



The Summit County Open Space and Trails Department identifies, protects and manages open spaces, trails and trailheads to preserve and maintain Summit County's rural mountain character, unique natural areas and high quality of life for residents and visitors.

2016 Highlights

The Open Space and Trails Department is looking forward to another great field season this year. In July 2015, we welcomed Jesse Billingham as a new Resource Specialist. We are excited to have him take the lead on our summer trail projects with two seasonal employees.

Summit County Open Space and Trails turned 20 years old this year. In that time we have preserved the natural character of over 15,000 acres of Open Space and created a broad array of recreational opportunities. We are all incredibly proud to be so strongly supported by this great community.

We are excited to get going on some higher profile projects outlined in this newsletter this



Welcome Jesse Billingham, our newest Resource Specialist

summer, including the Swan River Restoration and the environmental review for the extension of the Fremont Pass Recpath. It will also be another busy year on the County trails with many special events and the increasing popularity of both our soft-surface and Recpath systems.

As always, please “pardon our dust” during construction. I can’t possibly say it often enough, how much we appreciate those of you who volunteer to get dusty to maintain and improve our incredible open space and trail resources.

Thank you for your interest and assistance and we look forward to seeing you out on your trails and open spaces.

- Brian Lorch, Director

Special Event Permitting

2015 was another busy year with special events, making Summit County the favorite location for numerous marathons, mountain biking, road biking and walking events.

Summit County is known for our public cycling events in Colorado. With our diverse trail and road system, there are a large number of bike rides and races which occur weekly and annually.

With many jurisdictions in Colorado limiting or not allowing races, we have a large demand and increasing numbers of participants from throughout the state and country.

A permit is required for

special events and commercial uses that take place on County properties or facilities, including filming and photo shoots.

Our office permitted 45 special events for recreational use on our county owned paved Recpath and natural surface trails. Another 12 special event permits were issued for events

held on Dillon Reservoir Recreation Area property. For special uses on Dillon Reservoir, our office issued 15 permits, seeing an increase in recreation on the water surface.

In January 2015, we implemented a revised fee structure based on “per participant” fees for each special event.

Requests for special event dates in 2016 are already pouring in and being processed for summer events. 2016 will be another active year with events utilizing our amazing Recpath and trails system.



2015 Construction of the new turnpike located within Horseshoe Dredge trail network.

Volunteer Hours

In the summer 2015, we had assistance from approximately 250 volunteers.

Volunteers for single day projects contributed 602 hours of their time

Our "Adopt" volunteers contributed over 450 hours of their time.

If one multiplies the total volunteer hours (1,052) by \$13.07 which is the national economic hourly value of a volunteer, it equals \$13,749.64.

Reflective Vests for Summer 2016

In response to a few requests from volunteers last summer, we will have reflective vests available to loan out to our "adopt" volunteers in 2016. This will aid in you being more visible to users on the Recpath and trails.

Businesses who volunteered with us 2015:

- * 4-H
- * Keller Williams
- * Beetlekill Blues
- * IBARMS
- * Generations of Compassion
- * IHS
- * DaVita Healthcare
- * Summit County Community Development



Volunteer Program

Summit County Open Space & Trails Department encourages the public to dedicate time volunteering for a day or a summer-long commitment. Multiple opportunities exist, from having businesses/organizations come out to join us for a volunteer trail-work day to individuals or groups having an ongoing commitment adopting a section of trail, Recpath or open space.

One day projects are ca-

tered to groups. We provide all tools, education and crew leaders. The day, time, project and location is worked out with group leaders to meet the needs of all involved. Ideal project times last from 3-6 hours.

We have hosted local business groups, Denver business groups and even a Family Trust from around the Country participating in this great opportunity! Long-term volunteers make a two-year

commitment to adopt a section of Recpath, natural surface trail, or open space. Most volunteers start sometime in late April or early May for the first cleanup of the season and continue throughout the summer into late September or early October, working on their adopted open space property or trail twice a month. Responsibilities include light maintenance, natural resource monitoring and litter pickup.



Volunteers from IBARMS constructed a new single track for the Oro Grande trail

2015 New Adopt Section Volunteers

- Paul Maxwell
- Susan Knopf
- Jay Pansing
- Mayfield Family
- Ingrid Basler

Thank you for joining us!!!



Volunteers from 4-H participated in a Weed Pull volunteer day

2015 Acquisitions

The Summit County Open Space and Trails Program protected about 90 acres of open space at a cost of \$412,000 in 2015. The 20 land transactions furthered the County's work to conserve wetlands, secure public recreational access and protect Summit County's scenic backcountry character.

Protecting recreational access is a primary goal of the Summit County Open Space Program. U.S. Forest Service lands comprise almost 80 percent of the county's land area, but access to these public lands can be hindered or blocked by parcels of private land, which are concentrated in the valleys. Two of the most notable land acquisitions in 2015 will help ensure permanent public winter trail access to Quandary Peak. In addition to the Monte-Cristo-area ac-

quisitions, backcountry mining claims purchased in 2015 near Santa Fe Peak, Northstar Mountain and Humbug Hill will also help protect the backcountry character of Summit County and its recreational opportunities.

The County conducted 14 wetland density transfers in the Quandary Village and Alpine Breckenridge area under the Summit County Transferable Development Rights (TDR) Program in 2015. This program aims to concentrate density in more developed areas of the county while protecting backcountry and sensitive areas. Private property owners may transfer their development rights from designated rural "sending areas" to urban "receiving areas," per Summit County Master Plan TDR maps.

Through a similar process called "parcel assemblage," one landowner consolidated density on one property

and protected eight other backcountry claims totaling 20 acres via transfer to the Town and County in 2015. The claims were inholdings in the White River National Forest, and their dedication as open space will provide for contiguous wildlife habitat preservation and scenic viewshed protection.

Summit County acquired seven new trail easements in 2015 to expand its natural surface trails and paved Summit County Recpath system. The County maintains more than 60 miles of paved recreational pathways and natural surface trails, in addition to its open space properties.

The Summit County Open Space Program is funded by a mill levy approved by voters in four elections, most recently in 2008. This 12-year funding mechanism provides about \$1.2 million per year for open space property acquisition.

Swan River Restoration

The Colorado Water Conservation Board and Colorado Basin Roundtable together awarded a \$975,000 Water Supply Reserve Account Grant to Summit County in support of a stream restoration project on the Swan River. The restoration area includes approximately 3,500 linear feet of the river along Tiger Road in the Swan River drainage, 11 miles northeast of Breckenridge, on land jointly owned by Summit County and the Town of Breckenridge.

This initial phase of restoration work will contribute to the overarching goal of restoring the ecological integrity of the Swan River watershed by reconnecting more than 19 miles of stream and riparian areas now segregated by dredge piles. The restored channel and adjacent areas will provide a variety of habitat features for fish, mammals, insects and other native species.

Improved stream crossings to expand the habitat for native Colorado cutthroat trout will be installed



The BOCC approved the Saints John Management Strategy on January 26, 2016. Open Space & Trails will be working with Summit Historical Society to develop an interpretive sign for the property to be installed summer 2016.

at Muggins Gulch Road, Tiger Road and Rock Island Road to better facilitate natural stream flow of the new channel and to reduce the number and severity of flooding events. The restoration plan also includes a new soft-surface trail that will provide access for the public to enjoy the restored stream and the adjacent White River National Forest.

The project planning has been a highly collaborative effort, with significant public involvement and partnerships and consultation with state and local governments and private entities. In addition to the County and Town, active participants in the project planning and funding include the U.S. Forest Service, Colorado Parks and Wildlife,

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Trout Unlimited, Blue River Watershed Group, Friends of the Dillon Ranger District and the National Forest Foundation.

The Swan River restoration project is funded through a variety of sources, including previous grant funding from the Colorado Water Conservation Board that aided in planning phases. This year's work will receive \$300,000 in support from the Summit County Safety First Fund, approved by voters in November 2014. The Safety First funding was critical in leveraging funds from CWCB. Trout Unlimited has launched a project website that will enable members of the public to contribute to the river's restoration. Find out more at <http://restoretheswanriver.com/>



Make a Difference Day Volunteers



DaVita Healthcare assisting with barbed wire fence removal



Generations of Compassion constructing Wirepatch Trail



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Planned Improvements in 2016

- Renovations to reconstruct a section of Recpath near Dillon Dam. The existing section is not well engineered and there is constant sand and debris deposited on the path. Project is projected to cost approximately \$270,000.
- The County will be putting additional sharrows and striping in Keystone along with rumble strips and striping through Copper.
- The County will complete crack sealing where needed throughout the entire Recpath system. This is performed on an annual basis and the County has begun using a new product which provides an improved riding experience.
- Summit County and Town of Breckenridge have entered into a contract with Rocky Mountain Youth Corps for four weeks of trail crew work on hiking and mountain bike trails.
- Phase 2 of the Summit Cove project will involve design and construction. Goals of the project include: provide clearly defined safe routes for bicyclists and pedestrians, separate modes of travel to increase safety and slow vehicle speeds to 20 mph. In addition, a \$475,000 causeway project will be engineered and constructed. This road widening project will accommodate bicycle users to safely navigate across a narrow causeway in Summit Cove.

Fremont Pass

As one of the Governor's 16 in 2016 priority projects, Summit County is continuing to move forward planning the Fremont Pass Recpath. Throughout 2015, Summit County worked diligently with the US Forest Service (USFS) and Climax Molybdenum Company and has now entered into the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process and holds a Memorandum of Understanding with Climax and Lake County. A planning document "Fremont Pass Recreational Pathway: Summit County Extension Design Narrative" evaluates alternatives to utilize approximately three miles of existing train grade on White River National Forest administered lands so bicycles and pedestrians can bypass the "narrows" which has long been identified

as the most dangerous section of Highway 91.

Summit County, on behalf of the USFS, solicited proposals from qualified consultants/contractors in January 2016 to perform analysis and preparation of an Environmental Assessment to support the USFS during implementation of a NEPA review.

Summit County Board of County Commissioners has directed the Open Space and Trails Department to prioritize efforts with Lake County, Leadville, Climax Molybdenum Company and the US Forest Service to extend the Tenmile Canyon Recpath over Fremont Pass to connect with the nationally celebrated Mineral Belt Trail in Leadville. Efforts will continue through 2016 and beyond to move forward on this regional recreational amenity.

Bike to Work Day

Colorado's Bike to Work Day is Wednesday, June 22, 2016. With the assistance of the Physical Activity and Nutrition Team of the Summit (PANTS) there will be six breakfast stations and three happy hours for community members who commute to work by bike. Don't need to go to work that day? Ride your bike to run an errand and you can still participate! New this year will be presentations on bike safety and maintenance open to anyone interested. As always, raffle entries will be provided at the breakfast stations and evening happy hours. Events will be occurring throughout the community including Silverthorne's bike to work month and Breckenridge's bike to work week so stay tuned for more information on all of the great happenings around the County.

Want to join us?

Have a group you want to schedule a volunteer project for? Want to meet new people and get outdoors? We are always looking for volunteers. Please contact Katie Kent at 970.668.4092 or Katie.Kent@SummitCountyCO.gov to get on our email list. Once you're on our email list, you will be invited to all volunteer projects as they are scheduled. We can also cater a volunteer day to any ages and interests. Contact us to set up a group work day for your office, team, scout group or any other interested group.

Know of a County open space property or trail which needs work performed on it? Please contact Katie to get it on a list of project ideas for Summer 2016. We appreciate your input and feedback.