

Roll Call

Dennis Kuhn called the December 20, 2010 BOSAC meeting to order at 5:38 pm. Other BOSAC members present included Monique Merrill, Scott Yule, Devon O'Neil, Jeff Cospolich, and Jennifer McAtamney. Staff members present were Tim Gagen, Tony Overlock, Scott Reid, Heide Andersen, Scott Cline, Chris Kulik, Peter Grosssheusch and Mark Truckey. Brian Lorch from Summit County Government, Dr. Christy Carello and Councilmember Jeffrey Bergeron were also present.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes were approved as presented.

Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved as presented.

Public Comments

There were no public comments.

Staff Summary

Mr. Truckey introduced Chris Kulick to BOSAC and informed BOSAC of the impending staff changes. Heide has given her notice and will be moving to the Methow Valley in Washington State. Scott Reid has assumed Ms. Andersen's position, and Chris Kulick will move from Current Planning to the Open Space Division to fill Mr. Reid's vacated position.

Mr. Kuhn thanked Ms. Andersen for her work and dedication to the Open Space and Trails Division.

Open Space and Trails

2010 Trail Projects Summary

Mr. Tony Overlock provided an overview of the 2010 trail season. This year was our most productive yet, with all four trail crew members returning and an additional fifth member paid for by the Colorado Workforce. The Middle Flume VOC project was another success. Volunteer numbers were up again this year. Over \$58,000 of value was donated to the town via volunteer projects. 3.1 miles of new or realigned trails were constructed. 18 miles of existing trails were maintained. 403 volunteers donated their time for a total of 2272 volunteer hours. Two of the crew members (Joel and Tom) will unfortunately not be returning in 2011, but we once again have an ambitious project list. Thank to BOSAC and Council for their continued support of the trails program.

2011 Cucumber Monitoring Program

Ms. Andersen provided an overview of the current Cucumber Gulch Monitoring program and outlined staff recommendations for the 2011 monitoring program. 2001 was the first season data was collected and the intervening years have provided good information and trends over time. Water quality, avian population, amphibian and vegetation surveys are recommended by staff and Dr. Carello to be retained and continued. Beaver and muskrat surveys could be cut. Additional ungulate pellet counts are not really needed into the future and the wildlife cameras

may help with some of that information. Trail condition surveys are no longer necessary because our trail crew works on the trail issues constantly. Students often work pro bono, so the value provided to the program is large.

Dr. Carello: The maintenance of the trails precludes successful research efforts. I am on sabbatical this year, but I think I will be successful in recruiting students to continue this work this year. Also, a student is creating a plant guide to Cucumber Gulch, which will be a good tool for the Town. I started work in Cucumber Gulch Preserve in 2003, which is useful for consistency.

Mr. Yule: Does Christy do the water quality survey? (It has switched over the years, but ERO is now in charge of water analysis.)

Ms. Andersen: The lab tests for water quality are very expensive, the largest portion of the research budget (30-40% of budget for lab work). It may be worth evaluating the water quality measures for several more years at least.

Ms. McAtamney: I think the recommendations make a lot of sense. If we see changes in the future, we can renew these studies.

Mr. Cospolich: How much do these changes save us? (\$6,000 approximately)

Ms. Carello: It is sad to lose the observation time during the beaver/muskrat surveys because it often gives us a chance to see other species as well. We have a new norm with the numbers of beavers and muskrats. The populations fluctuate normally anyway, but I think we are at a relatively steady norm at this point.

BOSAC agreed to eliminate the study components outlined in the memo.

Ms. Andersen outlined the potential human impact study as requested by Council. The gondola evaluation from 2010 was useful. Staff recommends ceasing that survey unless the dates for the gondola operations are moved into June or earlier. A schedule change to earlier in the summer may force nest abandonment for local birds. We recommend closing Toad Alley to trail users until the gondola begins operation. A motion detection camera study could also be designed to compare wildlife usage on a closed and opened trail. Trail use data will also continue to be collected by staff. The cameras will also help us categorize types and timing of use. Uphill mountain bike traffic may also be an option to reduce impacts on the gulch.

Mr. Yule: Josie's cabin remains an issue. Are the Daytons still running snowshoe tours and is there a new stove installed? (yes) We need to include the entire gulch in the impact evaluation, not just the upper gulch area.

Mr. Kuhn: I recommend no activities in Josie's after dark.

Mr. Gagen: This should only be a daytime warming hut. Council agrees that this cabin should only be used during Nordic center operation hours.

Mr. Yule: We need a good management plan for the cabin. It's easy to access; it's got a stove. We need to focus our energy on evaluating use of that cabin.

Dr. Carello: I am concerned about training the snowshoe guides to ensure that the snowshoe hikes stay on the designated snowshoe routes. I am also concerned about nighttime snowshoe routes in sensitive areas. They should stay on the more heavily traveled system routes, like Gold Digger.

BOSAC requested a management plan be developed for Josie's Cabin. BOSAC does not want to see nighttime activities within the PMA within Cucumber Gulch.

Ms. McAtamney: I would wait to implement the uphill traffic limitations until we study it for a year. I worry that if we open the gondola and the trails on the same day, it will muddle the information gathering effort.

Dr. Carello: We think the camera approach will be useful, but it is still just a snapshot of one area. We will know type of use, group size, travel direction etc. But for wildlife, we might get some good information, but then again maybe not. On the majority of the trail system, the gondola has no real impact, except where it actually crosses the trail alignment. The bird surveys for 2010 showed that the numbers were back to 2008 numbers in terms of abundance. Many of the increased numbers from 2009 can be attributed to cowbirds and corvids coming into the newly fragmented corridor. I am hoping is that the cowbird population is saturated and will not climb again this year. Without additional fragmentation, I am hoping that there will not be another increase in cowbird populations. I don't believe that opening the gondola and the trail on the same day will really impact the proposed wildlife camera study.

Mr. Kuhn: I want to see the ski area finish the bridge over the alpine slide, and early in the season, before the mountain bikers are on the trails. Their budget process is in February, so we need to be talking with the ski area now to get that trail completed and across the alpine slide. That is critical to the trail issue.

Dr. Carello: The most sensitive species will be away from the trails. Species that are edge adapted will likely not alter their behavior. A large increase in use may trickle into the deeper habitat of the gulch. I would not recommend moving the existing cameras at all because we have such good data already.

Ms. Andersen: Council approved a \$10,000 increase in the 2011 research budget, which could be used for wildlife cameras.

Mr. Yule: It seems like the gondola was not a big impact this year. What if the ski area wants to open it earlier?

Ms. McAtamney: I would like to see more data before any changes. I am worried about Christy's point about egg laying and timing for birds nesting.

Dr. Carello: Once the chicks have hatched, nest abandonment is rare. The potential for disruption is much greater if the gondola opens earlier than July 1st, when the birds are still nesting and have not yet reared their chicks.

BOSAC agreed that construction of the bridge over the alpine slide by July 1st, or by the date of the opening of the alpine slide, is a high priority for 2011. The goal is to have the new Peaks Connect opened before mountain biking season. BOSAC agreed with the remainder of staff's recommendation in the memo, including the wildlife camera-based study on Toad Alley and Hang Ten.

2011 Work Plan

Mr. Reid provided presented the draft 2011 workplan and solicited feedback from BOSAC.

Ms. Andersen: Approval of the Upper Blue Nordic Master Plan may result in some items being added to the workplan.

Mr. Cospolich: I would like to see the Black Loop topsoil and landscaping item as a higher priority.

Mr. Kuhn: Development of a wildlife management plan is interesting.

Ms. Andersen: This issue came about via the Sustainable Breck project. The Police Department has also been working on coyote issues, so we are thinking that we can help address wildlife issues throughout town with a clear overall plan.

Ms. McAtamney: It would be helpful to have better information on migration corridors so we can work with proposed annexation issues. Please see if the BOEC is willing to help offset costs of the proposed. Keep it on there for now.

Commissioner Issues

Mr. Yule: The new Black Loop trail skis really well. It is a huge improvement.

Executive Session

Mr. O'Neill motioned to enter into Executive Session to discuss property acquisition. Ms. McAtamney seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. BOSAC entered into Executive Session at 7:27 pm. Ms. McAtamney made a motion to exit Executive Session; Ms. Merrill seconded the motion. BOSAC came out of Executive Session at 7:44 pm.

Next Meeting

The next regularly scheduled BOSAC meeting is on January 17, 2010 at 5:30 pm in the Administrative Conference Room in the Breckenridge Town Hall (150 Ski Hill Road).

Mr. O'Neil motioned to adjourn the meeting and Ms. McAtamney seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 7:49 p.m.

Dennis Kuhn, Chair