



TOWN OF JACKSON TOWN COUNCIL AGENDA DOCUMENTATION

PREPARATION DATE: February 1, 2018
MEETING DATE: February 5, 2018

SUBMITTING DEPARTMENT: Administration
DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR: Bob McLaurin
PRESENTER: Bob McLaurin

SUBJECT: Karns Meadow – Various Project Components and Environmental Analysis

STATEMENT/PURPOSE

The purpose of this item is for the Town Council to consider initiating a Town of Jackson Environmental Analysis process for Karns Meadow. This EA would evaluate the various allowed components and uses as set for in the buy-sell agreement between the Town of Jackson and in the conservation easements governing each parcel.

BACKGROUND/ALTERNATIVES

Karns Meadow is a 41-acre parcel of largely undeveloped land lying between West Jackson (a mixed-use area), downtown Jackson (a commercial area) and South Jackson (residential areas and at the foot of the Snow King ridge). The Karns family sold the property to the Town of Jackson in eight separate parcels between 2003 and 2009, and partnered with the Jackson Hole Land Trust on conservation easements that define the conservation values and permitted uses for each parcel. The purchase agreement and easements allow for a number of physical improvements including a pathway around the perimeter of the meadow, a natural surface equestrian trail, a fishing access platform, parking area, bathroom facilities and picnic shelters for park users, trail lighting, park/pathway signage, a public bus stop, and a public parking lot and/or parking garage. (The attached Map 1 is a 2011 exhibit that shows the Karns Meadow area, vegetative cover type, and various pathway alignment alternatives, including the alignment initially identified in the easements). Tract 4 also allows for a stormwater treatment plant and artificial wetlands, the development of three residential housing lots, and a public parking area along Flat Creek Drive. The stormwater wetlands and associated riparian habitat enhancements on tracts 3 and 4 were constructed in 2010. There have been additional minor alterations including the construction of designated access points to Flat Creek (gravel paths and stream bank protection), the temporary storage of an historic cabin (still on site), and installation of Town of Jackson solar panels. The Town of Jackson Well Number 5 is also located on this property, but was constructed long before the purchase of the property.

Staff initiated background environmental planning for the pathway and equestrian trail portion of the project in 2011. This work included baseline inventory of wetlands and other environmental resources, and analysis of route alternatives for the purpose of meeting NEPA requirements for two federal grants totaling \$900,000 that were awarded to the Town of Jackson in 2012 and 2014. The route alternatives are shown in Map 1. The NEPA work was not fully completed and both of these grants have since been rescinded due to lack of activity on the project.

More recently, starting in mid-2017, the Jackson Hole Land Trust reached out to Town staff to discuss steps for moving forward with the various components of the Karns Meadow project(s). Coordinating with the Housing Department, Pathways, Parks and Recreation, START, Public Works, and Administration, staff submitted a pre-application request to the Planning Department in November 2017 to initiate the Environmental Analysis (EA) process. Separately, the Parks and Rec Advisory Board was also considering an application from the Land Trust for the natural park component of the project as part of the Parks and Rec 5-Year Capital Improvement Plan outreach process. The Parks board process, which began after the EA pre-application was submitted, is

essentially a long-term budgeting and visioning exercise as the Parks board does not have the authority to approve projects in Karns Meadow, and in no way does it supplant the Town's standard planning and public review process.

If authorized to proceed, the EA process will be managed by the Town Planning Department and will involve hiring a licensed environmental consultant to evaluate the environmental impacts of a selection of proposed improvements and uses derived from the list of "allowable" uses per the conservation easements. This may include any of the elements noted above (and any others mentioned in the easements), such as the park, pathway, and housing, but does not necessarily have to include all, or even any, of them (although if nothing is proposed, there would be no need for an EA). An EA pre-application meeting was held December 20th with staff from Planning, Parks and Rec, START, Pathways, Public Works, Housing, Admin, the Jackson Hole Land Trust, and Wyoming Game and Fish. Discussion included an overview of the EA process, hiring a consultant, and developing the list of project components to be proposed for the EA evaluation.

Staff is requesting approval from Council to move forward with hiring an environmental consultant to prepare an EA for the various Karns Meadow project components. The Jackson Hole Land Trust will provide funding for EA with the Town of Jackson as the project owner and applicant. Staff will assist with developing the list of project components to be evaluated (and would bring this list back to Council for approval as part of an MOU with the Land Trust).

ATTACHMENTS

Karns Meadow Vegetative Cover and Approximate Pathway

FISCAL IMPACT

The Jackson Hole Land Trust has committed to cover the cost to hire the environmental consultant to prepare the Environmental Analysis, so there should be little fiscal impact to the Town. The Town would be the client, and would select and direct the consultant, but the cost would be paid by the JHLT.

STAFF IMPACT

Staff from multiple departments will be involved in the EA to a substantial degree. Planning staff will likely have the largest level of involvement and will coordinate preparation and review of the EA. Staff from the other town agencies mentioned above will be involved with developing the list of proposed project components, project planning/design, and EA review. It is expected that there will be a high level of public involvement in this process and a corresponding level of staff involvement.

LEGAL REVIEW

Not applicable at this time.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Town hire an Environmental Consultant to proceed with the Environmental Analysis process and continue to work with the Jackson Hole Land Trust (as the holder of the conservation easements) to determine the project components to be considered in the EA.

SUGGESTED MOTION

I move to approve moving forward with the environmental analysis and direct the Town Manager to prepare a Memorandum of Understanding with the Jackson Hole Land Trust to cover the funding of this process.

Synopsis for PowerPoint (120 words max):

Background:

The purpose of this item is for the Town Council to consider initiating a Town of Jackson Environmental Analysis process for Karns Meadow. This EA would evaluate the various allowed components and uses as set for in the buy-sell agreement between the Town of Jackson and in the conservation easements governing each parcel.



JH Community Pathways
KARNS MEADOW

**Map 1:
Karns Meadow
Vegetative Cover
& Approximate Pathway**

November 3, 2011

References:

- Environmental Laboratory. 1987. "Corps of Engineers Wetlands Delineation Manual," Technical Report Y-871, U.S. Army Engineer Waterways Experiment Station, Vicksburg, Miss.
- Jackson Hole Land Trust. December 2005. Karns Meadow Conservation Easements and Baseline Inventory.
- Intermountain Aquatics Inc. 2007. Wetland Delineation and Vegetation Survey for Karns Meadow Tracts 3 & 4.
- Alder Environmental, 2011. Environmental Analysis for the Proposed START Transity Facility, Karns Meadow, Tract 1,2,5,6.

Legend:

- Property Lines
 - Road Easement
 - Pathway Alignment**
 - JHLT Conservation Easement, Exhibit C
 - Alternative 1
 - Alternative 2
 - Alternative 3
 - Alternative 4
 - Vegetative Cover Types**
 - Scrub- Shrub Wetland
 - Riparian Shrub
 - Cottonwood - medium
 - Agricultural Meadow
 - Open Disturbed Grassland
 - Open Water - Flat Creek
- Highest Value Habitat*
↓
Lowest Value Habitat

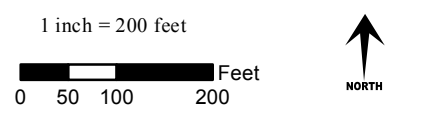
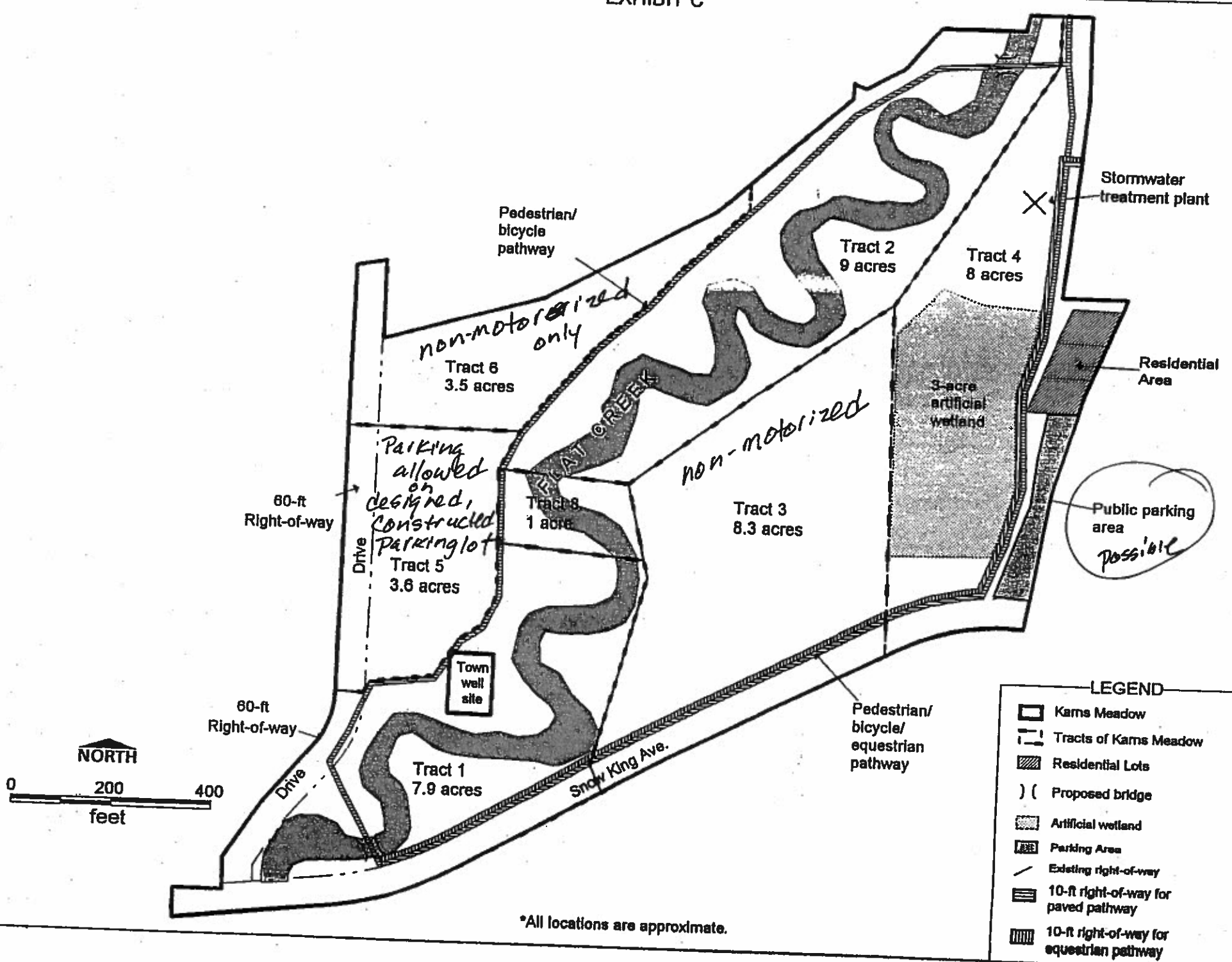


EXHIBIT C*



NORTH



*All locations are approximate.

LEGEND

- Kams Meadow
- Tracts of Kams Meadow
- Residential Lots
- Proposed bridge
- Artificial wetland
- Parking Area
- Existing right-of-way
- 10-ft right-of-way for paved pathway
- 10-ft right-of-way for equestrian pathway

Rec'd 2-5-18
Hand Delivered

February 4, 2018

SUBJECT: Karns Meadow - Various Project Components and Environmental Analysis

Dear Mayor Muldoon, Council Members, and Mr. McLarin,

My wife and I live at 530 West Hansen Avenue overlooking the open space of Tract 4 of the Karns Meadow. Our "voice" represents over 44 years of observing and appreciating the meadow. We believe though, you should consider the "voices" of the Jackson Hole Community and wildlife professionals to guide you if you proceed with an EA for the development of the Karns Meadow.

Voice of the Jackson Hole Community:

We're sure you will hear the voices of many individuals of the Jackson Hole community representing both sides of this issue. We posit the Vision Chapter of the Jackson, Teton County Comprehensive Plan, as expressed by joint Planning Commission Resolution 12-001, dated 02/09/2012 represents the real "voice of the community". Regarding wildlife on the Karns Meadow, this resolution states **"Ensure that wildlife is the priority over, rather than 'balanced with', recreational amenities"**.

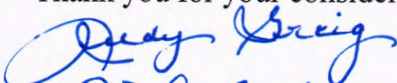
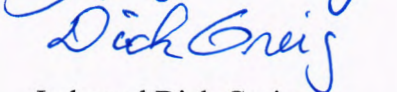
We note this resolution statement differs from that presented in the Jackson | Teton County Comprehensive Plan adopted April 2, 2012, just two months after the resolution. We don't believe the latter statement resulted from the proper process of involving public workshops, open houses, Planning Commissioner/Elected Officials workshops, and receipt of public comment used and resulting with Resolution 12-001.

Voice of Wildlife Professionals:

The Karns Meadow lies in the Natural Resource Overlay. The essence of the NRO is to provide protection to the most important and sensitive natural areas within the Town and County. Because of the dependence of wildlife on the meadow, we urge you to approve a comprehensive EA and also solicit input from professional wildlife organizations: Jackson Hole Wildlife Foundation, Jackson Hole Conservation Alliance, and Wyoming Game and Fish.

We hope the EA includes impacts of any/all of the proposed developments on wildlife based not just on the current buildout around the meadow but also for the expected buildout around the meadow in 10 years or so, including the Sagebursh Apartments, the proposed Town of Jackson residential projects on Tract 5 and at the Bus Barn property, and development in the proposed Karns Meadow Park.

Thank you for your consideration.

Judy and Dick Greig
530 West Hansen Avenue
Jackson, WY 83001
307-733-4183
rgreig@gmail.com

From: Loren Nelson
To: [Bob McLaurin](#); [Roxanne DeVries Robinson](#); [Town Council](#); [Pete Muldoon](#)
Subject: Karns Meadow Development Proposal
Date: Saturday, February 3, 2018 10:46:38 AM

Dear Mr. McLaurin, Mayor Muldoon, and Council Members -

On February 5 a proposal is before the Council to approve an Environmental Assessment for the development of Karns Meadow.

Karns Meadow is an environmentally sensitive parcel of land that is the single, last, natural, (almost) undeveloped land in central Jackson. It is the only remaining prime natural habitat that allows wildlife movement and migration between the national forest and East Gros Ventre Butte and the highway 22 corridor to Teton Pass. The land is essential to wildlife.

A proposal from the Jackson Hole Land Trust was made to the Parks and Rec Advisory Board in January to develop this land with a pathway, picnic grounds, rest rooms, shelters, and bridges over Flat Creek. The Board listened to the citizens of Jackson and **withdrew** from its long-range funding plan, money for architectural and engineering planning and for the proposed pathway until a comprehensive Environmental Assessment is completed and reviewed.

In our opinion, a mandatory, pre-development Environmental Assessment should not be approved because the development of this unique natural park should not be approved. Our concerns about the development proposal are several:

1. There is **no need** for another pathway through this natural park. There are existing pathways on all sides of Karns Meadow (Broadway, Snow King, Karns Road, and Flat Creek) and these pathways are mostly within 200 feet of the proposed pathway within the meadow.
2. There is **no public demand** for another pathway within this part of Jackson. The Parks & Rec planning document from July 2017 confirms public demand for more town pathways is low.
3. There is **no priority** for either a pathway or a picnic ground in Karns Meadow. This was also confirmed by Parks & Rec in the July 2017 planning document.
4. The land is **crucial wildlife habitat** and an increased presence of people in the *heart of the meadow* would be disruptive.
5. Development will cause **irreversible harm** to the habitat - once built, it will never be removed.

In the history of the west, our pioneers "circled their wagons" to keep threats from the center of their camps. The circular pathway proposed around the most sensitive parts of Karns Meadow will essentially keep wildlife from the meadow and irreversibly change the nature of this essential habitat.

We hope that you will reject the EA proposal for Karns Meadow because it is wasteful

and unnecessary - it should be obvious to anyone that this obtrusive pathway should not be built.

If you choose to proceed with an EA, we hope that it will be a true and robust, comprehensive assessment conducted over all seasons (winter, early spring, late spring, summer, early fall, and late fall) because the habitat and species change dramatically throughout the year and over several years because the wildlife needs change with the severity of our winters and the depth of the snow pack.

We believe there are several other development options that could make the Karns Meadow Park a unique visitor experience that, unlike the circular pathway proposal, would protect rather than harm the habitat and wildlife.

Thank you for considering our opinions.

Loren Nelson
Friends of Karns Meadow
445 Flat Creek Drive
Jackson, WY 83001
305-542-9038

From: Sandy Shuptrine
To: [Town Council](#)
Subject: Karns Meadow
Date: Tuesday, January 30, 2018 4:56:14 PM

Dear Mayor Muldoon and Council-

I am just getting tuned into the possibility that you may be addressing the Karns Meadow and a potential EA, this evening.

I am hoping the idea of FIRST doing a sensitive environmental design has reached you...it would go a long way toward a meaningful EA, it seems. I suggest reviewing a letter sent by Frances Clark on this matter I will attempt to copy it below.

With Regard,

Sandy Shuptrine
P.O. Box 1954
Jackson, WY 83001
(307) 733 6371
sandyshuptrine@wyom.net

January 10, 2018

Dear Park and Recreation Board Members,

It is with great concern that I read the article in the JH News & Guide about the plans for Karns Meadow. For much of my career, I developed stewardship and educational plans for similar-sized and situated conservation lands in New England. The current proposed plans are indeed appropriate for such an urban park. However, here in Jackson, such an amenity is unnecessary and destructive of the natural experience it wishes to promote. I urge you deny this project as it is presented.

In the densely populated region of the Northeastern U.S., such parks introduce people who have no other access to nature. A sight of a duck or a song of a bird are for many inner city residents and suburban school children a wonder. However, in Jackson we are surrounded by and have ready access to natural places and experiences that are the envy of the world. Indeed, the intense development of Karns Meadow will present a contrary lesson about nature than the project leaders intend. It will show visitors how we can out-right destroy and fragment wildlife habitat and disrupt their natural behaviors with unneeded recreational development and increased human noise, motion, and activity. This plan presents an urban/suburban amenity for one of the most natural communities in the U.S. It is unnecessary and poorly designed to meet the stated purposes.

Mr. Karns and family were most foresighted and generous with their gift of land with the added layer of protection in a conservation easement. The JH Land Trust is to be commended for their efforts to protect wildlife habitat, corridors, and agricultural lands in our midst. Indeed, I think we all appreciate their accomplishments. And it is important to follow the intent of the conservation easement. However, I suggest that the land trust redo this plan before asking for approval. Having not seen the restriction, I would encourage a de minimus vs. maximum approach to satisfy any easement requirements regarding recreational amenities. Where at all possible, it should recognize the current context of the property in the Town of Jackson and our much greater understanding of wildlife and wetlands values compared to decades ago when the easement was written. This plan can be much better and should not be approved as it is.

The following are my preliminary thoughts:

1. A thorough environmental assessment is necessary throughout the seasons, including wetland delineation, inventory of plants, birds, insects, mammals, and changes in seasonal uses. Ideally, this should be conducted for at least 2 years to obtain sufficient baseline data. For instance last year was a heavy snow year, this year a light snow year so far—wildlife reacts differently. All draft and final plans should wait upon this assessment. There are already some migration and bird banding data to help understand the dynamics of this site. A complete ecological assessment is invaluable not only to determine the best siting for required amenities, but also later to serve educational purposes.
2. A thorough site walk is essential for all staff and officials, as well as concerned citizens, before planning and decisions.
3. I have not walked the site myself; however, by looking at the plan, aerial photos, and newspaper article, a few points stand out:
 - a. Karn's Meadow protects the largest, broadest section of Flat Creek remaining within the confines of Jackson. It also appears to have several man-made wetlands in the southeast corner. Wetlands, even man-made ones, have particularly high ecological value. Karns Meadow serves as a valuable wetland wildlife habitat on its own and is a critical link to the rest of the creek. Creeks are essential wildlife corridors for myriad species from insects, fish, small mammals, and of course our mule deer and moose.
 - b. This property is the only relatively natural and safe area for wildlife to move through Jackson from the buttes on the north and forested slopes and ridge of the BTNF to the south. This linkage will be all the more important as the surrounding areas develop in the future and local mule deer and moose populations are further compromised.
 - c. It is well documented that mule deer come down from their winter habitat to this wetland for essential water, crossing Broadway regularly. The pathway enters right where I understand the mule deer access Karns Meadow at the NE corner. As planned, people will walk, bike, and ski past the houses (happy neighbors!) out into the open space, potentially surprising wildlife. This is not a good or safe coincidence. I recall this location is being considered for a protected wildlife corridor, even wildlife overpass.
 - d. The pathway as shown takes the longest route through the property – maximizing, instead of reducing, impacts. The constructed pathway itself and importantly the noise and motion of walkers, bicycles, and dogs cause both outright habitat destruction, as well as more subtle fragmentation. Wildlife seeking food and rest in the wetlands day or night are easily disturbed and will no longer come. This proposed plan diminishes wildlife habitat and also the opportunities to observe them.
 - e. The pathway runs adjacent to the most natural, sinuous parts of the wetland and crosses Flat Creek twice right where the mule deer are most likely to come through. By most wetland protection standards, the extent, proximity, and type of disturbance would not be allowed—especially when there are other alternatives. This lengthy route disrupts this essential wetland corridor, degrades habitat, and again scares away the wildlife that you wish people to enjoy.
 - f. Bike racks, tables, benches, trash cans, etc. are obstacles for wildlife. WGFD asks people to reduce these hazards in moose habitat elsewhere in the county. Picnic trash attracts everything from skunks and raccoons to bears, disrupting their diets and movement patterns. This is not a desirable nature lesson for visitors or for us residents.
 - g. I strongly question the need for the pathway, picnic, and other amenities given the many other opportunities in town, and indeed the National Forest, Elk Refuge, and National Park. The fairgrounds are to the east, there is no school nearby, and access to trails along the Flat Creek and to Josie's Ridge is within half a mile. Furthermore, the town already has an extensive system of bike routes and pathways, including a bike route flanking two sides of this property. While the town may try to regulate dogs and bicycles, this has proven difficult to impossible in existing

parks and pathways. I doubt these can be regulated here, adding to the degradation of this remaining habitat.

4. Alternatives: Using the information from the maps, I can see opportunities to provide the amenities described in the current plan and to minimize the impact to wildlife. (Again, an assessment is needed to determine the wildlife use of the different areas).

- Along the existing bike route on the south side of Karns Meadow e.g. Snow King Avenue, build out 2-3 viewing platforms with interpretation signs.
- If need be, provide a couple of small viewing platforms that overlook the wetland each with a single foot trail in and out. This would reduce the amount of pass-through traffic and provide a more tranquil and productive wildlife viewing opportunity. No bikes or dogs allowed.
- To reduce the impact to wildlife accessing the wetland corridor, if needed to meet the terms of the easement, place a short pathway through the southeast corner and offer an interpretive site and perhaps foot path adjacent to the man-made wetlands. The man-made wetlands could perhaps be enhanced and valuable lessons learned about the intricacies of wetlands and the difficulty of replicating them. This could be a model highway wetlands mitigation project.
- A picnic area and restroom with appropriate landscaping of native plants could also go in this southeast corner, to make full use of pathway and interpretation resource. This arrangement would serve as an amenity to the fairgrounds, could utilize the existing parking area, and perhaps meet the intention of the easement. In fact the restroom could possibly be built on the adjacent corner of the Fairgrounds by the parking lot.
- Whatever the amenity and uses, restrict/prohibit use at night and early morning and evenings, especially in winter when wildlife need the space the most. Prohibit dogs completely (unless there is an existing disturbed area that could be fenced away from the wetland), bicycles, and skiers at all times. No night lights. Design for tranquil viewing with narrow unpaved paths and small platforms if necessary to get closer to the wetland.
- In sum to meet the requirements of the easement, provide a few quality viewing stations, use the most disturbed parts of the property for amenities, and minimize the length of the pathway and its uses.

I understand that the Friends of Pathways has a grant from WYDOT for this project and, therefore, likely wants to complete this project quickly. It is unfortunate that the wider community—particularly the conservation community—was not brought into the conversation for their expertise before proposing such a grant. The funds should not drive the final plan or decision. Any plan should include a thorough environmental assessment and incorporate broader community values of protecting wildlife and wildlife education. Friends of Pathway and the town have provided a significant amenity already with bikeways adjacent to Karns Meadow and pathways throughout Jackson. If absolutely necessary to utilize the funds for pathway, they could construct the pathway along Snow King Avenue to replace the bike-way, instead of intruding into Karns Meadow. We do not need new routes through Karns Meadow.

JHLT and Pathways should come back with a plan that maintains vital wildlife corridors, minimizes wetland habitat disturbance, and provides some educational opportunities and compatible recreation within the heart of Jackson.

Please deny the plan as presented. A complete ecological assessment and redesigned plan are necessary before taking any step forward.

Thank you for your consideration of my comments

Frances Clark

From: Dave Mills
To: info@jhlandtrust.org
Cc: jake.shjh@gmail.com; Pete Muldoon
Subject: Energize Karns Meadow
Date: Monday, January 29, 2018 5:32:22 PM

Hello,

I've lived here just over seven years, and I've always admired and appreciated the work you do. And I've always thought that the folks at Save Historic Jackson Hole were a bit too stodgy, too old-fashioned, too cowboy.

Until now.

If Save Historic Jackson Hole has quoted you correctly, what in the world do you mean by "Energize Karns Meadow into a natural park"? What kind of bureaucratic nonsense is that? SHJH calls it "gobbledegook," and I'd agree completely.

Sorry, you've lost my admiration,

Dave Mills
325 Pine Drive (near Karns Meadow)
Jackson

(For the record, I urge you to leave what's left of Karns Meadow alone. The town's already damaged it enough. It doesn't need you *and* the town to make it worse.)

From: petekarns@bresnan.net
To: [Town Council](#)
Subject: Karns Meadow
Date: Monday, January 29, 2018 12:20:44 PM
Attachments: [Karns Meadow guest shot.docx](#)

Mayor and Council, Since the Karns Meadow master plan has gotten off track, I thought that you needed to hear from the Karns family. This letter may also end up as a Guest Shot in the JH News and Guide. Pete Karns

From: kirk Stone
To: [Town Council](#)
Subject: Karn"s Meadow
Date: Friday, January 26, 2018 11:20:25 AM

Dear Jackson,

I am appalled.

The Karn's meadow is a natural park. The fact that the town of Jackson and the Land Trust don't know about natural wetlands shows how uneducated they are.

My mother-in-law's house is on the dead in of west Kelly Avenue. We have watched the wonders of a natural wet land habitat for years.

The Karns family gave this park not only to this generation but intended it for their grandchildren, my grandchildren, your grandchildren and generations to come. How dare the elected officials take the only natural park that the town has and put pavilions, park benches and pathways there?

I'm a trail person myself, so it pisses me off when my tax dollars go to a pathway. You do not need to ride your bicycle through a natural wetland habitat. Either ride around it or park your bike and walk down there and enjoy it.

If you need park benches, bike racks, and gazebos you need to go back to the city. They even have parking meters. You can enjoy that too.

Sincerely

Cindy Hill Stone

Bx 1865 83001

307-690-6654

From: Joy Watson
To: [Town Council](#)
Subject: Karns Meadow
Date: Sunday, January 7, 2018 10:39:05 AM

Hello fellow Jackson-ites

This letter is to address my concern over development of the Karns Meadow from a natural shielded preserve into a people friendly environment.

We are talking about enticing people at the expense of loosing forever one of the last semi natural areas in the middle of Jackson.

I live right on the meadow and know first hand that we have many of our animal friends who also call that open, well brushed and grassed area "Home."

All of whom live very stably and securely in an area because very few people venture to disrupt them.

Last summer we had a very active dawn and dusk migrate mule deer herd family consisting of 2 adult and 3 adolescent,

along with fox, and in the Winter, moose and others make themselves seen.

I sited two Sand Hill Cranes last early summer stopping by.

Certainly we all know, you do not see Sandy Hill Cranes stopping by in peopled areas, they seek safe and remote locations to set down..

Already we saw the beginnings of several groups and tours from the new small foot bridge that was recently put behind Hoback/Staples/DollarTree complex.

Each group talking loudly and stomping down the grasses, wandering the meadow, picking grasses, all in the name of science and recreation.

The idea of lights in an area as natural as Karns meadow is particularly painful and disruptive.

This small protected area in the heart of Jackson provides the walkway between the mountains on the south of town, connecting from the north of Snow King, through behind Karns Hillside, Hidden Ranches on down past Horse Thief Canyon

to the western lands on the other side of Broadway leading across the Gross Ventres.

Please do not take away yet another small corridor...

We allowed the alternation of a major corridor with the building of the Teton Science School, and now with the urbanization of the Forestry property north of town,

must we loose yet another migration route and habitat to people usage valued over animal life and migration routes?

Please do not add yet another place that values people more than what our Master Plan says we in Jackson value: our wildlife, our connection with the animals..

Don't you think we have done that almost to the point of negating our very own intents?

It feels more and more like the old saying: "cutting off your nose despite your face" syndrome.

Thank you kindly for your consideration of allowing Karns Meadow to remain a habitat for nature, over a pedestrian walkway and people playground.

Sincerely,
Joy Watson

From: Franz Camenzind
To: [Steve Ashworth](#)
Cc: laurie@jhlandtrust.org; [Brian Schilling](#); [County Commissioners](#); [Town Council](#)
Subject: Karns Meadow
Date: Friday, January 5, 2018 12:04:10 PM

Dear Steve,

I am writing in regard to the planning for Karns Meadow. From what I am able to gather, significant decisions regarding the future of Karns Meadow may soon be made by the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board. If this is correct, I would appreciate clarification on a few questions and concerns. First, what are the current recommendations if any, for the future use of the Meadows? Second, how will the public be involved in the final decision making process—will there be a series of workshops or public meetings where concerns and recommendations can be brought to the process and addressed? What is the data set and support materials used for the current recommendations, and are, or how are these materials being made available for public review? And, what is the estimated time-line for this process and final decision?

I apologize for asking so many questions, but I feel that the 41-acre Karns Meadow is one of the most environmentally rich and critical pieces of habitat on the “East Bank” whose future is yet to be determined. And it certainly is, or is even more important than the 20-plus acre hill side and willow bottom property along Flat Creek and the Garaman Pathway (west end of Snow King) which the Town and the Land Trust recently acquired and manages for its wildlife and environmental value- which includes limiting human entry.

I mention this because, depending on the response to the above questions, I strongly recommend that before any final decision is made that a comprehensive environmental analysis be made on the Karns Meadow property. This should include vegetation mapping and a wildlife inventory including waterfowl and aquatic and fisheries analysis. And this analysis should include data collection from all seasons and for more than one year as weather conditions can dictate how this area functions environmentally and specifically for wildlife. We have known for decades that this meadow functions both as destination habitat and as a critical connection corridor between Snow King to the south, and East Gros Ventre Butte to the north. And we know that it is during the most severe winters that wildlife, particularly deer and moose depend most upon this meadow for refuge, seclusion and nutrition. This winter for example, is not typical and data collected now may not be indicative of long-term wildlife use.

In my years of conducting environmental analysis and wildlife inventories in the valley and the region, I have come to conclude that more data collected over a greater time supports better decisions.

And, how Karns Meadow functioned environmentally and specifically for wildlife ten or twenty years ago may be very different today simply because the use of the surrounding properties has changed dramatically. Before any irrevocable decisions are made, we must have the best information at hand, we need to respect the first-hand knowledge and the desires of the citizens of this community, and we must have an open, thorough and transparent process. Doing so should yield the best decision and the most defensible decision.

The very first sentence in the first page of the Comprehensive Plan begins with this visionary sentence: “*Preserve and protect the area’s ecosystem in order to ensure a healthy environment, community and economy for current and future generations.*” Will we as a

community apply this vision, this value statement to the future condition of one of the most environmentally diverse and important habitats remaining in the area– the Karns Meadow? I hope we do.

Steve, thank you for your commitment and dedication to making Teton County the best of what is left of the west.

Sincerely,
Franz Camenzind Ph.D
Jackson
733 6806
fcamenzi@wyoming.com

CC: B. Schilling Pathways Coordinator
L. Andrews President, JH Land Trust
Teton County Commissioners
Town of Jackson Council

From: Loren Nelson
To: [Town Council](#)
Subject: 2018 Karns Meadow development project
Date: Wednesday, December 27, 2017 10:12:45 AM
Attachments: [Muldoon-Council letter 1.docx](#)

Dear Mayor Muldoon and Council members -

Attached is a letter sent today via post regarding the plan of the Jackson Hole Land Trust and the Jackson/Teton County Parks and Recreation to start development in Karns Meadow in 2018.

We believe that creation of a pathway that will certainly bring many people into the heart of the meadow will disrupt crucial wildlife habitat and the major migration pathway through central Jackson. We believe the pathway is no longer necessary and there are several good alternatives to respect the wishes of the Karns family to allow many people to enjoy this pristine and (almost) undeveloped treasure in the town's center.

Thank you for looking into this development plan and considering other alternative that will protect our wildlife.

Loren Nelson & Nancy St. Clair
445 Flat Creek Drive
PO Box 3999
Jackson, WY 83001
305-542-9038

Feb 2, 2018

Town Council,

Short and sweet - Once the property is developed it will never be returned to nature. The wild life will never return to this area.

Park and Rec said they do not need another developed park in Jackson. I hope the town Council feels the same.

Nancy StClow

Rec'd 2-5-18
1:34 PM

From: Vance Carruth
To: [Roxanne DeVries Robinson](#); [Pete Muldoon](#); [Town Council](#)
Subject: Karns meadow development
Date: Monday, February 5, 2018 11:54:37 AM

February 5, 2018

Dear Mayor Muldoon and Members of the Jackson Town Council ,

I am writing you on behalf of my wife, Ann Carruth, and myself regarding future development within the Karns Meadow. My wife and I have been year round Teton County residents since 1972, and I have been here seasonally since the summer of 1963. One, or both of us, has lived in Jackson, Moose, Kelly, Wilson and in Park Housing within Grand Teton National Park in a number of different locations throughout the Park. We both worked many years in Teton County School District #1 as teachers at Jackson Hole High School, Middle School, and Jr. High School. I worked as a seasonal Park Naturalist for 7 summers in GTNP during the 1970's and we are both avid wildlife and environmental advocates.

For these reasons and my recent interest and involvement in the development of Wildlife Crossings for Jackson Hole, my wife and I would like to urge you to postpone any decisions regarding approving the development of any kind of recreational or physical changes to the public space that currently is undeveloped in Karns Meadow. The meadow has served as a refuge of safety for wildlife, birds and many plant species that make up this one last vestige of wild lands in the heart of the Town of Jackson. Installing yet another bike path or equestrian trail that would serve to disrupt and disturb the wildlife that currently lives in, or visits this wetlands habitat, would unavoidably force many of our wild neighbors to vacate this peaceful and little disturbed environment. Once human activities intrude on the wild character and values we judge as being top priorities that are pointed out in our Teton County Comprehensive Plan and Vision Statement, the future for wildlife would be irrevocably lost. As my dear departed friend and mentor, Mardy Murie, stated to me many times, "Once it's gone, it's gone forever".

Within the developed boundaries of the Town of Jackson we already have many parks and pathways, two of which parallel in close proximity on both the north and the south sides of the meadow. We have already developed and provided an extensive pathways system for public use, both within and outside the larger community as well as within the town. There are even more spaces that are open to public use by any number of outdoor enthusiasts.

Can we not save this one wild space within the town, leave it in its natural state, and keep our domestic pets and other domesticated animals confined to other spaces where they do no harm? We implore you to urge a thorough environmental assessment be done on this property prior to considering any developmental plans that would encircle and disturb, or disrupt, the wildlife or wetlands character of this remarkable wild place that currently is used by so many wild creatures. Those who wish to observe them at a distance that doesn't threaten or disturb them will

continue to be possible without disturbance of this wild space in the midst of the town of Jackson .

Finally, need we remind you that the economy of this town was built upon the desire of visitors to come here BECAUSE of the beauty of the landscapes that surround us and the wildlife that resides here? Keep it wild and they will continue to come, and we will teach them, by our own example, how to live in harmony with the natural world around them when they go home! Being good stewards of our environment has long lasting rewards for future generations who are depending on us to pass those values onto them.

You can ride a horse in any number of places outside this small jewel of a meadow; you can ride a bike on any of the miles of pathways that exist in Jackson Hole; likewise, you can cross country ski in many areas both in and outside the town of Jackson, but there is only ONE Karns Meadow where wildlife now lives relatively undisturbed and it is a beautiful thing to observe from a relatively close distance! In the longview history of our community, we believe, even the Karns family will one day come to recognize the value of keeping this space wild for future generations that, even 15 years ago, they may not have recognized just how far we would have come in providing the kinds of facilities and activities they envisioned for this area. We will be forever grateful for their generosity in preserving this wildlife habitat for wildlife. Today, the value of wild lands in the heart of Jackson are priceless. Please help us keep Karns Meadow wild!

Sincerely,

Vance Carruth

P.O. Box 7036

Jackson, Wyoming 83002

Founder of the original Safe Wildlife Crossings For Jackson Hole

Founder of Inspired Citizen Advocates For The Murie Legacy