

## LARIMER COUNTY PARKS ADVISORY BOARD

*The mission of Larimer County Department of Natural Resources is to establish, protect and manage significant regional parks and open lands providing quality outdoor recreational opportunities and stewardship of natural resource values. We are committed to fostering a sense of community and appreciation for the natural and agricultural heritage of Larimer County for present and future generations.*

### MINUTES

**Date:** June 2, 2020

**Time:** 5:30 – 8:30 p.m.

**Location:** Zoom Webinar

**Contact:** Please contact Sidney at [smichl@larimer.org](mailto:smichl@larimer.org) or 970-619-4462 if you are unable to attend.

Members		Staff		Guests
Mandy Peters	x	Daylan Figgs	x	Brad Wind (Northern Water)
Daniela Lawler	x	Dan Rieves	x	Jeff Stahla (Northern Water)
Deborah Shulman	x	Meegan Flenniken	x	
Kathy Maher	x	Lesli Ellis	x	
Michael Robinson	x	*Stephen Johnson		
Robert Harris	x	Sidney Michl (minutes)	x	
Russell Fruits	x			
Ruthie Rollins	x			
Stephen Amundson	x			
Steve Ambrose	x			

**x = present**

**\*commissioner**

1. CALL TO ORDER/INTRODUCTIONS – 5:33 p.m.
  - a. Daylan introduced Lesli Ellis, Brad Wind, and Meegan Flenniken.
2. PUBLIC COMMENT – none
3. AGENDA REVIEW
4. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF LAST MEETING MINUTES
  - a. Rob moved to approve the minutes from last meeting, Stephen seconded, motion passed unanimously.

## 5. INFORMATION & ANNOUNCEMENTS

- a. Natural Resource events for this month: [larimer.org/naturalresources](http://larimer.org/naturalresources).
- b. To sign up for Parks Advisory Board updates, go to [apps.larimer.org/subscriptions.cfm](https://apps.larimer.org/subscriptions.cfm), enter your email, click “Subscribe,” and check the “Parks Advisory Board” box.

## 6. UPDATES & REPORTS

- a. Park District updates – Dan/Mark
  - i. Dan – Parks and day use areas are hitting capacity (including more remote locations like Pinewood Reservoir) as early as 9:30am every day. Staff are spending a lot of time controlling parking lots, it’s been difficult to turn people away. Already inspected 5,000 boats, ahead of schedule from last year. As of June 1<sup>st</sup>, all campgrounds are open and accepting tent campers. Vault restrooms are open and being cleaned by DNR staff. Closures still in place: group use pavilions, swim beaches, cabins and tipis, and showerhouses. Second unit restrictions are in place at some campgrounds. Special events are limited due to group size restrictions. Waiting for approval from USBR regarding cabins and turn lane at Satanka, delays may push projects into 2021. ANS shelters are still on track. Daylan said camping revenue was down 17%, day use was up significantly (\$60k), hoping to close gap on camping shortfall by end of summer. Currently looking to reopen cabins by purchasing hydrogen peroxide cleaning devices. Dan said the devices will allow us to perform further sanitation and reopen other facilities as well.
  - ii. Deborah commented she’s seen visitors at Lory State Park not wearing masks or social distancing and that higher visitation has illustrated the need to adapt and provide more facilities/trails. She mentioned the Horsetooth swim race and said the committee is uncertain how to move forward to comply with social distancing. Dan shared similar concerns for capacity issues and said the Carter Lake swim race is also on the threshold of cancellation.
  - iii. Mandy said she was impressed by restroom cleanliness and visitor behavior at County parks and open spaces.
- b. Quarterly report – Q1 2020 – Daylan
  - i. Daylan highlighted a few key stories:
    1. DNR received the FLAP grant for \$7M with \$3M match to improve aging infrastructure on federally owned reservoir parks
    2. Cabin road renovations at Hermit Park Open Space
    3. New noxious weed found in Larimer County
    4. Financial summary through end of March
    5. Mountain lion event and response in Loveland
  - ii. Deborah asked when the parking lot and archery range will be completed at Satanka, Daylan said the archery range is indefinitely on hold, the parking lot and turn lane are both in the permitting process with USBR. Meeting tomorrow to discuss CIP projects, will likely be moved to fall of 2021.

## 7. DISCUSSION ITEMS

- a. Glade Reservoir 1041 update – Daylan
  - i. DNR’s review of the Glade Reservoir Recreation Concept Master Plan and the supporting documents submitted as part of the NISP 1041 permit application was included in the meeting packet. Daylan explained the department’s comments were guided by the 2017 Reservoir Parks Master Plan and the 2015 Open Lands Master Plan. The review was sent to the Planning Commission and will be used to form the memo that represents Larimer County on the 1041 process.
  - ii. Deborah asked which agency will build and fund recreational facilities at Glade, Daylan said it will primarily be Northern. The recreational feature is valued ~\$22M to the County, Northern is the primary financial sponsor and the County is secondary depending on the recreational amenity.
  - iii. Ruthie commented there are 350 parking spaces proposed for Glade and asked how many are available at Horsetooth. Daylan said Horsetooth has a similar number and a financial model was performed to analyze parking lot turnover and demand relative to Horsetooth and Carter Lake.
  - iv. Kathy said the letter reads as if it’s been decided Larimer County will manage recreation at Glade and asked who ultimately decides. Daylan said both the County and Northern prefer we manage recreation, but it is not finalized yet and will ultimately be decided by the commissioners. The public comment process will begin in June and run through August.

## 8. ACTION ITEMS

- a. Approval of e-bike study special permit/modification to regulations – Meegan
  - i. Meegan explained that current regulations allow class I and II e-bikes on concrete and asphalt paved surface trails only. DNR received direction recently from the BOCC to move forward with an e-bike study that would allow some form of access within our natural surface trail system. The study would be within a defined 6-8 month window of time, likely starting this summer. Around 30 random participants would be selected via a lottery and issued requirements and identification. The tentative plan is to focus on Devil’s Backbone Open Space and allow class I only, 2-wheeled e-bikes on trails that currently allow bikes. DNR anticipates public outreach and citizen surveys in 2020 and 2021 related to the desire to open our natural surface trail system to this type of motorized use. Meegan explained DNR is asking for a recommendation from PAB to modify regulation F13 to allow class I only, 2-wheeled e-bikes at specific designated natural surface trails within our system for purposes of the study.
  - ii. Ruthie asked about the difference between class I and class II e-bikes. A class I e-bike is defined by the state of CO as an electrically assisted bike equipped with a motor that provides assistance when the rider is pedaling up to 20 mph. A class II e-bike provides motor assistance when the rider is not pedaling.

- iii. Deborah commented these discussions are also occurring at Fraser and nearby national forests and encouraged PAB to review e-bikes from a safety perspective. She asked about the line between allowing e-bikes vs. all motorized vehicles (dirt bikes, e-scooters) on trails. Meegan shared concerns for safety and for throttle assist and mentioned they anticipate maintenance and patrol challenges to balance frontcountry vs. backcountry use, particularly if e-bikes increase visitor access to more backcountry locations. Deborah commented motorized vehicles will increase wear and tear on trails.
- iv. Rob said there isn't much difference between a class II e-bike and a modest motorcycle and downhill speeds can be dangerous. Meegan clarified the study will only allow class I e-bikes for those reasons. Meegan noted there's a misconception that e-bikes are intended for aging or disabled groups but many bike companies market e-bikes to a different demographic.
- v. Russell commented the hunting season at Red Mountain Open Space is only allowed during "off days" and asked if there will be designated days or times for study participants to use e-bikes. He also asked how DNR plans to manage pushback. Meegan said there are limitations to the study due to its timeframe and that we can explore designated days for study participants. Daylan said we will be frontloading communication about the study so visitors at Devil's Backbone are aware of e-bike use and participants will be issued vests for identification. This study will be the initial step in the process of considering future regulations.
- vi. Deborah encouraged visitors to comment if they feel less safe with e-bikes on trails and expressed concern for traditional user experiences.
- vii. Mandy said user conflict and the addition of higher speed bikers concerns her as a mountain biker.
- viii. Daylan said we are working to make a survey accessible on the website and social media and that PAB raised good points about unintended consequences of e-bike use.
- ix. Ruthie asked about a cross-sectional study, Meegan said the lottery will be random. Daylan added Interior agencies are gathering public input on e-bikes via a Federal Register, DNR can glean information and data from their public comments as well.
- x. Rob moved to recommend the BOCC modify regulations to allow LCDNR to conduct an exploratory study of class I, 2-wheeled e-bikes to last no longer than December of 2021. Steve seconded. Those in favor: Mandy, Daniela, Deborah, Kathy, Mike, Rob, Russell, Stephen, Steve. Those opposed: Ruthie. Motion passed.

## 9. US BUREAU OF RECLAMATION UPDATE

- a. Jeff Stahla updated the Horsetooth Outlet Project is being discussed at the City of Fort Collins Council meeting tonight. Horsetooth Reservoir is currently 98% full, will receive more water until July 1<sup>st</sup> when inflow will be reduced to 0%. Carter Lake is >90% full,

water will continue to be pushed into Carter throughout the season. Once Flatiron Reservoir reaches full capacity, pumps will be turned off.

- b. Rob asked when the Horsetooth Marina will become inaccessible, Jeff said there will still be enough water in Horsetooth for recreation through Labor Day but boats should be removed after the weekend. Deborah asked what elevation is needed for the Outlet Project, Jeff said 5,388 ft.

#### 10. BOARD MEMBER REPORTS

#### 11. DIRECTOR'S REPORT: Daylan Figgs

- a. First quarter sales tax was up 5% YTD, but expecting Help Preserve Open Space sales tax to decline due to COVID. Number of boat launches and day use visitation are up from last year, camping is picking up as well. A key advantage is operating expenses left over from old sales tax, which have allowed DNR to frontload money into cash reserves. Some capital improvement projects might be shifted to 2021 but capital repair projects on existing facilities and projects with grant funding will move forward as scheduled. Not anticipating any staff changes, only one DNR position is funded by General Fund (County Forester). The camping freeze gave the department the time and capacity to hire commercial restroom cleaners, onboard seasonal staff, and complete additional projects such as hazard tree removals. Glade 1041 process is ahead of us, board members are encouraged to participate as community members if they wish. Group size limitations are up to 50 participants, more to come on restarting education and special events at a smaller scale.

#### 12. NEXT MEETING SCHEDULED: 7/7/2020 via Zoom Webinar

#### 13. EXECUTIVE SESSION: Pursuant to C.R.S. (24-6-402(4)(a)) for discussion pertaining to the purchase, acquisition, lease, transfer or sale of any real, personal or other property interest.

#### 14. ADJOURN – 7:04 p.m.