

Visitor Use Impact and Decision Framework

Name of Project: Closing Sledding at Pineridge

May 2019 See attached map for sledding considerations

Visitor Use Impact and Decision Framework (IDF) Summary Table		
Project or Use: Closing sledding at Pineridge		
Reason for proposal: Ranger team proposed due to safety concerns		
Criteria	Rating	Rationale
A. What is the scale of Ecological Impacts?	Low positive ecological change	Does not appear to be a high benefit ecologically from closing. Current impacts to vegetation and soil are low since use is low. There are two rare plants documented in the sledding area Hairy waterclover in 2011 and Slimpod Venus lookingglass documented in 1986. Neither have been documented since. Impacts could be more concerning if use increased in designated and undesignated areas.
B. What is the scale of Cultural Resource impacts?	Low positive cultural change	Does not appear to be a high benefit for cultural resources by closing sledding. There are no known cultural resources within the sledding site and thereby little improvement to be shown by closing the hill.
C. Are there generally favorable Social considerations?	No	For the few that access the sledding spot, there would be a negative impact to the user experience. However, the statically valid intercept survey yielded 0% of visitors indicating sledding as their use (there was a write-in option). When asked "Do you support closing sledding at Pineridge?" 48% of respondents from the non-statistically valid survey from the Foothills open house stated "Yes" or "Somewhat" 29% stated "No" while 23% stated "I don't know".

D. Does this generally align with Administrative Considerations?	Yes	There are potentially severe safety issues when visitors sled down from CR 42C instead of within the designated sledding area near the parking lot. The proposal is a proactive move to avoid issues because of these safety concerns.
---	-----	--

Staff Recommendation:

Although the IDF shows slight lean towards retaining use of the sledding hill, **staff recommends closure of the hill to sledding**. Despite the potential negative change to the visitor experience from the small number of users, this proposal is a proactive step to avoid potentially serious safety issues. In summary:

- The designated sledding spot is a short run and dotted with obstacles (rabbitbrush, boulders), and rarely has enough snow cover to sled.
- When sledders do come to Pineridge, the designated spot is undesirable, therefore users are drawn to sledding on the opposite slope near CR 42C.
- County Road 42C has a narrow right-of-way, steep slopes, and 45 mph speed limit. An extremely dangerous situation occurs when sledders park along the road, often with young children, to access the undesigned slope. Rangers work to educate but ticket when they see repeat violations.
- Closing sledding is a proactive management action to avoid serious safety concerns.

Best Management Practices

- Rangers will add signage to Pineridge indicating sledding is closed starting for the 2019/2020 season.
- Rangers will focus on education for the first few years should they notice any violations.
- The Natural Areas Department will post on their website that sledding is closed and list alternative locations for sledding within the City of Fort Collins.
- Natural Areas will advocate for a sledding hill as part of the Hughes Redevelopment project.

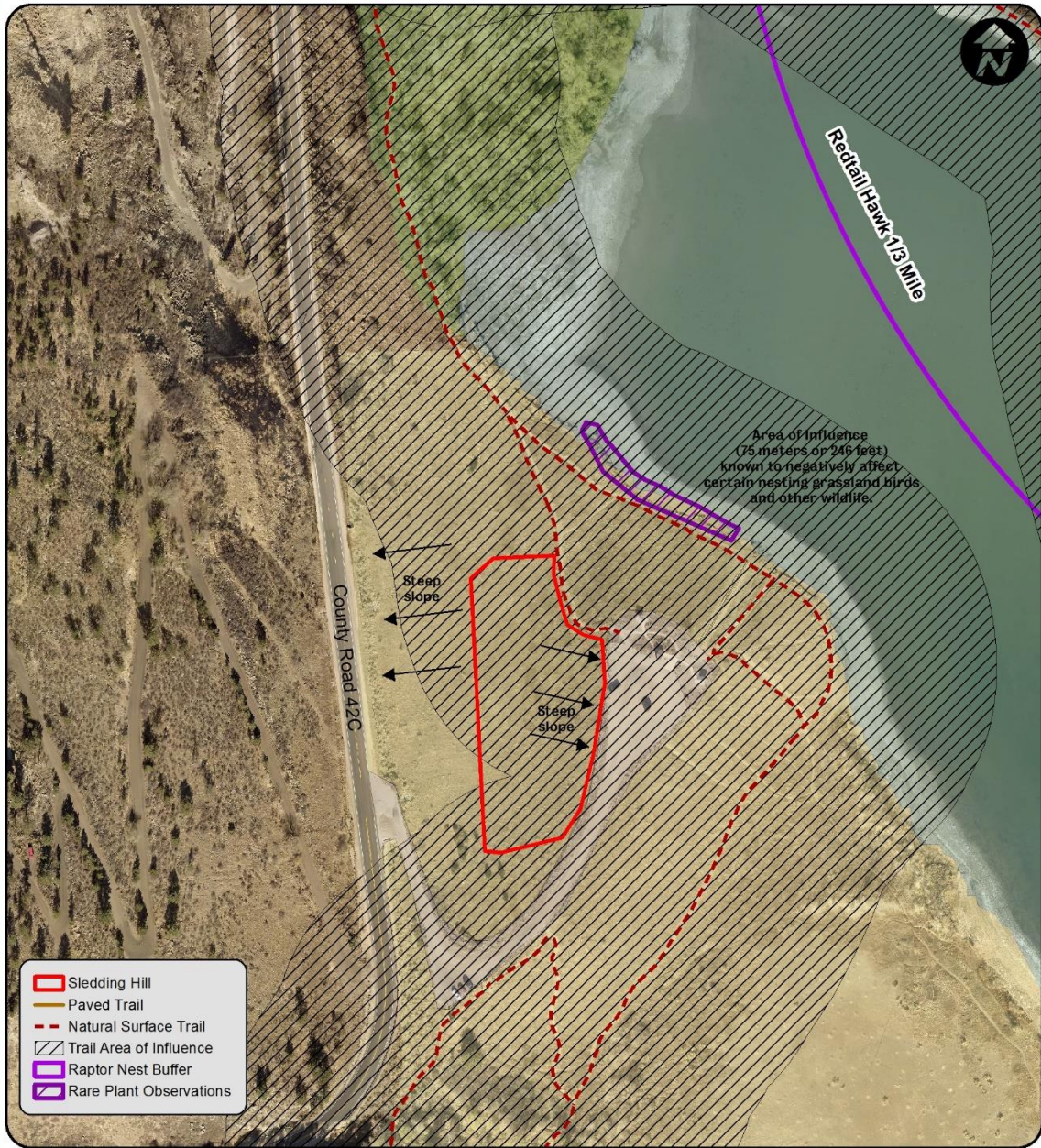
Core Management Team Decision

- Confirmed staff recommendation at 6/20/2019 meeting. **Decision is to close sledding and implement best management practices.**

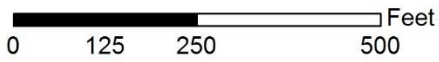
For the full IDF please email hwagner@fcgov.com

Sledding Area

Pineridge Natural Area



- Sledding Hill
- Paved Trail
- Natural Surface Trail
- Trail Area of Influence
- Raptor Nest Buffer
- Rare Plant Observations



Printed: August 12, 2019