

The other side of the story...

Karns Improvement Plans?

Town of Jackson officials are addicted to growth; we all know that. When they're not approving massive commercial development, hotels, apartment buildings, subdivisions, condos, restaurants and banks, they're busy trying to buildout town owned properties.

In addition to adding the 7,000 new residents in 2,800 new dwellings, they'd like to 'improve' our parks. Perhaps their most egregious park plan is to urbanize Karns Meadow.

A three-phase plan was recently unveiled for this 47-acre parcel of pristine wetlands. Karns Meadow would be "improved" with multiple pathways, two bridges over Flat Creek, bike racks, park benches, pavilions and picnic shelters. They plan permanent restrooms too.

The \$500,000 project, funded by the Land Trust, is yet another example of how town keeps chipping away at this very generous pennies-on-the-dollar "gift" from the Karns family. Plans call for affordable housing as well.

Since acquiring the property, the Town of Jackson has already plopped down a bus depot and bisected the parcel with a new road running from Broadway to Snow King. They've turned one parcel into two.

Fortunately, some local citizens stepped up to delay this newest madness. 'Friends of Karns Meadow,' including Loren Nelson and many others, stopped this development while an environmental study is undertaken.

Town already limited wildlife access to the Meadow when they approved a large apartment complex on Broadway last year. When built, it will increase mule deer road kill as they seek their winter water source in Karns Meadow. It's a lot like a mule deer extermination plan.

Perhaps our town electeds don't care about the deer, fox, moose, and countless birds that rely on Karns Meadow habitat. They've apparently forgotten our "Last of the Old West" values.

The proposal says: "The Jackson Hole Land Trust would like to continue its partnership with the town of Jackson and Teton County Parks and Recreation to energize Karns Meadow into a natural park."

Energize Karns Meadow into a natural park?

What kind of gobbledygook is that? It's already a "natural park." The Land Trust has lost their way on this one. Their proposal is part of the distorted notion that "humans know best." We can make nature better.

*We should honor
the Karns Family gift*

This habitat destroying proposal could not have been what the Karns family intended for their gift. Town should be ashamed.

These pristine riparian wetlands have already been sullied, and more human trampling will only make things worse. Since Karns Meadow is a primary source of the town's drinking water, we could be fouling our own nest.

Preservation and conservation have too long been relegated to a backseat interest by our elected officials. That's not what voters want. They've repeatedly voiced their desire to see wildlife, habitat, and nature remain primary concerns in this valley.

Until conservation savvy town council candidates step up and run for office, nothing will change. If we don't assert our Wyoming Old-West values now, they might disappear completely.

Locals overwhelmingly support wildlife and open space. Voters are waiting.