

SAN MIGUEL COUNTY OPEN SPACE COMMISSION 2021 WORK PLAN/GOALS

Mission Statement: The San Miguel County Open Space Commission seeks to protect, conserve and enhance lands important for open space, recreation, natural habitat, agriculture and scenic beauty throughout San Miguel County for this and future generations.

<u>Goals/Programs</u>	<u>Accomplished 2020</u>	<u>Action Items 2021</u>	<u>Budget 2021</u>
<p><u>San Miguel Land Heritage Program</u> - The Open Space Commission (OSC) will continue to facilitate the preservation of important lands in San Miguel County (SMC) by contributing funds for transaction costs associated with viable conservation easements being closed by certified land trusts.</p>	<p>a. Elk Springs Ranch – 1345 acre land conservation easement (LCE). Montezuma Land Conservancy (MLC) holds the easement (closed 1/20).</p>	<p>a. Overview the properties in the County's Land Heritage Program (LHP) and pursue potential LCE's.</p> <p>b. Participate and review the LHP on an as-needed basis.</p> <p>c. 2 potential 9K+ LCE's to be considered if LHP applications are submitted. Both close in 2021. OSC and BOCC approval required. Approx. costs for both \$210K for the purchase of development rights. Closing costs – potential LCE acquisition and match.</p> <p>d. Due diligence for LCE's, appraisals, environmental assessments, etc.</p> <p>e. Routine advertising.</p>	<p>c. \$50K c. \$160K</p> <p>d. \$8K</p> <p>e. \$750.</p>
<p><u>Payment for Ecosystem Services</u> - Assist in development and implementation of PES programs that enhance land health, watershed health, soils health, forest health, and/or provide protection or enhancement of habitat for species of concern to the County.</p>	<p>a., b. - Pollinators planted at the Down Valley Park (DVP) in 2020 (ongoing).</p>	<p>Identify SMC OS PES project priorities annually.</p> <p><u>PES PROJECTS:</u></p> <p>a. Continue to monitor/develop Pollinator Corridors/Strips/Projects, etc.</p> <p>b. Pollinator Garden seasonal hire (no grant 2019/2020).</p> <p>c. Develop a Pollinator Garden Plant Germination Program.</p> <p>d. Continue to monitor Soil Health Program (6th year) and PES projects - study and development.</p>	<p>a. \$20K</p> <p>b. \$6K</p> <p>c. \$2K</p>

	<p>i. County awarded a Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB) grant to enhance its existing PES program. RFQ issued for Administrator of CWCB grant and awarded to The Terra Firm.</p>	<p>e. Support Ag Lands Carbon Sequestration Green House Gas Study.</p> <p>f. O.A. Greager property – monitor property.</p> <p>g. Consider overlap w/San Miguel Watershed Coalition for potential PES projects.</p> <p>h. CWCB Grant to enhance County’s existing PES program. SMC matching funds - The total grant is \$69,293. Moved to a separate Grant Fund budget item.</p> <p>i. Consider LCE properties for PES projects.</p> <p>j. Potential Pollinator Garden at the County’s future Mill Creek Park.</p> <p>k. County rep. to attend the Quivira Coalition conference.</p> <p>l. Consider Campbell property (LCE) for a passive use future trail. (Campbell property sold 8/20). (This is also listed under “Rec. Opportunities and Trails” – page 4).</p> <p>m. Forest Health Monitoring Project (Community Support Funding)</p> <p>n. Community Support Education</p> <p>o. FEN Study (Comm. Support Funding)</p>	<p>h. \$35K</p> <p>k. \$2K</p> <p>m. \$5K</p> <p>n. \$3K</p> <p>o. \$2K</p>
<p><u>Annual Work Plan Development & Implementation</u> -The OSC will develop an annual work plan and companion budget requests in time for presentation to the BOCC so it can inform the development of the following year’s budget during the County’s budget process. The OSC will make semi-annual presentations to the BOCC to provide updates to progress being made on each year’s work plan.</p>	<p>a. Developed a 2021 Work Plan with action items related to each program and goal.</p> <p>b. Determined priorities, timelines and related budget needs for action items.</p>	<p>a. Compile input from OSC/POS Dir./Staff/BOCC and refine the Work Plan to coincide with the County’s budget process.</p> <p>b. Report work plan to the BOCC to inform the development of the following year’s budget. The POS Dir./OSC Chair will provide updates of progress being made on each year’s Work Plan to the BOCC.</p> <p>c. The OSC’s Work Plan is an active working document.</p>	

<p>Education/Outreach - The OSC will help keep the public aware and informed and will facilitate public outreach and education on relevant topics, including, but not limited to, updates on activities and progress of the OSC on its annual Work Plan, using a variety of media and strategies such as social media platforms, press releases, radio interviews, guest columns, forums, etc.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Newspaper articles/press releases/County website announcements: - New Ilium deck park area (8/20); - E-Bike Pilot Program (7/20); - Trail Signage Policy established (7/20); - 2 CDOT Multi-Model Options Fund grants awarded to the County – Down Valley Connector Trail Feasibility Study and a bridge for the Bridal Veil Creek Trail (3/20); - Elk Springs Ranch LCE (1/20); - New Bridal Veil Creek Trail (12/19); - New Bridal Veil Trail (11/18); - New Remine Creek Trail (9/18); -Acquired Society Turn Climbing Wall(6/18); - Pollinator Garden established (5/17); - Campbell LCE (12/16); - Washburn LCE (11/16). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Produce/publish POS Annual Report (POS Director prepares this document). b. Provide updates of success - achieving action items on goals/programs: Press/radio releases, attend community meetings and present information. c. Determine what is worth raising awareness of related to the OSC's goals/accomplishments. d. Support community education – Gunnison Sage Grouse (GuSG), PES/Soil Health projects, Noxious Weed Management, trail etiquette, etc. 	<p>d. \$3K (listed under PES)</p>
<p>Mining, Oil and Gas, and Development - The OSC will monitor oil and gas leasing, mining and development proposals (or that may affect SMC Open Space parcels) and activity within SMC.</p>	<p>- OSC Member Roger Wickham followed the Colorado Oil and Gas Conservation Commission (COGCC) and attended their meetings via Zoom. He provided updates and reports to the OSC.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Review reports from POS Director/County liaison and staff on such development proposals relevant to the OSC. b. Review status map showing current mining activity, active leases, pending leases. c. Acquire an updated report from the COGCC on their rulemaking. d. Square with PES/GuSG efforts & other OSC goals. e. Discuss/review water health as it relates to Oil & Gas and to Open Space projects, properties and goals. 	
<p>Gunnison Sage Grouse - The OSC will continue to work to protect, preserve and enhance GuSG habitat and to monitor efforts of agencies and other stakeholders working on this effort.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - GuSG Site Assessment Field Visits with CPW and NFWF – Miramonte area and Dry Creek Basin – Attended by BOCC Hilary Cooper & POS Director Janet Kask (7/20). - County worked with Montezuma Land Conservancy – MLC submitted a GOCO Restore Grant to enhance GuSG habitat (10/20). SMC to contribute \$14,500. (Community Support Funding). Grant award to be announced 3/21. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Continue to support GuSG Working Group and fund Coordinator Salary. b. Habitat restoration projects. Investigate sites where Bill Zeedyk erosion control/riparian restoration structures would assist the GuSG population. c. Identify partners and/or stakeholders. d. Identify potential LHP properties within mapped GuSG areas. e. Identify/prioritize projects to support GuSG. PES overlap (i.e., O.A. Greager). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. \$9500. b. \$5K <p>(County to contribute \$14,500. If MLC is awarded the GOCO Restore grant).</p>

<p><u>Planning Dept. Referral Process</u> – Work with County staff to review summary referrals of development and planning applications to the County Planning Department having a nexus to or component that would affect open space, parks, trails, public access, GuSG or County roads (such as a road vacation application). The OSC intends to provide timely recommendations or input on such applications as they pertain to the OSC’s goals or mission.</p>	<p>All - Ongoing</p>	<p>a. POS Dir./staff will communicate/inform OSC to apprise of issues affecting SMC Parks and Open Space.</p> <p>b. POS Director/Staff will email or schedule timely OSC review for recommendations.</p> <p>c. SMC High-Country Area (HCA) Zoning District. Review the value system.</p> <p>d. Pursue potential open space parcels for acquisition.</p>	
<p><u>Enhancing Recreational Opportunities and Trails</u> - Partner with existing groups and entities working on the regional trail master plan, to determine County priorities for retaining and enhancing access to public lands. Assist in working on opportunities to accomplish securing rights-of-way for trail connectors, and retaining, enhancing and protecting access to public lands.</p>	<p>a. Ongoing</p> <p>b. Defined and implemented a County Trail Signage Policy. BOCC adopted the OSC’s recommendations 7/20.</p> <p>c. Define/determine the use of E-bikes on County trails. Allow Class 1 E-bikes on 2 County trails – the M59 River Trail and the Whiskey Charlie 62 trail. BOCC adopted the OSC’s recommendations 7/20.</p> <p>d. Remine Creek Trail – updated signage for cyclist and hiker etiquette and yielding. TMC assisted. Installed 9/20</p> <p>e. Plans prepared fall 2020. Install to commence spring 2021.</p> <p>f. DVCT - SMC, with the assistance of the TMC, applied for a CDOT MMOF Planning Grant for a feasibility study of the Down Valley Connector Trail project.</p> <p>g. BVCT Bridge - SMC, with the assistance of the TMC, applied for a CDOT MMOF Grant for the BVCT bridge. Grant awarded 3/20. BOCC approved resolution and CDOT IGA 11/20. Project/funding to be transferred from CDOT to CPW.</p>	<p>a. Continue to work with partners on regional trails (ToT, WETA, Regional Trails Group, Telluride Mountain Club, Tres Rios Travel Mgmt. Plan) to develop new County trails.</p> <p>b. Accomplished in 2020. Continue to assess County signage needs.</p> <p>c. Continue to monitor E-bike issues on County trails.</p> <p>e. Remine Creek Trail – plan to install culvert to cross lower stream for cyclists. Bridge to remain for pedestrians/hikers only. SMVC to share cost with SMC (spring 2021).</p> <p>f. Continue the process with CDOT to plan the DVCT.</p> <p>g. Begin BVCT bridge project with assistance from the TMC. ID next steps. Project to commence spring 2021.</p>	<p>- Funding set aside for seasonal positions to assist with maintenance of all trails within the County system.</p> <p>g. \$30K County match (total grant \$120K - \$30K match from the TMC). Separate grant fund budget – not with the OSC.</p>

	<p>h. Dave Foley conducted a partial survey in 2019. Survey to be completed in 2021. OSC site walks to determine which direction to proceed. Attempts to obtain permission have begun.</p> <p>j. SMC POS conducted a community survey to gather input. Survey completed summer 2020. OSC to review survey results winter 2020.</p> <p>k. Discussed with the BOCC 7/20. Ongoing enforcement issue. County Attorney and County Planning dept. involved.</p> <p>l. Site walk visit conducted 6/20. Ongoing.</p> <p>m. Ilium Deck – new respite area for hikers/cyclists by the river adjacent to the Church Camp. New County park area. Completed 8/20.</p>	<p>h. Perimeter Trail – Perform and complete survey alignment. Working on acquiring permission from the USFS, Idarado and the ToT for recreational trail easements. USFS will require NEPA. Begin implementation of preferred alignment with Telluride Open Space as funding partner.</p> <p>i. Ilium Flume Trail – County Historical Commission involved – need to ground truth potential alignment with the USFS. Spring 2021.</p> <p>j. Mill Creek Park – Using survey results, determine plan for the 1.09 acre site and plan to break ground spring 2021.</p> <p>k. Keystone Gorge Loop Trail – no dogs or bikes allowed. Too many ignoring signage. Determine plan of action for enforcement of County trails.</p> <p>l. Galloping Goose Trail – monitor Black Hills Energy re-veg. efforts with the USFS.</p> <p>n. Consider Campbell property, which is under a land conservation easement, for a passive use future trail. (Campbell property sold August 2020). Mentioned in PES too.</p> <p>o. Gather input for assessment of Down Valley connector trail holes and goals. Prioritize DV connector pieces needed.</p> <p>p. Establish DV connector trails considering Scenic Byways, Federal funding and SMART objectives.</p> <p>q. Determine lands needed to acquire as OS or LCE to create connector trails, (i.e.: Sawpit San Miguel River trail connector).</p> <p>r. Discuss future plans for the uses of O.A. Greager/Campbell OS parcel. Possible PES projects.</p>	<p>h. \$10K</p>
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<p><u>Collaboration with Town of Telluride Open Space Commission</u> - The SMC OSC will have 1 member who has dual membership on both the Town and County OSC's in order to facilitate a working relationship between the two groups.</p>	<p>a., b. – Crossover reports were emailed or presented as part of the SMC OSC meeting agendas.</p>	<p>a. Crossover rep. to determine most important aspects of TOT and SMC OSC meetings to briefly summarize in a Crossover report to members.</p> <p>b. Crossover rep. to communicate between both OSC and suggest/share cooperative/complimentary projects.</p>	
<p><u>Scenic Resource Protection</u> - The OSC will work with County Staff and other partners such as Land Trusts, landowners and public agencies to identify critical views for potential protection through easements. The OSC will also coordinate with CDOT on their projects for impact to the Scenic Byways traversing our County - San Juan Skyway and Unaweep/Tabeguache Byway.</p>	<p>All - Ongoing</p> <p>e. OSC Member Angela Dye was appointed as the County liaison on the San Juan Skyway Scenic Byway Committee.</p>	<p>a. Be more proactive in advocating for better management practices with CDOT.</p> <p>b. Review need for LCE to protect scenic corridors along the two Skyways that traverse our County.</p> <p>c. Identify critical viewpoints and move towards protection.</p> <p>d. Identify nexus with habitat/recreation use.</p> <p>e. Attend upcoming SJSSBC conference in Ouray in May 2021.</p> <p>f. Research funds for Scenic Byway designation.</p> <p>g. Provide input to the Scenic Byways Corridor Management Plan Update.</p>	<p>e. \$250.</p>

GLOSSARY FOR ACRONYMS:

- BOCC – Board of County Commissioners
- BVCT – Bridal Veil Creek Trail
- CDOT – CO Dept. of Transportation
- COGCC – CO Oil Gas Conservation Comm.
- CPW – Colorado Parks & Wildlife
- CWCB – CO Water Conservation Board
- DVCT – Down Valley Connector Trail
- DVP – Down Valley Park
- GOCO – Great Outdoors Colorado
- GuSG – Gunnison Sage Grouse
- HCA – High Country Area Zoning District
- IGA – Intergovernmental Agreement
- LCE – Land Conservation Easement
- LHP – Land Heritage Program
- MLC – Montezuma Land Conservancy
- MMOF – Multi-Model Options Fund
- NFWF – National Fish & Wildlife Foundation
- OS – Open Space
- OSC – Open Space Commission
- PES – Payment for Ecosystem Services
- POS – Parks & Open Space
- RFQ – Request for Qualifications
- SJSBC – San Juan Skyway Scenic Byway
Committee
- SMART – San Miguel Authority for
Regional Transportation
- SMC – San Miguel County
- SMVC – San Miguel Valley Corps.
- TMC – Telluride Mountain Club
- ToT – Town of Telluride
- USFS – United States Forest Service
- WETA – West End Trails Alliance