: I think the Town should focus on a downhill only hiking program to diversify the offerings. The base area will be crazy with activity as it is.

Ms. Hunter: I like the education concept, but I am concerned with the volume proposed here. Four days a week, sometimes twice a day is too much.

Mr. Joyce: I see pros and cons. The idea of it being controlled access is good, but I have trouble with giving the ski area the ability to send more people into that area in competition with the town program. Limiting the number of days is an option.

Mr. Yule: In the sake of full disclosure, I am a Breckenridge Ski Area employee. I am also passionate about Cucumber Gulch Preserve. There are too many 'what ifs' in the proposal and perhaps the limit should be two hikes per week. We need to limit access in this sensitive area. The trail also needs work and I would like to see the ski area share some of the burden of maintenance if they are operating hikes there.

Mr. Hollinshead: This is too many days. One or two days a week is a problem. The worst section of trail is from the Peaks Trailhead access. We should encourage the ski area to build better trails on the ski area to serve this need- use the area below 6 Chair for example. There are still more trails on the ski area that should be utilized. Hiking-only trails on the ski area should be a focus for them.

Ms. Merrill: I agree with Ellen and Scott. We need more a more detailed proposal. Perhaps only one or two per week is appropriate. More information in written form such as starting point, exact route taken, etc. would be useful. I'd like a more detailed proposal before making a final decision

Ms. Carello: The VERP results should be reviewed. Solitude will be impacted, which is a primary draw of the area. Voices carry and loud noises are a problem. Perhaps a shock hill drier trail loop would be preferable, so the people could see the Gulch, but not impact it. Or they could stagger the use to reduce the number of users in the Preserve. I am worried about trail impacts as well.

Ms. Andersen: The VERP was done prior to the opening of the Peak 7 lodges. The ski area is planning to run the gondola during the summer and that will also increase use. I believe they plan to charge money for mountain bikes on the gondola.

Ms. Hollinshead: BOSAC should discuss this and should be referred to by Council. Does Town Council have any say in this? (Council will have to approve the proposal.)

Ms. Hunter: Christy, what are you comfortable with as far as additional use?

Ms. Carello: My first answer is that no additional hikes are good. Less is better. Trail impacts will be a big issue. The summer is also the most important time for many of our sensitive species, so the fewer interruptions, the better.

Mr. Yule: Shuttling of bikes from the gondola may require closure of this trail altogether.

BOSAC requested that the ski area provide additional information regarding this proposal, including the number of days per week, the duration, alternative trails considered, etc. The ski area representatives need to understand the sensitivity of Cucumber Gulch and how important it is to BOSAC and the Town as a whole. BOSAC would like to see more of a focus on trails within the ski area. More information should also be provided on the staffing approach. Perhaps the ski area could use the Pence Miller Trail and Shock Hill Trails (e.g. Start at Shock Hill and loop around the Hill). Two per week, one in Cucumber Gulch, one elsewhere seems like a reasonable number of hikes on Town open space.

Cucumber Gulch Preserve Presentation

Dr. Christy Carello presented to BOSAC the results of the Cucumber Gulch Preserve monitoring program. Primary conclusions include:

WATER: The water quality results have been pooled between the ski area and open space research programs, which is a good step. Much of the activity on Peak 8 base area has impacted the water quality in the gulch (construction, regrading, lift moving, culvert replacement). We had significant erosion in May, under the first season of runoff since the new culvert was installed by the ski area. The new culvert needs to be changed. The existing broken culvert may have been a good thing because it allowed for infiltration, not point source release. Channelization is a major problem that needs to be taken care of as soon as possible. The culvert is discharging directly into the Gulch, as is the Glenwild riprap discharge. These should both be fixed to ensure good water quality in the Gulch. Sampling showed increased turbidity and sedimentation below these discharge points. Erosion and sedimentation are occurring and are problematic to the health of the Gulch. I was also concerned with the straightness of the restored wetlands on County Road 3 alignment.

Mr. Grosshuesch: I believe the flow from the Peak 8 culvert should be directed into the detention pond. We will look into the drainage plan more closely.

Dr. Carello: We documented increased hardness in the water, probably related to the restoration of CR 3. There were also increased levels of chloride along CR 3. There was also an increase in phosphorous, which can lead to algal blooms and eutrophication, which is a threat to the Gulch. This is likely related to the hydroseeding at the base area. The number one concern is the removal of the Glenwild riprapped storm water channel emptying into the Gulch. It is potentially in direct conflict with state regulations regarding discharging into wetlands. We need to prevent direct discharge like this into the Gulch, and both the Glenwild drainage and the Peak 8 culvert.

VEGETATION: The vegetation monitoring went well this year. The only significant change was an increase in canopy coverage of the shrubland habitat. This can be correlated with changes in precipitation.

WEEDS: Weeds continue to be an issue in select locations. Eradication efforts have proved successful and should be continued. We should focus more effort on the new Peak 7 bridge area, which has a lot of scentless/false chamomile around it. The gondola alignment where the trees have been removed is also problematic with thistles and dandelions.

WILLOWS: The nordic ski trail maintenance willow study revealed that willow trimming and grooming for nordic ski trails significantly reduces the reproductive fitness of the willows. Catkin production is lessened tremendously on the Nordic ski trails. Does that really matter is the question? The willows could be reproducing underground/cloning, but this will reduce diversity within the ski trail corridor. Branch length is also shortened. There is a reduction in branch length in July and August on the both the controls and treatment areas, possibly due to over browsing. Non native species (dandelion) is showing up more clearly in ski trail corridors. We would like to answer the question, "Does Nordic ski trail maintenance affect browsing by moose and beaver?" We could create exclosures to preclude browsing, then compare the control with treatment areas. We could also look at which browser is most active. Nordic ski trail maintenance definitely affects willow reproduction. Snow is compacted and remains longer, so that the willows miss their photo opportunity. The trigger for producing catkins is not there due to the additional snow compaction. It is up to BOSAC to decide if this finding really matters and requires action.

AVIAN: The May-July time is critical for avian species reproduction. Overall, brown-headed cowbirds birds are now more prevalent in the Gulch, especially just below Peak 8. Crows and other corvids are more prevalent in the mixed conifer forest, which could be problematic for the neotropical songbirds. More birds are found during dawn than dusk, but there are still many songbirds active at dusk feeding. The American three toed woodpecker was noted for the first time (possibly related to the presence of mountain pine beetle). Violet Green Swallows are back up in numbers, potentially because the noise impacts present a few years ago are gone. Warbling Vireo is still not prevalent, but is present in one location in the Gulch. This species is very sensitive to brown-headed cowbirds. Incidents of brown-headed Cowbird are up 53% since 2008 and 500% since 2005. This is a local (not statewide) trend directly related to forest fragmentation in and around the Gulch. We see a lot of brown-headed cowbirds along CR 3 below Peak 8, and along the gondola alignment, and near the bird feeders in White Wolf. Songbirds are most active during the four hours after sunrise, so we need to limit noise and disturbance during that time. June and July are the most important songbird breeding months, so limiting activity during that time would be prudent.

AMPHIBIAN: We found no evidence of the boreal toad this past summer.

MAMMALIAN: Beaver lodges are stabilizing in numbers, but the number of sightings of beaver and muskrats are up. The muskrats are way up in sightings, which could be problematic because they are in competition with the beavers. Ungulate habitat use findings: Shrub lands are used by moose, and deer prefer the upland and conifer habitat. We estimate the moose population at two

bull moose and one cow and once calf. I have not seen elk at all in Cucumber Gulch, other than once several years ago. They are probably crossing CR 3 farther north.

TRAIL CONDITIONS: There were no significant changes here, and some improvements. Some tread incision on Gold Digger. Peaks Connect has some wet spots on it. The trail crew has been taking care of many of the problem areas, but there are a few more.

Regarding the summer operation of the gondola, 8:30 am start seems too early and the middle of June is also too early given the breeding timeframe of songbirds. I will read through the report more thoroughly and provide my comments to staff.

BOSAC thanked Dr. Carello for her work and presentation.

Summer Trail Map Update

Mr. Reid presented the latest version of the summer non-motorized trail map.

Mr. Truckey: I think we need a blowup of the downtown Breckenridge area to assist with wayfinding through Town and on the local, close-in trails.

Ms. Hollinshead: I would like to see us remove the loops on the backside.

Mr. Reid gave a description of the 5 agreed upon loops and 3 additional options.

Ms. Hollinshead: We should add hiking loops specifically.

Ms. Hunter: Many tourists would appreciate the downtown blow-up vs. trails like Quandary on the outskirts.

Ms. Merrill: Do the 5 biking trails and then have a blow-up of the downtown area.

Mr. Kuhn: Should this be done in conjunction with the downtown delineated bike lanes?

Ms. Merrill: A blow-up of downtown is really important.

Ms. Hollinshead: It would also be nice to have a table with distances for road bikers.

BOSAC agreed to provide a Town-specific blowup area, two additional hiking-focused loops (Iowa Hill and Mohawk Lakes), and a table with road biking distances.

Mr. Cospolich: Did Town Council ever decide on amount of funding from BOSAC for bike striping? (Staff understands the direction to be use what is already budgeted and complete as much as possible in the next two years.)

Ms. Hunter: Could we mention that we are at altitude and that people should bring water. Perhaps note where motorized or other use might be expected

Mr. Reid: I will work with Mike McCormack on the wording for the maps, including much of the information in the mountain biking messaging document.

Mr. Kuhn: Should we be including some of our messaging regarding dog poop clean-up?

Ms. Hollinshead: If we have the arrows, then maybe we don't need the loop maps.

Mr. Reid: USFS is okay with the maps, but didn't want more arrows. We'd only use them on Town/County trails.

Ms. Hollinshead: We should minimize the number of arrows.

BOSAC agreed to pursue production with Yupo/plastic material and to pursue 10,000 for the first run of maps. Arrows will be installed on the suggested loops, but minimized.

Ms. Hollinshead: I would like to know the difference between singletrack and other trails/roads. That's big for me. The maps that bug are the ones that show everything in solid lines. The topographic lines could be included with the shaded relief. I think it's big to differentiate between different types of roads and trails (paved, jeep, double-track, single-track). Also, I like it when the maps have black diamonds with a "d" for difficult sections.

Ms. Merrill: I would use dashed lines for singletrack.

BOSAC directed staff to reevaluate using topographic lines on the primary map (in addition to the blowups) and to evaluate the symbology suggestions of Ms. Hollinshead. BOSAC agreed that the trail map subcommittee will make the final decision on these layout issues.

Mr. Reid: We have two important dates to keep in mind for this summer. The first is June 24th through the 27th. The IMBA Trail Care Crew will be present to work on the new Discovery Trail addition. The second date is the VOC project July 17th and 18th for work on the Middle Flume.

Sustainability Task Force

BOSAC agreed to continue this agenda item until the April meeting.

Commissioner Issues

Mr. Kuhn: Please add Mountain bikes in the Gulch as an agenda item for next year. Please send the VERP study results to BOSAC for review.

Mr. Joyce: We have had incursions into Sallie Barber by snowmobiles again. Look into fencing instead of dropping trees on Sallie Barber to prevent snowmobile use. Could we put a fence up at Janzen's? (Possibly, but staff will talk to County staff regarding this topic.)

Ms. Hunter: Look into entrance of Summit Gulch ditch, as property is for sale and it could be a good time to get an easement.

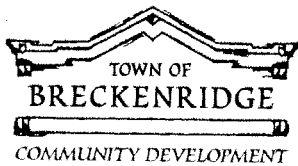
Mr. Yule: Vail Resorts has a new ECO Program that could be a good source for volunteers.

Next Meeting

The next regularly scheduled BOSAC meeting is on April 19, 2010 at 5:30 pm in the Administrative Conference Room in the Breckenridge Town Hall (150 Ski Hill Road).

Mr. Yule motioned to adjourn the meeting and Mr. Cospolich seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 9:29 p.m.

Dennis Kuhn, Chair



April 6, 2010

Rep. Jared Polis
P.O. Box 1453
Frisco, CO 80443

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

Dear Rep. Polis:

The Town of Breckenridge would like to state our endorsement of the Hidden Gems Wilderness Proposal, as portrayed on the Hidden Gems Campaign website March 17, 2010, for the Hoosier Ridge and Tenmile areas.

In our letter dated January 28, 2010, the Town of Breckenridge listed concerns that were at that time not yet resolved:

- Wilderness designation could impede our ability to fight wildfires and protect our watershed in the aftermath of wildfire. This is particularly of issue because of 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 (i.e. firebreaks and other fuels management prescriptions), use roads and mechanical equipment to fight a fire, and locate and construct water quality protection structures or ancillary roads within some of the areas proposed as wilderness.
- Wilderness designation affects the extent to which mountain bike trail systems can be utilized and further expanded.
- Wilderness designation would preclude the use of mechanized equipment in clearing trails of downed trees. Considering the fire danger and potential for subsequent blow-down, the Town feels that it is important that chainsaws and other mechanized equipment be allowed in order to adequately clear trails and provide for the safety of the trail users in a timely manner.

The Hidden Gems Wilderness proposal has been adjusted since that time to address many of these issues. The boundaries of the proposed wilderness now largely match that of the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) boundaries, helping alleviate Town concerns and those of the Red, White and Blue Fire Department regarding proactive fire mitigation, fire suppression, and post-fire watershed protection efforts in the Upper Blue Basin. Further, many mountain bike trails in the Town and County trail master plans, along with those identified as important by user groups such as the Summit Fat Tire Society, have been excluded from Wilderness designation.

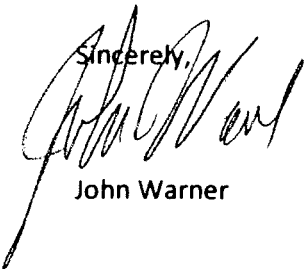
The Town still believes any final language must address the need to manage large-scale downfall through mechanical means on trails in wilderness, both for trails in existing wilderness areas and in areas recommended through the Hidden Gems proposal. Regardless of the outcome of the Hidden Gems Campaign, this is of great concern to our community as the trees infested by the mountain pine beetle eventually fall.

In our January 28th letter, we asked that the Hidden Gems proposal address those areas no longer included within proposed wilderness, as well as other areas appropriate as a non-motorized wilderness buffer in order to expand protection. Through the use of a companion designation, natural resources and trails that were taken out of the original citizen's wilderness proposal could receive a higher level of protection that they might otherwise have without a congressionally legislated designation. At the same time, wildfire and watershed protection could be provided with less restrictions than would be the case in a designated wilderness area. Both the International Mountain Biking Association and the Hidden Gems Campaign are working on companion designation maps and language for inclusion in the proposal.

The Town of Breckenridge can officially endorse the Wilderness-specific boundaries that have been arrived at, as long as the above-mentioned companion designation is also included in the final legislation submitted. Moving forward, the multi-faceted lands protection approach appears to be a solution with broad appeal, a consensus-building option that will become more critical as development and extractive industries place greater demands upon the stewards of our public lands. It is our opinion that this approach enhances and complements the sanctity of wilderness, but also addresses the lingering issues of wildfire mitigation, watershed protection and historical recreational use.

Please feel free to call Heide Andersen at 970.547.3110 if you have any questions. In the meantime, we look forward to working further with your office on the companion designation wording and mapping.

Sincerely,



John Warner

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

2010 Summer Wilderness Hike Schedule Breckenridge Outdoor Recreation & Education Dept.

Hikes listed by date and difficulty.

June 9- Sunbeam/Carter Park Loop: Portrait of Breckenridge- (moderate-difficult)

June 16- Lower Flume Trail: Mines of the Times- (easy-moderate)

June 23- Select 10/F&D Placer: A History of Breckenridge- (moderate)

June 30- B&B Trail: Historical Mine Sites- (easy)

July 7- Cucumber Gulch: Medicinal Plants- (easy)

July 14- Illinois Creek: Views of Breckenridge -(moderate- difficult)

July 21-Sawmill Creek: Shadows & Waterfalls-(moderate)

July 28- Wakefield Blue River Trail: Fun for Everyone- (easy-moderate)

August 4-Lower Flume Trail: Mines of the Times- (easy-moderate)

August 11- Cucumber Gulch: Fragile Ecosystems- (easy)

August 13- Select 10/F&D Placer: A History of Breckenridge- (easy-moderate)

August 20- Sawmill Creek: Shadows and Waterfalls- (moderate)

August 25- X10U8 Trail: Life of a Miner- (moderate)

2010 Breckenridge Heritage Alliance Summer Guided Historic Hikes Schedule

Effective June 17 – September 23

Guided Hikes in French Gulch (BnB, Minnie & X10U8 Trails)

Thursdays at 10 a.m.

Maximum of 10 people per tour.

Guided Hike at Iowa Hill

Saturdays at 10 a.m.

Maximum of 10 people per tour.

February 8, 2010

Dear Property Owner,

Providing safe and reliable electric service, while complying with various government agencies' requirements, is a top priority of Xcel Energy. To do so, Xcel Energy routinely maintains vegetation along its electric distribution and transmission right-of-way throughout the State of Colorado.

Forests in the vicinity of Breckenridge, Colorado have experienced an increase in tree mortality as the Mountain Pine Beetle epidemic continues to expand throughout the State's forests. According to the United States Forest Service (USFS), mortality rates of mature lodgepole pine are approaching 80%. Within the next 3-5 years, current USFS projections show such mortality rate increasing to 90% of mature lodgepole pine. As dead lodgepole pine stands deteriorate and fall to the ground, trees near overhead power lines pose an additional threat to electric service reliability.

Xcel Energy has been working in cooperation with the USFS with the goal of developing and implementing a variety of vegetation treatments on forest land both on and adjacent to Xcel Energy's electric distribution and transmission right-of-ways in an effort to better protect overhead electric conductors.

These proposed vegetation treatments include the clearing of all tall growing tree species up to 200 feet on each side of the centerline for transmission rights-of-way and up to 75 feet on each side of the centerline for distribution rights-of-way. To be consistent, Xcel Energy desires to perform this same treatment on private property, adjacent to State and Federal lands. Vegetation treatments will be accomplished utilizing the following felling methods or combinations thereof.

1. Mechanical felling utilizing ground-based slash buster type machinery whereby all standing trees will be masticated in place and debris scattered.
2. Mechanical felling utilizing ground-based feller buncher type machinery whereby merchantable timber will be cut off just above ground line and piled for property owner.
3. Hand felling utilizing chainsaw crews to fell trees. Hand felling will be utilized in areas identified with restrictions on ground-based machinery, such as steep slopes, wetland areas and designated roadless areas.

We look forward to working with the private property owners in the Breckenridge, Colorado area to achieve the proposed treatment. An authorized contractor of Xcel Energy may be utilizing one or more of the felling methods described above, on the property you own on or adjacent to our electric distribution or transmission right-of-way.

Although Xcel Energy is not responsible for vegetation management outside of its rights-of-way (whether on USFS property or private property), and by this request we are not assuming any responsibility for the same, we are interested in implementing this one-time plan on certain private property for efficiency purposes.

Please contact Xcel Energy's Vegetation Management Department at 303-571-3965 to discuss any site specific concerns you may have regarding this clearing on your property, or to schedule an individual site visit with our clearing contractor, as we systematically perform clearing work on facilities in this area.

Sincerely,

Terry Hamm
Supervisor I, Vegetation Management
Xcel Energy
Public Service Company of Colorado
303-571-3965
terry.hamm@xcelenergy.com