Natural Surface Trails

Summary of Public Comments

From: Walker Thompson [mailto:walkersmooth@gmail.com]

Sent: Thursday, October 23, 2014 6:12 PM

To: Hall, Kevin

Subject: Trail closures in Sailing Hawks

Hey Kevin,

I hope you are well! I am writing to voice my opinion that the user-generated trails in Sailing Hawks be fully adopted in to the trail network. I ask this as a user of these trails and patient advocate. The closure of these trails will just cause new ones to emerge... The DEVO kids ride these as well as old ladies - I've seen both. Let's face it, there will be rogue trails up there, so lets work on adoption or improvements and less restriction...

See you on Monday, if I can make it!

--

Walker Thompson

Durango, CO

M: 970-759-1277

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From: Benjamin Bain [mailto:freshseeker@gmail.com]

Sent: Friday, October 24, 2014 3:31 PM

To: Hall, Kevin; Rec

Subject: trails deemed for closure

It has to come to my attention that the City in conjunction with the Natural Surface Trails Committee has selected certain trail segments to be closed. I am writing to show my support and interest in some of the trails deemed to be closed. I believe that some of the trails are targeted pearly because they are used by advanced mountain bikers. However, there are many other unofficial trails that have been created by hikers, climbers, and dog walkers that are not considered for closure. This paradox seems somewhat discriminatory and singles out a particular user group which is rapidly growing and part of our local community.

My main arguments for leaving some of the well used trail segments alone is a) they are a great asset to our community and are maintained, b)these trails are used by other users not just mountain bikers, and c) the City land use code needs to be revised to officially allow these trails to exist.

The .07 mile section of trail at Dalla Mtn. Park that has natural rock features along the trail was selected for removal. This is a very short section of trail is widely used and appreciated by the local community. I have personally seen all walks of life on the trail as well. I have seen hikers, dog walkers, and the devo kids bike group on this trail. All interactions have been positive and people are generally amused and happy to be there. The short section of trail provides a riding experience that is unique and rare to the Durango area. My suggestion is to either allow the trail to exist unofficially or allow the Durango Freeride group to adopt it and maintain it. This goes for the jump trail around the old City dump as well. That is a unique and needed trail for the Durango area. Also, these trails have already been maintained by the public, so they won't fall apart anytime soon.

Presumably the main reason those trails were targeted is because of the City land use code, which states that jumps, berms, and such can't be build. I think that language should be revised. Such features have been allowed to exist around Raiders Ridge and Twin Buttes. Thus the code needs to be changed. Many local governments have accepted "freeride" mountain biking and have worked with the local community. It is time Durango to do the same. Mountain bike technology and riding has rapidly evolved and more and more people want to see jumps, berms, and drops on trails.

If legal liability is a reason that these features shouldn't exist, i believe that reasoning is exaggerated and unfounded. At one of the past public board meetings, a discussion came about whether or not a "progressive" trail should be built. One of the board members said liability was a concern. Dean Brookie who represents the city said that, "Local government is already in the business of liability. The city will probably get sued if we pass a bag tax. I don't think that liability should be a concern." Basically there are already many issues with liability that exist. Many people get hurt hiking, biking, and climbing on City owned land. Are we to close everything off to the public because of that? Of course not. People will not ride freeride features unless they are confident and skilled to do so. If they get hurt on these features it is an accident and their responsibility. These accidents already happen all the time, that is why the road though Horse Gulch was repaired.

Also some of the trail segments around Overland Mtn. Park deemed for closure have been heavily used for many years. Every trail in Durango has some sort of erosion problem at some time. Generally the more a trail is used, the more packed down it gets and the less it is eroded. I agree with the recommendations that Adam Howell made about what trails should be kept left alone.

I think that we need to work together to get more official "freeride" style trails built in "natural" settings like Twin Buttes, Dalla Mtn. Park, Overland Mtn. Park, or Horse Gulch. I know the Chapman bike park is supposed to address this, but the majority of the people I have talked to would rather see freeride style trails in the before mentioned areas not Chapman Hill. The natural terrain provides many opportunities for advanced mountain bike features. There is much more room to work with in many of our open space areas that are not nearly as steep and erosion prone as Chapman.

Thank you for reading this, I know your time is valuable.

Respectfully,

Ben Bain

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Sent: Sunday, October 26, 2014 12:06 PM

To: Hall, Kevin

Subject: Request to save trails in Durango

Kevin

I am a Durango resident that lives between Sailing Hawks and Overend Mountain Park. I am an avid mountain biker and use the trails that the city is proposing to close. I DO NOT support this proposal.

These trails provide a type of riding that is lacking in Durango. If you close the trails you will be playing a game of whack-a-mole. Close one and three more will pop up.

I propose that the city adopt these trails and make a collaborative effort with the riders that use them to maintain and improve them.

I appreciate your consideration and thank you for the work that you do.

--

Jay Godson

2426 Thomas Ave

Durango CO 81301

970 560 1713

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From: Mary Monroe [mailto:mary@trails2000.org]

Sent: Monday, October 27, 2014 8:25 AM

To: Metz, Cathy; Hall, Kevin

Cc: John Baxter; Daryl Crites; Terryl Peterson; Melissa Youseff; Kevin Myers

Subject: trails committee

Hi Cathy and Kevin:

We are hearing a great deal of feedback about the maps; particularly the closure areas in Dalla and Hawk's nest. DEVO, Fort Lewis and the Trails 2000 gravity council have requested they not be closed. In addition, regarding your meeting with John Norton, John Baxter's comments follow:

Given the POST plan it makes sense to have a higher density of trails-Cathy or Kevin certainly can address this. It was a very thorough public process!

Also, this analysis is only a small piece of a much larger picture. Although I'm not an expert in urban planning, there are several interconnected elements that all need to be included; Urban density is a key link to a health"downtown" economy, but a "livable" high urban density is predicated several things including easy access to open space and outdoor recreation, along with being able to get around town without a car.

I dont know John Norton, but if trail density is really a concern for Cathy and the Boards, I would suggest that a much more complete analysis should be done on the entire urban "ecosystem" before any conclusions are made about one part of it.

Feel free to forward this or represent my comments to Cathy and Kevin.

Best, John

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From: Chris Strouthopoulos [mailto:cstrouth1@yahoo.com]

Sent: Saturday, October 25, 2014 7:27 PM

To: Rec

Subject: Trail Closures

Cathy-

In general I can see the reasoning behind the trail closures being discussed at monday's meeting. Most of the trails marked for closure are pretty unsustainable ruts. There is not much to redeem them. However, there are a couple segments that I feel are being singled out for other reasons, and I suspect it's because they have jumps and/or built features.

For example, the longest red trail marked for closure on the Dalla map is sustainable. It sheets water well and is well maintained. It features several rock jumps that are super fun to ride, and are pretty unique. Devo, for example, loves that trail, and posted on their facebook page on Sept 23rd in praise of it. They use it as a training area for the Flyers. If we close this trail there is nothing else really like it around. This one I'd really like to see adopted. If we need to send a T2000 crew up there to alleviate the town's concerns, that would be even better.

The other trail I'd advocate for is the trail in Southern Test tracks, on the west side of the dirt road coming out of the tech center. It's also marked in red. That's the closest thing Durango has to a jump park. It's also a unique trail, and with adoption and some maintenance would be another special feature of our system.

Many of the trails being adopted are pirate trails, so that doesn't seem to be the issue. Jumps seem like the reason these two are being targeted. Let's be realistic. People want jumps. Rather than continue to have folks build them illegally, lets designate some trails that offer these features and focus traffic there.

Thank you for considering my email.

Best,

Chris Strouthopoulos

T2000 Gravity Council Advisory Board Member

T2000 Senior Advisory Board Member

Durango Freeride Facebook Page Administrator

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From: Adam Howell [mailto:athowell@gmail.com]

Sent: Friday, September 12, 2014 12:21 PM

To: Hall, Kevin; Howell, Adam

Subject: possible closure of popular trail segments

Dear Kevin Hall, Durango's Assistant Community Development Director,

We, the petitioners, are against several of the closures recommended by the Natural Surface Trails Committee for the Natural Lands Board and the Parks and Recreation Board to discuss the future of at a joint meeting in October.

Specifically, seven popular trail segments identified for possible closure in an inventory of trails that were mapped out by the committee and documented by Horse Gulch Blog LLC are concerning. Those seven trail segments are mentioned in the following Horse Gulch Blog story: City boards to consider closing several trail segments in Overend Mountain Park, etc: http://wp.me/p2Darv-1Av

Surely, these trails are not all redundant nor are they all destined for erosional failure. To the contrary, these trails have independent utility, and several contribute to a more diverse and challenging trail infrastructure.

Please adopt some of these trails and recognize them as valid, popular and sustainable contributions to our community's natural surface trail system.

Thank you, and please acknowledge.

Adam Howell

athowell@gmail.com

Durango, Colorado

Aaron Loyd

Alex Brown

Andrew Charnock

Ben Bain

Ben Eng

Brandon Mathis

David Long

Jerai Matkovich

Jeremy Thompson

Joesph Carr

Julie Figg

Justin Repath

Lauren Lowe

Lucas Lemaire

Lucas O'Laughlin

Marc Whipp

Mathew Schumann

Nathaniel West

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From: Fletcher Ouren [mailto:ouren.f@gmail.com]

Sent: Monday, October 27, 2014 12:25 PM

To: Hall, Kevin; Howell, Adam

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seven trail segments are mentioned in the following Horse Gulch Blog story: City boards to consider closing several trail segments in Overend Mountain Park, etc: http://wp.me/p2Darv-1Av

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Please adopt some of these trails and recognize them as valid, popular and sustainable contributions to our community's natural surface trail system.

Thank you, and please acknowledge.

Fletcher Ouren

ouren.f@gmail.com

Durango, CO

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From: Dott, Cynthia [mailto:DOTT_C@fortlewis.edu]

Sent: Monday, October 27, 2014 9:36 AM

To: Metz, Cathy; Hall, Kevin

Subject: Comments on proposals re. City natural surface trails

Hi Kevin & Cathy –

I have just had the privilege of seeing the new recommendations for natural surface trails in the City open space park lands, and I have just a few comments related to Overend Mtn Park. I can't attend tonight's meeting, but thought maybe a short memo would be worth sharing with you and the Boards who are meeting tonight to discuss these proposals.

Overall this looks like a great next step to take in trail management; I just had a few additional comments/suggestions to share.

Thanks for sharing these with the Board members at this evening's meeting.

Hope you are both well and enjoying the beautiful fall weather!

Warm regards,

Cynthia

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Cynthia Dott, PhD

Assoc. Prof. of Biology

Fort Lewis College

1000 Rim Drive

Durango, CO 81301

970-247-7322

Memo: Comments on proposed trail changes on City of Durango natural surface trails

To: Natural Lands Preservation and Parks & Recreation Advisory Boards

From: Cynthia Dott, biologist (FLC) & citizen trail user

Date: 10/27/14

Notes on proposed trail changes, especially in the Overend Mountain Park (area I'm most familiar with):

First, I commend the City for undertaking this extensive review of trails and trail conditions on open space lands in the city area.

My suggestions/comments are related to a few changes suggested on the OMP Trail System Proposal maps.

Map 1:

- Several suggested trail closures seem like a good idea, though I'm unsure how closures will be successful, as many of them have been tried in the past, and once trail users become accustomed to using certain trails it seems to be very hard to re-direct them to new routes.

- New proposed connecting trail off the end of Hidden Valley (blue dashed line) concerns me, as a biologist, since it will increase human traffic in an area that has previously been much less travelled and probably represents valuable open space for wildlife to retreat from human interaction.

- Likewise, the 2 blue trails in the Grabens area (marked as existing trails to be mapped) that run on parallel ridges on either side of one of the grabens valleys concern me as well. These trails are relatively new (? ~5 years), and started out as "social trails" created by mountain bikers without any oversight/permission from the city or other trail organizations. The valley they go around used to be quite isolated and probably provided a necessary wildlife refuge; now it is much more exposed to human interaction/impact. I know that closing existing trails is extremely difficult, but I would make a strong case for closing these two trails rather than condoning the creation of random social trails in the park.

Map 2:

- The Ned's Hill trail is clearly problematic from an erosion standpoint, but the proposal to re-route the trail to the west (blue dashed line) concerns me for 2 reasons. First, the re-route will cut into previously un-trailed, treed terrain (except, again, for random social trails people are creating), in an area that is increasingly criss-crossed by human trails. Second, the old trail (which was an old road) will be difficult if not impossible to close – that will mean that instead of maintaining the same number of trails in the area, we will be increasing the total number of trails. I would argue that it would be much better to find ways to mitigate the erosion on the old trail than to create a new trail in this area.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on the wonderful trail resources we have here in Durango, and many thanks to you all for the time and energy you put into managing and maintaining these resources on behalf of the citizens and wildlife of the Durango area.

With warm regards,

Cynthia Dott

dott_c@fortlewis.edu

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From: Anne Markward [mailto:amarkward@gmail.com]

Sent: Monday, October 27, 2014 9:31 AM

To: Metz, Cathy; Hall, Kevin

Subject: Natural Surface Trails Committee Comments

Hello -

Thanks to all for working so hard to encourage fun, health, and recreation in Durango.

I have a few comments and concerns about the proposed trail system that largely reflect my larger concerns with open space, GOCO funding, and resource preservation.

- Topnotch, state of the art management plans are needed for Horse Gulch, Dalla, Overend, as well as other proposed / existing land and off land parks. Not the "30,000' level review", but actual, on the ground plans need to be put in place before additional trails are cut or opened. In specific, plans need to include:

o Ongoing stewardship of the properties - not just physical, but social. ie, have an expected presence of personnel or ambassadors on all City trails to enforce expectations of good behavior.

o Ongoing maintenance and improvement of properties - too often, trails we already have are not kept up. It seems easier to get money for new acquisitions, rather than ongoing habitat restoration and improvement.

o Hours and levels of development that work for both trail users and existing neighbors. Compromise is possible, and should be sought.

- Trails - both on land and on water - must respect the needs of wildlife as much as the wishes of humans. Trails proposed for the Hidden Valley area and for connecting Overend to Twin Buttes hugely impact wildlife, directly against the values expressed in partnerships with GOCO, etc. Please, avoid these conflicts.

Thanks again for your work on this -

Anne

Anne Markward

970 779 8796

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From: Amy Schwarzbach [mailto:amyschwarzbach@gmail.com]

Sent: Tuesday, October 28, 2014 10:37 AM

To: Hall, Kevin; Metz, Cathy

Subject: Trails comment

Hello Cathy & Kevin,

Thank you so much for facilitating the public comment meeting last night. I'm hoping I can submit my personal comments, not as an LPOSC representative.

As an avid mountain biker, who loves technical riding, I would love to have more varied terrain to ride and stay strong on. However, I don't believe that requires more trail miles through new trail construction or adoption of unapproved trails. My experience having lived all over this State and throughout the country to work in land management and recreational industries, and continuing to travel on weekends to recreate, is that trails can have challenging features built into them to accommodate the needs expressed at the meeting last night. Many other communities have trails where a section is rocky or technical or has man made obstacles, and if necessary, there is a parallel alternative route for that section to allow multiple skill sets and trail users to enjoy the same trail.

If my understanding of the trail process in Durango is accurate, couldn't Trails 2000 propose such trail alterations for the City to consider, thus meeting the needs of its members who say they "need" more technical options to ride? Converting sections of existing trails could meet those needs, without increasing impact to wildlife in the City parks and without accruing major costs associated with building, adopting, and maintaining entirely new trails. I think trail hikers and runners may express their support of such trail additions as well. I trail run and also enjoy the physical challenge and variety a diverse trail surface provides. When I'm not looking for a trail experience, I run neighborhood streets and sidewalks.

As examples, a few sections of trails in Overend come to mind where wooden bridge features would allow downhill drainage where the trails currently blow out, while adding a fun riding or hiking feature for the trail users.

Thank you for considering my personal comments on the trail recommendations discussion.

Sincerely,

Amy Schwarzbach

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Thank you for your work on this important topic. I cannot attend the meeting on the 27th as I have a work commitment. My husband John and I have lived by the Overend Mountain Park for 20 years. We have been working with the City's Parks and Recreation Department for many years to give input on

issues specifically for the Overend Mountain Park (OMP). Our neighborhood has and in concert with the City and Trails 2000, accomplished the following over the years:

- Hosted four work days in the OMP to: a) clean up dog waste; b) eradicate nonnative weeds (especially in the Perins Gulch Area as it remains a relatively pristine area); c) closed agreed-upon social trails d) cleaned up homeless camps; e) acted as "eyes and ears" for illegal activities occurring in the park (fireworks, camp fires, motorized use, target practice, and illegal trail building) and f) fixed up the Montview and Leyden trail heads.

- Our community worked very closely with the City and Trails 2000 and other stakeholders to establish the original primary trail system and signage for the OMP which, after some months of input and process, now enjoys wide support by trail users.

- We, along with other adjacent neighbors, have called the City when unsafe activities were occurring in the OMP hopefully serving as local "eyes and ears." As an example, this past summer, youths were consistently building large bonfires in the "Meadow Area" of the OMP. We worked hard to alert authorities to this situation since a run-away fire in the OMP could burn Durango's entire western skyline.

- Communicated with the City Police Department and the Durango Fire Department to help them understand that OMP is in their jurisdiction and asked them to give all new personnel trail maps so they know where they are going in case of an incident.

- Successfully worked to get new signs up on the dog waste dispensaries that had stronger language since dog waste threatens the City's water quality not to mention being a distraction for trail users.

My input is as follows:

What I like:

- I agree that there needs to be signed primary trail system for the City's open lands.

- I very much support cleaning up the "the Meadow Area" in the OMP. That area has become a complete mess and thus, it attracts people using the park for illegal activities.

- Most of the trail closures, reroutes or new trails in the Overend Mountain Park make sense or I am "neutral" on them except for ones I have noted below (3).

- I appreciate the good works Trails 2000 has done over the years and most especially their help with the OMP work days. I also appreciate being able to directly access City staff especially Cathy Metz.

What I would like to see changed:

- Before new trails go in, I would suggest that the City, working with Trails 2000 and other partners, make a much more concerted effort to improve care-taking, maintenance and upkeep for the trails we already have.

- Social trails are a major problem in the OMP. The City should be the primary contact for identifying and closing social trails. I feel the City needs to use best practices because there is a wide range of opinion out there on what constitutes a social trail; how to close them; and how to educate

users. The opinions and voices of all trails users should be considered in the closure of social trails as the only way it works is broad education. What we don't want are ongoing battles between trail users who do (or do not like) a certain trail closed. I have witnessed such battles for years in the OMP and they are not helpful or productive. Nor are "user battles" effective in actually dealing with a social trail. There has to be a better way.

- I strongly feel that the "recommended down-hill only" for Star Wars (and thus Snake Charmer in Horse Gulch) is very, very poor and ill-advised public policy. This proposed action would make that trail unsafe and places additional liability on the City. If you put up a sign encouraging "recommended downhill travel", you are effectively closing it for hikers/walkers. Why? Because most hikers/walkers go up Star Wars so they can see bikes coming towards them. It is the major north/south connector for that part of the park so this policy closes off a major connector for hikers/walkers. This recommendation caught me by surprise because when the City staff did a field trip to the Star Wars sight, there was no consensus to change Star Wars to favor one interest.

I support signage on Star Wars that says something like: Uphill and Downhill Users: Please use extreme caution as this is a Multiple Use Trail. Bikers, please slow down. Walkers, please keep alert for bikers.

I hope the boards will make a decision on this based on common sense, the terrain and trail map, and taking into account balanced values and trail users' needs.

- I believe the proposed new trail in Hidden Valley does not add that much value to the entire OMP's system. It would cut through prime, pristine wildlife habitat. The OMP has an extensive network of dense trails so I see no compelling reason to add one, smaller connector loop. The City is charged with managing for all values including wildlife as per the conservation easement and GoCo funding.

- An analysis of new trails should include additional values and criteria to consider including: a) impact on neighborhoods and parking; b) impact on wildlife and open space/natural values and c) safety for multiple uses. A question I have is: Who will do this analysis? My input is that the City should be charged with doing the analysis so the public can be involved and have easy access to City staff or consultants to voice a full range of views and opinions.

- I do not support the idea of a connector from the OMP to the Colorado Trail or to Twin Buttes due to wildlife habitat disturbances. Also, this is very important: these connectors would bring more traffic to our neighborhoods and trail heads ~~ something most neighbors I talk to are not willing to support. If these trails are studied, the impacts to neighborhoods and parking capacity must be studied.

I would like to note that having only three work days and two weekend days to review this map and memo was not enough time for a full analysis. I would encourage you to not make final decisions on October 27th. Also, a link to the memo was not in the press release and I personally couldn't easily find the memo on the City's Web site. The public needs more time and more accessibility to this information as so many park enthusiasts, wildlife and these treasured landscapes are affected by these recommendations.

On a final note, I appreciate all this hard work. My husband and I will continue to be good stewards and good neighbors to the City and the OMP.

Thank you.

Enthusiast

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Jason Bushey

Oct 27th, 5:51pm

I am hoping this is directed to the correct parties. I was not in town for tonight's meeting, and want to voice my opinion on the removal of the "free ride trail" in Dallas mountain park. I feel it would be a great shame to remove this trail, as it is progressing the trail types and providing variety in durango. It is also off of another trail so there is not a trail conflict. I am not sure the main reasons to remove it, but placing signs around the features would be a great start to cooperation of progressive trails and multi use. If you look at areas like lunch loops in grand junction, they have incorporated this great. If durango could adopt this, it would be great to work together for more variety for the new bikes that come out today, that can handle these types of trails. I have personally rode this trail multiple times and I believe it is built very well and safe. There are routes around all features and safe landings. I personally would like to see more trails like this in durango.

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From: Priscilla [mailto:priscillalukens@live.com]

Sent: Thursday, October 30, 2014 3:19 PM

To: Rec

Subject: trail system

Regarding comments on the natural surface trail system: I would love to see a trail designated pedestrian only for every difficulty level and at every park.

Thanks, Priscilla Lukens

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From: Adam Howell [mailto:athowell@gmail.com]

Sent: Tuesday, November 11, 2014 10:05 PM

To: Gantt, Joanne

Subject: public comments received by email on Natural Surface Trails Committee recommendations

Hello Joanne,

Is there a reason why nineteen peoples' comments in resistance to the Natural Surface Trails Committee's proposed trail closures were not posted with mine and everyone else's on Durango's Parks and Recreation website?

The letters that said the same thing as mine were sent from nineteen individuals with individual email accounts, and there names are:

20	Aaron Loyd	Durango, CO	Sep 29, 2014
19	David Long	durango, co	Sep 27, 2014
18	Julie Figg	Ignacio, CO	Sep 27, 2014
17	Jerai Matkovich	Durango, Colorado	Sep 27, 2014
16	Justin Repath	Denver, Colorado	Sep 26, 2014
15	Joseph carr	pagosa springs, Colorado	Sep 25, 2014
14	LUcas LeMaire	Durango, CO	Sep 25, 2014
13	Marc whipp	dillon	Sep 25, 2014
12	Alex Brown		Sep 25, 2014
11	Lucas O'Laughlin	Durango	Sep 24, 2014
10	Ben Bain	Durango, CO	Sep 24, 2014
9	Lauren Lowe	Steamboat Springs, CO	Sep 24, 2014
8	Ben Eng		Sep 24, 2014
7	Matthew Schumann	Durango, CO	Sep 24, 2014
6	Jeremy Thompson		Sep 23, 2014
5	Brandon Mathis	Durango, Co	Sep 13, 2014
4	Andrew Charnock	Durango , Co	Sep 12, 2014
3	Jerry Hazard	Durango, Colorado	Sep 12, 2014
2	Emily Koren	Durango, Colorado	Sep 12, 2014

Thanks,

Adam Howell

Horse Gulch Blog LLC

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From: Adam Howell [mailto:athowell@gmail.com]

Sent: Monday, October 06, 2014 9:18 PM

To: Hall, Kevin

Subject: Map of trails to share with city boards

Kevin,

This email has two maps attached that would not fit in previous emails that I tried sending you. Let me know if the formatting will let you share them and/or print them.

I have edited the trail inventory maps that you and the Natural Surface Trails Committee have created for classifying the status of the city's existing and proposed trails.

The edited maps that I'm sending you have purple-color-coded trails that represent trails that myself and 18 other people who have written you think should be saved as valid contributions to our city's natural surface trail system.

Please forward these maps to both the Natural Lands Preservation Advisory Board, as well as the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board to review before considering the closure of the seven trail segments that us petitioners are hoping the city will save.

Thank you and please acknowledge.

Adam Howell

Horse Gulch Blog

OMP Trails Aug 2014, Howell edit.jpg

Dalla Trail System Aug 2014, Howell edit.jpg

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From: Adam Howell [mailto:athowell@gmail.com]

Sent: Friday, November 21, 2014 9:30 PM

To: Brookie, Dean

Cc: City Council; Metz, Cathy; Hall, Kevin; Baxter, Kim; Ciotti, Chloe; Matthew, Connie; McClung, Steve; Smith, Mark; Whiteman, Steve; Wilbert, Paul; Zink, Ed; Burke, Sandy; Burke, Sandy 2nd email; Carver, Karen; Hoehlein, Rich; Jaycox, Kelli; McClain, Scott; Rinderle, Christina; Schertz, Peter; Speegle, Richard; Viehmann, Frank; Waller, Sarah; Youssef, Melissa; Zimsky, Bill

Subject: Re: Public comments on proposed trail closures

Hello Dean,

Again, I have zero hesitation in asking you and the relevant City boards why the letters of nineteen individuals have been excluded from the public comments that were posted on the Parks and Recreation page of the City's website regarding the recommendations of the Natural Surface Trails Committee. Please answer the question on the record.

I am most certainly suggesting that they have been excluded from the City's website because, as of the writing of this email, they are still not there. If they are there, then maybe you could direct me to them.

If Hall sees them on the City's website, then maybe he could direct me to them?

What I'm looking for is not my email to Joanne Gantt on November 11 where I reference these people's names and ask why the emails from nineteen individuals have been excluded. I'm talking about the actual letters that are missing from the City's website.

I know they exist because I received copies of them.

Where are these nineteen letters that were sent from individual email accounts? Since the City is posting comments submitted by email on this topic, then why are the letters of these nineteen individuals excluded from the record?

I didn't make up these people's names, and it's not my responsibility to post their letters on the City's website.

Emailed letters from the following individuals written in resistance to the proposed closure of seven popular trail segments have been excluded from the City's website, but if they are there, then please correct me if I'm wrong.

The map that I sent to Kevin Hall was NOT posted with the rest of the public comments, nor were the identical letters from the following nineteen individuals:

20	Aaron Loyd	Durango, CO	Sep 29, 2014
19	David Long	durango, co	Sep 27, 2014
18	Julie Figg	Ignacio, CO	Sep 27, 2014
17	Jerai Matkovich	Durango, Colorado	Sep 27, 2014
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5	Brandon Mathis	Durango, Co	Sep 13, 2014
4	Andrew Charnock	Durango , Co	Sep 12, 2014

3	Jerry Hazard	Durango, Colorado	Sep 12, 2014
2	Emily Koren	Durango, Colorado	Sep 12, 2014

Please tell me why these letters have been excluded from the website, while letters from other people were included.

Also, were these people's comments included in the packets that the boards received before the last meeting? Nobody on the boards has answered this question for me yet.

Thanks,

Adam Howell

Horse Gulch Blog LLC

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From: Ann Bond [mailto:agent.bond2@gmail.com]

Sent: Tuesday, December 02, 2014 2:32 PM

To: Rec; Rinderle, Christina; Brookie, Dean; White, Dick; Brant, Keith; Marbury, Sweetie; Zimsky, Bill; smith_d@fortlewis.edu; Viehmann, Frank; Carver, Karen; kerrie.neet@dot.state.co.us; Schertz, Peter; Speegle, Richard; Burke, Sandy; conniejmatthews18@gmail.com; Baxter, Kim; Smith, Mark; McClung - DNR, Steve; Whiteman, Steve; damian peduto; Alan Schwartz; Chana Reed; david palenchar; gaspar perricone; heather carroll; jacy rock; james pribyl; james smith; james spaanstra; lise aangeenbrug; matt sugar; mike king; mikeking@state.co.us; Peggy Montano; Philip James; Thomas Burke; Thomas Swanson; laangeenbrug@goco.org; jtenneson@goco.org; Perez, Scott; Magee, Brian - 2; amy@huff-law.com; Metz, Cathy; Hall, Kevin

Subject: Public comments on Natural Surface Trails recommendations

I would like to submit my comments into the public record. Thank you very much for the opportunity. Ann Bond, private citizen and trail user

Dec. 2, 2014

TO: CITY OF DURANGO, LA PLATA OPEN SPACE CONSERVANCY, GOCO

FROM: Ann Bond, private citizen, resident of Durango, trail user

RE: Public comments on natural-surface trail committee recommendations

TO QUOTE THE OVEREND MOUNTAIN PARK CONSERVATION EASEMENT:

“This deed contains restrictions on the use and development of the property which are intended to protect its open space values. The state board of the GOCO Trust fund has found that the adoption of these deed restrictions is in the public interest.”

THEREFORE, the makeup of the Working Group and its recommendations must adhere to the "restrictions" protecting the parcel's open space values under conservation easement.

By legally agreeing to manage natural resources protected under conservation easements held on its open space parcels, the City of Durango becomes more competitive for GOCO Open Space grants. This not only gives the City an advantage in acquiring funds, but also carries with it legal responsibilities and mandates.

City of Durango open-space acquisitions acquired through GOCO funding and held under conservation easement by La Plata Open Space Conservancy must be managed to balance recreation use with natural resource values and involve upfront collaboration through a Working Group of stakeholders representing all values. In addition, these parcels are also purchased with the tax dollars of Durango citizens and should be managed to accommodate the safety and enjoyment of all user groups.

THE EASEMENT STATES CONSERVATION VALUES ARE EQUAL TO RECREATIONAL VALUES:

"The property possesses natural, wildlife, scenic, open space and recreational values (collectively "Conservation Values) of great importance …" "…serves as a buffer between the City of Durango's west side residential neighborhoods and the BLM land to the west where endangered Peregrine falcons nest."

"Grantor <City> intends that the conservation values of the property be preserved and maintained by the continuation of land use patterns, including, without limitation, those relating to natural open space, wildlife habitat and active and passive recreation."

"Grantee <La Plata Open Space Conservancy> agrees by accepting this grant to honor the intentions of Grantor stated herein and to preserve and protect in perpetuity the conservation values of the property for the benefit of this generation and the generations to come."

THEREFORE, the long-term vision for Overend Mountain Park should involve holistic planning that develops measures to conserve natural-resource values, including wildlife habitat, soil stability, vegetation, etc. Sustainable trail planning involving all stakeholders can mitigate negative impacts to natural resources, as well as social impacts to different user groups and stakeholders.

However, the Trails Working Group, which is tasked with making recommendations to the City regarding trail management, has focused exclusively on recreational values. This is partly because the constituencies represented on the Working Group overwhelmingly favor recreational special-interest and commercial interests.

THE EASEMENT CALLS FOR A BALANCED STAKEHOLDERS ADVISORY COMMITTEE:

"The Management Plan shall provide for the establishment of a "Stakeholders Advisory Committee" consisting of representatives from agencies or organizations having a specific and demonstrable interest in the management of the Property. All such representatives shall be appointed by the City Council of the City of Durango. The purpose of the committee shall be to assist the City in its operation and management of the Property by advancing recommendations in that regard which it may from time to time deem appropriate. Any proposed changes to the Management Plan shall be circulated to the Stakeholders Advisory Committee for its review and recommendation prior to adoption by the City Council."

THEREFORE, all stakeholders should be at the table. The Working Group should represent all interests, including natural-resource and wildlife professionals, and adjacent landowners, both public and private. Representatives of adjacent Durango neighborhoods, the Bureau of Land Management, and Colorado Parks and Wildlife should be included. These adjacent landowners (be they private property owners or public land management agencies) stand to be directly impacted in many ways by how the parcel is managed and have much to offer in terms of upfront planning.

For example, recreational use can impact roadside parking and increase traffic congestion and safety in the adjacent Crestview neighborhood. And recreational use can easily cross jurisdictional boundaries and violate important wildlife closures in the adjacent state wildlife area. Furthermore, wildlife officials could bring much knowledge to the table in how to plan to mitigate impacts of trail construction and the resulting recreational use patterns on the viability of wildlife habitat.

Because the current makeup of the Working Group now represents mostly recreational interests, its resulting recommendations are not well rounded or visionary. For example, the City states that Trails 2000 is on the Working Group because new trail development will be considered by the City with input from this outside group because of its recreational expertise. Surely, the Working Group should also include entities that can provide expertise on managing the other natural resource values protected in the easements.

In addition, the Working Group includes several members of the Natural Lands and Parks and Recreation advisory boards, which are tasked with approval of the recommendations. This seems to represent a redundant conflict of interest.

THE EASEMENT STATES THAT RECREATION VALUES ARE NOT SUPERIOR TO OTHER VALUES:

"It is the purpose of this Easement to assure that the Property will be retained forever in its natural, scenic, forested, and open space condition and to prevent any use of the Property that will significantly impair or interfere with the Conservation Values of the Property. Grantor <City of Durango> intends that this Easement will confine the use of the Property to such activities, including, without limitation, those involving public recreation (walking, hiking, biking and wildlife viewing) and education as are consistent with the purpose of this Easement."

"To accomplish the purpose of this Easement the following rights are conveyed to Grantee <La Plata Open Space> by this Easement: To preserve and protect the Conservation Values of the Property;"

THEREFORE, The City must not only abide by these restrictions in its management planning and actions but also educate recreationists that their use is only one of many values to be managed for and that recreation is not listed as the priority value in City open space under conservation easement. Special-interest groups must understand that, for those parcels under conservation easement, recreation is not listed as the primary focus, but one of many values that must be balanced equally.

THE EASEMENT STATES CITY HOLDS LIABILITY FOR MANAGEMENT:

"Grantor <City> retains all responsibilities and shall bear all costs and liabilities of any kind related to the ownership, operation, upkeep, and maintenance of the property, including the maintenance of adequate comprehensive general liability insurance coverage. Grantor shall keep the Property free of

any liens arising out of any work performed for, materials furnished to, or obligations incurred by Grantor."

THEREFORE, Working Group recommendations should not cede supervision and management of open-space trails to Trails 2000. By handing over this responsibility, the City would abdicate its management role as cited under conservation easement. Where will liability lie within this scenario – with the taxpayers or the special-interest group? Furthermore, the full interests of citizens (who pay the open space tax) and the citizens of Colorado (who fund GOCO) are not fully and equally represented under this scenario.

The City also has a responsible and legal mandate to manage for multiple-use trails open to all recreational users; however, there are conflicting statements in the Working Group recommendations that undermine each other, offering no clear direction regarding this important issue.

For example, Working Group recommendations: "Fragmentation of the trail system by restricting certain user groups is not supported," and "The City promote(s) multi-use and two-direction trails in the City's natural surface trail system." are contradictory with the another recommendation: "There may be cases in the future where one-way trails will be included in the system."

Recommendations are also inconsistent in encouraging collaboration with adjacent landowners while, at the same time, advocating for construction of major trails to the edge of adjacent parcels with no input from those landowners (be they public or private). These actions stand to negatively impact important values on adjacent properties, including seasonal closures to protect sensitive wildlife seasons within the state wildlife area and quality of life in the neighborhoods. In this regard, the below recommendations from the Working Group are incompatible:

 "The City and Trails 2000 shall continue to work collaboratively with other public land management agencies including the BLM, Forest Service, Colorado Parks and Wildlife and Bureau of Reclamation regarding the area natural surface trail system."

 "The following future trail connections are recommended for priority evaluation ns potential implementation:

 Overend Mountain Park to Twin Buttes

 Colorado Trail to Overend Mountain Park

Advocating the construction of trail connections through the state wildlife area or bringing Colorado Trail terminus into the Crestview neighborhood both carry huge impacts to adjacent stakeholders. Prior to recommending trail extensions as a desired outcome, the City owes the public land agencies and adjacent neighbors a seat at the table to discuss concerns and mitigations.

THANK YOU again for the opportunity to comment. The City's open space parcels and the conservation easements that protect them are important additions to the quality of life of Durango. I believe Durango residents and visitors support a balance between recreational values and natural resource values, as called for in the conservation easements that protect all open space parcels, including Overend Mountain Park.

I encourage the City to work closely with La Plata Open Space Conservancy and all stakeholders in planning a future that supports the deed restrictions in the conservation easements to ensure that these parcels are managed responsibly and legally.

Sincerely, Ann Bond, private citizen and trail

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From: Sarah Tescher [mailto:sarah@durangodevo.com]

Sent: Monday, December 01, 2014 9:13 PM

To: Hall, Kevin; Metz, Cathy

Subject: A Devo video project/ a Visual for you

Cathy and Kevin,

I just wanted to share a video that Devo did to help people understand that these riders are normal people who just want places to ride where they can test their skills, have fun and train. They are not the stereotyped fullface, Red Bull pounding, metal music listening, must ride straight down hill, etc. types of riders that were alluded to by various people in the last meeting, but rather riders with jobs here, going to school here, riding here. This is a normal ride for them and what most riders are looking for these days both in Durango and visiting Durango. Improving the trails or creating new ones, is just changing with the times.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ci0O5N2wXBg

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Sarah Tescher

Program Manager of Devo

(970)779-8480

www.durangodevo.com

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From: Tom Breed [mailto:breedtt@gmail.com]

Sent: Thursday, December 11, 2014 1:55 PM

To: Metz, Cathy

Subject: Re: Natural Surface Trail System

Cathy,

Please forward the following comments to the Advisory Boards:

I have reviewed Mr. Howell's proposed changes to the plan for Dalla Mountain Park and Overend Park and find that the trails Mr. Powell recommends "saving" are prone to errosion and redundent. I recommend that the "plan" remain as currently proposed.

Thanks,

Tom Breed

907 Hidden Valley Circle, Durango

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From: Adam Howell [mailto:athowell@gmail.com]

Sent: Monday, December 15, 2014 8:42 PM

To: Hall, Kevin

Cc: Baxter, Kim; Brookie, Dean; Ciotti, Chloe; Matthew, Connie; McClung, Steve; Metz, Cathy; Smith, Mark; Whiteman, Steve; Wilbert, Paul; Zink, Ed; Burke, Sandy; Burke, Sandy 2nd email; Carver, Karen; Hoehlein, Rich; Jaycox, Kelli; McClain, Scott; Schertz, Peter; Speegle, Richard; Viehmann, Frank; Waller, Sarah; Youssef, Melissa; Zimsky, Bill

Subject: Follow up comments on proposed trail closures after last joint Board meeting

Hello to the members of the Natural Lands Preservation Advisory Board and the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board,

The following points of mine are being made in response to some of the discussion that occurred at the last joint Board meeting in October.

1. Don't let La Plata Open Space Conservancy's President Jerry Zink fool you as to what the City can do with lands that are purchased partially with GOCO grants. Specifically, Zink is wrong in stating that conservation easements don't respond to need. I would refer you to the Deed for Conservation Easement for Dalla Mountain Park, where the reserved right is given to the city to permit bicycling activities, and to amend (read #10) the document jointly with the Conservancy if it's agreed that there is a need. As for Zink's comment that it is unnatural for GOCO to fund open space projects that are meant specifically for recreation, I will refute that, as well. A number of examples of open space acquisitions funded strictly for recreation can be viewed on GOCO's website, including the Valmont Bike Park in Boulder. In 2014, GOCO also funded skate parks, ice rink repairs and athletic facilities to make outdoor recreation more accessible for various communities.

2. The steeper technical trails with freeride features on them are important to a rapidly growing user group in our community.

3. A formal written process for allowing members of the public to create mountain bike specific trails is nonexistent, leaving trails users with the option to give the idea to Trails 2000 with the hope of them agreeing with it. Either that, or one must present the idea to the City's Boards who have been known to shrug off trail project proposals until they can gauge the community's perception to the first progressive freeride trail known as Snakecharmer.

4. Two of the trails that the Natural Surface Trails Committee are recommending for closure are being discriminately targeted for being freeride-specific. Why is the Committee choosing to discriminate against trails illegally created by mountain bikers, while trails illegally created by climbers, for instance, are allowed to remain? Either way, I'm not saying you should destroy the climbers' trails just because they were never mapped out, nor were people given permission to create the trails. Meanwhile, some of the least sustainable trails on City lands–such as lower Horse Gulch Road, The Nose coming off of Raiders Ridge, and Down N' Out coming off of the extended Raiders Ridge–are not proposed for closure, even though they're the most high-maintenance, erosive, unsustainable trails around. Even so, I'm not saying they should all be closed, but fall lines made of cobble stone or jagged rocks don't make for the best trails for most people.

5. The brownfields versus greenfields approach presented by a citizen to the boards is a subjective oversimplification of what is occurring on City lands. Many of the trails marked for closure on City lands can be maintained and fixed to be more sustainable and to drain water properly. For one, the Hawk's Nest Freeride Trail can be maintained by users and erosion problems dealt with. Secondly, the Dalla Mountain Freeride Trail has rock features and a minimal grade to prevent the trail from blowing out during storms. Thirdly, erosion on the upper part of Grabens Loop can be drained off of the trail with water bars and natural french drains made from rocks found in the surrounding area that have permeable qualities when placed together. These three trails are marked for closure, yet have erosion problems that could be mitigated. Will you give me permission to do this maintenance?

Sincerely,

Adam Howell

Horse Gulch Blog LLC

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From: Don May [mailto:donrmay@gmail.com]

Sent: Wednesday, December 17, 2014 8:16 AM

To: Rec

Subject: proposed trail closures

Rec Board,

I have been riding these trails since 1984 or when they were first created. My observations over a long period of time is that they erode during heavy rains (like this fall) and then they self-heal over time, then erode, then heal. It's a cycle.

Trails that have a geomorphology (slope, soil type, etc) that are prone to excessive erosion continue to degrade and eventually cannot be ridden so people quit using them. The whole process is self-selecting. This is especially true on the west side shale.

Please do not close challenging trails based on a point-in-time assessment of erosion. It would be easy to monitor and document erosion at critical locations over time and then make an objective decision. This is not a time critical issue so let's collect the data and not jump to generalized conclusions.

Challenging trails are essential to the unique Durango cycling community. Dumbing down all of our trails to the least common denominator does not meet the needs of the large population of advanced riders.

I have some engineering experience in this and would be more than happy to assist in studying the erosion issue.

Thanks,

Don May

735 East 7th Ave

Durango

385-7504

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From: Joe Lewandowski [mailto:joelewski@hotmail.com]

Sent: Wednesday, December 17, 2014 10:58 AM

To: Rec

Subject: Close steep trails

To the Parks and Recreation and Natural Lands Preservation boards

Please, do the right thing and close the steep trails used by mountain bikers in our city parks. The erosion caused by bicycle tires is not benign. The ruts and disturbance to vegetation on steep hillsides cause water to channel severely carrying silt-laden polluted water into local streams and into the Animas River. This negatively impacts water quality and critical aquatic habitat. And as the "trail" gets rutted, bikers move a few feet away and cause rutting in another location. Eventually this becomes one big rut and the problem escalates.

Undoubtedly, you will receive far more letters and comments from mountain bikers than people who actually care about the environment. This issue, however, should not be decided simply by a show of hands. This is a conservation issue. The Natural Lands Preservation Board should have the last word on this.

Mountain bikers will never be satisfied with the number and location of trails. For this issue the decision must be made for environmental reasons which benefit ALL Durango residents.

Sincerely,

Joe Lewandowski

708 Obrien Drive # 2 Durango

member of city of Durango Planning Commission

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From: Gardner [mailto:gcatsman@yahoo.com]

Sent: Wednesday, December 17, 2014 11:20 AM

To: Rec

Subject: Trail closures

I am not in favor of trail closures. Closing trails will result in people traveling off trail and creating more "illegitimate" trails! If erosion is the issue, than keep trails open!

Thanks

gardner catsman

Local small Busness owner

9707691409

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From: Shane Ellis [mailto:s.ellis16@animashighschool.com]

Sent: Tuesday, December 16, 2014 1:26 PM

To: Rec

Subject: Trail closures

Hello,

My name is Shane Ellis. Im a 16 year old DH mountain bike racer and I have lived in Durango my entire life. Perhaps the area that I would like to advocate the most for is DumpJumps. Dumpjumps is an area near the tech center where riders build and ride jumps that are very challenging. These jumps are a five minute ride from my house and they are where I've spent most of my time riding and building there

over the past summer. Literally, it's my life. Also, the jumps better not get taken out before they remove the trash left by homeless people there. I've ridden and raced downhill bikes all over this country. I still have yet to go to a zone with as much potential as this place. Pllleeeease pleeeease pleeeeaaaase don't remove these jumps. I go to Animas High School. On my ride home I love being able to go ride at this zone half way between my school and my house. Without this place I would be much more likely to go build somewhere else. Before any decisions are made I would love to have an opportunity to have whoever is making these decisions come watch us ride them. Let's talk about it there, with the people who use them the most. Im saying I ride this place a lot and am really hoping they don't get removed. They've become to much of an influencal part of my riding that I couldn't imagine them simply disappearing. I understand erosion concerns. Here is my argument against that. Yes it erodes. The thing is it's on shail and you can practically watch the dirt move down the hill on it's own. I really don't think that the tire marks left behind are the cause of this erosion. Its going to happen anyways. I would love it if I could be contacted to schedule a time when we could meet at the jumps. I'll bring my bike and let's talk about them. As the primary user of this area please allow me that opportunity.

Thank you for your time,

Shane R. Ellis

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From: Shane Ellis [mailto:s.ellis16@animashighschool.com]

Sent: Tuesday, December 16, 2014 2:55 PM

To: Rec

Subject: Shane Ellis Op-ed article

Hello here is an Op-ed article I wrote for my humanities class which I thought you might appreciate

Illegal Mountain Biking

by Shane Ellis

Since, the creation of the bicycle people have been pushing the limits of what is possible on a bicycle. Currently, mountain biking has been increasing in popularity. Trails now are built for downhill mountain bikes and dirt jumpers. Many communities find it hard to satisfy everyone in the public's needs for every trial they spend their money on. As the sport progresses there will be a higher demand for jump/downhill trails. In places local governments aren't building trail for riding, people will build illegal trails which if built improperly, can cause damage to an ecosystem and violate landowners rights. In order to maximize liberty, and equality landowners and land managers must start working with riders and trail users to make desirable trails and jumps for everyone.

Towns like Durango need to be promoting being in the outdoors in as many ways as possible. Many people in towns like Durango's livelihoods are based on cycling. The government should never disable our ability to go into the woods and enjoy ourselves. John

F. Kennedy once said, “Physical fitness is not only one of the most important keys to a healthy body, it is the basis of dynamic and creative intellectual activity.”(Kennedy) Physical fitness is how we as humans progress our society. As our society becomes more obese, it is worth it to allow any way of doing something healthy because it promotes wellness even if that entails building trail.

There are many towns that have similar issues. *In Good Company* is a film that depicts an illegal trail network in Washington being torn down by the government for environmental reasons. The film interviews many local residents and business owners who are involved in the bike industry of Washington. Many of the users of these trails felt that was unnecessary and as a result the mountain bike scene in Bellingham quickly Spencer Santanello, owner of Prospect St. Cafe, said, “ when the North Fork trail system was removed, there was a dramatic decline in my business.”(Santanello) The Whatcom Trails Co-Op is an organization aiming to bring more and more desired trail access to the people of Whatcom County. There is something to be learned from this film and that is there is a clear demand for Downhill trails everywhere you go. The trails can be a valuable asset to the community, “Many of our most serious conflicts are conflicts within ourselves. Those who suppose their judgements are always consistent are unreflective or dogmatic.” (Rawles) This advocates for liberty because it is saying that restricting anyone from doing what they feel is right should be allowed to do their activity.

Often without an organization to create the specific trails the public wants, riders will build trails without consent. When these trails get discovered the local government will destroy the trails. This can put riders and the government at odds. There are many issues with illegal trail building including erosion. Erosion on a trail anywhere leaves a scar on the land that will take a long time to recover, if it ever does.These are genuine concerns but I feel it is important to understand the riders perspective. Shana Payne writes, “ ‘Flow trails’ for mountain biking don't necessarily cost more than hiking trails.” (Payne) With a crew working for the same amount of time and money that it takes to build hiking trails, downhill trails and jumps can be built for the same amount.

Trails 2000 is a trail organization based out of Durango, Colorado, and has been claiming they are going to build a bike park for two years. The Chapman Hill Recreation Area Bike Park plan was brought to the city council on February 27, 2012.(Durango Parks & Rec.) The plan was approved by the council. After two years there is still no such thing as the Chapman Hill Bike Park.There is a huge amount of frustration over this. The city council knows of at least four illegally constructed DH trails in the, La Plata county. These trails have been allowed because the Forest Service decided they are not a huge problem due to where they are and how they were made. Since there is no form of a bike park or dirt jumps many riders feel the need to construct illegal trails because there is nowhere else to ride DH bikes near town.

When features are removed in order to preserve our rights to the wilderness a very different result is often achieved. Recently in Durango, officials of the city ordered bike jumps, fire rings and shade structures to be removed. “ ‘A conservation easement protects it from ever being developed,’ said Schwarzbach. ‘That’s why they’re gems for us here, and once the community recognizes that and hopefully appreciates that that’s the case I’d like to think that the abuse of trail systems, or building camps, or fire pits or whatever would maybe

diminish. But I live in a rose-tinted world, and I put myself there."(Schwarzbach) The gems in Durango should be there for people to use. Using the wilderness in my opinion should be being allowed to shape the earth until your vision comes true. I could not disagree with Schwarzbach more.

If the goal is to promote the use of outdoors then not only should creations of ways to use them be allowed it should be encouraged. Removing these features could make people feel guilty for using the wilderness in a positive manner. It would be much easier to simply work with the riders to make obstacles that are desired by the riders. When there is a lack of cooperation to make trails riders want to ride then why is the creation of trails discouraged?

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From: Matt Muraro [mailto:matt.muraro@gmail.com]

Sent: Thursday, December 18, 2014 3:17 PM

To: Hall, Kevin

Subject: Area Trail Closures

Mr. Kevin Hall,

Thank you for taking the time to discuss local trail issues with me yesterday. The City has done an admirable job of acquiring open space, planning new trails, and managing the existing trails to make Durango what it is today. Reviewing the information on the City's website and talking to you has helped me understand the complexity of the issue and some of the concerns.

As someone who works and lives near the Dalla and Overend Mtn Parks, I strongly advocate for the incorporation of the Dalla "freeride" trail and other "freeride" trails into the City's trail system as a mapped or unmapped trail. I am an older rider who greatly appreciates having this type of trail on the northwest end of town. I would like to see the City incorporate more trails like this into the system. It is a community asset and an amenity that is unique to this portion of the City. There is a big difference between technical trails like Raiders Ridge, jumps in Overend and the drops on this trail. It serves a growing need as other trails get easier and become more crowded due to the City's population growth. Durango needs these types of trails to support the growth of local riders, the growth of the City's population, and to promote the area as a mountain biking destination.

Contrary to some other commenters, I believe that trail density is a good thing. Dense trails localize impacts in a growing community, allowing areas specifically preserved as habitat to be trail free. This trail is surrounded by other highly used trails and directly parallel to an already existing, mapped trail so I would believe its impact to the environment is very small.

I have been watching this trail in for some time and it has not suffered from erosion issues like some of the other mapped trails throughout the area (Horse Gulch meadow and Animas) during the summer monsoons. It has well-constructed features and will not erode any faster than the average trail. The trail is located in rocky terrain with sandy soils that infiltrates much of the run-off. In addition, the trail undulates and does not follow the topographic gradient, which channels runoff and contributes to

erosion in storm events. This short segment could easily be maintained if needed. Even if it did discharge some sediment in a large event, it is too far from any live waters to have an impact.

I commend the City for its efforts to improve the trails throughout this area and for taking my comments into consideration.

Sincerely,

Matt Muraro

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From: John Norton [mailto:john@nortonappraisal.com]

Sent: Tuesday, January 06, 2015 8:31 AM

To: Metz, Cathy

Cc: City Manager; Hall, Kevin

Subject: New Downhill Bike Course - Overend Mountain Park

Cathy,

Based on Joanne's communication below, it appears that the City is still taking written comment on the Natural Surface Trail System up until the January 8th meeting. Please consider this email additional comments on the proposed plan.

Parks & Recreation Advisory Board

Natural Lands Preservation Advisory Board

Immediately before Christmas, I discovered a new downhill bike course in Overend Mountain Park. The course is extensive and appears to be relatively new. Please see the attached document which shows the course on a map along with photographs.

The downhill/progressive/freeride bike community has requested that seven of the trails proposed for closure in the Natural Surface Trail Committee Recommendations remain open.

This request raises two questions: 1) If the request is granted and all seven trails remain open, how does the downhill/progressive/freeride biking community propose to "self-police" so that new unauthorized downhill courses such as the one documented here are no longer constructed? 2) Are they willing to close and reclaim this unauthorized downhill course and others like it?

Unauthorized trail construction similar to the new downhill bike course in Overend Mountain Park does cause resource damage as the pictures indicate. It is not just a little bit of erosion that heals over time. At the current rate of resource damage, Overend Mountain Park, as well as the other Durango natural land parks, will simply become expansive BMX tracks. This was not the vision represented by the City of Durango to Great Outdoors Colorado when the properies were acquired.

The construction of unauthorized downhill bike courses on Durango's natural lands is a significant issue. People are breaking the law by damaging City property. As part of your deliberations, I request that the City explore and implement a comprehensive solution to this obvious problem.

Sincerely,

John Norton

2009 Highland Avenue

Durango, Colorado 81301

970-247-8088

john@nortonappraisal.com

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