

02.12.2024

Bonner County Planning
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Via email

RE: Narrative Conditional Use Permit Application RP56N02W357200A & RP56N02W357950A

To Whom It May Concern,

On behalf of Panhandle Gravity Sports, Llc, the following application for a Conditional Use Permit to operate a Recreational Facility at their property is being submitted for review and scheduling of a public hearing.

Background

Recently Scott and Jennifer Kalbach purchased 170.6 +/- acres accessed off Five Lakes Estates Road and are excited to proceed with the review and permitting available under Bonner County Code 12-333 Table 3-3 to develop a Recreational Facility “Panhandle Bike Ranch” on two unplatted parcels RP56N02W357950A (+/- 85.33 AC) 35-56N-2W S2 E 8/15 LESS E 4/15, an unplatted Rural 10 zoned parcel with no improvements hereafter Western Parcel, and RP56N02W357200A (+/- 85.33 AC) 35-56N-2W S2 E 4/15 an unplatted Rural 10 zoned parcel with no improvements hereafter Eastern Parcel. Both parcels hold a Comprehensive Land Use Map designation of Rural Residential 5-10 AC.



Subject Parcels

Upon the purchase of the property the owners proceeded to gather together the world's premier mountain bike trail design and construction experts, ultimately selecting the firm Gravity Logic to engage them on the preliminary design and components to develop a non-motorized mountain bike trail system. Gravity Logic has designed and constructed about 75 of the world's premier facilities of this type and all involved are excited to realize the dream of creating a facility of this quality in our region. The first step in this process is to secure a Conditional Use Permit for this recreational facility.

The fine details of the bike park design are in early stages but generally will consist of a parking area (+/- 1 Acre) , a small lean-to shelter (10' x 20') to provide ticketing services, a small 10' x 40' barn for bike rental storage, a portable shower/restroom facility, an outdoor gathering area , a handful of dispersed tent camping sites (+/- 1 Acre with No Outdoor Fires Permitted in Camping Sites) and a series of professionally installed trails running from the height of land back to the parking area. The trails will service a variety of rider skills that will be accessed and maintained via historic logging roads on the property and an emergency helicopter landing site is being designed for the height of land. The operators expect to service the recreational biking demand of the area and to attract regional visitors to the site on a seasonal basis. Occasional small scale events are also expected including but not limited to customary types such as regional races, bike demo's and area biking club activities. The facilities are anticipated to be open to the public during daylight hours seven days per week. Operations will include day use ticket sales and transport of bikers via shuttle from the base parking area to the height of land on a regular schedule. The primary activity will be downhill and cross country non-motorized mountain biking. Ancillary services will include portable restroom and portable wash facilities and occasional food vending to service the need of facility users. Overall, the impact of the project will be low intensity on the land and beyond the typical gathering of riders for the shuttle return to the height of land, activity will be dispersed throughout the trail system.

Per Bonner County Revised Code

*RECREATIONAL FACILITY: A place designed and equipped for the conduct of small scale and low intensity sports, leisure time activities and other customary and usual recreational activities. Activities may include, but are not limited to, recreational uses such as rafting, canoeing, **tent camping**, swimming, cross country skiing, hiking, hunting and fishing, horseback riding and snowmobiling, together with accessory facilities, operated as a business and open to the public or operated as a private club for members.*

The proposed use will not create odors, glare, fumes or vibration or otherwise impact adjacent land owners as the activity will generally be focused to the interior of the large parcel. Any impact to adjacent land owners will be negligible and generally of far lower intensity than a typical logging operation or the potential intensity resulting from up to 17 single family residential parcels which the present zoning would permit through subdivision approval. Other than the arrival and departure of guest, adjoining property owners will be unlikely to notice any impact from the proposed use. We believe that the proposed use is complementary and compatible with adjacent land uses in the area. Due to the significant cost associated with the forwarding of the detailed design plans for the parking area, we respectfully ask that any additional requirements for grading or related plans be attached as a condition of approval to be reviewed by and in accordance with any applicable BCRC sections or standards prior to specific land disturbing activities occurring.

We thank you in advance for your assistance. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or need for clarification. Additional/supplemental application narrative details follow on the subsequent pages.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Grimm', written in a cursive style.

Jeremy Grimm

President

Whiskey Rock Planning + Consulting

218 Cedar Street, #206

Sandpoint, ID 83864

Per Bonner County Code §12-222, Conditional Use Permit Applications are required to address:

1. Effects of elements such as noise, light glare, odors, fumes and vibrations on adjoining property;
2. Compatibility of the proposal with the adjoining land uses; and
3. Relationship of the proposal to the comprehensive plan.

This proposal is unlikely produce noise, light glare, odors, fumes or vibrations that will impact adjoining property in comparison to the historic utilization of the property related to logging and forestry operations.

This proposal is compatible with adjoining and surrounding land uses by offering low impact recreational use and fits with the zoning of the area because Recreational Facilities are an allowed Conditional Use.

This CUP request is in accordance with the following elements of the Bonner County Comprehensive Plan:

- **Property Rights:**

This CUP conforms with the property rights goal and represents a balance between conforming to County Code and respecting the private property rights of the applicant. The applicant desires to operate this property to service the needs of area residents and tourist with low intensity non-motorized recreational activities.

- **Population:**

Population within the County has been growing according to every metric, including the current comprehensive plan. Approving this CUP here would provide the option for the owner to respond to the growing demand for a variety of recreational services in the area.

- **School Facilities & Transportation:**

The CUP approval on this parcel will have no impact on the transportation system or on school facilities.

- **Economic Development:**

This CUP will have no detrimental effect on the County's economic development. This proposal has the potential to boost the County's economy by providing enhanced recreational services to the area residents and visitors.

- **Land Use:**

This proposal is consistent with the Land Use component. Specifically, the zoning in the Rural 10 allows these uses through the approval of a CUP.

- **Natural Resources:**

This application is not inconsistent with the natural resources chapter of the plan and would future timber production.

- **Hazardous Areas:**

We do not believe any hazardous areas exist on this parcel. This parcel is ideally situated for this use due to its location and topography.

- **Public Services:**

Approval of the CUP here would not place additional burden on public services and response times. In fact the proposed development will include a Helicopter landing site at the height of land which will be accessible through internal roads. The emergency evacuation landing site will service the facility and may also support emergency air evacuation for area residents. (See Site Plan)

- **Transportation:**

A CUP approval here would not create undue stress on this transportation network and is lower than what would occur if the property were developed as single-family residential lots. Access to the property from Five Lakes Estate Road would be improved and widened to 25'. Within the property driveway access would be improved and developed at a 20' width.

- **Recreation:**

Approval would support the recreational opportunities in the area by providing additional trail access to the growing mountain bike community in the area.

- **Special Areas or Sites:**

This site is not adversely impacting any special areas or sites as identified in the comprehensive plan.

- **Housing:**

The CUP approval would have no impact on housing in the county.

- **Agriculture:**

The site is undeveloped forest land and the proposed use would have no impact on the continuation of tree growth.

- **Community Design:**

The CUP approval would align with the Community Design Goals and Policies of the Comprehensive Plan because the proposed facility would be compatible with the rural character.

Summary

In closing, the applicant is excited to move forward with the realization of developing a world class mountain bike trail system on their property. The undertaking will involve one of the most qualified design and construction teams in the world and will adhere to all best management practices for trail construction. As this effort will require significant financial commitment, the applicant desires first to secure this Conditional Use Permit before moving forward with more detailed designs. Based on preliminary analysis of the soils and terrain, the site is optimally suited for such a facility. Bonner County Revised Code 12-432 does not prescribe a specific allotment of off street parking for the proposed use. Based on the draft business plan, the applicant believes that 100 off street parking places are appropriate for the scale and use of the facility. The applicant is agreeable to providing and having the County approve grading and stormwater plans associated with the parking area as a condition of approval and all other accessory structures would be regulated by Bonner County Revised Code at the time of building location permit submission. Due to the size of the parcel, use of the property as a non-motorized mountain bike recreational facility will have no noticeable impact on adjacent properties especially in comparison or considering the level of intensity that might occur if the land were subdivided into residential parcels. The site contains over 170 acres and uses would be dispersed through the area.