



**Town Council
WORK SESSION
Tuesday, May 31, 2022
Public Meeting Room / Eagle Town Hall
200 Broadway Eagle, CO**

*This agenda and the meetings can be viewed at www.Townofeagle.org.
Times listed are approximate and are subject to change.*

TOWN COUNCIL WORK SESSION ACCESS INFORMATION AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION *This will be an in-person work session. Work sessions of the Town Council are not meetings requiring public comment. The public is allowed to attend, however, public comment will not be scheduled and will only be taken at the discretion of the Mayor. The Council shall take no final or official action, vote, nor make any motions.*

1. Microsoft Teams meeting
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Phone Conference ID: 109 703 161#

PRESENTATION - 4:00 PM

1. Open Space and Trails Master Plan

I hereby certify that the above Notice of Meeting was posted by me in the designated location at least 24 hours prior to said meeting.

Jenny Rakow, CMC
Town Clerk

PUBLIC WIFI – Eagle Guest



To: Mayor and Town Council

From: Brian Lieberman

Date: May 31, 2022

Agenda Item: Open Space and Trails Master Plan Work Session Presentation

REQUEST: Staff requests that the Town Council review the April 27 final draft of the Open Space and Trails Master Plan, including the appendices, and provide direction (if any) on what changes or additions Council would like to see prior to adopting the master plan during a regularly scheduled Council meeting.

BACKGROUND: In 2020, Council approved the development of the Open Space and Trails Master Plan. The need for the plan arose from the overwhelming interest of the community and stakeholders in open space and trails management and the need for refined strategic direction to guide investment in open space projects and assets. In June 2021, the Town hired the consulting firm SE group to lead the plan's development. SE Group and town staff have collected data and engaged with the community, stakeholders, and Open Space and Recreation Advisory Committee (OSRAC) to produce the plan throughout the past year. The plan has been through numerous drafts and revisions. Staff and SE Group are excited to present the plan's final draft to Council and the community.

The master plan will be a guiding document for the Town's Open Space and Trails department that provides a continued vision for open space and trails and an action plan for implementation in the next ten years. The plan includes research and recommendations for prioritization and needs analysis for capital projects, land acquisitions, trail development, recreation services, cultural amenities, funding estimates, and funding mechanisms. In addition, the plan situates itself within existing local and regional planning documents such as the Elevate Eagle and builds upon existing strategic efforts in the Town of Eagle.

ANALYSIS: The Open Space and Trails Master Plan includes a robust analysis of current conditions, community and stakeholder input, funding, and needs for the department. Out of this analysis, SE group and town staff worked with experts, stakeholders, and the community to develop a vision and goals for open space management. This includes recommendations to realize our community's vision of open space, funding mechanisms, and an implementation plan.

Of note, before implementing any recommendation in the plan, additional environmental review and public scoping would occur for projects on both federal land and Town Open Space. Thus, these recommendations represent a vision for the future rather than an approved list of projects.

COMMUNITY INPUT: Community involvement has been a cornerstone for the development of the plan. We received over 30 comments during the public comment period (3/15 – 4/8), significant stakeholder involvement throughout the process, guidance from OSRAC, over 250 responses to the online survey, 50 attendees at our first open house (10/19/21), and over 60 at the second open house (3/15). More than 18 diverse stakeholders have been involved in the planning process.

OSRAC discussed the final draft of the Open Space and Trails Master Plan during the May 3, 2022, committee meeting. Additional public and stakeholder comment was accepted during that meeting. The following motion was made:

Motion to recommend that Town Council adopts the Open Space and Trails Master plan as it exists in the April 27, 2022, final draft version with the following changes and additions:

1. *Inclusion of the Eagle County Safe Passage Plan as a reference document/plan*
2. *Statement that the plan will be flexible to changing and updating maps, data, and science*
3. *Statement that the plan will be flexible to the adoption of future plans by coalitions such as the Eagle County Community Wildlife Roundtable, Eagle Valley Outdoor Stewardship Coalition, and other regional wildlife habitat studies*
4. *Change the priority for a wildlife ranger/ code enforcement officer from 4-6 years (medium) to 0-3 years (high)*
5. *Disclaimer on all maps that trail alignments and proposed projects are approximate and conceptual-not approved for construction*
6. *Change the polygon name in East Eagle to “East Eagle area for further study of habitat, conservation, and trails, consistent with the SRMA.”*

Motion by Saeger second by Wescoatt. Six votes for and one vote against.

BUDGET / STAFF IMPACT: The master plan provides the Town with key funding priorities, identified gaps and opportunities, strategic direction, capital projects, and partnerships to support implementation for the next ten years. This strategic document will be very beneficial to staff and the annual budget as it provides a community and stakeholder supported direction for open space and trails. The plan identifies priority levels with a temporal guide for implementation of community supported projects.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT / STANDARDS ACHIEVED: Action item #3.9 in Elevate Eagle identifies the need for the Town to develop an Open Space and Trails Master Plan. Several other action items under the Elevating Our Adventurous Lifestyle and Relationship with the Environment sections detail action items that will be included in the Open Space and Trails Master Plan as well.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Provide direction (if any) on what changes or additions Council would like to see prior to adopting the master plan during a regularly scheduled Council meeting.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Council Work Session Presentation
2. April 27 final draft of the Open Space and Trails Master Plan
3. Appendix A. Public Engagement
4. Appendix B. Open Space and Trails Analyses
5. Appendix C. Response to Comments Document and List of Public Comments



Eagle Open Space & Trails Master Plan

Council Presentation – May 31, 2022





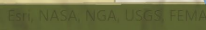
PLAN PURPOSE

- Why are we doing this? Why is this needed?
 - Need for better understanding of community needs and involvement with open space and trails
 - Trails plan last completed in 2014, open space had not been revisited since 1997
 - Understanding existing conditions or what is needed to understand existing conditions



ABOUT THE PLAN

- What is this plan and how do we use it?
 - Roadmap for future projects, budgeting, and priorities
 - Community/stakeholder vision and goals to guide future decision-making around open space and trails
 - This plan is intended to be adaptive as conditions change
 - This plan does not consecrate the approval of all elements, site specific environmental review required



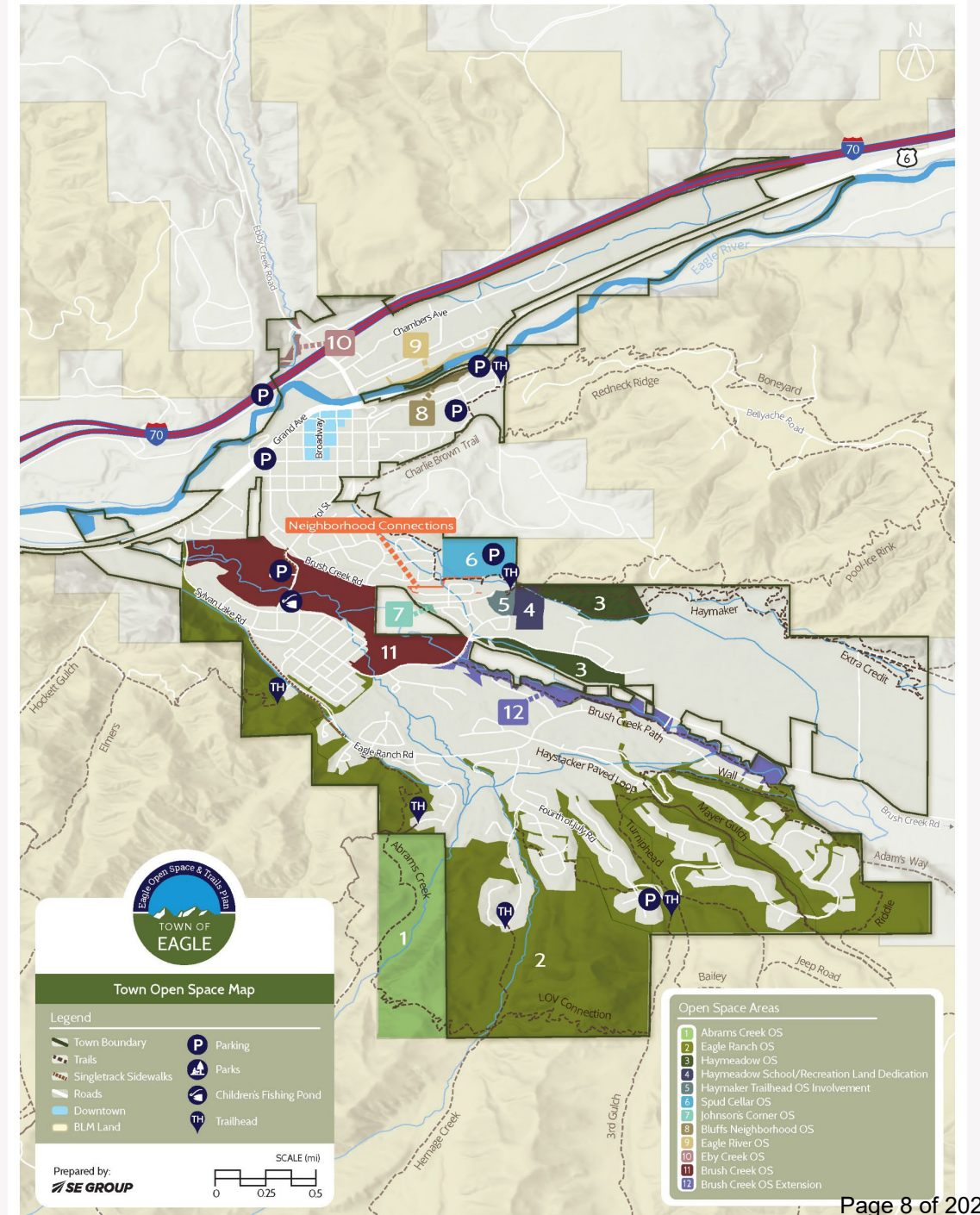
TOWN OPEN SPACE

Approximately 1,357 Acres

Approximately 860 of those acres are in and around Eagle Ranch

Open Space Management Objectives

- Conserve Natural Characteristics
- Protect Critical Wildlife Habitat
- Maintain Scenic Qualities
- Provide Appropriate Recreational Opportunities



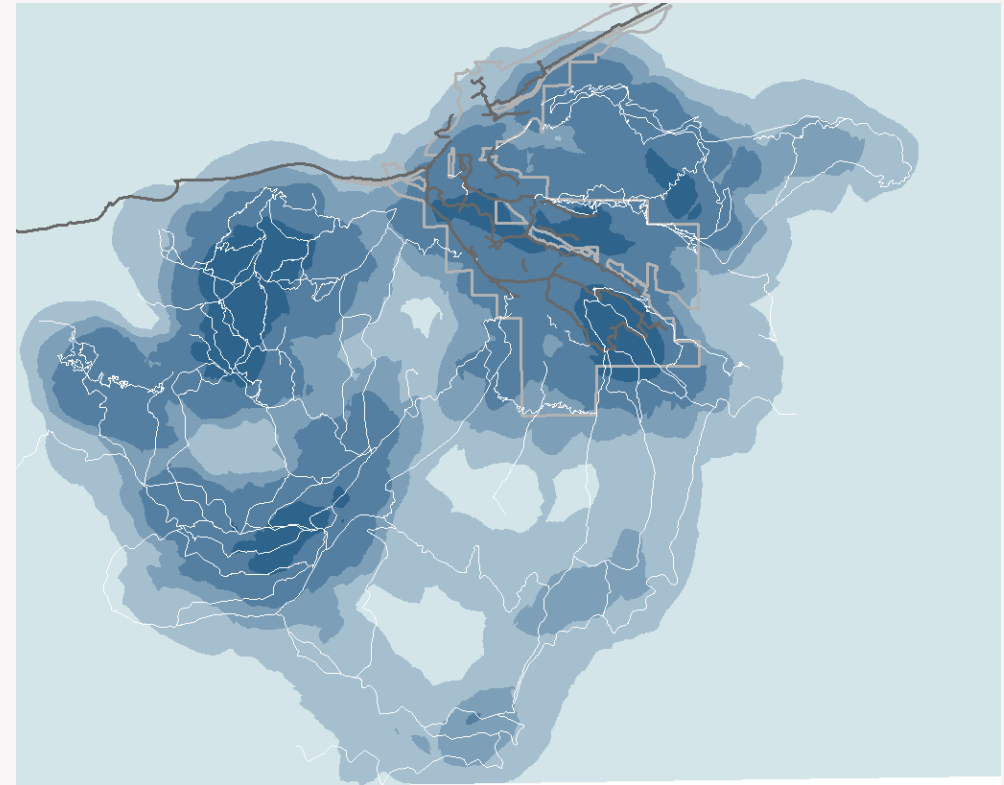
OPEN SPACE ANALYSIS

- Using available resource data sources, not able to go into significant depth on open space conditions
- Documentation of habitat, previously mapped noxious weeds, wetlands, penstemon, CNHP conservation areas, soil erodibility, and biodiversity/resiliency



TRAILS ANALYSIS

- Analysis of existing trail system within the Town and on adjacent public land
- Key Takeaways:
 - Extensive mileage planning area wide, high variability in levels of use
 - Majority of trails are intermediate (fewer beginner or advanced opportunities)
 - Several very steep trails where erosion is an issue



PUBLIC PROCESS – OUTREACH METHODS

- Town of Eagle Website (main page news flash, link under long-range planning, link under Open Space page)
- Eagle Today newsletter
- Town of Eagle and Eagle Outside Social Media
- Flyers at Town Hall, coffee shops, gear shops, trailheads, restaurants
- Partner's social media (HTC, VVMTA, EVOM, RMSR, Cycle Effect, EVLT, ECOS)
- 3 Vail Daily articles
- Distributed to Town HOA's
- Broadway Variable Message Board
- Project website (eagleostplan.org and email list)
- Comment periods advertised by Eagle County Community Wildlife Roundtable and Eagle Valley Outdoor Stewardship Coalition

PUBLIC PROCESS – STAKEHOLDERS

- CPW
- USFS
- BLM
- Eagle Valley Wildland Fire
- Hardscrabble Trails Coalition
- Rocky Mountain Sport Riders
- Backcountry Mountain Horse Trekkers
- Eagle County BMX
- Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation
- The Cycle Effect
- Eagle Ranch Wildlife Committee
- Walking Mountains Science Center
- Eagle Valley Outdoor Movement
- Trout Unlimited
- Vail Valley Mountain Trails Alliance
- Eagle County Open Space
- Eagle Valley Land Trust
- Mountain Recreation District

PUBLIC PROCESS - TIMELINE

- Stakeholder Roundtable – August 2, 2021
- Community Visioning Open House – October 19, 2021 and follow up survey
 - 50-60 attendees, 234 responses to online survey (October 20 – November 10)
 - EVOM (September 23) and Cycle Effect outreach (October 19)
- Focus Group Meetings (separate OS, Trails meetings) – December 9, 2021
 - OSRAC, land management agencies, CPW, user group organizations
- OSRAC Draft Plan Review – March 1, 2022
- Public Draft Plan Open House – March 15, 2022
- Public Comment Period: March 16 – April 8
- OSRAC Final Draft Plan Review – May 3, 2022

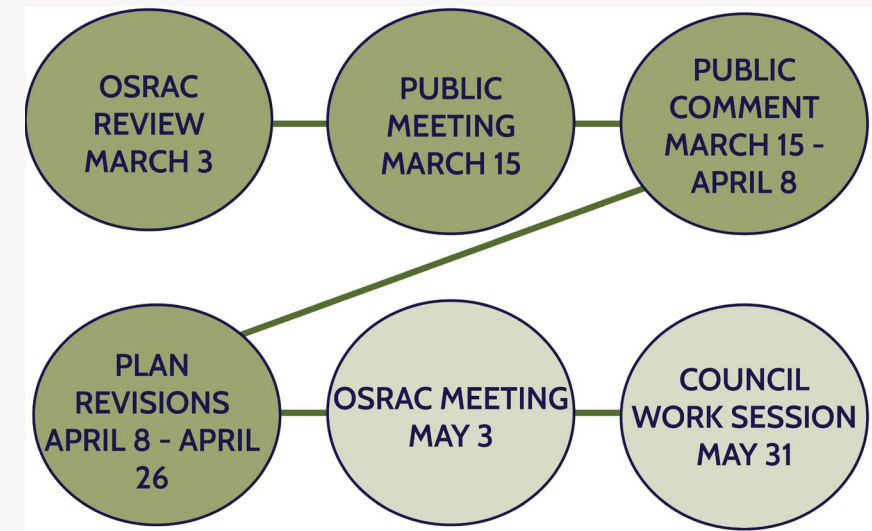
OCT OPEN HOUSE/SURVEY

- Vision comments: options for all user types, sustainability, expansion/strategic growth, continued presence of wildlife, maintenance
- Key priorities were open space preservation, maintenance, and increasing recreational opportunities
- Highest open space values: providing publicly accessible recreation, protecting wildlife and natural resources, preserving rural character
- On trail question, largest support for modest amount of new trails and key connections



PLAN REVIEW PROCESS

- Received comments from OSRAC – March 1, 2022
 - Minor revisions made prior to public open house
- Public Open House (March 15, 2022) and Public Comment Period (March 16 – April 8)
 - 50-60 attendees, 30 additional comments received
 - Verbal comments at open house, project website comment box, e-mail, mail
- Resulting plan revisions made in April
- Response to comments and summary of revisions included as Appendix C of the plan



WHAT WE HEARD

- Additional emphasis on open space
 - Goal prioritization, additional background information, additional recommendations around future open space management plans, restoration efforts, inclusion of open space recommendations
- Concerns about wildlife habitat
 - Removal of new trails in the ACEC, statement that all future trails would have seasonal closure as determined with CPW, maps of elk and mule deer habitat shown in the plan, support for regional habitat mapping project
- Lack of priorities/quantity of goals
 - Goals prioritized into 6 primary goals and 14 sub-goals. Goals have been ordered to reflect priorities.
- Received several comments with different perspectives on e-bikes – remained topic for further discussion

WHAT WE HEARD

- Portion of East Eagle SRMA
 - Adjusted language to include that future management should be consistent with SRMA designation
- Inclusion of past planning exercises
 - Re-affirmation of 1997 Open Lands Plan values, references to Eagle River Corridor Plan, Haymeadow OS, Brush Creek Improvements Project, further reference to community survey and Elevate Eagle
- Social Trails
 - Removal of names of social trails, policy against formalization of such trails going forward
- Downtown/River connectivity
 - Added recommendation around creating connectivity to downtown and river
- Full list of comments and revisions included in response to comments document

VISION STATEMENT

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.



PRIMARY GOALS

1. Inventory conditions and improve understanding of open space.
2. Based on the outcome of conditions inventory, appropriately invest in open space, natural resources, and wildlife habitat protection.
3. Maintain existing trails and recreation assets in open space and surrounding federal lands.
4. Strategically evaluate support for new recreational opportunities with consideration to wildlife habitat, natural resource impacts, system connectivity, user experiences, and accessibility.
5. Provide equitable access to the open space and trails for all users across a variety of activities and effectively communicate with residents and visitors to support accessibility, good etiquette, and an understanding of wildlife habitat and natural resource impacts.
6. Residents and visitors to the area contribute to a consistent source of funding for the Open Space and Trails Department.

OPEN SPACE RECOMMENDATIONS

- Wildlife and Habitat
- Open Space Assessment and Management
- Natural Resource Restoration
- Policies and Departmental
- Highlights
 - Ecological assessments and management plans for each town open space
 - Noxious weeds management plan
 - Education/restoration around social trails
 - Several habitat related recs incorporated throughout the plan

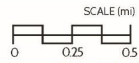


Open Space Opportunity Map

Legend

- Town Boundary
- Roads
- Trails
- Town Open Space
- Paved Rec Paths
- Downtown
- Singletrack Sidewalks
- BLM Land

Prepared by:
SE GROUP



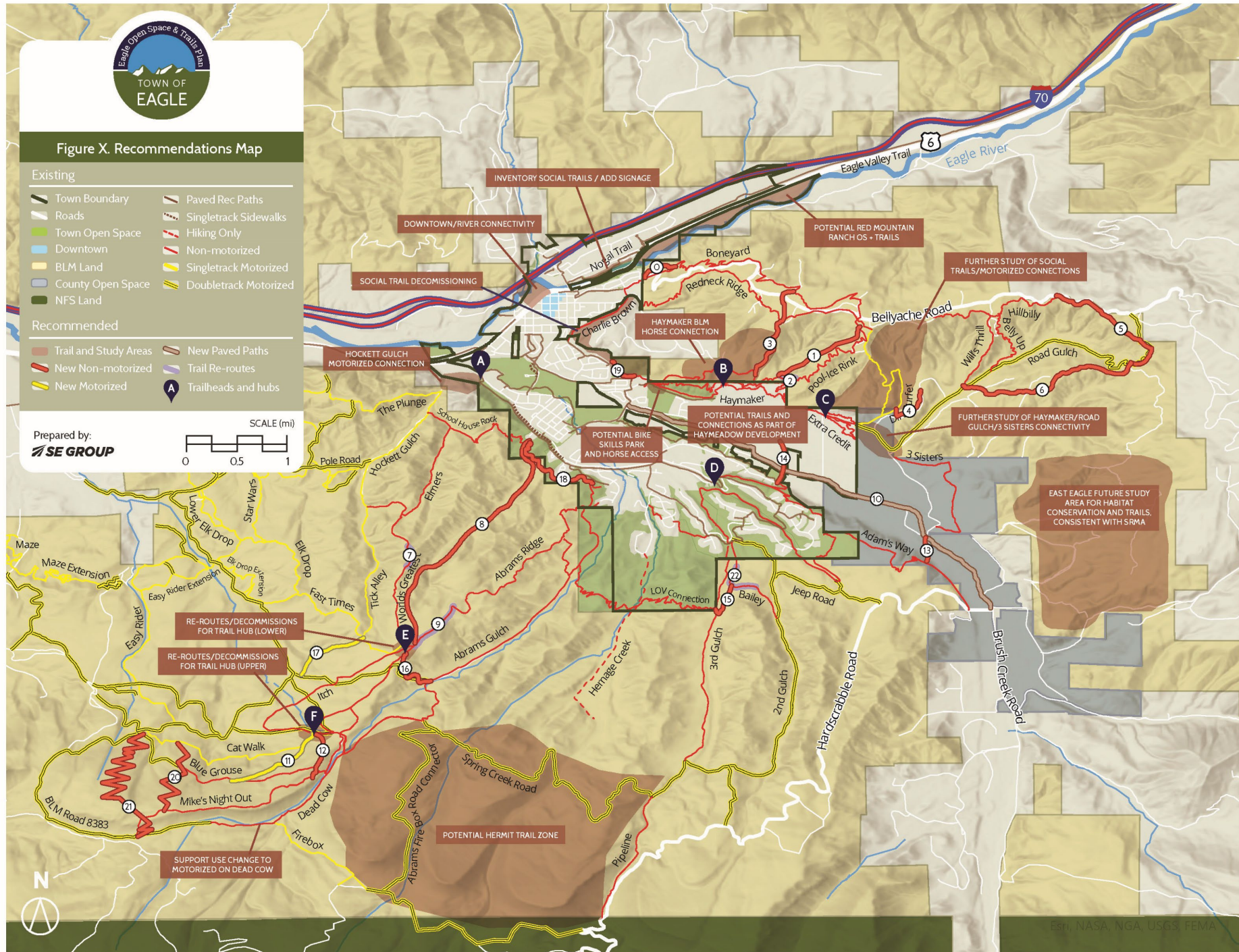
Opportunities

- Known Areas of Noxious Weeds
- Ground Squirrel Management Focus Area
- Riparian, Wetland, and Water Management/Restoration
- Social Trail Decommissioning
- Bank Stabilization
- Trash Clean-up
- Vegetation Management
- Continue to Support Conservation Projects in the Brush Creek Corridor

The Town of Eagle intends to partner with CPW and neighboring landowners to sponsor projects that improve wildlife mobility and habitat throughout our open space portfolio, when opportunities are available.

TRAIL RECOMMENDATIONS

- Trails – very high level, mileage and alignments are not exact
- Trail Maintenance
- Support Facilities and Infrastructure
- Policies
- Highlights
 - Continue to evaluate e-bikes policy
 - Working with the BLM on camping management/capacity and exploring in-town options
 - All new recreation opportunities subject to seasonal closures
 - Visitor information strategy around directing visitors to appropriate areas



PRIORITIES



HIGH (0-3 YEARS)

OS2. Habitat Improvement Projects
OS5. Regional Habitat Studies
OS6. Ecological Assessments
OS9. Wetlands
OS10. Fuels Management
OS11. Noxious Weeds Management
OS13. Social Trail Management
OS14. Restoration Brush Creek/Eagle River
AE1. Wildlife Education
AE2. Natural Resource Education
T3. Trail Hubs
T8. Haymaker/Road Gulch/3 Sisters
M1. Re-Routes
M3. Trail Maintenance Collaboration
M4. Early Season Maintenance
M7. Quarterly Meeting
M8. Maintenance Tracking System
M9. Annual Maintenance Plan
SF1. Haymaker Trailhead
SF3. Wayfinding Signage
SF5. Replaceable + Replicable Signage
SF6. Motorized Access
SF8. BLM Camping Level



MEDIUM (4-6 YEARS)

OS1. Enforcement Officer/Ranger
OS8. Open Space Management Plans
OS12. Adjacent Property Weed Coordination
AE3. Spanish Signage + Maps
AE5. Creative User Etiquette Signage
AE6. Etiquette Standards
AE7. Messaging System
AE8. Beginner Friendly Opportunities
T2. Criteria Development
T4. Motorized Dead-ends
T5. Support Horse Access
T6. Bike Skills Park
T7. Use Changes
T9. Dirt Surfer Discussion
M2. Social Trails
M5. Trail Conditions Facebook
M6. Haymaker Testing Ground
SF2. Trailheads Access
SF4. Visitor Information Strategy
SF7. In-Town Camping
SF9. BLM Camping Services
P1. E-bikes



LOW (7-10 YEARS)

OS7. Spatial Inventory of Town Open Spaces
T10. Hermit Discussion
T11. Forest Service Discussion
SF10. BLM Camping Capacity
P3. Permitting Structure

ADVOCACY/CONTINUED INITIATIVES

OS3. Dog Control Policies
OS4. Dog/Wildlife Conflict
OS15. Restoration Organization Support
OS16. Restoration Efforts Coordination
OS17. Open Space Acquisition
OS18. Development Standards
OS19. ACEC/SRMA
OS20. Consistent Funding Source
AE4. Community Partners
SF11. Trailhead w/ Wildlife in Mind
M10. Trail Organization Support
M11. Adopt-A-Trail
P2. Seasonal Wildlife Closures
P4. Trail Sustainability
P5. Social Trail Policy

FUNDING

Plan lays out elevated role/scope for OST department

Appreciating lodging tax collections are expected to increase

Outfitter permit fees have not been collected recently

Anticipated increase from those sources

OST Department has had contributions from general fund in recent years, amount has fluctuated

Recommendation: funding through increased lodging tax enforcement and growth, fee on commercial outfitters, and established funding floor for OST Department from general fund. Additional tax explored in the future.

OSRAC RECOMMENDATIONS

- OSRAC reviewed revised plan at May 3, 2022 meeting
- Recommendations from OSRAC
 - Inclusion of Eagle County Safe Passages Plan as a reference document/plan
 - Statement that the plan will be flexible to changing and updating maps, data, and science
 - Statement that the plan will be flexible to the adoption of future plans by coalitions such as the Eagle County Community Wildlife Roundtable, Eagle Valley Outdoor Stewardship Coalition, and regional wildlife habitat studies
 - Changing priority for a wildlife ranger/enforcement officer from medium to high
 - Disclaimer on all maps that all alignments and proposed projects are approximate and conceptual – not approved for construction
 - Change the name of the Polygon in East Eagle to “East Eagle area for further study of habitat, conservation, and trails, consistent with SRMA”

TOWN OF EAGLE

OPEN SPACE AND TRAILS MASTER PLAN



**FINAL DRAFT
MAY 2022**



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

TOWN COUNCIL

Scott Turnipseed – Mayor

Mikel “Pappy” Kerst – Mayor Pro Tem

Ellen Bodenheimier – Council Member and OSRAC Committee Coordinator

Janet Bartnik– Council Member

Geoffrey Grimmer– Council Member

Sarah Parrish– Council Member

Nick Sunday– Council Member

OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Ernest Saeger – Committee Chair

Jessica Foulis – Vice Chair

Erinn Hoban – Committee Member and Secretary

Craig Wescoatt – Committee Member

John Bailey – Committee Member

Lizzy Owens – Committee Member

Phillip Kirkman – Committee Member

Chris Kehoe – Alternate Committee Member

TOWN STAFF

Jim White – Interim Town Manager

Tom Gosiorowski – Public Works Director

Brian Lieberman – Open Space and Trails Manager

Halsey Lucas – Open Space and Trails Technician

FORMER TOWN STAFF

Brandy Reitter

PLANNING TEAM

SE Group

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- Figure 5. Elk Habitat
- Figure 6. Mule Deer
- Figure 7. BLM Zones
- Figure 8. Open Space Recommendations
- Figure 9. Trail Recommendations

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 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 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. Unlike the 2014 Trails Plan, which solely focused on trails, this Plan encompasses Town Open Spaces, natural resources, and conservation as well. 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. However, the primary focus of the natural resource management element of the plan is Town-owned Open Space. See **Figure 1** for a map of the planning area and **Figure 2** for a map of Town Open Space.

OPEN SPACE AND TRAILS DEPARTMENT AND OSRAC

Open Space and Trails related efforts in the Town of Eagle are led by the Town's Open Space and Trails Department and the Open Space and Recreation Advisory Committee (OSRAC). The purpose of the Town department is to "preserve and protect natural open space areas and wildlife habitat while also providing outdoor recreation opportunities for Eagle's citizens and visitors."

The purpose of OSRAC is to provide additional expertise to the Town Council and the Town Manager to enhance and facilitate open space and recreation in the Town. OSRAC was founded in 2020 due to overwhelming interest in enhancing natural resource management. OSRAC acts as a catalyst between the Town, residents, relevant stakeholders, and the broader community to expand and improve the Town's internal and adjacent open space and recreation opportunities. This is done within the context of the Town's commitment to conservation, social, and environmental objectives.

The mission of OSRAC is as follows: "Ensure continuing investment, conservation, and sound management practices of open space, trails and natural resources within the Town of Eagle and adjacent public and private lands with the goal of maintaining our community's quality of life for present and future generations." This seven-person advisory committee was instrumental in the development and refinement of this plan.

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 1996 Eagle Area Community Plan and 1997 Eagle Area Open Lands Conservation Plan established important principles around open space and conservation that continue to guide this plan. The Open Lands plan first identified the management objectives for open space and outlined the vision of management by the Town. While some management strategies have evolved to address increased use, new recreational equipment developments, and changes in desired management by Town residents, many major objectives identified in that plan still hold true today.

The [2014 Eagle Area Trails Plan](#) documented a vision and trail and maintenance recommendations. This plan includes key recommendations that have yet to be implemented that were revisited in this planning process.

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. Along with sentiments expressed in recent community surveys, this Elevate Eagle plan encourages a balanced approach to open space management that encourages responsible recreation management with regard to wildlife habitat and natural resource protection. The plan calls for the development of an Open Space and Trails Plan and the development of programs or funding around protecting wildlife habitat, maintenance and improvements to the trail system, wildlife education, and natural hazards mitigation. This Open Space and Trails Plan develops more detailed actions around these goals.

In the [2021 Community Survey](#), Eagle residents listed quality of life and recreational opportunities as the top two reasons they choose to live in Eagle. For quality of life, key contributing factors listed include open space & trails and the recreation-oriented lifestyle. Stream and river quality, open spaces areas, scenic/visual quality, recreational access, and wildlife conservation were among the top issues listed that need to be responsibly addressed by the Town.

Additional documents reviewed include planning and assessments for specific town open spaces ([Eagle River Corridor Master Plan](#), [Brush Creek Watershed Management Plan](#), Brush Creek Ecological Assessment, Eagle Ranch Wildlife Mitigation Plan, [Haymaker Trailhead Master Plan](#), Haymeadow Open Space Management Plan).

The [2015 Colorado Parks and Wildlife State Wildlife Action Plan](#) was consulted around important habitats and management actions to preserve them.

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 for the next 10 years. This Plan represents the community's direction to the Town around open space and trails.

Prior to the implementation of any recommendation, additional environmental review and public scoping would occur for projects on both federal land and Town Open Space. Thus, these recommendations represent a vision for the future, rather than an approved list of projects.

Over the next decade, as habitat/natural conditions change or new data becomes available, it may be necessary to update this plan in response.

Vision, Objectives, 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.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

The Town's 1997 Open Lands Conservation Plan laid out the following objectives around the management of open space. These objectives were reviewed as part of this plan process and reaffirmed.

- a. Conserve Natural Characteristics
- b. Protect Critical Wildlife Habitat
- c. Provide Appropriate Recreational Opportunities
- d. Maintain Scenic Qualities

GOALS

This plan has 6 primary goals with 14 additional sub-goals. These goals are listed in order of priority.

1. Inventory conditions and improve understanding of open space.
 - a. The Town is actively increasing its capacity and understanding in managing natural resource conditions and habitat.
 - b. The Town monitors and manages natural resource conditions in its open spaces in accordance with best practices and management plans.
2. Based on the outcome of conditions inventory, appropriately invest in open space, natural resources, and wildlife habitat protection.
 - a. The Town works with partners to identify and pursue appropriate habitat restoration and open space management projects on Town Open Space and surrounding federal lands.
 - b. The Town invests in wetland and riparian health, particularly around Brush Creek, and works to restore impaired wetlands for wildlife habitat and riparian health.
3. Maintain existing trails and recreation assets in open space and surrounding federal lands.
 - a. 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.
 - b. Accurate and informative signage and trailhead kiosks help users navigate the system and understand resource sensitivity and proper etiquette.
4. Strategically evaluate support for new recreational opportunities with consideration to wildlife habitat, natural resource impacts, system connectivity, user experiences, and accessibility.
 - a. Together with partners, the Town strikes a community and scientific supported balance of wildlife and resource protection with appropriate recreational opportunities.

- b. The Town encourages and promotes recreational use in appropriate areas based on resource/habitat sensitivity, parking and access, desired experiences, and neighborhood impacts.
 - c. Key trail connections support access to the many different parts of the system and create a cohesive trail network.
 - d. The Town strategically evaluates its support for new trails based on connectivity, wildlife habitat, user experiences, accessibility, and soil conditions.
5. Provide equitable access to the open space and trails for all users across a variety of activities and effectively communicate with residents and visitors to support accessibility, good etiquette, and an understanding of wildlife habitat and natural resource impacts.
 - a. The Town effectively communicates with the community to share important information about wildlife habitat and resource sensitivity, seasonal closures, etiquette, and system updates.
 - b. 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.
 - c. The Town works closely with its partners to creatively engage the community, support accessible recreation, and better educate open space and trail users.
 - d. 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.
6. Residents and visitors to the area contribute to a consistent source of funding for the Open Space and Trails Department.

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. Chapter 2 also exhibits opportunities for the Town to inventory and improve management of natural resources and wildlife habitat.

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, non-motorized, and equine 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 natural resource 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 during a focus group.

Plan Review

The draft plan was presented to and reviewed by OSRAC and the public. OSRAC met on March 3, 2022 to review the plan. On March 15, 2022, an open house was held to present the draft Plan for community feedback. A public comment period was open from March 16, 2022 to April 8, 2022. This feedback was incorporated into the plan prior to a meeting with OSRAC on May 3, 2022 to review changes. A Town Council work session was held on May 31, 2022. Both the OSRAC meeting and the Council work session were open to the public to provide additional comment.

All public engagement opportunities were advertised on the Town website, social media, at Town Hall, on user group platforms, in Eagle Today and Vail Daily, and on flyers placed around Eagle. Some meetings were advertised on the Town's electronic sign on Broadway Street as well and through HOA listservs.

A summary of the comments received and the corresponding edits is included as **Appendix C**.

CHAPTER 2: EXISTING CONDITIONS

The Town of Eagle's natural open space areas protect important winter range habitats for ungulates, native vegetation, and amazing vistas of peaks and forests in the Brush Creek Valley.

Recreationally, within the Town of Eagle municipal boundary, there are paved and natural surface trails, trailheads, natural 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 recreation offerings within the Town boundary is included as **Figure 3**.

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 4** depicts the trails, trailheads, open space, and dispersed camping surrounding the Town.

Town Open Space and Natural Resources Management

LAND CONSERVATION

The Town has historically focused available resources for conserving land on properties with high wildlife and recreation values in the Brush Creek Valley. This includes supporting the establishment of Sylvan Lake State Park and protecting properties once proposed to be part of the Adam's Rib/Hardscrabble Ranch (now the Brush Creek Valley Ranch and Open Space). In addition, the Town has worked with Eagle Valley Land Trust, Eagle County Open Space, and other community partners to purchase properties for conservation. These include the Spud Cellar and Abrams Creek Open Space properties.

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 2**, 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. With the help of community partners, 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. In addition, the Town 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.

These parcels have been managed in accordance with the Eagle Ranch Wildlife Mitigation and Enhancement Plan. This plan was developed to “avoid, minimize, and mitigate wildlife impacts resulting from the Eagle Ranch PUD.” Development was avoided on elk and deer winter range to the maximum extent feasible, with those areas deeded to the Town as Open Space. 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). Other elements of the mitigation plan discuss fencing, building envelopes, landscaping, and potential actions on developed lots.

Much of the open space is 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 area is also mapped black bear habitat. 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. These parcels are managed in accordance with the Haymeadow Open Space Management Plan. The parcels, with changed agricultural practices, have converted from grassy hayfields to weed-dominated habitats with low vegetation cover. The northern parcel includes most of the first loop of the Haymaker Trail and a portion of the Haymeadow Paved Trail. It 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 is from the Haymaker Trailhead. These parcels will also include trail 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. An integrated weed management plan describes a range of biological, mechanical, cultural, and chemical methods to control the existing stand of noxious weeds. Additional noxious weeds found on the property are listed in the management plan. 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. This parcel has been identified as low quality, weed-dominated habitat, and an Ecological Restoration Plan was developed for this parcel in 2018. This plan outlines restoration and weed management practices to be undertaken on the parcel.

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 Cellar 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. This parcel was deeded to the Town as open space with the development of Brush Creek Village Townhomes. Prior to the development of neighborhoods in this area, Brush Creek Road used to be aligned to the south and west of this parcel. Today, recreations can enjoy a soft surface trail that runs the length of the old roadbed. 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, and the parcel is mostly grass and small shrubs. 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 system 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. The parcels help preserve a view corridor along Highway 6 and from the Bluffs neighborhood as well.

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. The 2015 Eagle River Corridor Plan has zoned open space areas along the river as Preservation Areas, Natural Experience Areas, and Active Recreation Areas. The lands included within this Town Open Space on the north side of the river have been designated as a Natural Experience area, where visitors are encouraged to experience the area via soft-surface trails, offering protection of natural resources while allowing limited human visitation. This land has been more disturbed, and the area is well suited for limited improvements (benches, shade trees, educational kiosks). Several user-created trails exist from the bike path down to the water for fishing and recreation access. The Eagle River Corridor Plan recommends consolidating these trails into fewer designated trails that located and designed to limit impacts to riparian vegetation and wildlife habitat.

On the south side of the river, it is designated as a preservation area, to be protected in its natural condition without development of any kind and without the intrusion of trails. This area has mature cottonwood trees and dense thickets of willows.

There are no system trails in this open space and most of it is mapped river or riparian wetland. 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.

A Brush Creek Watershed Improvement Project was completed circa 2011, intended to improve stream health from the lower Sylvan Lake Road bridge near Highway 6 to the upper end of the Eagle Ranch Development boundary (3.5 miles of waterway). The project was jointly coordinated by the Eagle Ranch Wildlife Committee, the Town of Eagle, and CPW under a permit from the Army Corps of Engineers. The project identified well-established practices that improve stream health and fish habitat for spawning, feeding, resting, and wintering. Plan recommendations have resulted in plantings of cottonwoods, willows, and other shrub species. Disturbed sites were also replanted with a native grass/forb seed mix. These projects have been completed both on Town open space and adjacent private properties along the creek.

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.

At present, the Town does not have a thorough understanding of natural resource conditions in its open spaces. Therefore, one of the main goals/recommendations of the plan is to conduct studies to establish what the conditions are. Then, the Town can act on these results.

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. Unfortunately, detailed knowledge of the location of noxious weeds and general condition of these weeds has not been documented by the Town. 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 manage 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

The Eagle River and Brush Creek are important riparian environments for habitat, ecosystem function, and recreational access. Both of these environments have been subject to recent planning (Eagle River Corridor Plan, Eagle River Watershed Plan, and Brush Creek Watershed Management Plan). These plans provide additional information and recommendations around the management of these environments and may need to be revisited to better understand current conditions and establish criteria for management in line with open space objectives. 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. **Figure 5** shows elk habitat in the area and **Figure 6** shows mule deer habitat in the area. These habitats, along with those of other species with important habitats in Eagle County are available at this [link](#) prepared by Eagle Community Wildlife Roundtable. Current data on habitat can be obtained directly from the local CPW staff. 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. A map of seasonal wildlife closures is available at this [link](#). The Town supports seasonal closures to protect wildlife for any new recreation development. 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. Management for other natural resources will also improve the quality of the habitat.

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.

The Town has a limited understanding of current conditions and potential restoration projects, towards ultimately identifying restoration projects in line with open space management objectives.

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 and other improvements have benefitted anglers as well.

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. Most of these activities are mutually beneficial for improvements to wildlife habitat and management of vegetation.

Surrounding Federal and Publicly Accessible Lands

The landscape surrounding the Town of Eagle is managed by diverse 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.

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 and County lands. This information is to be considered in

the planning of future recreational opportunities and habitat improvement projects beyond the Town. The BLM planning zones described herein are shown in **Figure 7**.

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

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 7**). The BLM restricts mechanized and motorized trail use in the SRMA between December 1 to April 15 to protect wintering wildlife species. Other standards for the Hardscrabble/East Eagle SRMA allow timber harvest, fuels/vegetation treatments, and dispersed 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 7**). 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. New trail and recreation developments are intended to be confined to SRMAs rather than ACECs.

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. The Town has not historically provided resources for recreation or habitat management in this area. There are numerous social trails in this area and some system double tracks.

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.

EAGLE COUNTY

The Brush Creek Valley Ranch and Open Space (BCVROS) properties also have specific directives established by the Eagle County Open Space Department, the property management plan, and the conservation easement. Trails on these properties only allow for non-motorized use, and the Salt Creek portion of the open space is limited to pedestrian and equestrian use only. Other than the Salt Creek area, the BCVROS properties have seasonal wildlife closures to all public access.

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 4**). 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 has a mix of seasonal wildlife closures to address habitat needs.

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.

WHITE RIVER NATIONAL FOREST

The Bureau of Land Management land near Eagle is bordered by the White River National Forest to the south. Lands on the White River National Forest are managed in accordance with the White River National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (2002) with recreation managed in accordance with the Forest's travel management plan. These lands are outside the study area of this plan, but this plan and recreation/natural resource management in and around Eagle have impacts on the National Forest. As a result, the U.S. Forest Service has been engaged in this plan process and will be an important partner for the Town going forward.

Trails

The Plan's study area encompasses trails on Town of Eagle, BLM, 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 comparatively 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

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 less desirable 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 the preferences of mountain bikers.
- **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 primary 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. 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 recreational opportunities 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 opportunities are proposed.

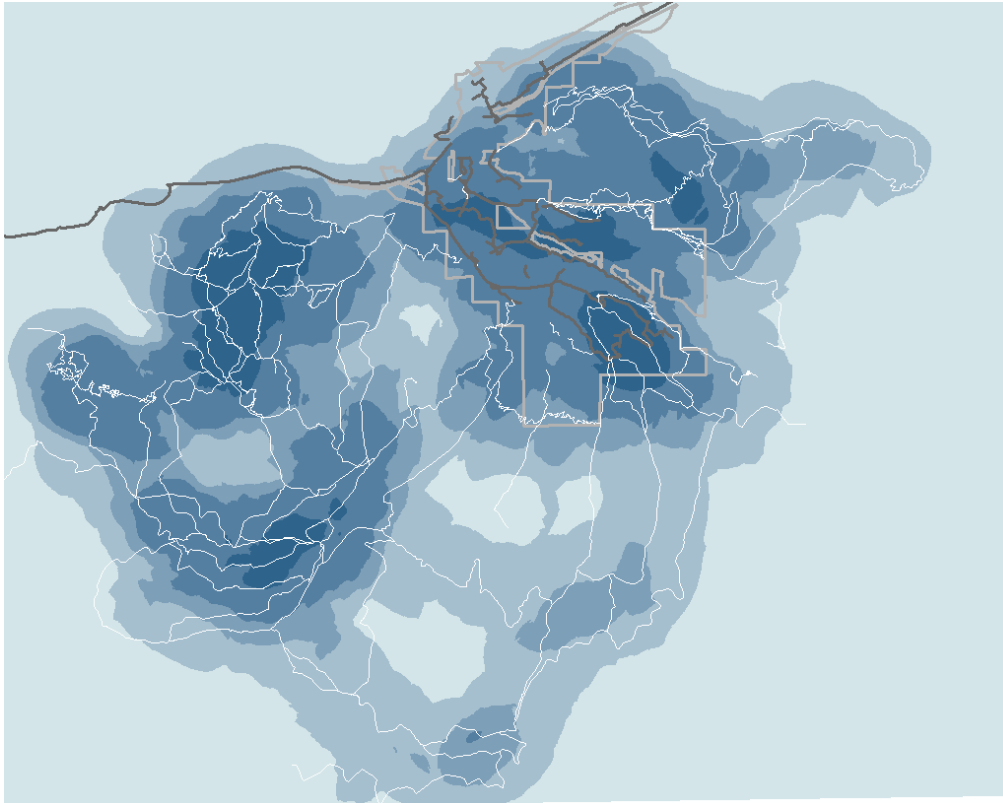
The trail system around Eagle is located on land managed by several cooperating agencies. Each agency manages trails on their respective land; however, many trails close to Eagle are adopted by groups who volunteer to take the lead on maintenance. The Town has assisted with maintenance responsibilities 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. Even with extensive and effective trail work every season, steep sections of trail with poor soil quality often require continual maintenance.

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.



TRAIL COUNT DATA

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.

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.

To note, the recommendations for open space and trails reflect the different stages each system is in. While the trail system is relatively mature and its issues and opportunities well documented, significantly less is known about the resource conditions of the Town's open spaces and the work that needs to be completed. Therefore, the recommendations for the Town's open spaces and conservation are more focused on further studies and partnerships. It is anticipated that these studies or ecological assessments would provide more detailed recommendations. Overall, the Town's goal is to increase its understanding and capacity to manage natural resource conditions.

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. See **Figure 8** for a map of natural resource management opportunities on Town Open Spaces.

Wildlife and Habitat

OS1 – Enforcement Office/Ranger

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

OS2 – Habitat Improvement Projects

Provide support to habitat improvement projects on surrounding public lands.

Work with CPW and other partners to identify areas of degraded habitat on Town Open Space and projects to restore impaired habitats.

Support projects outside of Open Space that protect existing habitats or limit disturbance.

OS3 – Dog Control Policies

Work with neighboring land managers to have consistent dog control policies or to better identify dog polices according to each land manager.

OS4 – Dog/Wildlife Conflict

Work with CPW and public land managers to address dog/wildlife conflict issues and consider enforcement on open space as necessary. The Town of Eagle is currently contracted with Eagle County Animal Control, however, this could be included in the duties of the enforcement officer/ranger recommended in OS1.

OS5 – Regional Habitat Studies

Support county/regional efforts to study wildlife habitat, connectivity, and biodiversity hot spots in the region. This plan may need to adapt following the completion of such efforts.

To note, additional recommendations on limiting habitat fragmentation as it relates to trails can be found under the Trails recommendations. Potential wildlife impacts and known habitat helped drive the determination of what trails to include in the trails opportunities map. Further policy around winter recreation/seasonal wildlife closures are listed under the Policy recommendations, with no new winter recreation areas recommended within this planning process. Wildlife education-related recommendations are included under the Accessibility and Education recommendations section.

Open Space Assessment and Management*OS6 – Ecological Assessments*

Conduct ecological assessments for Town Open Spaces to better understand noxious weeds, habitat, and other resource conditions. Prioritize assessments in open space properties that have high ecological value or that provide important wildlife habitat, such as the Brush Creek Open Space properties. These ecological assessments should include vegetation surveys, wildlife habitat surveys, and wetland delineation/reach conditions studies if applicable.

OS7 – Spatial Inventory of Town Open Spaces

Create and maintain a spatial inventory of Town open spaces. The inventory could include named parcels, past assessments completed, and mapping of resources.

OS8 – Development of Open Space Management Plans

Develop open space management plans for each open space that the Town manages. These plans should build off the ecological assessments (recommendation OS6) and include a robust inventory of existing conditions (cultural resources, ecological resources, existing uses, easements, geology/soils), a public process, and management actions around biodiversity protection and maintenance, recreation and special uses, and education, interpretation, and enforcement. Further understanding the existing conditions and what needs to be done for Town open spaces will provide great clarity on where the department needs to go from a budgeting, partnerships, and capacity perspective.

Natural Resource Restoration

The spatial location of recommended natural resource restoration projects is depicted in **Figure 8**. Additional assessments and inventories of town Open Spaces (described as part of OS6/OS8) will likely result in additional areas for future such projects.

OS9 – Wetlands

Conduct further studies to better understand the conditions of wetlands in Town (e.g., Brush Creek) and prioritize projects that restore wetlands and improve riparian health and degraded wildlife habitat.

Sponsor a broad assessment of the Brush Creek wetlands on Town-owned open space to highlight sections that are impaired. Work with the community and stakeholders to establish goals for restoration. Focus on attainable restoration projects that meet the goals of restoration.

Pursue outside funding, such as GOCO's Restore grant, for large scale studies and restoration projects along Brush Creek.

OS10 – Fuels Management

Work with Eagle Valley Wildland to conduct fuels management in Town open spaces that address noxious weeds, pests, wildfire risks, and other resource conditions. Support Eagle Valley Wildland to educate the public on the importance of this work.

OS11 – Noxious Weeds Management

Develop a noxious weed management plan that set goals for the Town and lays out the Town's weed management methodology to achieve said goals. Incorporate a nimble and data-driven approach that includes innovative techniques to target weed problems on specific properties.

Work with Town Council to nominate the OSRAC as the Town's Noxious Weed Advisory Board. Bring in new committee members that have experience or expertise with noxious weeds and/or encourage existing OSRAC members to learn more about noxious weed management.

Advocate for additional resources to be allocated to noxious weed management. In addition, pursue outside partnerships and funding to strengthen the Town noxious weed management program. Examples include the Colorado Department of Agriculture's Weed Management Grants and EVLT'S Weed Worriers Program.

OS12 – 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.

OS13 – Social Trail Management

Establish a “Stay on the Trail” campaign to provide education on the impacts of traveling off trail and creating social trails.

Inventory existing social trails on Town Open Space. Develop a plan to effectively and permanently close social trails. Focus on education in the plan to change behavior and develop a restoration plan. Priority areas include on the Spud Cellar property, open space along the Eagle River, spurs off the Charlie Brown Trail, and near the Haymaker Trail and Trailhead area.

Work with adjacent landowners to close social trails that start or cross on properties with different landownership.

Support the BLM to close and restore social trails identified on BLM lands.

OS14 – Restoration near Brush Creek and Eagle River

Develop a plan to reduce erosion and improve vegetation along riverbanks where recreation has damaged natural resources. Inventory existing social trails near waterways. Develop designated access points to popular river locations and a restoration plan to reduce off trail use and restore streambanks and vegetation.

OS15 – Restoration Organization Support

Support organizations and volunteers working on natural resource restoration projects through Town communication platforms, tools, supplies, people-hours, and coordination.

OS16 – Restoration Efforts Coordination

Work with Eagle County Open Space to better coordinate restoration efforts and habitat conservation projects with regional priorities.

Policies and Departmental*OS17 – 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). The Town’s criteria for acquisitions includes properties that are important for natural resource protection, habitat, buffers/scenic view protection, and/or recreational access. Properties that rank highly among several or all of these criteria should rank highly. In addition, pursue key properties that would provide public access from Town to public lands.

Continue with the Town’s historic support for land conservation in the Brush Creek Valley. The Town may not be the best entity to lead acquisition/conservation efforts but could be a party to these efforts.

OS18 – Development Standards

Consider an update to 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.

OS19 – ACEC/SRMA

Support the BLM in their management of the Areas of Critical Environmental Concern around Eagle, allowing the Harrington's Penstemon to thrive. Support the BLM in their management of SRMAs to balance recreation and conservation needs in these areas.

OS20 – Consistent Funding Source

Establish a consistent funding source to continue to provide management and restoration of Town Open Space.

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 – 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.

AE2 – Natural Resource Education

Develop educational materials about area natural resources and the fragile ecosystem and soils, and accordingly how to recreate responsibly. These materials should be shared through trailhead kiosks, the Town of Eagle website, Town social media platforms, and via partners' networks.

AE3 – Spanish Signage and Maps

Continue to work with community partners on improving recreation management and accessibility for non-English speakers. This could include signs, maps, trailhead kiosk information and web information about trails and open space in Spanish. This may also include working with non-English speakers and community partners to identify and remove other barriers to the outdoors.

AE4 – Community Partners

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

AE5 – Creative User Etiquette Signage

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

AE6 – 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.

AE7 – 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).

AE8 – 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 are aimed at better connecting the system, enhancing user experiences, creating broader accessibility to the system, and concentrating use where appropriate to limit the fragmentation of habitat. The recommendations were developed in light of the 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.

The general ethos and prioritization here emphasizes maintenance of existing, enhancements and connectivity with the existing system, newer trails near development, rather than major trail expansion. This is in keeping with the important habitat and challenging soils in and around Eagle.

Opportunities

T1 – Trail Opportunities

See **Figure 9** and **Table 5** for recommended trail opportunities, connections, re-routes, and decommissions. **Figure 9** also shows recommendations for areas for further study or trail zones (see **Table 6**) and specific locations/points (**Table 7**).

The trail recommendations included here represent those that align well with the community's vision and goals, specifically around an accessible trail system while continuing to conserve habitat, and the Town's capacity and priorities. Public land managers may approve other trail alignments not shown in this Plan that meet the goals of the land manager, and this Plan, by no means, precludes that from taking place. All trail proposals in this plan will be subject to additional environmental review and public scoping determined by each land manager's internal policies (such as NEPA on federal lands or Town of Eagle Municipal Code requirements on Town open space).

The following tables summarize the identified trail opportunities. A trail by trail list is available as **Table 5** at the end of this chapter.

TABLE 2. OPPORTUNITIES BY TYPE

TYPE	MILEAGE
New Trail	17.54
Re-Route Existing	1.37
New Paved Trail	4.13

TABLE 3. NEW SINGLETRACK MILEAGE BY PRIORITY

PRIORITY	MILEAGE
Low	2.66
Medium	11.77
High	6.79
Dependent	1.82

TABLE 4. MILEAGE BY BLM ZONE

BLM ZONE	NEW TRAIL	RE-ROUTE EXISTING
ACEC	0.39	0.4
RMZ 1	9.78	0.97
RMZ 2	6.33	0
Total	16.5	2.74

T2 – Criteria Development

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 improved horse access to BLM land from Town and work to limit conflict with other user groups. Explore opportunities to provide horse trailer parking and equestrian access from Town to BLM lands.

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 that accomplish other recommendations in this plan. 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 and 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.

Trail 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 – Trail Maintenance Collaboration

Continue to work collaboratively with VVMTA, HTC, and other partners 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 or other such social media platforms 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, HTC, and other partnering organizations 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 and other partners. 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 – Trail Organization Support

Support HTC and other trail 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 more detailed site planning and the eventual implementation of the Haymaker Trailhead Master Plan, collaborating with Mountain Recreation District if possible.

SF2 – Trailheads Access

As 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 – Wayfinding Signage

Develop effective wayfinding signage that directs people to and between Town open space and trails for pedestrians and cyclists. This may include signage from downtown to trailheads or trailhead to trailhead on the paved path network.

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

Add signage throughout the system that helps users better navigate the system and educates users on etiquette, wildlife, natural resources, and closures. 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. Should a campground be developed, wildfire risk should be mitigated.

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.

SF11 – Trailheads with Wildlife in Mind

Follow best practices for designing, developing, or upgrading trailheads around wildlife. This would include wildlife-friendly fencing, approved bear-resistant containers, and trailhead lighting.

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. All new recreational opportunities in wintering range will be subject to seasonal wildlife closures – determined in partnership with CPW, BLM, and any other applicable land managers.

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.

P4 – Trail Sustainability

All new trails must be built sustainably to limit impact on the natural environment and require a reduced maintenance load.

P5 – Social Trails Policy

Develop a new culture around social trails, where social trails are not formalized and new trails are only added to the system following proper review of the appropriate location, alignment, trail offering and purpose. Work with the BLM to develop specific Eagle-area management objectives for closures and off-trail travel.

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TABLE 5. TRAIL RECOMMENDATIONS

The ID numbers listed in this table correspond to the trail recommendation as shown in Figure 9.

ID	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	Uphill route from Haymaker Trailhead to start of Pool & Ice. Explore opportunity to incorporate equestrian use as well while limiting conflict.	0.7
4	DM Re-Route	New Trail	Medium	Non-Motorized	Intermediate	BLM	RMZ 1	Creating singletrack option in the Road Gulch area.	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 development of Trail Rec #6.	1.35
6	New Road Gulch Area Loop Route	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
10	Brush Creek Paved Path	New Paved Trail	High	Non-Motorized	Paved	Town/County		Planning for this path extension is already underway and would provide ADA accessible opportunities.	4.13
11	Blue Grouse Extension	New Trail	Low	Motorized	Intermediate	BLM	RMZ 2	Re-routing to Catwalk to create new motorized loop	0.92

ID	NAME	Type	Priority	User Type	Difficulty	Land Manager	BLM Zone	Note	Estimated Mileage
12	Mike's Extension	New Trail	Medium	Non-Motorized	Intermediate	BLM	RMZ 2	Extending/Re-routing Mike's into new trail hub	0.52
13	Adam's Way Brush Creek Connector	New Trail	High	Non-Motorized	Beginner	BCVROS			0.26
14	Haymeadow Connector	New Trail	Dependent	Non-Motorized	Beginner	Town		Dependent on Haymeadow Development	0.47
15	Bailey LOV Connection	New Trail	Medium	Non-Motorized	Intermediate	BLM	ACEC	Partially on Town Open Space	0.39
16	Abrams Gulch Connector	New Trail	Low	Non-Motorized	Intermediate	BLM	RMZ 1		0.57
17	Itch to Tick Alley Connector	New Trail	Medium	Motorized	Intermediate	BLM	RMZ 2	Creating a motorized connector that allows motorized users to avoid non-motorized area	0.72
18	Kill Bill/School House Connector	New Trail	Medium	Non-Motorized	Intermediate	Town/BLM	RMZ 1		0.99
19	Spud Cellar Connector	New Trail	Medium	Non-Motorized	Beginner	Town		Additional planning needed, may be paved or singletrack	0.31
20	Mike's Alt	New Trail	Low	Non-Motorized	Intermediate/Advanced	BLM	RMZ 2	downhill trail	1.17
21	Mike's Night Up	New Trail	Medium	Non-Motorized	Intermediate/Advanced	BLM	RMZ 2		3
22	Bailey Re-Route	Re-Route Existing	High	Non-Motorized	Intermediate	BLM	ACEC	Re-route of existing trail section	0.4
	TOTAL								23.42

TABLE 6. POLYGON RECOMMENDATIONS

ID	NAME	PRIORITY	DESCRIPTION
I	Potential Bike Skills Park and Horse Access	High	Explore bike skills park in Haymaker Trailhead area that is open to the public and supports rider progression. Explore opportunities for trailer parking/access from Haymaker.
II	Potential Hermit Trail Zone	Low	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.

ID	NAME	PRIORITY	DESCRIPTION
III	Re-routes/decommissions 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). Support motorized flow through this hub.
IV	Re-routes/decommissions for Trail Hub (upper)	Medium	Re-route trails to all meet up at single point for trail hub (Catwalk, Mike's, Reynolds, Scratch)
V	Further study of social trails/motorized connections (Dirt Surfer area)	High	See recommendation T.9
VI	Further study of Haymaker/Road Gulch/3 Sisters	High	See recommendation T.8
VII	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
VIII	Social Trail Decommissioning	Medium	Social trail decommissioning along Charlie Brown Trail and in Spud Cellar Open Space
IX	Potential Red Mountain Ranch OS + Trails	Dependent	Support the development of sustainable trails in the new Red Mountain Ranch PUD open space
X	Hockett Gulch Motorized Connection	Medium	Explore opportunities and acquire land as necessary to develop motorized connection through Hockett Gulch
XI	Haymaker BLM Horse Connection	Low	Develop equestrian connection from Haymaker Trailhead onto BLM land if trailer parking is added at the Haymaker Trailhead. Explore allowing horses on recommended Haymaker uphill trail (Trail Recommendation #3).
XII	Downtown/River Connectivity	High	Enhance trail connectivity in and around downtown to and along Grand Avenue and to the River Park. Participate in the Grand Avenue Corridor Study.
XIII	East Eagle Future Study Area for Habitat Conservation and Trails, Consistent with SRMA	Low	Conduct additional study to weigh Town support/direction for new trails in this area given existing habitat and recreational uses. To note, the BLM may pursue new facilities or recreational uses in this area in the intermediary, and this recommendation would not preclude that. Any ultimate recommendation would not change the land use designation on the property as established by the BLM.
XIV	Potential Trails and Connections as Part of Haymeadow Development	Dependent	As part of the approved Haymeadow Development Plan, new natural surface trails and paved paths have been planned.

TABLE 7. POINT RECOMMENDATIONS

ID	NAME	PRIORITY	DESCRIPTION
A	Hockett Gulch TH	High	Development of Hockett Gulch trailhead in conjunction with Reserve at Hockett Gulch
B	Haymeadow Trailhead 1	N/A	Planned trailhead as part of Haymeadow Development
C	Haymeadow Trailhead 2	N/A	Planned trailhead as part of Haymeadow Development
D	New Eagle Ranch Trailhead	High	Develop small trailhead with parking at Haystacker Drive intersection with Wall
E	Trail Hub (Lower)	High	See recommendation T.3
F	Trail Hub (Upper)	Medium	See recommendation T.3

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 Sport Riders).

TABLE 8. PARTNERSHIPS

Partner	Recommendations
Bureau of Land Management	AE1, AE2, AE6, AE8, T1, T3, T4, T5, T7, T8, T9, T10, M1, M2, M9, SF5, SF7, SF8, SF9, SF10, OS2, OS3, OS4, OS13, OS19
Vail Valley Mountain Trails Alliance/Hardscrabble Trail Coalition and other trail maintenance organizations	AE3, AE4, AE5, AE6, AE7, AE8, T1, T3, T6, T7, T9, M1, M2, M3, M4, M5, M6, M7, M8, M9, M10, M11, SF1, SF3, SF4, SF5, SF10
Eagle Valley Outdoor Movement and similar organizations	AE3, AE4
Community outdoor recreation programming organizations	AE4, AE7, T6
Rocky Mountain Sport Riders	AE6, AE7, T1, T4, T7, T8, T9, M1, M2, SF6
Mountain Trekkers Back Country Horsemen	AE6, AE7, T1, T5, M2, SF1

Colorado Parks and Wildlife	AE1, AE2, AE6, T2, T7, SF4, SF8, SF11, P2, OS1, OS2, OS3, OS4, OS5
Eagle Valley Wildland	OS10
Eagle Valley Land Trust	OS1, OS3, OS5, O10, OS16
Eagle Ranch Wildlife Committee	AE1, AE2, OS1, OS2, OS3, OS4, OS5, OS6, OS8, OS9, OS10, OS12, OS17, OS7, OS10, OS14, OS15
Mountain Recreation District	AE4, SF1
U.S. Forest Service	T10, T11, OS2, OS13
Eagle County Open Space	T8, OS2, OS3, OS4, OS5, OS11, OS13, OS14, OS16, OS17

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 (OS8), 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>)

COLORADO NOXIOUS WEED MANAGEMENT

The Colorado Noxious Weed Management Fund provides additional financial resources for on-the-ground noxious weeds management. Organized private interests, conservation districts, municipalities, and counties are eligible to apply. The program also administers federal noxious weed management funds from the U.S. Forest Service's State and Private Forestry program. (<https://ag.colorado.gov/conservation/noxious-weeds/grants>)

COLORADO OUTDOOR EQUITY GRANT

CPW and the Outdoor Equity Grant Board annually fund programs to broaden accessibility to the outdoors for those in underserved communities. Non-profit organizations and governments are eligible to apply. Grants are largely up to \$50,000 and eligible expenses include project planning or coordination, operating expenses, physical goods, staff expenses, costs of engineering/design/land acquisition, and costs associated with volunteer engagement and retention. (<https://cpw.state.co.us/aboutus/Pages/Outdoor-Equity-Fund.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 are 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.

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HIGH (0-3 YEARS)

OS2. Habitat Improvement Projects
 OS5. Regional Habitat Studies
 OS6. Ecological Assessments
 OS9. Wetlands
 OS10. Fuels Management
 OS11. Noxious Weeds Management
 OS13. Social Trail Management
 OS14. Restoration Brush Creek/Eagle River
 AE1. Wildlife Education
 AE2. Natural Resource Education
 T3. Trail Hubs
 T8. Haymaker/Road Gulch/3 Sisters
 M1. Re-Routes
 M3. Trail Maintenance Collaboration
 M4. Early Season Maintenance
 M7. Quarterly Meeting
 M8. Maintenance Tracking System
 M9. Annual Maintenance Plan
 SF1. Haymaker Trailhead
 SF3. Wayfinding Signage
 SF5. Replaceable + Replicable Signage
 SF6. Motorized Access
 SF8. BLM Camping Level



MEDIUM (4-6 YEARS)

OS1. Enforcement Officer/Ranger
 OS8. Open Space Management Plans
 OS12. Adjacent Property Weed Coordination
 AE3. Spanish Signage + Maps
 AE5. Creative User Etiquette Signage
 AE6. Etiquette Standards
 AE7. Messaging System
 AE8. Beginner Friendly Opportunities
 T2. Criteria Development
 T4. Motorized Dead-ends
 T5. Support Horse Access
 T6. Bike Skills Park
 T7. Use Changes
 T9. Dirt Surfer Discussion
 M2. Social Trails
 M5. Trail Conditions Facebook
 M6. Haymaker Testing Ground
 SF2. Trailheads Access
 SF4. Visitor Information Strategy
 SF7. In-Town Camping
 SF9. BLM Camping Services
 P1. E-bikes



LOW (7-10 YEARS)

OS7. Spatial Inventory of Town Open Spaces
 T10. Hermit Discussion
 T11. Forest Service Discussion
 SF10. BLM Camping Capacity
 P3. Permitting Structure

ADVOCACY/CONTINUED INITIATIVES

OS3. Dog Control Policies
 OS4. Dog/Wildlife Conflict
 OS15. Restoration Organization Support
 OS16. Restoration Efforts Coordination
 OS17. Open Space Acquisition
 OS18. Development Standards
 OS19. ACEC/SRMA
 OS20. Consistent Funding Source
 AE4. Community Partners
 SF11. Trailhead w/ Wildlife in Mind

M10. Trail Organization Support
 M11. Adopt-A-Trail
 P2. Seasonal Wildlife Closures
 P4. Trail Sustainability
 P5. Social Trail Policy

All projects are listed in this table with an estimated cost. Cost ranges are listed as approximate under the following \$ (\$0 - \$15,000), \$\$ (\$15,000 - \$50,000), \$\$\$ (\$50,000+).

TABLE 9. PRIORITY MATRIX

Recommendation	Priority	Estimated Cost (\$-\$\$\$)
OS1. Enforcement Officer/Ranger	Medium	\$\$
OS2. Habitat Improvement Projects	High	\$\$\$
OS3. Dog Control Policies	Advocacy/Continued Initiative	\$
OS4. Dog/Wildlife Conflict	Advocacy/Continued Initiative	\$
OS5. Regional Habitat Studies	High	\$\$
OS6. Ecological Assessments	High	\$\$\$
OS7. Spatial Inventory of Town Open Spaces	Low	\$
OS8. Open Space Management Plans	Medium	\$\$\$
OS9. Wetlands	High	\$\$\$
OS10. Fuels Management	High	\$\$
OS11. Noxious Weeds Management	High	\$\$
OS12. Adjacent Property Weed Coordination	Medium	\$
OS13. Social Trail Management	High	\$\$\$
OS14 Restoration Brush Creek/Eagle River	High	\$\$\$
OS15. Restoration Organization Support	Advocacy/Continued Initiative	\$\$
OS16. Restoration Efforts Coordination	Advocacy/Continued Initiative	\$
OS17. Open Space Acquisition	Advocacy/Continued Initiative	\$\$\$
OS18. OS Development Standards	Advocacy/Continued Initiative	\$
OS19. ACEC/SRMA	Medium	\$\$
OS20. Consistent Funding Source	High	\$\$
AE1. Wildlife Education	High	\$\$

AE2. Natural Resource Education	High	\$\$
AE3. Spanish signage and maps	Medium	\$\$
AE4. Community Partners	High	\$
AE5. Creative User Etiquette Signage	Medium	\$\$
AE6. Etiquette Standards	Medium	\$
AE7. Messaging System	Medium	\$
AE8. 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. Trail 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. Trail Organization 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	Low	\$\$\$
SF11. Trailheads with Wildlife in Mind	High	\$\$
P1. E-bikes	Medium/High	\$
P2. Seasonal Wildlife Closures	High	\$
P3. Permitting Structure	Low/Medium	\$
P4. Trail Sustainability	High	\$
P5. Social Trail Policy	High	\$

Funding

The Eagle Open Space and Trails Department is funded by a combination of lodging tax and contributions from the Town's general fund. The Town's lodging tax is 6% on all lodging nights, with half of that (3% of lodging fees) going directly to the Open Space and Trails Department. The tax has been recently restructured (6% of lodging fees rather a set \$4 dollar amount) and is increasingly capturing revenues from short-term rentals. Due to these changes, the revenue from the lodging tax is expected to increase. In the past few years, the Town Council has decided to make contributions of varying amounts from its general fund. In some years, the department has operated leanly and not required this contribution from Town Council.

There is a Town Open Space fee associated with commercial river access that has not been collected recently. This fee should be enforced going forward, adjusted as necessary, and applied to commercial outfitters on all Town Open Spaces.

It is the recommendation of this plan that the department fund itself through a combination of increased lodging tax enforcement and growth, the fee on commercial outfitters, grants, and a funding floor from the Town's general fund. Town Council would establish a minimum amount or floor to which they would contribute each year, helping the department better plan future projects.

While an additional tax may not be feasible now given the current landscape, an additional tax could be explored in the future.

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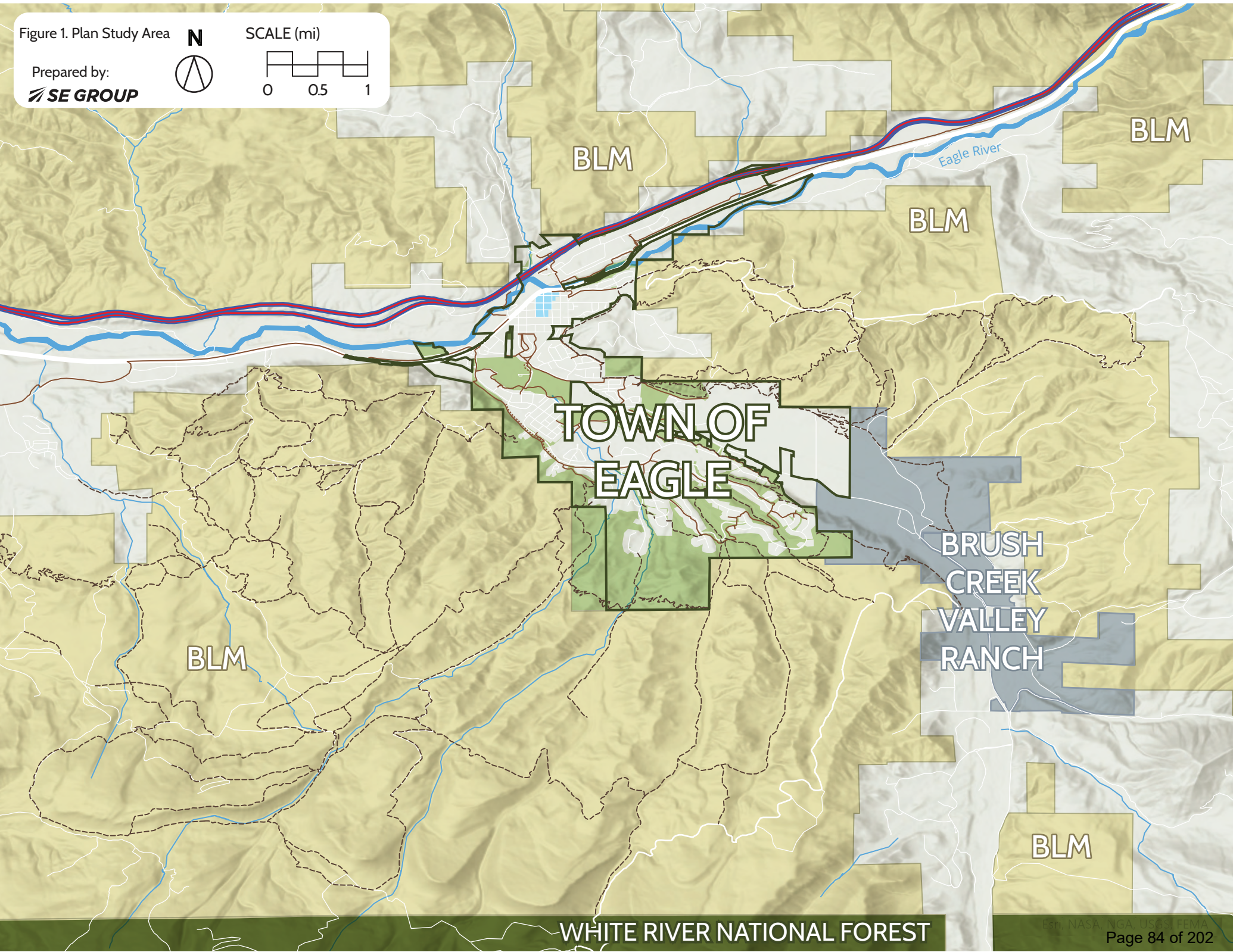
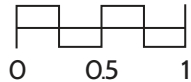
Figure 1. Plan Study Area

N

SCALE (mi)

Prepared by:

SE GROUP



WHITE RIVER NATIONAL FOREST

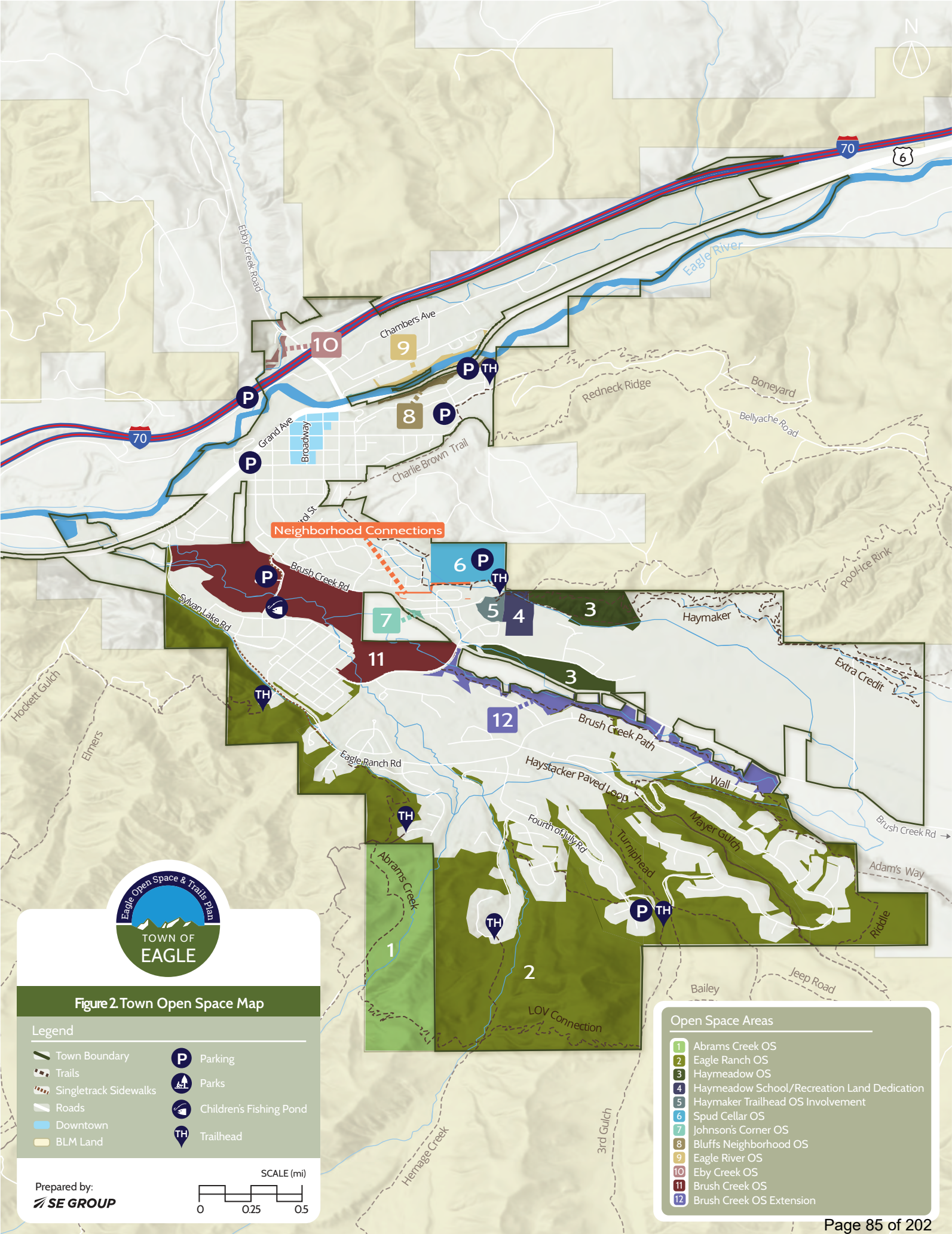
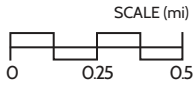


Figure 2 Town Open Space Map

Legend

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

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 |

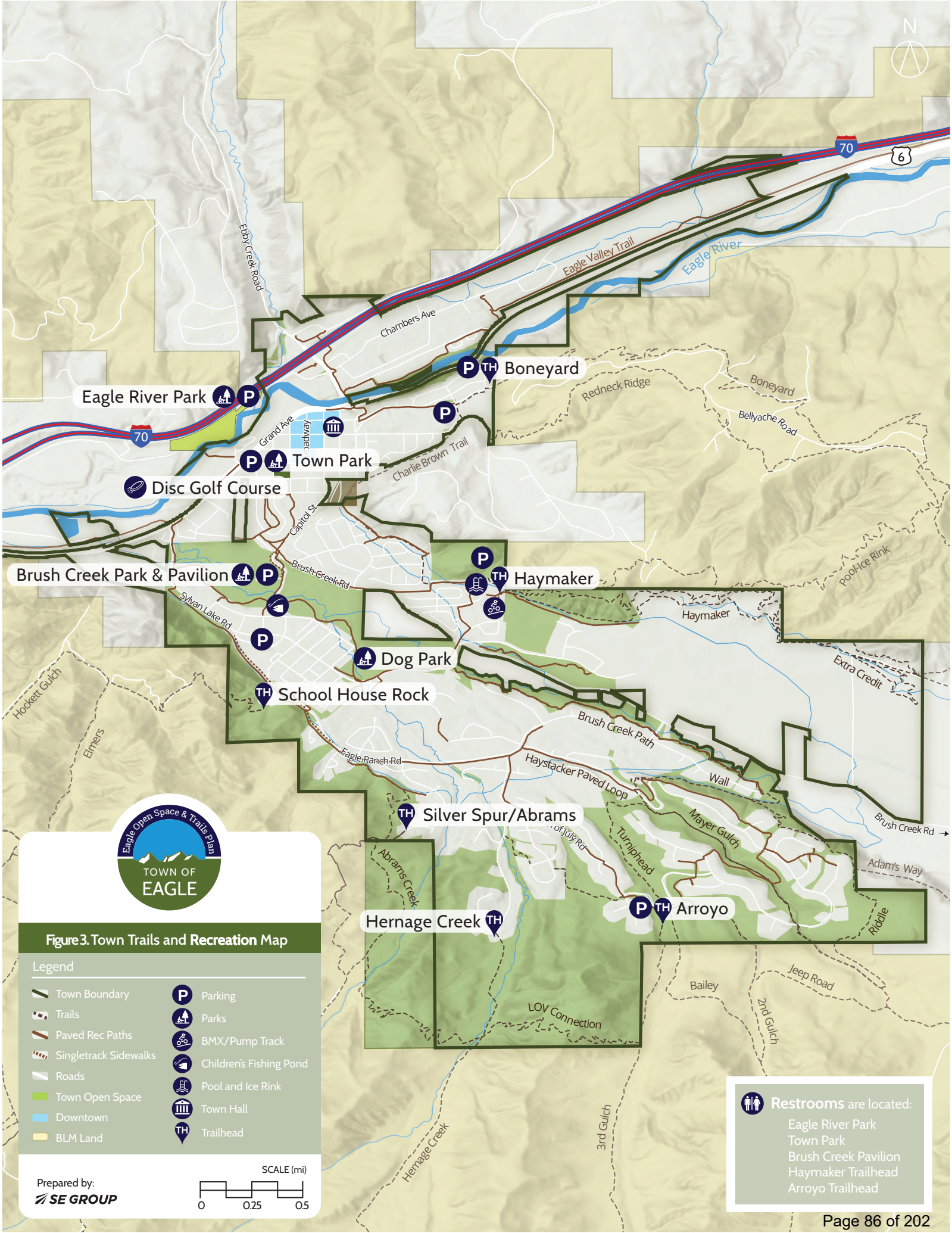
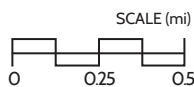


Figure 3. Town Trails and Recreation Map

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

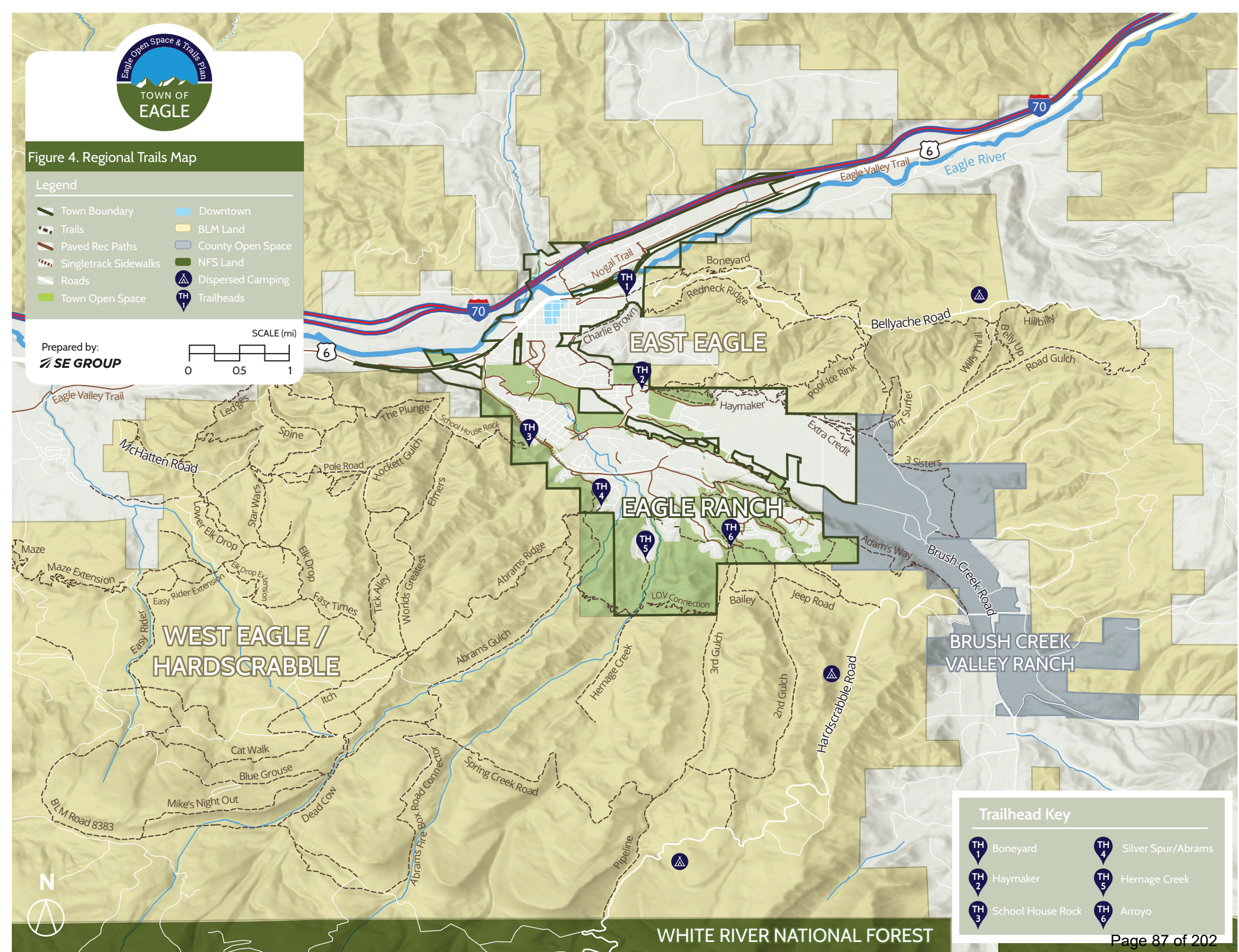
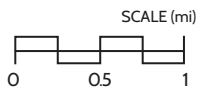


Figure 4. Regional Trails Map

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 |

WHITE RIVER NATIONAL FOREST



Figure 5. Elk Habitat Map

Legend

- | | |
|------------------|---|
| Town Boundary | Severe Winter Range |
| Roads | Winter Concentration Areas |
| Winter Range | Severe Winter Range/Winter Concentration Area (Overlap) |
| Production Areas | |

Elk summer range covers the whole map area except for parts of Downtown. Migration corridors and summer concentration areas are not within the frame of this map

Source: CPW Species Activity Map

Prepared by:

SE GROUP

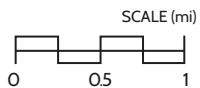




Figure 6. Mule Deer Habitat Map

Legend

- | | |
|--------------------|---|
| Town Boundary | Severe Winter Range |
| Roads | Winter Concentration Areas |
| Winter Range | Severe Winter Range/Winter Concentration Area (Overlap) |
| Concentration Area | Migration Corridor |

Mule Deer summer range covers the whole map area except for parts of Downtown

Source: CPW Species Activity Map

Prepared by:

SE GROUP

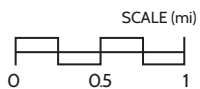




Figure 7. BLM Management Zones Map

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

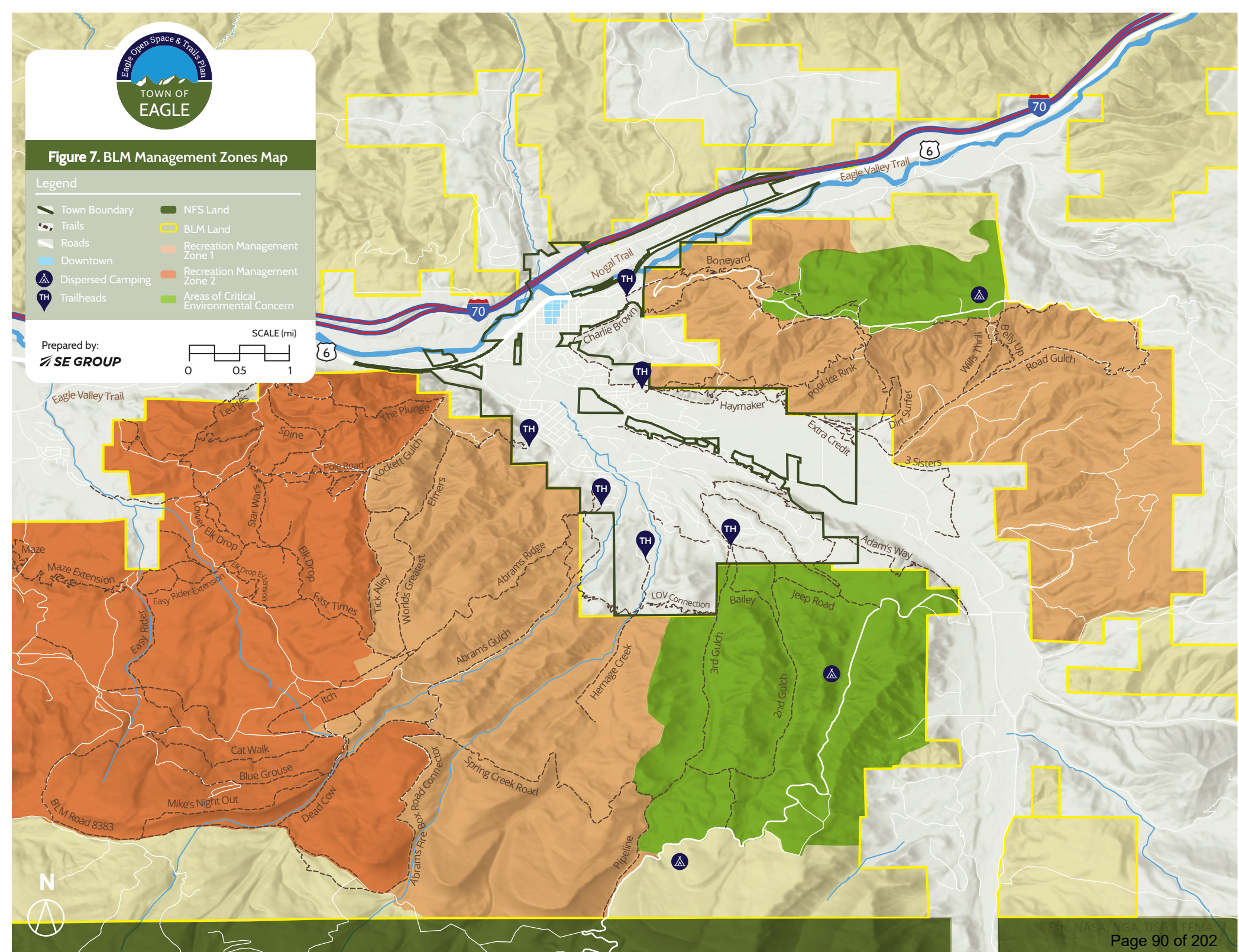
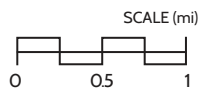


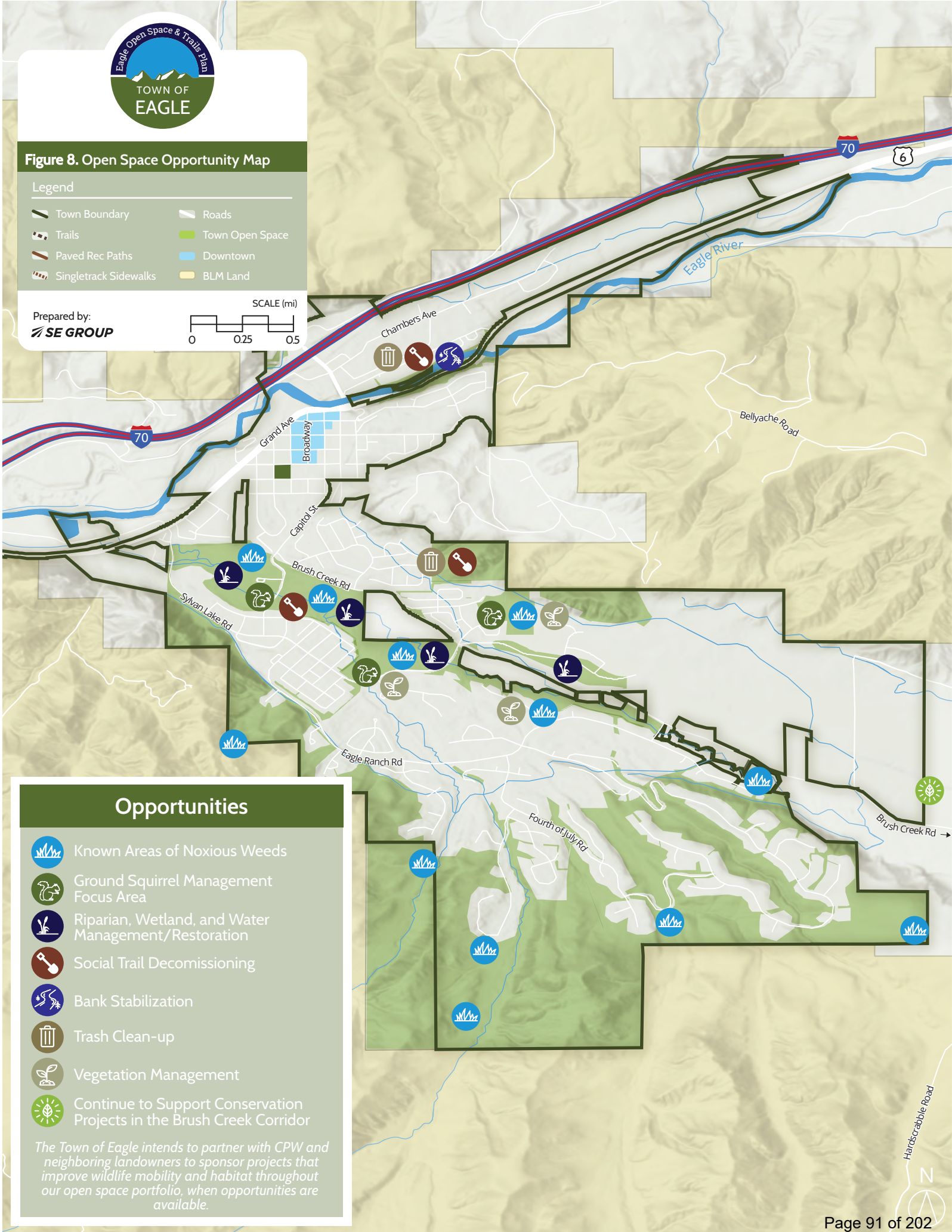
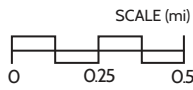


Figure 8. Open Space Opportunity Map

Legend

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------|
| Town Boundary | Roads |
| Trails | Town Open Space |
| Paved Rec Paths | Downtown |
| Singletrack Sidewalks | BLM Land |

Prepared by:
SE GROUP



Opportunities

- Known Areas of Noxious Weeds
- Ground Squirrel Management Focus Area
- Riparian, Wetland, and Water Management/Restoration
- Social Trail Decommissioning
- Bank Stabilization
- Trash Clean-up
- Vegetation Management
- Continue to Support Conservation Projects in the Brush Creek Corridor

The Town of Eagle intends to partner with CPW and neighboring landowners to sponsor projects that improve wildlife mobility and habitat throughout our open space portfolio, when opportunities are available.



Figure 9. Trail Recommendations Map

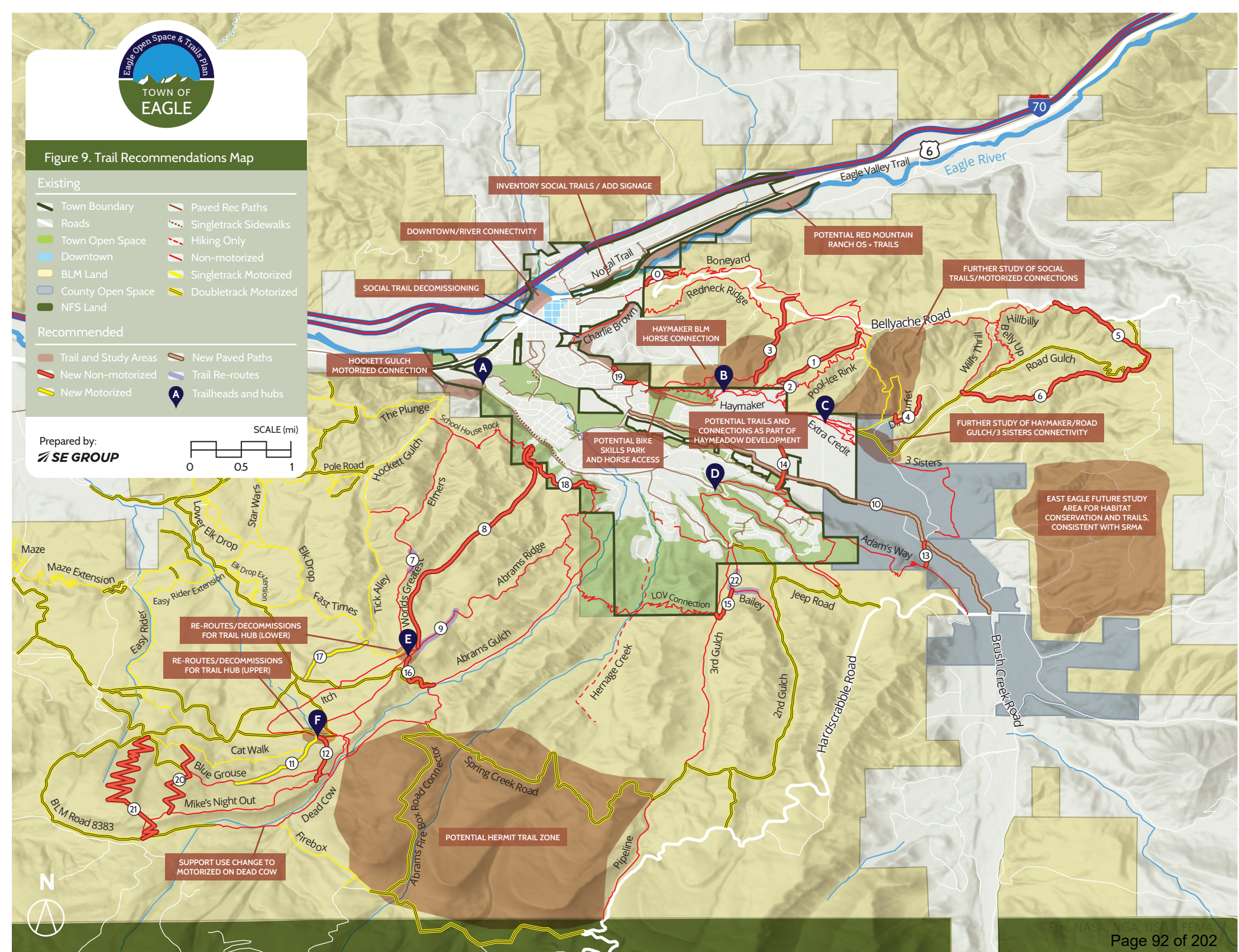
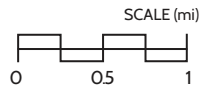
Existing

- | | |
|-------------------|-----------------------|
| Town Boundary | Paved Rec Paths |
| Roads | Singletrack Sidewalks |
| Town Open Space | Hiking Only |
| Downtown | Non-motorized |
| BLM Land | Singletrack Motorized |
| County Open Space | Doubletrack Motorized |
| NFS Land | |

Recommended

- | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|
| Trail and Study Areas | New Paved Paths |
| New Non-motorized | Trail Re-routes |
| New Motorized | Trailheads and hubs |

Prepared by:
SE GROUP



APPENDIX A. PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT



ROUNDTABLE MEETING NOTES

LOCATION: Council Chambers, 200 Broadway Street, Eagle

DATE: August 2, 2021

TIME: 11 a.m. – 2 p.m.

ATTENDEES: Paula Peterson, U.S. Forest Service
Jay Lucas, Eagle County BMX
Fletcher Groff, Eagle County BMX
Ernest Sager, Vail Valley Mountain Trails Alliance (VVMTA)/Open Space and Recreation Advisory Committee (OSRAC)
Rob Tadlock, Hardscrabble Trails Coalition (HTC)
Brian Wodrich, Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW)
Peter Suneson, Eagle County Open Space
Jessica Foulis, Eagle Valley Land Trust/OSRAC
Alan Czepinski, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) – Colorado River Valley Field Office
Brian Bastuba, Rocky Mountain Sports Riders
Trent Swanson, Trent Swanson Outdoors
Erinn Hoban, VVMTA/OSRAC
Brian Hopkins, Assistant Field Manager Bureau of Land Management – Colorado River Valley Field Office
Janet Bartnik, Mountain Recreation/Town Council
Debra Dupree Batton, Equestrian
Abby Ratton, Equestrian
Brian Lieberman, Town of Eagle
Gabby Voeller, SE Group
Scott Prior, SE Group
Melanie McKenzie, SE Group

RE: Roundtable Meeting

MEETING NOTES

Desired Outcomes for the Open Space and Trails System

- Balancing uses (especially for the equestrian community)
- Balancing recreation and conservation

- Plan for growth

SWOT Analysis – Trails

Strengths

- Partnership driven system
- Access
- Variety of trail types and user groups
- Existing efforts to balance recreation and wildlife

Weaknesses

- Overuse
- Dominance of a single user group (others being forced onto single use trails, optimization)
- Maintenance challenge
- Etiquette
- Signage away from trailheads
- Challenging to know how to navigate between trails
- Confusion at Boneyard trailhead

Opportunities

- More dedicated trails
- BMX facilities
- How to use Brush Creek OS
- Implementation of Haymaker Trailhead Master Plan
- Revenues from groups/operators
- Infrastructure to better support more trail users
- Connectivity to Town/businesses
- Partnering with downtown development

Threats

- Littering
- Social trails (makes it harder to call for new trails)
- Funding
- Wildfire
- Road cyclist safety

SWOT Analysis – Open Space

Strengths

- Breaks up development and provides access
- Good wildlife habitat
- Diversity of ecosystems and landscapes

Weaknesses

- Consistency in management
- Wildlife conflict
- Limited signage/awareness
- Limited resources
- E-bikes are a big question

Opportunities

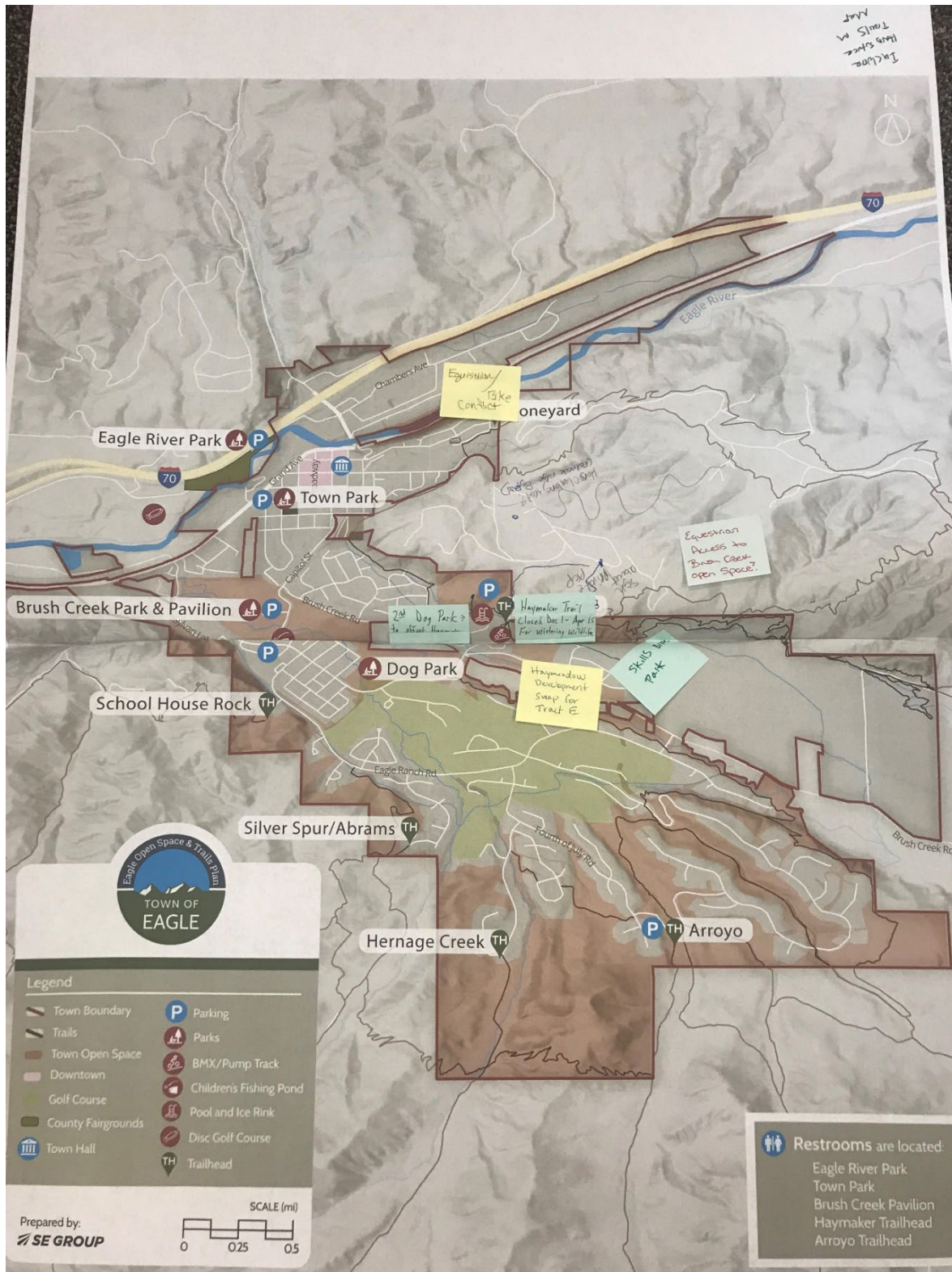
- Better signage
- More education
- Consistency
- More access for all

Threats

- Losing agricultural heritage
- Habitat fragmentation
- Appropriately locating/siting outdoor rec
- Over advertising
- Wildlife viewing
- Dispersed camping
- Poor user etiquette

Map Exercise

Town Map



Haymaker area

- High traffic
- Opportunities for: restrooms, overflow parking, better signage, a dog park
- Trail suggestions: walking trails, singletrack through Spud Cellar

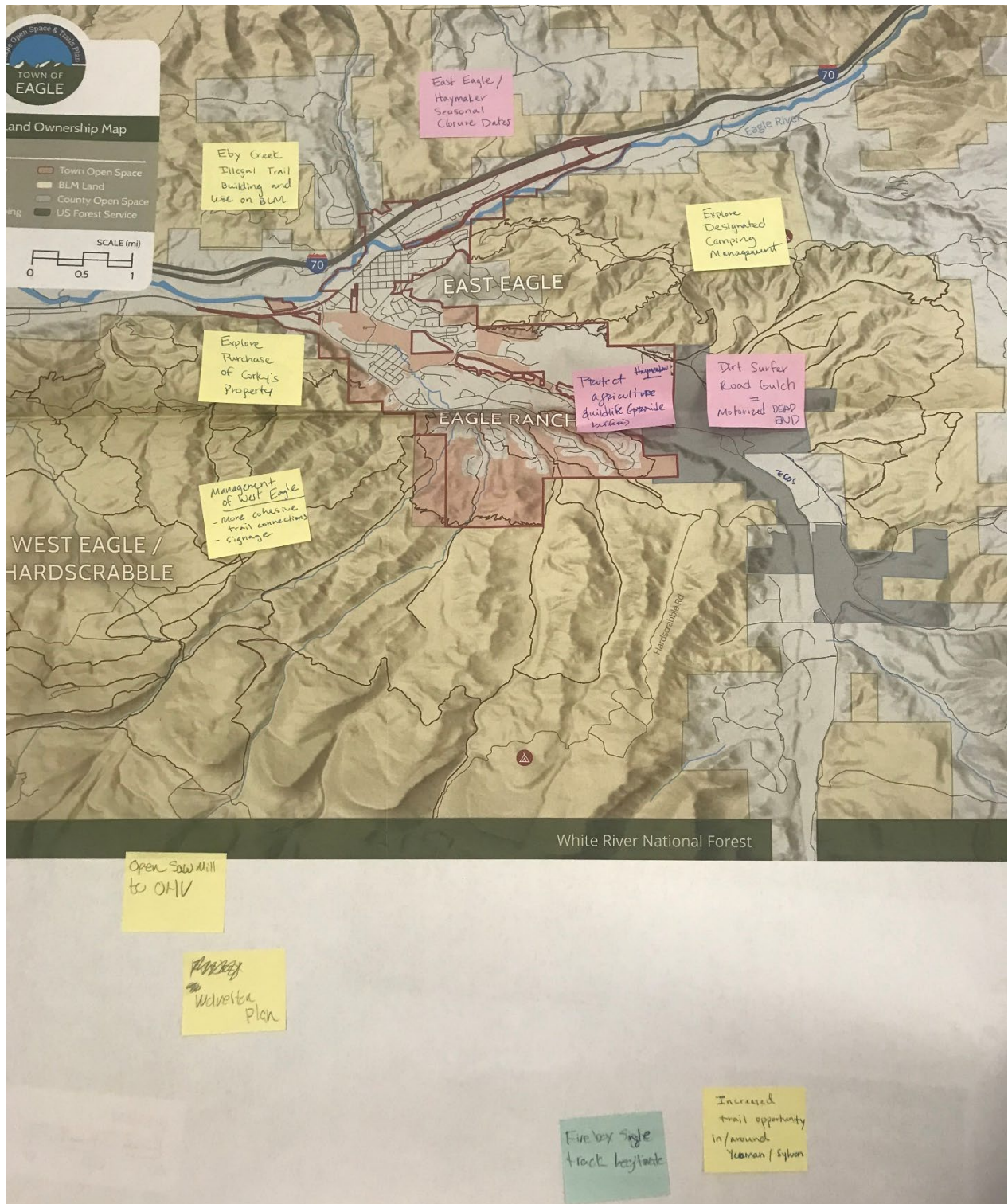
Boneyard trail

- Good for skills progression
- Weaknesses: parking, navigation, user conflict

Recommendations

- Better maps and navigation tools to direct trail users to routes and trailheads
- Partner with businesses in Town
- Bike skills park down Brush Creek Rd from Haymaker
- Additional restroom and trash facilities at trailheads
- Improve road cyclist safety

Regional Map



Recommendations

- Explore designated camping management on Bellyache Road
- Create more cohesive trail connections in West Eagle
- Improve signage in West Eagle
- Explore equestrian access to Brush Creek Open Space
- Create a buffer around Haymeadow to protect agriculture and wildlife
- Improve motorized trail connectivity



MEMORANDUM

TO: Brian Lieberman, Town of Eagle

FROM: Gabby Voeller, SE Group

DATE: December 6, 2021

RE: Visioning Open House and Survey Results

Visioning Open House and Online Survey Summary

The Town of Eagle hosted a Visioning Open House event to collect ideas and feedback on the Town of Eagle Open Space and Trails Master Plan. The event was held on October 19, 2021, at the Brush Creek Pavilion. The Visioning Open House 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 event was drop-in anytime format, with interactive stations and large-scale maps for commenting. Members of the project team were also available for one-on-one discussions. 29 people signed in and an estimated 50-60 people were in attendance.

Following the open house, an online survey was available for those unable to attend the event. To replicate the open house experience, the open house materials were available online for context and a survey asked the same questions as the boards. Map questions were replicated using a heatmap in the survey with an option to add additional comments. The survey received 234 responses and was open October 20 to November 12, 2021. The raw write-in responses are in Appendix A.

Background Information

The following questions asked basic information of workshop attendees and survey respondents and their use of the Eagle Open Space and Trails system.

Trail Use

ABOUT YOU

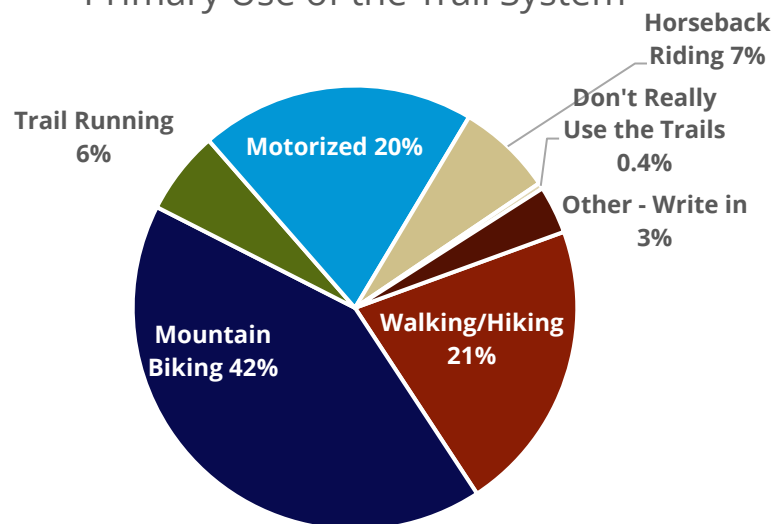
What is your primary use of the trail system and paved path network? Pick one.

MOUNTAIN BIKING	TRAIL RUNNING	WALKING/HIKING	MOTORIZED	HORSEBACK RIDING	DON'T REALLY USE THE TRAILS	OTHER (WRITE-IN)
						<i>Commuting to work</i> <i>DOG WALKING</i> <i>FAT BIKING</i> <i>NORDIC</i> <i>Snowshoeing</i>

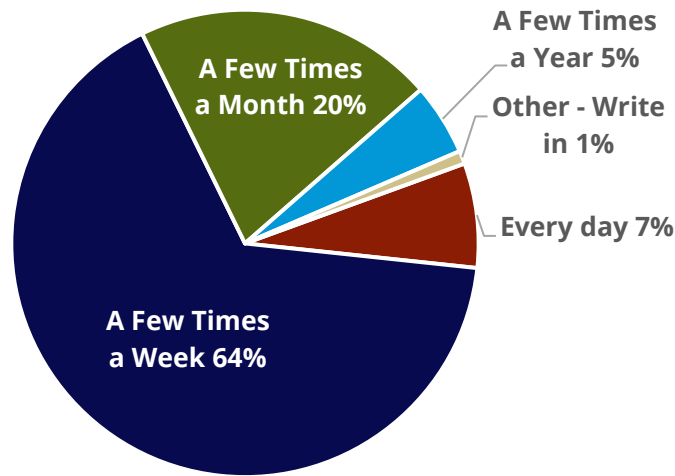
How often do you use the trails and paved paths?

EVERY DAY	A FEW TIMES A WEEK	A FEW TIMES A MONTH	A FEW TIMES A YEAR

Primary Use of the Trail System

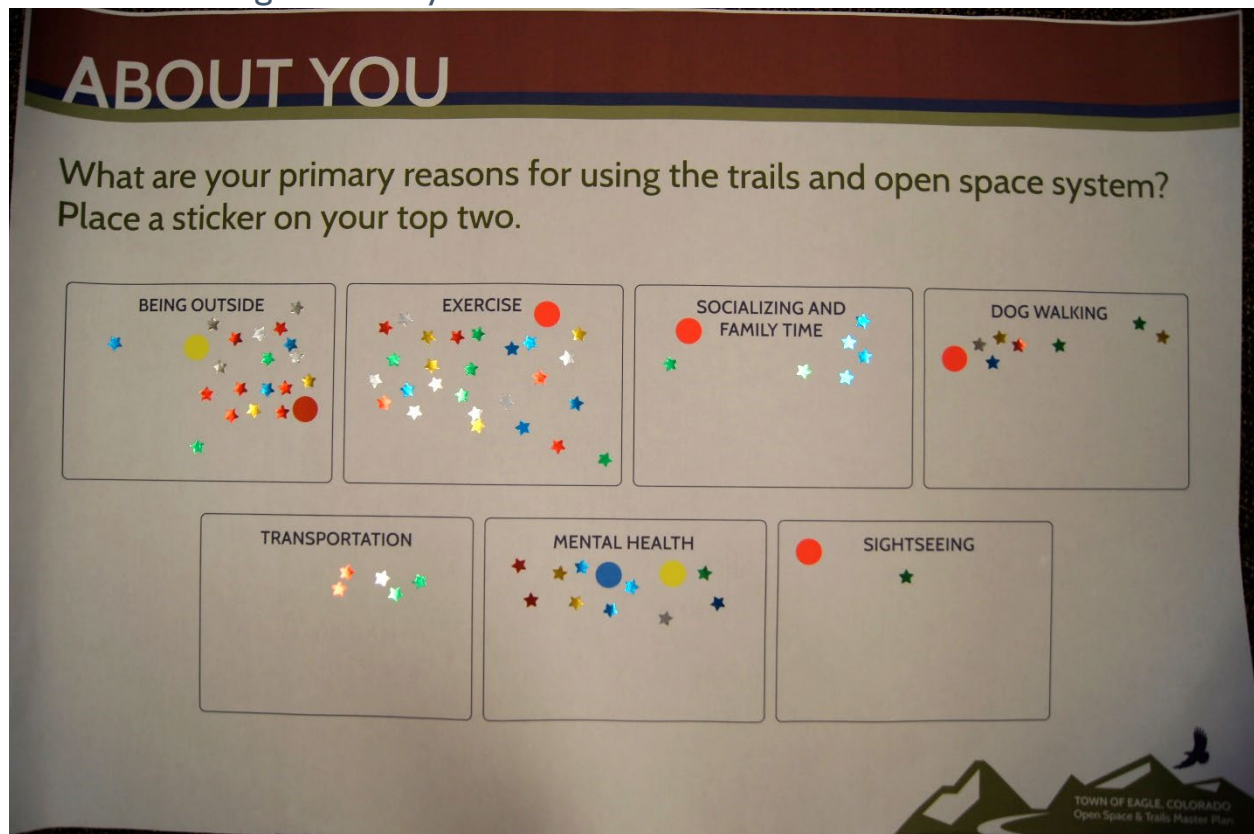


Frequency of Use

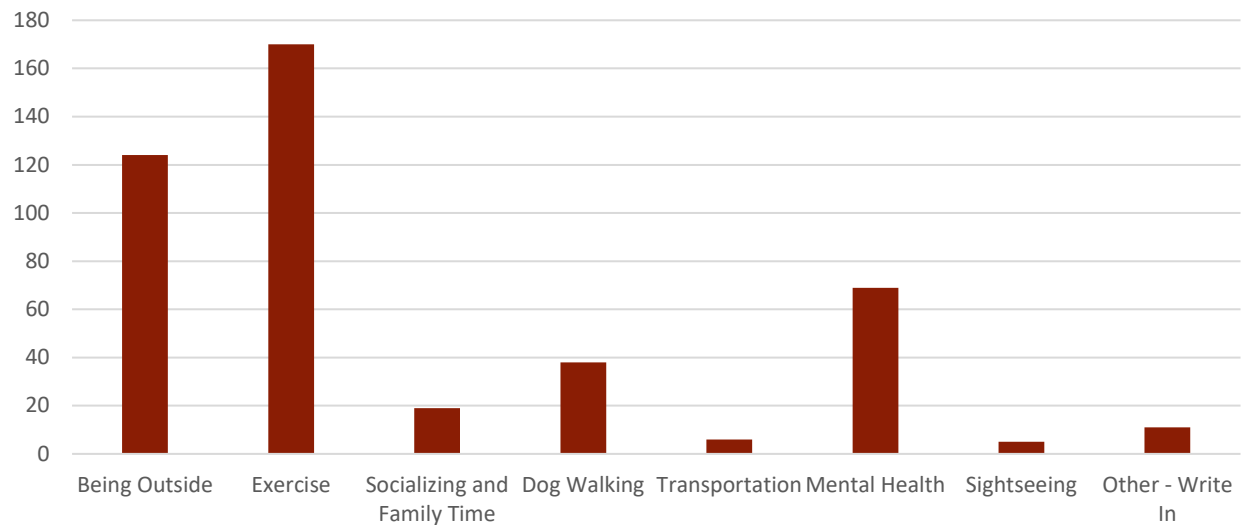


Survey respondents and open house attendees were primarily mountain bikers (42% of survey respondents, 52% of open house attendees) or walkers/hikers (21% of survey respondents, 25% of open house attendees). Of survey respondents, there were many motorized users (20% of respondents) and some horseback riders (7%). The majority of survey respondents and open house attendees use the trails and paved paths frequently. A large proportion (64%) of survey respondents use the trails and paths a few times a week and only 7% reported using it every day. A slight majority (53%) of the open house attendees reported using the trails every day. It is important to note that open house attendees report more frequent use of the trail system in considering responses to subsequent questions.

Reasons for Using the Trail System



Reasons for Using the Trail System



Exercise, being outside, and mental health, in order, were the primary reasons that both survey respondents and open house attendees use the open space and trails system.

When survey responses were broken down by user groups, these primary rationales as listed hold for both mountain bikers and motorized users. Walkers/hikers listed using the

trails for dog walking. A higher proportion of horseback riders listed being outside as their primary reason for using the trail system. Of the write-in responses, many survey respondents either indicated that they use the trail system for horseback riding, wildlife viewing, fun, adventure riding, training, or wanted to select more than two reasons.

Visioning

VISIONING

What do you value about the EXISTING Town of Eagle Open Space and Trail system?

- Proximity
- ✓ Easy access, being able to walk my dog off side-walks
- uncrowded ✓
- I love here because of the trails. I love everything about it - agree!
- ACCESS OUT MY DOOR, uncrowded ✓✓
- Easy access. Variety of trail types ✓✓
- ★ Year Round use ✓✓
- Access and visibility of access, adjacency to scenery ✓

What words or phrases would you use to describe your ten-year vision for the Town of Eagle Open Space and Trail system?

- ★ Forward Thinking
- ★ Progressive ✓
- balanced for all uses
- dog walking/bikeable
- accommodating growth
- wildlife still here ✓✓
- Well-maintained
- more trails ✓✓
- well-signed (frequency, quality, orientation/directional/brand)
- NATURAL RESOURCE PROTECTION
- Sustainable for people & wildlife
- Preservation of wildlife
- Limited + highly strategic new trail development
- Balance use + time
- Year Round use
- Maintenance
- Management/Ecosystem Management Strategy
- Nordic Ski trails
- PAR Courses
- More Disc golf ✓✓

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Open Space & Trails Master Plan

Common themes noted in responses about the existing trail system include its accessibility, trail connectivity, proximity to town or home, variety of trail types and uses, fun, and beauty of the landscape. Common themes in responses about the ten-year vision for trails and open space include expansion and growth, maintenance, connectivity, variety of uses, and more motorized, e-bike, or horseback riding options. In addition to these themes, the open house attendees also noted the existing uncrowdedness and year-round use of the trail system and envisioned a future system with a focus on natural resource/wildlife preservation.

Trail System Values

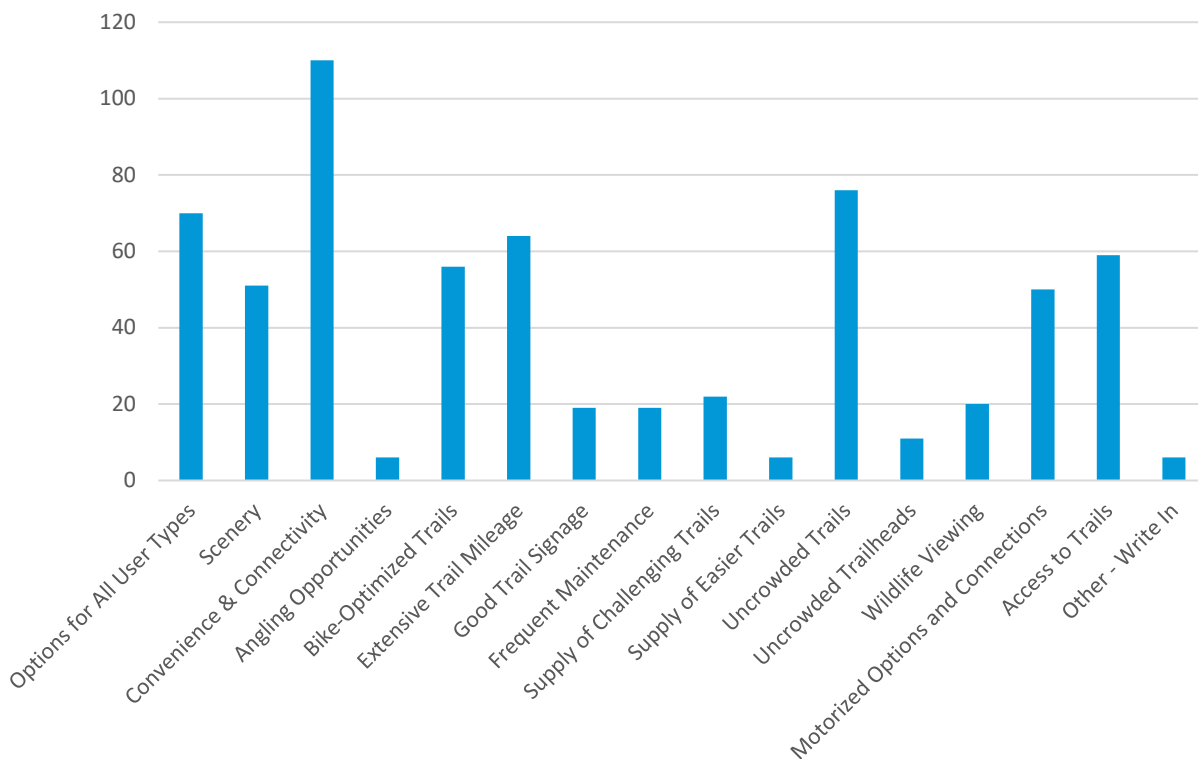
TRAIL SYSTEM VALUES

Place three dots for elements you value most about the existing trails system.

OPTIONS FOR ALL USER TYPES 	SCENERY 	CONVENIENCE & CONNECTIVITY 	ANGLING OPPORTUNITIES 	BIKE-OPTIMIZED TRAILS 	EXTENSIVE TRAIL MILEAGE
GOOD TRAIL SIGNAGE 	FREQUENT MAINTENANCE 	SUPPLY OF CHALLENGING TRAILS 	SUPPLY OF EASIER TRAILS 	UNCROWDED TRAILS 	UNCROWDED TRAILHEADS
WILDLIFE VIEWING 	MOTORIZED OPTIONS AND CONNECTIONS 	ACCESS TO TRAILS 	OTHER (WRITE-IN) Economic generator Access year-round		

TOWN OF EAGLE, COLORADO
Open Space & Trails Master Plan

Trail System Values



Attributes most valued in the trail system by open house attendees were convenience and connectivity (18 votes), uncrowded trails (15 votes), access to trails (15 votes), extensive trail mileage (9 votes), and bike-optimized trails (9 votes), in order. Survey respondents placed very similar values, except they placed a higher value on options for all user types. When comparing overall results to those of different user groups, mountain bikers valued bike-optimized trails more; walkers/hikers valued scenery more; horseback riders valued scenery, options for all user types, and wildlife viewing more; and motorized users valued motorized options and connections the most.

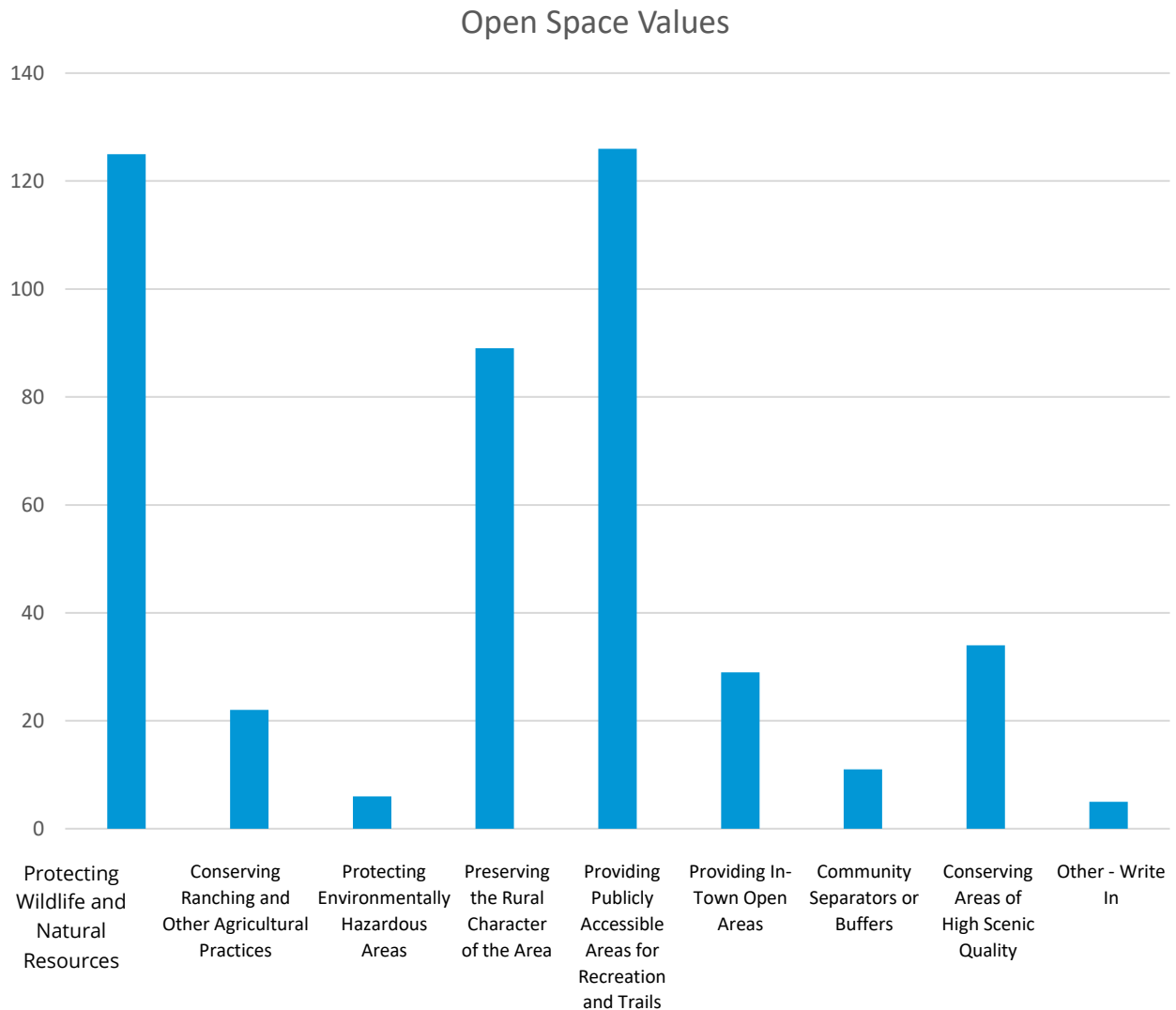
Write-in responses to the question noted the ability to ride horses, year-round access, and having the trails as an economic generator.

Open Space Values

OPEN SPACE VALUES

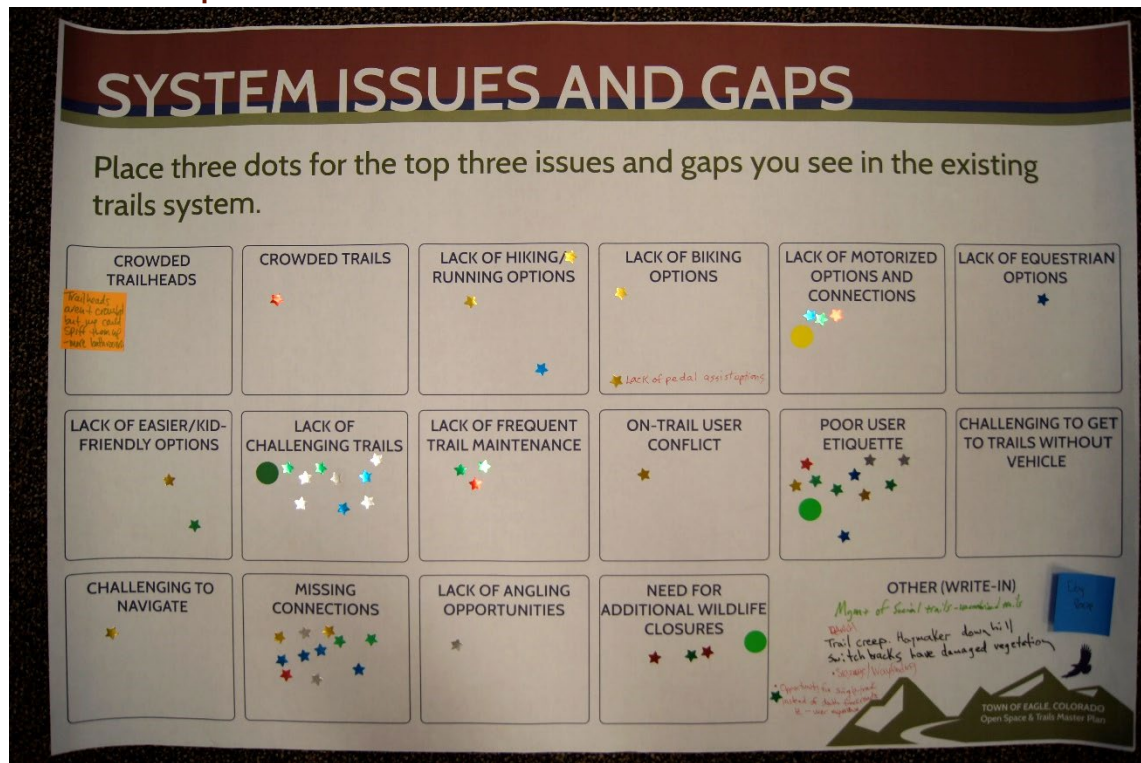
Place two dots for elements you value most about the existing open spaces.

Town Open Space Map Legend: - Open Space - Public Open Space - Private Open Space - Conservation Easement - Wilderness - Scenic Area Scale: 0 100 200 feet Prepared by: [Logo]	PROTECTING WILDLIFE AND NATURAL RESOURCES 	CONSERVING RANCHING AND OTHER AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES 	PROTECTING ENVIRONMENTALLY HAZARDOUS AREAS
	PRESERVING THE RURAL UNDEVELOPED CHARACTER OF THE AREA 	PROVIDING PUBLICLY ACCESSIBLE AREAS FOR RECREATION AND TRAILS 	PROVIDING IN-TOWN OPEN AREAS
	COMMUNITY SEPARATORS OR BUFFERS 	CONSERVING AREAS OF HIGH SCENIC QUALITY 	OTHER (WRITE-IN)

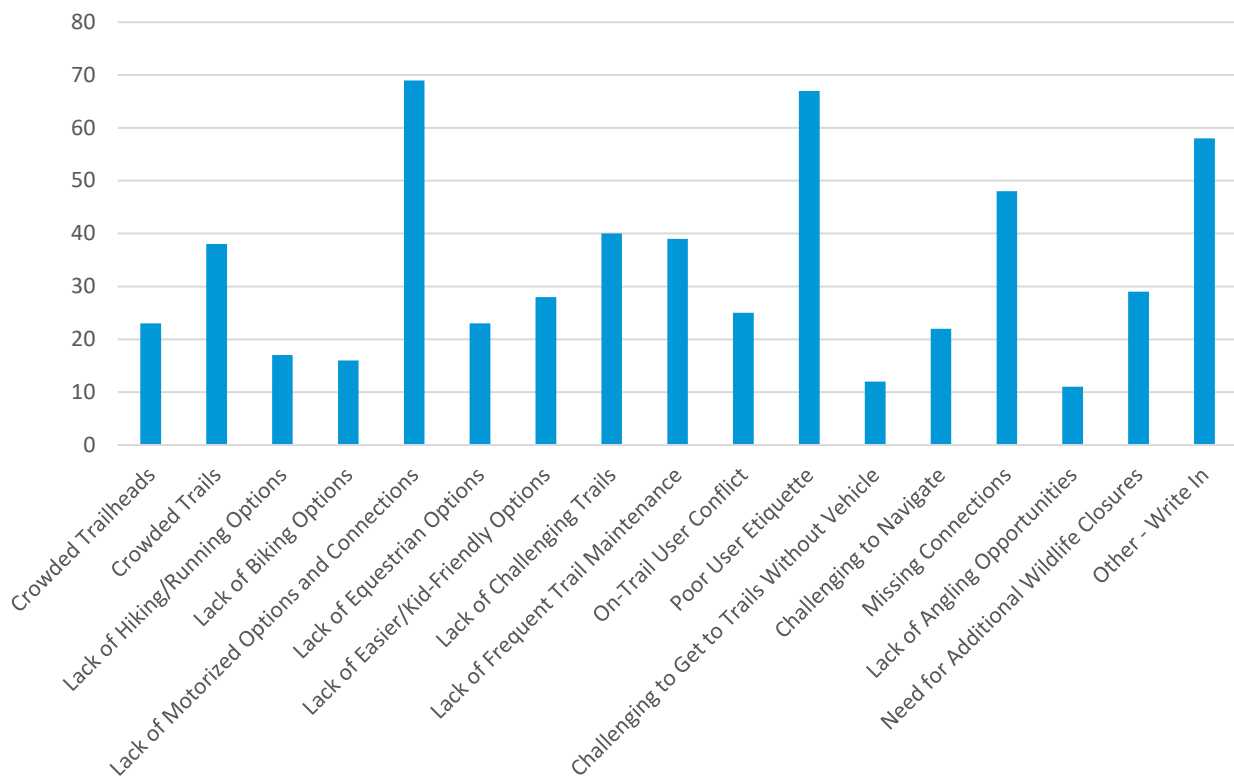


The attributes most valued in the open space system by open house attendees and survey respondents are providing publicly accessible areas for recreation and trails (34% of open house stickers placed, 28% of survey respondent votes), protecting wildlife and natural resources (30% of open house stickers placed, 28% of survey respondent votes), and preserving the rural undeveloped character of the area (18% of open house stickers placed, 20% of survey respondent votes), in order. Attendees and respondents could select up to two values. When breaking the survey data down by user groups, mountain bikers and motorized reported their values as listed. Walkers/hikers and horseback riders placed the highest value on wildlife and natural resource protection. Write-in responses noted year-round access, serenity, and community values.

Issues and Gaps



Issues and Gaps

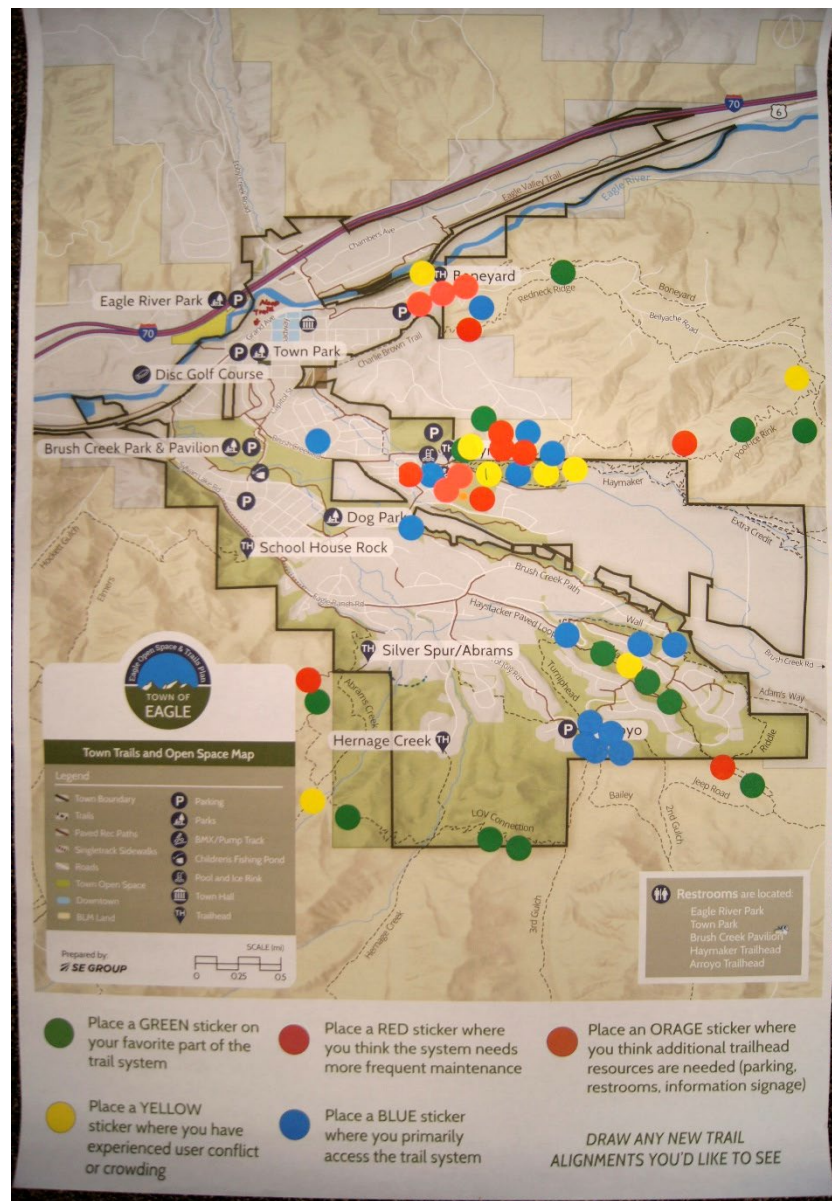


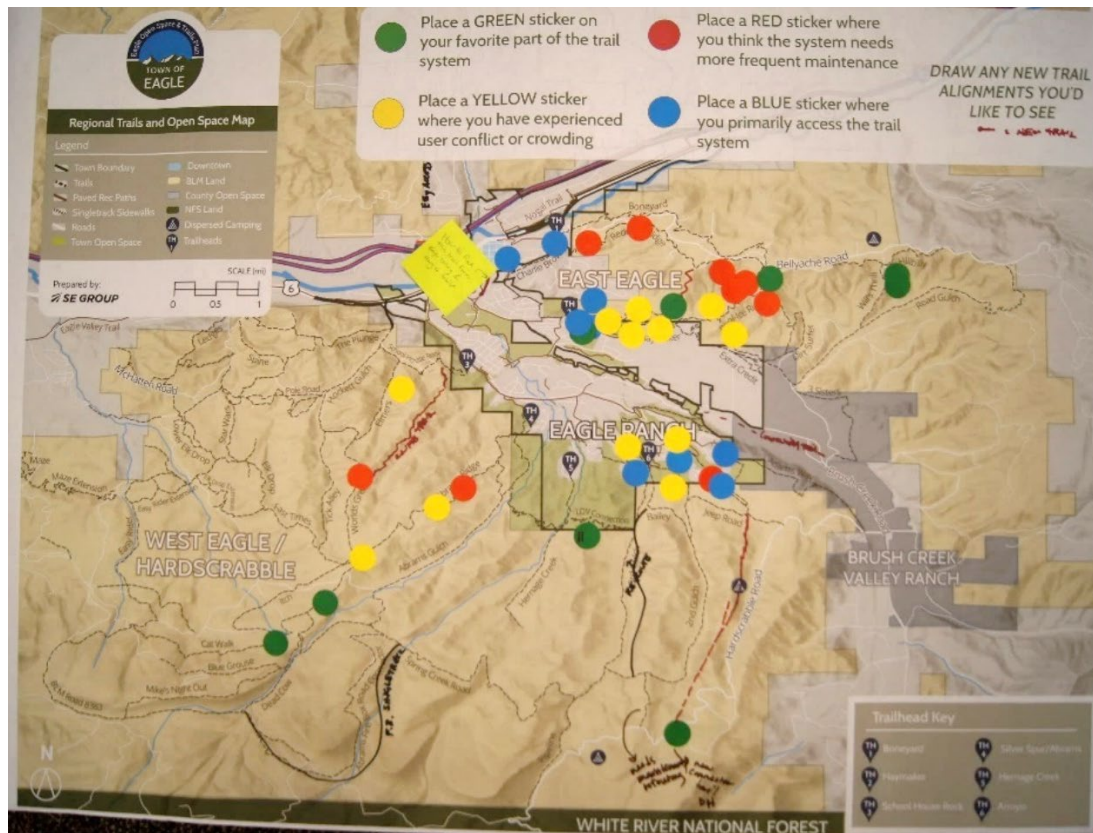
Open House attendees indicated the following as primary issues and gaps in the trails system: poor user etiquette (18% of stickers placed), missing connections (18% of stickers placed), and lack of challenging trails (16% of stickers placed). Survey respondents also indicated poor user etiquette (12% of survey respondent votes) and missing connections (9% of survey respondent votes), as well as a lack of motorized options (12% of survey respondent votes). There were also 63 write-in responses that touched on the following themes:

- Social trails
- Dogs off leash or dog poop on trails
- Lack of signage
- Lack of winter access
- Lack of e-bike/motorized access or trails
- Too much motorized use
- Lack of flatter trail options

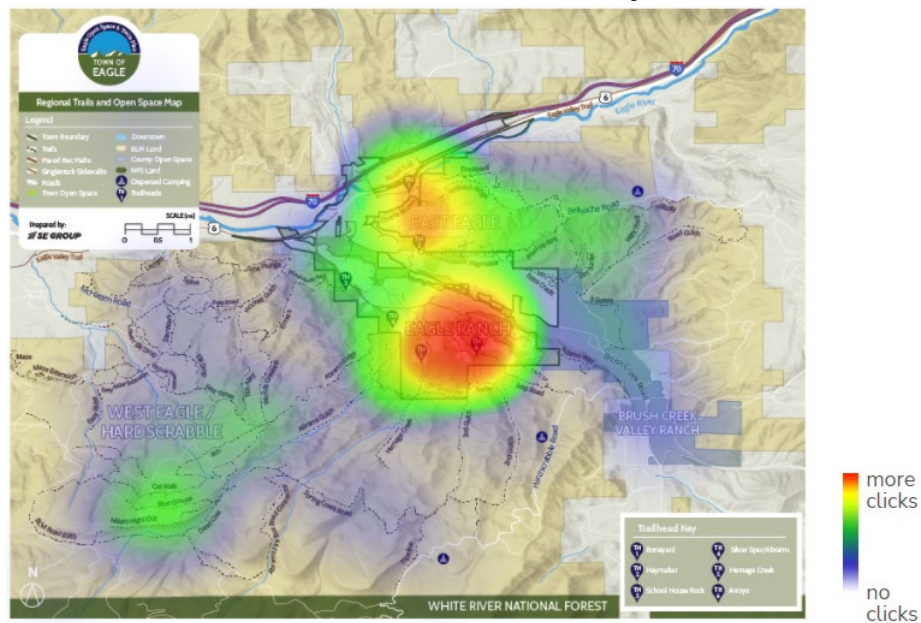
When looking at the responses by user group, primary issues varied. Horseback riders primarily indicated a lack of equestrian options; motorized users primarily indicated a lack of motorized options and connections; walkers/hikers primarily indicated poor user etiquette; and mountain bikers primarily indicated missing connections. In the written comments, there was discussion of bikers not yielding to pedestrians or the trails being mostly bike-friendly but not horse/pedestrian friendly.

Map Questions

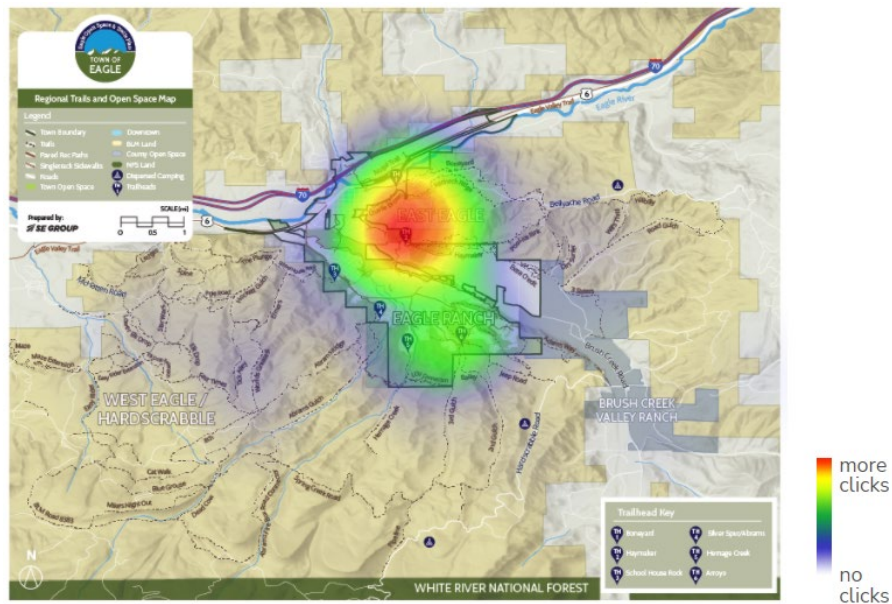




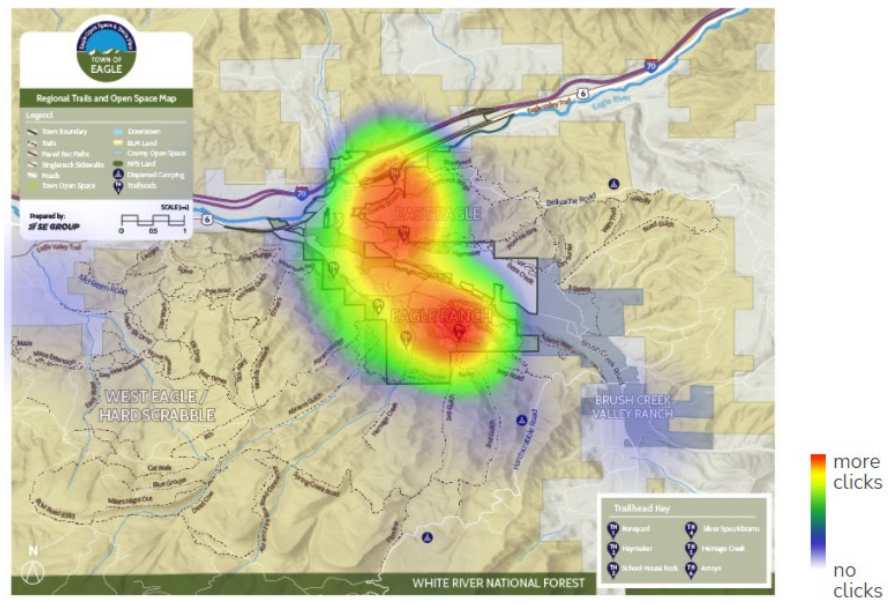
Favorite Areas on the Trail System



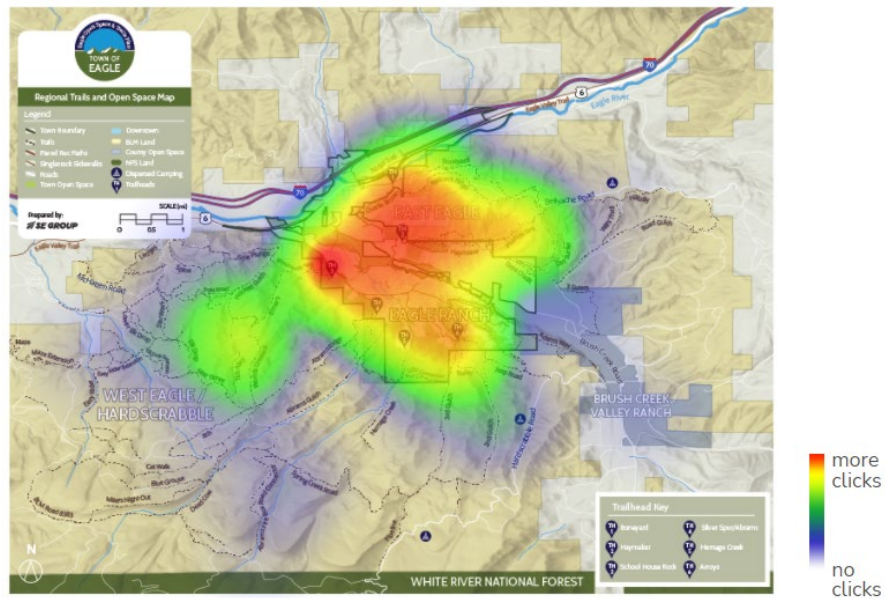
Areas of User Conflict



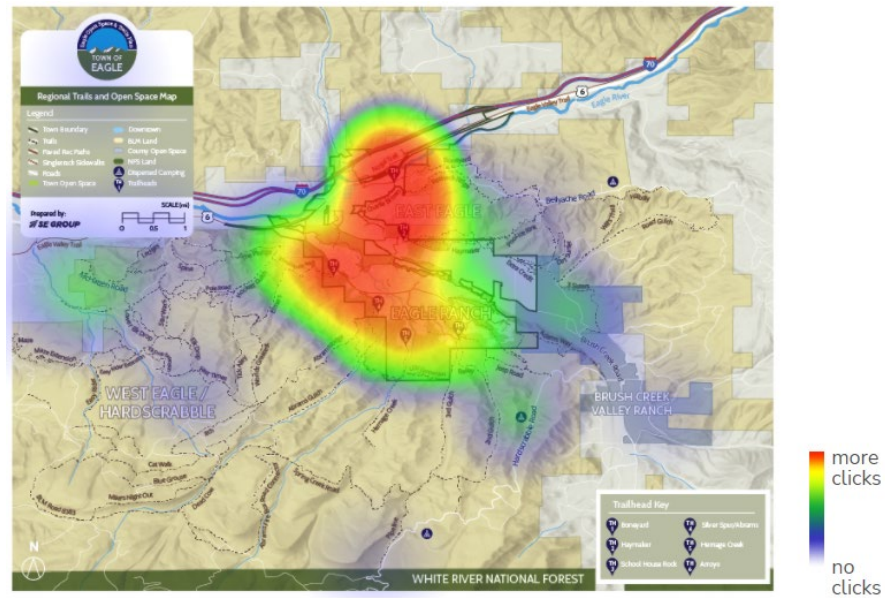
Areas in Need of Maintenance



Primary Access Points



Areas in Need of Trailhead Resources



also mentioned issues with parking and traffic, dogs, and downhill vs. uphill traffic, particularly between bikers and walkers. A handful of survey respondents also commented that they have experienced no conflict.

Open house attendees indicated that the following trails need more maintenance include Redneck Ridge, Pool-Ice Rink, Haymaker, and Mayer Gulch. Other individuals indicated a need for maintenance on Abrams Ridge and Worlds Greatest. Survey respondents indicated that maintenance is needed near the Boneyard and Haymaker trailheads and on trails in the Eagle Ranch area. Comments mentioned the difficulty of navigation and the need for more signage, issues with berms and steep switchbacks, and cracks in the paved paths. There were a few commenters who saw no need for more maintenance.

Open house attendees reported that their primary access to the trail system was through Arroyo, Haymaker, and Boneyard trailheads, or from neighborhood roads. Many survey respondents reported accessing the system from the School House Rock/Horton Street trailhead, and a lower proportion reported accessing via the Arroyo trailhead relative to open house attendees. A handful of commenters also said that they access trails from home and bike or walk to trailheads rather than drive.

Many survey and open house participants would like to see additional trailhead resources at Haymaker or Boneyard, and many survey respondents would like to see more amenities at School House Rock. A handful of survey respondents expressed a need for amenities near the Bellyache camping areas, crowded areas where people have observed trash and human waste.

Wildlife and Seasonal Closures

WILDLIFE & SEASONAL CLOSURES

The Town is chartered with protecting wildlife and providing recreational opportunities. Open space and trails in and around the Town of Eagle are closed seasonally to protect wildlife, soils, vegetation, watersheds, and fisheries. Elk and mule deer seek out lower elevations in the winter months, such as areas in and around Town and lower elevation trails. These two species have faced significant population decline in recent years. Winter wildlife closures are critical to protect their winter habitat and migration corridors. Predators of elk and mule deer, such as mountain lions or bears, can also be present in elk and mule deer winter habitat.

Spring closures protect calving and production for the elk and mule deer, critical for population health. During the warmer months, mule deer and elk are more dispersed, but trails can contribute to habitat fragmentation.

BLM trails and roads are closed between December 1 – April 15 for mechanized and motorized from Eagle. BLM trails in West Eagle are open and accessible from Gypsum or Hardscrabble Road until their closure on January 16.

Brush Creek Valley Ranch and Open Space is closed to all uses December 1 – June 30.

Town of Eagle Trails are closed December 15 – April 15. The current exceptions are Haymaker (Loops 1 and 2), Boneyard, Redneck Ridge, and paved paths.

Wildlife Trail Ambassador Program 2020-2021
Winter & Spring Seasonal Wildlife Trail Closures

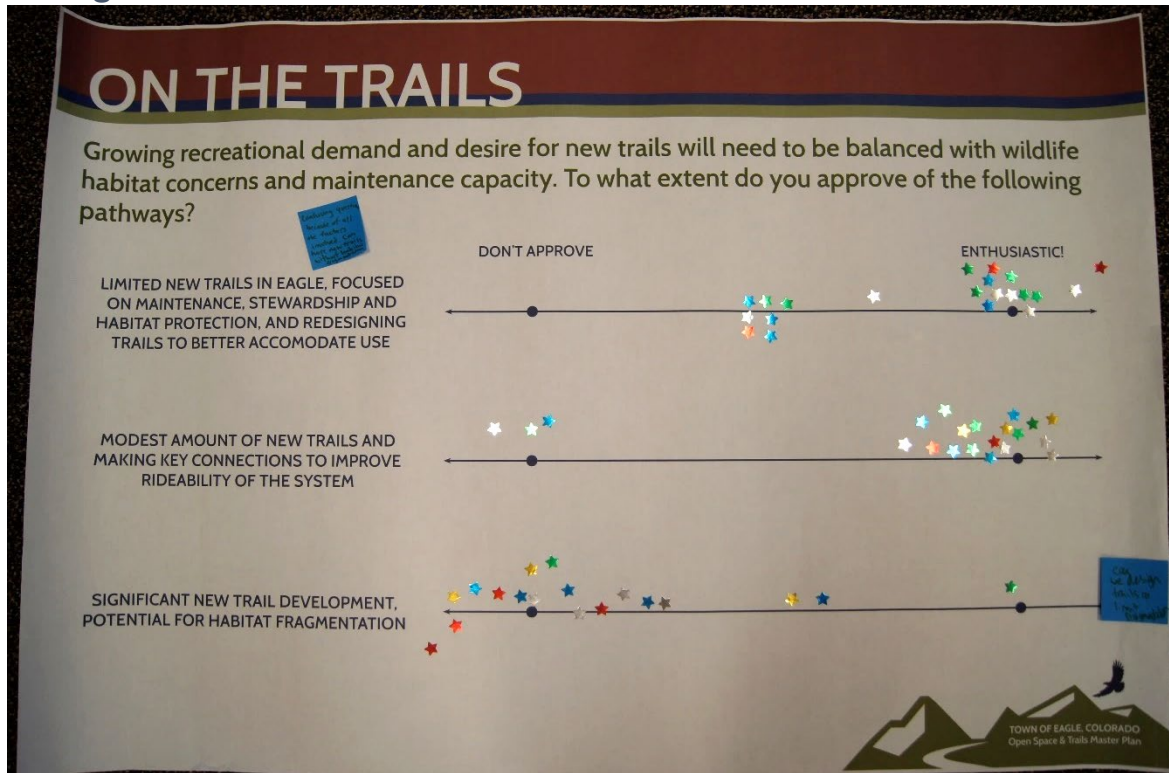
PLEASE PROVIDE ANY ADDITIONAL COMMENTS OR OBSERVATIONS ON WILDLIFE HABITAT AND SEASONAL CLOSURES.

Keep protecting Deer & Elk
Exclude winter routes - but not in critical/wild areas
Partnership - on-site closures, trail off leash close - but not off leash open on Haymaker, Boneyard, Redneck with education, support + enforcement
Increase community education

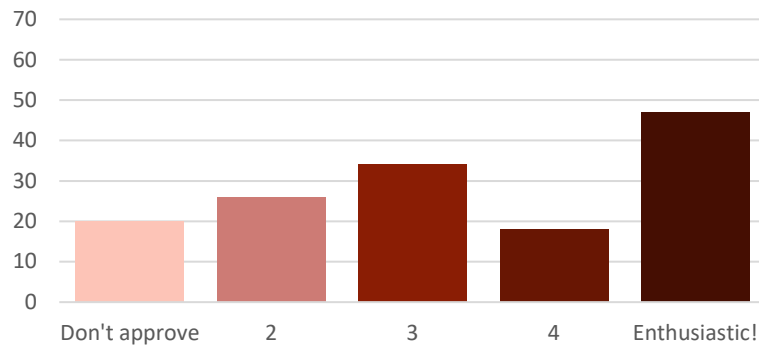
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- A desire for more winter recreation access
- Continue efforts to protect wildlife (particularly deer and elk)
- Do more to protect wildlife
- Concerns about wildlife interactions with dogs (especially when dogs are off-leash)
- Trails can still be built without impacts to wildlife
- An interest in additional trail development in areas with little wildlife presence
- Residential development has had a greater impact on wildlife than trails
- Increase community education

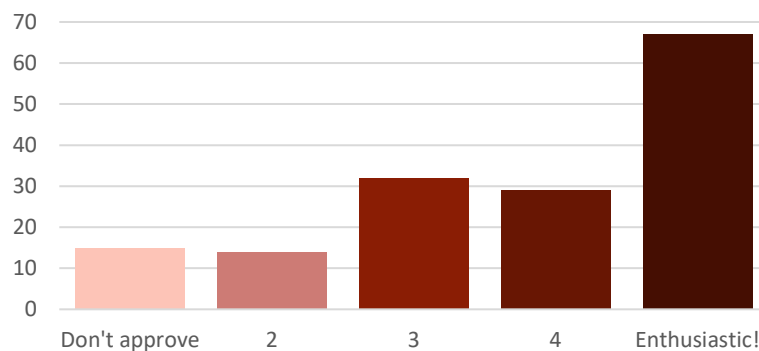
Balancing Wildlife and Recreation



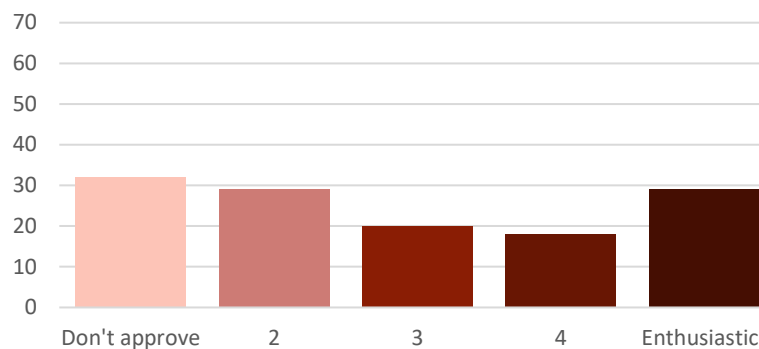
Limited new trails in Eagle, focused on maintenance, stewardship and habitat protection, and redesigning trails to better accommodate use



Modest amount of new trails and making key connections to improve rideability of the system



Significant new trail development, potential for habitat fragmentation



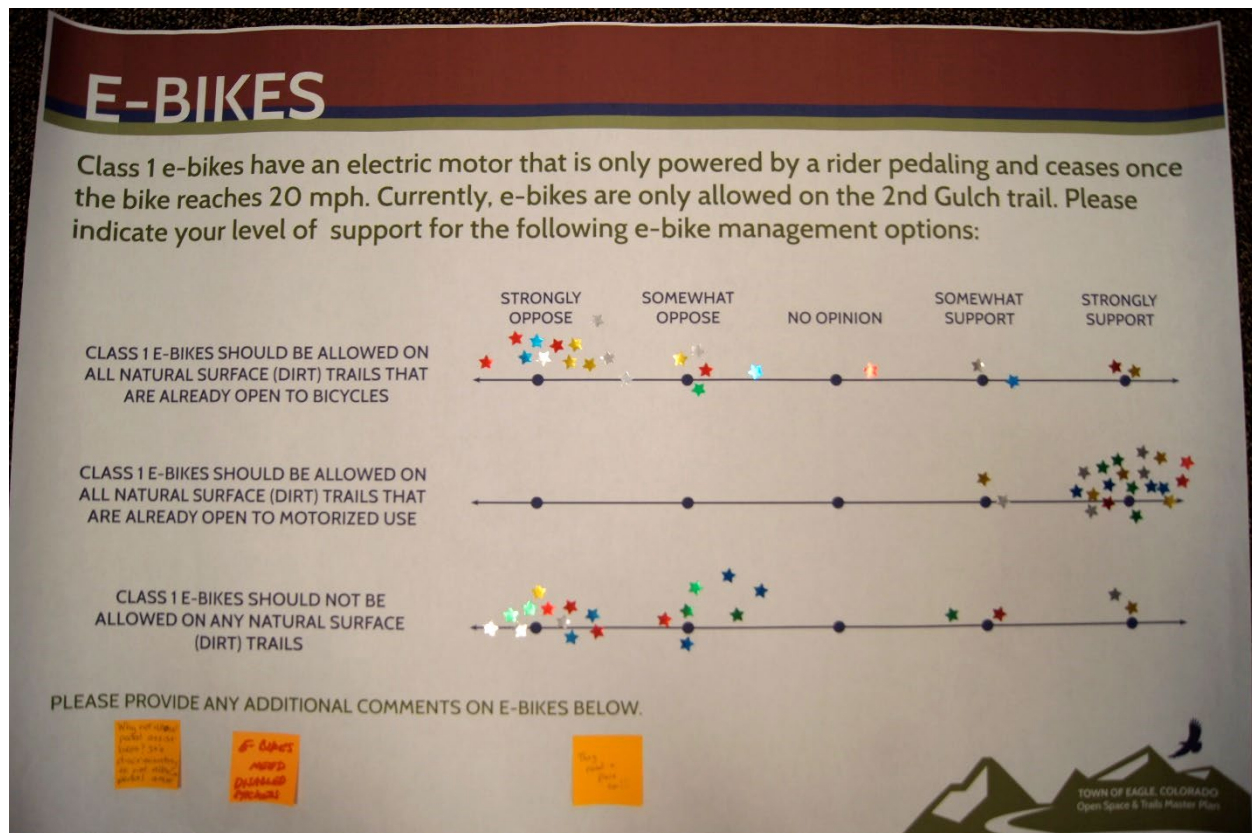
Many open house attendees supported limiting new trails in Eagle, focusing on maintenance, stewardship and habitat protection, and redesigning trails (62% with enthusiastic approval). No attendees did not approve of this option. Nearly all attendees expressed a level of support for a modest amount of new trails, with three attendees expressing disapproval of this option and no responses in between. Most open house attendees (83%) didn't approve of significant new trail development, although there was one enthusiastic response and two who were neutral.

Among survey respondents, limited new trails had mixed support, with an average ranking of 3.3 among survey respondents, with slightly more people who were enthusiastic (at a score of 5) than any other ranking. Survey respondents were most enthusiastic about a modest amount of new trails and making key connections to improve rideability of the

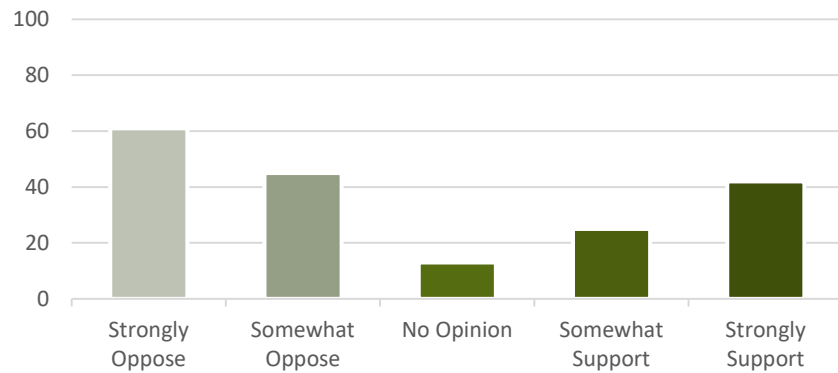
system, with an average ranking of 3.8. Significant new trail development was relatively polarizing amongst survey respondents, with both enthusiastic respondents and those who did not approve, for an average score of 2.9.

A few write-in comments from both survey respondents and open house attendees expressed concern for the way in which this question was asked; some argued that more trail development doesn't have to result in habitat fragmentation and favored more sustainable trail development.

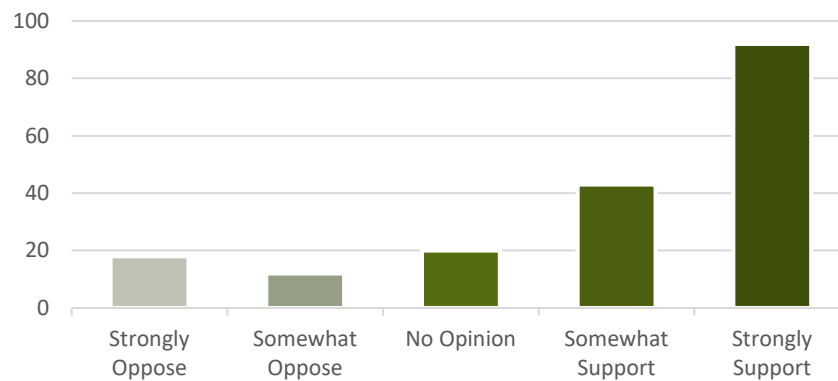
E-Bikes



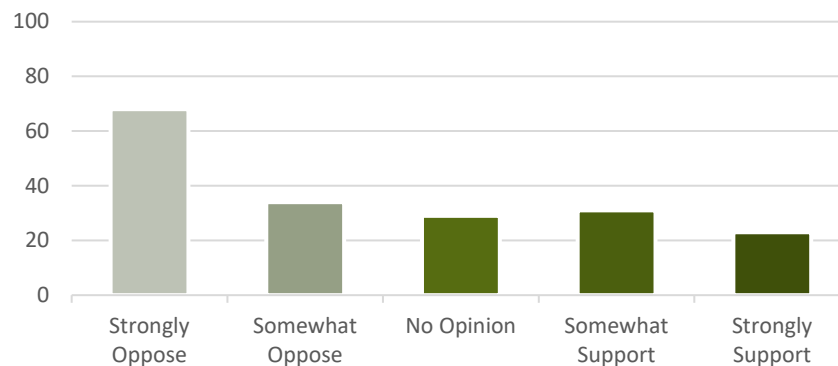
Class I e-bikes should be allowed on all natural surface (dirt) trails that are already open to bicycles



Class I e-bikes should be allowed on all natural surface (dirt) trails that are already open to motorized use

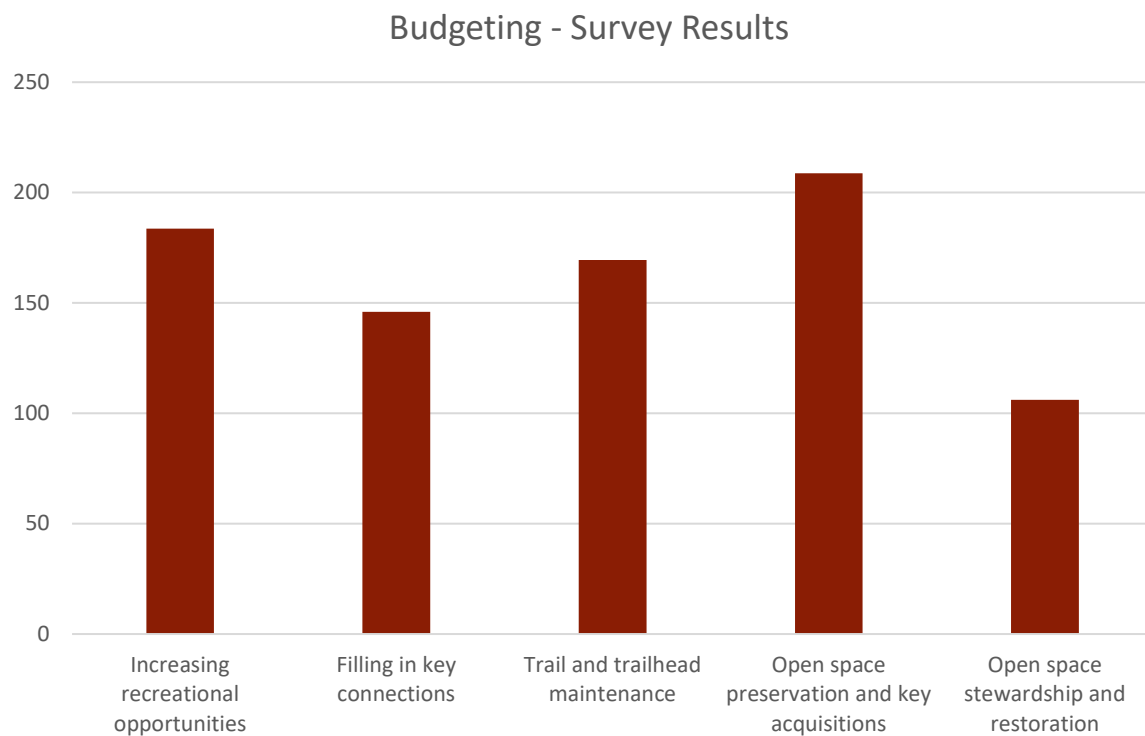
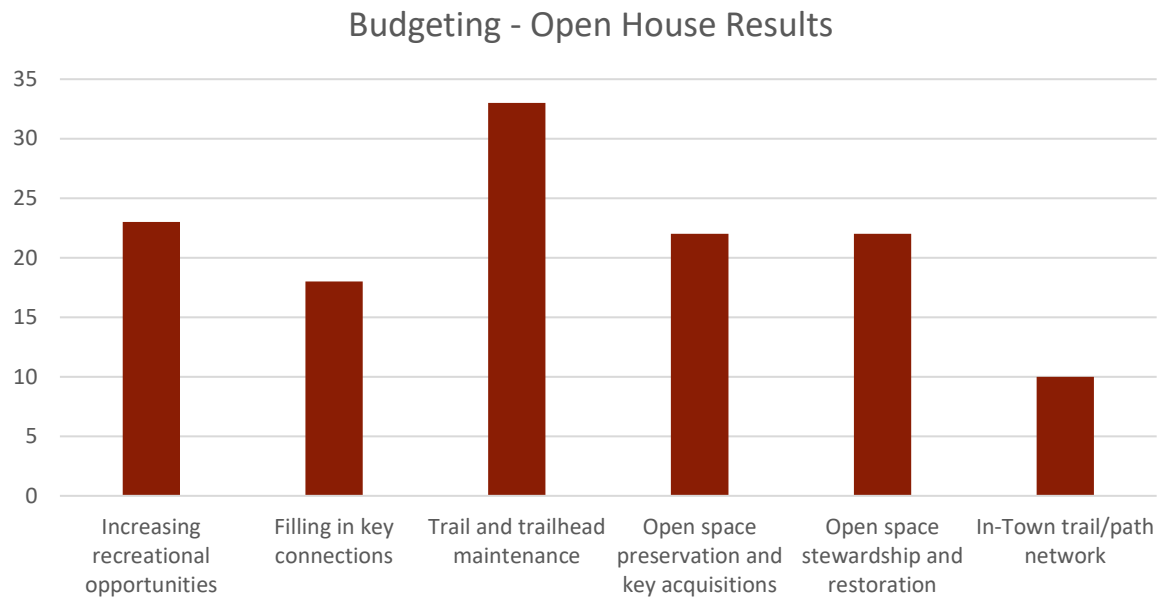


Class I e-bikes should not be allowed on any natural surface (dirt) trails



Of the three options, the highest percentage of both survey respondents (50%) and open house attendees (100%) were supportive of allowing e-bikes on trails already open to motorized use. There was less support for allowing e-bikes on all natural surface trails: 36% of survey respondents and 18% of open house attendees supported this option. There was general opposition among both response sets for prohibiting e-bikes on all natural surface trails, with 82% of open house attendees and 38% of survey respondents in opposition.

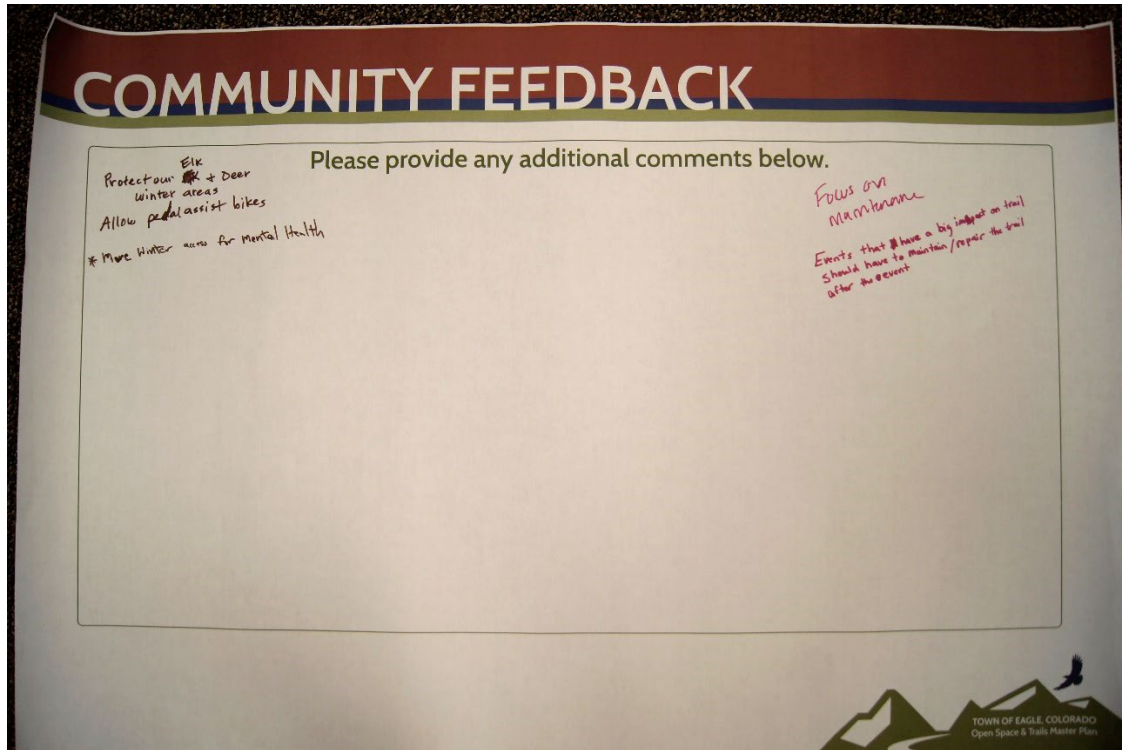
Budgeting



Survey respondents and open house attendees were asked how the Town should distribute its resources going forward by placing 0 to 5 votes and 5 total on each spending category. Across both groups, the highest spending priorities were open space preservation and key acquisitions (231 votes total), increasing recreational opportunities (206 votes total), and trails and trailhead maintenance (203 votes total). Open space

stewardship and restoration was also a key priority among many open house attendees. Open house attendees had relatively low interest in putting resources into the in-Town trail/path network. This option was not included on the online survey.

Additional Comments



Open House attendees and survey participants were asked for any additional comments, and 87 respondents provided their input. Common themes among these comments are:

- More terrain/features on singletrack trails
- Support for more e-bike and motorized access
- Comments on biases towards mountain bikers; some user groups feel overlooked
- Frustration about the loss of motorized access on trails such as Worlds Greatest
- Trash/dog waste on trails
- Dogs off-leash cause concerns for wildlife
- General signage could be improved
- Prioritize connections over new trails
- Keep open space "open"
- Support for wildlife conservation efforts such as Brush Creek Open Space
- Consideration of wildlife when planning new trails
- Continue to prioritize maintenance

There were also general supportive comments that appreciated the Town and other trail managers for their hard work, the opportunity for the survey, and the creation of this plan.



MEMORANDUM

LOCATION: Council Chambers, 200 Broadway Street, Eagle

DATE: December 9, 2021

TIME: 9 – 10:45 a.m.

ATTENDEES: Hugh Fairfield-Smith, Eagle Valley Wildland
 Ernest Sager, Vail Valley Mountain Trails Alliance (VVMTA)/Open Space & Recreation Advisory Committee (OSRAC)
 Erinn Hoban, VVMTA/OSRAC
 John Bailey, OSRAC
 Jessica Foulis, Eagle Valley Land Trust/OSRAC
 Peter Suneson, Eagle County Open Space
 Phillip Kirkman, Eagle County Open Space/OSRAC
 Brian Wodrich, Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW)
 Lizzy Owens, Mountain Rec/OSRAC
 Ellen Bodenheimier, Town Council/OSRAC
 Brian Lieberman, Town of Eagle
 Gabby Voeller, SE Group
 Ellie Wachtel, SE Group
 Melanie McKenzie, SE Group

RE: Open Space Focus Group Meeting

FROM: Gabby Voeller, SE Group

Meeting Context and Purpose

On December 9, 2021, the Eagle Open Space and Trails Plan stakeholders, Town staff, and consultant team convened for a focus group meeting that discussed open space. 13 people attended the meeting in-person at Eagle Town Hall, and 1 person joined the meeting virtually.

At the meeting, the consultant team presented findings from a desktop analysis of open space, habitat, and natural environment conditions and a visioning survey that engaged over 250 local residents. The participants were guided in an open-ended discussion of

these materials and other key topics for discussion. The conversation provided recommendations and informed the plan direction.

Open Space Discussion Summary

The following summary presents the results from these open-ended conversations.

Existing Programs/Ongoing Efforts

- The Eagle Valley Land Trust participates in the Weed Warriors of Eagle Valley, a grassroots effort for weeds management and education
- Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) has a seeding program to re-plant native grasses and improve soil quality
- Abrams Creek Open Space is currently working on a forest management plan with an outside forester

Issue/Opportunity Identification

- There has been an increase in noxious weeds in the Haymeadow area with the development of new roads; the development team has a dedicated staff member doing treatments on the weeds but the efforts are a work in progress
- Eagle Valley Land Trust would be willing to help find funds for holistic management of soil quality, native grasses, land restoration, weeds, etc.
- Climate change is expected to impact wildlife patterns; this may require an adjustment of seasonal closures
- There is concern about increases in recreational use with continued population growth in Eagle and impacts on wildlife habitat
- There is concern about dispersed camping and the waste on nearby BLM land
- There is interest in creating and maintaining equitable access to the trails and open space system
- Funding for open space management going forward is limited. Participants discussed a sales tax to put towards an open space management fund
- There is a lack of consistency around wildlife closures which creates confusion for participants and other trail users
- The Eagle County Community Wildlife Roundtable is interested in taking a wider approach to wildlife management

Places of Agreement/Disagreement

- Participants expressed support for controlled burns, a relatively inexpensive and effective strategy for habitat and vegetation restoration and pest management; controlled burns are already occurring in and around Eagle. Education is and would continue to be an important component
- Participants agreed that climate change is a threat to the future management of open space, especially in the context of wildlife management and closures as

habitat corridors and seasonality are changing. Participants discussed adaptive closures, but largely agreed the existing system is complicated enough

- Participants agreed that there is a need for better enforcement and education of wildlife closures; there are people who disobey the closures
 - Participants discussed adding wildlife closure enforcement and education to the Town of Eagle Code Enforcement Officer job description, as this position is currently vacant
- Participants agreed that while consistency of wildlife closures is important, closures should prioritize what is best for wildlife
- Participants agreed that habitat improvement projects should include areas beyond the Town boundary
- Participants agreed that dogs should be included in management planning as it relates to wildlife management
 - They were not interested in pursuing a dog tag program similar to the one in Boulder
- Participants are excited to see this plan start conversations with Town Council around funding and implementation

Potential Recommendations

- The Town of Eagle working with landowners of properties bordering areas with noxious weeds to multiply weed management efforts
- The management plan should focus on the bigger picture rather than specific areas in need of maintenance (such as the Haymeadow area). Those should be the focus of future studies
- Consider integrative methods for pest, weeds, and wildlife management such as controlled burns and raptor poles, or CO₂ fumigation
- Work with developers to establish ways in which new development can support open space management efforts. People were more interested in specificity around what the Town was interested in
 - Of interest were: an impact fee to account for increased trail use, a fee-in-lieu for capital improvements, land acquisitions for connectivity, maintenance of trails, and formalizing access and neighborhood connections
 - Participants emphasized the importance of formalizing access for new developments for preventing social trails and minimizing impacts
- Determination of areas to concentrate use/publicize for non-local use. This would be based on existing use patterns, habitat/natural resources, desired experience, and existing or potential parking and access facilities

Necessary Follow-ups

- Town of Eagle to connect with licensed herbicide applicators to gain a better understanding of where noxious weeds exist and when weeds are receptive to treatment methods for a more targeted, customized approach

- Research open space management efforts in surrounding areas to understand what has and hasn't been working
- Research Front Range open space policies/actions around ground squirrels and beavers

To Include in the Plan

- Express the importance of wildlife to the Eagle community
- Highlight the importance of finding a balance between the community's desire for more winter recreation and increasing the protection of wildlife



MEMORANDUM

LOCATION: Council Chambers, 200 Broadway Street, Eagle

DATE: December 9, 2021

TIME: 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.

ATTENDEES: Ernest Sager, Vail Valley Mountain Trails Alliance (VVMTA)/Open Space & Recreation Advisory Committee (OSRAC)
Jessica Foulis, Eagle Valley Land Trust/OSRAC
John Bailey, OSRAC
Peter Suneson, Eagle County Open Space
Phillip Kirkman, Eagle County Open Space/OSRAC
Brian Wodrich, Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW)
Ellen Bodenhemier, Town Council/OSRAC
Justin Jones, BLM Recreation Planner for OHV
Peter Barkley, The Cycle Effect
Alan Czepinski, BLM
Rob Tadlock, Hardscrabble Trails Coalition (HTC)
Laura Turitz, HTC
Christopher Kehoe, HTC/OSRAC
Brian Bastuba, Rocky Mountain Sports Riders
Brian Lieberman, Town of Eagle
Gabby Voeller, SE Group
Ellie Wachtel, SE Group
Melanie McKenzie, SE Group

RE: Trails Focus Group Meeting

FROM: Gabby Voeller, SE Group

Meeting Context and Purpose

On December 9, 2021, the Eagle Open Space and Trails Plan stakeholders, Town staff, and consultant team convened for a focus group meeting that discussed the existing and future trail network in the Eagle area. 16 people attended the meeting in-person at Eagle Town Hall, and 2 people joined the meeting virtually.

At the meeting, the consultant team presented findings from a desktop analysis of the trail system and a visioning survey that engaged over 250 local residents. The participants were guided through an open-ended discussion of these materials and other key topics for discussion. The conversation provided recommendations and informed the plan direction.

Trails Discussion Summary

The following summary presents the results from these open-ended conversations.

Issue/Opportunity Identification

- There is a lack of connectivity in the motorized trail system; motorized use is fragmented and some trails dead-end onto non-motorized trails, particularly in West Eagle
- There is a lack of signage indicating the allowed usage on trails; some signs have been removed by users perhaps unhappy with the allowable uses. Other trailhead kiosk signage is lacking.
- Many people use the Brush Creek Elementary parking lot for trail access, but there have been complaints about people using this lot for such. Online information encourages people to use the Elementary school parking lot, and there is no information that suggests available parking and bathrooms at Brush Creek Pavilion.
- There is limited parking at many of the trailheads for West Eagle/Hardscrabble. There is the greatest misalignment at Hernage Gulch, particularly given its hiking only use.
- The frequent rutting of trails in the system is an issue. Among other potential solutions and strategies, the group was interested in looking into more innovative trail armoring techniques.
- Related to future trail access around Hockett Gulch, it is important to ensure Reserve at Hockett Gulch approved with parking lot/trail access plans in place.

Places of Agreement/Disagreement

- CPW expressed that extensive trail mileage exists (184 miles) and asked participants if there is a need for more trails or if the focus should be on maintenance; participants generally agreed that some additional mileage was necessary (and/or already approved) towards improving key connections and trail access was a priority
 - One participant also noted that while there are 184 miles of trails, only a fraction of these are used by the community because of the lack of access and connectivity; small improvements could help users better access existing parts of the system
- Participants agreed that there is a need for improved motorized access into West Eagle/Hardscrabble; an ideal place for this access is through private property. As singletrack motorized users can ride along Eagle streets, motorized access could

remain relatively informal, as most out-of-town riders should continue to access the system from Gypsum.

- Participants agreed that the Town of Eagle should not pursue more neighborhood trailheads in existing neighborhoods unless there is an extenuating circumstance.

Potential Recommendations

- The public is not well educated on local wildlife; creating an infographic or map identifying habitat locations for local species may be educational
- There is confusion about where parking is or isn't allowed; improving signage or correcting parking information on Trailforks would be helpful
- Creating a beginner skills park could increase beginner trail options and require relatively limited flat land
- To expand expert trail network, seek out opportunities to focus on more technical trails with rocks and other obstacles (better suited for West Eagle/Hardscrabble)
- The 2015 BLM Resource Management Plan (RMP) has a capacity for additional trail mileage; there is interest in developing up to that mileage
- Trailheads should be designed according to associated trail uses; for example, trailheads that attract more walkers/hikers or out-of-town visitors may need more parking
- There is an opportunity to take some pressure off the Pool-Ice Rink, which sees high volume such as through an intermediate trail between Will's Thrill and Pool-Ice Rink
- Further publicize trail monitoring portals

Necessary Follow-ups

- Town of Eagle to continue working with developers for the Reserve at Hockett Gulch to support trail access in this area

To Include in the Plan

- Establish roles and responsibilities of the Town with key partners and stakeholders moving forward

APPENDIX B. OPEN SPACE & TRAILS ANALYSES



MEMORANDUM

TO: Town of Eagle

FROM: Gabby Voeller, SE Group

DATE: January 12, 2022

RE: Open Space and Conservation Analysis

Open Space and Conservation Analysis

This analysis examines publicly available resource and habitat data for Town Open Spaces and public lands immediately surrounding Eagle. This information can be used to understand resource sensitivity or conditions towards future recreation planning or management activities. However, further study and analysis will likely be required prior to implementation of many of the actions recommended in this plan.

The following data sources were reviewed for each Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Management Zone and Town Open Space property. All data is available on the Colorado Conservation Data Explorer (CODEX) unless otherwise noted.

Mapped wetlands – National Wetland Inventory

Elk, Mule Deer, and Bald Eagle Habitat – Colorado Parks and Wildlife Species Activity Mapping. Lynx and Bighorn habitat data was also reviewed but was not found in the study area.

Noxious Weeds – mapped noxious weeds through the public documenting tool at EDDMaps. This is not considered a complete inventory of noxious weeds in the area.

Wildfire Risk – the overall composite risk occurring from a wildfire by combining burn probably and values at risk rating. This is a layer put together by the Colorado State Forest Service and available on the Wildfire Risk Public Viewer.

Resiliency – An analysis layer put together by The Nature Conservancy depicting adaptability of the landscape to changes. It is a factor of elevation, geology, soil, relative diversity of microclimates, connectedness by natural cover.

Potential Conservation Area - areas representing the Colorado Natural Heritage Program's best estimate of the primary area supporting the long-term survival of targeted species, subspecies and natural communities. It is not a formal designation. This is often a desktop exercise, based on biological and physical factors, and it does not account for land ownership and political concerns. It is useful for land-use planning and conservation strategies but does not have legal meaning or in any way represent an attempt to regulate or limit the use of private property. It does not automatically exclude any activity whatsoever.

A study was conducted of Penstemon species in East Eagle, and that data is included where available. No areas are Audubon mapped important bird habitat. Soil Erodibility (USA SSURGO) was also evaluated for the BLM zones, measuring soil's susceptibility to detachment.

Town of Eagle 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 on the attached map, numbered accordingly.

ID	Name	Acreage
1	Abrams Creek OS	174.2
2	Eagle Ranch OS	862.0
3	Haymeadow OS	58.8
4	Haymeadow Park/School site	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

Abrams Creek OS

Abrams Creek OS is a 174.2-acre parcel located beyond 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. Endangered 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. It is considered highly resilient according to mapping by the Nature Conservancy, suggesting it provides has high capacity to adjust to changes. The Town has conducted resource management activities such as restoring a pipeline scar and prescribed burns in this area. The Colorado State Forest Service has mapped the area as moderate and high wildfire risk.

Eagle Ranch OS

Eagle Ranch OS is 862.9 acres encompassing 36 different parcels. There is relative diversity in these parcels, with some small, neighborhood parcels and higher elevation parcels with juniper-sage. Eagle Ranch OS connects to 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 Path. Trailheads include Horton Street/School House Rock, Abrams, Hernage Creek, and Arroyo that provide the majority of access to West Eagle/Hardscrabble BLM lands.

The seasonal wildlife closure is December 15 – April 15. 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 open space ranges from very highly resilient (around School House Rock and north) to highly resilient around Arroyo, with less resilient areas at lower elevation and within the development. The Colorado Natural Heritage Program has designated the western portion of the Open Space (Third Gulch west) as a potential conservation area. 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 comprised of two parcels totaling 58.8 acres, to the north and south of the of the proposed 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. 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. Both parcels are

considered less resilient in Nature Conservancy mapping. The parcels are at lowest risk of wildfire according to the Colorado State Forest Service.

Haymeadow Park/School Site

This 15.1-acre parcel is within the Haymeadow development site and has been set aside for future school or park development, but Town Open Space would manage in the intermediary. It is adjacent to the Haymeadow Open Space and bordered by BLM land to the north. The Haymaker and Pool & Ice Rink trails cuts through the northern portion of the parcel, along with the Haymeadow paved path. Most of the parcel is within 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 considered less resilient in Nature Conservancy mapping. 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. This 6.8-acre parcel includes the Haymaker parking lot, BMX track, bike park, pump track, and the access to the Haymaker trail. Most of the parcel 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 34.9 acres to the north of the pool and Brush Creek Meadows neighborhood and bordered by BLM land to the west and private land in 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 considered less resilient in Nature Conservancy mapping. The parcel is at lowest risk of wildfire according to the Colorado State Forest Service.

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. 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 considered less resilient in Nature Conservancy mapping. The parcel is at moderate risk of wildfire according to the Colorado State Forest Service.

Bluffs Neighborhood OS

The Bluffs Neighborhood OS is a narrow 7.1-acre parcel 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 considered least resilient in Nature Conservancy mapping. The parcel is at lowest risk of wildfire according to the Colorado State Forest Service.

Eagle River OS

The Eagle River OS is 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 trails in this open space and most of it is mapped river or riparian wetland. 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. The parcels are considered least resilient in Nature Conservancy mapping. 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 is located within this open space, as are the kid's fishing pond, community garden, 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. The area west of Capitol Street is a very high percentage wetland. 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 considered less resilient in Nature Conservancy mapping. 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. Additional detail on resource conditions and habitat are available for this study area. Vegetative zones within this study area are palustrine scrub wetlands, palustrine emergent wetlands, forested riparian, and ruderal upland. The soil evaluated on site is indicative of fill soil and is non-native. The assessment found no Threatened,

Endangered, or Sensitive species in the study area. It is also mapped range for bald eagle, black bear, Brazilian free-tailed bat, Canada geese, great blue heron, and mountain lion, and it is considered a human conflict area for mountain lion. Six noxious weeds species were observed in 2020 in the study area, with concentration areas mapped. The assessment recommended realigning treatments around growing season and 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. 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 considered less resilient in Nature Conservancy mapping. The open space is a mix of moderate and high risk of wildfire according to the Colorado State Forest Service.

BLM Management Zones

The Bureau of Land Management is the land manager for many of the areas surrounding Eagle and where many popular trails are partially or fully located. All trails or other recreation facilities proposed on the BLM would undergo NEPA analysis.

Hardscrabble/East Eagle SRMA Recreation Management Zone 1

This zone is oriented towards non-motorized recreation. The zone is largely middle country and front country. These designations are classifications around public access and proximity to developed areas and determine desired recreation setting characteristics such as naturalness, visitor facilities, evidence of use, management controls, and other factors. 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 borders the Bluffs neighborhood, the Kaibob neighborhood in unincorporated Eagle County, Haymeadow Open Space, and Eagle County 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. Nearly the entire portion is a CNHP Potential Conservation Area. There are no mapped noxious weeds within the zone. Soils are largely moderately erodible, with highly erodible soils on the northern edge and in the Road Gulch area. Wildfire risk is a mix of low risk at lower elevations and moderate risk at higher elevations. The zone is largely most or more resilient, with less resilient areas on the southern portion. 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. The eastern boundary is the BLM boundary along Eagle Ranch and east of Hernage Creek, while the western boundary roughly follows Tick Alley. 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. Only the very southwest portion is CNHP Potential Conservation Area. There are no mapped noxious weeds within the zone. Soils are largely less erodible. Wildfire risk is largely high risk. This portion is largely most or more resilient, with small pockets of less resilient areas.

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. The southern portion is CNHP Potential Conservation Area. There are no mapped noxious weeds within the zone. Soils are a mix in terms of erodibility, with more erodible soils around Spring Creek Road and Ledge. Wildfire risk is largely high risk. The zone is largely moderately resilient, with highly resilient largely along the northern portion.

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. No portion of the zone is mapped Migration Corridors or Production Areas.

The CNHP has designated the entirety of the zone as a Potential Conservation Area. 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. Soil erodibility is moderate to low through most of the area, with some areas of high erodibility on the northern edge and areas of low erodibility along the eastern edge. Most of the area is moderate on the resiliency scale with a few areas along the edges that are highly resilient and areas in the center that are relatively low. The area is at high wildfire risk.

Western Portion

This area is 5,703 acres in West Eagle between Eagle Ranch, the western portion of RMZ 1, and Eagle County Open Space. Hardscrabble Road is the southern boundary. 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 CNHP has designated most of the zone as a Potential Conservation Area. Soil erodibility is moderate through most of the area. Most of the area is more resilient. 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.

Soils are moderate to highly erodible. The area is a mix of resiliency, with some more resilient areas mix with less resilient areas. 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.



MEMORANDUM

TO: Town of Eagle

FROM: Gabby Voeller, SE Group

DATE: November 24, 2021

RE: Trail Analysis

TRAIL ANALYSIS

Introduction

As part of the Open Space and Trails Master Plan, the consultant team analyzed the trails in and around the Town of Eagle. This analysis identifies the strengths and weaknesses of the Eagle area trail system, particularly towards providing desired experiences and opportunities at a variety of ability levels.

The trails included in this analysis are all those within the Town of Eagle, surrounding Bureau of Land Management lands ("BLM"), the National Forest System, and Eagle County Open Space land. The analysis matches the geographic scope of the 2014 IMBA Eagle Area Trails Plan. This is also the study area for the 2022 Open Space and Trails Plan. The trails analyzed provide opportunities for hiking, biking, equestrian, and motorized use. Trails were analyzed by the following criteria and sources:

- Trail Type – singletrack, doubletrack, or paved; categorized using a combination of existing Town of Eagle data and Trailforks data
- Difficulty – beginner, intermediate, advanced, expert, categorized using Trailforks and MTB Project data
- Use Allowed – determined from land manager data
- Location – general area (i.e., East Eagle, West Eagle/Hardscrabble, Brush Creek, In-Town)
- Popularity – Trailforks rates trails on a scale of 1-100 based on level of use. This analysis used the following criteria:
 - Very Popular: score of 76-100
 - Popular: 51-75

- Somewhat Popular: 26-50
- Not Popular: 0-25
- Proximate Trailhead – selected from closest Town of Eagle designated trailhead
- Directionality – based on land manager data; several signed trails are recommended directional, but not mandated
- Land Manager – determined based on mapped boundaries of land managers
- Seasonal Closures – based on land manager policy; depicted holistically on VVMTA maps.
- Function – point to point, loop, short connector

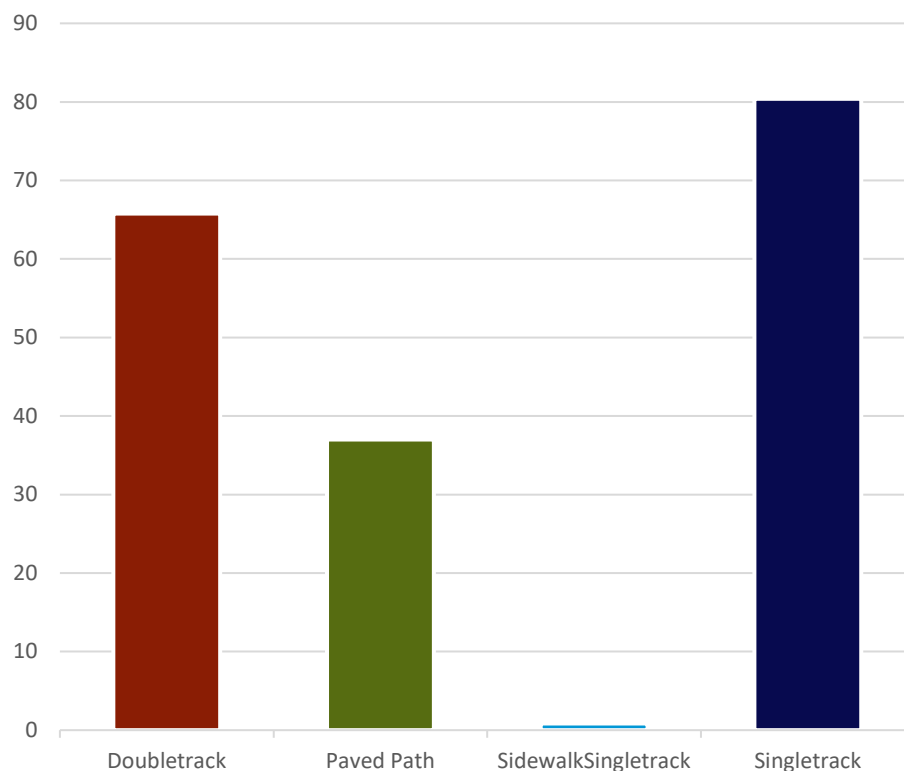
Each trail was included on a list with its respective criteria and analyzed according to different variables. The results are below.

Trail System Background

The Eagle area trail system is a mix of BLM routes, social trails formalized into system routes, and newer, planned natural surface trails and paved paths. Today, the system includes nearly 200 miles of formal trails and recreational roads, along with several unsanctioned social trails. The trail system offers opportunities for several different user types and a range of difficulties.

For this analysis, 131 trails were analyzed for a total of 184 trail miles.

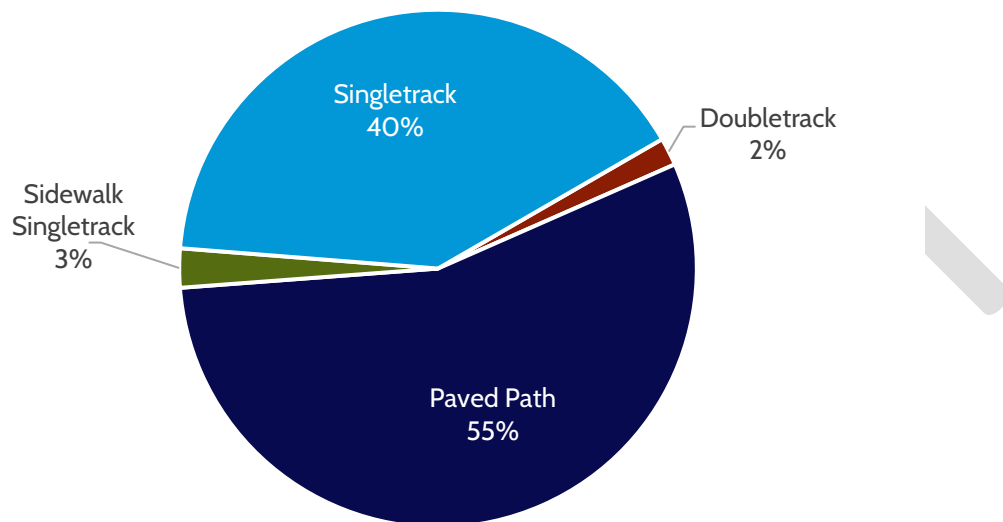
Figure 1. Trail Mileage by Type



The Eagle area has many miles of singletrack trails (81 miles). There are also 66 miles of doubletrack trails, serving a mix of recreational and transportation purposes.

Additionally, there are 37 miles of paved paths in and around Eagle (including 18 miles of the Eagle Valley Trail considered in this analysis). The paved path network in and around Eagle is an important asset as it allows users to recreate and travel around town, to trailheads, and along the Eagle River Valley.

Figure 2. Trail Mileage by Type within Town of Eagle Boundary



There are 37 miles of trails and paths within the Town boundaries, more than half of which is paved paths. The only paved path that extends beyond the Eagle boundary is the Eagle Valley Trail managed by Eagle County Eco Trails.

Approximately 14 miles of singletrack trails are within Eagle. Trails within and relatively close to the Town are important for accessible recreation. Most of this trail mileage serves to access trails on nearby public land.

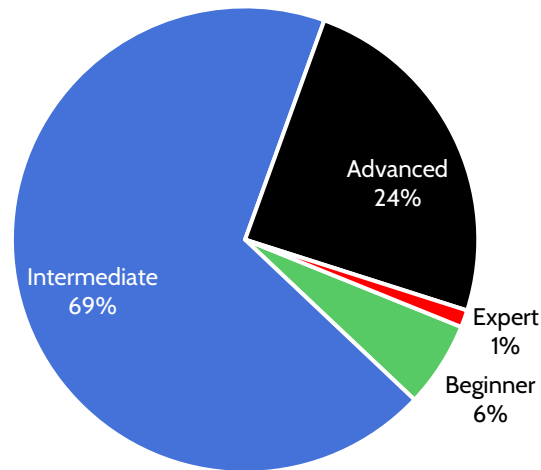
Figure 3. Singletrack Trail Mileage by Difficulty

Figure 3 shows that there is a small proportion of beginner trails in the Eagle singletrack trail system. Users looking for beginner trails may travel fewer miles than more experienced users, so an imbalance is expected, although this is a relatively large discrepancy. Additionally, greater than two-thirds of singletrack trails considered in this analysis are intermediate. 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 terrain in Eagle lends itself to intermediate trails, with hilly terrain but limited rocks or roots to offer technical challenge.

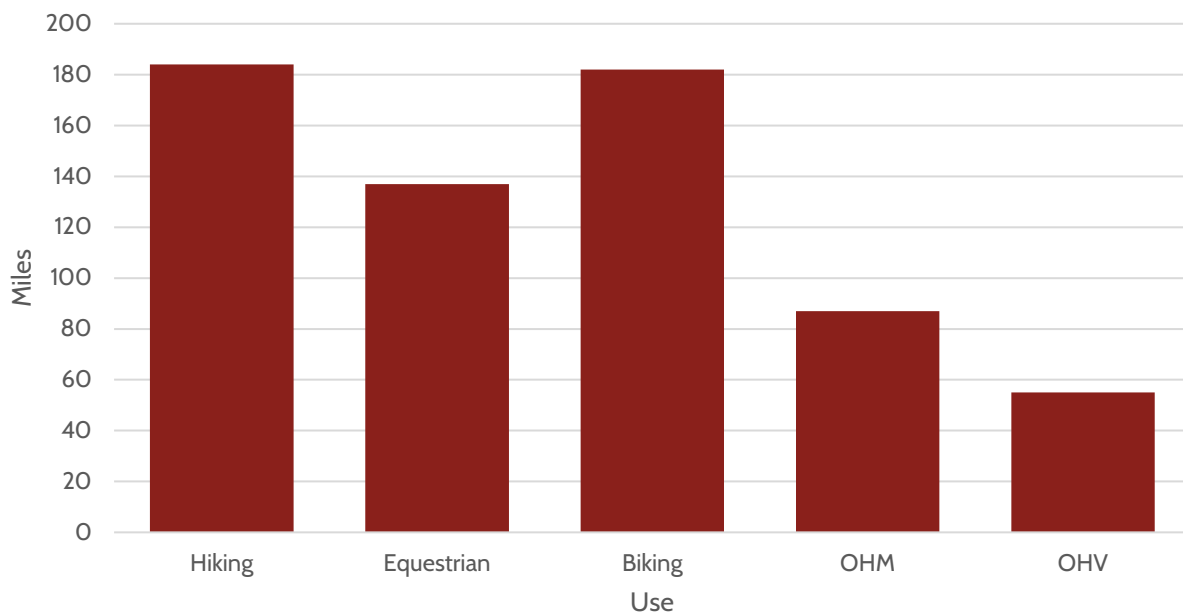
Figure 4. Uses Allowed by Trail Mileage

Figure 4 displays the number of trail miles open to each use type. It is important to note that many trails have shared uses [e.g., all Off Highway Vehicle (“OHV”) trails are also open to Off Highway Motorcycle (“OHM”)] so they are counted in more than one category. All 184 miles of trails are open to hiking use, and nearly all are open to biking use with the exception of the Hernage Creek Trail. There are also nearly 140 miles of trail open for equestrian use, 80+ miles for OHM use, and less than 60 miles for OHV use.

While the figure displays trail mileage open to each user group, it doesn’t necessarily reflect all the trails used by each user group. Notably, there are several trails open to a user group where that group may choose not to use that trail particularly at peak times, such as equestrians on a trail popular with bikes.

Trail System Analysis

The system trails were categorized by location as shown on the map below.

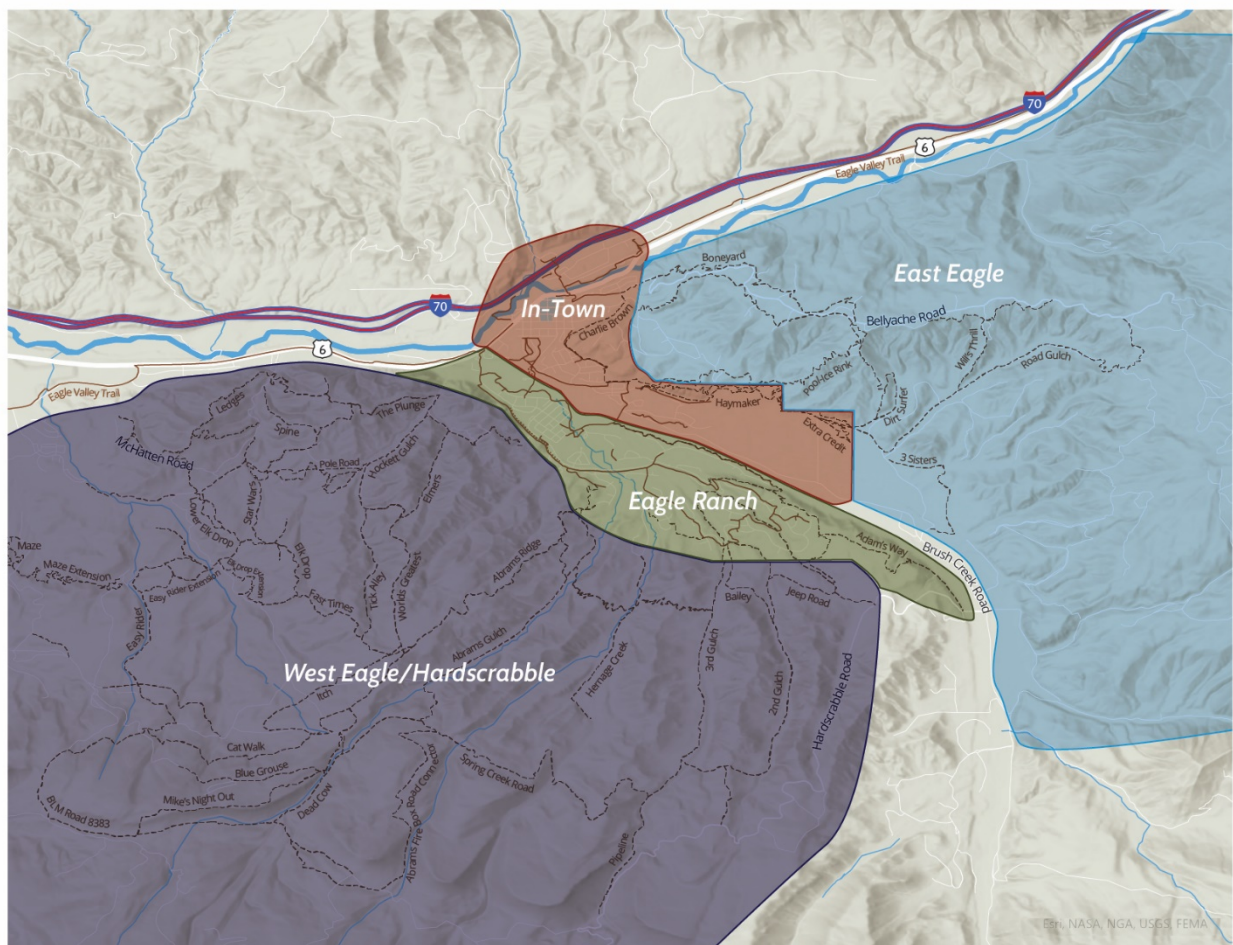
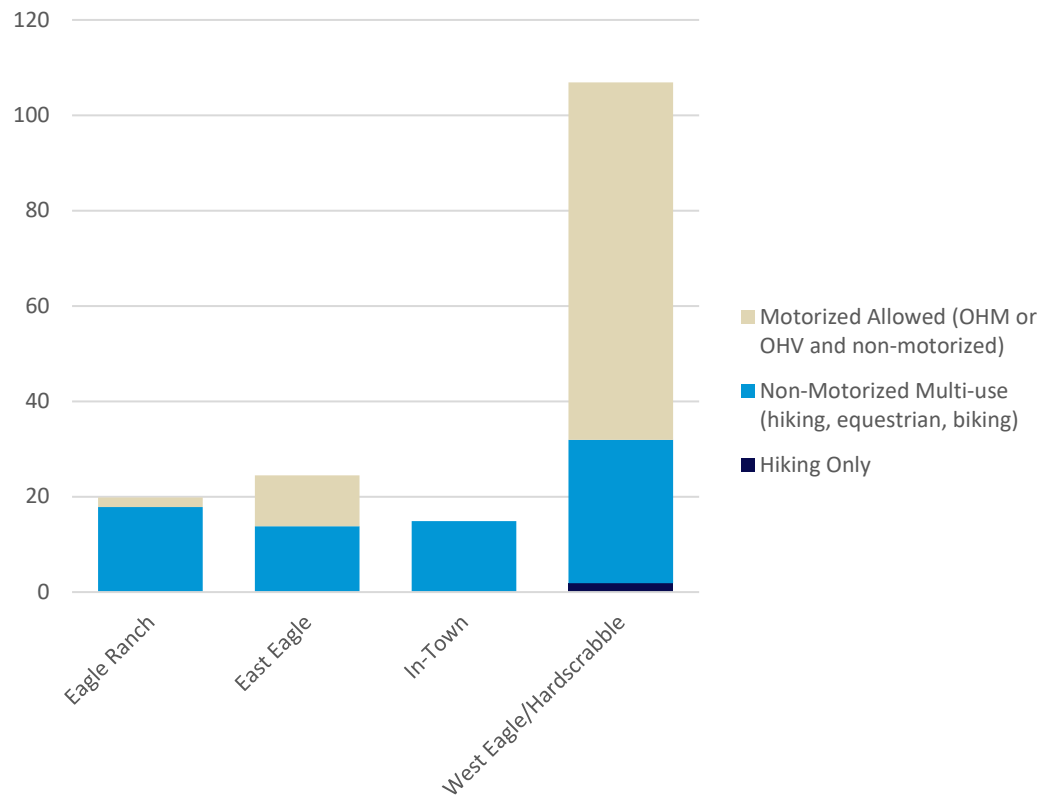
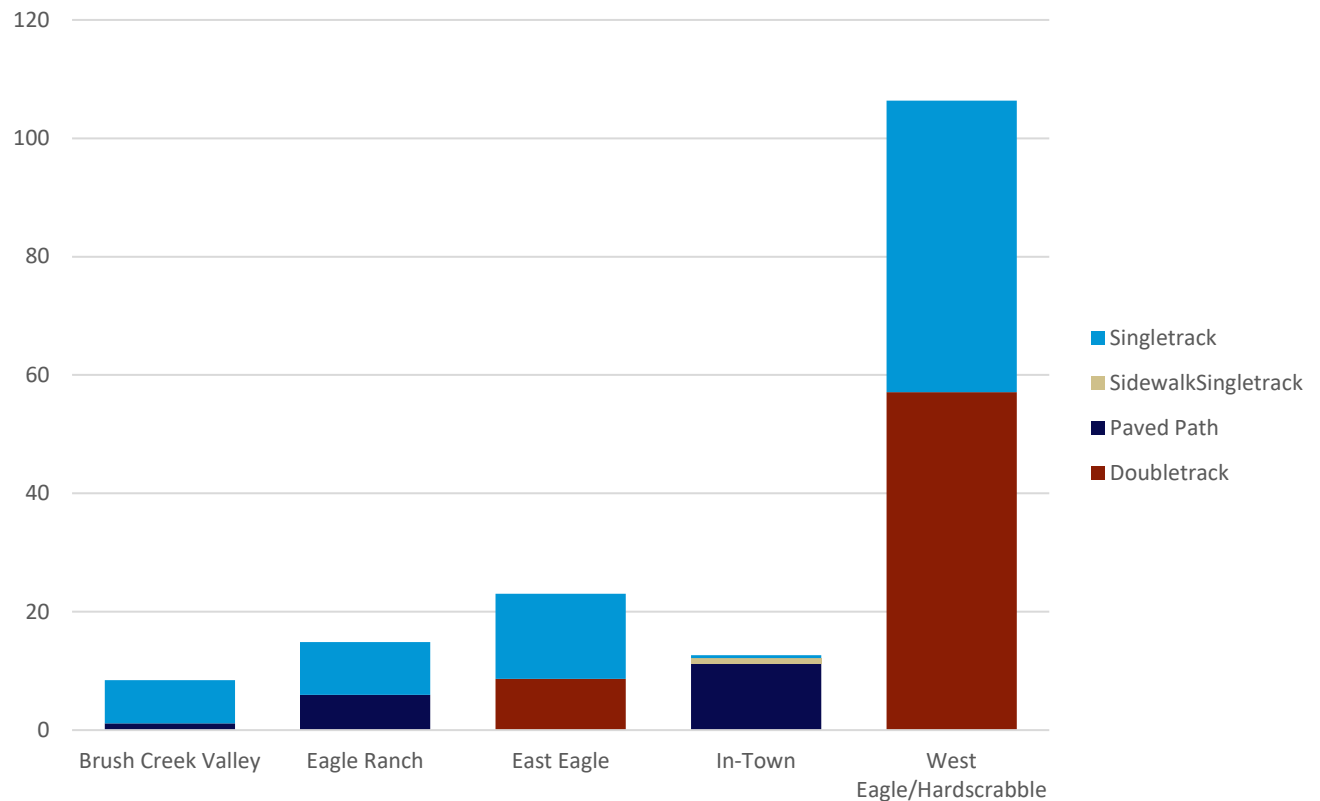


Figure 5. Trail Mileage by Allowed Use and Location

This chart shows the mileage by allowable uses and location. The bulk of system mileage is located in West Eagle/Hardscrabble, particularly of motorized routes. Opportunities for non-motorized multi-use are well distributed between each area. Despite the motorized trail mileage in West Eagle/Hardscrabble, motorized access to the network from Eagle can be challenging as there are limited access routes.

Figure 6. Mileage by Trail Type and Location

This chart shows the trail type breakdown by location, where trails were categorized by the area where the majority of the mileage is. A majority of the singletrack trails are in the West Eagle/Hardscrabble area. There are also many singletrack trails in Eagle Ranch and East Eagle, with very few In-Town. Doubletrack routes are almost exclusively in West Eagle/Hardscrabble with the exception of Road Gulch in East Eagle. The In-Town area is almost exclusively paved paths.

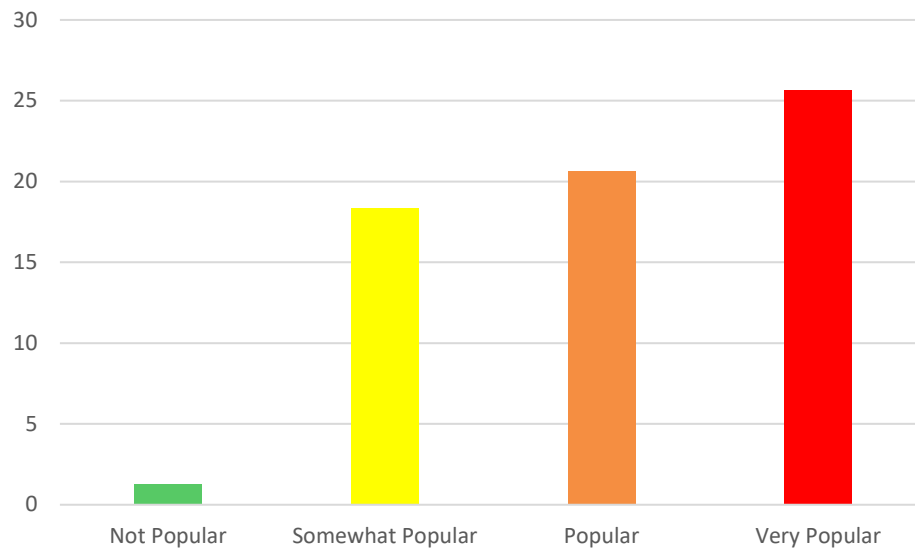
Figure 7. Singletrack Trail Mileage by Trailforks Popularity

Figure 7 shows the Trailforks-rated popularity of singletrack trails in the Eagle system. 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.

Singletrack trails with the highest popularity ratings 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.

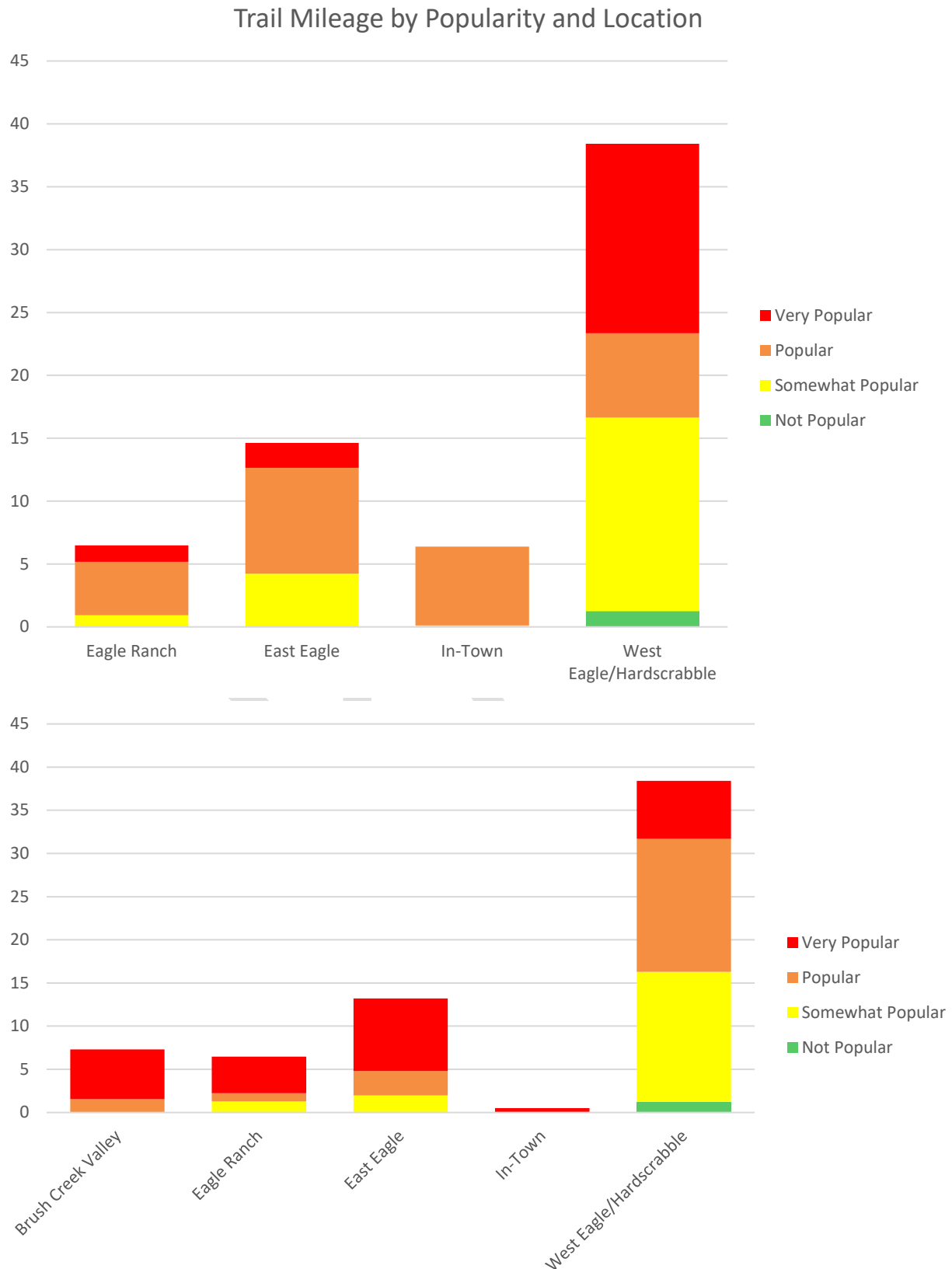
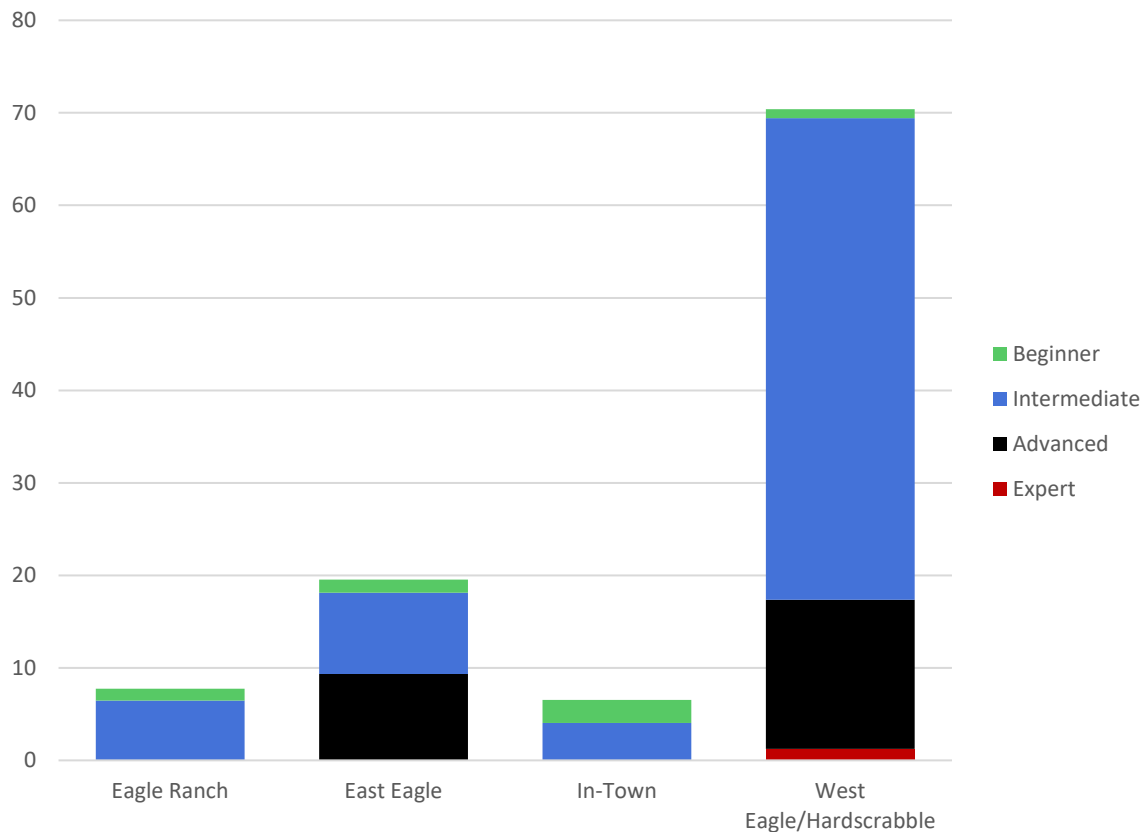
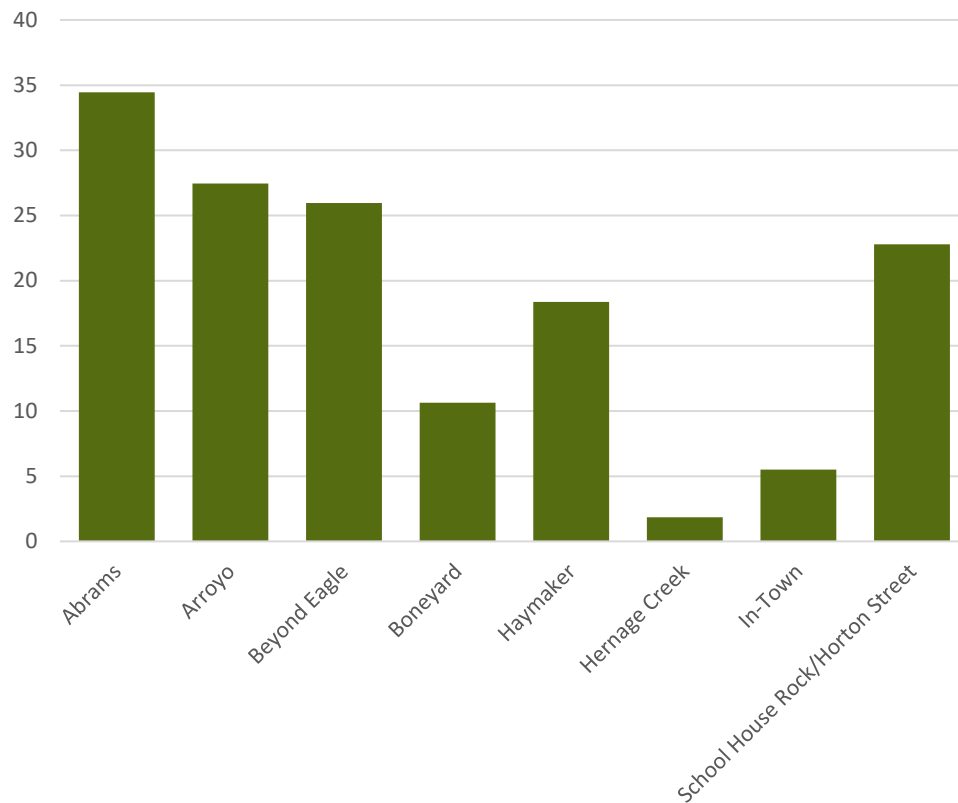
Figure 8. Singletrack Trail Mileage by Trailforks Popularity and Location

Figure 8 breaks down Trailforks popularity by location. A very high proportion Eagle Ranch and East Eagle trails are rated by Trailforks as very popular. Few trails in West Eagle/Hardscrabble are very popular, and the area has a larger number of somewhat or not popular trails. Trailforks popularity can be a factor of the type of trail, accessibility, and experience provided.

Figure 9. Trail Mileage by Difficulty and Location



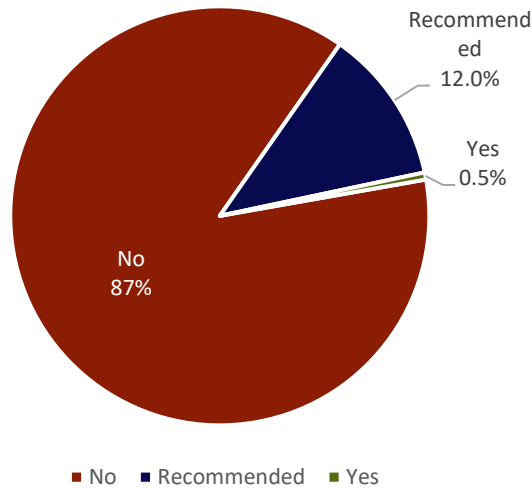
Intermediate trails are found in all locations, while advanced trails are limited to East Eagle and West Eagle/Hardscrabble, and the beginner mileage is relatively divided. Having concentrations of ability levels is important to meet the needs of the range of user abilities during their trail experience.

Figure 10. Natural Surface Trail Mileage by Proximate Trailhead

It is important to balance the amount of accessible trail mileage with the parking and amenities at each trailhead. Generally, there is a fairly even distribution of trail mileage per trailhead with the exception of Hernage Creek, which has only one primary trail, and Boneyard and Haymaker which provide access to extremely popular trails.

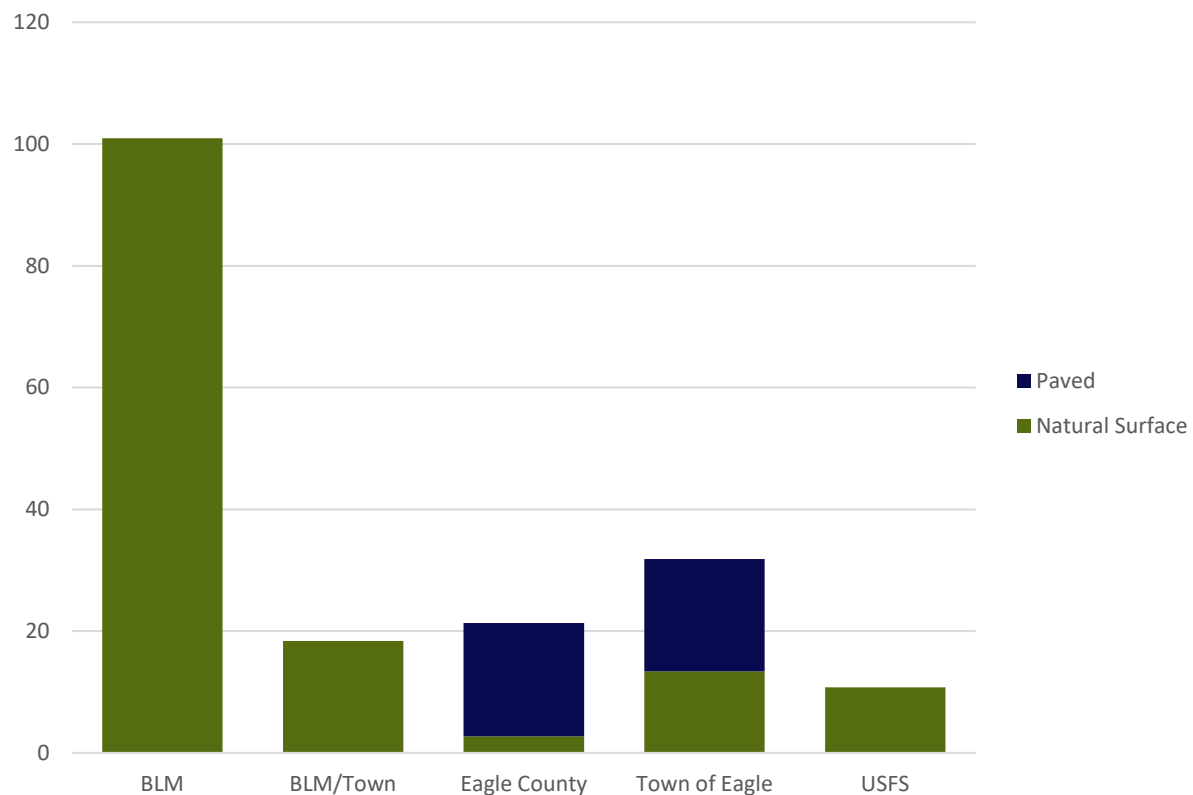
Not all trailheads with high trail mileage have parking and trailhead amenities. The Abrams trailhead, for example, has no parking but a high number of miles. Also, while mileage is a key factor, more desirable trails such as Boneyard may disproportionately attract people to that trailhead than their level of mileage would suggest.

Figure 11. Natural Surface Trail Mileage by Directionality



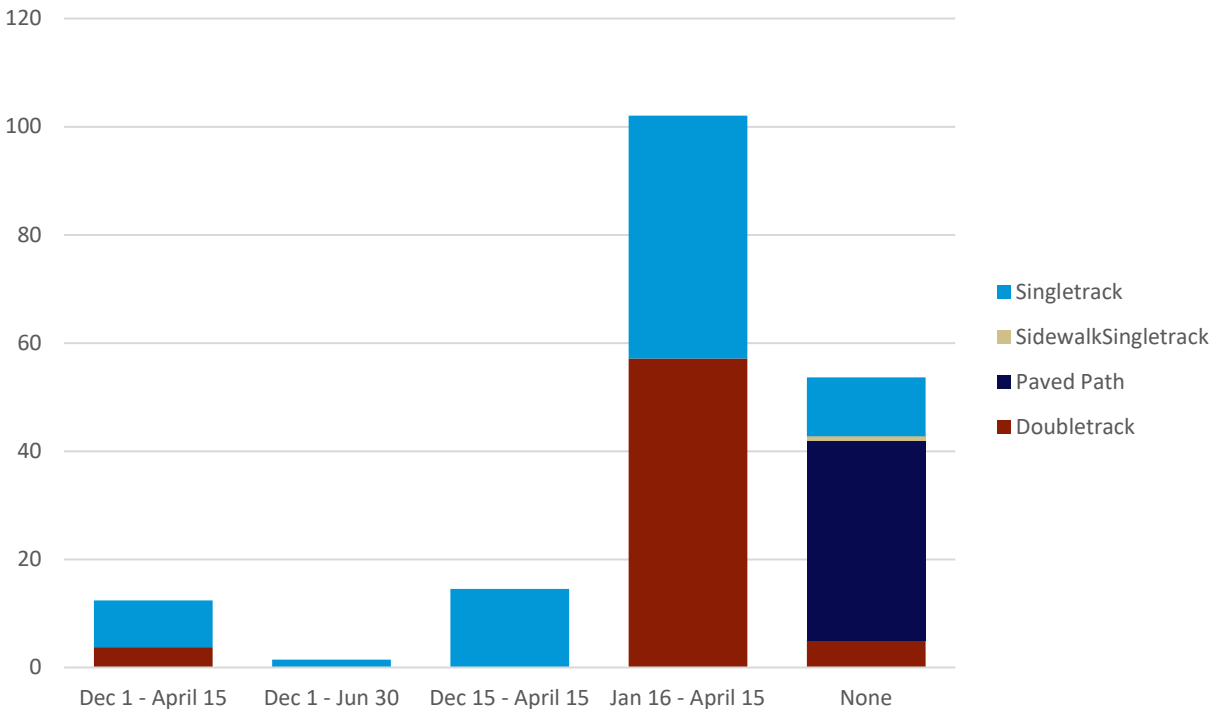
A vast majority of trails do not have or recommend a direction. Directionality is typically required or recommended when a trail's build may lead to high-speed riding on a singletrack and user conflict. Of singletrack trails, about 23% have a recommended or required direction.

Figure 12. Trail Mileage by Land Manager

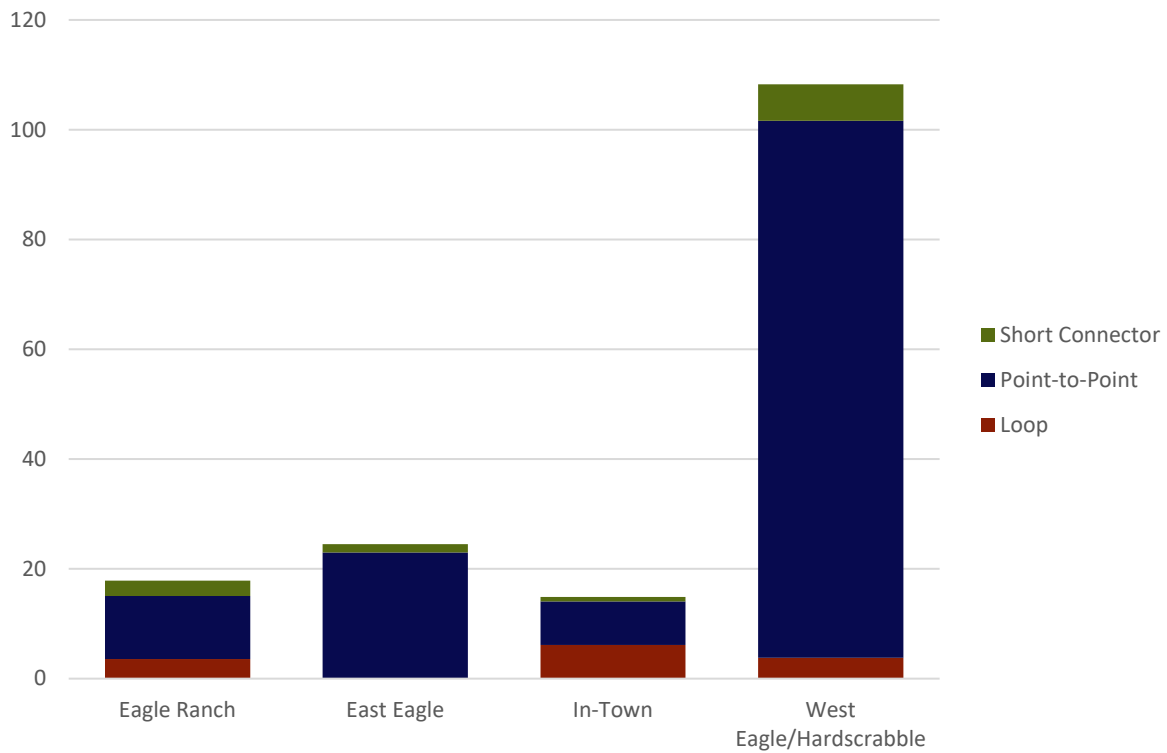


A majority of trail mileage is on surrounding BLM land. The Town itself manages approximately 30 miles of trails solely within the Town of Eagle, about half of which is paved and not managed by the Open Space and Trails Department. Several trails begin in the Town of Eagle before passing on to the BLM and must be co-managed. There are 4 such miles of those trails within the Town of Eagle, for 17.4 total natural surface trail miles within the Town of Eagle. Because some trails intersect lands managed by more than one entity, it is important that land managers work collaboratively to manage trails in this area.

Figure 13. Trail Mileage by Seasonal Closure and Trail Type



Trail closures are important to manage the natural resources and limit impacts to wildlife in and around Eagle. These vary by land manager. Many trails are closed to mechanized and motorized use during these closures, but not to foot or equestrian use. The majority of trails (including those in West Eagle/Hardscrabble) are closed between January 16 and April 15. Of the trails closed between January 16 and April 15, 12% are closed from Town of Eagle access points on December 15 but can be accessed through trailheads in Gypsum through January 16. Of trails without a closure, the vast majority are paved options, with about 10 miles of singletrack that remain open.

Figure 14. Trail Mileage by Function and Location

Most trails within the system are point-to-point trails. Short connectors are useful for trail navigation and connectivity, particularly between point-to-point trails, creating loops. Loops are generally desirable among trail users.

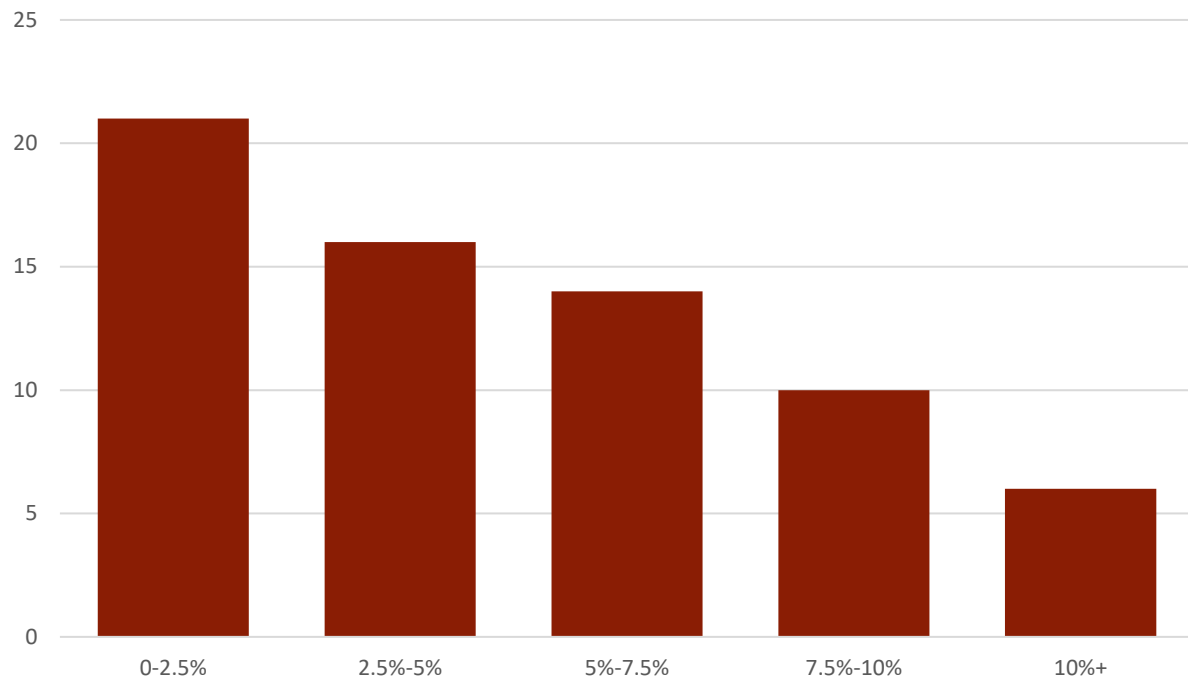
Figure 15. Average Trail Grade by Number of Trails

Figure 15 shows the number of trails within each average grade range (the net elevation gain of the trail over its length). The figure only includes trails with elevation data on Trailforks. Nearly 60% of all trails have a grade of 5% or lower, indicating that the trail system has a strong supply of gradual trails. An average grade above 7.5% trail indicates a very steep trail, with potential experience and trail sustainability concerns.

Maintenance

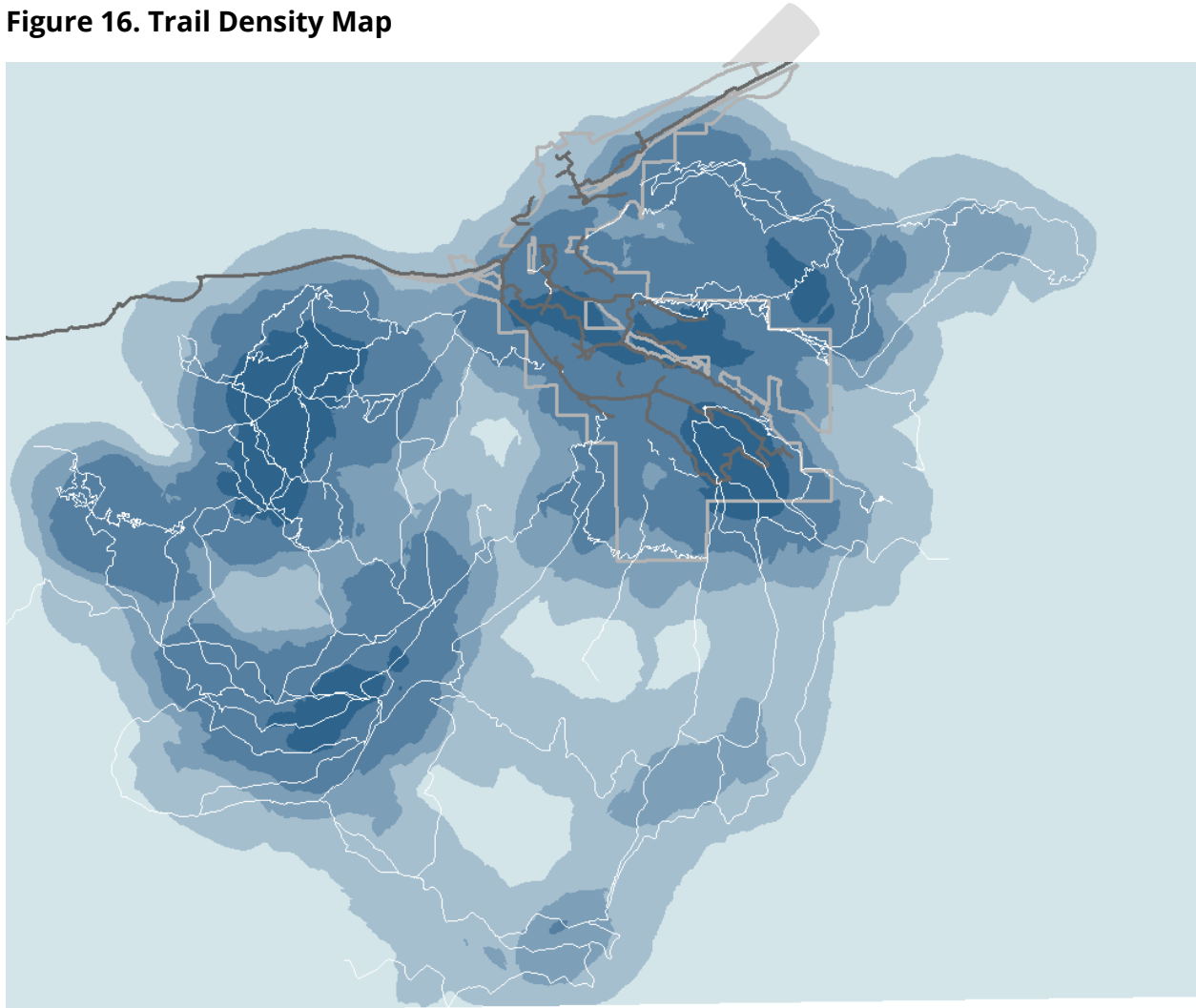
As described above, the trail system around Eagle is located on land managed by several cooperating agencies. Each agency manages trails on their respective land, however, many trails close to Eagle are adopted by groups who volunteer to take the lead on maintenance. The Town has assisted with maintenance responsibilities on BLM trails as well, as it provides a direct benefit to residents and visitors to Eagle. The soil found across the Eagle area can create challenges for maintenance.

Several trails within or partially within the Town of Eagle are in relatively good condition and have low maintenance needs. These trails include Wall, School House Rock, Boneyard, and Kill Bill. However, there are also certain trails that have high maintenance needs due to heavy use, erosion, drainage, or trail features that require upkeep such as berms. These trails include Dirt Surfer, Haymaker, Redneck Ridge, Pool-Ice Rink, Extra Credit, and Abrams Ridge. There are also several social trails throughout the trail network, some of which are located on sensitive wildlife habitat.

In addition to fulfilling maintenance needs, enforcement of proper trail use and trail closures is also necessary to reduce the impacts to the natural resources around Eagle, particularly through preventing erosion and the creation of social trails. While each landowner takes responsibility to enforce their respective trail rules, the Town also contracts with Animal Services to enforce responsible pet etiquette on trails and in open space.

Trail Density

Figure 16. Trail Density Map



This trail density map shows the relative density of the trail network, by number of trail miles within a 2-mile radius of a given point. The area in and around town and to the East is relatively high density. There are also several high density areas relatively far from Town.

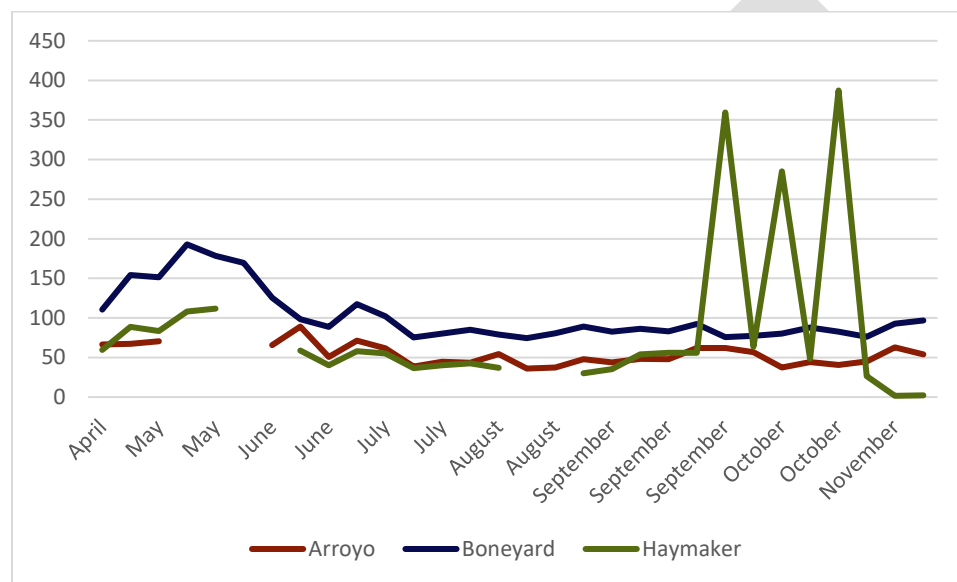
Trail Count Data

The Town has three trail counters in place on system trails: Boneyard, Haymaker, and 3rd Gulch (near the Arroyo Trailhead). These counters record each time a user passes through

but do not distinguish by type of user. The counters were placed shortly after the seasonal closure ended (mid-April) and at the time of this analysis, data was available through November 17, 2021. The counters were not in place prior to this year; however, some data exists from smaller prior visitation counts. These counters do not track the type of use (i.e., hiking, biking, equestrian, motorized). The counters likely do not capture all use of a given trail, given counter malfunctions or the location of the counter (i.e., for Haymaker, the counter is placed on the berms where not all users of the trail go).

The following figure shows average weekly totals at each of the counters.

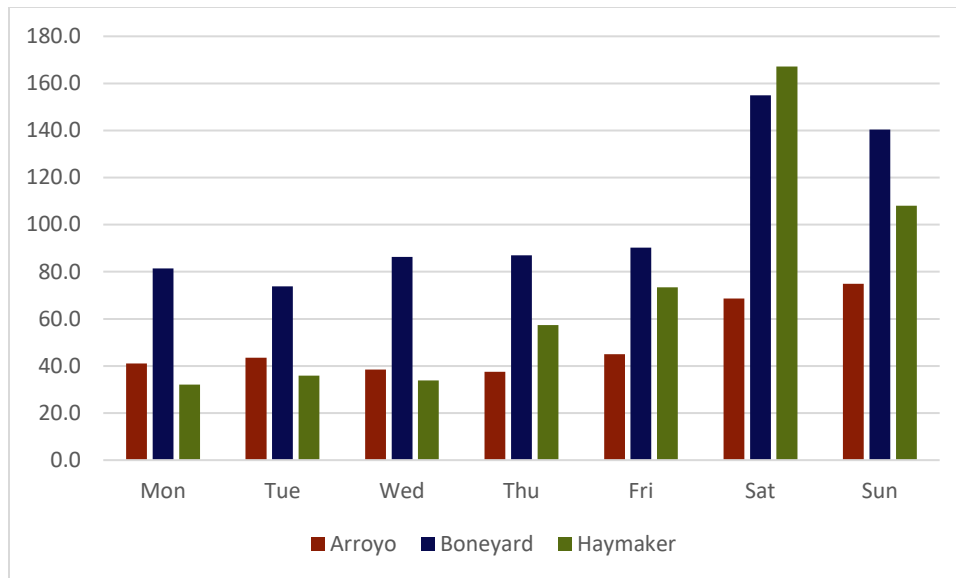
Figure 17. Average Weekly Counts



The Boneyard Trail sees the highest average use (105 users per day) compared to 54 on average at Arroyo and 82 at Haymaker. The weeks of the Colorado High School Cycling League races saw the highest use (359 and 285) with up to 1240 on a single race day during the first weekend. Across all trails, use is highest in the spring, before declining over the summer and picking up slightly in the fall. On Boneyard, use during the spring is about 150-200 riders per day on average, compared to 60-80 during the summer. Levels of use are more consistent on the other two trails.

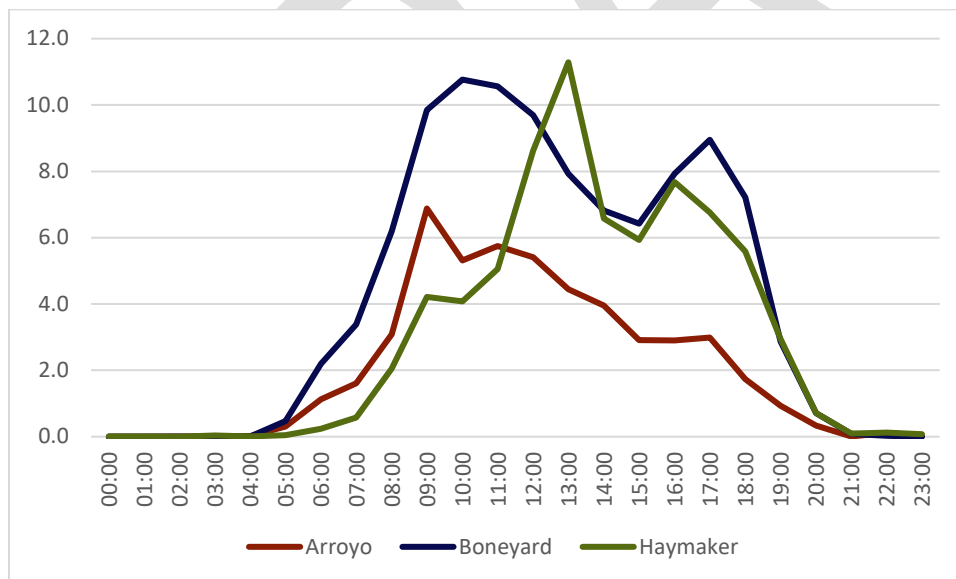
The trails see more use on the weekends than during the week. On Boneyard and Arroyo, the trails see approximately 60% more use on the average weekend day than weekday. On Haymaker, when the race weekends are not considered, use tends to be more even between weekdays and weekends.

Figure 18. Average Counts by Day of the Week



The temporal patterns throughout the day vary by trail. Boneyard sees high levels of use in the 9, 10, and 11 o'clock hours, declining through the middle of the day, before increasing to similar levels for the 5 o'clock and 6 o'clock hours. Haymaker has a mid-day peak, in the 12 and 1 o'clock hours, with a similar evening peak to Boneyard. Arroyo sees the highest levels of use in the 9 o'clock hour, before declining steadily through the rest of the day.

Figure 19. Average Hourly Counts



Combined, the trail counters recorded about 53,000 passes. The trail counters malfunctioned and did not record during a few weeks of the summer, and total annual counts are likely 15-25% higher.

Key Findings

- 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.
- The majority of trails are intermediate. Beginner and advanced trail mileage is relatively limited.
- The majority of trails within the Town boundary are paved paths.
- BLM is the primary 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.
- Most trails in the system have seasonal closures. The majority of trails that remain open year-round are paved paths, with the exception of East Eagle.
- A small proportion of trails have a required or recommended directionality. Recommending or requiring directionality can be an important tool to reduce user conflict and increasing the number of such trails will be explored further in this plan.
- There are few short connector and loop trails in the trail system. Short connectors and loop trails options can be desirable. At present, it may be challenging for users to figure out loop routes or remember all of the necessary connections to do so.
- While there are many miles of trails open to motorized use in West Eagle/Hardscrabble, there are limited access points to motorized opportunities in the trail system from the Town of Eagle. There are also limited access points with formalized amenities such as parking, kiosks, or restrooms for non-motorized users from Town. There are more access opportunities for motorized users on the west side of Hardscrabble, mostly from Gypsum.
- Trails with an average grade over 7.5% or sustained grades higher than 10% may need to be re-routed and/or closed. There are several such trails in the area that will be reviewed further during this process to determine the need.
- Trails see the highest level of use in the spring, and extremely high use over the fall race weekends. Boneyard sees higher use than Haymaker or 3rd Gulch trail. This information will be utilized in this planning process when exploring dispersing use and planning facilities and future maintenance needs.
- There are distinct areas with high trail density in West Eagle/Hardscrabble, far from Eagle access points into the system. In this process, it will be explored where to concentrate use and trail development going forward, based on existing densities, wildlife habitat, potential experience and access, among other factors.

APPENDIX C. DRAFT PLAN RESPONSE TO COMMENTS



MEMORANDUM

TO: Town of Eagle

FROM: Gabby Voeller, SE Group

DATE: April 27, 2022

RE: Draft Plan – Response to Comments

Draft Plan Feedback

The draft Open Space and Trails Plan was shared with the Open Space Recreation Advisory Committee (OSRAC) and members of the public in March 2022. OSRAC and other stakeholders provided comments during a meeting on March 3, 2022. The Town held a draft plan public meeting on March 15, 2022, where members of the public could learn about the plan's vision, goals, and recommendations and provide comments on a draft plan. Approximately 50 to 60 people were in attendance. A public comment period was open from March 16, 2022 to April 8, 2022. Members of the public and agencies could submit comments via an online portal, email, or mail to the Town. In total, 36 comments were received.

The response to the comments received, including revisions made to the draft plan as a result, are presented by the theme of the comment, rather than the individual comment. All individual comments are included as Attachment A. Verbal comments from the public meeting have been incorporated into the table below.

Several comments made during the OSRAC meeting were made prior to the presentation of the plan to the public. These include:

- Clarification of closures in Brush Creek Valley Ranch Open Space
- Removal of names of social trails
- Reordering of recommendations
- Acknowledging that the trail landscape is more sophisticated, and the nature of recommendations is different
- Downtown trail connectivity
- Policy around social trails

- Broadening language around partners
- Improving the graphics/organization of the priorities section
- Discussing sustainable trail building and limiting future maintenance load
- Speaking to a variety of fuels management strategies (not just prescribed burns)
- Wildlife-friendly trash receptacles
- Wetlands evaluation in Brush Creek

DRAFT

Theme	Comments	Response/Revision
Open Space Management	Several comments urge greater focus and substance around open space management in the plan. Some comments suggest working with volunteers on natural resource/restoration projects, open space project figures and better presentation of the physicality of these recommendations, and the development of the open space and trails plan as a separate document.	Additional emphasis has been placed on open space management. This includes additional recommendations around open space management, detail around existing open spaces, plan ordering, goal prioritization, incorporation of the 1996 open space values, and new habitat and open space opportunities figures. It is further noted that while better managing its open spaces is a high priority for the Town, the Town is working with a lack of information/recent studies. With additional information, the Town can have a better understanding of future open space management actions it can take. Recommendations to complete these types of studies have been included in the plan.
E-bikes	Residents shared both a desire to see e-bikes allowed and a desire to limit e-bikes on Eagle area trails (reasons included safety, accessibility, people powered trails, more use of currently quieter trails)	No changes were made as the plan at present recommends studying e-bike policies through a future process that engages the public.

River Park	Multiple residents mentioned that the plan does not discuss supporting connectivity to River Park	This opportunity was added to the trail recommendations list and map.
Dogs	Residents expressed a desire to see more opportunities for dogs, concerns about unleashed dogs and wildlife, enforcement, and a need for more unleashed areas, potential enforcement officer/ranger.	No changes were made as the plan at present recommends studying dog policies and enforcement going forward. These comments (and the range of ideas expressed) do support continuing to work through this issue beyond this planning process. An enforcement officer/ranger was mentioned under dog recommendations.
Paved Paths	Several comments expressed concerns about paved path maintenance and continued maintenance/access with HOA management, maintenance of paved paths of high importance	Maintenance and planning of paved paths do not fall under the purview of the Town Open Space and Trails Department and thus these revisions have not been incorporated.
Goals and Priorities	Multiple residents commented that the list of goals was lengthy and demonstrated no clear priorities. A few residents offered suggestions on a potential order.	The 17 goals were sorted into 6 primary goals, with 14 sub-goals. These goals were then ordered based on broader community sentiments expressed in the October visioning survey and open house and the Town's understanding of the importance of habitat and conservation in the Eagle area.
Trail Mileage	Comments received state the following: do not increase trails but focus on maintaining what we have,	The mileage of new trails recommended decreased slightly to remove two trails proposed in the

	prohibit all future trail development, develop significantly more new trails than are currently shown in the plan, and develop more new trails around 2nd/3rd gulch, and the trail system already has a “Disneyland” feel.	West Eagle ACEC. Otherwise, trail mileage was not adjusted. The recommended mileage was in line with the sentiments expressed by a majority of respondents in the October Open House and Survey (modest amount of new trails, improving system useability). However, it is further noted that the Town’s primary priorities are around open space management and trail maintenance, and new trail development is not the highest priority. No additional trails were added around 2nd and 3rd Gulch as these are located in or near the BLM-designated Area of Critical Environmental Concern.
East Eagle SRMA	Residents commented on the language around the area of East Eagle designated for future study and conservation/recreation. The concern was that this designation would contradict this area’s management as an SRMA by the BLM.	Label was updated to say “East Eagle Future Study Area for Habitat Conservation and Trails, Consistent with SRMA.”
Education	Several residents highlighted the importance of education (wildlife, etiquette, trail conditions, human impacts).	No change to the plan. The plan places a high emphasis on the need for education. The plan supports increasing communication with the community and visitors, improving signage and outreach, and continuing

		to partner with originations such as VVMTA that have a Wildlife Trail Ambassador Program.
Motorized Access	Comments included interest in better motorized access from Eagle (Hockett Gulch), concerns about level of motorized access to the system and on existing roads, desire to see Sawmill allow motorized access.	No Change to the plan. The Town worked closely with the BLM, CPW, motorized and non-motorized users groups to establish the current recommendations.
Residential development	Multiple comments expressed displeasure with new housing developments in Eagle and that the Town should only be allowed to do such developments if they can prove there is no meaningful impact on wildlife.	Housing and development are outside the scope of this plan and was not incorporated.
Wildlife Habitat	Several individuals commented on the importance of wildlife habitat and concern about declining population (particularly mule deer and elk habitat). Commentors urged the development of habitat maps for this plan and working with CPW (avoidance areas, seasonal timing)	Habitat maps have been included in this plan. CPW has been consulted in this planning process and a statement about the town's future evaluation of any trail in open space and the inclusion of CPW in that process has been added. Further, the plan provides support for establishing larger habitat maps at a County/ watershed level and the plan could be amended upon the completion of such plans. The Town of Eagle is too small of a location to produce meaningful and comprehensive wildlife and habitat maps, as most

		wildlife move regularly across Town boundaries.
View Corridors	Residents expressed concern about the lack of discussion/recommendations around important view corridors in this plan.	Additional information/recommendations has been added around view corridors from the 1996 plan
Trail Maintenance	Residents commented on the poor condition of second Gulch condition, overuse from UTVs, trying out a soil amendment/tackifier, better noting that trails are well maintained, and that the maintenance priority should be for pedestrians	The Town does not prioritize any user group for trail maintenance, however, the Town does partner with user group-oriented organizations that do trail maintenance work. A note was added about the existing level of maintenance of Town trails.
Trailheads and signage	A resident expressed a desire for more trailhead amenities (restrooms) and others noted that the signage of the system is poor.	No change to the plan. The plan proposes four new trailhead locations to accommodate new development in Town. Further, the plan recommends an evaluation and facelift for wayfinding signage.
Supporting BLM lands management	Residents commented on the recommendation around supporting the BLM in the management of the ACEC – that it should encompass all lands managed by the BLM in the area.	Supporting the BLM in the management of the SRMAs has been added to this recommendation.
Social trails	Residents noted that some social trails provide important opportunities, limit user conflict, and may be in an area where it's not particularly impactful and could formalize. Others expressed	As stated in the plan, the Town does not want the impression that social trails will be adopted or formalized into the system. Both the BLM and Town do not support this

	a desire for policing and heavy fines for creation of such trails and excitement that the Town was moving away from formalizing trails.	management strategy. The plan includes a high priority recommendation for social trails to be inventoried and decommissioned, particularly near the Eagle River and Brush Creek, Spud Cellar, Haymaker, and Charlie Brown.
Restoration planning and assessments	An entity commented that the Town should ensure that these efforts are holistic and speak to other management planning efforts.	This has been incorporated into the plan. An overarching theme of the plan is to integrate with existing plans and provide support where possible – and in particular, not to duplicate efforts or recommend actions that would negatively impact existing plans.
Horse access	Residents expressed concern about horse impact on trails particularly in areas with easily degraded soils	No Change to the plan. The Town and BLM trail system is a multi-use amenity with opportunities for all user groups.
Acquisitions	Eagle County recommended establishing conservation criteria around acquisitions, potentially in line with that of Eagle County	It has been clarified that the Town's priorities around acquisitions as stated in the plan do reflect criteria by which it would make decisions.
Recreational Tourism	Comments received include not wanting to be a biking destination, wanting to be a biking destination, and that promotion of the trails should be the lowest priority.	Promotion of the trails is not the responsibility of the Open Space and Trails department and no comments on the subject were included in the plan.

Spud Cellar OS	Comments were received about the type of trail and placing signage adjacent to private property	The type of trail would be determined through a future planning process, and it is Town policy to not place signage on private property. No changes were made to the plan.
Haymaker Trail	Residents commented on the social trails in the area (both allowing cut-offs and confusing to follow), keeping first two loops open for winter recreation, and concerns about that trail's location/elk habitat.	Signage/ Social Trails: One of the major goals of the plan is to inventory and decommission social trails and to improve signage throughout the trail system. No changes made. Big game: The plan recommends any new trail be subject to a seasonal wildlife closure determined with CPW. Existing seasonal trail closures will be determined in partnership with CPW and BLM. The plan will not make specific recommendations for closure changes on any specific trails.
Haymeadow Development	Residents expressed concerns about the development and wildlife habitat. Residents also noted future trails/trailheads in the approved development plans.	Residential development is outside the scope of this plan. The future trails/trailheads were noted on the maps and included in planning. Paved trails and specific trail alignments will be determined as the PUD is built out.
Seasonal Closures	A commentor recommended additional information about seasonal wildlife closures and that any trails located near mule deer/elk winter habitat be required to have a seasonal closure.	Additional information and a link to a seasonal closure map were added to the plan. Language was added that all new trails would be reviewed with CPW for potential wildlife closure.

Winter recreation	Residents commented on the importance of winter options, preserving or increasing access on haymaker, and a new winter option in Eagle Ranch.	No revisions were made to the plan as the plan recommends balancing recreation opportunities with consistency and the important and changing habitat needs of wildlife. These options would continue to be evaluated. Existing seasonal trail closures will be determined in partnership with CPW and BLM. The plan will not make specific recommendations for closure changes on any specific trails.
User groups	Residents commented on the over emphasis of the needs of mountain bikers in the plan.	A wide variety of user groups have been involved with the planning process since the beginning, and the plan addresses the needs of these many user groups. Roundtable meetings were held with representatives of all user groups. Biking is a significant demand on the system and therefore, considerations for biking are noted in the recreation management section of the plan. These improvements and maintenance items will benefit more than just one user group.
Past Planning Efforts	A resident commented that additional past planning efforts need to be taken into account in the planning process.	The “Relationships to Other Plans” section has been expanded to include these planning documents, and background and recommendations were revised accordingly as well.

ADA Accessibility	A resident stated that goals and recommendations around inclusive trails should include ADA accessibility.	The goals and recommendations were revised accordingly. All paved paths and the crusher fine trail are currently ADA accessible and the Town intends to continue expanding these options moving forward.
Forest Service	The Forest Service noted that they could be included in additional locations as a partner in this plan.	The Forest Service was further incorporated, however, limited by the fact that land that the agency manages is not within the project study area.
Camping	Residents expressed concern about in-town camping options around potential fires.	Language was added around mitigating wildfire risk should a campground be developed.

DRAFT



4/7/2022

Brian Lieberman
Town of Eagle Open Space and Trails Manager

RE: Town of Eagle Open Space and Trails Master Plan

Thank you for providing Eagle County Open Space (ECOS) the opportunity to provide comments on the draft of the Town of Eagle Open Space and Trails Master Plan. As neighboring land managers and partners in conservation and recreation, ECOS believes a successful open space and trails network requires thoughtful coordination and communication with all stakeholders. We appreciate being included in the process and look forward to the continued partnership.

The draft plan aims to provide guidance on “how to improve and enhance the trail system as well as stewardship strategies for open space management.” We believe this approach is appropriate, but overall, encourage more substance and content related to habitat improvements and stewardship of non-recreation resources.

As an example, in Chapter 2, *Conservation and Wildlife* (pg. 17) the plan “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.” We encourage these efforts to also guide the planning of restoration, habitat enhancement projects, and partnership opportunities as well.

Similarly, we would encourage the plan to provide more equitable recommendations between the suggested stewardship strategies and enhancing the trail network. For example, *Recommendation M10* (chapter 3, pg. 4) suggests supporting specific volunteer projects on trails. While we wholly support this recommendation, we suggest codifying support for restoration or natural resource based projects or partners as well.

We applaud the coordination with existing plans as this is necessary for successful implementation. Of the 3 plans cited, 2 speak to the trail systems and recreational amenities. ECOS has worked with consultants to provide “Restoration Opportunities Reports” and encourage similar projects to better coordinate this draft plan with region-wide restoration opportunities or habitat conservation projects.

With a newly turned focus towards acquisitions, ECOS recommends developing a set of conservation criteria or specific conservation values that can serve as a guide for evaluating

potential acquisitions. ECOS is happy to share the program's conservation criteria with the Town's Open Space and Trails program. Alignment of these priorities will enable a frictionless partnership when pursuing projects together. For example, one of ECOS' conservation criteria is "*PHYSICAL AND VISUAL BUFFERS*- Promote community separation and distinction, and provide separation between developed areas and sensitive lands."

In sum, ECOS thinks this draft plan is a huge step forward in the right direction. However, a more balanced approach between recreation and habitat improvement or conservation priorities and recommendations may be more impactful. Whereas we understand the increasing recreational pressures on our community will not be waning anytime soon, plans such as this are the one opportunity to give standing to the natural resources and local ecology that make the Town of Eagle such a great asset to the greater Eagle County community.

Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or comments you may have.

Peter Suneson

Outreach and Stewardship Coordinator
Eagle County Open Space
peter.suneson@eaglecounty.us
(o) 970-328-8637
(c) 970-401-1054



COLORADO

Parks and Wildlife

Department of Natural Resources

Glenwood Springs Service Center
0088 Wildlife Way
Glenwood Springs, CO 81601
P 970.947.2920 | F 970-947-2936

April 25, 2022

Brian Lieberman
Open Space and Trails Manager
Town of Eagle

RE: Town of Eagle Open Space Master Plan Draft

Mr. Lieberman,

Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) has reviewed the Town of Eagle Open Space Master Plan Draft and appreciates the opportunity to provide the following additional comments. For Reference, the chapters of the Draft plan are indicated before each comment.

- (1-1) Recommend that the purpose of the Open Space program is included in the introduction so public can immediately relate to the goals of the Town of Eagle Open Space. "The purpose is to preserve and protect natural open space areas and wildlife habitat while also providing outdoor recreation opportunities for Eagle's citizens and visitors"
- (2-4 to 2-21) Seasonal Winter Closures: CPW recommends that any trails that go through or in the general vicinity of mapped winter range for elk or deer will have a winter closure from December 1 to April 15.
 - As Winter Closures serve an important role in protecting wintering wildlife, CPW recommends creating a short chapter to address the importance and rationale of winter closures where the dates and locations are found in one location within the Plan.
- (3-10) P2: Have all Seasonal Wildlife Closures utilize the same dates throughout Town to increase consistency and decrease confusion by Open Space users.



- (2-15) Make clear that the link included in the Plan for wildlife habitats prepared by the Eagle Community Wildlife Roundtable may quickly become outdated and should not be used for official reference. Current, up to date data on these habitats shall be obtained directly from local CPW staff.
- (3-3) Regarding OS13 and OS14 - Dog/ Wildlife Conflicts: Include information on the Town's current contract with Eagle County Animal control to be the main enforcement when dealing with dog control policies. As more enforcement is deemed necessary, a direct reference to the need of a full time Town of Eagle Open Space Ranger should be included in this section.
- (3-1) Omit "Wildlife" from the title "Wildlife Enforcement Officer" in OS2 recommendation. Change to either Town Code Enforcement Officer or Open Space Ranger as CPW will continue to be the lead Agency to enforce State Wildlife Law under Title 33, Colorado Revised Statutes. Continue to explore the inclusion of wildlife closure enforcement in Town Code Enforcement officer duties or a dedicated open space ranger.
- (3-5) Change wording under section T-1, second paragraph: "...specifically around an accessible trail system WHILE CONTINUING TO conserve habitat, and the Town's capacity and priorities."
- (3-10) SF11: Change "wildlife-friendly trash receptacles" to Approved Bear-Resistant Containers
- Are all existing and approved trails on the map? Add an additional map(s) to include all current and approved trails within the Town of Eagle Open Space to use as reference when navigating TABLE 5 (3-1) Trail Recommendations. It appears that several existing trails are missing from the map on "Figure 2: Town Trails and Open Space Map" and "Figure X: Recommendations Map."
- (Map section): Add a detailed map of existing Seasonal Closures within the map section.
- Reference the recent Eagle County Wildlife, Recreation, and Land Use Survey (Michael Quartuch) within the beginning chapters of the Plan to illustrate the public's overwhelming support to protect local wildlife within areas where recreation exists. This will help support the Plan's chapters and methods in protecting Wildlife.

CPW appreciates the Town of Eagle Open Space's dedication to creating such a well-written and thorough Draft of the Open Space and Trails Master Plan, and for providing CPW an opportunity to provide comments. If further clarification or discussion is needed on any of the above comments, please contact CPW District Wildlife Manager, Brian Wodrich at Brian.Wodrich@state.CO.US or by phone at 970-948-9166.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brian Wodrich". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Brian" and last name "Wodrich" clearly distinguishable.

Brian Wodrich

District Wildlife Manager

Colorado Parks and Wildlife

Prusse, Jennifer - FS <jennifer.l.prusse@usda.gov>

Good Afternoon,

My comments include three general recommendations:

- 1) Coordinate with CPW DWM Brian Wodrich to get recommendations on trail-avoidance areas, determine where new trails would not pose adverse cumulative effects, and develop seasonal timing restrictions if needed (tied to an enforcement plan).
- 2) Develop maps to show where the proposed trails are to share with the public, as well as where they are in relation to important ungulate habitats, which can be found here:

[https://hub.arcgis.com/datasets/190573c5aba643a0bc058e6f7f0510b7_Activity_Mapping_Data_\(arcgis.com\)](https://hub.arcgis.com/datasets/190573c5aba643a0bc058e6f7f0510b7_Activity_Mapping_Data_(arcgis.com))

Or, to see key habitat types specific to Eagle County:

<https://www.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=a425288bd373418f974269c75ce5ce87&extent=-12009865.7211%2C4746998.8943%2C-11716347.5325%2C4880916.5679%2C102100ion>

- 3) Consult this document as well in your planning efforts for additional management recommendations:

[Sustaining wildlife with recreation on public lands: a synthesis of research findings, management practices, and research needs | Treeseearch \(usda.gov\)](#)

Thanks for the opportunity to comment,



Jen Prusse
Wildlife Biologist
She/Her/Hers

Forest Service
White River National Forest,
Eagle-Holy Cross Ranger District

Desk: 970-827-5160
Cell: 970-471-8894
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Minturn, CO 81645
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Caring for the land and serving people

April 5, 2022

To: Town of Eagle Open Space
Email: openspace@townofeagle.org
P. O. Box 609
Eagle, CO 81631

Dear Town of Eagle Open Space,

Well, for once I don't have a joke- because it is NO JOKE what's happened to our local elk herd.

When I first moved to Eagle in 2008, the elk herd filled my driveway. And my yard. I used to see them all winter long, pretty much every day; they made elk beds in my yard and snacked on my yard. This winter I didn't see them much. Where did they go? These past few years I've seen them less and less. I hear it's because of the new mountain biking trail which was built a few years ago (Haymaker Trail) because it runs right through elk resting area.

I also hear there are many more trails proposed, adding in trail connections, and more use of the Open Space, in your new Open Space Master Plan Proposal. I am writing to say I am **not** in favor of any new uses of our Open Space, because it has affected the elk too much already. I would like you to consider closing all the trails during the winter to give our elk the chance to come back, and to not add any new uses (e-bikes, camping, fire rings, and outfitter companies who would profit on using up the Open Space).

I wish I had a joke about this, but it is too serious to joke about. I'm 85 years old and have seen some pretty special places; all over the World, and I chose to live in Eagle. But it is changing, with all this new development, and using up the wild lands. It's not the same place. When you take away the wildlife it isn't special anymore.

dk

HTC Comments

1. It feels that the plan emphasizes that the trails in Eagle are not maintained. HTC feels that they put a lot of effort into trail maintenance and overall, the trails are well maintained.
 - a. We need to define what standard or level of care we need trails to be maintained to.
 - b. The plan should acknowledge that soils in this area are a significant challenge.
Conditions on trails reflect soil challenges.
 - c. Perhaps some rewording on page 11?
2. In figures, how can we represent the efforts that need to occur on the open space side? Most people look at figures and figures are heavy on trail expansion.
3. Rename East Eagle polygon: **“East Eagle Future Study Area for Habitat Conservation and Trails, consistent SRMA”**
4. Should we include something in the plan that explains that the river park is not included in this study?



Brian Lieberman
Open Space and Trails Manager
1050 Chambers Ave
Eagle, CO 81631

March 14, 2022

Dear Brian,

Thank you for all your work putting together the Town of Eagle Open Space Master Plan. We are proud to be your partner and are excited to keep Eagle on the map as a great place to live and recreate. We would like to take the opportunity to add additional comments on the Master Plan regarding the East Eagle SRMA and Winter Recreation.

We have expressed concern about the omission of trails beyond Sasquatch within the original East Eagle SRMA. We feel that adding a polygon over this area indicating "future trail area for consideration" is necessary. We agree that it is a lower priority for trail development considering wildlife concerns and that trails in this area need to follow the county's extended closures. However, to omit it entirely could indicate to the BLM that we aren't interested in developing trails in this area. Rather, we would like to keep the option open, defaulting to the original SRMA, and keep monitoring this area as things change and develop over the next ~10 years.

We feel that officially designating sacrificial winter recreation areas in the master plan supports protecting more critical wildlife habitats and closures. When Haymaker was developed it was designated by the town for winter recreation. Since then, the Elk like to winter in the third and fourth loops. We all agreed to close down that area and have effectively enforced those closures for the last two years. We proposed officially designating the first and second loops open for winter recreation giving people the ability to choose where they recreate depending on where the wildlife is on any given day. We will continue to support winter recreation with education about wintering wildlife and the appropriate etiquette.

Furthermore, we would like the town to consider opening a small section of the Eagle Ranch loops on Town of Eagle land for winter recreation. The trails are close to the building density, and as the town continues to grow, if we have choices for people to recreate, we can better avoid the wildlife and give people much-needed space in the winter.

Thank you for your consideration of these two matters. We look forward to finalizing the plan and continuing to support your efforts.

Sincerely,

Robert Tadlock, President

Charlie Brown, Vice President

Laura Turitz, Treasurer

Nicky Asselin, Secretary

Hardscrabble Trails Coalition

www.hardscrabbletrailscoalition.org

April 6, 2022

Dear Mr. Turnipseed, Council Members and Members of Open Space,

I am concerned about the uses of our open space for 2 reasons. First, the shrinking of our elk herds and second the slightly shady way the mountain bikers have manipulated the process by which mountain bike trails are approved.

The thriving and surviving of our elk herds is the responsibility of our local citizenship. It is our duty to care for and preserve our elk for a balanced eco system and for our posterity. Colorado is natural habitat for elk and we must ensure their presence in our state.

Secondly, the methods of data collection and procedures used at the Open Space meeting on March 15 were not transparent. In this current climate of political corruption, public officials should make every effort to hear all sides, to be honest and to be unbiased. I was not at the meeting, because I did not know about it. I obtained this information from an attendee. The following lists some examples of manipulation of the public meeting:

1. Notice of the December meeting was suppressed.
2. The meeting was held during Covid cautionary time.
3. During the meeting, public comment was limited to 15 minutes total, for all comments.
4. Questioning by the SE group was ambiguous and difficult to understand.
5. Opposition views were cut short, passed over, or ignored.
6. No protection of wildlife was proposed in the expansion of the trails.

The purpose of the Open Space program is to preserve and protect natural open space areas and wildlife habitat while also providing outdoor recreation opportunities for Eagle's citizens and visitors. Decimating the elk herd so that a group of people can compete with each other and feel good about themselves is wrong. Current bike trails should be used for that. Please stop the mountain bike trail expansion. Please do not sacrifice our state's natural resources for someone's ego.

RE: Comments on Revision to TOE Open Space and Trails Master Plan

Brian Lieberman, OS Director

Scott Turnipseed, Mayor

Tom Gosiorowski, Public Works Director

Brian, Scott, Tom,

Thank you for extending the comment period following the recent publication of the OSTMP. I understand quite well how different a process such as the one that you are currently leading can appear quite differently from a staff point of view than from a public POV, so first of all, thank you for putting this important revision forward. The part of this process comprised of public surveys, focus groups, and “open houses” that are heavily facilitated polls may be useful to staff and the consultant in getting a feel for public sentiment to shape the draft document, but the process doesn’t really begin for most of the seriously interested public until there is a draft document to review.

For many of us who’ve utilized such documents as the OS plan going back to 1996 and various Comp plans which have been adopted since, these value-laden plans provide general insights that have been invaluable in shaping our reviews of proposed site specific developments such as Adams Rib, Eagle Ranch, Haymeadow among others. What Eagle is today south of old town is largely defined by the town’s vision of open space that was written into previous plans. This is the primary purpose of my comments. Secondly, though I apologize for not naming each of them correctly, I think the document is missing some key document references and other historical context.

You will also have to forgive that I have an excess of institutional memory related to the Town, having been on the board for a decade starting in 1998, including Mayor when we had public hearings to determine the location and uses of each access point from Eagle Ranch, and much later serving as Town Manager. That doesn’t give me any special standing, but it does explain why certain things may jump off the page to me, and why some of my comments may appear edgy. No offence intended.

General Comments:

- Having seen the goals in the open house and then reading them again in the document, I agree with Jamie Harrison’s comment at the meeting. The vision is far too broad and there are far too many goals. They say so much that they say nothing at all. Some group—the town board likely-- needs to do some difficult prioritization, either eliminating many goals, prioritizing the goals, or creating a more pointed framework with a hierarchy. Jamie stated his priorities in the meeting. Mine **in descending order** would be:
 - Preserving and enhancing natural habitats, specifically for wildlife
 - Preserving and enhancing view corridors
 - Protecting critical habitat and wildlife corridors seasonally
 - Quality and maintenance of the “in town” paved and crusher fine paths networks that extend from public ROW onto town Parks and Open Space

- Quality and maintenance of singletrack paths that extend from town to federal lands, descending priority for this would be
 - Careful management of and useful signage at access points
 - first for pedestrians,
 - second for non-mechanized, non-motorized bikes,
 - third for mechanized or motorized use
- Supporting facilities, oversight and upkeep of adjacent federal lands including policing of and heavy fines for creation and use of social trails
- Creation of approved singletrack trails
- Creation of better access points, play areas and parking for motorized users in the Eagle-Gypsum Hardscrabble area and closure of dirt bike access on roads through town
- Dogs – people are far too obsessed with leashing of dogs, we need more off leash areas for the thousands of dog owners. BTW, there is no mention of the dog park which uses a major chunk of important open space.
- Promotion of Town trails and open space for visitors
- Note: Clearly others would rank these differently, but without some kind of priority ranking, I believe that with so many goals, this plan as currently structures could be read for anyone to do anything, and would provide little guidance when decisionmakers are faced with actual proposals for use or land use.
- The Open Space Plan and Trails Master Plan should not be combined. This document reads almost exclusively as a trails plan advising adjacent land managers of public input from the town. That is useful, but it obscures the use of a plan that defines uses of actual Open Spaces that the town fought to acquire, defended in court to protect and seems to forget all of the reasons the town had for doing so. The top five priorities listed above why we have these open spaces in the first place. Pages 30-37 belong in a Trails Plan as to pages 49-55. Would like to see as much close in mapping of in town OS and uses as effort is put into these singletrack trails maps which are great for a Trails Plan.
- Not sure why the pagination doesn't continue through the entire document. Below in cases I refer to the pagination in the PDF.

Specific Comments:

1:Page 2: Relationship to Other Plans

It is a clue what is absent in the plan and so far represented by the process that not mentioned in this are:

- The Town Comprehensive Plan and previous OS Plans
 - OS Plan informs the land use plan for review of development large and small
 - 1996 OS Plan defined need for view corridors that informed existence of Brush Creek Park/OS, setback of Haymeadow from Brush Creek Road as well as what became the Brush Creek Open Space
 - It defined the value of density close to town and growing “from the inside out” to lesser densities further from Highway 6
- The Eagle Ranch Wildlife Management Plan

- explains purpose of wildlife closures
- explains design of wildlife corridors including golf course design
- talks about the fishery, Abrams and Brush Creek
- The Eagle River Corridor Plan (discusses OS at Fairgrounds, the Villas and up the Eagle River)
- Town and Mtn Rec Recreation Surveys – going back as far as 2004 which was the first I recall. **In each survey, walking was the top recreational priority for most residents** and still is. Walking use by residents far exceeds biking or mountain biking, which is not how the plan reads at all. This plan reads like an IMBA pamphlet.

1: Pages 3-4, Vision and Goals – see previous comments

1: Pages 5-6, Not sure why the process needs to be written into the plan. It belongs in a staff memo. Here it reads as defensive.

2: Page 1: the intro is telling here of my previous points. **The only feature mentioned in the existing conditions intro that is actually on town OS is the fish pond.** All else is on town park land, dedicated recreation lands, County lands, and federal lands beyond. Is this plan concerned with the actual management of actual town owned open space? Again, these other things may be important, but they should not dominate an OS plan.

2: pages 1-2 Land Management

It is great to mention the adopted management documents of adjacent lands, but what is important to this document would be how those would inform management back onto the adjacent town managed open spaces. For instance, on BCVR&OS paragraph, it would be useful to note that Haymeadow has a wildlife corridor adjacent to this county OS that was designed to be combined with a similar corridor on that property should it ever be developed. Since it will not be developed, what does this mean to Haymeadow OS? Should it go away since adjacent land is now protected? Is it still good to not have Haymeadow develop right to the BCOS fence line? This document would be a good place to discuss such things.

Also related to Haymeadow OS, the plan mentions the Haymaker trail quite a bit. Of equal or greater interest is the connecting points that were designed for future pedestrian circulation from the Willow Corridor in the center of the Haymeadow property that will connect across Brush Creek road to the Eagle Ranch crusher fine path. Again, lots of input from bikers, lots of attached maps showing bike trails on BLM, not much mappage on actual town OS from the perspective of thousands of daily, year-round walkers. The Haymeadow ADA should be cited.

2: pages 3-7: Excellent work. Should be adopted in a trails plan and forwarded to BLM land managers. If the two plans are to live together, they need some clear separations starting with the goals which would read quite differently if they were to be written specifically to pertain to the section beginning on 2-8.

2: Page 8-13

RMR OS– should note that the Eagle River Corridor Plan informs this future OS, and might reiterate some of what values will be used in determining uses along that key riparian reach –

light fishing access with managed points, type of path/use and distance from high water mark, location of Eagle River Trail on property, etc

Abrams Creek OS— detail here is excellent and should inform level of detail on other properties

Eagle Ranch OS—again, listing the trails that take off, barely skims the surface of what should be said about these lands which make up 2/3 of the town OS. Almost nothing is said about the Brush Creek Reach of OS, I suppose because there is no single track there.

Haymeadow OS—again, all singletrack. It is incorrect to say there is no seasonal closure on Haymaker Trail. The second loop is closed seasonally for wildlife.

Haymeadow School/Rec- shouldn't this be informed by the Mountain Rec master plan, not by the town's OS plan? Yes there is to be a trailhead there...but this is the only purview of an OS/Trails plan for this property.

Spud Cellar – OK detail here. There is mention of the approved singletrack connection which has never been installed just above the backyards to connect from the Pool and Ice paved path to the existing rec path constructed by the Terrace. This entire corridor separating the Terrace from Upper Kaibab is critical for wildlife. The town should also prioritize repair of the Terrace paved rec path once it becomes part of the larger rec path system when connected.

Other OS parcels mentioned—the primary comments on each seem to be about the recreation potential, not highlighting in much detail if at all if there were other key values and purposes. Some were acquired specifically to block development and for non-use. Again, these read like a trails plan, not an OS plan.

Eagle River OS: Again—completely misses work done previously in River Corridor plan when it should be reinforcing that work. Town also has looked to acquire more OS on the East side of the River on private property. Might be some mention of why that may still be of interest without mentioning specific properties. When river park development happens, a path along the East side of the river from Brush Creek to Eby Creek Road would be an amazing amenity.

Brush Creek OS Extension: good, but neglects to mention that there are also two parcels on the East side of the Creek that abut Brush Creek Road and Haymeadow, which have connection possibilities for the crusher fine path. Doesn't speak to trails on the uphill side of the far end of the Eagle Ranch road which connect up to the Highlands and back over properties to above the fifth (I think) tee box. Pedestrian only. This is some key OS circulation for some walkers and a few bikers.

2:page 14. Love the mention of weeds and pests. Town should be more active about this and this should also note a need for coordination with Eagle Ranch Golf Course and adjacent vacant lands in ER with regard to pests and weeds.

Riparian, Wetland and Water Management: again, after spending tens of thousands of dollars to improve the stream banks along Brush Creek to improve the fishery, there is almost no mention at all about the importance of this habitat or use beside the childrens pond which is artificial. Also not mentioned is the Brush Creek Management Plan which is a critical document that informs the flow, stream management and use of water rights. I don't think town has

adopted a Surface Water Management plan, but this would be the place to recommend that. It would have been of use in informing how to handle development in the lower reaches of Brush Creek.

2: page 16 – OK there is one sentence here about stream health and fish

2: page 18 – has Eagle Adopted any kind of Wildfire management document? I know it was much discussed and in the Design Guidelines when the Highlands were added to Eagle Ranch. This would be a good place to recommend that. What plan guided the fuels reduction work in the Brush Creek OS corridor by Greater Eagle Fire last year? Are we going to do fuel loads management on all OS? This would be an important place to guide that. Touched upon in 3-2.

Things I did not see in the plan that ought to be covered:

1. Wildlife fence installed by town to fence-out Hardscrabble grazing area
2. View Corridors
3. Stream setbacks
4. Ridgeline protection – one of the past Comp or OS plans addressed this
5. Uses at the Fairgrounds to inform County Plan, how it should interrelate and also connect to OS trails/ paths plan
6. Hockett Gulch
7. Winter uses on Highlands OS which are not covered by the previous Eagle Ranch Wildlife Master Plan—would be great to have snowshoe loop up Third back to Arroyo trailhead
8. East Eagle generally
9. Generally being useful to inform review of future proposed developments
10. Lack of fence-out to BLM Grazing area above Haymeadow – not a problem today, but shouldn't be at expense of taxpayers after being amended out of requirement for Haymeadow. Colorado is a fence out state, not a fence-in state by law.
11. Closure of town roads to dirt bikes for access to trailheads—this is absolutely ruining the quality of life because of the constant sound pollution in Eagle Ranch, and I suspect elsewhere as well.

Generally, the Recommendations section is well done. Probably would want more emphasis on replacing the many aging signs on town OS that have never been replaced, and pulling up the kiosks which were improperly installed directly in ground without concrete, gravel or metal separating dirt from wood. They will all rot and fall over eventually if not fixed. I happen to know who installed them so poorly, but will not mention herein.

Apologies for any offence given through my vehemence or tone.

Thank you

It was brought to my attention that at the last open space and trails plan meeting the topic of e-bikes and motorized vehicles on our local trails was discussed. I would like to share my thoughts with you in hopes that it might be of value.

I'm an avid mountain biker and ride the trails often. As expected there has been a large amount of growth and with that more traffic which is great! However that does bring up a few concerns for me especially regarding e-bikes and motorized vehicles. The following are the issues I would like addressed before considering allowing e-bikes on singletrack.

- Safety for riders and pets
- wildlife disruption and injury
- trail conditions and destruction on non designated singletrack land
- Enforcement of rules and regulations

The topic of safety is my biggest concern. There have been increasing encounters with dogs off leash, hikers, mountain bikers and wildlife. With the introduction of e-bikes comes more traffic, greater speed and weight. I have witnessed ebikers going uphill on some of the most popular downhill enduro trails even when it's not currently allowed. Keep in mind that this is a far greater hazard than a non-motirzed or battery powered bicycle. e-bikes can easily carry a rider uphill at speeds greater than 30mph and downhill riders the same at 30 mph. A collision at those speeds is equivalent to hitting a parked vehicle or wall at highway speeds of 60mph, this puts us in the category of **not only injury but very likely death.**

While it may be possible to designate more trails downhill only or introduce a speed limit the problem we have is that we currently have very poor enforcement. We have had encounters with dogs chasing wildlife despite clear signs that pets must be leashed and still I see dogs off leash regularly. Without addressing our current issues I see it as highly irresponsible to allow faster vehicles and e-bikes on non-motorized singletrack. I predict if it's allowed now it will sooner or later be reconsidered when someone is seriously injured or possibly killed. I urge you to please consider this before a tragedy occurs and then having to roll back. I would prefer to see trails that are not on singletrack such as fire roads (we have so many miles of them) and motorized vehicles trails designated for ebiker traffic instead of on singletrack for the reasons mentioned above.

Feel free to contact me if you have any questions, thank you for your time.

4/4/2022

I am a resident of the Town of Eagle and a senior citizen long time mountain bike rider who just does not have the strength or strong heart that I once had when I was 30 years old.

Please allow Electric assist bikes on Eagle Trails. As you know you still have to pedal on an E-Bike. An Electric assist bike does not have a throttle, they just give you more power every time you pedal to make up for any lack of strength or physical fitness you may have. A E-bike does not erode the trails more than a regular Mountain bike. They do not make the trails Unsafe. A rider can turn the electric assist on and off on their handle bars. They do not make any noise or take away from others experience in any way.

I cannot think of a single valid reason for prohibiting Electric Assist Bikes on the Eagle Trail system. Can you come up with one?

The typical Electric assist Mountain bike rider is someone who wants to enjoy the trails but lacks the physical strength or does not have a strong enough heart to make it up all the hills without a little help. Most riders will turn the assist on and off to conserve the battery and only use the pedal assist on hills they need help on.

Not allowing E-bikes is discriminating against Seniors and others who don't have the physical ability to ride up steep trails without their heart rates getting to a dangerous point. Because of these physical limitations Many seniors or other people with disabilities cannot enjoy the beautiful Eagle Trails from a bike.

Instead the Mountain bike trails in Eagle are being set aside for only the physically fit and young riders with strong hearts. Yes there are some seniors who can still ride straight up the side of a mountain, but not many.

Electric assist bikes are here to stay and you should review your policy. Your policy of non motorized vehicles should be revised to **NO COMBUSTION ENGINES** or you should specifically exclude electric pedal assist bikes from the non motorized policy.

Part of the Eagle Trails Plan is to be more inclusive to everyone. Everyone in the Town of Eagle should be able to enjoy the trail system. This current policy is not inclusive. It is the opposite.

I love Eagle and would not personally consider a Lawsuit against Eagle for Discrimination. But someone will one day. You can be sure that in this world we live in that someone will hire an attorney and bring a law suit against Eagle under the **Americans With Disabilities Act** for discriminating against those who don't have the physical fitness to ride the trails in Eagle without Electric assist bikes. This lawsuit will be triggered when and if someone is riding and enjoying an Eagle Trail and they are cited for riding an Electric Assist Bike.

Are you willing to go to Court to defend this policy? Ultimately it will cost Eagle a lot of money and you would lose.

Therefore you cannot enforce this policy. It is a bad idea to set policies that you cannot enforce.

Please reconsider the policy and allow Electric pedal assist bikes on the Eagle Trail System.

Maybe you could change the policy to say --- **Permitted Electric Assist Bikes Are Allowed or Electric Assist Bikes Require a Permit from the Town of Eagle.** You could then have a process for a permit where the bike is inspected to make sure it doesn't make noise and it is truly pedal assist and not some form of a electric motorcycle. You then could verify that the owner has physical limitations that require electric assist. You could charge a fee for it and add another form of revenue. Everyone wins!

Thank You for what you are doing to preserve and build on the Eagle Trail System.

EVL:

- Would
- the Town prefer to install the Connector Trail as singletrack or paved path? Additional planning needed as noted in the draft OSTMP (Open Space and Trails Master Plan).
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- Will
- the Town consider signage on private property adjacent to Spud Cellar (Roberts Ranch) to help users know where it is permissible to recreate?
-

TOWN Response:

The master plan will not identify the type of trail desired by the Town. I see that decision being determined if and when the Town considers moving forward with this project. The decision would include stakeholder and public comments.

The Town does not typically sign private property. I know this is a special circumstance, so perhaps together we could come up with a proposal. I do not see this being included in the master plan though, as it is more of a smaller management objective.

RE: PUBLIC INPUT REGARDING DRAFT OST PLAN

Dear Brian:

In case my hardcopy letter is not received by Open Space in time, I am sending it to you here via email as a backup.

I am opposed to any further trails expansion, trails construction and any new uses of our Open Space. In addition, I propose a halt to any further planning and proposals regarding our Open Space. I believe the current trails have already severely impacted our wildlife and wild habitat at crisis levels, and our wildlife needs a breather.

The Draft OST Plan reflects what Mountain Bikers want, **not what the general Eagle Public wants.**

- 52% of attendees to the Visioning Open House in December self-identified as Mountain Bikers, and

- 42% of Oct/Nov Survey respondents self-identified as Mountain Bikers.

I never received notice for the Survey, or the December meeting; and nobody I know heard about these either. Two weeks before Christmas (and during a Covid cautionary time) was a bad time to conduct an Open House to get a representational idea of what all Eagle residents want. The survey should've been more circulated; 234 survey responses does not represent what the general Eagle population of 6,356 wants.

In addition, it is questionable whether SE Group's methods of data collection and interpretation is accurate, for these reasons:

1. Open Space's March 15 meeting was touted as a public input/engagement opportunity, however when citizens tried commenting during SE Group's presentation, SE said to wait til the end for public input. SE suddenly cut the meeting short by half an hour & only allowed 15 minutes for input, which wasn't enough time.
2. During the 15 minutes of public input, I did not observe anyone taking minutes or notes for oppositional input, it appeared only notes supporting SE's proposal were recorded, such as someone's suggestion for making trails ADA-compliant.
3. The vast majority of attendees' input was QUESTIONING any further trails expansion and use, due to the public's concerns about wildlife and wildlife habitat already being seriously and negatively impacted from the current Trails; they were **not** in support of SE Group's proposals.
4. During the presentation SE Group asked railroading questions which appeared designed to attempt to gain public consensus to approve up to 18 different statements at a time. Several people questioned the unusually-worded statement requests, as many canceled each other out or were diametrically opposed. Also, SE claimed wifi wasn't working so the voting was not confidential.
5. In the public input, people providing support of SE's proposals were encouraged to speak more (for example, a person describing how their EBikes wouldn't damage the trails). Anyone seeming in opposition was barely acknowledged, no SE commentary given, and SE moderator Gabby Voeller quickly went on to another raised hand. One citizen, Sheela Loudermilk,

apparently went over her time (but there was not a timer) and Ms. Voeller silenced her by loudly berating her, and angrily refusing to comment even when Ms. Loudermilk politely asked for discussion. **Ms. Voeller's behavior was unprofessional at this meeting and this fostered a negative, threatening environment where people were intimidated to speak up after her outburst.**

6. Three different individuals (including former Eagle Mayor Jon Stavney) all commented that the wording of the questions was bizarre. One person suggested we reply to each individual statement (instead of 11-18 at a time), because one couldn't possibly be in total agreement with so many different statements. It appeared to many of us the questions were designed to give blanket approval to the entire proposal, which does not make a fair public input process.

7. There was such a blizzard of proposed items, one person asked for a halt on anything new; instead that a policy be written that one of these proposed ideas at a time could be tried (for example, not allowing camping, fire rings, horse trailriding and professional outfitters all at the same time). This way it could first be properly assessed whether the proposed utilization was beneficial or detrimental to wildlife and wildlife habitat.

8. Several people asked why we would build more trails/add more utilizations when we already have serious problems with the current trails, specifically the decimation of our local elk herd. I've watched it diminish from 550+ to approx 70 elk since Haymaker Trail opened. Three months ago a worrisome development began- the Elk dispersed into small pods of 3-7, and are being picked off by cars and predators; in fact there were three elk killed in one day on the same exact road spot last month.

9. Several citizens asked why SE did not include any ideas for protecting wildlife, as nothing specific was proposed in this draft plan. SE claimed they needed more data to submit ideas for this; however as you know it is too late for that, the majority of the elk herd is already dead. I have an inquiry in to State Patrol Public Affairs to learn roadkill data from this year, last year & previous years to learn if there has been an increase, so this data point can be considered. It is a well-researched fact the elk are spooked just by the presence of a dog, a fast-moving bike or trailrunner, and this had led to them breaking off from their safe herd, becoming displaced, and being vulnerable to vehicles and predators. Haymaker Trail runs right through historic migrational elk birthing area, and I believe this is why our local herd has diminished so severely in very recent years.

10. Dog control was barely mentioned in the proposal. It is a fact that 87% of dogs on Haymaker Trail run off-leash, according to Trail Cams. Dogs and off-leash dogs are a primary reason for the decimation of our elk herd. Yet there was nothing mentioned for stopping this problem; in fact it is also common knowledge that during 2020 Eagle Ranch association asked code enforcers to stop writing dog tickets.

11. It is stated: *The purpose of the Open Space program is to preserve and protect natural open space areas and wildlife habitat while also providing outdoor recreation opportunities for Eagle's citizens and visitors.* How are we preserving and protecting natural open space and wildlife habitat by adding more trails, camping, fire rings, EBikes and professional outfitters? Is Open space remaining true to its vision statement which lists preserving/protecting open space & wildlife habitat FIRST?

There is a very large amount of published data on how drastically our local Eagle Elk herd has suffered from humans and dogs on the current trails, dating back to 1986; with all this factual data why is it being considered to build more trails and further utilize our Open Space?

I would like to suggest TOE Open Space consider **extending public input through July 1, 2022** to see what the majority of Eagle residents really want for their Open Space, **to use a different method of data collection than SE Group**, and to **close Haymaker Trail immediately**, to give our starving elk in their third trimester a chance to survive.

Thank you for your consideration.

Hello,

I just wanted to say thank you for starting a plan to make Eagle an even better place by preserving wildlife and having access to BLM and National forest.

I've been in this valley since 93 and have been a homeowner in Eagle since 99. I know it's impossible to keep everyone happy, so I'm going to keep it short and sweet.

Our wildlife need to be put first! Second....by giving ebikes or any other form of motorized vehicles easier access to west Eagle or to our non motorized single track is a huge mistake!! They already ride every single trail except Abrams ridge and School House rocks. There is unfortunately no enforcement up there and these people don't care. Some actually are a part of VVMTA and the mountain bike scene, but know that most people can't see who they are when they're fully suited up in their Moto gear. I won't throw them under the bus just yet.

If our trails were only for non motorized users like hikers, bikers and horses....we still would need a ton of education and maintenance. Our population is growing so fast our trails cannot keep up now. I just see adding more ebikes and Moto's were screwed! And not to mention it's a huge safety issue that I've personally experienced.

I've been riding and hiking all over this beautiful state and by far we have more erosion and destruction from motorized vehicles on our trails then anywhere in the state.

Thanks for your time

Hello town of Eagle representatives,

I first want to thank the Town for the significant effort that has gone into creating a new trails master plan. I really appreciate the effort to include community members and local trails focused groups. I have a few comments I wanted to share with you regarding OHV recommendations and funding:

1. I know most of the plan is focused on Town and BLM land, but I would like to see Sawmill added to the list of recommendations for opening to motorcycles. Even if the Town does not plan to fund or work in that area, it is part of our overall network and I would like to see support from the Town to reopen this route to motorcycles. As it is, this trail does not get much use from other user groups and is a great way to move OHV traffic out of town. Furthermore, motorcycles keep the trail from becoming too overgrown to ride. Please consider adding this to your recommendations for opening to motorcycles.

2. Second, under funding, I think you should think about applying for CPW OHV grants to accomplish OHV related work. RMSR successfully applied for a grant in 2017 and has applied for a grant this year and will likely receive some funding. Town of Avon also applied for an OHV grant this year and is likely to receive some funding. Writing a grant is something RMSR would gladly help with and we feel with the Town behind a project, the chances of getting funds from this pool are high.

Thanks a lot for your attention. Feel free to reply with any questions/concerns.

To: Town of Eagle Open Space

From:

Date: April 8, 2022

Re: Draft Eagle Open Space and Trails Plan (2022)

Comment:

Page: 3-2

Section: OS5 – Wetlands

Comment: It would be beneficial if a Brush Creek wetlands assessment could be aligned with other Brush Creek management plans or water quality assessments.

Page: 3-3

Section: OS – 8 Social Trail Management

Comment: There are several social or game trails along the haymaker loop that people appear to use to shorten loops and routes which reduce conflict between different trail users. i.e. hikers, dog walker, and mountain bikers. The use of trails in this area appears to align with Opportunities and Analysis bullets Directionality, and Trail Function from page 2-5. Prior to closing a social trail, it would be good to evaluate if it is bringing benefit to open space users with no harm created, or if an alternative formal trail should be created.

Page 3 – 4

Section OS16 – Restoration near Brush Creek and Eagle River

Comment: Potentially align Restoration plans with other entities to holistically and cooperatively approach water quality, usage, and stream health.

Page 3 – 4

Section AE5 – Creative User Etiquette Signage

Comment: In strong support of trail etiquette signs to improve user experience. Consider trail conditions etiquette signs, i.e. Only use trail if frozen or dry.

Page 3 – 6

Section T5 – Support Horse Access

Statement: Support improved horse access to BLM land from Town and work to limit conflict with other user groups. Explore opportunities to provide horse trailer parking and equestrian access from the Haymaker trailhead to BLM lands.

Comment: Horse use on trails tends to degrade the trail quality of other users quite rapidly. This is especially prevalent in areas of poor and non-cohesive soil. Consider providing horse only trails if and where possible.

Page 3 – 7

Trail Maintenance

Comment: Can the Town consider a soil amendment such as a tackifier to improve soil and trail quality?

Page 3 – 10

P1 – E-Bikes

Comment: In support of continuing to evaluate the e-bike policies.

Thank you and please feel free to contact me at if you have questions or need additional clarification on my comments

Sincerely,

To: Town Council of Eagle

Re: Open Space Plan

I have attended 2 of the meetings regarding the Open Space Plan. They have not been widely advertised in my opinion. There seems to be a majority of bicyclists represented at the meetings. They are not the only ones that should be driving our open space plans. These plans affect my family. Our home backs up to TOE open space. We are also frequent users of the trails beyond the TOE open space. From April 16th until December 15th, we use the unpaved trails 5 to 7 times a week.

I slogged through the 55 page PDF of the Open Space Plan. One thing I saw that was disturbing was that "wildlife should be considered". Protecting our wildlife should be a **priority**, not just a consideration. I counted 19 proposed new unpaved trails and 1 paved. The length of **each** of the proposed new trails was not exceedingly long but added together, it is **too much**. The proposed paved path is over 4 miles long. Why do we need 20 new trails? I do not think we do at this time. As I mentioned, I am a frequent trail user and the trails I use are not crowded. I am all for maintaining and improving our current trail system but an additional 20 trails is just too many. Our Elk population is in crisis. Any new disturbance could push the herd over the edge and we could lose them forever. The Deer are also in decline. Adding and developing are not always the best course of action. "If you build it, they will come.", a line from Field of Dreams, seems to me to be true. So **don't** build it. We do not need "them" to come. I am all for recreational opportunities for our town but we do not need to make this a biking destination for Coloradans or out of staters. There is already so much construction going on in our town with much more already approved. If we don't curb our desire to build houses, trails, etc, the Town of Eagle is going to find itself without one of its most precious resources; our wildlife.

I want to hear a wildlife expert speak at a town meeting about the effect these newly proposed trails would have on the Elk, Deer, Bobcats, etc.

Thank you for your time.

Hello,

I would like to share my thoughts on the recent discussion regarding the use of trails. I've been an avid mountain biker and trail user in our county for over 25 years. I appreciate the development and maintenance of all trails around.

The recent meeting and the discussion on allowing moto and e-bikes on our mtb/hiking trails are not making me happy for several reasons.

Most of the time, our trails are in pristine conditions. The whole county is growing and it seems like there are more tourists in town than ever before. I agree that this is great for local businesses and it helps our economy to remain strong. But more usage and higher traffic on our trails will cause issues.

1. Safety

As of now, most of the trail use remains in the lower parts of Eagle. It is easy to get to and you don't need to be super fit to ride most of these trails. It's a different story with trails like Sawmill, Mike Nights Out, etc.

If you allow e-bikes and moto to ride on these trails, not only these trails will require more maintenance, but

we will have issues with safety. Almost nobody rides these trails uphill. Every now and then there is that guy,

that's either lost or someone that's looking for an extra challenge, but generally (unofficially) these are considered downhill trails.

I've personally run into e-bikers and moto guys on these two (and many other) trails, even when it is not allowed.

With an engine or motor on their bikes they tend to climb these trails uphill. Most of the times you can hear the moto

coming, but not an e-bike. This will result in crashes and issues between all parties. Now, it's very peaceful at the higher

elevations. That won't be the case if e-bikes and motos are allowed up there. It will encourage more people to ride

these trails and the amount of accidents will increase.

2. Environmental/Habitat impact

As mentioned earlier, you can hear the moto's most of the time from a mile away. Don't you worry what's it going

to do with our elk, deer and other animals in the area? Same with e-bikes. If allowed, there will be so many more

users up there. Was there a study done on the impact? What are the grounds that the authorities will consider to make

a decision whether to allow or not?

Thank you,

Comments submitted through online platform

- I read the article in the Vail Daily this morning about the Haymeadow development and after this winter, I am very concerned that such a large number of homes and people is going to harm our Elk population. The elk this winter have spent a tremendous amount of time in the Haymeadow development area and across the road by the homes and horses along Brush Creek. They are often resting or sleeping on the area to be developed. It does not seem like the plans are leaving enough undisturbed areas for the herd. I hope someone is still taking a look into this issue.
- "Thanks for all your hard work and the meeting last week. People had troubles voting, because the sets of bullet points for goals and recommendations encompassed both recreation and conservation, which can conflict with each other. It would help to break all categories into 2 parts, those that address recreation and those that address conservation. People would then be able to vote more accurately on each set of bullet points.
- Also, I know prior to the meeting there was a lot of discussion about dogs, but very little was resolved. Eagle is a dog town, and to not have accommodations for them is a mistake. For off-leash opportunities a dog park and a trail along highway 6 is not enough. Eagle people are busy and into fitness. They like to exercise with their dogs. This is one reason dogs are off-leash and poop is everywhere. I have ideas and want to offer time to help create options.
- "The paved bike paths in Homeowner Association areas (ownership) are slightly referenced as ""partnerships with HOA's"", which is vague and leaves areas of problems to come in the future. These HOA's may have obligation(s) to keep the paths public, but no obligation to keep them paved or in good paved condition. The ever increasing use of paths through these neighborhoods creates increasing maintenance obligations on these HOA's as well as greater impact on the homes along the paths. The trail system's dependence on these (to move people from one area to another to use the trail system) may fail when the HOA's decide to let the path(s) become unpaved natural surface trails.
- There should be some documented arrangement with the HOA's to share the maintenance costs to incentivize the HOA paths remaining available to the trail system, or just acquire the paths away from their HOA ownership and control."
- Thank you for sharing this draft. I personally appreciate the action to remove noxious weeds/thistles from our lands before they take over!
- "I want to thank ToE and Brian Lieberman for this fantastic effort. The leadership in the work and collection of public input is how we shape our community and surrounding jurisdictions to best meet community wants and needs. I am a member and supporter of VVMTA and HTC as they have crafted MTB trails that make our community great. I hope we continue to develop more MTB trails with interesting features to keep our youth engaged in the sport I love and connect the trails we have today. Additionally, I want to urge we continue the policy of predominantly ""People Powered Trails"" as E-bikes have their place but not at the expense of the vast majority of non-motorized users. Thank you, "
- "The maps in plan that were emailed were difficult to understand. Today, I met with Brian Lieberman who did a wonderful job of clarifying the maps and vision for Eagle. Thank You Brian!
- I saw the new signage for the trailheads which should help those of us who use the trails and should hopefully prevent inappropriate use of them in the off season so that our wildlife is not disturbed. The signs will also help us all know which trails are hiking only. The Arroyo parking lot

Comments submitted through online platform

being closed from December 15 to April 15 should also prevent trail usage. The hope is that people who want to hike the tarred trails will use the pocket park slots and I'm not sure how that can be indicated. Thank You for sharing the information that you have gathered.

- Highest priority should be protection of wildlife, particularly Deer and Elk populations. They were here long before we were and deserve our best efforts to just "let them be". Wildlife education concerning Winter closures is essential and should be backed up with enforcement. Concentration should be on improving upon what we have, not building more trails. Mountain biker preferences for the trail system are no more important than any other users preferences. Education on Trail Etiquette is needed. As a hiker, I always get off the trail to allow bikers to pass easily but I am tired of having to literally jump off the trails when mountain bikers are speeding around blind turns.
- Would be wonderful if there could be more direct access to the motorized Hardscrabble single track system just west of town somewhere within the Town of Eagle. There's easy access by MTB, but in order to get to the trail systems just west of town, you have to enter from Spring Creek (Buckhorn), or go all the way out to 2nd Gulch or Hardscrabble. Motorized access via Hockett Gulch or Abrams would make it far more accessible directly from town.
- Given the explosion both in eBike sales and the number of new residents in the town, I can't believe there is a debate as to allowing class I eBikes access to all of the town trails. I live in the eagle ranch area and the vast majority of my neighbors, 50 years and older, want eBike access to the mtb trail system. Older residents and residents with medical issues are prevented from trail access under the current rules. The ski resorts now allow eBike access, why not the town of eagle?
- Hi, 2 years ago, after looking for 10 years, we built our dream home in the Highlands and are 100% against any further trail or open space development. The reason we built here was for the abundance of wildlife, the relative solitude and lack of development. Now it seems everything in Eagle and Eagle Ranch is moving forward as fast as possible. Please stop. Don't turn this beautiful unspoiled area into the next recreational hot spot in the valley. I oppose any new development and will vote against any official that supports it. Thank you.
- Please improve the access to the motorized and E-bike access to the Hardscrabble - approved motorized (e-bike) trails from Eagle. Spring Creek is excessively far to travel on an E-bike to gain legal access to legal trails. I see little to no information about E-bike access and many users are unclear where they may legally ride.
- "The open space and trails master plan requires a balanced approach and for all of us to be responsible stewards of the iconic landscape and animals that live therein. One glaring example where humans are not being responsible is the destruction of our elk herd. The Town of Eagle has the data. The human threat to the elk herd includes interaction with cars, unleashed dogs and anything, including fast moving bicycles and people, that triggers the 'flight' response. The 'flight' response can cause an animal to burn valuable fat which is necessary to survive the winter, and stress that can disrupt the birthing process and survival of the species. I have personally witnessed runners and bicyclists on trails with their dogs running next to them, and unleashed dogs chasing elk while the owners laughed. To save the elk, we have to limit access on all current elk trails and halt trail expansion... All because of those who are not responsible and are often belligerent when confronted."

Comments submitted through online platform

- "I appreciate the vision toward expanding a sustainable trail network that takes wildlife into account. I would like to see more single track than seems to be prioritized; there is a real opportunity for Eagle to position itself in a similar position to mtb destinations in Colorado like Salida, Crested Butte, and Fruita, which would drive local business considerably! I would also like to see more consideration given to dog owners in the area, there are currently few good options for off-leash travel for our four-legged friends. Boulder OSMP has an excellent model for how high-use areas with considerable wildlife populations can still allow significant, legally sanctioned opportunities for pet-owners to have their dogs off-leash within their trail system. Current language in the draft plan includes minimal language regarding dogs; dog ownership seems to be high and tensions will continue to increase with minimal good options/systems for dog owners to have their dogs off-leash."
- "I realize it's already a goal but continue to have trails for all user groups. Trails that are heavily used by mountain bikers are sometimes stressful for hikers, runners, dog walkers, and/or families. Not all trail users know good etiquette. To some, faster equals more rights. The goal should be to promote a healthy life style for all. There are some trails with limited sight distance and a history of crashes. It may be time to consider directional trails. When balancing recreation and wildlife, consider all wildlife big and small. Not just the large visible animals."
- "Something needs to be done on second gulch to make it a sustainable path for all users. As of now, turbocharged RAZORS can rip up second gulch to get to Hardscrabble and in doing so have ruined that section for any other user. What once was a nice double track option to get to third gulch has now become so deep with ruts and moondust that even dirt bikes have a hard time getting up or down the road. Getting up on a bicycle is impossible most of the season due to these conditions, which is a shame as it was such a nice alternative to third gulch and allowed access into some very beautiful areas in our valley. I'm not sure that the BLM/town of eagle team saw the rise of the UTV's and how they will impact are fragile trail system if left unchecked. If you've ever ran into a UTV running 50mph up second gulch you'll immediately appreciate the safety aspect of this equation as well. 100+ HP 4x4's shouldn't be on this section of trail."
- The plan looks AMAZING! Only thing I would love to see are more trailheads / parking lots and more facilities such as restrooms throughout the trail system. Additional trails leading off of second or third gulch could be nice too (even further than the LOV connection trails). All in all FANTASTIC work done by you all on this project!!
- "The plan does not mention the River Park at all or trail connectivity to the River Park. As one of Eagle's biggest new amenities it seems like it should be included in the master plan. The plans recommendation (#12) is to support the BLM in their management of the ACEC's and allowing Herrington's Penstemon to thrive. I believe the plan should state the the town will support the BLM in all of their management objectives and also specifically in the SRMA's and allow recreation to thrive where it has been designated. The plan mentions trail maintenance numerous times but never mentions all the volunteer partner organizations the town has to help with maintenance. I think it's a great idea for the town to focus on land that is in their jurisdiction, partner with other land managers to further their already determined objectives and work on eduction and signage so everyone knows the rules and can enjoy their outdoor experience"