

SUMMIT COUNTY
OPEN SPACE ADVISORY COUNCIL
SUMMARY OF ACTIONS

January 2, 2019

OSAC MEMBERS PRESENT: Diane Hunt, John Uban, John Taylor, Bruce Fitch, Terry Craig, Laura Rossetter, Jeff Leigh, Turk Montepare, Art Hardin, Bob Gregory

OSAC MEMBERS ABSENT: Todd Rankin

STAFF PRESENT: Brian Lorch, Katherine King, Michael Wurzel

MEMBERS OF PUBLIC PRESENT: Anne Murphy - Town of Breckenridge; Heather Distad - Breckenridge resident/OSAC candidate

MEMBERS OF PUBLIC SUBMITTING COMMENTS: None

Call to Order: Turk Montepare called the meeting of the Summit County Open Space Advisory Council to order at 5:36 p.m.

Approval of Agenda: The agenda was approved as submitted.

Approval of Minutes: The minutes was approved as submitted.

Summary Report: OSAC congratulated staff on being awarded two major GOCO grants - for the Fremont Pass Recpath project and the Knorr Ranch conservation easements - for approximately \$1.5 million total. There was a brief discussion about the DNR Kennels (Gold Hill and DuLac Placer) and the plan for its demolition, which the Town does not have details on yet. The Summary Report was approved as submitted.

Overview of Open Space Goals and Accomplishments: Brian Lorch highlighted some of the key items on this year's accomplishments and goals. The trail connections through Mesa Cortina down to Silverthorne will be a 2019 trails priority, as well as the connection from Salt Lick to the Frisco interchange. OSAC asked about the status of commercial uses on open space, and staff replied that the Manager's office has not identified it as a high priority at this time. Staff anticipates the demand for these uses will continue to increase, so it will likely become a topic for discussion again with County leadership in the near future. OSAC also inquired about the proposed bridge over the Snake River at Bob Craig Open Space. Staff explained that due to greatly increased engineering costs, it won't be in the budget until at least 2020.

Public Comments not included on the Agenda : None.

REGULAR AGENDA:

Discussion of Open Space Management Activities:

Overview of 2018 seasonal accomplishments

Michael Wurzel gave a summary of the OST seasonal and volunteer crew accomplishments. OST had a great team of four seasonal staff led by Brad Kremske. 78 volunteers also gave 390 hours of their time on various open space projects. Highlights included the construction of the Upper Nightmare Trail (with TOB and VOC), the Sage Trail at the landfill (with the help of RMYC), the Mountain Pride Trail reroute (with TOB and USFS), assisting on the Backdoor Trail, cleanup of the Waterloo cabin (among others), and Swan River Restoration site revegetation efforts.

License Agreement requests - Copper and A-Basin

Copper Mountain is seeking to significantly expand their trail network, and would like one of the trails to

cross a partial interest mining claim owned by Summit County. The Lillie G claims (~40ac) are mostly owned by Copper, but the County has a small interest in the property and is in the process of consolidating the remaining private interests. Staff has been instructed to issue Copper a license agreement when the time comes.

Planning for Forest Management Activities

Michael Wurzel gave an overview of past and present forest management activities and goals on open space properties. The County first started thinning forests on open space in 2005, particularly in the Golden Horseshoe and close to residential areas, but nothing has been done in recent years (since 2015). Over time it's become clear that it will take more than just fuels reduction to lessen wildfire danger, including efforts to create defensible space, changes to the building code, and citizen preparedness and evacuation plans. In light of the recently voter-approved wildfire preparedness funding (approximately \$1 million/year), Open Space staff is making a renewed effort to identify forest health and wildfire preparedness measures. With the help of staff from the Colorado State Forest Service, this will include selective thinning in previously clear cut areas (to prevent dense, even-aged lodge pole growth), and new forest management plans for cuts on several open space properties. Staff is also in discussion with the Nature Conservancy about strategies to improve the health of aspen stands, which are in decline across the west.

Open space and GIS staff have looked at all open space properties within the wildland-urban interface (WUI), to see if they have been treated, and if not, if they should be a high or low priority. In areas of low priority, staff is considering "good neighbor practices" that would encourage/assist landowners and HOAs in forest cuts to reduce wildfire risk. High priority areas will be targeted for cuts, which in the near future will be Peabody Placer, Royal Placer, and Bashore. There are many other initiatives that staff are still developing, and they will keep OSAC informed of their efforts. In addition, the USFS plans to continue their wildfire patrols in the summer of 2019, and is in the process of a NEPA effort to evaluate additional clear cuts on the White River National Forest.

Discussion of Recpath Management: Multi-use signs have been installed on the groomed Recpath in the new Iron Springs alignment. Feedback has been positive on both the signs and the grooming efforts.

Discussion of OSAC Appointments: There are currently 6 members on the Council whose terms are expiring, and OSAC can have up to 13 members. All 6 have asked to be reappointed. Additionally Heather McGonegle-Distad has applied to be on the council. Heather works for the Access Fund currently and resides in the Upper Blue Basin. The OSAC members not up for re-appointment unanimously recommended the other 6 be re-appointed, and that Heather be appointed to the committee as either a full member or alternate, per BOCC's discretion. Staff explained that the Board would review their recommendation, and may choose to interview some of the candidates, in order to make appointments in time for the February meeting.

Executive Session to Discuss Acquisition of Real Property Interests:

Laura Rossetter made a motion to enter into Executive Session, which Art Hardin seconded. OSAC entered into Executive Session at 7:29 p.m. OSAC came out of Executive Session at 7:48 p.m.

ADDITIONAL BUSINESS/ANNOUNCEMENTS: none

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brian Lorch

Brian Lorch, Open Space and Trails Director