

### **Roll Call**

Jeff Cospolich called the November 19, 2012 BOSAC meeting to order at 4:06 pm. Other BOSAC members present included Chris Tennial, Devon O'Neil, Ben Brewer, Erin Hunter, Jeffery Bergeron and Jeff Carlson. Staff members present were Peter Grosshuesch and Chris Kulick. Gary Shimanowitz and Jeff Zimmerman from the Breckenridge Ski Resort were also in attendance.

### **Approval of Minutes**

The minutes were approved as presented.

Mr. Bergeron – We need to put sign a sign across from skiers edge stating this is not the Quandary Peak Trailhead. (Staff – We will speak to Summit County Open Space about the possibility of installing this type of sign.)

### **Approval of Agenda**

The agenda was approved as presented.

### **Public Comments**

There were no public comments.

### **Staff Summary**

#### **Cucumber Gulch Preserve Restoration**

The Cucumber Gulch wetland restoration project was completed on time and under budget. Staff will continue to monitor the restoration sites to evaluate the long term effectiveness of the project.

Mr. Shimanowitz – This was a successful project that was the result of a great partnership between the Town and the Breckenridge Ski Resort.

Mr. Zimmerman – Great project between the two entities. It to ensure its long-term success will require continued cooperation and maintenance between the two entities.

Mr. Bergeron – Are there ongoing funds for monitoring and maintenance? (Mr. Grosshuesch – Yes, we will continue conducting our annual monitoring program and will be committed to maintenance when the need arises.)

Mr. Shimanowitz – We also worked with Tom Daugherty on other drainage and sediment issues on the ski resort itself.

Mr. Bergeron – Now that we have more direct drainage as opposed to sheet flow is there any way to buffer the water impact in the Gulch. (Mr. Shimanowitz - That is what we worked on with Tom.)

Mr. Cospolich – I am very happy with the outcome of this project.

### **Trail Projects**

Three seasonal trail crew members are still working on 2012 trails and open space projects. Work has focused on X10U8 and Slalom Trails and fencing. The crew members will likely continue to work until the snowpack precludes productivity.

Mr. Bergeron –With the improved conditions and berms on moonstone I’m worried about it becoming a shuttle route? (Mr. Kulick – The rerouting and maintenance of the moonstone trail is the first step in creating a more user friendly system in the moonstone area. Long-term we will most likely be adding additional trails to separate ability levels and user groups. BOSAC will begin reviewing some these concepts next spring.)

### **Golden Horseshoe Cabin Cleanup**

In cooperation with Summit County, five cabins on joint Town/County open space in the Golden Horseshoe were cleaned up in October. Contemporary garbage and debris was removed from all cabins, and efforts were made to “dry-in” the cabins to reduce rotting and extend the cabins’ life spans. Staff plans to fabricate and install signage to welcome users, inform them about the cabins’ ownership, address trash and vandalism issues, and reduce potential liability exposure. If the cabins attract overnight stays, yield activities that violate open space regulations (e.g. fires), or experience vandalism, staff will reevaluate the existing “open door” cabin policy.

The US Forest Service (USFS) has issued a decision notice on the proposed abandoned mine cleanup project in the Golden Horseshoe, as previously discussed with BOSAC. The USFS opted to complete the proposed cleanup of contemporary debris at many sites, and to also spare five structures in the Lincoln Townsite from removal so they can be further evaluated for management and interpretation by the Breckenridge Heritage Alliance (BHA). The BHA has indicated a willingness to consider maintaining the vacant structures, although no special use authorization has been issued.

### **Trail Equipment**

This summer, the trails program purchased a mini tracked hauler for use in the construction and maintenance of the Town trails. Staff is now contemplating the purchase of a mini-skid loader, which would work well with the hauler and increase the trail crew’s productivity. The loader would require a capital expenditure of approximately \$30,000. Staff believes that this investment will increase efficiencies and improve long-term trail maintenance. There is still sufficient funding in this year’s trails budget line item to make the purchase.

Mr. Brewer – This isn’t replicating any machine we currently have? (Mr. Kulick – No, this is a unique piece of equipment for the Town. It will be owned by the Open Space Department but will be maintained by the Town’s fleet staff.)

### **Open Space and Trails**

#### **Open Space Program Metrics**

Staff presented the State of the Open Space report, which summarizes many of the accomplishments of the Town’s open space program since its inception in 1997. Staff requested that BOSAC review the attached report and answer the following questions:

**1. Does BOSAC have any clarifying questions regarding the information?**

BOSAC – Had no clarifying questions

**2. Does BOSAC have any additional information requests that are not covered in this report?**

Mr. Cospolich – It would be interesting to see how some of our efforts compare to Aspen/ Pitkin County. (Mr. Kulick – We would be happy to provide that information to BOSAC at the next meeting.)

Ms. Hunter – We should release this report to the public and promote it through the newspaper, social media and other news sites. (Mr. Kulick – That is are long-term plan once Council is able to review the document and provide feedback.)

**In-Town Open Space Discussion**

Staff presented a preliminary review of Town’s current in-town open space. Staff’s goal was to provide BOSAC with available information during this November meeting, and then return with a final, more neighborhood-specific analysis for BOSAC’s December review. Based on the feedback provided by BOSAC, staff will present any findings to Council in January or soon thereafter.

Balancing acquisition priorities between in-town and out of town/Upper Blue properties has been discussed since the 1997 inception of the open space program. The original 1998 Open Space Plan stated:

*“The Open Spaces Program will include properties within the Town boundary, and within the Upper Blue Basin, but with an emphasis on lands either within Town, or a short distance from Town boundaries. Special attention should be paid to land visible from Breckenridge, which, if developed, would adversely affect the scenic nature of Town.”(p. 12)*

In 2007, the Open Space Plan was revised and the policy was revised to read as follows:

*“The Open Space Program will include properties within the Town boundary, and within the Upper Blue Basin. Special attention should be paid to land visible from Breckenridge, which, if developed, would adversely affect the scenic nature of Town.” (p. 13)*

This minor edit was made to recognize the growing backcountry properties (e.g. B&B) acquired and managed by the Town and County, while still articulating a balance between in-town and out of town/Upper Blue open space acquisitions.

Mr. Bergeron – As the Town ages, we may face demands from people that will have special interest for programmed spaces in-Town.

Mr. Brewer - It is important to speak to individuals outside of the usual supporters of open space. This report conveys the story very succinctly to those not generally familiar with open space. By controlling 23% of all properties in-Town we have flexibility to positively shape the community.

Mr. Grosshuesch – In addition to the successes we have had and will continue to have through the Open Space program we have an aggressive agenda for parks development in the next couple years. This will include the snowplow park, five pocket parks along the Block 11 river segment and river restoration on McCain parcel.

Using the information provided in the attached State of the Open Space report and the staff presentation, please answer the following questions related to in-town open space:

1. ***Does BOSAC have any additional information needs to fully analyze this topic?***
2. ***Does BOSAC have any direction or comments in preparation for a final BOSAC discussion in December?***

Mr. Tennal – In regards to analysis a bit more direction from Council would be helpful.

Mr. Brewer – I think Council and BOSAC share the same vision on most issues but we might to look at few properties in-Town that could enhance the Open Space program.

Mr. O’Neil – We could make better use of historic resources for in-Town parks, such as the Milne Park and the Carter museum.

Mr. Cospolich – Because of our unique demographics and climate we shouldn’t use national standards for parks or open space.

Mr. Bergeron – I agree with Mr. Cospolich, due to our weather a lot of our active recreation space is indoors such as the Rec Center.

### **Cucumber Avian/Gondola Study**

Staff presented findings from Dr. Christy Carello report entitled “*The effects of springtime gondola operation on avian populations in Cucumber Gulch, Breckenridge, Colorado.*” The report was commissioned by Town Council in partnership with the Breckenridge Ski Resort to evaluate any potential impacts that the earlier springtime operation of the gondola may have to area bird populations.

The report’s main findings are summarized as follows:

- Following the commencement of gondola operations, the total number of birds (abundance) decreased in the gondola corridor when compared to the control sites. This decrease in avian population abundance within the gondola corridor is consistent with results of the previous 2010 study, which was conducted two weeks later in the season for the July 1<sup>st</sup> start date.
- The late-arriving Cordilleran Flycatchers appeared to choose nesting sites in control areas over the gondola corridor, suggesting a preference for nesting sites away from the gondola alignment when the gondola is operational.
- The Wilson’s warbler population experienced a statistically significant decrease within the gondola corridor once the gondola became operational. This finding is consistent with the 2010 results, but does not indicate whether the birds vacated the gondola corridor only or a larger area such as the Preserve.
- Violet-green swallows attempted to nest in underside gondola cabin cavities, which subsequently moved when the gondola began summer operations.
- Dr. Carello strongly recommended that the Breckenridge Ski Resort take measures to preclude avian access to the underside gondola cavities to prevent the Violet-green Swallows from nesting in the gondola cavities, only to have the gondola move the nest site when in operation. This suggestion echoes BSR’s consultant Rick Thompson’s previous 2010 recommendation.

- No other management indicator species yielded a statistically significant decrease from the gondola operation.
- Dr. Carello also continues to recommend that gondola operations are limited during morning and evening timeframes, when crepuscular (active at dusk and dawn) species are feeding and nesting.

Staff requested BOSAC review the attached report and answer the following questions in preparation for staff's 11/27 Town Council presentation on the same topic:

**1. Does BOSAC have any clarifying questions on the report's contents?**

BOSAC – In general most members of BOSAC felt the report was vague and recommended having Christy on hand to give some clarity on to the report.

**2. Does BOSAC have any recommendations for Council's consideration regarding this topic?**

Mr. Cospolich - The watershed moment happened when the gondola went in and altered the habitat. (Mr. Carlson – That doesn't mean we shouldn't try to do anything.) Agreed.

Mr. Bergeron - I worry about how quantifiable this study is.

Mr. Carlson - I feel that the running of the Gondola does not appeal to birds. (Mr. Cospolich – Does that surprise anyone. I question if we should continue to spend a lot of money every year to study this?)

Mr. Brewer - I have a hard time figuring out where the birds actually are going, a few feet over or far away. I have concerns with birds nesting in the cabins.

Mr. Shimanowitz – We investigated the nesting issue and found no evidence of birds nesting in the cabins. We spoke with CWA the cabin manufacturer; there 37,000 of this particular model of cabin worldwide and they have never had any issues with nesting. We could have covers manufactured but it would be very expensive and would prohibit us from other maintenance and cleaning.

Mr. Carlson – Are the attendants that clean the cabins really looking for nests before they spray them out?

Ms. Hunter – I also have the same concerns as Mr. Cospolich with the same study being commissioned over and over again. If we pay for Dr. Carello's studies we should follow the recommendations from the results.

Mr. Carlson – All I can do is go with the information that is provided. Whether they are building nests or not, the attraction the gondola provides seems detrimental to the birds because of energy expenditure they use to seek out unsuitable nesting sites.

Mr. Brewer – I agree with Mr. Carlson's concerns.

Mr. Bergeron – I feel the report is vague and wish Dr. Carello was on-hand to ask a few questions.

Mr. O'Neil – The report is pretty subjective and difficult to make decisions with the provided information.

Mr. Brewer – I agree the report is subjective.

Ms. Hunter – Couldn't the nesting issue whether it exists or not be solved by installing screens on the cabins.

Mr. Tennal – Is it a habitat issue or an operations issue in-terms of bird depopulation.

Mr. O'Neil – Statistically significant is used a lot in the report, which it may be due to the sample size, but the numbers don't point to a significant problem.

Mr. Bergeron – I don't think the money is wasted on these studies (Mr. Brewer – I agree).

Mr. Zimmerman – This is a very narrow study, a more meaningful study would be studying the larger context of the Gulch.

Mr. Brewer - Would we rather spend money on another study or fix the potential problem through collaboration with the ski resort. (Mr. Shimanowitz – We have reviewed Dr. Carello's concerns and have found no evidence of there being any issues with nesting.)

Mr. Brewer – It seems risky to run if we have seen birds entering the cabin. I would like to see a cost estimate for screens and have Christy available for questions during the Council work session.

### **Town Council Update**

Councilmember Ben Brewer updated BOSAC on recent Town Council agenda topics and direction, including the [engagebreckenridge.com](http://engagebreckenridge.com) tool and 2013 capital projects.

### **Next Meeting**

The next regularly scheduled meeting is on December 17, 2012 in the Administrative Conference Room at the Breckenridge Town Hall (150 Ski Hill Road).

Mr. O'Neil made a motion to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Mr. Carlson.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

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Jeff Cospolich, Chair