

BOISE CITY RIDGE TO RIVERS FOURTH QUARTER PARTNERSHIP MEETING
BOISE PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT
TUESDAY, JULY 21, 2020
8:30 A.M.

The Ridge to Rivers Partnership met at the Jim Hall Foothills Learning Center on Tuesday, July 21, 2020. Partners Present: Doug Holloway and Sara Arkle (Boise Parks and Recreation); Brent Ralston and David Draheim (Bureau of Land Management); Brad Lowe (Idaho Department of Fish and Game); Stephaney Kerley (Boise National Forest Service); David Gordon (Ridge to Rivers); Chloe Sallabanks (Clerk).

Others Present: None.

I. CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order at 8:44 a.m.

III. IN THE MATTER OF NEW BUSINESS

A. FY20 4th Quarter Budget and Work Plan Review

No comments were made.

B. Trail Maintenance and Project Update

Following a winter of good trail conditions, the spring and early summer's rain caused lots of damage. Trails designed and built by Ridge to Rivers held up well in conditions, but many older trails required reoccurring maintenance. Increased usage of the foothills trails resulted in widened trails, likely due to users trying to social distance from others. Crib wall construction would abet the high-usage, lower-skill level deterioration of trails and corners (seen often on Around the Mountain and Stack Rock trails). Hand maintenance has become increasingly difficult to do and less successful due to widened trails. Staff has put in for a third mini-excavator to help with maintenance in the future.

Work would begin on stone-armoring crossings in Dry Creek and Shingle Creek trails. In the future, for the few crossings that benefit from bridges, a Cadbury style bridge would be installed, replacing the current single-log ones.

Steel steps were installed on the backside of Camel's Back Reserve to continue reparations of erosion and solidify the trail. This improvement should increase users' ease of navigation.

A portion of Trail #6, Femrite's Patrol, was rerouted, which met with positive comments from some users, and negative comments from others who did not want to see the old, unsustainable route changed. The "Devils Slide" section of Trail #4, 8th Street Motorcycle Trail will be narrowed by installing buck and pole fencing in early September. The fenced sections will be revegetated. A long section of illegal motorized trail on upper Trail #4 was closed in June.

A trail to Lower Five Mile Gulch off the Boise Ridge Road (down to Watchman Trail) had unauthorized construction along it, and the Partnership discussed options of closing the illegal route. BLM had posted closure signs at the top of the trail. Unauthorized trail construction on federal or municipal land is a citable offense. Wildlife habitat, sensitive plant species, erosion, archeological sites, and resource management plans were factors that made unauthorized trail construction problematic.

C. Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) Survey

The survey was moving along well; no unexploded ordnances had been found. Any trail closures were posted online ahead of time.

D. Upper 8th Street Dispersed Use Management

Camping activity increased along upper 8th Street in the springtime. Signage was posted along this road and Rocky Canyon Road to notify that camping in the Foothills in Ada County is prohibited due to wildfire concerns. Camps have subsequently decreased. The illegal trail and camping areas were on private land.

E. E-Bike Management

Concerns from trail users about e-bike usage were frequently recorded. There had not been a change to the Boise Foothills e-bike policy at this point. Trail crews continued to post signage and stickers at trailheads notifying users of rules related to E-bikes. These have been routinely removed, assumedly by e-bike enthusiasts.

F. Management of Increased Use of Trailheads and Foothills Trails

Trail use drastically increased during COVID-19, and tensions among trail users were voiced to the department. The Partnership discussed opportunities to engage the public – possibly through online education campaigns and surveys – on preferred usage and changes to existing trails. Even trails that are further out and had historically low levels of use were very busy and parking was clearly inadequate for the level of use. A potential trail-use survey would be coordinated by the Ridge to Rivers Partnership to engage and inform the public and partnering agencies on possible new trail management strategies.

Currently, police bike officers and animal enforcement officers visited trailheads to enforce some trail regulations. The possibility for having full-time “rangers” with law enforcement ability designated to the foothills was discussed.

Boise Fire Department Station No. 1 responds to most foothills incidents. They responded to 16 incidents in 2017 and 33 in 2019. On July 20, 2020, 33 incidents—most involving cyclists— had already been responded to.

G. Special Use Direction/Amendment Needs

Special Events in the Boise Foothills were becoming more popular – the Boise Trails Challenge and 10 Barrel's Trail proposed competition were discussed as examples. The Partnership discussed the pros and cons of a one-day event with mass start times versus a more dispersed challenge that takes place over the course of multiple weeks. Application processes, permitting fees and requirements, and public notification were discussed. Managing partners would meet to update the special use guidelines.

H. MOU Signature Update

The Ridge to Rivers Partnership Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was in the process of being renewed. The former MOU was set to expire July 31, 2020. The meeting attendees would sign five copies to be sent to the Forest Service, Ada County Parks & Waterways and the City of Boise for final signatures.

I. Upcoming Trail Designs

The Hawkins Range Reserve loop design would be completed in the fall, using a grant from the Idaho State Parks Recreation Trails Program (RTP). The trail and trailhead should be completed in 2021.

The planned trail from Union St behind the Boise VA Medical Center was on hold while easement agreements were finalized and until public input can be sought.

J. R2R Partner Updates

Idaho Department of Fish and Game

The Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation debuted a sticker to support recreational access on Idaho Trails. Donations from sticker purchases would go toward maintaining and protecting Idaho's non-motorized trails.

Boise City

The Mesa Reserve Trailhead, which provides access to the Table Rock area, was finished. This was an extension of the Warm Springs Golf Course parking lot.

Construction would soon begin on a 25-car parking lot at the Harrison Hollow Reserve Trailhead. This trailhead would include a flush restroom, dog watering station, and bike racks.

Upcoming projects included the Hawkins Range Reserve Trailhead, expanding the Lower Bogus Trailhead that accesses Dry Creek and Sweet Connie trails, and expanding Cartwright Trailhead.

Bureau of Land Management

There were no updates.

Boise National Forest Service

There were no updates.

K. Testimony Opportunity for Non-Partner Agency Meeting Attendees

No other discussion was brought before the partners.

V. IN THE MATTER OF ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business before the Partnership, the meeting adjourned at 10:19 a.m.