



MEMORANDUM

P.O. Box 4100 ♦ FRISCO, COLORADO 80443

TO: MAYOR AND TOWN COUNCIL
FROM: DON REIMER, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR
RE: REVIEW OF DRAFT RFP: USFS PROPOSAL FOR RESOURCE MANAGEMENT IN
FRISCO'S BACKYARD AND NEPA REVIEW
DATE: NOVEMBER 30, 2021

Summary and Background: Frisco's Backyard area encompasses the land located generally south of Frisco, comprising Mount Royal, Miners Creek, Rainbow Lake, Ophir Mountain and Gold Hill. While outside of town limits, these National Forest (NFS) lands are a very important community recreation destination, with a natural forested backcountry character, yet close in proximity to Frisco. In recent years, there have been increasing concerns associated with potential wildfires near Town, and a desire to proactively mitigate hazardous fuel loads.

Analysis: At their June 22, 2021 meeting, Town Council reviewed the Frisco Trails Master Plan focusing on Plan implementation to date, and identifying priorities for coming years. At that meeting, Council expressed support for beginning implementation of the trails in Planning Area 3, designated Frisco's Backyard. Because this area is almost entirely on lands managed by the US Forest Service (USFS), any trail planning, construction and management would require coordination with and approval by USFS. Staff subsequently reached out to USFS personnel to discuss the process and requirements.

In August 2021, staff attended the Summit County Wildfire Council meeting, and had the opportunity to discuss wildfire mitigation in the areas around Frisco with fire protection and mitigation experts employed by the US Forest Service, and Summit Fire and EMS. Because the Trail planning discussion was in the initial stages, Town and USFS staff agreed that efficiencies would be gained by combining the environmental review processes required for both the fuels management and proposed trails projects.

Staff prepared the attached draft Request for Proposals (RFP) for Resource Management for the Backyard area, with a planned issue date of December 1, 2021, with proposals due by January 14, 2022. The scope includes two phases, first to develop a proposal intended to gain USFS approval of the project, and a second phase to conduct the NEPA environmental review required before any work can occur.

Financial Impact: Town Council included \$490,000 for Trails Construction and Enhancements (2000-5066) in the 2022 budget. These funds are earmarked for multiple projects, including: the Trails Master Plan Update; continuance of the trail construction and enhancements, and wildfire mitigation at the PRA; maintenance in Frisco's Backyard; and wildfire mitigation plans and revegetation efforts. Staff anticipates utilizing funds from this budget item for the completion of this plan and other projects.

Alignment with Strategic Plan: Completion of hazardous fuels mitigation and improvement of the trail network in the Frisco Backyard area would support goals in both the Sustainable Environment, and the Vibrant Culture, Arts, and Recreation areas of the Town Council Strategic Plan.

Environmental Sustainability: Mitigation of hazardous fuels on NFS lands adjacent to the Town of Frisco will reduce the potential impact of wildfire, reducing wildfire impacts and increasing sustainability in Frisco, and Summit County as a whole. Trail system improvements in this area will be required to follow trail construction and management best practices, which will reduce erosion and sedimentation over time.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends that Council take this opportunity to learn more about the project and proposed process for developing the USFS proposal. Per the schedule in the RFP, and pending the outcome of responses and proposer interviews, a contract could be prepared for Council consideration at the February 8, 2022 Town Council meeting.

Approved By:

Tony O'Rourke, Town Manager
Leslie Edwards, Finance Director

Attachments:

Attachment A – Draft RFP