

OPEN SPACE ADVISORY COMMITTEE STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE: November 16, 2015

AGENDA ITEM NUMBER: 4A

STAFF: Ann Bollinger, Open Space Administrator
Richard Wilkinson, Senior Natural Resource Specialist

REQUEST: Discussion only regarding activities, projects, and grants located within the Carson River area.

GENERAL DISCUSSION:

There has been a lot of activity occurring within the Carson River area. Staff has been busy planning and implementing activities throughout the past few months.

Activities and Events:

- **Open Space Tour:**
On October 6th, staff conducted a half-day tour of open space properties along the Carson River. The tour was open to the public and was made possible by a grant/sponsorship to the Carson Water Subconservancy District (CWSD). About 16 people attended the tour. The registration form asked participants about what they wanted to learn and/or what interested them in the tour. Attached is a summary of the responses. An evaluation was given after the tour and all response were positive.
- **Public Land Day:**
On Saturday, Saturday 26th, there was a two-part event hosted at Silver Saddle Ranch. In the morning, the Kiwanis led their annual Carson River Clean-Up Event. More than 150 students from the Carson High School Navy Junior ROTC and about 50 residents joined in the efforts to clean up trash along the river and in the canyons and wrap cottonwood trees along the river. Volunteers returned to Silver Saddle Ranch for BBQ hamburgers and hot dogs served by the Kiwanis.





At 12:30, we began the celebration for the land conveyance from BLM. Emceed by Roger Moellendorf, speeches were given by Mayor Crowell, Ralph Thomas – BLM District Manager, Juan Guzman, and Nancy Santos – Friends of Silver Saddle Ranch. Two bands – Sierra Sweethearts and Hick'ry Switch – played bluegrass music until the early evening.





Sierra Sweethearts



Hick'ry Switch

- **Silver Saddle Ranch:**
In addition to the Public Lands Day discussed above, Silver Saddle Ranch has been used for two other group events – on Saturday, July 25th by the Nevada All State Trail Riders and on Wednesday October 7th by BLM for an employee BBQ. In preparation for 2016, three event organizers have already contacted Carson City about continuing their events under the new ownership.
- **Volunteers:**
 - Chris Berggren, Eagle Scout candidate: On Saturday, August 22, Mr. Berggren hosted a project on the west side of the Prison Hill Recreation Area, near Clearview Drive. His project consisted of trail rehabilitation (from erosion events) and the installation of new trail wayfinding markers.
 - Capital City C.I.R.C.L.E.S. Initiative Community Service Project: On a rainy Saturday October 17th and with assistance from Finest Fence, 10 volunteers including previous Supervisor Aldean, helped install an additional 250' of split-rail fence on the north end of the Prison Hill Recreation Area.



Projects:

- Eagle Valley Creek bridge and trail segment:
The construction contract was awarded to Justin Wilson Construction on September 28th, and the survey work began on October 26th. The construction should be completed by December 2015.
- FLAP – Federal Lands Access Program grant for Sierra Vista Lane:
On September 30th, representatives from Central Federal Lands (CFL) visited Carson City. With staff, a site visit was conducted and various project components were discussed. CFL is currently evaluating the project and it is anticipated they will be in contact with Carson City in December.
- “Management Plan for Carson City Open Space and Parks in the Carson River Area”:
The final document should be ready for the committee’s review and approval at the next meeting.
- Silver Saddle Ranch:
Staff has been working hard on the transition from BLM ownership to Carson City by assuming all maintenance for the Silver Saddle Ranch. One of the maintenance activities that has been completed is the tree pruning of all of the trees near the red and white house complexes. A Contractor was hired to trim dead and/or hazardous materials out of all of the trees and apply a systemic herbicide treatment for Elm beetles. City crews have spent significant time cleaning up debris and materials around the buildings and trimming brush along some of the trails. In September, a water leak was repaired near the Red House parking area. This will continue to be a problem as the pipes are all old, rusted and galvanized. Staff recommends installing new pipe instead of repairing an old system. Staff has been working with the Friends of Silver Saddle Ranch on developing a landscape plan for the yard around the Red House. Until this plan is approved and implemented, staff has been watering trees in an effort to keep them alive through the drought. In preparation of winter, the well at the white house has been drained and winterized, and the well at the red house will be heated in order to keep water running.

Grants:

- Carson River:
In August, staff submitted a grant request to the Carson Truckee Water Conservancy District to remove large woody debris or snags from the river channel. The grant request was for \$15,000 and we received \$10,000, which will pay for equipment and seasonal crew time. The State of Nevada Division of Water Resources has a mandated responsibility to keep the navigable waterways clean and free of debris. For the last three legislatures they have not renewed this funding and the Conservation Districts have assisted them with the work in the channel. This year, the funding of \$250,000 per year did not make it into the budget; however, the Division of Water Resources will be submitting a special request for these funds through the Internal Finance Committee.

In Carson City, the work began during the week of October 26th. The crew consists of seasonal employees from the Parks Division, who were to be laid-off beginning October 26th. To date, approximately eight large trees and four snags have been removed from the river channel. This work should be completed by the end of November.

- Golden Eagle Lane:
In July 2015, rain events caused significant erosion and damage in Golden Eagle Lane area. In September 2015, staff submitted a grant request in the amount of \$75,000 to the Nevada Division of Environmental Protection for financial assistance for channel and slope stabilization on the Prison Hill Recreation Area and road stabilization on Golden Eagle Lane. Unfortunately, the grant was not funded.
- Prison Hill Recreation Area, 5th Street Trailhead:
In anticipation of submitting a grant to the Recreational Trails Program in early 2016 for trailhead improvements, staff contacted a consultant regarding assistance in project design. So far, only site visits, discussions, and the initial quote have been completed.
- SNPLMA:
Staff is working to identify and develop project components, descriptions, maps, etc. The working group consisting of two members each from the Open Space Advisory Committee and the Parks and Recreation Commission are scheduled to meet on Tuesday, December 8th.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: This agenda item is for informational purposes only. No formal action can be taken at this time.

What you would like to learn from the Open Space Tour...

- Learn more about the city
- How to replicate Open Space in Lyon County to transfer
- To see protected and unprotected floodplains
- Overview of the Carson River
- Opportunities to earn grant money to develop access and use for Open Space areas
- To become more informed
- Final management plan and future plans
- Where Open Spaces are and how to utilize them
- Learn more about where the open space areas are located, how to access them, how to access open space trails, and open space history
- Outdoor recreation advocate
- How is future Open Space prioritized and targeted? How much is enough or is more better?
- Learn mistakes to avoid the possibility that Lyon County may accept 490 acres Walker Basin
- History of the open space areas
- Plans for the Carson River corridor
- Learn more about Open Spaces and how to access them