

OPEN SPACE ADVISORY COMMITTEE STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE: August 15, 2016

AGENDA ITEM NUMBER: 3D

STAFF: Ann Bollinger, Open Space Administrator

REQUEST: **For Possible Action:** Review of the 2016-2017 work plan; discussion regarding current staff, projects, and priorities; and discussion regarding the process for future recommendations and budgets.

GENERAL DISCUSSION:

In preparation for future work plans, priorities and budget, the purpose of this agenda item is to provide a review of the current operations of the Open Space Division. Additionally, the policies and procedures will be discussed and the opportunities for participation by the committee to provide recommendations and support to staff.

This discussion is about what the Open Space Program is doing under current staff and budget and how programs and priorities for the future should be recommended going forward. It is a first step for next year's work plan, staff, and budget recommendations.

Staff will highlight current priorities. The committee will be to think about their sense of priorities, those of the community, and those in relevant planning documents recognizing that everything that is needed or wanted cannot get completed expeditiously with the available staff and financial resources.

Attached to this staff report are various documents for review and discussion:

- Carson City Municipal Code, excerpts from Chapter 13.06
- Budget process and budget for fiscal year 2016-17
- Functional Organization Chart (source: "Management Plan for Open Space and Parks in the Carson River Area")
- Work Plan, Fiscal Year 2016-2017
- Park Ranger report

Not reflected in the attachments is the significant staff time for various other tasks such as:

- City-wide requests: Examples of recent requests include information regarding portable toilets enclosures and portable toilet rentals from Public Works and review of the asset list of open space properties and structures from Finance.
- Public requests: Respond to daily phone calls and emails from the public. Address items of concern (i.e. trail access, dog waste along trails and illegal dump sites).

- Meetings: Preparation time and drafting of staff reports for advisory committees/commissions and the Board of Supervisors.
- Seasonal crew and inmate supervision: The seasonal crew (1-2 paid staff) and inmates work with the Open Space Division two days per week and the Parks Division three days per week. Their primary supervisor is David Navarro, Parks Operation Manager. David works for the Parks Division; and therefore he is less familiar with Open Space properties. When the seasonal crew works for Open Space, Rich Wilkinson acts as their supervisor. Rich identifies the work site, tasks and occasionally, he remains on-site throughout the day. Unfortunately, there is a high turn-over rate among seasonal work staff. With each new seasonal worker, Rich conducts orientation, explains tasks and expectations, etc. Rich spends as much as 40% of his work week with the seasonal crew, which detracts from his other duties as the Senior Natural Resource Specialist. While Ranger Costello could serve as the supervisor, his summer work schedule with later work hours conflicts with the availability of other staff and inmates.
- Volunteer projects: Staff time is approximately 20 hours towards each project. Along with other scheduled events, the Open Space Administrator has limited weekend activities to once per month so staff may spend time with their families. Volunteer projects are spread throughout the department, but there are still more requests than can be accommodated.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: This item is for discussion. Action may be taken regarding the work plan, staff, and budget recommendations

Carson City Municipal Code

Chapter 13.06 of the Carson City Municipal Code provides information regarding the Open Space Program including the participation by the Open Space Advisory Committee.

13.06.010 - Purpose.

(Excerpt) The open space advisory committee shall provide the oversight over the administration and expenditure of funds from the open space division of the quality of life special revenue fund established by Carson City Municipal Code 21.07. The funding for open space including interest and other income, may be used for the acquisition, restoration of natural resources, development and construction which afford for public access, health and safety, equipping, improvement, maintenance, conservation planning and management of real property for open spaces acquired through the fund; and administrative costs approved by the committee.

13.06.060 - Powers and duties of open space advisory committee.

(Excerpt) The committee shall identify and prioritize for the city potential open space acquisitions and make appropriate recommendations. The committee shall obtain and consider public input before making recommendations to the board of supervisors on prospective open space acquisitions, disposal, and management. The committee shall review and provide input and comment to the city manager's proposed budget as it relates to open space matters.

Budget

Budget process:

- February: The Finance Department provides estimated revenues for the new fiscal year to each department. The Open Space Division budget is initially reviewed by the Department Business Manager, Open Space Administrator, and Department Director. Based on previous expenditures and previously identified projects, the Open Space Administrator provides a recommendation to the Department Director.
- March/April: The Open Space Administrator and Department Director present the proposed budget to the Open Space Advisory Committee. The committee takes action whether to accept the proposed budget or to make changes.
- May: The Finance Department presents the city-wide budget to the Carson City Board of Supervisors, who takes action whether to accept the proposed budget or to make changes.
- July: Start of the new fiscal year.
- November/December: The “carryover” monies, or remaining funds, from the previous fiscal year are provided to each department. These funds may be allocated to the same budget line item or to a different one. The Open Space Administrator provides a recommendation to the Department Director.
- December, if timing allows: The Open Space Administrator and Department Director present the amended budget to the Open Space Advisory Committee. The committee takes action whether to accept the proposed budget or to make changes.
- January/February: The Finance Department presents the amended budget to the Carson City Board of Supervisors, who takes action whether to accept the proposed budget or to make changes.

Current budget:

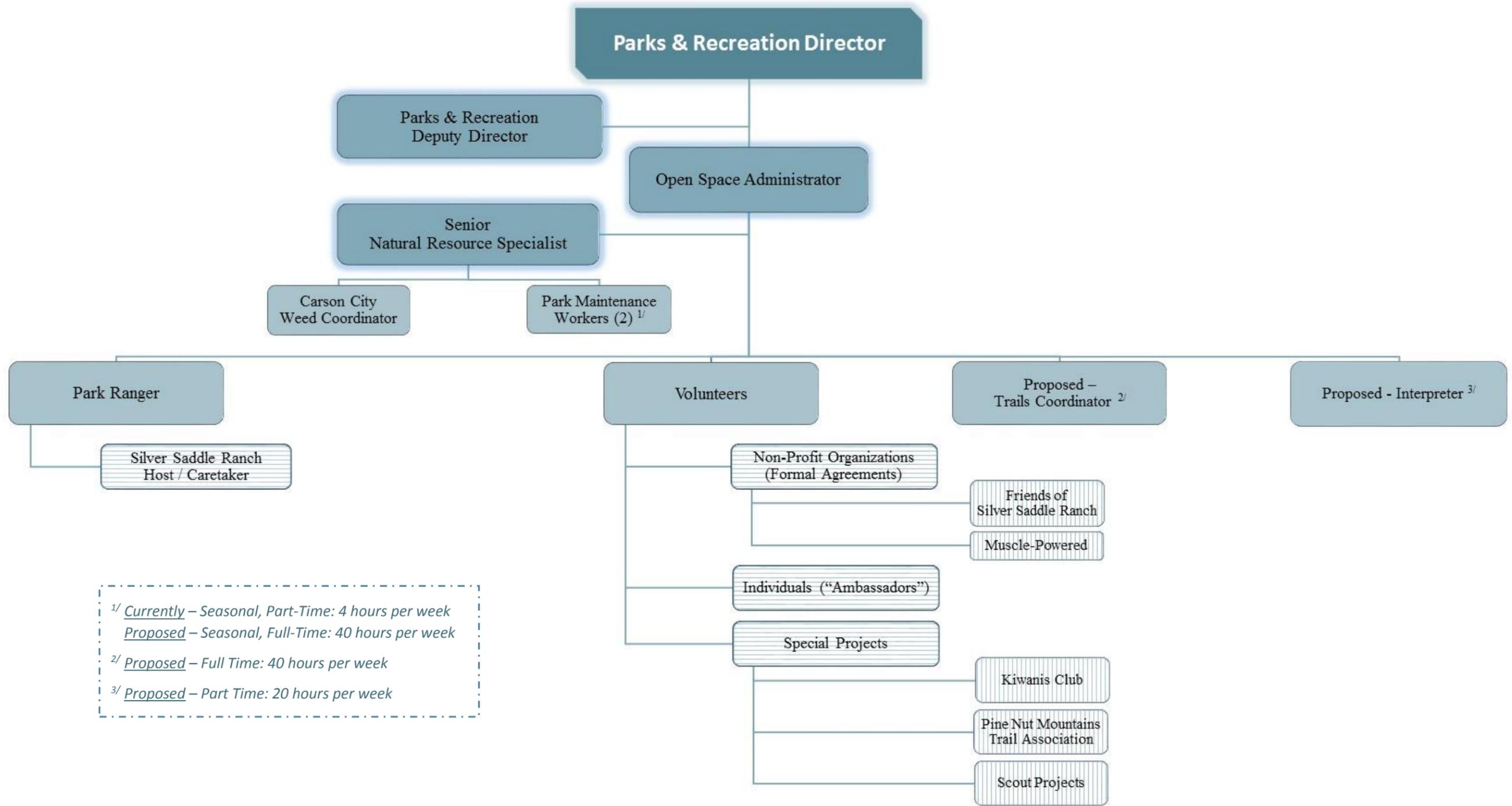
For Fiscal Year 2016-2017, the estimated revenue for the Quality of Life – Open Space budget was \$984,274. The table below includes the line items of most interest and/or discretion by the Committee. Some items cannot be changed, but they are listed below for your information.

ACCOUNT NUMBER	FY 15-16		FY 16-17
	BUDGET	BALANCE (As of 6/29/16)	BUDGET
SALARIES	\$206,316	\$9,518	\$226,774
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open Space Administrator – 100% • Senior Natural Resource Specialist – 100% • Park Ranger – 100% • Department Director – 15% • Department Business Manager – 10% • Front Desk Office Specialist – 15% • Park Maintenance Worker (year-round) – 20% 			
HOURLY/SEASONAL	\$50,000	\$17,734	\$59,104
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Park Maintenance Worker (seasonal) – 100% <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ \$14,000 • Weed Coordinator – 100% <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ \$15,000 (\$10,000 is reimbursed from the Carson Water Subconservancy District) • Silver Saddle Ranch Caretaker – 100% <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ \$5,500 • NEW Trails Coordinator – 100% <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ \$24,604 			
EMPLOYEE BENEFITS	\$99,122	\$18,036	\$93,056
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cannot be adjusted by the committee 			
PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	\$75,100	\$37,566	\$100,000
TRAINING	\$5,000	\$1,027	\$5,000
SILVER SADDLE RANCH PHONE	\$1,200	\$1,200	\$1,200
SILVER SADDLE RANCH POWER	\$5,000	\$3,657	\$3,000
SILVER SADDLE RANCH HEATING	\$2,000	-\$563	\$4,000
MAINTENANCE/MANAGEMENT	\$200,000	\$91,468	\$200,000
MACHINERY/EQUIPMENT	0	0	\$36,000
FIRE SUPPRESSION	\$37,500	0	\$37,500
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cannot be adjusted by the committee 			
HORSECREEK STEWARDSHIP/MAN.	\$47,375	\$47,375	\$47,375
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cannot be adjusted by the committee 			
INMATE PAYROLL	0	0	\$1,500
TRAVEL	\$8,000	\$4,190	\$8,000
VEHICLE FUEL	\$1,000	-\$894	\$2,000

ACCOUNT NUMBER	FY 15-16		FY 16-17
	BUDGET	BALANCE (As of 6/29/16)	BUDGET
ISC GENERAL FUND <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cannot be adjusted by the committee • This is the cost allocation plan prepared by Mahoney and Associates. It is based on actual expenses of the General Fund and calculated according to inflation. Each department pays their fair share of Treasurers, Assessors, Human Resources, Information Technology, Finance, District Attorney, City Manager, Elections, etc. All of the General Fund costs that are essential but don't earn revenue are allocated based on usage to the various City Funds. The Quality of Life pays just 2% of the total costs allocated city-wide. • Property Manager – \$8,000 	\$35,720	0	\$33,321
FLEET MANAGEMENT <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cannot be adjusted by the committee 	\$3,375	0	\$3,522
LAND ACQUISITION	\$537,942	\$537,942	\$104,225
UNDESIGNATED	0	0	\$17,062

Carson City Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Department – Open Space Division
FUNCTIONAL ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

Current and Proposed Staffing Levels
January 2016



*1/ Currently – Seasonal, Part-Time: 4 hours per week
Proposed – Seasonal, Full-Time: 40 hours per week*

2/ Proposed – Full Time: 40 hours per week

3/ Proposed – Part Time: 20 hours per week

Work Plan, Fiscal Year 2016-2017

Approved by the Open Space Advisory Committee on June 27, 2016

1. MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

		Ann	Rich	Park Ranger	Trails Coordinator
Staffing	Part-time trails coordinator position. A job description will need to be written, interviews conducted, and person hired and trained.	X			
Ash Canyon Road	Continue maintenance of the road from the water tanks to the west. NDEP Nonpoint Pollution grants will assist with funding.		X		
Education (Schools)	Continue partnerships and participation on environmental education activities with River Wranglers, Carson High School, and others.	X	X (primary contact)	X (future opportunity)	
Fuels Reduction Projects	Staff will continue collaboration with the Fire Department's efforts to manage fuels at the wildland-urban interface around town.		X		
Signage	Replace all BLM signs on the lands conveyed to Carson City.	X (limited progress)			
Trail Maintenance	Coordination with Muscle Powered on trail maintenance needs and opportunities.	X (current contact)			X (future contact)
	Actively plan and schedule work days for regular trail maintenance.				X (future project)

Volunteer Opportunities/ Activities	Individuals	X			
Volunteer Opportunities/ Activities	Organizations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Friends of Silver Saddle Ranch • Great Basin Institute • Muscle Powered 	X X (current contact) X (current contact)			X (future contact) X (future contact)
Volunteer Opportunities/ Activities	Community Groups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eagle Scouts • Kiwanis Clubs 	X (primary contact) X	X	X (future opportunity)	X (future opportunity)
Weed Control	Supervision of the Carson City Weed Coordinator, oversight of grant funds, and treatment of weeds across open space properties.		X		
Wildlife Surveys	Related to the Southern Nevada Public Lands Management Act grant application and questions/concerns on the old Buzzy's Ranch property, staff will develop a plan to conduct wildlife surveys along several stretches of the Carson River.		X (not yet started)		

2. CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

		Ann	Rich	Park Ranger	Trails Coordinator
Ash to Kings Trail	Complete the trail map for the kiosk(s) and wayfinding signage.	X			
Disc Golf Course	Provide natural resource expertise and guidance towards minimizing impacts in the planning and design of the project.		X		
Eagle Valley Creek Crossing and Trail Extension	The final project component is the installation of trail signs, to be completed in 2016.	X			
Golden Eagle Lane erosion and stabilization project	Staff has been working to acquire funding to install improvements in the area.		X		
Old Buzzy's Ranch Property	1) Ducks Unlimited project for wetlands enhancement 2) Roof repair and rehabilitation of the old stone shed	X (limited progress)	X		
Prison Hill Recreation Area, 5 th Street Trailhead	Trail and trailhead improvements on the north end of Prison Hill.		X		
Sierra Vista Lane	Public Works has received a grant from the Federal Lands Access Program for improvement to Sierra Vista Lane and adjacent trailheads. Because the trailheads are located on Open Space property (East Silver Saddle Ranch), staff and the Committee should be involved in the design.	X (project has not been very active)	X (project has not been very active)		

Silver Saddle Ranch	1) The roofs on several structures need to be repaired / replaced. 2) Re-install lawn and landscaping around the red house. Water pressure and other related components also need to be addressed.		X		
			X (limited progress)		
V&T Trail, North of Combs Canyon Road	Acquire trail easements along the V&T Trail. Trail construction on the new easement from the Eagle Valley Children's Home.	X (limited progress)			X (future project)
		X (limited progress)			X (future project)

3. PLANNING ACTIVITIES / REPORTS

		Ann	Rich	Park Ranger	Trails Coordinator
Annual Reports to the Board of Supervisors	To be completed upon OSAC review and approval.	X	X		
Charges and Fees	Adopt a fee schedule for activities and events, particularly for Silver Saddle Ranch.	X (no progress)			
Conservation Easement Monitoring	1) Conduct annual monitoring and reporting for Horsecreek Ranch. 2) Conduct self-monitoring on the open space lands conveyed to Carson City for assurance and compliance with the BLM Conservation Easement.	X	X		

Development Plans	Continue to attend Major Project Reviews and review development plans regarding open space and trail recommendations.	X			
Education and Information	<p>1) Work with the Assessor's Office to update/correct the database and identify Open Space properties.</p> <p>2) Work with GIS to update/correct the map identifying the shooting restrictions throughout Carson City.</p> <p>3) Continue the official naming of open space properties.</p> <p>4) Develop maps and information which would be useful for staff and the public. Update the website.</p> <p>5) Continue to partner with the Carson Water Subconservancy District, the Chamber of Commerce, and others to conduct informational presentations.</p> <p>6) Partner with the University of Nevada Cooperative Extension on a 4-H Youth Day Camp.</p>	<p>X (no progress)</p> <p>X (no progress)</p> <p>X (no progress)</p> <p>X (no progress)</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p>	X	X (future opportunity)	
Federal Agency Plans and Project Reviews	Carson City BLM Resource Management Plan (RMP) / Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)	X			
Kings Canyon/ Waterfall Trailhead	Research the potential developments or improvements of the Kings Canyon/Waterfall Trailhead with the U.S. Forest Service.				X (not yet started)

Nevada Stateline-to-Stateline Bikeway Project	Multi-agency project to construct 30+ miles of pathway from the north shore to the south shore.	X (current contact)			X (future contact)
Old Buzzy's Ranch Property – Conservation Plan	Work with the Natural Resources Conservation Service to develop a conservation plan for the ranch.		X (limited progress)		
Ordinances	Identify rules and regulations appropriate on open space properties, and develop ordinances for awareness and enforcement.	X (limited progress)			
Programmatic Agreement (PA) for Cultural Resources on all BLM conveyed to Carson City per the Omnibus Public Lands Management Act and the Bently acquisition.	<p>1) The PA requires one point-of-contact for all projects occurring on the conveyed lands.</p> <p>2) The PA requires annual monitoring by an appropriate professional or a certified Nevada Archaeological Site Steward. A training program needs to be developed to train volunteers for the stewardship of cultural resources.</p>	X			
Signage	Develop standards for kiosks, trail wayfinding signs, interpretive signs, etc.	X (no progress)			X (future project)
Silver Saddle Ranch	<p>1) Assess and evaluate the structures, including the water and electric system, for compliance with Carson City codes and State regulations.</p> <p>2) Site Development Plan</p>	X (not yet started)			
		X (not yet started)	X (not yet started)		

Trails	1) Work with various trails organizations on local and regional projects including the planning, construction and maintenance of all trails throughout Carson City.	X (current contact)			X (future contact)
	2) Submit an application to the Nevada of State Lands for the use and management of trails on their lands.	X (limited progress)			X (future contact)
Vehicle Access and/or Recreation	1) Develop an OHV map for Carson City.				X (not yet started)
	2) Improve signage and fencing in the Prison Hill Recreation Area, East Silver Saddle Ranch, and other locations.			X (limited progress)	
	3) Work with the federal agencies towards improved signage and information for the public.				X (not yet started)

4. LAND TRANSACTIONS

		Ann	Rich	Park Ranger	Trails Coordinator
Clear Creek / Nevada State Lands	The Clear Creek Trail has been an ongoing collaborative trail project with many different public, private, corporate and non-profit partners since 2008. Staff will coordinate with partners to acquire an easement or land for the trail and trailhead.	X			

Freeway Multi-Use Path	The Parks Division may request assistance with the acquisition of small, select areas of land for the south extension of the Freeway Multi-Use Path.	X (no current needs)			
Lompa Lane/ Steinheimer Wetlands	Staff will inquire whether the new property manager can develop agreements to facilitate the donation.	X (no progress)			
Old Woods Ranch LLC	Staff is actively working with the family towards a conservation easement including an application for grant funding from the Forest Legacy Program.	X			
Schulz Investments	Staff is actively working with the family on a conservation easement on 135 acres, possibly to be combined in a project with the Old Woods Ranch conservation easement.	X			
W. Michael Fagen	Staff has actively been working towards a fee title acquisition with Mr. Fagen. Staff will prepare a grant application to the Land and Water Conservation Fund in late summer 2016.	X			
Water Rights	When agricultural lands were purchased, particularly the old Buzzy's Ranch property, the Committee and the Board of Supervisors emphasized the need to keep the pastures green. Currently, there is not a proposal. Staff has begun working towards a solution.	X			



Memo

To: Open Space Advisory Committee
From: John Costello
cc:
Date: August 15, 2016
Re: Park Ranger Report

I, John Costello, have been with the Carson City Parks, Recreation and Open Space Department for a little over eight months now. It has been an amazing journey for me so far, starting off as a seasonal Park Ranger two years ago in Colorado Springs, Colorado to now a full-time Park Ranger in Carson City, Nevada. I know that I have grown as a Park Ranger, as well as a person in the last eight months. I can accredit that to the amazing people that I get to work with every day.

As far as my daily routine goes, there isn't a daily routine. Every day is different in the life of a Park Ranger. One day I could be rounding up cattle from off of Carson River Road, the next day I could be assisting with a Jeep that has gotten stuck on the side of a hill inside Carson River Canyon. That's what I love most about my job, it's always the unexpected. Some of my daily duties include providing information and assistance to open space users, whether it be providing them with historical information about the V & T inside Carson River Canyon, or where the best spots to ride ATV's, dirt bikes, and OHV's on Prison Hill are. A lot of what I do on a daily basis includes explaining and interpreting park and open space ordinances, rules and regulations. A lot of our open space, as you all well know, has been acquired from BLM over the recent years. BLM has very different rules and regulations than Carson City. For me, it has been a constant education process with the public throughout my time as the Open Space Park Ranger.

There have been many violations that have occurred in our open space since I have been on-duty. That is only because people have known most of this land as BLM for many, many years. Most of the violations that occur in Carson City open space occur inside Carson River Canyon. I have dealt with shooting, camping, campfires, graffiti, abandoned vehicles and dumping. On July 4th weekend, just inside Carson River Canyon, I had three illegal campfires, four illegal campsites, two illegal shooting, five contacts after sunset, four fishing contacts, and just on Sunday, approximately 28 vehicles inside the canyon. Most notably, one of the major issues that I observed my first four or five months with Carson City is that illegal dumping is a very big problem in Carson River Canyon, as well as other open space and BLM properties. We have been extremely proactive with putting up the necessary signage, as well as personally educating the public on what is allowed and what is prohibited on Carson City open space property. What should be extremely encouraging to all of you is that I have seen a drastic change inside Carson River Canyon from when I first started this job, to now. There have been many people that have stopped me while on patrol inside the canyon and told me

that they have never seen the canyon so nice and clean. The public seems to be taking notice of our signs and hard work inside the canyon, and want to do their part to keep it clean. There have been multiple instances where an individual recreating inside the canyon has called in a violation to dispatch, in which case a deputy and/or I will get dispatched to the location. This has been instrumental in catching many of these violators.

There have been many other violations and situations that I have been a part of as a Park Ranger for Carson City in Carson River Canyon, as well as our other open space properties, such as E. SSR, King's Canyon, Ambrose Natural Area, Prison Hill, etc. As I said before, being a generalist Park Ranger, you never know what each day has in store for you. I have been first responder to two D.U.I. accidents, one of which occurred at Ambrose Natural Area and one that occurred just off of Koontz and Edmonds. I have spent a half day inside Carson River Canyon with two motor unit deputies removing campers who had been there since before I started the position. I have helped an older gentleman change a tire and rescue a small dog on the same night, about three miles back into Carson River Canyon. I have assisted in the removal and installation of about 15 signs, as well as the replacement of about five signs. Ironically enough, people like to shoot our "No Shooting" signs, completely pull out of the ground our "Day Use" no camping and no campfire signs, and run over our "Rule and Regulation" signs. However, we are continuing to stay proactive, and I know for a fact that everything the open space program is doing is making a visible difference.

The open space program is not only dedicated to keeping Carson City open space clean, but we are also concerned about the surrounding areas that ultimately lead into Carson City open space. I made a few contacts while out on patrol at Prison Hill Recreation Area one weekend. The contacts that I made at Prison Hill were part of a non-profit organization called the White Trash Brigade. As I came to find out, their organization is dedicated to keeping public lands open by keeping them clean. The more I talked with them, the more I explained to them at how big of an issue illegal dumping was around Carson City. I ultimately ended up getting the contact information for the Founder of the organization so that we could try and set something up in Carson City. Over the next coming months, I was in constant contact with the Founder and many members of the White Trash Brigade, as well as the BLM. I wanted to partner with BLM on this project because it was BLM land, but the dump site debris was eventually making its way to Carson City open space. After I was able to coordinate a few meetings with the White Trash Brigade and BLM to get all of the details figured out for the project, we were able to set a date and get all of the necessary items needed to run a successful clean-up. The clean-up took place off of Sedge Rd. in Brunswick Canyon on Sunday, June 5th. Between myself, a couple BLM employees, and 25 dedicated White Trash Brigade volunteers, we were able to completely fill a 30 yard dumpster. I was proud that I was able to coordinate this successful clean-up. It wouldn't have been possible without the White Trash Brigade and the support of the BLM.

Being a part of the Carson City Parks, Recreation and Open Space Department over the last eight months has been a great experience. I have had the opportunity to refine and develop many skills that it takes to be a great Park Ranger and leader in the community. I have been through a State Park training course that went over defense tactics, making contacts in the field, and what it means to be a professional Park Ranger. I am a member of the Park Rangers Association of California and had the amazing opportunity of attending their conference in Santa Rosa, CA. There were discussions at the conference on the future of parks, as well as connecting the tech sectors and parks. There were trainings on Leave No Trace, and how to educate your park users about the importance of "pack it in, pack it out". As far as medical training, I have been certified in Wilderness First Aid, CPR, and Law Enforcement Casualty Care. I have been a part of Trail Crew Leader training, ATV training, Weed Warriors training, and my personal favorite (sarcasm), Taser certification and training. I

am extremely proud to represent Carson City as their Open Space Park Ranger. I'm excited for the future of the program because I can see first-hand the direction in which it is headed. I'm grateful for the opportunity that I have been given and I'm looking forward to my future with Carson City.