

Date: 3/7/2016
Conservation Lands Advisory Committee Meeting
Headwaters Meeting Room
4:00 to 6:00pm

Attended by: Aaron Olsen, Bert Lindler, Kevin Verlanic, Terry Carlson, Beverly Dupree, Carol Fischer, Kathleen Kennedy, Liz Bradley

Absent: Jennifer Hensiek, John Pierce, Chris Ryan, Giles Thelen

Staff: Morgan Valliant, Meranda Sikes

Public: Kurt Krueger, Garrick Swanson

Public Comments:

- None

Action Items:

Minutes – Kevin Verlanic moved to approve the January minutes, Terry Carlson seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Reviewed and made recommendations for the Park Board to adopt the *2015 Inventory and Conditions Assessment of Trail Systems on Missoula Conservation Lands*.

- Morgan Valliant – The *2015 Inventory and Conditions Assessment of Trail Systems* summarizes what we found when conducting our trail inventory. There has been an 18% growth in trail system, and over 100% growth in user made trails. This is the most complete inventory that has ever been made, and with that comes some management recommendations. We have 1.66 miles of user made trails that will fit well within the managed trail system.
 - Sunlight property footpath: Morgan Valliant – Currently, there is a loop trail in place with a connection to Blackfox drive. A user made trail runs right through the property and has regular use. Adding this trail will not have any major effects on wildlife, and trying to keep people off would be nearly impossible.
 - Motion: Carol Fisher moves to accept this trail addition as pedestrian use only, Kathleen Kennedy seconds. Motion passes unanimously.
 - Public comment – Kurt Krueger raised concerns about limiting bike usage.
 - Rattlesnake Greenbelt Footpath: Morgan Valliant – This footpath is used regularly and if it had been surveyed in 2008, it would have likely been included in the 2010 Conservation Land Management plan. Kathleen Kennedy raised concerns about Pine Beetle damaged trees in the area. Morgan Valliant acknowledged the damage to the trees. Kevin Verlanic raised questions about cost of the addition. Morgan Valliant stated it would cost less to add and manage the trail than to cover the trail and try to keep people out.
 - Motion: Kathleen Kennedy moves to accept this trail addition as public non-motorized, Kevin Verlanic seconded. Motion passes unanimously.
 - Lincoln Hills “Hawthorn Thicket” Trail: Morgan Valliant – With this trail addition we would be providing a route through the hawthorn thicket back to the trail head, while working to aggressively close dead end and other user made trails. Committee members raised questions

about wildlife in the area, citizens entering and using areas not near the proposed trail, and making this trail a pedestrian only opposed to public non-motorized.

- Motion: Arron Olsen moves to accept this trail addition as public non-motorized, Carol Fischer seconds.
- Amended motion: Beverly Dupree suggests to amend the motion to designate this trail as pedestrian only, Kathleen Kennedy seconds.
 - Discussion on amendment: Carol Fischer raised concerns about the difficulty of stopping bike usage since the existing trail allows for bikes. Beverly Dupree talked about habitat conservation and the dangers of bikers who travel quickly through the area. Morgan Valliant reminded committee members that all other surrounding trails are public non-motorized and it would be difficult to add a pedestrian only area.
 - Public comment on amended motion: Kurt Krueger noted that the section is uphill, so bikes are not traveling quickly, and would be on the trail for a fairly short section.
- Amendment to the amended motion: Beverly Dupree suggests making the small vertical section of the trail public non-motorized and keeping the long horizontal section as pedestrian only.
 - Vote on both amended motions failed 2 to 7.
 - Original Motion: Accept the Jumbo Hawthorn Thicket trail addition as public non-motorized.
 - Vote passes unanimously
- Elk Ridge Connection: Morgan Valliant – This proposed trail is in the north zone of Mt. Jumbo and crosses over into Forest Service land. CLM would need cooperation with the Forest Service if this section would be added.
 - Motion: Carol Fischer moves to accept this trail addition as public non-motorized, Kevin Verlanic seconds.
 - Discussion on the motion: Carol Fischer asked if the small purple sections of trail will remain or be removed. Morgan Valliant confirmed the purple sections will be covered and closed.
 - Public comment on the motion: Kurt Krueger wanted to know why we would close the northern purple section of trail. Morgan Valliant noted the Conservation Land Management team is trying to plan for dual usage for pedestrians and bikers and the section needs to be closed for that purpose.
 - Motion: Accept the Elk Ridge Connection addition as public non-motorized.
 - Vote passes unanimously

Discussion Items:

- Reviewed and discussed draft scoring system for use by CLAC to rank natural, cultural and recreational resource values on new open space acquisitions, and for use to designate management priorities on those parcels. CLAC revisions and suggestions included:
 - Make sure the scale goes the same way for every category and perhaps changing the scaling system from 1-3 to poor, moderate, good.
 - Edit the formatting of the document so the boxes take up the whole page giving more room for writing
 - Adding sections to include aquatic wildlife, an auditory section to listen for wildlife, and a section about the potential for threatened and endangered species. Also including a seasonal section to score areas with different uses during different times of the year.

- Reviewed the draft of the Syringa Park master plan. Garrick Swanson introduced Syringa Park and stated the park will use the existing access and will be designed as an all abilities bike skills park. It will include native plants and native tall grasses and will utilize a drip system to provide water for plants as well as park maintenance. Morgan Valliant stated the overall goal for this area is to be adopted by the city and managed by Conservation Lands Management (CLM). It is unique for CLM because it has a high use of recreation. Burt Lindler asked about the funding of the project and Garrick Swanson responded the funding is up in the air at the moment and the cost for the proposed project is anywhere from 125 to 200 thousand dollars. Kevin Verlanic questioned why this area is being adopted as conservation and doesn't believe it fits well within the program. Morgan Valliant explained there are a lot of trails and native species and CLM has the most knowledge and expertise to manage this type of area. Also, the 2010 Conservation Lands Management Plan addresses this area for adoption by CLM. Garrick Swanson also mentioned this area is designed to encourage bike use and deter unwanted use of bikes on other conservation lands. Overall, committee members strongly feel the plan should be adopted, but then transferred to park maintenance.

- Discussed rescheduling options for April CLAC meeting
 - If Barmeyer property is under city ownership by the end of March, there will be an April meeting. Morgan Valliant will contact CLAC to set up the possible April meeting.