



**Parks &
Open Space**

**Parks & Open Space Advisory Committee
AGENDA**

May 27, 2021
6:30 p.m.

Virtual Meeting

Suggested Timetable

6:30 Call to Order

6:30 Approval of the April 22, 2021 Meeting Minutes
ACTION REQUESTED: Minutes Approval

6:35 Public Participation - Items Not on the Agenda

Presentations

6:45 Newland Acquisition
ACTION REQUESTED: Recommendation to BOCC
PRESENTER: Sandy Duff, Senior Land Officer

7:05 Strategic Plan Updates: Plant Ecology, Wildlife, Weeds
ACTION REQUESTED: None, Information item only
PRESENTER: David Hirt, Plant Ecology Supervisor; Susan Spaulding, Wildlife Supervisor; and Steve Sauer, Weeds Supervisor

7:50 Director's Update

7:55 Adjourn

DRAFT

Parks & Open Space

Parks & Open Space Advisory Committee MINUTES

April 22, 2021
6:30 p.m.

Virtual Meeting

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM by James Krug

Members:

James Krug
Jenn Archuleta
Paula Fitzgerald
Steven Meyrich
Trace Baker
Ann Obenchain
Tony Lewis
Janet George
Heather Williams -- **Excused**

Staff:

Eric Lane
Therese Glowacki
Mac Kobza
Pascale Fried
Judy Dvorshock
Vivienne Jannatpour
Nik Brockman
Renata Frye
Dave Hoerath

Approval of the March 25, 2021 Meeting Minutes

ACTION REQUESTED: Minutes Approval

ACTION: Obenchain moved approval of item. Baker seconded the motion.

VOTE: **AYES:** Krug, Archuleta, Fitzgerald, Meyrich, Baker, Obenchain, Lewis, George; **EXCUSED:** Williams

Presentations

Elk Management Update

ACTION REQUESTED: Recommendation to BOCC

PRESENTER: Therese Glowacki, Resource Management Division Manager

Attachment: April Draft Minutes (5038 : Approval of the April 22, 2021 Meeting Minutes)

Non-staff speakers included:

Joe Padia - CPW
Ben Gallowich - CPW
Jason Duetsch - CPW

ACTION: Fitzgerald moved approval of item. Baker seconded the motion. Tony Lewis proposed an amendment that the BOCC approach CPW for funding to add an overpass over Hwy 36. Amendment was added.

VOTE: AYES: Krug, Archuleta, Fitzgerald, Meyrich, Baker, Obenchain, Lewis, George; **EXCUSED:** Williams

The Northern Redbelly Dace Recovery Project

ACTION REQUESTED: None, Information item only

PRESENTER: Mac Kobza, Wildlife Biologist

Strategic Plan Updates: Administration Division and Education & Outreach workgroup

ACTION REQUESTED: None, Information item only

PRESENTER: Judy Dvorshock, Administrative Division Manager and Pascale Fried, Education & Outreach Manager

Director's Update

Heil Valley Ranch:

- The aerial mulching contractor is starting to mobilize equipment and helicopters may start flying to collect hazard trees next week.
- BCPOS participated in three open houses for neighbors and community to learn about flood risks.
- BCPOS awarded the contract to design and then build sediment control structures on Heil.
- We submitted a grant to Colorado Water Conservation Board for addition funds to cover mulching on high priority USFS land that will increase the effectiveness of our mulching efforts.
- The south side of Heil will remain closed for safety and speed of operations at least through September 30.

Other Updates:

- The BOCC and City of Boulder approved the Rocky Mountain Greenway FLAP IGA which codifies collaboration among Boulder and Jefferson Counties and some cities on the construction of trail crossings on Indiana Street and State Highway 128 to connect trail networks to Rocky Flats and extend the Rocky Mountain Greenway into Boulder.
- The construction of the Niwot Ditch diversion structure met a milestone on April 1 and is delivering water to the agricultural users. The creek passage component is still under construction. This will help the state endangered native fish use the creek without begin blocked by a dam, while still providing water to the farmers. It also replaces a ditch diversion which has been deteriorating and was in need of replacement.
- The Open Space Foundation awarded the Ag program \$50,000 for the Boulder County Bean Storage Project to help support the transition away from genetically engineered crops. We are working to finalize the best location of the new storage shed.
- Community Forest Sort Yard in Nederland opens next Wednesday, April 28.

Parting remarks: I've appreciated the opportunity to work with POSAC, individually and collectively, over the last several years. I value the time and commitment that each of you have made to public service and your partnership with the department to advance the community's open space goals. Some issues are fun

to learn about and others are difficult to work through. You've volunteered to sit in the hot seat on a few thorny issues that our community continues to grapple with - and you've done so voluntarily. So, I want to thank you for your commitment to serve the community and express my sincere appreciation for the opportunity to partner with you in shaping the future of Boulder County's open spaces. I wish you all well, especially in your continued work for open space. Thank you very much!

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:19 PM



Parks & Open Space

5201 St. Vrain Road • Longmont, CO 80503
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www.BoulderCountyOpenSpace.org

PARKS & OPEN SPACE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

Time/Date of Meeting: 6:30 p.m., Thursday, May 27, 2021

Location: Virtual Meeting

TO:	Parks & Open Space Advisory Committee
FROM:	Sandy Duff, Senior Land Officer
AGENDA ITEM:	Newland Acquisition
ACTION REQUESTED:	Recommendation to the BOCC

Summary

Boulder County proposes to acquire approximately 17 acres of vacant mountain land owned by Donna M. Newland for \$135,640. The property is located on the west side of Peak to Peak Highway, approximately 0.5 miles south of Ward, and is completely surrounded by the Kaufman, Harper and BLM Ward Exchange Open Space properties. Staff supports this acquisition.

Background Information

The property is comprised of four mining claims, the Dew Drop and Dew Drop Extension, the Helen C. Lode, the Sunrise Lode, and the Redeemer Lode. These claims are part of the Captain Jack Mill Superfund Site, of which the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) have been working to mitigate the impacts of historic mining activities since the cleanup plan was issued in 2008. This remediation work consists of an in-tunnel water treatment system to neutralize mine drainage and improve the water quality within the mining tunnels that lead to the Big Five adit and remediation area across the highway. The remediation taking place at the Big Five area is continually monitored not only by the county on the county owned open space, but by the CDPHE and the EPA.

Historical Significance

The Captain Jack Mine (originally the Black Jack Mine) lies in California Gulch and was based around a vein that carried silver and lead instead of gold. The Captain Jack contained a mill facility and its own tailings pile and settling pond, and the White Raven Mine and the Conqueror Mill operated just downstream. These mines, together with the Big Five Company mines, made California Gulch the location of one of the largest mining operations in Boulder County. The portal of the Big Five Adit Tunnel sits at the west end of the gulch and stretches west underneath the Peak to Peak Highway. Its reach of nearly 10,000 feet extends to the Columbia, Dew Drop and Gold Crown Extension Veins, among others. The Big Five Company, which was created around 1897-1900, combined the Dew Drop Mining Company, Dew Drop Milling Company, Adit Mining Company, Adit Tunnel Company, and Niwot Mining Company. The Big Five operation included a three-story mill building, a large shop, a stable, an explosives magazine, an office, and a boardinghouse, and Camp Francis existed just west of the Big Five. Hard times caused these operations to go idle periodically, but the Captain Jack Mine and Mill were operated at various times until 1992. Due to

Attachment: Newland 5-27-21 (5039 : Newland Acquisition)

modifications made during more recent mining activities, little historic value remains from the mines themselves, except for a masonry wall from the Big Five Mill that still stands.

Deal Terms

Acquisition Summary

Acres	Water Rights	# Building Rights County Will Acquire	Price per Building Right/Acre	Water Right Value	Total Purchase Price
17	N/A	1	\$135,640/Right \$7,978/Acre	N/A	\$135,640

This transaction will be paid for with open space sales and use taxes, which Boulder County can only use for open space purposes.

Mineral Rights

Boulder County will acquire the mineral rights with this property. A Phase I Environmental Assessment has been completed for the property. The inclusion of the property as part of the Captain Jack Superfund site and the contribution to the groundwater in the Big Five tunnels and the water discharge at the Big Five adit on the Captain Jack site represent a recognized environmental condition (REC) at the overall site. These environmental conditions listed in the Phase I report will be noted in a “reasonable steps comfort letter” that CDPHE and the EPA will sign assuring Boulder County that it will not be responsible for any additional clean-up work, so long as Boulder County takes reasonable steps to ensure that the remediation work remains intact as constructed and that no new environmental contamination occurs and promptly notifies CDPHE and the EPA of any issues that arise. As long as Boulder County takes reasonable steps to prevent the treatments from being disturbed and any new conditions from occurring, Boulder County will qualify as a “bona fide prospective purchaser” for protection from liability under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA). Boulder County POS and County Attorney staff are comfortable that Boulder County can meet these conditions.

Boulder County Comprehensive Plan Designations

The Boulder County Comprehensive Plan (Comp Plan) provides information about the area’s agricultural, cultural, environmental, and other open space resources (including passive recreation, community buffers, and scenic viewsheds). Maps in the Comp Plan indicate the following designations of these resources on the property: Indian Peaks Environmental Conservation Area, Significant Natural Communities, Riparian Areas, View Protection Corridor rating of 5. This View Protection Corridor rating of 5 indicates the highest importance of protecting the view corridor along this stretch of the Peak to Peak Highway. By removing the development right, this acquisition will protect the important views that the View Protection Corridor rating represents.

Potential Uses

At this time, the property is used as open land, with ongoing remediation activities on the eastern most 2/3 of the property. The Phase I Environmental Assessment has noted that there is an open adit, the Dew Drop adit, on the property. After purchase, staff will notify the State

of Colorado’s Division of Mining, Reclamation and Safety (DRMS) for formal closure and the property will be closed until the mining hazards can be addressed by DRMS.

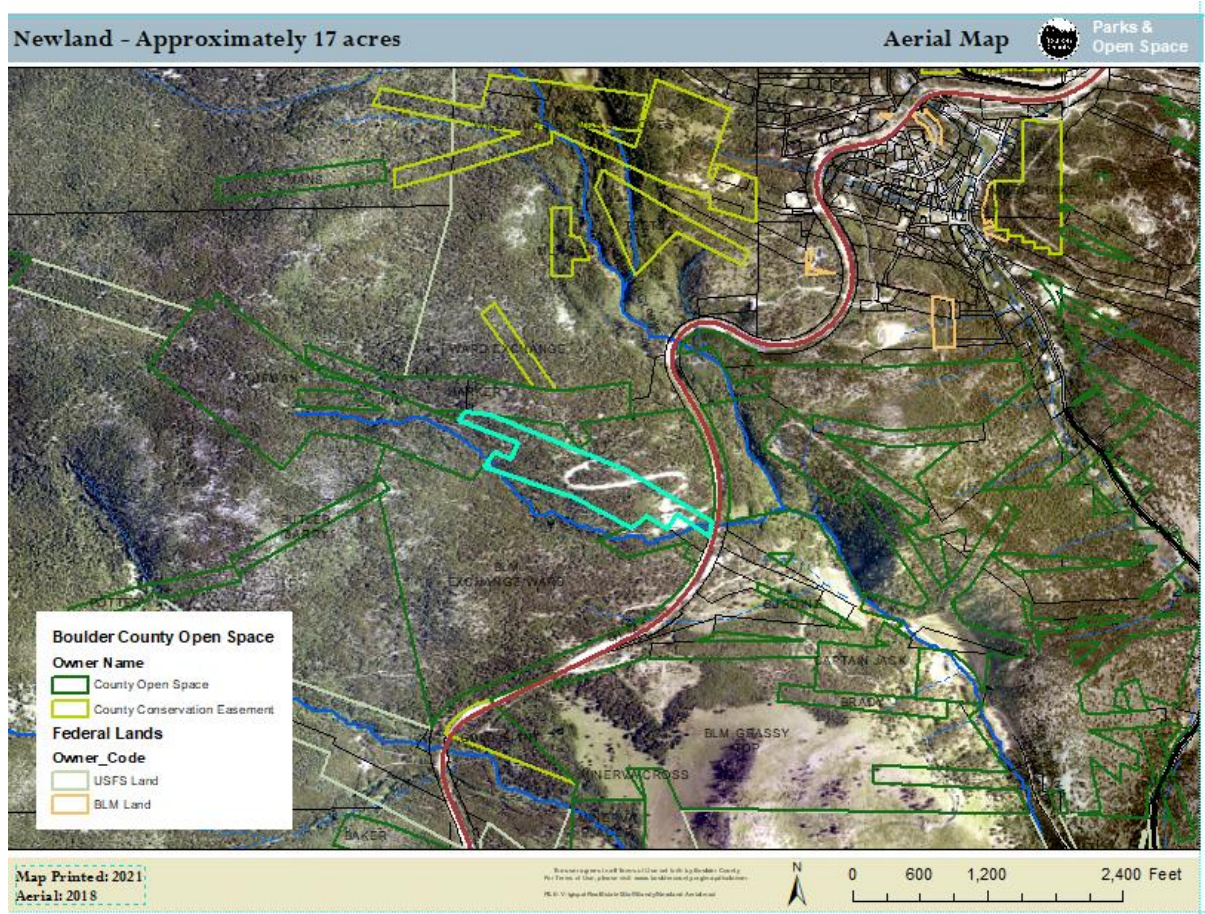
Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends approval. The Newland property is an excellent candidate for acquisition due to its contiguity with the Kaufman, Harper and Ward Area BLM properties, as well as open space properties on the other side of the highway, including Grassy Top, Brady and Captain Jack. Development of the property would be inappropriate due to the remote location, scenic and wildlife values. This acquisition is contiguous with other open space properties in the area and provides for a contiguous landscape of open space in this scenic area.

POSAC Action Requested

Recommendation to the Boulder County Commissioners to approve the acquisition as described above and by staff at the POSAC meeting.

Suggested motion language: I move approval of this transaction as staff has described.



Attachment: Newland 5-27-21 (5039 : Newland Acquisition)



Attachment: Newland 5-27-21 (5039 : Newland Acquisition)



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PARKS & OPEN SPACE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

Time/Date of Meeting: 6:30 p.m., Thursday, May 27, 2021

Location: Virtual Meeting

TO: Parks & Open Space Advisory Committee
DATE: Thursday, May 27, 2021
AGENDA ITEM TITLE: Strategic Plan Overview: Plant Ecology, Wildlife and Weeds Workgroups
PRESENTERS: David Hirt, Plant Ecology Supervisor, Susan Spaulding, Wildlife Supervisor, and Steve Sauer, Weeds Supervisor
ACTION REQUESTED: Information Only

Background

In 2019, staff embarked on an internal planning process to ensure that our work reflects strategic priorities and moves us toward our desired future conditions and goals. The result of this work is a strategic plan for every workgroup in the Parks & Open Space Department that sets work priorities and informs each employee’s workplan. Over the course of 2021, work groups will provide an overview of their strategic objectives to POSAC. This month’s presentations will be from the Plant Ecology, Wildlife, and Weeds workgroups, which are all in the Resource Management Division.

Plant Ecology Workgroup DFC

Native plant communities, including communities and species of special concern, are healthy, diverse, self-sustaining and resilient to natural and anthropogenic disturbances, and ecosystem processes are appropriately or effectively emulated.

Plant Ecology Workgroup Goals

1. Identify, preserve, and maintain high quality native plant communities and landscapes.
2. Enhance wildlife habitat, ecosystem functions, and visitor experience through the restoration of degraded lands.
3. Increase enthusiasm and support for native plants and their importance to ecosystem function and habitat.
4. Provide up to date, accurate, and timely input and direction for management.

Plant Ecology Workgroup Objectives

Objective 1-1: Complete vegetation mapping on 165 acres of the Billings West property in 2021 utilizing in-house staff.

Objective 1-2: Update vegetation mapping hierarchy for current mapped Alliances to adhere to recent nationwide changes by NatureServe by December 2021. Moving forward, identify individual polygon data to the Association level when feasible, focusing on those identified by Colorado Natural Heritage Program and the BCCP ERE as significant natural communities.

Objective 1-3: Complete 2nd Phase of wetlands assessment, targeting emergent and wet meadow wetlands identified as significant in previous assessments, and those on properties acquired since 2003, with a focus on the southern half of the County by the end of 2021.

Attachment: SP Memo May 2021 (5040 : Strategic Plan Updates: Plant Ecology, Wildlife, Weeds)

- Objective 2-1:** Monitor and maintain revegetation of the Reach 3 Phase 2 flood recovery project on St. Vrain Creek, to ensure it meets the success criteria outlined in the Biological Opinion with the US Fish and Wildlife Service and provide an annual report by December 20, 2021.
- Objective 2-2:** Utilize in-house staff, and/or volunteers to plant additional species of riparian and wetland vegetation following the completion of construction for the Niwot Ditch fish passage project in spring of 2021. Work with Water staff to identify water augmentation for use to maintain those plantings through the 2021 growing season.
- Objective 2-3:** Create a strategic priorities matrix for restoration sites – i.e. high value/low success vs. Low value/low success vs. High value/high success to guide future planning processes by the end of 2021.
- Objective 2-4:** Draft an RFP and solicit proposals for the design-build services to restore the historic hydrology to the Prescott wetland, which was historically altered by drainage channels, by July 2021. Proposals will help to inform an accurate budget that can be used to request POSIP or Stewardship funds for construction in 2022. This work will improve the diverse vegetation of a wet meadow/fen complex, and restore hydrology to currently dried peat soils, a significant sink for carbon sequestration in line with the BOCC and CAMP goals.
- Objective 2-5:** Add two new species to the Peck Native Seed Garden in spring of 2021.
- Objective 3-1:** Update Plant Ecology presence on BCPOS web site to include educational information including plant lists for heavily visited parks, updates on work groups achievements, and links to related information and other non-profits and agencies involved in plant conservation by the end of 2021.
- Objective 3-2:** Continue utilizing the Plant Ecology Twitter feed by posting highlights of our native plants and work group efforts at least 30 times throughout the year.
- Objective 3-3:** By May 2021, establish a volunteer property steward program on three to five properties with resources at higher risk, due to intersection with USFS properties and established OHV routes, such as Grassy Top and Prescott.
- Objective 3-4:** Build a relationship with Native American stakeholders to build trust and respectfully highlight their heritage and connection to the Boulder County ecological landscape.
- Objective 4-1:** Create three or four standardized seed mixes for generalized habitats (plains grassland, shrub/steppe, lower montane Ponderosa Pine, and upper montane Lodgepole Pine) to increase efficiencies in responding to staff seed mix requests by April of 2021.
- Objective 4-2:** Research available inventory software to identify potential solutions to more efficiently track our seed collection, storage, and current availability. Vet potential products and provide a cost estimate prior to September, 2021 in order to request the need for potential funding through POSIP or Stewardship funding, if above internal O&M budget ability.

Wildlife Workgroup DFC

Diverse and representative habitats and landscape connectivity are preserved, conserved and enhanced to ensure biological diversity and ecological health at a regional scale. Natural processes including disturbance regimes are embraced to ensure complete ecosystem function.

Wildlife Workgroup Goals

1. Preserve wildlife habitat to ensure protection from anthropogenic impacts in order to maintain regional native biodiversity.
2. Conserve wildlife habitat to ensure native biodiversity is maintained in a multiple-use focused landscape while allowing for sustainable use of natural resources.
3. Restore degraded wildlife habitats to bolster ecosystem function, connectivity, and resilience.

4. Promote and manage for functional landscape connectivity at multiple-scales to maintain natural movement patterns for native species.
5. Allow or re-create natural disturbance processes to ensure ecosystem function and resilience.
6. Manage wildlife populations.

Wildlife Workgroup Objectives

Objective 1-2: Work collaboratively with adjacent land management agencies on acquisition priorities.

Sub-Objective: Work collaboratively with adjacent land management agencies on acquisitions priorities as determined by species assessments, presence of high value habitat and/or County designated Critical Wildlife Habitat.

Details- Species to receive specific assessments: (examples: Northern leopard frog, Northern goshawk, elk, Preble's Meadow Jumping Mouse).

Actions-

- Conduct northern leopard frog surveys annually, in collaboration with OSMP, to inform acquisitions strategies.
- Work collaboratively with CPW to participate in elk collaring studies to determine movement patterns and identify migration corridors.
- Conduct PMJM surveys and share data with OSMP to ensure regional population information is current.
- Conduct northern goshawk surveys annually on BCPOS and USFS properties. Assisting USFS with goshawk surveys adds to their collective knowledge on territory activity, as they are unable to survey annually.

Objective 2-1: Identify areas of representative habitat values within areas of multiple use and develop conservation plans for these areas.

Sub-Objective- Develop department level strategies for maintenance or enhancement of riparian areas, wetlands, grasslands, high elevation meadows, mixed conifer, limber pine stands and other areas of high habitat value.

Details- Representative habitat is defined as areas serving a disproportionate diversity of species based on its prevalence in the landscape. Current conservation principles emphasize the importance of identifying, maintaining and connecting these habitats.

Actions-

- Project development for 2021 will include proposed protection measures for the Blue Jay Mine due to known bat maternity colonies utilizing the structures on the property. Measures will include interpretive signage and formalized fencing in a phased approach.
 - o This project is directly correlated to the BCCP ERE, and conservation measures outlined in the Long-legged myotis conservation and recovery plan. Conservation measure: protect mid-elevation bat maternity colony habitat features.

Objective 4-1- Conduct baseline study of fragmentation and permeability of Boulder County with partner agencies included.

Details- As part of the County's small grant program, wildlife staff has solicited researchers to conduct fragmentation modeling of Boulder County. The initial study was completed in 2019, and a subsequent, more large-scale study conducted in 2020.

Actions-

- o Analyze results for areas of highest habitat effectiveness (core habitat)

- o Define threats and impediments for native species of concern to allow for defining of connectivity needs.
- o Establish a target threshold of fragmentation at a regional scale.
- o Utilize study (modeling) results to inform initiatives outlined in the BCPOS Climate Action Mitigation Plan (CAMP).

Objective 4-2: Establish Wildlife Crossings

Details- Collaborate with CDOT and County Public Works staff to identify priorities and opportunities for wildlife crossings that will preserve natural movement patterns and reduce the incidence of vehicle collisions with wildlife.

Actions-

- o In 2021, reconnect with CDOT on their regional report on collision hotspots and priorities.
 - o As outlined in the Red Hill Hunt Management Plan, wildlife crossings will be investigated in collaboration with CDOT, and determination of feasibility of a crossing over Highway 36 between Boulder and Lyons. Connectivity is a Governor's initiative for Colorado.
- o In 2021, request financial support via BCPOS Stewardship funds toward a partnership with Northern Water to establish three crossing locations for the Southern Supply Canal through the RSP at Rabbit Mountain.

Weeds Workgroup DFC

Diverse habitat for native flora and fauna through a strategic reduction in noxious weed populations to support open space values.

Weeds Workgroup Goals

1. Eliminate List A and contain or eliminate the populations of county List B invasive plants.
2. Improve native grasslands and other natural systems to effectively increase grazing, wildlife and pollinator habitat.
3. Control noxious weeds along county and regional trails to ensure a safe and pleasant visitor experience.
4. Increase weed control along county rights of way for control of listed species, safety, and visual attractiveness.

Weeds Workgroup 2021 Objectives

- Objective 1-1:** For List A weeds, increase treated area an additional 10%, for an additional 250 acres monitored.
- Objective 1-2:** For List B weeds, treat an additional 15% or an additional 727 acres in 2021 (diffuse knapweed, teasel, Dalmatian toadflax, Canada thistle, musk thistle, scotch thistle, leafy spurge, spotted knapweed, Russian knapweed).
- Objective 1-3:** In 2021, work with GIS/Tech to translate List B maps to a database for showing the trend of weed populations.
- Objective 2-1:** Treat 1,000 ac. in SE Grasslands (and other properties) with Rejuvera in 2021.
- Objective 2-2:** Treat 100 acres each at Heil Valley Ranch (Red Hill) and Hall Ranch in 2021 (tractor application, mostly cheatgrass, some broadleaf weeds, for grassland restoration.
- Objective 3-1:** Annually, review new BCPOS Properties acquisitions, new trails/trailheads, from previous year; visit at least 5 previously unreviewed current BCPOS properties for weed concerns
- Objective 3-2:** Annually, treat approximately 20 miles of unimproved/primitive trails (65.7 mi. total) during the growing season.

- Objective 3-3:** Annually treat all improved trails, surfaces and edges (73.5 mi. total) and Parking Lots/Trailheads (32)
- Objective 4-1:** Annually, Monitor 650 miles of county right of way on an annual basis for noxious weeds.
- Objective 4-2:** Annually, spot treat for noxious weeds using selective herbicides, based on the monitoring results.
- Objective 4-3:** Annually, mow the majority of the 650 miles of roadside 3 times during the growing season.

POSAC Action Requested

Information Only