

Green Belt Trails

Introduction

In addition to the over 4,000 acre Community Preserve on the other side of U.S. Highway 285, Eldorado has another 987 acres of open space within the community. These "Greenbelts" were established to meet requirements for drainage and floodplain easements by the developer, AMREP in 1972. Over the years, these open spaces have had substantial use by the community resulting in the development of many social trails throughout the Greenbelts. This ad hoc manner of trail development produced trails that mostly are unsustainable. In 2011, Cliff Chetwin a National Park Service retiree and then member of the ECIA Conservation Committee, conducted an assessment (attachment #1) of the trails within the Greenbelts. This assessment concluded that almost all the trails were in fair to poor condition and in need of significant work.

In the spring of 2014, Francis (aka "Steve") Griego approached the committee with a proposal to complete a 2¾ mile pilot project in Pueblo Cañon Park, the middle of the three east-west trending greenbelts. After receiving ECIA Board approval, the project was completed by the committee under the direction of Mr. Griego using volunteers, ECIA staff and equipment. During the construction phase, some community members voiced their strong opposition to the project. However, upon project completion, committee members received many compliments from residents and requests to have projects completed in "their" Greenbelts. Such requests have continued, and committee members have undertaken outings to assess areas where the trails were reported to be in bad shape.

The pilot project has held up well to date and can be deemed to have met the objectives set out at the outset. With this success, the committee believes it is appropriate to consider implementation of additional projects in the Greenbelts. This raises questions about how to choose where to locate additional projects and what is the standard for trail construction that should be used. The Standard Operating procedures and Greenbelt Trail Standard that follow are intended to help guide such efforts.

John Parker, March 2016

SOP

Identification and selection of trail improvement areas - since most of the existing trails have been deemed to be in fair to poor condition, the committee needs to assure that fairness and objectivity are used in determining locations for projects. To this end the following criteria should be applied:

- The project should not be in the same Greenbelt where the previous project was completed.
- The proposed location should have trail segments deemed to be in comparatively poor condition relative to other greenbelt trails.

- There should be a resident prepared to be a “champion” for the project. This person will volunteer time in soliciting volunteers from community members in the vicinity of the project and attend meetings where committee and Board approval is requested.

Public notification regarding trail projects - residents within 300’ of the project location (measured from the center of the trail corridor of the proposed project shall receive a letter from ECIA with a detailed map explaining the proposed project. In addition, the proposal shall be published on the ECIA webpage. These notifications shall occur no less than 30 days prior to the Committee meeting where approval is considered.

Public participation in trail projects - although mechanical methods and ECIA staff time will be used to perform projects, it will be necessary to enlist the support of volunteers to complete Greenbelt trail projects. As part of the approval process, the project “champion” will need to demonstrate that there are a sufficient number of community members willing to volunteer time to complete the project.

Application of the trail standard (i.e. width of tread, closing of social trails etc) - the committee will assure that application of the trail standard will be done in a manner that allows for flexibility in response to site parameters and concerns of trail users and residents in the immediate area.

Some portions of the greenbelts may be determined to be so narrow, or perhaps so rarely used, that trail improvements would be unnecessary or inappropriate.

Signature 

Date 3/7/19

Title BOARD PRESIDENT