

MCINTOSH LAKE MASTER PLAN

PUBLIC MEETING #2 SUMMARY

May 14, 2003

On April 15th, the second of five public meetings was held at the City of Longmont Senior Center. As with the first meeting, there was an exceptional turnout with over 125 participants. The purpose of the meeting was to provide the public with an opportunity to express their ideas and concerns about a series of alternative master plan concepts for McIntosh Lake. After a brief summary of the alternatives, participants were divided into four discussion groups. Each of the groups was asked to describe which elements, from any of the plans, that they liked best, what elements they were opposed to and which alternative they preferred. At the end of the meeting all participants were asked to come back together and hear the comments recorded in each group.

In addition to the meeting, the City received over 150 written comments in the form of questionnaire responses and email messages. The public's input from the meeting and all written responses will be used to help generate the draft McIntosh Lake Master Plan.

ALTERNATIVE CONCEPTS DISCUSSED

Three alternative concepts were discussed at the meeting. These concepts were developed utilizing input from the last public meeting. Each alternative has a different emphasis in relation to resource preservation and recreation.

In Alternative A: Wildlife Refuge, the vast majority of the site would be conserved as a wildlife area. Wildlife and fish habitat preservation and enhancement would be emphasized. No boating would be permitted on the lake and, although the existing trail system would be expanded, it would not circumvent the lake. The entire north and west sides of the park would be designated as a "wildlife refuge" where habitat would be protected and restored and public access prohibited. Fishing would be allowed only along the south shore. Education and interpretation would be emphasized with exhibits provided at key natural and cultural resource areas. To enhance educational opportunities and provide safe access to the park, an underpass would be constructed at 17th Street with a link to Westview Middle School. Several dispersed parking lots would be provided near different parts of the lake.

Alternative B: Restoration and Recreation would preserve and enhance prime wildlife areas while allowing more recreational uses than shown in Alternative A. A trail would be developed around the entire lake. The sections of the trail near residential developments would be paved with unpaved trails provided along the outer edges of the park. On the north side, three unpaved trail options would be considered. Either one or all three of these trails could be built, depending upon agreements decided between the City and several adjacent landowners. Non-motorized carry-in boating would be allowed and gravel boat ramps would be provided. Fishing would be permitted along much of the shoreline and within the water. A northern section of the lake

and shore would be designated a "lake protection zone" and would be off limits to visitors in order to protect wildlife and their habitat. As in Alternative A, several small-scale dispersed parking lots would be provided along with a pedestrian underpass at 17th Street.

Alternative C: Recreation Emphasis would provide for the greatest diversity of recreational uses and limited wildlife preservation and enhancement. Both motorized and non-motorized boating would be allowed on the lake. However, due to the small scale of the waterbody, motorized and non-motorized uses would occur on different days of the week. In addition, two sandy swim beaches, a designated windsurf area, a dog water park, a water ski route and a paved trail around the entire lake would be provided. Fishing would be allowed from several places along the shore and within the water. Additional access and road improvements on the west side of the lake would be provided either off of Highway 66 or 17th Street. The west side would be developed with a large parking lot, a multi-use building, a boat launch ramp, a fishing pier, a canoe rental, storage facility and a sandy swim beach.

WHAT WE HEARD FROM YOU

The following information summarizes what the Project Team heard at the second public meeting and learned from reading the residents' written comments.

The public was first asked what elements from any of the plans that they liked best.

The vast majority of respondents listed wildlife habitat preservation, restoration and enhancement as the most important characteristics to include in the plan. Much of the public obviously cares deeply about the wildlife in this area and wants to ensure recreational uses minimize interference with wildlife.

Respondents also frequently mentioned the need for an expanded trail system. Most residents wanted a trail around the lake that would provide access for a diversity of trail users while minimizing disturbance to important wildlife habitats. In some cases, residents were opposed to a trail around the lake and wanted a system that provided access only to the portions of the lake that were away from prime wildlife areas. Some people specifically stated that they wanted all new trails to be soft surface while others wanted as much paved trail as possible. Some respondents mentioned that they wanted bike trails while others spoke of having hiking, jogging and interpretive trails. A few of the public specifically stated that they wanted the trail to link to the Boulder County Heritage Center and to other trail systems in the area.

Most respondents wanted non-motorized, carry-in boating. Many people specifically mentioned that they wanted canoeing and kayaking while some mentioned that they wanted windsurfing in a designated area that was clean and free of glass. Several residents mentioned that they were in favor of non-motorized boating as long as certain areas of the shoreline and the water remained off limits to ensure wildlife were preserved. Only a few residents wanted motor boating or wakeless boating and very few mentioned that they desired water skiing. A swimming area with a beach was also considered a desirable amenity by many residents.

Other uses and facilities listed less frequently by residents included the desire to have fishing, fish habitat improvements, a dog beach with a dog swim area, an underpass at 17th Street that linked to Westview Middle School and parking off of 17th Street on the west side of the lake, away from residences. Other ideas mentioned by a few people include the provision of an observation viewing area, gravel boat launch ramps, canoe rental, boat storage and interpretive areas.

Secondly, the public was asked to identify elements from the alternative plans that they would definitely NOT want to see happen.

Motor boating was listed as the use least desired on McIntosh Lake by many of the respondents. Other uses and facilities mentioned frequently as undesirable include a swim area and beach, non-motorized boating, a dog beach/park and traffic. New parking facilities in existing neighborhoods, big parking lots and too much parking were also listed as negative uses. Mentioned less frequently as undesirable uses were water skiing, prairie dogs, trails traversing wildlife areas or passing too near the lake, new roads on the west side of the lake and fishing near homes.

Lastly, the public was asked which alternative they preferred, A, B or C.

The majority of respondents felt Alternative B, the Restoration and Recreation concept was the most preferable. The second most desired concept was Alternative A which focused on creating a Wildlife Refuge. By far the fewest people desired Alternative C, which was the Recreation Emphasis concept and focused on providing diverse recreation opportunities with few wildlife habitat preservation and enhancement areas.

NEXT STEPS

All the comments gathered from the two public meetings form the development of the draft McIntosh Lake Master Plan. It is likely, that the draft plan will include elements from several of the alternative concepts. The next public meeting will provide an opportunity for the public to comment on the draft plan. The meeting will be **June 4**, at the Senior Center, 910 Longs Peak Avenue. There will be an open house from **6:00 PM to 6:30 PM** followed by a meeting from **6:30 PM to 8:30 PM**.

Thank you for participating in this process.

