

Norbeck Society Newsletter – September 2023

Calendar: Outings, Programs, Projects, Volunteering:

- Tentative date for **Norbeck Society annual picnic** is Sunday, October 8, 11 am to 3pm.
- Bob and Kent helped the USFS on the **Spring Creek bridges project**, installing handrails. Due to discovery of a safety/engineering flaw in the bridge design, the volunteer workday for August 26 was cancelled.
- **NS field trip at Wind Cave NP** (Riparian III: Seeps and springs in the Red Valley) was held on July 29. Six people attended. Park Resource Management staff were invited but did not attend.
- **Star Village north slope volunteer opportunity, Thurs. Sept 7 and Fri. 8:** Dan Driscoll (West Dakota Water Development District) is requesting help for rehabbing the slope in the shale. This Thur (9/7) the city will bring in equipment to help Dan rework our access trail going up from the apt bldgs. On Thursday he could use one general purpose swamper or 2 folks splitting AM/PM - might be more sitting in the shade than working, but good to have hands available. On Friday (9/8), he will be topsoiling along the trail. He could use at least 2 rakers/seeders/blanket installers. Please let him know if you're able to help on either day. You can park in the parking lots for the apts just west of East Blvd. Start around 0900 Thursday and 0800 Friday. **Email Dan – wdwdd3@gmail.com**

Issues:

- **Billboards, posters and website:** Three billboards are up now, and two more are yet to come. Billboards are now at Baken Park, on W. Main above Copy Country (sustainable timber question) and E. St Joseph (sustainable OHV use question). Statistics on NS website views in July and August show a significant increase, likely spurred by people viewing the billboards.

Visit NorbeckSociety.com to view information about issues of concern for our organization. This is what the public sees when they visit the Norbeck Society website as a result of viewing the billboards. Information on NS concerns about livestock grazing have been posted on the web page in the last week. Information on issues related to water have not been posted on the website yet.

- **OHV trail system:** Committee members continue to monitor resource damage related to abuse of motorized trails and illegal trail creation. Issues in the Peaceful Pines area and Bald Hills area have been documented and the USFS is being made aware of these and other areas of abuse.
- **Timber management:** The Norbeck Society will be interested to see what data and analysis will be generated by the LIDAR project supposed to be implemented in the next 6-8 months on the Black Hills National Forest to provide more data on the locations, status and conditions of trees. This project seems to have originated from the Rocky Mountain Regional office of the USFS in response to pressure by the timber industry, their lobbyists and federal politicians. It doesn't seem likely to us that LIDAR will produce data supporting high levels of timber harvest. However, it doesn't seem that timber industry will stop pushing until they find new, "more accurate data" that supports their desired management.

- **Important Comment Opportunity – Spruce Project comments due Sept. 23**

Black Hills Projects lead to Timber Harvests on our already overcut forest – please take a moment to submit your comments! The Black Hills National Forest proposes management activities on approximately 3,614 acres in mixed conifer stands. Detailed information will be sent to you in a few days.

- **Important Action Needed from YOU!:**

Timber sales off the Black Hills National Forest for the fiscal year that ends September 30 are about 150% of what can be considered sustainable. The unsustainable harvest is putting wildlife, botanical, soil quality, recreation, fire safety, and other values at high risk. Your voice can make a difference. And so can your dollars:

Given current circumstances, it is necessary to “step up our game” in order to protect the forest assets we all value. The **Norbeck Society Steering Committee has decided to acquire a legal assessment** regarding the unsustainable harvests on the Black Hills National Forest.

We need your help – it will cost around \$9,000.

Please send your donation to: The Norbeck Society, P.O. Box 9730, Rapid City, SD 57709

Questions can be addressed by emailing us at info@norbeckociety.com