

**MINUTES
OPEN SPACE AND TRAILS BOARD
REGULAR SESSION
August 3, 2023
530 E Main St.
Aspen CO, 81611**

OSTB Present:

Graeme Means Dist. 1, Chair	Howie Mallory Dist. 2 Not Present	Amy Barrow Dist. 3	Michael Kinsley Dist. 4	Wayne Ives Dist. 5
--------------------------------	---	-----------------------	----------------------------	-----------------------

Staff Present: Gary Tennenbaum, Jessie Young, Kim Arensdorf, Drew Walters, Carly O'Connell, Janet Urquhart, Liza Mitchell, Paul Holsinger, Dale Will, Richard Neiley

Others Present: Mary & Keith Hatanaka, Jared Gibson, Elizabeth & Edgar Boyles

Graeme Means called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mary Hatanaka, expressed concern about North Star Nature Preserve's (NSNP) increase in use, specifically with commercial use. She stated that the NSNP Deed of Conservation Easement from 2002 states that "no amendment should be made to the management plan that would increase the type or intensity of recreation, commercial, and public use beyond what is specified in the existing Management Plan". Jessie Young explained that public use surveys are currently being conducted to collect user data at NSNP. Gary Tennenbaum stated that staff is working with Aspen Valley Land Trusht (AVLT) to discuss the conservation easement. Staff is currently looking at a user overview, and before 2024 commercial permits are issued OST will have a recommendation on how to move forward in December, with a full NSNP management plan update in 2025, he said.

Jared Gibson, requested from the Board approval of a memorial plaque for his mother Kathy Gibson on Maroon Creek Bridge. Gibson noted that the plaque would have historical significance due to his mother's efforts to get the Maroon Creek Bridge built. Gibson explained that he would pay for the design and construction of the plaque. Jessie Young expressed support for the memorial, noting that it has historical value and provides a great story of perseverance. The OSTB provided support for the memorial.

Board action below.

Edgar Boyles thanked the Board for the recreation capacity study that is currently being conducted at NSNP. He asked if the study is regarding capacity or overall use at NSNP. Additionally, what metrics are being used, and what publications are being used to conduct the study, he asked. Tennenbaum stated that OST is not doing an official park service study, however OST is studying what the commercial capacity of NSNP.

Elizabeth Boyles commented that the capacity study for NSNP needs to address the entire Roaring Fork Watershed as a tributary. She noted that in the past baselines studies were

conducted and they should be included in the capacity study. Tennenbaum clarified that OST is currently conducting a capacity study for commercial use. The overall use of North Star is being monitored and enforced by OST Rangers. He noted that Wildwood is not an OST property but under the jurisdiction of the Forest Service, however this year OST has taken on enforcing that portion of NSNP as well. Staff is tracking and counting the overall use, and there has not been any major impacts to the natural resources at NSNP, he said. The use is more of a social issue, and in December staff will be returning to the Board with recommendations for commercial use.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Michael Kinsley motioned for the OSTB to approve the 07/06/2023 OSTB Regular and Executive Session Draft Minutes. Amy Barrow seconded. Motion passed (5-0).

Mary & Keith Hatanaka, Jared Gibson, Elizabeth & Edgar Boyles left at 9:20 a.m.

Draft 2023 Redstone Parks and Open Space Management Plan Update

Young explained that the last management plan update for Redstone Park and Open Space (RPOS) was in 2010. Since the last update OST has acquired Coke Ovens property. Additionally, the Drool and Sawmill hill are being incorporated into this updated plan, she said. The Redstone area acquisitions of open space parcels represent an investment of approx. \$6.2m for the benefit of residents and visitors, as well as wildlife. This plan recognizes recent improvements to Elk and Redstone parks and Redstone Boulders, she said.

Carly O'Connell commented that the plan summary includes the goals, outreach, and key updates. She noted that the area recreation access and easements provide fishing, climbing, and pedestrian access.

Liza Mitchell stated that an important aspect of natural resources in RPOS is the connectivity from public lands to water resources. She explained that The Roaring Fork Biodiversity and Connectivity Study, completed in 2022 by the Watershed Biodiversity Initiative (WBI) and scientists at the Colorado Natural Heritage Program, provides a map of conservation value for the Roaring Fork Watershed. This study also identifies the East Creek drainage as having high biodiversity importance, and is the locale with the highest conservation importance in the area. The Coke Ovens provides a wetland area and winter elk habitat, she said.

O'Connell provided the existing conditions and improvements for the following:

- Elk Park: primarily a landscaped park with a memorial grove. Three multi-purpose recreation areas and amenities.
- Redstone Park: improvements include an enlarged gazebo, play area improvements, and path connection improvements.
- Coke Ovens: Includes a 14 acre parcel with historic coke ovens, 70 acres behind the ovens, and agricultural lease components. Provides interpretive exhibits and a walking path adjacent to the historic ovens.
- The Drool: known for its scenic value and recreation, specifically for its ice climbing pillar route.
- Redstone Boulders: consist of parking area for the East Creek Trail, and paths to the bouldering areas located on OST and Forest Service lands.

- Sawmill Hill: located behind the Redstone Inn and connects to Forest Service land. A forest health study will be focusing on this area, ponderosa trees.

Drew Walters commented that there is a lot of acreage around the Coke Ovens, however a lot of the acreage is not productive. Historically the area has been flood irrigated which will be looked into when leasing the property. He noted that there is only about 19 acres that are suitable for grazing, due to lack of sunlight, high elevation, short growing season. Grazing productivity is determined by soil and climate. The parcel has been historically overgrazed and there have been irrigation issues, he said.

O'Connell commented that the planning process and public input started last fall and included meetings with the White River National Forest, Colorado Parks and Wildlife, Colorado Department of Transportation, Roaring Fork Conservancy, Healthy Rivers Board, West Elk Scenic and Historic Byway and the Pitkin County engineer. Staff collected community survey responses, attended Magical Moment's concert series, and met with the Crystal Caucus. Community feed back included 152 responses from the community meetings an online survey and outreach events. She noted that community feedback results reflected high rates of satisfaction in the area. Among the survey responses the community ranked the following based on importance of values:

1. Beauty/scenic views,
2. Enhancing wildlife habitat and natural resources.
3. Enhancing riparian/aquatic health
4. Culture/historic significance
5. Access/connectivity
6. Recreation
7. Agriculture

O'Connell noted that the respondents provided little support for attracting/supporting tourism.

O'Connell commented that with regards to special and commercial use regulations currently Redstone Community Association events do not require a permit, however other community organizations will need to obtain a permit. Kinsley asked if the permit requirements were supported by community groups. Young explained that community was ok with the current direction. O'Connell explained that no commercial use is permitted at the Coke Ovens with the exception of those uses established pursuant to the annual operating plan associated with the agricultural lease area. To ensure that agricultural and ranching activities are the primary focus of Coke Ovens Open Space, events within the boundaries of the lease area will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Paul Holsinger explained that any special events will need to work with the agriculture leasee. Wayne Ives asked if the Magical Moments will move back to Redstone Park. O'Connell stated that majority of the community respondents wanted to move the concert series back to Redstone Park.

O'Connell and Mitchell provided the Coke Ovens management action items of note:

- Establish a long-term lease at the Coke Ovens Open Space through the Agricultural Lease Policy.
- Require maintenance of leased portions of Coke Ovens Open Space.

BOARD ACTION
Maroon Creek Bridge Plaque
Michael Kinsley motioned to approve the Gibson memorial plaque on Maroon Creek Bridge. Wayne Ives seconded. Motioned passed (4-0).

Board action below.

Ives noted that some of the area that is being considered for re-wilding is depending on agricultural leasee flood irrigated water. Mitchell stated that the management plan sets the stage for those conversations.

O'Connell stated that additional RPOS action items include:

- Conduct a baseline inventory of access routes at Redstone Boulders.
- Continue to work with private property owners along Sawmill Hill to clarify/improve winter public access to "the Pillar."

Amy Barrow applauded staff's work on integrating all of the parcel aspects into the larger picture for RPOS.

Kinsley asked if Pitkin County is liable for people climbing on the Coke Ovens. O'Connell clarified that the Coke Ovens themselves are managed by the Redstone Historical Society and that resource is protected by them and AVLT. Tennenbaum stated that OST can provide rules and enforcement.

Kinsley commented on the history section regarding "removal of the Ute People", he recommended adding "forcible" removal to the language.

Kinsley stated that there is reference to Redstone to McClure Trail, he asked if the whole conceptual Carbondale to Crested Butte plan is referenced in the Management Plan. Yes, Young said.

The OSTB recommended to release the draft RPOS Management Plan for public comment.

ADJOURN

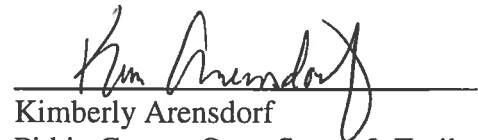
The OSTB meeting of August 3, 2023 adjourned at 12:55 p.m.

Approved:



Graeme Means, Chair
Pitkin County Open Space & Trails Board

Attest:



Kimberly Arensdorf
Pitkin County Open Space & Trails
Administrative Specialist

