

**MINUTES AND PROCEEDINGS OF THE PARKS AND OPEN SPACE  
ADVISORY COMMITTEE,  
April 23, 2009**

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by David Batts in the Hearing Room of the Board of Commissioners, Third Floor, Boulder County Courthouse, Boulder, Colorado.

**POSAC Members in Attendance**

Present: David Batts, Sue Cass, Lisa Dilling, Eric Hozempa, Paul Jurasin, Mary McQuiston, and Jason Vogel (arrived at 7:20)

Excused: Christian Meyer and Janice Moore

**Staff in Attendance**

Jim Daus, Renata Frye, Therese Glowacki, Dave Hoerath, Vivienne Jannatpour, Rich Koopmann, Ron Stewart, Ernst Strenge

**March Meeting Minutes**

Eric Hozempa moved to accept the March meeting minutes, and Lisa Dilling seconded the motion. *Motion carried unanimously.*

**Public Participation for Items not on the Agenda**

- Richard Carlson, 5469 Niwot Rd., Longmont. He spoke in opposition of the proposed Lyons to Boulder Regional Trail. He reports that the County may use eminent domain over 24 private properties for this trail. He states the County is considering a 200-ft. bridge on this trail. He also maintains that the County is considering taking an 8-ft. wide trail up Haystack Mountain. He urges POSAC to learn more about this project. He has 78 neighbors who share his concerns.
  
- Don Getman, 4353 Oxford Rd., Longmont. He is also against the building of the trail. He must cross this trail in three places while driving Oxford, Niwot, and Plateau Roads, encountering runners and others users with their dogs, making it very dangerous. One of the proposed trails will split his ranch in two. He also worries about debris.
  
- Anne Larson, 8498 Stirrup Ct., Longmont. She is opposed because the area is a rural setting and not the place for such a trail. Trespassing would occur on private property and dog waste would be on private land. Boulder County needs to put trails on County Open Space, not private land.
  
- Gary Zimmerman, 5952 Oxford Rd., Longmont. He wonders how much consideration has been given to the impact on wildlife. He states that the trail will be dangerous because of the canal. He asks if a fence will be built?

- Susan Carlson, 5469 Niwot Rd., Longmont. She is against the trail and asserts that Haystack Mountain needs to be protected. A representative from the Transportation Department told her that the trail will go over Haystack Mountain.

### Discussion

POSAC has asked for an update, or a public hearing, regarding this proposed trail. Ron Stewart responded that the Lyons to Boulder Trail Project (formerly known as the Feeder Canal Project) is in the Comprehensive Plan as a regional trail and was one of the top priorities identified when the Regional Trails program was established, which has been approved twice by voters in a sales tax election. It is a Transportation Department tax, which means it is a Transportation Department program, but POS is involved. They are in the beginning of the planning process and have hired consultants. They held an initial public workshop at the POS building on January 16. More than 100 citizens attended to give input. The current phase involves alternatives identification, where all alternatives considered are put onto maps and then will be put on the website so all alternatives can be seen. The next phase will be to identify just 2 or 3 alternatives. A second public meeting will take place, probably in June, so citizens can give their input. Transportation will come before POSAC when they are ready to propose a corridor.

### **Property Transaction: Becker**

*\* Action Requested- Recommendation to BOCC*

Acquisition of 75 acres south of Bunce School Road, North of Peaceful Valley  
Staff Presenter: Jim Daus

*See Staff Memo for Detail on Presentation.*

### Questions

Paul Jurasin: Are there any four-wheel drive trails or hiking trails on the property? Jim Daus: I don't believe so. Lisa Dilling: Are the building sites very accessible? Jim Daus: Yes, they are both accessible. Sue Cass: The cost of a little over \$4,000 per acre seems very reasonable. Are we getting a bargain? Jim Daus: In the mountains we really look more at the building right value, rather than per acre value. I think it's the right value for this property. David Batts: It looks like you showed a road in the photos, is there a plan to mitigate activities? Jim Daus: There is no road, what I showed you was just a driveway. There is just one access road, which we would probably gate.

### Public Comment

None

### Motion

Lisa Dilling moved to accept staff recommendation for the purchase and Sue Cass seconded the motion. ***Motion carried unanimously.***

### Discussion on Motion

Lisa Dilling: Obviously this is a very beautiful property, but it is also close to or contiguous to other pieces of open space. It doesn't seem like an unreasonable price. Mary McQuiston: I

agree, and I strongly recommend you gate it to stop any off-road vehicle use. David Batts read Christian Meyer's comments into the record: *I think the Becker acquisition is a good one if only based upon the view from the Peak to Peak Highway.*

**Update on Disposal of Open Space Property  
for Purposes of a Community Forestry Sort Yard**

*\*Information Only*

Presenter: Michelle Krezek, Director, Intergovernmental Affairs

*See Staff Memo for Detail on Presentation.*

Questions

Why would the County pay off the debt owed by the Town of Nederland? Michelle Krezek: That is something the Town asked for in the negotiations. Lisa Dilling: But this is a community yard for them [Nederland residents]? Michelle Krezek: Yes, it will be there specifically for residents of that area. Mary McQuiston: Will there be a commercial operation on-site? Michelle Krezek: The Land Use code does not allow a sale yard there. Any wood that has economic value would be sorted out and not put into the wood curtain burner and could be sold at another location. Paul Jurasin: I appreciate the update on this project. Sometimes we have a discussion on an issue and never hear what happens after our meeting. Michelle Krezek: POS will bring to POSAC the actual Land Use Limited Impact application and the Commissioners would appreciate your comments. Therese Glowacki: POS will start working on the details of the Limited Impact Special Use Review, including location, fire prevention, entrance and exit sites. If you would like to have a field trip to the Meeker Park site, POS would gladly arrange it. David Batts: It seems we have interest in that. Sue Cass: What will be done to the wood you are clearing to make the sort yard? Therese Glowacki: We would use Peak-to-Peak Wood if we can provide them with the proper lengths that they prefer. We will also use some in the POS biomass heating system because we need an annual supply of wood. The slash will go in the air curtain burner.

Public Comment

None

**Draft Betasso Preserve Management Plan**

Staff Presenter: Ernst Streng

*\*Action Requested –  
Recommendation to BOCC*

*See Staff Memo for Detail on Presentation.*

Questions

Jason Vogel: What were the public comments regarding the bike ban? Were there other polarizing issues? Ernst Streng: I received the highest number of comments regarding the alternative day use regulation. Some other public concerns were about the one-way directional use, some people would like to see it implemented on the new trail system. Jason Vogel: How many were for the bike ban, and how many against? Ernst Streng: Fourteen said they support the alternative day use for bikes, 68 were against it any restrictions to bikes. Approximately 40

comments suggested a bike-only day. Six comments suggested increasing the biking days to three or more days a week. Three comments suggested reducing bike days to only one day a week. Mary McQuiston: On the west side of the proposed trail, the switchbacks seem very severe. Ernst Strenge: That is Trail Option 2B. That is a fairly steep hillside and the trail avoids some wildlife areas that way. It's probably a 20-40% slope. On average, our trail won't be more than a 8% slope. Mary McQuiston: What is the slope of the hillside? I know there are concerns over erosion hazards. Ernst Strenge: It's 20-30% or greater in that section. Mary McQuiston: How wide is the trail you are proposing through that section? Ernst Strenge: We are not proposing a trail width. That will come through our design phase, after talking to some user groups and looking at the terrain. We may create some pull off areas, but that section of trail will probably end up being a little more technical. Lisa Dilling: There were concerns about the safety of getting into the property from the canyon trail. How far off is that assessment? Ernst Strenge: I don't think we have a date for that. We would need to work with willing landowners because it involves private property. Paul Jurasin: You mentioned that the northern part of the property is a potential Lynx habitat. Is there any evidence of Lynx there? Ernst Strenge: No, it is more that the north-facing dense Douglas Fir habitat has the potential to be inhabited by Lynx. Dave Hoerath: There have been some sightings west of Mountain Meadows. Not all Lynx have collars anymore, so we are not sure. Paul Jurasin: You said a caretaker position was based on funding. From where does the funding come? Ernst Strenge: It would be part of our annual budget request. Eric Hozempa: You said the caretaker position would actively work with groups. Could you tell us what that would entail? Ernst Strenge: We've talked about semi-regular meetings with groups to listen to their concerns, working directly with local land owners when there are incidents of trespass or other problems, and possibly being the contact person for volunteer projects on the property. Eric Hozempa: I wanted to clarify that you asking us to approve Trail Option 2B plus the habitat conservation area as well? Ernst Strenge: That's correct. Sue Cass: Do you have a feel for when the Fourmile Canyon access will occur? Ernst Strenge: We have the trail easement with the landowner. It would be a matter of working with the BLM, which would probably happen soon after the adoption of the management plan. That process would take 6-12 months. Sue Cass: Because there is no parking there, this would primarily be access for mountain bikers? Ernst Strenge: Correct. Lisa Dilling: How are the existing social trails on Benjamin being closed off? Ernst Strenge: A lot of those areas will be in the habitat conservation area, so they will be closed to the public and it will be enforced. Mary McQuiston: Are there any plans for changing the parking situation? Ernst Strenge: The plan does allow for a redesign if more parking is needed, but right now we think the parking is adequate. David Batts: I like the concept of having HCA's. What do you think is required in the management of a HCA? Therese Glowacki: The most important piece would be closing the social trails, which are highly eroded. We would utilize volunteer groups for restoration, including planting local species and mulching. There will be no forest management because Mountain Pine Beetles will not attack Douglas Firs. We don't think we will need to have wildlife habitat enhancement. There will be some weed management. David Batts: This has been an intensive and expedited process. Are you satisfied with the public process? Ernst Strenge: Definitely. We have heard from many different constituents and I think we have come up with a win-win situation for everybody.

## Public Comment

- Linda Andes-Georges, 8417 Stirrup Lane, Longmont. She thinks this is a very good plan. She read a portion of a comment from Stephen Jones: ... *it's essential that we set aside areas where wildlife can thrive without being disturbed by humans and their pets. I also support provisions in the plan for an on-site caretaker... As proposed, the management plan is a definite "win-win" which expands and enhances recreational opportunities while providing permanent protection for critical wildlife habitat.*
- Chris Abrahamson, 304 Acadia Ave., Lafayette. He speaks on behalf of Boulder County Audubon Society, who fully supports the proposed plan. His group believes this plan provides the best balance in habitat conservation, recreation opportunities, and historic preservation.
- Deb Abrahamson, 304 Acadia Ave., Lafayette. She echoes the previous comments.
- Bonnie Forbes, 1188 Weaver Dr., Boulder. She and her neighbors have all experience terrible trespassing problems. They have not been able to keep bikers off their land. She is also concerned about the fragile wildlife and the danger of fires.
- Paige Cofrin, 470 Weaver Rd., Boulder. He owns land that borders Betasso. There used to be a sign and gate near an access road that was put up by the County that closed the access to Betasso from the west. The sign is now on the ground and the gate is barely on the hinges because of so many accessing Betasso from his property. Weaver Road is a private road, yet bikers use this to get to Betasso from the west, making it very dangerous. He insists that a ranger is necessary for this plan. If the County can't afford one, they can't afford both.
- Mark McIntyre, 2045 Balsam Dr., Boulder. He speaks on behalf of the Boulder Mountain Bike Alliance. They have three areas of concern. 1) The Wed./Saturday mountain bike restriction is unfair. 2) They advocate Trail 2A because it has fewer switchbacks and is probably less problematic for horses. 3) They would like to have a legal east-west access to the property.
- Linda Senser, 1767 Fourmile Canyon Dr., Boulder. She only has an objection with the spur coming off onto Fourmile. The bike traffic is terrible right now and it is very dangerous. This spur is designed for bikes and increasing bike traffic would be idiotic.
- Linda Lyle, 135 Blue Ribbon Rd., Boulder. She would like to see a bike lane on Fourmile Canyon Road because it is so treacherous.
- Marcia Barber, Mountain Meadows. She would like to see more off-limits days for bikes. She doesn't think any trail should be built here. The fire danger is also a major concern for her. Trail 2A goes into a drainage area that is important to wildlife. She also thinks Trail 2B is too steep and will be too narrow for equestrians. She doesn't think this should be rushed. She would like also like to see more research done to see how wildlife would be impacted.
- Arlene Miller, 173 Wild Tiger Rd., Boulder. She is an equestrian. She has had some very scary encounters with bikes while riding her horse. Equestrian trails need to be at least 4-ft

wide, have no blind corners, and have pullouts large enough for two horses. This is an opportunity to build a trail for all users, not just a bike trail. She appreciates the work put into the plan and the habitat conservation area.

### Questions

Lisa Dilling: What is the trail recommendation that we will vote on tonight? Is Trail 2B definite? Will the specifics be decided later? Ernst Strenge: You will vote on the conceptual trail alignment. The design option will be decided later, based on input from user groups and the comments we have heard tonight. Mary McQuiston: Will the design consultant you hired still be involved in the trail design? Ernst Strenge: We don't have a contract for that. POS has it's own landscape architects and trails staff. David Batts: Who was the consultant you used? Ernst Strenge: IMBA Trail Solutions [International Mountain Bike Association]. Lisa Dilling: We will vote on continuing the 2-day ban for mountain bikes? Would that policy be revisited at a later time? Ernst Strenge: The 2-day ban would be for a minimum two years, then the ban would be looked at again to see if it was working. Mary McQuiston: The directional regulations are also being voted on tonight? Ernst Strenge: Yes, to continue the directional use on the Canyon Loop Trail, but not to include it on the new trail system. If we see user conflict then we could implement directional use on the new trail system. Lisa Dilling: How long will this new trail system take to open? Ernst Strenge: It would start this year, but we are not sure how long it will take to complete. Jason Vogel: Could we vote on the parts of the plan separately? David Batts: The request is to recommend the management plan, so we should see if there is a motion. If there is not a motion then we can entertain something like that.

### Motion #1

Jason Vogel moved to vote on individual pieces of the plan. ***Motion failed with no second.***

### Motion #2

Lisa Dilling moved to recommend the plan as written, and Eric Hozempa seconded the motion. ***Motion carried 5-2.***

### Discussion on Motion #2

Lisa Dilling: Any management plan has many elements and details but you really can't go through line by line. This motion can fail and then we can discuss an alternative. I like the habitat conservation area. I like the public process. The loop designation as a concept is a good compromise between habitat conservation and user groups. I have concerns that this is not a good trail for horses so I'd like to see how that works out during the public process. Eric Hozempa: I would echo what Lisa said. I would encourage POS to move forward with getting a caretaker. I would also like something to be done with signage on Fourmile. I support this management plan. Sue Cass: I am thrilled with the HCA aspect of this plan. I have concerns about the new trail being safe for equestrians. I am not sure if the trail can accommodate horses; I would like to see that hashed out in the future. Mary McQuiston: I am also thrilled with the HCA, but I don't know if I can support this plan. I think more information is needed regarding wildlife migration from Betasso. There have been several comments that the trail will be highly technical and will become a de facto mountain bike trail. It does not look like a multi-use trail to me, so I don't think I could support this in general. Jason Vogel: I have a number of comments to make. I would like to start by saying that I am a mountain biker. I think I am responsible mountain biker. I patrol Betasso twice a week. Mountain bikers are equal taxpaying citizens.

There are some bad eggs; I would say the same about hikers. I am disturbed by a number of things that have been said, that this is a “good compromise”, “balanced approach”, “win-win”. I don’t think this is necessarily a bad plan; I support many parts of it, including the HCA. But mountain bikers are facing disproportionate discrimination. Mountain bikers have the highest potential for user conflict; this is one reason why mountain bikers have become some of the best trail designers in the world. Trails need to be built to manage mountain bikes. IMPA doesn’t design trails for mountain bike use only. 2B is a trail that protects one of the three drainages on Arkansas Mountain, and to do that the trail has lots of switchbacks, which increases user conflict, increases erosion, and decreases user experience. I prefer Option 2A. Regarding safety, I ride up the Boulder Canyon Trail and then I get on Boulder Canyon Road and it is scary. We will see the same problem on Fourmile Canyon Road. I would bet that if a trail was built on the cliff, with stairs, mountain bikers would use it. I’m disappointed that it wasn’t considered more seriously. People will continue to trespass because some people have done it for so long, they feel a right of ownership. I don’t think that creating a HCA and putting a ranger on the property will necessarily solve the issue. I think a possible management solution would be to create an East-West connector. So while I do support about three-quarters of the plan, I will not support this motion. Paul Jurasin: We are evaluating the management plan as a whole and I do support it. I support the HCA portion of it. The trail would be difficult for horses; I don’t know what we could do about that. Lisa Dilling: The safety issues are very concerning, but I don’t know if this management plan is the way to address them.

David Batts read Christian Meyer’s comments about the management plan into the record: *I think the proposed plan strikes a prudent balance the various possible potential uses. The leave-the-land-alone advocate in me is pleased with the creation of a conservation area will result in a significant improvement over existing conditions. I think that setting aside a large area of a property like this is important. It is similar to what we have done at Heil but on a smaller scale. I am concerned that local historical but recent uses may continue but I think the trial option proposed will go a long way towards pulling mountain bikers into a controlled area. The recreation advocate in me is pleased to see a significant addition to the system, more and longer would be better, but this is a major addition in my mind, especially given the other uses and needs on the property. I am glad an Alaska road access is not part of the proposed system. I believe that would cause more problems than benefits. I appreciate that the trail construction will be difficult in some areas, and that is likely to make for a better trail experience. If you take a look at the new loop at Heil, the Heil valley extension into Lyons and the proposal here I think the county has made significant advances in recreational opportunities in the last two years. And it should be recognized that this is a change in the way we have been looking at and managing properties. I think it is a good thing. I like the idea of a revisit of the restricted mountain bike use after the system has been up in place for a few years. The was put in place at Betasso against the recommendation of POSAC, opposed primarily because it singled out s specific group for exclusion and had the appearance of simply appeasing the local residents, but it does seemed to have worked out well and the local residents are to be credited for being some of the best stewards of the land. It is their backyard after all. I appreciate the level of effort staff has put into the update to the Betasso MP. The range of items that is considered and revisited each time an addition or update to a plan is made. I don’t think we are missing anything significant in terms of what is there and what the concerns are. This really boils down to how do we want to use our properties. And I think this is evident in the stakeholder process that has been used – all opinions have been heard by the others, and incorporated to varying degrees. As one committee member has pointed out – if everyone leaves the table slightly happy and slightly disappointed then we probably have a plan that meets what the taxpayers are after. This is a huge investment for the County. I like what I see in the plan and I would vote for it if I were present at the meeting.*

### Motion #3

Jason Vogel moved that the new loop not be subject to Wednesday/Saturday closures after a connector has been built to Fourmile Canyon Road, and Lisa Dilling seconded the motion.

***Motion failed 3-4.***

### Discussion on Motion #3

Jason Vogel: Because this area of the trail system is so far removed from the parking lot, it's going to be used mostly by mountain bikers and trail runners. You will see much less user conflict, which is the reason for the 2-day closure. The physics of the trail would probably limit the use by many equestrians. In addition, there will be another connector eventually built to Fourmile Canyon Road. Throw the bikers a bone and tell them that you are willing to compromise. David Batts: Do you think mountain bikers would stay on that one loop and not be tempted to go onto the main part? Jason Vogel: I know that some bikers violate the current restrictions. But I know that you develop a very negative relationship with the biking community if you don't try to find a compromise. Mary McQuiston: My opinion would be to see how it goes and not vote today about what may happen in a few years. Sue Cass: I agree with Mary; let's see what the actual user trends are on the new trail.

### Motion #4

Jason Vogel moved that the definition of this particular HCA allow for future consideration of an East-West corridor. ***Motion failed with no second.***

### Motion #5

Jason Vogel moved that Boulder County consider variations to 2A and 2B trail connectors to try to minimize user conflict and trail erosion issues by reconsidering the boundaries of the HCA, and Lisa Dilling seconded the motion. ***Motion failed 1-6.***

### Discussion on Motion #5

Jason Vogel: The recommended trail sounds very similar to the Canyon Link Trail, which suffers significant erosion problems and user conflict issues. The problem with a HCA designation is hard and fast. We could accomplish some good things while maintaining the spirit of the HCA.

### Motion #6

Lisa Dilling moved to recommend to BOCC to convene a task force or a forum for discussion and resolution of the issues of traffic safety on roads around our active mountain recreation areas, and Mary McQuiston seconded the motion. ***Motion carried 5-2.***

### Discussion on Motion #6

Lisa Dilling: This is about safe access to the properties for recreation, which affects our open space users. Paul Jurasin: I think what I'm hearing you say is that we would like POS to consider safety measures when developing their management plans? Lisa Dilling: I don't think it is just a POS issue; it is a County issue.

Mary McQuiston: I would like to state that I would like to see the sign that has fallen down on Weaver Road get replaced as soon as possible. We are asking a lot of our open space neighbors and we owe them security.

### **Director's Update**

The transportation element of the Comprehensive Plan is about to be updated. This safety issue for cyclists could be considered in the plan. POS will suggest it.

This is National Volunteer Week. POS statistics show about 40% of all county volunteer hours are spent in POS, including the Extension Office. POS volunteer hours have increased by more than 50% in the last year. The biggest increase has come in the form of work projects, such as Picture Rock Trail.

POSAC will have a special meeting about Roundup Ready Beets in place of the regular May meeting. This meeting will begin at 5:30, with pizza provided at 5:00. This will be a joint meeting with the Food and Agriculture Policy Council, and public input will be given. You will be asked to make a recommendation at the June POSAC meeting.

The Colorado Open Meetings Law was discussed to remind POSAC members about the rules of email communications between members. Such emails must be included in the packets for public viewing, but it is better legally to not send these emails at all because it can place the public at a disadvantage. POS will consider placing a link on the POSAC web page that includes all communication from the public and POSAC members.

Jason Vogel: I am one of the guilty parties who sometimes ignore this recommendation. We should have our email correspondence tied to a blog. I could have started a public conversation about the issues discussed today if a POS blog existed. We would have had better communication, and it would have been publicly noticed. POS needs to solve this.

Ron Stewart: The law doesn't allow this. The law says discussions and decisions need to be made in a forum. Some local city councils have gotten into hot water because of this.

Jason Vogel moved that POS staff investigate the creation of a blog to allow POSAC members to have conversations in a publicly noticed way through email correspondence. Lisa Dilling seconded the motion. ***Motion carried 5-2.***

### **Discussion on Motion**

Jason Vogel: I would like to see a hotline like the Boulder City Council has. David Batts: I'm assuming this would set precedence for other County advisory groups.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 9:46 p.m.