

Roll Call

Erin Hunter called the January 21, 2013 BOSAC meeting to order at 5:35 pm. Other BOSAC members present included Devon O'Neil, Ben Brewer, Jeff Carlson and Jeffery Bergeron. Staff members present were Peter Grosshuesch, Mark Truckey, Scott Reid, Tony Overlock and Chris Kulick.

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

2013 Golden Horseshoe Trails NEPA Process

Staff has been working with U.S. Forest Service and Summit County Government representatives to plan near-future trail projects in the Golden Horseshoe (e.g. Weber Gulch and Aspen Alley realignments, ZL Trail, Galena extension, and more). Eight different trail projects have been identified that require site-specific NEPA analysis because they are new trails or significant realignments of existing routes. Environmental, cultural and other evaluations are underway, and staff anticipates a late spring, 2013 decision. Most of these projects are targeted for 2014 and after. Staff will keep BOSAC informed of these potential future projects.

Trail Map revision

Staff has begun work on a revised, second edition trail map for website distribution and purchase at local shops. Edits have been solicited from County and USFS staffs, and many others. Please send any suggested revisions you have to Scott Reid so that the next map can be as complete and updated as possible.

Engage Breckenridge

Recently, the Town has unveiled a new public engagement tool, called Engage Breckenridge (www.engagebreckenridge.com). This site provides a social media forum in which Town-related ideas and suggestions can be discussed. Since the site's inception, staff has received four open space-related comments to be considered, including some River Trail improvements, Sallie Barber drainage concerns, and a proposed volunteer mountain bike patrol. Staff will consider all suggestions from the site, and include in the monthly agenda any issues that require BOSAC consideration.

Mr. Brewer – Are restrooms included in the long-term river parks plan. (Staff – Yes.)

Open Space and Trails

2012 Cucumber Gulch Wetland Monitoring Report

Staff presented information on the 2012 Wetland Monitoring Report for Cucumber Gulch Preserve, provided by EcoMetrics and Johnson Environmental Consulting. This report was commissioned by

Town Council and BOSAC to scientifically evaluate the quality and health of the water and wetland resources in the Preserve.

This report:

- 1) Satisfies the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) permitting requirements for the 2012 Upper Cucumber Gulch wetland restoration project;
- 2) Develops a set of measureable variables and standards from which wetland health can be evaluated over time; and
- 3) Establishes baseline data for future research.

All of this information will be used to better understand, track, and manage the sensitive Cucumber Gulch wetland complex. The 2012 report is of particular importance because in September the Town and Breckenridge Ski Resort (BSR) jointly undertook a wetland restoration project in upper Cucumber Gulch, with oversight by the Corps and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Data for this report were collected before, during, and immediately after the wetland restoration work occurred, and therefore provide a valuable benchmark for restoration goals.

In summary, the report reaches the following conclusions:

- 1) The condition of the upper Cucumber Gulch wetlands had diminished significantly prior to the 2012 work to the point that much of the area previously considered wetlands no longer qualified. The wetlands were worse off, and smaller, than originally thought.
- 2) Relic hydric soils and wetland vegetation remain in these areas, and suggest a strong potential for rapid restoration of wetland conditions if hydrologic function can be restored.
- 3) Voluntary wetland restoration efforts by the Town and BSR are constructed to plan and appear to be on track to restore functional hydrology. Initial readings suggest improving hydrologic function in the soil.
- 4) Performance criteria for the wetland restoration goals are now established and can be tracked in the future to determine project success.

The wetland restoration project completed in 2012 therefore appears to be a good first step towards improving the wetlands in upper Cucumber Gulch. Using framework provided from the report, BOSAC and staff will be able to track the results of the effort and document any project successes or failures.

Mr. Bergeron – When will Council discuss this item? (Staff – in February, most likely.)

Mr. O’Neil – I would like to hear back from the consultants later this summer on the progress of the wetland restoration project.

Mr. Bergeron – What happens if we have a weak run-off this year? Will there be enough water to repair wetlands and will we know if the energy dissipater is functioning properly? (Staff – The energy dissipater will not be able to be tested until we have a sufficient storm event but we believe the wetland restoration will provide better hydration to the wetlands even during dry conditions.)

Mr. Tennel – Via email – I would like for us know more about the beaver populations in the Gulch.

Mr. Carlson – For how long will we continue to test water in the Gulch? (Staff – we believe we will do the tests for the foreseeable future because water is the lifeblood of the Gulch.)

Mr. Carlson – Are chemicals and other pollutants tested for in the water testing? (Staff – We previously tested for pollutants at great expense. However, Ecometrics recommended that we reduce the frequency of this testing because we have never had an issue with chemicals or other pollutants in the results. The ski resort also conducts water quality testing that we review annually. We plan to review this data annually and it does include pollutant sampling.)

Mr. Brewer – I think we should take a look at up stream sediment that comes from the Ski Resort. (Staff – We plan to have our consultants study upstream sediment by monitoring accumulation below the pipe and work with the ski resort to minimize up stream sediment entering the Gulch.)

Ms. Hunter – It would be great to study some other wetlands around the Town as well as Cucumber Gulch. Are the adjacent property owners happy with the results of the project? (Staff – In general the neighbors have had a positive reaction to the results of the project.)

Mr. Brewer – Are we taking any steps to remediate the Boreas Creek channel incision? (Staff – we are working with our consultants on that issue this week and will bring this issue back BOSAC at a later date.)

Forest Management Prescription for MBJ and Wedge Parcels

Staff presented information from the Forest Management report for the MBJ and Wedge parcels written by Eric Petterson of Rocky Mountain Ecological Services. Staff commissioned Mr. Petterson to address the newly acquired MBJ and Wedge parcels, which, as new purchases, were not included in his previous December 2007 *Forest Health and Mountain Pine Beetle Analysis in the Cucumber Gulch Wildlife Preserve* report.

The original report recommended not undertaking active tree removal efforts within Cucumber Gulch Preserve for two primary reasons:

- 1) The lodgepole pine component of the Preserve is approximately 30%, meaning almost 70% of the forest is Engelmann spruce or subalpine fir. The majority of the forest within the Preserve is likely to survive the current mountain pine beetle infestation.
- 2) Access for ground-based logging equipment in this sensitive wetland area is poor, and developing such access would compromise other area wetland protection goals.

The acquisitions of the MBJ and Wedge parcels offer a new management challenge because they contain a developed access road, an existing, partially cleared area, and an overstory dominated by dead or mature lodgepole pines. Following his review of the site, Mr. Petterson recommended the Town undertake an overstory removal project with the following objectives:

- 1) To clean up and reclaim the previous owners' unfinished tree removal effort.
- 2) To improve the forest health of a 5.5 acre lodgepole pine stand that has largely succumbed to mountain pine beetle infestation.
- 3) To avoid future hazard tree concerns with the existing "Hang 10" nordic ski trail.

The proposed patch cut would improve the forest age-class and structure in a small portion of the Preserve. It would provide more diverse habitat through the removal of the dead forest overstory, while also reducing the potential for falling trees on a popular nordic trail. Lastly, following the initial disturbance from logging operations, long-term revegetation and restoration efforts will enhance the open space values for which these properties were acquired.

Mr. Tannel – Via Email – What are we going to do with the existing service road? (Staff – We anticipated removing the road originally but after further review we may be open to leaving it in place to provide better administrative access.)

Mr. Brewer – What make these parcels different from other parcels in the Preserve where no forest health mitigation is recommended? (Staff – Since these two properties are uplands with good existing access and a higher percentage of dead and diseased lodge pole pine trees, we believe it is better to actively pursue selective thinning to improve forest health, increase safety for users of the Hang-10 trail, and diversify the wildlife habitat.)

Ms. Hunter – Will this be similar to other forest health treatments we have conducted on other parcels we manage? (Staff – For this project, we use a lighter hand and anticipate using selective versus a complete clear cutting.)

Mr. Brewer – Sometimes it is good to leave the forest to its own devices but I am supportive of the project if all of our consultants recommend proceeding.

Mr. O’Neil – I am in support but we should use a light hand. Keep the service road for administrative access but ensure that it is secured to dissuade unauthorized use.

BOSAC reached consensus to propose this fuels treatment project through a PMA variance process to complete the project in 2013.

2012 Field Season Update

Staff member, Tony Overlock provided a presentation to BOSAC, detailing the trail crew’s 2012 accomplishments. Highlights from the 2012 field season include:

- Constructed and Realigned 4.6 miles of new trail. Trails completed in 2012.
 - V3
 - 4,000 ft new trail, 60 ft boardwalk, 4 banked turns and 40 ft log skinny
 - In cooperation with Higher Ground Earthworks
 - Galena Ditch
 - 12,000 ft new trail, 4 boardwalks totaling 160 ft
 - In cooperation with Volunteers for Outdoor Colorado, Summit County Government, and Rocky Mt. Youth Corps
 - Betty’s Trail
 - 4,000 ft new trail, 2 boardwalks totaling 50 ft
 - In collaboration with Friends of Breckenridge Trails and Rocky Mt. Youth Corps
 - Columbia Lode Trail
 - 1,000 ft of new trail, rock stairs, rock armoring and 3 banked turns
- 311 Volunteers donated 1680 hours with an estimated value of \$36,000 to the Town

- Improved overall user experience by creating a wide variety of trails and enhanced signage.
- Preserved Town Open Space through invasive weed removal, fencing, signage and extensive trail maintenance

2013 Workplan

Staff presented the draft 2013 workplan to BOSAC.

Mr. O'Neil – Would the Galena extension take place in 2014? (Staff – If we get NEPA approval, we may get started this season.)

Mr. Bergeron – In the Moonstone area, we should consider directional usage and use restrictions to minimize user conflicts in this heavily utilized area. (Staff – we are exploring several possibilities for conflict management in this area.)

Ms. Hunter – Thanks for closing unsustainable trails as new trails continue to be built. It would be nice to have some additional dog stations at busy trailheads such as the Horseshoe Dredge, Sallie Barber/French Gulch, or the Ice Rink. Possibly consider installing more buck and rail fencing to prevent motorized use in non-motorized areas.

Town Council Update

Councilmember Ben Brewer updated BOSAC on recent Council discussions and decisions including single use bags and the McCain Master Plan.

Next Meeting

The next regularly scheduled meeting is on Monday February 18, 2013, which is also the Presidents Day holiday, 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 7:45 p.m.

Erin Hunter, Vice-Chair