

CONSERVATION LANDS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES

February 3, 2020

4:00 PM

Currents

600 Cregg Lane

Missoula, MT 59802

Members present: Beverly Dupree, Kathleen Kennedy, Karen Sippy, Hannah Specht, Jamison Starbuck, Giles Thelen, Teagan Hayes, John O'Connor

Members absent: Carol Fischer

Others present: Staff Present; Morgan Valliant, Jolanda Cummings, Kate Sousa, Rob Bell, Clancy Jandreau
Public Present; Beu Horan, Sarah Martin, Sofia Fregogo, Mia Carriedo, Madison Murrill, John Conner, Colleen Biehl, Dave Westfall, Naomi Alhadeff

1. Approval of Minutes From December 02, 2019 and January 06, 2020

The minutes were approved as submitted.

2. Public comment on non-agenda items

Introductions were conducted.

3. Discussion Items

3.1 2019 Update on Research and Monitoring projects on Conservation Lands

An overview on the main monitoring efforts and research projects conducted in 2019. This included updates on the condition of Missoula's most intact grasslands, elk and recreational use in the South Hills, impacts of deer browse on riparian vegetation, and best management practices for controlling knapweed and exotic annual grasses. Clancy Jandreau will also briefly touch on the Conservation Lands Trailhead Inventory conducted in 2019.

Clancy Jandreau provided a presentation on the updates from 2019 Conservation Lands Management Research and Monitoring Program. Updates included management goals, challenges, research and monitoring program, Elk and Recreation on the South Hills Spur, trail usage, conservation lands trailhead inventory, Missoula's grazing program, integrated control of spotted knapweed, riparian impacts of deer browse and ventenata management and restoration.

The committee discussed impacts of weather and trends of the landscape.

4. Action Items

4.1 Proposal for Bancroft Ponds Park Outdoor Classroom

Review proposal from Lewis and Clark Neighborhood's Bancroft Ponds Committee to develop an outdoor classroom in Bancroft Ponds Park.

Morgan Valliant gave the brief background of Bancroft ponds and the ability it has to provide an educational environment.

Dave Westfall representing Bancroft Ponds committee and the Lewis and Clark Neighborhood council gave an overview of the proposal for the Bancroft Ponds Park Outdoor Classroom. Dave Westfall provided information to the committee on the enhancements that the committees would like to see to the park and the development of an outdoor classroom. The overall cost of the project would be \$14,000 and the committee would like request \$6000 from the City of Missoula to help with the overall cost. The committee is asking for the support from Conservation Lands Advisory Committee (CLAC)

CLAC conversed about the placement of the outdoor school and the benefits that it would have for the community and students. There was concern on the placement of boulders for seating and if there would create an area in which individuals might be able to hide. There was also discussion on current boulders in the area and if the Bancroft Ponds committee or the Lewis and Clark Neighborhood council had observed any vandalism. Dave Westfall and Colleen Biehl informed the committee that they had not seen any vandalism.

CLAC members asked if the Bancroft Pond Committee foresees a possible shelter around the outdoor classroom. Dave Westfall and John Conner communicated that they don't see a shelter ever being recommended.

Morgan Valliant reminded the committee that this action would be an addition to the current management plan for Bancroft Ponds. The outdoor classroom would comply with the current management plan. It would ensure that what is done in the park is usable and ecstastically fit with the landscape. The Bancroft Pond committee is asking for CLAC to make a recommendation to Park Board and bring it forward so the committee will be able to move forward on the design.

Naomi Alhadeff from National Wildlife Federation stated that community members have stressed this as a high need.

Moved by: Beverly Dupree

Seconded by: Kathleen Kennedy

Recommend to Park Board that the Bancroft Committee move forward with design of the Outdoor Classroom.

AYES: (8): Beverly Dupree, Kathleen Kennedy, Karen Sippy, Hannah Specht, Jamison Starbuck, Giles Thelen, Teagan Hayes, and John O'Connor

Vote results: Approved (8 to 0)

5. Discussion items

5.1 Final Review of the Clark Fork Islands Recreation Plan

Morgan Valliant presented the Clark Fork Islands Recreation Plan for Final review to CLAC members. The recreation plan will be presented to Park Board in March. Park Board will then review the plan and then release it to the public for 20 to 30 days. Park Board would then conduct a public meeting to gather feedback.

Morgan Valliant highlighted areas within the Clark Fork Islands Recreation Plan to indicate the updates that were made to the Final draft. There were multiple updates within the document and each was presented to the committee. The committee members inquired about historical testing in the area prior to construction. CLAC members discussed the commuter trail and if dogs should be on leash and what type of lighting would be required. There were recommendations of having signage that clearly stated areas that were private property and entering into conservation lands along the commuter trail.

Hannah Specht asked about phasing and if there would be something in place where the public wouldn't have access until bridges were complete.

Morgan Valliant doesn't want to encourage access until the bridges are completed and wants the infrastructures to be completed before it would be open to the public.

Committee members questioned trapping in the area and if signs to clarify and educate the public would be needed. Morgan Valliant said that there are regulations for no trapping in the City but something that could be considered.

Morgan Valliant asked the committee to read through the Recreation plan and look at the maps and send edits to him within 2 weeks so he can make changes if needed.

6. Future items

6.1 Clark Fork Island Recreation Management Plan

In March Conservation Committee will recommend the Park and Recreation Board to Adopt the Clark Fork Island Recreation Management Plan.

6.2 Conservation Land Management

In March there will be an update of the 2019 accomplishments and a overview of 2020 priorities.

7. Announcements

8. CLAC Board Member Q&A on non-agenda items

9. Adjournment

Adjournment 6:01pm

Minutes by Jolanda Cummings