

Eldorado Canyon State Park Visitor Use Management Plan Task Force Meeting Summary

June 26, 2019. 4:30 pm to 7:30 pm
St. Paul's United Methodist Church
4215 Grinnell Ave, Boulder, CO 80305

Attendees

See Appendix A

Objectives

- Become familiar with context, scope and process for development of the Eldorado Canyon State Park Visitor Use Management Plan (Eldo VUMP), and how the Task Force will contribute
- Hear Task Force members' initial feedback on desired conditions and brainstorm alternatives/management strategies to explore

Next Steps and Action Items

- This meeting is the first in a series of five or six. The second meeting will be held on August 5th and will focus on strategies for the Eldo VUMP.
- Keystone Policy Center will synthesize feedback, generate a meeting summary, and disseminate this along with the meeting slide deck.

Meeting Notes

Welcome and Introductions

Julie Shapiro (Keystone Policy Center) opened the meeting, welcomed everyone, reviewed the agenda and ground rules, and outlined the meeting objectives.

Eldorado Canyon History and Background

Windi Padia (CPW) presented an overview of the park. Eldorado Canyon State Park, founded in 1978, is one of 41 Colorado state parks. The park is divided into three parcels: Inner Canyon, Jefferson County, and Crescent Meadows. It has 214 parking spaces, 10 picnic areas, four full-time staff, and operates on an annual budget of \$160k.

As Colorado's population has grown, so has visitation to Eldorado Canyon. In 2017, the park saw 480k visitors, which rose to 520k in 2018. Visitation to the park is only expected to increase in the coming years, which has prompted Colorado to determine the park's visitor capacity and incorporate it into a management plan for the park. Some issues Eldorado Canyon faces are common among state parks, including improper waste disposal and misuse of park facilities. Especially important to this park, however, is the limited access provided by a single road,

which cuts through the town of Eldorado Springs, creating traffic congestion that impacts both visitors of the park and residents of the town.

Scope and Objectives of the Visitor Use Management Plan Process

Windi presented the scope and intent of the VUMP process. The overarching goal is for CPW to protect park resources and provide high quality visitor experiences at Eldorado Canyon and to consider the management of the park from the perspective of what Eldorado Canyon State Park will look like in 50 years.

Timeline (June 2019 to late 2020)

Capacity Study	Summer 2019
4-5 Task Force meeting, plus public meetings	Fall 2019; Winter 2020
Draft plan developed	Early 2020
Final plan developed	Mid 2020
Strategies implemented*	Mid to late 2020

*Some test strategies may be piloted while plan is in development.

Eldo VUMP Engagement Overview - Interagency Team

Organization	Name
CPW	John Carson, Park Manager
CPW	Kacie Miller, Planning Manager
Boulder County Parks & Open Space	Marni Ratzel, Resource Planner
City of Boulder Open Space & Mountain Parks	Kacey French, Planner
Boulder County Transportation	Scott McCarey, Multitmodal Planning Manager

- Provides a forum to share information and coordinate on potential strategies that would impact local transportation issues or open space lands
- Provides input into the Eldorado Canyon State Park capacity study, engagement plan, the development of alternatives, and the visitor use management plan

Eldo VUMP Engagement Overview - Task Force

Julie Shapiro (Keystone Policy Center) introduced key components of the Task Force. She reviewed the Task Force Charter, which lays out essential ground rules for productive and collaborative deliberation. The members of the Task Force were invited to participate by CPW on an organizational or constituent basis. Each group selected their own individual

representatives. Alternates may come to meetings as observers or as replacements. All Task Force members are asked to agree to the charter.

The Task force is an advisory group, meaning all plans, strategies, and solutions identified by the group are non-binding. CPW has ultimate authority over the Eldo VUMP, but the organization is committed to taking the outcomes of this Task Force seriously.

The objective of this first meeting was to establish context and introduce the Eldo VUMP process. The task force will meet for an additional four or five meetings. The next meeting will be focused on identifying and developing management strategies.

Eldo VUMP Engagement Overview - Public Meetings and Comment Periods

Public engagement is ongoing and will continue through April 2020. The current public engagement timeline is as follows:

Visitor surveys as part of capacity study	June-July 2019
Public comment (online) and additional engagement as needed	September 2019
Evening public meeting to discuss different scenarios for visitor use management	Sept 9 and 17, 2019
Anticipated timing for public comment on draft plan through online comments and a public meeting	Feb-April 2020

Capacity Study

Ellie Wachtel (SE Group) presented on the Eldorado Canyon State Park capacity study, which is currently underway. The objective of the capacity study is to determine the park's visitor capacity, which is essential to planning strategy towards desired future condition. The study is considering capacity in a holistic manner, considering not only the total number of people in the park, but also the road in and out of the park, parking spaces within the park, picnic areas, and more.

The SE Group will collect data to present to the Task Force. Data from the capacity study will draw on externally gathered data (e.g. traffic study, state park survey) and internally gathered quantitative measurements (e.g., trail counts, visit duration) and qualitative measurements (visitor intercept surveys on user experience) this summer.

In response to a group member's question on measuring natural resource capacity, Windi explained that CPW already tracks natural resources and that they will be able to overlay their data with the data from the park capacity study to inform decision to help protect and enhance current and future natural resources.

One group member raised the concern that the pool's closure this summer will likely skew the usage data. There is also the chance of the development of an event center, which could substantially increase use, but would not be part of the capacity study. Windi responded that these conditions would be both a blessing and a curse, in that the numbers would be more accurate as to park visitation but road use would not include the full town visitation.

More data from the capacity study will be presented at the next Task Force meeting.

Collaborative Problem Solving

Jonathan Geurts (Keystone Policy Center) presented on collaborative problem solving. All of the Task Force members have a common interest: to improve the experience of going to Eldorado Canyon. Therefore, it is key that the group stay focused on mutually acceptable outcomes. The Task Force is made up of many different perspectives and its members will need to develop working relationship over the next year to come up with solutions to complex problems, which require decision-making based on values as well as technical solutions. The best thing that individual members can do now is to analyze what they want to see happen with the park, and take time to consider the perspectives of others around the table.

Desired Future Conditions

John Carson presented the current list of desired future conditions for Eldorado Canyon. CPW is working with the Task Force to identify common desired future conditions in order to establish positive future use of the park. The desired future conditions list is divided into two categories: user experience and ecology, and emphasizes the importance of health and safety, positive recreational experience for all users of all abilities, and the importance reducing conflict at the park (between animals and humans, humans and vehicles, visitors and residents, and visitors and park staff).

The Task Force provided feedback on desired future conditions (see Appendix B).

For the full list, please see the current Desired Future Conditions document.

Eldo VUMP DRAFT Objective

Julie Shapiro (Keystone Policy Center) asked the group to provide feedback on the draft objective of the Task Force.

Draft objective: The Visitor Use Management Plan will identify strategies for managing visitor use and access as well as reducing vehicle pressure to enhance user experiences and protect park resources.

Group members had the following feedback:

- The emphasis on “vehicle pressure” narrows the scope of the objective too much before the group defines a desired state and identifies strategies. While traffic congestion is widely acknowledged to be an issue, the objective should be more holistic.
- It is hard to be sure what “vehicle pressure” means. Does it include shuttles, motorcycles, etc.? Also, does it refer only to road congestion leading to the park and town, or also parking within the park?
- The language of the objective should be tighter, emphasizing first the positive aspects the plan.
- The objective should include desired outcomes and identified targets.
- The objective should be longer and include more about how it will be achieved, including the process of collecting and sharing information.
- The objective would be stronger with the word “effective,” as: “...will identify *effective* strategies for managing visitor use...”

Group members asked questions, to which CPW and SE Group responded with the following clarifying points:

- This process will focus on Visitor Use Management Plan development, which has a higher perspective than any specific project that may be undertaken under it. Future potential uses will be addressed as components of this plan.
- The capacity study that will inform the VUMP will focus on establishing a baseline of visitation data and will not attempt to project future use.
- Among other focuses, the park capacity study will include the total number of bike users and map their current use.
- CPW is currently updating the park’s inventory of natural resources and assessing habitat condition. This assessment includes but is not limited to water soil, and trail conditions throughout the park. CPW will compare this assessment to past assessments to determine changes in park conditions. Jeff Thompson (CPW) will have an updated resource assessment by the end of the fall 2019.

Introduction to Strategies

Windi Padia provided an overview of ongoing and upcoming Eldorado Canyon projects:

- CPW is redesigning the entrance station to improve traffic flow. CPW is considering moving the entrance station further into the park, adding a parking space for gate attendants and additional lane to create a bypass lane so staff, residents, and emergency vehicles have a way to pass through.
- CPW is studying the feasibility of extending the Streamside Trail to move more pedestrians off the roadway.
- CPW is pilot testing a statewide visitor satisfaction survey in 2019 and 2020, and Eldorado Canyon has been selected as one of eight parks in the system that will be surveyed this year.

Windi also briefly introduced potential strategies to address some of the key issues facing the park. There was no discussing on these strategies. The task force will discuss strategies further during the next meeting on August 5th.

Proposed Potential Strategies:

Transportation and Access	Permits and Reservations	Infrastructure
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visitor shuttle • Road improvements • Relocate entrance station to the east of the canyon (further from town and residents) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permit system for vehicles • Permit system for vehicles and walk-ins/ bike-ins • Paid picnic table reservations • Limits on special use agreements/ special activity agreements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upgrade restrooms, picnic facilities, road paving • Trail system improvements

The Task Force discussed the strategies and key issues in small groups and provided feedback (see Appendix B).

Adjourn

Appendix A - Task Force Members in Attendance on 6/26

Name	Organization
Mike Schlauch	Action Committee for Eldorado (ACE)
Suzanne Webel	Boulder Area Trail Coalition (BATCO)
Kate Beezley	Boulder Climbing Community (BCC)
Gerry Kelly	Boulder County Nature Association (BCNA)
Marni Ratzel	Boulder County Parks & Open Space
Sue Cass	Boulder County Nature Association (BCNA)
Alex Hyde-Wright	Boulder County Transportation
Marcus Popetz	Boulder Mountainbike Alliance (BMA)
Kacey French	City of Boulder Open Space & Mountain Parks (OSMP)
Adnana Murtic	Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) – Region 4, Boulder
Emily Bresko	Colorado Mountain Club
John Carson	Colorado Parks & Wildlife (CPW)
Jeff Thompson	Colorado Parks & Wildlife (CPW)
Gina McAfee	Eldorado "Valley" Residents
Doug Larson	Eldorado Artesian Springs, Inc.
Cathy Shoenfeld	Eldorado Artesian Springs, Inc.
Tod Smith	Eldorado Springs - east residents
Laura Tyson	Eldorado Springs - east residents
Neil Blank	Eldorado Springs - Kneale Road (west residents)
Malika Lahmam	Islamic Center of Boulder
Aaron Peavey	Rocky Mountain Fire
Dale Wang	Rocky Mountain Rescue Group (RMRG)

Additional CPW Representatives and Contract Facilitators and Planners

Mark Leslie	Colorado Parks & Wildlife (CPW)
Kacie Miller	Colorado Parks & Wildlife (CPW)
Windi Padia	Colorado Parks & Wildlife (CPW)
Jonathan Geurts	Keystone Policy Center
Julie Shapiro	Keystone Policy Center
Tori Thompson	Keystone Policy Center
Tyler Ford	SE Group
Ellie Wachtel	SE Group

Appendix B – Task Force Feedback on Strategies and Key Issues

1. Visitor plan vs. master plan?
2. Idea: Examples from other parks/recreation areas in addressing user demands; very unique issues, physical limitations in Eldo Canyon
3. Some user's positive experiences co-exist well, and some user's ways of having a positive experience detract from other user's experience. That needs to be addressed
4. Don't take the South alignment off the table! Evaluate if fairly
5. Extreme measures are necessary
6. Box canyon = hard user conflict
7. Vertical vs horizontal trails/landscapes
8. How do we incorporate the history of climbing in the visitor experience?
9. Is the streamside trail multiuse? Extendable to 119?
10. Make a pie chart of existing user mix
11. Existing use shouldn't take precedence over new use
12. No-bike days (alternating or other?) if allowed on new trail
13. Improve lower eldo-walker so horses can use it again (= historic use- we built it!)
14. Open Folder + Rattlesnake Gulch to equestrians (= historic uses)
15. Permits for picnic tables w/o fee or until infrastructure can be enhanced to support picnic fee
16. \$\$ Charge = preferring richer families? Picnic only if you have money?
17. Fee for vehicle separate from fee to visit park (Hermit Park, Larimer County)
18. Vehicle fee separate from visit or day pass fee. Park pass fee separate from vehicle fee – charge for each
19. Locate EMS vehicle @ park. Enhance trail(s) to better accommodate EMS litter travel route (safety)
20. Identify how many visitors get turned around
21. Shuttle = no cars w/o ADA or horse reason?
22. Shuttle must_bypass waiting in line?

Eldorado Canyon State Park Visitor Use Management Plan Task Force Meeting Summary

August 5, 2019 12:30 pm to 6:30 pm
Boulder Public Library – George Reynolds Branch
3595 Table Mesa Drive, Boulder, CO 80305

Attendees

See Appendix A

Objectives

- Hear preliminary results of the capacity study and learn about baseline ecological conditions of the park.
- Become familiar with the relative success of visitor use management strategies in other public lands with high visitation and limited space.
- Work the problem being addressed by the Eldorado Canyon Visitor Use Management Plan (VUMP) by developing and combining strategies into scenarios.

Next Steps and Action Items

- Task Force members should promote the public meetings, as they have connections to groups who care about the park.
- Keystone Policy Center and CPW will schedule the third task force meeting.
- Keystone Policy Center will synthesize ideas raised into a strategies working document to inform future Task Force conversations and the scenarios presented at the public meetings.

Meeting Notes

Welcome and Introductions

Julie Shapiro (Keystone Policy Center) opened the meeting, welcomed everyone, outlined meeting objectives, reviewed the agenda, and reminded the group of the task force purpose and VUMP objective. Julie also provided a high-level overview of the Task Force ground rules, social media protocols, and participation guidelines for alternate representatives.

Timeline

Windi Padia (CPW) presented an updated timeline for the VUMP process, summarized below. The fourth Task Force meeting, scheduled for December or January, will provide an opportunity to discuss the proposed multi-use connector trail as it relates to the visitor use scenarios identified in the coming months. Windi reminded the group that the VUMP itself is intended to manage current park conditions and will not include any decision on the trail.

September 2019	Two public engagement sessions and online public comment
October 2019	First draft of Park Resource Stewardship Plan to be released
Late October/Early November 2019	3 rd Task Force meeting
December 2019/January 2020	4 th Task Force meeting (optional discussion on multi-use connector trail)
February - April 2020	Anticipated timing for release of draft Visitor Use Management Plan (VUMP)
February – April 2020	Public comment on draft VUMP through online comments and a public meeting
March/April 2020	5 th Task Force meeting
Spring	VUMP is finalized

Capacity Study: Fieldwork Findings

Ellie Wachtel (SE Group) presented the preliminary findings from the Fieldwork phase of the capacity analysis. The capacity study will also include a traffic study and park visitation data, which will be shared at later dates. During the Fieldwork phase, SE group surveyed 356 visitor groups across three six-hour fieldwork sessions on June 26th, June 29th, and July 13th. Hikers made up the most popular park use, and 63% of survey respondents had visited the park before. Overall, the vast majority of visitors responded that they had an “excellent” or “good” experience at the park.

See the Fieldwork Findings Memo for more information on the results.

Establishing Baseline Ecological Conditions at Eldorado Canyon State Park

Jeff Thompson (CPW) shared CPW’s resource stewardship process for Colorado State Parks.

Data for the report includes:

- Existing ecological data, including information from CPW species activity mapping, CO Herpetofaunal Atlas, eBird, Audubon Christmas Bird Count, Geology Mapping, Web Soil Survey, and plant lists
- Citizen science from the Colorado Native Plant Society and the Eldorado Canyon Plant Society
- A park specific resource inventory

Compiling the park specific resource inventory requires a complex and comprehensive resource stewardship process. Data for the inventory includes:

- Mapping, condition assessment, and revegetation and restoration data on vegetation communities
- The 2015 Breeding Bird Survey

- Significant wildlife species, such as the Preble’s Meadow Jumping Mouse and the Yellow-faced “Botta’s” Pocket Gopher
- The 2019 Reptile and Amphibian Survey
- The geology mapping and geo hazards report project (launching Fall 2019)
- Soil study
- Well management plan
- Cultural resources based on the cultural surveys and research update project (launching fall 2019)
- Significant features

The draft Resource Stewardship Plan will be completed by October 2019 and will include a significant features map, ecological sensitivity data, vegetation conditions, cultural sensitivity information, and management prescriptions. The cultural and geological chapters of the report will be added upon completion of the corresponding mapping and surveying projects.

Shuttle Pilot update

CPW and Boulder County Transportation are considering a pilot test program for a shuttle service to and from Eldo. The pilot program is still in development. The organizations will test proposed shuttle drop-off and pick-up locations to help determine feasibility. As with any management strategy tested in the coming years, CPW will measure how the introduction of a shuttle impacts traffic flow and safety in the park. CPW and Boulder County Transportation are also still considering many program elements, including the reservation system, fee structure, and times of operation.

John Carson (CPW) acknowledged that marketing and education around the shuttle system will be essential and will require advanced planning. CPW plans to pursue a multimedia outreach approach before launching the pilot program.

Alex Hyde-Wright(Boulder County Transportation) confirmed that running the shuttle will have an estimated annual cost between \$130k and \$150k, depending on the shuttle schedule and route.

The shuttle pilot is one component of the VUMP process and will not limit the consideration of other management strategies.

Case Study: Visitor use management at Hanging Lake (Presented by Kay Hopkins, USDA Forest Service, White River National Forest)

White River National Forest, home to Hanging Lake and Maroon Bells, receives more than 17 million visitors per year. Visitation at Hanging lake increased 126% over five years. In 2018, the

park had 184k visitors, all on a single 1.5-mile trail. Increased visitation at Hanging Lake resulted in increased safety concerns, degradation of visitor's experiences, and damage to the trail.

To address over-visitation, the Forest Service assessed visitor use management strategies for Hanging Lake and the Hanging Lake Trail. During the process, the trail's capacity was determined to be 615 visitors per day. To keep trail use at capacity, the parking lot is closed during the peak season (May 1 – November 1). During this period, the shuttle is the only way to access the park. The parking lot will open during the shoulder seasons, but capacity will still be capped at 615 visitors per day.

The Forest Service began its outreach and education effort 3 years prior to implementing the shuttle system, and uses virtual message boards along I-70 to inform visitors how to reach the shuttle pickup location and welcome center.

Kay described some of the key considerations they addressed while planning for visitor use management, including finding balance between the needs of the park and the desires of the public. She also offered her suggestions for the VUMP process based on her experience:

1. Have an involved stakeholder group that is committed to the process from beginning to end.
2. Be conscientious about how you communicate aspects of the VUMP to the public. Ensure that the information is accessible to all groups.
3. Use a mix of short-, mid- and long-term solutions to signal to the public that the process is moving forward, and progress is being made.
4. Use all data resources available to make informed decisions and communicate with stakeholders.
5. Let the process work. Get comments early and incorporate them throughout.

Case Study: Overparking (Presented by Mary Ann Bonnell, Jefferson County Open Space)

Mary Ann gave a presentation on how Jefferson County Open Space (JeffCo) has been addressing overparking. The JeffCo Open Space system receives 7 million visitors each year, most of whom are unsupervised. Overparking has been a significant concern for the visitor services managers, as it impacts safety, natural resources, and the wellbeing of local community members.

The organization has considered multiple options and alternatives to address overparking, including improved demarcation, parking enforcement, and web cameras to show visitors parking conditions. JeffCo has partnered with Lot Spot, a parking management system start-up that uses a camera to track parking lot occupancy as cars enter and exit a parking lot. The equipment (pole, camera, and solar panel) has a minimal footprint, however it does require a strong and consistent cell signal to operate. Lot Spot computes the data and communicates it using a dashboard and mobile app. The data can be distributed both to managers and potential

visitors. JeffCo will also feed Lot Spot data to Google so when potential visitors search for a park, they will see information on peak visitation times. The goal of using Lot Spot and a data-heavy approach is to enhance visitors' access to information so that they may make more informed parking and visitation decisions.

Small Group Strategy Workshop

The Task Force broke out into smaller groups for the strategy workshop. Ahead of the meeting, Task Force members were asked to submit a worksheet identifying visitor use management strategies. Keystone Policy Center compiled the responses, and identified two focus areas for discussion:

- Access to the park: Roads and parking availability
- Use within the park: Trails, picnic areas, and climbing routes

Each group spent time discussing both of the problems identified above. The groups reviewed the compiled worksheet responses then reviewed and discussed strategies to address problems, including weighing the potential advantages and limitations of each strategy. Keystone Policy Center will compile the initial worksheet responses and ideas from the small group discussions into a single visitor use strategies working document.

Public Engagement Process

In September, CPW will engage the public in the VUMP process with two public meeting sessions in Boulder and an online comment period. The meetings will provide more information on the project and invite attendees to discuss, in small groups, a series of future park management scenarios. Ideas raised in these groups will help inform the development of the VUMP.

Session 1

Monday, September 9, 2019

6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

Unity of Boulder

2855 Folsom St., Boulder, CO 80304

Session 2

Tuesday, September 17, 2019

6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

Avalon Ballroom

6185 Arapahoe Rd., Boulder CO 80303

The online comment option will be available at

<https://cpw.state.co.us/placestogo/parks/EldoradoCanyon/Pages/Visitor-Use-Management-Plan.aspx>

between September 9th and September 30th and has been designed to approximate the information and questions at the public meetings.

The Task Force highlighted the following questions and consideration for the public engagement process:

- Would the public accept a permitting/reservation system and shuttle outright, or would there be pushback on these initiatives? If so, how resistant would the public be?
- How much would visitors be willing to pay in additional fees for permits or a shuttle service?
- How can CPW engage people in the Denver Metro area on the VUMP process?

Outreach and Communications

Kacie Miller (CPW) informed the group that the Eldo website has been updated to include a page on the VUMP. The page includes all public information on the VUMP process, an option for site visitors to sign up for email updates, a FAQ page, and a list of the organizations represented by the Task Force. Kacie asked the Task Force to share the website with their networks.

Kacie also asked the Task Force for their assistance in advertising the upcoming public meetings (September 9 and 17) and online public comment period. CPW will develop and distribute a bilingual (English/Spanish) flyer advertising the public engagement process. Participants will only need to attend one meeting or submit their feedback on the online survey in order to participate in the process. The online survey will also be available in Spanish. A press release and other outreach will be shared widely in the Denver Metro area.

Task Force members are invited to participate in the public engagement process in ways that further the VUMP process.

Appendix A – Task Force Members, Staff, and Guests in attendance on 8/5

Primary Task Force Members

Organization	Name
Action Committee for Eldorado (ACE)	Mike Schlauch
Boulder Climbing Community (BCC)	Kate Beezley
Boulder County Nature Association (BCNA)	Gerry Kelly
Boulder County Parks & Open Space	Marni Ratzel
Boulder County Transportation	Alex Hyde-Wright
Boulder Mountainbike Alliance (BMA)	Marcus Popetz
City of Boulder Open Space & Mountain Parks (OSMP)	Kacey French
Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT)	Dan Marcucci
Colorado Mountain Club	Emily Bresko
Colorado Parks & Wildlife (CPW)	John Carson
Colorado Parks & Wildlife (CPW)	Jeff Thompson
Eldorado "Valley" Residents	Maggie Fox
Eldorado Artesian Springs, Inc.	Doug Larson
Eldorado Springs - east residents	Laura Tyson
Eldorado Springs - Kneale Road (west residents)	Neil Blank
Islamic Center of Boulder	Malika Lahmam
Rocky Mountain Fire	Aaron Peavey
Rocky Mountain Rescue Group (RMRG)	Dale Wang

Task Force Alternates

Organization	Name
Boulder County Nature Association (BCNA)	Sue Cass

Facilitators and Technical Consultants

Organization	Name
Keystone Policy Center	Jonathan Geurts
Keystone Policy Center	Julie Shapiro
Keystone Policy Center	Tori Thompson
SE Group	Tyler Ford
SE Group	Gabby Voeller
SE Group	Ellie Wachtel

Additional CPW Staff

Organization	Name
Colorado Parks and Wildlife	Lisa Gill
Colorado Parks and Wildlife	Kacie Miller

Guests and Observers

- Mary Ann Bonnell (*case study presenter*)
- Mike Browning
- Kay Hopkins (*case study presenter – remote*)

Eldorado Canyon State Park Visitor Use Management Plan (VUMP)

Task Force Meeting Summary

October 30, 2019 4:30 pm to 7:30 pm
St. Paul's United Methodist Church
4215 Grinnell Ave, Boulder, CO 80305

Attendees

See Appendix A

Objectives

- Hear and respond to planning and public engagement updates.
- Discuss ways of evaluating and responding to the impacts of visitor use and behavior on the natural environment, public access, and visitor experience.
- Plan for the next steps in the Visitor Use Management Plan (VUMP) timeline.

Next Steps and Action Items

- Keystone Policy Center will finalize and disseminate the Public Engagement Report.
- SE Group will finalize and disseminate the Capacity Study.
- CPW will finalize and disseminate the Resource Stewardship Plan.
- Keystone Policy Center and CPW will schedule the fourth task force meeting, which is currently planned to take place in January.
- Task Force members are invited to reach out directly to CPW or SE Group to address capacity and planning questions.

Meeting Notes

Welcome and Introductions

Jonathan Geurts (Keystone Policy Center) opened the meeting, welcomed everyone, outlined meeting objectives, reviewed the agenda, and briefly reviewed the ground rules.

Task Force Updates

- Windi Padia (CPW) will be starting a new position with the Colorado Department of Natural Resources and will no longer be involved with Eldo or the VUMP process. CPW will begin searching for her replacement shortly.
- CPW has invited Jason Swann to join the Task Force. Jason is the founder of Rising Routes, a Denver-based organization focused on outdoor education and equitable access to the outdoors.

Timeline

The Task Force will convene again in January to give the group ample time to review and process the upcoming reports.

September 2019	Two public engagement sessions and online public comment
Late October 2019	3 rd Task Force meeting
November/December 2019	First draft of Park Resource Stewardship Plan to be released
January 2020	4 th Task Force meeting (optional discussion on multi-use connector trail)
February – April 2020	Anticipated timing for release of draft plan
February – April 2020	Public comment on draft VUMP through online comments and a public meeting
March/April 2020	5 th Task Force meeting
Spring 2020	VUMP is finalized

Public Engagement Report Discussion

Jonathan gave an overview of the VUMP public engagement process, which included two public meetings in Boulder and an online survey. Keystone’s Public Engagement Report will incorporate the synthesis from the public meeting small group discussions, polling data from the public meetings, and content analysis of the online survey responses.

See the Keystone Task Force Meeting presentation for more information on the results of the qualitative study.

Resource Stewardship Plan Update

Jeff Thompson (CPW) presented an update on the Eldorado Canyon State Park (Eldo) Resource Stewardship Plan and the resource stewardship planning process. The process includes reviewing regional, natural, and human impacts and influences on the park.

The plan highlights resource monitoring to emphasize adaptive management. In response to a Task Force Member’s question on the inclusion of water and air quality data, Jeff informed the Task Force that CPW is working with local cities and USGS for water quality data, which will be incorporated into the plan. CPW is not focused on air quality, because it is generally outside of the scope of park management capabilities.

The draft plan will be completed in early November. The release date for the final report is TBD. See the CPW Resource Stewardship Plan presentation for more information.

Update on Capacity Study

Ellie Wachtel (SE Group) presented an update on the Capacity Study, including a brief overview of the capacity analysis process, a more in-depth discussion on visitation patterns and trends, and key findings from the traffic study. Ellie highlighted the concern that when park staff are required to manage parking throughout the day, it reduces their overall capacity for park management (responsible park use, education, etc.).

Between 2016 and 2018, park visitation increased steadily each month. Visitation in 2019 is estimated to reach 466k, a decline from 2018 that CPW suspects is due to weather conditions. John Carson (CPW) noted that despite the overall decline in visitation, the park was at capacity each weekend day through the peak season (which lasted until mid-October).

In response to questions from Task Force members, Ellie and CPW provided additional information on data collection, and next steps:

- SE Group will work with Jeff Thompson and CPW to combine capacity findings with natural resources and habitats data. They will create a “heat map” by looking at park use spatial distribution of the data that SE Group is collecting and overlaying it with natural resources GIS data.
- Walk-in visitors are counted in the annual park visitation totals. CPW currently has no plans to limit walk-in visitation at the main entrance and is unable to limit walk-ins from Walker Ranch.
- CPW tracks traffic at Crescent Meadows and the annual park visitation statistics include visitors who used the Crescent Meadows entrance. However, SE Group has not yet incorporated the broken-out data into their analysis.

See the Capacity Analysis presentation for more information on the results of the study.

Group Discussion on Desired Future Conditions

Kacie Miller (CPW) reviewed CPW’s typical park management planning process, including Management Zones for park management planning; and a wide range of data collection efforts, including natural resources and the environment, and case studies and contextual information (e.g., Muir Woods management strategies).

Julie Shapiro (Keystone Policy Center) introduced the Task Force discussion on Desired Future Conditions to better understand the linkages between environmental capacity and visitor capacity. The Task Force was asked to consider park management topics related to the environment and consider how these topics can be addressed in order to meet Desired Future Conditions. The discussion included identifying behaviors related the issue, strategies to

address the issue, indicators of the strategies' success, and finally, adaptive management strategies.

<i>Topic: Keeping visitors on the trails to reduce environmental impacts</i>	
Behavior	Visitors go off trails, creating erosion and habitat impact risks
Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective signage, education, and self-monitoring tools (e.g., Colorado Mountain Club's recreation impact monitoring app) • Physical barriers • Trails that are designed to minimize switchbacks • Park management visibility along trails
Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff monitoring of wildlife (e.g., annual bird survey) • Citizen science

<i>Topic: Impact of visitor use on the town</i>	
Behavior	Visitors parking illegally in Eldo when they are unable to find a spot in the park
Indicator	Rates of illegal parking in Eldo

<i>Topic: Water quality management</i>	
Behavior	Use of the vault toilets in the park could impact downstream water quality
Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connect park water system to Eldorado Springs system • Upgrade park bathrooms • Monitor water quality near bathrooms
Indicator	Presence of bacteria (e.g., E. coli) in the creek

Note: *After the meeting, CPW provided the following clarification via email to the Task Force:*

“Eldo Restrooms: At our last meeting you had several questions regarding the restrooms at Eldo and specifically about the impact of the main lot restroom. It's important to know that the main lot restroom storage tank isn't exposed to the air - it's a 'desiccating' toilet that works by drying waste material. Overflow effluent is stored in a sealed tank. We pump as needed for these lined and sealed vaults. The criteria we use to determine need for additional restrooms include, but are not limited to: visitation, trail usage, human waste found along trails/other areas, budget. We are asking for funds for a vault at Fowler Trailhead. The south side picnic area is also slated to be replaced.”

<i>Topic: Trail design and visitor distribution</i>	
Behavior	An expanded Streamside Trail would change trail distribution and redirect visitors closer to steep climbing routes, potentially creating safety issues

Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective signage on trails • Trail difficulty education
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In order for park staff to develop strategies to address management issues, they must first understand what is driving the behaviors that need to be changed. Jeff added that monitoring is an ongoing challenge for park management, and that it is very difficult to gather enough data to make robust decisions. There is a space between identifying strategies and reviewing indicators that is filled by monitoring. It is an ongoing park management challenge to determine how to effectively fill that gap with limited resources.

The Task Force then brainstormed Key Indicators for meeting Desired Future Conditions, including:

- Dust control
- Trash along the stream
- System compliance rates (i.e., If a permit system is implemented, how visitors without permits still drive through Eldo)

Julie asked the Task Force to consider *what are the reasonable expectations for visitor access and use given growth in population and recreation demand for Eldo and for our parks in general?* Expectations can be considered from both the supply side and the demand side.

On the supply side, the Task Force was asked to consider what are reasonable expectations for park managers as well as CPW's obligation for communication, education, and outreach.

- Education, communications, and outreach as a means to manage expectations and ensure a predictable experience for visitors
 - Visitors are aware of park capacity and park management policies (e.g., if a permit is required, or if the park closes to visitors at a certain capacity).
 - Education strategies are incorporated into the VUMP.

On the demand side, the Task Force was asked to consider what are reasonable expectations for park visitors.

- Visiting the park is a predictable and reliably positive experience.
- Through education, visitors understand that their interaction with public lands will likely change with population growth in the state and high levels of interest in outdoor recreation.

Additional Comments and Questions

Infrastructure Capacity Limitations

One Task Force member asked if there a formalized review process by which CPW upgrades infrastructure to keep up with park visitation, and whether CPW is required to follow certain building capacity regulations and requirements (especially as they pertain to environmental quality).

Task Force members shared that they would benefit from a better understanding of various capacity limitations on park infrastructure (e.g., the capacity of a vault toilet). Understanding capacity limitations will inform which issues need to be addressed and how resources are best allocated. The initial findings from SE Groups' Capacity Study demonstrate that park visitation levels are not impacting visitor experience. In developing the VUMP, it will be important to ensure that CPW is addressing the *right* problems, based on available data, and that park management strategies help CPW meet the park's defined Desired Future Conditions.

Entrance Station Renovation

John notes that the main intention of the entrance station renovation project is to alleviate the impact of traffic on the town. There are no plans to increase the number of parking spaces, therefore CPW does not expect the renovation will significantly impact park visitation.

Idling Vehicles

While CPW does not have a formal policy or procedure for idling vehicles, John reported that park staff has been successful at moving cars along efficiently (as shown by SE Group's data).

Visitor capacity and natural resource impacts

Jeff Thompson (CPW) shared that the park's natural resources and habitats are being maintained at the park's current visitation levels. If CPW were to establish a visitor capacity number, the division feels confident that they can continue to maintain the park's resources at current visitation levels. Jeff noted that identifying the threshold (tipping point) is a challenge, and a practice that has never been required by CPW in the past. Jeff reinforced the point from SE Group's Capacity Study that the number of parking spaces and geological features of the canyon create a natural visitation capacity for the park.

One Task Force member added that the shuttle is the only mechanism by which CPW could significantly increase park visitation. If CPW were to implement a shuttle system, it would be important to understand how the system could potentially increase overall visitation.

Impact of marketing and social media on visitation

In response to a question from a Task Force member on the role marketing efforts have played in increasing park visitation, John explained that social media sharing has played a significant role in spreading awareness and expanding use of all public lands, including Eldo. The effect is

amplified by the state's enthusiasm for outdoor recreation. Eldo has also been included in tourism books and commercials, promoting the park as a destination.

Kacie Miller (CPW) added that increased use of parks and decreased budgets statewide have stretched park managers across the state beyond their capacity. Many expressed concern that they don't have the capacity to be stewards of public lands and cultivate responsible park users through education, enforcement and visibility.

Appendix A – Task Force Members, Staff, and Guests in attendance on 10/30

Primary Task Force Members

Organization	Name
Action Committee for Eldorado (ACE)	Mike Schlauch
Boulder Area Trails Coalition (BATCO)	Suzanne Webel
Boulder Climbing Community (BCC)	Kate Beezley
Boulder County Nature Association (BCNA)	Gerry Kelly
Boulder County Parks & Open Space	Marni Ratzel
Boulder County Transportation	Alex Hyde-Wright
City of Boulder Open Space & Mountain Parks (OSMP)	Kacey French
Colorado Mountain Club	Emily Bresko
Colorado Parks & Wildlife (CPW)	John Carson
Colorado Parks & Wildlife (CPW)	Jeff Thompson
Eldorado "Valley" Residents	Kim Hedberg
Eldorado Artesian Springs, Inc.	Doug Larson
Eldorado Springs - East Residents	Laura Tyson
Eldorado Springs - Kneale Road (west residents)	Neil Blank
Rocky Mountain Rescue Group (RMRG)	Dale Wang

Task Force Alternates

Organization	Name
Boulder County Nature Association (BCNA)	Sue Cass
Boulder Mountainbike Alliance (BMA)	Wendy Sweet
Eldorado Artesian Springs, Inc.	Cathy Shoenfeld

Facilitators and Technical Consultants

Organization	Name
Keystone Policy Center	Jonathan Geurts
Keystone Policy Center	Julie Shapiro
Keystone Policy Center	Tori Thompson
SE Group	Tyler Ford
SE Group	Ellie Wachtel

Additional CPW Staff

Organization	Name
Colorado Parks and Wildlife	Kacie Miller
Colorado Parks and Wildlife	Windi Padia

Eldorado Canyon State Park Visitor Use Management Plan (VUMP)

Task Force Meeting Summary – Final

February 12, 2020 5:30 pm to 7:30 pm
Southern Hills Middle School
1500 Knox Dr, Boulder, CO 80305

Note: Task Force members responded to the draft summary with corrections, clarifications, questions/requests for more information, and additional perspectives. This final summary incorporates edits for accuracy and clarity of what was said at the meeting, in some cases adding in detail that was discussed at the meeting but not captured in the original draft summary. Additional information, insights, clarifications, questions and perspectives on the Feasibility Study, the multi-use trail, or other issues that were shared after the meeting but were not specifically articulated during the meeting are not included in this summary, but have been shared with CPW. As a point of process, it was clarified by facilitators after the meeting that the opportunity for additional feedback following the meeting was to allow additional time to reflect on the questions discussed there, and not a formal comment period.

Attendees

See Appendix A

Objectives:

- Hear brief updates on the VUMP strategy development process and relevant analyses.
- Discuss potential interactions of VUMP strategies, a north-route multi-use connector trail, and potential multi-use trail management strategies (*see Appendix B for additional background*).

Next Steps and Action Items

- Recognizing that Task Force members might desire additional time to respond to the questions at the meeting, they were asked to further consider visitor access and experience strategies and their potential interactions with a multi-use trail and were given a 2-week deadline to provide additional feedback.
- Task Force members were invited to discuss this topic (and any previous discussions) with their group members to solicit additional feedback, and to share this feedback directly with CPW (including Keystone if desired).
- CPW will keep the Task Force informed regarding the draft plan and review process. The Task Force will have opportunity to review and provide comment via the public process and potentially a Task Force meeting.

Meeting Notes

Introduction

Julie opened the meeting, welcomed everyone, and introduced the new Task Force Members, Diana Lin (Brown Girls Climb) and Jason Swann (Rising Routes) (neither were present), as well as new CPW leadership, Scott Roush (who was present at the meeting). A focus of the meeting was to consider potential interaction and compatibilities to help inform *how* a multi-use trail might be managed, which will in turn help inform a later decision on *whether* the trail would be implemented. Julie emphasized that discussing possible scenarios for *how* was not an indication that agencies would move forward with a multi-use trail.

- Task Force members also noted the additional important considerations of *when* the decision will be made about the trail, and, depending on that decision, when the trail would be built and how these timing considerations relate to the implementation and evaluation of VUM strategies.

Update on VUMP Strategy Development

Kacie Miller (CPW) gave an overview of the status and contents of the Park Management Plan which includes VUMP.

- CPW and SE Group are in the process of writing the plan and incorporating information from the Capacity Analysis and Public Engagement Report. The draft plan is expected to be completed and released in the spring.
- Kacie explained that the management plan is a tool for park management and staff, and as such is likely to be a long document that includes facts and figures important for the management of the park. However, Task Force members and the general public will not need to read the plan in its entirety to understand the management strategies and provide meaningful input on the plan to CPW.
- The template of a CPW state parks management plan is as follows; For this plan, Chapters 5 and 6 are likely to be the VUMP.
 - Chapter 1 - Introduction: park goals, public input, management considerations (will include a summarization of the input from the Task Force and public meetings)
 - Chapter 2 - Regional context
 - Chapter 3 - Park Resources: natural, cultural, staff, infrastructure, recreation; interpretive themes/messages
 - Chapter 4 - Management Zones (will include sensitivity maps)
 - Chapter 5 - Enhancement Opportunities/Management Initiatives
 - Chapter 6 - Implementation (park management strategies CPW is considering)
- *For examples of CPW park management plans, see the [Sylvan Lake State Park Management Plan](#) and the [State Forest State Park Management Plan](#).*

Throughout the meeting, CPW shared additional information about planned strategies for the VUMP. This information is consolidated here:

- CPW plans to implement the following visitor access management strategies this summer: a shuttle, improved parking spot delineation, and a communications and outreach plan.
- In addition, CPW is determining whether to implement [Lot Spot](#) this summer. If implemented, Lot Spot will be used to track and communicate real-time parking availability.
- CPW is also planning on moving forward with the entrance station redesign, with construction expected to begin in the fall. The permit system is still under consideration but may not be implemented this summer.
- The shuttle pilot will include 3 15-passenger shuttles running each hour (one shuttle every 20 minutes), with a potential total daily capacity of 200-300 people. The shuttle will include stops along Broadway, the 170&93 skiers' lot, and 2 stops within the park.

Eldorado Canyon-Walker Ranch Trail Feasibility Study

John Carson (CPW) gave a brief overview of the [feasibility study](#) conducted in 2018 by Boulder County Parks and Open Space, City of Boulder Open Space and Mountain Parks, and CPW. A [summary of the findings](#) was provided as a handout at the meetings. (See Appendix B for more information on the relationship between the VUMP and the multi-use trail decision from the CPW website.)

- The objectives of a multi-use trail, as described in the feasibility study, are to improve access to Walker Ranch and expand trail-based recreation opportunities, and reasonably accommodate bicycles while maintaining the currently allowed park activities.
- While the feasibility study assessed two possible routes for the trail, current and ongoing discussions on the trail are focused on the North Route, which follows the Eldorado Canyon corridor.
- The study estimated that the trail would increase visitation, on average, by 60 additional daily visitors.
- The estimated cost of the North Route is between \$360,000 and \$660,000.
- The feasibility study found that the introduction of a multi-use trail would likely increase traffic, parking demand and use of the park, as well as raise the potential for conflict in the park.

Marni Ratzel (Boulder County Parks & Open Space) added that the feasibility study was a joint effort led by Boulder County and reviewed and endorsed by all three parties involved (Boulder County, OSMP, and CPW). The study did not include a decision about the trail, but instead was a technical tool used by the three agencies to evaluate potential routes for a multi-use trail.

- Not all Task Force members agree with the methods used during the feasibility study or its conclusions.

For the more information on the findings of the feasibility study, see the [Eldorado Canyon-Walker Ranch Trail Feasibility Study](#) or the [Summary of Analysis Findings](#).

Visitor Use Assumptions and Estimates Related to a Multi-Use Trail

Ellie Wachtel (SE Group) explained the assumptions and calculations behind the feasibility study's estimate that the multi-use trail would add 60 additional daily visitors to the park (not just mountain bikers, but all trail users).¹ The figure was based on average visitors per day, acknowledging that 48% of trail use in the park occurs on weekends, and used two methods to estimate additional visitors with the multi-use trail. These methods and the resulting estimates were vetted and endorsed by Boulder County, OSMP, and CPW.

- Method 1: Trail counts on Walker Ranch Trail (~50 mountain bike users per day during summer months)
 - This method assumes all mountain bike users on the Walker Ranch trail would also ride the new connector trail.
- Method 2: Picture Rock Trail (~70 users per day during summer months (in 2017))
 - Picture Rock Trail is near Lyons, 5.3 miles long, and connects Heil Valley Ranch trails to Hall Ranch and Lyons.
- The number is averaged across the week, meaning the visitor increase would be higher on the weekend than weekdays.
- Task Force members inquired as to how much visitor use would increase overtime from the initial increase of 60 daily visitors at the introduction of the trail.

See Appendix C for a map of daily level of use at Eldorado Canyon State Park (based on the 10th busiest day at the park).

Potential Interactions of VUMP Strategies, a Multi-Use Trail, and Potential Multi-Use Trail Management Strategies

Julie reviewed the format of the discussion on possible interactions of potential VUMP strategies, a multi-use trail, and potential multi-use trial management strategies. While this discussion is focused on VUM, there are many additional inputs to decision making, including safety, natural and cultural resources, budget, other visitor capacity and access issues, and input from other agencies.

Task Force members were given a discussion guide and asked to consider:

- VUMP strategies currently being discussed and how their effectiveness may be affected by a multi-use trail (positive, negative, or neutral).
- Additional multi-use trail management strategies and their potential compatibility with visitor access and use.

¹ Note: SE Group was not involved in the feasibility study nor the development of the visitor increase estimate.

Task Force Feedback

Note: The bullets below and throughout the remainder of this summary represent unique ideas and perspectives expressed by individual Task Force members during the discussion and are not an indication of fact, consensus, or popularity.

Concerning both visitor access and experience, Task Force members discussed the importance of including in the VUMP a process to monitor progress to indicate success of management strategies implemented. Additionally, Task Members discussed the value of implementing strategies in phases in order to better determine how effectively each strategy addressed community and park management concerns. Some Task Force members said that these issues should be addressed through the VUMP before a decision on a multi-use trail is made.

Discussion: Visitor Access

Sample Multi-Use Trail Management Strategies	VUMP Potential Visitor Access Strategies <i>(strategies in bold are planned or being considered for implementation this summer)</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Day and/or time restrictions for bikes• Permit for use• Restrictions on group size• Streamside Trail extension²• Require bells on bikes• Add 'pullouts' for places on trail to step aside• Direction restrictions or alternating direction of travel for bikes• Other ideas to be brainstormed	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lot Spot• Shuttle• Entrance station redesign• Parking spot delineation• Parking permit system• Limit on SUAs• Road improvement• Picnic reservation• Comms and education plans

Task Force members were first asked to discuss how potential VUMP visitor access strategies might interact with a multi-use trail. Individual Task Force members commented as follows:

VUMP Strategy: Shuttle Service

- If the shuttle allows bikes, and depending on bike capacity, the shuttle could improve access for bikers. The 15-passenger shuttle that will be used in the pilot can hold 2-3 bikes, though there is a possible option for additional bike capacity in the future if the shuttle tows a trailer.
- Parking capacity at the shuttle stops would influence access for all trail users.
- The shuttle and multi-use trail could decrease parking in town by increasing use of offsite parking facilities and alternative park access points.

² Note: While there are many factors that need to be considered before moving forward with any plans, CPW has been considering extending the Streamside Trail as part of a strategy to reduce pedestrian traffic on the park road

- The shuttle could increase the number of people in the park, which could increase conflict, especially if there are conflicting user groups.

VUMP Strategy: Parking Permits

- If the number of cars allowed into the park is capped, the multi-use trail would not increase the number of cars. However, it would change the composition of visitors (more mountain bikers).

VUMP Strategy: Streamside Trail Extension

- If the Streamside Trail extension were to meet the multi-use trail, it would change use patterns on the road. If not, then the road would be used by cars, the shuttle, bikes, and pedestrians.

Task Force members discussed how potential multi-use trail management strategies might interact to affect visitor access. Individual Task Force members commented as follows:

- Task Force members discussed the merits and concerns with placing restrictions on bikers, and how it could impact both access and experience.
- Restrictions on bikers may send the message to bikers that they are not valued as trail users.
- On the other hand, restrictions on bikers could be a solution to accommodate bikes while maintaining the currently allowed park activities.
- A north route multi-use trail would include construction of a separate section in the canyon for bikes for the first mile of the trail. The first mile of the existing Eldorado Canyon Trail (the most used section of the trail) would be preserved for hiking (no bikes). This could increase access to bikers and reduce conflict and safety issues with other users.
- In the case of a multi-use Eldorado Canyon to Walker Ranch connector trail, directional restrictions could also reduce access for bikers because it would break trail connectivity. This restriction could drive potential trail users to Chapman, which could in turn drive bikers to Flagstaff, which has the potential to be an unsafe trail.
- Day- or time-based restrictions for bikers could give hikers an opportunity to use a multi-use trail without the safety and visitor experience concerns of sharing the trail with bikes. There can be a power differential between hikers and bikers (speed, weight, etc.) that increases conflict between the users. Placing restrictions on bikers may help to balance this power dynamic (also a use/experience concern).
- Day- or time-based restrictions could be a strategy to mitigate increased visitation by encouraging recreational activities on alternate days. Sharing by dividing could allow more equitable access to diverse recreational users.
- Day- or time-based restrictions could cause confusion and frustration among users, shifting use to other parks (both hikers and bikers), potentially causing increased user conflict at those parks.

- As with directional restrictions, day- or time-based restrictions would break trail connectivity for bikers coming from the Winter Park side, particularly those on multi-day biking trips.

Task Force members were then asked to consider potential interactions of VUMP visitor access strategies and additional multi-use trail management strategies. Individual Task Force members commented as follows:

- One benefit of a multi-use trail is that it could be more accessible for equestrian users. However, one participant felt that none of the possible VUMP strategies address access for equestrian users.

Discussion: Visitor Use/Experience

Sample Multi-Use Trail Management Strategies	VUMP Potential Visitor Use/Experience Strategies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Day and/or time restrictions for bikes • Permit for use • Restrictions on group size • Streamside Trail extension³ • Require bells on bikes • Add ‘pullouts’ for places on trail to step aside • Direction restrictions or alternating direction of travel for bikes • Other ideas to be brainstormed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restroom upgrades • Picnic facility upgrades • Trail upgrades/ maintenance • Streamside Trail exit • Increased staffing • Comms and education plans

Task force members discussed how a multi-use trail might impact visitor use and experience. Individual Task Force members commented as follows:

- How the trail is built is important. A well-built trail can reduce user conflict. For example, maintaining open sight lines allows bikers to see others before they’re upon them.
- Knowing that funding is limited, it would be important to consider whether building and maintaining the multi-use trail would impact CPW’s ability to implement other visitor use strategies, such as restroom or picnic facility upgrades.
- The picnic area sees the highest use on average. If CPW were to implement a strategy that places a cap on daily park visitation (e.g., parking permits), introducing an additional user group to the park may change the makeup of visitors, further distributing use throughout the park and easing pressure on picnic sites.
- The introduction of a multi-use trail could increase the use demands on the park’s infrastructure (picnic areas, restrooms, etc.).

³ Note: While there are many factors that need to be considered before moving forward with any plans, CPW has been considering extending the Streamside Trail as part of a strategy to reduce pedestrian traffic on the park road

- The multi-use trail could have an impact on user safety.
- The purpose of the Boulder Mountainbike Alliance (BMA) is to offset the impact that biking has on trails and parks. BMA members could commit to bike patrol, volunteer hours, in-kind donations, covering the cost entrance fees for bikers, and other ways to support the park if the multi-use trail is built.

Task Force members discussed how potential multi-use trail management strategies might interact to affect visitor experience. Individual Task Force members commented as follows:

- Whether or not electric bikes are allowed would impact visitor experience.
- Education requirements for users of the multi-use trail could help to mitigate conflict and manage user experience on the trail.
- Restrictions on group size could be important to ensuring positive user experience (other trails have seen groups of 30-70 bikers at a time).
- Task Force members that commented on bells as a management strategy felt that requiring bells on bikes would likely have a negative impact on user experience.
- The addition of pullouts on the trail could help reduce user conflict and increase safety in some situations.

Additional Discussion VUMP Strategies

Given that CPW presented an update (above) on strategies that it would pilot this summer, Task Force members also discussed the potential VUMP strategies and how they would influence visitor access and in-park visitor use/experience independent of the addition of a multi-use trail. Individual Task Force members commented as follows:

Shuttle Pilot

- Some Task Force members expressed concern that without a permit system limiting the number of cars in the park, the shuttle would increase the number of daily users, putting more pressure on park resources and potentially impacting visitor experience.
- Task Force members also expressed concern that without a permit system or a requirement to take the shuttle, visitors would still drive through town to the park to see if parking is available, leaving the issue of traffic through Eldorado Springs inadequately addressed.

Lot Spot

- Task Force members expressed concern that as Lot Spot provides data on real-time parking capacity, it may not be effective at changing visitor behavior as parking capacity is likely to change between the time a potential visitor checks the status and arrives at the park. For example, a visitor may drive to the park after seeing several available spaces on Lot Spot, only to arrive to find the park at capacity. If Lot Spot is not a reliable indicator of parking availability at the time a visitor arrives at the park, Task Force members noted that visitors would likely still drive through town to the park to see if

parking is available, leaving the issue of traffic through Eldorado Springs inadequately addressed.

- This strategy may be less effective for non-local park visitors, as parking capacity could change significantly during the trip to the park.

Park Capacity and Access

- A Task Force member suggested that adding an additional park access point on the South side (via Fowler Trail) would reduce pressure on the town and the park entrance and provide additional access to the multi-use trail if it were built.
- Task Force members were concerned that the proposed VUMP strategies (with or without the inclusion of a multi-use trail) do not address park capacity concerns or access concerns for residents. Some suggested limiting the number of cars and/or visitors able to walk or bike into the park.
- Ellie and Kacie noted the different park capacity definitions – parking capacity, trail capacity, and natural resource capacity.
 - According to the Resource Stewardship Plan, the park’s natural resources are in good shape.
 - According to the Capacity Analysis, parking is the limiting factor on park capacity, as users reported positive experiences and few people feel the trails are overcrowded (with the possible exception of the picnic areas and the most popular climbing crags).

Appendix A: Meeting Attendees & Task Force Members

Note: this meeting was optional.

Primary Task Force Members Present

Organization	Name
Action Committee for Eldorado (ACE)	Mike Schlauch
Boulder Area Trails Coalition (BATCO)	Suzanne Webel
Boulder Climbing Community (BCC)	Kate Beezley
Boulder County Nature Association (BCNA)	Gerry Kelly
Boulder County Parks & Open Space	Marni Ratzel
Boulder County Transportation	Alex Hyde-Wright
Boulder Mountainbike Alliance (BMA)	Marcus Popetz
City of Boulder Open Space & Mountain Parks (OSMP)	Kacey French
Colorado Mountain Club	Emily Bresko
Colorado Parks & Wildlife (CPW)	John Carson
Eldorado "Valley" Residents	Kim Hedberg
Eldorado Artesian Springs, Inc.	Doug Larson
Eldorado Springs - East Residents	Laura Tyson
Eldorado Springs - Kneale Road (west residents)	Neil Blank

Primary Task Force Members Not Present

Organization	Name
Brown Girls Climb	Diana Lin
Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT)	Dan Marcucci
Colorado Parks & Wildlife (CPW)	Jeff Thompson
Islamic Center of Boulder	<i>vacant</i>
Rising Routes	Jason Swann
Rocky Mountain Fire	Aaron Peavey
Rocky Mountain Rescue Group (RMRG)	Dale Wang

Task Force Alternates Present

Organization	Name
Boulder Climbing Community (BCC)	Greg German
Boulder County Nature Association (BCNA)	Sue Cass
Boulder Mountainbike Alliance (BMA)	Wendy Sweet
Eldorado Artesian Springs, Inc.	Cathy Shoenfeld

Facilitators and Technical Consultants Present

Organization	Name
Keystone Policy Center	Jonathan Geurts
Keystone Policy Center	Julie Shapiro
Keystone Policy Center	Tori Thompson
SE Group	Ellie Wachtel

Additional CPW Staff Present

Organization	Name
Colorado Parks and Wildlife	Mark Leslie
Colorado Parks and Wildlife	Kacie Miller
Colorado Parks and Wildlife	Scott Roush

Appendix B: Additional Background on Discussion

****Additional Background:** As part of the VUMP planning process, CPW intends to further analyze a potential multi-use connection that would allow mountain biking within the context of projected increases in visitation and other potential future uses of Eldorado Canyon State Park. After the VUMP is finalized, CPW, Boulder County Parks & Open Space, Boulder County Transportation and City of Boulder Open Space and Mountain Parks will make a decision on whether or not to move forward with the north route multi-use connector trail. No multi-use trail and a north route multi-use trail are the only options under consideration.*

Discussion of strategies for how a multi-use trail might be managed will help inform a later decision on whether, and if so, how it would be implemented. The Task Force discussion will not assume nor seek consensus on the decision to implement a multi-use trail. Participation in the discussion is optional for Task Force members.

More info on the relationship between the VUMP and the multi-use connection decision is in the FAQs at: https://gdoc.pub/doc/e/2PACX-1vR64OCwHZq89UBIF3ePGfDfxoUshvZ361HU_vpTGk5Qwn2_tYbyqwaWx0VUv1wgQ64HJ00YoS1WgOqj. The relevant FAQs are excerpted below, directly from the information provided on the website:

How will the VUMP impact the Eldorado Canyon to Walker Ranch multi-use connection decision?

- The Eldorado Canyon to Walker Ranch Connection Feasibility Study analyzed a potential multi-use trail connection from the park to adjacent city and county open space properties. Three partner agencies worked collaboratively to conduct the study: CPW, City of Boulder Open Space and Mountain Parks, and Boulder County Parks & Open Space.
- In November 2018, the agencies recommended a northern route for a multi-use trail using much of the existing Eldorado Canyon Trail because it could feasibly achieve the connection while balancing conservation and recreation needs of the area. However, the study also found that adding a multi-use trail connection in the park was likely to increase visitation and could potentially create visitor conflicts or worsen capacity issues.
- In March 2019, CPW recommended putting any decisions about a multi-use trail on hold until an overall Visitor Use Management Plan could be developed.
- As part of the VUMP planning process, CPW intends to further analyze a potential multi-use connection that would allow mountain biking within the context of projected increases in visitation and other potential future uses of the park.
- Given the volume of study and public comment already collected on the multi-use trail connection, the VUMP process will focus first on, and seek public input on, alternatives for addressing the current situation at the park.
- The scope of the VUMP development is broader than just the decision on the multi-use trail connection.
- After the plan is finalized, CPW, Boulder County Parks & Open Space, Boulder County Transportation and City of Boulder Open Space and Mountain Parks will make a decision on whether or not to move forward with the north route multi-use connector trail.

Appendix C: Eldorado Canyon State Park Daily Level of Use Map
Based on data collected by SE Group for the Eldo Capacity Study

