

April 10, 2015

**BPAAC RECOMMENDATIONS  
TO THE HRCA BOARD OF DIRECTORS REGARDING  
POTENTIAL USES OF THE BACKCOUNTRY  
PLANNING AREAS**

*Backcountry Planning Areas Advisory Committee*

Len Abruzzo

Kiel Downing

Phil Heiser

Megan Lindsey

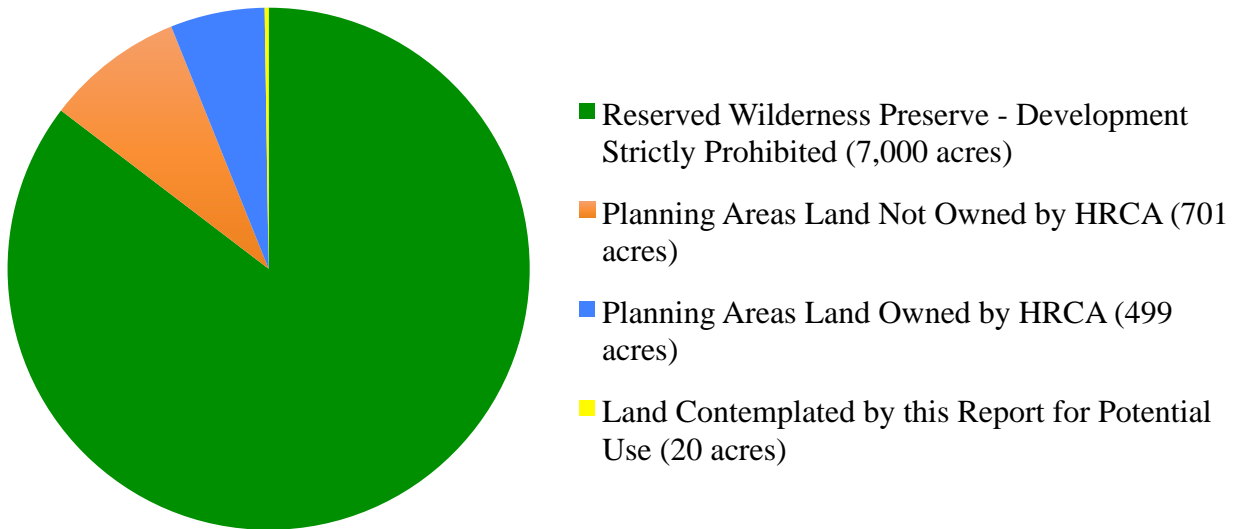
Jon Loe

Josh Quist

## I. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to provide recommendations to the HRCA Board of Directors regarding potential uses of land contained within the Backcountry Planning Areas that should be further investigated through the Community Involvement Process (“CIP”). The Backcountry Wilderness Area consists of 8,200 acres. The total acreage of the Planning Areas is 1,200. The HRCA owns 499 of those acres. We are only considering potential uses within a fraction of those 499 acres that will likely comprise about 20 acres.

### Distribution of Land in Backcountry Wilderness Area



In determining our collective recommendations, the committee members spent months debating the pros and cons of different potential uses. During all of our conversations, we focused on the following objectives:

1. Protection of wildlife and conservation of pristine natural landscape,
2. Improved mental and physical health of Highlands Ranch residents,
3. Increased community benefit from and involvement with the Backcountry,
4. Increased opportunities for natural habitat awareness and education,
5. Long term preservation and potential enhancement of HRCA property values, and
6. The desire for the Backcountry to be financially self-sustaining.

Below we have highlighted the top four uses that we believe may satisfy the goals and objectives of the Highlands Ranch community. We understand, and have always operated under the assumption that, all uses need to be investigated and vetted through the CIP.

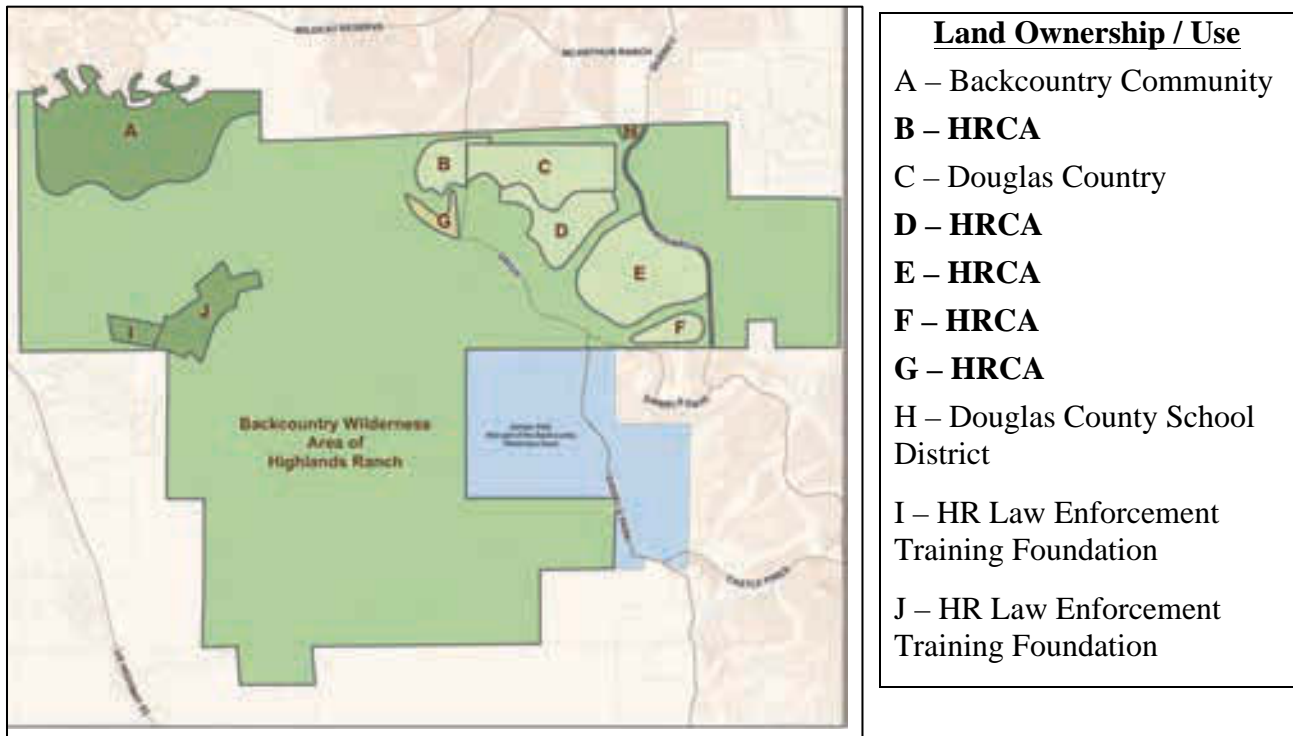
We also considered the estimated financial cost and potential positive and negative community impacts of not adding any new uses or amenities to the Planning Areas.

## II. HISTORY

The Backcountry Wilderness Area, formerly called the Open Space Conservation Area (“OSCA”), was conveyed to the Highlands Ranch Community Association (“HRCA”) in its totality in 2009. The OSCA was conveyed from Shea Homes, the developer of Highlands Ranch, as a result of the 1988 OSCA Agreement between Douglas County, Mission Viejo (who eventually sold Highlands Ranch to Shea Homes), and the HRCA.

The original OSCA Committee convened in 1989 and operated sporadically through 1995. The OSCA Committee then met regularly from 1996 to 2000, resulting in the completion of one of the governing documents for the Backcountry, the OSCA Plan. The OSCA Committee consisted of several Highlands Ranch residents, community leaders, and representatives from Shea Homes, Douglas County, and the HRCA. Several biologists from the state and other experts also provided input into the completion of the OSCA Plan.

The OSCA Plan was approved by Douglas County in 2000 and is a zoning document that details allowed uses within the Backcountry. The OSCA Plan outlined approximately 1,200 acres of the total 8,200 acres to be set aside as “Planning Areas.” The Planning Areas have different allowed uses than the other 7,000 acres that are more strictly protected for conservation. Currently, of the 1,200 acres in Planning Areas, the HRCA owns 499 of those acres. This report only considers potential land uses within portions of the Planning Areas owned by the HRCA (B, D, E, F, G).



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A – Backcountry Community
<b>B – HRCA</b>
C – Douglas Country
<b>D – HRCA</b>
<b>E – HRCA</b>
<b>F – HRCA</b>
<b>G – HRCA</b>
H – Douglas County School District
I – HR Law Enforcement Training Foundation
J – HR Law Enforcement Training Foundation

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The OSCA Plan states that the HRCA should “utilize the revenue to HRCA from the use of 1200 acres to financially support the management of OSCA and/or any other purposes deemed appropriate by the HRCA Board of Directors that benefit the community.”

Since the completion of the OSCA Plan in 2000 there have been several HRCA committees created to discuss the best use of the Planning Areas. In 2002, there was the OSCA Strategic Planning Committee that produced community survey results. In 2010, the Backcountry Planning Areas Committee was formed and produced another community survey in 2012 along with a CIP to ensure that any proposed uses within the planning areas go through the CIP and gain community wide approval.

In addition, in 2001, the sale of Planning Area A to Shea Homes, which is now the Backcountry neighborhood community, created the OSCA Fund. The OSCA Fund currently holds approximately two million dollars and is to be used for capital improvement projects in the Backcountry, such as the projects recommended in this report.

This committee, the Backcountry Planning Areas Advisory Committee (“BPAAC”) was formed in 2012 and its main purpose is to advise the Board on projects related to the Planning Areas. This report is the Committee’s advisement to the Board and evaluates past survey results and other factors to recommend certain amenities that would benefit the community, have support from the community according to past survey results, and produce revenue to help fund the management of the other 7,000 acres of the Backcountry.

The BPAAC was established by Resolution No 12-0502 and adopted by the Highlands Ranch Board of Directors on May 15, 2012. The Resolution generally charged the committee with developing recommendations regarding potential uses of limited parcels of land contained within Backcountry Planning Areas. The group acts as both an advisory body and a resource to the Highlands Ranch community.

### **III. SUMMARY OF THE 2012 HRCA COMMUNITY SURVEY**

The HRCA Board of Directors established 2014 deliverables for the BPAAC. These deliverables included completing a summary of the 2012 HRCA Community Survey. This survey was generated and conducted by the National Research Center. (*See HRCA Community Survey 2012, attached as Exhibit A.*)

The Survey was mailed to a randomly selected sample of 3,000 Highlands Ranch homeowners. Among other things, the Survey asked homeowners to provide their preferences and opinions with regard to development in the Planning Areas. A total of 1,307 homeowners responded to the survey and the survey results were weighted in accordance with population characteristics as determined by the 2010 Census.

Questions 6 through 11 in the Report were directed toward potential development in the Backcountry asking as follows:

- Q 6. Thinking about *potential recreational opportunities* in HRCA Planning Areas . . . , please indicate your level of support for the following pursuits . . .
- Q 7. Thinking about *potential development opportunities* in HRCA Planning Areas . . . , please indicate your level of support for the following pursuits . . .
- Q 8. Current zoning allows several *other types of uses* in HRCA Planning Areas . . . . Thinking about those uses, please indicate your level of support for the following pursuits . . .
- Q 9. New Backcountry amenities could be funded in a number of ways. Thinking about any new amenities in the Backcountry, please indicate your level of support for the following funding approaches . . .
- Q 10. Currently, the cost of Backcountry operations is funded by homeowner assessments. Program and user fees and/or revenue from the sale of land could partially or fully fund the operations expenses for the Backcountry. Thinking about operations expenses for the Backcountry, please indicate your level of support for the following funding approaches . . .

In November 2012, the National Research Center published a Report of the Results of the 2012 Survey. (See Key Pages from Report of Results, attached as Exhibit B.)

**A. The Survey Results Support No Development in the Planning Areas.**

The Survey indicates that 54% of homeowners strongly or somewhat support no development of any kind in the Planning Areas and 42% support no additional recreational amenities (like expanded camping and trails, or a fishing pond). Similarly, 57% of respondents indicated that they prefer no alternative uses for Planning Areas, such as tennis courts or a library.

Of the homeowners surveyed, 83% either strongly or somewhat support the continued use of homeowner assessments to fund the cost of the Backcountry.

Currently, the Backcountry has a \$290,000 operating budget funded by homeowner assessments or approximately \$9 per household per year. This is not sufficient for long-term maintenance and conservation of the Backcountry Wilderness Area. However, this provides a baseline indication as to the cost of maintaining the Backcountry Wilderness Area as-is, with no further development.

In developing this Report, the committee contemplated the financial and social costs to the HRCA community if no further development occurred in the Backcountry Planning Areas and consider this to be a reasonable option. The estimated financial cost to HRCA residents would be as follows, based on current-day costs to maintain and manage the Backcountry:

	Total Cost to Community Per Year	Estimate Cost Per Household Per Year (Assumes 33,000 Households)
Current Cost Paid through HRCA Assessments	\$290,000	\$9.00
Low-End Estimated Cost to Manage the Backcountry	\$350,000	\$11.00
High-End Estimated Cost to Manage the Backcountry	\$500,000	\$15.00

The cost to the community of a “no development” strategy extends beyond the finances. It also deprives community members of opportunities to engage in new activities in the Backcountry and limits opportunities for expansion of summer camps and other existing activities (like archery and horseback riding). A “no development” strategy is also at odds with the 2002 OSCA Management Implementation Plan’s vision that the HRCA put this land to use for the enjoyment of all residents. It is also at odds with the OSCA Plan’s directive that the Backcountry be financially independent and not be reliant on funding from Highlands Ranch homeowner assessments. Regardless, given the survey results general support for no development in the Backcountry and continued financial support by HRCA residents, no additional development is a viable option, in light of the apparent support of residents to maintain on-going assessments.

**B. Potential Uses to Provide Enhanced Opportunities for HRCA Community Members and Support Conservation.**

The committee determined certain uses that are supported by the Survey results and which support the OSCA objectives of enhanced community involvement and financial independence. We also considered uses supported by the Survey that would have as little as possible impact on the environment and cause minimal disturbance to any community members with homes bordering the Backcountry Wilderness area. The BPAAC has prepared this report, and its recommendations, with the understanding that development of a future Douglas County Regional Park in Planning Area C (owned by Douglas County) may or may not happen and there is currently no timetable for the completion of the regional park and its associated infrastructure such as roads, utilities, and parking. Therefore any development of the HRCA Planning Areas would, at this point in time, require considerable investment by the HRCA into basic infrastructure.

The Survey Report strongly supports the addition of trails in the Backcountry (92% support). The HRCA has already taken recent steps to expand the current trail system. Regardless, the committee supports the continued development of the trail system both inside and outside the Planning Areas, as appropriate in conjunction with land preservation and wildlife maintenance efforts. The trails should be used to interconnect and provide access to and from the recommended uses described herein.

As explained in detail below, and based upon the above considerations, the committee recommends that the HRCA consider dedicating time and resources toward exploring the development of the following opportunities in the Planning Areas:



1. Covered Pavilion	Covered pavilion used to support the expansion of youth camps, for community events, to be rented as a revenue generating opportunity
2. Horse Stables	Expanded horse stables and attendant facilities
3. Archery Range	Relocation and expansion of existing archery facilities to allow for enhanced recreation, lessons, and competitions
4. Ropes Course	Professionally designed ropes course that would support youth camps, provide recreation and adventure to community members, and create unique opportunities for school outings and corporate retreats.

We have described in detail below how these uses could be implemented as part of Phase I efforts. We recommend that the four amenities be built together with the pavilion serving as the hub, or center, of the amenities and the horse stables, archery range, and ropes course all located within walking distance of the pavilion. We recommend that the HRCA consider building these four uses as close together as is geographically feasible to allow for shared utilities, facilities, and access roads, and in order to limit the environmental impact. Landscaping, fencing, shade structures, utilities, restrooms, roads, and parking would be necessary components to the recommended Phase I amenities.

Aside from the ropes course, the recommended uses build upon existing, successful Backcountry programs for which there is proven community demand, usage, and revenue generating potential. Our recommended uses would allow for the expansion and growth of those programs, increased operating efficiencies, and increased usage and availability, and result in increased revenues.

Depending on the success of Phase I, the community may desire expansion of the recommended amenities. The potential for future expansion should be taken into consideration during Phase I planning. Each project in Phase I should be sited to allow for such expansion.

In addition to the expansion of Phase I amenities, Phase II and III could include new uses like Frisbee golf, a reflection pond, and community gardens, which we have discussed in Section VI, “Other Considerations” below.

#### **IV. RECOMMENDED POTENTIAL USES IN THE PLANNING AREAS**

##### **#1 – Covered Pavilion**

The BPAAC recommends that the HRCA construct a large covered pavilion, ideally 5,000 square feet in size (size of a single basketball court) with the potential ability to be expanded as needed. The BPAAC also recommends an adjoining outdoor covered patio area that could further support events. The pavilion could be constructed with removable side-walls or flaps so that the structure may be used year around and support youth camps, programs, weddings, and other large events such as corporate retreats, Taste of Highlands Ranch, and the Elk Banquet and Silent Auction.

This type of amenity received moderate support from homeowners in the 2012 survey, with 21% strongly supporting and 41% somewhat supporting concerts, weddings, and special events in the Planning Areas. While the survey doesn't specifically contemplate the construction of a covered pavilion, homeowners surveyed provide modest support for an outdoor amphitheater, which is a similar type of structure with similar impact to the natural landscape.



The BPAAC supports the construction of a covered pavilion largely because it would be a multi-use structure with meaningful revenue generating opportunities. The BPAAC envisions that the covered pavilion would be located in a scenic part of the planning areas, and could potentially benefit from nearby equestrian facilities and a future pond for ambiance and scenery. Comparable local facilities at Denver Botanical Gardens-Chatfield and the Hudson Gardens rent for as much as \$500 per hour during the late spring to early fall months, often with a minimal number of rental hours such that the facilities generate thousands of dollars in revenue in a single evening.



Importantly, the BPAAC also envisions the covered pavilion acting as the central hub for all other recommended amenities in the BPAAC. It would be centrally located within a short walk of the other amenities, minimizing the overall environmental impact and enabling the various amenities to share utilities and parking facilities.

The cost to construct a covered pavilion varies widely depending on size and materials. Logistically, a covered pavilion could only be used for special events if it had restroom facilities, utilities, changing rooms, and a prep kitchen. A sound system and lighting for evening events would also help to make the facility more marketable. Adding sidewalls or panels that can be open or closed would allow it to potentially be used year around, especially if basic space heaters are added. A covered pavilion can be constructed using materials that blend well with the surrounding area and in a location less visible to homeowners.



## **#2 – Ropes / challenge course.**

The BPAAC recommends that the HRCA build a ropes / challenge course. Most likely it would take up less than 2 acres of space and preferably be built within walking distance from the covered pavilion. The existing Backcountry Outdoor Adventure Youth Camps and other HRCA

programs, school groups, team building opportunities, corporate retreats, and individual fee based use could use a ropes course.

A ropes / challenge course is an experiential adventure facility that provides groups and individuals the opportunity to participate in a series of activities that involve mental, physical, and emotional risk-taking. Ropes/challenge courses are also used to encourage team building.



Trained instructors generally guide participants through a series of obstacles designed with poles, ropes, and cables to simulate challenges that might be found in a natural setting. Ropes courses have a variety of elements such as balance beams, zip lines, slanted bridges, pole and wall climbing, and cargo nets.

The construction of a ropes/challenge course received solid support from the community in the 2012 survey with 22% strongly supporting and 46% somewhat supporting (68% total in support). Beyond the modest community support, the

BPAAC supports the construction of a ropes / challenge course because it presents a solid revenue generating opportunity and offers a new amenity not otherwise available in the nearby community.

The initial investment in a ropes/challenge course typically includes a site visit from a design professional and engineering and design fees ranging from an estimated \$15,000 to \$20,000. Based upon current research, construction and equipment costs for a course with ten to twelve obstacles typically ranges from \$350,000 to \$750,000 for a high quality year-round complex. As with the other development recommendations, a ropes / challenge course depends on the existence of parking, restroom facilities, water fountains, tables, and other infrastructure, all of which could be incorporated into the covered pavilion.



Ongoing maintenance is typically nominal with an annual inspection in the range of \$2,000. The course would need to be surrounded by a security fence to guard against trespassers and to mitigate safety concerns. The ropes course would have to be staffed by trained guides, and the estimated staff to participant ratio is between 1:7 and 1:10. Essential equipment is minimal, including helmets, ropes, and safety harnesses. The HRCA would also face ongoing costs associated with insurance and applicable regulations.

The ropes course would be expected to serve as a meaningful revenue source for the Backcountry. By way of example only, our investigation suggests that a top-line \$400,000 course in a low-population area (unlike Highlands Ranch) generated \$80,000 in annual revenues during its first-year of operations (\$50.00 / adult). Given the relatively dense population of Highlands Ranch and the surrounding schools and businesses, we anticipate that even stronger revenues could be generated by a ropes course in the Backcountry.

### **#3 – Horse facilities / activities**

The BPAAC recommends that the HRCA construct horse stables to allow for expanded opportunity in horse camps, riding lessons, therapeutic riding lessons, and trail rides. We envision the expansion and improvement of horse facilities to be a Phased process.

In the 2012 survey, homeowners indicated modest support for riding competitions and riding lessons, with 16% strongly supporting and 41% somewhat supporting the addition of such amenities.

The Backcountry currently has a small, temporary horse area. Horses are leased and maintained there only during summer months and the facilities are very limited. The HRCA leases twelve horses for \$1,200 per horse and past gross revenue has been approximately \$20,000 with around 500 to 600 riders per year. The HRCA expects to generate additional revenue, as much as \$30,000, this year due to



*Existing horse area in Highlands Ranch.*



*Existing Highlands Ranch office for horse management.*

expanded programs. The program pays for itself, but does not generate net profits. Though it does not generate net profits, it provides unique recreational opportunities for the community.

The recommended new facility would replace, and improve upon, the existing facility. This would be beneficial for multiple reasons. First, it would enable the HRCA to purchase (rather than lease) horses, which is less expensive. Second, improved facilities would enable the HRCA to grow its horse lessons and camps and thus generate greater community opportunities and involvement.

#### *Phase I*

The 2012 Survey results generally disfavored the construction of an indoor/outdoor equestrian event center (63% oppose) and therefore we do not recommend the initial construction of that

type of structure. Rather, Phase I would include a pasture area, fenced outdoor riding areas, loafing shed (for horse cover), and barn type structure to accommodate hay, tack, and field office. If necessary, these facilities could be contained within 5 acres.



*Future outdoor arena.*

The stables would provide the HRCA the capability to own its own horses rather than lease them each summer. The HRCA currently leases 12 horses for each summer. The lease fee per summer is \$1,200 per horse. By contrast, a horse and its tack can be purchased for an estimated \$2,000, depending on the year. Therefore, it costs more to lease a horse for two summers than it costs to purchase a horse outright.

The BPAAC envisions that the HRCA would be flexible in the number of horses that it initially purchases and continue to lease the remaining horses (as needed) during the first couple of years. This would enable the HRCA to better gauge the costs and benefits of year-round ownership. At a minimum, ownership of horses would allow for year around lessons and riding opportunities.

Access to utilities and restrooms are a necessary component of Phase I, along with roads and parking that would most likely be in association with the other recommended amenities. The stables would ideally be located within walking distance of the pavilion and possibly as a backdrop to the pavilion in order to add atmosphere to the events and weddings that would take place at the pavilion. Depending on a number of variables, mostly infrastructure, the upfront investment could be \$100,000 to \$200,000.



*Future horse pens.*

## *Phase II*

In the 2012 survey, homeowners surveyed generally opposed horse boarding—only 33% provided strong or modest support. The BPAAC believes the addition of horse boarding and its associated facilities should be a consideration as part of a potential Phase II. Such facilities would minimally increase the “footprint” and could be a strong and steady revenue generating opportunity. Therefore the siting of the horse facilities should allow for expansion in order to accommodate boarding in the future, if so desired by the community.

## **#4 – Archery Range**

The BPAAC recommends that the HRCA construct a new archery range to expand the opportunities available for HRCA residents. Archery was not in the 2012 survey as the HRCA range was just beginning at that point. Due to its success and popularity, along with ease and

modest costs of construction, maintenance, and operation resulting in a reasonable revenue margin a new archery range would be a good amenity to add.

There is currently an archery range in the Backcountry, but there is no room for expansion and its length is not competition distance. The current range has been open since 2012 and increases in usage and revenue each year. The HRCA has offered archery lessons since 2012, which increase in popularity each year. Some students have gone on to compete in state and national tournaments. The current lesson structure offers Junior Olympic Archery Development in the hopes of developing a local Olympic archer.

The HRCA also requires residents to pay for an annual pass to use the archery ranges. This would continue as a valuable revenue generating opportunity. With expanded facilities the revenues generated from archery would be expected to grow exponentially.



*Highlands Ranch family shooting as existing archery range.*

### *Phase I*

The BPAAC envisions that Phase I would consist of a new and expanded range that would allow Highlands Ranch archers to



*Rendering of potential archery range.*

practice shooting Olympic distances (100 yards). Depending on interest, use, and the desire of the community, the range could also be used for competitions.

An archery range would need approximately 1 to 2 acres of space. Construction consists of placing targets, ensuring proper backstops or adequate space behind the targets, a firing line, shade structures and tables, and nearby restrooms.

The archery range, in conjunction with the other three amenities and within walking distance of the pavilion, would be an important part of expanded youth camps and programs, team building retreats, and offer the potential for large tournaments and competitions. The cost to construct a basic archery range would be minimal, estimated at \$10,000 to \$50,000.

### *Phase II*

As a potential Phase II, the archery range could be expanded to include additional lanes and/or spectator seating for archery competitions.

### *Phase III*

In addition to the archery range, the Committee suggests HRCA could build an independent 3-D archery range, depending upon the success of the archery range. 3-D archery is a subset of field archery, which focuses on shooting life-size 3-D models of game. The archer walks through a marked trail to a number of targets. The trail is designed similar to a golf course, but the design is on a much smaller scale.

This type of amenity would provide increased opportunities for archers to expand their skills and attract different participants than traditional archery ranges.

## THE SHOOTING LANE



## V. Rational for Recommendations

The BPAAC recommends the four projects explained above because they will help to improve the Highlands Ranch community and provide opportunities for the Backcountry to generate net revenues. Specifically, we believe that these four amenities, along with the expanded trails, are the best recommendations because they:

- Are consistent with and support the objectives outlined in the OSCA Plan;
- Are in line with the community preferences from the 2012 survey;
- Can be built in close proximity to each other to minimize environmental impact;
- Can be built in close proximity to each other to enable the amenities to share parking, utilities, and other infrastructure;
- Are consistent with the outdoor recreation theme and contemplate the type of structures that are conventionally located in parks and ranch areas;
- Have anticipated construction costs that are within the general realm of expectations that have been outlined for the Backcountry;
- Have the ability to generate revenues such that they are, at a minimum, financially self-sustaining;
- Expand the existing archery and equestrian programs, which have already proven successful and popular in the Highlands Ranch community; and
- Provide general economic value to the community by providing increased access to recreational and educational opportunities.

It is important to stress that the recommendations are viewed in conjunction with each other, not as individual projects that should be parceled out. The success and quality of each amenity depends in part on the other amenities with the covered pavilion being the most critical part of the entire recommendation. Without the covered pavilion, the revenue potentials and uses begin to diminish.

Currently the Backcountry operating fund is limited to what homeowners are willing to pay in their assessments. The goal of these amenities is to minimize the homeowner assessments that support the Backcountry, while still providing adequate funds to protect and conserve to the highest standards possible.

## **VI. Other Considerations**

Finally, the 2014 Board of Directors asked the BPAAC to consider the 2012 survey report and analyze the potential discrepancies in that report. The BPAAC reviewed the 2012 survey in its entirety, studied it, and researched many of the amenities and/or developments that received moderate to strong support.

### *Potential Discrepancies in the Survey Report*

The Survey showed that 42% of respondents support no recreational amenities in the Backcountry and 54% of respondents support no development of any kind in the Planning Areas. However, these people who indicated that they support leaving the Planning Areas as is were still asked to rank their support for additional amenities. This calls to question what percentage of respondents surveyed truly support the addition of certain amenities or development. By way of example, 92% of residents support the addition of trails in the Backcountry. It is unclear whether 92% actually support the additional of trails, or whether a substantial portion those residents would actually prefer no additional amenities of any kind in the Backcountry.

### *Language in the Survey Report that is Subject to Interpretation*

Surveys inherently require interpretation and it is very difficult to incorporate precise language. Drawing conclusions from the 2012 Survey is challenging because the definitions of the amenities are subject to interpretation. A simple example is the amphitheater, which received fairly strong support from the survey respondents (64%). An amphitheater can mean a small structure built into a hillside, or it can mean Red Rocks amphitheater. The BPAAC struggled with deciphering what each proposed use and/or opportunity entailed and we suspect that respondents may not have had consistent interpretations when responding to the survey.

The Committee recognizes this fact and weighed it into its recommendations. For example, with regard to the amphitheater, we decided that a revenue-generating amphitheater would likely generate a lot of traffic and noise, and therefore was not consistent with community objectives for the Backcountry. Further, the amenities recommended in this report (covered pavilion, horse facilities, and ropes course) received support from more than 50% of survey participants.

### *Uses and Opportunities that the BPAAC Does Not Recommend*

As stated above, the BPAAC considered in detail all of the uses and opportunities contemplated by the survey. This includes the nature center, campgrounds, fishing pond, outdoor amphitheater, tree farm, fire/police station, animal rescue facilities, soccer fields, library, and baseball/softball fields.



None of the above were included in the BPAAC's top four recommendations for various reasons including economic feasibility, construction costs, impact to the surrounding property, high usage expectations and resulting impact to surrounding property and community, staffing concerns, infrastructure demands, and water demands. Further, the results of the Survey showed that the community does not want to see urban-type buildings in the Backcountry. The survey respondents overwhelmingly opposed an indoor ice arena, tennis courts, recreation center, public school, and houses of worship, college/university, and sports training facilities. The BPAAC therefore does not recommend the addition of amenities that would require these types of structures in the Backcountry.

The four recommendations of this Committee are consistent with the survey results and community objectives, including the OSCA Plan goals, and less impactful than the other uses strongly opposed by survey respondents. As mentioned in the introduction, there are possibilities for a Phase II that had moderate to strong support and those include a Frisbee golf course and community gardens. Those are acceptable and feasible uses but are not in the top four recommendations of this Committee.

## **VII. Recommended Next Steps**

The BPAAC recommends that the HRCA Board of Directors determine whether they wish to proceed with examining the potential for development in the Backcountry. To the extent that the Board of Directors believes that it makes sense to continue exploring development in the Backcountry, we ask that the HRCA Board of Directors support the recommendations in this report and begin the necessary steps to move toward the CIP including:

- A business case and/or cost benefit analysis should be completed for each recommendation and for the recommendations in totality;
- Douglas County should be contacted to understand any limitations on access, construction, feasibility, cooperation, and coordination;
- Landscape architects or a Land Use firm should be hired to complete a feasibility study and siting study;
- Estimates on infrastructure installation and feasibility completed.

# Exhibit A



# HIGHLANDS RANCH COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

August 2012

Dear Highlands Ranch Community Association Homeowner,

The Highlands Ranch Community Association (HRCA) wants to know what you think! You have been randomly selected to participate in HRCA's 2012 Community Survey.

Please take a few minutes to fill out the enclosed survey regarding the Backcountry Wilderness Area and its Planning Areas as well as other programs and services provided by HRCA. Your feedback will help the Board of Directors make long term planning decisions that affect our community.

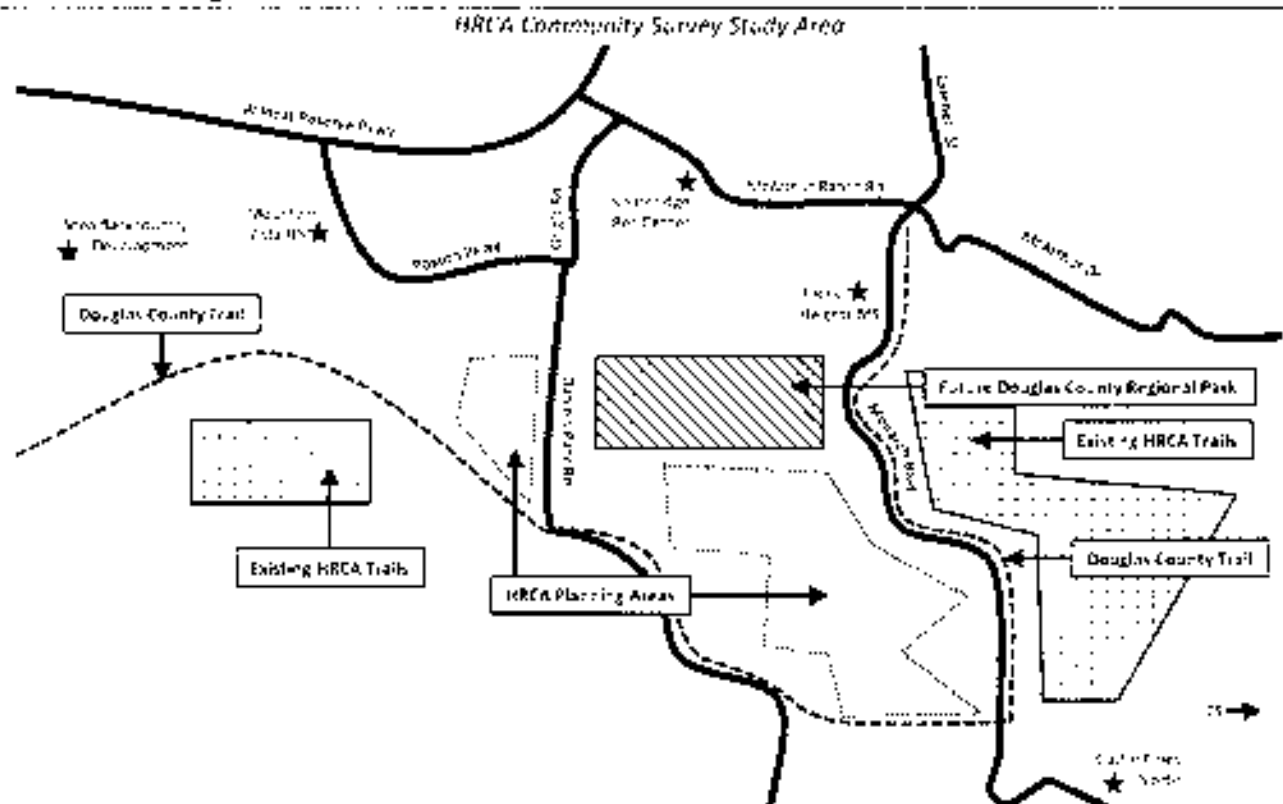
Please spend a few minutes to answer all the questions and return the survey in the enclosed postage-paid envelope. Your responses will remain completely anonymous. You may complete the survey online if you would prefer, at: [www.h-r-c.com/hrca](http://www.h-r-c.com/hrca)

Your participation in this survey is very important – especially since your household is one of only a small number of households being surveyed. If you have any questions about the survey please call Peggy Zack at (303) 471-8803.

Please help us shape the future of the HRCA. Thank you for your time and participation.

Sincerely,

Jerry Flannery  
CEO/General Manager



## Highlands Ranch Community Association (HRCA) Community Survey 2012

Please select the response (by circling the number or checking the box) that most closely represents your opinion for each question. Your responses are anonymous and will be reported in group form only.

### About the HRCA

1. Please rate the job the HRCA does at each of the following.

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Don't Know
Managing the four recreation centers .....	1	2	3	4	5
Managing the Backcountry Wilderness Area .....	1	2	3	4	5
Enforcing each sector's covenants .....	1	2	3	4	5
Providing services that enhance property values .....	1	2	3	4	5
Making assessments for the HRCA services fair and reasonable .....	1	2	3	4	5
Planning and operating community events .....	1	2	3	4	5

2. Thinking about various sources of information about the HRCA, please indicate which you depend on for HRCA news and events.

- |  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> HRCA Website                          | <input type="checkbox"/> HRCA Twitter/Facebook     | <input type="checkbox"/> Other online sources                           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> www.hrcaranch.org                     | <input type="checkbox"/> HRCA Activities Guide     | <input type="checkbox"/> Word of mouth                                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> HRCA E-Lists (if any) (not box)       | <input type="checkbox"/> Your HRCA direct delegate | <input type="checkbox"/> Flyers, signs, billboards and facility signage |
| <input type="checkbox"/> HRCA Monthly Newsletter               | <input type="checkbox"/> Newspapers                |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Information from your Sub-Association |  |   |

### The Backcountry Wilderness Area

3. Please indicate your level of familiarity with the following Backcountry features.

	Very Familiar	Somewhat Familiar	Not at all familiar
HRCA trail system .....	1	2	3
Douglas County trail system .....	1	2	3
Protected/wildlife sanctuary areas .....	1	2	3
HRCA Planning Areas (see map on the cover letter) .....	1	2	3
Public Douglas County Regional Park (see map on the cover letter) .....	1	2	3
Community Involvement Process (CIP) for Backcountry Planning Areas .....	1	2	3

4. Please indicate your level of familiarity with the following Backcountry activities.

	Very Familiar	Somewhat familiar	Not at all familiar
Youth camps .....	1	2	3
Hayrides .....	1	2	3
Horse back trail rides .....	1	2	3
Eik hunting .....	1	2	3
Eik bugling/photo hunts .....	1	2	3
Archery lessons .....	1	2	3
Archery range .....	1	2	3
Firearms classes .....	1	2	3
Nature hikes .....	1	2	3
Private parties such as birthday parties, etc. .....	1	2	3
Volunteer program/opportunities .....	1	2	3

5. Today the HRCA Backcountry Trails (not including the Douglas County East/West Regional Trail) are owned by HRCA members, and usage is restricted to members and their guests. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements.

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
The trails should remain private with no access by non-residents .....	1	2	3	4	5
The trails should be open to the general public for a fee .....	1	2	3	4	5
The trails should be open to any non-resident who pays a fee .....	1	2	3	4	5

**Development in the Backcountry**

6. Thinking about potential recreational opportunities in HRC Planning Areas (see map on the cover letter), please indicate your level of support for the following pursuits.

	Strongly Support	Somewhat Support	Somewhat Oppose	Strongly Oppose	Don't know
No recreational amenities of any kind, leave it as is	1	2	3	4	5
Expanded hiking, biking, running and horseback riding	1	2	3	4	5
Expanded camping	1	2	3	4	5
Access, horse boarding, riding competitions and lessons	1	2	3	4	5
Golf course	1	2	3	4	5
Recreation challenge course	1	2	3	4	5
Concerts, weddings, special events	1	2	3	4	5
Skate park	1	2	3	4	5
Off road bike park with pump track, cyclocross track, dirt jumps, etc	1	2	3	4	5
Private golf course	1	2	3	4	5
Fishing ponds	1	2	3	4	5
Other	1	2	3	4	5

7. Thinking about potential development opportunities in HRC Planning Areas (see map on the cover letter), please indicate your level of support for the following pursuits.

	Strongly Support	Somewhat Support	Somewhat Oppose	Strongly Oppose	Don't know
No development of any kind, leave it as is	1	2	3	4	5
Outdoor amphitheater	1	2	3	4	5
Nature center	1	2	3	4	5
Cemetery/monument gardens	1	2	3	4	5
Convention/event center with covered pavilion, indoor/outdoor arena	1	2	3	4	5
Tree farm	1	2	3	4	5
Reservoir for water storage	1	2	3	4	5
Other	1	2	3	4	5

8. Current zoning allows several other types of uses in HRC Planning Areas (see map on the cover letter). Thinking about those uses, please indicate your level of support for the following pursuits.

	Strongly Support	Somewhat Support	Somewhat Oppose	Strongly Oppose	Don't know
Recreation center	1	2	3	4	5
Indoor ice arena	1	2	3	4	5
Baseball/softball fields	1	2	3	4	5
Soccer fields	1	2	3	4	5
Tennis courts	1	2	3	4	5
Private equestrian training facilities	1	2	3	4	5
Animal rescue/rehabilitation facilities	1	2	3	4	5
Houses of worship	1	2	3	4	5
Fire/police station	1	2	3	4	5
Library	1	2	3	4	5
College/university	1	2	3	4	5
Public school	1	2	3	4	5

9. New Backcountry amenities could be funded in a number of ways. Thinking about any new amenities in the Backcountry, please indicate your level of support for the following funding approaches.

	Strongly Support	Somewhat Support	Somewhat Oppose	Strongly Oppose	Don't Know
No increase / Don't support HRCA developments in the Planning Areas.....	1	2	3	4	5
Recreational assessment increase of 1-2% (\$4-\$9/year) for 10 years.....	1	2	3	4	5
Recreational assessment increase of 3-6% (\$13-\$17/year) for 6 years.....	1	2	3	4	5
Recreational assessment increase of 5-6% (\$24-\$26/year) for 4 years.....	1	2	3	4	5
Special assessment of \$50 per year for 2 years.....	1	2	3	4	5
One-time special assessment of \$100.....	1	2	3	4	5

10. Currently, the cost of Backcountry operations is funded by homeowner assessments. Program and user fees and/or revenue from the sale of land could partially or fully fund the operations expenses for the Backcountry. Thinking about operations expenses for the Backcountry, please indicate your level of support for the following funding approaches.

	Strongly Support	Somewhat Support	Somewhat Oppose	Strongly Oppose	Don't Know
Continue to use homeowner assessments.....	1	2	3	4	5
Give up user fees and revenues from new recreational amenities.....	1	2	3	4	5
Seller/lease Backcountry property to private entities for public uses.....	1	2	3	4	5
Seller/lease Backcountry property to private entities for private uses.....	1	2	3	4	5

11. The programs and activities currently offered in the Backcountry cover their expenses in full and produce a small amount of additional revenue. Please indicate which of the following statements best describes your view of activities and programs in the Backcountry.

- The amount of activities and programs is just right.
- The amount of activities and programs should decrease.
- The amount of activities and programs offered should increase.
- Don't know.

**The Highlands Ranch Community**

12. Please rate the quality of each of the following aspects of the Highlands Ranch community.

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Don't know
Overall mix of commercial, residential and recreational areas.....	1	2	3	4	5
Appropriate mix of restaurant choices.....	1	2	3	4	5
Quality of restaurants.....	1	2	3	4	5
Appropriate mix of retail businesses.....	1	2	3	4	5
Quality of retail establishments.....	1	2	3	4	5
Appropriate mix of housing choices.....	1	2	3	4	5
Opportunities to work in the community.....	1	2	3	4	5
Quality of neighborhood/community parks and recreational areas.....	1	2	3	4	5
Quality of public services (e.g., library, police, fire, water, trash).....	1	2	3	4	5
Length of drive commute to work or school.....	1	2	3	4	5

Comment [SH1]: Don't see a true Howard perhaps "Best of the Best"

Comment [SH2]: Don't see a real "town center"?

Comment [SH3]: Overall good and beautiful community

**Recreation Centers**

13. Please first indicate how many times, if at all, in the past 12 months you or another household member have used or participated in each of the following in Highlands Ranch and then rate the quality of each, whether or not you have participated.

	Frequency	Number of times used				Scale of quality				
		1-2	3-4	5-6	7-8	1	2	3	4	5
Northridge recreation center	1	7	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Southridge recreation center	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Eastridge recreation center	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Westridge recreation center	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Backcountry Wilderness Area programs	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Sports & fitness programs	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Aquatics programs	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Social and arts programs	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Preschool	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Child care	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Nursery programs	5	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Community and special events (e.g. July 4th, Ropes, Home in Town, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5

14. Thinking about the four existing recreation centers, please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements.

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
The HRCA should focus on operating recreation centers at the lowest possible cost	1	2	3	4	5
The HRCA should maintain a state of the art recreation centers that are the equal of private facilities in the area	1	2	3	4	5
The HRCA should build a new recreation center in Highlands Ranch	1	2	3	4	5
The HRCA should build a new outdoor pool/aquatics center in Highlands Ranch	1	2	3	4	5
The Eastridge weight and cardio areas should be remodeled and expanded	1	2	3	4	5
The Northridge outdoor tennis courts should be converted to multipurposes	1	2	3	4	5

15. Any new recreational amenities will require funding sources for construction financing. Thinking about those amenities, please indicate your level of support for the following funding approaches.

	Strongly support	Somewhat support	Somewhat oppose	Strongly oppose	Don't know
No increase / Don't support any changes to the existing recreation centers	1	2	3	4	5
Recreational assessment increase of 1-2% (\$4-\$9/year) for 10 years	1	2	3	4	5
Recreational assessment increase of 3-4% (\$13-\$17/year) for 6 years	1	2	3	4	5
Recreational assessment increase of 5-6% (\$24-\$26/year) for 4 years	1	2	3	4	5
Special assessment of \$50 per year for 2 years	1	2	3	4	5
One-time special assessment of \$100	1	2	3	4	5

**About You**

Our last questions are about you and your household. Again, all of your responses to this survey are completely anonymous and will be reported in group form only.

**Q1. How many years have you lived in Highlands Ranch?**

- Less than 7 years
- 7-9 years
- 10-19 years
- 20-29 years
- 30-39 years
- 40-49 years
- 50-59 years
- 60-69 years
- 70 or more years

**Q2. Which best describes your home?**

- Single family detached home
- Attached home (townhome or townhome)
- Apartment or condo

**Q3. Are you or any other members of your household aged 65 or older?**

- Yes
- No

**Q4. Are there any children 17 or younger in your household?**

- |   | Yes                      | No                       |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 0 to 5 years old   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 6 to 12 years old  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 13 to 17 years old | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

**Q5. In which category is your age?**

- |                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 18-24 years | <input type="checkbox"/> 45-54 years       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 25-34 years | <input type="checkbox"/> 55-64 years       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 35-44 years | <input type="checkbox"/> 75 years or older |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 65-74 years |  |

**Q6. What is your gender?**

- Female
- Male

Thank you for completing this survey. Please return the completed survey in the postage-paid envelope to:  
**National Research Center, Inc., PO Box 549, Belle Mead, NJ 08502**



# Exhibit B



COMMUNITY SURVEY

## Report of Results

November 2012

Prepared by:



## Development in the Backcountry

Beyond the many recreational opportunities already available to residents, the HRCA is considering expanding recreational opportunities in the Backcountry. Homeowners appeared to favor certain projects over others:

- About 9 in 10 homeowners supported trails for hiking, biking, running and horseback riding.
- Three-quarters supported fishing ponds, while about two-thirds supported a ropes/challenge course or concerts, weddings and special events in the Backcountry.
- Homeowners largely opposed projects such as a golf course, an off road bike park or skate park.
- Notably, over one-third of homeowners preferred that the Backcountry be left as is, with no additional recreational amenities of any kind.

In addition to these recreational projects, a variety of non-recreation development opportunities are possible in the Backcountry Planning Areas. However, HRCA homeowner greeted these projects more cautiously:

- Just over half of homeowners supported no development of any kind, preferring that the Planning Areas be left as they are.
- Homeowners were most amenable to the prospect of a nature center, with three-quarters expressing support.
- About 6 in 10 at least “somewhat” supported an outdoor amphitheater or a tree farm.
- Most homeowners were strongly opposed to the cemetery/memorial gardens.

Any one of these development projects must adhere to HRCA zoning requirements before it is put into action. Current zoning allows for some types of uses in the HRCA Planning Areas but not others. Once again, homeowners approached new zoning options with caution:

- Just over half of homeowners at least “somewhat” supported leaving the Planning Areas as they are, with no other uses of any kind.
- Among the possible uses noted on the survey, a fire/police station was most popular, with 56% of homeowners indicating that they at least “somewhat” support this project.
- About half supported animal rescue/rehabilitation facilities, soccer fields, a library and baseball/softball fields.
- In contrast, about 7 in 10 homeowners “somewhat” or “strongly” opposed houses of worship, a college/university and private sports training facilities.

The pursuit of new development projects in the Backcountry will require additional funding from homeowner assessments. When presented with a number of funding options, homeowners appeared to prefer a conservative approach:

- Just over half preferred that there be no increase at all, indicating opposition to new development in the Planning Areas.
- Among the five possible assessment increase plans, about 6 in 10 homeowners supported a 10-year recreational assessment increase of 1-2% (\$4-\$9/year).
- All other proposed assessment plans received substantial opposition, particularly the short-term special assessments.

Whether or not the HRCA chooses to pursue new development projects, existing operations in the Backcountry must be kept afloat. Currently, Backcountry operations are supported by homeowner assessments; however, a few homeowners were open to considering new sources of funding:

- About 7 in 10 “somewhat” or “strongly” supported developing user fees and revenues from new recreation programs.
- However, most homeowners “somewhat” or “strongly” opposed selling or leasing Backcountry property to private entities for either public or private uses.
- Many prefer the system that is already in place, with 8 in 10 homeowners supporting the continued use of homeowner assessments.

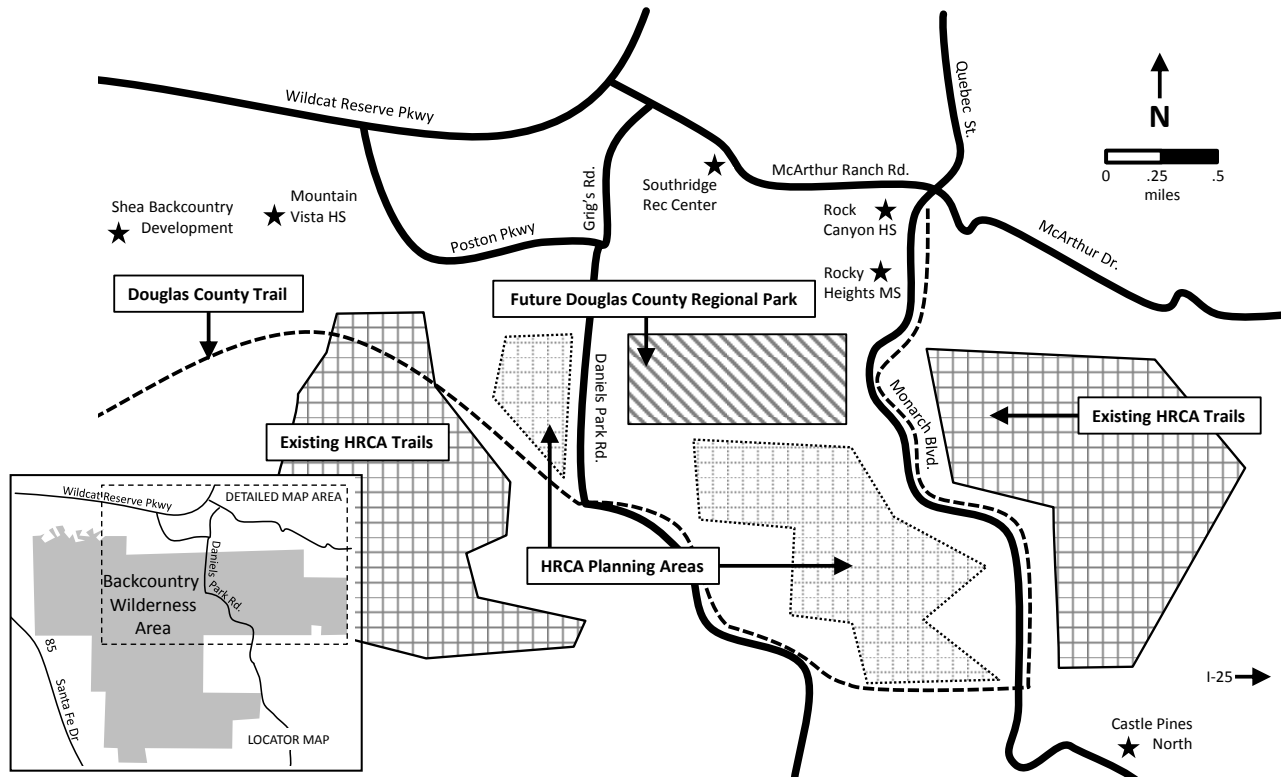
## Conclusion

The results of this survey provide key insights into homeowners’ opinions of and priorities for the HRCA. While most lauded the high quality of current recreational programs and facilities, many homeowners also endorsed plans for improvements and new development. As the HRCA prepares to move forward with such projects, resident opinion should be used in combination with additional data sources, so that the voice of the public can be balanced against the realities of budgeting, population demographics, politics and community resources. Survey results may answer certain questions, but they also raise new ones, motivating additional investigation as a community charts its course of action.

## HRCA Planning Areas and the Backcountry

To assist the HRCA Board of Directors with long-term planning decisions, survey recipients rated a number potential recreational and development opportunities in the HRCA Planning Areas of the Backcountry. The survey included a map (Figure 8) of the Backcountry to help orient respondents to the Planning Areas. Respondents indicated their level of support or opposition to various opportunities as well as funding preferences.

FIGURE 8: HRCA COMMUNITY SURVEY STUDY AREA



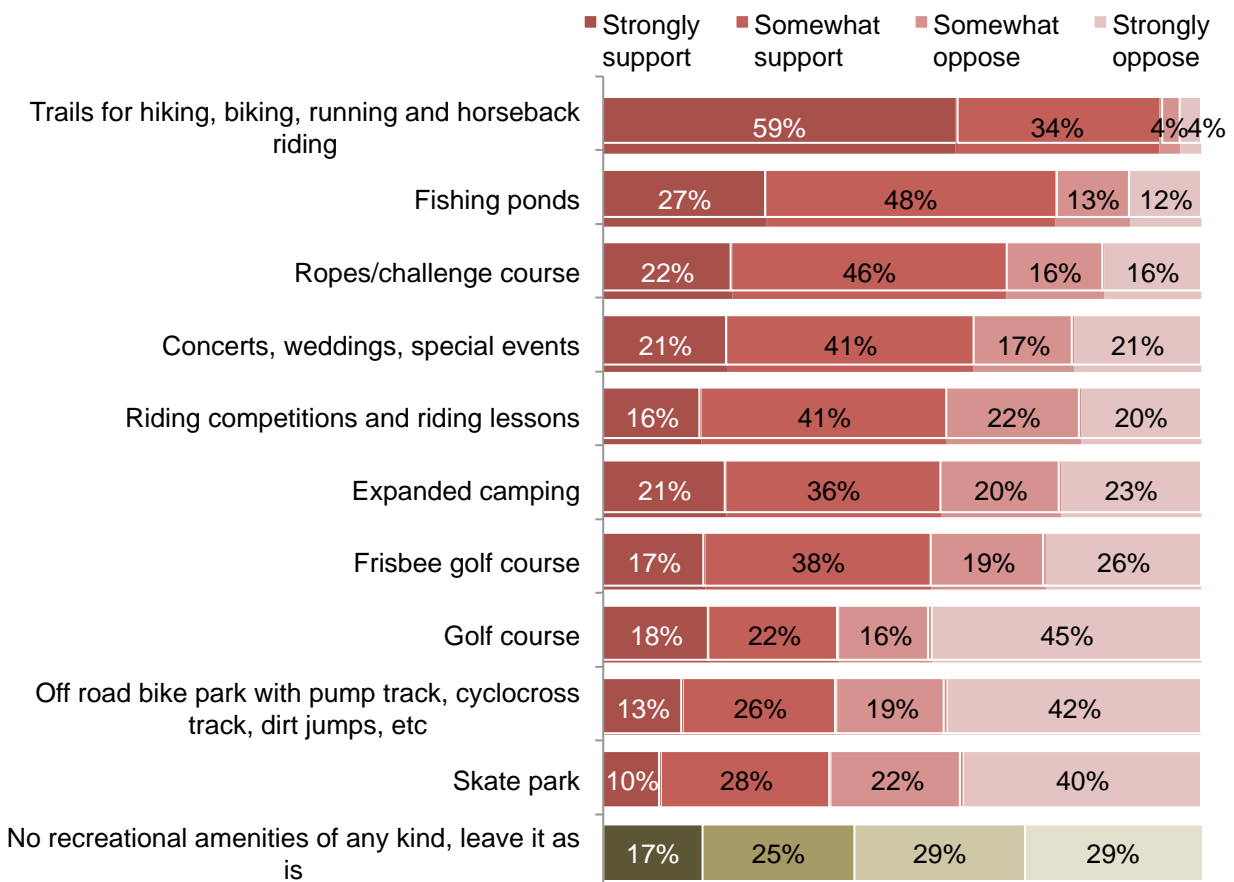
## Development in the Backcountry

While the HRCA already offers varied recreational opportunities for its residents, the Backcountry offerings could be expanded. The survey asked homeowners to rate their level of support for a variety of potential pursuits related to the HRCA Planning Areas. Although 42% of residents advocated for no additional recreational amenities of any kind, most of the new amenities were favored by a majority. Most strikingly, 9 in 10 residents indicated their support for hiking, biking, running and horseback riding trails, with 6 in 10 indicating strong support. Three-quarters supported fishing ponds and two-thirds supported a ropes/challenge course. Recreational opportunities receiving the least support included a golf course, an off road bike park and a skate park, with around 4 in 10 residents indicating strong opposition to these pursuits.

Respondents were also permitted to write in an “other” potential recreational opportunity in the HRCA Planning Areas and provide a rating for it. About 60 respondents wrote in their own response. These write-in responses can be found in *Appendix A: Verbatim Responses to Open-ended Questions*.

FIGURE 12: POTENTIAL RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES IN HRCA PLANNING AREAS

*Thinking about potential recreational opportunities in HRCA Planning Areas, please indicate your level of support for the following pursuits.*



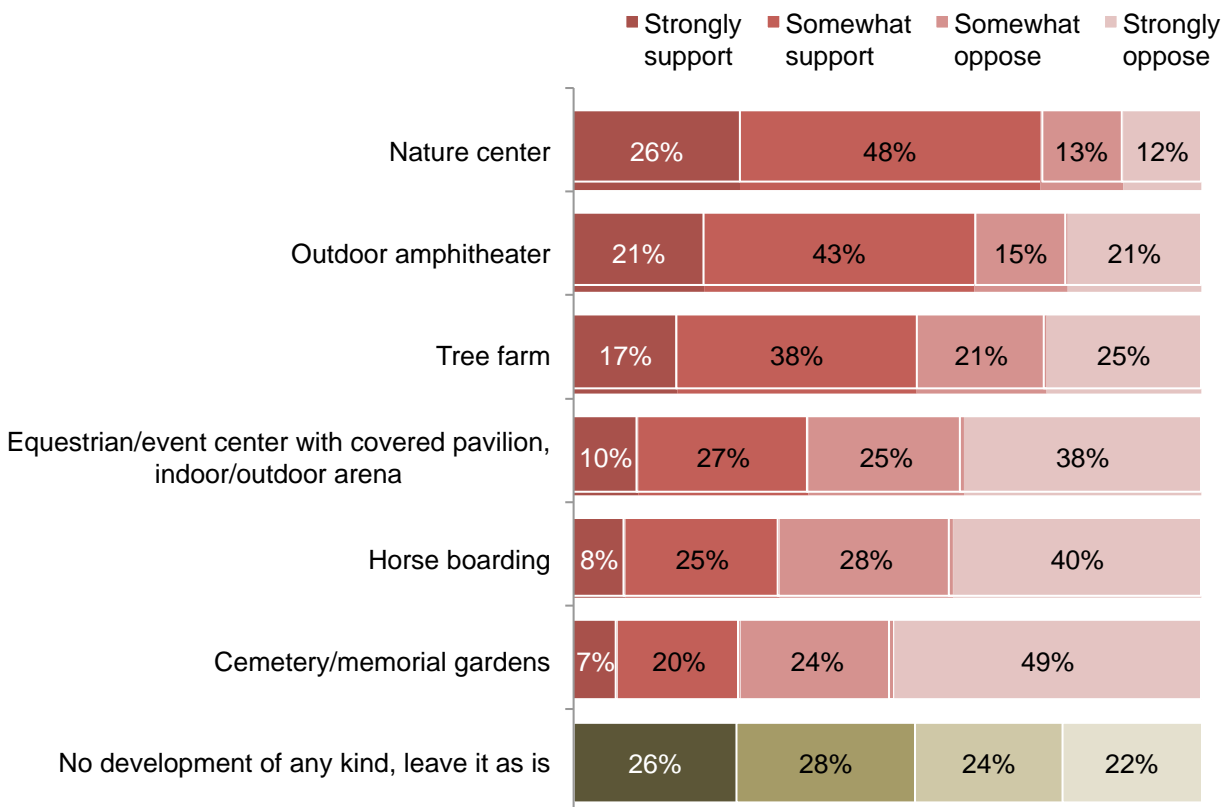
Prepared by National Research Center, Inc.

In addition to possible new recreational amenities, the Backcountry presents opportunities for new non-recreation development in the Planning Areas. In general, HRCA members greeted these development options more cautiously than the recreation possibilities and 54% supported no development of any kind, advocating that the Planning Areas be left as they are. Homeowners expressed the greatest support for a nature center, with three-quarters of homeowners indicating support. Approximately 6 in 10 residents at least “somewhat” supported an outdoor amphitheater and a tree farm. The least popular development opportunity was the cemetery/memorial gardens; half of residents indicated strong opposition to this pursuit.

In addition to rating the list of development opportunities, respondents were permitted to write in and rate an “other” development opportunity in the HRCA Planning Areas. About 45 respondents wrote in their own response. These write-in responses can be found in *Appendix A: Verbatim Responses to Open-ended Questions*.

FIGURE 13: POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN HRCA PLANNING AREAS

*Thinking about potential development opportunities in HRCA Planning Areas, please indicate your level of support for the following pursuits.*



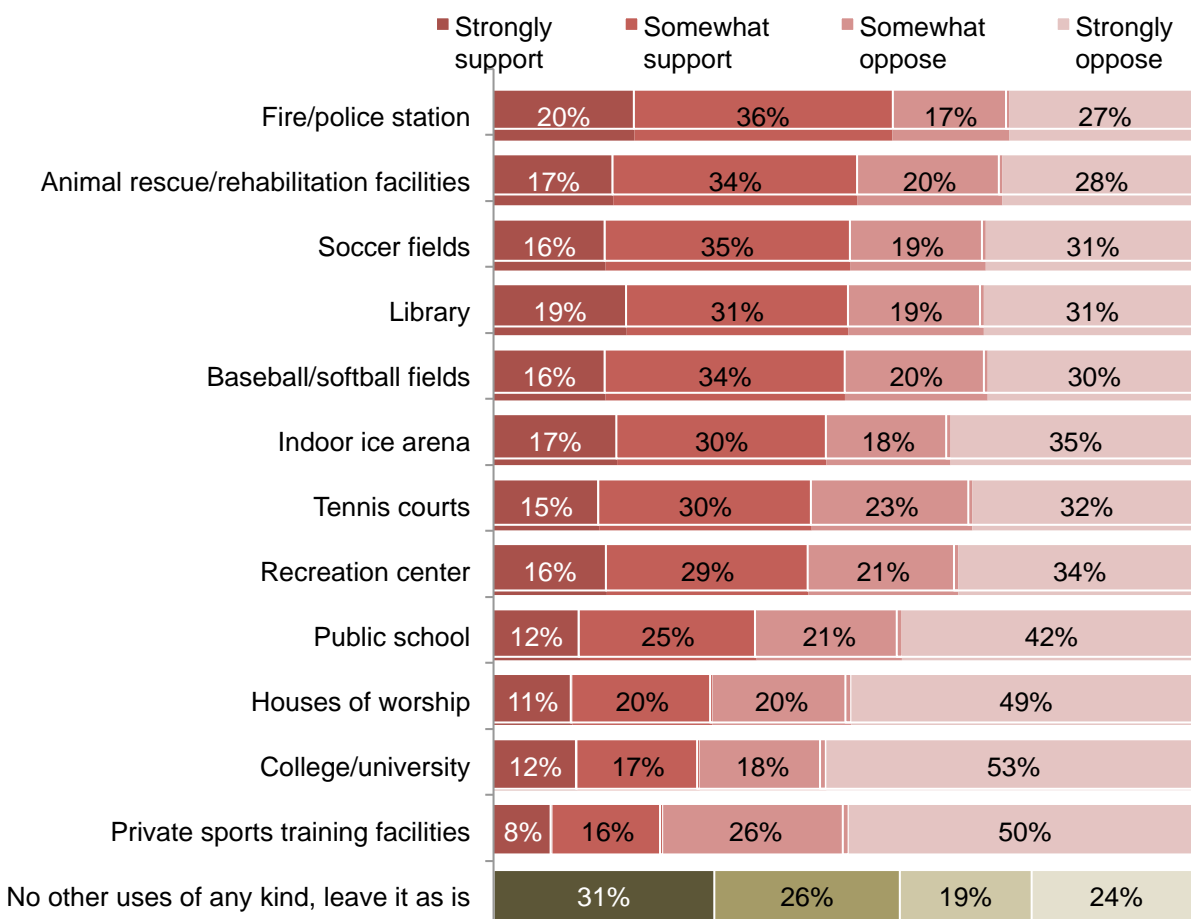
Prepared by National Research Center, Inc.

Any additional development in the Backcountry must adhere to HRCA zoning requirements. Current zoning allows for several types of uses in the HRCA Planning Areas. The survey asked homeowners to consider these uses and to indicate their level of support for 12 potential new projects. Fifty-seven percent of homeowners at least “somewhat” supported leaving the Planning Areas as they are, with no other uses of any kind. Among the possible uses noted on the survey, 56% “somewhat” or “strongly” supported a fire/police station and about half expressed support for animal rescue/rehabilitation facilities, soccer fields, a library and baseball/softball fields. Homeowners voiced the strongest opposition toward uses for houses of worship, a college/university and for private sports training facilities; about 7 in 10 residents opposed these pursuits with roughly half in strong opposition.

Respondents were also permitted to write in and rate an “other” use in the HRCA Planning Areas. About 30 respondents wrote in their own response. These write-in responses can be found in *Appendix A: Verbatim Responses to Open-ended Questions*.

FIGURE 14: POTENTIAL USES IN HRCA PLANNING AREAS

*Current zoning allows several other types of uses in HRCA Planning Areas. Thinking about those uses, please indicate your level of support for the following pursuits.*



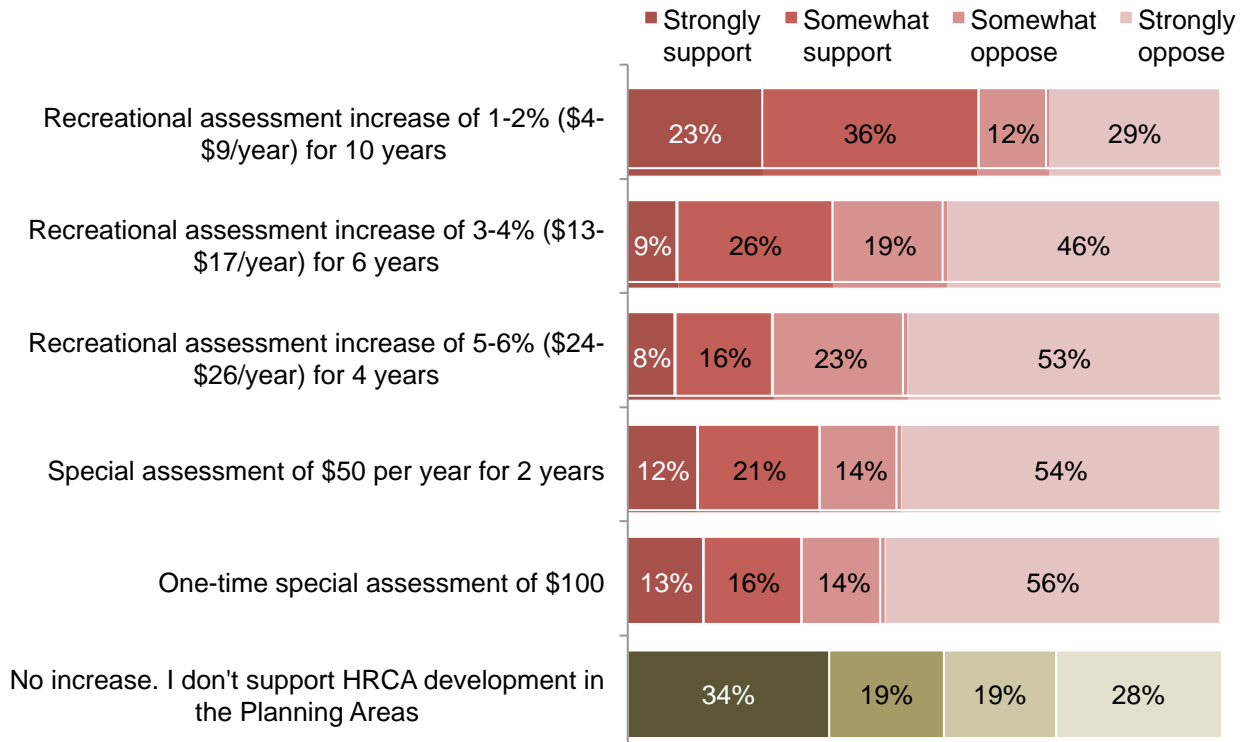
Prepared by National Research Center, Inc.



New Backcountry amenities would require funding through homeowner assessments. Survey respondents were asked how they would prefer to generate the increased funding. Overall, homeowners preferred an increase of 1-2% (\$4-\$9/year) for 10 years (59% “strongly” or “somewhat” supporting) or no increase (54% “strongly” or “somewhat” supporting). The remaining funding proposals garnered less support from HRCA members, with about half of all residents expressing strong opposition to these plans.

FIGURE 15: FUNDING FOR BACKCOUNTRY AMENITIES

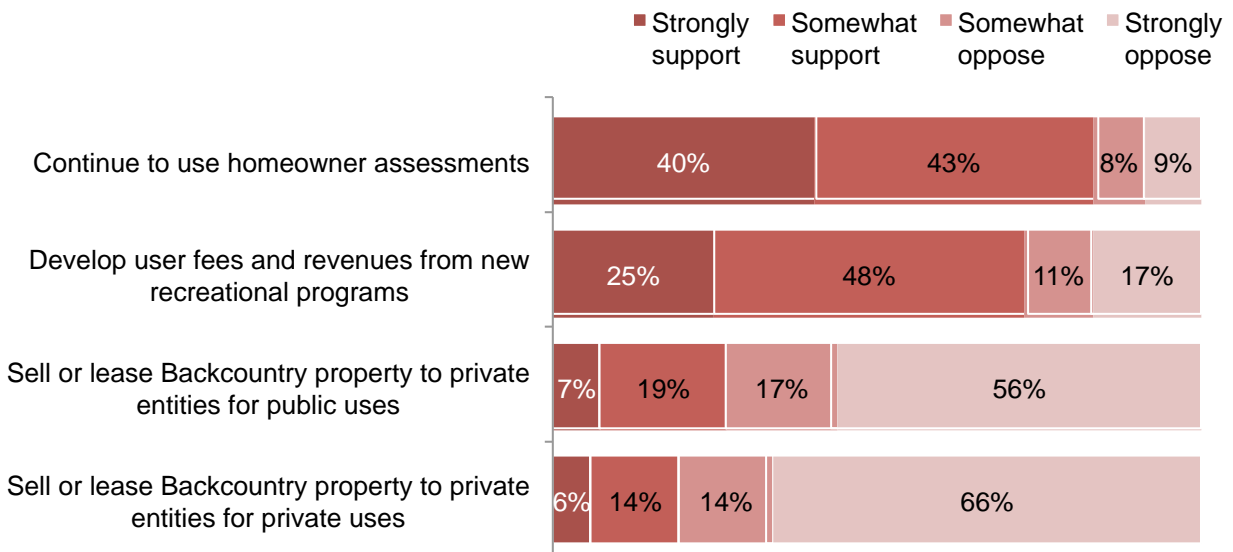
*New Backcountry amenities could be funded in a number of ways. Thinking about any new amenities in the Backcountry, please indicate your level of support for the following funding approaches.*



Regardless of where residents stand on issues of new development in the Backcountry, existing operations must be kept afloat. Currently, the cost of Backcountry operations is funded by homeowner assessments; however, program and user fees and/or revenue from the sale of land could at least partially fund Backcountry expenses. Residents were asked to weigh in on how the HRCA should proceed with funding Backcountry operations. Most residents (83%) supported the continued use of homeowner assessments, while nearly as many (73%) also supported the development of user fees and revenues from new recreation programs. In contrast, the majority of residents expressed strong opposition to the sale or lease of Backcountry property to private entities for either public or private uses.

FIGURE 16: FUNDING FOR BACKCOUNTRY OPERATIONS

*Currently, the cost of Backcountry operations is funded by homeowner assessments. Program and user fees and/or revenue from the sale of land could partially or fully fund the operations expenses for the Backcountry. Thinking about operations expenses for the Backcountry, please indicate your level of support for the following funding approaches.*



## Appendix B: Responses to Survey Questions

### Responses Excluding “Don’t Know”

The following pages contain a complete set of responses to each question on the survey, excluding the “don’t know” responses.

TABLE 1: QUESTION 1

Please indicate your level of familiarity with the following Backcountry features.	Very familiar	Somewhat familiar	Not at all familiar	Total
HRCA Backcountry trail system	22%	43%	35%	100%
Douglas County East/West trail system	21%	40%	40%	100%
Protected/wildlife sanctuary areas	9%	38%	53%	100%
HRCA Planning Areas	7%	33%	61%	100%
Future Douglas County Regional Park	6%	27%	67%	100%
Community Involvement Process (CIP) for Backcountry planning areas	2%	18%	80%	100%

TABLE 2: QUESTION 2

Please indicate your level of familiarity with the following Backcountry activities.	Very familiar	Somewhat familiar	Not at all familiar	Total
Youth camps	4%	29%	66%	100%
Hay rides	6%	39%	55%	100%
Horseback trail rides	8%	38%	54%	100%
Elk hunting	5%	20%	75%	100%
Elk bugling/photo hunts	4%	20%	76%	100%
Archery lessons	4%	22%	74%	100%
Archery range	5%	22%	73%	100%
Firearms classes	3%	17%	80%	100%
Nature hikes	9%	41%	49%	100%
Private parties such as birthday parties, etc.	7%	28%	65%	100%
Volunteer program/opportunities	5%	28%	66%	100%

TABLE 3: QUESTION 3

Today the HRCA Backcountry trails (not including the Douglas County East/West Regional Trail) are owned by HRCA members, and usage is restricted to members who are allowed to use the HRCA recreation centers and their guests. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements.	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
The trails should remain private, accessed only by members and their guests	47%	29%	15%	9%	100%
The trails should be open to the general public for no fee	10%	14%	20%	56%	100%
The trails should be open to any non-member who pays a fee	14%	40%	19%	28%	100%

TABLE 4: QUESTION 4

Thinking about potential recreational opportunities in HRCA Planning Areas (see map on the cover letter), please indicate your level of support for the following pursuits.	Strongly support	Somewhat support	Somewhat oppose	Strongly oppose	Total
No recreational amenities of any kind, leave it as is	17%	25%	29%	29%	100%
Trails for hiking, biking, running and horseback riding	59%	34%	4%	4%	100%
Expanded camping	21%	36%	20%	23%	100%
Riding competitions and riding lessons	16%	41%	22%	20%	100%
Golf course	18%	22%	16%	45%	100%
Ropes/challenge course	22%	46%	16%	16%	100%
Concerts, weddings, special events	21%	41%	17%	21%	100%
Skate park	10%	28%	22%	40%	100%
Off road bike park with pump track, cyclocross track, dirt jumps, etc.	13%	26%	19%	42%	100%
Frisbee golf course	17%	38%	19%	26%	100%
Fishing ponds	27%	48%	13%	12%	100%
Other	84%	3%	4%	9%	100%

TABLE 5: QUESTION 5

Thinking about potential development opportunities in HRCA Planning Areas (see map on the cover letter), please indicate your level of support for the following pursuits.	Strongly support	Somewhat support	Somewhat oppose	Strongly oppose	Total
No development of any kind, leave it as is	26%	28%	24%	22%	100%
Outdoor amphitheater	21%	43%	15%	21%	100%
Nature center	26%	48%	13%	12%	100%
Cemetery/memorial gardens	7%	20%	24%	49%	100%
Equestrian/event center with covered pavilion, indoor/outdoor arena	10%	27%	25%	38%	100%
Tree farm	17%	38%	21%	25%	100%
Horse boarding	8%	25%	28%	40%	100%
Other	63%	3%	12%	22%	100%

TABLE 6: QUESTION 6

Current zoning allows several other types of uses in HRCA Planning Areas (see map on the cover letter).Thinking about those uses, please indicate your level of support for the following pursuits.	Strongly support	Somewhat support	Somewhat oppose	Strongly oppose	Total
No other uses of any kind, leave it as is	31%	26%	19%	24%	100%
Recreation center	16%	29%	21%	34%	100%
Indoor ice arena	17%	30%	18%	35%	100%
Baseball/softball fields	16%	34%	20%	30%	100%
Soccer fields	16%	35%	19%	31%	100%
Tennis courts	15%	30%	23%	32%	100%
Private sports training facilities	8%	16%	26%	50%	100%
Animal rescue/rehabilitation facilities	17%	34%	20%	28%	100%
Houses of worship	11%	20%	20%	49%	100%
Fire/police station	20%	36%	17%	27%	100%
Library	19%	31%	19%	31%	100%
College/university	12%	17%	18%	53%	100%
Public school	12%	25%	21%	42%	100%
Other	78%	16%	6%	0%	100%

TABLE 7: QUESTION 7

New Backcountry amenities could be funded in a number of ways. Thinking about any new amenities in the Backcountry, please indicate your level of support for the following funding approaches.	Strongly support	Somewhat support	Somewhat oppose	Strongly oppose	Total
No increase. I don't support HRCA development in the Planning Areas	34%	19%	19%	28%	100%
Recreational assessment increase of 1-2% (\$4-\$9/year) for 10 years	23%	36%	12%	29%	100%
Recreational assessment increase of 3-4% (\$13-\$17/year) for 6 years	9%	26%	19%	46%	100%
Recreational assessment increase of 5-6% (\$24-\$26/year) for 4 years	8%	16%	23%	53%	100%
Special assessment of \$50 per year for 2 years	12%	21%	14%	54%	100%
One-time special assessment of \$100	13%	16%	14%	56%	100%

TABLE 8: QUESTION 8

Currently, the cost of Backcountry operations is funded by homeowner assessments. Program and user fees and/or revenue from the sale of land could partially or fully fund the operations expenses for the Backcountry. Thinking about operations expenses for the Backcountry, please indicate your level of support for the following funding approaches.	Strongly support	Somewhat support	Somewhat oppose	Strongly oppose	Total
Continue to use homeowner assessments	40%	43%	8%	9%	100%
Develop user fees and revenues from new recreational programs	25%	48%	11%	17%	100%
Sell or lease Backcountry property to private entities for public uses	7%	19%	17%	56%	100%
Sell or lease Backcountry property to private entities for private uses	6%	14%	14%	66%	100%

The ropes course would be expected to serve as a meaningful revenue source for the Backcountry. By way of example only, our investigation suggests that a top-line \$400,000 course in a low-population area (unlike Highlands Ranch) generated \$80,000 in annual revenues during its first-year of operations (\$50.00 / adult). Given the relatively dense population of Highlands Ranch and the surrounding schools and businesses, we anticipate that even stronger revenues could be generated by a ropes course in the Backcountry.

### **#3 – Horse facilities / activities**

The BPAAC recommends that the HRCA construct horse stables to allow for expanded opportunity in horse camps, riding lessons, therapeutic riding lessons, and trail rides. We envision the expansion and improvement of horse facilities to be a Phased process.

In the 2012 survey, homeowners indicated modest support for riding competitions and riding lessons, with 16% strongly supporting and 41% somewhat supporting the addition of such amenities.

The Backcountry currently has a small, temporary horse area. Horses are leased and maintained there only during summer months and the facilities are very limited. The HRCA leases twelve horses for \$1,200 per horse and past gross revenue has been approximately \$20,000 with around 500 to 600 riders per year. The HRCA expects to generate additional revenue, as much as \$30,000, this year due to



*Existing horse area in Highlands Ranch.*



*Existing Highlands Ranch office for horse management.*

expanded programs. The program pays for itself, but does not generate net profits. Though it does not generate net profits, it provides unique recreational opportunities for the community.

The recommended new facility would replace, and improve upon, the existing facility. This would be beneficial for multiple reasons. First, it would enable the HRCA to purchase (rather than lease) horses, which is less expensive. Second, improved facilities would enable the HRCA to grow its horse lessons and camps and thus generate greater community opportunities and involvement.

#### *Phase I*

The 2012 Survey results generally disfavored the construction of an indoor/outdoor equestrian event center (63% oppose) and therefore we do not recommend the initial construction of that

type of structure. Rather, Phase I would include a pasture area, fenced outdoor riding areas, loafing shed (for horse cover), and barn type structure to accommodate hay, tack, and field office. If necessary, these facilities could be contained within 5 acres.



*Future outdoor arena.*

The stables would provide the HRCA the capability to own its own horses rather than lease them each summer. The HRCA currently leases 12 horses for each summer. The lease fee per summer is \$1,200 per horse. By contrast, a horse and its tack can be purchased for an estimated \$2,000, depending on the year. Therefore, it costs more to lease a horse for two summers than it costs to purchase a horse outright.

The BPAAC envisions that the HRCA would be flexible in the number of horses that it initially purchases and continue to lease the remaining horses (as needed) during the first couple of years. This would enable the HRCA to better gauge the costs and benefits of year-round ownership. At a minimum, ownership of horses would allow for year around lessons and riding opportunities.

Access to utilities and restrooms are a necessary component of Phase I, along with roads and parking that would most likely be in association with the other recommended amenities. The stables would ideally be located within walking distance of the pavilion and possibly as a backdrop to the pavilion in order to add atmosphere to the events and weddings that would take place at the pavilion. Depending on a number of variables, mostly infrastructure, the upfront investment could be \$100,000 to \$200,000.



*Future horse pens.*

## *Phase II*

In the 2012 survey, homeowners surveyed generally opposed horse boarding—only 33% provided strong or modest support. The BPAAC believes the addition of horse boarding and its associated facilities should be a consideration as part of a potential Phase II. Such facilities would minimally increase the “footprint” and could be a strong and steady revenue generating opportunity. Therefore the siting of the horse facilities should allow for expansion in order to accommodate boarding in the future, if so desired by the community.

## **#4 – Archery Range**

The BPAAC recommends that the HRCA construct a new archery range to expand the opportunities available for HRCA residents. Archery was not in the 2012 survey as the HRCA range was just beginning at that point. Due to its success and popularity, along with ease and



modest costs of construction, maintenance, and operation resulting in a reasonable revenue margin a new archery range would be a good amenity to add.

There is currently an archery range in the Backcountry, but there is no room for expansion and its length is not competition distance. The current range has been open since 2012 and increases in usage and revenue each year. The HRCA has offered archery lessons since 2012, which increase in popularity each year. Some students have gone on to compete in state and national tournaments. The current lesson structure offers Junior Olympic Archery Development in the hopes of developing a local Olympic archer.

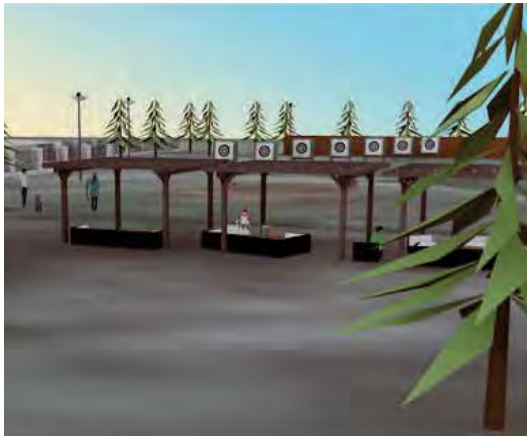
The HRCA also requires residents to pay for an annual pass to use the archery ranges. This would continue as a valuable revenue generating opportunity. With expanded facilities the revenues generated from archery would be expected to grow exponentially.



*Highlands Ranch family shooting as existing archery range.*

### *Phase I*

The BPAAC envisions that Phase I would consist of a new and expanded range that would allow Highlands Ranch archers to



*Rendering of potential archery range.*

practice shooting Olympic distances (100 yards). Depending on interest, use, and the desire of the community, the range could also be used for competitions.

An archery range would need approximately 1 to 2 acres of space. Construction consists of placing targets, ensuring proper backstops or adequate space behind the targets, a firing line, shade structures and tables, and nearby restrooms.

The archery range, in conjunction with the other three amenities and within walking distance of the pavilion, would be an important part of expanded youth camps and programs, team building retreats, and offer the potential for large tournaments and competitions. The cost to construct a basic archery range would be minimal, estimated at \$10,000 to \$50,000.

### *Phase II*

As a potential Phase II, the archery range could be expanded to include additional lanes and/or spectator seating for archery competitions.

### *Phase III*

In addition to the archery range, the Committee suggests HRCA could build an independent 3-D archery range, depending upon the success of the archery range. 3-D archery is a subset of field archery, which focuses on shooting life-size 3-D models of game. The archer walks through a marked trail to a number of targets. The trail is designed similar to a golf course, but the design is on a much smaller scale.

This type of amenity would provide increased opportunities for archers to expand their skills and attract different participants than traditional archery ranges.

## THE SHOOTING LANE



## V. Rational for Recommendations

The BPAAC recommends the four projects explained above because they will help to improve the Highlands Ranch community and provide opportunities for the Backcountry to generate net revenues. Specifically, we believe that these four amenities, along with the expanded trails, are the best recommendations because they:

- Are consistent with and support the objectives outlined in the OSCA Plan;
- Are in line with the community preferences from the 2012 survey;
- Can be built in close proximity to each other to minimize environmental impact;
- Can be built in close proximity to each other to enable the amenities to share parking, utilities, and other infrastructure;
- Are consistent with the outdoor recreation theme and contemplate the type of structures that are conventionally located in parks and ranch areas;
- Have anticipated construction costs that are within the general realm of expectations that have been outlined for the Backcountry;
- Have the ability to generate revenues such that they are, at a minimum, financially self-sustaining;
- Expand the existing archery and equestrian programs, which have already proven successful and popular in the Highlands Ranch community; and
- Provide general economic value to the community by providing increased access to recreational and educational opportunities.

It is important to stress that the recommendations are viewed in conjunction with each other, not as individual projects that should be parceled out. The success and quality of each amenity depends in part on the other amenities with the covered pavilion being the most critical part of the entire recommendation. Without the covered pavilion, the revenue potentials and uses begin to diminish.

## Development in the Backcountry

Beyond the many recreational opportunities already available to residents, the HRCA is considering expanding recreational opportunities in the Backcountry. Homeowners appeared to favor certain projects over others:

- About 9 in 10 homeowners supported trails for hiking, biking, running and horseback riding.
- Three-quarters supported fishing ponds, while about two-thirds supported a ropes/challenge course or concerts, weddings and special events in the Backcountry.
- Homeowners largely opposed projects such as a golf course, an off road bike park or skate park.
- Notably, over one-third of homeowners preferred that the Backcountry be left as is, with no additional recreational amenities of any kind.

In addition to these recreational projects, a variety of non-recreation development opportunities are possible in the Backcountry Planning Areas. However, HRCA homeowner greeted these projects more cautiously:

- Just over half of homeowners supported no development of any kind, preferring that the Planning Areas be left as they are.
- Homeowners were most amenable to the prospect of a nature center, with three-quarters expressing support.
- About 6 in 10 at least “somewhat” supported an outdoor amphitheater or a tree farm.
- Most homeowners were strongly opposed to the cemetery/memorial gardens.

Any one of these development projects must adhere to HRCA zoning requirements before it is put into action. Current zoning allows for some types of uses in the HRCA Planning Areas but not others. Once again, homeowners approached new zoning options with caution:

- Just over half of homeowners at least “somewhat” supported leaving the Planning Areas as they are, with no other uses of any kind.
- Among the possible uses noted on the survey, a fire/police station was most popular, with 56% of homeowners indicating that they at least “somewhat” support this project.
- About half supported animal rescue/rehabilitation facilities, soccer fields, a library and baseball/softball fields.
- In contrast, about 7 in 10 homeowners “somewhat” or “strongly” opposed houses of worship, a college/university and private sports training facilities.

The pursuit of new development projects in the Backcountry will require additional funding from homeowner assessments. When presented with a number of funding options, homeowners appeared to prefer a conservative approach:

- Just over half preferred that there be no increase at all, indicating opposition to new development in the Planning Areas.
- Among the five possible assessment increase plans, about 6 in 10 homeowners supported a 10-year recreational assessment increase of 1-2% (\$4-\$9/year).
- All other proposed assessment plans received substantial opposition, particularly the short-term special assessments.

Whether or not the HRCA chooses to pursue new development projects, existing operations in the Backcountry must be kept afloat. Currently, Backcountry operations are supported by homeowner assessments; however, a few homeowners were open to considering new sources of funding:

- About 7 in 10 “somewhat” or “strongly” supported developing user fees and revenues from new recreation programs.
- However, most homeowners “somewhat” or “strongly” opposed selling or leasing Backcountry property to private entities for either public or private uses.
- Many prefer the system that is already in place, with 8 in 10 homeowners supporting the continued use of homeowner assessments.

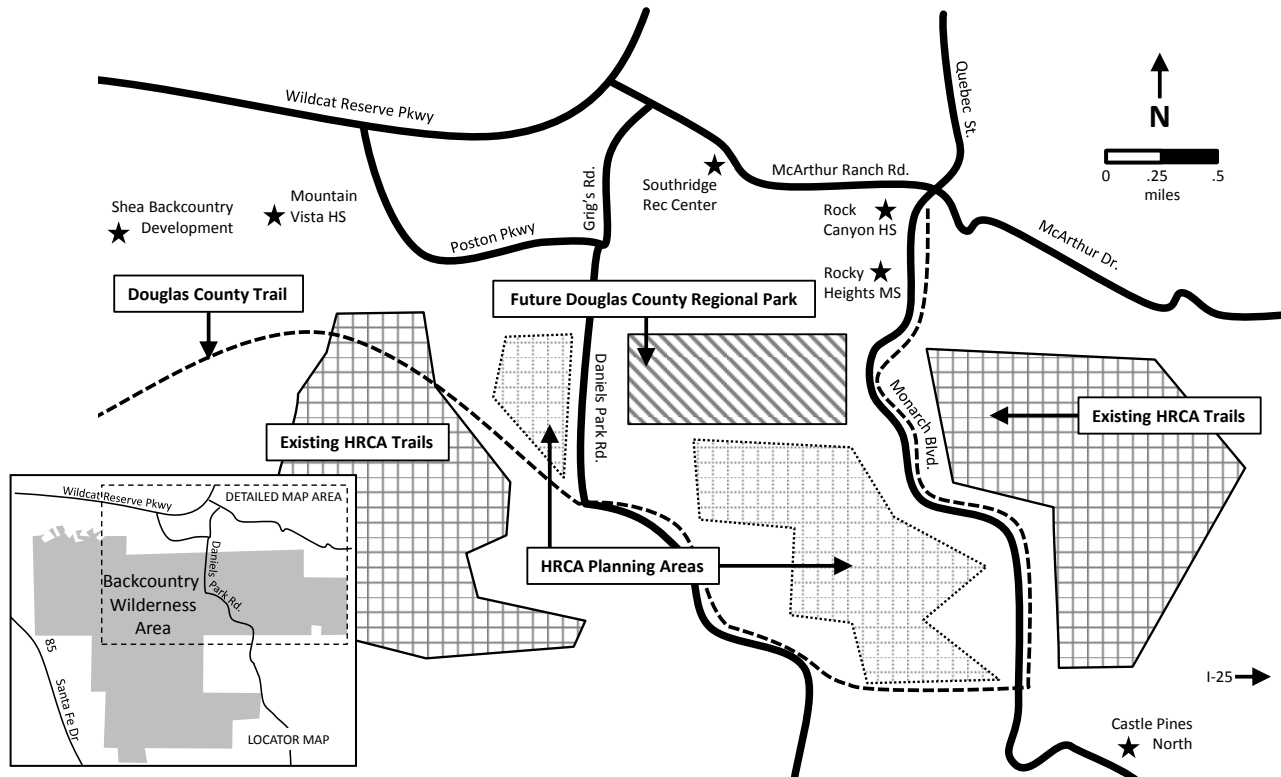
## Conclusion

The results of this survey provide key insights into homeowners’ opinions of and priorities for the HRCA. While most lauded the high quality of current recreational programs and facilities, many homeowners also endorsed plans for improvements and new development. As the HRCA prepares to move forward with such projects, resident opinion should be used in combination with additional data sources, so that the voice of the public can be balanced against the realities of budgeting, population demographics, politics and community resources. Survey results may answer certain questions, but they also raise new ones, motivating additional investigation as a community charts its course of action.

## HRCA Planning Areas and the Backcountry

To assist the HRCA Board of Directors with long-term planning decisions, survey recipients rated a number potential recreational and development opportunities in the HRCA Planning Areas of the Backcountry. The survey included a map (Figure 8) of the Backcountry to help orient respondents to the Planning Areas. Respondents indicated their level of support or opposition to various opportunities as well as funding preferences.

FIGURE 8: HRCA COMMUNITY SURVEY STUDY AREA



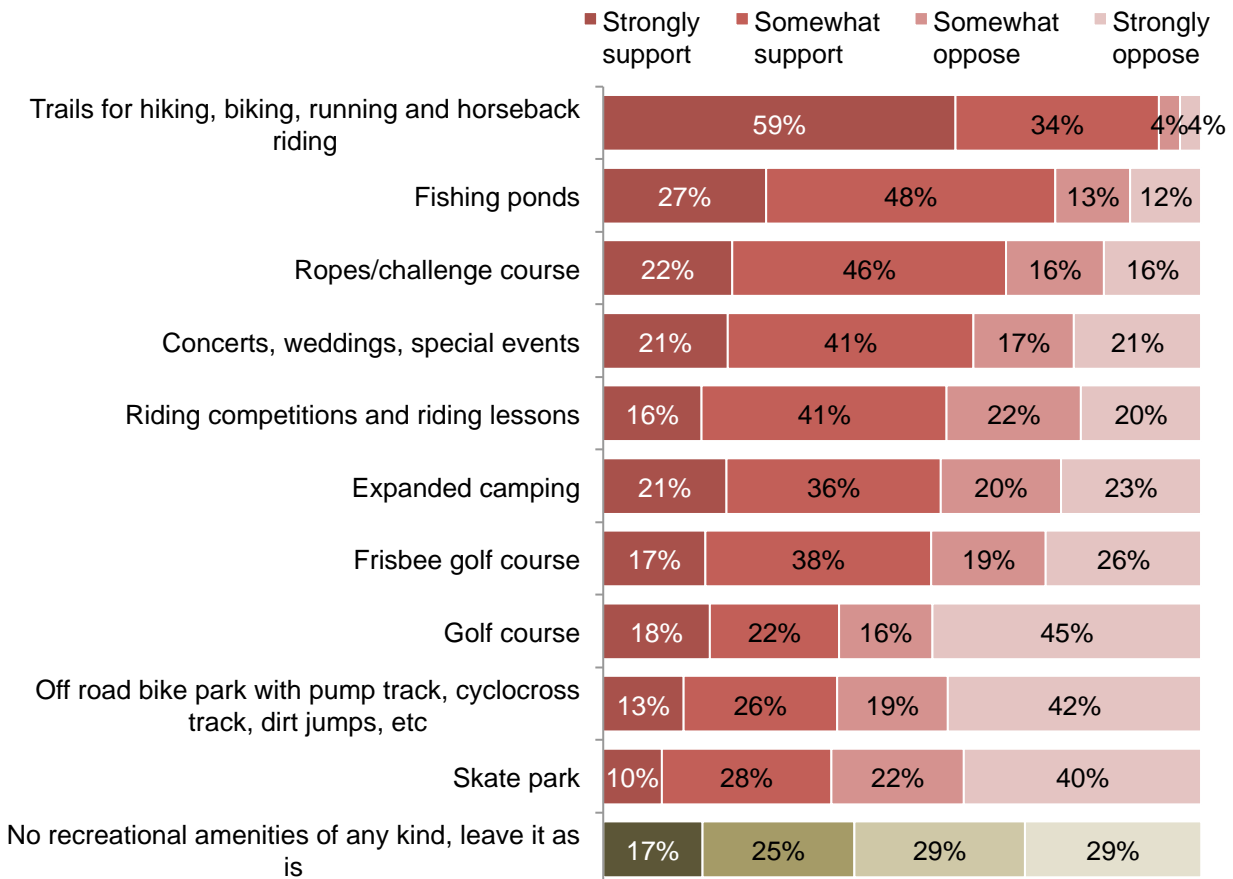
## Development in the Backcountry

While the HRCA already offers varied recreational opportunities for its residents, the Backcountry offerings could be expanded. The survey asked homeowners to rate their level of support for a variety of potential pursuits related to the HRCA Planning Areas. Although 42% of residents advocated for no additional recreational amenities of any kind, most of the new amenities were favored by a majority. Most strikingly, 9 in 10 residents indicated their support for hiking, biking, running and horseback riding trails, with 6 in 10 indicating strong support. Three-quarters supported fishing ponds and two-thirds supported a ropes/challenge course. Recreational opportunities receiving the least support included a golf course, an off road bike park and a skate park, with around 4 in 10 residents indicating strong opposition to these pursuits.

Respondents were also permitted to write in an “other” potential recreational opportunity in the HRCA Planning Areas and provide a rating for it. About 60 respondents wrote in their own response. These write-in responses can be found in *Appendix A: Verbatim Responses to Open-ended Questions*.

FIGURE 12: POTENTIAL RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES IN HRCA PLANNING AREAS

*Thinking about potential recreational opportunities in HRCA Planning Areas, please indicate your level of support for the following pursuits.*



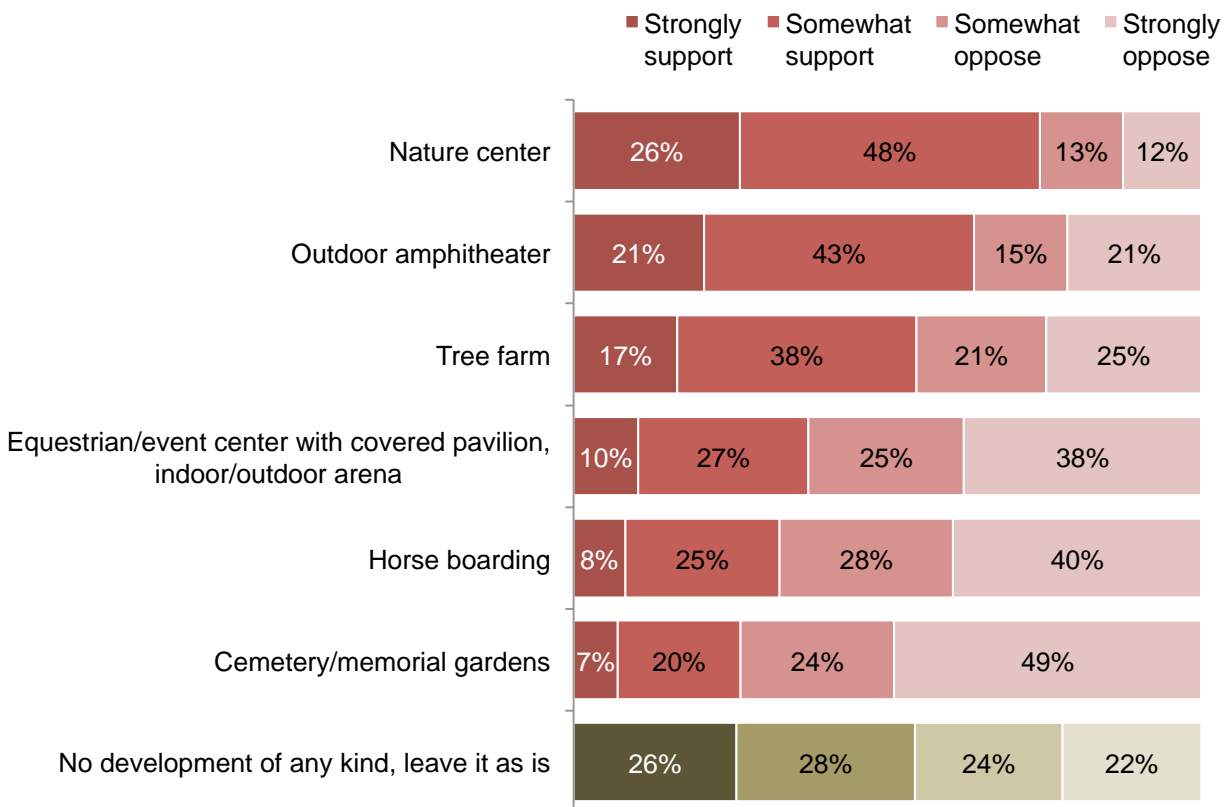
Prepared by National Research Center, Inc.

In addition to possible new recreational amenities, the Backcountry presents opportunities for new non-recreation development in the Planning Areas. In general, HRCA members greeted these development options more cautiously than the recreation possibilities and 54% supported no development of any kind, advocating that the Planning Areas be left as they are. Homeowners expressed the greatest support for a nature center, with three-quarters of homeowners indicating support. Approximately 6 in 10 residents at least “somewhat” supported an outdoor amphitheater and a tree farm. The least popular development opportunity was the cemetery/memorial gardens; half of residents indicated strong opposition to this pursuit.

In addition to rating the list of development opportunities, respondents were permitted to write in and rate an “other” development opportunity in the HRCA Planning Areas. About 45 respondents wrote in their own response. These write-in responses can be found in *Appendix A: Verbatim Responses to Open-ended Questions*.

FIGURE 13: POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN HRCA PLANNING AREAS

*Thinking about potential development opportunities in HRCA Planning Areas, please indicate your level of support for the following pursuits.*



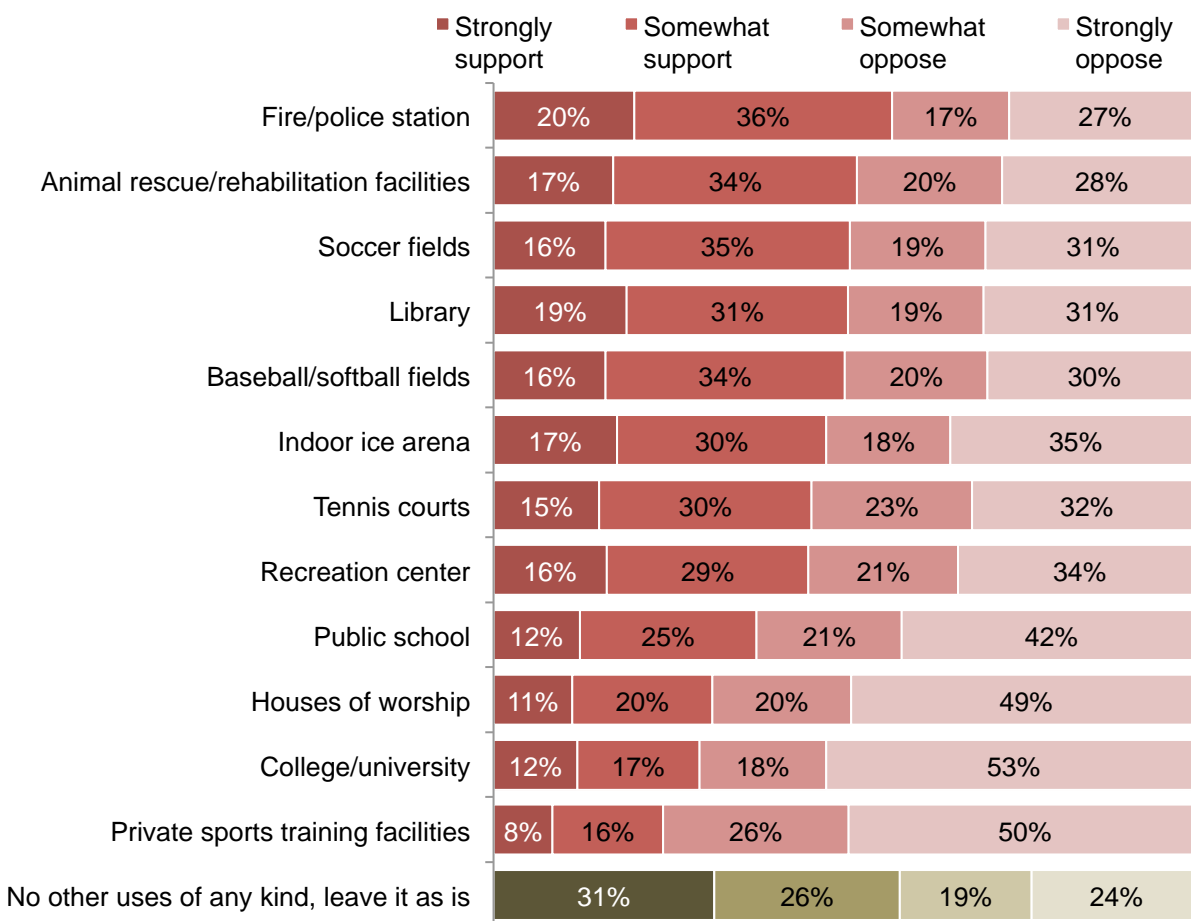
Prepared by National Research Center, Inc.

Any additional development in the Backcountry must adhere to HRCA zoning requirements. Current zoning allows for several types of uses in the HRCA Planning Areas. The survey asked homeowners to consider these uses and to indicate their level of support for 12 potential new projects. Fifty-seven percent of homeowners at least “somewhat” supported leaving the Planning Areas as they are, with no other uses of any kind. Among the possible uses noted on the survey, 56% “somewhat” or “strongly” supported a fire/police station and about half expressed support for animal rescue/rehabilitation facilities, soccer fields, a library and baseball/softball fields. Homeowners voiced the strongest opposition toward uses for houses of worship, a college/university and for private sports training facilities; about 7 in 10 residents opposed these pursuits with roughly half in strong opposition.

Respondents were also permitted to write in and rate an “other” use in the HRCA Planning Areas. About 30 respondents wrote in their own response. These write-in responses can be found in *Appendix A: Verbatim Responses to Open-ended Questions*.

FIGURE 14: POTENTIAL USES IN HRCA PLANNING AREAS

*Current zoning allows several other types of uses in HRCA Planning Areas. Thinking about those uses, please indicate your level of support for the following pursuits.*



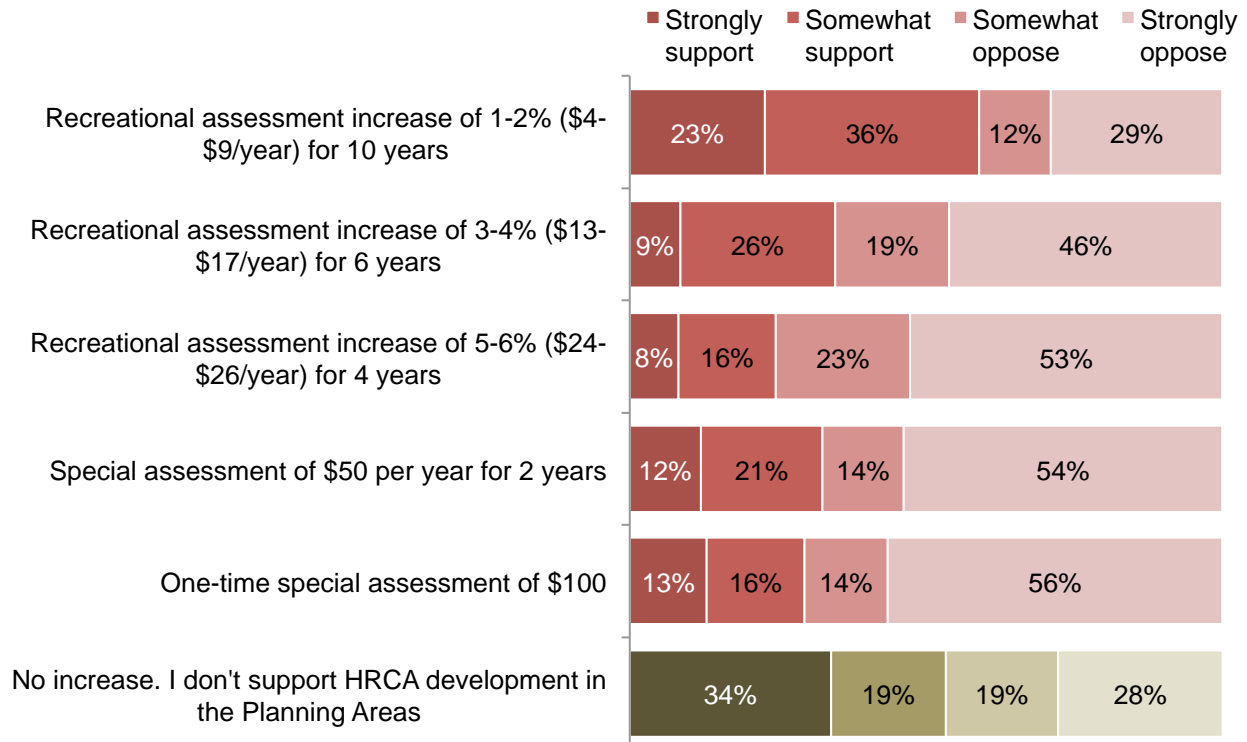
Prepared by National Research Center, Inc.



New Backcountry amenities would require funding through homeowner assessments. Survey respondents were asked how they would prefer to generate the increased funding. Overall, homeowners preferred an increase of 1-2% (\$4-\$9/year) for 10 years (59% “strongly” or “somewhat” supporting) or no increase (54% “strongly” or “somewhat” supporting). The remaining funding proposals garnered less support from HRCA members, with about half of all residents expressing strong opposition to these plans.

FIGURE 15: FUNDING FOR BACKCOUNTRY AMENITIES

*New Backcountry amenities could be funded in a number of ways. Thinking about any new amenities in the Backcountry, please indicate your level of support for the following funding approaches.*

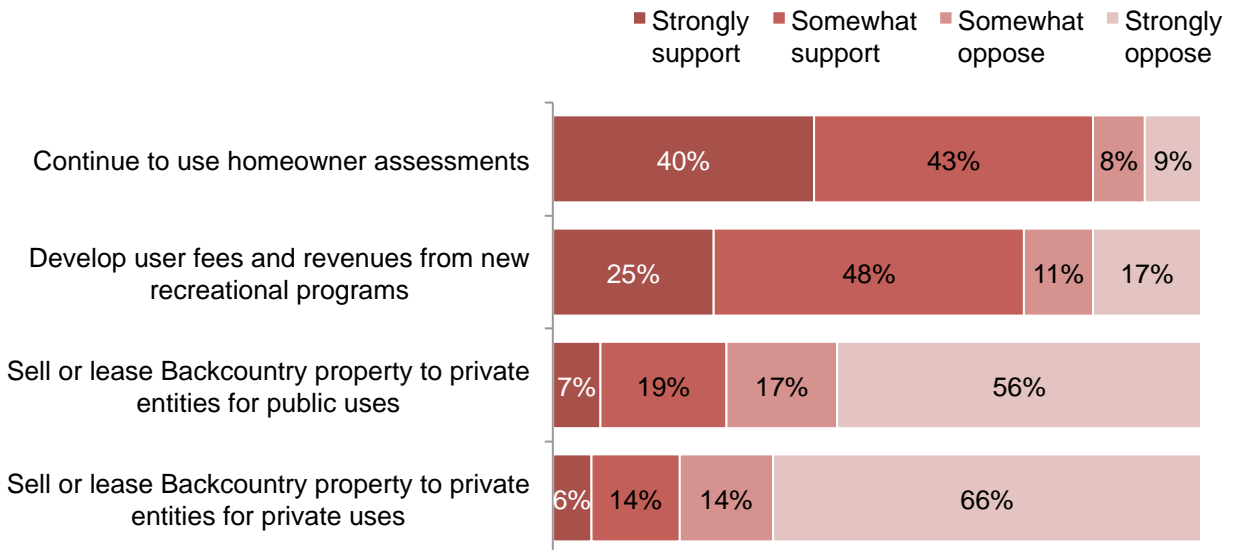


Prepared by National Research Center, Inc.

Regardless of where residents stand on issues of new development in the Backcountry, existing operations must be kept afloat. Currently, the cost of Backcountry operations is funded by homeowner assessments; however, program and user fees and/or revenue from the sale of land could at least partially fund Backcountry expenses. Residents were asked to weigh in on how the HRCA should proceed with funding Backcountry operations. Most residents (83%) supported the continued use of homeowner assessments, while nearly as many (73%) also supported the development of user fees and revenues from new recreation programs. In contrast, the majority of residents expressed strong opposition to the sale or lease of Backcountry property to private entities for either public or private uses.

FIGURE 16: FUNDING FOR BACKCOUNTRY OPERATIONS

*Currently, the cost of Backcountry operations is funded by homeowner assessments. Program and user fees and/or revenue from the sale of land could partially or fully fund the operations expenses for the Backcountry. Thinking about operations expenses for the Backcountry, please indicate your level of support for the following funding approaches.*



## Appendix B: Responses to Survey Questions

### Responses Excluding “Don’t Know”

The following pages contain a complete set of responses to each question on the survey, excluding the “don’t know” responses.

TABLE 1: QUESTION 1

Please indicate your level of familiarity with the following Backcountry features.	Very familiar	Somewhat familiar	Not at all familiar	Total
HRCA Backcountry trail system	22%	43%	35%	100%
Douglas County East/West trail system	21%	40%	40%	100%
Protected/wildlife sanctuary areas	9%	38%	53%	100%
HRCA Planning Areas	7%	33%	61%	100%
Future Douglas County Regional Park	6%	27%	67%	100%
Community Involvement Process (CIP) for Backcountry planning areas	2%	18%	80%	100%

TABLE 2: QUESTION 2

Please indicate your level of familiarity with the following Backcountry activities.	Very familiar	Somewhat familiar	Not at all familiar	Total
Youth camps	4%	29%	66%	100%
Hay rides	6%	39%	55%	100%
Horseback trail rides	8%	38%	54%	100%
Elk hunting	5%	20%	75%	100%
Elk bugling/photo hunts	4%	20%	76%	100%
Archery lessons	4%	22%	74%	100%
Archery range	5%	22%	73%	100%
Firearms classes	3%	17%	80%	100%
Nature hikes	9%	41%	49%	100%
Private parties such as birthday parties, etc.	7%	28%	65%	100%
Volunteer program/opportunities	5%	28%	66%	100%

TABLE 3: QUESTION 3

Today the HRCA Backcountry trails (not including the Douglas County East/West Regional Trail) are owned by HRCA members, and usage is restricted to members who are allowed to use the HRCA recreation centers and their guests. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements.	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
The trails should remain private, accessed only by members and their guests	47%	29%	15%	9%	100%
The trails should be open to the general public for no fee	10%	14%	20%	56%	100%
The trails should be open to any non-member who pays a fee	14%	40%	19%	28%	100%

TABLE 4: QUESTION 4

Thinking about potential recreational opportunities in HRCA Planning Areas (see map on the cover letter), please indicate your level of support for the following pursuits.	Strongly support	Somewhat support	Somewhat oppose	Strongly oppose	Total
No recreational amenities of any kind, leave it as is	17%	25%	29%	29%	100%
Trails for hiking, biking, running and horseback riding	59%	34%	4%	4%	100%
Expanded camping	21%	36%	20%	23%	100%
Riding competitions and riding lessons	16%	41%	22%	20%	100%
Golf course	18%	22%	16%	45%	100%
Ropes/challenge course	22%	46%	16%	16%	100%
Concerts, weddings, special events	21%	41%	17%	21%	100%
Skate park	10%	28%	22%	40%	100%
Off road bike park with pump track, cyclocross track, dirt jumps, etc.	13%	26%	19%	42%	100%
Frisbee golf course	17%	38%	19%	26%	100%
Fishing ponds	27%	48%	13%	12%	100%
Other	84%	3%	4%	9%	100%

TABLE 5: QUESTION 5

Thinking about potential development opportunities in HRCA Planning Areas (see map on the cover letter), please indicate your level of support for the following pursuits.	Strongly support	Somewhat support	Somewhat oppose	Strongly oppose	Total
No development of any kind, leave it as is	26%	28%	24%	22%	100%
Outdoor amphitheater	21%	43%	15%	21%	100%
Nature center	26%	48%	13%	12%	100%
Cemetery/memorial gardens	7%	20%	24%	49%	100%
Equestrian/event center with covered pavilion, indoor/outdoor arena	10%	27%	25%	38%	100%
Tree farm	17%	38%	21%	25%	100%
Horse boarding	8%	25%	28%	40%	100%
Other	63%	3%	12%	22%	100%

TABLE 6: QUESTION 6

Current zoning allows several other types of uses in HRCA Planning Areas (see map on the cover letter).Thinking about those uses, please indicate your level of support for the following pursuits.	Strongly support	Somewhat support	Somewhat oppose	Strongly oppose	Total
No other uses of any kind, leave it as is	31%	26%	19%	24%	100%
Recreation center	16%	29%	21%	34%	100%
Indoor ice arena	17%	30%	18%	35%	100%
Baseball/softball fields	16%	34%	20%	30%	100%
Soccer fields	16%	35%	19%	31%	100%
Tennis courts	15%	30%	23%	32%	100%
Private sports training facilities	8%	16%	26%	50%	100%
Animal rescue/rehabilitation facilities	17%	34%	20%	28%	100%
Houses of worship	11%	20%	20%	49%	100%
Fire/police station	20%	36%	17%	27%	100%
Library	19%	31%	19%	31%	100%
College/university	12%	17%	18%	53%	100%
Public school	12%	25%	21%	42%	100%
Other	78%	16%	6%	0%	100%

TABLE 7: QUESTION 7

New Backcountry amenities could be funded in a number of ways. Thinking about any new amenities in the Backcountry, please indicate your level of support for the following funding approaches.	Strongly support	Somewhat support	Somewhat oppose	Strongly oppose	Total
No increase. I don't support HRCA development in the Planning Areas	34%	19%	19%	28%	100%
Recreational assessment increase of 1-2% (\$4-\$9/year) for 10 years	23%	36%	12%	29%	100%
Recreational assessment increase of 3-4% (\$13-\$17/year) for 6 years	9%	26%	19%	46%	100%
Recreational assessment increase of 5-6% (\$24-\$26/year) for 4 years	8%	16%	23%	53%	100%
Special assessment of \$50 per year for 2 years	12%	21%	14%	54%	100%
One-time special assessment of \$100	13%	16%	14%	56%	100%

TABLE 8: QUESTION 8

Currently, the cost of Backcountry operations is funded by homeowner assessments. Program and user fees and/or revenue from the sale of land could partially or fully fund the operations expenses for the Backcountry. Thinking about operations expenses for the Backcountry, please indicate your level of support for the following funding approaches.	Strongly support	Somewhat support	Somewhat oppose	Strongly oppose	Total
Continue to use homeowner assessments	40%	43%	8%	9%	100%
Develop user fees and revenues from new recreational programs	25%	48%	11%	17%	100%
Sell or lease Backcountry property to private entities for public uses	7%	19%	17%	56%	100%
Sell or lease Backcountry property to private entities for private uses	6%	14%	14%	66%	100%

The ropes course would be expected to serve as a meaningful revenue source for the Backcountry. By way of example only, our investigation suggests that a top-line \$400,000 course in a low-population area (unlike Highlands Ranch) generated \$80,000 in annual revenues during its first-year of operations (\$50.00 / adult). Given the relatively dense population of Highlands Ranch and the surrounding schools and businesses, we anticipate that even stronger revenues could be generated by a ropes course in the Backcountry.

### **#3 – Horse facilities / activities**

The BPAAC recommends that the HRCA construct horse stables to allow for expanded opportunity in horse camps, riding lessons, therapeutic riding lessons, and trail rides. We envision the expansion and improvement of horse facilities to be a Phased process.

In the 2012 survey, homeowners indicated modest support for riding competitions and riding lessons, with 16% strongly supporting and 41% somewhat supporting the addition of such amenities.

The Backcountry currently has a small, temporary horse area. Horses are leased and maintained there only during summer months and the facilities are very limited. The HRCA leases twelve horses for \$1,200 per horse and past gross revenue has been approximately \$20,000 with around 500 to 600 riders per year. The HRCA expects to generate additional revenue, as much as \$30,000, this year due to



*Existing horse area in Highlands Ranch.*



*Existing Highlands Ranch office for horse management.*

expanded programs. The program pays for itself, but does not generate net profits. Though it does not generate net profits, it provides unique recreational opportunities for the community.

The recommended new facility would replace, and improve upon, the existing facility. This would be beneficial for multiple reasons. First, it would enable the HRCA to purchase (rather than lease) horses, which is less expensive. Second, improved facilities would enable the HRCA to grow its horse lessons and camps and thus generate greater community opportunities and involvement.

#### *Phase I*

The 2012 Survey results generally disfavored the construction of an indoor/outdoor equestrian event center (63% oppose) and therefore we do not recommend the initial construction of that

type of structure. Rather, Phase I would include a pasture area, fenced outdoor riding areas, loafing shed (for horse cover), and barn type structure to accommodate hay, tack, and field office. If necessary, these facilities could be contained within 5 acres.



*Future outdoor arena.*

The stables would provide the HRCA the capability to own its own horses rather than lease them each summer. The HRCA currently leases 12 horses for each summer. The lease fee per summer is \$1,200 per horse. By contrast, a horse and its tack can be purchased for an estimated \$2,000, depending on the year. Therefore, it costs more to lease a horse for two summers than it costs to purchase a horse outright.

The BPAAC envisions that the HRCA would be flexible in the number of horses that it initially purchases and continue to lease the remaining horses (as needed) during the first couple of years. This would enable the HRCA to better gauge the costs and benefits of year-round ownership. At a minimum, ownership of horses would allow for year around lessons and riding opportunities.

Access to utilities and restrooms are a necessary component of Phase I, along with roads and parking that would most likely be in association with the other recommended amenities. The stables would ideally be located within walking distance of the pavilion and possibly as a backdrop to the pavilion in order to add atmosphere to the events and weddings that would take place at the pavilion. Depending on a number of variables, mostly infrastructure, the upfront investment could be \$100,000 to \$200,000.



*Future horse pens.*

## *Phase II*

In the 2012 survey, homeowners surveyed generally opposed horse boarding—only 33% provided strong or modest support. The BPAAC believes the addition of horse boarding and its associated facilities should be a consideration as part of a potential Phase II. Such facilities would minimally increase the “footprint” and could be a strong and steady revenue generating opportunity. Therefore the siting of the horse facilities should allow for expansion in order to accommodate boarding in the future, if so desired by the community.

## **#4 – Archery Range**

The BPAAC recommends that the HRCA construct a new archery range to expand the opportunities available for HRCA residents. Archery was not in the 2012 survey as the HRCA range was just beginning at that point. Due to its success and popularity, along with ease and



modest costs of construction, maintenance, and operation resulting in a reasonable revenue margin a new archery range would be a good amenity to add.

There is currently an archery range in the Backcountry, but there is no room for expansion and its length is not competition distance. The current range has been open since 2012 and increases in usage and revenue each year. The HRCA has offered archery lessons since 2012, which increase in popularity each year. Some students have gone on to compete in state and national tournaments. The current lesson structure offers Junior Olympic Archery Development in the hopes of developing a local Olympic archer.

The HRCA also requires residents to pay for an annual pass to use the archery ranges. This would continue as a valuable revenue generating opportunity. With expanded facilities the revenues generated from archery would be expected to grow exponentially.



*Highlands Ranch family shooting as existing archery range.*

### *Phase I*

The BPAAC envisions that Phase I would consist of a new and expanded range that would allow Highlands Ranch archers to



*Rendering of potential archery range.*

practice shooting Olympic distances (100 yards). Depending on interest, use, and the desire of the community, the range could also be used for competitions.

An archery range would need approximately 1 to 2 acres of space. Construction consists of placing targets, ensuring proper backstops or adequate space behind the targets, a firing line, shade structures and tables, and nearby restrooms.

The archery range, in conjunction with the other three amenities and within walking distance of the pavilion, would be an important part of expanded youth camps and programs, team building retreats, and offer the potential for large tournaments and competitions. The cost to construct a basic archery range would be minimal, estimated at \$10,000 to \$50,000.

### *Phase II*

As a potential Phase II, the archery range could be expanded to include additional lanes and/or spectator seating for archery competitions.

### *Phase III*

In addition to the archery range, the Committee suggests HRCA could build an independent 3-D archery range, depending upon the success of the archery range. 3-D archery is a subset of field archery, which focuses on shooting life-size 3-D models of game. The archer walks through a marked trail to a number of targets. The trail is designed similar to a golf course, but the design is on a much smaller scale.

This type of amenity would provide increased opportunities for archers to expand their skills and attract different participants than traditional archery ranges.

## THE SHOOTING LANE



## V. Rational for Recommendations

The BPAAC recommends the four projects explained above because they will help to improve the Highlands Ranch community and provide opportunities for the Backcountry to generate net revenues. Specifically, we believe that these four amenities, along with the expanded trails, are the best recommendations because they:

- Are consistent with and support the objectives outlined in the OSCA Plan;
- Are in line with the community preferences from the 2012 survey;
- Can be built in close proximity to each other to minimize environmental impact;
- Can be built in close proximity to each other to enable the amenities to share parking, utilities, and other infrastructure;
- Are consistent with the outdoor recreation theme and contemplate the type of structures that are conventionally located in parks and ranch areas;
- Have anticipated construction costs that are within the general realm of expectations that have been outlined for the Backcountry;
- Have the ability to generate revenues such that they are, at a minimum, financially self-sustaining;
- Expand the existing archery and equestrian programs, which have already proven successful and popular in the Highlands Ranch community; and
- Provide general economic value to the community by providing increased access to recreational and educational opportunities.

It is important to stress that the recommendations are viewed in conjunction with each other, not as individual projects that should be parceled out. The success and quality of each amenity depends in part on the other amenities with the covered pavilion being the most critical part of the entire recommendation. Without the covered pavilion, the revenue potentials and uses begin to diminish.

## Development in the Backcountry

Beyond the many recreational opportunities already available to residents, the HRCA is considering expanding recreational opportunities in the Backcountry. Homeowners appeared to favor certain projects over others:

- About 9 in 10 homeowners supported trails for hiking, biking, running and horseback riding.
- Three-quarters supported fishing ponds, while about two-thirds supported a ropes/challenge course or concerts, weddings and special events in the Backcountry.
- Homeowners largely opposed projects such as a golf course, an off road bike park or skate park.
- Notably, over one-third of homeowners preferred that the Backcountry be left as is, with no additional recreational amenities of any kind.

In addition to these recreational projects, a variety of non-recreation development opportunities are possible in the Backcountry Planning Areas. However, HRCA homeowner greeted these projects more cautiously:

- Just over half of homeowners supported no development of any kind, preferring that the Planning Areas be left as they are.
- Homeowners were most amenable to the prospect of a nature center, with three-quarters expressing support.
- About 6 in 10 at least “somewhat” supported an outdoor amphitheater or a tree farm.
- Most homeowners were strongly opposed to the cemetery/memorial gardens.

Any one of these development projects must adhere to HRCA zoning requirements before it is put into action. Current zoning allows for some types of uses in the HRCA Planning Areas but not others. Once again, homeowners approached new zoning options with caution:

- Just over half of homeowners at least “somewhat” supported leaving the Planning Areas as they are, with no other uses of any kind.
- Among the possible uses noted on the survey, a fire/police station was most popular, with 56% of homeowners indicating that they at least “somewhat” support this project.
- About half supported animal rescue/rehabilitation facilities, soccer fields, a library and baseball/softball fields.
- In contrast, about 7 in 10 homeowners “somewhat” or “strongly” opposed houses of worship, a college/university and private sports training facilities.

The pursuit of new development projects in the Backcountry will require additional funding from homeowner assessments. When presented with a number of funding options, homeowners appeared to prefer a conservative approach:

- Just over half preferred that there be no increase at all, indicating opposition to new development in the Planning Areas.
- Among the five possible assessment increase plans, about 6 in 10 homeowners supported a 10-year recreational assessment increase of 1-2% (\$4-\$9/year).
- All other proposed assessment plans received substantial opposition, particularly the short-term special assessments.

Whether or not the HRCA chooses to pursue new development projects, existing operations in the Backcountry must be kept afloat. Currently, Backcountry operations are supported by homeowner assessments; however, a few homeowners were open to considering new sources of funding:

- About 7 in 10 “somewhat” or “strongly” supported developing user fees and revenues from new recreation programs.
- However, most homeowners “somewhat” or “strongly” opposed selling or leasing Backcountry property to private entities for either public or private uses.
- Many prefer the system that is already in place, with 8 in 10 homeowners supporting the continued use of homeowner assessments.

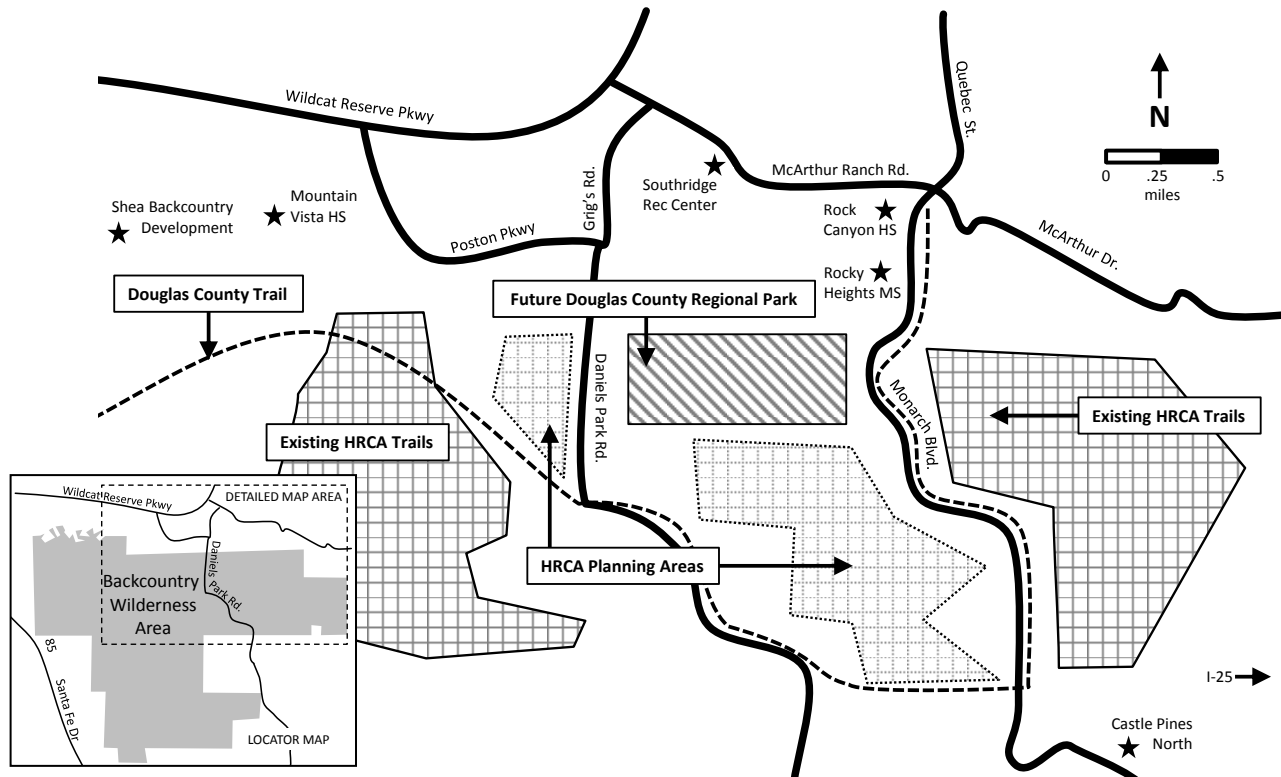
## Conclusion

The results of this survey provide key insights into homeowners’ opinions of and priorities for the HRCA. While most lauded the high quality of current recreational programs and facilities, many homeowners also endorsed plans for improvements and new development. As the HRCA prepares to move forward with such projects, resident opinion should be used in combination with additional data sources, so that the voice of the public can be balanced against the realities of budgeting, population demographics, politics and community resources. Survey results may answer certain questions, but they also raise new ones, motivating additional investigation as a community charts its course of action.

## HRCA Planning Areas and the Backcountry

To assist the HRCA Board of Directors with long-term planning decisions, survey recipients rated a number potential recreational and development opportunities in the HRCA Planning Areas of the Backcountry. The survey included a map (Figure 8) of the Backcountry to help orient respondents to the Planning Areas. Respondents indicated their level of support or opposition to various opportunities as well as funding preferences.

FIGURE 8: HRCA COMMUNITY SURVEY STUDY AREA



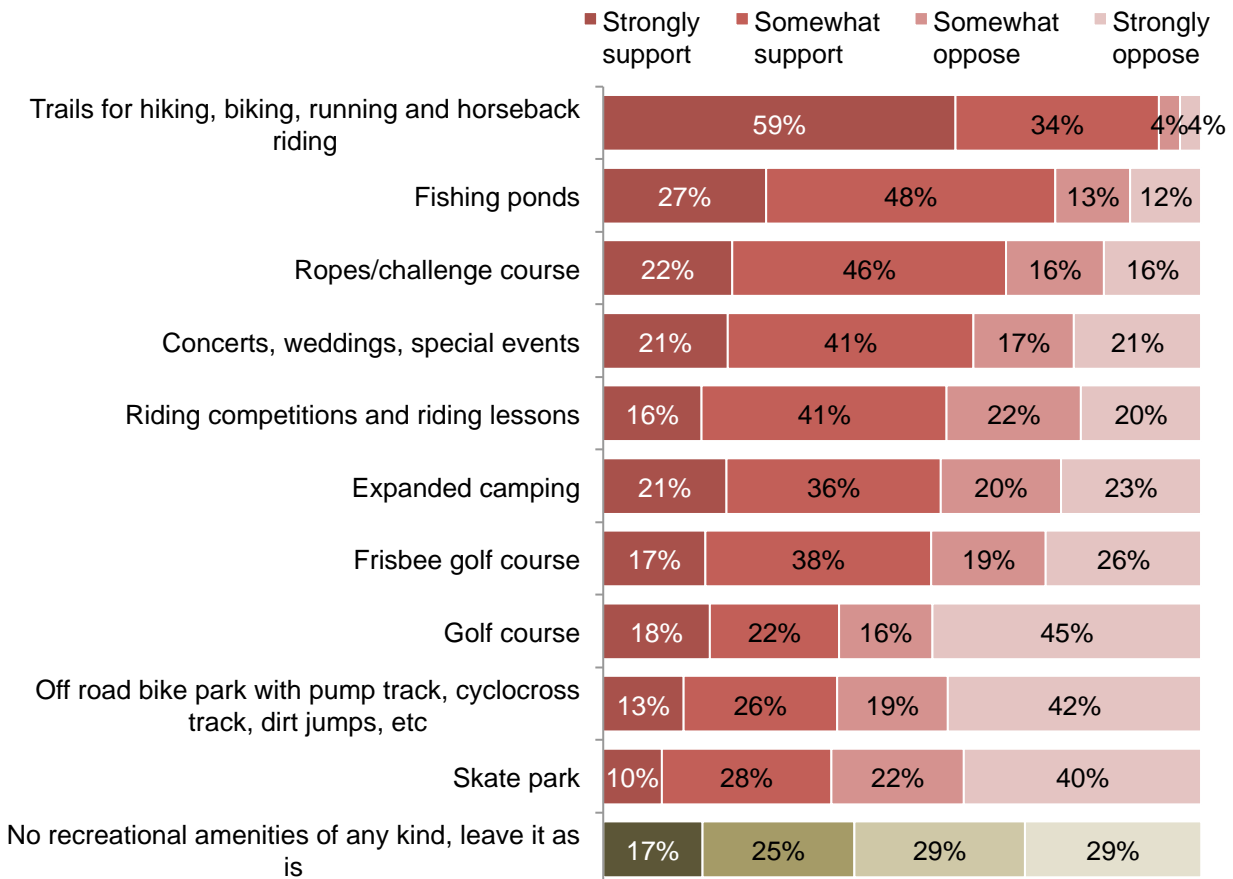
## Development in the Backcountry

While the HRCA already offers varied recreational opportunities for its residents, the Backcountry offerings could be expanded. The survey asked homeowners to rate their level of support for a variety of potential pursuits related to the HRCA Planning Areas. Although 42% of residents advocated for no additional recreational amenities of any kind, most of the new amenities were favored by a majority. Most strikingly, 9 in 10 residents indicated their support for hiking, biking, running and horseback riding trails, with 6 in 10 indicating strong support. Three-quarters supported fishing ponds and two-thirds supported a ropes/challenge course. Recreational opportunities receiving the least support included a golf course, an off road bike park and a skate park, with around 4 in 10 residents indicating strong opposition to these pursuits.

Respondents were also permitted to write in an “other” potential recreational opportunity in the HRCA Planning Areas and provide a rating for it. About 60 respondents wrote in their own response. These write-in responses can be found in *Appendix A: Verbatim Responses to Open-ended Questions*.

FIGURE 12: POTENTIAL RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES IN HRCA PLANNING AREAS

*Thinking about potential recreational opportunities in HRCA Planning Areas, please indicate your level of support for the following pursuits.*



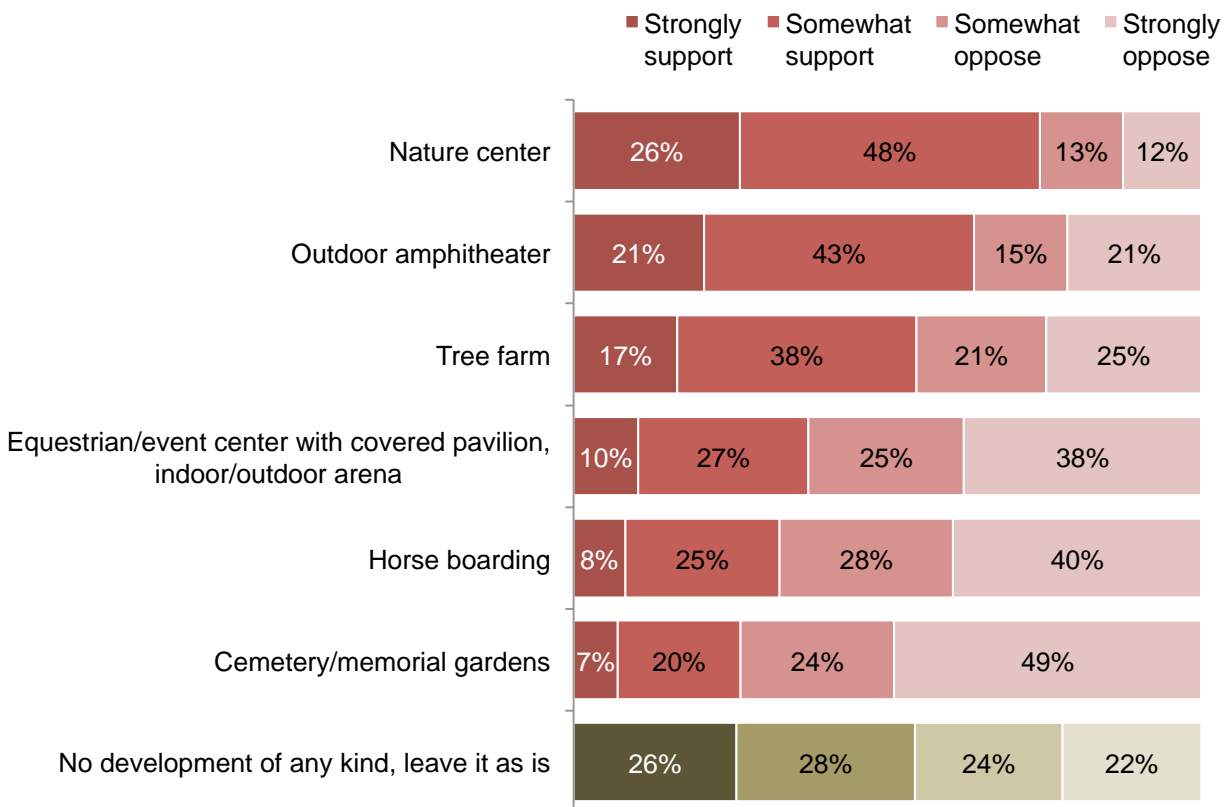
Prepared by National Research Center, Inc.

In addition to possible new recreational amenities, the Backcountry presents opportunities for new non-recreation development in the Planning Areas. In general, HRCA members greeted these development options more cautiously than the recreation possibilities and 54% supported no development of any kind, advocating that the Planning Areas be left as they are. Homeowners expressed the greatest support for a nature center, with three-quarters of homeowners indicating support. Approximately 6 in 10 residents at least “somewhat” supported an outdoor amphitheater and a tree farm. The least popular development opportunity was the cemetery/memorial gardens; half of residents indicated strong opposition to this pursuit.

In addition to rating the list of development opportunities, respondents were permitted to write in and rate an “other” development opportunity in the HRCA Planning Areas. About 45 respondents wrote in their own response. These write-in responses can be found in *Appendix A: Verbatim Responses to Open-ended Questions*.

FIGURE 13: POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN HRCA PLANNING AREAS

*Thinking about potential development opportunities in HRCA Planning Areas, please indicate your level of support for the following pursuits.*



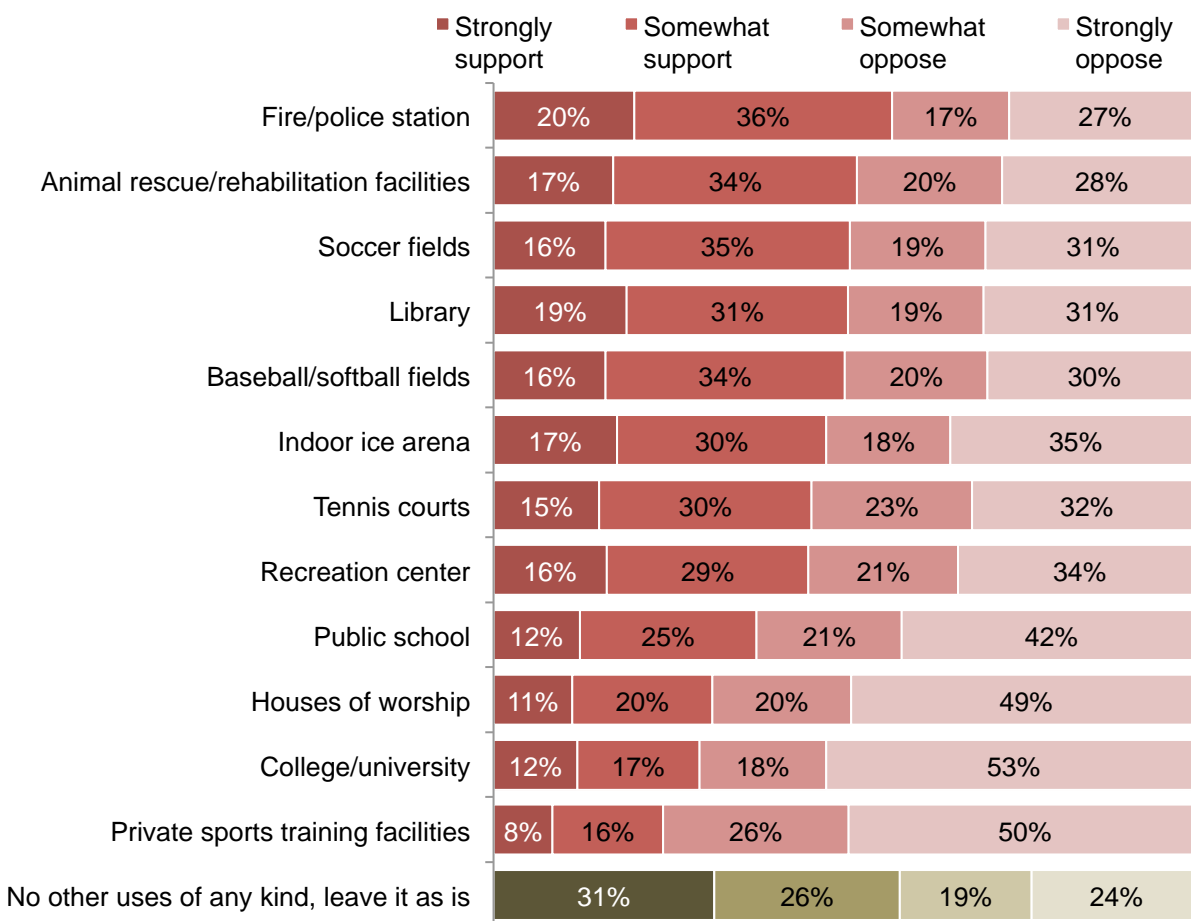
Prepared by National Research Center, Inc.

Any additional development in the Backcountry must adhere to HRCA zoning requirements. Current zoning allows for several types of uses in the HRCA Planning Areas. The survey asked homeowners to consider these uses and to indicate their level of support for 12 potential new projects. Fifty-seven percent of homeowners at least “somewhat” supported leaving the Planning Areas as they are, with no other uses of any kind. Among the possible uses noted on the survey, 56% “somewhat” or “strongly” supported a fire/police station and about half expressed support for animal rescue/rehabilitation facilities, soccer fields, a library and baseball/softball fields. Homeowners voiced the strongest opposition toward uses for houses of worship, a college/university and for private sports training facilities; about 7 in 10 residents opposed these pursuits with roughly half in strong opposition.

Respondents were also permitted to write in and rate an “other” use in the HRCA Planning Areas. About 30 respondents wrote in their own response. These write-in responses can be found in *Appendix A: Verbatim Responses to Open-ended Questions*.

FIGURE 14: POTENTIAL USES IN HRCA PLANNING AREAS

*Current zoning allows several other types of uses in HRCA Planning Areas. Thinking about those uses, please indicate your level of support for the following pursuits.*



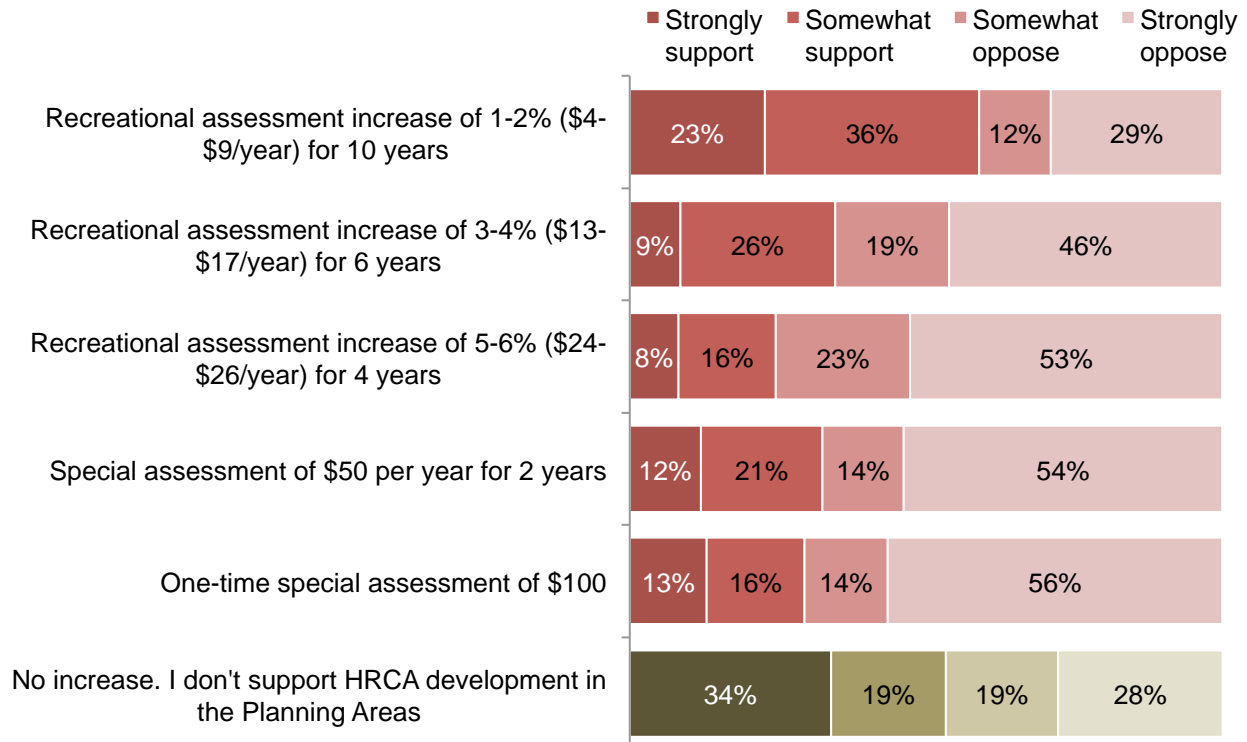
Prepared by National Research Center, Inc.



New Backcountry amenities would require funding through homeowner assessments. Survey respondents were asked how they would prefer to generate the increased funding. Overall, homeowners preferred an increase of 1-2% (\$4-\$9/year) for 10 years (59% “strongly” or “somewhat” supporting) or no increase (54% “strongly” or “somewhat” supporting). The remaining funding proposals garnered less support from HRCA members, with about half of all residents expressing strong opposition to these plans.

FIGURE 15: FUNDING FOR BACKCOUNTRY AMENITIES

*New Backcountry amenities could be funded in a number of ways. Thinking about any new amenities in the Backcountry, please indicate your level of support for the following funding approaches.*

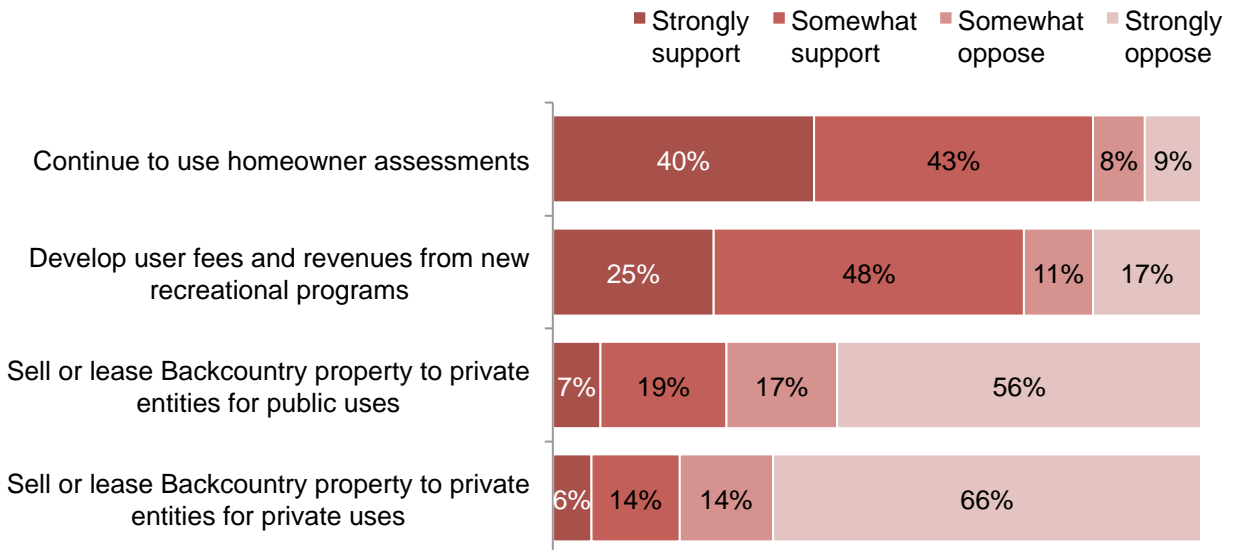


Prepared by National Research Center, Inc.

Regardless of where residents stand on issues of new development in the Backcountry, existing operations must be kept afloat. Currently, the cost of Backcountry operations is funded by homeowner assessments; however, program and user fees and/or revenue from the sale of land could at least partially fund Backcountry expenses. Residents were asked to weigh in on how the HRCA should proceed with funding Backcountry operations. Most residents (83%) supported the continued use of homeowner assessments, while nearly as many (73%) also supported the development of user fees and revenues from new recreation programs. In contrast, the majority of residents expressed strong opposition to the sale or lease of Backcountry property to private entities for either public or private uses.

FIGURE 16: FUNDING FOR BACKCOUNTRY OPERATIONS

*Currently, the cost of Backcountry operations is funded by homeowner assessments. Program and user fees and/or revenue from the sale of land could partially or fully fund the operations expenses for the Backcountry. Thinking about operations expenses for the Backcountry, please indicate your level of support for the following funding approaches.*



## Appendix B: Responses to Survey Questions

### Responses Excluding “Don’t Know”

The following pages contain a complete set of responses to each question on the survey, excluding the “don’t know” responses.

TABLE 1: QUESTION 1

Please indicate your level of familiarity with the following Backcountry features.	Very familiar	Somewhat familiar	Not at all familiar	Total
HRCA Backcountry trail system	22%	43%	35%	100%
Douglas County East/West trail system	21%	40%	40%	100%
Protected/wildlife sanctuary areas	9%	38%	53%	100%
HRCA Planning Areas	7%	33%	61%	100%
Future Douglas County Regional Park	6%	27%	67%	100%
Community Involvement Process (CIP) for Backcountry planning areas	2%	18%	80%	100%

TABLE 2: QUESTION 2

Please indicate your level of familiarity with the following Backcountry activities.	Very familiar	Somewhat familiar	Not at all familiar	Total
Youth camps	4%	29%	66%	100%
Hay rides	6%	39%	55%	100%
Horseback trail rides	8%	38%	54%	100%
Elk hunting	5%	20%	75%	100%
Elk bugling/photo hunts	4%	20%	76%	100%
Archery lessons	4%	22%	74%	100%
Archery range	5%	22%	73%	100%
Firearms classes	3%	17%	80%	100%
Nature hikes	9%	41%	49%	100%
Private parties such as birthday parties, etc.	7%	28%	65%	100%
Volunteer program/opportunities	5%	28%	66%	100%

TABLE 3: QUESTION 3

Today the HRCA Backcountry trails (not including the Douglas County East/West Regional Trail) are owned by HRCA members, and usage is restricted to members who are allowed to use the HRCA recreation centers and their guests. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements.	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
The trails should remain private, accessed only by members and their guests	47%	29%	15%	9%	100%
The trails should be open to the general public for no fee	10%	14%	20%	56%	100%
The trails should be open to any non-member who pays a fee	14%	40%	19%	28%	100%

TABLE 4: QUESTION 4

Thinking about potential recreational opportunities in HRCA Planning Areas (see map on the cover letter), please indicate your level of support for the following pursuits.	Strongly support	Somewhat support	Somewhat oppose	Strongly oppose	Total
No recreational amenities of any kind, leave it as is	17%	25%	29%	29%	100%
Trails for hiking, biking, running and horseback riding	59%	34%	4%	4%	100%
Expanded camping	21%	36%	20%	23%	100%
Riding competitions and riding lessons	16%	41%	22%	20%	100%
Golf course	18%	22%	16%	45%	100%
Ropes/challenge course	22%	46%	16%	16%	100%
Concerts, weddings, special events	21%	41%	17%	21%	100%
Skate park	10%	28%	22%	40%	100%
Off road bike park with pump track, cyclocross track, dirt jumps, etc.	13%	26%	19%	42%	100%
Frisbee golf course	17%	38%	19%	26%	100%
Fishing ponds	27%	48%	13%	12%	100%
Other	84%	3%	4%	9%	100%

TABLE 5: QUESTION 5

Thinking about potential development opportunities in HRCA Planning Areas (see map on the cover letter), please indicate your level of support for the following pursuits.	Strongly support	Somewhat support	Somewhat oppose	Strongly oppose	Total
No development of any kind, leave it as is	26%	28%	24%	22%	100%
Outdoor amphitheater	21%	43%	15%	21%	100%
Nature center	26%	48%	13%	12%	100%
Cemetery/memorial gardens	7%	20%	24%	49%	100%
Equestrian/event center with covered pavilion, indoor/outdoor arena	10%	27%	25%	38%	100%
Tree farm	17%	38%	21%	25%	100%
Horse boarding	8%	25%	28%	40%	100%
Other	63%	3%	12%	22%	100%

TABLE 6: QUESTION 6

Current zoning allows several other types of uses in HRCA Planning Areas (see map on the cover letter).Thinking about those uses, please indicate your level of support for the following pursuits.	Strongly support	Somewhat support	Somewhat oppose	Strongly oppose	Total
No other uses of any kind, leave it as is	31%	26%	19%	24%	100%
Recreation center	16%	29%	21%	34%	100%
Indoor ice arena	17%	30%	18%	35%	100%
Baseball/softball fields	16%	34%	20%	30%	100%
Soccer fields	16%	35%	19%	31%	100%
Tennis courts	15%	30%	23%	32%	100%
Private sports training facilities	8%	16%	26%	50%	100%
Animal rescue/rehabilitation facilities	17%	34%	20%	28%	100%
Houses of worship	11%	20%	20%	49%	100%
Fire/police station	20%	36%	17%	27%	100%
Library	19%	31%	19%	31%	100%
College/university	12%	17%	18%	53%	100%
Public school	12%	25%	21%	42%	100%
Other	78%	16%	6%	0%	100%

TABLE 7: QUESTION 7

New Backcountry amenities could be funded in a number of ways. Thinking about any new amenities in the Backcountry, please indicate your level of support for the following funding approaches.	Strongly support	Somewhat support	Somewhat oppose	Strongly oppose	Total
No increase. I don't support HRCA development in the Planning Areas	34%	19%	19%	28%	100%
Recreational assessment increase of 1-2% (\$4-\$9/year) for 10 years	23%	36%	12%	29%	100%
Recreational assessment increase of 3-4% (\$13-\$17/year) for 6 years	9%	26%	19%	46%	100%
Recreational assessment increase of 5-6% (\$24-\$26/year) for 4 years	8%	16%	23%	53%	100%
Special assessment of \$50 per year for 2 years	12%	21%	14%	54%	100%
One-time special assessment of \$100	13%	16%	14%	56%	100%

TABLE 8: QUESTION 8

Currently, the cost of Backcountry operations is funded by homeowner assessments. Program and user fees and/or revenue from the sale of land could partially or fully fund the operations expenses for the Backcountry. Thinking about operations expenses for the Backcountry, please indicate your level of support for the following funding approaches.	Strongly support	Somewhat support	Somewhat oppose	Strongly oppose	Total
Continue to use homeowner assessments	40%	43%	8%	9%	100%
Develop user fees and revenues from new recreational programs	25%	48%	11%	17%	100%
Sell or lease Backcountry property to private entities for public uses	7%	19%	17%	56%	100%
Sell or lease Backcountry property to private entities for private uses	6%	14%	14%	66%	100%