

**City of Carson City
Agenda Report**

Date Submitted: February 10, 2015

Agenda Date Requested: February 19, 2015
Time Requested: 15 minutes

To: Mayor and Board of Supervisors

From: Parks and Recreation Department – Open Space Division

Subject Title: For Possible Action: To approve the Open Space Advisory Committee's Annual Report for 2014. (Ann Bollinger, Roger Moellendorf, and Bruce Scott)

Staff Summary: Carson City Municipal Code Section 13.06.090 requires that the Open Space Advisory Committee provide an annual report of their activities to the Board of Supervisors. The attached report contains information on the activities of the Open Space Program organized into the following categories: Land Management, Capital Improvement Projects, Planning Activities, and Reports, Land Acquisitions, and Financial Information.

Type of Action Requested: (check one)

Resolution Ordinance
 Formal Action/Motion Other (Specify)

Does This Action Require A Business Impact Statement: Yes No

Recommended Board Action: I move to approve the Open Space Advisory Committee's Annual Report for 2014.

Explanation for Recommended Board Action: As required by ordinance, staff has prepared the report on behalf of the Open Space Advisory Committee describing the most notable activities of the Open Space Program carried out in 2014. It is staff's intention to use this report as a communication tool in discussing with others the functions of the Open Space Division.

Applicable Statute, Code, Policy, Rule or Regulation:
Carson City Municipal Code 13.06 – Open Space

Fiscal Impact: N/A

Explanation of Impact: N/A

Funding Source: N/A

Alternatives: Not to approve the Annual Report.

Supporting Material: Annual Report

Prepared By: Ann Rollinger, Open Space Administrator

Reviewed By: S. J. M. (FOL RM.) Date: 2-9-8
(Department Head)

(Department Head)

(City Manager)

Date: 2/10/15

(District Attorney)

Date: 2/10/15

(Finance Director)

Date: 10/13/13

Board Action Taken:

Motion: _____ 1: _____ Aye/Nay

1: _____ Aye/Nay

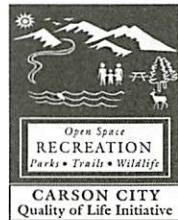
2: _____

(Vote Recorded By)



Carson City Parks and Recreation Department

OPEN SPACE



Report to the Board of Supervisors of the Open Space Advisory Committee Activities January – December 2014

Dear Mayor Crowell and Board of Supervisors,

As required by Section 13.06.090 of the Carson City Municipal Code, it is my honor to present to you the following report of the activities conducted by the Open Space Advisory Committee (OSAC) in 2014. The information provided is arranged into the following categories:

- Land Management
- Capital Improvement Projects
- Planning Activities and Reports
- Land Acquisitions
- Financial Information

First and foremost, the OSAC expresses our sincere gratitude to Juan Guzman for his leadership as Carson City's First Open Space Manager. He led the Open Space Program since 2000 and was instrumental in the acquisition of 3,347 acres for open space protection to be enjoyed by Carson City residents for perpetuity. An additional 3,589 acres will be transferred from the BLM in the near future. Juan retired on September 4, 2014.

Land Management

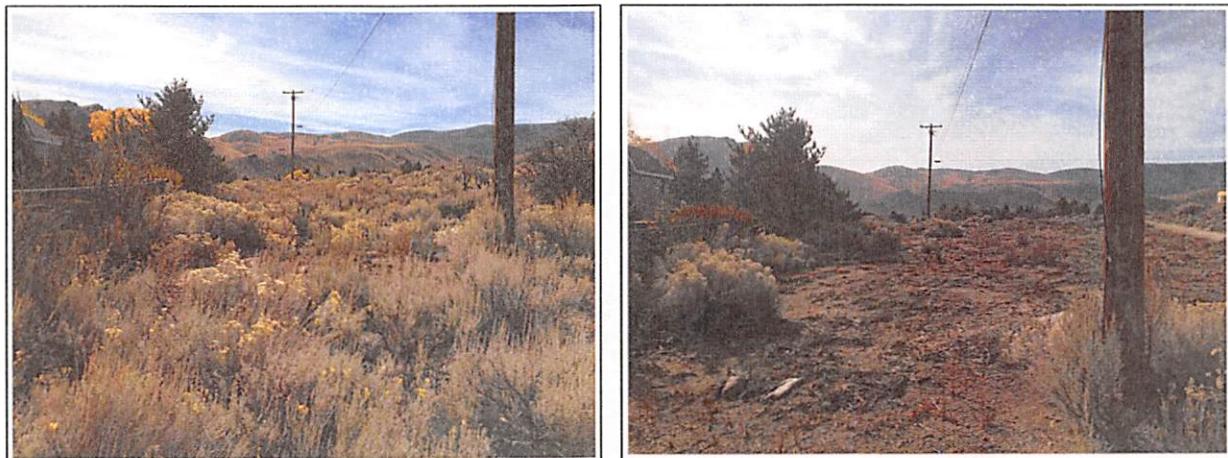


In 2012 the City received a 319(h) grant specific to Nonpoint Source Stormwater Planning from the Nevada Division of Environmental Protection. Early in 2014, the Ash Canyon Maintenance and Erosion Control Plan was finalized. With the grant, the City committed to preparing the plan and implementation of the plan as funding allows with the project objective to reduce erosion from Ash Canyon Road and thus sediment in Ash Canyon Creek, a municipal water source for Carson City. In 2014, the implementation measures included: road grading, repair of water bars, and placement of geotextile and riprap in one ditch.

The management of fuels on acquired lands, as well as natural parks and the wildland-urban

interface, is a top priority for the Open Space Program. Most fuel reduction projects on the west side of town are funded with a grant from the Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act (SNPLMA). The grant deadline is March 31, 2015.

Throughout the year, various fuels reduction treatments were conducted to create and/or maintain a community defensible space by modifying vegetation structure and composition, thereby reducing fuel loading and wildfire intensity. The Carson City seasonal fire crew assisted with chainsaw treatments, and contractors were employed in mastication, mowing, and off-site removal efforts. Dense upland sagebrush and riparian species were thinned and/or removed from approximately 9-10 acres.



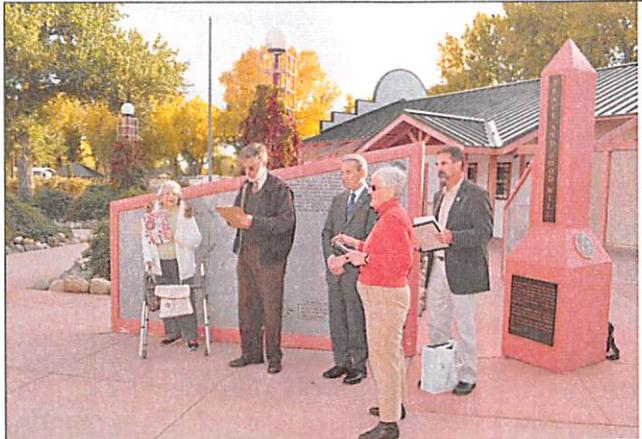
Fuels Reduction and Mastication Treatment near Ash Canyon Road – before and after photos
Fall 2014

In addition to the shrub treatments, our well-received fine fuels management program through the use of sheep continued. The 9th consecutive year with targeted sheep grazing was conducted April – May, lasting 6 ½ weeks. With assistance from the Parks Department, temporary fencing was installed near select areas of wildland-urban interface to increase utilization. Due to recent past and predicted drought conditions and the desire to maintain desirable species, just one band was used to graze herbaceous fuels on less than 2,000 acres. There were three newspaper articles (Carson City's Nevada Appeal and the Las Vegas Review Journal), three television interviews (Reno's KRNV Channel 4, KOLO-TV Channel 8, and Fox 11), and two field trips (young children with Carson City's Recreation Program and college students in the Principles of Range Management class at the University of Nevada, Reno.).

Environmental education opportunities spanned into other areas as well. River Wranglers coordinated several education-based work days along the Carson River including one day with the Nevada Appeal at the Ambrose Carson River Natural Area. The Carson High School Biology Class continued their annual field trip to the Ambrose Carson River Natural Area in which high school students teach lessons to fourth grade students. Additionally, Carson High School was awarded a grant from the Dream Tags Charitable Fund at the Community Foundation of Western Nevada for three years of restoration work at Quill Ranch. The students will learn about invasive weeds, native plant communities, wildlife habitat, and Carson City's

watershed, learn how to collect and analyze vegetation data, and participate in broadcast seeding for restoration. The grant provides funds for bus transportation to the project site and herbicide treatments on noxious weeds. Beginning in 2013, the Sierra Nevada College Environmental Program has incorporated our lands into their classroom.

The OSAC is very pleased to report that our activities and work have immensely benefited from the contribution and assistance of volunteers and groups. The OSAC is especially proud to report that one of our own members received the award for Volunteer of the Year from the Foundation for the Betterment of Parks and Recreation.



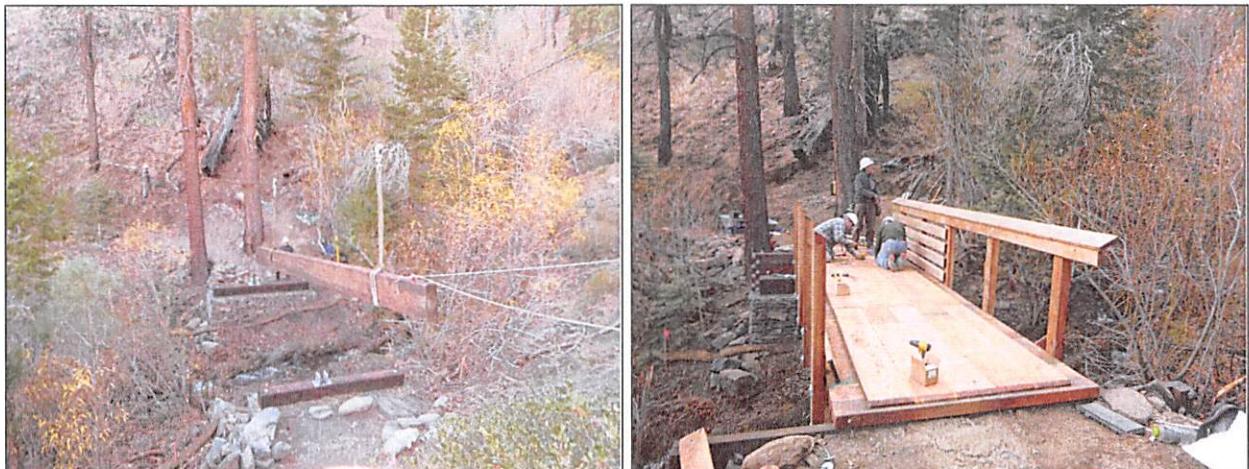
Award Ceremony by the Foundation for the Betterment of Parks and Recreation
October 21, 2014

Dr. Rob Bauter and Mr. Dick Wipfli regularly patrol and provide a presence within open space lands. Dick and Rob particularly enjoy their tours on Ash Canyon Road and Kings Canyon Road. They wear shirts identifying them as being volunteers through the Open Space Program and they offer water and assistance to hikers and visitors. Mr. Paul Sinnott assists in the Prison Hill Recreation Area with trash clean-up and trail repair, as well as assisting Jeff Potter with trail construction on the Ash to Kings Trail.

Muscle-Powered has been instrumental in the development of single-track trails along the Carson Range. After three years of construction, the 7+ mile Ash to Kings Trail is almost completed (the Ash Creek Bridge will be installed in February or March 2015). Under the exceptional leadership of Jeff Potter, many members of the community volunteered their time to assist with trail construction. The U.S. Forest Service Carson Ranger District, Great Basin Institute, and Lumos and Associates were also project partners and contributed to the success. Grant funds from the Recreational Trails Program helped to pay for materials and labor.

Volunteer of the Year: Donna Inversin

Over the last three years, Donna has been a great asset to the Parks & Recreation Department by overseeing the Easy Walk and Easy Bike program along with being a trail advocate. She dedicates her time to discovering new trails and possible walking and biking paths to take all who are interested. She takes into consideration all ages and abilities when deciding where to take the group next. On her own time, she guides approximately four walks per month and during the summer of 2014 she offered two community bike rides per month around Carson City, exposing the participants to new areas and trails that they may not have known about. She has planned and organized community volunteer efforts to remove garbage and debris in our recreational areas along the Carson River, and continues to envision future opportunities for new trail development. The Carson City Parks & Recreation Department enjoys working with Donna and appreciates all that she has given back to our wonderful community.



The North Kings Bridge was installed in November 2014.

Another organization whose work continues to help the Open Space Program is the Friends of Silver Saddle Ranch (FOSSR). The FOSSR have been very involved with management of lands along the Carson River, particularly the Silver Saddle Ranch. In December, the FOSSR hosted a holiday open house and Santa Claus provided horse-drawn carriage rides.

From January through October 2014, the Open Space Program received an estimated value of \$44,996 from volunteers. At minimum, volunteers spent 2,362 hours on our lands, at a value of \$19.05/hour (the latest dollar value available, according www.independentsector.org).

Capital Improvement Projects

In addition to the Ash to Kings Trail described above, improvements were completed on the Waterfall Trail and Trailhead including a new kiosk. A new memorial for the fallen firefighters will be installed soon.

Planning Activities and Reports

Staff is extremely pleased to report that the Draft Management Plan for the Carson River Area was completed. One public open house was held and more than 60 people attended. The Draft Management Plan was also presented to two advisory committees and the Board of Supervisors.

The progress on the Nevada Stateline-to-Stateline Bikeway Project continued. In 2014, the State Route 28 Corridor Management Plan was completed. This plan incorporated concepts from several plans for the area and made recommendations accordingly. One significant outcome was the award of \$12 million from the Federal Lands Access Program to begin implementation. In addition to existing funds, the grant will fund construction of a three-mile section of pathway from Incline Village to Sand Harbor (also known as the North Demonstration Project) and improvements to eight parking areas. The project construction will begin summer of 2015 for the Washoe County segment. The design of the parking lots will also begin in 2015, and construction of the parking lots is anticipated in 2017-2018.

Staff was successful in completing the annual monitoring of the 175-acre conservation easement at Horsecreek Ranch. We found no violations of the easement. Third party encroachments and trespassing incidents have subsided and vandalism at the property was minimal. Monitoring of the easement is an annual activity in order to ascertain compliance with the terms of the transaction. It is our privilege to monitor the easement, and it is important to inform you that the stewardship account donated by the owner has a balance of \$47,875 to be used exclusively for this purpose.

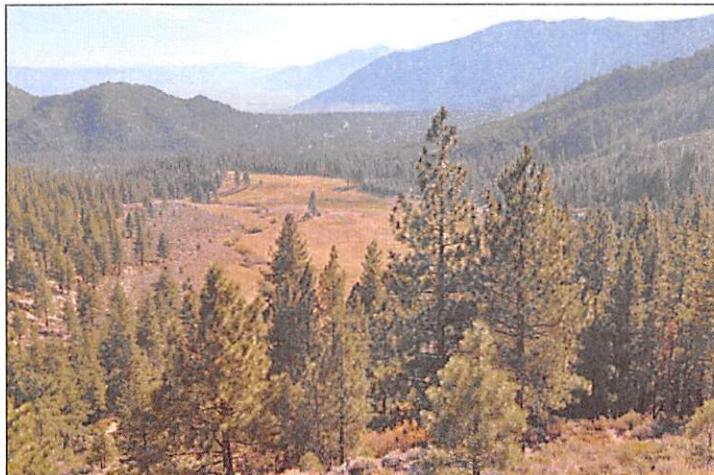


Photo taken November 5, 2014

Land Acquisitions

Due in part to the decrease in revenue generated by the sales tax and the state of the economy and in part to a resolution approved by the Board of Supervisors in August 2012 directing the OSAC and staff to suspend activities on the acquisition of lands for a period of two years and to emphasize the active management of existing properties in the Open Space Program, there is just one acquisition to report. The subject property consists of 28,424 sq. ft. (just less than ½ acre), is located south of Highway 50 at Lompa Lane, and is significant for further development of the Freeway Multi-Use Pathway. The property is owned by the Arraiz Family 1993 Trust. Progress towards acquisition continued throughout the year, including the signing of the Purchase and Sale Agreement. The closing date is scheduled on or prior to February 2, 2015.

Financial Considerations

One of the functions of the OSAC is to provide oversight over the administration and expenditures of funds from the Open Space Division of the Quality of Life special revenue fund established by Carson City Municipal Code Section 21.07. The Section states, “The Committee shall review and provide input and comment to the City Manager’s proposed budget as it relates to Open Space matters and perform other duties as may be specifically assigned to it by the Board of Supervisors.”

The acquisition account has been almost depleted. Our efforts will continue to be directed towards the management of lands and the annual operations budget will reflect the shift from acquisition into stewardship.

Finally, it is our pleasure to inform the Board of Supervisors that as of December 9, 2014, approximately 3,347 acres of land have been protected or obtained through purchases, donations, or transfers with a Question 18 cost of \$10,437,282. Grants have provided \$8,596,757 for a total of cost of \$19,034,039. The acquisitions and related information are presented in the following table(s).

On behalf of our Committee and staff, thank you very much for the opportunity to present this report.