



City Council Staff Report

Subject: Bonanza Flat Open Space Planning

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Department: Sustainability

Date: November 9, 2017

Type of Item: Administrative

Summary Recommendation

Staff recommends City Council reviews and discusses the current Bonanza Flat Resource Inventory (Attachment I) and approves the following;

1. Extend the Resource Inventory through March 2018, so as to collect data specific to the winter season; and
2. Identify and stake Bonanza Flat property boundaries adjacent to Pine Canyon and Guardsman Pass seasonal roads and monitor winter motorized usage; and
3. Direct staff to meet with the Jurisdictional Stakeholder Group and Technical Resource Committee to confirm the Conservation Values, based on the Resource Inventory and initiate discussions associated with permitted and prohibited uses to be identified within the Conservation Easement.

Executive Summary

City Council should review and discuss the current Bonanza Flat Resource Inventory and approve the following staff recommendations;

1. Extend the Resource Inventory through March 2018, so as to collect data specific to the winter season; and
2. Identify and stake the Bonanza Flat property boundaries adjacent to Pine Canyon and Guardsman Pass seasonal roads and monitor winter motorized use; and
3. Direct staff to meet with the Jurisdictional Stakeholder Group and Technical Resource Committee to confirm the Conservation Values, based on the Resource Inventory and initiate discussions associated with permitted and prohibited uses to be identified within the Conservation Easement.

Acronyms

PCMC Park City Municipal Corporation
UOL Utah Open Lands

Analysis

Staff has provided a timeline of approximately six months, which can find the timeline here: [Bonanza Flat Planning Timeline](#)

Utah Open Lands has developed the Resource Inventory for the property, which can be found in **(Attachment I.)**

The Bonanza Flat Conservation Area Resource Inventory (Inventory) consists of eight sections that provide information regarding current uses, historic uses, and scientific analysis of the conservation values found on Bonanza Flat.

The Inventory provides sets of data which allow for a greater understanding of the current conditions on the property and the **potential conservation trajectory** of those values based on those conditions. Beyond aiding in establishing a baseline of data that can be utilized as applied to the baseline documentation that will accompany the conservation easement, the Inventory provides basic building blocks for decision making.

- The Inventory provides a rudimentary explanation of what is taking place on the property and the existing affects. *Understanding the effects is a critical component of determining permitted and restricted uses for the conservation easement and guidance for the adaptive management plan and its eventual framework.* Its function is to aid the City Council, staff and identified stakeholders in making the aforementioned decisions.

The Bonanza Flat Conservation Area is already a beloved landscape as evidenced by the fundraising effort that brought communities and jurisdictional entities together. As much as it is beloved, it is endanger of becoming overly loved and **has a finite carrying capacity**. Achieving parity on balance of the conservation values may be more a function of **identifying distinct resource areas rather than ensuring that all uses and all conditions remain constant for all areas.**

- **An overarching value of Bonanza Flat is its unique characterization as a watershed area.** It is a locally significant value. The ability to store snowpack and the flat nature of the property allows for natural ponding and both intermittent and perennial water features. From this fact stems an initial conservation value conflict.
- **Certain recreational uses may be in conflict with watershed protection.** Additionally, winter and summer recreational aspects and components are fundamentally different and should be addressed accordingly. Determining whether certain recreational uses should be restricted where resource protection would be impaired by allowing these uses to occur or occur in the same unregulated manner will be an important component of conservation easement planning and adaptive management plan decisions. Solution based decisions

like shifting/limiting recreational access points and providing increased recreational infrastructure—facilities—by accommodating recreational uses through a higher level of management will ensure that cumulative impacts and increasing conflicts with other conservation values will be lessened.

Fundamentally, together with Park City staff, Utah Open Lands and the identified stakeholders the City will need to determine the degree of use beyond simply the type of use to sustain a healthy carrying capacity for Bonanza Flat and the protection of all conservation values.

Next Update to City Council

On July 13th, staff committed to returning to City Council every six weeks, so as to provide a planning and inventory update, as well as, provide for additional public input. Staff anticipates the next scheduled City Council update to be in early to mid-January.

Department Review

This report has been reviewed by the Budget and Executive Departments, as well as the City Attorney's Office.

Attachment I- Bonanza Flat Resource Inventory November 2017

(This is a very large file, which takes time to load. Staff has provided a link to the Document which is also located on the City's Bonanza Flat Conservation Area webpage)

[Bonanza Flat Conservation Area Resource Inventory November 2017](#)

Attachment II- Recaps of Jurisdictional Stakeholder and Technical Resource Committee Meetings

Jurisdictional Stakeholders Meeting Recap

The jurisdictional meeting involved entities whose public charter, either through funds provided, taxing authority or public purview encompassed Bonanza Flat. This initial meeting was purposed to receive input from these entities regarding their conservation or preservation priorities for Bonanza Flat. The meeting was geared to provide the various stakeholders with the ability to discuss either how Bonanza Flat as a property interfaced with their jurisdiction or vice versa. In attendance: Wasatch Mountain State Park, US Forest Service, Metropolitan Water District of Salt Lake and Sandy, Salt Lake City Public Utilities, Wasatch County, Midway City, Summit County, Snyderville Basin Special Recreation District

- Conservation Value Prioritization Discussion: Watershed, scenic, non-motorized recreation, and wildlife. An overarching concern for each stakeholder was water quality. From Summit County to Wasatch County, Metropolitan Water District to Salt Lake Public Utilities, the concern over protecting the watershed value of this

property exhibited itself as a high concern and was unanimous among stakeholders. Among the stakeholders it was recognized that the property effectually encompasses two different watersheds; big cottonwood and Provo River. It was recognized that behavioral patterns from user groups could affect both watersheds regardless of signage.

- Dog management. Specific to waste was identified as a major watershed concern.
- Human waste and impacts from the lack of camping facilities was also a watershed concern.
- All stakeholders recognized the critical role Bonanza Flat plays in broader regional recreational pursuits. Recreational pursuits varied slightly among the stakeholders. There was not a specific activity cited by all jurisdictional partners, however stakeholders identified potential threats to the Bonanza Flat area as including: uninformed or uneducated users of the area, increased general pollution, 'loving the area to death', watershed quality and human caused fire dangers.
- A key component identified by the stakeholders was the pristine nature of various areas in Bonanza Flat. It was suggested by a few jurisdictional stakeholders that protecting the pristine conditions existent on Bonanza Flat would be

Technical Resource Advisors Meeting Recap

The technical resource advisors in attendance: The Mountain Trails Foundation (MTF), the Citizens Open Space Advisory Committee (COSAC), Trails Utah, Save our Canyons (SoC) and Wasatch Backcountry Alliance (WBA) consists of organizations able to provide technical advice associated with possible uses. This initial meeting was purposed to introduce the planning framework and timeline, in addition to, receiving initial input on proposed technical planning documents

- Technical Planning Discussion: Similar to concerns echoed within the Mountain Accord planning process, the sentiment from the advisory group was that the property could be 'loved to death', should the access to the property be mismanaged. Specifically, the group noted that the property and proposed recreational amenities (trails) would have a carrying capacity, which ultimately would be regulated by the type, amount and location in which access is provided.
 - The creation of a sustainable trail network that manages use and impact to the property by avoiding environmentally sensitive areas.
 - Dog management within a watershed was discussed.
 - Recreational snowmobiling versus the utilization of snowmobiles for access to private property in the area was discussed.
 - Education and enforcement was a topic that continually arose, noting that any limitation and/or regulation of use would require a combination of both to ensure the environmental properties of the land would be preserved.