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Friends Interested in Dogs and Open Space

June Newsletter - Little Early

The plan is to send this newsletter out about monthly. This is a little early as OSMP has released the "Overarching Issues" which addresses, among other things, the [Report on the Green Tag Program](#). There is a public input session on May 24th (Thursday) which we'll discuss lower down.

Also, thanks to everyone who commented on the last Newsletter. Some questions were raised that we'll address in this edition. One is especially important as it affects your wallet, and that's the difference between Boulder City Open Space and Boulder County Open Space. We also need to check on the status of Coot Lake to see how that is changing (or not).

Finally there is video of a V&S problem in San Francisco which made the international press recently.

That seems to be about all, of we go!

OSMP Green Tag Meeting

OSMP are organizing an Open House at the East Boulder Community Center on Thursday 24 May at 6pm to receive public input on the proposed changes to the Green Tag Program. As we hope they will reach out to everyone who has a Green Tag (~25,000) FIDOS will be there. Stop by and say hi if you can get to the meeting.

County Meeting

PARKS AND OPEN SPACE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

There is a meeting to discuss the planning for the Lagerman Imel Open Space on Thursday 24 May (Yes, the same day as the Green Tag Open House). We'd like to get V&S trail access in this area. As a matter of interest the results of the Public Input were posted today, and it shows that 43 respondents wanted V&S trails in the area, that was the highest number of any requests. The second most common demand (25 responses) was for the removal of a feedlot from the site and that has already been removed from the plan.

BUT

They are still proposing to ban V&S in the area!!

[The Full Report is here](#)

The POSAC meeting is at 6.30pm

Commissioners' Hearing Room,
3rd Floor, Boulder County Courthouse,
1325 Pearl Street,
Boulder, CO

Boulder City v Boulder County Open Space.

In the last newsletter we mentioned there are only two trails in Boulder County which allow Voice and Sight (V&S) access, one up in Nederland, and the 0.7 mile trail around West Twin Lake in Boulder. A couple of people pointed out they legally exercised their dogs off leash at Boulder Ranch and other locations outside the city.

Thing is, if you check the sign at the trail head you will find Boulder Ranch is run by the City Open Space and Mountain Parks, as are all the V&S areas except the Rez/Coot which is Parks and Rec, and the little inlier of Twin Lakes which is county. Even Barker Res up in Nederland is OSMP land.

Recently the city has noticed the fact that people are coming into the Boulder Open Space and have started discussing the "carrying capacity" of the land, and parking restrictions. In the "Overarching Issues" study they talk of increase fees for access by none Boulder Residents and banning none residents from city Open Space has been mentioned, (though we dont think thats possible).

There is something viscerally wrong about about excluding people from the land because they live in the next town, but the failure of the County Administrators to provide V&S trails in the lands they manage has caused this movement, fueled by the connected few who are working to drive all people off the Open Space and turn it into a nature reserve for their own enjoyment.

Its one thing to work to retain V&S access in Boulder, but the real answer is to open V&S trail in the County so visitors will be spread more thinly on more trails, reducing impact.

Coot Status - A Parks and Rec Restriction

The current status on Coot is that the V&S restrictions have been lifted from May 15th as the target species are not nesting this year. Oddly, there was nests in previous years when there was a porous fence and V&S was permitted.

The issue here is the ability of Staff to arbitrarily close trails on a whim. This is certainly a battle we will have to fight year after year, otherwise they can easily forget to reopen a trail following a seasonal closing.

2011 Visitors Survey Results

OSMP just released the results of the [2010-2011 Visitors attitude survey](#) and is significant to the V&S community for a single pie chart on about page 26 which shows 59% of "conflict" on the Open Space was due to dogs in the survey.

Looks bad!

Thing is, only 7% of respondents reported any conflict at all, so 59% of 7% is only 4%. Also in this study a "conflict" could be seeing a poop bag on the trail. If 10 people see the same bag on that day thats 10 "conflicts".

When you hear of dogs causing 59% of all conflict in the Open Space (and you certainly will), just remember the context.

A preview of a movie on V&S restrictions

There has been a move to drive V&S visitors off the Golden Gate National Park in San Francisco, you may have read about the [local dog walker being tazared by a ranger](#). Now the group has made a video of exactly how certain groups are seizing land and driving visitors off. The preview is at: ["Anatomy of a Public Land Grab"](#)

The first 1/2 of the preview is about the SanFrancisco situation, but the second half is strangely similar to the Boulder situation. Well worth 5 minutes of your time

FIDOS Membership and Feedback

Members of FIDOS include a wide cross section of the Boulder Community, the most common factor is an interest and protecting the the Open Space, accompanied by our dogs. Many supporters are in fact "between dogs", but value meeting others with their dogs on the trail.

In order to retain and expand this access we each need to be "good stewards" of the lands around us and keep an eye on whats going on on the trails as well as in the meeting rooms.

Let us know if you have any ideas or observations on the direction of FIDOS.

New perspectives on V&S are always valuable in developing our arguments.

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