



**OPEN SPACE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
THURSDAY, JULY 11, 2024
AGENDA**

| | | |
|--------------------------------|----------------|--|
| Thursday, July 11, 2024 | 5:30 PM | 100 Third St. Castle Rock, CO 80104 Conference Rooms A&B Instructions for virtually joining the meeting can be found at: https://www.douglas.co.us/board-county-commissioners/boards-commissions/open-space-advisory-committee/ |
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The purpose of the Douglas County Open Space Advisory Committee is to advise and make recommendations to the Douglas County Board of County Commissioners (Board) and municipal officials regarding disbursement of funds from the Parks, Trails, Historic Resources, Open Space Sales and Use Tax Fund, and to select open space land to be proposed for acquisition, maintenance, or preservation, to establish priorities, and to make recommendations to the Board on lands involving conservation easements acquired with such funds.

CALL TO ORDER – 5:30 PM

- I. Roll Call**
- II. COSAC Disclosures**
- III. Adoption of Agenda**
- IV. Approval of Minutes – June 6, 2024**
- V. Administrative Announcements**
 - i. Parks & Trails Updates**
 - ii. Micki Clark, County Consultant Updates**
 - iii. Open Space Updates**
 - iv. Other Updates**
- VI. Public comment (Provisions for additional public comment will be made as deemed appropriate by Chair)**

NEW BUSINESS

- VII. Outside 285 – Partnership & Great Outdoors Colorado Grant Application – Kirk Inderbitzen, Ranger Supervisor, Lindsay Williams, Land Manager Specialist**
- VIII. COSAC Discussion for the Good of the Order**

**EXECUTIVE SESSION
ADJOURN REGULAR MEETING**

The Next Regular Meeting Will be Held on Thursday, August 1, 2024 @ 5:30 p.m.

**OPEN SPACE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
THURSDAY, JUNE 6, 2024
MINUTES**

Call to Order

I. RECURRING ITEMS

ROLL CALL

Jennifer Drybread, Committee Member – Present
Jim Guerra, Committee Member – Excused
Patti Hostetler, Vice Chair – Present
Brian O’Malley, Committee Member - Present
Mike Parr, Committee Member – Excused
Jay Sage, Chair – Excused
Kathie Shandro, Committee Member – Present
Elizabeth Snow, Committee Member – Present

II. Disclosure for Items on the Agenda

None

III. Motion to Approve Agenda

RESULT: Approved
MOVER: Shandro
SECONDER: Drybread
AYES: Drybread, Hostetler, O’Malley, Shandro, Snow
ABSENT: Guerra, Parr, Sage

IV. Motion to Approve Minutes from May 2, 2024

RESULT: Approved
MOVER: Drybread
SECONDER: O’Malley
AYES: Drybread, Hostetler, O’Malley, Shandro, Snow
ABSENT: Guerra, Parr, Sage

V. Administrative Announcements

Members of Open Space staff provided administrative announcements on various topics including:

- Environmental educational class at Prairie Canyon Ranch attended by students and staff from Mesa Middle School
- Upcoming meeting of representatives from CDOT, USGS, and Federal Highways is soon to be scheduled to assess work on the I25 wildlife underpasses and future overpass; this assessment will be included in a report to Congress on the progress and successes of these endeavors

- COSAC member Mike Parr has submitted his resignation from COSAC; Mr. Parr was recently elected to the city council of Lone Tree
- Progress continues on the Sandstone Ranch observatory
- Review of the Douglas County Open Space Program Financial Management Report updated on June 6th, 2024; Ms. Martha Marshall, Douglas County Budget Director was present to review the report and answer questions from COSAC
- Mr. Morgan Morehart, Manager of Parks & Trails Operations provided an update on current projects and activities
- Ms. Mary Ann Monzani, Open Space Program Coordinator, reviewed the updated COSAC bylaws that were discussed and revised at the May meeting and included in the distribution packet for the meeting; as no further updates or revisions were suggested by COSAC, the bylaws as presented were accepted
- Ms. Micki Clark, Communique Consulting, provided viewpoints on an upcoming work session with the Board of County Commissioners to continue discussions on the visions for Open Space, Parks & Trails, and Historic Preservation

NEW BUSINESS

VI. Outside 285 – Partnership & Great Outdoors Colorado Grant Application – Kirk Inderbitzen, Ranger Supervisor, Lindsay Williams, Land Manager Specialist

Mr. Kirk Inderbitzen, Ranger Supervisor, presented this item to COSAC. The purpose of the presentation was to solicit input from COSAC on a potential funding opportunity for a Great Outdoor Colorado Community Impact Grant. The presentation included:

- Overview of Outside 285 as a regional partnership to advance both habitat conservation and trail-based outdoor recreation throughout the 285 corridor
- This matching grant would improve existing trails and trailheads as well as develop new trails with new signage to increase safety in the Indian Creek trail system that is just east of Pike Hill, Nelson Ranch, and Sharptail
- The dollars invested will be used to establish new and improved trails along with new signage plan to benefit the residents of Douglas County- new user-friendly access points with existing trail systems
- This agenda item is not a funding request at this time, but rather being presented to receive insight and direction from COSAC Review of timing for COSAC approval as well as grant submittal

The consensus from COSAC is that this project brings value to Douglas County and Open Space and the committee will make a formal recommendation at the July COSAC meeting.

VII. Use of Operations & Maintenance Budget to Maintain Open Space Trailheads – Open Space Staff Presentation

Mr. Inderbitzen gave a brief oral presentation on the fundamentals of the Operations & Maintenance Budget. He explained what these funds are traditionally used for along with examples of projects that have been completed with an increase in budget over the last few years. The focus of these projects are maintenance projects which are sustainable allowing for ongoing maintenance. These projects are also performed by contractors to allow staff to perform the jobs they were hired to do.

Ms. Lindsay Williams, Land Management Specialist/Ranger, added to the presentation by providing an overview of specific projects that were/are being performed this year on various properties.

VIII. COSAC Discussion for the Good of the Order

COSAC member Brian O'Malley provided comments concerning the placement of open space monument signs on a schedule for replacement of the wooden monument signs. There are currently two signs that are down and needing replacement. Staff commented that collaboration with Parks & Trails is underway for development of a unified sign plan. Staff will provide an update on the sign plan at the July meeting.

COSAC Vice-Chair, Patti Hostetler, provided comments on the concept of Douglas County partnering with Douglas Land Conservancy on conservation easements that would not allow public access. Ms. Hostetler provided history on the County's funding partnership with Douglas Land Conservancy pertaining to the transaction costs related to private conservation easements.

Final comments for the Good of the Order pertained to budget for transferring Douglas County held conservation easements to certain land conservancies, along with a study that was recently performed by Colorado State University on the economic value of land conservation.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

COSAC entered executive session pursuant to C.R.S. § 24-6-402(4)(a),(b) and discussed the potential acquisition of specific real property in Douglas County for preservation as open space. The discussion included the costs, benefits, and relative merits of potential property acquisitions, existing protections and encumbrances, limitations upon use, wildlife, natural resources, terrain, surrounding properties, and how the property relates to the objectives of COSAC and Douglas County. COSAC also received legal advice from an assistant county attorney regarding executive sessions and compliance with the Colorado Open Meetings Law.

Motion for COSAC to enter into an executive session.

RESULT: Approved

MOVER: Shandro

SECONDER: Drybread

AYES: Drybread, Hostetler, O'Malley, Shandro, Snow

ABSENT: Guerra, Parr, Sage

ADJOURN REGULAR MEETING

After adjourning the executive session, COSAC members came back to the regular COSAC meeting. COSAC Chair, Jay Sage stated that COSAC was now finished with the executive session pursuant to C.R.S. § 24-6-402(4)(a),(b) for the purposes of discussing the potential acquisition of specific properties and legal advice, stated that no decisions were made in the executive session, and asked for a motion for adjournment.

Motion to adjourn the regular COSAC meeting.

RESULT: Approved

MOVER: Drybread

SECONDER: Shandro

AYES: Drybread, Hostetler, O'Malley, Shandro, Snow

ABSENT: Guerra, Parr, Sage

**OUTSIDE 285 GOCO GRANT REQUEST
COSAC AGENDA ITEM**

DATE: JULY 1, 2024
TO: COUNTY OPEN SPACE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
THROUGH: DAN DERTZ, DIRECTOR OF OPEN SPACE AND NATURAL RESOURCES
FROM: LINDSAY WILLIAMS, LAND MANAGER SPECIALIST / RANGER & KIRK
INDERBITZEN, RANGER SUPERVISOR
CC: SCOTT MCELDFOWNEY, DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF OPEN SPACE AND NATURAL
RESOURCES
SUBJECT: OUTSIDE 285 PARTNERSHIP AND GOCO GRANT REQUEST

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|--|------------------------|
| COSAC REGULAR MEETING | JULY 11, 2024 |
| BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' BUSINESS MEETING | AUGUST 13, 2024 |

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Staff is seeking a recommendation from the County Open Space Advisory Committee (COSAC) on the funding opportunity with Outside 285 on a Great Outdoor Colorado (GOCO) Community Impact Grant. Total cost estimate for this project is approximately one million dollars with 10% match from Douglas County and 90% GOCO reimbursement. Although the Douglas County total portion is only \$100,000, the County will need to budget for the one million dollars and be reimbursed by GOCO once the project is complete.

The grant will increase safety for county residents and visitors, improve habitat, create sustainable trails, close social trails, and improve connections with Douglas County Open Space in the northwestern portion of the county. The grant opportunity has been identified through an ongoing partnership which consists of 28 key partners, including Douglas County, United States Forest Service, Colorado Parks and Wildlife, Bureau of Land Management, Denver Water, as well as many special interest groups such as the Colorado Mountain Bike Association, Colorado Mountain Club and Colorado Wildlife Federation.

II. REQUEST

A. Request

Staff is requesting a recommendation from COSAC regarding a one-million-dollar GOCO grant.

B. Background

The current conditions of the trail network in the Pike National Forest, which Douglas County's trails are connected, was built over the years by piecemeal. Many of the trails in this area are not properly signed, or not signed at all. Some of the trails are social trails, which has been harmful to both trail users and wildlife movement in the area.

The Douglas County Search and Rescue, Douglas County Sheriff's Deputies, Douglas County Open Space and Natural Resource (DCOSNR) Rangers and State Parks Staff respond to this area as needed to aid with rescue and recovery efforts throughout the years. This area is difficult to access with limited means of communication and poor signage that leads visitors astray. The area is currently bisected with social trails that were never intended to exist; therefore, visitors are unsure of their location and how to get to their destination. Furthermore, the social trails bisect habitat that was set aside for wildlife and were never designed to be sustainable.

Douglas County Open Space and Natural Resources (DCOSNR) will be the applicant and grant administrator for the GOCO Community Impact Grant. United States Forest Service (USFS) and Colorado Mountain Bike Association (COMBA) are providing in-kind contributions with National Environment Policy Act processing and assisting with trail crew management.

Improving the existing trailhead and improving or creating new trails with new signage will increase safety and access to Douglas County Open Space that is east of this area; Pike Hill, Nelson Ranch and Sharptail Ridge.

GOCO Community Impact Grants intent is to develop and revitalize parks, trails, school yards, fairgrounds, environmental education facilities, and other projects. Matching requirements and project timelines will be customized to partners and projects. There is no maximum request amount, most requests are expected to fall below \$1 million for a given grant cycle. The first cycle starts August 1, 2024, with grants awarded December 6, 2024.

Outside 285 is an organization whose plan is to conserve wildlife habitat while improving trail-based outdoor recreation experiences within the US 285 Corridor. The planning area encompasses about 550,000 acres of public land across Clear Creek, Douglas, Jefferson, and Park County's. The Indian Creek Working Group analyzed existing conditions within the Indian Creek area of the Pike National Forest. The conceptual plan calls for improving the trail

system and habitat conditions by rerouting trails, closing social trails, improving the trailhead, riparian corridor protection and new trail linkages.

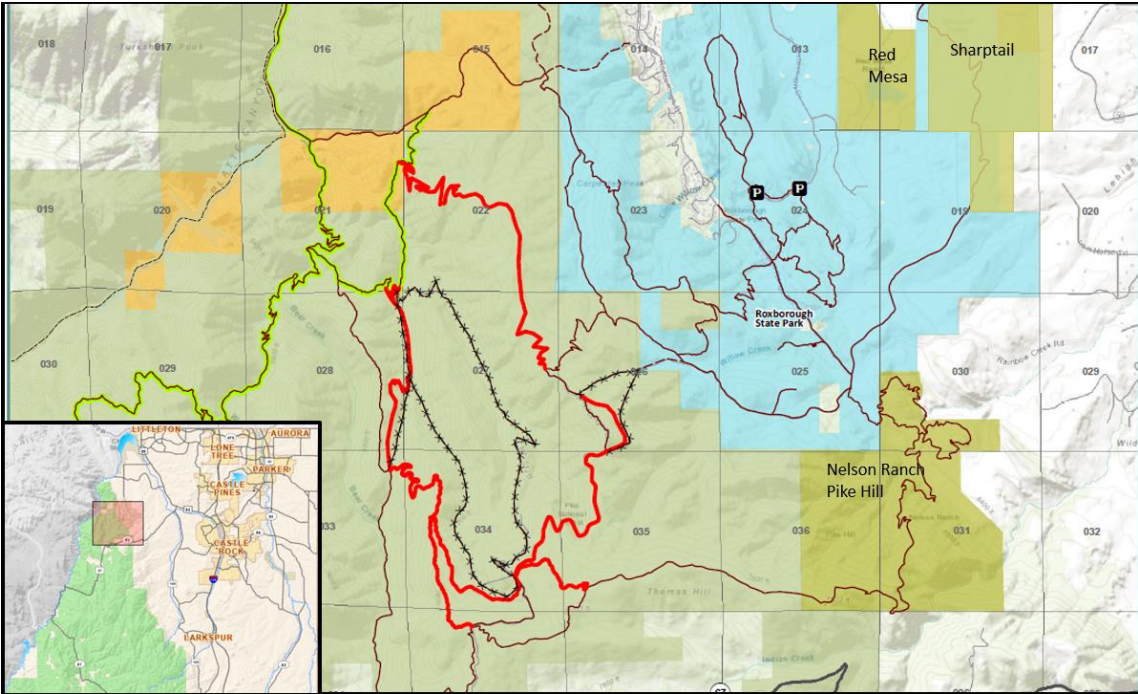
Letters of support have been secured or are expected from United States Forest Service South Platte Ranger District, Colorado Parks and Wildlife, Douglas County Search and Rescue. Additionally, ERO will continue to support the project through coordination, designing, planning and construction. The trail will be constructed by COMBA trail crews, or a trail building contractor selected through a contract bid process.

C. Location

The Indian Creek trail system is located off North State Hwy 67, just west of South Rampart Range Road, in the northwestern portion of Douglas County.

III. RECOMMENDED ACTION

It is staff's recommendation that the Outside 285 Grant be recommended for approval by COSAC.



ATTACHMENTS

Indian Creek Cost Estimate

Indian Creek User Group Survey Results

| Indian Creek Trail Cost Estimate | | | | | | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------|---------------|--------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|-------------------|
| ID | Trail Name | Priority Tier | Approx length (ft) | Contingency + 20% Miles | Avg Tread Cost (\$/ft) | Est Cost - Trail Tread | |
| Trail Obliteration | | | | | | | |
| A | Upper Stephens | 1 | 12,144 | 14572.8 | 2.8 | 3 \$ | 43,718 |
| B | Stephens Connector | 1 | 3168 | 3801.6 | 0.7 | 3 \$ | 11,405 |
| C | Roundup | 1 | 15312 | 18374.4 | 3.5 | 3 \$ | 55,123 |
| D | East Road 1 | 1 | 5280 | 6336 | 1.2 | 3 \$ | 19,008 |
| E | East Road 2 | 1 | 2,010 | 2412 | 0.5 | 3 \$ | 7,236 |
| Subtotal | | | 25,770 | 30,924 | 8.6 | 3.00 \$ | 136,490 |
| New Trails/Reroutes | | | | | | | |
| 1 | South Ridge | 1 | 9960 | 11952 | 2.3 | 12 \$ | 143,424 |
| 2 | Lower Stephens | 1 | 6336 | 7603.2 | 1.4 | 6 \$ | 45,619 |
| 4 | North Ridge | 1 | 17107 | 20528.4 | 3.9 | 12 \$ | 246,341 |
| 9 | Ringtail Connector | 1 | 4864 | 5836.8 | 1.1 | 12 \$ | 70,042 |
| 15 | Campground bypass | 1 | 1690 | 2028 | 0.4 | 10 \$ | 20,280 |
| 7 | Road corridor | 2 | 10144 | 12172.8 | 2.3 | 10 \$ | 121,728 |
| 8 | South Ridge Loop | 2 | 4752 | 5702.4 | 1.1 | 12 \$ | 68,429 |
| | Maintenance reroutes | 1 | 4050 | 4860 | 0.9 | 12 \$ | 58,320 |
| Subtotal | | | 58,903 | 70,684 | 13.4 | 10.75 \$ | 774,182 |
| TOTALS | | | | | | | \$ 910,673 |
| | Signage Plan | | | | | \$ | 35,000 |
| | Field Design | | | | | \$ | 35,000 |
| | Total | | | | | \$ | 945,673 |
| | 10% Match | | | | | \$ | 94,567 |

General Survey Results

- **491** people took the survey
- Folks were from **71** different areas in Colorado and **2** areas out of state
- Representation from each user type listed below:
 - **Mountain Biking** had the **most responses (263)**
 - Equestrian (155)
 - Hiking (28)
 - Trail Running (20)
 - Hunting (12)
 - Multi-Use (5)
 - Wildlife Viewing/Birding (2)
 - **Camping** had the **least (1)**

