

TOWN OF BRECKENRIDGE
OPEN SPACE ADVISORY COMMISSION
Monday, April 8, 2013
Breckenridge Town Hall
150 Ski Hill Road
3rd floor Administrative Conference Room

4:00 Site visit to in-town wetland properties (Meet promptly behind Town Hall in snow boots.)

5:30 Call to Order, Roll Call

5:35 Discussion/approval of Minutes – March 18, 2013

5:40 Discussion/approval of Agenda

5:45 Public Comment (Non-Agenda Items)

5:50 Staff Summary

- Trail Map Revision
- McCain Master Plan
- Friends of Breckenridge Trails Dates
- Hoosier Pass Recpath Feasibility Study
- Moonstone Forest Health Project

5:55 Open Space

- Golden Horseshoe County Road Management
- Trails Website
- Field Season Preparation

7:30 Executive Session

8:00 Adjourn

For further information, please contact the Open Space and Trails Program at 970-547-3155 (Scott) or 970-453-3371 (Chris).

Memorandum

To: Breckenridge Open Space Advisory Commission
From: Open Space Staff
Re: April 8, 2013 Meeting

Staff Summary**Trail Map Revision**

Staff is working closely with staff members from the U.S. Forest Service and Summit County Government to revise and reproduce the hiking and biking trail map that is distributed through area shops and the Breckenridge Welcome Center. Proposed revisions include: adding new trails, revising trail names, correcting existing errors, including distance tic marks, and updating the cover photo. We intend to complete the revisions and produce the map by mid-May. Please contact staff with any questions or edits you have regarding the map.

McCain Master Plan

The McCain Master Plan is being drafted by Town Council and includes a significant focus on open space protection. BOSAC members interested in learning details about the plan should contact staff. At its April 9th meeting, Council will discuss the topic further.

Friends of Breckenridge Trails Dates

The Friends of Breckenridge Trails volunteer event schedule can be located on the Town [website](#). The first event is a June 1st tree planting in partnership with the [Bristlecone Legacy Forest](#) program.

Hoosier Pass Recpath Feasibility Study

As previously discussed, the [Hoosier Pass Recpath Feasibility Study](#) is nearing completion. The study, commissioned by the Summit County Open Space Department with State Trails grant assistance and Town of Breckenridge support, is intended to evaluate the feasibility of a recpath connection between Breckenridge and Alma over Hoosier Pass. As part of the study, several focus groups and community workshops have recently been held in Alma, Blue River and Breckenridge.

Public feedback for the recpath concept has been positive, with a clear preference shown for a detached, grade separated recpath on the Breckenridge side of Hoosier Pass. The feasibility study should be completed this spring with a final report provided by June 1st. Recent local press coverage can be found [here](#).

Moonstone Forest Health Project

As previously discussed with BOSAC during its [May 2012 meeting](#), forest health and fire mitigation efforts are scheduled to occur in the northern portion of the Moonstone parcel. Staff hired a consultant to outline the best fuels mitigation approach that will also protect vegetative screening for the adjacent homes. Tree removal work will begin in May, and once completed, trail construction will begin in the same vicinity.

Open Space and Trails

Golden Horseshoe County Road Management

The U.S. Forest Service (USFS) Travel Management Plan and the Golden Horseshoe Plan form the management prescriptions for the trails and roads throughout the Upper Blue basin. Many of the identified recreational routes are County roads, under the jurisdiction of Summit County Government. To effectively manage interjurisdictional roads and trails that cross between National Forest, public open space, and private land, more consistent route management policies are needed.

There are at least three examples where year-round use of a County road is in conflict with the USFS travel management policies and Town recommendations. Specifically:

1. **Baldy Road**, from the bus stop trailhead up, is to be managed as a winter, non-motorized area based on the USFS travel management plan. However, because it is also a County road, the route continues to be accessed by snowmobiles.
2. **Boreas Pass Road**, from the trailhead/winter gate closure to Boreas Pass, is managed as winter, non-motorized route, with access to the Section House. However, snowmobiles continue to travel the route.
3. **Gold Run Road**, through the Gold Run Nordic Center, is a County road that has been closed to snowmobiles via County ordinance (2010-22). However, that closure does not extend to street vehicles, which have driven the groomed nordic trails several times during the 2012/2013 low snow winter season. Notably, the owner of Dry Gulch Placer has an access easement that allows plowing on portions of Gold Run Road and Preston Way. This plowing tends to attract unwitting drivers, who subsequently get stuck without an adequate turnaround. Any County road policy change on Gold Run Road would need to account for the owner of Dry Gulch Placer, who has the right to plow to his property, and who also supports the proposed policy change and the installation of a gate to prevent unauthorized motor vehicles access during winter months.

The inconsistent travel management and road policies confuse users, offer opportunities for travel management plan violations, and preclude Sheriff and USFS law enforcement officers from enforcing the travel management plan.

Staff seeks BOSAC's review of the existing and current route use policies above and support of a recommendation to the Summit Board of Commissioners (BOCC) requesting:

1. A Summit County road policy for upper Baldy Road that closes the route to winter motorized use- both snowmobile and vehicular use.
2. A Summit County road policy for upper Boreas Pass Road that closes it to winter motorized use- both snowmobile and vehicular use.
3. A Summit County winter closure of Gold Run Road to street vehicles and a gate installed at the Gold Run Road/Forest Hills Drive junction. This approach would allow non-motorized recreational, continued access for the

Dry Gulch Placer landowner, and increased protection for Gold Run Nordic Center operations.

Staff requests BOSAC answer the following questions:

- 1. Does BOSAC support the policy changes outlined above?*
- 2. If so, does BOSAC have any additions or conditions to include with the recommendation to Town Council and the BOCC?*

Trails Website

Staff is updating the Town's [Trails website](#) to include additional information for visitors, including maps, trail conditions updates, trail photos, and volunteer opportunities. (www.breckenridgetrails.org)

One significant new addition to the website is the 3D Trail Map viewer, which will allow a web user to explore the trails and terrain surrounding Breckenridge via Google Earth, with pan and zoom tools. If the user clicks on a given trail, the trail name, difficulty level, and trail length will appear on the screen. Staff will provide BOSAC a brief demonstration of the new map software at the meeting.

The Town website now also includes a Town [dog map](#), as previously reviewed by BOSAC.

Staff requests BOSAC review the new website features and answer the following question:

- 1. Does BOSAC have any feedback regarding the new Town website features?*

Field Season Preparation

Staff is preparing for another productive field season. We are thankful that all four trail crew members plan to return for the 2013 summer season. A knowledgeable and dedicated staff helps ensure a productive summer season.

Based on the annual workplan approved by BOSAC at its [January meeting](#), staff is preparing its many field projects previously discussed. Highlights include:

- Reconstruction of the upper portion of Sidedoor Trail as a primary project for 2013. Volunteers for Outdoor Colorado (VOC) has agreed to assist the Town and County with that project. Project dates are July 27-28, 2013.
- Completion of a downhill traffic-only portion of B-Line Trail, to commence once the snowpack melts, likely in May or early June.
- Construction of the Barney Flow Trail, to begin once the fuels mitigation project is completed on the Moonstone open space, likely in late May or early June.
- Installation of trail access posts throughout the Golden Horseshoe, to begin in June or July.
- Installation of a gate on French Gulch Road, above the Humbug Hill Road. This effort will move the current Mountain Meadows gate lower on the road, thereby reducing unauthorized camping, dumping, and other activities.

- Hiring the Rocky Mountain Youth Corps for several weeks to construct new trails and restore unsustainable routes.
- Removal of hazard trees throughout the open space system.

Staff requests BOSAC answer the following question:

1. ***Does BOSAC have any questions or comments regarding staff's field season preparations?***

Roll Call

Jeff Cospolich called the March 18, 2013 BOSAC meeting to order at 5:33 pm. Other BOSAC members present included Ben Brewer, Jeff Carlson, Erin Hunter, Chris Tennal and Jeffery Bergeron. Staff members present were Peter Grosshuesch, Mark Truckey, Scott Reid and Chris Kulick. Applicants Nick Truitt & Sidney Fox, Vail Resorts employee Jeff Zimmerman, and Paul Semmer from the U.S Forest Service were also in attendance.

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

McCain Master Plan Update

At its February 26th meeting, Town Council held a public open house regarding the McCain property Master Plan. As BOSAC recalls, the majority of the 126-acre parcel was purchased by the Town in 2003 for \$1.1 million. 30% of the purchase price was drawn from the open space fund, with the understanding that the Blue River corridor through the site would be protected for open space purposes.

Recently, Town Council directed staff to initiate a public forum to help inform the master planning process for the property. During the work session, several potential land uses were outlined for public consideration, including governmental uses (e.g. open space, snow stacking, solar garden, water facilities, etc.), commercial and service/commercial uses (e.g. retail, light industrial, commercial storage, etc.), industrial uses (e.g. mining, batch plant operations, etc.) and residential uses. Public comments from the open house indicated strong support for governmental uses, and open space in particular. The Town Council expressed an interest, based on public input, in maximizing the amount of open space provided on the McCain property while still accommodating other governmental uses. Staff will keep BOSAC informed of future decisions regarding the open space portions of the McCain property.

2013 Forest Health Projects

In 2013, three forest health projects are planned on Town and joint Town/Summit County open space projects. Those projects include:

Golden Horseshoe: Town and County staff submitted a \$105,000 grant application to the State of Colorado to remove dead and dying lodgepole pines from approximately 75 acres in the Golden Horseshoe. Under this proposal, the \$105,000 match would be split equally between the Town and County open space programs and an additional Summit County Wildfire Council grant. The project sites are primarily located next to other existing or scheduled cuts on Gibson Hill, the Highlands and Summit Estates.

MBJ/Wedge: As discussed at the January 21st BOSAC meeting, a treatment on the recently acquired MJB and Wedge parcels will also be pursued. Because it is located within the Cucumber Gulch Preserve Preventative Management Area (PMA), a PMA variance will be pursued through the Planning Commission and Town Council prior to implementation.

Moonstone: Defensible space efforts that began on the Moonstone property in fall, 2012 will be continued to the west. The goals are to reduce fuel loads, remove overstory dead, and improve forest health on the Moonstone property. Following these forest health efforts, Town staff will construct a new flow trail alignment as previously discussed with BOSAC.

2013 Friends of Breckenridge Trails Dates

The Friends of Breckenridge Trails (FOBT) program offers multiple volunteer opportunities, including trail construction and maintenance, weed pulling, and tree planting. The FOBT program is intended to promote a stewardship ethic among local trail users while also leveraging limited trails maintenance funds with volunteer sweat equity. The program has grown annually and typically yields a donated value of over \$30,000 through volunteer efforts.

Staff strongly encouraged BOSAC to attend a minimum of one volunteer date annually to better understand the FOBT program, participate in the trail crew's projects, and to witness the inspirational volunteer work that occurs. The 2013 Friends of Breckenridge Trails dates are set and can be found on the Town website.

Open Space and Trails

Mountain Biking Guide Service Proposal

Staff presented a proposal from Nick Truitt and Sidney Fox of Breck Bike Guides to offer a mountain bike guide service on Town trails. As BOSAC is aware, the Town has two existing license agreements that allow limited commercial use on open space. Examples currently include sleigh ride tours and dog sled tours in the Parkville area. The existing agreements include conditions on season, duration, liability insurance coverage, eligible operation areas, and trail use fees based on a percentage of gross revenue. Although mountain bike tours have been proposed before, no license agreement has previously been approved.

Staff sought BOSAC's feedback regarding the proposal:

1. Does BOSAC have any clarifying questions regarding the proposal?

Mr. Bergeron – What is the group size? (Mr. Truitt – Generally 3-5 customers).

Mr. Tennal – Will you ride to the trails from the business's storefront? (Mr. Truitt - That is the intention since all of the Town's trails are so close).

Mr. Tennal – Will you know days in advance where a booked group will be going? (Mr. Truitt - We will have to evaluate the rider levels on a day by day basis prior to route selection.)

Mr. Truitt – We will emphasize trail etiquette, using IMBA's ["Rules of the Trail"](#) as the foundation for teaching etiquette.

Mr. Bergeron – I would prefer that only local companies are eligible for license agreements. I am pleased the applicants are local residents and would like ensure any further consideration for additional license agreements would stipulate local residency.

Staff – We can impose conditions the BOSAC recommends if you are generally supportive of the concept. This is a one year trial, we will review this next year.

- 1. Does BOSAC support the concept of the proposed mountain bike guide service on Town trails?**
All: Yes

Mr. Brewer – I am supportive of the concept. Safety is the most important element I can stress. I would like to have more avenues like this to introduce individuals to our trail network. The remainder of BOSAC supported the proposal as well.

- 2. If so, does BOSAC have any conditions or limitation on the proposed activity?**

BOSAC recommended the following conditions in addition to any conditions required by the Town Attorney:

- Group size 3-5
- Develop evacuation plan for all routes
- One year approval with a possibility of annual renewal
- Limit the guiding season, based on trail conditions
- Minimize user conflict with other trail users
- Do not operate when trail conditions are muddy or wet
- Foul weather shuttle pickups have not yet been addressed

2012 Cucumber Gulch Monitoring Report

Staff presented the 2012 Cucumber Gulch Preserve annual monitoring report prepared by Dr. Christy Carello. This report is commissioned annually based on BOSAC and Council direction, and when coupled with EcoMetrics' wetland monitoring report [discussed previously](#) by BOSAC, provides an overview of the annual monitoring results in the Preserve.

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

No clarifying questions were asked.

- 2. Does BOSAC agree with the recommendations found in the report?**

BOSAC unanimously supported the recommendations in the report.

Mr. Brewer – The report is very valuable and I support its recommendations. It is fairly costly but necessary.

Mr. Bergeron – I support the docent program if it can be done for a minimal cost.

Mr. Tennal – Recommendation number 6 (docent program) is the most important recommendation and will make the other recommendations more effective. The docents should not be heavy handed in dealing with the public.

Mr. Cospolich – I agree with every recommendation in the report.

3. What specific direction does BOSAC have regarding 2013 management and monitoring of the Preserve?

Ms. Hunter – At some point, should we limit the number of individuals in the Gulch? (Staff – Our goal should be to get better compliance with closure periods since they are the most sensitive periods for the Gulch).

Mr. Bergeron – I would like Council to consider plugging the holes in the gondola to ensure that it always meets federal migratory bird compliance.

2013 Cucumber Gulch Monitoring and Trail Use Monitoring Proposals

Staff presented a proposal for the 2013 Cucumber Gulch Preserve monitoring program. The 2013 program is planned to continue, with a particular focus on measuring the results of last year’s wetland restoration project. BOSAC reviewed the 2013 Cucumber Gulch Preserve monitoring proposals from both EcoMetrics and Emerald Planet.

Staff worked with both consultants to develop the proposals, in an effort to balance management informational needs with research costs. The EcoMetrics proposal focuses on evaluating hydrologic factors and tracking the results of the 2012 wetland restoration project. The incoming sediment and Boreas Creek channel restoration items are new research endeavors requested by staff for 2013. The Emerald Planet/Dr. Carello proposal continues to focus primarily on Cucumber Gulch wildlife issues, but also includes noxious weed tracking and trail camera research. As the proposal indicated, the frequency of vegetation monitoring was reduced and will not be studied this year, and beaver research has been increased to better track wetland restoration results. Dr. Carello also included a line item to pilot a docent program to help educate users regarding Cucumber Gulch Preserve, and its area regulations and seasonal closures.

Costs of the Cucumber-related research proposals are as follows:

EcoMetrics	\$52,000
Emerald Planet/Carello	<u>\$25,395</u>
Cucumber Research	\$77,395

Together, the two Cucumber-related research proposals do not exceed the \$80,000 Cucumber monitoring line item outlined in the open space budget. Staff seeks BOSAC’s review of these two proposals

Staff also requested Emerald Planet’s assistance with a trail usage study on a select Town trails. As proposed, the research goal is to gather a baseline estimate of trail traffic on several Town trails, including routes with high, medium and low use levels of use. Staff also seeks a percentage breakdown of type of use (e.g. hiker, mountain biker, dog walker) on trails. Once gathered, this information will assist staff with trail management and grant writing, and should allow for more accurate future trail use estimates.

Trail usage study \$3,385 (included in the total Emerald Planet line item)

BOSAC specifically answered these questions regarding the Cucumber Gulch Preserve and trail use monitoring proposals:

1. Does BOSAC have any questions regarding the content of the monitoring proposals?

Mr. Cospolich – Will the monitoring have to change with the construction of the new building at Peak 8. (Staff – All hard surface water from any future buildings will go into the current detention pond which was designed for full build out. Groundwater will be handled through a perforated pipe and reintroduced subsurface to the Gulch).

2. Does BOSAC support the Cucumber Gulch–related monitoring proposals for 2013?

BOSAC was supportive of the proposed monitoring for 2013.

3. Does BOSAC seek any edits or additions to the Cucumber proposals?

BOSAC did not seek any additional edits or additions to the Cucumber Monitoring proposals.

4. Does BOSAC support the trail usage study proposal for 2103?

BOSAC – was supportive of the proposed trail usage study for 2013.

Mr. Brewer – I am supportive of getting as much usable data as possible.

5. Does BOSAC seek any edits or additions to the trail usage study proposal?

No recommendations were made by BOSAC.

2013 Cucumber Gulch Channel Restoration Project

Staff presented information pertaining to the proposed Cucumber Gulch channel restoration. As discussed following the 2012 Cucumber wetland restoration project, the incised reach of the Boreas Creek channel that connects the Upper Cucumber Gulch area with the Reset Pond continues to present hydrologic challenges for the management of Cucumber Gulch water resources. In response, staff has solicited a channel restoration plan from Mike Claffey, who designed and implemented the 2012 Upper Cucumber Gulch wetland restoration project.

The goal of the Boreas Creek channel restoration project is to use bio-engineering techniques to stabilize the current channel and rewater/restore the adjacent wetland areas. Channel restoration is a complex and dynamic process, and staff believes that involving fluvial geomorphologists and qualified wetland consultants at an early stage will improve the final restoration project and expedite the Army Corps of Engineers permitting process. Once the design and permit process is complete, staff would request BOSAC permission, pursue a Cucumber PMA variance, and then initiate a bid process to complete the actual channel restoration project. BOSAC will have another chance to review this project as we finalize a strategy.

Mr. Carlson – Will the recently completed restoration of the upper beaver ponds improve the channel conditions? (Staff – Not necessarily because the deep incision of the channel independently

lowers the area's water table. The restoration of the ponds will however lessen the stream flow and may help slow further incision.)

Staff requested BOSAC review the design proposal and respond to the following questions:

1. ***Does BOSAC support the goal to complete a channel restoration in Upper Cucumber Gulch in 2013?***
2. ***Does BOSAC support the expenditure of funds to pursue the design and permitting elements of the project with a 2013 timetable?***

BOSAC was supportive of the expenditure of funds to complete the channel restoration in 2013.

USFS Monte Cristo Mine Road Special Use Authorization Proposal

Staff and Paul Semmer presented information on a recent proposal the USFS received requesting a special use authorization to provide driveway access to private landowners along Monte Cristo Mine Road. As part of its public scoping process, the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) has requested the Town of Breckenridge comment on a proposal. The road was constructed in the 1940's to access the Monte Cristo Mine and has been regularly used by the recreating public since that time. The route provides both winter and summer access to the southern flanks of Quandary Peak, and also connects to the Wheeler National Recreation Trail.

In order to achieve standing in this process, comments had to be received by USFS staff by 3/18/13. In order to meet the comment deadline, staff submitted a letter requesting continued public recreation access to this historic road. However, once the deadline is met, additional comments can be made to USFS staff. Therefore, staff requested BOSAC review the attached comment request and answer the following questions:

1. ***Does BOSAC have any additional questions of staff regarding this comment request or the Monte Cristo Mine Road?***

Mr. Carlson – Have any of the previous landowners had issues with the public recreating on the road. (Staff – Previously there was an unsigned gate, presumably to deter use of the road.)

Mr. Semmer – Presently none of the road prisms in the area are technically legal routes per the Travel Management Plan. They could possibly be brought into the system in the future and made legal.

Ms. Hunter – Is there alternative access without crossing the proponents property? (Staff – The road alignment is much better than alternative routes due to wetlands, previous mining and limiting the disturbance to a single road.)

Mr. Carlson – Is the USFS required to give access to the proponent? (Mr. Semmer – We are only required to grant access when a property is completely surrounded by USFS property.)

Mr. Brewer – What is the ideal outcome? (Mr. Semmer - Maximizing the public benefit is the ideal outcome. In this case, the ideal outcome is obtaining full unrestricted access on the road through the proponent's land in return for allowing vehicular access to the proponent's property over USFS land.)

Ms. Hunter – What do the other owner's desire? (Mr. Semmer - They want access without reciprocation. Mainly they are concerned with public motorized use.)

2. Does BOSAC have any additional comments regarding this issue?

All of BOSAC was unanimous in their desire for legal, public, non-motorized access of Monte Cristo Road.

Mr. Semmer – I appreciate all the time and energy the BOSAC members put into managing area open space. You play an important role in this community and I thank you for your work.

Executive Session

Mr. Carlson – Motioned to move into executive session at 7:00 pm to discuss property acquisition negotiations. Mr. Bergeron seconded the motion.

Ms. Hunter – Made a motion to come out of Executive Session at 8:02 pm. Mr. Carlson seconded the motion.

Next Meeting

The next regularly scheduled meeting is on Monday, April 8, 2013, in the Administrative Conference Room at the Breckenridge Town Hall (150 Ski Hill Road). This meeting will be a week earlier than the normally scheduled 3rd Monday schedule.

Mr. Bergeron made a motion to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Mr. Carlson.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:04 p.m.

Jeff Cospolich, Chair