

HELENA OPEN SPACE MAINTENANCE DISTRICT NO.1

On January 8, 2007 the Helena City Commission approved Resolution of Intention No. 19431 to create the Helena Open Space Maintenance District No. 1. The purpose of the district is to protect, maintain, restore, and care for the City of Helena's open space lands or natural parks. These open space lands now total nearly 2000 acres spread across the south hills of Helena and along parts of Ten Mile Creek, Prickly Pear Creek, and Crystal Springs Creek. And other natural areas around Helena.

Up to now the maintenance and management of Helena's Open Lands system has been funded primarily by means of funds set aside for maintenance out of the Open Space Bond passed by city voters in 1996. Those funds will most likely be entirely expended by the end of FY 2007.

This maintenance district is a citywide assessment allowed by Montana state statute that will provide long- term funding for the maintenance of the City's open space system. The proposed assessment would be a base amount of \$7.00 per individual property charged annually plus \$0.00215 per square foot of impervious area in excess of 2222 square feet. "Impervious area" is the developed part of a lot or parcel impermeable to stormwater infiltration. The estimated annual cost initially is \$156,000.

The district will provide funding for labor, materials, supplies, and other expenses to maintain and manage this open space system. This will include management of the forest, forest fuel reduction for potential wildfires, noxious weed control, native plants protection, maintenance and development of trails and trailheads, wildlife protection, boundary identification and maintenance, cultural resource identification and protection, wetlands protection and other related issues to maintain and care for Helena's Open Space System.

The full **Helena Open Lands Management Plan** and **South Hills Trail Plan** may be viewed by going to the City of Helena website www.helenamt.gov/parks then click on Document Center, then under Guidelines & Plans, then the Helena Open Lands Management Plan or the South Hills Trails Plan. These plans explain in detail how the open space system will be maintained and managed.

On January 29, 2007, at 6:00 P.M. in the City Commission Chambers, Room 330, City-County Building, 316 North Park Avenue, Helena, Montana, the Helena City Commission will hear and pass upon all written protests that have been made against the creation of the district.

Further questions about the creation of the Helena Open Space Maintenance District No. 1 may be directed to the Helena City Parks Administration Office, Room 428, 316 North Park Avenue, Helena, MT 59623, or at 406-447-8463.

City of Helena, Montana