MINUTES OF A MEETING OF
THE WILDLIFE COMMITTEE OF
EAGLE RANCH ASSOCIATION

A Meeting of the Wildlife Committee of the Eagle Ranch Association (the "Association") was held on February 12, 2025, at the Eagle Ranch Office, 1143 Capitol Street, Eagle, CO 81631. This meeting was rescheduled from January 28, 2025.

Committee Members Present:

Hugh Fairfield-Smith, Eagle Valley Wildland
Derek Rose, Eagle Ranch Golf Course
Brian Wodrich, Colorado Parks and Wildlife
Brian Lieberman, Town of Eagle
Kate Sheldon, Committee Member

Others Present:

Stacey Todd, Eagle County Wildfire Collaborative, Acting Wildlife Coordinator
Shawn Bruckman, Ground-Up Solutions
Tom Olden, Resident
Clark Gunlick, Resident
Pam Gunlick, Resident
Jackie McKenna, Resident
Tanya Jordet, Resident

The order of business was as follows:

1. Call to Order. The meeting was called to order at 10:02 a.m. MDT. A quorum of Committee members was present.

2. Approval of Minutes. Upon motion made and seconded, the Committee unanimously approved the minutes of the meeting held on October 23, 2024, as presented.

3. New Business

    a. Introduction of Stacey Todd, new acting Wildlife Coordinator
    Hugh introduced Stacey. Employee of Eagle River Fire. No committee member had issues with her helping run the wildlife committee meetings

    b. Public Input (not on agenda)
        i. Clark Gunlick shared his concern for construction pushing wildlife onto town open spaces where vegetation has been destroyed and migration of ground squirrels, badgers, and deer/elk. Clark requests that the TOE maintain and bring open space back to its original open space conditions
            1. Hugh shared that funds have been authorized for this project.
            2. Discussion followed on the eradication of ground animals. Ground animals will not be relocated due to numerous issues. Brian Wodrich and Derek Rose described the process and Wodrich shared to be prepared for pushback from neighbors. Done humanely through CPW regulations

ii. Jackie McKenna shared she does not want ground animals eradicated and feels it is not necessary. Humans need to co-exist with animals
    1. Derek explained the animals are not poisoned and carbon monoxide, does not carry on to other animals. Wodrich stated management options are euthanized or leave them be.
    2. Jackie shared information on deterrents and asked the committee to try other things first before eradication. Imbalance in ecosystem
    3. Eagle Ranch Golf Course is part of the Audubon Society
    4. Derek and Wodrich continued to discuss ground animals - they have been displaced and if there is heavy vegetation in an area, they typically look elsewhere.

iii. Tom Olden discussed the relationship between the town of Eagle and the Committee and the fast-tracking of E-Bikes. Tom stated that the committee is to use the funding to maintain, acquire and manage.
    1. Tom hasn't seen a sign about the Audubon Society. Derek shared that there is one in the golf course clubhouse.
    2. Liberman shared that there are more interpretive signs on the walking path that were partially funded through the ERWC

c. <u>BLM's upcoming Scoping for e-bikes on public lands</u>

The agenda was moved around to accommodate members of the public who wanted to speak on the topic.

i. Brian Liberman shared that Upper Colorado River Valley Field Office of the BLM received a request from a regional mountain bike group. HTC supports the proposal but did not initiate the proposal to support e-bikes. The field office is to evaluate a proposal for Class I (Pedal Assist) to be allowed on most of their non-motorized trails out of that field office. Done through a NEPA assessment which includes stakeholder input and environmental assessments.

ii. HTC has contacted TOE staff asking TOE to be involved in discussions. TOE and BLM trails intertwine, and one can't make a decision without the other. Open Space and Recreation Advisory Committee and Town Council want TOE Open Space to participate in this review process which at minimum will include a survey and an open house where residents will be able to voice support or opposition. Ultimately, the Town Council's decision. Timeframe: Spring, Summer, and Fall
    1. BLM wants to work with the TOE in making a decision. Important to have a lot of public input.
    2. **Invite Alan Sipenski to a committee meeting or give an email update to the committee.**

Committee Discussion

- Kate shared that she had recently attended the Open Space and Town Council Meetings, change in experience with e-bikes on the trail, and a drastic difference if e-bikes are allowed. Fast-tracked. Kate shared the mission of the wildlife committee – to protect wildlife and wildlife habitat. Discussion of zone of disturbance (1000ft)– worse with e-bikes.
- Brian Lieberman addressed the need to have proof that wildlife will be impacted. He suggested a possible study and looking at environmental impact studies of other communities.

- Kate shared that the only open space areas that allow e-bikes are on the front range and don't have the elk population there.
- Lieberman—a decision backed by fact-based data in ERWC involved. The biggest issue with e-bikes is that they can go further out, with a higher frequency of use, not higher disturbance.
- Wodrich discussed the ADA component with e-bikes. Looking at both side. Comfortable for the committee to take a stand, wants to make sure there is a direct path to wildlife concerns = e-bikes
- Kate commented if Eagle County Open Space takes a no-e-bike stance and TOE allows it, then there will be an influx of e-bike users in the area.

d. Eleven Miles of New Rec Trails

i. The Town of Eagle went through the master plan process and adopted it in 2022. The plan shows hope for new trails that the recreation group wanted to see. Compromise. HTC submitted a proposal to BLM based on projects in that master plan. Reroute of Abrams Gulch, Dirt Surfer. Phase II approach – new trails. Most of the trails are on BLM, only one proposed trail on TOE Open Space and a couple of reroutes on Abrams Gulch. HTC hopes to work with town and BLM to start the NEPA process. Still in the early stage of planning and when proposal is finalized, HTC will present to the Open Space Advisory Committee and then on to Town Council, where there will be public comment. TOE has budgeted a small contribution to the project and most of the funds would come through HTC. Preapproved in the scope of BLM allowance.

Discussion

- Kate shared a letter regarding the Minturn moose and the impacts of development. The CPW formula for cluster trails, recreation sprawl, and one linear mile per sq mile in big game habitats.
- Wodrich shared recommendations with BLM, and concerns with trails.

Public Comment

- Tanya Jordet is concerned about disruption to the elk. She attended the HTC meeting and thought that some trails looked good with less disruption. The proposed trail behind Seabreeze Street trail cuts across elk migration
    - Wodrich shared that they would prefer the elk and deer outside of town limits in the open spaces. Where trails are being proposed is where CPW would prefer the elk to be. Balance in high priority areas, planning phase important.
    - Lieberman shared that there are opportunities for public comment. Similar process as he had described for e-bikes. Stakeholders involved, present to OSRAC, town council public hearing. The timeline is not known at this time. The Town Council makes the final decision.
- Tom Olden stated the committee is to focus in HOA Boundaries +5 miles. Not to support things against that. He expects the committee to write a letter to Town Council against e-bikes.
    - Discussion followed with Wodrich agreeing that a letter should be written but needs the supporting facts and references. Discussion on the letter and what it should say. The letter has little value without

fact base. Tom would like the committee to be more aggressive. ERWC is happy to write a letter.

- Discussion on the possibility that proposed trails might be better for wildlife. Pulling off users from high-priority habitats to lower priority is a benefit. CPW referral agency and will give viewpoints.

Kate made a motion that the Eagle Ranch Wildlife Committee draft a letter to the Eagle Town Council stating that ERWC is interested in participating in the discussion regarding the 11 miles of new trails that local mountain bike groups are proposing concerning the impact to wildlife. Drafts will go to the committee for review at the next special meeting

With a second letter regarding e-bikes.

Brian Wodrich seconded. Unanimously approved

Kate offered to draft the letters.

Discussion on ways that the ERWC can get information out the public, specifically positive things that are being done. It was suggested possibly with the movie theater ads or in the HOA publication.

4. Other Business

a. Ground-Up Solutions - Update.

i. Shawn provided an update. The soil report was sent out to the committee on Dec 31 (also below). Phase I data collection is complete. Phase II pilot project with seed and compost extract. Shawn reviewed the budget and timeline. The budget of $54,010 was approved in April. $22,000 spent in Phase I, which is a little under budget. Leaves $32,000 for the next Phase. Spud Celler and Hernage Creek areas. Dominate species cheatgrass and crested wheat grass. The recommendation is to focus on perennial vegetation and manage the non-native grasses. Shawn shared the recommendations for the pilot program. Meeting with EC Conservation District to work on seed mix.

Committee Discussion

- Derek recommended Buffalo Brand Seed on the Front Range. The seed won't have the benefit of jump-starting with water. Shawn hopes to have the seed selected by mid-March and get out in early Spring. Cheatgrass mitigation and two pilot projects can be done in the $32,000 visit. Shawn will get information together to put in the HOA newsletter.
- Will need an agreement signed by town council when it comes to seeding. MOU was to get the study done.
- Shawn will put the full report in dropbox

Soil Report
Group Up Update

b. Scope of Services and Timeline Preliminary Presentation for the Open Space Ranger Position
    i. Scope of Services to outline what the position is doing, key responsibilities and goals of the position. Funding Agreement with the committee to solidify the funding of the position. Review of Funding Agreement will take place on Feb 27 Special Meeting. The position was posted on 1/28 with the hopes of getting someone in the position by the end of April/early May. Ranger Excellence School takes place in mid-May. Patrols to start the fall of 2025.

Committee Discussion

- This position will have the ability to write tickets. Focus on education first. Warnings. Recommendation for TOE legal attorneys to keep the IGA as simple as possible. Lieberman's goal is to have the ranger out on the weekends, yet it's a balance.

Public Comment

- Tom Oden inquired about ticket revenue and whether the ERWC would get a portion of the revenue and shared his concerns about the position meeting the guidelines of the PUD.
- Committee Discussion on enforcement vs education and the percentage of the ranger's time should be spent enforcing in the winter months in regards to the 48% of the salary coming from the ERWC.
    - TOE is repurposing the open space and trails maintain tech with maintain obligations they must complete.

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 12:13 p.m. MDT.

Respectfully submitted,

Stacey Todd

Stacey Todd, Coordinator