



STAFF REPORT

Report To: Board of Supervisors **Meeting Date:** August 17, 2026

Staff Contact: Jennifer Budge, Parks, Recreation and Open Space Director

Agenda Title: For Possible Action: Discussion and review of the Open Space opportunities map and future of Open Space acquisitions. (Lyndsey Boyer, lboyer@carsoncity.gov)

Agenda Action: Other / Presentation **Time Requested:** 20 minutes

Proposed Motion

N/A

Board's Strategic Goal

Quality of Life

Previous Action

N/A

Background/Issues & Analysis

The Open Space Program in Carson City was created through the passage of the Quality-of-Life Initiative in 1996. The Open Space Master Plan was written in 2000 and served as a guiding document to inform the early acquisition strategy for Open Space lands in Carson City. Open Space is defined as primarily undeveloped land having significant natural resources important to the quality of life in our community. Over the last 30 years, the Open Space program has focused on preserving lands throughout Carson City for passive recreation and natural resource protection, focusing on acquiring and protecting the Carson River corridor/floodplains, hillsides and viewsheds, agricultural areas, along with trails, trailheads, critical wildlife habitat such as wetlands and watershed protection on the west side of town. Today, Carson City has protected nearly 7,400 acres throughout Carson City. Exhibit A identifies our current Open Space property inventory.

Since 2015, following the Omnibus Public Lands Management Act of 2009, which conveyed approximately 4,500 acres to Carson City, the Open Space Program has shifted priority focus from land acquisitions to maintenance and management of these lands. Priorities include noxious and invasive plant management, fuels reduction/defensible space, restoration and recreation management – developing trails and trailheads with signage and amenities.

However, there are still a few properties in Carson City that have been identified for priority acquisition, if they became available. The Open Space Program determines priority acquisitions by completing an Open Space Evaluation Assessment (Exhibit B), which helps staff determine how critical an acquisition may be based on a variety of criteria such as presence of wildlife habitat, aquatic resources, ease of access, zoning, potential market value, development potential, connectivity to public

lands or other Open Space properties, community support and more. Exhibit C identifies remaining acquisition priorities for the Open Space Program. These lands have been carefully considered and evaluated for protection based on their natural or cultural resources, opportunity for trail connectivity or watershed protection. Current remaining priorities include any undeveloped land along the Carson River corridor, parcels on Prison Hill owned by the State of Nevada and a few key parcels on the west side of town that are critical for watershed protection or trail connectivity. Our department is beginning the process to update our Master Plan, and identifying and prioritizing remaining Open Space acquisition opportunities will be discussed and evaluated through that process.

Status of current acquisitions:

Buzzy's Ranch Water Rights

Carson City completed two acquisitions in early 2026, totaling 1,279.62 acre-feet annually (AFA). Both acquisitions represent approximately 69% of the total water rights needed to support Buzzy's Ranch. In addition, SNPLMA awarded Carson City \$1.8 million to acquire approximately 694.35 AFA of water rights to support the wetlands and wet meadows at Buzzy's Ranch. Staff continue to work on the required due diligence needed to initiate an appraisal for the water rights.

Ash Canyon Acquisition

Carson City was awarded \$1.2 million from the Conserve Nevada grant program to acquire approximately 80 acres located in Ash Canyon, adjacent to Ash Creek. This property is critical for wildlife habitat protection, watershed protection and trail connectivity. Working with Nevada Land Trust, the appraisal process for the property is currently underway.

Old Woods Ranch Conservation Easement

Working with Nevada Land Trust, the appraisal for this project has been initiated and is expected to be completed by the end of July. Following completion of the appraisal, staff will bring the draft Conservation Easement before the Board of Supervisors for approval and acceptance.

Applicable Statute, Code, Policy, Rule or Regulation

N/A

Financial Information

Is there a fiscal impact? No

If yes, account name/number:

Is it currently budgeted? No

Explanation of Fiscal Impact: N/A

Alternatives

N/A

Attachment(s):

[5B EXHIBIT A - Map_Open Space Properties.pdf](#)

[5B EXHIBIT B - Open Space Evaluation Form.pdf](#)

[5B EXHIBIT C - Priority Acquisitions_Map&Table 2026.pdf](#)

Motion: _____

1) _____

2) _____

Aye/Nay

(Vote Recorded By)