



MEMORANDUM

P.O. Box 4100 ♦ FRISCO, COLORADO 80443

TO: MAYOR AND TOWN COUNCIL
FROM: SUSAN LEE, PLANNER, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
RE: UPDATE ON THE USFS PROPOSAL FOR RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND NEPA REVIEW IN FRISCO'S BACKYARD
DATE: JULY 26, 2022

Summary and Background: On March 22, 2022, based on the Town's ongoing priorities for trail and recreation improvements, wildfire management, and increasing pressure on the existing trail network Town Council approved a contract with SE Group to develop a proposal for USFS consideration of trail and resource management in the area known as Frisco's Backyard. The contracted scope of work included the development of a proposal, on behalf of the Town, for resource management in the Backyard area. The proposal would include goals for fuel reduction and trail improvements among other resource management opportunities. Upon acceptance by the USFS the consultant team will manage the resource surveys, mapping, and scoping work associated with the NEPA review process.

Analysis: During the contract approval discussion Council requested an update from the consultant team to learn more about the project parameters. The consultant team, led by Ash Smith of SE Group will give an overview of the following:

- Process and status of Town of Frisco's proposal to the Forest Service
- Anticipated Forest Service environmental review process and schedule
- Opportunities for public involvement
- Phased cost approach for environmental analysis

Financial Impact: The SE Group contract is for a cost not to exceed \$240,500, which will be spread over the 2022 and 2023 budget years. Town Council allocated \$490,000 in the 2022 budget (2000-5066) for Trails Projects. This included funds for several items: \$100,000 for continued trail work at the Peninsula Recreation Area; \$150,000 to develop a management plan with the USFS for the Backyard area; \$200,000 for wildfire mitigation efforts including fuels reduction/wildfire mitigation plans and revegetation efforts; and \$40,000 to update the 2017 Frisco Trails Master Plan. Since the management plan and NEPA studies are required prior to any type of implementation, a portion of the funds allocated for the wildfire mitigation efforts has been dedicated to the contract for *USFS Proposal for Resource Management in Frisco's Backyard and NEPA Review*.

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: The overarching focus of this project is to improve the ecosystem health, reduce hazardous fuels and risk of wildfire, and create more sustainable recreation opportunities in the Backyard area. Mitigation of hazardous fuels on USFS lands adjacent to the Town of Frisco will improve forest health while reducing the potential impact of wildfire. Trail system improvements in this area will be required to follow current USFS management best practices for trail construction, which will reduce erosion and sedimentation. As with any type of construction activity there will be negative environmental impacts associated with energy consumption and soil disturbance but by conducting these activities in accordance with a plan that incorporates sustainable construction practices, the overall impacts will be minimized.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends Town Council take this opportunity to learn about the USFS proposal and NEPA process.

Reviews and Approvals:

- Leslie Edwards, Finance Director
- Diane McBride, Interim Town Manager

Attachments:

- None