

**OPEN SPACE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
STAFF REPORT**

MEETING DATE: February 22, 2016

AGENDA ITEM NUMBER: 4A

STAFF: Rich Wilkinson, Senior Natural Resource Specialist

REQUEST: Staff update on a Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act project

GENERAL DISCUSSION: Staff coordinated a meeting with the volunteer working group representing two members each from the Parks and Recreation Commission and Open Space Advisory Committee. The meeting was held on December 8, 2015. A project summary, scoring matrix and a scoring sheet for each project was provided. The group focused on three regional areas which included: Silver Saddle Ranch / Buzzy's Ranch (Scored 60.30), the west side of Carson City (Scored 52.20), and the Prison Hill Recreation Area (Scored 51.48). Attached to your staff report are the results of the scoring matrix and the pros and cons. The volunteer working group will have an additional meeting on March 7, 2016 to further discuss the highest ranked project, which was the Silver Saddle Ranch / Buzzy's Ranch area.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: This agenda item is for informational purposes only. No formal action can be taken at this time.

SILVER SADDLE RANCH / BUZZY'S RANCH

SCORES

CONNECTIVITY

REVIEW CRITERIA — Promotes connectivity that links people to nature and to recreation opportunities and unites important places across the landscape.

The project enhances physical connectivity or access to or within a regional/local park, trail, or natural area, and/or federal lands.

5	4	5	5	5	5	4	5	3	5	4.60
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The park, trail, or natural area is part of an approved regional or local plan. (If no formal regional/local approved plan describes the planning process.)

5	3	5	5	5	4	4	4	4	5	4.40
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The project is integral in ceasing a comprehensive system of parks, trails, and natural areas.

5	3	5	5	5	5	4	5	3	5	4.50
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The project serves as an education/interpretive bridge to connect people to the outdoors.

5	4	5	5	5	4	4	5	4	5	4.60
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TOTAL

18.10

COST & VALUE OF INVESTMENT

REVIEW CRITERIA — The projected deliverables, budget, associated costs, and phasing considerations of the proposal are stated and justified.

Public demand/use vs. investment required (ie, service area/radius, communities benefited) is reasonable and is clearly identified.

4	3	3	3	4	2	4	4	3	5	3.50
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The design or approach of the project minimizes future maintenance and/or replacement costs to the extent possible for the type of project.

3	3	4	5	5	3	4	3	3	1	3.40
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Has identified committed non-SNPLMA sources of funding or in-kind contribution in the development and/or implementation of the project (ie, financial, volunteerism).

4	3			5	3	3	4	3	3	3.50
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TOTAL

10.40

GRAND TOTALS

60.30

Silver Saddle Ranch and Buzzy's Ranch

Working Group Comments:

Pros:

- 1- Connectivity with trails for Carson River Park, Silver Saddle Ranch, Mexican Dam, Riverview Park, Morgan Mill Preserve, Vidler, Empire Ranch Trail, Mexican Ditch Trail, and Prison Hill Trails. This will help connect to the entire Carson City Trail System.
- 2- Preservation of historical ranch, presents unlimited preservation of Carson City historic ranching with continued agricultural use
- 3- The ability to expand and improve aquatic trail system to Silver Saddle Ranch and Buzzy's Ranch
- 4- Volunteer base in place to assist in upkeep
- 5- High public demand
- 6- Help complete Unified Pathways Master Plan
- 7- Called for in Parks and Recreation Master Plan
- 8- Population close to schools makes for easy educational opportunities, outdoor classroom and nature activities
- 9- Multiple use opportunities
- 10- No land ownership concerns or need for easements, rights of entry, and land purchases
- 11- Can reach a large diversity of ability and interest, broaden education, and interpretation opportunities
- 12- Economic, political, and city event destination
- 13- Establish Prison Hill and Silver Saddle Ranch into Aquatic Trail
- 14- Increase access to Buzzy's Ranch area

Cons:

- 1- Big project with a lot of planning and staff time
- 2- May be too costly depending on budget
- 3- Very complex likely to take multiple years or phases
- 4- Not shovel ready

Staff Recommendations and Priorities:

- 1- City required to meet ADA guidelines for accessibility to Silver Saddle Ranch
- 2- Critical infrastructure needs addressed to ensure historical structures are maintained and repaired
- 3- White house needs demolished, it may be considered a liability or hazard
- 4- Critical need for safe crossing at Carson River Road
- 5- This project area checks off a lot of boxes for the SNPLMA selection committee and will most likely result in a higher score

West Carson City

Working Group Comments:

Pros:

- 1- Help update Unified Pathways Master Plan
- 2- Outstanding opportunities for connectivity with Tahoe Rim Trail, State Parks, USFS lands, and the Carson Valley Trail System
- 3- V&T provide important low elevation north to south connector which also connects with the Eagle Valley Children's Home and Carson Tahoe Hospital
- 4- Expand the City's mountain bike trail system
- 5- Greater connectivity for all trails
- 6- Formal parking areas would benefit public and keep people in desired areas
- 7- Low cost and low effort required
- 8- Simple scope and execution

Cons:

- 1- Limited potential for interpretive and education opportunities
- 2- Not as useful because of limited abilities
- 3- Limited
- 4- A lot of variables that would impact getting project approval: land ownership, access, and need for an easement

Staff Recommendations and Priorities:

- 1-

Prison Hill Recreation Area

Working Group Comments:

Pros:

- 1- Improve public access through trailhead development
- 2- Interpretative opportunities for geological, environmental, natural resource protection
- 3- Create sustainable trail system
- 4- High public demand
- 5- Protect and separate OHV and non-motorized areas
- 6- May have OHV grant funding available
- 7- Unique mountain bike and urban trail system
- 8- Tie into Silver Saddle Ranch and Buzzy' s Ranch existing trails
- 9- Potential OHV education outreach

Cons:

- 1- Not as much public demand

Staff Recommendations and Priorities:

- 1- Is a key connector to other trails already planned or established