ERO

Consultants in Natural Resources and the Environment

# Stratton Open Space Management Plan

Prepared for—

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Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Services
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**Plan Preparers**

This management plan was completed as a collaborative effort between Colorado Springs Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Services Department, Colorado Springs Utilities, Palmer Land Trust, the ERO consulting team, and the Colorado Springs community. The ERO consulting team consisted of:

- ERO Resources Corporation: Project lead, natural resources
- Tapis Associates: Trails and recreation
- Kezziah-Watkins: Public process and facilitation

This plan was adopted by the City of Colorado Springs Parks and Recreation Advisory Board on _____, 2016.

# Summary

Stratton Open Space is a 306.5 acre property at the southwest edge of Colorado Springs, at the transition from residential neighborhoods to the east to expansive public lands to the west, including North Cheyenne Cañon Park and Pike National Forest. The property contains a diverse mosaic of ecological communities, including grasslands, shrublands, and forests which provide habitat for a variety of wildlife species. The property is also a recreational asset, with a variety of trails that provide access for outdoor recreation and serves as a gateway to a regional system of trails.

This Management Plan is intended to provide the City of Colorado Springs Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Department with a framework for management and stewardship of the property over the next five years. This Management Plan was completed based on existing documentation, field assessments, stakeholder meetings, and community input. This plan provides broad guidance and specific resource management strategies to achieve the following goals:

1. **Vegetation** – Protect and enhance the quality, diversity, and health of native plant communities
2. **Wildlife** – Protect and enhance wildlife habitat on the property
3. **Trails and Facilities** – Manage trails and visitor use facilities to provide high-quality recreational experiences while protecting natural resource values
4. **Visitor Use** – Provide visitor use experiences and opportunities that are enjoyable, safe, and appropriate while minimizing resource impacts and user conflicts.

The *Introduction* provides a background on the property, the process, and relevant planning and policy guidance. The *Existing Conditions* section outlines the natural resources, visitor uses and amenities, and management context of the property. The *Resource Management Plan* section provides general guidance on several key issues, including: noxious weed management, forest management, vegetation management, trail and access management, dog management, South Suburban Reservoir access, and special events on the property. It outlines the recommended timing and priority of specific management strategies. This section also outlines recommended resource monitoring actions.

This Management Plan not only satisfies the requirements of the conservation easement on the property, but also provides a blueprint for proactive management of open space resources over the next five years.

*Big bluestem along the Upper Meadows Loop Trail*

# Introduction

## Location and Background

Stratton Open Space consists of 306.5 acres located on the western edge of Colorado Springs. The property is located about 2.5 miles southwest of downtown Colorado Springs, north of Cheyenne Boulevard and west of Cresta Road, and directly abuts North Cheyenne Cañon Park to the west (Figure 1). The property contains a biologically diverse mosaic of plant communities at the foothills transitional zone, is an important community buffer, and is a gateway for outdoor recreational opportunities.

Beginning in the early 1990s, local citizens began working to protect the property as open space. In 1998, the City of Colorado Springs completed the purchase of Stratton Open Space for $5.9 million. Most of the funding for the purchase came from the then recently-passed (1997) Trails, Open Space, and Parks (TOPS) sales tax in Colorado Springs. The TOPS program contributed $4.4 million, with the remainder of the purchase price coming from the Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) Trust Fund ($500,000), private donations, and assistance from The Trust for Public Land. As a requirement of the GOCO funding, a conservation easement was placed on the property. The easement is held by the Palmer Land Trust, a private land conservation organization. Stratton Open Space is owned by the City of Colorado Springs and is managed by the City's Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Services Department.

The City of Colorado Springs owns and Colorado Springs Utilities (CSU) manages land that is immediately adjacent to Stratton Open Space on the south side and contains two water supply reservoirs – South Suburban Reservoir and Gold Camp Reservoir - and associated infrastructure. Outside of the fenced reservoir and facility areas, the CSU-managed land is indistinguishable from Stratton Open Space, and several trails and visitor use areas cross between the properties.

## Vision and Goals

### Vision Statement

Stratton Open Space contains a diverse mosaic of ecological communities at the transition between urban neighborhoods and foothills canyons. The property serves as an important community buffer and aesthetic resource for the city, while also providing visitors with an easily accessible gateway for outdoor recreation. The property is highly valued by the community for its ecological, scenic, and recreational amenities, and is managed to maintain the highest levels of quality and stewardship to maintain these standards.

### Goals

The following goals for Stratton Open Space provide a philosophical foundation on which to base the implementation of this Management Plan. These broad goals provide the basis for management actions related to specific resources.

5. **Vegetation** – Protect and enhance the quality, diversity, and health of native plant communities
6. **Wildlife** – Protect and enhance wildlife habitat on the property
7. **Trails and Facilities** – Manage trails and visitor use facilities to provide high-quality recreation experiences while protecting natural resource values
8. **Visitor Use** – Provide visitor use experiences and opportunities that are enjoyable, safe, and appropriate while minimizing resource impacts and user conflicts.

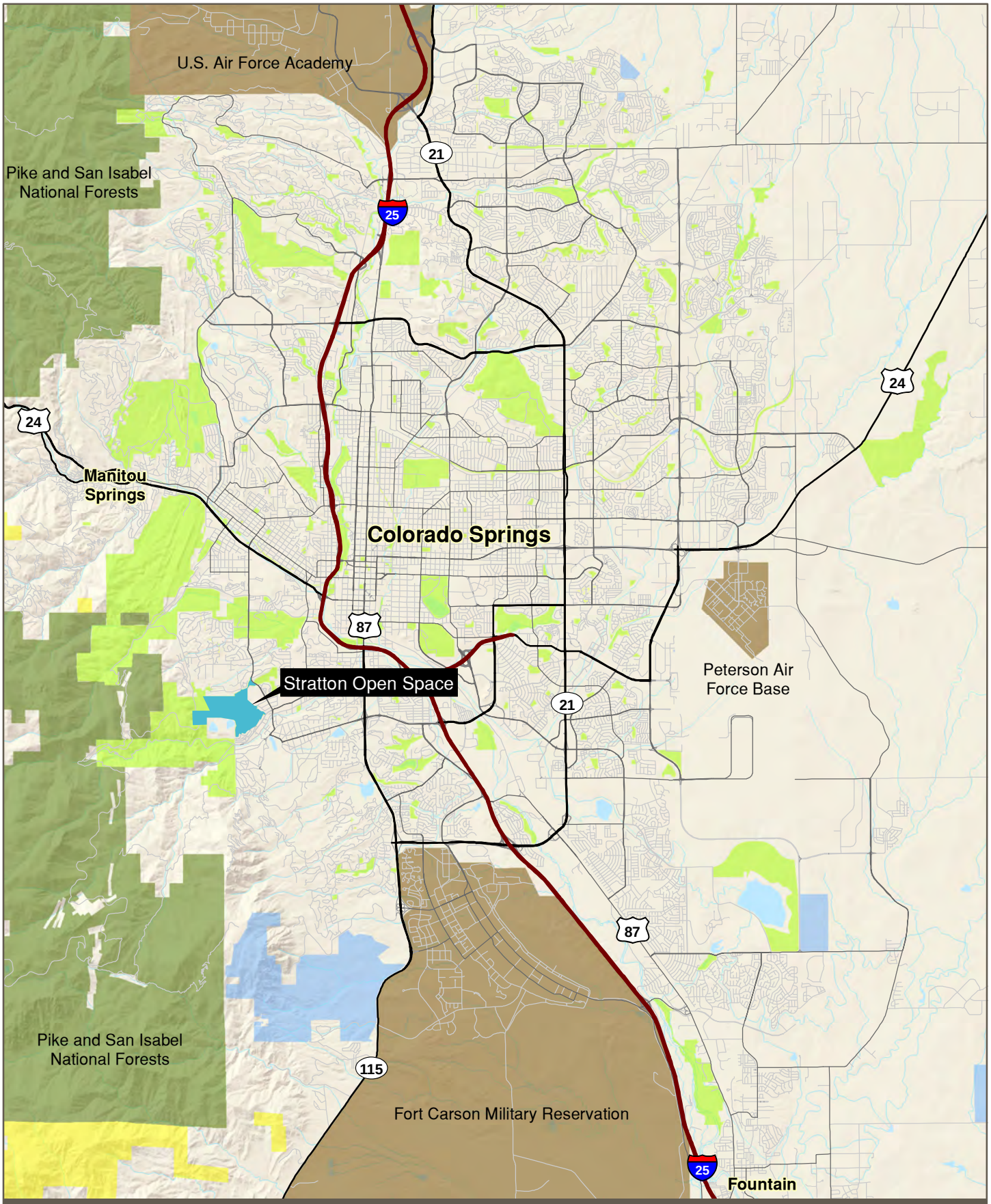


Figure 1. Location

- Parks and Open Space
- Department of Defense
- U.S. Forest Service
- Bureau of Land Management
- State of Colorado

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## Plan Givens

The following "givens" represent existing guidance and decisions that are non-negotiable and set the parameters for the decision making-process and implementation of this management plan.

- The City's Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Department is legally responsible for design, maintenance, operations and management of resources and recreation in Stratton Open Space. All elements of the Stratton Open Space Management Plan must conform to the Colorado Springs Parks Rules and Regulations Ordinances.
- Stratton Open Space is subject to the requirements and restrictions of the Trails, Open Space and Parks (TOPS) Ordinance.
- The planning process will respect the terms and conditions of existing utility easements and the conservation easement. Any proposed changes to the existing conservation easement must be approved by the Colorado Springs Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, the Palmer Land Trust, and Great Outdoors Colorado.
- Implementation of the Management Plan will occur as funding allows.
- Any recommendations related to specific recreational use of Colorado Springs Utilities' South Suburban Reservoir and associated watershed land must be consistent with existing codes, rules, and regulations pertaining to recreational use and open space management.
- Colorado Springs Utilities will continue to access and manage its land and water at South Suburban Reservoir as needed for water storage purposes, independent of any recreational use or management decisions.
- Groups and individuals interested in the property are encouraged to help develop the best possible Management Plan; all voices will be equal in the decision-making process.
- The recommended Stratton Open Space Management Plan will be submitted to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board for approval.

## Planning Process

The City of Colorado Springs hired a consultant team lead by ERO Resources Corporation in August 2015 to undertake the planning process and to develop this management plan. The planning process proceeded in three phases:

1. **Phase One: Information Gathering:** The initial step included personal interviews with eight individuals who have a long history of involvement and familiarity with the Stratton Open Space property. A preliminary list of issues was prepared following the interviews. That list was shared with the community at a workshop on October 20, 2015, and was updated based on workshop responses.

   Issues of consistent interest to the community included:
   - Dogs
   - Forest health management
   - Signage
   - Trail management
   - Vegetation management
   - Visitor experience

2. **Phase Two: Public Process:** Based on the issues identified by the community and by analysis of existing conditions on the property, draft management strategies were developed and were reviewed with and discussed by the community at a workshop on November 10, 2015. Necessary adjustments were made to the strategies, based on community responses.

   The draft Management Plan was offered for community review both online and at a community open house on January 12, 2016.

3. **Phase Three: Approvals:** The recommended Management Plan was reviewed and approved by the TOPS Working Committee on _____ and by the Parks Advisory Board on _____.

A more detailed summary of community and stakeholder input is provided in Appendix B.

## Plan Guidance

### Deed of Conservation Easement

The purpose of the conservation easement (Appendix A) is to assure that the Stratton Open Space property "will be retained forever in its natural, scenic, open space and recreation condition and to prevent any use of the property that will significantly impair or interfere with the conservation values of the property."

Prohibited uses listed in the conservation easement include subdivision; commercial timber harvest; mining or extraction of soil, sand, gravel, rock, oil, natural gas, fuel or any other mineral substance; construction of buildings, roads, trails or other improvements without prior approval of the Palmer Land Trust; dumping of trash; and commercial or industrial activity. In addition, the property must be managed in accordance with an approved land stewardship plan. This management plan serves as that land stewardship plan.

#### *Conservation Values*

The conservation easement defines five primary conservation values associated with Stratton Open Space, summarized as follows:

1. Scenic Viewshed – As part of the city's mountain backdrop, the property is visible from public places throughout the city, while the open space trails provide views across grassland, shrub, and forest plant communities toward the city and adjacent mountains.
2. Native Plant Communities – The diverse ecosystem is comprised of several native vegetation communities including foothill grassland, shrubland, forests and small areas of riparian forest and wetland.
3. Wildlife Habitat – As part of a complex of public lands including North Cheyenne Cañon Park, Pike National Forest, and Colorado Springs Utilities property, Stratton Open Space supports important bird and wildlife habitat and migration routes.
4. Recreation – Hikers and cyclists enjoy the trails on the property and those that connect to North Cheyenne Cañon Park and Pike National Forest. The property also provides opportunities for nature study and environmental education.
5. Geology – The Ute Pass fault underlying the property is a distinctive geologic feature that defines the soils, topography, vegetation, and character of Stratton Open Space.

**Colorado Springs Park System Master Plan**

Recommendations from the 2014 Colorado Springs Park System Master Plan that are relevant to management of the property include the following:

- Comprehensively address the management and care needs of the natural environment and open space lands such as erosion control, invasive species, forest management and wildfire.
- The Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Department should work to eliminate and/or control noxious weeds on park and open space properties as a part of ongoing maintenance. Develop a citywide integrated weed management plan to help effectively and efficiently control weeds.
- Comprehensively address natural resource management and urban forestry through the creation of annual maintenance tasks as part of a long-term natural resource management approach.
- Increase trail maintenance and address the negative impacts of social or unplanned trail creation.
- Work with natural resource managers of wildlife habitat to balance wildlife needs with management for fire, floods and drought.
- Identify and re-route trails that are susceptible to frequent damage from flooding.
- Improve wayfinding by installing signs and maps at key junctions in the trail system and identifying parking locations.
- The Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Department should establish a policy allowing for programmed events/activities within open space lands as long as the natural and cultural resource values are not impacted.
- Work with Colorado Springs Utilities (CSU) to identify CSU lands that have natural value for use as open space and seek a partnership to jointly manage these lands to conserve their natural values. Determine if public access might be possible on these lands for recreation purposes.
- Develop master plans for all open space properties which address appropriate access and connectivity with neighboring properties, resource sensitivity, existing resources and opportunities for resource enhancement and restoration. Plans should be created and updated for all properties or groups of properties within a contiguous area with progress tracked over time.
- Communicate park rules and “Leave No Trace” ethics to the public through the use of signage and informational campaigns.
- Signs in the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services system should clearly indicate rules, regulations and expectations of usage to maintain quality of facilities and prevent harmful behaviors that would negatively impact the natural or programmatic features of the parks and trails.
- Enforcement should include ticketing for infringements to the established dog leash law.

**Previous Planning Documents**

The following previous planning documents were reviewed in the preparation of this management plan:

- Conservation Interest Monitoring Report – Stratton Open Space (2014)
- Land Stewardship Plan, Stratton Open Space (2007)
- North Cheyenne Cañon Park and Stratton Open Space Forest Health Assessment and Management Plan (2004)
- North Cheyenne Cañon Master Plan (1999)

## Purpose of the Management Plan

The purpose of this management plan is to guide resource management at Stratton Open Space and to identify priorities for the next five years. More specifically, this plan is also intended to achieve the following objectives:

1. Articulate the overall resource management goals for the property
2. Document existing conditions and resource management issues on the property
3. Identify and prioritize strategies to address resource management issues and maintain the overall integrity of resources on the property
4. Document the agreed-upon goals, strategies, and priorities for resource management on the property that are commonly understood by visitors, stakeholders, and the surrounding community
5. Provide an implementation and monitoring plan for PRCS staff, Friends groups, and volunteers

In addition, this management plan fulfills the requirement under paragraph 3(e) of the Conservation Easement, which states:

> The Property must be operated and managed in accordance with a land stewardship plan prepared and accepted with the mutual consent of the Grantor (City of Colorado Springs) and Grantee (Palmer Land Trust). The land stewardship plan will be updated every five (5) years and distributed to the parties.

# Existing Conditions

## Geographic Setting

Stratton Open Space is located on the western edge of Colorado Springs, about 2.5 miles southwest of downtown near the intersection of Cheyenne Mountain Boulevard and Cresta Road. The property is located in portions of Sections 26, 27, and 35, Township 14 South, Range 67 West. The property is bounded by Cheyenne Mountain High School to the east, residential subdivisions to the north and southeast, Colorado Springs Utilities land to the south, and North Cheyenne Cañon Park to the west (Figure 2).

The property is located at the transition between the rolling Fountain Creek valley and the steep foothill canyons at the base of Pikes Peak. Elevations range from about 6,200 feet at the eastern edge, to about 7,250 feet at the western edge.

## Geology

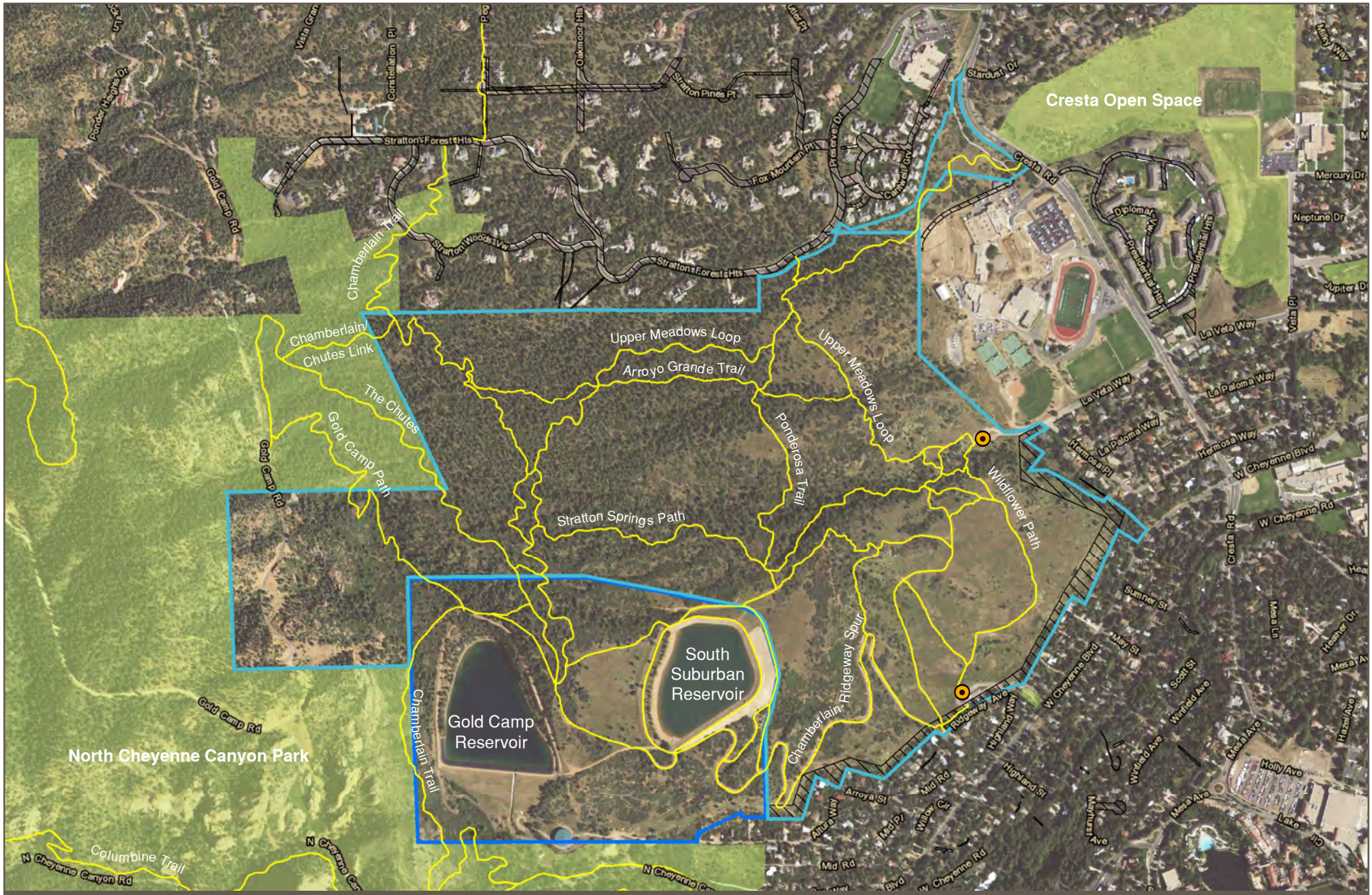
Stratton Open Space is located at the base of the Pikes Peak batholiths, along the Ute Pass Fault, which defines the mountain front geology of the area (Chronic and Williams 2002). Because of this unique location, the property has complex subsurface geology and is underlain by ten geologic units.

Most of the eastern portions of the property are underlain by alluvial deposits (boulders, gravel, and sand) of Holocene to Late Pleistocene origin. A sliver of Pierre Shale bedrock is found near the surface along the eastern edge of the property. The upper, western portions of the property are generally underlain by older fan deposits of Holocene to Late Pleistocene origin, consisting of sand or silty-sand mixed with cobble and gravel. The far western portion of the property, along the east edge of the Ute Pass Fault, is dominated by colluvial deposits (Holocene and late Pleistocene) consisting of weathered bedrock and sediments. Above the fault, the far western edge of the property is dominated by Pikes Peak granite, which is a large homogenous outcrop associated with the Pikes Peak batholith which extends to the west (Carroll and Crawford 2000).

## Soils

The Natural Resources Conservation Service has mapped four soil types on the property. These are shown on Figure 3 and are summarized as follows (NRCS 2015):

- Chaseville-Midway complex – Gravelly sandy loam with medium runoff. Found in the lower meadows along the eastern edge of the property.
- Chaseville gravelly sandy loam, 8 to 40 percent slopes – Excessively drained with low runoff. This soil type dominates most of the property.
- Besser sandy loam, 5 to 9 percent slopes – Well drained with low runoff. Isolated in the small meadows in the north-central portion of the property.
- Kutler-Broadmoor-Rock outcrop complex, 25 to 90 percent slopes – Excessively drained with high runoff. This soil type dominates the western edge of the property.




# Figure 2. Existing Conditions

- Stratton Open Space
- Colorado Springs Utilities
- Other Parks and Open Space
- Utility Easement
- Trailhead
- Designated Trail

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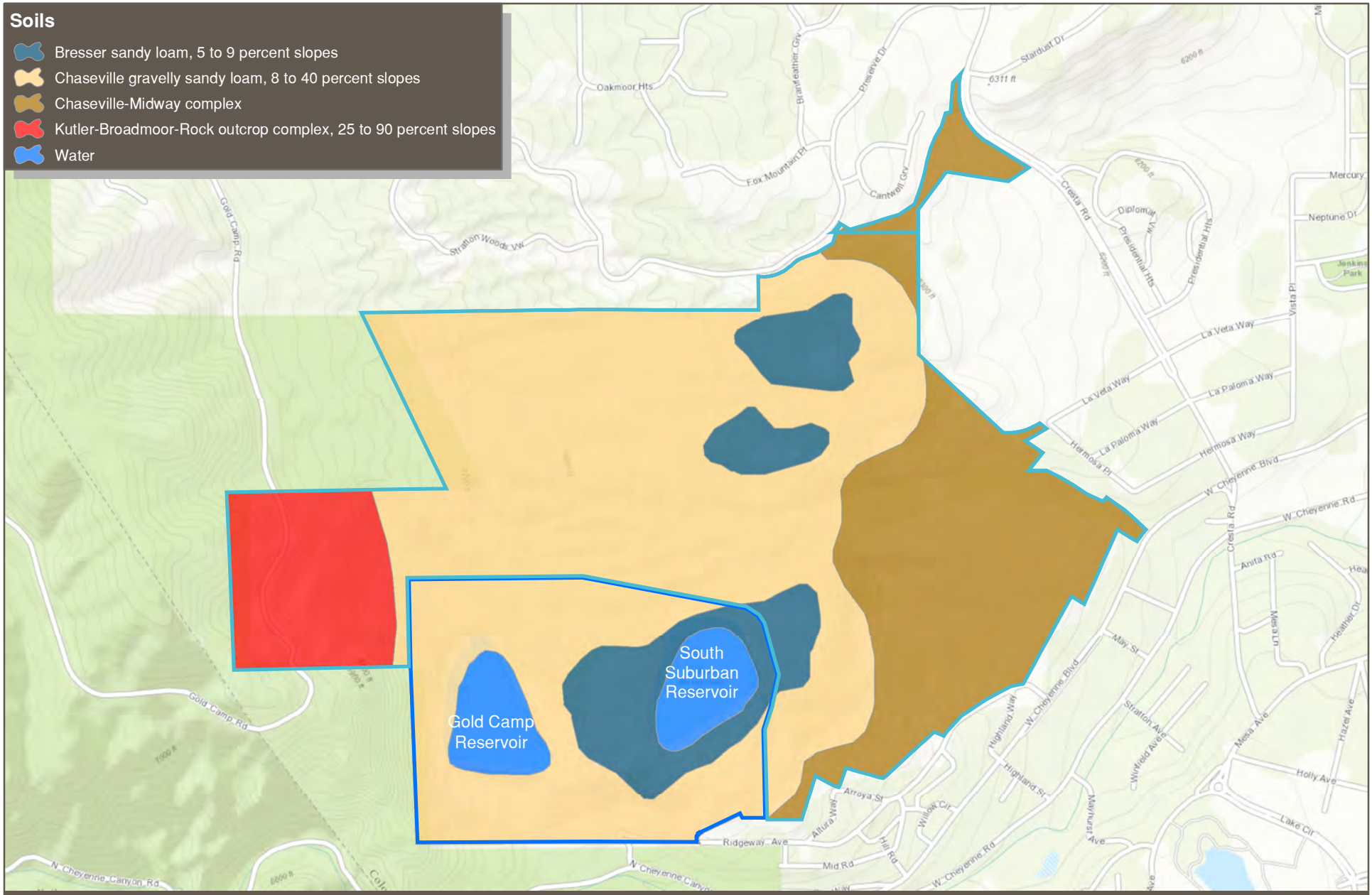


Figure 3. Soils

0 500 1,000 feet

Stratton Open Space

Colorado Springs Utilities

## Water Resources

Two primary drainages cross the property from west to east, each with multiple minor tributary channels and arroyos. All of the drainages are ephemeral, except for a small section of the larger drainage above the La Veta Trailhead which contains a spring that supplies a small but persistent water supply. (The spring may be the result of reservoir seepage).

Two water supply reservoirs are located on CSU land adjacent to the open space property to the south. These are South Suburban Reservoir and Gold Camp Reservoir.

## Vegetation Resources

### Native Plant Communities

Stratton Open Space is dominated by seven major plant communities, transitioning from grasslands and shrublands to the east to higher-elevation forests to the west. This diverse mosaic of vegetation types over a relatively small land area contributes to both the scenic beauty of the property and its ecological diversity. Plant communities are shown on Figure 4 and are described below. Descriptions are based on field observations and existing documentation (Obee 2002, Colorado Springs Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Services Department 2004, and Biohabitats 2007).

#### *Foothills grassland*

The foothills grassland community is located primarily in the relatively flat, eastern portion of the property. This community is dominated by native prairie grasses such as blue grama, western wheatgrass, needle-and-thread grass, ring muhly, sand dropseed, and threeawn and non-native grasses such as crested wheatgrass, smooth brome, and cheatgrass. Other common prairie species include yucca, prickly pear, rabbitbrush, wild rose, and snowberry, as well as many wildflowers.

This community is interspersed with pockets of foothills shrubland vegetation, which tend to expand and encroach on meadow habitats in the absence of grazing, fire, or mechanical removal. A six-acre wildfire in early 2015 burned a large portion of the lower meadow. While detailed pre-fire vegetation data was not available, the burned area did appear to have significant thatch removal and rigorous grass growth.

*Foothills grassland community*

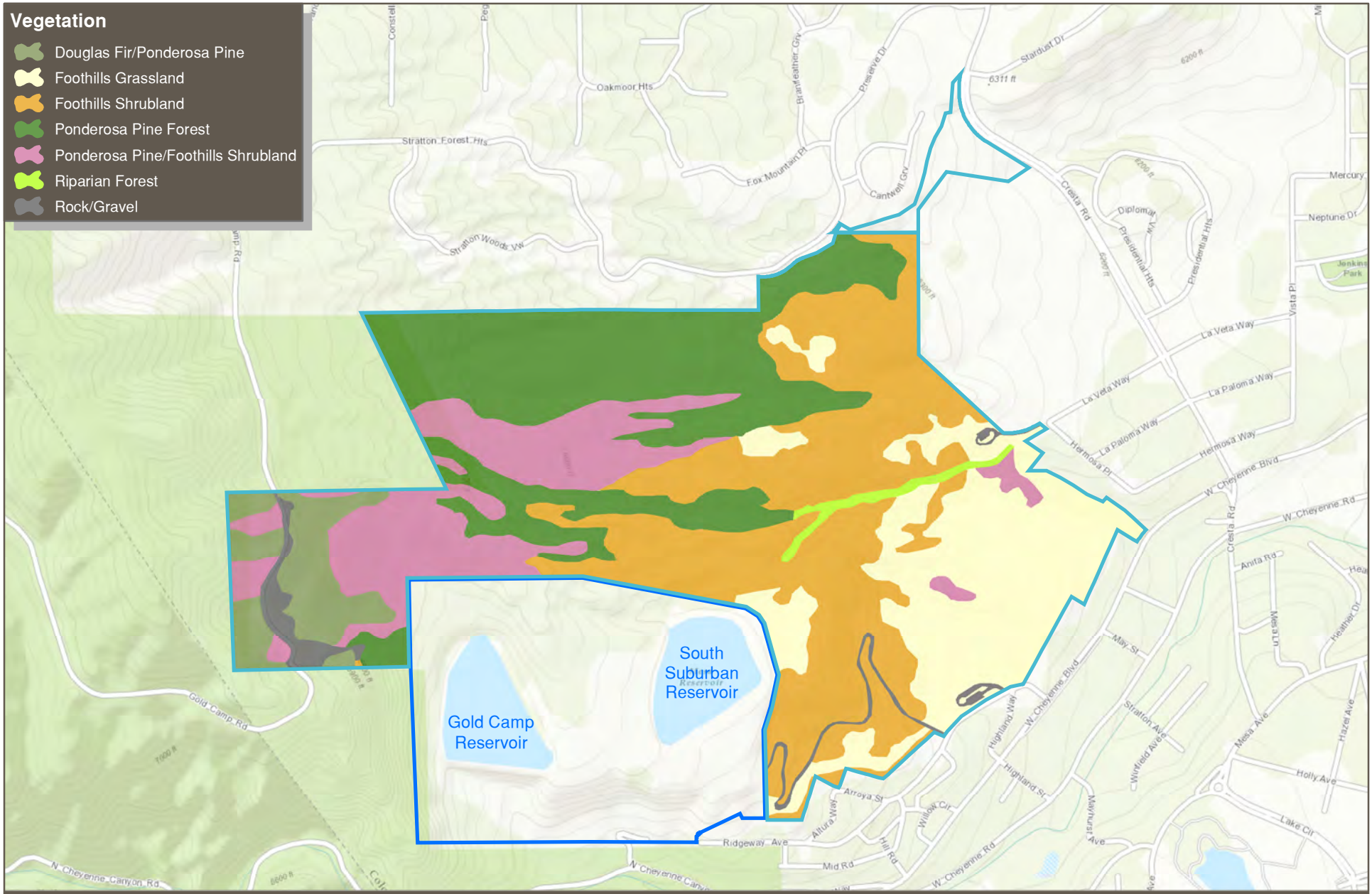


Figure 4. Vegetation

Stratton Open Space

Colorado Springs Utilities

***Foothills shrubland***

The middle slopes of Stratton Open space consists of a foothills shrubland community, dominated by thickets of Gambel oak, mountain mahogany, interspersed with piñon pine, Rocky Mountain juniper, and ponderosa pine. Additional shrubs include chokecherry, wax currant, skunkbrush, and gooseberry. The understory is dominated by grasses such as blue grama, big bluestem, little bluestem, and other native and introduced species. This transitional community includes components of both forest and grassland habitats, which contributes to its ecological diversity and value as wildlife habitat.

***Riparian shrubland and forest***

A narrow band of riparian shrubland occurs along the lush drainage in the east-central portion of the property. The spring-fed stream and shaded canyon supports a narrow band of riparian shrubland and forest, consisting primarily of narrow-leaf cottonwood, plains cottonwood, and willow along with Douglas-fir, ponderosa pine, and upland shrub species.

***Wetland***

A small, ephemeral wetland is located in the northeast corner of the property. The wetland is likely fed by a groundwater seep, and consists of a mix of willow, river birch, Nebraska sedge, and cattail. Some decadent aspen and Canada thistle are also present.

***Ponderosa pine forest***

The upper elevation slopes along the northern edge of the property, as well as the upper drainages, are dominated by ponderosa pine, intermixed with Douglas-fir and patches of Gambel oak and mountain mahogany. The understory consists of patches of grasses including mountain muhly, blue grama, side-oats grama, kinnickinick, and bare soil.

***Ponderosa pine/shrubland***

South-facing portions of the upper property are dominated by a ponderosa pine/shrubland community. This community is similar to the ponderosa pine forest, except that the pine trees are less dense and the patches of Gambel oak-dominated shrubs are larger and more extensive in some areas. However, a build-up of borer (*Agrilus quercicola*) populations in Gambel oak due to years of drought conditions combined with late frost has caused stress and extensive dieback of Gambel oaks.

***Douglas- fir/Ponderosa pine forest***

The steep, gravelly slopes on the far western edge of the property near Gold Camp Road are dominated by Douglas-fir forest interspersed with ponderosa pine. The understory is sparser but is otherwise similar to the forest communities described above.

## Rare Plant Species and Communities

No rare or listed plant species or communities are known to occur on the property (USFWS 2015, CNHP 2001, Biohabitats 2007).

## Noxious Weeds

Several noxious weed species are present on Stratton Open Space, based on field observations by city staff and by ERO in 2015. The Colorado Noxious Weed Act classifies noxious weeds in to three lists: List A species are designated for eradication, List B species are targeted for weed

management efforts to stop their continued spread, and List C species should be managed by effective weed management approaches based on local government priorities. Fifteen noxious weed species are known to occur within Stratton Open Space, 10 of which are considered to be management concerns (because they are A- and B- listed species):

*Common mullein*

***List A Weed Species***

- Myrtle spurge (*Euphorbia myrsinites*)

***List B Weed Species***

- Bouncingbet (*Saponaria officinalis*)
- Bull thistle (*Cirsium vulgare*)
- Canada thistle (*Cirsium arvense*)
- Chinese clematis (*Clematis orientalis*)
- Dalmatian toadflax (*Linaria dalmatica*)
- Diffuse knapweed (*Centaurea difussa*)
- Musk thistle (*Carduus nutans*)
- Russian olive (*Elaeagnus angustifolia*)
- Yellow toadflax (*Linaria vulgaris*)

***List C Weed Species***

- Cheatgrass (*Bromus tectorum*)
- Chicory (*Cichorium intybus*)
- Common burdock (*Arctium minus*)
- Common mullein (*Verbascum thapsus*)
- Field bindweed (*Convolvulus arvensis*)

All completed noxious weed mapping is shown in Figure 5. In addition to noxious weeds, the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Department also notes the location of poison ivy in Stratton Open Space. Poison ivy is a native species, but may be controlled in selected areas (e.g., along recreation trail edges) by the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Department. The city has also worked to control Siberian elm and common buckthorn, invasive species that are not listed noxious weeds.

## Wildlife Resources

### Common Wildlife

The diverse vegetation communities at Stratton Open Space support a variety of wildlife species that are typical of the mountain front transition in the Pikes Peak region. Mule deer is the most prevalent large mammal species, but Stratton Open Space is also home to a variety of carnivores including coyote, black bear, mountain lion, gray fox, and bobcat. Small mammals include

chipmunk, cottontail, jackrabbit, deer mouse, pocket gopher, various squirrels, and skunk. Reptiles include fence lizard, garter snake, bullsnake, and rattlesnake.

The diverse mosaic of habitats of the property has been documented to support a wide variety of bird species. A bird list compiled in 1989 documented 76 total species, 30 of which were known to nest on the property (Obee 2002). Common bird species include western bluebird, red-tailed hawk, black-capped chickadee, lesser goldfinch, broad-tailed hummingbird, Stellar's jay, pygmy nuthatch, vesper sparrow, and Virginia's warbler.

### Threatened and Endangered Species

Federally threatened and endangered species are protected under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.). Significant adverse effects to a federally listed species or its habitat require consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) under Section 7 or 10 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA). Candidate species are not yet listed as threatened or endangered, but may be listed in the future.

The USFWS indicates that there are several threatened or endangered wildlife species with potential for occurrence in El Paso County. However, based on the site visit, the property does not contain suitable habitat for any listed species (USFWS 2015). Two species – Mexican spotted owl and Pawnee montane skipper – rely on habitat that is similar to habitat found on the property. Each of these is briefly discussed as follows:

- Mexican spotted owl is a federally-listed threatened species under the ESA, and has been known to occur in the foothills forests in the Pikes Peak Region. Much of the area, including the western-most portions of the property, has been designated to be Critical Habitat for the species. However, the Douglas-fir/ponderosa pine forest community on the property is not believed to support the species, because it lacks the steep-walled canyons that are considered to be an integral component of spotted owl habitat, and because it is a relatively small area that is surrounded by roads, residential development, and other human use. Consequently, no spotted owls have been reported on the property.
- Pawnee montane skipper is a federally-listed threatened butterfly species under the ESA, and is known to occur in dry, open, ponderosa pine woodlands on moderately steep slopes derived from Pikes Peak granite and with an understory of blue grama grass and prairie gayfeather and limited tall scrub or conifer growth. This species occurs only in the South Platte Canyon river drainage system northwest of Colorado Springs, and is highly unlikely to occur at Stratton Open Space due to a lack of specific habitat requirements and known occurrences in the area.

## Cultural and Historical Resources

The Colorado Cultural Resource On-line Database Compass, provided by the Colorado Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (OAHP), was used to conduct a search of cultural resources for Stratton Open Space. This database contains information on documented federal or state studies or findings regarding any cultural resources. According to the search, Gold Camp Road, a portion of which passes through the west side of Stratton Open Space, was converted from a railroad – the Colorado Springs and Cripple Creek District Railroad – into an auto highway between 1922 and 1924 (OAHP 2015).

The Colorado Springs and Cripple Creek District Railroad was created by Irving Howbert, James Burns, and a group of Colorado Springs businessmen to combat the discriminatory freight rates charged by the other railroads. Considered an engineering phenomenon, the new railroad (known as the Shortline because it was only 36.1 miles long) traveled from 26th Street in Colorado City through Bear Creek Cañon, past St. Peter's Dome, and around Mt. Rosa to Victor. Completed in 1901, it soon became a tourist attraction. By 1920, the declining population and gold production of the Cripple Creek District led to the demise of the Shortline. In 1922, it was bought at auction by W.E. Corley. Corley scrapped the railroad, widened the roadbed, and built the Corley Toll Highway, which opened in 1924. Corley made an unsuccessful attempt to gain permission from the U.S. Forest Service to build a 14-mile road from the highway to the top of Pikes Peak. In 1948, Corley deeded the right-of-way to the road to the U.S. Forest Service.

Although no specific sites were identified through the OAHP search, the segment of Gold Camp Road through Stratton Open Space may contribute to the overall historical value of the former railroad alignment. A cultural resource (pedestrian-level) survey for Stratton Open Space has not been conducted. Thus, other cultural or historic resources may occur on Stratton Open Space.

## Adjacent Land Uses

Current adjacent land ownership and uses surrounding Stratton Open Space include the following:

### *Cheyenne Mountain High School*

Located to the northeast of the property, Cheyenne Mountain High School is owned by the Cheyenne Mountain School District 12. The 52-acre campus includes academic buildings, sports fields, and parking. A major renovation of the school is currently underway, which includes the construction of a baseball field adjacent to the Stratton Open Space boundary. Most of the other grading and construction will be associated with the academic buildings and parking lots in the central and eastern portions of the campus.

### *Colorado Springs Utilities*

The City of Colorado Springs – Colorado Springs Utilities owns a 112-acre tract of land to the south of the property. This property contains two water storage reservoirs, a water tank, roads, and other associated facilities. The northern portions of the CSU property are indistinguishable from the open space, and are managed accordingly.

### *Other Open Space*

Stratton Open Space is contiguous along its entire western boundary with the 1,600-acre North Cheyenne Cañon Park. The smaller, 18-acre Stratton Forest Open Space abuts the northwestern corner of the property. Another 7-acre city-owned property lies adjacent to the northeast corner of Stratton Open Space.

### *Residential Areas*

The property is bounded on three sides – the southeast, east, and north – by residential subdivisions. Thirty-eight residential parcels directly adjoin the open space property to the south and east, with another eight parcels along the north boundary.

## Visitor Use and Improvements

### Trails

Stratton Open Space trails are popular and heavily used in all weather conditions. Despite a robust designated trail system, off-trail travel is prevalent and use of non-system ("rogue") trails is a persistent issue. Many rogue trails are frequently used and are indistinguishable from system trails. Both system and non-system trails contain unsustainable stretches including: poor alignment, too steep of grade, poor construction for the soil conditions, trails in drainages and trails on service roads. These conditions result in trail shortcutting, trail widening, trail braiding (at steps and wet/muddy sections), a proliferation of non-system rogue trails and ongoing maintenance.

Non-system rogue trails are also concentrated at areas near trailheads and neighborhood connections. In addition, individual non-system trails emanate from most adjacent residences creating erosion, impact to the vegetation, visual impact and wayfinding confusion.

*Chutes Trail*

### Trailheads

Neighborhood and regional visitors use the trailheads at La Veta and Ridgeway. Trailhead facilities include parking, trash receptacle, dog-waste bag station, regulatory signage and trail maps. The La Veta trailhead also provides a restroom. The Ridgeway trailhead has a designated area for equestrian parking.

Inadequate parking at peak times and weekends results in overflow parking on neighborhod streets and the Cheyenne Mountain High School parking lots. A proliferation of non-system rogue trails emanate from both trailheads.

### Interpretive and Wayfinding Signage

Interpretive and wayfinding signage is concentrated at the trailheads. Trail directional and trail use designation signage within the open space assumes visitor knowledge of trail names, locations and destinations. Visitors find this content unclear and inadequate. Users have added destination information to augment information provided on trail signs.

### Dog Use and Management

Stratton Open Space is a popular destination for walking and hiking with dogs. Dogs are required to be on leash, per city ordinance (6.7.107; Duty to Restrain Animals). However, dog leash compliance is typically low. Impacts to the open space resources and other visitors have been reported due to off-leash dogs and dog waste that is not properly picked up or disposed of.

Although not formally designated as an off leash dog area, in recent years, South Suburban Reservoir on the adjoining CSU-owned land has become a destination for off-leash dog use. Visitors to the reservoir access it through the Stratton Open Space trails system.

# Resource Management Plan

Implementing this Management Plan will require identification and prioritization of management actions to accomplish objectives and goals. These prioritized management actions should continue to be reviewed on an annual basis to determine annual work programs given budget and staff constraints. Implementation of the Management Plan also needs to be balanced with other resource needs throughout the open space system. Many of the management actions will be implemented within the first few years, while others will take many years to accomplish. Some management actions are ongoing, some are short term, and others are long term, representing considerable investments of time and energy.

## Resource Management Issues

Resource management issues are specific occurrences or situations, such as land use practices, visitor use, or noxious weed infestations that can compromise the conservation values of the property. Based on the site visits and public input during this process, management issues for Stratton Open Space are listed below and should be addressed with management actions.

| | |
|---|---|
| **Vegetation Management**<br>• Noxious weed management<br>• Weed inventory and control<br><br>**Forest Health Management**<br>• Fire mitigation projects<br>• Forest composition and structure<br>• Pest management<br><br>**Dog Management**<br>• Off-leash dogs: natural resource and visitor impacts<br>• Off-leash and swimming dogs in the South Suburban Reservoir fenced area<br>• Dog waste and dog waste bags<br><br>**Trail Management**<br>• Designated (system) trails<br>• Rogue (non-system) trails<br>• Trail location (drainages, poor soils, service roads)<br>• Shortcutting<br>• Trail condition (e.g., erosion and widening)<br>• Maintenance, including timber steps<br>• Wet conditions, including trailheads<br>• Connections | **Signage**<br>• Trail/trailhead way-finding<br>• Trail use warnings for mountain bikes<br>• Damaged Ridgeway donor support sign<br>• Reservoir use rules<br>• Dog waste removal<br><br>**Visitor Experience**<br>• Protection of “wildness” and character of the property<br>• Balance of preservation of natural resource and use<br>• Use designations (hiker-only trails)<br>• Shared use of trails by hikers, bikers, dog owners, and equestrians<br>• Permitted uses, including special events and South Suburban Reservoir access<br>• Inadequate trailhead parking<br>• Vandalism of open space property |

All of these issues were considered during the management planning process. However, not all issues are directly addressed by management strategies. Some issues are more appropriately addressed as part of a separate Master Plan process, while others were determined to not warrant a management response at this time.

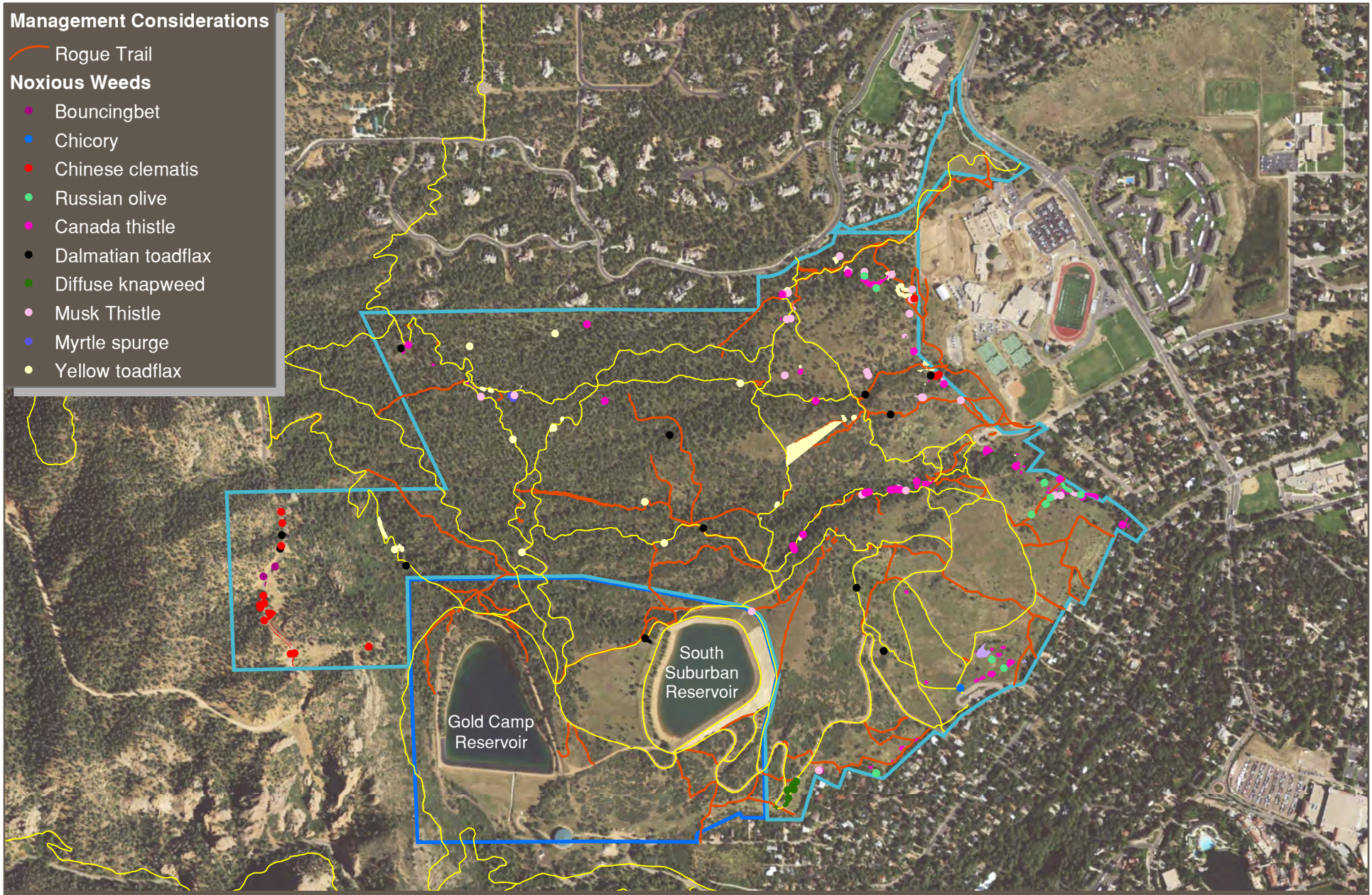


Figure 5. Management Considerations

0 500 1,000 feet

Open Space
Colorado Springs Utilities
Designated Trail

CITY OF COLORADO SPRINGS

## Discussion of Key Management Issues and Strategies

### Noxious Weed Management

Prioritization of weed management efforts is based on several factors. Attempting to control all the non-native species present within Stratton Open Space can be overwhelming and ultimately unsuccessful, so it is important to develop a strategy to ensure the most efficient use of resources. This type of strategy is built upon two principles. First, instead of managing against weeds, the philosophy is to manage for the desired target species and communities within Stratton Open Space. With this spirit, the species that have been identified as management concerns are those that have the potential to threaten the survival of native communities. Second, to minimize the total, long-term weed control workload, the Colorado Springs Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Department will act to prevent new infestations and contain the spread of plants with expanding ranges. Prioritization of weed management efforts considers legal mandates, weed biology, and species distribution.

In addition to legal mandates and weed biology, the existing distribution of weeds within Stratton Open Space is of primary importance in prioritizing weeds for management activities. The analogy of a wildfire has often been used to describe the spread of noxious weeds. Using this analogy, small, isolated patches of weeds are generally considered a higher priority for control activities than large, well-established infestations. Small, isolated patches are easier to eradicate because there is a smaller distribution of plants, smaller seed bank, less-developed root system, and potentially, a desirable vegetation community. The Colorado Springs Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Department also notes species that are not yet within Stratton Open Space, but are found nearby and could be problems if they spread to the property. The weed management program includes regularly monitoring Stratton Open Space for these species in order to quickly detect and eliminate them if they ever do appear.

With this reasoning in mind, higher priority will be given to:

- Weeds with a specific management status designation of elimination
- Weed species that are new or relatively rare to the region or Stratton Open Space
- Species not well established in surrounding areas
- Small infestations of species known to be highly invasive
- Infestations likely to spread because of location (e.g., road sides, trail sides, drainages, or wind breaks) or management activities (e.g., trail work or forest treatments)
- Infestations adjacent to or likely to spread into areas containing conservation targets
- Edges of large infestations

Lower priority will be given to:

- Large, well-established infestations for which there is little potential for eradication on Stratton Open Space
- Species that are well established in surrounding areas and thus provide a constant seed source to Stratton Open Space
- Species confined to disturbed areas
- Species that are easier to control relative to others

## Forest Management

The forest on Stratton Open Space is relatively young and with the cessation of ranching, has been expanding on the flat to moderate slopes on the outwash mesa below Gold Camp Road. Ponderosa pine stands ranging from somewhat open to dense dominate the overstory while Gambel oak characterizes the understory. The oldest trees, primarily in shaded draws, are over 150 years with a few remnant trees older than 250 years. A large part of the forest is less than 100 years old, even 50 years old.

Natural fire patterns, born out in tree ring studies, were first disrupted on a large scale in the second half of the 19th century with settlement into the area. Along with this was timber cutting that took the largest trees, leaving behind slash, undergrowth, and smaller trees. Based on the photographic record and the previous forest inventory (Colorado Springs Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Department 2004), Stratton Open Space forest stands still hover near the densest they have ever been. This current condition favors a crown fire regime with a relatively high risk of catastrophic stand-replacing fire. When the region was first settled, these forests were probably at the other extreme, supporting less than 30 percent of the current crown closure.

Douglas-fir is increasingly invading the dominant ponderosa pine/shrubland community in the shaded understory. In much of the forest there is a dense understory of Douglas-fir as well as ponderosa pine regeneration. With an increasing stand density, a significant understory component, and a closing canopy, fire is likely to move from the ground into the crowns of the trees. Stand mortality is less than 10 percent and is associated with several pockets of dwarf mistletoe; many of these trees have been hit by *Ips* engraver beetles. Up to 30 percent of the dieback observed in the Gambel oak stands can be attributed to a build-up of borer (*Agrilus quercicola*) populations due to years of drought conditions combined with late frost. In addition, Gambel oak is a fire-adapted species. Fire stimulates the regeneration of Gambel oak after top-kill and the species responds to fire through vegetative sprouting.

*Forest treatment area*

The Colorado Springs Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Department (2004) completed the North Cheyenne Cañon Park and Stratton Open Space Forest Health Assessment and Management Plan. The Forest Health Assessment and Management Plan provides the foundation for and continues to be a useful document that guides forest management decisions on Stratton Open Space (Will 2015). Thus, the Forest Health Assessment and Management Plan (in its entirety) is incorporated herein by reference.

In a continuing effort to implement the Forest Health Assessment and Management Plan during 2016-17, the Forestry Division of the Colorado Springs Parks, Recreation and Cultural

Services Department intends to complete additional forest management actions (i.e., "treatments") that will connect to already completed Forestry Division and Fire Department treatment areas from 2005 to 2015 (Figure 6).

The area scheduled for treatment is heavily forested with ponderosa pine (some of which are infected with dwarf mistletoe) and Douglas-fir; it is the last untreated section of Stratton Open Space. Decadent stands of oak brush with limited canopy separation occupy the remaining acreage. The proposed treatments include reducing the basal area in the ponderosa pine/Douglas-fir stand along the creek banks to release native riparian plants, thus facilitating regeneration.

The Forestry Division intends to remove non-native trees, treat stumps to inhibit suckering, and masticate oak brush to create separated mosaics, encouraging healthy clones. Treatment strategies for forest management on Stratton Open Space should include:

- Thinning stands to be relatively open leaving the appropriate amount of downed woody debris
- Restoring the ponderosa pine ecosystem with a diversity of age classes including an old-growth class
- Cutting dead and beetle infested trees in identified pockets
- Monitoring and controlling dwarf mistletoe in ponderosa pine
- Thinning understory regeneration and Gambel oak where appropriate
- Integrating noxious weed management with forest treatments
- Thinning and building upon natural separations in Gambel oak
- Establishing and/or maintaining approximately three large snags per acre

When completed, the 91-acre treatment area will help to protect four water storage facilities, the Cheyenne Cañon Creek watershed and an adjacent residential subdivision. The primary long-term benefits of the project are reduced risk of wildfire in Stratton Open Space and adjacent neighborhoods; protection of water supplies, quality, and infrastructure; improved forest health; as well as greater public awareness of forest restoration. These benefits will be sustained through yearly volunteer projects primarily controlling oak brush sprouts coordinated and funded by the Friends of Stratton Open Space assisted by personnel from the Colorado Springs Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Department. The Forestry Department will also continue to seek out grants and other funding opportunities to assist with these needs.

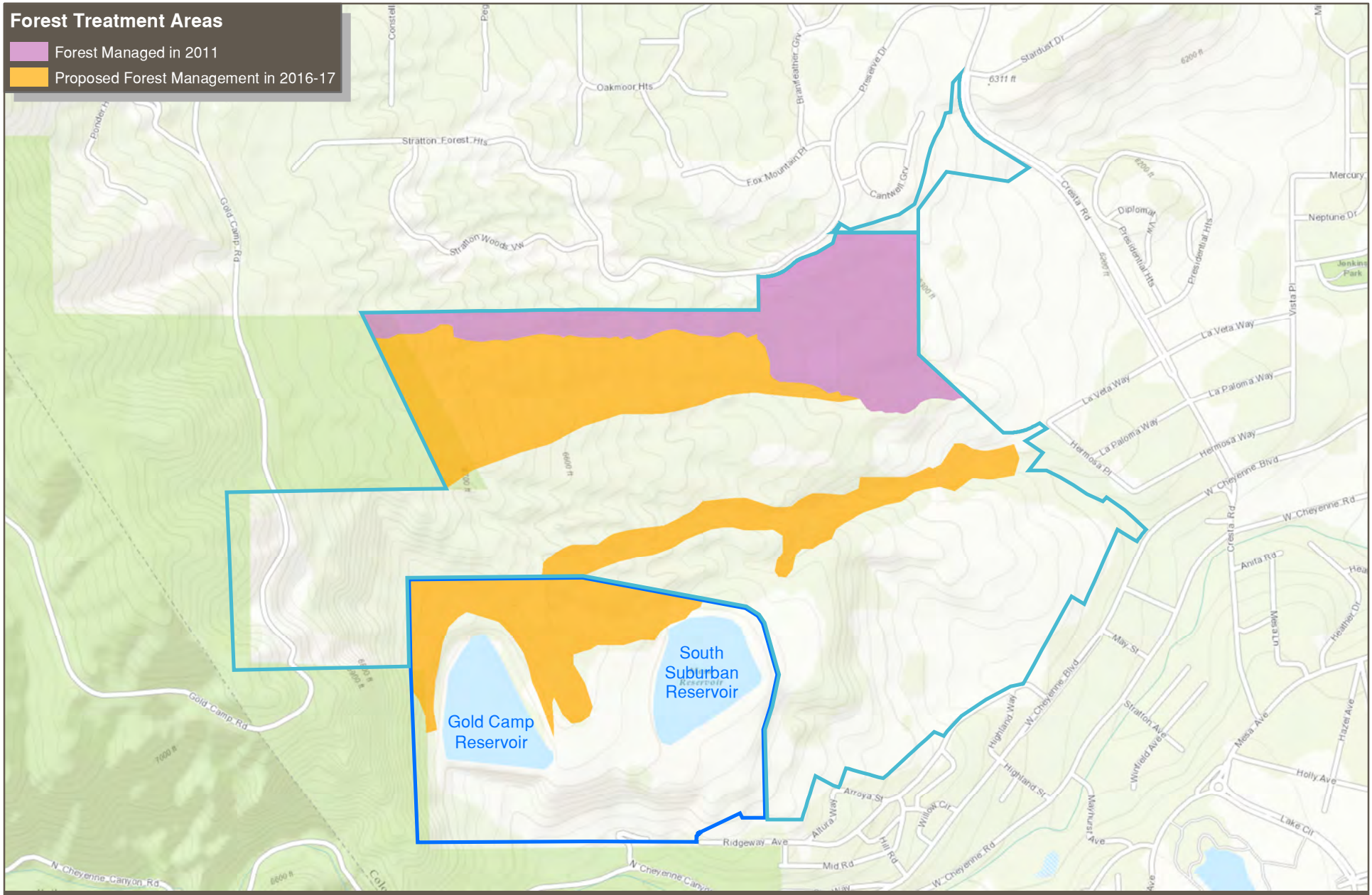


Figure 6. Forest Treatment Areas

Open Space

Colorado Springs Utilities

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### Vegetation Management

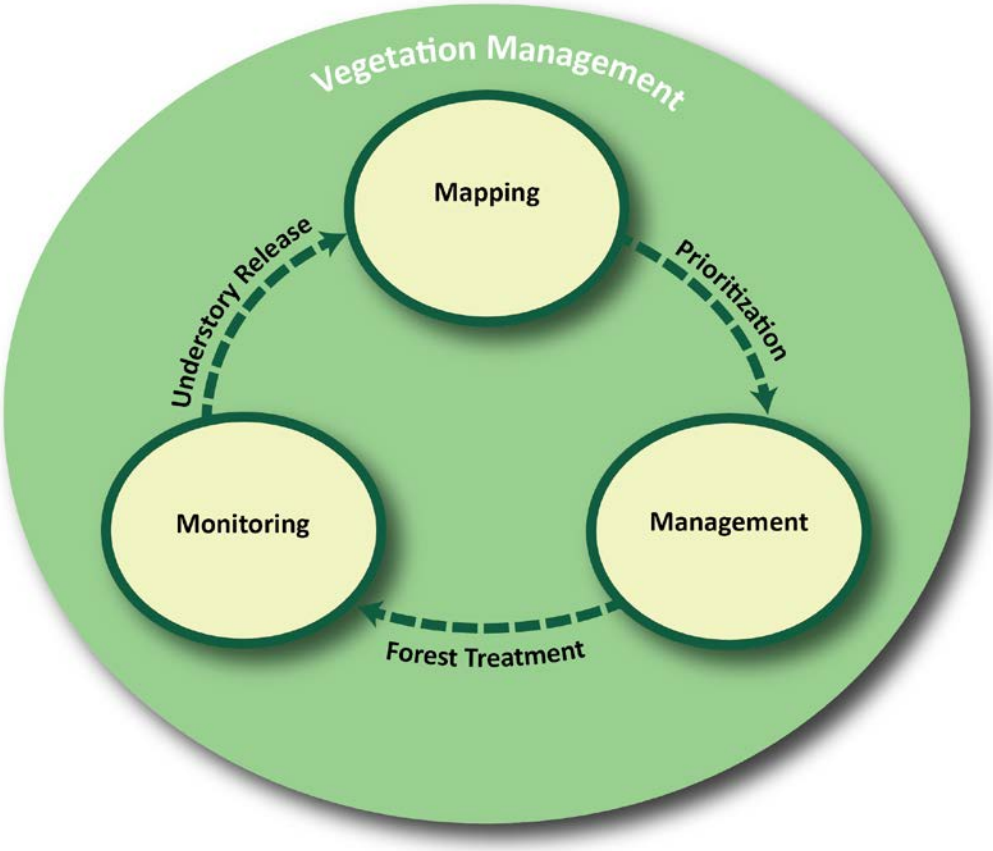
Thinning and other treatments on Stratton Open Space can restore ecological integrity in the ponderosa pine forest that is at risk of unnaturally severe crown fires and disease outbreaks. Such treatments can promote the survival and recruitment of native plant and animal species, but they also represent a significant disturbance that can allow noxious weeds to spread. Noxious weeds, as previously discussed, can cause significant ecological problems. Mitigating their impact must be a high priority during the planning and implementation of restoration treatments.

Most noxious weed species prefer disturbed areas for colonization. For this reason, restoration sites are a highly suitable place for noxious weed migration and proliferation. Severe soil disturbances, including those caused by restoration thinning, may provide an ideal colonization site for these opportunistic species and result in profound changes in understory vegetation.

Leaving forests untreated, though, is not an effective means of dealing with noxious weeds. Severe wildfires, such as those that have occurred in many overly dense ponderosa pine forests in the region, can promote the spread of many noxious weed species. When carefully planned and implemented, restoration treatments that prevent severe fires can help prevent the spread of noxious weeds.

Considering the land-use history of Stratton Open Space, concentrations of invasive seeds may be present within the seed bank at sites where disturbances such as construction, road building, seeding, livestock grazing, and logging occurred in the past. Present-day disturbance in these locations could encourage their emergence from the soil seed bank, and it may be impossible to avoid the colonization of noxious weed species at a treatment site. The graphic below provides a visualization for vegetation management, specifically an approach of how to integrate noxious weed management with forest treatments (e.g., thinning), or even trail restoration. The steps shown in the graphic are outlined below.

- **Mapping.** The planning process for forest treatments (e.g., thinning) should include an inventory of existing plant species located on and near the treatment site. Where possible, areas heavily infested with noxious weeds should not undergo treatments until the infestations have been controlled.
- **Prioritization.** Where invasive exotics are present in treatment areas on Stratton Open Space, thin areas without infestations first, and control existing populations of noxious weeds — otherwise noxious weeds will spread into areas that are currently weed free. Ensure that heavily trafficked sites, such as roads, trail corridors, staging areas, and potential log landings (if any), have no noxious weeds present.




- **Management.** Control noxious weeds before work begins on the ground. If noxious weeds are present in only small numbers in or around the treatment site, it may be feasible and is certainly advisable to eradicate them before any **forest treatment** work begins. A little bit of control before any soil disturbance occurs can avert the need to do a lot of control later on.
- **Monitor**. The prevention of colonization by noxious weeds does not end when on-the-ground forest management activity is complete. The removal of portions of the tree canopy will promote an **understory release** with the potential to increase the density of noxious weeds. Monitoring after treatment is vital and should be done annually. Include intermediate targets, rather than only end targets, in order to ensure that restoration objectives are being met along the way.

Regardless of the best efforts at prevention, some noxious weeds likely will appear following forest treatments. Some are more of a problem than others. For example, common mullein appears to have invaded several forest management sites on Stratton Open Space following treatment. Common mullein tends to be replaced during the course of successional changes within a few years, although viable seeds may remain plentiful in the soil seed bank. (For mullein, hand pulling is effective as is herbicide application during the rosette stage). Other more aggressive species may persist and spread unless managed. It is much easier to remove invasive plant infestations when they are small. A few hours spent dealing with weeds soon after thinning, and before plants reach the reproductive stage, can avert larger infestations later.

## Trail and Access Management

Trails at Stratton Open Space are heavily used and appreciated by the community. However, many of the trails (both system and non-system) are showing signs of significant erosion and deterioration, and non-system rogue trails continue to proliferate throughout the property. This results in impacts to vegetation and wildlife habitat, inhibits visitor use and wayfinding, and further constrains resources for management and stewardship. In addition, the concentration of different user types (mountain bikes, hikers, and dog walkers) on a few key trails (e.g., Chutes Trail and Ridge Trail) has resulted in conflict or diminished experiences for some users. The following general strategies are recommended to maintain and improve the trail infrastructure and visitor experiences on the property:

*Trail erosion*

- Monitor the development and use of undesignated rogue trails on the property to understand the extent of rogue trails and the reasons they are created (i.e., desired connection or avoidance of other problem areas)
- Inspect trails following major storm events or other disturbances to identify trail damage or other problems that require immediate attention
- Consistently and aggressively close undesignated rogue trails, using a variety of tools including fencing, signage, vegetation or visual obstructions as appropriate to limit continued use
- Complete trail maintenance and improvement projects, including small reroutes, concurrent with rogue trail closure to provide visitors with a clear and positive experience on designated trails and to discourage the creation of new rogue trails
- Use trailhead signs, wayfinding, and outreach to direct trail users to particular trails or areas that are less prone to crowding and conflict
- Utilize trail surfacing, including decomposed granite, rock armoring, and other methods with site-appropriate materials, to address specific trail locations that are prone to poor drainage, mud, and erosion
- As part of trail maintenance and improvement projects, use a variety of trail design methods to reduce the speed of cyclists in conflict-prone areas by limiting excessive trail grades, providing clear sightlines near turns, using choke points (rocks and logs that narrow the trail) and technical features (armoring, optional lines, or challenging features); emphasize trails that are *interesting* to the rider rather than *fast*

While the overall trail and facility layout and circulation is to be considered in a future master plan, this management plan includes several specific recommendations to address these issues in the interim. The following trail system maintenance and management priorities should be implemented in the near term, prior to and concurrent with a master planning process. These focus areas and points are listed below and are shown on Figure 7:

***Trail Project Focus Areas***

A. Evaluate, redesign and close trails in this area. Provide signage and clear passage for visitors to desired destinations; close redundant trails. Utilize fencing to enforce closures and establish sustainable trail alignments.
B. Evaluate, consolidate, redesign and close trails in this area. Provide signage and clear passage for visitors to desired destinations; close redundant trails. Utilize fencing to enforce closures and establish sustainable trail alignments. Connect to east/west trail at junction with Upper Meadows Loop. Coordinate with High School to understand their use patterns and education to support compliance. Continue to monitor compliance and new use patterns.
C. Work with neighbors to consolidate individual access trails and minimize visual impact, erosion and resource damage. Close all trails and access, or consider establishing one or two appropriate access trails and aggressively closing the rest.
D. Close social trails. Utilize fencing to secure closure.
E. Close social trails. Utilize fencing to secure closure.
F. Evaluate, redesign and close trails in this area. Provide signage and clear passage for visitors to desired destinations; close redundant trails. Utilize fencing to enforce closures and establish sustainable trail alignments.
G. Evaluate, redesign and close trails in this area. Provide signage and clear passage for visitors to desired destinations; close redundant trails. Utilize fencing to enforce closures and establish sustainable trail alignments.

*Rogue trail closure*

***Trail Project Locations***

1. Reroute to eliminate entrenched sections
2. Trail maintenance to eliminate braiding due to low area. Restore vegetation along trail edges.
3. Reroute to eliminate steps on Upper Meadows Trail, Ponderosa Trails and connecting trails.
4. Reroute to eliminate unsustainable trail section and relocate trail outside of riparian watercourse. Close existing unsustainable tread.
5. Close social trail. Utilize fencing to secure closure.
6. Close social trail. Utilize fencing to secure closure.
7. Reroute to eliminate unsustainable trail section. Close existing tread.
8. Reroute to eliminate unsustainable trail section. Close existing tread.
9. Reroute to eliminate unsustainable trail section. Close existing tread.

*Unsustainable trail tread*

***Major Trail Intersections***

More robust wayfinding and interpretative information should be located at major trail intersections throughout the property. These locations are identified in Figure 7. These are also suitable locations for benches on the property.

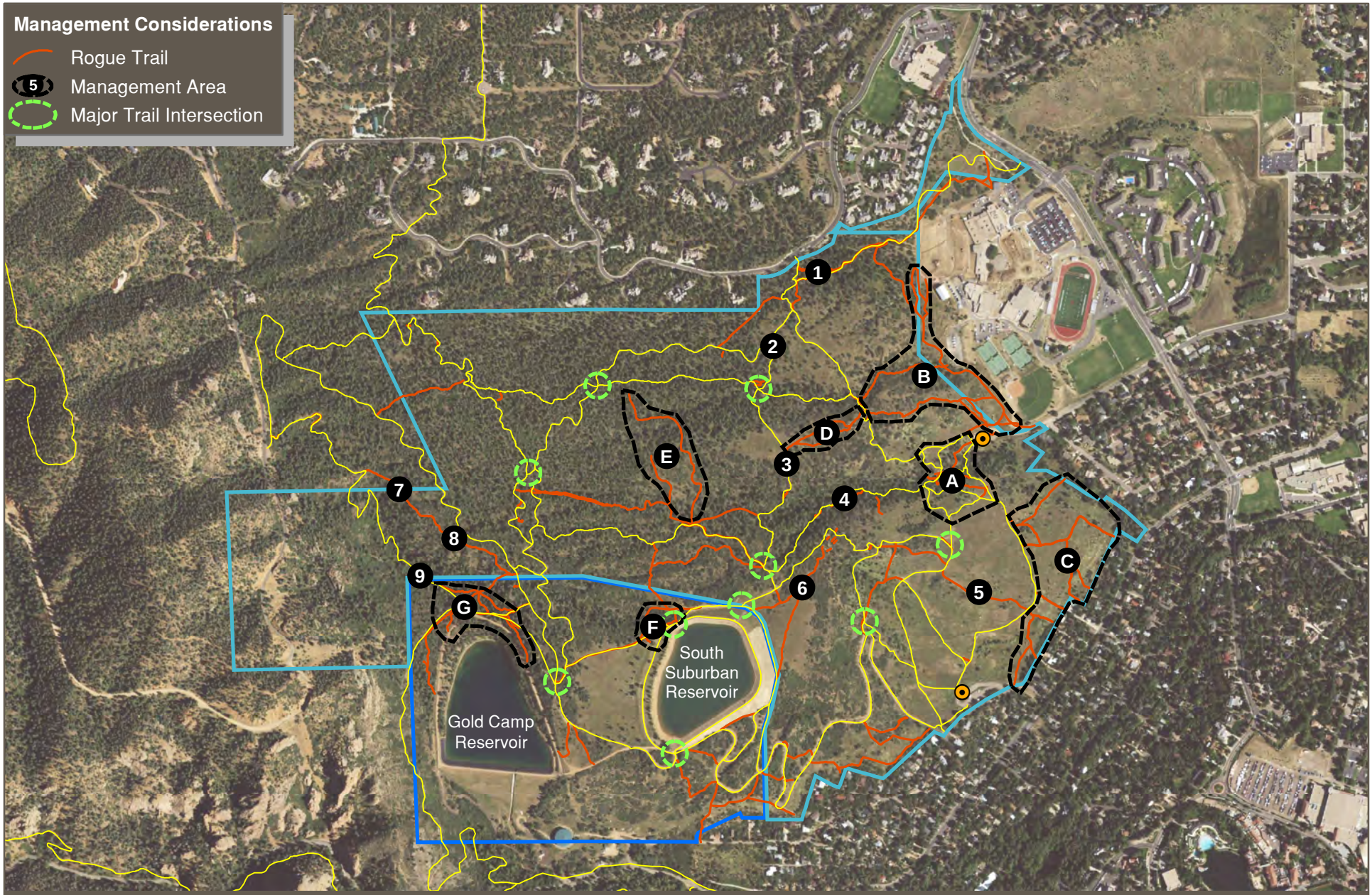



Figure 7. Trail and Recreation Management

0 500 1,000 feet

Open Space
Colorado Springs Utilities
Trailhead
Designated Trail

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### Dog Management

Per city regulations (Ordinance 6.7.107; Duty to Restrain Animals), dogs are required to be on-leash on city open space land. Off-leash dog use is a prevalent issue at Stratton Open Space as a consequence of common practice, lack of enforcement, and increasing use of South Suburban Reservoir as a destination for dog owners. Enforcement of the regulations is limited, due to a lack of staff capacity and enforcement authority, and resistance from the community. Off-leash dogs present a variety of challenges for resource management and protection, including increased disturbance of wildlife, creating a nuisance for some other visitors, and reduced ability of owners to control aggressive dogs. In addition, dog waste that is not properly disposed of creates both unsightly and unsanitary conditions in the open space. The strategies listed in Table 1, page 34 are intended to improve management of dog-related issues on the property.

### South Suburban Reservoir Access

Informal visitor and dog access to South Suburban Reservoir is currently allowed by Colorado Springs Utilities (CSU). However, this use has not been formally approved by the Colorado Springs City Council, and does not meet appropriate best management practices (BMPs) for source water protection. While this use was discussed in the management planning process to gage the interest of the public to formalize the reservoirs as an off-leash area, this management plan is not the mechanism to evaluate or approve recreational use on CSU property. This management plan does; however, consider the impacts that this use has on Stratton Open Space, and what management actions should be undertaken to mitigate those impacts. Based on staff and community input and field reviews, the primary impacts of this use on Stratton Open Space are off-leash dogs and dog waste.

*South Suburban Reservoir*

To bring the current recreational uses into compliance, this recreational use on CSU land needs to be formally considered and approved by the Colorado Springs City Council. This would entail a resolution for recreational use at South Suburban Reservoir to be taken to the City Council for formal approval. As part of the considerations for proper health, safety, and resource protection, the City Council will make the final determination on appropriate levels of recreational use including, but not limited to, dog uses. The general steps to for approval include:

1. Community advocates and CSU to propose recreational use of the reservoirs to the Utilities Board.
2. The Utilities Board would be informed of the proposal and would decide on moving a resolution to City Council
3. City Council would consider the resolution and formalize (or deny) recreational use at South Suburban Reservoir
4. If recreational use is approved, Colorado Springs Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services and CSU would develop management strategies, through an Executive Agreement, to clearly define management roles and responsibilities and boundaries for dogs off-leash

*Existing regulatory signs*

Impacts of this use on Stratton Open Space need to be addressed. To achieve this, the following management strategies are recommended to ensure proper management of this use and to mitigate impacts to open space resources:

- Clearly demarcate the boundary between on-leash and off-leash areas with signs. Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services and CSU would also reserve the right to install double gates if needed to improve compliance.
- Install and maintain trash receptacles at the reservoir to manage dog waste
- Increase outreach and enforcement of leash laws (Ordinance 6.7.107; Duty to Restrain Animals) in the open space
- Monitor and track visitor feedback regarding off-leash dog use at the reservoir and on open space land
- Evaluate, on an annual basis, the status of recreational use of CSU land and the effectiveness of these strategies to reduce impacts to open space resources, as a joint effort between CSU and Colorado Springs Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services
- Pursue the formalization of recreational uses at South Suburban Reservoir in 2016

The implementation of management strategies for Stratton Open Space, and the process to evaluate and potentially approve recreational use on CSU land, would move forward together on to separate but parallel tracks. Approval and implementation of the Stratton Open Space Management Plan will occur independently, by the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, from CSU's request to formalize off-leash dog use at the South Suburban Reservoir to City Council. The Colorado Springs Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Department will be responsible for approval and implementation of this management plan. CSU will be responsible for approval of off-leash dog activities within the South Suburban Reservoir.

### Special Events

A variety of special events on Stratton Open Space have been proposed in the past, ranging from fundraiser walks to high school cross-country races and mountain bike events. Most events are currently prohibited by city policies and the stipulations of the conservation

easement. If events were to be allowed in the future, policy changes would need to occur at the city-wide level, and the conservation easement would need to be amended. Any changes to the conservation easement must be approved by the Colorado Springs Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, the Palmer Land Trust, and Great Outdoors Colorado. The city currently follows a defined process ("passive recreation criteria") to determine whether activities should be allowed on open space properties where they are not otherwise prohibited.

In the event that policy changes occur to allow special events, the following presents additional questions to consider at Stratton Open Space in evaluating the passive recreation criteria questions. If the answer to any question is "yes," the activity would not be allowed.

1. Will the open space resource values be diminished as outlined in the Open Space's Master Plan, the Forest Health Management Plan/Maintenance Management Plan, or generally accepted guidance?
   *Issues to consider:*
   - For running and biking events, consider the proposed route, number of participants, and number of passes along particular trails to evaluate potential for damage to trails and other resources.
   - Do not allow events in sensitive areas (such as the Canyon Trail) or on trails that are in poor condition
   - Monitor proposed trail sections for widening, braiding, or vegetation trampling associated with events, and consider a reclamation commitment from event organizers to mitigate those impacts
   - Consider how spectators will be managed or encouraged to limit shortcutting during events (e.g., routing, signs, temporary fencing, event staff placement)
   - Plan for and accommodate participant parking and restrooms outside of the open space
2. Will the event effectively close or significantly limit use of the open space in whole or part to the public?
   *Issues to consider:*
   - Events at Stratton Open Space should not begin or end on the property, including trailheads
   - Trails used for events should remain open to all users, but signed for the event to remind participants to be aware of other users, and to encourage other users to use alternative routes
   - Trail-based events should be routed to allow reasonable use of other trails by non-event visitors
   - For running and biking events, event staff or volunteers should be placed at key trail intersections to direct participants and minimize conflict with other visitors
3. Will the event leave anything behind and/or trace (e.g., chalk marks, flags, litter, graffiti, waste)?
   *Issues to consider:*
   - All events should require full removal of all materials

## Resource Management Strategies

Management strategies for Stratton Open Space, including goals, objectives, and actions are presented in the following table, along with the recommended timing and priority of implementation.

For the purposes of this section of this Management Plan, the following terminology applies:

- **Goal** - Goals broadly describe the desired states for the future regarding resources and related issues. Goals lay the foundation for the objectives that provide guidance in the decision-making process.
- **Objective** - Objectives are the course of action intended to influence and determine the specific actions.
- **Action** - Actions describe some specific tasks that the City of Colorado Springs can take to accomplish the overall vision for the Stratton Open Space.

Timing recommendations are defined as follows:

- **S – Short-term actions** – Should be completed within one year
- **L – Long-term actions** – Should be initiated or completed within five years
- **O – On-going actions** – Should be completed on an on-going, annual basis indefinitely

Priority recommendations are defined as follows:

- **H – High priority actions** - should be accomplished first. These management actions are considered extremely important to the protection of the conservation values of Stratton Open Space. High priority actions are directly related to the accomplishment of other resource objectives and goals.
- **M – Medium priority actions** - considered important, but not urgent, and meet a combination of other resource goals and objectives.
- **L – Low priority actions** - important, but not critical to resource protection needs. Low priority management actions do not have to be completed in the immediate future and primarily fulfill a specific resource goal or objective.

**Table 1. Summary of Management Strategies for Stratton Open Space**

| Management Strategies | Timing | Priority |
|---|---|---|
| **VEGETATION** | | |
| ***Goal*** – Protect and enhance the quality, diversity, and health of native plant communities. | | |
| **Objective 1:** Manage existing noxious weed infestations and prevent new weed infestations. | | |
| Action: Complete comprehensive noxious weed inventory and mapping on an annual basis | **O** | **M** |
| Action: Complete and implement a system-wide noxious weed management plan, including specific treatment approaches for Stratton Open Space | **S** | **H** |
| Action: Concentrate immediate weed management efforts along existing trails, adjacent to trailheads, along fence lines, along roads, near adjacent construction areas (e.g., high school campus) and within previously-treated forest management units | **O** | **H** |
| Action: Remove all Russian olive (particularly in the lower meadow), and continue to control Siberian elm | **S** | **M** |
| Action: Eliminate bull thistle in compliance with management status established for 2015 | **S** | **H** |
| Action: Eliminate bouncingbet in compliance with management status established for 2016 | **S** | **H** |
| Action: Eliminate Chinese clematis in compliance with management status established for 2020 | **L** | **H** |
| Action: Conduct all forest restoration practices with an integrated noxious weed management strategy | **O** | **H** |
| Action: Integrate weed management with all management practices, including reclamation of disturbed areas, use of weed-free materials, cleaning maintenance equipment from off-site, and monitoring project areas for new weed infestations | **O** | **M** |
| **Objective 2:** Manage forest communities to reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfire and to reduce encroachment of dense scrub and pine | | |
| Action: Monitor for harmful forest insects and diseases (e.g., dwarf mistletoe, *Ips* beetle, and tussock moth) | **O** | **M** |
| Action: Refine forest management methods to minimize vegetative impacts, including disposing of slash through pile burning or use of an air curtain burner, dispersing chipped materials to avoid impacts to vegetation, and using large-diameter material to facilitate trail closures | **S** | **M** |
| Action: Integrate forest management practices with noxious weed management strategies | **O** | **M** |

| Management Strategies | Timing | Priority |
|---|---|---|
| **WILDLIFE** | | |
| ***Goal*** – Protect and enhance wildlife habitat on the property. | | |
| **Objective 1**: Plan and implement management projects in a manner that protects and enhances wildlife habitat | | |
| Action: Avoid conducting habitat-disturbing activities (e.g., tree removal, grubbing, grading) during the March-July breeding season for songbirds to avoid the destruction of nests | **O** | **M** |
| Action: Close, reclaim, and manage social trail closures to maintain unfragmented habitat for wildlife | **L** | **H** |
| Action: Work with friends groups, schools, and other partners to collect data on wildlife observations, including bird counts and opportunistic reporting | **L** | **L** |
| **TRAILS AND FACILITIES** | | |
| ***Goal*** – Manage trails and visitor use facilities to provide high-quality recreation experiences while protecting natural resource values | | |
| **Objective 1**: Develop a trail and facility master plan for Stratton Open Space and contiguous city-owned properties | | |
| Action: Comprehensively address system and non-system trails, trail realignments and closures, possible new trails, neighborhood connections, trailheads, trail standards, and wayfinding signage | **L** | **H** |
| Action: Monitor and evaluate use and function of trailheads for consideration in a future master plan | **O** | **L** |
| Action: Monitor and evaluate trail impacts during wet (rain, snow and natural springs) trail conditions and following major storm events to identify immediate problems and longer-term issues consideration in future master plan or management plan | **O** | **L** |
| **Objective 2:** Improve and replace trailhead signs and wayfinding to improve visitor experience, aesthetics, and compliance with regulations | | |
| Action: Repair or replace damaged or out-of-date signs at trailheads | **S** | **M** |
| Action: Repair, replace, or relocate wayfinding signposts that are in poor condition or are in poor locations | **O** | **M** |
| Action: Comprehensively address trail signage messaging that may include trail name, distance to common destinations, distance to nearest trail system map | **L** | **M** |
| Action: Install new trail system maps at trailheads, neighborhood connections and a major trail intersections | **L** | **M** |
| Action: Locate donor and memorial benches at designated trailheads and designated major trail intersections (see Figure 7) | **L** | **L** |

| Management Strategies | Timing | Priority |
|---|---|---|
| **Objective 3:** Implement on-going trail maintenance and management projects, emphasizing erosion and hazard areas, trail braiding, redundant trails, and non-system rogue trails | | |
| Action: Complete short reroutes of system trails to eliminate steep, eroded, or otherwise unsustainable alignments | **S** | **H** |
| Action: Complete short reroutes of system trails to minimize trail sections through poorly-drained clay soils or within drainage bottoms | **L** | **M** |
| Action: Close unsustainable and redundant trails to prevent resource damage; utilize fencing or other appropriate tools to enforce closures until vegetation re-establishes | **S** | **M** |
| Action: Emphasize trail management and maintenance efforts in specific locations (see Figure 7) | **S** | **H** |
| Action: Develop an annual work plan for staff, volunteer, and contracted trail maintenance efforts | **O** | **M** |
| Action: Collaborate with Friends of Stratton Open Space and other groups to secure sustainable trail maintenance funding | **L** | **M** |
| **VISITOR USE** | | |
| ***Goal*** – Provide visitor use experiences and opportunities that are enjoyable, safe, and appropriate while minimizing resource impacts and user conflicts. | | |
| **Objective 1:** Manage dog use on the property to allow reasonable and enjoyable access that is consistent with regulations, conflict management, and resource protection needs | | |
| Action: Install and maintain clear signs affirming dog on-leash regulations at trailheads, access points, and at South Suburban Reservoir | **S** | **H** |
| Action: Actively affirm and enforce dog regulations using a combination of outreach materials, staff presence, and law enforcement | **O** | **H** |
| Action: Place and maintain additional dog waste receptacles at trailheads and at South Suburban Reservoir | **S** | **H** |
| **Objective 2:** Manage visitor conflict through a variety of outreach and design tools | | |
| Action: Install and maintain clear signs reminding users of trail yielding etiquette (horses > hikers > bikers) | **S** | **L** |
| Action: Consider outreach tools to reduce conflict on the Chutes Trail, including suggested alternate routes for hikers and uphill bikers and yielding signs | **O** | **L** |
| Action: Consider establishing alternate preferred routes for downhill bikers to reduce traffic and conflict on the Ridge Trail | **L** | **L** |
| Action: Implement trail design features (e.g., trail chokes, turns, and improved visibility) to manage excessive bike speeds in conflict-prone locations | **L** | **M** |

| Management Strategies | Timing | Priority |
|---|---|---|
| **Objective 3:** Implement a process to manage dog access to South Suburban Reservoir in a manner that minimizes impacts to Stratton Open Space | | |
| Action: Citizen Advocates and CSU to develop a resolution for recreational use (including dog access) at South Suburban Reservoir for City Council approval | **S** | **H** |
| Action: Work with CSU to develop an Executive Agreement, containing an operations plan, for recreation and dog access to South Suburban Reservoir to clearly define allowed uses and management roles and responsibilities | **S** | **H** |
| Action: Clearly demarcate boundary between required on-leash and permitted off-leash areas through improved signage and double gates if needed | **S** | **H** |
| Action: Install and maintain dog waste receptacles at the reservoir | **S** | **H** |
| Action: Monitor and track visitor feedback regarding off-leash dog use at the reservoir and impacts on adjacent open space land | **O** | **L** |
| Action: Evaluate, with CSU and on an annual basis, the status of permitted use and unanticipated impacts on reservoir operations or open space resources | **O** | **M** |

## Monitoring

Annual stewardship monitoring is conducted in partnership with the Palmer Land Trust under the terms of the conservation easement (Appendix A). The monitoring process is documented (i.e., reports, photographs, and maps) and tracked. Documentation generally includes site conditions relative to the enforceable terms of the easement.

Additional monitoring of specific resources and specific management issues is necessary to document the on-going trajectory of management issues and to determine how well management objectives are being met. Monitoring allows the City to make informed decisions about resource management priorities and projects, and provides a feedback mechanism that facilitates on-going learning about resource issues and improvement of techniques to address them.

The monitoring of specific resources and resource issues should be performed on a periodic and on-going basis. While some monitoring is based on informed observations (e.g., trail conditions), some require more scheduled and rigorous surveys (e.g., noxious weeds). The following table provides a summary of monitoring tasks that are recommended to track the progress of the resource management strategies listed above.

**Table 2. Summary of Monitoring Actions**

| Monitoring Actions | Frequency | Methods |
|---|---|---|
| **VEGETATION MONITORING** | | |
| Action: Inventory and map noxious weed infestations | Annually | Mapping, photos |
| Action: Survey trail corridors and disturbance areas for new noxious weed infestations | Annually | Visual inspection, point mapping |
| Action: Monitor forest management areas and trail closures for new noxious weed infestations | Before/after treatment projects | Visual inspection, point mapping |
| Action: Monitor for harmful forest insects and diseases (e.g., dwarf mistletoe, *Ips* beetle, and tussock moth) | Every 3 years | Visual inspection, point mapping |
| | | |
| **WILDLIFE MONITORING** | | |
| Action: Survey for breeding bird nests prior to habitat-disturbing activities (e.g., tree removal, grubbing, grading, trail construction) during the March-July breeding season | Before projects | Surveys |
| Action: Work with friends groups, schools, and other partners to collect data on wildlife observations | Annually | Surveys, counts, observations |
| **TRAIL AND FACILITY MONITORING** | | |
| Action: Inventory and map rogue trail closures and new rogue trails on the property | Annually | Mapping, photos |
| Action: Monitor and evaluate use and function of trailheads for consideration in a future master plan | Monthly | Visual observation, documentation |

| Monitoring Actions | Frequency | Methods |
|---|---|---|
| Action: Monitor and evaluate trail impacts during wet (rain, snow and natural springs) trail conditions and following major storm events for immediate issues and longer-term consideration in future master plan or management plan. | Periodically | Visual observation, photos |
| Action: Evaluate condition of wayfinding signs | Annually | Visual observation, photos |
| Action: Document trail sections that are in poor, unsafe, or deteriorating condition | Annually | Visual inspection, point mapping, photos |
| **VISITOR USE MONITORING** | | |
| Action: Track and document off-leash dog outreach contacts, enforcement, and complaints | Ongoing | Documentation |
| Action: Monitor use and effectiveness of dog waste receptacles | Ongoing | Visual observation, documentation |
| Action: Evaluate and document trail conflict areas, and the effectiveness of conflict reduction efforts | Ongoing | Visual observation, documentation |
| Action: Track and document trail conflict complaints, including location and nature of conflict | Annually | Documentation |
| Action: Monitor and track visitor feedback regarding off-leash dog use at South Suburban Reservoir and impacts on open space land | Annually | Documentation |
| Action: If special events are permitted, monitor affected areas before and after events to track impacts and ensure impacts are appropriately mitigated | Before and after events | Visual inspections, photos |

# References

Biohabitats, Inc. 2007. Land Stewardship Plan for Stratton Open Space, Colorado Springs, 2008-2013. Prepared for the City of Colorado Springs.

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# Appendices

A. Conservation Easement

B. Public Involvement Summary

C. Plant Species List

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# DEED OF CONSERVATION EASEMENT

**NOTICE: THIS PROPERTY HAS BEEN ACQUIRED IN PART WITH A GRANT FROM THE STATE BOARD OF THE GREAT OUTDOORS COLORADO TRUST FUND (the "BOARD"). THIS DEED CONTAINS RESTRICTIONS ON THE USE AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROPERTY WHICH ARE INTENDED TO PROTECT ITS OPEN SPACE VALUES. THE BOARD HAS FOUND THAT THE ADOPTION OF THESE DEED RESTRICTIONS IS IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST.**

THIS DEED OF CONSERVATION EASEMENT is made this 8th day of July, 1998, by the City of Colorado Springs, a home rule city and Colorado municipal corporation having an address at 30 S. Nevada Avenue, Colorado Springs, Colorado ("Grantor"), in favor of the William J. Palmer Parks Foundation, Inc. a Colorado nonprofit corporation, having an address at P.O. Box 1281, Colorado Springs, Colorado ("Grantee").

A. Grantor is the sole owner in fee simple of certain real property in El Paso County, Colorado, more particularly described in the attached Exhibit A (the "Property").

B. The Property possesses natural, scenic, open space, and recreational values (collectively, "Conservation Values") of great importance to Grantor, the people of the City of Colorado Springs and the people of the State of Colorado.

C. In particular, the Property presents a unique opportunity to provide the public open space within an urban environment which will complement Grantor's North Cheyenne Canon Park, a regional park offering active and passive recreational opportunities.

D. The specific Conservation Values of the Property are documented in an inventory of relevant features of the Property ("Baseline Documentation"), which will consist of reports, maps, photographs, and other documentation that the parties agree to provide, collectively, an accurate representation of the Property at the time of this grant and which is intended to serve as an objective information baseline for monitoring compliance with the terms of this grant. The Baseline Documentation will be compiled and distributed to the parties no later than August 31, 1999. Once completed, the Baseline Documentation shall be attached to and incorporated into this Deed of Conservation Easement.

E. Grantor intends that the Conservation Values of the Property be preserved and maintained through consistent land use patterns including, without limitation, those uses existing at the time of this Easement grant which do not significantly impair or interfere with those values.

F. Grantor further intends to convey to Grantee the right to preserve and protect the Conservation Values of the Property in perpetuity.

G. Grantee is a publicly supported, tax-exempt nonprofit organization, qualified under Section 501(c)(3) and 170(h) of the Internal Revenue Code, whose primary purpose is to foster, for the people of all ages, open space, park, recreation and leisure time facilities and opportunities, within the City of Colorado Springs, State of Colorado, and County of El Paso, State of Colorado, and areas surrounding or convenient thereto. In furtherance of its purpose, but not otherwise, the Grantee has the following powers:

7/56 C-2-2

1. To seek and accept public or private contributions, gifts, bequests, devises, grants or donations, and to expend, accumulate and invest the same;

2. To acquire by purchase, contribution, gift, bequest, devise, grant or donation or otherwise, and to hold, lease, encumber, sell or otherwise dispose of real, personal tangible or intangible property;

3. To make distributions and donations of money or property to the City of Colorado Springs, State of Colorado, or to the County of El Paso, State of Colorado, or to any national, state, county, municipal, or other governmental unit, board or corporation;

4. To exercise the powers which are now or may hereinafter be conferred upon corporations not for profit organized under the laws of the State of Colorado.

H. Grantee agrees to honor the Grantor's stated intentions and to preserve and protect in perpetuity the Conservation Values of the Property for the benefit of this generation and the generations to come.

IN CONSIDERATION of the mutual covenants, terms, conditions, and restrictions contained in this Easement and pursuant to the laws of the State of Colorado, in particular C.R.S. § 38-30.5-101 *et seq.*, Grantor voluntarily grants and conveys to Grantee a Conservation Easement in perpetuity over the Property of the nature, character and extent set forth below ("Easement").

1. Purpose. The purpose of this Easement is to assure that the Property will be retained forever in its natural, scenic, open space and recreation condition and to prevent any use of the Property that will significantly impair or interfere with the Conservation Values of the Property. Grantor intends that this Easement will confine the use of the Property to those activities consistent with the purpose of this Easement.

2. Rights and Obligations of Grantee. To accomplish the purpose of this Easement, the following rights are conveyed to Grantee:

a. To preserve and protect the Conservation Values of the Property;

b. To enter upon the Property at reasonable times to monitor Grantor's compliance with and otherwise enforce the terms of this Easement. Any entry upon the Property shall be upon prior notice to Grantor. Grantee shall not unreasonably interfere with Grantor's use and quiet enjoyment of the Property; and

c. To prevent any activity or use of the Property inconsistent with the purpose of this Easement and to require the restoration of any damaged areas or features of the Property resulting from any inconsistent activity or use.

d. Grantee agrees it shall comply with the Board's Stewardship Policy adopted January 8, 1997, attached as Exhibit B, as may be amended from time to time with the mutual consent of the Board and Grantee.

3. Prohibited Uses. Any activity or use of the Property inconsistent with the purpose of this Easement is prohibited. Without limiting this general prohibition, the following activities and uses are expressly prohibited:

a. Construction of Buildings and Other Structures. The construction or reconstruction of any building or other structure or improvement, except those existing on the date of this Easement, without the advance written permission of Grantee is prohibited except in accordance with paragraphs (b) and (c) below.

b. Fences. Grantor may repair or replace existing fences, or erect new fences necessary for the reasonable and customary management of wildlife, recreation uses or for separation of ownership and uses.

c. New Structures and Improvements. New buildings and other structures and improvements may be built with the advance written permission of Grantee. Grantee must give such permission within a reasonable time unless Grantee determines that the proposed building, structure or improvement will substantially diminish or impair the Conservation Values of the Property. The parties acknowledge that new structures and improvements will be constructed in accord with a Grantee-approved master plan for the Property.

d. Subdivision. Any division or subdivision of title to the Property, whether by physical or legal process, is prohibited.

e. Land Management. The Property must be operated and managed in accordance with a land stewardship plan prepared and accepted with the mutual consent of Grantor and Grantee. The land stewardship plan will be updated every five (5) years and distributed to the parties.

f. Timber Harvesting. Trees may be cut to control insects and disease, to control invasive non-native species, and to prevent personal injury and property damage. Commercial timber harvesting on the Property is prohibited.

g. Mining. The mining or extraction of soil, sand, gravel, rock, oil, natural gas, fuel or any other mineral substance is prohibited except in connection with construction approved pursuant to a Grantee-approved master plan for the Property.

h. Paving and Road and Trail Construction. No portion of the Property may be paved or otherwise covered with concrete, asphalt, or any other paving material without the advance written permission of the Grantee. Nor may any road or trail beyond those necessary to connect the Property to the Grantor's urban trail system be constructed without the advance written permission of Grantee. Grantee must give permission within a reasonable time unless Grantee determines that the proposed paving, construction, or location of any road or trail will substantially diminish or impair the Conservation Values of the Property or is otherwise inconsistent with this Easement. Permission shall not be unreasonably withheld.

i. Trash. The dumping or uncontained accumulation of any trash, refuse or debris on the Property is prohibited.

j. Water Rights. Grantor shall make an effort to obtain water rights to the Property and shall retain and reserve the right to use any water rights sufficient to maintain and improve the Conservation Values of the Property. Grantor may not transfer, encumber, lease, sell or otherwise separate water rights sufficient to maintain and improve the Conservation Values of the Property from title to the Property itself.

k. Commercial or Industrial Activity. All commercial or industrial uses of the Property are prohibited.

4. Reserved Rights. Grantor reserves to itself, its successors and assigns, all rights accruing from ownership of the Property, including the right to engage in or to permit or invite others to engage in all uses of the Property not expressly prohibited and not inconsistent with the purpose of this Easement.

5. Notice of Intention to Undertake Certain Permitted Actions. The purpose of requiring Grantor to notify Grantee prior to undertaking certain activities is to afford Grantee an opportunity to ensure that the activities are assigned and carried out in a manner consistent with the purpose of this Easement. Whenever notice is required, Grantor shall notify Grantee in writing not less than sixty (60) days prior to the date Grantor intends to undertake the activity. Notice shall described the nature, scope, design, location, timetable, and any other information material to the proposed activity in sufficient detail to permit Grantee to make an informed judgement of its consistency with the purpose of this Easement.

6. Grantee's Approval. Where Grantee's approval is required, Grantee must grant approval or withhold approval in writing within sixty (60) days of receipt of Grantor's written request. Grantee's approval may be withheld only upon a reasonable determination that the action as proposed would be inconsistent with the purpose of this Easement.

7. Enforcement. Grantee shall have the right to prevent, correct or require correction of violations of the terms and purposes of this Easement. Grantee may enter and inspect the Property for violations. If Grantee finds what it believes is a violation, Grantee shall immediately notify Grantor and the Board in writing of the nature of the alleged violation. Upon receipt of this written notice, Grantor must either (a) restore the Property to its condition prior to the violation, or (b) provide Grantee a written explanation of the reason the alleged violation should be permitted. If the Grantor offers justification for permitting the alleged violation, both parties agree to meet as soon as possible to resolve this difference. If a resolution cannot be achieved at the meeting, both parties agree to meet with a mutually acceptable mediator to attempt resolution. When Grantee determines an ongoing or imminent violation could irreversibly diminish or impair the Conservation Values of the Property, Grantee may, at its discretion, take appropriate legal action. Grantor must discontinue any activity which could increase or expand the alleged violation during the mediation process. Should mediation fail to resolve the dispute, Grantee may again, at its discretion, take appropriate legal action. If a court determines that a violation is imminent, exists, or has occurred, Grantee may request a temporary or permanent injunction. A court may also issue an injunction to require Grantor to restore the Property to its condition prior to the violation.

Costs of Enforcement. Any costs incurred by Grantee in successfully enforcing the terms of this Easement against Grantor, including, without limitation, costs of suit and attorneys' fees, and any costs of restoration necessitated by Grantor's violation of the terms of this Easement shall be borne by Grantor. If Grantor prevails in any action to enforce the terms of this Easement, Grantor's costs of suit, including, without limitation, attorneys' fees, shall be borne by Grantee, but only if the mediator, arbitrator, or Judge, as applicable, determines that the Grantee's position was frivolous or substantially without merit.

8. Grantee's Discretion. Enforcement of the terms of this Easement shall be at the discretion of Grantee. Any forbearance by Grantee to exercise its rights in the event of a breach of this Easement shall not be deemed or construed to be a waiver by Grantee of the breach or of any

subsequent breach of the same or any other term of this Easement or of any of Grantee's rights under this Easement. Grantee's delay or omission in exercising any right or remedy upon Grantor's breach shall not impair any right or remedy construed as a waiver.

9. Waiver of Certain Defenses. Grantor hereby waives any defense of laches, estoppel, or prescription. The parties agree that the statute of limitations applicable to contract shall apply to any proceeding to enforce this Conservation Easement. Grantor hereby specifically waives any defense available to Grantor pursuant to C.R.S. § 38-41-119.

10. Acts Beyond Grantor's Control. No event shall be construed to entitle Grantee to bring any action against Grantor for injury to or change in the Property resulting from causes beyond Grantors's control, including, without limitation, fire, flood, storm, drought, earth or underground water movement, or from any prudent action taken by Grantor under emergency conditions to prevent, abate, or mitigate significant injury to the Property resulting from such causes.

11. Access. In accord with the Code of the City of Colorado Springs 1980, as amended, the general public shall have access to the Property, as appropriate. The Grantor specifically reserves the right to close access to the Property in the interest of the public health, safety and welfare, pursuant to Section 18-2-104 of the Code of the City of Colorado Springs 1980, as amended.

12. Costs and Liabilities. Grantor retains all responsibilities and shall bear all costs and liabilities of any kind related to ownership, operation, upkeep and maintenance of the Property. Grantor is responsible for (1) the negligent actions of its officials, employees and agents in the performance or failure to perform incident to this Easement, and (2) injury to or the death of any person, or physical damage to any property, resulting from any act, omission, condition , or other matter related to or occurring on or about the Property, regardless of cause unless due solely to the negligence of the Grantee. Grantor, to the extent permitted by law, shall indemnify and defend Grantee from any third party claims related to Grantor's ownership, operation, upkeep, or maintenance of the Property.

It is agreed that Grantor's liability will not exceed any applicable limit set forth in the Colorado Governmental Immunity Act, C.R.S. § 24-10-101 *et seq.*, as amended. The Grantor does not waive or intend to waive the limitations on liability provided to Grantor under the Colorado Governmental Immunity Act. In assuming responsibility for the negligent acts or omissions of its own officials, agents and employees in the performance or failure to perform incident to this Agreement, the Grantor in no way assumes responsibility for the negligence or intentional misconduct of the employees or agents of Grantee.

13. Extinguishment. If the purpose of this Easement becomes impossible to accomplish, this Easement can only be wholly or partially terminated or extinguished by judicial proceedings in a court of competent jurisdiction. Each party shall promptly notify the other when it first learns of such circumstances, and must also notify the Board of such circumstances. Grantee's proceeds, after the satisfaction of prior claims, from any sale, exchange or involuntary conversion of all or any portion of the Property subsequent to termination or extinguishment, must be in accordance with paragraph 14 below, unless otherwise provided by Colorado law. Grantee shall pay to the Board the proportion of the net proceeds of the sale of the Property, which is equal to a fraction, the numerator of which is the grant and the denominator of which is the acquisition price for the Property. Any remaining proceeds not otherwise allocated between the Board and the Grantee shall be retained by Grantor.

If this Easement is extinguished (in whole or in part) by eminent domain or other legal proceeding, Grantee shall pay to the Board the proportion of the net proceeds of the sale of the Property, which is equal to a fraction the numerator of which is the grant and the denominator of which is the original acquisition price for the Property.

14. Proceeds. This Easement constitutes a real property interest immediately vested in Grantee, which the parties stipulate has a fair market value ("FMV"). The Easement's FMV is determined by multiplying the FMV of the Property unencumbered by the Easement (minus any increase in value after the date of this Easement grant attributable to improvements) by the ratio of the value of the Easement at the time of this Easement grant to the value of the Property, without deduction for the value of the Easement, at the time of this Easement grant. For the purposes of this paragraph, the ratio of the value of the Easement to the value of the Property unencumbered by the Easement will remain constant.

15. Grantee Assignment. This Easement is transferable. Grantee may only assign its rights and obligations under this Easement to an organization that is (a) a qualified organization at the time of transfer under Section 170(h) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended (or any successor provision then applicable), and the applicable regulations promulgated thereunder, (b) authorized to acquire and hold conservation easements under Colorado law, and (c) approved as a transferee by the Board, its successors or assigns. As a condition of transfer, Grantee must ensure that the conservation purposes of this Easement continue to be carried out by the transferee. The Board retains the right to compel Grantee to assign its rights and obligations under this Easement to another organization if Grantee ceases to exist or fails or refuses to enforce the terms and provisions of this Easement.

16. Subsequent Grantor Transfers. Grantor agrees to incorporate the terms of this Easement into any deed or other legal instrument by which it divests itself of any interest in the Property, including without limitation, a leasehold interest. Grantor further agrees to give written notice to Grantee of the transfer of any interest at least thirty (30) days prior to the date of the transfer. Grantor's failure to perform any act required by this paragraph will not impair the validity of this Easement or limit its enforceability in any way.

17. Notices. Any notice, demand, request, consent, approval or communication contemplated by this Easement shall be in writing and either served personally or sent by first class mail, postage prepaid, addressed as follows:

| | |
|---|---|
| To Grantor: | City of Colorado Springs<br>Director of Parks and Recreation<br>1400 Recreation Way<br>Colorado Springs, CO 80905 |
| To Grantee: | The William J. Palmer Parks Foundation, Inc.<br>Executive Director<br>P.O. Box 1281<br>Colorado Springs, CO 80901 |
| To the Board: | Executive Director<br>State Board of the Great Outdoors Colorado Trust Fund<br>225 East 16th Avenue, Suite 1150<br>Denver, CO 80203 |

or to other addresses as the parties may designate by written notice to the other.

18. Recordation. This instrument will be recorded with the deed to the Property and other documents evidencing Grantor's acquisition of the Property with the El Paso County, Colorado, Clerk and Recorder. Grantee may re-record it at any time as may be required to preserve its rights in this Easement.

19. General Provisions.

a. Controlling Law. The interpretation and performance of this Easement shall be governed by the laws of the State of Colorado, and the Charter, City Code, Ordinances, Rules and Regulations of the City of Colorado Springs, Colorado, a home rule city and Colorado municipal corporation. Court Jurisdiction shall exclusively be in the District Court for the Fourth Judicial District of Colorado.

b. Liberal Construction. This Easement shall be liberally construed to effect the purpose of the Easement and the policy and purpose of C.R.S. § 38-30.5-101 *et seq.* If any provision in this Deed of Conservation Easement is found to be ambiguous, an interpretation consistent with the purpose of this Easement that would render the provision valid shall be favored over any interpretation that would render it invalid.

c. Severability. If any provision of this Easement, or its application to any person or circumstance, is found to be invalid, the remaining provisions of this Easement, or its application to other persons or circumstances shall not be affected.

d. Entire Agreement. This Deed of Conservation Easement sets forth the entire agreement of the parties with respect to the Easement and supersedes all prior discussions, negotiations, understandings or agreements relating to the Easement, all of which are merged in this Easement.

e. No Forfeiture. Nothing contained herein will result in a forfeiture or reversion of Grantor's title in any respect.

f. Successors. The covenants, terms, conditions, and restrictions of this Easement shall be binding upon, and inure to the benefit of, the parties and their respective successors and assigns. This Easement shall continue as a servitude running in perpetuity with the Property.

g. Termination of Rights and Obligations. A party's rights and obligations under this Easement terminate upon transfer of the party's interest in the Easement or Property, except that liability for acts or omissions occurring prior to transfer shall survive transfer.

h. Captions. The captions in this Deed of Conservation Easement have been inserted solely for convenience of reference, are not a part of the Easement and have no effect upon its construction or interpretation.

i. Amendment. Should an amendment to or modification of this Easement become appropriate, Grantor and Grantee are free to jointly amend this document. The prior written approval of any amendment or modification of this Easement must be obtained from the Board and the Board must respond within thirty (30) days. Board's failure to respond within thirty (30) days shall be deemed approval of the proposed amendment. Any amendment or modification must be consistent

with the conservation purposes of this Easement and may not affect its perpetual duration. Any amendment, must be written, signed by both parties and the Board or its successors or assigns, and recorded in the records of the El Paso County Clerk and Recorder.

j. Termination of the Board. In the event that Article XXVII of the Colorado Constitution, which established the Board, is amended or repealed to terminate the Board or merge the Board into another entity, the rights and obligations of the Board under this Easement shall be assigned to and assumed by another entity as provided by law, or in the absence of such direction, by the Colorado Department of Natural Resources or its successor.

INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

TO HAVE AND TO HOLD by Grantee, its successors, and assigns forever, Grantor and Grantee have executed this Deed of Conservation Easement on the day and year written above.

FOR THE GRANTOR:

CITY OF COLORADO SPRINGS

Richard Reich
Land Manager

FOR THE GRANTEE:

THE WILLIAM J. PALMER PARKS FOUNDATION, INC.

Paula L. Wenham
President

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Wynetta Massese
Senior Corporate Attorney
City of Colorado Springs

ATTEST:

Leslie A. Flaks
Secretary

STATE OF COLORADO )
) ss.
COUNTY OF EL PASO )

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 8th day of July, 1998, by **Richard Reich**, as Land Manager for the City of Colorado Springs.

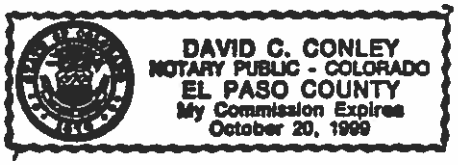
My Commission expires: 4-29-02

Notary Public

STATE OF COLORADO )
) ss.
COUNTY OF EL PASO )

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 8th day of July, 1998, by **P.J. Wenham and Leslie Flaks**, as President and Secretary, respectively, of the William J. Palmer Parks Foundation, Inc.

My Commission expires: _____.




Notary Public

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# PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

## TRACTS 4 AND A

A TRACT OF LAND BEING PORTIONS OF THE SOUTHEAST QUARTER OF THE NORTHWEST QUARTER OF SECTION 26, THE SOUTHEAST QUARTER OF SECTION 26, THE SOUTHWEST QUARTER OF SECTION 26, THE SOUTHEAST QUARTER OF SECTION 27 AND THE NORTH HALF OF SECTION 35, ALL IN TOWNSHIP 14 SOUTH, RANGE 67 WEST OF THE 6TH P.M. IN THE CITY OF COLORADO SPRINGS, EL PASO COUNTY, COLORADO, AND BEING MORE PARTICULARLY DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS:

THE BASIS OF BEARINGS FOR THIS DESCRIPTION IS THE EAST LINE OF THE SOUTHEAST QUARTER OF SECTION 27, TOWNSHIP 14 SOUTH, RANGE 67 OF THE 6TH P.M., N00°48'27"W A DISTANCE OF 2598.95 FEET. THE BEARING IS A GRID BEARING OF THE COLORADO STATE PLANE COORDINATE SYSTEM, CENTRAL ZONE, N.A.D. 1983. THE LINE IS MONUMENTED BY A 2" DIAMETER PIPE AND 2½" DIAMETER PIPE CAP, LS 2372, ON THE SOUTH AND A 2½" DIAMETER ALUMINUM CAP LS 19625 ON THE NORTH.

COMMENCING AT THE SOUTHEAST CORNER OF THE SOUTHEAST QUARTER OF SECTION 27; THENCE N00°48'27"W ON THE EAST LINE OF SAID SOUTHEAST QUARTER A DISTANCE OF 649.93 FEET TO THE SOUTHEAST CORNER OF THE NORTH HALF OF THE SOUTHEAST QUARTER OF SECTION 27 AS MONUMENTED BY A 2" DIAMETER PIPE WITH A 2½" DIAMETER PIPE CAP, LS 2372, AND THE POINT OF BEGINNING OF THE TRACT DESCRIBED HEREIN; THENCE S89°20'41"W ON THE NORTH LINE OF THAT TRACT OF LAND DESCRIBED IN BOOK 2383 AT PAGE 47 OF THE EL PASO COUNTY RECORDS A DISTANCE OF 1288.74 FEET TO THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF SAID TRACT; THENCE S01°09'30"E ON THE WEST LINE OF SAID TRACT A DISTANCE OF 651.40 FEET TO THE SOUTHEAST CORNER OF THE SOUTHWEST QUARTER OF THE SOUTHEAST QUARTER OF SECTION 27; THE S89°16'50"W ON THE SOUTH LINE OF SAID SOUTHWEST QUARTER OF THE SOUTHEAST QUARTER A DISTANCE OF 1284.75 FEET TO THE SOUTHWEST CORNER THEREOF; THENCE N02°16'20"W ON THE WEST LINE OF SAID SOUTHWEST QUARTER OF THE SOUTHEAST QUARTER A DISTANCE OF 1296.67 FEET TO THE NORTHWEST CORNER THEREOF; THENCE N89°12'30"E ON THE NORTH LINE OF THE SOUTH HALF OF THE SOUTHEAST QUARTER A DISTANCE OF 1601.32 FEET TO A POINT 300 FEET EAST OF THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF THE SOUTHEAST QUARTER OF THE SOUTHEAST QUARTER, SAID POINT BEING THE SOUTHEAST CORNER OF THAT TRACT OF LAND DESCRIBED IN BOOK 910 AT PAGE



EXHIBIT A

359 OF SAID EL PASO COUNTY RECORDS; THENCE N26°13'19"W ON THE EASTERLY LINE OF SAID TRACT A DISTANCE OF 1436.69 FEET TO A POINT ON THE NORTH LINE OF THE SOUTHEAST QUARTER THAT IS 300 FEET WEST OF THE NORTHEAST CORNER OF THE NORTHWEST QUARTER OF THE SOUTHEAST QUARTER; THENCE N89°08'17"E ON THE NORTH LINE OF THE SOUTHEAST QUARTER A DISTANCE OF 1617.89 FEET TO THE NORTHEAST CORNER THEREOF; THENCE S89°59'08"E ON THE NORTH LINE OF THE NORTHWEST QUARTER OF THE SOUTHWEST QUARTER OF SECTION 26 A DISTANCE OF 1317.98 FEET TO THE NORTHEAST CORNER THEREOF; THENCE N00°49'56"W ON THE WEST LINE OF THE SOUTHEAST QUARTER OF THE NORTHWEST QUARTER A DISTANCE OF 246.44 FEET TO THE SOUTHWEST CORNER OF THAT TRACT DESCRIBED AT RECEPTION NO. 098057305 OF SAID EL PASO COUNTY RECORDS; THE FOLLOWING FIVE (5) COURSES ARE ALONG THE SOUTHERLY AND EASTERLY LINES OF SAID TRACT: (1) THENCE ON A CURVE TO THE LEFT HAVING A RADIUS OF 300.00 FEET THROUGH A CENTRAL ANGLE OF 49°39'02", AN ARC DISTANCE OF 259.97 FEET, THE LONG CHORD OF WHICH BEARS N70°04'28"E A DISTANCE OF 251.91 FEET TO A POINT OF REVERSE CURVATURE; (2) THENCE ON A CURVE TO THE RIGHT HAVING A RADIUS OF 250.00 FEET THROUGH A CENTRAL ANGLE OF 26°04'55", AN ARC DISTANCE OF 113.80 FEET, THE LONG CHORD OF WHICH BEARS N58°17'24"E A DISTANCE OF 112.82 FEET; (3) THENCE N69°52'59"E A DISTANCE OF 100.67 FEET; (4) THENCE N59°52'36"E A DISTANCE OF 135.00 FEET; (5) THENCE N17°03'11"E A DISTANCE OF 80.00 FEET TO A POINT ON THE SOUTH LINE OF THE VILLAGE AT STRATTON PRESERVE AS SHOWN ON THE SUBDIVISION PLAT THEREOF RECORDED AT RECEPTION NO. 997066121 OF SAID EL PASO COUNTY RECORDS; THENCE N89°57'16"E ON THE SOUTH LINE OF SAID SUBDIVISION A DISTANCE OF 604.97 FEET TO THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF THAT TRACT OF LAND DESCRIBED AT RECEPTION NO. 97053161 OF SAID EL PASO COUNTY RECORDS; THENCE S00°02'44"E ON THE WEST LINE OF SAID TRACT A DISTANCE OF 893.56 FEET; THENCE S47°10'26"E ON THE SOUTHWESTERLY LINE OF SAID TRACT A DISTANCE OF 845.00 FEET; THENCE S89°00'58"W A DISTANCE OF 163.93 FEET TO A POINT OF CURVE; THENCE ON A CURVE TO THE LEFT HAVING A RADIUS OF 280.00 FEET, THROUGH A CENTRAL ANGLE OF 73°53'00", AN ARC DISTANCE OF 361.06 FEET; THENCE S15°07'58"W A DISTANCE OF 144.67 FEET TO A POINT OF CURVE; THENCE ON A CURVE TO THE RIGHT HAVING A RADIUS OF 370.00 FEET, THROUGH A CENTRAL ANGLE OF 17°34'58", AN ARC DISTANCE OF 113.54 FEET; THENCE S57°17'04"E A DISTANCE OF 60.00 FEET; THENCE ON A CURVE TO THE RIGHT HAVING A RADIUS OF 430.00 FEET THROUGH A CENTRAL ANGLE OF 47°35'02", AN ARC DISTANCE OF 357.11 FEET, THE LONG CHORD OF WHICH BEARS S56°30'27"W A DISTANCE OF 346.94 FEET; THENCE S80°17'58"W A DISTANCE OF 110.53 FEET; THENCE S22°58'00"W A DISTANCE OF 484.40 FEET; THENCE S04°43'00"W A DISTANCE OF 555.70 FEET; THENCE S23°28'00"E A DISTANCE OF 274.88 FEET; THENCE S29°20'00"W A DISTANCE OF 106.31 FEET; THENCE N87°37'27"W A DISTANCE OF 653.32 FEET TO A POINT ON THE EASTERLY LINE OF THE AFORESAID TRACT DESCRIBED IN BOOK 2383 AT PAGE 47; THE FOLLOWING FIVE (5) COURSES ARE ALONG THE EASTERLY AND NORTHERLY LINES OF SAID TRACT: (1) THENCE N11°37'41"E A DISTANCE OF 243.40 FEET; (2) THENCE N15°48'00"W A

DISTANCE OF 393.71 FEET; (3) THENCE N34°30'48"W A DISTANCE OF 73.45 FEET; (4) THENCE N57°16'58"W A DISTANCE OF 109.45 FEET; (5) THENCE N79°22'56"W A DISTANCE OF 1218.02 FEET TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING: THE DESCRIBED TRACT CONTAINING 242.5556 ACRES, EXCEPTING THEREFROM THE FOLLOWING DESCRIBED RIGHT-OF-WAY FOR GOLD CAMP ROAD.

A TRACT OF LAND BEING A PORTION OF THE SOUTHWEST QUARTER OF THE SOUTHEAST QUARTER OF SECTION 27, TOWNSHIP 14 SOUTH, RANGE 67 WEST, IN THE CITY OF COLORADO SPRINGS, EL PASO COUNTY, COLORADO, AND BEING MORE PARTICULARLY DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS:

A STRIP OF LAND BEING 100 FEET WIDE AND BEING 50 FEET ON EITHER SIDE OF THE FOLLOWING DESCRIBED CENTERLINE: COMMENCING AT THE SOUTHWEST CORNER OF THE SOUTHEAST QUARTER OF SECTION 27; THE N89°16'50"E ON THE SOUTH LINE OF THE SOUTHEAST QUARTER A DISTANCE OF 542.52 FEET TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING OF THE CENTERLINE OF SAID 100 FOOT WIDE STRIP OF LAND; THENCE ON A CURVE TO THE LEFT HAVING A RADIUS OF 358.10 FEET THROUGH A CENTRAL ANGLE OF 28°00'00", AN ARC DISTANCE OF 175.00 FEET, THE LONG CHORD OF WHICH BEARS N34°24'28"W A DISTANCE OF 173.26 FEET; THENCE N48°24'28"W A DISTANCE OF 153.00 FEET; THENCE ON A CURVE TO THE RIGHT HAVING A RADIUS OF 358.10 FEET THROUGH A CENTRAL ANGLE OF 81°55'12", AN ARC DISTANCE OF 512.00 FEET; THENCE N33°30'44"E A DISTANCE OF 110.00 FEET; THENCE ON A CURVE TO THE LEFT HAVING A RADIUS OF 358.10 FEET THROUGH A CENTRAL ANGLE OF 56°28'48", AN ARC DISTANCE OF 353.00 FEET; THENCE N22°58'04"W A DISTANCE OF 167.72 FEET TO A POINT ON THE NORTH LINE OF THE SOUTHWEST QUARTER OF THE SOUTHEAST QUARTER AND THE TERMINUS OF SAID CENTERLINE, SAID POINT BEARING N89°12'30"E A DISTANCE OF 347.15 FEET FROM THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF THE SOUTHWEST QUARTER OF THE SOUTHEAST QUARTER, THE EXTERIOR LINES OF SAID TRACT SHALL BE LENGTHENED OR SHORTENED TO INTERSECT THE ALIQUOT QUARTER SECTION LINES: THE DESCRIBED TRACT CONTAINING 3.3762 ACRES, MORE OR LESS.

COLORADO REGISTERED
KEVIN M. O'LEARY
C-28658
29 MAY 1998
PROFESSIONAL LAND SURVEYOR

Leigh Whitehead & Associates, Inc.
ENGINEERS, SURVEYORS & PLANNERS

2720 EAST YAMPA STREET, SUITE 1
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# PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

## TRACT 2

A TRACT OF LAND BEING PORTIONS OF THE NORTHEAST QUARTER OF THE NORTHWEST QUARTER AND THE NORTHWEST QUARTER OF THE NORTHEAST QUARTER OF SECTION 35 AND A PORTION OF THE SOUTHEAST QUARTER OF SECTION 26, TOWNSHIP 14 SOUTH, RANGE 67 WEST OF THE 6TH P.M., EL PASO COUNTY, COLORADO, MORE PARTICULARLY DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS:

BEGINNING AT THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF LOT ONE, BLOCK 11, STRATTON PARK ADDITION ACCORDING TO THE SUBDIVISION PLAT THEREOF RECORDED IN PLAT BOOK D AT PAGES 34 AND 35 OF THE RECORDS OF THE EL PASO COUNTY CLERK AND RECORDER, SAID CORNER ALSO BEING THE SOUTHEAST CORNER OF A TRACT DESCRIBED IN BOOK 2383 AT PAGE 47 OF SAID EL PASO COUNTY RECORDS; THENCE S89°29'12"E ON THE NORTHERLY LINE OF SAID BLOCK 11 A DISTANCE OF 254.60 FEET; THENCE N17°16'48"E ON THE WESTERLY LINE OF SAID BLOCK 11 A DISTANCE OF 336.40 FEET; THENCE S61°51'49"E ON THE NORTHEASTERLY LINE OF LOT 13 OF SAID BLOCK 11 A DISTANCE OF 151.90 FEET; THENCE S74°25'04"E ON THE BOUNDARY OF SAID STRATTON PARK ADDITION A DISTANCE OF 40.81 FEET; THENCE N28°49'58"E A DISTANCE OF 20.08 FEET TO A POINT ON THE WESTERLY LINE OF LOT 14, BLOCK 9, STRATTON PARK ADDITION, SAID POINT ALSO BEING THE MOST SOUTHERLY CORNER OF A TRACT DESCRIBED IN BOOK 2779 AT PAGE 554 OF SAID EL PASO COUNTY RECORDS; THENCE N19°09'22"E ON THE WESTERLY LINE OF SAID TRACT A DISTANCE OF 130.50 FEET TO THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF SAID TRACT; THENCE S75°10'49"E ON THE NORTHERLY LINE OF SAID TRACT AND THE NORTHERLY LINE OF BLOCK 9, STRATTON PARK ADDITION A DISTANCE OF 281.04 FEET TO THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF LAMBERTY SUBDIVISION, A REPLAT OF LOTS 7 AND 8, BLOCK 9, STRATTON PARK ADDITION ACCORDING TO THE SUBDIVISION PLAT THEREOF RECORDED IN PLAT BOOK W-3 AT PAGE 40 OF THE RECORDS OF THE EL PASO COUNTY CLERK AND RECORDER; THENCE N48°05'15"E ON THE NORTHWESTERLY LINE OF SAID LAMBERTY SUBDIVISION, SAID BLOCK 9, STRATTON PARK ADDITION, RIDGEWAY SUBDIVISION ACCORDING TO THE SUBDIVISION PLAT THEREOF RECORDED IN PLAT BOOK N-3 AT PAGE 58 OF THE RECORDS OF THE EL PASO COUNTY CLERK AND RECORDER AND A TRACT DESCRIBED IN BOOK 6525 AT PAGE 1468 OF SAID RECORDS, A DISTANCE OF 503.64 FEET TO THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF SAID TRACT; THENCE S66°16'32"E ON THE NORTHEASTERLY LINE OF SAID TRACT A DISTANCE OF 81.27 FEET; THENCE

N29°30'17"E ON THE NORTHWESTERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF RIDGEWAY AVENUE A DISTANCE OF 45.07 FEET; THENCE ON THE APPARENT WESTERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF UNDEDICATED RIDGEWAY AVENUE THE FOLLOWING FOUR COURSES: 1) THENCE N41°19'08"E A DISTANCE OF 151.11 FEET; 2) THENCE N56°53'24"E A DISTANCE OF 216.53 FEET; 3) THENCE N61°13'54"E A DISTANCE OF 204.87 FEET; 4) THENCE N79°39'55"E A DISTANCE OF 93.68 FEET TO THE SOUTHWESTERLY CORNER OF A TRACT DESCRIBED IN BOOK 6026 AT PAGE 480 OF SAID RECORDS; THENCE N29°19'55"E ON THE NORTH LINE OF SAID TRACT A DISTANCE OF 164.28 FEET TO THE SOUTHWESTERLY CORNER OF A TRACT DESCRIBED IN BOOK 6066 AT PAGE 897 OF SAID RECORDS; THENCE N28°34'57"E ON THE WESTERLY LINES OF SAID TRACT DESCRIBED IN BOOK 6066, PAGE 897, A TRACT DESCRIBED IN BOOK 6345 AT PAGE 1476 OF SAID RECORDS, LOT 10, BOULEVARD SUBDIVISION ACCORDING TO THE SUBDIVISION PLAT THEREOF RECORDED IN PLAT BOOK L AT PAGE 41 OF THE RECORDS OF THE EL PASO COUNTY CLERK AND RECORDER AND A TRACT DESCRIBED IN BOOK 3189 AT PAGE 694 OF SAID RECORDS A DISTANCE OF 564.07 FEET; THENCE S59°07'49"E ON THE NORTHERLY LINE OF SAID TRACT DESCRIBED IN BOOK 3189 AT PAGE 694 A DISTANCE OF 109.63 FEET TO THE SOUTHWEST CORNER OF LOT 1, CRESTA VISTA SUBDIVISION FILING NO. 3 ACCORDING TO THE SUBDIVISION PLAT THEREOF RECORDED IN PLAT BOOK U AT PAGE 74 OF THE RECORDS OF THE EL PASO COUNTY CLERK AND RECORDER; THENCE N24°03'50"E ON THE WESTERLY LINE OF SAID CRESTA VISTA SUBDIVISION NO. 3 A DISTANCE OF 602.13 FEET TO THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF LOT 6, SAID CRESTA VISTA NO. 3; THENCE N20°33'50"E ON SAID WESTERLY LINE A DISTANCE OF 154.80 FEET TO THE SOUTHEASTERLY CORNER OF LOT 8, SAID CRESTA VISTA NO. 3; THENCE N55°12'44"W ON THE SOUTH LINE OF SAID LOT 8 A DISTANCE OF 164.88 FEET TO THE CENTERLINE OF A 16 FOOT ALLEY VACATED IN BOOK 1637, PAGE 47 OF SAID RECORDS, SAID POINT ALSO BEING THE NORTHEASTERLY CORNER OF A TRACT DESCRIBED IN BOOK 6124 AT PAGE 849 OF SAID RECORDS; THENCE S39°22'48"W ON THE EASTERLY LINE OF SAID TRACT A DISTANCE OF 39.02 FEET; THENCE N66°01'57"W ON THE SOUTH LINE OF SAID TRACT A DISTANCE OF 129.32 FEET TO THE SOUTHEASTERLY CORNER OF A TRACT DESCRIBED IN BOOK 2118 AT PAGE 263 OF SAID RECORDS; THENCE N55°23'56"W ON THE SOUTH LINE OF SAID TRACT A DISTANCE OF 119.26 FEET TO THE SOUTHEASTERLY CORNER OF A TRACT DESCRIBED IN BOOK 3013 AT PAGE 942 OF SAID RECORDS; THENCE N60°39'03"W ON THE SOUTH LINE OF SAID TRACT A DISTANCE OF 113.90 FEET TO THE SOUTHEASTERLY CORNER OF A TRACT DESCRIBED IN BOOK 2367 AT PAGE 446 OF SAID RECORDS; THENCE N62°47'15"W ON THE SOUTH LINE OF SAID TRACT A DISTANCE OF 109.99 FEET TO THE SOUTHEASTERLY CORNER OF A TRACT DESCRIBED IN BOOK 1670 AT PAGE 347 OF SAID RECORDS; THENCE S89°29'00"W ON THE SOUTH LINE OF SAID TRACT A DISTANCE OF 130.70 FEET; THENCE N38°58'23"E ON THE NORTHWESTERLY LINE OF SAID TRACT A DISTANCE OF 165.58 FEET TO THE MOST SOUTHERLY CORNER OF LOT 14, CRESTA VISTA NO. 3; THENCE N55°09'40"W ON THE SOUTHWESTERLY LINE OF SAID LOT 14 A DISTANCE OF 156.80 FEET TO THE MOST WESTERLY CORNER OF SAID LOT 14; THENCE N60°26'24"E ON THE NORTHWESTERLY LINE OF SAID LOT 14 A

DISTANCE OF 177.29 FEET TO THE MOST NORTHERLY CORNER OF SAID LOT 14; THENCE N50°53'03"W ON THE SOUTHWESTERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF LA VETA WAY A DISTANCE OF 64.38 FEET TO A POINT ON THE SOUTHERLY LINE OF THAT TRACT DESCRIBED AT RECEPTION NO. 97053161 OF SAID EL PASO COUNTY RECORDS; THENCE S60°27'10"W ON SAID SOUTH LINE A DISTANCE OF 42.16 FEET; THENCE ON A CURVE TO THE RIGHT HAVING A RADIUS OF 370.00 FEET, CONTINUING ON THE SOUTH LINE OF SAID TRACT, THROUGH A CENTRAL ANGLE OF 28°33'48", AN ARC DISTANCE OF 184.45 FEET; THENCE S89°00'58"W, CONTINUING ON SAID SOUTH LINE AND THE WESTERLY EXTENSION THEREOF A DISTANCE OF 217.96 FEET TO A POINT OF CURVE; THENCE ON A CURVE TO THE LEFT HAVING A RADIUS OF 280.00 FEET, THROUGH A CENTRAL ANGLE OF 73°53'00", AN ARC DISTANCE OF 361.06 FEET; THENCE S15°07'58"W A DISTANCE OF 144.67 FEET TO A POINT OF CURVE; THENCE ON A CURVE TO THE RIGHT HAVING A RADIUS OF 370.00 FEET, THROUGH A CENTRAL ANGLE OF 17°34'58", AN ARC DISTANCE OF 113.54 FEET; THENCE S57°17'04"E A DISTANCE OF 60.00 FEET; THENCE ON A CURVE TO THE RIGHT HAVING A RADIUS OF 430.00 FEET THROUGH A CENTRAL ANGLE OF 47°35'02", AN ARC DISTANCE OF 357.11 FEET, THE LONG CHORD OF WHICH BEARS S56°30'27"W A DISTANCE OF 346.94 FEET; THENCE S80°17'58"W A DISTANCE OF 110.53 FEET; THENCE S22°58'00"W A DISTANCE OF 484.40 FEET; THENCE S04°43'00"W A DISTANCE OF 555.70 FEET; THENCE S23°28'00"E A DISTANCE OF 274.88 FEET; THENCE S29°20'00"W A DISTANCE OF 106.31 FEET; THENCE N87°37'27"W A DISTANCE OF 653.32 FEET TO A POINT ON THE EASTERLY LINE OF THE AFORESAID TRACT DESCRIBED IN BOOK 2383 AT PAGE 47; THE FOLLOWING TWO (2) COURSES ARE ALONG THE EASTERLY LINE OF SAID TRACT: (1) THENCE S18°28'16"W A DISTANCE OF 174.97 FEET; (2) THENCE S01°29'24"E A DISTANCE OF 659.69 FEET TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING: THE DESCRIBED TRACT CONTAINING 75.6030 ACRES, MORE OR LESS.

COLORADO REGISTERED
KEVIN M. O'LEARY
28658
29 MAY 1998
PROFESSIONAL LAND SURVEYOR

C:\1998\TRACT2.027

# Stratton Open Space Management Plan
Community Workshop
October 20, 2105

## Verbatim Group Comments

*Are any issues categories missing from the preliminary list of issues?*

Group #1

- Bikes – safety, speed, trail erosion, using unauthorized trails
- Pest management – moths, beetles, caterpillars – sub-category to forest health management

Group #2

- Add more receptacles for dog waste bags, especially around the Reservoir
- Funding of Management Plan missing

Group #3

- Bikes
- Dealing with vandals, especially one man

*Which two issues categories on the preliminary issues list are of most importance to your group to be addressed through the Stratton Open Space Management Plan? Why are those issues of special importance to your group?*

Group #1

Note: Our group's top priorities are based on widespread, overall impacts

Issue #1: Forest health management

Why? Fire mitigation because of urban interface and the significant negative consequences that can occur due to wildfire.

Issue #2: Vegetation management

Why? Noxious weeds getting out of control. Will have negative impacts across entire ecosystem.

# Stratton Open Space Management Plan
Community Workshop
October 20, 2105

## Verbatim Individual Comments by Issue Category

*Is there anything you'd like to make sure is considered as the Management Plan for Stratton Open Space is developed?*

### Dogs

- Concerned that with the South Reservoir open to dogs that it will become more and more of a dog park. I was really encouraged by the Humane Society, when they started to TRY to enforce the dogs-on- leash ordinance, but slowly people begin to start with dogs off leash.
- More receptacles for dog waste and more receptacles for bags. Who will remove the waste? Will City do that or Utilities?
- More dog bag disposal areas in the open space
- Allow dogs off leash if they are under voice control
- Leave the reservoir open for dogs to swim
- Off-leash dogs (multiple dogs per person); consistent enforcement?
- Poop bag dispensers
- Trash cans at entrances to Reservoir (Friends of Stratton would be interested in helping fund collection of trash)
- Dog waste
- Trash cans at the Reservoir
- Add dog waste bag dispenser at the Reservoir
- Dog waste containers near Reservoir?
- How can Friends Group support Utilities in keeping Reservoir open?
- Consider how to address groups of unsupervised dogs

### Forest Health Management

- Fire mitigation around periphery of Stratton Open Space closest to homes bordering the Stratton Open Space
- From talking with ranger and forester, I know elm removal is important (but didn't seem to appear in the noxious plants review)

## Signage

- Better signage – maps (you are here designations)
- Signage – clarify limited use trails
- Maps: "You are here" and an arrow pointing north
- Signage on trails similar to Red Rock
- Consider signage like at Red Rock Canyon
- Would be great to have more signage like the County park at Bear Creek – where the sign says "[Dogs] Must be on leash – report people that violate".

## Trail Management

- Use of mountain bikes on wet muddy trails. Maybe close Stratton Open Space when trails very muddy
- Find solution for "mud holes" – be it wood bridges or more gravel
- Erosion control
- Please re-route the Ladder trail that connects Chamberlain to the upper portion of the Mesa Chutes trail. Please re-route the trail that leaves the LaVeta trailhead (above the restroom). Both of these trails are very eroded, but are viable routes.
- I'm always wondering why there is barbed wire along the trail at the dam – very unsafe
- Trail use by bikes causes wear – what is evolution of trails over years, i.e. roots exposed, rocks, etc. (deepening of route)
- Locate trail standards (best practices) (sustainability) (sight distances-vegetation) and survey for substandard trails – upgrade
- Open trail from Stratton to Bear Creek?
- Park use restrictions following heavy rains/snow storms, etc. Suggest [you] close park til dry.
- Add trail above *(?)* high school

## Vegetation Management

- Control weeds, especially on the face of the dam – possibly plant native plants - make it more attractive

## Visitor Experience

- Keep it wild
- Better interface between mountain bikers/hikers/folks with dogs/horseback riders
- High schoolers smoking/lives*(?)* behind CMHS
- Safety between cyclists and hikers

- Special events in park and parking?
- Bicycles?
- How can Friends Group help influence good behavior in space i.e. best practice for asking people to pick up poop, pass politely on bikes, don't swim in reservoir, etc.?

## Other

- PLEASE be sure to develop ADEQUATE FUNDING to IMPLEMENT the resulting management plan!
- Coordinate and prioritize eventual management plan needs with Friends groups (to help implement needs)
- We have been requesting and trying to donate two benches in the Reservoir for visitors to be able to rest and enjoy the view. This to commemorate my wife and son, my wife passed away last April just above the second/west reservoir. Regardless of funds being available, though generous donations, no progress has been made since May. It should not be this hard, the personal losses were hard enough. *(Personal contact information provided and forwarded to the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Department staff.)*
- Culvert in Ridgeway Basin – directs water down onto Cheyenne Blvd., then onto residents' properties/houses in times of heavy rains. Tim Mitros [has] info of this culvert and water issues. (Put in by Park and Rec?)
- Vandalizing sign posts and opening closed trails – one gentleman in particular – off of Stratton Open Space for 1 year – what happens when he comes back?

## Additional comments submitted via email following the October 20 community workshop

To whom it may concern,

I am an active user of Stratton Open Space with my dog who loves to swim. I know there is a great amount of discussion being had about whether or not dogs should be allowed to swim here. I believe that the open water area should still be used for dogs swimming and recreational use. In the springs, there are not many other places for dogs to go swim like this and it is a big enough swimming hole that each dog has their own space to do so. I do feel like some improvements could be made to have designated trails for each activity, such as dogs on a certain trail, horses on a certain trail, bikers and walkers/hikers on a certain trail. I think this would help trail users to feel as though they can still go and use the open space and trails for what they would like. Some people may not like dogs, so they won't encounter them on the hiking/biking trail and vice versa.

I think it is important to keep Stratton open space for dogs and dog lovers as my family has gotten a lot of use out of it and my dog LOVES it.

Thank you for your time.

Hi,

I was not able to attend the entire meeting last night and wanted to make sure I submitted the following to be considered during the Management Plan.

Overall, I think that time and resources should be put towards areas like signage, vegetation management, fire mitigation and trail management.
Here are some other thoughts:

Dogs - I have used the open space as long as it has existed as both a non-dog owner and dog owner. For the most part, people are very considerate. There have been times when a dog off-leash has been a bit too friendly or interrupted a run, hey they are just dogs. Also, as a dog owner it is true that most dogs are off-leash. I understand that this issue does come up and some dog owners that like to walk with their dogs leashed may end up feeling it's a conflict of interest. I think that we just all need to be considerate of others. Finally, there are people that pick up after their dogs and those that don't. As a frequent user, I just try to make sure I pick up more dog poop than my dogs leave. I just hope that as people see me with full bags of poop they will get the idea.

Parking - Can the empty lot that is along Ridgeway/Cheyenne Blvd be a parking lot? Does it follow the conservation easements? How about signage about other parking areas or encourage them to park along Cheyenne Blvd. That would mean parking in front of my home, but it's better than having them parking on the grass, like I have seen some do in the past.

For the next meeting, I would like the people running the meeting to make sure that no ideas get discussed that would not be allowed due to any rules, easements, etc. I remember the first meetings about the open space, a lot of time was spent discussing if the horses that pastured on the land would be allowed to stay. In the end, the city said they would not be allowed due to liability. I don't want to waste time again. My main concern is the issue of the dog swimming in the reservoir. This is such much loved aspect of the open space. If CSU does not want it to continued, due to water safety, then we should not spend time on the issue. If they are open to keeping going, then we can talk about what needs to be done to keep it open. Or we need to know the reasons they may close it in the future (i.e. water testing results, etc). I also think that spending time talking about dogs off leash is a waste of time. It is already an area that dogs must be on a leash, that does not change. Since that space has been opened to the public, most dogs are off-leash. Unfortunately, I don't think much can be done to change it now.

Dear Sarah:

This may not best be directed your way but you were the only one to offer contact information at the meeting last night. We left at 7:30 when the meeting appeared to be only half over.
I was impressed that the meager turn out of “concerned citizens” likely means that we trail users are pretty happy with our experiences in the Stratton Open Space. Thank you and all for your preparations which were significant.

My wife and I are also happy with our experiences which are nearly daily. We do have observations which I will state here.

Dogs were top of the list and of importance for us. I am one of those who pretty well scour the trail of dog poop each time we are on the property. I must have liked Easter egg hunts as a kid. It was said that someone/s went up and stuck white flags by each dropping to photo the terrible mess, I presume. Facts probably are that a week later the flags would all be in a different place as someone, like me, would have policed it up. I find that regular poop bags are only good for one deposit while market bags can gather a pound or so of dried droppings. The fresh wet numbers are heavy and provide more work for the most appreciated workers who empty those trash cans. Also the photo shown of tied-off bags "littering" the trail were likely left by those who cleaned up after their pet on the way up, with probable intention of picking it up on the return. I get those on my return since why not? So I see it as a problem that does not get too out of hand.

About the stated problem of dog droppings being a pollutant due to their makeup, I note with interest that our top ten dog park has a live stream running through it, while the Stratton has one little trickle. Let's get real here.

I have been a Skyway resident for fifty years and hiked the Stratton some when it became available. My wife of fifty two years passed and six years ago I remarried to a major dog person and able hiker. I have learned a lot and notably that a dog on leash can be inclined to be aggressive since they feel trapped by the leash. My now six years of up-close experience has left me with not a single bad experience with an off-leash dog. I know that the official answer is for everyone to pile into the 21st St. dog park – if you can find a parking spot. It is not a very satisfying place for a hiker, as most of us are at Stratton. Dogs need to run and many of us like to hike, therein lies the problem. On the highway the problem drivers get collared while in the dog world the good and bad get the same penalty. Tough problem.

Trail comments finally. I know that the improvements of the Ridge Trail and La Veta trail head were engineered by a bicyclist/motorcyclist fellow and these trails have my admiration as being correctly done. Undoubtedly this was costly. By my observation the ongoing management policy is to do nothing until a grand plan can be afforded. Water waits for no one and with each rainy season the problems grow. If I can't afford a new roof I do not stop patching leaks. Given the simple knowledge that water runs downhill and collects in holes, it is not too difficult to find places where water can be directed off trail and holes can be drained to avoid "braiding." I was told by a fellow, that I believed knew what he was saying, that as a citizen I do not have the right to start working on these trails on my own. How about a grand plan built around volunteers? A once a year work party would be inadequate. I fully support bicyclists using these trails and a good bicycle trail is a perfect walking trail. I would suggest we identify, through local bike clubs, those who have been educated in trail building by a national mountain bike organization. I know the training exists since my daughter, from Taos Ski Valley, has taken the training. She and her husband have created miles of sustainable bike trails on North Side at Taos Ski Valley.

Social trails help disperse the trail users and, strangely, do not seem to have added significantly to the problem areas. Some or many of these paths date to when horses were the users of the Stratton and some of these are cut deeply. Likely closing these and allowing them to become natural erosion channels is a best plan.

Many, if not most of the timbers that were years ago put across the paths were not thoughtfully placed. They interrupted the flow of water but did not direct water off the trail. They also created a problem for bicyclist who had to find a way around. This showcases the need for skilled guidance in any work done.

The toilet at the La Veta trail head is a bit of a disgrace. So much money spent on a facility that is locked a good half the year and the half when it is most needed. Probably it will just remain a monument to good intentions.

Hi Sarah,

Foremost, thank you for hosting the Stratton Open Space community meeting earlier this week. It is wonderful to see this area receiving attention and, hopefully, greater oversight and maintenance efforts in the future.

Next, after reflecting on the meeting for the past few days, I wanted to reach out in an attempt to gain a better understanding of the issues, goals and related constraints. Plus, I wanted to offer/reiterate some additional thoughts. In that context, please consider the following.

1. Is the Stratton Open Space "conservation easement document" readily available for public review? If so, please let me know how to gain access. I'd like to read it in an attempt to gain a better understanding of what conditions were called out when the property ownership was transferred.

2. Has the City ever been involved with or performed a "compliance assessment" or similar effort which compares current Stratton Open Space conditions and/or activities to the requirements set forth in the "conservation easement document" (or any other relevant document such as ordinances, other easements, agreements, etc.)? If so, can the public (me) access a copy of any such assessment(s)? If so, please let me know how to gain access. Just trying to shortcut the process necessary to identify any current or potentially non-compliant issues.

3. I find it intriguing that CSU (and/or the City) has apparently made a decision to allow an "open gate dog park" within City limits (the lower reservoir is in City limits, correct?) allowing off leash dogs. Has any CSU or City effort been made to determine whether this decision was valid and proper within a) CSU's authority or b) any authority granted to CSU by the City or c) the context of the City's ordinances? In other words, how does CSU's operating decision affecting a publicly accessible reservoir mesh with the City's dog leash rule (for example, even though the land is owned by CSU, doesn't the City own CSU and therefore impose an obligation upon CSU to honor the City's dog leash rule)?

4. If an individual was harmed by an off leash dog within the "reservoir dog park", does the City and/or CSU have adequate defense against claims for damages stemming from decisions to maintain/allow an informal dog park? What if the harm occurred immediately outside of one of the open gates to the "reservoir dog park", either on CSU property or on Stratton Open Space? Does the City and/or CSU believe that a) the "reservoir dog park" and/or b) the open-gate policy at the "reservoir dog park" are well-advised conditions? Does the City and/or CSU believe that the "spillover" effect on Stratton Open Space from having an off leash, open gate dog park in its midst is insignificant?

5. Has the City and/or CSU considered whether the "reservoir dog park" and its open-gate policy represents an "attractive nuisance"? With the many nearby schools and surrounding neighborhoods, it seems reasonably foreseeable that minors could be tempted by the water and either a) injured by an off leash dog as allowed by the City and/or CSU or b) suffer harm or death by an ill-advised decision to enter the water.

6. I have personally been confronted by literally countless dogs off leash in Stratton Open Space, mostly friendly ones. However, one time I genuinely feared for my safety due to the aggressive, threatening behavior by an absolutely ferocious, off-leash 100 pound dog. I have also witnessed an elderly woman who was knocked down by an overly friendly, off-leash dog. Once knocked down, she seemed to be panic-stricken and literally could not get back to her feet without assistance and significant reassurance. She assured me that she would never return to the Open Space. I am reminded of these risks every time I venture back into the area and witness roughly 25% compliance with the leash ordinance, never knowing whether one of the off-leash dogs might come unglued or cause accidental harm and, simultaneously, I keep wondering why leash enforcement efforts seem to be so non-existent or ineffective. Until the "leash culture" (as well as poop scooping) at this area changes, freedom for many to enjoy this absolutely beautiful area is significantly impacted. Given the above, I'm compelled to suggest a prolonged, consistent and consequential dog leash enforcement effort (or, alternatively, turn the entire Stratton Open Space into an off leash area so everyone will know what to expect - however - this could easily create more problems than it would solve).

Please accept the above as constructive, well-intended input toward a thoughtfully generated, viable management plan for Stratton Open Space.

I look forward to your reply and feel free to call and discuss if that's easier than replying by email. Rest assured, I offer the above in the utmost cooperative spirit and wish you and your colleagues the best of luck as you balance the competing goals, conflicting views, constraints, etc. going forward and please let me know if I can help.

Thank you.

Group #2

Note: We want Stratton Open Space to retain its wilderness character

Issue #1: Trail maintenance and sustainability / standards

Why? *(no comments submitted)*

Issue #2: Signage

Why? *(no comments submitted)*

Group #3

Issue #1: Over-zealous weed control

Why? *(no comments submitted)*

Issue #2: More trail maintenance (building and vandalism by one gentleman in particular)

Why? *(no comments submitted)*

# Stratton Open Space Management Plan

Community Workshop

November 10, 2105

## Group Discussion Questions and Comments

*Do you have any questions about any of the preliminary strategies?*

- Does the plan include wildfire management?
- Problems occur due to lack of maintenance. Will there be enough funding?
- Explain what you mean by "preferred routes"
- What is the timeline for putting plans into action?
- Can 2D tax funds be used for this plan?
- How do dogs off-leash in CSU area relate to City code?
- What are noxious weeds and are you doing anything beyond Russian olive removal?
- Are you looking at restricting park use during muddy times?
- How do you address the natural spring wet area near the Ridgeway trailhead and what is the purpose of the culvert?
- Explain CSU's desire for an off-leash dog designation
- Why did the Humane Society stop ticketing off-leash dog owners at the Reservoir?
- What does "trail standards" mean?
- Who do users call to express concerns regarding trail conditions or issues?

*Is anything missing that you believe is important to include?*

- How the City is planning to deal with the vandalism problem with a specific individual
- Address the overall issue of public safety (fire, off-leash dogs, etc.)

*Do you have any comments about any of the strategies?*

- Provide a way to collect opinions at trailheads or on website
- Good information
- Bad microphone
- Off-leash dog ordinance should be enforced
- Mixed-use concerns due to mountain bikers and hikers on the same trails
- Link the GOCOSprings phone app on the City website

# Stratton Open Space Management Plan
Community Workshop
November 10, 2105

## Verbatim Individual Comments by Issue Category

*Do you have any comments about any of the preliminary management strategies presented and discussed tonight?*

**Dogs**

- I don't have a problem with off-leash dogs in the fenced area but a few vocal dog owners should not stop enforcement of off-leash regulations that many other users who are not motivated to complain, benefit from and support.
- In terms of dog use, I think it's an issue but would be hard to change the mindset of dog owners and resources should be spent on other areas to benefit the open space. So, let's get along with one another. Bikers, hikers, dog owners, etc.
- We oppose the off-leash area at the South Suburban Reservoir. The leash law should be enforced. I live across from Stratton Open Space, but do not walk in the area because I am intimidated by the dogs off-leash. Having the Reservoir open to dogs increased the impact on the trails and lack of parking in the designated parking areas.
- South Suburban has become an amazing dog swimming resource that wasn't even in anyone's awareness in the original master planning process. If that is going to change, it should be part of a master plan, not just a management plan. I am in favor of dogs off-leash at South Suburban Reservoir.
- As a runner and mountain biker, I enjoy the trails at Stratton Open Space almost every day of the week. I am concerned about off-leash dogs and their possible danger to others.
- I am a mountain biker and the only problem I have ever had has been with off-leash dogs not under control of their owners.
- Keep the Reservoir open to dogs, please! (I happily pick up other's waste). Receptacles for waste are good!
- Dog "monitoring" and "evaluation" programs are very vague. Dogs are a real source of conflict. CSU's decision to allow off-leash dogs is in violation and should stop as both a technical and apparently ethical matter. Increasing dog-leash enforcement, education, consequences, etc. is sorely under-emphasized. A vast, silent majority desires strong leash-law enforcement but fears the backlash from aggressive dog-off-leash practitioners.
- Keep the Reservoir an off-leash area for dogs!! I take my dogs there every day.
- Leave Reservoir an off-leash area.
- Pursue CSU/City designation of the Reservoir as an approved off-leash dog area. This is a unique and valuable resource in the city and needs to be made official.
- The dogs are not a problem – the owners are (no control of dogs) – not picking up the feces.
- Dogs off-leash are an abomination – enforce the ordinance! Do not allow dogs in the South Suburban Reservoir!

## Forest Health Management

- Thank you for your consideration of the nesting songbirds when removing trees.
- Respect the habitation of birds (cutting of trees).

## Signage

- Signage at intersections should include directions to major features. The Sharpie-d directions are actually useful. The official signs should include information like La Veta Trailhead this-a-way and Ridgeway Trailhead that-a-way. Reservoir is another feature to have signs give direction to. Trailheads are the most important ones to have signs to point to. Very useful. Need signs to help people distinguish from social trails or more signs at real intersections. We find it difficult to navigate in there because we cannot tell some very well-established social trails from system trails.
- Trail signage upgrades should include caution advisories about bikes and courtesy reminders to bikers to respect all users and to ride in control. I'm a regular Chutes mountain biker and I get run off the trail frequently by high-speed downhillers who cannot stop from upcoming traffic or pedestrians.
- Could you provide website contact information at the trailheads so people can leave comments and concerns?
- Yes to way-finding signage! I still get off-course. I am one who appreciates the vandal's comments.
- City website to register problems (trails, etc.) ([per] Melissa)
- Hurrah for trail signage possibilities! I get asked so often for directions (mostly to the Reservoir!) because signage is confusing and/or absent.

## Trail Management

- I like the idea of closing some of the redundant social trails. However, this needs to be done with a lot of input from regular users so work done would less likely to be undone.
- Trails from La Veta to Reservoir need serious erosion control/re-building. (The trail that heads into the large meadow). Do new extremely fat bikes/tires with studs cause damage that needs to be addressed? They ride in all kinds of bad weather.
- The trail due north of dog Reservoir that has high humps to control erosion – can that be re-routed or de-humped?
- Accelerate damage repair on trails.

## Vegetation Management

- Noxious weeds are a huge problem in the open space. They need more than just monitoring.
- Regarding noxious weeds, do you plan to spray? If so, please avoid spraying during nesting season.

## Visitor Experience

- Please strongly consider keeping the man who does a lot of vandalizing on the property off permanently!! Any work that gets done by the Friends group gets undone immediately by this man.
- More discussions need to happen between bikers and hikers, with and without dogs.

- Would like La Veta restroom to be open more often.
- Keep open space as wild as possible!
- Manage mountain bike/hiker conflicts on lower trails, parking-to-Reservoir, etc. Maybe designate a specific trail from one parking lot for bikes and other hiking-only.
- Parking! Striping and handicapped parking need to be renewed and made obvious.
- This is a multi-use area and mostly works well as such. Only so much can be done outside of the realm of personal responsibility, courtesy, and cooperation.
- Please keep area in its natural state as much as possible.

## Other

- I believe that the high priorities are working on maintenance of the property.
- Good first steps! Keep going.
- I work at Cheyenne Mt. High School and would be happy to help publicize information about the Management Plan and future meetings. *(Contact information provided and forwarded to the City)*
- Being a regular user over the last 20+ years (17 years as an open space), I see little maintenance or park staff presence in the open space. A lack of maintenance seems to lead to more degradation (i.e. weeds, erosion, social trails).
- The direction of the preliminary strategies is decent/OK.

## Additional comments submitted to the City via email

I could not find an area to make a comment on the Stratton Open Space project, so here goes:

1. Make the Chutes trail bikers-only. Let them be as stupid, or "adventurous", as they please without risking the health of walkers.
2. Make SOS a "no leashes required" area for dogs. It is, de facto, one already and folks who walk/ride there deal with it. As an alternative, you can start a program similar to the Boulder Voice and Sight Tag program.
3. Fine the idiots who bag dog waste and then toss the bag on the trails....as opposed to putting all in the garbage cans at the trailheads. All they are doing is leaving a bag full of crap on the trail instead of leaving the waste to decompose naturally.

Thank you.

## Public Comments on the Review Draft Master Plan - January 2016

| Comment |
| --- |
| ~First, I wanted to say that you and your planning team have done a great job on the Maintenance Plan for Stratton Open Space. You tackled some difficult issues. After 10+ years of use, it was a good time for an update. I scanned over the plan that you posted so forgive me if some of these items were mentioned.<br><br>~I have noticed on the Incline a temporary sign about dalmation toadflax, asking people to pull it. I think temporary signage would be helpful for many issues at Stratton whether it is pulling the rosette stage of common mullein or pulling Dalmation toadflax, staying on muddy trails and getting your feet muddy, or nesting birds during critical periods. Some of these things users are doing already (rightly or wrongly) and can affect on a daily basis.<br><br>~Also, there were a few trails (i.e. Gold Camp Path, lower meadow trails) that sustained a lot of erosion from September of 2013 and got even worse this last Spring. Maybe it should be mentioned when there are unusual events that there's some kind of inspection of trails, etc. It would be helpful to identify these areas and have them on a project list (you may already do).<br><br>~Lastly, a presence by caretakers and staff on occasion, I think is important. That helps them know and understand their open spaces. This may already be happening at some level based on your staffing.<br><br>~I do think volunteers and Friends can be a great asset with may of these things. I know the Friends group is on task and working on many things. |
| Let me begin by saying congratulations to all involved. It is an impressive document and there is far more in it with which I agree than points below where I either disagree or have questions/comments. |
| **Noxious weeds and forest management**: Here I do worry a bit about over-kill (excuse the pun). My thinking is pretty much in line with that of botanist George Cameron whom I am copying and from whom I hope you will also get comments. I believe George knows more about the ecology of the open space than any living individual. He has been hiking on this land and observing it for over forty years -- long before it became the Stratton Open Space (SOS). I have been doing so for only about twenty years.<br><br>On noxious weeds, I am just not sure how much of a problem we really have. The ones mentioned in the report (although I believe George thought one or two may have been misidentified) have been there all along, but in my experience they have not really expanded their territory or driven out competing native plants. In a wet year like this past year, one does see more toadflax and mullein, but you also see a lot more of all the botanical good guys. If the Parks Department can get volunteers who want to go out and pull up toadflax and mullein (and have the guidance to actually pull up the right plant) then fine, but I do not believe it is worth a major expenditure of TOPS funds. Thus, I worry about all the action items about noxious eradication in the report. As a former bureaucrat myself, I know that when a good manager has a list of things to implement, he/she is supposed to go out and implement them. This usually costs money. |

**Forest management:** Here too I worry about an excess of zeal -- and, believe me, on this subject (when compared to most of my friends on the open space) I am a "moderate." I am also a big fan of Dennis Will. I accept the view that with many years of fire suppression, the SOS is now in a historically vegetation-dense state. And I like Dennis' mantra of trying to "mimic" nature in his forest thinning operations. I think the plan goes a step farther -- to "managing" or "manipulating" nature -- as it does in the final action item on page 34 (and elsewhere in the narrative) of not only calling for cutting back of the Gambel's Oak (mimicking nature) but also controlling (managing nature) the natural re-sprouting that would take place after the cutting back -- or after a fire. Would this be done by using something like garlon?

I would note that there are a lot of people out there who really love the Gambel's Oak. When we were working to save the Stratton land as the first TOPS acquisition, we talked repeatedly about its "five ecosystems," a descriptor originally coined by Dick Beidleman. Right in the middle of this list is the "mixed shrubland" which is first and foremost Gambel's Oak. To permanently suppress the Gambel's Oak would significantly change the entire character and ecology of the SOS -- and the experience people have on it.

There is one plant species I wish had been included in the draft management plan -- the Siberian Elm. In my experience, it is the one non-native that really does aggressively expand its range on the SOS. Let's save the garlon for the Siberian Elms.

**Trails**: Here I believe the draft plan correctly identifies most of the problem areas. I do have some concerns about the "fixes" recommended. There are a lot of recommendations for using "fencing" to block shortcuts and social trails. Wouldn't a really thorough blocking of these trails with brush (all that cut down Gambel's Oak) work just as well and be far less expensive. It is worth noting that the fencing -- particularly on the shortcuts -- would have to be dog-proof. For example, almost all of the shortcuts on popular Ridge trail to the "dog reservoir" were first pioneered by off-leash dogs. Then they were further opened (and reopened) by a few individuals -- primarily Rick Bergles. In the past couple of weeks, when this part of the open space has been largely snow-covered, the tracks in the snow tell it all. It's the dogs.

One trail enhancement remedy that I have often thought would be helpful in the lower meadow areas, where the soils are predominantly clay (Chasevile-Midway complex -- pages 8 & 9) and the trails become extremely sticky, messy muddy when wet, would be to spread decomposed granite on them. This was done to a limited degree a few years ago on the trails near the Ridgeway trailhead when CSU accidentally flooded that part of the SOS. It worked -- although it is not a permanent fix as the granite does eventually get worked in to the clay base and would have to be renewed from time to time. However, it did make the hiking experience far more pleasant and helped prevent the ever-widening of the trails as people attempted to avoid the mud.

I was surprised by the recommendation about placing possible "memorial" or other benches at certain trail junctures within the SOS (page 35). Despite the precedent created by the Garden of the Goddesses' benches in Red Rock Canyon, I thought the overall policy was to not do this in open spaces. Do we really want to go there? Don't a lot of our easements (even TOPS policy) prohibit the building of anything beyond trails on open spaces?

**Dogs**: I don't have a dog in this fight. I would note that in the twenty years I have hiked on the SOS, I have been bitten by dogs twice. One was off-leash, one was on-leash. The latter made the much bigger hole. I do believe that the only thing that will work is active enforcement. Otherwise, twenty -- or forty -- years from now a future management plan will describe the same situation we have today.

**A final small correction**: On page 16, the draft says "equestrian parking facilities are not provided." Not true. There is a "signed" equestrian lane at the Ridgeway parking area. It is regularly -- if not heavily -- used by horse trailers.

I think one of the goals or objectives (whichever is appropriate) of the management plan should be to engage the Friends group for Stratton and volunteers, with objectives or actions to identify parts of the management plan that would be appropriate for volunteer projects, work with the Friends group or other volunteers to identify what they would like to help with and plan and hold projects to accomplish some of them.
Volunteer projects not only help augment scarce Parks and Rec resources but also give people in the community ownership in the open space, and in the changes that might come with the management plan, and with the specific project that they work on. It can also give the members of the community a better understanding of the magnitude of the work and challenges in managing and maintaining the open space. The plan has some mention of the Friends group. But I think it would be good to plan to engage them more generally and use them where appropriate and where they have the interest and resources to help.

Nonsystem trails create several types of problems, so I'm glad to see those addressed in the management plan.
I hope that this action:
Comprehensively address trail signage messaging that may include trail name, distance to common destinations, distance to nearest trail system map means that signs will include pointing toward trailheads, the reservoir, and such. Especially with all the nonsystem trails, it is difficult for people who are not regulars to find their way. The names of the trails don't help as much as an arrow pointing toward the trailhead where they parked or the location that they're trying to reach. It's also good to see invasive weeds being addressed.

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I am writing to express my support of keeping the Reservoir open to people and dogs. I have never experienced any conflicts and I think it is a wonderful place to enjoy our beautiful outdoors.

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My wife, myself, our family and our dogs have utilized the Stratton Open Space since its purchase and before it existed as a park. We have encountered very little conflict with other users over many years in general. We adhere to the designated trails and pick up the wastes from our dogs and the dogs of others that do not. Most potential conflict has been form others that believe that the trails belong only to them and have little regard for others. Bicyclists that are riding too fast and blindly around corners have exhibited this disregard for others on more than one occasion. We seldom encountered dogs that were a problem or threatening but not every human is in control of themselves or their animals, and the human can become the threat instead, on the trail or on the street. People who create the rogue trails likely all into that category.

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The use of South Suburban Reservoir by dogs off leash is a valuable use that needs to be retained by every effort available.

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Hope all is well. Nice job on the Management Plan process. I was unable to make the meeting but would like to add a couple of comments.

1. As a user of the space for 17 years, I think we should be proud of how well we have done reconciling the different uses. I am a hiker, mountain biker and yes, even a dog owner and I have never had any real problems with other users of the trails. I understand that this process certainly solicits comments and you hear the vocal minority of folks that can't get along with other users, but I think the vast majority of open-minded users don't have a problem with mountain bikers, equestrians, hikers or dogs (on or off leash). I think continued education as you have proposed is a good idea to continue the positive experience for the vast majority of different users.

2. I also agree with the proposal to minimize trail conflicts in certain areas and would encourage some "trail recommendations" be established and communicated. For example, I think most of us who use the area frequently don't choose to hike or bike up the Chutes because we know there are alternative trails that make the experience more pleasant (even aside from encountering downhill bikes). I think some recommendations for folks that are unfamiliar with the area would go a long way to reducing some of the conflicts (at least on the Chutes trail). For bikes, the Chamberlain and Chamberlain Connector route is a much more pleasant ascent and as a hiker, Gold Camp Path is a beautiful ascent. This is just one example, but others could be noted as well.

3. As for dogs, the South Suburban Reservoir is a community gem for dogs and dog owners and it would be rendered useless if the leash ordinance were enforced at the Reservoir. My experience has shown that the existing fencing is more than adequate to define the area - I don't think additional restrictions to access (ie. double gates) would accomplish much other than making it more difficult for everyone to access the space. I agree that additional signage to educate all users is not a bad idea.

Thanks for adding my comments to the discussion. I look forward to using the Stratton Open Space with an open mind for many years to come!

I am writing to say that I am in favor of allowing dogs to be off-leash at South Suburban Reservoir. I have been using this area of the open space for at least 12-15 years, and I have never witnessed conflict between dogs or between dog owners while I was there. It is a very special place unlike any other in the city for dogs and dog owners alike to exercise and enjoy being in nature.

I would also like to add that I think installing a double-gated system would be an unnecessary expense. I have consistently observed responsible behavior in this setting--users allow their dogs to swim for an average of 10-15 minutes, and then depart the area in an appropriate manner. Usually the dog is tired enough from swimming that he or she is not inclined to run out of control.

This kind of responsible behavior makes sense, given that dog owners who allow their dogs to swim off-leash are accustomed to keeping control of their dogs by voice command, or they would not feel comfortable engaging in this activity in the first place.

I can understand that there are Stratton Open Space users who are uncomfortable around off-leash dogs. That's why I would also support the designation of certain trails for off-leash dog and owner use. Again, the majority of dog owners who I have observed walking with their dogs off-leash are confident in their ability to keep their dogs under control or they wouldn't attempt it. So I don't believe that the off-leash dogs would pose a significant threat to designated on-leash trails. This is an idea I've only recently heard of, but I think it is worth experimenting with.

Thank you for your consideration.

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Thank you for your work on an impressive management plan for the Stratton Open Space, and the opportunity for review and comment. I've long studied the land, and wrote a flora in 2001.

Reading the management plan, I focused on weed and forest projects. The phrase "weed control" makes me nervous: I've seen fine native plants be victims of identity confusion, and any control that leaves open ground favors the return of colonizers. On the Stratton land, most colonizers grow on the trampled trailsides. They mostly don't spread to untrampled ground away from the trail. Trailsides will always be trampled, and control efforts there are wasted. As a benefit, the stiff, prickly plants keep people on the trail. On undisturbed ground, extreme drought can create openings for colonizers when wet years follow, as we saw last year. But in a study on another site I saw native plants eventually prevail without intervention.

The plan does not mention Siberian elm. When contour ditches were dug in the 1960's, elms invaded the open ground. Cheyenne Commons labored for years to remove them. But they are persistent, and must be watched.

The vegetation mosaic defines the land. Dense brush and forest allow a lost-in-the-woods thrill in a small space close to the city. But, though I wish otherwise, it is a fire-adapted forest. Dennis Will has a solid understanding and respect for western forests. Cutting oaks to mimic fire is a sound and necessary policy. But the last item on page 34 of the management plan says, "control resprouting." Regrowth is part of re-creating natural conditions. "Control resprouting" sounds like gardening for a tidy urban park. Dennis explained the item to me at the last meeting, but I remain concerned.

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Please do not spend tax payer money trying to "fix" something that is not broken. The Open Space is incredibly successful and popular. People like it the way it is. It is Open Space, not a a city park. Don't over-manage it. A fancy gate at the reservoir to keep off-leash dogs from getting out into the Open Space - silly and wasteful. Please, less is more!

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Just took a walk this morning in the Stratton, and one of the trails shown on your displays marked as 'rouge' is actually the Lower Meadows loop, posted and signed right at the entry on ridge trail :O)

On pages 31-32, the plan discusses special events. You may be including the issue in "policy changes" and making a decision not to address it, but it strikes me that the document doesn't make it clear that if any remuneration is involved in the event, then under the current conservation easement, the event would not be allowed, and this may be a reason to amend the easement. I think it would be useful to put the public on notice about this, so we don't both get a lot of flak if we end up amending the easements for that purpose. Also, I thought you guys were planning to explore this possibility with the public through this process, to see if there was enough public support for it. Have you done that and what has the response been?

## Plant Species List for Stratton Open Space

| Common Name | Scientific Name |
|---|---|
| ***Grasses, Rushes, Sedges and Reeds*** | |
| Big bluestem* | *Andropogon gerardii* |
| Blue grama | *Bouteloua gracilis* |
| Bluegrass | *Poa nemoralis* subsp. *interior* |
| Crested wheatgrass | *Agropyron cristatum* |
| Little bluestem | *Schizachyrium scoparium* |
| Mountain muhly | *Muhlenbergia montana* |
| Nebraska sedge | *Carex nebrascensis* |
| Needle-and-thread | *Stipa comata* |
| Ring muhly | *Muhlenbergia torreyi* |
| Sand dropseed | *Sporobolus cryptandrus* |
| Sideoats grama | *Bouteloua curtipendula* |
| Squirreltail | *Elymus longifolius* |
| Smooth brome | *Bromus inermis* |
| Threeawn | *Aristida* |
| Western wheatgrass | *Pascopyrum smithii* |
| ***Shrubs*** | |
| Big rabbitbrush | *Ericameria nauseosus* |
| Chokecherry | *Padus virginiana* subsp. *melanocarpa* |
| Common buckthorn (exotic) | *Rhamnus cathartica* |
| Gambel oak | *Quercus gambelii* |
| Gooseberry | *Ribes uva-crispa* |
| Hawthorne* | *Crataegus macracantha* var. *occidentalis* |
| Kinnikinnick | *Arctostaphylos uva-ursi* |
| Morrow's honeysuckle* | *Lonicera morrowii* |
| Mountain mahogany | *Cercocarpus montanus* |
| New Jersey tea* | *Ceanothus americanus* |
| Oceanspray | *Holodiscus discolor* |
| Prostrate juniper | *Juniperus communis* subsp. *alpina* |
| Red raspberry* | *Rubus idaeus* subsp. *melanolasius* |
| Rocky Mountain juniper | *Juniperus scopulorum* |
| Shrubby cinquefoil* | *Pentaphylloides fruticosa* |
| Skunkbush | *Rhus trilobata* |
| Snowberry | *Symphoricarpos* sp. |
| Wax currant | *Ribes cereum* |
| Wild rose | *Rosa woodsii* |
| Willow | *Salix* sp. |
| Yucca | *Yucca glauca* |
| ***Trees*** | |
| Blue spruce | *Picea pungens* |
| Douglas-fir | *Pseudotsuga menziesii* |
| Narrowleaf cottonwood | *Populus angustifolia* |
| Piñon pine* | *Pinus edulis* |
| Plains cottonwood | *Populus deltoides* subsp. *monilifera* |
| Ponderosa pine | *Pinus ponderosa* subsp. *scopulorum* |
| River birch | *Betula nigra* |
| Rocky Mountain maple | *Acer glabrum* |
| Siberian elm (exotic) | *Ulmus pumila* |
| ***Flowers*** | |
| American vetch | *Vicia americana* |
| Asparagus | *Asparagus officinalis* |
| Ball cactus | *Pediocactus simpsonii* |

| Common Name | Scientific Name |
|---|---|
| Cattail | *Typha* sp. |
| Chiming bells | *Mertensia lanceolata* |
| Common dandelion | *Taraxacum officinale* |
| Common plantain | *Plantago major* |
| Curly dock | *Rumex crispus* |
| Cutleaf evening-primrose | *Oenothera coronopifolia* |
| Drummond's milkvetch | *Astragalus drummondii* |
| False indigo | *Amorpha fruticosa* |
| False Solomon's seal | *Maianthemum stellatum* |
| Fremont's geranium | *Geranium caespitosum subsp. fremontii* |
| Gayfeather | *Liatris punctata* |
| Globeflower | *Sphaeralcea coccinea* |
| Groundsel | *Packera neomexicana* |
| Gumweed | *Grindelia squarrosa* |
| Gunnison's mariposa lily | *Calochortus gunnisonii* |
| Hairy golden aster | *Heterotheca villosa* |
| Heartleaf four-o'clock | *Oxybaphus nyctagineus* |
| Ivy-leaved ground cherry | *Physalis hederifolia* var. *comata* |
| Leafy potentilla | *Drymocaulis fissa* |
| Low milkweed | *Asclepias pumila* |
| Low penstemon | *Penstemon virens* |
| Macoun's buttercup | *Ranunculus macounii* |
| Many-flowered puccoon | *Lithospermum multiflorum* |
| Miner's candle | *Oreocarya virgata* |
| Mountain bladderpod | *Lesquerella montana* |
| Nodding onion | *Allium cernuum* |
| One-sided penstemon | *Penstemon secundiflorus* |
| Paintbrush | *Castilleja* sp. |
| Pasqueflower | *Pulsatilla patens* |
| Pasture sage | *Artemisia frigida* |
| Poison ivy | *Toxicodendron rydbergii* |
| Prairie coneflower | *Ratibida columnifera* |
| Prairie spiderwort | *Tradescantia occidentalis* |
| Prickly lettuce | *Lactuca serriola* |
| Prickly-pear | *Opuntia polyacantha* |
| Prickly poppy | *Argemone hispida* |
| Purple locoweed | *Oxytropis lambertii* |
| Purple pea vine | *Lathyrus eucosmus* |
| Purple prairie clover | *Dalea purpurea* |
| Pussytoes | *Antennaria parvifolia* |
| Rock clematis | *Atragene columbiana* |
| Rocky Mountain spurge* | *Tithymalus montanus* |
| Salsify | *Tragopogon dubius* subsp. *major* |
| Sand lily | *Leucocrinum montanum* |
| Scarlet guara | *Gaura coccinea* |
| Scorpionweed | *Phacelia heterophylla* |
| Silver sage | *Artemisia cana* |
| Silvery potentilla | *Potentilla hippiana* |
| Slender-flowered scurf pea | *Psoralidium tenuiflorum* |
| Spotted coralroot* | *Corallorhiza maculata* |
| Spreading dogbane | *Apocynum androsaemifolium* |
| Sticky potentilla | *Drymocaulis arguta* |
| Thimbleweed | *Anemone cylindrica* |
| Tumble mustard | *Sisymbrium altissimum* |

| Common Name | Scientific Name |
|---|---|
| Western wallflower | *Erysimum capitatum* |
| White dalea (or white prairie clover) | *Dalea candida* var. *oligophylla* |
| White prairie clover | *Dalea candida* var. *oligophylla* |
| Wild onion | *Allium textile* |
| Winged buckwheat | *Pterogonum alatum* |
| Woolly plantain | *Plantago patagonica* |
| Yarrow | *Achillea lanulosa* |
| Yellow evening-primrose | *Oenothera villosa* |
| Yellow stonecrop | *Amerosedum lanceolatum* |
| Yellow sweet clover | *Melilotus officinalis* |
| ***Ferns*** | |
| Brittle fern | *Cystopteris fragilis* |
| ***Noxious Weeds*** | |
| Bouncingbet | *Saponaria officinalis* |
| Bull thistle | *Cirsium vulgare* |
| Canada thistle | *Cirsium arvense* |
| Cheatgrass | *Bromus tectorum* |
| Chicory | *Cichorium intybus* |
| Chinese clematis | *Clematis orientalis* |
| Common burdock | *Arctium minus* |
| Common mullein | *Verbascum thapsus* |
| Dalmatian toadflax | *Linaria dalmatica* |
| Diffuse knapweed | *Centaurea difussa* |
| Field bindweed | *Convolvulus arvensis* |
| Musk thistle | *Carduus nutans* |
| Myrtle spurge | *Euphorbia myrsinites* |
| Russian olive | *Elaeagnus angustifolia* |
| Yellow toadflax | *Linaria vulgaris* |

*uncommon