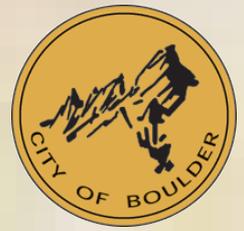
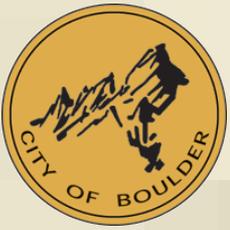


# City of Boulder Bison Donation Evaluation



Open Space Board of Trustees Update  
April 11, 2012

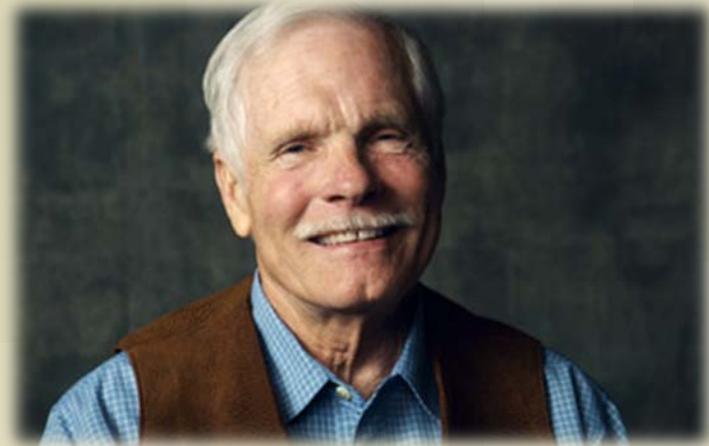


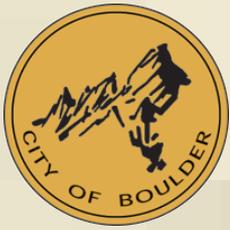


# Background

- October, 2010

Ted's Montana Grill Opens on Pearl Street





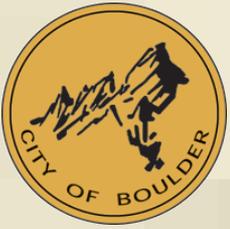
# Background

- October, 2010  
Ted's Montana Grill Opens on Pearl Street
- October, 28 2011



**Ted Turner to donate buffalo herd to roam Boulder open space: CNN founder working with city to place 20 bison along U.S. 36**

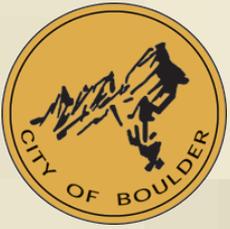
Boulder Daily Camera



# Background

- October, 2010  
Ted's Montana Grill Opens 1701 Pearl Street
- October, 28 2011  
Offer of Donation Announced
- December 1, 2011  
City Council Meeting

**Boulder to study buffalo herd offer by Ted Turner**  
Leaders express reservations about potential cost



# Background

- December 1, 2011  
City Council Meeting

**Bronson Hilliard, a spokesman for the university, said CU remains "neutral" on whether the buffalo herd is a good idea.**

**"We're not a partner in that project," he said. "We're an observer."**

**Hilliard called the connection between a potential herd and the CU brand "symbolic." "Buffaloes are a symbol of the West, they're not just a CU mascot," he said.**



# Grassland Plan Context

- Management Objectives
- Management Actions
  - IPM
  - Fire
  - Livestock Grazing

## Improve t

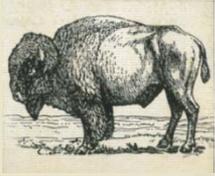
- occur
- butter
- occur



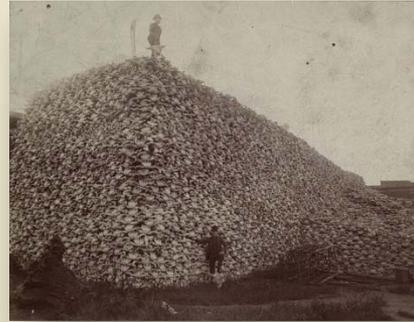
es >50%



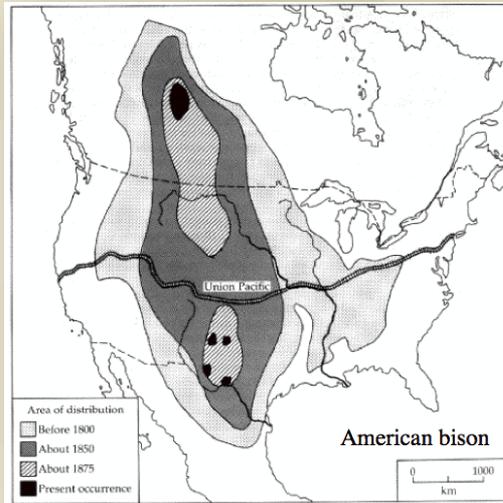
# Brief History of Bison in North America



200,000 years  
20-30 million animals



1830-1880 (50 years)  
ca. 1,000 remain



Conservation Herds

Herds with  
Combined Purposes



Domestic/Commercial  
Herds





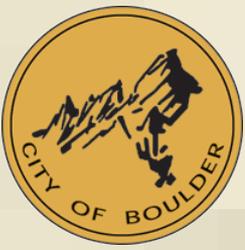
# Grassland Plan Context

- Extirpated Species
  - Work with agency responsible
  - When OSMP can make a significant contribution to recovery
  - In the context of meeting other Grassland Plan objectives

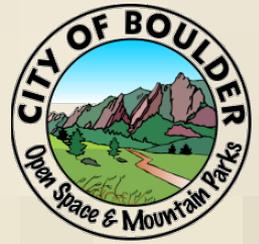


Ecological  
or  
Landscape

Genetic



# City Staff Response



- **OSMP Lead**

- **Staff Team**

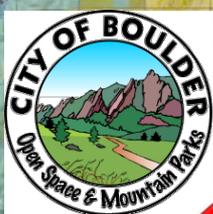
Agriculture, Vegetation, Wildlife, GIS, Other agency experience

- **Sites**

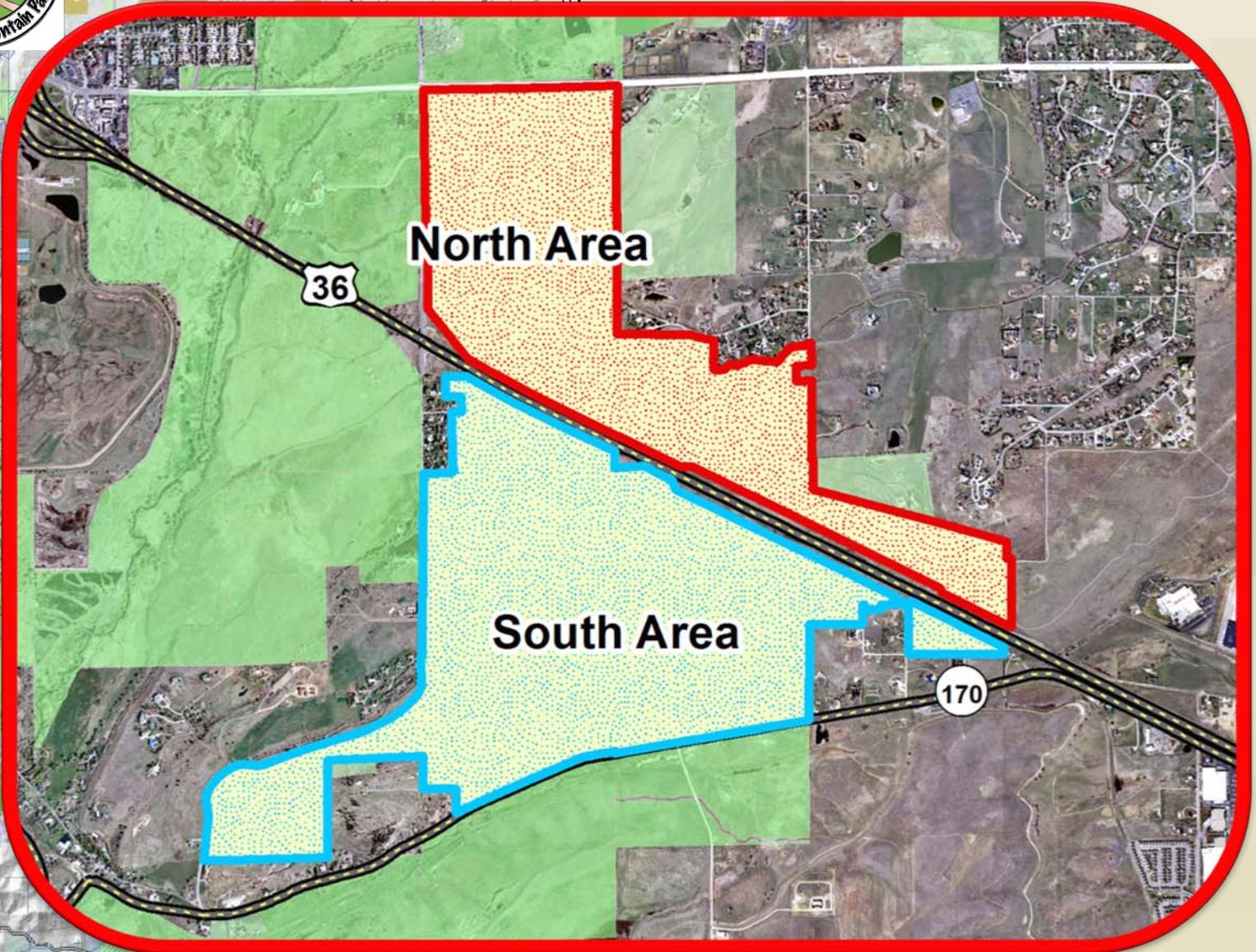
Along US 36 (north and south)

- **Factors**

Agricultural, Cost, Ecological, Operational



# Evaluation Sites

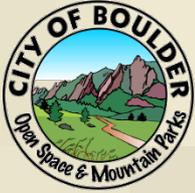


North Area

South Area

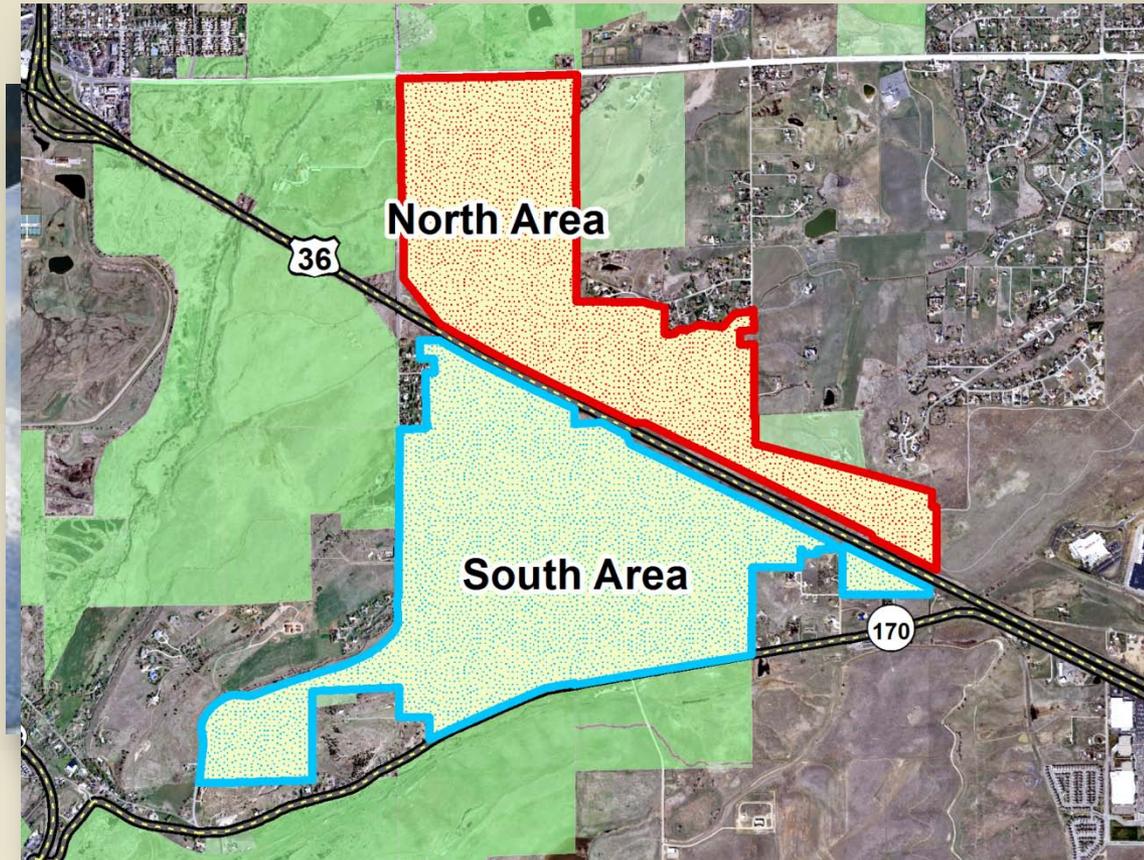
36

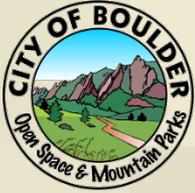
170



# Community Factors

- Visibility and Enjoyment/Quality of Life
- Colorado Natural Areas
- Safety
- Visitor Access





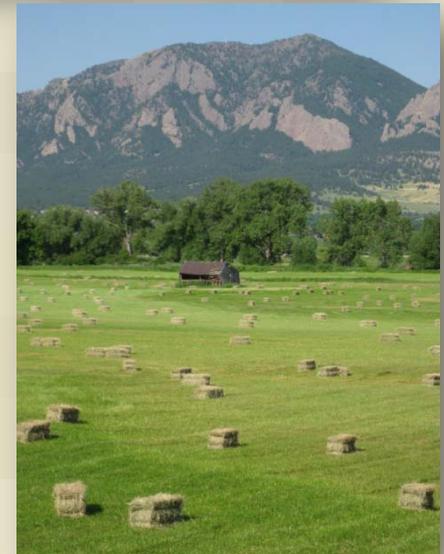
# Agricultural Factors

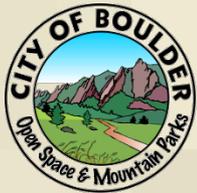


- Agriculture Economics
  - Lease Revenue
  - City Investment
  - Landscape benefits
  - Local food production

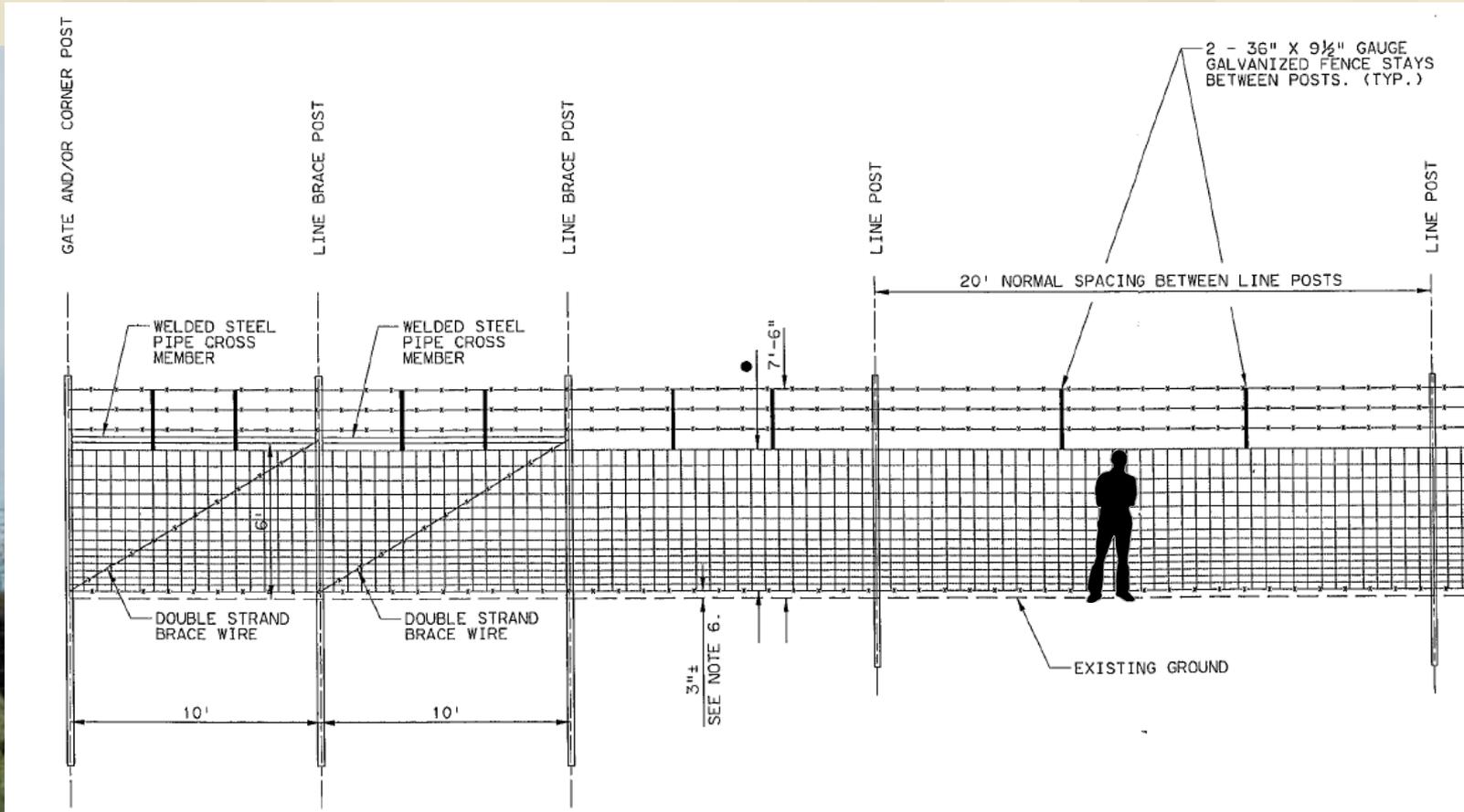
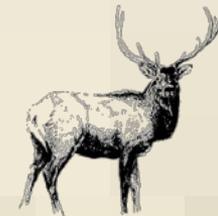


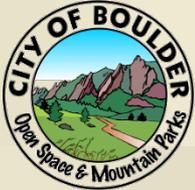
- Effect upon Existing Lessees
- Safety
- Long-Term Changes to Vegetation
- Grazing Flexibility





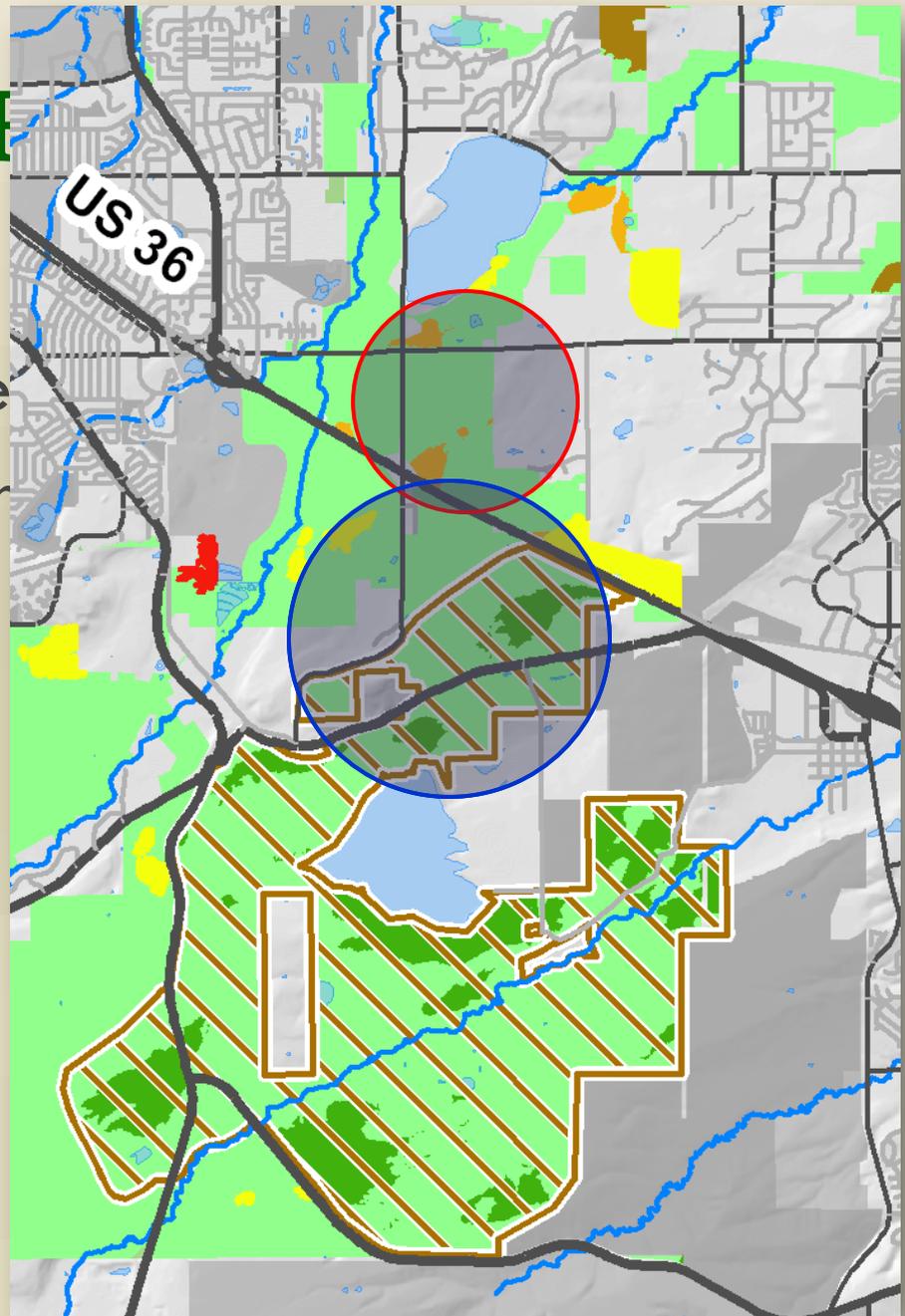
# Ecological Factors: Wildlife

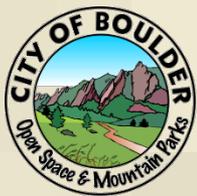




# Ecological Effects

- Wildlife Effects
  - Fencing/Habitat fragmentation
  - Prairie Dog Management
  - Bobolink Management
    - North 10%
    - South 36%

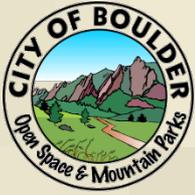




# Vegetation Factors

- Long Term Changes
- Rare Plant Susceptibility
- Exotic Species From Forage

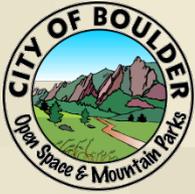




# Ecological Factors: Wetlands

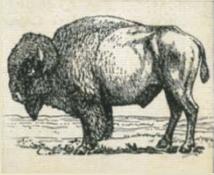
- Vegetation shifts
- Changes in hydrology





# Ecological Factors: Soil Loss

- Soil Loss
  - Wind
  - Prairie dog activity
  - Bison grazing



# Bison Ranching Operational Factors

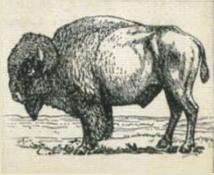
- Animal Numbers: Stocking Rate and Management Objectives
  - *Comparison of current cattle and proposed bison.*
- Pasture Designs
- Water Availability
- Safety



# Costs

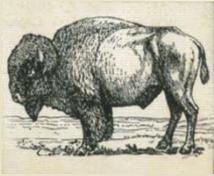
- Fencing
- Corral
- Handling Facilities
- Hay Storage Facility
- Hay
- Personnel
- Equipment
- \$450,000 to \$650,000 cap
- Up to \$100,000 annually (under staff-run scenario)





# Summary

- Bison would have aesthetic appeal
- Ecological changes predicted due to changes in grazing timing and fencing type
- Restricted ability to manage adaptively
- Long term commitment
- Costs are significant
- Community concerns over access



# Timeline—What's Next?

## Project Initiation

- Bison donation proposal announced.
- Nod of 5 from Council to evaluate proposal

