

Draft Trails Working Group Recommendations

March 12, 2004

Ernest Gruening State Historical Site

Existing Recommendation:

Group Size - *up to 10*

Spacing - *1 group in park at a time*

Days: - *M-F no weekend*

Number of Groups per Day - *up to 4*

Hours of Operation - *no restriction*

New Recommendation: no change

Comments: As the park is improved to accommodate more use it is anticipated that allowable commercial use levels will increase.

Herbert Glacier Trail

Existing Recommendation:

Group Size - *up to 15*

Spacing - *30 people per day maximum*

Days - *M-Th no weekend*

Number of Groups per Day - *up to 4*

Hours of Operation - *no restriction*

New Recommendation: add Fridays and 1 group of 8 per day on weekends

Comments: Change will accommodate small groups of independent travelers.

Sunshine Cove

Existing Recommendation:

Group Size - *up to 20*

Spacing - *no restriction*

Days - *no restriction*

Number of Groups per Day - *up to 1*

Hours of Operation - *no restriction*

New Recommendation: Increase the number of groups to 2 per day and confine commercial use to the new beach access trail (southernmost trail).

Comments: Change will better accommodate scuba and kayak classes and will keep them further from the camping area.

Amalga Meadows Beach Access

Existing Recommendation:

Group Size - *up to 30*

Spacing - *1 group on beach max.*

Days - *no restriction*

Number of Groups per Day - *up to 4*

Hours of Operation - *off trail by 7:00 pm*

New Recommendation: no change

Comments: It was determined that there is no demand for a loop trail to the beach, therefore, the previous recommendation to create a loop trail should be removed.

Proposed Amalga Meadow Trails:

Existing Recommendation:

none

New Recommendation: Scheduled for future discussion

Comments: Criteria for commercial use to be determined after appropriate infrastructure is constructed.

Fritz Cove Road Parking Area

Existing Recommendation:

none

New Recommendation: no commercial use

Comments: The Trails Working Group made a decision in 2001 that this congested neighborhood was not a good place for commercial use. When the land for the parking lot was transferred to the city it was for the purpose of creating more parking for recreational beach access and not for expanded commercial opportunities. Therefore it does not make sense to add commercial use back to this neighborhood and the parking area should remain closed to commercial use including staging for bike tours.

Auke Lake Parking Area

Existing Recommendation:

Group Size - *up to 15*

Spacing - *no restriction*

Days - *no restriction*

Number of Groups per Day - *1*

Hours of Operation - *no restriction*

New Recommendation: no change

Comments: Kayak and other classes are accommodated by this recommendation.

Montana Creek DOT Right of Way

Existing Recommendation:

Group Size - *up to 15*

Spacing - *1 group on trail at a time*

Days - *M-F, 1 weekend day*

Number of Groups per Day - *up to 5*

Hours of Operation - *off trail by 5:00 pm*

Recommendation: no change

Comments: Expanded parking is needed to accommodate the many users of this trail.

Multiple erosion problems along the right of way need to be corrected to preserve the old roadbed. Because this right of way accesses the Montana Creek Trail managed by the Forest Service it is recommended that they take over management of this trail to establish better management authority over the multiple uses on the trail.

Kaxdigoowu Heen Dei and Dimond Park Bridge (paved path along Mendenhall River)

Existing Recommendation:

none

New Recommendation: no commercial use

Comments: It was determined that this trail already has a lot of use and congestion and it does not seem reasonable to add commercial use to the mix.

Mendenhall Glacier Recreation Area

A. West Glacier Trail

Existing Recommendation:

Group Size - *up to 15*

Spacing - *45 people per day max.*

Days - *M-F, no weekends*

Number of Groups per Day - *up to 4*

Hours of Operation - *off trail by 6:00 pm*

New Recommendation: no change

Comments: Expand trailhead parking is needed to accommodate the commercial and non commercial trail users along with all of the boat launching activities. Improved trail tread is needed to minimize flooding, mud and rough surfaces. Better directional, informational and safety signs are needed.

B. Moraine Ecology Trail

Existing Recommendation:

Group Size - *up to 15*

Spacing - *no restriction*

Days - *no restriction*

Number of Groups per Day - *up to 4*

Hours of Operation - *off trail by 6:00 pm*

Recommendation: no change

Comments: Improve trail to minimize the proliferation of side trails.

C. Photo Point Trail

Existing Recommendation:

Group Size – *no limit*

Spacing – *no restriction*

Days – *no restriction*

Number of Groups per Day – *no limit*

Hours of Operation – *no restriction*

New Recommendation: no change

Comments: Interpretation is allowed when Forest Service interpreters are not present. The trail to the Nugget Creek Falls should be improved to accommodate a wider variety of users. Measures to keep people away from the Tern nesting area should be taken.

D. Nugget Creek Trail

Existing Recommendation:

Group Size - *up to 15*

Spacing – *no restriction*

Days – *no restriction*

Number of Groups per Day – *up to 2*

Hours of Operation – *no restriction*

New Recommendation: no change

Comments:

E. East Glacier Loop Trail

Existing Recommendation:

Group Size - *up to 15*

Spacing – *no restriction*

Days – *no restriction*

Number of Groups per Day – *up to 4*

Hours of Operation – *no restriction*

New Recommendation: no change

Comments:

F. Trail of Time

Existing Recommendation:

Group Size – *no limit*

Spacing – *no restriction*

Days – *no restriction*

Number of Groups per Day – *no limit*

Hours of Operation – *no restriction*

New Recommendation: no change

Comments: Commercial use is allowed without interpretation. Create pullouts along the trail for large groups to stop for interpretation without disturbing other trail users.

DZ Trail System

Existing Recommendation:

If design is compatible use will be determined after construction

New Recommendation: no change

Comments: The trail is currently being designed and constructed to accommodate school, neighborhood and commercial use. The Trails Working Group will make further recommendations once the system is complete with loop trails.

Perseverance Trail System

A. Perseverance Trail

Existing Recommendation:

Group Size - *up to 15*

Number of Groups per Day – *up to 4*

Spacing – *two groups on trail max.* Hours of Operation – *off trail by 7 pm*
Days – *M-F, 1 weekend day*

New Recommendation: no change
Comments: Encourage ½ hour spacing

B. Granite Creek Trail

Existing Recommendation:
no commercial use after Perseverance Trail is repaired into Silverbow Basin

New Recommendation: closed to commercial use
Comments: As recommended in the previous plan this trail has been closed since the Perseverance Trail was reopened through Silverbow Basin.

C. Red Mill Trail (Part of Perseverance Trail System)

Existing Recommendation:
none

New Recommendation: Open this trail to commercial use with the same restrictions as Perseverance Trail.

Comments: This trail is similar to Perseverance in size and can accommodate the same use levels. Opening this trail to commercial use will help disperse existing use on Perseverance Trail.

D. Glory Hole Trail (Part of Perseverance Trail System)

Existing Recommendation:
none

New Recommendation: Open this trail to commercial use with the same restrictions as Perseverance Trail.

Comments: This trail is similar to Perseverance in size and can accommodate the same use levels. Opening this trail to commercial use will help disperse existing use on Perseverance Trail.

E. Mine Ruins Trail (Part of Perseverance Trail System)

Existing Recommendation:
none

New Recommendation: Open this trail to commercial use for 1 group of 8 per day.

Comments: This steep narrow trail can only accommodate minimal commercial use.

Mt. Roberts Trail above the Tram

A. Loop to Terrace above the Cross

Existing Recommendation:
Group Size - *up to 15*
Spacing – *no restriction*
Days – *no restriction*

Number of Groups per Day – *no limit*
Hours of Operation – *no restriction*

New Recommendation: no change

Comments: Travel in a clockwise direction on the loop and encourage 15 minute spacing.

B. Cross to Gold Ridge

Existing Recommendation:
Group Size - *up to 10*
Spacing – *no restriction*
Days – *no restriction*

Number of Groups per Day – *up to 2*
Hours of Operation – *no restriction*

New Recommendation: no change

Comments: No motorized access and operator should be familiar with preservation practices.

C. Gold Ridge to Mt. Roberts Peak

Existing Recommendation:

Group Size - *up to 10*

Spacing - *no restriction*

Days - *M-F, no weekends*

Number of Groups per Day - *1*

Hours of Operation - *no restriction*

New Recommendation: no change

Comments: No motorized access and no more than 10 groups per season.

Treadwell Mine Historic Loop Trail

Existing Recommendation:

Group Size - *up to 15*

Spacing - *no restriction*

Days - *M-Sat, no Sunday*

Number of Groups per Day - *up to 4*

Hours of Operation - *off trail by 5:00 pm*

New Recommendation: Change the weekend recommendation to open one weekend day to be determined during permitting and posted each season

Comments: This change is consistent with recommendations for other trails and better meets changing demands by the industry.

Eaglecrest Trails

A. Eaglecrest Lower Mountain Trails (near the day lodge and parking areas)

Existing Recommendation:

open for commercial use proposals that provide improved infrastructure

New Recommendation: Allowable uses for these trails would be determined during the planning stage of each trail.

Comments: Conceptual approval was given for two projects presented by Eaglecrest. The first is to create an 8 to 14 foot wide, 2 mile long gravel pathway around the cross country ski track in the lower meadow near the parking lot for summer wheeled dog sled use.

Recommendations are to allow general use when the dog tours are not using the trail and to take precautions to preserve the surrounding muskeg during construction and during the summer use season. The second project is to create a canopy walk that leaves from the lodge and does a loop up into the drainages above the lodge. This trail would have sections elevated up to 80 feet off the ground and would require a guide for use. Anyone wishing to use the trail would be welcome as long as they paid the fee for the accompanying guide and the trail was open for use.

B. Eaglecrest Upper Mountain Trails (above the base of Ptarmigan Chairlift)

Existing Recommendation:

open for commercial use proposals that provide improved infrastructure

New Recommendation: Allowable uses for these trails would be determined during the planning stage of each trail.

Comments: The conceptual plan as presented by Eaglecrest for the development of multiuse trails on the upper part of the mountain was approved as a guide for further trail development. This included four trails creating a looping system with varying sizes of trails designed for varying user groups including commercial use. Overnight cabins would be constructed for use after the trails are completed. The four trails are:

1. A large scale trail on the east side of the mountain from the day lodge to the Eagles Nest warming hut.
2. A small scale trail from the day lodge to Cropley Lake.

3. A small scale trail from Cropley Lake to the ridge through Heavenly Valley and on around the ridge to the Eagles Nest.
4. A large scale trail from the top of the Hooter Chairlift to Cropley Lake.

North Douglas Trail System

A. Outer Point Trail

Existing Recommendation:

closed to commercial use

New Recommendation: closed to commercial use in 2004

Comments: This trail was closed to commercial use when the Rainforest Trail was opened to commercial use. A planning process during the winter of 04/05 will discuss the possibility of opening this trail and closing the Rainforest Trail to commercial use.

B. Rainforest Trail

Existing Recommendation:

Group Size - *up to 15*

Number of Groups per Day – *no restriction*

Spacing – *15 minutes between groups*

Hours of Operation – *off trail by 7:00 pm*

Days – *no restriction*

New Recommendation: no change

Comments: Groups should travel in a counter clockwise direction. It was agreed that these recommendations should be used through 2004. During the winter of 2004/2005 a comprehensive trail planning effort should be undertaken for all trails in the North Douglas area. This effort should address creating a more interconnected system of trails, better trail surfacing on some trails, accessible trails, commercial use, dog use and other issues. This summer trail use numbers should be counted in various different ways and possibly, user surveys should be taken.

General Commercial Use Recommendations

Implementation

- These recommendations will be implemented in 2004.

Signs

- Signs should be placed at every trail that is designated for commercial use so that the public knows what to expect and operators know a permit is required.

Trail to Nugget Creek Waterfall

- The group agreed to encourage the Forest Service to construct a better trail to Nugget Creek Waterfall along the flats. Decisions for commercial use should be considered during the planning of this project.

Wildlife Viewing Areas or Trails

- The group agreed that the development of wildlife viewing areas or trails should be pursued. Some areas should be set up for commercial use while others would be left for no commercial use. It was generally agreed that the biggest detriment to wildlife viewing was dogs. Areas should be created where dogs are limited to provide better wildlife viewing opportunities. The following areas were recommended for further study:
 1. The Airport Dike Trail – create a trail and/or viewing blinds/areas on the inside of the Airport Dike Trail along some of the sloughs.
 2. Fish Creek – Has several diverse habitats that could provide opportunities for wildlife viewing trails and/or blinds.

3. Salmon Creek Delta – It was suggested that a blind or viewing area could be set up behind the GCI building.
4. Sheep Creek Delta – This area has many diverse species and could be provide for improved wildlife viewing opportunities.
5. Sheep Creek Valley – This area may provide opportunities for viewing of upland wildlife species.
6. Ernest Gruening State Historical Park - Opportunities exist for trails and blinds to view a variety of wildlife species.
7. Mt. Roberts – Many wildlife species that enjoy the alpine can be seen in this area.
8. Other areas - There are many other areas that should be considered for wildlife viewing opportunities.

Public process for this round of Trails Working Group recommendations: The group will continue with noon meetings on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of each month. The meetings will be open to the public and will be advertised with public service announcements in the paper and on the radio. Meeting schedules, agendas and minutes will be posted on the CBJ Parks and Recreation web page. Once the group reaches consensus on possible changes to the existing commercial use of trails recommendations the group will hold one evening public meeting. Input from the public meeting will be used to refine recommendations and then they will be forwarded to the PRAC and SPAC. At a regularly scheduled meeting open to the public and public comment, the PRAC will review the recommendations. Finally the recommendations will be forwarded to the Assembly, State Parks and the Forest Service for potential adoption.