

The *Proposed* Malachite Trail

Description, Background, and Steps to Approval and Implementation

June 17, 2021

Description

The *proposed* Malachite Trail was in the top tier of priorities for inclusion in the Genesee trail system in the 2017-2019 Recreation Facilities and Trails Master Plan (RFTMP). The trail, if approved and constructed, would be approximately 1.8 miles in length, and run on a roughly east-west alignment within the Open Space inside the Montane Drive loop (see attached map). It is accessed on the west end by a short section of the Hillrise East trail as it skirts the Tot Lot and on the east by the Lower Montane Trail just north of Montane Drive East.

The proposed trail traverses a south-facing slope and would provide outstanding views of the Great Plains, Bear Creek Canyon, Black Mountain, Mount Evans, and the James Peak Wilderness area of the Arapaho National Forest. This panorama exceeds those from any other trail in Genesee. If constructed it would provide another set of trail loop opportunities within the Montane Loop trails.

Background

The name of the proposed trail comes from a malachite mine that was first developed in the late 1800s and later was utilized by the Colorado School of Mines for laboratory instruction and the US Geological Survey for minerals testing. This work resulted in the creation of a single lane access road heading west from the Lower Montane Trail area, portions of which would be utilized by the trail. A short stretch of trail near the end of the road and mine area was roughly constructed by Genesee crews years ago but was subsequently abandoned.

Genesee residents have explored the area over the years, and have even placed flagging of potential alignments. With the inclusion in the RFTMP, interest in constructing the trail for shared use or hiker-only use has intensified, so the Trails Committee included it in their analysis for suitability and flagged a preliminary alignment to enable data collection and analysis.

Approval and Implementation Steps

Inclusion in the RFTMP or community support expressed in the Shared Use Trail questionnaire *do not* constitute approval for implementation of the trail. Steps to implementation include:

- Approval by the Board of Directors to add the trail to the Genesee Foundation's (GF) assets
- An assessment of the construction requirements by the GF Open Space Manager, supported by the Trails Committee as needed. This may require contracting the services of an outside trail design consultant, at a cost of \$2,000-\$5,000.
- If it is determined that a trail construction contractor would be required to construct portions of the trail, an Authorization for Expenditure (AFE) for such services would be prepared and advanced to the Finance Committee for budget considerations and final action by the Board. Planning estimates for roughly 40% of the trail range from under \$20,000 to over \$50,000.
- If no funds were available or a determination made of feasibility to construct the trail with Open Space Crew, Trail Stewards, or other resources available to the Open Space Manager, work would be prioritized among other trails projects, scheduled, and completed over time.