

## **OPEN SPACE ADVISORY COMMITTEE STAFF REPORT**

**MEETING DATE:** December 19, 2016

**AGENDA ITEM NUMBER:** 4C

**STAFF:** Ann Bollinger, Open Space Administrator

**REQUEST:** Staff update on activities, projects and grants located on Open Space properties within the Carson River area.

### **GENERAL DISCUSSION:**

The following provides a summary of activities throughout the Carson River area.

#### **Carson River Mercury Superfund Site**

The November 1<sup>st</sup> “Get on the Van Man” tour of the Carson River Mercury Superfund Site by the Carson Water Subconservancy District (CWSD) has been rescheduled to February 21-23. The Carson River Mercury Superfund Site is quite extensive. In Carson City, the site begins at the Empire Ranch Golf Course and continues down the river corridor including Morgan Mill Preserve Open Space and Carson River Canyon Open Space. The tour is open to the public but seats are limited. If anyone is interested, please contact Brenda Hunt at the CWSD at 887-9005.

#### **Carson River Snapshot Day**

On Friday, November 4<sup>th</sup>, staff participated in the 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Carson River Snapshot Day at Carson River Park. The Nevada Division of Environmental Protection and the Carson River Coalition Education Working Group co-sponsored this event. Snapshot Day offers students, parents, and educators the chance to experience the river first-hand and interact with resource experts who care for this lifeline that connects our communities. Snapshot Day data is collected from multiple sites at the same time on the same day, documenting an annual “snap shot” of the river. The primary purposes of this event are to document and study riparian habitat, measure water quality, and increase the public’s awareness of our precious watershed. Under the guidance of resource experts, student monitoring teams conduct field tests for dissolved oxygen, conductivity, pH and temperature. Additional water samples were collected for laboratory analysis of nutrients, turbidity and bacteria. Monitoring teams also complete a habitat assessment of their site, which includes visual observations and photo documentation of vegetation and stream conditions. The event had 55 4<sup>th</sup> grade students from Carson Montessori School along with their parents and teachers. There were five educational stations which included water quality, habitat, invasive weeds, floodplain /watershed and flood modelling. Staff explained the benefits of treating invasive weeds and how the weeds negatively affect water quality, native plant communities, and wildlife habitat.

### **Golden Eagle Lane Erosion Control project**

The Golden Eagle Lane project is located at the south end of the Prison Hill Recreation Area. The project goal is to reduce erosion and improve the watershed directly above the Carson River. Carson City was awarded \$75,000 from the Carson Water Subconservancy District and recently received \$40,636 from the State of Nevada Conservation and Resource Protection Program (Question 1) towards the completion of this project. Carson City Public Works is assisting with design/engineering contractor and will assist with the construction contract. Open Space staff will continue to be involved in the project design and grant administration. The construction is anticipated to begin in the spring of 2017.

### **Prison Hill Recreation Area, 5th Street Trailhead**

The Nevada Division of State Parks Recreational Trails Program (RTP) has awarded \$200,000 to Carson City for trailhead improvements at the corner of 5<sup>th</sup> Street and Carson River Road. The cultural resources review is currently being conducted by the Nevada Department of Transportation. After the clearance has been received, staff will begin working with Public Works on the design and layout of the new trailhead along with the realignment of the trails. The construction is anticipated to begin 2017.

### **Silver Saddle Ranch**

Activities and events at the ranch are slowing down for the season.

Recent and upcoming events:

- November 14 – Friends of Silver Saddle Ranch monthly board meeting
- December 3 - Friends of Silver Saddle Ranch – Christmas Open House
- January 9 – Friends of Silver Saddle Ranch monthly board meeting
- February 13 – Friends of Silver Saddle Ranch monthly board meeting

### **Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act (SNPLMA) grant application**

A grant award for \$1.8 million dollars towards several trail improvements on the Prison Hill Recreation Area, Mexican Ditch Trail, Silver Saddle Ranch, and the old Buzzy's Ranch was officially announced on December 7<sup>th</sup>. Neil Kornze, Director of the Bureau of Land Management, announced the grant award at a press conference in Las Vegas at the Red Rocks National Conservation Area.

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



**News Release**

BLM State Office, Reno, NV  
For Immediate Release

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**Date:** December 7, 2016

**BLM Director Kornze Announces \$79 Million for Conservation and Recreation Projects in Nevada**

*Funding supports 30 local projects that benefit Nevada communities*

LAS VEGAS, NV – Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Director Neil Kornze today announced a package of 30 conservation and recreation projects totaling nearly \$80 million in a ceremony at Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area. Joining the BLM Director to celebrate today’s announcement were Andy Hafen, the Mayor of Henderson, NV, and Mauricia Baca, the Executive Director of Outside Las Vegas.

Funding for the projects was generated through the sale of public lands under the Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act (SNPLMA). Today’s announcement of \$79 million in funding, in conjunction with \$30 million previously announced, brings the total SNPLMA funding this year to nearly \$109 million.

“These projects are a benefit to both the environment and the economy,” said Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals Management Janice Schneider, who approved the grants. “This program supports an incredible legacy of improved quality of life for all Nevadans.”

Through SNPLMA the BLM, in collaboration with its partners, funds projects that benefit local communities and improve the overall quality of life by restoring landscapes, protecting environmentally-sensitive areas, supporting recreation opportunities, and protecting rural communities from wildfire. A significant portion of the funds are shared with local governments and the State of Nevada.

“I am excited to be back in my home state to announce these important community projects,” said BLM Director Neil Kornze. “These investments will strengthen outdoor opportunities in the Las Vegas Valley and in many of Nevada’s small towns.”

The 30 projects announced today include \$1.5 million for the acquisition of land adjoining the Kiel Ranch Historic Park, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is one of the first settlement sites in the Las Vegas Valley. Funding will allow the City of North Las Vegas to more than double the existing park.

The funding will also allow the restoration of Wheeler Peak Campground in Great Basin National Park. The 37-unit campground is one of the highest elevation developed campgrounds in the United States and was a point of national pride when it was originally constructed in the 1950s. The campsites will be fully restored, strengthening recreation opportunities in White Pine County.

The funding also includes \$1.1 million for the continued development of the Caliente Mountain Bike System in Lincoln County. This project is a partnership between the BLM, the Lincoln County Board of Commissioners, the City of Caliente, Nevada Division of State Parks, the International Mountain Bicycling Association, and local partners. Funding will provide for the design and construction of 24 to 37 miles of new bike trails, a trailhead, and parking facilities.

Earlier this year at the 20th Annual Lake Tahoe Summit, Department of the Interior Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals Management Janice Schneider announced nearly \$30 million in SNPLMA project funding. Those funds will be used for hazardous fuels and wildfire prevention projects for the Lake Tahoe region, to include the Carson Valley, to make Nevada’s landscapes more resilient in the face of longer wildfire seasons and restore and enhance unique ecosystems across the state.

The following is a complete list of projects funded by today’s announcement:

### **Parks, Trails, and Natural Areas**

- Las Vegas Wash Enhancement and Stabilization (Southern Nevada Water Authority), \$4,000,000
- McGill Ball Park Upgrade Phase II (White Pine County), \$996,199
- Northern Nevada Historic Railroad Museum Interpretive Trail Phase II (White Pine County) \$1,287,999
- Carson River Trail System Phase II - Ranch Connection (Carson City), \$1,843,685
- Kiel Ranch Historic Park 6.81 Acre Acquisition (City of North Las Vegas), \$1,520,700
- Robert E. "Bob" Price Park Improvements (Clark County), \$2,348,173
- Southwest Ridge Park/Trailhead Phase I (Clark County), \$4,876,966

- Craig Ranch Regional Park 5.34 Acre Acquisition (City of North Las Vegas), \$3,824,600
- Craig Ranch Regional Park 20.57 Acre Acquisition (City of North Las Vegas), \$4,025,000

### **Capital Improvements**

- Colorado River Heritage Trail – Arizona (Bureau of Reclamation), \$5,999,773
- Water in the Desert: Water Conservation Delivery System (Fish and Wildlife Service), \$1,308,514
- Lincoln County Partners Non-Motorized Multipurpose Trail System, Phase II (BLM), \$1,119,683
- Reconstruct and Restore the Historic Wheeler Peak Campground (National Park Service), \$4,438,406
- Hoover Dam Visitor Center, Theater Level Refurbishment (Bureau of Reclamation) \$2,702,471
- Rehabilitate Boulder Beach Campground North Loop (National Park Service) \$1,451,701
- Hilltop Campground Reconstruction Project (Forest Service), \$5,286,300

### **Conservation Initiatives**

- Preservation of bats in the western US (National Park Service), \$1,193,632
- Building Stewardship of Public Lands with Displaced User Groups (National Park Service), \$2,978,100
- Protecting Gold Butte’s Cultural Heritage (Bureau of Land Management), \$1,749,218
- Butterfly Autecology Phase IV (Forest Service), \$1,608,015
- Protection, Stabilization, Restoration of Lehman Caves Historic Area (National Park Service), \$926,597
- Endemic and Sensitive Species Biological Mitigations for Spring Mountains National Recreation Area Capital Improvement Projects (Forest Service), \$734,200

### **Environmentally Sensitive Land Acquisitions**

- Jack’s Valley Ranch Conservation Easement (Forest Service), \$12,419,000

### **Eastern Nevada Landscape Restoration Project**

- Atlanta Road Sage-Grouse Habitat Improvement Continuation (Bureau of Land Management), \$566,000
- Sagebrush Habitat Restoration (Forest Service), \$1,185,520
- Ely District Noxious and Invasive Weeds: Inventory, Treatment, Restoration, and Education (Forest Service), \$920,560

- South Spring and Hamblin Valley Watershed Restoration Plan (Bureau of Land Management), \$350,000
- Forgotten Grasslands: Restoration of Basin Wildrye Ecosystems on Great Basin National Park (National Park Service) \$320,950

### **Multi-species Habitat Conservation Plan**

- Desert Tortoise Connectivity (Clark County), \$2,448,000
- Riparian Restoration - Muddy River Riparian Reserve Unit (Clark County), \$2,770,000

### **Reserve Funds**

- Funding announced today includes \$2 million that can be used to fund unexpected shortfalls.

For more information about SNPLMA and project funding please visit <https://www.blm.gov/site-page/programs-lands-and-realty-regional-information-nevada-snplma>

The BLM manages more than 245 million acres of public land, the most of any Federal agency. This land, known as the National System of Public Lands, is primarily located in 12 Western states, including Alaska. The BLM also administers 700 million acres of sub-surface mineral estate throughout the nation. The BLM's mission is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of America's public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations. In Fiscal Year 2015, the BLM generated \$4.1 billion in receipts from activities occurring on public lands.

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