



INFORMATION PACKET MEMORANDUM

To: Members of City Council

From: Jane S. Brautigam, City Manager
Tracy Winfree, Interim Director, Open Space and Mountain Parks
Mark Gershman, Environmental Planning Supervisor
Steve Armstead, Environmental Planner

Date: March 3, 2015

Subject: Information Item: North Trail Study Area Plan

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this memo is to provide council with an update on the North Trail Study Area Plan and the Feb.18 Open Space Board of Trustees (OSBT) study session discussing the plan's scope, approach to community engagement and the role of the board.

This memo includes:

- Background information on the North Trail Study Area (TSA) Plan;
- The proposed scope of the plan including goal, objectives, phased approach to developing the plan, timeline and deliverables;
- Details on the proposed outreach and engagement strategies for community participation in the plan; and
- Information on the role of the OSBT in the development of the plan.

The OSBT was very supportive of the proposed process framework and community outreach and engagement approach suggested by staff. The discussion at the study session centered around fine-tuning the overall approach of the plan in the areas of outreach and decision making. The board recognized that the proposed timeline is ambitious. Board members advised staff to both manage community expectations so the plan can be accomplished promptly and take the time needed for a process that allows for meaningful community involvement. The board expressed an interest in the plan being done well rather than quickly.

OSBT FEEDBACK

The OSBT provided staff with suggestions on proposed plan deliverables, community outreach and engagement priorities, topics for expert panel discussion workshops, and the proposal by staff that the OSBT host the process.

Deliverables

There was a recommendation regarding the plan deliverables that maps are important for the planning process and that including a greater number of maps may be more useful than fewer and more complex maps which can be more difficult to interpret. There was support for staff making Google map layers available so community members could overlay and compare information to generate ideas that could be shared as part of the process.

Community Engagement

The OSBT emphasized the importance of having a process that reaches out to community members who do not typically engage in planning. They also expressed a preference for interactions that allowed for an exchange of ideas over position statements. The OSBT favored engaging community members using online tools such as Inspire Boulder and through a series of in-person workshops. There was also strong support for on-site trail and local store front outreach to encourage a broad base of participation and input. Other suggestions included:

- Seek input from families, youth and seniors;
- Market messages about why participation in the process is important;
- Schedule events to encourage attendance by a broader cross-section of the community;
- Connect North TSA outreach to existing interpretive hikes; and
- Provide online resources such as information on sustainable trail design and resource and habitat conservation information.

The OSBT also shared topics for workshops and expert panel discussions. There was a preference by the board for topics related to “improving visitor experience” which could include trail design, managing visitor conflict, and trail sustainability. Other suggestions included trail connectivity, undesignated trails and special or unique natural resources and their management requirements.

The last topic discussed was the suggestion that the OSBT host the North TSA planning process. After discussion about how the board could do this, the board endorsed this suggestion. Staff will be following up with board members to further develop this idea.

PUBLIC FEEDBACK

The OSBT and staff received several public comments during discussions of the North TSA process (Attachment A). A common concern expressed was that reasonable or legitimate input from stakeholder groups should be treated and valued equitably. Additionally, there were common threads that the planning process should encourage people to be constructive, and share ideas of what they like, and what works well. Several comments were received expressing a desire that the process not put individuals or groups in situations that favor confrontational rhetoric. The process as proposed by staff, and improved by the OSBT, is designed to help address these concerns. A separate set of comments was received suggesting that the visitor experience be better integrated into trail design.

Specific to the Joder property, there was a comment suggesting the property be afforded a special public input session, workshop and discussion. In the proposed North TSA process, the Joder property will be part of the assessment of visitor access opportunities along the North Foothills subarea of the TSA which encompasses both the Joder property and adjacent lands. Staff feels that a broader scale consideration of options is more aligned with the direction contained in the Visitor Master Plan and the benefit of the TSA process. The innovation of using subareas within TSAs is thought to be a good way to assess opportunities to improve visitor experience in the context of the surrounding landscape.

BACKGROUND

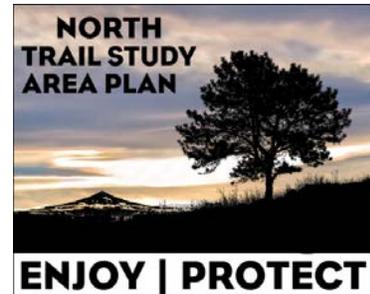
Trail Study Area Plans

In 2005, the Boulder City Council approved the Open Space and Mountain Parks (OSMP) Visitor Master Plan (VMP). The VMP created a framework for the department to manage for high-quality visitor experiences while ensuring that the lands are protected and preserved for future generations.

An integral feature of the VMP was the creation of TSA Plans, which established visitor access and recreation resource management priorities and projects for specific areas of Boulder's public lands. So far, three TSA Plans have been completed and are being implemented: the Marshall Mesa / Southern Grasslands TSA, the Eldorado Mountain / Doudy Draw TSA and the West TSA. Three TSA plans remain - the North, East and South TSAs.

North TSA

The North TSA includes lands north of the Diagonal Highway on the east and lands north of Linden Avenue on the west (Attachment B). The North TSA Plan will include management recommendations for 7,600 acres that OSMP owns and manages. The North TSA area also includes 1,945 acres of land with some level of city open space ownership, but where OSMP does not provide or manage public access (conservation easements: 1,031 acres lands jointly owned with and managed by Boulder County: 914 acres).



The North TSA landscape is varied and includes foothills topped with ponderosa pine woodlands, and grassy slopes with occasional shrub thickets leading up to the ridges. Hillsides and mesa sides are dissected by drainages and dotted with springs that support riparian and wetland habitats. The bulk of the TSA is comprised of grasslands, much of which is used by Boulder County farmers and ranchers. Existing visitor amenities include a network of 20 miles of trails as well as 14 trailheads and access points that provide access to popular destinations such as Wonderland Lake, the North Foothills, and Boulder Valley Ranch.

ANALYSIS

North TSA Plan Goals and Objectives

North TSA Plan Goal

The goal of the North TSA Plan is **to provide management direction and implementation actions to maintain and improve the visitor experience, protect natural, cultural, and agricultural resources, and provide a physically and environmentally sustainable trail system in the North TSA.**

TSA plans focus on the designated and undesignated trails, trailheads, access points and recreational activities. TSA plans describe how existing trailheads, access points, infrastructure and trails can be modified to improve visitor access and experiences compatible with natural, cultural and agricultural resource conservation.

North TSA Plan Objectives

1. Enhance recreational opportunities where a high-quality experience can be provided and the activity is compatible with resource conservation.
2. Minimize conflict among visitor activities.
3. Ensure that new or rerouted trails and trail connections result in physically sustainable trails that conserve natural, agricultural and cultural resources, provide a high-quality visitor experience, and encourage visitors to stay on-trail.
4. Retrofit, reroute and improve the existing trail system to make it more physically sustainable and compatible with ecological and agricultural management objectives.
5. Recommend that undesignated trails either be formally designated or closed and restored. Designating previously undesignated trails may also involve re-routing to improve sustainability.
6. Provide an appropriate balance of resource protection and visitor access matched to the specific natural and recreational qualities of different management area designations. *The Visitor Master Plan provides general guidance in balancing resource protection and visitor access opportunities for four management area designations; Passive Recreation Areas, Natural Areas, Agricultural Areas, and Habitat Conservation Areas.*
7. Provide recommendations for adjustments in management area designations and for designating management areas on properties that do not have designations.

North TSA Planning Process, Deliverables, Timeline and Sideboards

Process

The proposed planning process has four phases (Figure 1). The first phase is focused on collecting and compiling information about the TSA that will help inform the development of scenarios which in turn will be refined into the draft plan's recommendations. The primary deliverable for the first phase is an inventory/assessment report to be completed in the second quarter of 2015.

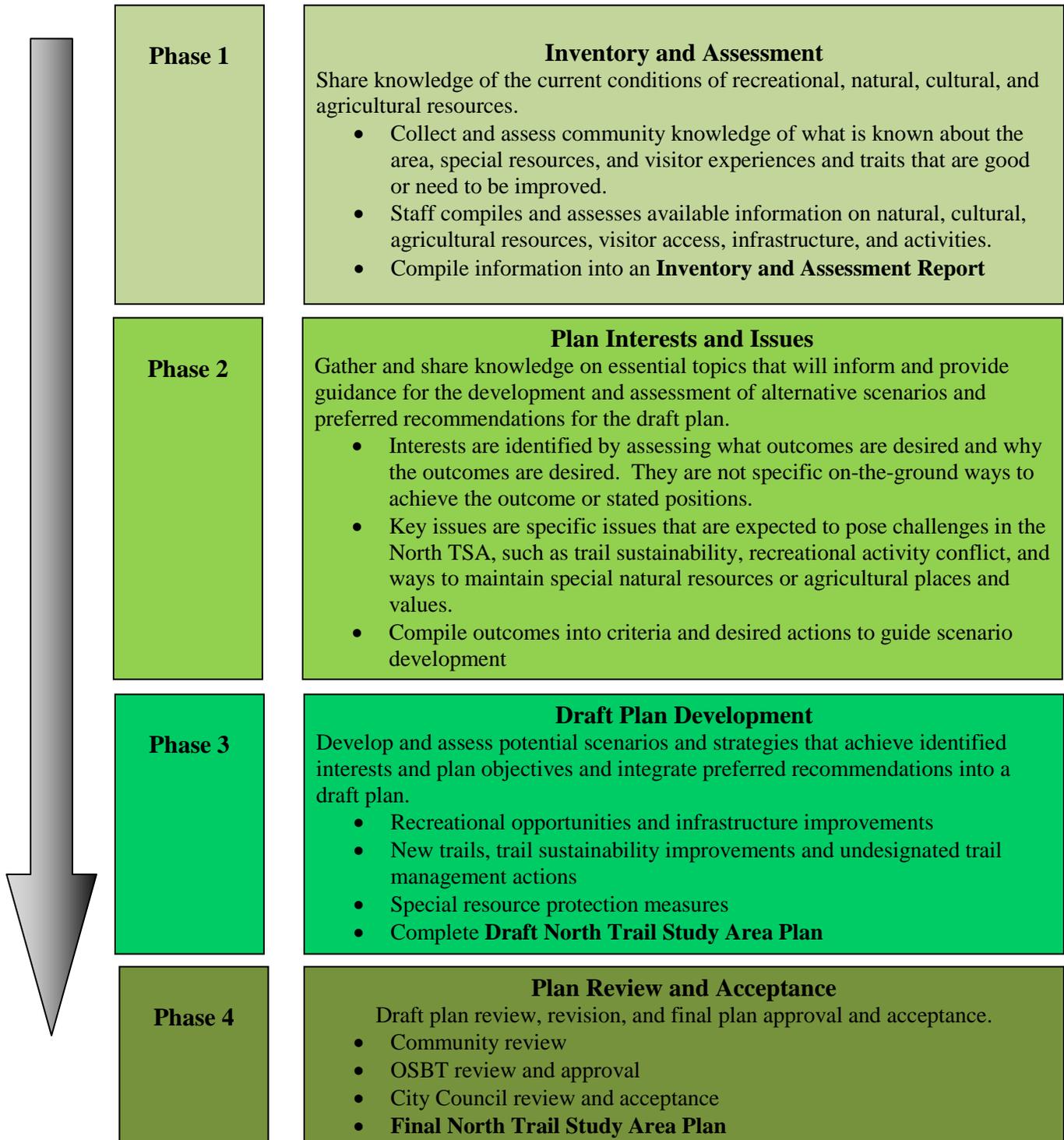
The second phase identifies key interests and issues that will further inform and guide the development of scenarios and recommendations. This phase will result in a list of criteria and desired actions from the community to help direct the development of scenarios and will be completed by the third quarter.

During the third phase, staff, the community, and the OSBT will generate and assess potential scenarios that achieve planning objectives and community interests. This part of the planning

process will begin in the third quarter and conclude with the completion of a draft plan at the end of the fourth quarter of 2015.

The fourth and final phase begins in the first quarter of 2016 and includes the review of the draft plan by the community, the OSBT and recommendation and acceptance of the plan by City Council.

Figure 1. The Four Phases of the North TSA Planning Process



Deliverables and Timeline

The proposed timeframe for the North TSA Plan is based upon having a draft plan available for review at the end of 2015. Review and acceptance of the draft plan would then potentially begin during the first quarter of 2016. The North TSA Plan is a high priority for OSMP. A list of potential plan milestones is provided in Table 1. Preliminary project timelines for the overall project and just for 2015 are available in Attachment C.

Table 1. Possible North TSA Plan Milestones for 2015

1 st Qtr	2 nd Qtr	3 rd Qtr	4 th Qtr
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OSBT Study Session (SS) plan scope and public process • City Council information packet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OSBT SS assessment • OSBT SS interests • Begin community engagement • Open invite community workshop assessment • Workshop key interests • Workshops/Expert Panels key issues • Inventory/assessment report • City Council information packet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshops/Expert Panels key issues • Workshop(s) TSA-wide and subarea scenarios • City Council information packet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshops TSA-wide and subarea scenarios • OSBT SS Alternative scenarios • OSBT SS Preferred scenarios • Draft plan • City Council information packet

Plan Sideboards

The North TSA sideboards will define the decision space for the North TSA planning process. Sideboards clarify what is “on the table” for discussion, and what is beyond the scope of consideration. Sideboards provide critical guidance that allows the public engagement process to answer questions such as: 1) What constraints must the plan account for? 2) What considerations are essential for the plan to be supported as a viable set of recommendations? The plan may include recommendations for minor changes to existing agreements, city regulations or code if such changes are desirable, feasible and necessary to meet plan objectives. However, recommendations for changes to agreements or regulations/code will be subject to the necessary processes and subsequent outcomes.

An initial set of sideboards will be developed by staff and the OSBT by the beginning of the second quarter. Refinement and additions to the sideboards can occur after the inventory and assessment phase based on what is learned from this phase.

Community Engagement

Community Engagement Objectives

Consultation and collaboration among interested community members is fundamental to identifying community-supported actions to recommend in the plan. The following are staff's proposed objectives for the community engagement process:

- Keep people informed, allow for sharing, learning, and understanding among the department, the OSBT, and the community.
- Encourage public interaction, and the sharing of ideas and feedback through both internet-based tools and in-person workshops.
- Support the development of a plan through an inclusive and transparent process that adds clarity to the decision making and rationale for plan outcomes.
- Build relationships, trust, capacity, and commitment for the North TSA Plan.
- Foster collaboration among the public, the OSBT and staff to develop common understanding, share perspectives, generate ideas, and ultimately create a plan that benefits from the knowledge and values of the community, OSBT and staff.
- Engage a broad cross section of the community.

Staff recommends that the North TSA community engagement process include outreach tools that notify and inform community members of the planning process and participation opportunities and a variety of tools that foster the sharing of perspectives and ideas and offer ongoing involvement in the development of the plan. In order for public participation to be most effective, people will engage directly with one another, OSBT and staff. OSMP is proposing using a variety of venues including interactive internet-based input tools and specially-designed community workshops to learn, share ideas, and problem-solve challenging issues.

Community Engagement Approaches

Staff reviewed the public participation steps from previously completed TSA plans, ideas offered by board members, other public land planning processes other city departments' planning efforts and a professional facilitator with experience working with the city and a wide range of public land and resource managers. A summary of the public participation tools used in past TSAs is available in Attachment D.

After considering the available options and integrating the experiences learned from previous TSA processes, staff is recommending the community engagement strategy outlined in Attachment E as a starting point for discussions with the board. Selected elements of the proposed strategy are further discussed below.

The strategy includes a very robust level of community engagement and numerous strategies for outreach and participation. The proposed timeframe (Attachment C) for the North TSA Plan is based upon the goal of completing the draft plan by the end of 2015. Staff believes this is feasible, yet challenging, and recognizes that achieving this goal is dependent on the number and type of community engagement opportunities. It may not be possible to complete the plan on this schedule if the planning process includes the full range of community engagement options.

Community Outreach and Notification

Informing

A critical component of the public engagement process is the strategies and tools to share information with the community about the planning process, opportunities to participate, and progress on the planning process. Staff proposes to employ a variety of communication tools to share information with the community. Tools successfully used with the West TSA and the recent implementation of the revised Voice and Sight Tag Program help shape the components staff recommends for a successful communication and outreach campaign. Examples of the tools proposed include:

- Project website
- Social media (Interact Boulder)
- Emails and newsletters
- Neighborhood mailings
- Natural Selection hikes
- Trailhead kiosk signs

Updating

Another important element for public engagement is outreach to community members who may not usually participate in TSA planning. Using mailings to both city and county neighborhoods adjacent to the North TSA, utility bill notices, and outreach to neighborhood HOAs and organizations are ways to make neighbors aware of the process and potential involvement opportunities. The use of social media (Twitter, Facebook) and internet-based input and feedback tools (Inspire Boulder) will also give convenient access to information. Based upon the experience of other city departments, this approach should encourage involvement by individuals who have not typically attended OSBT meetings that use more traditional meeting-oriented engagement processes. Trail-based and store-front outreach and participatory strategies may also reach new community audiences.

Public Engagement Opportunities

Staff is proposing to use a mix of engagement strategies and tools to encourage participation in the North TSA planning process. Two important strategies that will be used in all phases are the city's internet-based participatory platform called [Inspire Boulder](#) and a planned series of open-invite community workshops. Inspire Boulder is a digital town hall and community engagement platform that has been successfully used by the city in the development of numerous planning efforts and allows feedback through a variety of input tools including questions, polls, surveys, issue prioritization, budgeting, and simple map-based feedback.

Staff is also proposing a series of workshops to gather community knowledge about the North TSA, issues, and key interests along with workshops to refine alternative TSA-wide and subarea scenarios (Table 2.). A series of one to four workshops focused on specific "key issues" will include expert panel presentations followed by community discussion and idea sharing.

Table 2. Possible Community Workshops

Workshop Topic	Workshop Purpose	Workshop Deliverable
Assessment	Learn about the community’s knowledge of conditions in the North TSA. Answer the question: “Where are there problems in the TSA and where is there something great to be maintained?”	Community information on the condition of recreational, natural, cultural, and agricultural resources. Identified areas of concern and areas of importance. This assessment information will supplement and be integrated with staff’s inventory information.
Interests	Answer the question: “What outcomes for the North TSA Plan are most important and why?”	Plan outcomes that are most important and are priorities for the plan to address to improve conditions in the North TSA. Identifying ways to achieve the outcomes occurs later in the process.
<p>Key Issues One or more workshops on challenging issues. Potential topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Improving Visitor Experience</i> • <i>Trail Sustainability</i> • <i>Significant and Special Natural Resources</i> 	Learn about ways experts have addressed specific issues that are likely to pose challenges in the North TSA. Answer the question: “What was learned from the experts and which idea(s) would be good to implement and why?”	The main outcome from this step is a list of desired actions for staff and the OSBT to consider in the development of alternative scenarios and preferred recommendations.
TSA and Subarea Scenarios	Staff will use information from the previous steps to develop alternative scenarios for managing the TSA and challenging issues that the community can comment on, suggest modifications, and rank preferences. Answer the question: “What scenarios are preferred for the North TSA?”	The desired outcome from this step is feedback on the scenarios for staff and the OSBT to consider in selecting preferred recommendations for the draft plan.

Considering the proposed timeframe (Attachment C) for the North TSA Plan, staff recognizes that it may not be possible to complete the plan on this schedule if the planning process includes the full range of community engagement opportunities. Some options to consider for scaling back outreach and engagement could include:

- Reducing or eliminating on-trail and/or store front outreach/comment stations for all or some of the steps in the plan.
- Including only online review and feedback of the inventory/assessment information.
- Reducing the number of expert panels or consolidating several expert panels into a single workshop.
- Reducing the number of workshops and rely on other sources of community participation such as on-line feedback or on-trail/store front.
- Reducing the number of times feedback is requested using Inspire Boulder and simplifying the types of feedback requested to the tools most suitable for Inspire Boulder.

A summary of proposed outreach approaches along with engagement options for the first three phases of the plan is included in Attachment F.

OSBT Hosting of the Process

Staff would like to involve OSBT in the development of the North TSA plan from the beginning and proposes that OSBT consider itself as “host” of the North TSA plan. The intent is to make it clear that OSBT is the recommending body to the city council and to support staff in engaging the community. As host, the community and the City Council can clearly see the board’s involvement. Staff is hoping this approach would raise the board’s visibility in different types of community forums, not just during the two- or three-minute per public comment hearings before the board. The intent is to have more inclusive and informal dialogue and to connect with the community in different and more meaningful ways. Staff has heard from community and board members alike that these short formal “testimonies” were less than optimal opportunities for input.

Actions that the OSBT could take to support the role of hosting the plan include:

- Providing a statement of invite and welcome to the community to participate and share in the development of the North TSA Plan.
- Writing a board-supported guest editorial explaining the process, goals and inviting participation.
- Having board member representation at each community workshop/meeting, offering a welcome to participants, observing and listening to the process, and later helping share insights and perspectives about workshop outcomes to the full board.
- Discussing with staff during board meetings and at study sessions the information provided by the community and staff and assisting in revising and integrating milestone content into the development of plan recommendations.
- Reviewing information updates, presentations and materials that go to City Council.
- Providing a recommendation to City Council based on what is heard and learned throughout the process and working with staff through each phase of the process.

NEXT STEPS

Staff will continue to collect, assess and compile information relevant for the TSA inventory and engage in steps necessary to proceed with implementing the community engagement strategy. These steps include planning out logistics for the engagement strategy, identifying staffing needs and roles, hiring needed consultant services, and beginning preparations for the first outreach and

engagement opportunities. A [North TSA project website](#) has been set up and will be updated with information as it becomes available on the planning process, community engagement opportunities, and supplemental TSA information. Staff will provide an update to OSBT on progress at the March meeting and upcoming plans to begin public engagement.

Progress Updates for City Council:

Staff will provide regular updates to City Council in the form of information at the completion of each phase of the process, and more frequently if needed or requested. After the completion of a draft plan, staff recommends that City Council and the OSBT meet in a joint study session to discuss the plan recommendations. After the study session, the OSBT can host a public hearing and make a recommendation to council for its consideration and acceptance of a final plan.

ATTACHMENTS:

A: Compendium of Public Comments

B: North TSA Map

C: North TSA Timelines

D: Comparison of TSA Plans' Public Engagement Opportunities

E: North Trail Study Area Plan Draft Community Engagement Strategy

F: North TSA 2015 Plan Phases and Community Outreach and Engagement Options

Compendium of Public Comments

Date: February 17, 2015 at 2:17:36 PM MST

Subject: FIDOS' Participation in the North TSA Plan

Dear Open Space Board of Trustees,

FIDOS would first like to thank you for your involvement in the facilitation of the North TSA plan. We hope that the North TSA process can be collaborative and minimally contentious, particularly in comparison to the West TSA.

In the North TSA, FIDOS hopes to see a public process where public input is valued, considered, and fairly incorporated. Concerns have been expressed previously that public input was solicited, but then either disregarded or very selectively considered. We ask that the reasonable interests of all user groups are treated equitably and without bias toward any specific user group.

In the past, OSMP staff has often taken the approach of seeking input as to where there are problems or conflict in Open Space. We ask that the public be invited to share what they like and what works well with North TSA trails. FIDOS asks to be part of any small group sessions that are part of the North TSA process and that we be kept informed of all North TSA proceedings so that we can then forward this information to our membership base.

Finally, since the Joder property is a new addition to the North TSA, we feel that it deserves special public input sessions, workshops, and discussion. There has already been a great deal of discussion on the Joder property and its appropriate land designation. Providing special sessions on the Joder property will allow this property the additional attention that it deserves. Also, it would be an opportunity to demonstrate to the public the openness of the process that underlies management considerations for Open Space.

Thank you for your consideration of our requests.

Best regards,
The FIDOS Board

Jim Illg – President
Lori Fuller
Tony Gannaway
Eileen Monyok
Aldona Siczek
Dan Suple

Date: February 18, 2015 at 10:17:59 AM MST

Subject: N-TSA

Dear OSBT,

I had been planning to attend Wednesday's study session but was called out of town on business at the last minute. But let me urge you to come up with a process that values legitimate input from all stakeholder groups but doesn't pit one user group against others, is constructive, and -- most important -- gets the job done by the end of 2015 as has repeatedly been promised.

I live in north Boulder, and border the open space just south of Lee Hill Road, and am very much looking forward to this.

Thanks!
Joe Glynn
President, BATCO

From: Dan Brillon
Date: February 19, 2015 at 3:34:47 AM MST
Subject: NTSA Comments

Dear OSBT and Acting OSMP Director,

Again, I just want to say how great it is that your meetings are now televised, as it makes it possible for those of us who just can't make it to the meetings in person to be kept abreast on what is happening with Open Space.

Regarding last night's meeting, Kevin I just want to say thank you for bringing the concept of User Experience into the discussion around the NTSA process. I'm pretty sure this is the first time that concept has been mentioned in the context of OSMP trail design. I'm also pleased to hear based on Tracy's comment about the staff presentation earlier in the day that trail design standards do in fact exist, because we've been trying to get these from staff for years. **Can these please be made available to the public?** Based on what I've heard, it seems as though the OSMP trail design standard is completely focused on sustainability as being the key attribute of good trail design. This is where the problem effectively starts because sustainability alone is not enough to make a good trail.

As I've shared before, there are four basic tenants to comprehensive trail design: **1) User Safety, 2) User Experience, 3) Resource Impact and 4) Regulation Compliance.** As a community we really need to have a conversation around trail design standards. Until we do so, we are going to continue to have potentially dangerous situations, with low user satisfaction, high user conflict and low compliance with regulations.

Again, I point to OSMP's most recent newly designed trail Lion's Liar on the Wittermyer property as an example of this problem. While this trail meets a subset of tenant 4 above (sustainability), it fails in the following key ways:

1. **User Safety** - allows a novice hiker to go up Lions Lair and all of a sudden be presented with a very technical descent down the Sanitas south or east ridge. This is the equivalent of a ski area having a green run (easy) drop the user at a triple black diamond run (most difficult).
2. **User Experience** - users of Sanitas are looking for a technical hiking experience. Lions Lair is anything but that resulting in comments as you heard at your last meeting of it being too easy and boring. Additionally, from a dog user point of view it creates a very poor experience because of the fact that both Sanitas and Sunshine Canyon are open to dogs, but the connection between them is now not.
3. **Resource Impact** - the mountain bike flow design (this is the basic standard OSMP appears to have adopted because of its sustainability qualities) uses a much larger area of land than an equally sustainable trail designed exclusively for foot traffic, thus impacting more wildlife and sensitive land features.
4. **Regulation Compliance** - as noted above, the no dog policy on Lions Lair presents the dog user with two bad decision points at the end of Sunshine Canyon trail and the top of Sanitas to break the rules and continue the logical connection between these two trails.

So again, I ask that there be a public conversation around comprehensive trail design standards. Only by doing this will we truly address the user issues associated with our trails.

Sincerely,
Dan

From: Dan Brillon
Sent: Saturday, February 21, 2015 12:16 PM
To: OSBT-Web; Winfree, Tracy; Reeder, Jim
Subject: Re: NTSA Comments

Okay, thanks to a very helpful board member I now have the actual OSMP trail design standards. And if you can bear with me for one more email, I want to show you what I believe to be one of the critical changes which if made for the NTSA process would significantly improve the public view of both OSMP and result in better trails for users.

I'm assuming as Board members you've all seen this, but if not the trail design standards are here: <https://www-static.bouldercolorado.gov/docs/trail-design-standards-1-201308051352.pdf>

OSMP is using what's referred to as a "ground based" view of trail design - basically design a trail to the highest level of development that the land allows based on a set of characteristics the land manager has decided desirable (usually focused on maintenance and sustainability considerations). This ground based view is the general approach that land managers adopted back in the 70's as they started to become aware that trails actually needed to be maintained. It's also a time when the primary user group of trails were simply "hikers." It was a good approach to trail management for the time, but in today's world of hikers, mountain bikers, runners, horseback riders, etc., the situation is a lot more complicated and thus the approach to trail design needs to evolve as well.

There are three critical steps when assessing the development of a trail:

1. Where should the trail go?
2. Who should be allowed to use the trail?
3. What should the trail look like based on the intended use?

The current TSA process addresses steps 1 and 2, but there is literally no public conversation around step 3. Step 3 - what the trail looks like - is ultimately what most directly affects a user's experience of a trail. While steps 1 and 2 will always be controversial, step 3 is what creates the ongoing user perception of a land area and the land manager's effectiveness.

In today's world of multiple user groups sharing the same trail, the best practice land management technique is to use a "user based" approach to trail design. This allows the actual design of the trail to factor in the desired attributes of the different user groups. Below is an overly simplified matrix of some attributes which hikers, runners and mountain bikers might have:

User Group	Experience Level	Max Grade	Speed	Surface Attribute	Length
Hiker	Novice	Flat	Slow	Smooth	Short
Hiker	Intermediate	Intermediate	Slow	Mixed	Medium
Hiker	Advanced	Steep	Slow	Technical	Long
Runner	Novice	Flat	Slow	Smooth	Medium
Runner	Intermediate	Intermediate	Medium	Mixed	Long
Runner	Advanced	Steep	Medium	Technical	Long
Biker	Novice	Flat	Medium	Smooth	Medium
Biker	Intermediate	Intermediate	Fast	Mixed	Long
Biker	Advanced	Intermediate	Fast	Technical	Long

Using the example of the Lions Lair trail on the Wittermyer property, OSMP saw the opportunity based on the land conditions to build what I believe is a Fully Developed Class 5 trail, a primary characteristic of which is a max grade of 8%. But if you were to approach the design of this trail from the attributes of the user groups who are going to use it, you would end up building a trail that would look very different. The primary user of this trail is likely an Intermediate to Advanced Hiker and as such they would be looking for a fairly technical trail with some quite steep sections and of medium to long distance as this user wants a vigorous experience - this is why they are on Sanitas and not the Wonderland Lake trail. So in this case OSMP delivered half of what this user group is looking for (distance) but missed on creating the technical attributes this type of user desires (challenging Sanitas like conditions). And again a trail like this can be built in a manner that is as sustainable as a Class 5 trail - it just requires a different approach to trail building.

The real value of a user based approach to design comes when you have more than one user group sharing a trail. In this instance you identify the "primary" user group and begin with their attributes as the default design position, then look for overlap in the secondary user groups

attributes and emphasize those features in the design. Where attributes conflict, you do what we label "designing out conflict". A good example of this is where hikers and mountain bikers share a trail. One of the biggest conflicts between the two groups' attributes is that of speed - hikers are slow while riders are fast. To design out this conflict you create long lines of sight so mountain bikers have time to slow down before encountering a hiker, and the hiker has plenty of time to see them coming. Where line of sight isn't possible, you then use corners or technical terrain to slow the bikes down. There are a lot of techniques like this for each set of user groups - this really is the key to managing user group conflict.

Let me give you a slightly absurd analogy to try and emphasize this point. Let's pretend OSMP was tasked with the responsibility of delivering music to Boulder residences. As a result OSMP builds a recording studio, brings in the best artists it can find, and sets up transmission stations to deliver crystal clear signals to every home in Boulder. They now would expect that the community would be very happy to have music, and in that respect they would have accomplished their mission. But what if the artists OSMP was able to attract were mainly classical? How would the music lovers who want rock or country music feel about the experience? This is effectively what is happening with our trails - we are getting trails, but they aren't meeting the requirements of the different user groups and thus we have low user satisfaction, high conflict and low regulation compliance. OSMP's Class 5 trail, which I assume is their most desirable as all the newly developed trails seem to be being built to this standard, is effectively a mountain bike "Flow" trail design and as such is the classical music equivalent in the above analogy - great for mountain bikers (although these trails aren't open to bikes), but not so satisfying for the other users.

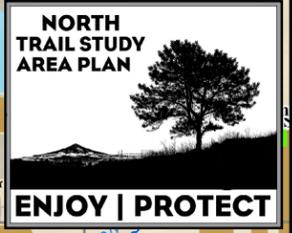
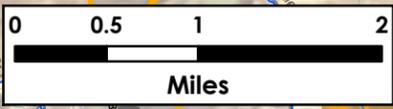
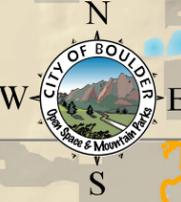
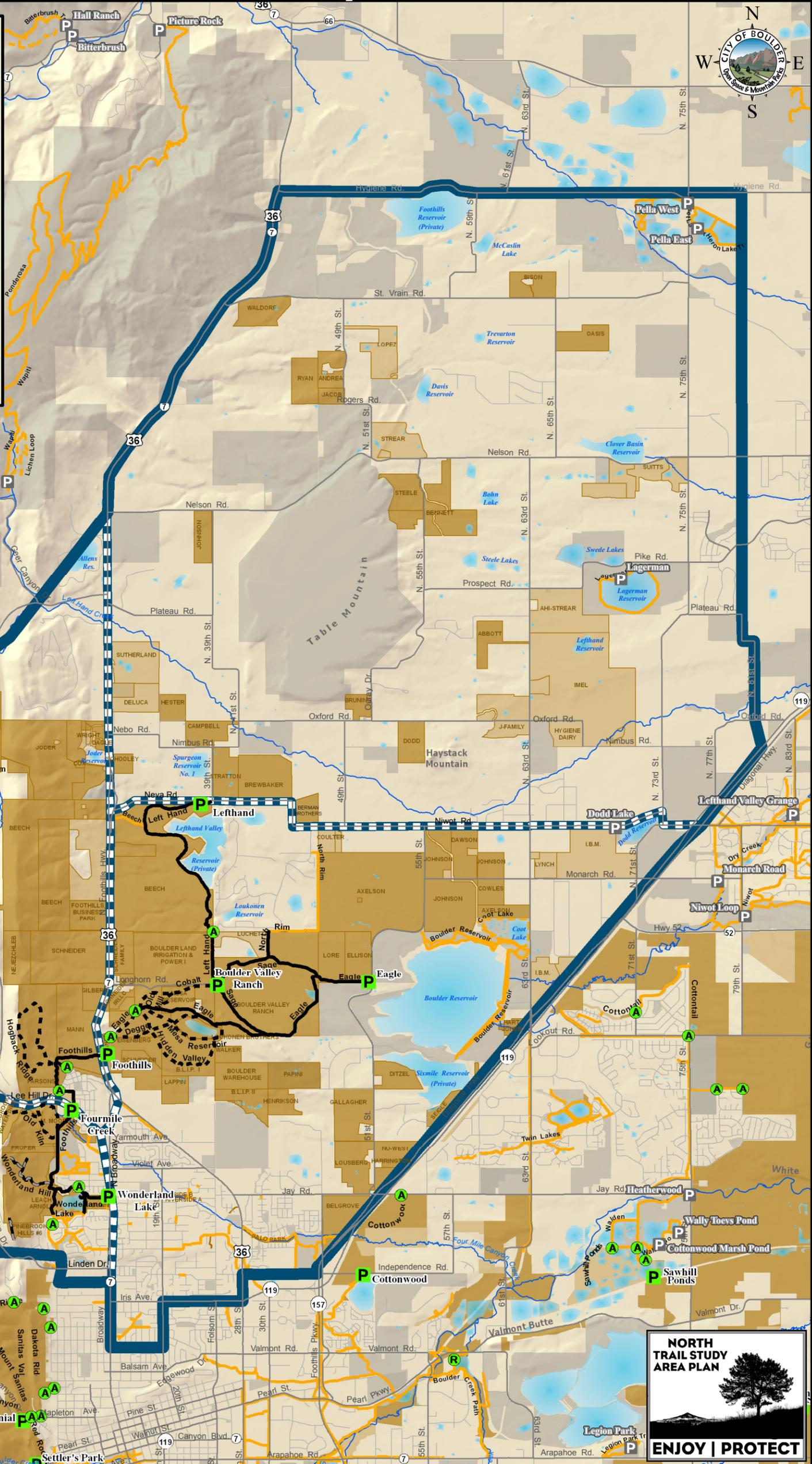
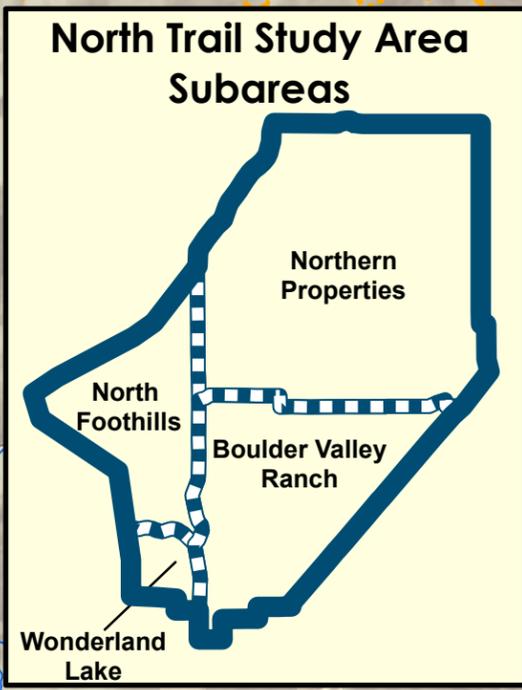
When a land agency switches from a ground based to user based approach to trail design, something magical happens - the user feels like it is "their" trail. It has the attributes they desire (even though the user may not explicitly realize what these are) and as a result they feel really good every time they use it. They'll say that was a "good" trail. As the Federal land managers have seen over the last decade or so, when this happens user satisfaction goes way up, user conflict goes down, and compliance becomes much less of an issue. This results in the agencies saving money as they don't have to spend anywhere near as much on Rangers to enforce regulations and deal with conflict, and it also results in much lower maintenance costs as the users themselves are more likely to volunteer to do the upkeep on "their" trail.

So I am more than happy to work you and staff to whatever degree desired if you want to pull in this critical Step 3 of what the trail should look like to the NTSA process. Just the acknowledgement and documentation of specific user group trail attributes would go a long way towards starting to pull the public into the "ownership" role of "their" trail system vs. the current experience of it being "OSMP's trail system." I've seen time and time again how this simple shift dramatically changes the entire feel of a trail system and the public perception of the land agency. As such I am willing to do whatever necessary to help OSMP embrace this approach so that this TSA can finally be viewed as a success in terms of the kinds of trail experiences it produces for users on the ground.

Sincerely,
Dan

City of Boulder Open Space and Mountain Parks North Trail Study Area

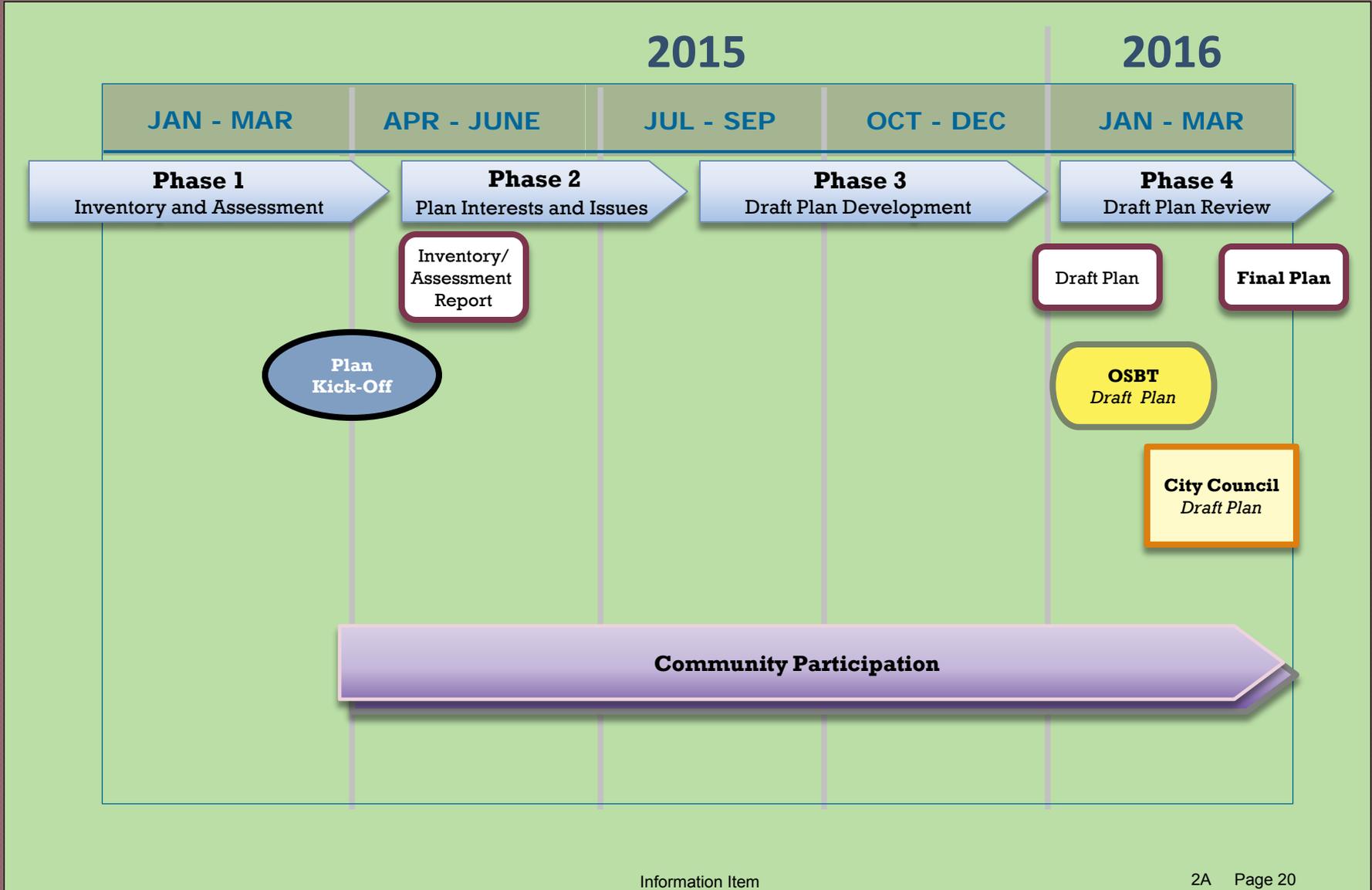
Date: 2/24/2015



- | | | |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| OSMP Trailhead | OSMP Hiking/Equestrian Trail | NTSA Boundary |
| OSMP Access Point | OSMP Multi-Use Trail | NTSA Subarea |
| OSMP Recreational Feature Access | Gliding Access | OSMP Fee and Managed Property |
| Boulder County Trailhead | Other Hiking Trail | Other OSMP Property |
| | Other Multi-Use Trail | Other Protected Land |

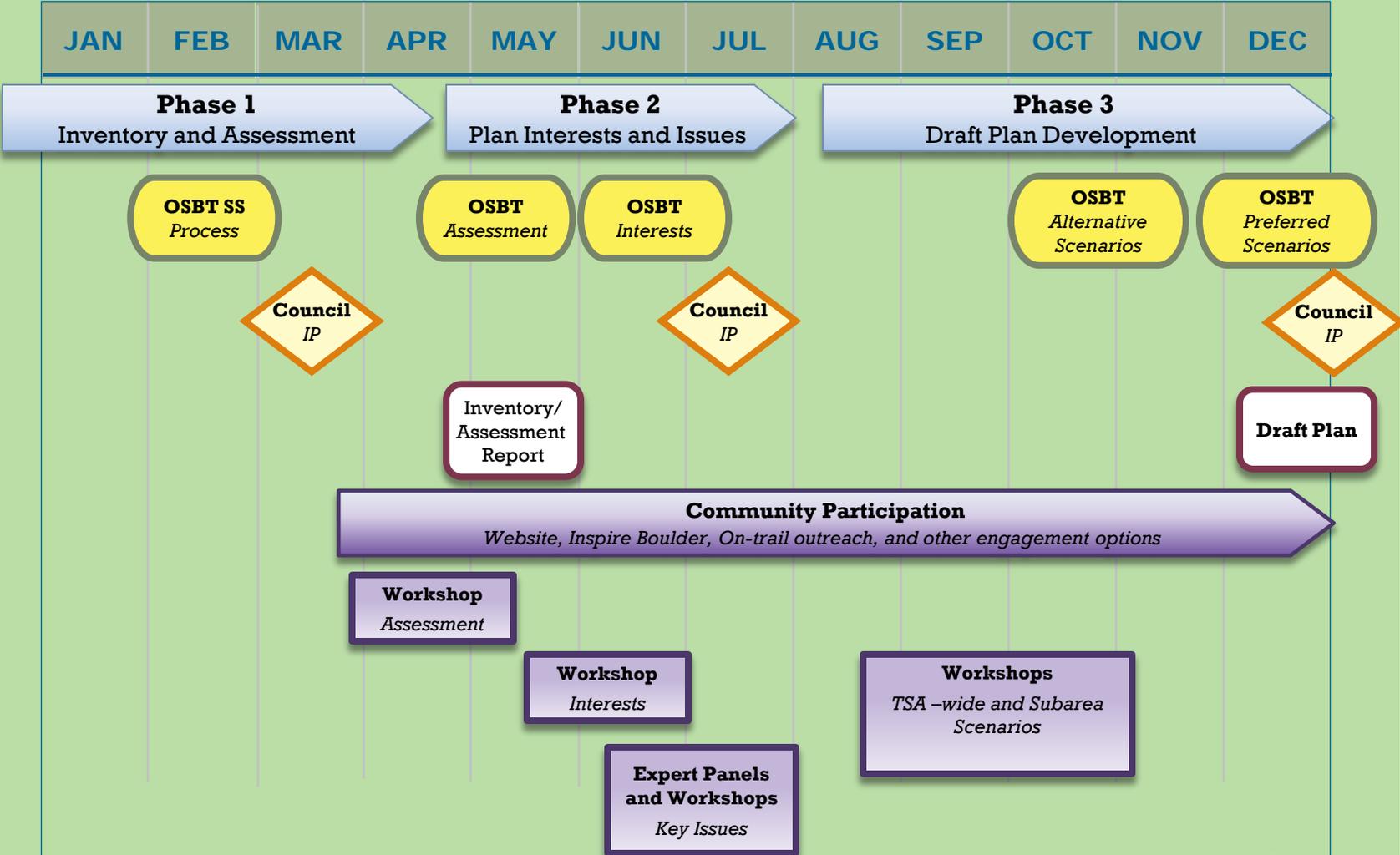
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Potential North TSA Timeline



Potential North TSA Timeline

2015



Comparison of TSA Plans' Public Engagement Opportunities

Items in red text indicate approaches not used in other TSAs

TSA Plan	Plan Kick-Off and Inventory	Draft Plan Development	Draft Plan Review and Approval
Marshall Mesa / Southern Grassland	Outreach <ul style="list-style-type: none"> E-mails Project website Press releases 	Outreach <ul style="list-style-type: none"> E-mails Project website Press releases 	Outreach <ul style="list-style-type: none"> E-mails Project website Press releases
	Input/Feedback <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community questionnaire Community workshop to review inventory report and create trail scenarios (<i>open invitation</i>) 	Input/Feedback <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community workshop to review trail scenario alternatives (<i>open invitation</i>) Open House to review alternative trail scenarios 	Input/Feedback <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community workshop to review draft plan Open House to review draft plan
			Public Hearing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public hearing at OSBT meeting
Eldorado Mountain / Doudy Draw	Outreach <ul style="list-style-type: none"> E-mails Project website Press releases Signs & flyers Post cards to area residents 	Outreach <ul style="list-style-type: none"> E-mails Project website Press releases Signs & flyers 	Outreach <ul style="list-style-type: none"> E-mails Project website Press releases
	Input/Feedback <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listening sessions with stakeholders 	Input/Feedback <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two open houses to review alternatives Listening sessions/discussions with stakeholders Community field trips Community feedback requested on seasonal grassland nesting bird closures (<i>plan-specific issue</i>) 	Input/Feedback <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two community open houses to review draft plan Post planning process questionnaire
			Public Hearing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public hearing at OSBT meeting

TSA Plan	Plan Kick-Off and Inventory	Draft Plan Development	Draft Plan Review and Approval
West	Outreach <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E-mails • Project website • Press releases • Signs & flyers 	Outreach <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E-mails • Project website • Press releases • Community collaborative group outreach to constituents 	Outreach <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E-mails • Project website • Press releases
	Input/Feedback <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community open house on process and public involvement • Feedback requested on inventory report • Community open house on inventory report 	Input/Feedback <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community meeting to select collaborative community group • Collaborative community process (Community Collaborative Group) • Bi-monthly Community Collaborative Group (CCG) meetings have public comment opportunity • Community meeting by the collaborative group on mountain biking opportunities (<i>plan-specific issue</i>) • Community meetings or open houses hosted by staff for trail projects not included in the TSA planning process. (Goat Trail, Green Mountain West Ridge) (<i>plan-specific issue</i>) 	Input/Feedback <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community meeting on collaborative group recommendations
			Public Hearings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public hearing at OSBT meeting for CCG recommendations • Public hearing at OSBT meeting for draft plan • Public hearing at City Council meeting

North Trail Study Area Plan

Community Engagement Strategy

Phase 1: Inventory and Assessment

Step 1: Participation in the Assessment

The goal of this step is to get the community engaged from the beginning by inviting their participation in the documentation of the current conditions in the North Trail Study Area (TSA). This step involves getting members of the public to identify where they have seen problems in the North TSA and where there is something great they want to maintain. They will basically help catalogue the current conditions of the area.

This step would occur through several types of engagement to reach a broad segment of the community, beyond those who attend Open Space Board of Trustees (OSBT) meetings and typical open houses:

- An open public workshop during which participants identify specific areas of concern or of high value on maps
- Optional meetings with targeted invitations to specific experts and/or stakeholders to discuss the current conditions on a specific topic (e.g., songbirds, raptors, trail sustainability, etc.)
- On-trail outreach with staff providing questionnaires or maps at trailheads
- Store front/coffee shop outreach with staff hosting a map-based station at local shops
- Web-based questionnaires and possibly web-based maps to allow for similar input through the Inspire Boulder website

Results:

- The primary output from this step would be a series of identified areas of concern and areas of importance to be integrated into work on the inventory/assessment.
- Outcomes from this step include early community engagement, increased community role in and hopefully acceptance of baseline data, and increased trust in the process.

Additional resources needed:

- Venue costs
- Facilitation for the open public meeting; possibly for the optional meetings with targeted groups
- Public Relations and Community Outreach staff not currently budgeted/integrated into the project
- Cost, if any, for “setting up shop” in stores and coffee shops
- Printing for maps and information sheets/handouts

Step 2: Review and Comment on the Inventory and Assessment

The public will be invited to provide comment on the inventory and assessment. The assessment will be posted online for the public’s review and comment. Optionally, the OSBT and staff could also host a public meeting to unveil the assessment, have staff answer questions, and encourage

small group discussions on what members think about the assessment. If OSBT and staff opt to host a meeting, additional costs include meeting facilitation and small group facilitators (see below for more details on small group facilitators).

Phase 2: Plan Interests and Issues

Step 1: Identification of Interests in the North TSA

The goal of this step is to get community involvement in the identification of the interests in the North TSA. Rather than invite a list of positions or “wants” in the North TSA, this conversation focuses on why people want what they want. For example, if someone suggests moving a particular trail from location A to location B, the interest that underlies that might be improved views or a trail alignment that avoids commonly wet and muddy areas.

This step would occur through the following steps:

- An open public workshop for small group discussion to answer two questions: “What would you like to see in the North TSA?” and “Why?” Non-staff small group facilitators would assist in managing the small group discussions.
- On-trail outreach with staff asking users to share their responses to the same questions
- Store front/coffee shop outreach with staff hosting a station to get responses to the same questions
- Web-based questionnaires to get responses to the same questions

Results:

- The primary output from this step is a list of interests in the North TSA, which can be integrated and balanced to be approved or revised by the OSBT and staff, and once finalized, could be used as a set of criteria for a good area plan (i.e., a good plan is one that meets most or all of the identified interests).
- Outcomes from this step include ongoing community engagement to help set priorities for the planning process and increased trust in the process.

Additional resources needed:

- Venue costs
- Facilitation for the open public workshop
- Small group facilitators (conflict resolution students can likely be used to get skilled facilitation for a reasonable cost)
- PR/Outreach staff not currently budgeted/integrated into the project
- Cost, if any, for “setting up shop” in stores/coffee shops

Step 2: Education and Discussion of Key Issues and Options

The first goal of this step is to help the community, OSBT and staff learn about different ways experts have addressed specific issues that may pose challenges in the North TSA, such as maintaining a high quality of visitor experience while also improving trail physical and environmental sustainability and minimizing recreational activity (user) conflicts. Additional topics could include unique natural, cultural, and agricultural resources and ways to conserve

them. The second goal of the step is to encourage community dialogue about what was learned from the experts and which idea(s) the community would like to see implemented in the North TSA and why.

The primary way this step will be implemented is through expert panels on the topics identified above. Community members will be invited to attend these panels to learn from the experts; then they will discuss what they have learned in small groups. The primary discussion question for the small groups will be “Which of the ideas on [topic] resonates with you as a good approach for the North TSA?” Small group facilitators will be helpful in keeping participants focused on the questions.

The panel discussions will be video recorded for community members who do not attend the meetings in person and posted online along with any summary or reference documents. Additionally, an online dialogue can be created on the Inspire Boulder site to give these virtual participants a similar opportunity for discussion as that available for in-person participants.

Results:

- The primary output from this step is a list of desired actions from the community for the North TSA for staff to consider in the development of the draft plan.
- Outcomes from this step include increased knowledge among community members about issues and options for the North TSA, ongoing community engagement to help frame potential recommendations, and increased trust in the process.

Additional resources needed:

- Venue costs
- Speaking fees and/or travel costs for experts
- Facilitation for the panel discussion meetings
- Small group facilitators (conflict resolution students can likely be used to get skilled facilitation for a reasonable cost)
- Recording costs (for Channel 8 or another recording company)

Plan Phase 3: Draft Plan Development

Step 1: Discussion of Proposed Scenarios for Issues and Areas

Based on the ideas that emerge from the above steps, staff will develop scenarios for ways to manage the North TSA and/or ways to address challenging issues. Once these scenarios are available, the community will be invited to respond to them, providing comments and suggestions and/or ranking them based on preference (if staff develops multiple scenarios for a single subarea or issue). This can be done during an open public workshop, as well as online using the Inspire Boulder website. Additional opportunities for comment on the scenarios could also be provided at trailheads and in store/coffee shops.

Results:

- The primary output from this step is feedback on the scenarios for the OSBT and staff to consider as the draft plan is developed; staff could select a preferred scenario based on

feedback and/or integrate components from different scenarios into a hybrid scenario. The list of interests developed in Step 3 can also serve as a guide in determining which scenarios go into the draft plan.

- Outcomes from this step include ongoing community engagement to help revise scenarios and identify preferred scenarios for inclusion in the draft plan and increased trust in the process.

Additional resources needed:

- Venue costs
- Facilitation for the open public meeting
- Small group facilitators (conflict resolution students can likely be used to get skilled facilitation for a reasonable cost)
- Printing costs for handouts (if needed)
- Cost, if any, for “setting up shop” in stores/coffee shops

North TSA Plan Phase 4: Plan Review and Acceptance

Step 1: Comment on the Draft Plan

The public will be invited to provide comment on the draft plan that results from the above steps. The draft plan will be posted online for the public’s review and comment. Optionally, OSBT and staff could also host a final public meeting to unveil the draft plan, have staff answer questions, and encourage small group discussions on what members of the community like and would like to see changed before the plan is finalized. If OSBT and staff decide to host this final public meeting, additional costs include meeting facilitation and small group facilitators.

Step 2: Public Hearings on the Draft Plan

Prior to final review of the draft plan by the OSBT and City Council, a joint study session discussing the draft plan may be beneficial. After the study session, the public can provide comment on the draft plan during the OSBT public hearing scheduled for when the OSBT approves the draft plan and has a recommendation to City Council. An additional public hearing would be scheduled during City Council’s consideration and acceptance of the plan.

Community Outreach and Engagement	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
	Inventory and Assessment	Plan Interests and Issues	Draft Plan Development
<p>Inform/Outreach</p> <p><i>Providing information to assist in understanding the process, opportunities for input, issues to resolve, and progress on developing the plan.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social media (Facebook, Twitter) • Project website • Emails and project newsletters sent to interested individuals and stakeholders • Media releases • Neighborhood mailings • Inside Boulder/Channel 8 information • Natural Selection hikes, programs, walking tours • Utility bill notices or inserts • Fact Sheets • Trailhead signs and kiosks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social media (Facebook, Twitter) • Project website • Emails and project newsletter • Media releases • Neighborhood mailing • Inside Boulder/Channel 8 information • Natural Selection hikes, programs, walking tours • HOA notifications, newsletters, websites • Online mapping resources —Inventory data layers available for Google Earth mapping 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social media (Facebook, Twitter) • Project website • Emails and project newsletter • Media releases • Neighborhood mailing • Inside Boulder/Channel 8 information • Utility bill notices or inserts
<p>Engage/Involve</p> <p><i>Providing input on specific topics and issues and feedback on alternatives, scenarios, and preferred recommendations.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inspire Boulder (MindMixer)-Digital town hall • Website and comment form • Open-invite workshop on current conditions in the TSA (assessment) • On-trail outreach and questionnaires provided by staff or maps for providing comments placed at trailheads • Store front/coffee shop outreach and map-based station for comments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inspire Boulder (MindMixer)-Digital town hall • Website/comment form • Open-invite workshops on interests in the TSA and on issues and likely challenges in the TSA • On-trail outreach and questionnaires provided by staff • Store front/coffee shop outreach and comment station for commenting on questions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inspire Boulder (MindMixer)-Digital town hall • Website/comment form • Open-invite workshop(s) on staff-proposed scenarios for TSA-wide and subarea management actions
Additional Options			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Optional meetings with specific experts and/or stakeholders • Community open house to review Inventory and Assessment information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen and learn sessions with stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On-trail and store/coffee shop outreach and comment opportunity on scenarios • Listen and learn sessions with stakeholders