

## 2020 HELENA OPEN LANDS MAINTENANCE PLAN

PRINCIPAL GOAL OF THE HELENA OPEN LANDS MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (HOLMAC) WORK PLAN: To outline land management activities scheduled for implementation in 2020. The recommended work plan will be updated each year to address land management needs that have emerged as a result of input from the citizens of Helena, HOLMAC, and/or city staff. In accordance with the goals and objectives defined within the Helena Open Lands Management Plan, land stewardship activities shall be designed and implemented in a manner that will preserve, restore, and enhance the natural character of Helena's open lands and provide accessible natural open lands.

### TRAIL MAINTENANCE ITEMS (PRICKLY PEAR LAND TRUST):

1. Complete a comprehensive condition inspection of all designated trails occurring within the City of Helena Open Lands System (reference EXHIBIT A, B, C, D, and E) and complete Trail Inspection Forms (EXHIBIT F).  
**Completed**
2. Repair all natural earth and granite covered designated trails located on City of Helena ownership as depicted on EXHIBITS B, C, D, E and listed within EXHIBIT A and maintain existing drain dips and/or install new drainage features where opportunities to intercept and divert continuous surface water runoff occur, replace/compact decomposed granite as needed, and prune/remove coniferous vegetation within trail corridor (stems-branches-roots).  
**Partially Completed**
3. Respond to trail maintenance situations as directed by the City's Liaison.  
**Partially Completed**
4. Construct or reroute trails where new trails have been approved, and/or safety maintenance/sustainability issues arise.  
**Partially Completed**
5. Complete the closure of 2.0 miles of non-designated trails by ripping and scarring the trail surface, reshaping the existing trail profile, transplanting native vegetation, recruiting top soil, and seeding over with seed provided by City.  
**.4 Miles Completed**
6. Purchase and install carsonite "closure" signs where designated trails intersect non-designated trails that have been subjected to the aforementioned trail closure activities.

7. Complete a comprehensive inspection of all trailhead kiosk, animal control, and trail identification signage occurring within the open lands system (reference EXHIBITS A, B, C, D, E) and complete Trail Inspection Forms (EXHIBIT F). Inspections shall include the identification of unsigned trails and/or trail junctions. Said Trail Inspection Forms shall be delivered to the City on or before June 1, 2020.

**Completed**

8. Draft sign templates, purchase signs that have been subject to City's approval, and deliver signs to the City by June 1, 2020.

**Partially Completed**

9. Install 20 sign posts and/or trail identification signs as determined from said inspections. City will provide Contractor with posts having affixed signs.

**Partially Completed**

10. Develop a trail data collection plan, maintain 4 data collection sites, and deliver a trail data report to the City.

**Completed**

11. Develop a trail etiquette signage program for the City's open space system trailheads. Additionally, draft, manufacture, and distribute trail etiquette literature at the City's open space trailheads and natural resource events occurring in the greater Helena, MT area.

**Partially Completed**

12. Develop a youth participation program for the South Hills trails system and conduct outreach efforts with schools occurring in the greater Helena, MT area. Additionally, facilitate 5 youth focused events related to the South Hills trail system.

**Partially Completed**

#### **TRAIL IMPROVEMENT (PARKS DEPARTMENT STAFF):**

1. Resurface the Bull Run connector trail located between South California Street and Saddle Drive with decomposed granite.
2. Analyze the relocation of that portion of the DeFord Trail located south of the Old Shooting Range Trailhead in response to extensive drainage issues.

**Completed**

#### **FOREST MANAGEMENT (PARKS DEPARTMENT STAFF & SELECTED CONTRACTORS):**

1. Mt. Ascension Forest Fuels Reduction Project:
  - Complete 40 acres of slash pile burning.

**Completed**

2. Mount Helena Fuels Reduction:

- Complete 18 acres of slash pile burning.
- Prepare and complete approximately 95 acres of forest fuel treatment work on the north face of Mount Helena.

**4 Acres of Burning Completed, 60 Acres of Unit Layout Completed**

3. Participating Agreement (Capital 360)

- Prepare and complete approximately 60 acres of forest fuel and hazard tree treatment work on the Le Grande Tract (Whyte Property Addition).
- Prepare and complete approximately 80 acres of forestry maintenance work within the Open Lands system.

**125 Acres of Forest Fuel Reduction Work Completed**

4. Forest Fuel Treatment Grants

- a. Complete applications as opportunities arise - individual grants require commission approval.

5. Forestry Visuals

- a. Remove retention tree and boundary identification flagging from all forestry projects completed to date.

**Partially Completed**

- b. Respond to trash dumping and abandoned transient camps as needed.

6. Forestry Education

- a. Participate in community forestry outreach efforts as opportunities arise.

7. Firewood Distribution

- a. Harvest, forward, and process approximately 100 cords of firewood material for clients of the Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP).
- b. Assist in the organization of volunteers involved in the splitting and distribution of accumulated firewood material during the September 1, 2020 to March 31, 2021 timeframe.

**15 Cords Completed**

**FACILITIES (PARKS DEPARTMENT STAFF:**

1. Install an informational kiosk adjacent to the SW corner of the Disc Golf Parking Area (Donaldson Property) near the intersection of Saddle Drive and Cabernet Drive intended for the display of a map of the Saddle Drive Disc Golf Course, Fire Danger Ratings and any additional information deemed necessary.

**Completed**

2. Install two new picnic tables and two new benches at the Mount Helena Trailhead (Reeders Village).
3. Contract the restriping & accessibility symbolization of the Mount Helena (Reeders Village) and Dump Gulch Trailheads.
4. Complete the decomposed granite pathway that provides access to the Charles van Hook wetlands and place additional gravel on the associated parking area.  
**Completed**
5. Install a pet waste station at the westernmost portion of the Le Grande Cannon Boulevard trail and analyze the potential installation of two additional pet waste stations, one at intersection South Davis/2<sup>nd</sup> Street and a second to be located at intersection Red Letter Street/Heritage Drive.  
**Completed**
6. Repair the Archery Range access gate.  
**Completed**
7. Replace the Mt Ascension traffic control gate located near the intersection of the Eddy McClure West Trail and Arrowroot Drive.  
**Completed**
8. Remove the Beattie Street Trailhead fencing and pet waste station prior to the start of construction activities.  
**Completed**
9. Replace the southern door on the Donaldson Barn.
10. Research potential to improve safety and security at trailheads in response to recent theft and vandalism at trailheads.

#### **FENCE CONSTRUCTION & REMOVAL (PARKS DEPARTMENT STAFF:**

1. Complete the installation of approximately 1,500 feet of post and rail fencing on the western & southern borders of the SW ¼, Section 31, T. 10 N., R. 03 W., Lewis & Clark County, MT & the eastern side of the Little Moab Trail in the N1/2NE1/4SW1/4, Section 31, T. 10 N., R. 03 W., Lewis & Clark County, MT.  
**Partially Completed**
2. Install traffic control fencing near the intersection of Arrowroot Drive and the 2006 Trail to control illegal off road activity.  
**Completed**

3. Identify sections of dysfunctional wire fence occurring upon the Le Grande tract and schedule removal.

#### **BOUNDARY IDENTIFICATION (PARKS DEPARTMENT STAFF):**

1. Verify open lands boundaries as the budgets allow. Prioritize open lands boundary identification needs according to program of work and emerging management issues.
2. Install boundary identification posts at approximate 100-foot intervals where encroachment situations are identified.

#### **PROPERTY ACQUISITION/EXCHANGE (PARKS DEPARTMENT STAFF):**

1. Assist in the completion of property acquisition grant applications as opportunities become available.
2. Respond to public and partnership requests regarding potential purchase/sale/exchange of open lands properties.

#### **WEED MANAGEMENT (PARKS DEPARTMENT STAFF & SELECTED CONTRACTORS):**

1. Noxious Weed Treatment and Public Education
  - a. Coordinate volunteers interested participating in the City's open lands system weed control program throughout the summer.
  - b. Monitoring/mapping
    - i. Visit set locations and identify weed infestations for treatment.
    - ii. Train volunteers on mapping and monitoring techniques.
2. Weed pulls
  - a. Schedule and participate in weed pulls on open lands.
  - b. Look to continue the Department of Agriculture Adopt-A-Trailhead program.
  - c. Look to increase events per year with the assistance of PPLT.
3. Herbicide
  - a. Treat approximately 400 acres of concentrated weed infestations occurring within the City's open lands system.
  - b. Implement a targeted spot treatment program with staff members focusing on trailheads and trail corridors.  
**Completed**
4. Biocontrol:
  - a. Participate in insects collections for Dalmatian Toadflax, Leafy Spurge, and Spotted Knapweed coordinated by the state bio control coordinator.
  - b. Assist in monitoring of insect release sites for potential collection.
  - c. Mark an additional 10-15 past release sites.

- d. Update insect release map and include newly marked sites.