

CONSERVATION COMMITTEE REPORT

March 14, 2012

9:35–10:30 am

140 West Pine Street

Members Present Dave Strohmaier (chair), Marilyn Marler, Adam Hertz, Bob Jaffe, Caitlin Copple, Dick Haines, Cynthia Wolken, and Ed Childers

Members Absent:

Others Present: Morgan Valliant, Bert Linder

I. ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS

A. Approve minutes.

Minutes of February 22, 2012 were approved as submitted.

II. FINAL CONSIDERATION AGENDA ITEMS

III. CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

IV. REGULAR AGENDA

1. Conservation Lands Update. ([memo](#))—Regular Agenda (Morgan Valliant) (Referred to committee: 03/12/12)(**Informational Item, Remove from Agenda**)([Council Power Point](#))

Morgan Valliant, Conservation Lands Manager provided the committee with updates, and review regarding management activities on the City Open Space including highlight from 2011 and priority projects for 2012.

Bert Linder provided a brief update as a member of the newly formed Conservation Lands Advisory Committee (CLAC). This is the first year for the Committee and committee members have spent their time getting familiar with the management challenges and learning how to work effectively with Morgan and staff. The committee's work is guided by the CLM plan. Some of the projects reviewed by the committee include:

- Fairview/Pattee Canyon master planning for parks and trail system
- Special event requests on conservation lands.

Morgan - reviewed slides of the highlights from the 2011

- First year using the Conservation Lands Management plan
- Creation of the CLAC
- Highly motivate and knowledgeable group of volunteers - volunteers hours = 2022
- Trail construction – 1 mile on Sunlight property
- Fencing – repair and remove 1.15 miles
- Forest Thinning – Received grant from DNRC to thin 165 acres and a total of 218.5 acres with remainder done in house and city fire
- Invasive tree removals
- Hand pulling – 10.5 acres
- Weed mowing – 129 acres
- Re-vegetation – saplings, juvenile trees, native grass and forb plugs, spread 2020 lbs of seeds
- Herbicide applications – 52 acres of weeds, 571 acres of land,
- Sheep grazing – 1085 ac in 109 days
- Grants and donations - \$63K -

Marilyn Marler complimented Morgan on his obtaining grants and working with partners to supplement his budget.

Research Highlight

- 3 years of sheep grazing and data set
- Grazing occurs at the landscape scale about 950 acres per year

- Low cost tool to manage degraded areas to kill weeds but a negative impact occurs when there are not native seeds to germinate so another type of weed comes back the next year.

Morgan received a grant from the Department of Ag to fund a part time research assistant for sheep grazing to find answer to the following questions:

Research questions:

- What are the impacts of grazing on the entire plant community?
- Do Sheep facilitate dispersal of weeds while they graze
- How do we incorporate re-vegetation into a sheep grazing program?

The majority of a sheep's diet is weeds and they also consume native plants. There needs to be further research as to what part of the native plant is eating and what impact it has on the plant. There is great benefit from the site specific research and research and monitoring is essential for adaptive management.

Projects for 2012

- Thinning of 40 ac on M Jumbo
- Update trailheads to reflect changes to the dog ordinance
- Restoration on John Toole Park and Bancroft ponds
- Construction 1/2m hiking trail Hemayagen Park as per Farviews/Pattee canyon neighborhood plan

The committee discussed the research and amount of resources necessary to get to the final weed control goal. Ed reminded the committee that in 2000 there were zero dollars allocated to weed reduction and the goal was to make improvement but never the intention that all weeds would be removed from conservation lands. At best we would be able to decrease the use of herbicides and use those dollars for other projects.

HELD ITEMS

1. Discuss the city's strategy to complete a boundary survey of Greenough Park. ([memo](#))—Regular Agenda (Dave Strohmaier) (Referred to committee: 04/04/2011)
2. Approve and authorize the Mayor to sign an amendment to the agreement with Territorial Landworks, Inc. (TLI) in an amount not to exceed \$136,702.37 for professional services, including engineering, surveying, and construction management for Project #PR 08-02 GCT, Grant Creek Trail, CTEP #STPE 8199(105). ([memo](#))—Regular Agenda (Dave Shaw) (Referred to committee: 10/24/11)

The meeting adjourned at 10:35 am.