

History of Bicycle Use on Open Space

On **Jan. 18, 1983**, City Council banned mountain bikes from trails on Mountain Parks and Open Space. Staff was then asked to go back and look at individual trails and make a recommendation to Council regarding which trails could be reopened. The City Manager suggested that a committee be formed to look at mountain bikes and all trail uses.

In a **Feb. 28, 1983** memo, Open Space requested that eight trails be reopened to bikes. The City Manager reopened the following trails March 10:

1. Centennial Trail (55th-Gapter)
2. Hayden Lake Trail (Independence-47th)
3. Boulder Creek Trail (75th-County property)
4. Sunshine Canyon Trail (PSCO substation-picnic shelter)
5. Palo Park Trail (28th-30th)
6. Shanahan Trail (Hardscrabble-Mesa Trail)
7. Lower Mesa Trail (from parking lot for 2.1 miles)
8. Chapman Drive (Flagstaff-private property)

At the **April 13, 1983** OSBT meeting, staff recommended opening thirteen more trails and requested that the OSBT make the same recommendation to the City Manager:

1. Trail to the Operations Center along South Boulder Creek
2. Portion of South Mesa Trail (contingent on volunteer help to rehabilitate trails)
3. Mount Sanitas fire access
4. Radio tower/Shanahan Trail
5. Alvin New Subdivision
6. Wonderland Hill
7. NCAR, provision on agreement with NCAR
8. Parsons
9. Fern Canyon
10. Dunn II
11. Burke/Gebhard
12. East and West Rudd
13. South Boulder Creek

Also studying area south of Old Mesa Trail in Eldorado Springs, BVR, Kaufman, and an area west of Sawhill Ponds.

MOTION: "That the OSBT recommend to the City Manager to accept staff's recommendations for trail reopenings." **VOTE:** Unanimous

At the **March 11, 1987** meeting, the OSBT was asked to consider the recommended closure of Open Space trails west of Hwy. 93, north of Eldorado Springs Drive and south of Sunshine Canyon, to bikes.

MOTION: "That the OSBT approve the closure of all Open Space trails [to bicycles] west of Hwy. 93, starting at Beech Aircraft in North Boulder and going to the County line at the southern end of the City Open Space properties. Two trails shall be excluded from the motion: 1) Community Ditch Trail and 2) the trail that starts from Wonderland Lake going north to Lee Hill Road. This decision shall be reconsidered in one year (by March 1, 1988). Further, the OSBT charges the Trails Committee to search out possible locations for areas that would be exclusively dedicated or primarily intended for use by bicyclists, such as the Marshall Mesa area." **FRIENDLY AMENDMENT:** "To review the use of the unpaved portion of the Doudy Draw Trail and Trail #13 -- Wonderland Lake -- in six months to see if they warrant closure." **VOTE:** Unanimous

At the **April 8, 1987** meeting, staff asked the OSBT for formal adoption of a bicycle map as directed by the OSBT on March 11. It is important to note that bikes are to be ridden on trails only and not off them. The Trails Committee recommended the installation of three gates (two on the east side of Hwy. 93 and one on the west side) and construction of a bridge across Community Ditch to provide a better connection on the trail.

Additional OSBT recommendations include: 1) mark on the map where dead-end trails are located, 2) remove all unnecessary trail access signs, 3) indicate that bikes are allowed on trails only, and 4) put the amount of the fine on the map.

MOTION: "That the OSBT recommend the adoption of the Open Space trails bike map as attached to the April 8, 1987, memorandum from staff and amended by the Board to be in effect through December 31, 1987 unless revised by the Board prior to that time." **FRIENDLY AMENDMENT:** "That the Board recognizes that the map is only conceptual and that the Board will review final map before distribution." **VOTE:** Unanimous

At the **August 12, 1987**, staff recommended to the OSBT that two trails, Wonderland Lake and Community Ditch, remain open to bike use. The entire system will be reviewed in March, 1988.

The Trails Committee had recommended "...to the PRAB and the OSBT that all trails on Open Space and Mountain Parks west of Hwy. 93/Broadway, south of Canyon and north of Eldorado Springs, be closed to bicycle traffic, except for established bike paths as designated on the Boulder City bike map. Additionally, the Committee recommends that a task force study the possibility of establishing a bicycle loop route somewhere in South Boulder, possibly in the Community Ditch/Marshall Lake area, and also in North Boulder in the Wonderland Lake/Lee

Hill Road area." Also "...that heavier fines be levied for bicyclists riding on non-designated trails; that education efforts be initiated explaining the reasons for closures; and that immediate study of alternative routes suitable for bicycle use occur, and that more and better signing should be part of this effort."

MOTION: "That the OSBT recommend that the current status of bike use on the Wonderland Lake and Community Ditch trails be continued." **FRIENDLY AMENDMENT:** "That the bike use be continued until the scheduled annual review in the spring of 1988." **VOTE:** Unanimous

At the **June 22, 1988** OSBT meeting, staff and the Trails Committee recommended that a side trail south of Mesa Reservoir be closed to all use and that trails use be concentrated north of Mesa Reservoir. Bicycle use should only be allowed on the trail north of the Reservoir, continuing on the lower trail loop to Boulder Reservoir. This would be on a trial basis and staff would monitor it carefully.

MOTION: "That the OSBT approve the closure of the southern portion of the Boulder Valley Ranch Trail, south of Mesa Reservoir, to all users; that all traffic be re-routed to the northern portion of the trail north of Mesa Reservoir; and that bicycle use be allowed, on a trial basis, on the trail from the Foothills Trailhead to the Eagle Trailhead (51st Street at Boulder Reservoir), as shown on the map attached to the memorandum to the Board regarding Mesa Reservoir trail use, dated June 22, 1988, with the proviso that the bicycle trail use be reviewed by the OSBT within 90 days after commencement of such use, and further that if staff feels that there is any problem with such use, staff may immediately close the trail to all bicycle use." **VOTE:** Unanimous

At the **October 12, 1988** OSBT meeting, staff presented a review of the bicycle use the OSBT approved on June 22.

MOTION: "That the OSBT continue to allow bicycle use on the designated trails on the lower portion of the BVR/Mesa Reservoir Trail from Foothills Trailhead to the Eagle Trailhead." **VOTE:** Unanimous

At the **Feb. 8, 1989** OSBT meeting, staff explained that the Trails Committee unanimously approved opening the Foothills Trail, between Lee Hill Road and U.S. 36, to bicycles.

MOTION: "That the OSBT accept staff's recommendation to open the Foothills Trail north of Lee Hill Road, going northward and eastward under the U.S. 36 underpass and connecting with the BVR trail system. This will open up a continuous bike trail from Wonderland Lake north and eastward to the Boulder Reservoir." **VOTE:** Unanimous

At the **May 10, 1989** OSBT meeting, staff passed on a request from the Trails Committee recommending opening the eastern portion of the trail around Wonderland Lake and the foot trail from the Foothills Nature Center to bicycles.

MOTION: “That the OSBT approve the opening of the eastern portion of the trail around Wonderland Lake to bicycles and recommends that the foot trail from the Foothills Nature Center be opened to bicycle use once necessary improvements have been completed. The Board further reaffirms the recommendation of the Trails Committee and makes particular note of the need for drainage improvements and graveling on the approximately one mile section of trail going from the Wonderland Lake to Lee Hill Road.” **VOTE:** Unanimous

At the **April 8, 1992** OSBT meeting, the OSBT discussed two recommendations made by the Trails Committee: 1) “that bike access be provided on an east-west trail section between the Foothills Trail and the water tank” and 2) “that staff explore the possibility of access from emergency use from the trail directly to Lee Hill Road, in order to avoid disturbing the hillside, and as an alternative to options 1, 2 and 3 (as shown on the design plan.)” This issue would return to the OSBT in June after being heard by the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board.

At the **March 10, 1993** OSBT meeting, the Board discussed whether to have the old Kiln Trail remain closed or open it up to bicycle use along with pedestrian traffic. Staff stated that there is a formal policy of no bikes west of Broadway, except for Community Ditch, Boulder Creek, and the Foothills Trail.

MOTION: “That the Kiln Trail remain closed to bicycles, but that the Board revisit this issue specifically, when they do the Master Trail Plan.” **VOTE:** Unanimous

At the **July 10, 1996** OSBT meeting, a member of the public requested the OSBT to reevaluate the old Kiln Trail to allow bicycle access. Staff stated that there is a policy, approved by the City Council, OSBT, and PRAB, that prohibits bicycles from the mountain backdrop. The OSBT and Council agreed to open the Community Ditch Trail, the Foothills Trail, and the area across Wonderland Lake dam to bikes. The policy would need to be changed to allow bicycles on the old Kiln Trail. An OSBT member suggested that the person bring this to the City Council’s attention. This matter came up again at the **July 24, August 14, and August 28** meetings. Staff wrote a response to the person on July 30. On August 14, an OSBT member suggested that bike use of the Kiln Trail be considered in the area management plan process.