

TOWN OF BRECKENRIDGE  
*OPEN SPACE ADVISORY COMMISSION*  
Monday, November 10, 2008  
BRECKENRIDGE COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
150 Ski Hill Road

5:30 Call to Order, Roll Call

5:35 Discussion/approval of Minutes – October 13<sup>th</sup>

5:40 Discussion/approval of Agenda

5:45 Public Comment (Non-Agenda Items)

5:50 Staff Summary

- Work Plan update
- White River National Forest Travel Management Plan update
- Nature/ Nordic Center update

6:15 Open Space and Trails

- Phase II Historical Assessment (Eric Twitty)
- Town Access Point exercise
- Lower French Gulch Trailhead discussion
- BOSAC Retreat discussion

7:30 Executive Session

8:00 Commissioner Issues

8:15 Adjourn

For further information, please contact the Open Space and Trails Program at 547.3110 (Heide) or 547.3155 (Scott).

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**Memorandum**

To: Breckenridge Open Space Advisory Commission  
From: Heide Andersen, Open Space and Trails Planner III  
Mark Truckey, Asst. Director of Community Development  
Scott Reid, Open Space and Trails Planner II  
Re: November 10, 2008 meeting

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**Staff Summary****Workplan update**

Please see the attached workplan update.

**White River National Forest Travel Management Plan update**

Staff from the Dillon Ranger District has indicated that the Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS) for its Travel Management Plan (TMP) will be released on November 7, 2008. There will be a 60-day comment period.

Starting November 7<sup>th</sup>, The WRNF TMP SDEIS will be available on line at [http://www.fs.fed.us/r2/whiteriver/projects/travel\\_management](http://www.fs.fed.us/r2/whiteriver/projects/travel_management). Instructions and an interactive map will also be available.

Staff will work to review and comment on the supplemental plan for BOSAC discussion at the 12/8 BOSAC meeting.

**Nature/Nordic Center update**

Staff continues to work with Suzanne Allen-Guerra to complete a document to capture the progress made to date with the Nature/Nordic Center programming. Although the Nature Series Director position no longer exists, and the construction of the Nature/Nordic Center has been pushed back until 2011/2012 after the debt payments on Cucumber Gulch have been paid off, Town Council is interested in having a product that encapsulates the meetings, discussions, and ideas that were part of this last programming exercise that took place in 2007/2008.

**Open Space and Trails****Phase II Historical Assessment**

Eric Twitty, of Mountain States Historical, will provide an overview of the second phase of the historical assessment work he performed for the Town and Summit County.

**Trail and Trailhead Planning exercise**

As requested at the October BOSAC meeting, staff will provide an overview map of the greater Golden Horseshoe area to help facilitate a discussion of the various trailhead locations and accesses from Town to French Gulch and other areas.

**Lower French Gulch trailhead**

As discussed at the 10/13 BOSAC meeting, the concept of the Lower French Gulch trailhead will be reviewed for consideration in the 2009 workplan.

**BOSAC Retreat discussion**

Staff requests a brief discussion regarding the merits and difficulties of planning a BOSAC retreat in the coming months.

### ***Roll Call***

Matt Stais called the October 13, 2008 BOSAC meeting to order at 5:50 p.m. Other BOSAC members present included David Rossi, Ellen Hollinshead, Jeff Cospolich, Dennis Kuhn and Monique Merrill. Staff members present were Heide Andersen, Scott Reid, Mark Truckey and Peter Grosshuesch. Brian Lorch from Summit County was also present, as was OSAC member Art Girten and acquisition specialist Turk Montepare. Linda Kay Peterson and Rick Hague with the Breckenridge Heritage Alliance were also in the audience.

### ***Approval of Minutes***

The minutes were approved with one minor change: Mr. Reid will change the cost figure for the 2009 French Gulch trail construction cost from \$3000 to \$40,000, based on the cost of three bridge structures and VOC work.

### ***Approval of Agenda***

The agenda was approved as presented.

### ***Public Comments***

Art Girten requested that BOSAC write a letter of support for referendum 1A. He stated that he has been surprised by some of the local opposition to the measure.

Mr. Rossi: Council will entertain a resolution on 10/14 to support the measure.

Ms. Andersen: Tim Gagen agreed that it was fine if BOSAC agreed to come out in favor of the measure as well.

Mr. Stais: Staff should write a letter in favor of the measure for review by BOSAC to be submitted to the Summit Daily News.

BOSAC agreed unanimously to review and approve a letter of support for Referendum 1A.

### **Staff Summary**

Ms. Andersen updated BOSAC on the experimental pine beetle treatment in the Highlands. ArborJet is testing its product to assess its effectiveness on a Town open space parcel in the Highlands. The site has no real environmental concerns.

### **Open Space and Trails**

#### **French Gulch Historical Signage**

Mr. Reid updated BOSAC on the current status of the interpretive sign project and some of the issues relating to the sign locations.

Mr. Hague: Site #6 is an important site to interpret. There is plenty of material to interpret based on historical maps and the site itself.

Ms. Merrill: How do you direct people to these sites? Via your website?

Mr. Hague: We have sort of received a conflicting message from Council. On one hand, they have discouraged us from attracting more cars out there, but they also approved the expenditure for the signs.

Ms. Peterson: Each sign will have 'respect this historical site' language on them. It is part of the message. I have been working with a contractor from the Mineral Belt Trail signage in Leadville. Time is of the essence and we would like to get this project completed this year. We would be happy to have BOSAC and Summit County or others review the text before fabrication.

Mr. Hague: We are OK with moving sign locations as long as it is on the same site. We could also add a thirteenth sign at the Reiling Dredge, as long as it is within the budget. Thirteen signs will be our target if BOSAC approves them and it can be handled within the existing budget.

Ms. Hollinshead: The Reiling Dredge is the centerpiece and should be where the signs should be located. If it fits into the budget, then I would be fine with putting signs everywhere currently located, and at the Dredge, which is the focal point.

Mr. Cospolich: It would be wise to put a trail counter at the Reiling Dredge entrances to assess use.

Mr. Rossi: Please proofread the signs, because there are grammatical errors on the Iowa Hill signs.

### **Nature/Nordic Center**

Ms. Andersen: Allen Guerra Architects will not be able to present on the Nature/Nordic Center. The big question is whether or not the programming should be done now, with changes to LEED and the Town's goals. They are willing to take this on at a later date, when the Town is ready to move ahead with construction.

Mr. Cospolich: I thought the programming was intended to help define the project.

Mr. Stais: I think it is time to conclude the exercise with a deliverable to put on the shelf for use when Council is ready to proceed. The scope and the schedule are important. It is important to have Council weigh in so that future Councils will have some guidance on the project. We need a document. It is a big issue not so easily solved. The pro bono exercise should be completed with a deliverable. BOSAC is the filter for Council. It should come here first.

Ms. Merrill: This is pro bono work, right? (Yes) I agree with Mr. Stais. We should get what they have to offer.

Mr. Rossi: We should get the deliverable at this point. BOSAC should review this prior to going to Council.

Ms. Andersen: As an FYI, the Recreation Department has recommended no funding for the Nature Series in 2009.

### **Lower French Gulch Trailhead**

Mr. Reid summarized the previous history regarding the proposed trailhead at the bottom of the B&B Trail, including the arguments for and against the trailhead construction.

Ms. Andersen: Also, OSAC has asked why the trailhead they approved has not been constructed yet.

Mr. Lorch: OSAC saw the trailhead as a done deal and were wondering why it was not yet constructed. And if not in that location, where should it go? There is currently parking on the road, which is illegal.

Mr. Rossi: Have any other alternatives been explored? If we need parking, fine. The struggle for me is the master planning of this valley. A component missing is an overall vision of the future. How do we envision people accessing and using the area? I struggle with pin prick projects. We should drive usage the way we want. There has obviously been an increase in use, but it is still hit or miss in terms of use. There is a concern regarding traffic. The parking may cause more traffic. We need a master plan of the valley. I don't like cutting back on the amount of trail we have. I would prefer not to compromise that short trail, even fifty or sixty yards.

Mr. Stais: What are the operational costs of this? Would the County plow this? (That is a plan under a loose handshake deal.) Is there a cost to clean up the area? Signs would also be needed.

Ms. Hollinshead: It is premature to put the lot in because we have not completed the Wellington Trail. It makes more sense to allow access to French Gulch and Gold Run Gulch from the stables, which accesses both of those spots. There have been a few busy days, but not many. It seems to work alright in the winter. More people will park at the Reiling Dredge TH now that it is done. It is too close to the Reiling Dredge TH. I would like to see the spot across from the current pullout plowed. It is nice to ride through the dredge rocks. I like the beginning of that trail.

Mr. Cospolich: I am personally for it in 2009. What bothers me that we don't have the clear threshold of when to move ahead. We should put in a sign from Reiling Dredge TH. I like that the proposed trailhead is visibly removed from the road. I think it is a good improvement. I saw several hundred people pedaling their bikes along French Gulch Road. I don't think it should be lower in the valley. It is a good location. This is best for the overall visitor experience. Wayfinding is a challenge in this valley. Ease of directional verbiage is important.

Mr. Stais: The County makes a good point. They spent money on this too and not all locals can ride from home to these trails. There is some parking now by Little Red. Maybe it makes sense to look at this as a whole, as Mr. Rossi suggests. We should look at other options as well.

Ms. Merrill: That road gets a lot of use by all users. I drive slowly. Shouldn't we educate the vehicle drivers, not the recreationists? Down the road, we may need a parking lot, but I don't see the need yet. You know you are going to run into a lot of recreationists.

Mr. Kuhn: I am in favor of it. I am looking for a place to park. It is easy and minimal cost. It makes good sense. I see a lot of people on that road and in that area. This will capture the lunchtime crowd.

Mr. Rossi: I don't see the vision here. We need to connect the trails from Town. We need to plan better with Country Boy and Severson's property in the mix. I haven't seen it yet. You are shortening an already short trail.

Mr. Montepare: The real issue is the private owners. We can't connect all the way through from Town because of a couple of landowners. We need to provide access. Realistically, people start there now. For the general public, this is where people start. We should not be parking people on the road, which is illegal on a County road. Perhaps you don't need a sign. It would be nice to get people off the road, though.

Ms. Hollinshead: Can't we just work it like it is?

Mr. Lorch: That pull off is snow storage. They are not plowing for us, nor are they likely to plow unless we install a real trailhead.

Ms. Hollinshead: It is a unique part of the trail. Maybe this is a temporary trailhead until the rest of the area is well planned. It is the experience that I like.

Mr. Stais: Let's do it with flexibility in the future. We could plow the berm back in. I would like to move forward with the planning for this to determine the trails in this area. Perhaps at the next meeting, we can better identify parking areas in the valley. Bring a map to the next meeting to discuss the French Gulch valley for the long term solutions. Mr. Yule is in favor of this as well. I would like to put this to a vote.

Mr. Hollinshead: Since Mr. Yule has not benefitted from this discussion, he should be here to listen then vote.

Mr. Stais: Let's return it to the agenda in November for discussion.

### **Pro Forma**

Mr. Truckey provided an overview of the changes included in the pro forma.

Mr. Rossi: Under professional services, why does it jump in 2008? (Pine beetle planning and mitigation efforts.)

Mr. Stais: What are the changes to the audited 2007 numbers versus the anticipated numbers? (Some money that was not spent got rolled over the following year.)

Mr. Kuhn: How would we account for our budget if 1A does not pass? (It will be difficult.)

Mr. Lorch: The open space funding measure could be brought back next year, if the commissioners approve. The budget would definitely be scaled back, though, so that the money could last longer.

### **Trail Map Distribution**

Mr. Reid provided an overview of the trail map costs and potential sources for offsetting the costs to the open space funding, including ads, suggested donations, or charging certain groups for use of the maps. The map will always be posted on line for free access, though.

Mr. Rossi: We need creative ways to cut the costs or find a way to get revenue from the map.

Mr. Grosshuesch: Won't the BRC just get more money from the Town?

Mr. Rossi: Yes, but the open space fund would not bear the brunt of the map production costs.

BOSAC recommended staying the course but to consider ads or charging for the next generation of printed maps.

### **Executive Session**

Mr. Cospolich made a motion at 7:44 p.m. to enter into Executive Session to discuss property acquisitions. Ms. Merrill seconded the motion. Ms. Merrill motioned to come out of Executive Session. Mr. Cospolich seconded the motion. The session ended at 8:33 p.m.

### **Commissioner Issues**

There were no commissioner issues.

### ***Next Meeting***

The next BOSAC meeting is scheduled for 5:30 pm on November 10, 2008 in the Town Hall Auditorium.

Mr. Cospolich motioned to adjourn the meeting and Ms. Merrill seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

**2008 OPEN SPACE & TRAILS PROJECT LIST**

<u>Trail Projects</u>				
<b>PROJECT</b>	<b>COMPLETION DATE</b>	<b>PRIORITY</b>	<b>STAFFING REQUIREMENTS</b>	<b>STATUS 9/4/08</b>
<b>OVERSEE DEVELOPMENT-RELATED TRAIL REVIEW</b>	Ongoing	Required	Large	Ongoing. Sunrise Point, Vista Point, Corkscrew, Stan Miller/Shores, CR 3, County projects currently ( <b>including Western Sky and Bekkedal</b> ).
<b>OVERSEE TRAIL CREW-RELATED WORK</b> (Trail construction and maintenance) – *see list of trail projects on following page	Ongoing	Required	Large	Season complete.
<b>COMMENT ON USFS TRAVEL MANAGEMENT PLAN</b>	Spring	Required	Large	Awaiting release of supplemental draft.
<b>REVISE TRAILS MASTER PLAN</b>	Spring	High	Large	Underway. <b>Returning to Council on 12/9 agenda. Went to Planning Commission on 10/21.</b>
<b>COORDINATE VOLUNTEER EFFORTS</b>	Ongoing	High	Large	Season complete.
<b>DEVELOP MASTER PLAN FOR NORDIC EXPANSION AREA (FOR USFS AND COUNTY)</b>	Winter	High	Large	<b>Working through NEPA process with USFS.</b>
<b>PERMITTING FOR PEABODY LOOP</b>	Spring	High	Medium	<b>Project complete.</b>
<b>OVERSEE CONTRACTORS ON PEABODY LOOP CONSTRUCTION</b>	Summer	High	Large	<b>Project complete.</b>
<b>COMPLETE WEBSITE WORK</b>	Ongoing	Medium	Medium	Ongoing.
<b>INSTALL MOONSTONE FOREST HEALTH INTERPRETATIVE SIGNAGE</b>	Summer	Medium	Medium	No progress.
<b>Contractor Work</b>				
<b>COMPLETE WEED AND PEST CONTROL</b>	Spring	Required	Small	
<b>CONTINUE REVEGETATION FOR SHOCK HILL</b>	Spring	Medium	Small	
<b>INSTALL TRASH AND TOILET FACILITIES AT F&amp;D</b>	Summer	Medium	Small	No progress.

PLACER				
<u>Open Space Projects</u>				
PROJECT	COMPLETION DATE	PRIORITY	STAFFING REQUIREMENTS	STATUS
FULFILL B&B MINES CONSENT DECREE REQUIREMENTS	Ongoing	Required	Medium	Ongoing.
OVERSEE CONCESSIONAIRES	Ongoing	Required	Small	Ongoing. <b>BNC lease renewal process ongoing because of negotiations with current lease holder.</b>
OVERSEE OS ACQUISITIONS	Ongoing	Required	Large	Ongoing.
ADDRESS GOLDEN HORSESHOE MANAGEMENT TASKS	Ongoing	High	Large	Ongoing.
DEVELOP FOREST HEALTH AND WILDFIRE PROTECTION STRATEGIES FOR OPEN SPACE PARCELS	Ongoing	High	Large	Study complete. <b>Working to implement before weather precludes access.</b>
PLANNING FOR CUCUMBER NATURE/NORDIC CENTER	Ongoing	High	Large	Ongoing. <b>Working with architects on programming document to present to BOSAC and TC.</b>
OVERSEE PLANS AND RESEARCH FOR REILING DREDGE RESTORATION	On-going	Medium	Low	Ongoing. Field research by NPS completed. Awaiting reports.
McCAIN/ BLOCK 11 MASTER PLANNING	Ongoing	Medium	Small (will be Large if grant pursued)	Ongoing. Assisting with river restoration plan, including trails.
TRACK OS PROPERTY OWNERSHIP	Ongoing	Medium	Small	Ongoing.
OVERSEE PROCESS FOR HIDDEN GEMS WILDERNESS PROOSAL	Ongoing	Medium	Low	Ongoing.
Contractor Work				
CUCUMBER PRESERVE MONITORING	Ongoing	Required	Large	Underway. <b>VERP data being finalized and analyzed.</b>
NATURE SERIES PROGRAM	Ongoing	High	Small	Ongoing.
FOREST HEALTH/FIRE MITIGATION/MPB PROJECTS	Ongoing	High	Large	Ongoing. <b>Discovery Ridge project underway.</b>
MINESITE INVENTORY	Summer	High	Small	<b>Eric Twitty will present at 11/10 BOSAC meeting.</b>

<b>HISTORIC PRESERVATION/ RESTORATION EFFORTS</b>	Ongoing	High	Medium	Complete for season.
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**\* Trail Projects Include:**

- X Annual Trails Inventory and Maintenance
  - Four O'clock Switchback repairs
  - Carter Park Switchback repairs
- X Flumes drainage
- X Freeride Park maintenance and improvements
- X Volunteer Commitments
- X Golden Horseshoe trailwork \*\*\*
- X Install/ update Breckenridge Nordic Center trail posts
- X Trail Signage Program- Cucumber and other
- X Iowa Hill work ('cameras present' signs and trail delineation)
- X Cucumber Preserve Projects
  - Wellington Bridge
- X Make a Difference Day
- X B-Line Trail
- X Peabody/Middle Flume Connect
- X Hermit Placer Boardwalk
- X Toad Alley Boardwalk
- X Nightmare on Baldy Reroute



## OPEN SPACE & TRAILS DEPARTMENT

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Frisco, Colorado 80443

### **SUMMIT COUNTY OPEN SPACE ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA**

**Summit County Commons Building, Buffalo Mountain Room  
0037 Peak One Drive, Summit County Road 1005, Frisco, CO  
Wednesday, November 5, 2008, 6:00 p.m.**

#### **Meeting Agenda**

- 1: Call to order
- 2: Approval of Agenda
- 3: Approval of Minutes of the previous meeting (*see attached Summary of Actions*)
- 4: Acceptance of Summary Report (*see attached report*)
- 5: Public Comments on Items not included in Agenda
- 6: Discussion on Referred Measure 1A
- 7: Update and Discussion on On-going and Potential Open Space Protection Efforts and Issues
- 8: Update on Open Space Management Activities
- 9: Update from Town Open Space Advisory Boards
- 10: Other Business/Announcements
- 11: Adjournment

#### Enclosures

- Summary of Actions, October 1, 2008 OSAC meeting
- Summary Report on Open Space Activities
- Miscellaneous Newspaper Articles

**SUMMIT COUNTY  
OPEN SPACE ADVISORY COUNCIL  
SUMMARY OF ACTIONS  
October 1, 2008**

**COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:** Russ Camp, Art Girten, Chris Hart, Mike Clary, Charlotte Clarke, Dan Pins, Nancy Redner

**COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT:** Scott Hummer, Lynn Amstutz,, Martha Mackie

**STAFF PRESENT:** Brian Lorch, Katherine King, Steve Hill

**MEMBERS OF PUBLIC PRESENT:** Turk Montepare – public;

**Call to Order:** Chairman Scott Hummer called the meeting of the Open Space Advisory Council to order at 7:15 p.m., following the volunteer recognition event

**Approval of Agenda:** The agenda was approved as submitted.

**Approval of Minutes:** The September 3, 2008 meeting minutes were approved as submitted.

**Summary Report:** The summary report was approved as submitted.

**Public Comments on Items Not Included in the Agenda:** None.

**REGULAR AGENDA:**

**Update and Discussion on Ongoing and Potential Open Space Protection Efforts and Issues:**

Open Space Mill Levy – OSAC began the discussion of the mill levy by reviewing a potential resolution in support of Referendum 1A. Afterwards, they unanimously agreed to adopt the resolution. OSAC also reviewed their other ongoing efforts in helping pass the measure. The subcommittee has been meeting each week, and has been primarily focused on gaining support from local political, community and non-profit groups. They are working to devise a newspaper ad that will list all of these groups in favor of the measure, and are hoping to get written support from various other entities. Information on the measure is also being provided at [www.citizensfor1A.org](http://www.citizensfor1A.org).

**Executive Session:** OSAC unanimously passed a motion to go into Executive Session to discuss potential open space acquisitions. Outside of Executive Session OSAC made the following recommendations:

Vanderbilt Claim (Upper Blue)

Due to environmental concerns expressed by staff following a recent site visit to the Claim, OSAC unanimously agreed not to pursue the acquisition of this property.

Culbreath Road Claims (Upper Blue):

Staff described ongoing acquisition efforts with these properties due to various road access and maintenance easements.

Culbreath Humbug Claims (Upper Blue):

OSAC unanimously agreed that staff should pursue a “package acquisition” strategy on these parcels with those on Cullbreath Road, at the values discussed during Executive Session.

Girard Lode (Snake):

OSAC unanimously agreed that staff should counter offer at the values discussed during Executive Session, as well as ask for proof of other offers on the claim from the seller.

Brill properties (Upper Blue):

OSAC unanimously recommended that staff move forward with a counter-offer on the various Brill properties, at the values discussed during Executive Session.

Kinnaird Property (Upper Blue)

OSAC unanimously recommended that staff discuss the acquisition of the inholding portion of the property with the landowner, at the values discussed during Executive Session; as well as continue to pursue conservation easements previously discussed with the landowner.

**Update on Open Space Management Activities:**

**Turk’s Trail**

Staff discussed moving forward with the layout and naming of the new French Gulch area trail on joint Town/County property. Open Space naming criteria states that a trail or open space may be named after “an individual who has played a large part in protecting the land for public benefit.” The OSAC unanimously recommended that the trail be designated “Turk’s Trail.”

**Open Space and Trails website revisions:** Staff gave a brief overview of the changes and improvements to the Open Space website, which will be made ‘live’ as soon as possible.

**Make a Difference Day Projects:** Brian Lorch gave an overview of the planned project for Make a Difference Day, set for October 11<sup>th</sup>. They will include: 1) a clean-up of Blue River inlet, 2) installation of culverts at Horseshoe Gulch, and 3) fence repair at Fiester Open Space.

**Update from Town Open Space Advisory Boards:** Brian Lorch asked if someone from OSAC could be present at the next BOSAC meeting, when they will re-visit the parking situation at the B&B trailhead.

**Other Business/Announcements:** None.

**ADJOURNMENT:** The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Brian Lorch*

Brian Lorch  
Open Space and Trails Director



## OPEN SPACE & TRAILS DEPARTMENT

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### MEMORANDUM

TO: Open Space Advisory Council  
FROM: Brian Lorch  
DATE: October 31, 2008  
SUBJECT: Summary Report on Open Space Activities for November, 2008 meeting

The purpose of the summary report is to save time at the actual OSAC meetings by providing an update on open space protection activities not requiring a specific action by the OSAC, so that they do not need to be discussed during the meeting. Any questions on topics in this report can be discussed at the meeting or with staff prior to the meeting.

1. On October 10, 2008, Summit County and the Town of Breckenridge closed on the acquisition of the Raven Lode on Hoosier Ridge near Boreas Pass Rd. in the Upper Blue Basin.
2. The County and Town of Breckenridge jointly entered into an option agreement with the Brill Family Trust, for acquisition of nine approximately ½ acre lots in the Valley of the Blue Subdivision, and the 10 acre Tract A of Quandary Village Block 1, discussed at the September and October meetings.
3. Closing on the White Cloud and Camp Bird Claims (Upper Blue above Summit Estates) was delayed until November 25 to address issues associated with access easements. Agreements to address these issues have been drafted and are awaiting signatures.
4. Staff provided the seller of the Girrard Lode in Chihuahua Gulch with the offer recommended by the OSAC. The seller stated that, although his preference would be to preserve the property as open space, he felt compelled to go with a higher offer of approximately \$3,000 per acre.
5. Make a Difference Day was a resounding success with approximately 30 volunteers assisting OS&T Staff in completing the reestablishment of a trail and installation of fence on the Fiester Preserve, cleanup of the Blue River Inlet and installation of two culverts on the trail connection to the Colorado Trail at the Horseshoe Gulch (dredge boat) site.
6. The BOSAC discussed at length the proposed trailhead site in lower French Gulch at their October meeting. The BOSAC was equally split on this issue, and requested Town staff again for further evaluation of the need and alternative sites for this parking area.

October 5, 2008

## Open Space volunteers recognized

DAILY NEWS STAFF REPORT,

Summit County's Open Space and Trails Department held its 5th Annual Volunteer Recognition Evening on Oct. 1 for the many volunteers who donated thousands of hours of time this summer.

"It was an awesome volunteer effort this year," said Claudia Wiley, open space and trails resource specialist. "We recorded 615 volunteer days this season. Volunteers gave over 3,375 hours of time, valued at over \$67,620, in maintaining the recpath, open space properties and natural surface trails."

Volunteers built more than 10,800 feet of new natural-surface trail, maintained 6,000 feet of existing trail, constructed a 30-foot log bridge and removed 3,300 feet of barbed-wire fencing, in addition to many other tasks.

Volunteers also helped monitor and maintain 26 miles of recpath and more than 5,000 acres of open-space properties.

And they provided critical assistance in the county's continued reforestation efforts, planting 1,000 seedlings at Muggins Gulch Open Space.

In addition to thanking all the volunteers for their hard work, special recognition was given to outstanding volunteers: SSV Mountain Sports Outlet volunteers, under the leadership of Scott Miles, were recognized as the recpath volunteers of the year for their work the path from Heaton Bay Campground to Dillon.

Lyn Margolis is the natural-surface trail volunteer of the year for her work on numerous trail projects, ranging from building new trail to constructing a log bridge.

The National Wildlife Federation volunteers received the fourth annual Trudy Robinson open-space volunteer of the year award for mobilizing 68 volunteers to remove barbed-wire fencing from the Trudy Robinson Open Space property in the Lower Blue. This award is presented in memory of a founding member of the county's Open Space Advisory Council and a long-time open-space volunteer and advocate. The annual award embodies her passion and commitment toward open space protection in Summit County.

For more information on the program or to sign up for volunteer opportunities in 2009, contact the Open Space and Trails Department at (970) 668-4092 or via e-mail to [claudiaw@co.summit.co.us](mailto:claudiaw@co.summit.co.us).

<http://www.summitdaily.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20081005/NEWS/810059981&parentprofile=search&template=printart>

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October 3, 2008

## Big grant helps Swan Mountain rec path

BY BOB BERWYN  
SUMMIT DAILY NEWS  
SUMMIT COUNTY, CO COLORADO,



SUMMIT COUNTY – A \$750,000 grant in lottery funds from Great Outdoors Colorado will bring Summit County one big step closer to completing the next section of the Swan Mountain recpath.

The organization announced the grant at Sapphire Point Friday after holding a meeting in Silverthorne. The grant was the largest awarded by Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) this year out of 25 applications.

“We’re really pleased to be able to do it and pleased to do it here, where you know it’s so beautiful and we know the use of it will be so tremendous,” said Greg Romberg, a GOCO board member.

The total cost of the next 3,500-foot section, from the existing road crossing to Sapphire Point, is estimated at about \$1.5 million, based on preliminary design studies from 2004 and 2005. That price tag might go up as plans are finalized, said Brad Eckert, open space and trails planner.

The ultimate goal is to provide bicyclists and other recpath users an alternative to sharing the narrow, winding Swan Mountain Road with motorists to complete the loop around the Dillon Reservoir.

“It’s been a favorite bike ride of people for a long time, but it’s become a dangerous one that with a lot more traffic on this road ...” said Brian Lorch, the county’s open space and trails director. “This gets people off that dangerous section of the road and on a trail.”

Funding from the Colorado Department of Transportation totals about \$524,600, while the Friends of Swan Mountain group has raised about \$440,000.

“This will get us to the top of Sapphire Point,” Eckert said.

The section includes heavily forested areas with steep side slopes and several drainage crossings.

Eckert said that, under a “best-case scenario,” construction could start as soon as next spring, after final design work and after working with CDOT on various permit issues.

The next piece of the puzzle will be the 1.5-mile section through Summit Cove to hook up with the path near Highway 6, Eckert said.

That leaves the two-mile section between Sapphire Point and Highway 9 at Farmer’s Korner, with early cost estimates coming in at about \$7 million.

That will be the most expensive and challenge segment of the Swan Mountain rec path, Eckert said.

Summit Daily News staff writer Jonathan Batuello contributed to this story

<http://www.summitdaily.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20081003/NEWS/810039951&parentprofile=search&template=printart>

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# County officials: Referendum 1A would battle bark beetles and save open space

SPECIAL TO THE DAILY

**Editor's note:** The Summit County commissioners have placed Referendum 1A on the November ballot, asking voters to approve a tax hike that would raise about \$5.9 million annually to establish a wildfire fund and to pay for open-space protection, affordable housing and other government services.

Property-tax bills would rise about \$11 for every \$100,000 of assessed valuation, or \$54 for a \$500,000 home, if the measure is approved.

Urgent local needs, including potential costs for fighting a catastrophic wildfire and demand for affordable housing — as well as spiraling costs for fuel, road materials and health insurance for county employees — justify the tax hike, according to the commissioners.

A big portion of the tax would replace an existing 1.9 mill levy that raises about \$3 million annually for open-space acquisition and protection. That levy expires in 2010, when the new tax would take effect.

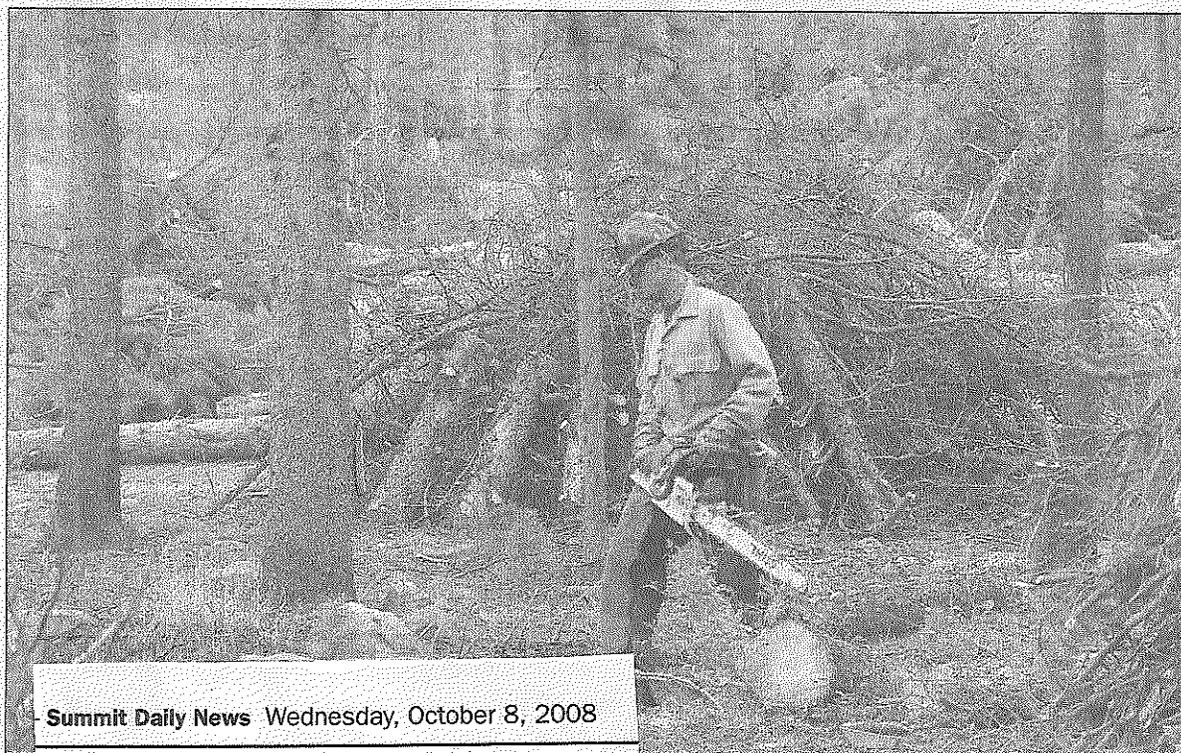
This is the first of a two-part series in which the commissioners answer questions about the measure and why they put it on the ballot.

## Why is the increased funding necessary?

To start with, there are a couple of important catalysts for the ballot measure. We have a severe pine-beetle infestation that is killing most of the lodgepole pine trees in the county. Anyone can just look out their window and see all the dead trees — and the problem is only going to get worse in the years ahead. These beetle-killed trees pose an imminent threat of a catastrophic fire in Summit County.

To deal with this situation, we are proposing two actions. First, fuel mitigation is needed to reduce the fire danger. The county, state forester, fire districts and others have been working to identify and treat areas where the fuel (dead timber) is most critical and threatening. We are hoping to limit the likelihood of a wildfire in this county. Efforts have been undertaken for several years in the wildland/urban interface areas in an effort to reduce the risk of a devastating fire in those neighborhoods that border forested area, and those efforts need to continue and intensify.

Second, if a fire does break out, we will need an emergency reserve account to pay for the extraordinary wildfire expenses that the county will have to shoulder. We want to have the



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Summit Daily file photo/Mark Fox

Lance Arnold, a seasonal firefighter with the Forest Service, works at clearing pine-beetle infested trees on National Forest land next to the recpath below Mount Royal last September as part of a fire mitigation plan. Fire mitigation is one of the catalysts for the upcoming ballot measure. Backers of 1A believe these efforts need to continue and intensify across the county.

revenues to aggressively fight every fire that breaks out to limit the damage. This will potentially save the lives of firefighters, residents and visitors as well as protect our homes and businesses. Most residents' worst nightmare is the picture of Summit County with blackened forests and burned-out homes and businesses. If the voters do not approve funding for the wildfire-mitigation program then it will not happen — it's that simple.

In addition, the county's existing open-space and trails funding is about to expire, and the voters need to approve an extension of that funding if the existing county Open Space and Trails program is to continue. The Open Space and Trails program preserves key parcels in the county to maintain our community's mountain character despite all the development pressures. These key parcels include buffer areas between our communities so we don't have continuous development along all our roads and on our ridgelines like you see in many other counties along Interstate 70.

Important natural areas are also being preserved for wildlife habitat and along rivers, lakes and streams. We are limiting the development of backcountry parcels in the national forest and on ridgelines which would otherwise be developed with homes and roads, helping both the view corridors and recreational experiences for locals and visitors. Trails are also being preserved and improved through our existing program and that access is vital to the lifestyle of most people and

businesses in Summit County.

We also have some critical general-fund needs due to TABOR's tight restrictions on government funding (Douglas Bruce's constitutional amendment restricting tax revenues and spending). The general fund is the primary source of revenue for running basic county departments, services and buildings. We have not had any tax increase for the county's general fund since 1992, when the TABOR Amendment was passed, and time has run out for the general fund due to expenses increasing much faster than property-tax revenues, including the most recent energy increases.

We also need to keep our facilities in basic working order and provide a safe working environment for our workers, such as our mechanics who are responsible for preventive maintenance and repairs on our equipment like our Road and Bridge Department snowplows, Summit Stage buses, ambulances and search-and-rescue equipment.

The installation of energy-efficiency improvements within our facilities, including clean or renewable energy systems, such as solar will result in long-term savings, help the environment, and reduce our dependence on foreign oil.

Finally, the county lacks the necessary funds to take action to acquire suitable land at a reasonable value for a potential affordable workforce-housing site, such as a federal land trade. Without this land, the county will be unable to partner with

private, local developers and builders who would actually construct and sell these homes.

## What would be some of the outcomes if it doesn't pass?

The outcomes would be painful for most residents, very painful for some. The county's existing Open Space and Trails program will end. There will be no funding for wildfire-hazard mitigation in our neighborhoods and subdivisions. Other discretionary functions and departments will have to be discontinued or severely limited. Even mandated departments like the Assessor's Office or Sheriff's Office will be affected and services reduced. We anticipate cutting up to 35 jobs and will need to scale back all county services because that is what we are engaged in — services for our residents and visitors. If a department or service is not mandated by law it would either go away or its programs would be subject to significant reductions.

Affected departments include, in no particular order: the library system, the Community/Senior Center and seniors programs, the Wildfire Hazardous Fuel Reduction program, Animal Control, Geographic Information System real property information and mapping data website, CSU Cooperative Extension including 4-H, the Weed Control program and of course Open Space and Trails. Snow-plowing services in the county will likely be reduced due to fuel costs and county offices may be open fewer days or hours each week.

**SPECIAL TO THE DAILY**

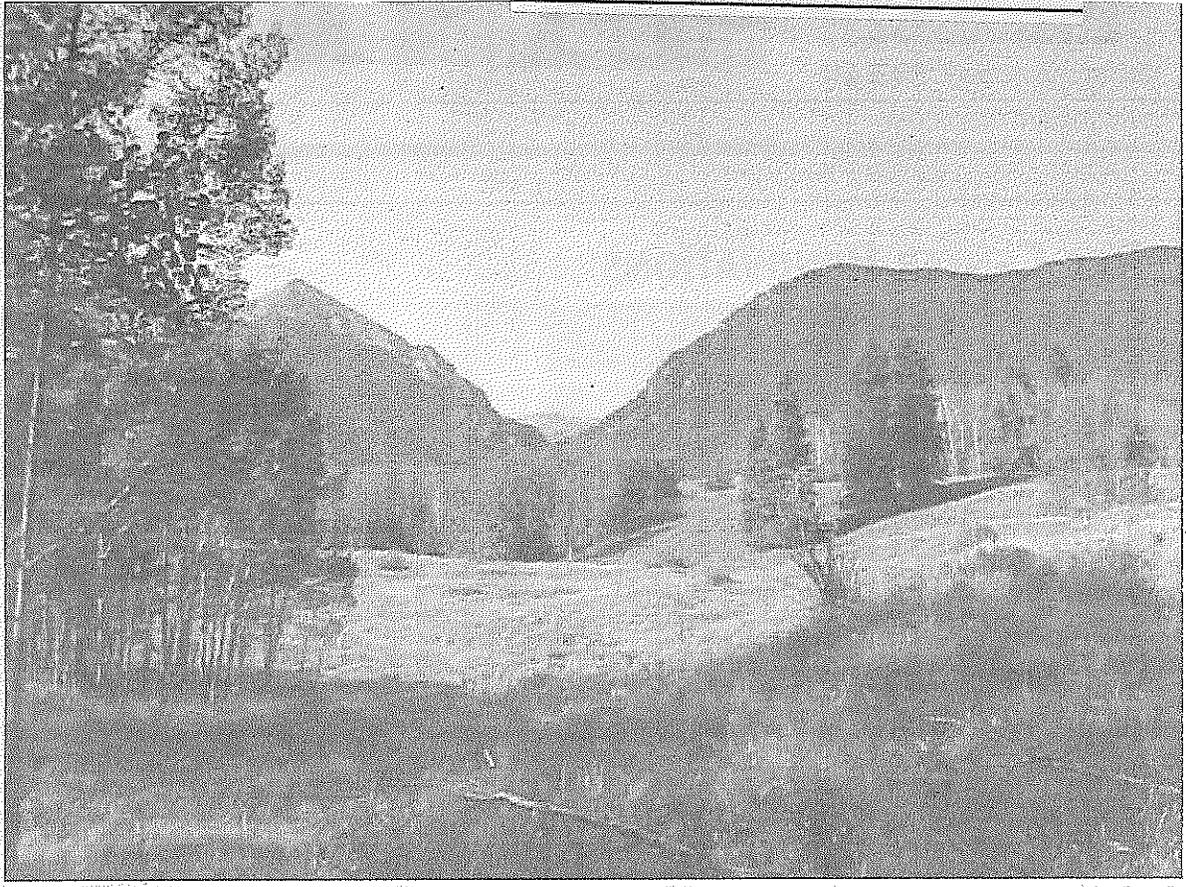
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Summit County commissioners say that Referendum 1A will help the county continue its efforts to preserve open space, such as the private Giberson Preserve Ranch shown here, in addition to funding many other government services.

Special to the Daily

**Doesn't the county have plenty of money from increased property valuations?**

No. Because of state law limitations on property-tax revenues, the general-fund revenues have not increased at the same rate as property values. In 1992, when TABOR was passed, our mill levy for general county operations was just under 11 mills (a mill is one dollar of tax per \$1,000 of assessed value). Our existing mill levy for general operations has been ratcheted down by state law to only 6.38 mills. In other words, as property values go up, the mill levy goes down in accordance with the revenue limits imposed by law.

So the general fund mill levy has decreased despite the tremendous growth in the county since 1992 and the corresponding increase in demand for services. For example, in 1992, there were 13,000 full-time residents in Summit County, and now we have 29,000. In 1992, there were 18,600 homes in the county, and now we have approximately 28,000 homes.

In addition to the increases in our full-time population, we experience significant service demands as a result of the county's primary industry — tourism. We welcome our guests, however, they place additional responsibilities on the county as we must increase public safety, transportation, development and other service infrastructure to levels that are comparable to much larger communities.

Another problem has been TABOR's use of the Denver-Boulder Consumer Price Index for calculating the county's revenue limits. The Denver Boulder CPI has not accurately reflected economic conditions of Summit County and has in the past inequitably limited the revenues available to Summit County resulting from the county's substantial rate of growth and costs in our mountain-resort economy.

**How much of the proposed increase goes to what, in what percentage?**

The measure would direct 75 percent of taxes to wildfire protection, open space and trails, clean energy and energy-efficiency improvements to public buildings and other public lands/improvements. The remaining 25 percent will be used for general-fund purposes so we can maintain county services at current levels.

**Is the county managing its money well? If so, why does it need this kind of 'Band-Aid' financing?**

The county has been very prudent with its revenues and general-fund budgeting in particular. The county eliminated 17 positions overall after the 2000-01 economic downturn, and since 2000 the net increase in personnel in county-general fund has been only 4.5 positions. General-fund departments had to cut up to 4 percent per year from their operating budgets for the past two budget cycles,

despite rising costs. There is no more room for basic cost-cutting given the substantial increases in expenses — without an increase in county revenues, we will have to replace the financial scalpel with an axe to cut programs and significantly reduce services to the community. This is not a Band-Aid solution; it's a vital transfusion to keep county government alive as it currently exists. The county's current budget includes a \$1.4 million operating deficit and is projected to be \$3.5 million in the red by 2012, despite on-going cost-cutting measures. At this point, we either need to increase general-fund revenues or eliminate many existing programs and services.

**What are the impacts on a homeowner's property tax?**

The proposed ballot measure would replace an existing \$3 million property tax, so the net increase is \$2.9 million dollars. The net effect of the measure, which would not start until 2010, would add 90 cents per month in property taxes per \$100,000 in residential-property valuation. So for a home valued at \$500,000 the measure would cost an additional \$4.50 per month starting in 2010.

We believe that this is a reasonable, limited request for funding in light of the important services provided to our residents, especially considering that approximately two-thirds of the residential property-tax revenues are paid by second homeowners. In essence, our residents get some of their local community services subsidized by non-residents via property taxes.

**What are the impacts on commercial property tax?**

Business properties are taxed differently than residential properties because of the Gallagher amendment to the Colorado Constitution, which sets the assessed value of businesses at a higher amount. The net increase in 2010 from the proposed measure would be approximately \$3.30 per month per \$100,000 of value for business property.

**In these tough economic times, why is the county looking to increase taxes?**

The timing is not good, but we can't change the fact that at present:

- Pine beetles are attacking our forests and killing 95 percent the lodgepole pines, causing a huge wildfire threat;
- The existing Open Space and Trails levy is expiring;
- County government has tried to go without a tax increase for general county operations since 1992 because of the TABOR Amendment to the Colorado Constitution. However, with recent cost increases, most notably energy expenses, our operating budget is in the red despite significant cost-cutting measures. We can no longer adjust our operating budget to deal with the shortfall; we either need new revenues approved by the voters or a major reduction of county services — that is what TABOR mandates and the time is now to do one or the other before we sink further into the red.

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## REFERENDUM:

From A2

### **Explain what 'other public projects' are and what the 'general-fund' portion is for?**

As noted earlier, the public projects are intended to maintain our past investments in public buildings while making changes to cut down on energy consumption and reduce carbon emissions in the process. In one building in particular, we have some serious life/safety issues for our mechanics. We are hoping to remedy the problem with a project that will be largely funded by the State of Colorado; however, local matching funds are still required.

If we can't match the state funds, then we will be forced to throw good money after bad (all county) by putting Band-Aid fixes on a crumbling structure.

The use of the general-fund portion is to keep the lights on for county government.

### **What's this phrase mean in the ballot language: '...shall the revenues be collected and spent as a voter-approved revenue change without limitation or condition ...'?**

This is the language required to comply with the TABOR Amendment to the Colorado Constitution and state statutes that allow the county to keep additional revenues generated by ballot measures approved by the voters.

Without this language, the county would collect the additional revenues in one year and potentially have to refund a portion of them in the next year — it simply allows us to retain the revenues approved by the voters. The proposed levy will expire in 12 years, except that a reduced portion of the revenues will be available for maintaining any improvements acquired with the revenues from this proposal. We don't want to create a situation where we can't afford to maintain our open-space lands or other improvements.