

**City of Carson City
Agenda Report**

Date Submitted: January 28, 2014

Agenda Date Requested: February 6, 2014

Time Requested: Consent

To: Mayor and Supervisors

From: Parks and Recreation Department – Open Space Division

Subject Title: For possible action to approve a recommendation from the Carson City Open Space Advisory Committee naming two open space acquisitions located along the Carson River and east of the Deer Run Road bridge, formerly the Serpa and Bently properties, as Carson River Canyon Open Space.

Staff Summary: During the Open Space Advisory Committee meeting on December 16, 2013, the Committee approved a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors to name the open space acquisitions as Carson River Canyon Open Space. This recommendation was made on a 7-0 motion.

Type of Action Requested: (check one)

- ☐ Resolution ☐ Ordinance
☒ Formal Action/Motion ☐ Other (Specify)

Does This Action Require A Business Impact Statement: ☐ Yes ☒ No

Recommended Board Action: I move to approve a recommendation from the Carson City Open Space Advisory Committee naming two open space acquisitions located along the Carson River and east of the Deer Run Road bridge, formerly the Serpa and Bently properties, as Carson River Canyon Open Space.

Explanation for Recommended Board Action: In May 2013, the Board of Supervisors adopted Resolution No. 2013-R-19 which established the policies and procedures for the naming of open space properties. Staff has proceeded with the process and is bringing the next nominations forward. On November 2, the Nevada Appeal published a short article notifying the public that the Open Space Program was receiving proposals for the naming of two open space properties. Staff also announced the application period at the Board of Supervisors meeting on November 21, 2013 and posted a notice on the Parks and Recreation Department Facebook page (viewed by 267 people, as of December 2, 2013). Two nominations were submitted from Open Space Advisory Committee Member Margie Evans and one nomination was submitted by staff. The Open Space Advisory Committee considered the nominations during their regularly scheduled meeting on December 16, 2013. Through motion and a vote of 7-0, the Committee recommended naming the open space acquisitions as Carson River Canyon Open Space. In keeping with the policies for the naming of open space properties, Carson River Canyon refers to the landscape, geographic, and topographic features.

Applicable Statute, Code, Policy, Rule or Regulation:

- Carson City Municipal Code 13.06.060
- Carson City Resolution No. 2013-R-19

Fiscal Impact: N/A

Explanation of Impact: N/A

Funding Source: N/A

Alternatives:

1. Deny the recommendation of the Carson City Open Space Advisory Committee and select another name for the park.
2. Deny the recommendation of the Carson City Open Space Advisory Committee and direct the Commission to consider another name.

Supporting Material:

- Resolution No. 2013-R-19
- Naming Packet / Property Information
- Open Space Advisory Committee, December 16, 2013, Staff Report, Agenda Item 3B

Prepared By: Ann Bollinger Date: 1/28/2014
Ann Bollinger, Natural Resource Specialist

Reviewed By: Roger Moellendorf Date: 1/28/14
Roger Moellendorf, Parks & Recreation Director

for Raut S. Shrivastava Date: 1/28/14
Marena Works, Interim City Manager

[Signature] Date: 1/28/14
District Attorney's Office

Unil Shrivastava Date: 1/28/14
Finance Department

Board Action Taken:

Motion: _____ 1: _____ Aye/Nay

2: _____

(Vote Recorded By)

RESOLUTION NO. 2013-R-19

A RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR THE NAMING OF OPEN SPACE PROPERTIES WITHIN CARSON CITY

WHEREAS, the Open Space Program was created through a voter-approved ballot initiative in 1996, often referred to as Question 18; and

WHEREAS, Carson City Charter Provision 2.230 empowers the Board of Supervisors to regulate public parks, buildings, grounds and rights-of-way within the City; and

WHEREAS, Carson City Charter Provision 8A.030 defines open space as real property that is undeveloped or partially developed natural landscape, including, but not limited to, ridges, stream corridors, natural shorelines, scenic areas, watershed areas, viewsheds, agricultural or other land devoted exclusively to open-space use, conservation easements and easements devoted or connecting to open-space use; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors desires to establish policies and procedures for the naming of the open space properties within Carson City;

NOW, THEREFORE, this Board hereby resolves to adopt the following:

POLICIES

1. Names should provide some form of individual identity to the property or specific part of any owned property.
2. If possible, names should be related to the unique natural landscape, geographic or topographic features, indigenous plants or wildlife, cultural or historical heritage.
3. The naming for individuals and/or families should be reserved as an incentive towards significant donations of land and/or endowments. It is encouraged that any recommended name be designated posthumously.
4. Individuals and organizations should be encouraged to submit nominations to the Parks and Recreation Department.
5. Due to their familiarity with the individual properties, committee members and staff may submit nominations.

PROCEDURES

1. After the City has acquired title to the property, the Parks and Recreation Department is responsible to solicit nominations.
2. The Parks and Recreation Department will publicize the open period including the deadline for nominations.
3. A formal nomination and justification must be submitted, in writing, to the Parks and Recreation Department.
4. The Parks and Recreation Department staff will review and research the nomination(s). Staff will prepare a written summary for the Open Space Advisory Committee (OSAC).
5. The Open Space Advisory Committee will review the nomination(s) for consideration at a regularly scheduled meeting. Upon OSAC recommendation, Parks and Recreation Department staff will forward to the Board of Supervisors for approval.
6. Upon Board of Supervisors' approval, the name shall be identified on open space signage and materials.

Upon motion by Supervisor John McKenna, seconded by Supervisor Brad Bonkowski, the foregoing resolution was passed and adopted this 2nd day of May, 2013, by the following vote:

AYES: Supervisor John McKenna
Supervisor Brad Bonkowski
Supervisor Karen Abowd
Supervisor Jim Shirk
Mayor Robert Crowell

NAYS: None.

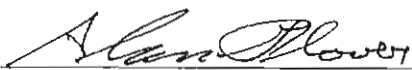
ABSENT: None.

ABSTAIN: None.



ROBERT L. CROWELL, Mayor

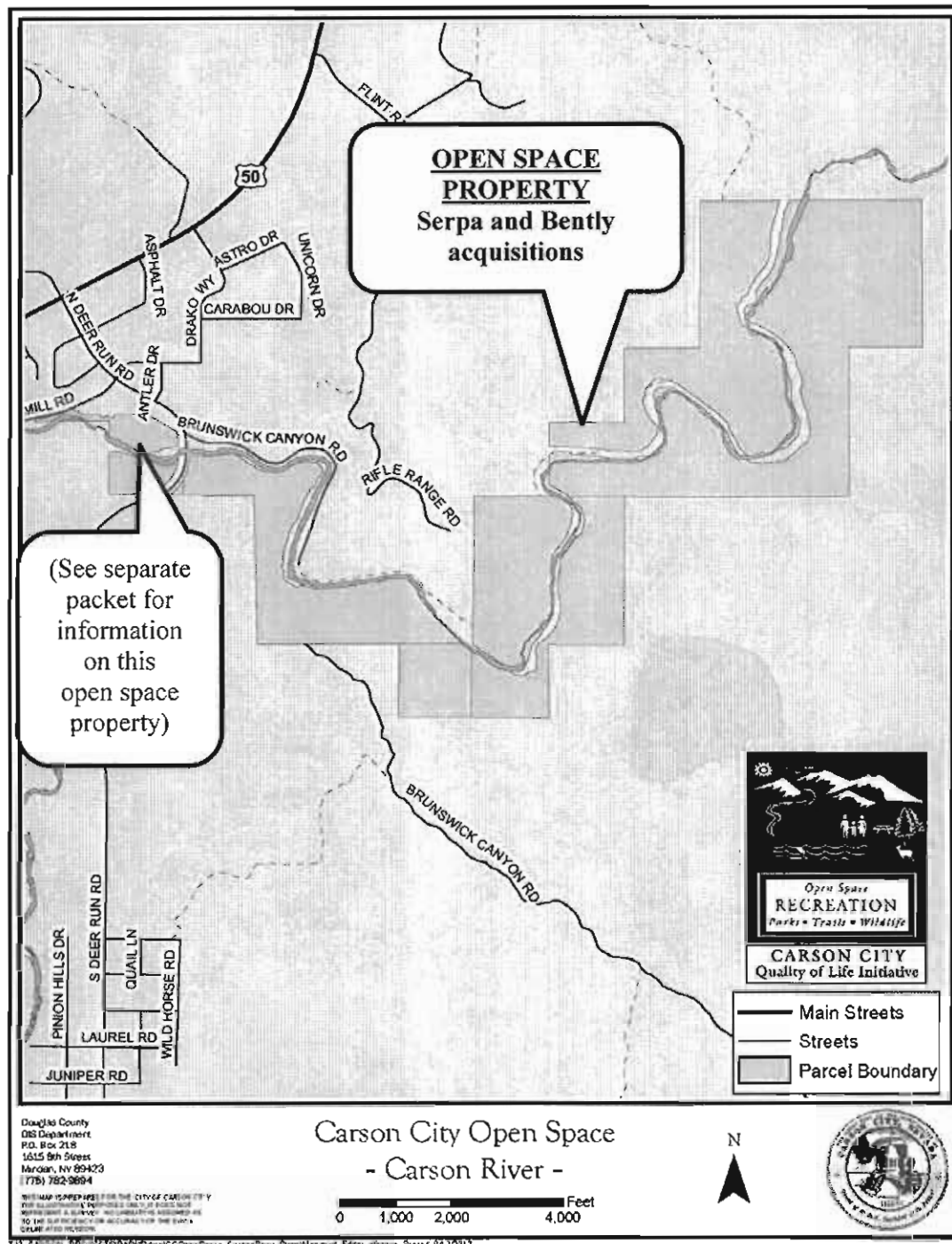
ATTEST:

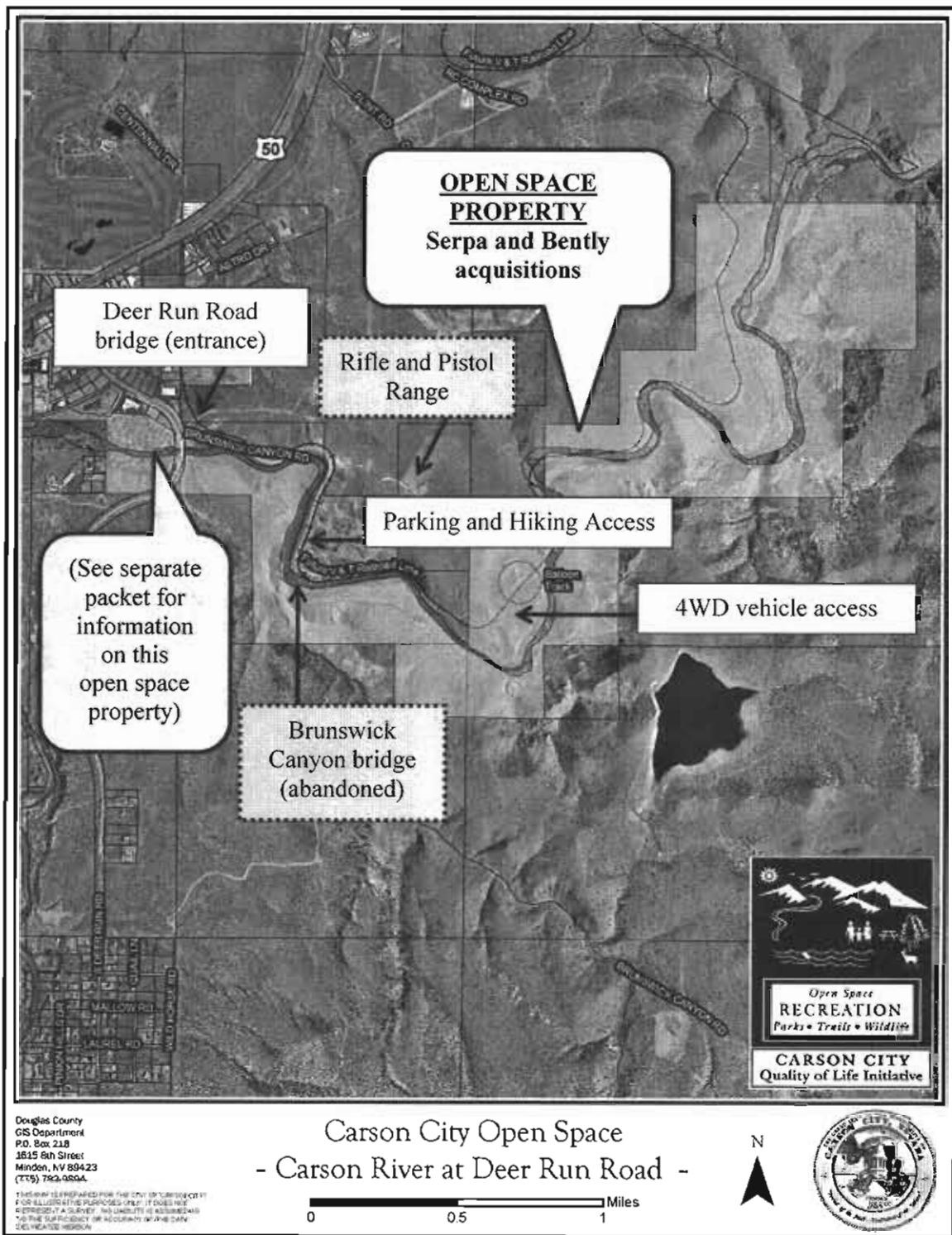


ALAN GLOVER, Clerk - Recorder

Carson City Open Space

Serpa and Bently Property Acquisitions, east of Deer Run Road bridge
871 acres (approximate total)





Location

There are several parcels under consideration within this one nomination. The subject property(ies) is located on the east side of Carson City, along the Carson River. The property is bordered to the west by Deer Run Road; to the north by one private parcel (Bertagnolli gravel pit), Carson City lands including the Rifle and Pistol Range and the Landfill; to the east by private lands; and to the south by public lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management.

Access

From the Deer Run Road bridge, the subject property can be seen on the southeast corner, though generally inaccessible. Most of the property lies further downriver into the Carson River Canyon (commonly referred to as Brunswick Canyon). The most common access is from the northeast corner of the Deer Run Road bridge, turning east onto Brunswick Canyon Road. The following mile markers provide various references to the property:

Mile 0.0 – The start of Brunswick Canyon Road at Deer Run Road.

Mile 1.0 – Up to the first mile, the road surface is a graded dirt road and accessible with a two-wheel drive vehicle. At the Bertagnolli gravel pit and Brunswick bridge (abandoned), the road is not maintained and a high clearance, four-wheel drive vehicle is recommended. At this point, visitors may park near the bridge and continue to follow the road by alternative methods (hike, mountain bike, or horseback riding).

Mile 1.3 – The start of the subject property and recognized with an Open Space sign.

Mile 1.7 – In the distance, an old entrance to a bunker can be seen. The road continues toward the entrance, and then turns left through a narrow gap between the rocks.

Mile 1.8 – Remnants of the old Merrimac Mill can be seen on the left. The road continues straight on the old railroad bed and follows the river. From this point, the road becomes very narrow and rough.

Mile 4.0 – The road ends and meets the reconstructed V&T Railway.

To access the property on the south side of the river, drive approximately two miles south from the Deer Run Road bridge to Sedge Road. Turn east and stay on the main road for 1.5 miles. Turn left and travel downhill towards the river for ¾ mile, following the wash. The entrance of the property is recognized with an Open Space sign. The road is not maintained and a high clearance, four-wheel drive vehicle is recommended.

The roads are open to non-motorized and motorized users.

Background

Purchase Date: January 2011
Purchased From: John C. Serpa / Sierra Clouds LLC
Funding Source: 1) Carson City Open Space, Quality of Life Sales and Use Tax Funds
2) Nevada Division of State Lands, Question 1 Program

Purchase Date: January 2012
Purchased From: Bently Family Ltd Partnership
Funding Source: 1) Carson City Open Space, Quality of Life Sales and Use Tax Funds
2) Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act

Physical Characteristics

Historic / Cultural: These properties may contain the most historic activity and artifacts of all the open space properties. Beginning just upriver, this section of the Carson River played a prominent role during the mining days of the Comstock Era. After ore was mined in Virginia City, it was transferred to any of the great number of stamp mills located along the river. The Carson River provided a water source which was necessary in the ore extraction process. Four stamp mills were located in this area: Merrimac Mill, Copper Canyon Mill, Vivian Mill, and the Santiago Mill. Today, the most visible artifact from the stamp mills is a wall from the Merrimac Mill.

As a consequence of the ore extraction process and widespread occurrence of mercury, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) declared much of this area as a federally listed Superfund site in August 1990. Referred to as the Carson River Mercury Superfund Site, the primary concerns reside in contaminated soils and waterways at or near former mill sites. Along the Carson River, the site extends from the Empire Ranch Golf Course in Carson City and continues downstream for 50 miles to the Lahontan Valley. The Carson City Parks and Recreation Department has conducted sampling at select areas to determine whether the lands are suitable for general recreation use. The development of recreational facilities, such as picnic sites for the Carson River Aquatic Trail, may require additional sampling.

In addition to the mining history, the historic Virginia & Truckee (V&T) Railway operated along the existing roadbed from 1869 to 1951. The roadbed itself also contains visible retaining walls and other components of historic significance. In 1993, the state legislature recognized the unique opportunity to restore this "iron horse" and created the Nevada Commission for the Reconstruction of the V&T Railway. Thus far, the V&T Railway has been reconstructed up to the north end of the subject property. The Commission has an easement on the northern parcel (Bently acquisition) for reconstruction. The right-of-way on southern parcel(s) is still privately-owned by Mr. Serpa; however, it is anticipated this right-of-way will be sold to the Commission for the railway reconstruction. It should be noted that the railway reconstruction will occur on the historic railway alignment and the existing roadbed, thereby closing road access beyond the Bertagnolli gravel pit.

Landform / scenic quality: Located on both sides of the Carson River, the property is dominated by steep, rocky slopes. The most level terrain is found in the alluvial fans and sandy bars along the river corridor. The elevations range from 4,500' to 5,500'.

Plant communities: The primary vegetation composition is sagebrush uplands and includes ephedra (Mormon Tea), desert peach, rabbitbrush, and others. Along the river corridor, cottonwoods, coyote willow, and Wood's rose are common. The upper elevations contain sparse concentrations of pinyon pine and juniper. Two small wetland areas contain cattails. Beautiful wildflowers have also been observed around the property including blanketflower, blazing star, columbine, paintbrush, primrose, and globemallow.

Water Resources: The Carson River flows through the center of the property. Additionally two small wetlands are present, one of which is result of leaking water from the Brunswick Reservoir located above.

Wildlife: The Carson River and diverse plant communities should provide habitat for many species of wildlife. The Carson River Master Plan, dated 1996, identifies fish, mammals, reptiles, amphibians, and birds throughout the river corridor, but not specific to this property. With that said, not much has been observed by staff nor biologists involved with V&T Environmental Assessment (EA). The V&T Supplemental EA identified the following species in the survey areas:

- Red-tailed hawk
- California quail
- Turkey vulture
- Western rattlesnake
- Wild horse
- Jackrabbit
- Skunk
- Western fence lizard
- Squirrel
- Mountain cottontail rabbit
- Side-blotched lizard

Additionally, Ms. Nancy Santos informed staff that pinyon jay is a unique species to our area. They are seen in large flocks along the river in Carson primarily in winter and they breed in colonies in the Pine Nut Mountains. There is currently research being done to find out more about their breeding habitats.

Photo 1: Scenic views of the landscape are dominated by steep topography with the river below. The property contains a diverse vegetation composition with riparian near the river's edge, sagebrush uplands and pinyon-juniper woodlands.



Photo 2: The only Class III whitewater rapids on the middle section of the Carson River flow through this section of the canyon.



Photo 3: Paintbrush and purple sage are just two of the wildflowers found throughout the canyon.



Photo 4: From the north side of the river and located approximately 1.0 mile from Deer Run Road, limited parking is available near the abandoned Brunswick Canyon bridge.

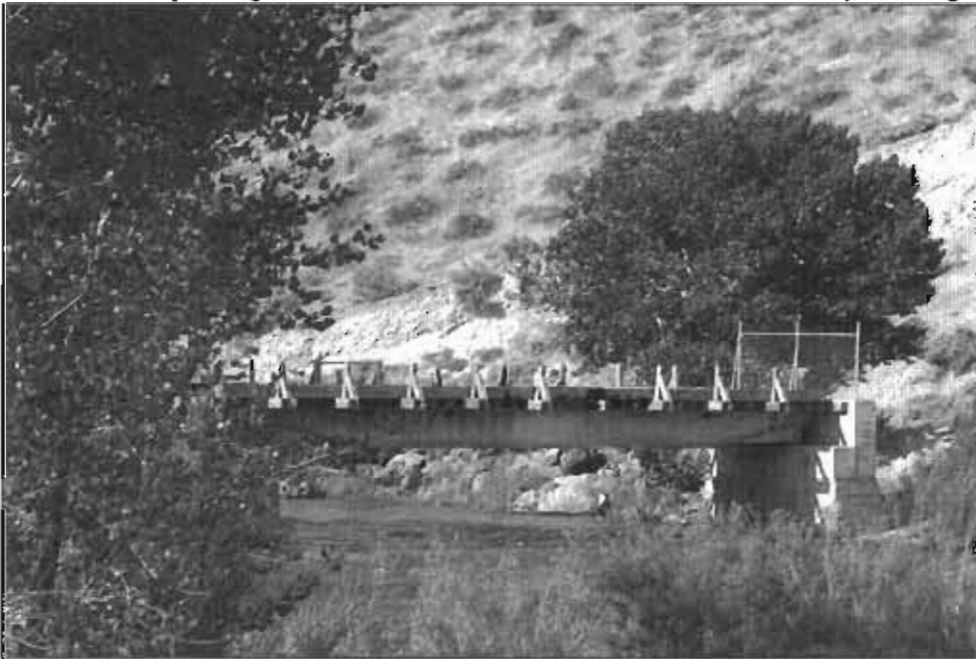


Photo 5: From the north side of the river and located approximately 1.3 miles from Deer Run Road, an Open Space signs designates the entrance to the open space property.



Photo 6: From the north side of the river and located approximately 1.8 miles from Deer Run Road, one wall is the remaining artifact of the Merrimac Mill.

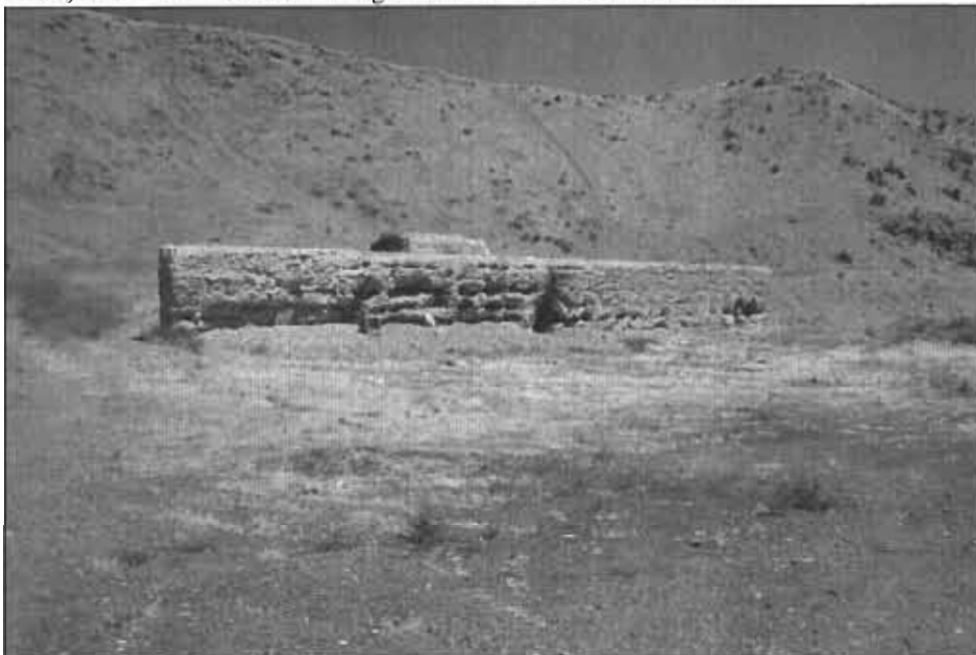


Photo 7: From the south side of the river, unique white cliffs can be observed across the river.



OPEN SPACE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE: December 16, 2013

AGENDA ITEM NUMBER: 3B

STAFF: Ann Bollinger, Natural Resource Specialist

REQUEST: For Possible Action: To recommend to the Board of Supervisors a name for two open space acquisitions, formerly the Serpa and Bently properties, located east of the Deer Run Road bridge.

GENERAL DISCUSSION: On November 2, 2013, the Nevada Appeal published a short article notifying the public that Carson City was receiving proposals for the naming of two open space properties (Exhibit A). Staff also posted a notice on the Parks and Recreation Department Facebook page (viewed by 267 people, as of December 2, 2013). The deadline set by our department for receiving proposals was 5:00 P.M. on Wednesday, November 27. No names were submitted as a result of this outreach. Rather, two names were submitted by OSAC Member Evans and one name was submitted by staff. The submitted names are listed in alphabetical order (Exhibit B):

- Carson Canyon
- Carson Gorge
- Carson River Canyon Open Space

After the Committee takes action to name the property, our department will forward that recommendation to the Board of Supervisors for their consideration. Staff is anticipating an agenda item at the Board of Supervisors meeting in January 2014.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: I move to recommend to the Board of Supervisors that the name for two open space acquisitions, formerly the Serpa and Bently properties, located east of the Deer Run Road bridge should be called _____.