

GEORGETOWN SILVER PLUME HISTORIC DISTRICT PUBLIC LANDS COMMISSION

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Clear Creek County, Clear Creek Ranger District USFS, Colorado Division of Wildlife, Colorado
Historical Society, Town of Georgetown, Town of Silver Plume, Historic Georgetown Inc.

Historic District Public Lands Commission Annual Report 2014

The Historic Public Lands Commission held six regular meetings and had one field trip in 2014. The major focus of the Commission was improvements of the existing trail systems on member lands and future planning for low impact recreation throughout the District and the Heritage Area.

Rutherford Trail, the newly developed connection between Georgetown and Silver Dale which opens the historic Chicago Lakes Wagon Road to pedestrian traffic, received particular attention. The bog sections of the trail were visited by Craig Abrahamson, engineer, Kevin Shanks, landscape architect, and Bob Johnson, crew chief for Volunteers of Outdoor Colorado, to determine the boardwalk options. Moveable puncheons, (wooden walkway sections) were determined to be the best solution. The HDPLC purchased materials for 4 of those sections which will be constructed this spring. The Town of Georgetown was able to negotiate a land trade with Xcel Energy to establish a parking area at the base of the trail. HDPLC members are currently working on the design of the parking lot and interpretive signs. The other significant work project was the rehabilitation of the Silver Dale bridge on Historic Georgetown property. HGI and HDPLC funded the work which was accomplished (without benefit of large equipment) by Tim Davis of Davis Welding in Empire. A beautiful job! A shooting incident in Silver Dale highlighted the need for appropriate signing indicating that in keeping with County ordinance 4, shooting was permitted only during hunting season for the purpose of hunting. HDPLC will fund the sign which is on order.



Future recreational planning, particularly on the lands at the base of the Waldorf Road, was set out as an HDPLC goal as social campsites are presenting sanitation problems in the area. Clear Creek Open Space Commission submitted a funding application to Great Outdoors Colorado for a planning grant which was not funded in this round. HDPLC will work closely with Open Space for resubmittal of the grant. The planning would be a partnership process for members: Town of Georgetown, Historic Georgetown Inc. and Clear Creek County represented by Open Space. History Colorado presented a concept for planning bicycle trails in the Loop District. The first phase of the project is on the valley floor and not on HDPLC lands. Other phases might utilize the Argentine Central Railroad Bed which is one of the HDPLC designated trails.

It was a great year for the Santiago Mill in the Waldorf Basin. The Mill Stewards were faithful in manning the site for weekend days throughout the summer and early fall. Visitation continues to increase. The Stewards plan to continue. A partnership of the Georgetown Trust, United States Forest Service and the State Historical Fund was able to fund a new roof for the building which may give it a few more years. Silver Plume Home Services crew camped out in the howling wind and sleeting rain for a week to complete the job. The HDPLC field trip in August 7 was able to see the last pieces attached.



The preservation of the historic landscape and wetlands of the Waldorf Basin continues to be a concern as structures are starting to appear. One home is built, another is planned and many mining claims are for sale as potential residential properties. The Commission discussed the potential to recommend that the County consider rural remote zoning or perhaps limit M-1 zoning to mining only in those areas above timberline. The County will be reviewing the Master plan in 2015 and HDPLC will pursue these ideas.

As usual, a major function of the HDPLC is the exchange of ideas and information between members. The Commission is an unfunded independent Commission created by the Public Law 235, the transfer of BLM lands to member agencies.