

Ridge to Rivers
3rd Quarter Partnership Meeting

MINUTES

May 22, 2014

Partners present: Scott Koberg, Ada County Parks and Waterways, Julia Grant, Boise City Department of Parks and Recreation, Stephaney Church, Boise National Forest, Larry Ridenhour and Tate Fischer, Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Krista Mueller, Idaho Department of Fish and Game, David Gordon and Will Taliaferro, Ridge to Rivers. Kristine Smith, minutes recorder.

- 3rd Quarter Budget and Work Plan Review
- Spring Trail Maintenance
- Volunteer Efforts
- R2R Assistance to Avimor Trails – Scott Koberg

S. Koberg explained that he did not want to exclude the partnership, and wanted to make sure everyone was aware of what was taking place with the Avimor Trails. T. Fischer explained that neither the Boise National Forest nor the Idaho Department of Fish and Game attended the meeting, however, moving forward, the partnership would be involved in decisions made for the property. As small as project may be to the different agencies, it is important for the public to understand that it starts with a cooperative agreement and then moves forward under the partnership model.

D. Gordon explained that it needs to be understood that the trails in the foothills, no matter where they are, tend to grow regionally, and there shouldn't be a single property owner working in a little pack. It needs to be defined how the partnership is going to work together, and the project seems to be on the right track.

- National Interscholastic Cycling Association – Idaho - Dylan Grandhandt

D. Gordon introduced Dylan Grandhandt and explained that he works with the National Interscholastic Cycling Association (NICA). The Association is working to establish a mountain bike racing program for high school age youth.

D. Grandhandt explained that he is a Boise City resident and works for NICA, which is based out of California. There is a state-wide community effort to bring NICA to Idaho to set-up a high

school racing program. If achieved, Idaho would be the thirteenth state to adopt the NICA program. Financially, the program would be a non-profit organization, subsidized by the industry and grants rather than burdening the school district.

Part of NICA protocol, and a component of all the nationwide teams, is trail maintenance. In Utah each student team member is required to complete a minimum of ten hours of trail maintenance. The program is in its third season in Utah, and in 2013 they introduced the ten-hour policy statewide and project that approximately 1,000 student racers contributed approximately 10,000 hours of volunteer trail work throughout the state. If the program is adopted in Idaho, he would be the Director and would plan to follow the ten-hour policy.

D. Grandhandt would also plan on having the program adopt the “Spirit of Howdy.” The program is a mission which started in the Berkley Hills High School, the mountain biking coach, Matt Fritzinger, had his athletes stop and say hello to every trail user, making sure that athletes were going slow enough to say hello. The mission encourages users to realize that everyone is on the trails together. The initiative has proven to be very effective, and is a way to change the culture of mountain biking. It has specifically been used in areas that have many land use partners, similar to the Ridge to Rivers Partnership.

L. Ridenhour questioned how many races a year would occur with the program. D. Grandhandt explained that each year there would be four to five races. The season would be during the fall, opening when the school year starts, following the same protocols as any other high school program. All the races are cross country mountain bike races. The course would need to include some loops, with both single and double track sections, and covering a total of four to five miles. Student athletes which participate in a year-around program, with some private coaches, would have their racing needs met outside of the proposed program.

D. Grandhandt explained that he reviewed the partnership’s Mountain Bike Racing Policy and believes that they can work within it. The program is a way for the youth in the community to be introduced to the trails, and to land management. The bid deadline is June 1, 2014, it is competitive and Idaho is competing against other states.

J. Grant questioned if D. Grandhandt had received a support letter from Ridge to Rivers. D. Grandhandt responded that he had received a letter of support. He has asked different organizations to write a letter explaining that they were interested in the program, however the organizations is not making any commitments to the program. If the bid is won, then by the fall of 2014 the program would be considered a non-profit. NICA would be responsible for all of the coaching, training, and certifying, which will require centers that will need to be determined—racing would not occur until the fall of 2015.

S. Koberg questioned if there was a website. D. Grandhandt responded that there was a Facebook page, which included his contact information as well as a quick biography and information about NICA.

- Eagle Sports Complex Trails – Scott Koberg

S. Koberg explained that Ada County has received a lot of positive feedback from their newsletter. The focus of the last newsletter was on Ridge to River to show Ada County's support of the partnership. He thanked everyone for contributing to the recent article.

J. Grant explained that the Jim Hall Foothill Learning Center has a "groupies" list which includes approximately 1,500 names, and is continuously growing. She suggested Ada County build a groupies list. S. Koberg explained that they have a mailing list. People are really interested in the Ridge to Rivers Program. K. Mueller thanked Ada County for inviting the Idaho Department of Fish and Game to have in article in the newsletter.

S. Koberg explained that the Ada Bike Park and Public Recreation Area does not have an official name yet. On April 11, 2014, the agreement between the City of Eagle and Ada County was finalized, with the City of Eagle purchasing approximately 46-acres of the Ada-Eagle Sports Complex area. Ada County retained ownership of the remainder of the property, equal to approximately 218-acres—the purchasing sale cancelled the existing lease with the City of Eagle and the property fell back to Ada County for management. Of the 218-acres there are approximately six and a half miles of multi-use trails with some social trails which have formed overtime.

A missing feature of the property is a bridge on the flow trail. That trail was designed by a professional trails organization hired by the City of Eagle. The organization did not install the ride over bridge or the jump, leaving an unsafe junction of an intersection with a break of trail. A large "Do Not Enter" sign was installed for public safety—the County has done a quick approach by not allowing entrance. Ada County has agreed to pay for, and install, the missing feature. They are working with bike specific crews to determine an appropriate design for the space and is respective of Ada County Code. If the project is expected to be over \$25,000 it will go to bid—staff does not expect it to go to bid.

D. Gordon questioned what the trail distance was from where the bridge needed to be installed, to where the trail finishes. S. Koberg responded that total trail distance was .62 miles with approximately one third of the trail below where the bridge needed to be installed.

The property that Ada County owns was purchased as a buffer to the landfill. As part of the landfill buffer, there are Ridge to Rivers trails that tie into the system. Originally, Rabbit Run, was a Ridge to Rivers trail that started from the east side of the ridge on BLM property and continued onto Ada County property, connecting into the skate park parking lot. As the area has previously been widely used for races, Ada County wanted to be supportive of the existing uses of the property and has decided to have the western portion of the trail removed from the Ridge to Rivers Trail system, creating a continuous system that will not force event coordinators to go through the Ridge to Rivers race evaluation process.

D. Gordon reminded everyone that Ridge to Rivers had previously discussed and received support from the partners on removing the portion of the Rabbit Run trail from the Ridge to Rivers system, which is why he decided to not bring it back to the partners. S. Koberg explained

that it was critical for the changes to be made because Ada County regularly gets requests for events and demonstrations, now they will be able to help steer organizers without having to involve Ridge to Rivers.

T. Fischer questioned if the permitting and race procedures between the different partners were similar, he has some concerns if each partners' procedures are different and the general public is having to jump through hoops, it could deter some organizers. S. Koberg explained that the racing procedures between each of the different entities were not the same. Ada County has been going through an adapted approach, because the City of Eagle had a policy through a lease agreement. Ada County is also responsible for races and special events on the Greenbelt and in Barber Park. Staff is working to try and determine the proper method of approval should be. J. Grant included that the City has 200-400 acres of open space and would be working on an Open Space Management Plan over the next year. The City does not have a formal special event policy for its Open Spaces or Reserves.

D. Gordon explained that the Ridge to Rivers race policy was reviewed two years ago. There are two race policies, one for foot races and one for mountain biking. If the race is going to be held on Ridge to Rivers trails it has to fall into the parameters of the policy. However, race organizers are still be required to get all of the appropriate permits from each partner. Race organizers don't seem to find it too difficult to work with each of the partners.

S. Church included that due the Forest Service's NEPA requirements, which is a very lengthy process, they choose to issue long term permits so that permits do not have to be reviewed annually.

- Trail Name Licensing Agreement with Retailers

D. Gordon explained that the partnership had been attempting to enter into an agreement with Bogus Basin Brewing. Ada County referenced a law which explains that a government agency can not appear to support an individual retailer, which has put a halt to the agreement process.

J. Grant forwarded some information she found through the American Trails Association, for the City of Cleveland, Ohio. Cleveland has a partnership with a brew pub similar to what Ridge to Rivers was proposing. The City of Cleveland's attorney forwarded information related to their partnership, which was passed along to both the Boise City attorney as well as the Ada County attorney. At the very least he is hoping that a statement can be added somewhere on Bogus Basin Brewing's product that says a portion from the sales goes towards trails in the foothills.

S. Koberg explained that it was specified in the Constitution of the State of Idaho that a government agency can not appear to support and individual retailer, which is how it differs from the City of Cleveland. The partnership is unique because it is made up of so many government agencies.

D. Gordon explained that similar agreements had been discussed with the Friends of the Boise Foothills. The group was looking at the possibility of having the R2R logo placed on different

retailer's products. The topic of trademarking trail names, similar to how the Ridge to Rivers name was trademarked, was discussed. However, someone would need to police every trail name, which is not feasible.

- Hillside to Hollow Open Space Planning Process Update – Julia Grant

J. Grant informed the partners that the Department was working with staff from the Land Trust of the Treasure Valley (LTTV) to host a workshop for the Hillside to Hollow master plan on May 28, 2014 at Hillside Junior High from 6:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. The Department has identified different parameters for the property while collecting public feedback, but now it needs to be determined how condense the parameters into something that can work on the ground. The workshop will include different focus groups with a facilitator working on a map reviewing and applying different considerations. There have been a lot of different perspectives for what the uses on the property should be. Now users can come together and have a discussion around the table, so that the Department can try to achieve a master plan that will work for the greatest number of people.

D. Gordon explained that it would be great to have additional representation from the partnership at the meeting. He knows that the support of the partnership exists, however, he ends up being the partnership contact and the public doesn't realize that it is the partnership making the decisions—the strength of the partnership is a collaborative effort.

S. Church requested that more notice be given to the partners in the future for these types of events.

Tim Breuer, LTTV, explained that the idea of the workshop is to allow the public the opportunity review management needs first hand with the guidance of the Foothills Open Space Management Plan. Users can see how difficult it is to meet all users' needs. The LTTV funded a small contract with a consulting firm that will help with the overall facilitation of the meeting.

- Polecat Trailhead Update – Julia and David

J. Grant explained that construction on the Polecat Trailhead on North Collister Drive started in early May. The contractor plans to have the project completed in 60 days, if not earlier. Staff has posted the area as closed to all users, as there is a large amount of dirt being moved and there are a lot of safety concerns. The construction company hired is The Wetlands Group, which is the same company that has worked with the Boise City Department of Parks and Recreation for development of Marianne Williams Park and Hyatt Hidden Lakes Reserve. They understand the desires of the Department, and the need for having the least amount of impact on the property.

D. Gordon explained that once construction is complete a Ridge to Rivers crew will carve in a trail that will be two-tenths of a mile to tie into the existing Polecat Trails. The trailhead development will be a challenge because it will go over an alluvial fan that does not provide a lot of relief and it will be difficult to add the connection without picking up grade too quickly.

J. Grant included that the total cost of the project was estimated to be approximately \$85,000, staff originally expected the project to be over \$100,000.

- Bucktail Trail In-fill Project

D. Gordon explained that the Bucktail Trail project was completed approximately three weeks prior to the meeting. Crews filled in portions of the trail that had a dropped due to erosion four inches or more. There was some damage to the vegetation along the trail due to the bringing in of materials however rain helped the vegetation grow back. Crews added some additional stones to the site in an effort to keep users on the existing trail.

During the week of May 12, 2014, a crew of BLM Smokejumpers completed the development of the Urban Trail under Ridge to Rivers supervision. The majority of the 1.3 mile trail was already in place. The smokejumpers cut in two re-routes where the trail came down into a fault line. Consideration for re-routing a third area was made, however, it was kept to improve the experience of the trail. The project was posted on the Ridge to Rivers Facebook page and seems to have been successful. It is a great trail for hiking and running, and makes for a nice additional climb to the Highlands Trail.

- Camel's Back Chute Mitigation RTP Grant

D. Gordon explained that he has not heard back on the results of the RTP Grant for the Camel's Back Chute. It has been rumored that the grant was not received. There were some concerns that the project would take away the opportunity for kids to climb the chute even though in the proposal it was made clear approximately four-fifths of the existing chute would remain. He will inform the partnership when he hears the final word on the project.

S. Church explained that the grant was very competitive this year as the Boise National Forest Mountain Home Ranger District put in a few requests to help aid in fire recovery.

- Trail Ranger Program

D. Gordon explained that Ridge to Rivers would have 15 trail rangers for the 2014 season—more rangers than they have had in the past. For the month of April a total of 174 patrols were recorded. The new lead trail ranger has been doing a great job, he has completed two trail awareness days in Camel's Back Park and a talk at REI and with the Treasure Valley Teen Vision Coalition. It is requested that the rangers be on the trails for four hours a week, always have some rangers who end up not being consistent, but it is addressed right away.

- Upcoming Trail Projects – Summer Program Focus

D. Gordon informed the partners that a crew would be out to design and construct an additional half mile for the Around the Mountain Trail. A representative from Boise Cascade contacted D. Gordon and explained that they wanted to give some money and 100-hours of time to the project.

He will plan on having staff cut the trail with a Cat, and then have the Boise Cascade members hand work the trails.

Crews are hoping to get back to projects which have been put on hold. Projects include the Cottonwood Creek steps rock crib project, and additional cribbing along that trail. A crew will move the Central Ridge Spur in Military Reserve a few feet, moving it to the outside edge of the ridge. Staff will also look into possible modifications to Corrals Trail, along the steep descent on the east side of the trail which gets washboarded along the old road bed each year. Additional repairs to Bob's Trail, which was washed out during the spring time flooding, will also be made. Crews will also spend additional time in the Hull's Gulch area working on the nose of the Red Winged Blackbird Trail.

- Trail Smart and Friends of the Boise Foothills - Julia

J. Grant explained that the last time the Trail Smart program was discussed staff was working on how to allow people to donate and have it be a tax deductible donation, arrangement were made and now the website is up and available to the public. The website was uploaded during the meeting and the partners were encouraged to place a link on their site. The logo was also added to the new Ridge to Rivers map, and funding received by the program will go into the Ridge to River Heritage Trust Trail Maintenance and Construction account. Those who donate will receive an email receipt which thanks them for their donation, along with coupons from various outdoor retailers.. The organizers are open to ideas and ways to make the program better, the website is trailsmart.org.

- Castle Rock Reserve Trail Re-naming – Julia and Doug

J. Grant explained that the Castle Rock Reserve was an area used by Native Americans over time. There have been some discussions that the trail names should recognize the historical use of the trails. The discussions include changing the name of the Hot Springs, Castlerock Loop and Castlerock Quarry Trails to Shoshone-Paiute Tribal names. The change would need to go through the Boise City Parks and Recreation Commission for approval.

S. Church questioned if there had been any discussion with the tribes. J. Grant explained that the request was coming from the tribe. Betty Foster, Castle Rock Reserve neighbor, has been a great supporter of the area. She has been involved with the placement of an educational rock at the site which acknowledges the previous uses of the property. The Department has also received letters of recommendations from the tribal elders and tribal councils to change the trail names.

Ridge to Rivers does not usually change trail names, and there is some concern that it could set a precedent. If approved, the changes would not show up on the 2014 trail map and would instead be changed on the 2015 map.

S. Koberg explained that he was supportive of recognizing the name change, but is concerned that most trails are in areas that have a Native American influence and it could open the door for

many trail name changes in the future. L. Ridenhour explained the first request was to rename Castle Rock Reserve as it used to be called Eagle Rock.

K. Muller questioned who had the right to change the reserve title. J. Grant explained that it was city property and they had the authority to make the change.

J. Grant explained over the last few years D. Gordon was working to resolve situations that had trails crossing private property without the appropriate legal accesses. The Hot Springs Trail crosses private property along its westernmost 200' and has never had a formal easement for the this section. The City has come to an agreement with the property owner to purchase the small section of property that the trail crosses.

D. Gordon explained that additional funding from the City had been provided for a replacement of a Ridge to Rivers truck. The new truck will be four-wheel drive with towing capabilities. The existing truck was being retired from city fleet twelve years ago.

D. Gordon explained that L. Ridenhour and Chris Clay have been working hard on the new map Ridge to Rivers map, it is expected that printing will occur during the first week of June. The Shaffer and Foothills map will be new be printed onto a single map. A price for the single map will need to be determined, it will likely be higher as they will now only be collecting funding from a single map sale rather than two different map sales.

L. Ridenhour explained that the maps will be available online through the Avenza application. The app will allow users to purchase the map through Avenza and download it onto their device, the map has a geo-reference so a dot on the map will show the user's location on the map.

S. Church informed the group that the Deputy Forest Supervisor is interested in helping with the Friends Group.

Meeting adjourned 9:43 a.m.