

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The Eagle community is passionate about its open space and trails. Residents place immense value on their proximity to hundreds of miles of trails and the accessible open space that supports important wildlife habitat. This plan identifies a vision and goals to preserve and enhance those valued qualities and guide the Town's Open Space and Trails department for the next decade. Through robust analysis and engagement process, this plan offers a clear guidance on community interests and gaps, opportunities, and threats associated with the existing system. Detailed recommendations and implementation priorities outline next steps for the department and its partners.

Plan Overview

Planning Area

The Town of Eagle manages approximately 1,400 acres of open space and has 37 miles of trail within the Town boundary, with an additional ~150 miles beyond it that connect to Town trails and act as an area-wide trail system. The land in and around Eagle is also home to diverse wildlife populations and important natural resources.

The extent of this Plan's analysis matches that of the 2014 IMBA Eagle Area Trails Plan, extending from the Town of Eagle west towards Gypsum, east towards Bellyache Road, south towards the White River National Forest, and north to the Town's northern boundary. The planning area encompasses all trails within the Town of Eagle, the Town's open spaces, as well as trails in surrounding open spaces and federal lands. These include lands administered by the Colorado River Valley Field Office of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the Eagle-Holy Cross Ranger District of the White River National Forest, land owned by Eagle County Open Space, and land protected by conservation easements held by the Eagle Valley Land Trust. See **Figure 1** for a map of the planning area.

Partnerships

The Town has valuable partnerships with entities such as federal land managers, trail and recreation advocacy groups, state and local agencies, conservation groups, Homeowner's Associations, and others for trail maintenance and construction, open space management, and acquisitions. These partnerships have been instrumental in providing recreational opportunities and maintenance. This plan makes recommendations on how to formalize and leverage these partnerships to complete new trails, maintain existing ones, and manage open spaces and natural resources.

Relationship to Other Plans

This planning process considers the ideas, recommendations, and documented conditions of several recent planning efforts.

The 2014 Eagle Area Trails Plan, completed by Hardscrabble Trails Coalition, documented a vision and trail and maintenance recommendations. This plan includes key recommendations that have yet to be implemented in light of current resource conditions and trail system gaps.

The 2015 BLM Resource Management Plan for the Colorado River Valley Field Office documents resource conditions and management practices for BLM land within the Colorado River Valley, which includes land in the Eagle planning area. The plan identifies recreation management zones around Eagle and establishes desired trail mileage and type in each management zone. New trails were planned following the directives of the BLM resource management plan.

The Town recently completed a new comprehensive plan, Elevate Eagle. The Elevate Eagle plan includes goals such as: enhancing downtown, diversifying the Town's economic opportunities, improving connectivity among neighborhoods, promoting Eagle's unique recreational offerings, balancing wildlife and recreation, and improving traffic, walkability, public transit, and other transportation options. This Open Space and Trails Plan develops more detailed actions around these goals.

Plan Organization

This first chapter introduces the plan and establishes the vision and goals for the open space and trails system.

The second chapter of this plan is an overview of existing conditions. This chapter includes an analysis of the existing trails system, an analysis of conservation priorities, natural resources, and open space, and a discussion of the existing land management structure and directive.

The third chapter dives into the recommendations of the Plan. This chapter is the heart of the Plan, with recommendations that speak to the opportunities and gaps identified through the existing conditions analysis and discussions with the Town of Eagle community. If implemented, these recommendations will help Eagle achieve its vision and goals.

The final chapter of the Plan, Implementation, describes the priorities for all the recommendations listed throughout the plan, outlines steps for implementation and action, and offers suggestions for funding and other opportunities to bring the plan recommendations to life.

How to Use this Plan

The Open Space and Trails Master Plan aims to provide guidance on how to improve and enhance the trail system as well as stewardship strategies for open space management.

These outcomes will only be achieved through coordination and collaboration with regional partners and the community.

This Plan provides the Town with key funding priorities, identified gaps and opportunities, strategic direction, capital projects, and partnerships to support implementation. This Plan represents the community's direction to the Town around open space and trails.

Vision and Goals

Vision

The Town of Eagle's vibrant community values their quality of life defined by an abundance of open space, a respect for local wildlife, and an accessible trail system that has options for all users. Eagle's open space and trails system is known for its steep hillsides covered in juniper, sagebrush, gypsum dirt, and scenic river valley. The system is a hidden gem for outdoor recreation, where intentional planning balances recreation opportunities with conservation and habitat preservation. The Town's Open Space and Trails Department proactively collaborates with partners and community members to support trail maintenance, natural resource and habitat management, and unique recreational experiences.

Goals

- The trail system offers a variety of experiences to meet the needs of all user groups and types: welcoming beginner experiences on flatter terrain and long or difficult backcountry routes - for mountain biking, motorized, equestrian, and hiking uses.
- The Town involves stakeholders, partners, ecologists, biologists, cultural resource specialists, and other experts to make decisions around project siting, natural resources, and seasonal wildlife closures.
- There is equitable access to the open space and trail system for all users across a variety of activities.
- The Town monitors and manages natural resource conditions in its open spaces in accordance with best practices and management plans.
- The Town works with partners to identify and pursue appropriate habitat restoration and open space management projects.
- The Town strategically evaluates support for new trails based on connectivity, user experiences, and accessibility while respecting wildlife habitat and soil conditions.
- Key trail connections support access to the many different parts of the system and create a cohesive trail network.
- The Town works closely with its partners to creatively engage the community, support accessible recreation, and better educate open space and trail users.

- The Town has capacity to maintain trails to a high standard within its boundary and support the BLM and other partner organizations in managing and maintaining trails beyond its boundary.
- Residents and visitors to the area contribute to a consistent source of funding for the Open Space and Trails Department.
- Accurate and informative signage and trailhead kiosks help users navigate the system and understand resource sensitivity and proper etiquette.
- The Town provides information and opportunities for open space and trail system users to understand and appreciate the diverse habitats and natural resources in and around the Town.
- The Town encourages and promotes recreational use in appropriate areas based on resource/habitat sensitivity, parking and access, desired experiences, and neighborhood impacts.
- The Town of Eagle achieves the vision of this Plan by creating a work program and implementation strategy.

Plan Process

The planning process combined thorough analysis of the existing system with a robust public engagement process to identify issues and opportunities for the Plan. The Eagle Open Space and Trails Master Plan process began with the planning team gathering information on the Town of Eagle's assets and perspectives on open space and trails. The team reviewed past plans and other relevant documents, developed maps of existing conditions, and hosted an initial roundtable meeting with stakeholders.

Following initial information gathering efforts, the planning team analyzed the existing open space and trails system to clearly understand the dynamics of the existing system. These analyses are summarized in Chapter 2 and available in full in Appendix B. At this stage, the planning team also engaged the community to understand their perceptions on the strengths and gaps in the existing system.

Utilizing the analyses and public engagement, the planning team identified key opportunities for the Open Space and Trails Department. The trails opportunity map highlights potential changes or enhancements to the trail system.

Public Engagement

The planning process repeatedly invited and encouraged Eagle residents to share their ideas for the Plan. The process engaged stakeholders such as local land managers, the land trust, members of trail organizations for motorized and non-motorized user groups, members of the Town's Open Space and Recreation Advisory Committee (OSRAC), and the Fire District. In addition to stakeholder meetings, two community outreach events and one online survey were conducted to gather input from the larger community.

Roundtable

On August 2, 2021, a roundtable meeting was held to engage stakeholders, discuss desired outcomes for the Plan, and perform a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis of the open space and trails system. Notes from this meeting are included in Appendix A.

Visioning Open House and Survey

On October 19, 2021, a Plan Visioning Open House was held at the Brush Creek Pavilion. The event was an opportunity for the community to share their thoughts, ideas, and concerns towards establishing the vision and foundation of the Open Space and Trails Master Plan. The Open House had interactive boards where attendees could respond to questions about their use of trails and open space, values, issues and gaps, and vision for the future.

Following the open house, an online survey was available for those unable to attend the event. Replicating the open house experience, the open house materials were available online for context and a survey asked the same questions as the boards.

Approximately 60 guests attended the in-person open house event and the survey received 234 additional responses. Survey and open house results indicate that residents value accessibility to trails and open space areas, open space/habitat preservation, continued maintenance of trails and trailheads, trail connectivity, good user etiquette, and having a variety of trail types. Full results from the survey and event are provided in Appendix A.

Focus Groups

On December 9, 2021, stakeholders were gathered for two focus group discussions, one on the trails system and one on open space and natural resources. Each focus group discussed existing conditions, management efforts, issues and gaps, future challenges, and goals for open space or trails. The trails focus group primarily discussed access and connectivity of trails within the system as well as opportunity areas for new trails. The open space focus group primarily discussed management, balancing wildlife and recreation, and funding for open space areas in and around Eagle. Notes from the focus groups are provided in Appendix A.

The planning team also engaged Eagle Valley Outdoor Movement and Cycle Effect to discuss system accessibility.

Draft Plan Open House

On March 15, 2022, an open house was held presenting the draft Plan for community feedback. Recommended changes were incorporated in the final draft of the Plan.

CHAPTER 2: EXISTING CONDITIONS

Within the Town of Eagle municipal boundary, there are paved and natural surface trails, trailheads, open space areas, and parks. There are also opportunities for other types of recreation at the river park, Children's fishing pond, BMX/pump track, the pool and ice rink, and the nearby disc golf course on land managed by Eagle County. A map of the existing offerings within the Town boundary is included as **Figure 2**.

Beyond the Town boundary, the open space and trails system expands west, south, and east onto lands managed by the Town, BLM, the White River National Forest, Eagle County Open Space, and land protected by conservation easements held by the Eagle Valley Land Trust. **Figure 3** depicts the trails, trailheads, open space, and dispersed camping surrounding the Town.

Land Management

The landscape surrounding the Town of Eagle is managed by several landowners. This can make land management (including wildlife conservation, and the management and maintenance of trails and other recreational opportunities) complex, as the management regulations and goals may differ by landowner.

BLM lands in the Eagle area are managed according to the 2015 BLM Resource Management Plan (RMP) for the Colorado River Valley Field Office. The plan provides directives on resources and resource uses such as recreation. Special Recreation Management Areas (SRMAs) have objectives and standards specific to the nature of recreation and natural resources in the area. The area around Eagle is within the Hardscrabble/East Eagle SRMA. The Hardscrabble/East Eagle SRMA is divided into two Recreation Management Zones (RMZ). RMZ 1 is East Eagle and portions of West Eagle, and the management emphasis is non-motorized recreation such as mountain biking, hiking, and equestrian use. RMZ 2 is West Eagle/Hardscrabble, and the management emphasis is motorized recreation (refer to **Figure 4**). The BLM restricts mechanized and motorized trail use in the SRMA between December 1 to April 15 to protect wintering game species. Other standards for the Hardscrabble/East Eagle SRMA allow timber harvest, fuels/vegetation treatments, and camping in specified areas and prohibit firearms in developed recreation sites, mineral leasing and disposal, and surface-disturbing activities.

Additionally, the BLM RMP established the Hardscrabble/East Eagle Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC), which is also within this Plan's study area (refer to **Figure 4**). ACECs have special management objectives to protect their resource values. The Hardscrabble/East Eagle ACEC has one of the highest known concentrations of Harrington's

penstemon, so it is closed to certain forestry, mineral leasing and disposal, and recreation practices. No new trails can be built in the ACEC.

The Brush Creek Valley Ranch and Open Space area also has specific directives established by the Eagle County Open Space Department, the property management plan, and the conservation easement. Trails in this area are intended for non-motorized use, and the Salt Creek portion of the open space is limited to pedestrian and equestrian use only. Most of the protected property is subject to seasonal wildlife closures that are outlined in the property's management plan. On trails that are not subject to a wildlife closure, snowshoeing, fat biking, cross-country skiing, and other non-motorized winter uses are permitted.

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Trails

The Plan's study area encompasses trails on Town of Eagle, BLM, National Forest System land, and Eagle County Open Space lands. These trails provide opportunities for hiking, biking, equestrian, and motorized use. This section breaks down the existing conditions of the Eagle area trail system and includes information on the balance of the system as a whole, how trails are used, and existing maintenance strategies. This analysis then informs the recommendations outlined in Chapter 3.

Trail Analysis

The trail analysis outlined below identifies the strengths and weaknesses of the Eagle area trail system, particularly towards providing desired experiences and opportunities at a variety of ability levels. Criteria used to analyze trails included trail type, difficulty, uses allowed, location, popularity, proximate trailheads, directionality, land managers, seasonal closures, and trail function. The results of the analysis are summarized below, and a detailed description of each criterion along with the full trail analysis document is included in Appendix B.

Background

The Eagle area trail system is a mix of historic BLM routes and trails, social trails formalized into system routes, and newer, planned natural surface trails and paved paths. The analysis considered the extensive network of 131 trails and routes, or 184 trail miles.

- **Trail Type.** The trail system serves a mix of recreation and transportation purposes and as analyzed, consists of 80 miles of singletrack trails, 66 miles of doubletrack trails, 37 miles of paved paths, and 1 mile of singletrack sidewalks. The singletrack sidewalks are located parallel to other sidewalks within Town and are primarily used for recreational transportation purposes. The majority (55% or 19 miles) of trails within the Town boundary are paved paths. The singletrack trail network provides the primary recreational experience and the paved path network, singletrack sidewalks, and doubletrack are important for transportation and connecting people and neighborhoods to recreational opportunities.
- **Trail Difficulty.** The majority (64% or 68 miles) of trails in the singletrack trail system are intermediate. Beginner and advanced trail mileage is relatively limited, at 10 and 24 miles respectively. Those interested in intermediate trails tend to make up the largest portion of the market and having an abundance of intermediate trails is desirable. The hilly terrain and limited rocks in and around Eagle lend themselves to intermediate trails. However, the terrain does present challenges for the development of sufficient mileage of easier and sustainable advanced trails.

Opportunities and Analysis

The system trails were categorized by location as shown in **Figure 5**, and takeaways from the trail analysis are summarized below.

- **Mileage and Access.** The bulk of the trail system mileage is located in West Eagle/Hardscrabble, particularly the motorized routes. This area has 106 trail miles, 75 of which are open to motorized use. While there are many trails open to motorized use in West Eagle/Hardscrabble, there are limited access points to motorized opportunities from the Town of Eagle. There are more access opportunities for motorized users on the west side of Hardscrabble, mostly from Gypsum. There are also limited access points with formalized amenities such as parking, kiosks, or restrooms for non-motorized users from Town.
- **Use and Connectivity.** Although the trail network in the Eagle area has extensive mileage, a number of the trails are not regularly used owing to their poor condition, remoteness, lack of connections to the rest of the system, or overall poor trail experience.
- **Popularity.** Singletrack trails with the highest popularity ratings from Trailforks are Boneyard, Pool and Ice Rink, Extra Credit, Mayer Gulch, and Turniphead. Singletrack trails with the lowest popularity rankings, in order, are Blue Grouse, 2nd Gulch, Dead Cow, Elk Drop Upper, and Elk Drop Alternate. When breaking down popularity by location, a high proportion of Eagle Ranch and East Eagle trails are rated as very popular, whereas there are fewer popular trails in West Eagle/Hardscrabble. It is important to note that popularity data from Trailforks may be disproportionately reflective of mountain bike use. A majority of the singletrack trails in the Eagle area are ranked as popular or very popular. It is important to note that popularity data from Trailforks is based on recorded activities by its users and may disproportionately reflect of mountain biker preferences.
- **Directionality.** A small proportion of trails (13%) have a required or recommended directionality. Recommending or requiring directionality can be an important tool to reduce user conflict, particularly when a trail's build may lead to high-speed riding on a singletrack.
- **Land Managers.** The BLM is the primarily land manager of the trail system. Over 100 miles of trails are on BLM land, with some trails crossing between Town of Eagle and BLM lands. As some trails intersect lands managed by more than one entity, it is important that land managers work collaboratively to manage trails in this area.
- **Seasonal Closures.** Trail closures are important to manage the natural resources and limit impacts to wildlife in and around Eagle, and these vary by land manager. Most trails in the system have seasonal closures. The majority of trails that remain open year-round are paved paths, with the exception of some singletrack trails in East Eagle and the Haymaker trail.

- **Trail Function.** Most trails within the system are point-to-point trails. While some short connectors are available, it can be challenging to navigate the system and create shorter loops and routes.
- **Trail Grade.** Trails with an average grade over 7.5% or sustained grades higher than 10% may have sustainability issues and need to be re-routed and/or closed. There are 16 such trails in the area that have been reviewed in this process.

Maintenance

The maintenance of the Eagle area trail system is a collaboration between the Town, public land agencies, VVMTA/HTC, volunteers, adopt-a-trail groups, and several other local organizations. Given the extensive mileage and poor soil quality, the maintenance of this network is a large undertaking, and this collaboration is essential. Existing efforts include the Adopt-a-Trail program, the VVMTA trail crew, HTC volunteer days, and a Town staff person. Despite these efforts, given the labor required and the soil quality, the trail system has not been maintained to the desired standard of many users, with large ruts on numerous system trails. The Town and trail advocacy groups have championed the maintenance of signage and trailhead kiosks. However, there are several places where signage has been removed or up to date information is necessary but missing.

Challenges exist in aligning maintenance labor capacity to timing and seasonal needs, collective understanding of priorities, addressing more complex maintenance issues, and the funding and staffing to maintain the trails to a desired level. There are several steeper trail sections that provide a different recreational experience but re-routes may resolve some habitual maintenance issues. The Town recognizes the need for additional maintenance and regular support for stewardship highlighted in Town planning documents and surveys, and the Town has worked to grow the resources available for trail maintenance each year.

While new trails can take the pressure off some heavily used existing trails, the Town and its partners' capacity to maintain the existing network must be considered as new trails are proposed.

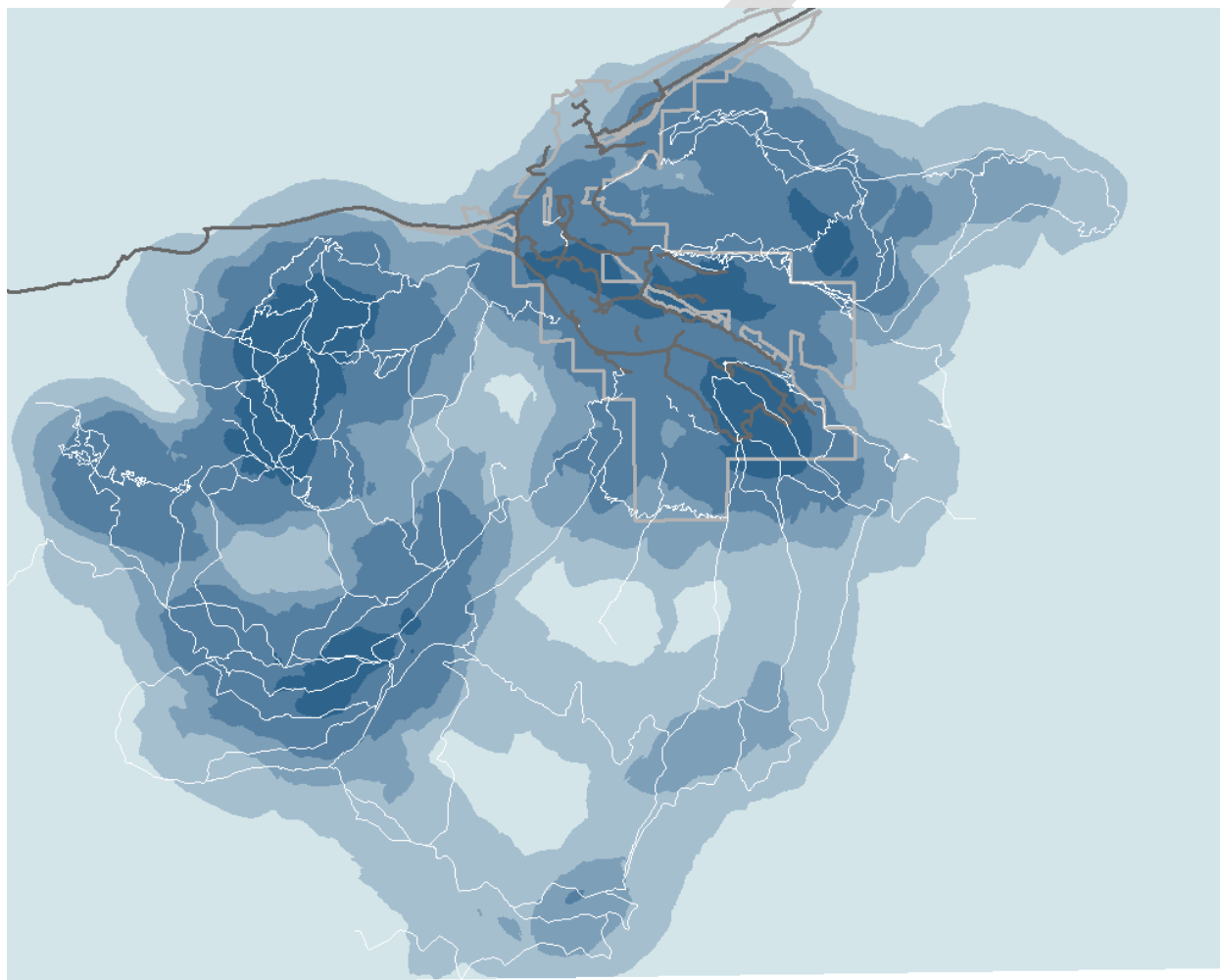
The trail system around Eagle is located on land managed by several cooperating agencies. Each agency manages trails on their respective land; however, many trails close to Eagle are adopted by groups who volunteer to take the lead on maintenance. The Town has assisted with maintenance responsibilities on BLM trails as well, as those trails provide a direct benefit to residents and visitors to Eagle.

The Eagle area trail system of singletrack, doubletrack, and paved paths in the Town and on surrounding public lands offers a very high level of mileage. This high mileage paired with the poor soil quality in the area creates challenges for keeping the trails well maintained.

Trail Density

Trail density was measured by the number of trails within a 2-mile radius of any given point in the study area. It is an important factor when considering existing disturbance and potential new trails. For example, it is favorable to concentrate trails in already disturbed areas to minimize impacts to the natural environment and wildlife habitat in particular.

The area in and around Town and to the east has a relatively high density. There are also distinct areas with high trail density in West Eagle/Hardscrabble, far from Eagle access points into the system. These trail densities, along with other factors such as wildlife habitat, potential experience, and access have informed this Plan's recommendations.



The Town had three trail counters in place on system trails to understand relative levels of use and daily/seasonal patterns on the trail system during 2021. The trail counters were placed on Boneyard, Haymaker, and 3rd Gulch (near the Arroyo trailhead) trails. These counters record each time a user passes but do not distinguish by type of user. The counters were placed shortly after the seasonal closure ended (mid-April) of 2021 and data

was available through November 17, 2021 at the time of the analysis. The counters will be in place going forward to demonstrate how use is changing across the system.

According to the data collected in 2021, trails see the highest level of use in the spring, and extremely high use over the high school race weekends in the fall. In general, Boneyard sees higher use than Haymaker or 3rd Gulch trail. This information was utilized in this Plan's recommendations around dispersing and/or concentrating use and planning facilities and future maintenance needs.

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Open Space, Natural Resources, and Conservation

Existing Open Space

The Town of Eagle owns 61 parcels of open space, totaling 1,371 acres, within and adjacent to the Town. These parcels have been categorized into 13 open space areas, listed in the table below and shown in **Figure 6**, numbered accordingly. There are a few small parcels that create connections between neighborhoods and paths that are shown on the map as well.

TABLE 1. TOWN OPEN SPACE

ID	Name	Acreage
1	Abrams Creek OS	174.2
2	Eagle Ranch OS	862.0
3	Haymeadow OS	58.8
4	Haymeadow School/Recreation Land Dedication	15.1
5	Haymaker Trailhead OS Involvement	6.8
6	Spud Cellar OS	34.9
7	Johnson's Corner OS	0.8
8	Bluffs Neighborhood OS	7.1
9	Eagle River OS	13.2
10	Eby Creek OS	3.5
11	Brush Creek OS	145.0
12	Brush Creek OS Extension	46.6
	Neighborhood Connections	2.57

This section describes each of the Town's open spaces, recreational opportunities, mapped habitat within them, and other natural resource information. The full review and data sources are available as Appendix B.

In 2020, the Town annexed Red Mountain Ranch along the Eagle River into the Town. There is a PUD with a maximum of 153 dwelling units approved for this property. The property will also include open space, some of which will be deeded to the Town. The acreage and the location deeded to the Town is unknown at the time of this plan but would represent an addition to the Town's open space system.

Abrams Creek OS

Abrams Creek OS is a 174.2-acre parcel located next to the Town boundary and adjacent to Eagle Ranch OS and BLM land. The Town of Eagle acquired this parcel in 2016 and Eagle Valley Land Trust has a conservation easement on the parcel. Existing trails through this parcel are LOV Connection and Abrams Creek trails, and the trails are closed December 15

– April 15 as a seasonal wildlife closure. The open space is typically accessed via the Silver Spur/Abrams trailhead or from the LOV connection trail originating at the Arroyo trailhead. Narrowly endemic Harrington's penstemon can be found within this parcel according to the Eagle Valley Land Trust. The parcel is also within mapped Elk Severe Winter Range, Elk Winter Concentration Area, Mule Deer Migration Corridor, Mule Deer Severe Winter Range, Mule Deer Winter Concentration Area, Mule Deer Summer Range, and Elk Summer Range. The Town has conducted resource management activities such as restoring a pipeline scar and noxious weed control and has planned efforts around hazardous fuels reduction and vegetation management. The Colorado State Forest Service has mapped the area as moderate and high wildfire risk. The Abrams Creek Watershed is home to a rare population of native Colorado River cutthroat trout that is thought to be one of the last remaining aboriginal trout populations in the greater Eagle River watershed. The Town supports efforts by various partners to protect habitat for this population of fish while ensuring local water rights are also delivered.

Eagle Ranch OS

Open space in the Eagle Ranch PUD totals 862.9 acres and encompasses 36 different parcels. The parcels were deeded to the Town through the Eagle Ranch PUD. There is relative diversity in these parcels, with some small, neighborhood parcels and higher elevation parcels with juniper/pinions and sage. Eagle Ranch OS abuts BLM land, County Open Space, Eagle Ranch residential areas, and Abrams and Brush Creek Open Spaces. Existing trails in the open space include LOV Connection, Hernage Creek, Turniphead, Bailey, Third Gulch, Mayer Gulch, Riddle, Wall, School House Rock, Abrams Gulch, and the Highlands Paved Loop and Eagle Ranch paved paths. Trailheads and access points include Horton Street/School House Rock, Silver Spur/Abrams, Hernage Creek, and Arroyo that act as the primary access to West Eagle/Hardscrabble BLM lands from the Town of Eagle.

The seasonal wildlife closure, where applicable, is December 15 – April 15. For some trails and open space on the west side of the PUD, the seasonal wildlife closure is included as a condition of the Eagle Ranch Annexation and Development Agreement (ADA).

Much of the open space is also within mapped Elk Severe Winter Range, Elk Winter Concentration Area, Mule Deer Migration Corridor, Mule Deer Severe Winter Range, Mule Deer Winter Concentration Area, Mule Deer Summer Range, and Elk Summer Range. Mapped noxious weeds in the open space are limited to along Hernage Creek Road. The Colorado State Forest Service has mapped the open space as mix of moderate, high, and highest wildfire risk.

Haymeadow OS

The Haymeadow Open Space is currently comprised of three parcels totaling 59.2 acres, to the north and south of the of the future Haymeadow development. The northern parcel includes most of the first loop of the Haymaker Trail and a portion of the Haymeadow

Paved Trail and is bordered by BLM land to the north. The Haymeadow Wetlands paved path is located within the southern parcel. Primary access to these open space parcels will likely be from the existing Haymaker Trailhead. These parcels will also include connections from new homes built in the Haymeadow development and existing homes in the area. There is currently no seasonal wildlife closure on these parcels. The southern parcel is within emergent wetlands and contains a few mapped noxious weeds. The northern parcel is located within Mule Deer Winter Concentration Area, Mule Deer Severe Winter Range, Mule Deer Migration Patterns, Elk Winter Concentration Area, Elk Severe Winter Range, Mule Deer Summer Range, and Elk Summer Range. The southern parcel is only Mule Deer Summer Range and Elk Summer Range. The parcels are at lowest risk of wildfire according to the Colorado State Forest Service. As the Haymeadow PUD is developed, additional open space parcels are proposed to be deeded to the Town.

Haymeadow School/Recreation Land Dedication

A 32.82-acre parcel, Tract E, was deeded to the Town during the first filing of the Haymeadow PUD. The parcel was deeded to the Town as a School and Recreation site. Upon request of the Eagle County School District, a portion of the parcel would be conveyed to the school district, when they see a need for a new school. The school is proposed to be located on the southern portion of the property. The amount of land needed for the school will be determined by the school district at a future point. Until and if there is a need for the school, the developer will be responsible for irrigation of the property.

With the approval of a major PUD amendment on December 8, 2021, 6.5 acres will be removed from Tract E on the northeastern side and instead will be used for housing. Haymeadow will dedicate 8 acres for a future park/recreation site at a later point in the development. In partnership with Mountain Recreation, the Town intends to develop a new site plan for the Haymaker Trailhead and recreation site. Land in the northwestern portion of Tract E is proposed to be included in the site plan. Likely elements of this site plan include an expansion of the trailhead, overflow parking, and a bike park.

Tract E abuts land managed by the BLM and OS-C on the northern side. The Haymaker and Pool & Ice Rink trails cut through the northern portion of the parcel as well, along with the Haymeadow paved path. Most of the parcel is within mapped Elk Severe Winter Range, Elk Winter Concentration Area, and Mule Deer Migration Corridors and it is entirely Mule Deer Summer Range and Elk Summer Range. It is just beyond Mule Deer Winter Concentration Area and Mule Deer Severe Winter Range. The parcel is at lowest risk of wildfire according to the Colorado State Forest Service.

Haymaker Trailhead OS Involvement

The Open Space and Trails Department helps manage the Haymaker Trailhead with the Mountain Recreation District and Town of Eagle Public Works. This 7-acre area within a

larger 19.2-acre parcel owned by the Town includes the Haymaker parking lot, BMX track, RC car park, shade structure, pump track, and the access to the Haymaker trail. Eagle's Pool and Ice Rink complex is located on the larger parcel, as are tennis courts and other recreation amenities. This area will be included in the Haymaker Site Plan described above. Most of the area is within Elk Severe Winter Range, Elk Winter Concentration Area, Mule Deer Summer Range, and Elk Summer Range. It is just beyond Mule Deer migration corridors, Mule Deer Winter Concentration Area, and Mule Deer Severe Winter Range. The parcel is considered less resilient in Nature Conservancy mapping. The parcel is at lowest risk of wildfire according to the Colorado State Forest Service.

Spud Cellar OS

Spud Collar OS is a 34.9-acre parcel located to the north of the pool and Brush Creek Meadows neighborhood and bordered by BLM land to the west and private land in Kaibab (unincorporated Eagle County) to the north. The only trail in this parcel is a short portion of Pool and Ice Rink at the edge of the parcel. The parcel is Elk Severe Winter Range, Mule Deer Summer Range, and Elk Summer Range, and mapped Mule Deer Winter Concentration Area is just beyond the boundary. The parcel is at lowest risk of wildfire according to the Colorado State Forest Service.

Named the Spud Cellar property due to the structure that was once located in this area, this parcel was part of the expanse of working ranches that stretched from the Town south through the Brush Creek Valley. The Town purchased the property in 2006 and placed a conservation easement held by the Eagle Valley Land Trust. The easement has a significant emphasis on protection of wildlife habitat and therefore, recreational use is limited to established trails only. The conservation easement allows for an additional trail on the property to connect the paved path behind the Orchards neighborhood to a paved path northwest of the Terrace neighborhood.

Johnson's Corner OS

Johnson's Corner OS is a small, triangular 0.8-acre parcel off Brush Creek Road. There are no existing trails through this parcel. Recreationists regularly use the old roadbed of Brush Creek Road that is located just the west of this property. It is within Elk Winter Concentration Area, Mule Deer Summer Range, and Elk Summer Range. There are mapped noxious weeds on the edges of the parcel. The parcel is at moderate risk of wildfire according to the Colorado State Forest Service.

Bluffs Neighborhood OS

The Bluffs Neighborhood OS includes two narrow parcels, a combined 7.1-acres, between Bluff neighborhood homes along Bluffs Drive and Highway 6. There are no sanctioned trails in this area, but there are several user-created trails. It is Elk Summer Range and Mule Deer Winter Concentration Area is just beyond the parcel. The parcel is at lowest risk of wildfire according to the Colorado State Forest Service.

Eagle River OS

There are three Eagle River OS parcels with a total area of 13.2 acres along the banks of the Eagle River between Eby Creek Road and the junction of Highway 6 and Nogal Road. Some of the river itself is included as well. There are no system trails in this open space and most of it is mapped river or riparian wetland. Several user created trails exist from the bike path down to the water for fishing and recreation access. Most of these trails are steep and unsustainable. It is Elk Summer Range and Mule Deer Summer Range.

Eby Creek OS

The Eby Creek Open Space is 3.5 acres across four parcels on the north side of the interstate, close to the on-ramp for I-70 west and heading up Eby Creek Road. There are no trails in this open space, and it is largely wetlands. It is Elk Summer Range, Mule Deer Summer Range, Mule Deer Migration Corridors, and Mule Deer Severe Winter Range. The parcels are at lowest risk of wildfire according to the Colorado State Forest Service.

Brush Creek OS

Brush Creek Open Space is 145 acres, across four parcels. The Open Space extends west from Hockett Ditch to Sylvan Lakes Road at the junction with Brush Creek Road. The open space also borders portions of the Eagle Ranch neighborhood. The Brush Creek Pavilion and playground are located within this open space, as are the children's fishing pond, community garden, soccer field, and Brush Creek paved path. Much of the Open Space is mapped wetlands, a mix of forested, emergent, and riparian wetlands, with some ponds as well. Portions of the open space are Elk Winter Concentration Area, Elk Severe Winter Range, Bald Eagle Roost Sites, and Mule Deer Winter Range. The entire open space is Elk Summer Range and Mule Deer Summer Range. There are many mapped noxious weeds within the open space, particularly on the northern portion. The open space is a mix of moderate and high risk of wildfire according to the Colorado State Forest Service.

In 2021, an ecological assessment was conducted for 28 acres in Brush Creek OS west of Capitol Street. The assessment recommended adjusting noxious weed treatments according to the growing season and specific species. It also recommended the inclusion of mechanical treatments (currently just chemical). Other recommendations include a monitoring program, a map of restoration opportunity areas, and formalized paths/boardwalks for riparian areas.

Brush Creek OS Extension

Brush Creek OS Extension refers to the 46.6 acres along Brush Creek east of Sylvan Lake Road, extending southeast approximately 1.3 miles. The open space is within the Eagle Ranch PUD. This open space is significantly narrower around Brush Creek than Brush Creek OS. The Open Space is bordered by Eagle Ranch to the south and residential lots in unincorporated Eagle County to the north. The Crusher Fine Trail runs the length of the open space. Only a small portion of the parcel is mapped wetlands, with the creek itself

and small pockets of riparian wetland and ponds. The open space is within Elk Winter Concentration Area, Mule Deer Migration Corridors, and Bald Eagle Roost Sites. There are some mapped noxious weeds on the eastern edge of the open space. The open space is a mix of moderate and high risk of wildfire according to the Colorado State Forest Service.

Natural Resource Management

The Town actively manages the natural resources within its open spaces. This section describes the Town's current efforts and their efficacy. While each resource is described separately in this section, it is important to recognize that all natural resources affect each other and addressing one category may positively impact others.

Noxious Weed Management

According to state law, the Town of Eagle is responsible for identifying and eradicating (or where not possible, containing) state listed noxious weeds on Town-owned properties and rights-of-ways, including open space. The Town contracts a certified and licensed herbicide applicator to treat noxious weeds on Town owned open space. At times, the Town will organize volunteer days to help with mechanical treatments of noxious weeds. Weed Warriors of Eagle River Valley also works to address weeds management and education for residents in the area. In the past, the Town has partnered with Eagle County to address noxious weeds along Brush Creek.

Managing noxious weeds in the Eagle area has been an ongoing challenge. Some local noxious weeds of concern include Canada thistle, musk thistle, white top, and Russian olive. Noxious weeds are particularly stubborn in the Haymeadow area, in conjunction with the development of new roads and subdivisions. Former land use (including cattle grazing and agriculture), development, and recreation within the Eagle area are driving factors for the spread of noxious weeds on Town-owned land.



Pest Control Management

Recent land use changes, development, and eradication of natural predators has led to a substantial increase in the ground squirrel population. At their current numbers, ground squirrels can spread diseases, remove native vegetation, and displace local wildlife. The Town works with a contractor to control the population of ground squirrels in open space. In addition, the Town monitors for any new expansion of non-native pests.

Riparian, Wetland, and Water Management

Brush Creek is a dynamic natural system strongly influenced by spring runoff. Throughout the Town boundaries, the river and river corridor have been protected with the designation of open space. The Town generally takes a passive approach to riparian management and permits the river to naturally run its course, although corridor enhancement work has previously occurred. The Town recently worked with the Eagle Ranch Wildlife Committee and the Colorado Parks and Wildlife on the Brush Creek Enhancement project, where they installed gravel bars, pools and riffles, and stabilized eroding stream banks in an effort to improve stream health and fish habitat.



Wildlife Habitat Management

The Eagle area is home to a critical winter range for elk and mule deer. In the winter, big game species seek the lower snow levels of this valley. It is critically important that recreationists give these animals ample space and do not stress them during the winter. Through seasonal wildlife closures and coordination with neighboring landowners, the Town provides these animals with open space to overwinter. The Town has observed a decline in non-compliance to wildlife closures likely through efforts by the Town and recreational community in education outreach. However, challenges remain around user behavior and pets on trails that are open in the winter.

During the summer, the Town takes a passive approach to wildlife habitat management, leaving most of its natural areas open for wildlife to occupy.



Natural Resource Restoration

Town open space properties exhibit varying degrees of impacts from past land use, infrastructure to support development, and recreation. Some of these lasting impacts include land degradation from cattle grazing and agriculture, channelization of waterways to prevent flooding, habitat fragmentation from roads and trails, consequences of unmanaged recreation, interruption to a natural fire regime, and broad consequences of climate change. When funding is available, the Town works with natural resource specialists and community partners to identify critical areas for restoration (i.e., Brush Creek enhancement projects in the early 2000s). Additionally, the Town has worked to restore other more recent manmade impacts such as the scar from the repair of the gas pipeline along the Abrams Creek Open Space.



Figure 1. An example of well vegetated and stable banks, but poor trout habitat. This area would see a pool excavated at "A" and material placed on the nascent bar at "B."

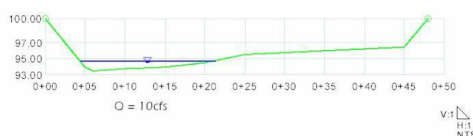


Figure 1a. Typical representation of section shown above, prior to enhancement.

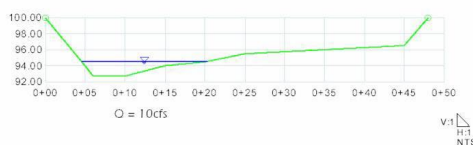


Figure 1b. Typical representation of section shown above, following enhancement.

Fish Habitat Management

The Town has worked to improve stream health and trout habitat along Brush Creek. In addition, the children's fishing pond was constructed to provide access for youth.



Sustainable Trail Builds and Designs

Trails such as Pool and Ice and Redneck Ridge have been rerouted, with assistance of the Town, to provide a better user experience and decrease damage from erosion. The Town strives to build sustainable trails to protect natural resources near trails.



Fuel Loads Management

Eagle has an excess of fuel loads in the urban-wildland interface. The Town partners with the Greater Eagle Fire District to reduce excess fuel loads, conduct prescribed burns, and cut fuel breaks near homes.



Conservation and Wildlife

Land conservation and protection of wildlife habitat beyond the municipal boundary is also a priority for the Town and its residents. This section describes habitat, conservation, and resource efforts on adjacent BLM lands. This information is to be considered in the planning of future recreational opportunities beyond the Town. The BLM planning zones described herein are shown in **Figure 4**.

Hardscrabble/East Eagle SRMA Recreation Management Zone 1

This zone is oriented towards non-motorized recreation. The BLM approved 12 additional trail miles to be constructed in this zone in its Resource Management Plan.

Eastern Portion

This portion is 8,110 acres in East Eagle extending from Highway 6 to Brush Creek Valley Ranch Open Space. It has 18 miles of existing trails and recreational roads including Bellyache Road, Boneyard, Redneck Ridge, Pool and Ice Rink, Dirt Surfer, Will's Thrill, Belly Up, Hillbilly, and Road Gulch. Trail density is moderate/high on the northern portion of the zone and very low on the southern portion of the zone, where there are no designated trails.

The zone is within Mule Deer Migration Corridors and is largely Elk Winter Concentration Area, Elk Severe Winter Range, Mule Deer Winter Concentration Area, and Mule Deer Severe Winter Range. It is Mule Deer and Elk Summer Range.

There are no mapped wetlands. Wildfire risk is a mix of low risk at lower elevations and moderate risk at higher elevations. A study of Penstemon in East Eagle recorded species on the southern portion. It is unclear whether this study included the full extent of this portion.

Western Portion

This portion is 9,407 acres in West Eagle from Hockett Gulch and the BLM boundary south, with the southern boundary just north of Firebox Road. It has 21.7 miles of existing trails and recreational roads including Hernage Creek, Abrams Gulch, Abrams Ridge, World's Greatest, School House Rock, Elmers, Scratch, and Itch. Trail density is relatively low within the zone, with higher densities on the edges around Eagle Ranch/Abrams and Reynolds Wrap and Itch.

The portion is within Elk Summer Range and Mule Deer Summer Range and is largely Elk Winter Concentration Area. A small portion of the zone close to Eagle Ranch is Elk Severe Winter Range. Mule Deer Severe Winter Range and Mule Deer Winter Concentration Areas are located on the northern portion of the zone. Mule Deer Migration Corridors are located just beyond the zone.

There are no mapped wetlands. There are no mapped noxious weeds within the zone. Wildfire risk is largely high risk.

Hardscrabble/East Eagle Recreation Management Zone 2

This zone is 19,248 acres in West Eagle west of RMZ 1, with the northern boundary at the interstate and the southern boundary along Dead Cow and Mike's Night Out. It has 58.9 miles of existing motorized trails and recreational roads including Maze, Pole Road, Elk Drop, Star Wars, Spring Creek Road, and Dead Cow. Trail density is relatively high in the zone with higher densities around Elk Drop and Star Wars, Maze, and around Itch and Cat Walk.

The zone is within Elk Summer Range and Mule Deer Summer Range and is largely Elk Winter Concentration Area. The northern portion of the zone is Mule Deer Severe Winter Range and Mule Deer Severe Winter Range.

There are no mapped wetlands. There are no mapped noxious weeds within the zone. Wildfire risk is largely high risk.

The BLM approved 10.5 additional trail miles to be constructed in this zone in its Resource Management Plan, oriented towards OHVs.

Hardscrabble-East Eagle Area of Critical Environmental Concern

The Hardscrabble-East Eagle ACEC was established to protect one of the highest known concentrations of excellent quality occurrences of Harrington's penstemon, a sensitive plant species. Miles of routes will not increase beyond the baseline of the designated routes.

Eastern Portion

This zone is 1,320 higher elevation acres in East Eagle. Existing trail mileage is relatively limited, with a portion of Boneyard and Redneck Ridge in the zone, along with Bellyache Road along its edge.

The entirety of the zone is mapped Elk Summer Range, Mule Deer Summer Range, Mule Deer Severe Winter Range, and Mule Deer Winter Concentration Area. No portions of the zone are mapped Migration Corridors or Migration Patterns. The entirety of the zone is mapped Elk Winter Range and Summer Range. The southern edge of the zone is mapped Elk Winter Concentration area. Most of the zone is mapped Elk Severe Winter Range, except for a strip running east-west across the zone.

A study of Penstemon in East Eagle recorded species on the southern portion. It is unclear whether this study included the full extent of the ACEC. The area is at high wildfire risk.

Western Portion

This area is 5,703 acres in West Eagle and existing trails are Bailey, 2nd Gulch, 3rd Gulch, Jeep Road, and Hardscrabble Road.

The entirety of the zone is mapped Elk Summer Range and Mule Deer Summer Range. The northern portion is Elk Severe Winter Range, Mule Deer Severe Winter Range, and Mule Deer Winter Concentration Area, and the western portion is Elk Winter Concentration Area. There are Mule Deer Migration Corridors on the northern portion.

The area is at high and moderate wildfire risk, with moderate risk more to the south. There is a small wetland along Hardscrabble Mountain Road.

North Side of the Highway

The area north of the Town of Eagle, on the opposite side of the interstate, is also BLM Land. It is not currently managed for recreation and there are no existing trails.

It is Mule Deer Summer Range and Elk Summer Range. Much of the area is Mule Deer Severe Winter Range and Mule Deer Migration Corridors, and some area is Mule Deer Winter Concentration Area. There are bald eagle roost sites close to the interstate.

There is a small wetland along Rule Road and some noxious weeds by Rule Road as well. Wildfire risk is moderate at lower elevations and high risk at higher elevations.

Brush Creek Valley Ranch and Open Space

The Brush Creek Valley Ranch and Open Space (BCVROS) 1,540 acres of County open space located about 1 mile southeast of the Town boundary (see **Figure 3**). It includes an approximately 2.5 mile stretch of Brush Creek. The land was purchased by the County in 2017 with the help of partners including the Town of Eagle. The Town of Eagle Open Space

and Trails Department is an important partner to the county and assists with management efforts in this area.

The recreation opportunities within BCVROS include walking, biking, and fishing. Fishing is allowed along public access points along the southern portion of Brush Creek.

Approximately 570 acres of the BCVROS land is used for agricultural purposes such as livestock grazing, horse pasturing, or hay production. Existing conditions described in the 2018 Brush Creek Valley Ranch and Open Space Management Plan indicate noxious weed infestations over approximately 200 acres of the property, and most pastureland is in poor to fair condition.

The BCVROS area is home to a diverse array of birds, small and large mammals, reptiles, amphibians, and fish. High management priorities are riparian habitat and the winter habitat within BCVROS for elk and mule deer, as the upper ranges of the property are Severe Winter Range and Winter Concentration Areas for these species. The area is closed between December 1 through April 15 for all recreational users to protect these critical habitats.

The 2018 Management Plan offers recommendations for future vegetation and wildlife management. Specific to the sensitive resources described above, the plan recommends aggressive weed control and monitoring to control noxious weeds, installing wildlife-friendly fencing to avoid riparian habitat degradation from livestock, implementing riparian habitat improvement projects such as vegetation recovery along the creek, and continuing to enforce wildlife closures to protect mule deer and elk habitat.

CHAPTER 3: RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are aimed at achieving the goals and vision for the Town of Eagle open space and trails, as outlined in Chapter 1. The recommendations are also aimed at addressing the gaps, issues, and opportunities identified in the Chapter 2 analysis of existing conditions.

Existing and new partnerships will be fundamental to the implementation of many of these recommendations.

Accessibility and Education

The following recommendations address making the trail system and open space more accessible to all users and improving education for recreationists to support better etiquette, limit confusion, and increase appreciation of the area's wildlife.

AE1 – Spanish Signage and Maps

Provide trail signs, maps, trailhead kiosk information and web information about trails and open space in Spanish.

AE2 – Community Partners

Continue partnering with the Cycle Effect, Eagle Valley Outdoor Movement, and other similar community partners to host inclusive events on the Town's open space and trail systems.

AE3 – Wildlife Education

Develop educational materials about area wildlife and their habitat, how to recreate responsibly with wildlife, and the value of seasonal wildlife closures for wildlife and residents. These materials should be shared through trailhead kiosks, the Town of Eagle website, Town social media platforms, and via partners' networks.

AE4 – Creative User Etiquette Signage

Develop creative signage that educates users about etiquette, with a focus on the Haymaker trail.

AE5 – Etiquette Standards

Work with local user group organizations and land management agencies to establish a standard set of etiquette guidelines and policies for trail and open space. This collaboration should also extend to the dissemination of etiquette information in member communications.

AE6 – Messaging System

Develop a messaging system with local user group organizations to share timely updates about the open space and trail system (i.e., wildlife closures, trail closures).

AE7 – Beginner Friendly Opportunities

Explore and collaborate on efforts to develop more beginner friendly and skills building opportunities in the area.

Trails

The following recommendations address maintenance, accessibility, and new opportunities for the Town's trail system. These recommendations balance opportunities to better connect the system and disperse users. The recommendations also look to provide options for all user groups in consideration of potential maintenance load and wildlife habitat and other resource concerns. Trail opportunities include both new routes and connections. Opportunities to decommission and re-route existing routes in light of soil quality, habitat throughout, and level of use of system trails are also included here. BLM management directives have established allowable new trail mileage sans a Resource Management Plan update, and these recommendations on BLM land are in keeping with that plan.

Opportunities

T1 – Trail Opportunities

See Figure X and Table 2 for recommended trail opportunities, connections, re-routes, and decommissions. Figure X also shows recommendations for areas for further study or trail zones (see Table 3) and specific locations/points (Table 4).

T2 – Criteria Development

Develop a set of criteria to evaluate support for trails within the Town or surrounding public lands based on wildlife habitat, potential seasonal wildlife closures, filling gaps in the area offering, and sustainability.

T3 – Trail Hubs

Support the development of identified trail hubs in the West Eagle/Hardscrabble area with maps and signage. Re-route trails as necessary to meet up at the identified points.

T4 – Motorized Dead-ends

Work with the BLM to reduce motorized dead-ends in the trail system.

T5 – Support Horse Access

Support horse access out of the Kaibab area and work to limit conflict with other user groups.

T6 – Bike Skills Park

Explore opportunities to develop a bike skills park and easier loops in and around the Haymaker trailhead.

T7 – Use Changes

Work with the BLM to explore allowable use changes on area trails. Recommended changes are opening Dead Cow and Firebox to motorized users and allowing motorized use on Blue Grouse, including the extension. Engage with user groups during this process.

T8 – Haymaker/Road Gulch/3 Sisters

Engage with Eagle County and BLM to further explore connectivity between Haymaker, Road Gulch, and Three Sisters trail.

T9 – Dirt Surfer Discussion

Engage with the BLM and user groups to discuss decommissioning, allowable use changes, or re-routes of Dirt Surfer, Braap, Burn After Riding, and other social trails in that area.

T10 – Hermit Discussion

Engage with the Forest Service and BLM to discuss future trails in the Hermit area and appropriate siting and connectivity for such trails, whether on BLM and/or NFS land.

T11 – Forest Service Discussion

Engage the Forest Service to evaluate existing recreation and management in the Hardscrabble area and Sylvan Lake/Yeoman Park, and plan for needed and community supported improvements.

Maintenance

M1 – Re-routes

Re-route steep trail sections prone to erosion and frequent maintenance needs. Some longer re-routes have been listed under trail opportunities, but the Town should look for smaller such opportunities on trails within Town boundaries and provide support for such projects on surrounding public lands.

M2 – Social Trails

Implement signage and physical blockages, in partnership with trail maintenance crews and organizations, to discourage users from using cut-off and social trails within the system. Social trails should also be incorporated into educational/etiquette campaigns around the impact of social trails on habitat and natural resources.

M3 – VVMTA Maintenance Collaboration

Continue to work collaboratively with VVMTA and HTC on supporting trail maintenance efforts on the area trail system, either through funding the trail conservation crew or hiring trail builders for more technical projects.

M4 – Early Season Maintenance

Ensure there are resources available to hire appropriate crews or builders to conduct vital early season maintenance.

M5 – Trail Conditions Facebook

Publicize VVMTA Trail Conditions Facebook page through town portals and at trailhead kiosks.

M6 – Haymaker Testing Ground

Use Haymaker as a testing ground for new and more developed armoring techniques, such as plastic armoring or chip seal. Set aside funds to collaborate with trail builders and implement these techniques.

M7 – Quarterly Meeting

Have a quarterly meeting between the Town, VVMTA, and HTC to talk about key trail maintenance priorities support a more cohesive effort.

M8 – Maintenance Tracking System

Develop a tracking system for maintenance efforts and unmet needs shared with HTC and VVMTA. This tracking system should record where maintenance occurs in the system, the frequency of it, and the associated time and costs. This can be used to guide future maintenance planning and budgeting.

M9 – Annual Maintenance Plan

Develop an annual maintenance plan that addresses when maintenance needs to occur on each system trail, responsible party, and a monitoring strategy.

M10 – HTC Support

Support HTC and partner organizations' volunteer projects through Town communication platforms, tools, supplies, people-hours, and coordination.

M11 – Adopt-A-Trail

Support VVMTA in the management and coordination of the Adopt-a-trail program.

Support Facilities and Infrastructure

SF1 - Haymaker Trailhead

Secure funding for the implementation of the Haymaker Trailhead Master Plan, collaborating with Mountain Recreation District if possible.

SF2 – Trailheads Access

If new trail portals are added to the system, ensure that they are located and oriented in such a way that supports access for the broader Eagle community. Strategies include providing parking, locating such trailheads along paved paths, and developing wayfinding signage.

SF3 – Haymaker to Boneyard Signage

Develop effective signage that directs people on the appropriate route between Boneyard Trailhead and Haymaker Trailhead.

SF4 – Visitor Information Strategy

Develop a visitor information strategy that determines appropriate areas to encourage visitors to park and strategies to effectively disseminate that information (e.g., Haymaker trailhead rather than Boneyard, Brush Creek Pavilion rather than Brush Creek Elementary School). This strategy should be implemented through the development of visitor-oriented facilities (i.e., bathrooms, bike repair stations), signage, and information posted online on the Town's website and trail websites such as Trailforks or MTB project.

SF5 - Replaceable + Replicable Signage

Build signage where the information boards are replaceable and replicable and can be easily updated as information changes (i.e., new trails, changing wildlife closures).

SF6 – Motorized Access

Explore opportunities to develop better motorized access into West Eagle/Hardscrabble. This portal could have limited facilities for motorized users, supporting ride-from-home explorations rather than out-of-town visitors.

SF7 – In-Town Camping

Explore in-town camping opportunities that are well-managed and maintained to alleviate pressure on dispersed camping on surrounding BLM land and encourage economic activity in Town.

SF8 – BLM Camping Level

Work with BLM to establish an appropriate level of dispersed camping in areas near Town.

SF9 – BLM Camping Services

Support the BLM to increase services for camping on nearby public lands, including fire rings, designated sites, information, parking, restrooms, and wildlife friendly trash receptacles.

SF10 – BLM Camping Capacity

Support increasing capacity for visitor services on nearby federal lands such as law enforcement, education, trail and visitor use maintenance, through additional staff and VVMTA's Trail Conservation Crew.

Policy Considerations

P1 – E-Bikes

Continue to evaluate e-bikes policies on non-motorized trails in the system. The ultimate policy should be consistent system-wide to minimize confusion.

P2 – Seasonal Wildlife Closures

With seasonal wildlife closures, work to balance consistency, changing habitat needs of wildlife, and winter recreation opportunities.

P3 – Permitting Structure

Explore a permitting structure for events, programs, or commercial outfits on Town open space and trails. A fee or volunteer trail maintenance could be required, or the permit process could serve as an opportunity to communicate key etiquette or other information.

Open Space and Conservation

The following recommendations address how the Town of Eagle can improve management of its 1,300+ acres of open space and support conservation on surrounding public lands. Given the integrated nature of natural resources and habitat, many of these recommendations are intended to address multiple challenges, such as habitat conditions, risk of wildfire, and pest control.

Opportunities

OS1 – Open Space Acquisition

If potential open space acquisition opportunities arise, look for partnerships to fund the acquisition and continued maintenance of the open space (i.e., EVLT, ECOS, Eagle Ranch Wildlife Committee, HOAs). Focus on properties that are important for natural resource protection, habitat, or recreational access.

OS2 – Wildlife Enforcement Officer

Explore the inclusion of wildlife closure enforcement in Town Code Enforcement officer duties or a dedicated open space ranger.

OS3 – Ecological Assessments

Conduct ecological assessments for Town Open Spaces to better understand noxious weeds and other resource conditions and develop management plans accordingly.

OS4 – Prescribed Burns

Work with Eagle Valley Wildland to conduct prescribed burns in Town open spaces that address noxious weeds, pests, wildfire risks, and other resource conditions. Support Eagle Valley Wildland to educate the public on prescribed burns.

OS5 – Noxious Weeds Management

Develop a nimble and data-driven approach to noxious weed management, using innovative techniques targeted to the weed problem on that specific site.

OS6 – Adjacent Property Weed Coordination

Coordinate with the property owners adjacent to Town open space and HOAs responsible for open space management on noxious weeds management.

OS7 – Development Standards

Update the Town of Eagle Code of Ordinances to require that developers provide land or funds that align with Town Open Space and Trails Department needs and increased demand. Potential actions include the provision of a trail impact fee dedicated to trail

maintenance, open space that provides intuitive access to the trail system and limits the potential for social trails, the development of trailheads that provides necessary facilities for residents and visitors.

OS8 – Habitat Improvement Projects

Provide support to habitat improvement projects on surrounding public lands.

OS9 – Spatial Inventory of Town Open Spaces

Create and maintain a spatial inventory of Town open spaces.

OS10 – Dog/Wildlife Conflict

Work with CPW and public land managers to address dog/wildlife conflict issues and consider enforcement on open space as necessary.

OS11 – Dog Control Policies

Work with neighboring land managers to have consistent dog control policies.

OS12 – Consistent Funding Source

Establish a consistent funding source to continue to provide management and restoration of Town open space.

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TABLE 2. TRAIL RECOMMENDATIONS

FID	NAME	Type	Priority	User Type	Difficulty	Land Manager	BLM Zone	Note	Estimated Mileage
0	Boneyard Road Bypass	New Trail	High	Non-Motorized	Intermediate	BLM	RMZ 1	Referred to as Good Bit	0.36
1	Pool & Ice - Harder Route	New Trail	High	Non-Motorized	Intermediate/Advanced	BLM	RMZ 1		0.92
2	Pool & Ice Bottom Re-Route	Re-Route Existing	High	Non-Motorized	Intermediate	BLM	RMZ 1		0.16
3	Haymaker Uphill	New Trail	Medium	Non-Motorized	Beginner/Intermediate	BLM	RMZ 1		0.7
4	DM Re-Route	Re-Route Existing	Medium	Non-Motorized	Intermediate	BLM/BCVROS	RMZ 1	re-route of existing social trail	0.53
5	Hillbilly Extension	New Trail	Dependent	Non-Motorized	Beginner/Intermediate	BLM	RMZ 1	Difficult trail build given resource concerns and topography, dependent on sasquatch	1.35
6	Sasquatch	New Trail	Medium	Non-Motorized	Intermediate	BLM	RMZ 1	Opportunity to extend trail mileage in East Eagle while limiting habitat fragmentation	1.73
7	World's Greatest Re-Route	Re-Route Existing	Medium	Non-Motorized	Advanced	BLM	RMZ 1		0.25
8	School House Uphill	New Trail	Medium	Non-Motorized	Intermediate	BLM	RMZ 1	Initial section of trail would be on Town Open Space	2.63
9	Abrams Ridge Singletrack Extension	Re-Route Existing	High	Non-Motorized	Advanced	BLM	RMZ 1	Singletrack for current doubletrack section near top of trail	0.56
12	Brush Creek Paved Path	New Paved Trail	High	Non-Motorized	Paved	Town/County			4.13
13	Third Gulch Re-Route	Re-Route Existing	Low	Non-Motorized	Intermediate	BLM	ACEC	Work with partners to continue to support emergency access in this area	1.74
14	Blue Grouse Extension	New Trail	Low	Motorized	Intermediate	BLM	RMZ 2	Re-routing to Catwalk to create new motorized loop	0.92
15	Mike's Extension	New Trail	Medium	Motorized	Intermediate	BLM	RMZ 2	Extending/Re-routing Mike's into new trail hub	0.52
16	Adam's Way Brush Creek Connector	New Trail	High	Non-Motorized	Beginner	BCVROS			0.26

FID	NAME	Type	Priority	User Type	Difficulty	Land Manager	BLM Zone	Note	Estimated Mileage
17	Haymeadow Connector	New Trail	Dependent	Non-Motorized	Beginner	Town		Dependent on Haymeadow Development	0.47
18	Bailey LOV Connection	Formalize Social Trail	Medium	Non-Motorized	Intermediate	BLM	ACEC	Existing social trail, partially on Town Open Space	0.39
19	Abrams Gulch Connector	New Trail	Low	Non-Motorized	Intermediate	BLM	RMZ 1		0.57
20	AG Connect South	New Trail	Dependent	Non-Motorized	Intermediate	BLM	RMZ 1	Dependent on Abrams Gulch re-route and hermit area development occurs	1.16
21	Kill Bill/School House Connector	New Trail	Medium	Non-Motorized	Intermediate	Town/BLM	RMZ 1		0.99
22	Adam's Way - Eagle Ranch Loops	New Trail	Low	Non-Motorized	Intermediate	BLM	ACEC	Allows for loop/connection during extended winter closure, could connect existing doubletracks	1.28
23	Spud Cellar Connector	New Trail	Medium	Non-Motorized	Beginner	Town		Additional planning needed, may be paved or singletrack	0.31
24	Mike's Alt	New Trail	Low	Non-Motorized	Intermediate/Advanced	BLM	RMZ 2	downhill trail	1.17
25	Mike's Night Up	New Trail	Medium	Non-Motorized	Intermediate/Advanced	BLM	RMZ 2		3
	TOTAL								26.10

TABLE 3. POLYGON RECOMMENDATIONS

FID	NAME	PRIORITY	DESCRIPTION
0	Potential Bike Skills Park	High	Explore bike skills park in Haymaker Trailhead area that is open to the public and supports rider progression
1	Potential Hermit Trail Zone	Medium	Explore trails in this area to support access to this area and use of pipeline. Minimize habitat fragmentation in trail siting and work with Forest Service to consider opportunities on adjacent National Forest.
2	Re-routes/decomissions for Trail Hub (lower)	High	Re-route trails to all meet up at single point for trail hub (Abram's Ridge, World's Greatest, Yellow Chair, Itch, Scratch)
3	Re-routes/decomissions for Trail Hub (upper)	Medium	Re-route trails to all meet up at single point for trail hub (Catwalk, Mike's, Reynolds, Scratch)
4	Further study of uses/social trails (Dirt Surfer area)	High	See recommendation T.9
5	Further study of Haymaker/Road Gulch/3 Sisters	Medium	See recommendation T.8
6	Inventory Social Trails and Add Signage (Eagle River)	Medium	Inventory social trails and add signage around appropriate use for Town Open Space along the Eagle River
7	Social Trail Decomissioning	Medium	Social trail decomissioning along Charlie Brown Trail and in Spud Cellar Open Space
8	Red Mountain Ranch OS + Trails	High	Support the development of sustainable trails in the new Red Mountain Ranch PUD open space
9	Hockett Gulch Motorized Connection	High	Explore opportunities and acquire land as necessary to develop motorized connection through Hockett Gulch
10	Kaibab Horse Connection	Medium	Develop equestrian connection from Kaibab into East Eagle BLM land

TABLE 4. POINT RECOMMENDATIONS

FID	NAME	PRIORITY	DESCRIPTION
0	New Eagle Ranch Trailhead	High	Develop small trailhead with parking at Haystacker Drive intersection with Wall
1	Trail Hub (Lower)	High	See recommendation T.3
2	Trail Hub (Upper)	Medium	See recommendation T.3
3	Hockett Gulch TH	High	Development of Hockett Gulch trailhead in conjunction with Reserve at Hockett Gulch

CHAPTER 4: IMPLEMENTATION AND FUNDING

Implementation is where the recommendations in this Plan can come to life! This chapter weaves together all the work generated during the Eagle Open Space and Trails Plan process into a prioritized set of recommendations, implementation strategies for completing projects, and a list of potential funding sources and grant opportunities. The money and capacity to build these projects must come from somewhere— this chapter addresses ways the Town of Eagle can raise money or dedicate existing funds to trail, open space, and connectivity projects.

Partnerships

Partnerships are essential to the current operations of the Open Space and Trails Department and to the implementation of the recommendations going forward. The following table lists who the Town would need to partner with to implement each recommendation. This list includes both existing and new partners for the Town to work with. There are some recommendations where the Town would need to work with multiple partners (i.e., the BLM and VVMTA). For specific trail recommendations, it is recommended that the Town partner with the land manager and impacted user group organizations (i.e., VVMTA/HTC, Rocky Mountain Riders).

TABLE 5. PARTNERSHIPS

Partner	Recommendations
Bureau of Land Management	AE4, T3, T4, T7, T8, T9, M1, M2, M9, SF5, SF7, SF8, SF9, SF10, OS8, OS10, OS11
Vail Valley Mountain Trails Alliance/Hardscrabble Trail Coalition	AE3, AE4, AE5, AE6, AE7, T3, T6, T7, T9, M1, M2, M3, M4, M5, M6, M7, M8, M9, SF4, SF5, SF10, M10, M11
Eagle Valley Outdoor Movement	AE1, AE2
Community outdoor recreation programming organizations	AE2, AE7, T6
Rocky Mountain Sport Riders	AE5, AE6, T7, T9
Mountain Trekkers Back Country Horsemen	AE5, AE6, T4
Colorado Parks and Wildlife	AE4, P2, OS10
Eagle Valley Wildland	OS4
Eagle Valley Land Trust	OS1, OS3, OS5
Eagle Ranch Wildlife Committee	OS1, OS3, OS4

Mountain Recreation District	SF1
U.S. Forest Service	T10, T11, OS8, OS11
Eagle County Open Space	T8, OS1, OS8, OS10, OS11

Intergovernmental Implementation

There are several recommendations where the Open Space and Trails Department would need to coordinate with other Town departments. Necessary collaborations include working with the Planning Department on potential code updates and the development review process (OS7), working with the Public Works Department on the Brush Creek Paved Path extension and Haymaker trailhead planning (SF1), and working with Council and the Town Manager on policies and future funding.

Grants

The following list describes grants that the Town of Eagle could pursue to implement many of the recommended projects.

Great Outdoors Colorado

Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) Grant Program is a competitive grant program for park and open space land acquisition and development, outdoor recreation, environmental education, and conservation. The program is funded by the Colorado Lottery and has provided \$1.1 billion in lottery proceeds since 1992 in all 64 counties of the state. Grants are generally awarded in two funding cycles, with deadlines in the spring and fall. GOCO is currently prioritizing projects that aim to repair the disconnect between youth and nature, connecting people to the outdoors by increasing bike and pedestrian access, and protecting urban and rural land. (www.goco.org)

Land and Water Conservation Fund

The Colorado Land and Water Conservation Fund provides grants for the state Recreational Trails Program. Eligible applicants are any local, county, or state government with control over public lands. These projects must enhance the outdoor recreation resources on public land and the funds are frequently used for trail building. To receive the grant, the local government must provide a 100% match. For large trail construction grants, the maximum is \$400,000; for small trail construction grants, the maximum is \$75,000.

(<https://cpw.state.co.us/Documents/Trails/LWCF/LWCFGrantsProcess.pdf>)

Non-Motorized Trails Grant

A grant funded by a partnership of Colorado Parks and Wildlife, GOCO, and the federal recreational trails program. A 30% match is required. Grants are available for large and small trail construction/maintenance, planning, and support. This includes constructing

new trails and trailheads, maintenance or reconstruction of existing trails, enhancing existing trailheads, engineering and feasibility studies and building and enhancing volunteer organizations. The grant can be awarded to governments, nonprofits, or recreation districts. (<http://cpw.state.co.us/aboutus/Pages/TrailsGrantsNM.aspx>)

Trails Connecting People

Trails Connecting People with Nature is a Sierra Club initiative that works to ensure that access to the outdoors is increasingly equitable and available to all communities. The Sierra Club Foundation awards one year trail grants ranging from \$5,000 to \$20,000 towards trail creation or maintenance projects that engage new leaders and provide opportunities for communities to connect with nature. (<https://www.sierraclub.org/nearby-nature>)

IMBA Trail Accelerator Grants

The International Mountain Bike Association offers trail grants to municipal, state, and federal governments, along with non-profits that actively manage parks and trails. The grant awardees receive professional services from the IMBA trail solutions team. The grants typically range from \$5,000 - \$30,000 dollars and require a one-to-one match. (<https://www.imba.com/trails-for-all/trail-accelerator-grants>)

PeopleforBikes

The PeopleforBikes Community Grant program has traditionally supported bicycle infrastructure projects that make it easier for people of all ages and abilities to participate. PeopleforBikes is currently reevaluating their grant structure.

Colorado Health Foundation

The Colorado Health Foundation has a variety of grant programs largely around equity and addressing inequalities particularly focused on health. There is a specific grant around creating outdoor spaces that reflect community history, culture and legacy. (<https://coloradohealth.org/open-funding>)

DOLA

The Colorado Department of Local Affairs provides grants through its Conservation Trust Fund to all communities that have established conservation trust funds in the state. It is to be used for acquiring and maintaining parks, open space, and recreational facilities. (<https://cdola.colorado.gov/funding-programs/conservation-trust-fund-ctf>)

Gates Family Foundation

The Gates Family Foundation provides strategic grants and capital grants for natural resource related projects. Projects can include constructing or improving parks, public recreation facilities, outdoor spaces, community gardens, particularly in underserved urban and rural areas. (<https://gatesfamilyfoundation.org/strategic-priorities/natural-resources/>)

National Fish and Wildlife Foundation

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation provides grants to projects that sustain, restore and enhance fish, wildlife and plants, and their habitats. The Foundation has funds devoted to species, ecosystems, and bioregions.

There are additional grants that the Town of Eagle may be able to pursue by working with a partner non-profit such as those offered by the Cornel Douglas Foundation or Xcel Energy.

Priority Matrix

The following matrix assigns a level of priority (low, medium, high) to each project in Chapter 3 based on its alignment with plan goals, community interest, cost, potential environment impacts, and accessibility and recreational value. The intention of this matrix is so that Town Staff can use it as a guide to implement “low hanging fruit” projects in the short term and to start finding political support and funding for longer term, more visionary projects. Projects are abbreviated as listed here, with the full recommendation found in Chapter 3.

TABLE 6. PRIORITY MATRIX

Recommendation	Priority
AE1. Spanish signage and maps	Medium
AE2. Community Partners	High
AE3. Wildlife Education	High
AE4. Creative User Etiquette Signage	Medium
AE5. Etiquette Standards	Medium
AE6. Messaging System	Medium/High
AE7. Beginner Friendly Options	Medium
T1. Trail Opportunities	See Chapter 3 for trail by trail priority
T2. Criteria Development	Medium
T3. Trail Hubs	High
T4. Motorized Dead-Ends	Medium
T5. Support Horse Access	Medium
T6. Bike Skills Park	Medium
T7. Use Changes	Medium
T8. Haymaker/Road Gulch/3 Sisters	Medium/High
T9. Dirt Surfer Discussion	Medium
T10. Hermit Discussion	Low
T11. Forest Service Discussion	Low
M1. Re-routes	High
M2. Social Trails	Medium
M3. VVMTA Maintenance Collaboration	High
M4. Early Season Maintenance	High

M5. Trail Conditions Facebook	Medium
M6. Haymaker Testing Ground	Medium
M7. Quarterly Meeting	High
M8. Maintenance Tracking System	High
M9. Annual Maintenance Plan	High
M10. HTC Support	High
M11. Adopt-A-Trail	High
SF1. Haymaker Trailhead	High
SF2. Trailheads Access	Medium
SF3. Haymaker to Boneyard Signage	High
SF4. Visitor Information Strategy	Medium
SF5. Replaceable + Replicable Signage	High
SF6. Motorized Access	High
SF7. In-Town Camping	Medium
SF8. BLM Camping Level	High
SF9. BLM Camping Services	Medium
SF10. BLM Camping Capacity	Medium
P1. E-bikes	High
P2. Seasonal Wildlife Closures	High
P3. Permitting Structure	Low/Medium
OS1. Open Space Acquisition	Medium
OS2. Wildlife Enforcement Officer	Medium
OS3. Ecological Assessments	Medium
OS4. Prescribed Burns	High
OS5. Noxious Weeds Management Approach	High
OS6. Adjacent Property Weed Coordination	Medium
OS7. OS Development Standards	High
OS8. Habitat Improvement Projects	High
OS9. Spatial Inventory of Town Open Spaces	Low/Medium
OS10. Dog/Wildlife Conflict	High
OS11. Dog Control Policies	High
OS12. Consistent Funding Source	High

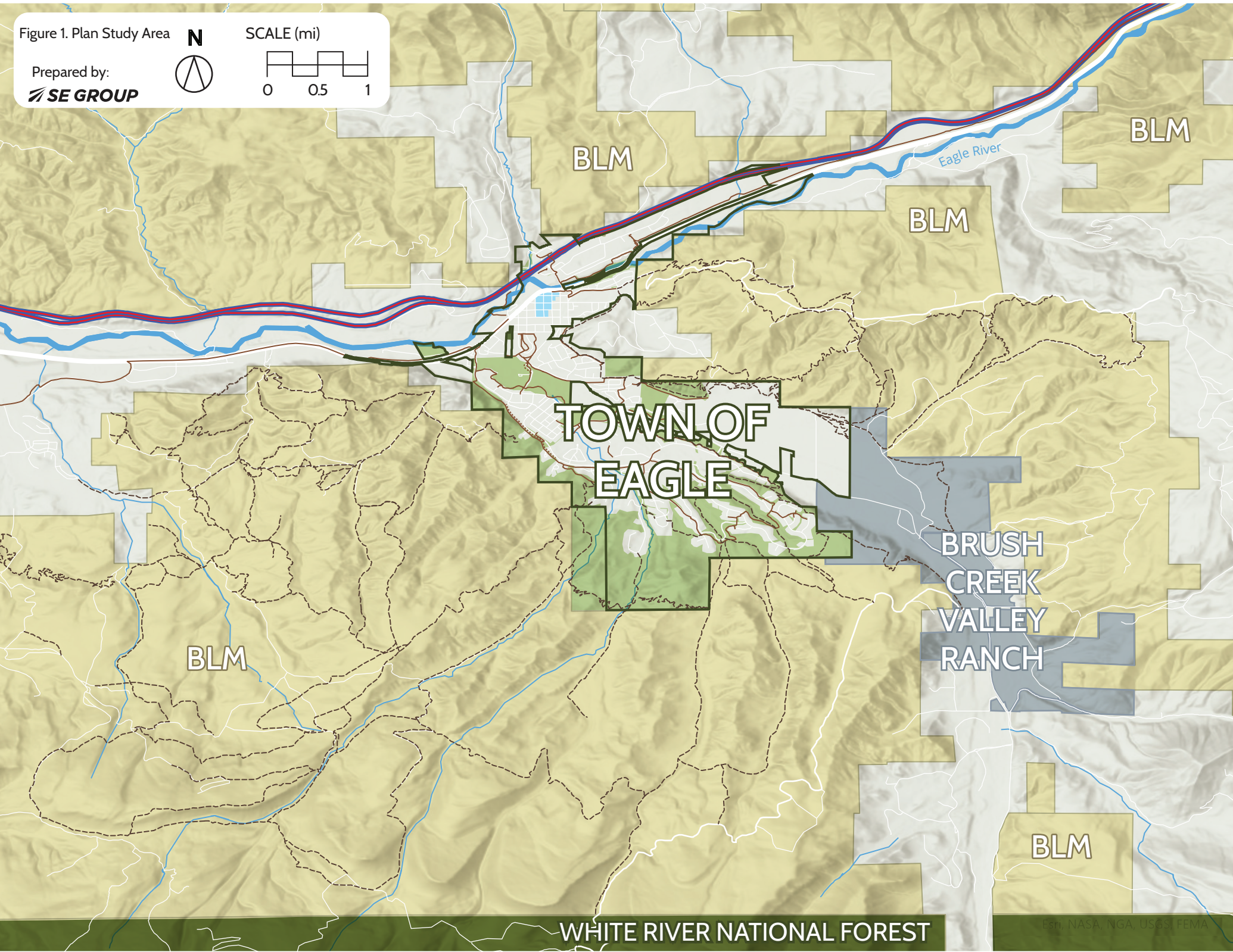
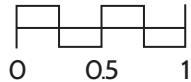
Figure 1. Plan Study Area

N

SCALE (mi)

Prepared by:

SE GROUP



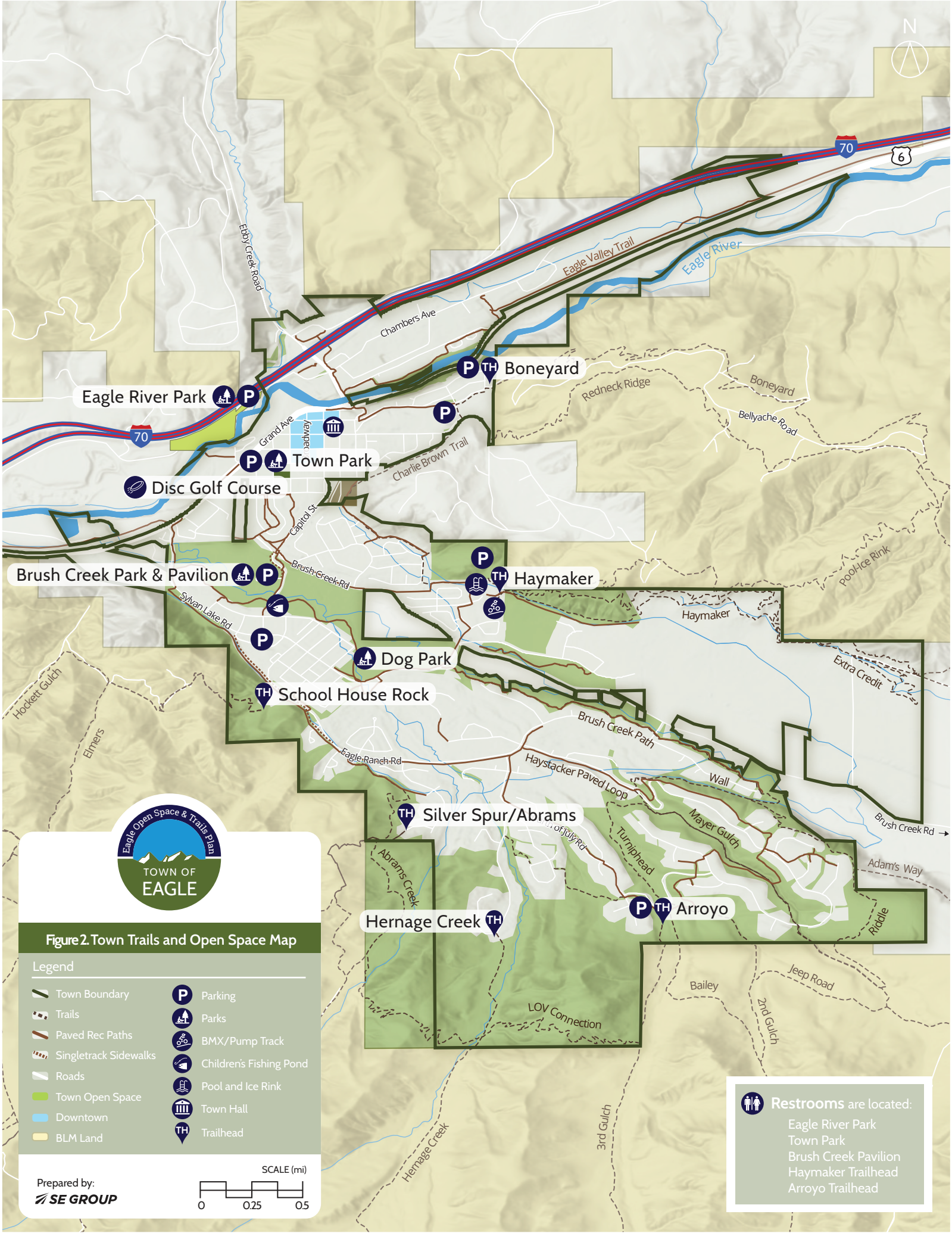
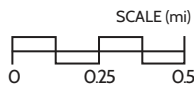


Figure 2. Town Trails and Open Space Map

Legend

- | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| Town Boundary | Parking |
| Trails | Parks |
| Paved Rec Paths | BMX/Pump Track |
| Singletrack Sidewalks | Children's Fishing Pond |
| Roads | Pool and Ice Rink |
| Town Open Space | Town Hall |
| Downtown | Trailhead |
| BLM Land | |

Prepared by:
SE GROUP



Restrooms are located:

- Eagle River Park
- Town Park
- Brush Creek Pavilion
- Haymaker Trailhead
- Arroyo Trailhead

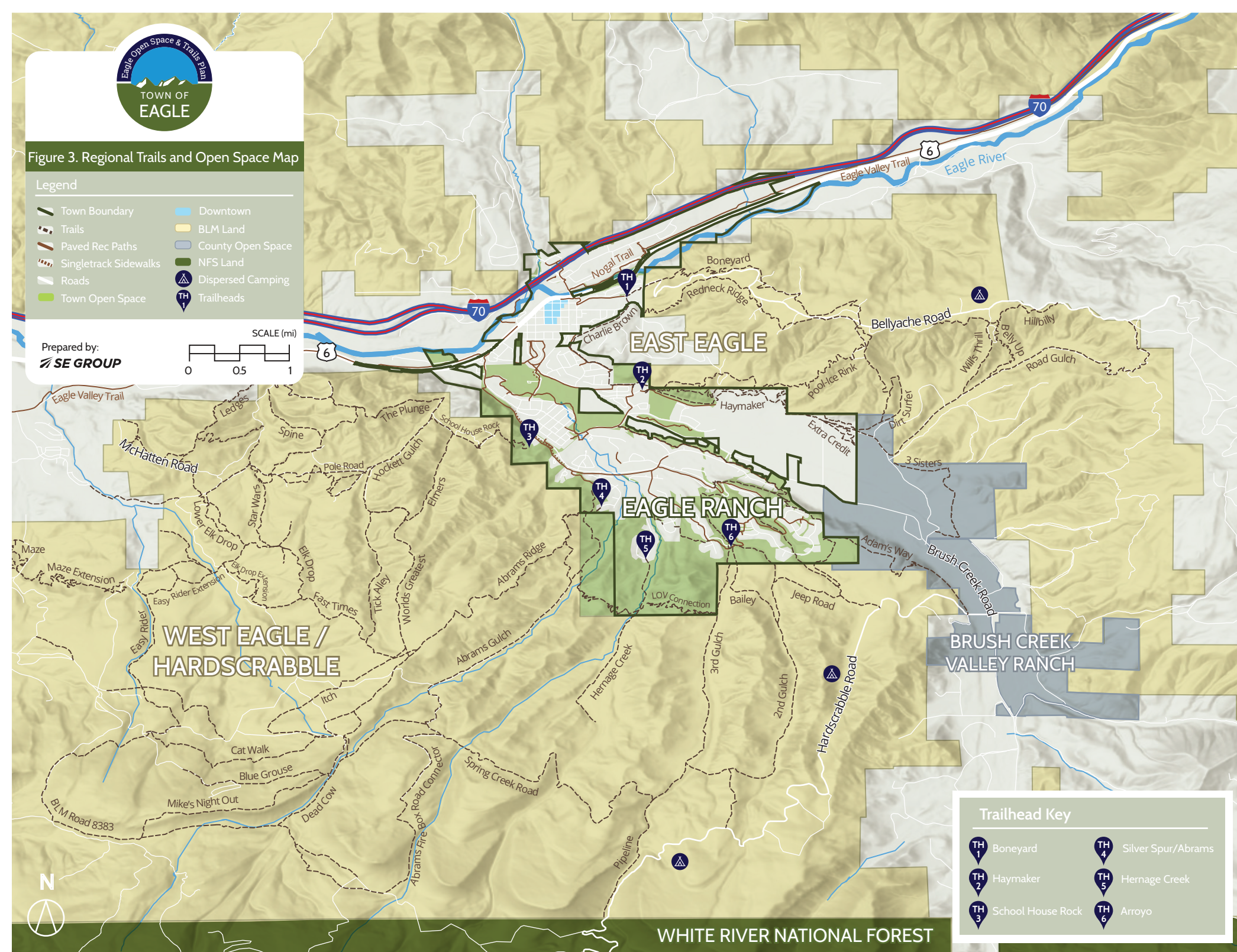
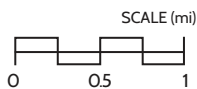


Figure 3. Regional Trails and Open Space Map

Legend

- Town Boundary
- Trails
- Paved Rec Paths
- Singletrack Sidewalks
- Roads
- Town Open Space
- Downtown
- BLM Land
- County Open Space
- NFS Land
- Dispersed Camping
- Trailheads

Prepared by:
SE GROUP



Trailhead Key

- | | |
|------------------------|-------------------------|
| TH 1 Boneyard | TH 4 Silver Spur/Abrams |
| TH 2 Haymaker | TH 5 Hernage Creek |
| TH 3 School House Rock | TH 6 Arroyo |



Figure 4. BLM Management Zones Map

Legend

- Town Boundary
- Trails
- Roads
- Downtown
- Dispersed Camping
- Trailheads
- NFS Land
- BLM Land
- Recreation Management Zone 1
- Recreation Management Zone 2
- Areas of Critical Environmental Concern

Prepared by:
SE GROUP

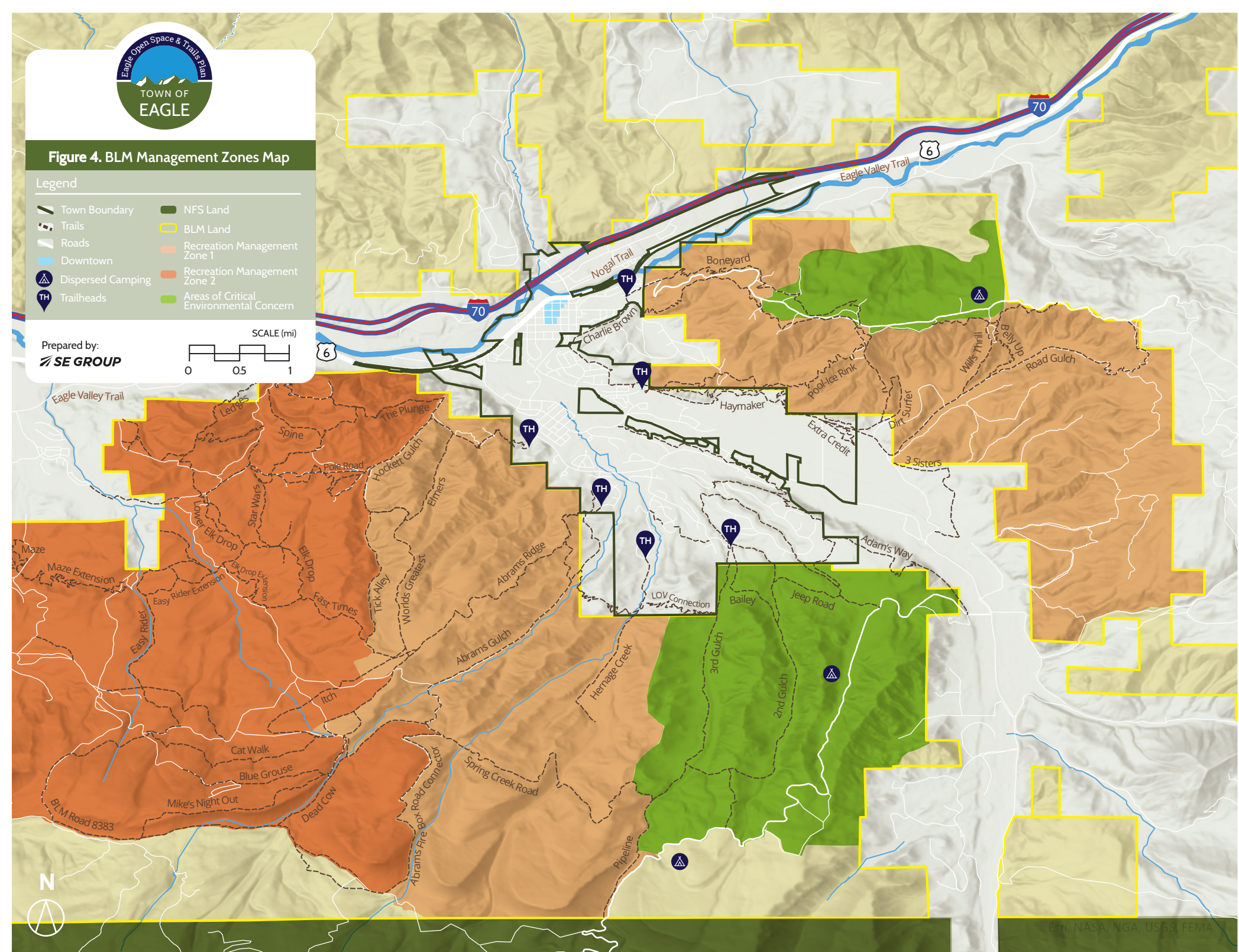
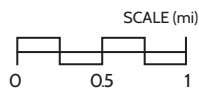
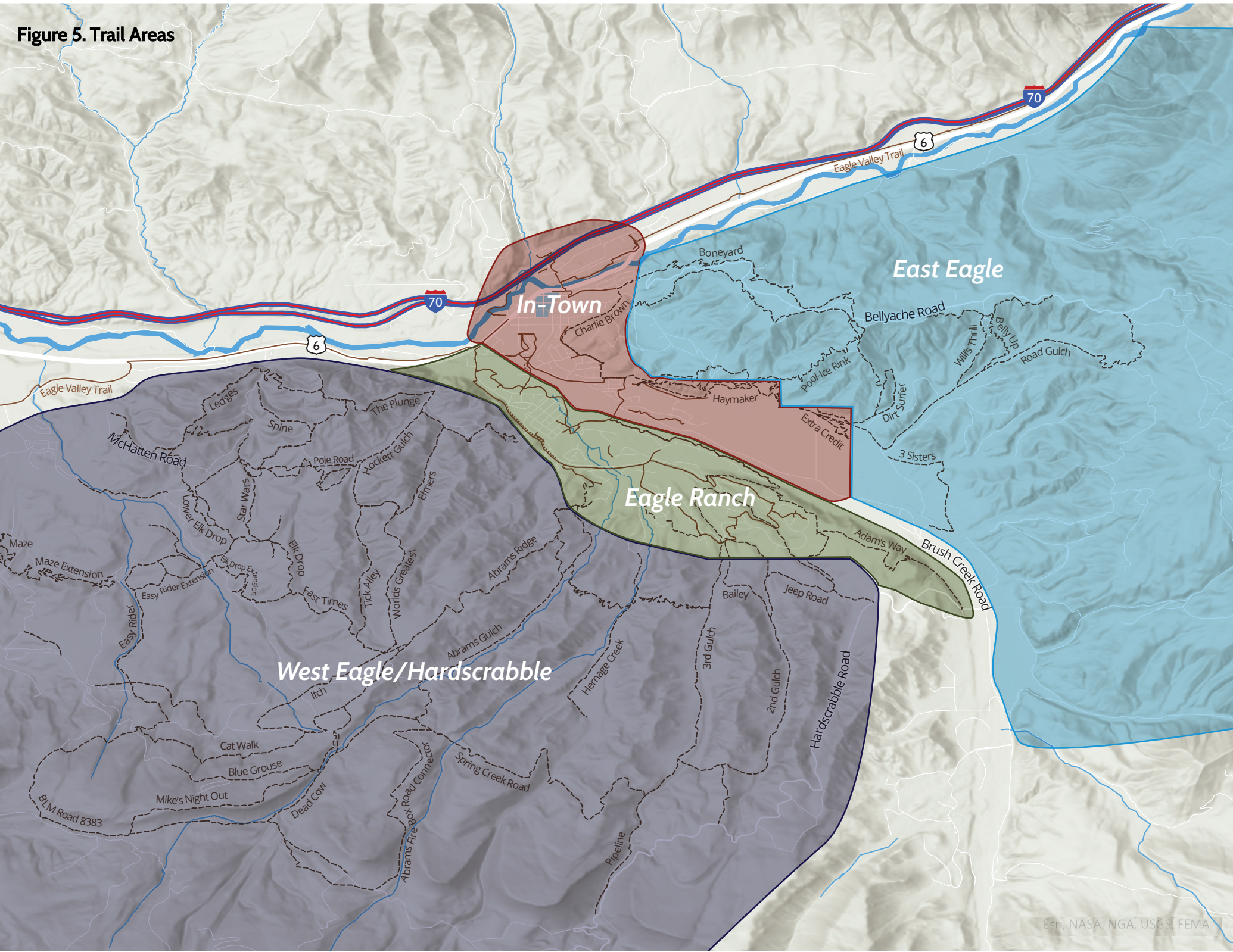


Figure 5. Trail Areas



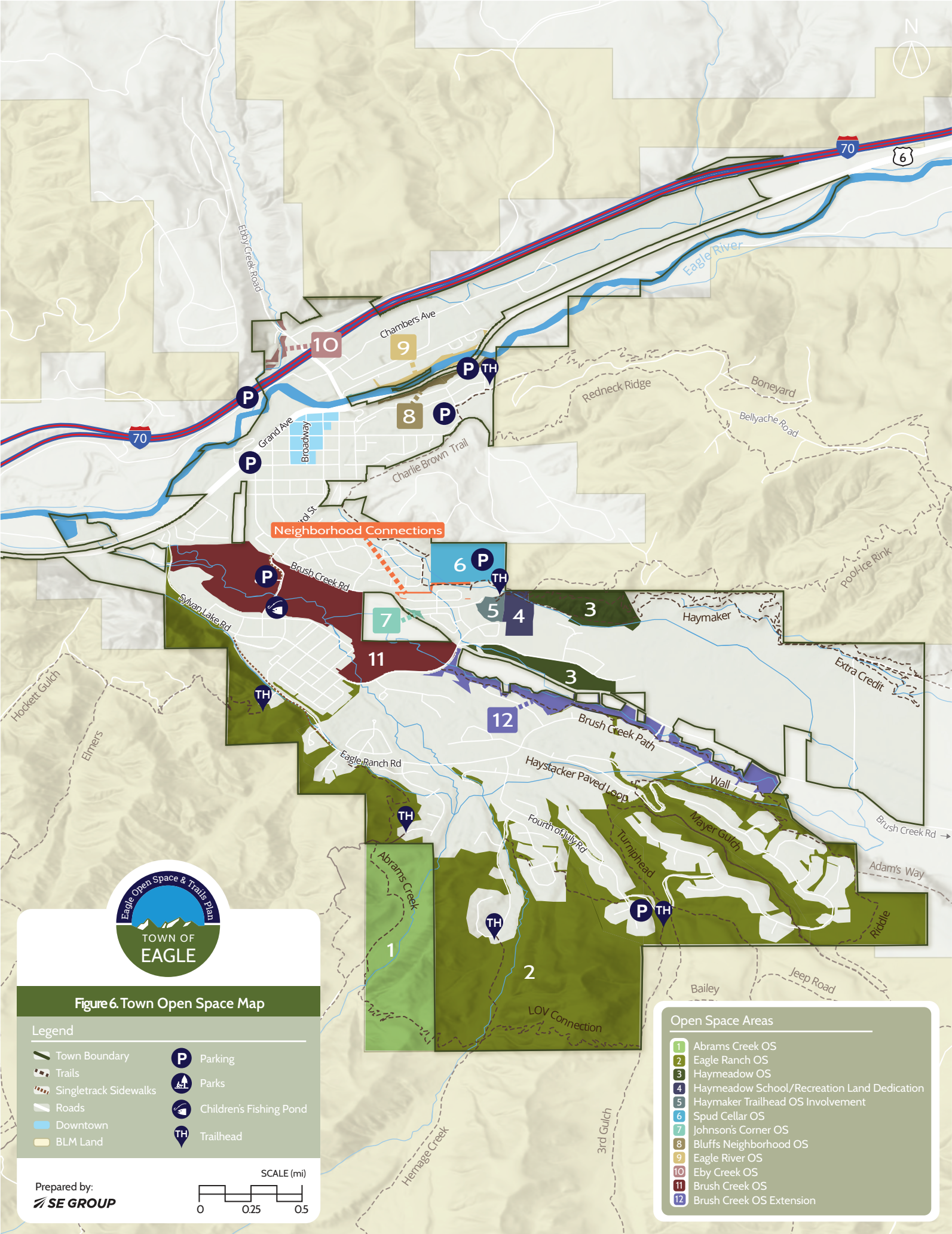
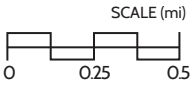


Figure 6. Town Open Space Map

Legend

- Town Boundary
- Trails
- Singletrack Sidewalks
- Roads
- Downtown
- BLM Land
- Parking
- Parks
- Children's Fishing Pond
- Trailhead

Prepared by:
SE GROUP



Open Space Areas

- 1 Abrams Creek OS
- 2 Eagle Ranch OS
- 3 Haymeadow OS
- 4 Haymeadow School/Recreation Land Dedication
- 5 Haymaker Trailhead OS Involvement
- 6 Spud Cellar OS
- 7 Johnson's Corner OS
- 8 Bluffs Neighborhood OS
- 9 Eagle River OS
- 10 Eby Creek OS
- 11 Brush Creek OS
- 12 Brush Creek OS Extension