

### **Roll Call**

Jeff Cospolich called the February 17, 2014 BOSAC meeting to order at 5:35 pm. Other BOSAC members present included Chris Tennal, Ben Brewer, Jeff Carlson, Jeffery Bergeron and Craig Campbell. Staff members present were Peter Grosshuesch, Scott Reid, Mark Truckey, Shane Greenberg and Chris Kulick. Erin Gigliello, Jeff Zimmerman from the Breckenridge Ski Resort, Shelly Grail from the U.S. Forest Service, Dr. Christy Carello of Emerald Planet, and Mark Beardsley of Ecometrics were also present.

### **Approval of Minutes**

The minutes were approved as presented.

### **Public Comments**

There were no public comments.

### **Staff Summary**

#### **North Main Street Park Preliminary Plan**

At its February 25<sup>th</sup> meeting, Town Council is scheduled to review preliminary designs for the North Main Street Park. The park will be located south of the Local Market and is intended to serve as a gathering space, a visual draw from Main Street to the Carter Museum, and relief from development on Main Street. If BOSAC members are interested in hearing further discussion of the draft plans, please plan to attend the February 25<sup>th</sup> Council work session.

Mr. Campbell – Asked questions about material abbreviations on the plan. (Mr. Greenberg – Clarified the abbreviations.) I love the look, but question the functionality of an amphitheatre due to size and proximity to Main Street. (Mr. Greenberg – The amphitheatre idea was raised through Engage Breck, but its size was minimized for the reasons you stated.) Are we missing an opportunity for historical interpretation? (Mr. Greenberg – We are going to integrate historical elements through the placement of public art.)

Mr. Tennal – It seemed like there was quite a bit support for a quiet, natural place of reflection and this proposal seems like a children’s playground. (Mr. Greenberg – We tried to meet the demands of both those that desired a playground and a natural park.)

Mr. Carlson – I like the idea of the amphitheatre and hosting amphitheatre functions, similar to the Frisco Historic Park.

Mr. Grosshuesch – The overall desire is to have a place on Main Street to take a break and relax while shopping, dining, etc.

Mr. Brewer – There are a lot nice elements in the park design. I will have further comments during the Council worksession.

### **2014 VOC Project Date**

Good news! The Upper Turk’s Trail project has been selected as a “30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Commemorative Project” by Volunteers for Outdoor Colorado (VOC) in 2014. The project will complete a long-envisioned connection between the existing Turk’s Trail and Sallie Barber Road

alignments, and will be used to highlight VOC's 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of statewide volunteer efforts. Please plan on attending at least one day of the volunteer weekend: July 26-27, 2014. More information is available on the VOC [website](#).

### **Wellington Trail Project**

Staff has requested a license agreement from Xcel/Public Service Company of Colorado (PSCo) to cross a portion of the substation property on Wellington Road and construct a new singletrack trail from the junction of Wellington Road/Campion Trail to the beginning of the Wellington Trail, near the stables on the Stilson Lot. If approved by PSCo, the license agreement would allow staff to pursue construction of a trail to bypass a portion of Wellington Road, provide an interpretive opportunity for the Reliance Dredge site, and connect Town neighborhoods to the larger French Gulch trail network. Staff will update BOSAC regarding progress on this potential project.

Mr. Cospolich – Will this trail eventually connect up to the French Gulch trails? (Mr. Reid – As directed by BOSAC, we plan to eventually (2015?) construct the Wellington Bridge following the development of phase II of the Wellington Neighborhood.) This doesn't connect very well to the Weisshorn neighborhood. (Mr. Reid – It does not, but it is an important connection to the Corkscrew and Vista Point Trails, and it gets bikers off of Wellington Rd).

### **Trails Open House**

This year, staff will host a trails open house in conjunction with the May or June BOSAC meeting. The goal of the open house will be to share with the general public the trail projects that the Town and County have planned for the next few years, talk about trail volunteer opportunities, and to field any public questions or comments regarding trail priorities and goals. Staff will provide additional information to BOSAC as the meeting approaches. The timing of the open house just before the summer trail season will also provide an opportunity to educate the public on avoiding using trails before they have dried out.

### **Open Space**

#### **USFS Referral: Breckenridge Ski Resort Master Development Plan Addendum**

Staff presented a referral from the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) pertaining to the Breckenridge Ski Resort (BSR) Master Development Plan Addendum. The USFS is seeking Town comments on the BSR proposal to increase on-mountain summer and winter amenities.

Based in part on the 2011 passage of the *Ski Area Recreational Opportunity Enhancement Act (SAROE)*, BSR has proposed multiple new facilities on National Forest lands within the current ski area boundary. The intent of the SAROE was to encourage additional year-round ski area facilities and provide more diverse recreational offerings on the National Forest. Accordingly, BSR has designed and proposed a wide-ranging addendum to their existing Master Development Plan to include: multiple zip lines and canopy tours, new and revised hiking/mountain biking trails, ropes courses, climbing walls, expanded Vista House and Peak 7 Hut, realigned upper Four O'clock Road, new observation deck, summer operation of the Independence, 6-Chair and Imperial Express, expanded off-highway vehicle tours, and associated revegetation efforts.

In general, BSR's proposal is consistent with the intent of the SAROE. It is logical to focus summer visitation on the ski area, where the lifts and other infrastructure exist to accommodate high

visitation levels. Directing more on-mountain summer use could also help reduce recreational pressure on Town-owned open space parcels such as Cucumber Gulch Preserve. However, the USFS seeks scoping comments from the Town, Summit County and other entities to evaluate BSR's expansive proposal. The primary intent of the scoping process is to identify all issues that should be addressed in the environmental review that will be conducted on the proposal. The Town will have another opportunity to comment on the proposal when an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is drafted for the proposal. Scoping comments will be discussed by Town Council at its March 11<sup>th</sup> work session and are due to the USFS by March 12<sup>th</sup>. Also, a public open house regarding the proposal is scheduled for March 5<sup>th</sup> between 4:30-6:30 at the Mountain Thunder Lodge (50 Mountain Thunder Drive).

To help frame the BOSAC discussion, staff offers the following points for consideration, drawn largely from previous Town Council/BOSAC comments regarding proposed ski area facility expansions:

- Surface drainage from Peak 8 into the existing Boreas Creek inlets and Upper Cucumber Gulch continues to be a high priority and keen concern for the Town. BSR is responsible for enhancing drainage and ski slope revegetation efforts in an effort to reduce sediment loads in Cucumber Gulch via the 60" culvert. The additional infrastructure included in this proposal underscores the need to install and effectively maintain sediment traps to reduce sediment transport. The revegetation element of the proposal is intriguing, but short on details.
- Recently, a draft base area master plan for the portions of the ski area **not** on National Forest was submitted for Town staff consideration. The Town seeks a defined base area plan to better define all of BSR's seasonal activities, including the summer fun park improvements and the winter activities such as lift maze configurations, entertainment stage location, and skier circulation. The addition of more on-mountain infrastructure proposed by BSR underscores the need for an integrated base area plan that provides clear direction for the future management of crowd control, special event management, and infrastructure needs.
- Extending the Peaks Trail through the ski area to bypass Cucumber Gulch and the pedestrian-only Peak 8 base area would provide a better trail connection to Town from this popular trail. As part of the Town Council approval to operate the Breckconnect gondola during summer months, BSR agreed to pursue the NEPA analysis and construction of this route. The Peaks Trail extension warrants evaluation via this NEPA process, even though portions of the proposed trail would occur outside of the ski area permit boundary.
- Visual impacts of the various proposed zip lines and observation towers should be thoroughly evaluated to determine whether the associated infrastructure will affect the Breckenridge's backdrop. Protecting scenic vistas and discouraging ridgeline development is an important Town planning and open space goal.
- Part of the intent of the SAROEA is to focus recreational facilities on already-impacted areas with existing infrastructure. More locally, BSR committed to limiting on-mountain facilities north of the Peak 7 terrain as part of the recent Peak 6 expansion. The proposed Ore Bucket canopy tour could violate both of these goals, given the new roads, cables, and towers

necessary to complete the proposed canopy tour. Additional impacts to forest cover and wildlife habitat could be limited if the proposed recreational facilities were focused on the interior portion of the ski area rather than the periphery.

- The proposed goal to realign upper Four O'clock Road to make it more sustainable is laudable, but highly constrained topographically. In general, the Town supports on-mountain drainage improvements on all current and future trails, roads, and ski runs that 1) promote water infiltration and vegetative regeneration, and 2) limit soil transport and 'flashy' surface flows.
- The proposal to increase on-mountain off-highway vehicle tours could negatively impact the area wildlife habitat and the 'forest experience' sought by many summer visitors.
- As a gold-level Bicycle Friendly Community, the Town of Breckenridge generally supports improvements to the existing mountain biking and hiking trail network on the Breckenridge Ski Area. Expansion of the trail system, with a goal of providing lift-served access to intermediate flow trails would significantly improve the Breckenridge's overall bike-related offerings.

Mr. Bergeron – Has there been a wildlife study? (Ms. Grail – There will be a forthcoming wildlife study as part of the EIS. The scoping period also helps us produce alternatives to the proposal.)

Mr. Campbell – What is the difference between a zip line and a canopy tour? (Mr. Zimmerman - A zip line is a straight line course down the fall line. A canopy tour generally follows topography through several sections, and takes two to three hours to complete.)

Mr. Carlson – Will the proposed towers mimic the existing zip line towers? (Mr. Zimmerman – The look of the towers is somewhat dictated by the required clearance. The towers need to have enough clearance to not obstruct ski terrain.) The current zip line towers are too high and to me look like an un-finished construction site. I would prefer not to see additional towers that look similar.

Mr. Bergeron – Ore Bucket and Sawmill are areas that are pretty much undisturbed in the summer. I think the summer development should be more focused in areas that already have development, and should avoid the Ore Bucket and Sawmill areas.

Mr. Zimmerman – The existing zip line towers on the mountain were designed to mimic historic mining infrastructure, but maybe they didn't hit the mark, as far as Mr. Carlson is concerned. Also, the Ore Bucket canopy tour will provide visitor access to a forest that is beautiful and would be inaccessible to most people without the canopy tour. The canopy tour will provide people with a safe, secure way to see a beautiful forest with spectacular views. Once it is constructed, the visitors won't even be touching the ground.

Mr. Campbell – How is the ski area going to prevent dirt bikers and OHVs from using the off road trails? (Ms. Grail – It is a Forest Service closure and is gated.) My biggest concerns are the visual impacts and wildlife impacts from this proposal. (Ms. Grail – Visual simulations will be part of the draft EIS.)

Mr. Zimmerman – Nothing to be implemented in the summer can impact skiing uses. Overall, we are targeting families and trying to expose them to the outdoors with the proposed new summer attractions.

Mr. Bergeron – How many towers and associated disturbance will be necessary for the Ore Bucket canopy tour? (Mr. Zimmerman – 9 towers are proposed.) How will they be installed? (Helicopter and access by skid steer route improved to be a mountain bike trail corridor. Towers will be supported by guy wires and will be fenced to protect skiers.)

Mr. Campbell – What happens if we have another MPB or similar infestation and the infrastructure becomes a lot more visible? (Ms. Grail – There is a spruce bark beetle in southern Colorado, which could certainly head north.)

Mr. Tennal – What is the fee structure for the attractions, is it ala carte or full day unlimited pass? (Mr. Zimmerman – It is both, we have 48 different pass options. We would love to simplify and only have an all day pass.) I commend you for including hiking; will there be any conflicts between hikers and motorized uses? (Mr. Zimmerman – Those uses will be separated.)

Ms. Grail – As part of this proposal, we are urging the ski area to rehab and improve many of the existing mountain bike trails that are in rough shape and not just expand with new trails.

Mr. Brewer – Where is the power to enforce the hydrology plan? (Ms. Grail – we constantly monitor the resort's hydrology.) Do you release a report card? (Ms. Grail – Not currently, but we meet with the ski area staff multiple times per year to outline improvements and performance expectations.)

Mr. Cospolich – I support the staff memo and reiterate my concerns over sediment management. I would also urge the ski area to build some intermediate-level flow trails as part of this plan.

Mr. Bergeron – Where are we on developing the Peaks Connect Trail? (Mr. Reid – The ski area is including the Peaks Connection trail concept in this NEPA analysis, but it is outside of the ski area's permit boundary.) (Ms. Grail – We will need to spend some time this summer looking at the feasibility of an alignment. We can include it in this project's NEPA.)

Mr. Brewer – We need to solve the Peak's Connect Trail problem. If it is not solved, it is a real deal breaker for me. You also need to drastically reduce the sediment loading into the Gulch. I worry the canopy tours are a "kill it to show it off" scenario. This proposal seems to be a disaster for wildlife because of the summer season. (Mr. Carlson – I agree with Mr. Brewer.)

BOSAC – All agreed with staff's bullet points.

### **Breckenridge Nordic Center Facility Use Request**

At its February 11<sup>th</sup> meeting, Town Council considered a request from Gene and Therese Dayton of the Breckenridge Nordic Center. The proposal seeks approval to host weddings and other events in the new Nordic Center building. In their review of the proposal, Town Council requested BOSAC

review and comment on the potential for impacts to Cucumber Gulch Preserve by guests of the proposed Nordic Center events.

Specifically, Council was concerned about use of the trails during the seasonal closure, noise impacts to area neighbors and wildlife, and parking overflow on to local Town streets. Council suggested approving a temporary, one-year permit of Nordic Center events with conditions put in place to protect Cucumber Gulch Preserve. The Council also suggested placing fencing between the lodge and Gulch, along with educational signage, to dissuade event attendees from walking into the Gulch. Council requested BOSAC input, including conditions to be placed on the Nordic Center operations to protect Cucumber Gulch Preserve.

In summary, the [Cucumber Gulch Preserve Management Plan](#) provides the following policy direction regarding special events and uses in Cucumber Gulch Preserve:

- An 8-person group size limit exists within the Preserve boundaries.
- Despite the previous popularity of special events utilizing the Preserve, Town Council directed staff to discontinue special events in the Preserve outside of the Nordic ski season. The prohibition of special events is based the intensity and concentrated special event activity levels compared with typical recreational use and the limited habitat impacts during winter months.
- Summer trails use in Cucumber is limited until after July 1st annually, and more typically, until the first Monday following July 4<sup>th</sup>. This date was established to keep visitors out the Preserve during the incubation period and the beginning of the chick-rearing stage for many of the migratory birds that utilize Cucumber Gulch Preserve as habitat. The first Monday following July 4<sup>th</sup> date was set to specifically avoid the high volume of trail use that characterizes the Independence Day weekend and recent research that shows displacement of some wildlife species by high volumes of trail use.

With the 2012 passage of the [Cucumber Gulch Preserve Management Plan](#), Town Council reaffirmed the policies above and also retained the discretion to overrule them.

Regarding the attached request from the Daytons, staff includes the following additional discussion points:

- If special events are approved in the Nordic facility, a clear policy regarding special event access to Cucumber Gulch is needed.
- Outdoor party tent rentals for food preparation, serving, or guest seating could significantly increase guest service capacity and, correspondingly, noise impacts to area wildlife.
- Outdoor lighting, music, or amplifiers could also affect wildlife habitat in the adjacent Preserve.
- The potential exists for guests and partygoers to leave the Nordic facility and wander into the Preserve, either on-trail or off-trail. Restricting this public access will be at least as challenging as implementing seasonal trail closures in the Preserve.

Mr. Bergeron – We need to institute an impact fee for each individual use to hire a docent to monitor the event. We should require an on-site docent or security guard for every event to ensure that no event guests go into Cucumber. Additionally, we should not allow exterior tents and limit the event to the seating capacity of the building.

Mr. Brewer – We should have a probationary period for the special event permission and consider additional fencing to discourage incursions into the Gulch.

BOSAC reached consensus regarding the following conditions of approval regarding this request:

1. No access to Cucumber Gulch Preserve should be allowed as part of the Nordic Center-based events. This limitation should be included as part of the Nordic Center/Town contract and any contract or agreement between the Nordic Center and the event hosts. A fine structure should be included for event hosts and the Nordic Center to ensure compliance with this rule. This is a year-round restriction.
2. An on-site docent/security guard should be present during all events to ensure that access is precluded to Cucumber Gulch. This guard should be on-site for the duration of the event.
3. No exterior tents should be allowed. All events should remain within or on the existing Nordic Center facility.
4. The contract or agreement between the Nordic Center and Town should include a probationary period of one year, and renewals thereafter to ensure all conditions are followed.

### **Forest Health Report**

Staff provided a memo outlining the Town open space and joint Town/Summit County forest health efforts in the Upper Blue basin since 2008. The goal of the memo is to provide an overall report on the efforts undertaken to address forest-related issues on open space lands and adjacent properties.

Mr. Bergeron – Is the Forest Service conducting a for-profit logging operation in Indiana Creek? (Mr. Grosshuesch – We saw a cutting unit on a map but don't know the exact specifics.)

Mr. Campbell – What happens with the materials after they are hauled out. (Mr. Reid – Material utilization is very important and materials are used for various wood products, including saw logs, pellet plant, biofuels, and firewood.)

Mr. Tennal – What types of impacts will these cuts have on our trails? (Mr. Reid – Most of the impacts will occur on double tracks such as Prospect Gulch road and the Draw but portions of Slalom and the Upper Preston Way may be temporarily affected. We have tried to use the trails as cut boundaries to reduce trail impacts.)

Mr. Campbell – Will they clean up the trails after cuts? (Mr. Reid – Most likely we will have to do some maintenance after the logging.)

BOSAC supported the current action plan to complete the 75-acre Golden Horseshoe cut and Iowa Hill cleanup in 2014, and then focus on hazard tree removal until the USFS completes the cuts they have already contracted.

### **2013 Cucumber Gulch Preserve Research**

Staff provided three documents related to the 2013 research in Cucumber Gulch Preserve. The documents included the following:

1. EcoMetrics' water quality report on the Upper Cucumber Gulch Preserve wetland restoration efforts. This report provides a broad overview of the projects and their successes, and fulfills the reporting requirements for the Army Corps of Engineers' permit. In summary, the restoration efforts have so far been highly successful in attaining the water quality and habitat value improvements sought.
2. Claffey Environmental Consulting, Inc's status report on the 2014 Boreas Creek channel restoration effort. This report summarizes the channel restoration project goals and successes, and fulfills the Army Corps of Engineers' permit reporting requirements. In general, the channel restoration project achieved the stated goals and will be monitored during spring runoff to evaluate its long-term stability and success.
3. Dr. Christy Carello's annual Cucumber monitoring report, which summarizes the results of the various wildlife-related research elements commissioned by BOSAC and Town Council. Generally, on-the-ground management and research efforts in Cucumber Gulch Preserve continue to achieve stated objectives, and can be improved to better protect sensitive wildlife habitat and species. Specific recommendations for improvement include:
  - a. Bolster seasonal closures to improve visitor compliance and prevent access to the Preserve during sensitive wildlife periods.
  - b. Expand the docent program to increase a management presence, particularly during the spring seasonal closure.
  - c. Further restrict access to the Peak 7 underpass to prevent human encroachment in this sensitive wildlife corridor.
  - d. Continue and expand noxious weed eradication efforts in the Preserve.
  - e. Encourage the planting of native vegetation in surrounding development.
  - f. Minimize disruptive human activities during sensitive wildlife periods.

Mr. Bergeron – The wetland remediation seemed like a phenomenal success, or am I reading it wrong? (Mr. Reid – We are cautiously optimistic.) However, we have had a big winter. Will the system be able to handle the melt off flows? (Mr. Beardsley – The big rain events are typically more impactful than snow melt.)

Mr. Beardsley – We have had a substantial turnaround in the Gulch over the last two years, so I am optimistic.

Mr. Tennal – Is there anything we are missing? (Mr. Beardsley – We will need to continue to monitor channel treatments.)

Mr. Brewer – I really liked the before and after photos, they were very illustrative.

Mr. Cospolich – Is there any desire to bring in more beavers? (Mr. Reid – Not at this time. Beaver relocation is regulated by Colorado Parks and Wildlife and they are not supportive of the introduction of any more beavers at this point.)

Ms. Carello – We still have a lot of people on closed trails and see a higher amount of users mid-week versus the weekends. The docents were effective when they were in place but still the number of violators doubled from the previous year.



Mr. Cospolich – Seems like docents are fairly budget conscious and effective.

Mr. Tennal – We need to get the awareness of what has happened in the Gulch out to the media and tout our success a bit more.

Mr. Bergeron – Money that has been spent in Cucumber Gulch has been well spent.

Mr. Brewer – We need a really good summary of all this info. In its present form, it is a bit overwhelming.

**Executive Session**

Mr. Bergeron – Motioned to move into executive session at 8:06 pm to discuss property acquisition negotiations.

Mr. Tennal seconded the motion.

Mr. Bergeron – Made a motion to come out of Executive Session at 8:14 pm. Mr. Brewer seconded the motion.

**Next Meeting**

The next regularly scheduled meeting is on Monday, March 17, 2014, at the Stephen C. West Ice Arena (189 Boreas Pass Road).

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

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

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Jeff Cospolich, Chair