



- Janet Urquhart / The Aspen Times

Got a name for Droste ridge?

Public pegged to come up with suggestions, vote to choose one

SEPTEMBER, 1 2011

[JANET URQUHART](#)

THE ASPEN TIMES

ASPEN, CO, COLORADO

ASPEN — It's not likely to be called "Bob Marley Ridge" or "420 Point," but the public is invited to propose names for both the scenic ridge on the former Droste property and the greater collection of open space properties near Snowmass Village that were connected with the purchase of the Droste land last year.

A committee charged with coming up with a naming process agreed Wednesday to a public contest.

While the process won't give the committee or elected officials the final say on either name, the ability to select the finalists from whatever entries are submitted will ensure that no unacceptable name for the ridge or the greater park is ultimately chosen by the public, committee members concurred.

"I like letting people vote, but we've got to keep control of it so it doesn't become Bob Marley," said Martha Cochran, executive director of the Aspen Valley Land Trust.

"Or 420 point," said Hawk Greenway, a member of the county Open Space and Trails board of directors.

"We should start writing down all these names because I'm getting them left and right," said Snowmass Town Councilman John Wilkinson.

John Denver Ridge is among the suggestions Wilkinson said he's heard. County Commissioner Jack Hatfield feigned choking over that proposal.

Name nominations will be accepted at www.aspenpitkin.com (watch for a link in the coming days) through Oct. 1. The committee, including representatives of Aspen, Pitkin County, Snowmass Village and the land trust, will then whittle the suggestions down to a handful of finalists.

Citizens will then vote, as will students in Aspen's public and private schools, through a process that is not yet defined. Dale Will, county Open Space and Trails director, said he will be looking to the schools for advice on student involvement.

Aspen Mayor Mick Ireland advocated letting the public come up with proposed names for both the 2,500 acres of combined open space (it has been called a mountain park) as well as the signature ridge that stretches nearly from Highway 82 to Snowmass Village. The ridgeline is the focal point of a \$17 million open space purchase, completed last year. The ridge, on land formerly owned by the Droste family, divides the Brush Creek and Owl Creek valleys, stretching northeast from Snowmass.

The naming of the ridge will produce an obvious name for the popular trail that runs along it, committee members generally agreed.

"If it's Whiskey Ridge, it's Whiskey Ridge Trail," Cochran said.

"Who knows what names are out there," Ireland said. "Even the non-winners would do a lot to educate the public about the different aspects of this park."

County open space officials are anxious to have a formal name for the ridge, which is currently scheduled to close for the winter on Dec. 1, Will said. A second name for the greater collection of open space parcels, including Cozy Point, Cozy Point South, Seven Star, Hidden Valley, Upper North Mesa and several others, is also a goal, he said.

"If it's possible to brand the whole thing in a way that would stick, I think that would be acceptable, as well," Will said.

"We ought to be attempting to name the whole shebang," Hatfield said.

Other ideas floating for naming the ridge include Fossil Ridge and Octopus's Garden, in reference to the pieces of prehistoric octopi that trail users have been collecting on the ridge trail. Hatfield, as an aside, said the county should find a way to keep people from carrying off fossils that apparently date back 150 million years. Wilkinson agreed, though he had one in his possession at the meeting.

The committee is tentatively scheduled to reconvene on Oct. 5 to review the nominated names, choose finalists and come up with a process for the public and school vote.

Wilkinson also pressed for a name for the newly constructed trail that links Snowmass to the ridgeline, expressing concern that it will be cemented in the public's mind as the "Droste Trail" if some other name isn't chosen soon. The Snowmass Trails Committee was pegged to come up with suggestions; the naming committee will pick one from among the Snowmass group's recommendations.

janet@aspentimes.com

<http://www.aspentimes.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20110901/NEWS/110839961/0/FRONTPAGE&template=printart>