Pikes Peak Region Trails and Open Space: Rich History, Abundant Assets, Promising Future

Date: Friday May 13, 2016
Time: 3:00 - 5:30pm (reception to follow)
Location: Penrose House Garden Pavilion
1661 Mesa Ave., Colorado Springs, CO 80906

Sponsors:
- El Pomar Foundation's: Pikes Peak Recreation and Tourism Heritage Series
- Trails and Open Space Coalition

Heritage Series Purpose:

Pikes Peak Recreation & Tourism Heritage Series is a program of El Pomar Foundation. It is intended to recognize, celebrate, and encourage the strong historical contributions of General Palmer, Spencer Penrose, El Pomar-Gaylord, Philip Anschutz and now a fourth generation of entrepreneurs in creating an astounding array of recreation and tourism dimensions focused on Pikes Peak. The Foundation wants to enhance public awareness of this vital part to our region's quality of life and diversified economy.

The first Heritage Series session focuses on trails and open space, both critical dimensions to our heritage and backyard recreation and tourism. It includes panelists reviewing our rich past, current complex mix of public and private assets, and promising future.
Agenda

Pikes Peak Region Trails and Open Space: Rich History, Abundant Assets, Promising Future

3:00pm-3:15pm Welcome:
- R. Thayer Tutt, President and CIO, El Pomar Foundation
- Walt Hecox, El Pomar Foundation Senior Program Advisor, Pikes Peak Recreation & Tourism Heritage Series
- Mayor John Suthers

3:15pm-3:25pm Opening Remarks:
- Governor John Hickenlooper

3:25pm-4:00pm Keynote Speaker:
- Lise Aangeenbrug, Executive Director, Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO)

Session Moderator: Susan Davies, Executive Director, Trails and Open Space Coalition

4:00pm-4:15pm Past:
- Matt Mayberry, Director, Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum

4:15pm-4:45pm Present:
- Chris Lieber, City of Colorado Springs Open Space and Parks Manager
- Oscar Martinez, District Ranger, US Forest Service, Pikes Peak Ranger District
- Ann Baker Easley, Executive Director, Volunteers for Outdoor Colorado
- Tim Payne, Fremont County Commissioner

4:45pm-5:15pm Future:
- Paul Mead, President, Friends of the Peak (Ring the Peak Trail)
- Thomas Morrissey, State Trails Program Manager, Colorado Division of Parks & Wildlife
- Justin Spring, Colorado Director of Land Protection, Trust for Public Lands
- Luis Benitez, Director, Colorado Outdoor Recreation Industry Office

5:15pm-5:30pm Closing Comments:
- Walt Hecox, Senior Program Advisor, Pikes Peak Recreation & Tourism Heritage Series

5:30pm-6:30 pm Reception

Partner tables around the perimeter of the Pavilion include: Cañon City Recreation, City Parks Department, Colorado Springs Convention & Visitors Bureau, Colorado Springs Cycling Club, Colorado Springs Utilities Watershed District Friends of the Peak, Greenway Fund, Guardians of Palmer Park, Manitou Springs Open Space Advisory Committee, Mile High Youth Corps, Mountain Top Cycling Club, Palmer Land Trust, Pikes Peak Outdoor Recreation Alliance, Regional Business Alliance, Rocky Mountain Field Institute, and Trails and Open Space Coalition.

For information about the El Pomar Heritage Series, visit: www.elpomar.org/heritageseries

Your comments, questions and suggestions are welcome-contact:
Walt Hecox, Senior Program Advisor, El Pomar Pikes Peak Recreation & Tourism Heritage Series
Email: whecox@elpomar.org Cell: (719)-640-5041
Trails and Open Space Heritage Session Background:

Recreation and tourism are defining features of the Pikes Peak region. From an economic perspective they are far more important than is generally recognized. In 2014, the three-county region of El Paso, Teller, and Fremont County attracted 5.2 million visitors, and direct travel spending was over $1.4 billion and supported 14,800 jobs earning $344 million. Some 600,000 people visit the top of Pikes Peak each year; many more spend time in the adjacent public and private areas.

In this sense, trails and open space form the "fabric" for our uses of land, riparian areas, and astounding vistas. We have many unique recreation areas in the Pikes Peak region, including, Garden of the Gods, North Cheyenne Canyon, Bar Camp and Trail, Cheyenne Mountain State Park, and a multitude of parks and trails. Open spaces range from areas protected via conservation easements, to city, county, state and federal areas. Pike National Forest in particular bolsters an expansive urban to rural wildland interface threaded with trails and campgrounds serving a range of recreational uses including: hikers, horses, bikes, and off-road vehicles. Without this priceless backdrop, the Pikes Peak region would be vastly different.

Stressed governmental budgets result in very limited resources for trails and open space acquisition and maintenance. From a trails and open space management perspective, the diligent work of nonprofit groups and volunteers helps manage forests, trails, drainage, and wildlife. Farsighted programs such as Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO), private land trusts, and foundations help bridge the gap so that existing natural assets receive critical maintenance while key additions to our inventory of trails and open space continue for future generations.

There is renewed interest in our Pikes Peak region becoming more aggressive in "branding" the region's natural, recreational and environmental dimensions. To this end, discussions are occurring among government agencies and businesses, and nonprofits need to be included in these efforts. Colorado Springs and the Pikes Peak region are uniquely positioned to take a leadership role in this endeavor given this City is home to a high concentration of nonprofit organizations as well as a vast expanse of outdoor recreation opportunities.

This inaugural El Pomar Foundation Heritage Series session focuses on trails and open space, both critical dimensions to our recreation, tourism and quality of life. Above all, we meet to celebrate the richness of natural assets and their accessibility via a strong network of trails and open space. We also intend to recognize many of the key actors that have brought us to today's outdoors network. We consider it essential to discuss some of the critical hurdles that exist to maintaining what we have and enhancing this legacy for our children and the future of the Pikes Peak region. Our panelists will reflect on our rich past, current complex mix of public and private assets, and promising future. Governor John Hickenlooper’s opening remarks and our keynote speaker Lise Aangeenbrug, Executive Director of Great Outdoors Colorado, will put our efforts in state and national context.

Outcomes are expected to include recognition of key groups and agencies, identification of gaps where additional public, private and volunteer efforts are needed, and a glimpse at a "pathway" to a world-class Pikes Peak region.

This invitation is being sent to a wide range of nonprofit organizations and their members in the Pikes Peak region representing stewardship, advocacy, outdoor recreation, and environmental education groups. Those associated with these groups are encouraged to attend, thereby sharing their experiences and obtaining a broad regional perspective on the Pikes Peak region’s trails and open space treasures.