City of Boulder Open Space and Mountain Parks

North Trail Study Area Plan

Interests Workshop

JUNE 27, 2015

Goal

Improve visitors' experiences and increase the sustainability of trails, while conserving natural, agricultural and cultural resources.

Process

*We **were** here*

Phase 1

Inventory and Assessment
"Current Conditions"

*We **are** here*

Phase 2

Interests and Issues
"What and **Why**"

Process

Then

Phase 3

Develop Draft Plan
"Alternative Scenarios"

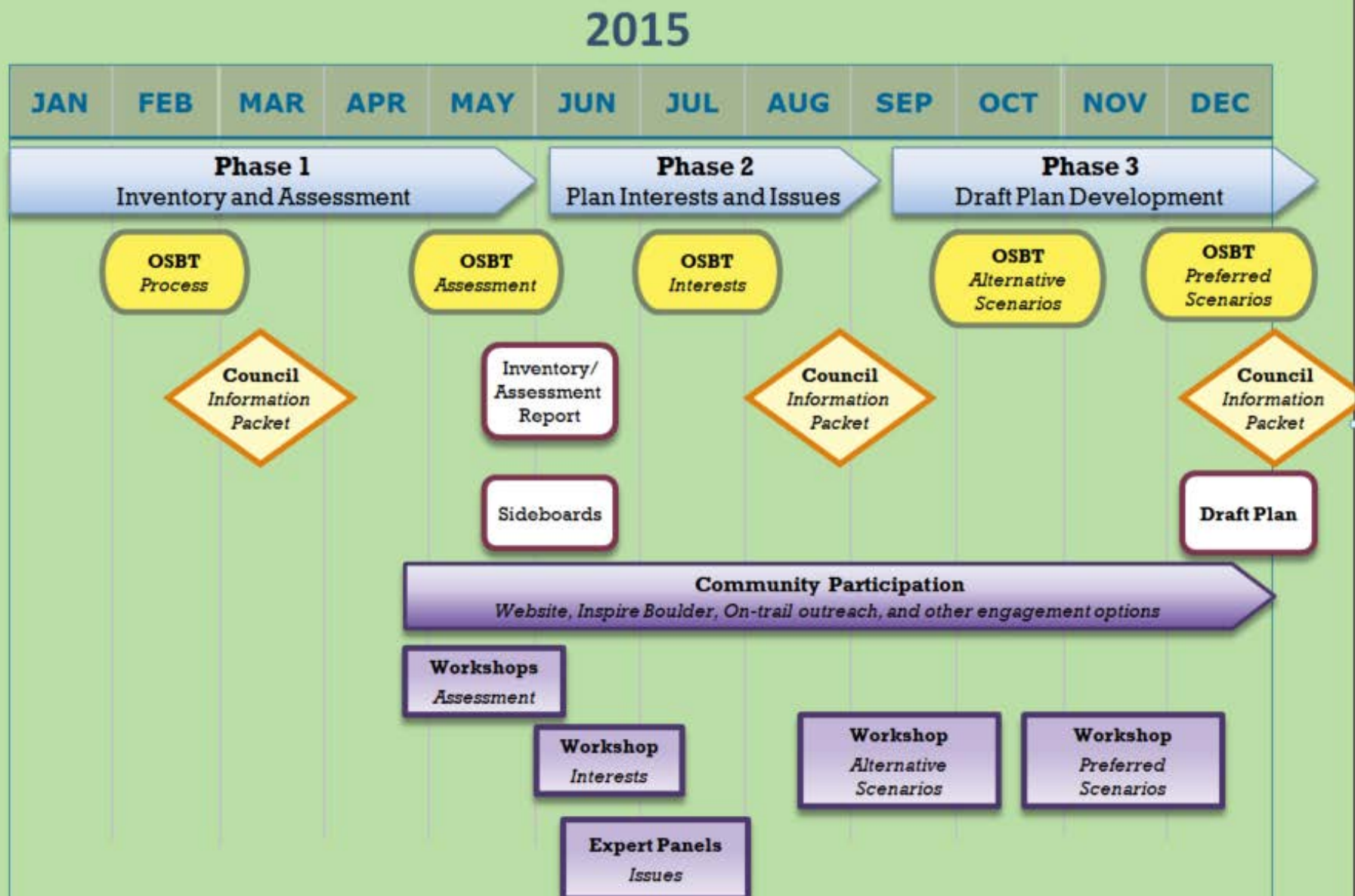
Finally

Phase 4

Plan Acceptance

City of Boulder Open Space and Mountain Parks

North Trail Study Area Plan



Ways To Be Involved

Specific Opportunities

- Workshops
- Inspire Boulder
- Look for us in the North TSA

Throughout the Process

- Website comment form (www.NORTHTSA.org)

Recreational Resources

North Trail Study Area Plan

- Roughly 20 years ago the North TSA received an estimated 315,000 annual visits
- Today the number is roughly 1 million (one fifth of the overall OSMP visits)

- 50% of North TSA visitors arrive by walking or running, 11% arrive by bike (OSMP system 57% arrive by car)
- Most visitors come to participate in a particular activity

19 miles of Designated Trails

- Hikers: >50%
- Bikers: >15%
- Runners: >25%
- Equestrians : 1%

Condition of Designated Trails

- Half the trails are in good or very good condition
- However, since 2007 trails are trending towards being in worse condition

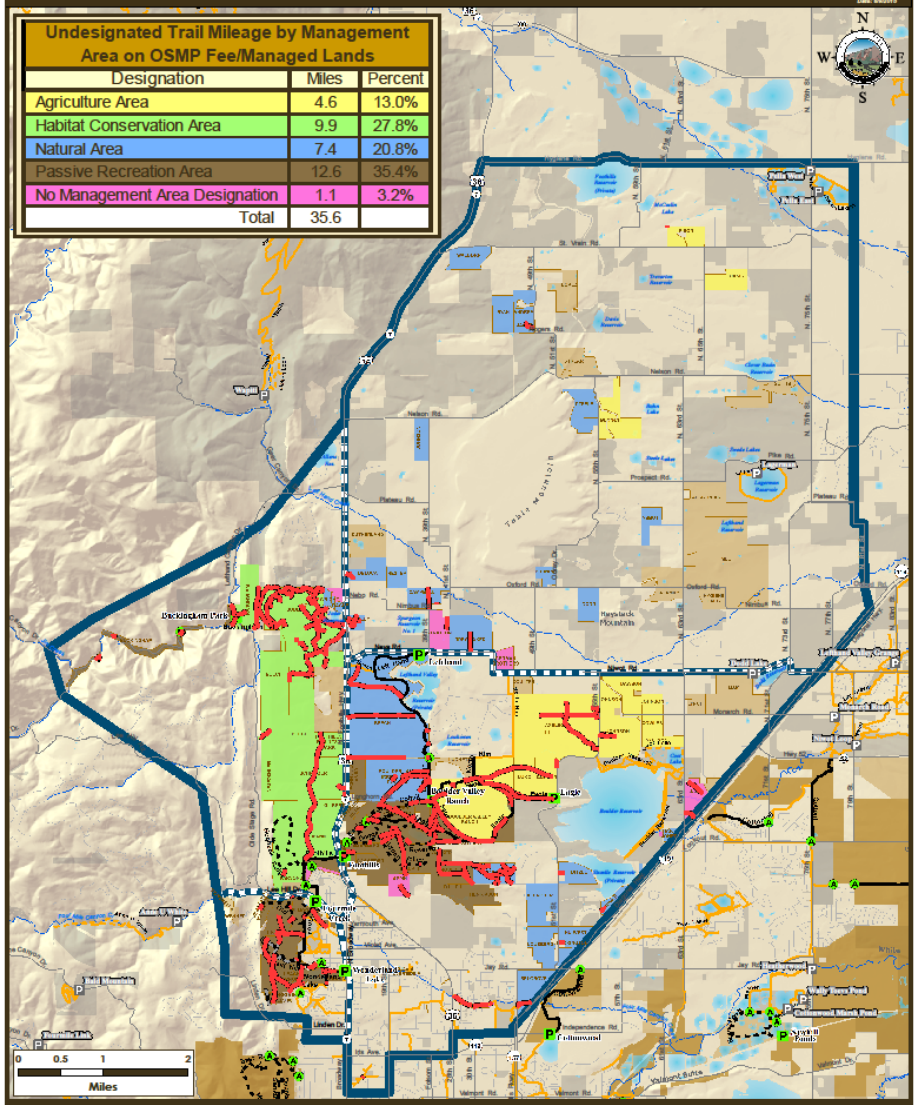
Undesignated Trails

- 35.7 miles of undesignated trails
- Designated trail system does not provide access to some destinations or connections

City of Boulder Open Space and Mountain Parks

North Trail Study Area Plan

Undesignated Trail Mileage by Management Area on OSMP Fee/Managed Lands		
Designation	Miles	Percent
Agriculture Area	4.6	13.0%
Habitat Conservation Area	9.9	27.8%
Natural Area	7.4	20.8%
Passive Recreation Area	12.6	35.4%
No Management Area Designation	1.1	3.2%
Total	35.6	



MAP R8: UNDESIGNATED TRAILS

- Undesignated Trail
- OSMP Trailhead
- OSMP Access Point
- OSMP Recreational Feature Access
- Boulder County Trailhead
- OSMP Hiking/Equestrian Trail
- OSMP Multi-Use Trail
- OSMP Gliding Access
- Non-OSMP Managed Hiking Trail
- Non-OSMP Managed Multi-Use Trail
- North TSA Boundary
- North TSA Subarea
- OSMP Fee and Managed Property
- OSMP Easement or Jointly Owned, County-Managed Land
- Other Government Land

Potential Connections to Assess

- North Foothills Trail to Joder Property
- Sage Trailhead to Eagle Trail
- Kelso Road to Hidden Valley Trail
- South Foothills trail (Wonderland Lake) to high ridge loop

Natural Resources

Natural Resources

High-quality habitat in the NTSA

- Very high biodiversity (CNHP)
- Five areas are Critical Wildlife Habitat (BCCP)
- Large habitat blocks

Five conservation Targets

1) Mixedgrass Prairie Mosaic
2) Xeric Tallgrass Prairie
3) Wetlands and Riparian
4) Upland Shrublands
5) Exposed Rock and Cliffs

Mixedgrass Prairie Mosaic

Forms large habitat blocks in the NTSA

Greatest acreage in this target (~5,000 acres; 64% of NTSA)

- Focal wildlife species- lark sparrow, prairie rattlesnake

Mixedgrass Prairie Mosaic

Uncommon plant communities

- New Mexico feathergrass
- Shale Barrens
  - Bell's Twinpod

Xeric Tallgrass

- 620 acres in NTSA (8% of NTSA)
- Rare community
  - 99% of tallgrass prairie in North America has been lost since European settlement
  - Characterized by the presence of big and little bluestem

Xeric Tallgrass

Focal wildlife species: grassland dependent butterflies (skippers)- NTSA is one of the best places to protect on OSMP

Wetlands and Riparian Areas

552 acres (7% of NTSA)

Provide important resources for wildlife

- Use of these areas disproportionate to availability*
- Focal wildlife species: northern harrier, plains topminnow

Upland Shrublands

375 acres (5% of NTSA)

Patchy, especially along hogback ridges and interspersed with rock outcroppings

- Shrub nesting birds = focal wildlife group- represented by lazuli bunting

Exposed Rock and Cliffs

39 acres (0.5% of NTSA)

Supports focal species: nesting golden eagles and rock wrens

- Interspersed within matrix grassland habitats

Habitat Suitability Indices

- Tool for examining focal wildlife species habitat suitability spatially
- Examine ecologically based habitat suitability and suitability as influenced by human features and use
- Species include prairie rattlesnake, grassland dependent butterflies, lazuli bunting, lark sparrow

Photo Credits

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Cultural Resources

Cultural Resources

- **Types of Resources**
  - Paleontology
  - Aboriginal Archaeology
  - Historical Archaeology
  - Historic Buildings, Structures and Objects

Cultural Resources

Paleontology

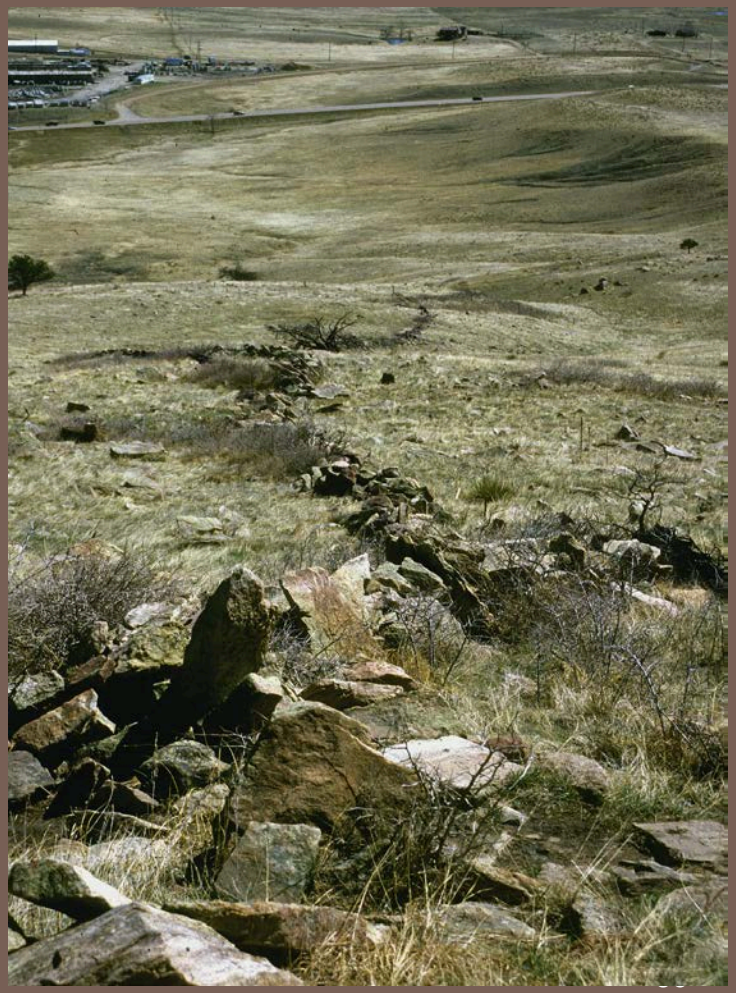
Two fossil bearing formations within North TSA, including Niobrara Chalk and Pierre Shale.

Example of bivalve remains common within the fossiliferous members within the North TSA area.

Cultural Resources

Archaeological Sites

The North TSA is home to a number of aboriginal sites, one of which is the Teegarden Wall on Dakota Ridge!



Teegarden Wall (*5BL6611*)

Cultural Resources

Historical Architecture

The North TSA is rich in history. Structures are located throughout the area.

Axelson House
(*5BL4127*)

Cobalt Gold Mining Company Smelter (*5BL5044*)

Lee Hill Lime Kiln (*5BL490*)

Significant places in the past still shape the character of the landscapes within the North TSA:

from historic agricultural areas, ditches, roads, and trails to natural vistas and resources important to people throughout time.

Agricultural Resources

Agricultural Resources

Agriculture in the North TSA:

- Agricultural lands (3,032 acres)
- Lands of statewide importance (2,438 acres)
- Lands of local importance (498 acres)

Agricultural Operations:

- OSMP has 26 leases in the North TSA
- Leases range in size (19 to 1,365 acres)
- Predominately cattle grazing and hay
- There is one organic farm producing vegetables, sheep and hay

Agricultural Resources

Potential Grass Banks

- Four properties totaling 2,032 acres

Irrigated Hayfields and Bobolink Songbirds

- 43 hayfields support one third of detected bobolinks on OSMP lands

Photo: Michael Morton

Questions?

Agenda

9:00 am Welcome

9:10 am Summary of the North TSA Process

9:25 am Key Findings from Inventory Report

10:00 am Teeing Up the Small Group Discussion

10:15 am Small Group Discussions

11:15 am Reports from Small Groups

11:30 am Adjourn

Positions	Interests
What I want or need	Why I want or need it
Often binary/absolute (yes/no, yours/mine, right/wrong, etc.)	Describes the motivation for a need or want
Distributive (resources can and will be divided)	Integrative (stakeholders' interests can be integrated for shared gain)
Involves stakeholders claiming their piece of the pie	Involves stakeholders creating new solutions and new "pie"
Involves win/lose dynamics	Involves win/win dynamics
Stakeholders seek to maximize their own gains and minimize their own losses	Stakeholders seek to maximize joint gains
Best outcome: everyone gets about half of what they want	Best outcome: everyone gets most or all of what they want
Allows for a single solution: *this* one	Allows for multiple possible solutions
Example: This river floods; we need a dam. *Solution = build a dam.*	Example: This river floods; we need to do something to stop the flooding. *Solution = build a dam OR create wetlands for flood water retention OR build multiple small diversions to slow water as it reaches the stream OR reduce impervious areas in upstream areas so water percolates into the ground instead of running off*

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