



MEMORANDUM

TO: MAYOR MICHAEL B. HANCOCK, CITY COUNCILMEMBERS
FROM: ALLEGRA "HAPPY" HAYNES
SUBJECT: NAMING OF UNNAMED 2.9-MILE LOOP TRAIL WITHIN O'FALLON PARK (25500 STATE HIGHWAY 72, KITTREDGE CO, 80457), WHICH BEGINS AT THE WEST TRAILHEAD FROM THE PARKING AREA AT O'FALLON PARK, AS "WINSTON K. WALKER LOOP TRAIL"
DATE: APRIL 13, 2023
CC: SCOTT GILMORE, SHANNON DENISON

I am pleased to present that the unnamed 2.9-mile loop trail within O'Fallon Park (25500 State Highway 72, Kittredge CO, 80457), which begins at the west trailhead from the parking area at O'Fallon Park (a Denver Mountain Park), be named Winston K. Walker Loop Trail. This is a name that would honor Winston Kenneth Walker, an outdoor enthusiast and connector of thousands to the natural beauty of Denver and its surrounding mountains.

While not originally from Colorado, Mr. Winston K. Walker's influence on thousands of Colorado residents was felt since moving here from in 1989. His passion for the outdoors led him to exposing people to the outdoors and bridging the African American community, among others, to the nature surrounding them. In addition to being an engineer by trade, he co-founded the *Beckwourth Mountain Club* in 1993 to help bring those of all backgrounds and ages into the nearby mountains. The Beckwourth Mountain Club was named after one of the west's first African American explorers, and the club worked to continue that legacy. Mr. Walker later created the *Beckwourth Doers*, a group that helped to bring even more people outdoors in an easy and accessible way. He advised several women-led and African American outdoor groups, by taking them to the mountains or to Denver parks. Teaching and educating on the outdoors, and leading groups into outdoor adventures such as hiking, fishing, rafting, and skiing. Winston Walker was overall a knowledgeable mountain guide and used his photography and a welcoming attitude to unite people, and to inspire urban youth into to venture further into nature.

Community members that knew Mr. Walker requested this naming as way to celebrate a man that led thousands to experience the mountains - an impact that passes through generations and should be memorialized in one of his favorite places, the Denver Mountain Parks. As Executive Director of Parks and Recreation, I count myself among the beneficiaries of Winston's love of the outdoors, his unbridled enthusiasm for introducing newcomers to outdoor adventure, and his kindness and patience in sharing his extraordinary skills and expertise in outdoor recreation. While Winston was particularly devoted to connecting African Americans and other people of color in underserved communities to nature, his personality was such that he never met a stranger and nearly everyone I know that spent any time with him felt that the were special friends of his. I met Winston while I was serving on City Council in the mid 1990's along with Sid Wilson and other founders of the Beckwourth Mountain Club. Throughout this long friendship with Winston, we worked together on many occasions on projects promoting outdoor access and our mutual love of



history especially the role of African Americans in the American West. My last collaboration with Winston was a couple of years ago when we were both involved in a symposium organized by Patty Limerick with the Center for the American West at the University of Colorado, where we explored the history of outdoor resorts created by African Americans in the late 19th and 20th centuries to provide access to outdoor leisure and adventure activities because of their exclusion from white-only facilities. Winston was weak and fragile from his long battle with cancer, but ever the optimist as we took a short hike around campus, he took the opportunity to encourage me and offer ideas and support for our efforts to increase access for Denver residents in our mountain parks. He was the model of a gentleman and scholar, full of kindness, compassion, an unparalleled zest for life and absolute devotion for sharing it with others. I can't think of anyone whose name is more fitting to grace the entrance to one of our trails and welcome one and all to our Denver Mountain Parks!

- Over 400 complete signatures in support (300 are required).
- Fifteen letters or emails of support, including letters from those who experienced his trail hikes and adventures, his family, and his friends across Metro-Denver, including the Denver Mountain Parks Foundation. The letters focused on Winston's warmth and ability to make the outdoors more accessible for all, but especially African Americans in Denver, through his vibrant love and passion for the Colorado mountains.
- DPR received no letters in opposition to the naming.

The proposal was presented on the April 12, 2023, at the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board meeting by the applicant, Everett Brinson. There were 7 speakers at the public hearing, all spoke in favor of the motion. Following the public hearing the Denver Parks & Recreation Advisory Board unanimously voted to recommend that the loop trail be named "Winston K. Walker Loop Trail."