

Marshall Mountain Recreation Area FAQs • June 2021

Fast Facts – A quick summary of the Project FAQs

- Izzy Dog, LLC owns the Marshall Mountain Base Area Property and is providing the Missoula community with a unique opportunity to preserve Marshall Mountain and build a mountain-based recreation area that residents can readily access and enjoy. It is now up to the many community partners to secure this area for future generations.
- The City of Missoula will lease the approximate 160-acre Base Area Property from Izzy Dog, LLC for the next 18 to 24 months for \$10.00, with an option to purchase the property at the end of that term. After securing the area and mitigating potential safety hazards, Parks and Recreation will open the property to the public for self-initiated, day-use recreation in early August 2021, date TBA.
- At the end of the lease period, the City of Missoula will have the option to purchase the Marshall Mountain Base Area Property for \$1,850,000. The acquisition will be subject to the standard City open space acquisition processes, including an extensive public process with multiple opportunities for citizen engagement, culminating with a City Council vote.
- During the lease period, the City of Missoula will collaborate with community partners to develop strategies to fund property acquisition, design, planning, and development. Potential funding sources will include but are not limited to the 2018 City-County Open Space bond, grants, and public/private partnerships.
- **A community celebration is scheduled for September 12, 2021, from 1-4 p.m.** Residents will have the opportunity to tour the site and learn how to become involved with the planning for the future Marshall Mountain Recreation Area.

FAQs

Project Overview

- The Marshall Mountain project area is comprised of two distinct parcels (see attached map). The Marshall Mountain base area (approx. 160 acres) and the Marshall Mountain Five Valleys Land Trust Parcel (approx. 160 acres). Izzy Dog, LLC recently purchased the base area, and in 2014, the Five Valleys Lands Trust parcel was donated to FVLT by The Nature Conservancy to hold for future transfer to a public entity.
- The former Marshall Mountain Ski Area closed in 2002. These two parcels, plus a special-use permit across approximately 100 acres of USFS land, composed the entirety of the former Marshall Mountain Ski Area.
- Since 2002, several public/private collaborations evolved and failed to purchase the Base Area property for use as a community recreation area. This sustained community interest in public acquisition of Marshall Mountain, plus the designation of Marshall Mountain as an Open Space Cornerstone in the 2019 City/County Open Space Plan, support public acquisition of the property. Additionally, the 2018 Parks, Recreation, Open Space and Trails county-wide survey found that 71% of households surveyed supported public acquisition of the former ski area.

- In 2020, the City of Missoula made an effort to acquire the Base Area; however, parties were unable to agree upon mutually satisfactory terms.
- The City intends to work with project partners and the public to develop a community vision for an all-season, all-access regional outdoor recreation area, or park, across the entirety of the former Marshall Mountain Ski Area.

Schedule and Terms of Acquisition for the Marshall Mountain Base Area Property

- Izzy Dog, LLC currently owns the Marshall Mountain Base Area Property. Izzy Dog, LLC is providing the community an opportunity to preserve Marshall Mountain and build a mountain-based recreation area that residents can readily access and enjoy. It is now up to the community partners to secure this area for future generations.
- The City of Missoula will lease the Base Area Property from Izzy Dog, LLC for the next 18 to 24 months, with an option to purchase the property at the end of that term. The City of Missoula will pay Izzy Dog \$10.00 to lease the property for the next 18 to 24 months.
- At the end of the lease period, the City of Missoula will have the option to purchase the Marshall Mountain Base Area Property for \$1,850,000. The acquisition will be subject to the standard City open space acquisition processes, including an extensive public process with multiple opportunities for citizen engagement, culminating with a City Council vote.
- As of June 22, 2021, the City of Missoula’s Parks and Recreation Department will manage (public access, event permitting, site security, maintenance, etc.) the Base Area Property. The site will be managed according to City parks/open space ordinances, the City’s Conservation Lands Management Plan, and Parks and Recreation’s special events and permit policies during the lease term. A fee structure, similar to other Council-approved fees, for events and programs will be developed to help defray operational costs.
- During the lease period, the City of Missoula will collaborate with community partners to develop strategies to fund property acquisition, design, planning, and development. Potential funding sources will include but are not limited to the 2018 City-County Open Space bond, grants, and public/private partnerships.
- **A community celebration is scheduled for September 12, 2021, from 1-4 p.m.** This celebration will be an opportunity for the public to tour the site and learn how to become involved with the planning for the future Marshall Mountain Recreation Area.

2021-2022 Maintenance, Management & Public Access

- All pre-approved events and camps currently scheduled for summer 2021 will continue. A Marshall Mountain-specific special event permit and fee structure will be developed for use for the 2022 season. All 2022 events will require a permit.
- The Marshall Mountain Base Area has been closed to all passive public use since 2002. Izzy Dog, LLC and the City intend to open the Base Area to passive public use after public safety hazards are eliminated or mitigated. **The majority of the Base Area Property will open to the public for self-initiated, day-use recreation in early August 2021, date TBA.**
- The portions of USFS road #53033, which crosses the Base Area property and connects to the “Green Gate Trailhead” on Marshall Canyon Road to the FVLT parcel, will remain open to the public. This will allow the public to access the trail system on the FVLT parcel (see attached map).

- Between now and early August, City staff will remove known hazards, secure buildings and structures, develop and post basic site signage, install fencing and gates, and improve parking. As per the lease agreement, the public will not be allowed in any buildings during the lease period.
- Throughout 2021, staff will document and analyze significant recreational and habitat conservation potential, in partnership with adjacent landowners, including the USFS and Five Valleys Land Trust, across the entirety of the former Marshall Mountain Ski Area. This effort will help guide future trail planning while protecting sensitive habitat resources on the property.
- In Winter 2021, the City and project partners will begin a public process to create a community vision for the entire Marshall Mountain Recreation Area. Among other things, this effort will identify potential public uses, address community outdoors recreation needs, identify future partnerships and infrastructure needs. It is assumed that development will be scalable ranging from primitive to improved and that any improvements can be phased in over time.
- Before the City acquisition, a business and funding plan for long-term management of the site will be developed.

Community Benefits

- Legacy of youth education: For decades, Marshall Mountain has taught Missoula’s youth to ski, bike, hike, camp and enjoy nature. We now have an opportunity to continue this legacy.
- Inclusive Recreation: Should the public ultimately own Marshall Mountain, we will have the opportunity for truly inclusive recreation. Through expert design and thoughtful planning, trails can accommodate a plethora of unique uses. Environmental and experiential outdoor education can thrive at Marshall Mountain. Many in our community have never experienced outdoor mountain-based recreation. Marshall Mountain can accommodate that opportunity through diverse programming and a commitment to recreation for all.
- Summer and out-of-school programming: In the spring of 2021, Parks and Recreation summer camps saw 2.5 registrants for every camp opening. Marshall Mountain can provide desirable space for expanding camp capacity.
- Community events: As Missoula has grown, and the need for a public space to host large outdoor recreational, educational, and commercial events has increased. Marshall Mountain, a former ski area, is uniquely suited to serve this role. Using this area for such events will decrease pressure on adjacent public lands AND keep these events and the revenue they generate in our community.
- Habitat protection: Marshall Mountain contains some unique habitats; however, it is also a highly altered landscape. Under public ownership, both habitat restoration AND responsible recreational development will occur. Marshall Mountain has the additional potential to serve as “ground-zero” for teaching responsible recreation ethics, which users would carry onto other adjacent public lands.
- Growing population: As the greater Missoula population grows, pressure on public lands increases and will eventually exceed appropriate use levels. Securing Marshall Mountain provides considerable capacity. Additionally, it serves and supports an already robust tourism and outdoor recreation economy.

Marshall Mountain Area Map

