

Request for PTHROS Funds for Spruce Mountain Open Space Maintenance

Date: 5/26/2026
To: Douglas County Board of County Commissioners
Through: Douglas J. DeBord, County Manager
From: Dan Dertz, Director of Open Space and Natural Resources
Subject: **Budget Request for Spruce Mountain Open Space Maintenance**

COSAC Meeting:	3/31/2026
Board of County Commissioners:	5/26/2026

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Staff requests supplemental funding from the Open Space Operations, Maintenance and Capital Improvement Projects (O&M/CIP) Fund of the Parks, Trails, Historic Resources and Open Space (PTHROS) sales tax in the amount of up to \$80,000 to improve and maintain the forest access road to Spruce Mountain Open Space. This road is critical for emergency access and is required per the Forest Legacy Conservation Easement Agreement. The Forest Legacy Conservation Easement Agreement was required as part of the purchase agreement that was used to help provide funds to purchase Spruce Mountain Open Space. The O&M/CIP fund has approximately \$11.2M available.

II. BACKGROUND

The PTHROS sales tax resolution provides direction on how funds are distributed between parks, historic resources, and open space. For open space projects, the O&M/CIP receives 20% of the sales tax collected, which is estimated to be approximately \$3.9M in 2026. The 2026 budget approved for Open Space and Natural Resources for O&M/CIP was approximately \$3.2M.

Public Works – Road and Bridge has performed work on the Spruce Mountain access road since the property was purchased as temporary fixes to address public safety and emergency response. The road is utilized as a foot, bike and horse trail for public access and is very steep and rough, as it is built on the side of the mountain. Thus far, they have been unable to address the underlying issues of major erosion and sedimentation to provide a longer-term solution. Staff has engaged Engineering to assist with this long-term solution. The plan includes adding culverts and other appurtenances to direct and slow storm drainage, trap sediment, and stabilize slopes (as required by the easement), while improving public safety and emergency response.

III. COSAC RECOMMENDATION

The County Open Space Advisory Committee (COSAC) reviewed this request on March 31, 2026. COSAC unanimously recommended approving this request from funds available within the Open Space O&M/CIP fund.

IV. STAFF ASSESSMENT

The Board may approve using funds up to \$80,000 from the O&M/CIP from the PTHROS sales tax to maintain the Spruce Mountain Open Space forest road.

ATTACHMENT

Map showing location of improvements

Spruce Mountain / Forest Legacy
Public Trail / Emergency Access
Road
Hwy 105 to Top of Spruce
Mountain

Primary
Erosion
Repair

Secondary
Erosion
Repair

