

FOBOS

Annual Meeting/ Picnic

Sunday, June 28th.
3-5 p.m.

2160 Linden Ave

[between 19th and
26th streets in north
Boulder]

**Come join us for
food, drinks, and
conversation!**

Mike Patton, OSMP
director, will be there

Questions?: call 303-
440-0180

West TSA process to include collaborative group

The planning process for the West Trail Study Area will include a "community collaborative group" (CCG). TSAs emerged from the Visitor Master Plan. They are intended to serve as management units for the four regions into which city open space has been divided.

There was widespread agreement following the process for Doudy Draw/Eldorado Mountain that a different approach was needed.

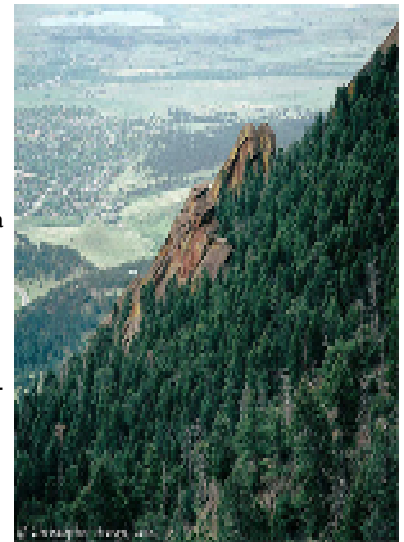
OSMP has hired Todd Bryan, a Boulder resident who works for the Keystone Center, to design and facilitate this process.

While the details are still under development, the general approach involves use of the CCG

to develop the plan. Included in the CCG are to be about 18 people who will represent conservation, recreation, and cultural interests as well as neighborhoods. Two OSMP staff members also will be part of the group.

FOBOS continues to emphasize the importance of using a conservation-first approach. OSMP is developing a natural resources inventory and analysis for the West TSA that should help inform the CCG about places with sensitive ecosystems that require special management.

The West TSA includes Mountain Parks, Shanahan Ridge, the Mesa Trail, and Mount Sanitas. It is by far the most visited part of the city's open space system.



**Flatirons from above.
-Chris Brown**

Budget impacts on Open Space and Mountain Parks

With the economy in trouble, OSMP has been forced to reduce some important services and not hire seasonal staff.

Some places you might notice the budget cuts are at the Chautauqua Ranger Cottage, now staffed only on weekends, in the reduced number of guided walks

and other educational programs, and in the reduced maintenance of trails. The junior ranger program, which provides summer jobs for teens, has been cut.

Less obvious to the public but critical to the open space mission, funding cuts prevent hiring

of key replacement staff. They mean reduction in monitoring wildlife, in managing noxious weeds, in treating forests to reduce fuel loads, and in mapping rare plants.

The good news is the department will not have to eliminate any existing full-time employees.

Should There Be Mountain Biking in the West TSA?

Larry MacDonnell



Mountain biking in Doudy Draw
-Rich Marchbanks

What do you think about allowing mountain biking in this area? Let us know so we can represent your views in the CCG process.

Call 303-440-0180 or email to inquiry@friendsofboulderopenspace.org.

Back in 1983, mountain biking was authorized in specific portions of both Open Space and Mountain Parks. Under the Open Space charter, biking on open space is allowed only with special approval.

As this relatively new form of recreation increased in popularity, conflicts emerged on Mountain Parks lands. As explained in the 1999 Mountain Parks plan:

On February 23, 1987, after reviewing public comment and recommendations from both Boards and the Trails Committee, City Council voted to approve regulatory changes banning mountain bikes in the geographic area west of Broadway, north of Eldorado Canyon, and south of Lee Hill Drive. Several members of the mountain biking community spoke to City Council in support of this closure, citing intense hiking use which already occurred in these areas and concerns with impacts and conflicts.

Mountain Parks is now merged with Open Space. Its lands are

included within the West Trail Study Area and are part of the planning process underway for this area.

The mountain biking community has asked that the existing ban be reconsidered as a part of the West TSA process. The "community collaborative group" will be asked to decide if there should be mountain biking in this area.

FOBOS expects to participate in this CCG process. We recognize the considerable interest in the community in opening up this area to mountain biking. These lands are immediately adjacent to town, and mountain bikers would like to be able to quickly access open space lands for their rides. The terrain provides potentially challenging rides in a beautiful setting. Many bikers would like to be able to ride through this area to reach trails located west of the Flatirons such as those at Walker Ranch.

We have expressed our concern with opening this area to

mountain biking. It is by far the most heavily used part of the city open space system. In addition to the many serious hikers and climbers using this area, there are a large number of people who simply enjoy a casual stroll, sometimes accompanied by their young children. There are probably an equal number of people who walk their dogs on trails in this area. We are concerned that mountain biking is simply not compatible with these kinds of uses.

Previous TSAs opened up existing trails in the Marshall Mesa and Doudy Draw areas to mountain biking. New trails constructed in the Doudy Draw area also are open to mountain biking. County open space offers many additional miles of trails for mountain biking.

We would like to hear from our members and others in the community about your views. What do you think about allowing mountain biking in this area? Let us know so we can represent your views in the CCG process.

The Community Collaborative Group

The Community Collaborative Group will:

- Develop a shared understanding of the current resource conditions.
- Identify the most important problems and opportunities that need to be addressed in the plan.
- Envision the long-term future of the West TSA and define desired future conditions.
- Develop feasible scenarios of actions and policies to maintain or achieve desired natural, cultural, and recreational resource conditions.
- Come to consensus on a set of plan recommendations that will form the basis for the West TSA Plan presented to the Open Space Board of Trustees.

From the OSMP web site, West TSA.



Mountain biking in Marshall Mesa

City Considering Reductions in Support for Mountain Parks

The current budget crunch is forcing the City of Boulder to make some difficult decisions to reduce its budget commitments. Under active consideration is a proposed reduction in the transfer of funds from the general fund to the Open Space and Mountain Parks Department to offset the costs associated with its management of Mountain Parks.

In 2000, the City decided to take management of Mountain Parks out of the Parks Department and place it with Open Space. Among many difficult questions was how to pay for the costs of managing this historic system with its many active uses.

Estimates of the direct costs for its management at that time were around \$2 million/year. It was hoped that there would be cost savings gained through the merger of about \$300,000.

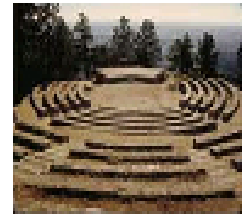
Despite agreement that the merger should not impose added costs to the open space budget, city council only authorized transfer of \$1.2 million from the general fund to offset costs. No funds were made available to address the identified "deferred" maintenance backlog estimated to be several million dollars more.

Since then, council has further reduced the transfer despite the increasing costs of managing this area. The result is the open space fund now pays most of the costs of managing the former Mountain Parks lands.

In the current budget discussions, the general fund transfer to OSMP to offset the costs of managing the Mountain Parks area is characterized as a "subsidy" to Open Space. While no final decisions have

been made, the proposals range from an additional 10% reduction to total elimination of the transfer.

We need to reduce our budget expenditures to address the decline in sales tax revenues. This decline has been in the range of 3 to 4 % and may reach as high as 6 % this year. Certainly it makes sense to reduce the transfer to reflect this decline in revenues. It does not make sense to disproportionately reduce this particular transfer, as is being proposed. It certainly does not make sense to eliminate this support. In fact, this commitment needs to be renewed and maintained so that the promises made to the public at the time of the merger are honored.



Sunrise Amphitheater

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Lyons-to-Boulder Trail Process

Boulder County Parks and Open Space and Transportation are continuing the public process for determining an alignment for the Lyons to Boulder trail.

A public open house is scheduled for Tuesday, June 23, 2009. It will be held from 4:00 p.m to 8:00 p.m at Barn A at the Boulder County Fairgrounds. The address is 9595 Nelson Road in Longmont.

At its first open house in January the county obtained recommendations from the public about possible alignments. Now staff have gone through a more detailed planning process that is expected to result in proposals for 2 or 3 possible alignments.

This 13 mile trail has been under consideration for some time. It would allow trail users to move between Lyons and Boulder without having to be on-road.

The primary concerns are the potential effects on property owners adjacent to the proposed alignments.

For more information see <http://www.bouldercounty.org/transportation/trails/LyonsToBoulderTrail.htm>



Boulder Valley Ranch
-Dan Fogelberg

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Dates of interest for the West TSA Process

June 18—West TSA Draft Inventory Reports Available on OSMP web site; comments due by July 10th

June 24—Open Space Board of Trustees Study Session on West TSA Inventory Report and Requirements for the Planning Process

July 1—Situation Assessment Report/Process Design Recommendations available on OSMP web site; comments due July 20, 2009

July 14—Public Open House

Go to the OSMP web site, West TSA, for updates.

County Parks and Open Space Betasso-Benjamin Management Plan Approved

On June 2, the Board of County Commissioners approved the staff recommendations for managing the Betasso Preserve, including the Benjamin property, with one minor revision. Commissioners Pearlman and Domenico voted in favor, while Commissioner Toor advocated further modifications to the staff plan. (FOBOS supported the staff plan.)

The staff recommendations included the creation of a 202-acre Arkansas Mountain Habitat Conservation Area in the northwestern portion of the property. The HCA would be closed to visitors. The staff plan would add a multiuse loop trail to the north edge of the property, providing a potential connection to Fourmile Canyon, adding 4.6 miles of trails, and roughly doubling the total trail mileage in the Preserve. Existing social trails would be closed

and reclaimed.

The current rules for cyclists on the existing Canyon Loop Trail will remain in force, requiring cyclists to travel in one direction only, and prohibiting mountain bikes on Wednesdays and Saturdays. The same day restrictions would apply to the new loop trail, but there will not be any directional requirement on the new trail, at least initially. The revision adopted by the Board instructs the staff to evaluate the day cycling restrictions on the new loop trail after one year to see whether they are necessary. (Staff had planned the evaluation after two years.)

Various other improvements are planned, including improved horse trailer parking, trail improvements, and an interpretive trail to the Betasso homestead. A trail connection to Fourmile Canyon will be made

if it is feasible, and an improved trail connection to Boulder Canyon will be investigated. Perhaps most important, BCPOS plans to have a resident caretaker on the property to improve management, to raise the level of visitor compliance, and to reduce conflicts between users and with neighboring property owners, who have been subjected to numerous trespassing violations and destruction of gates and fences.

The Betasso Preserve includes significant wildlife and ecosystem resources, and FOBOS applauds BCPOS for its emphasis on suitable management to preserve those resources as a major consideration in managing the property.