



# STRATTON OPEN SPACE

WILDFIRE MITIGATION PROJECT

CORY ASHBY

June 26, 2024

# TIMELINE / AGENDA



## 0 1 PROJECT DETAILS

6 : 3 0 - 7 : 0 0 P M

LOCATION

ACTIONS

SCOPE OF WORK

TIMELINE

## 0 2 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

7 : 0 0 - 7 : 3 0 P M

PLEASE HOLD ALL QUESTIONS

UNTIL PUBLIC COMMENTS /

QUESTIONS SESSION

## 0 3 MEETING ADJOURNED

7 : 3 0 P M

# SUBJECT MATTER EXPERTS

Cory Ashby - Wildfire Mitigation Program Coordinator (CSFD)

Ashley Whitworth - Wildfire Mitigation Program Administrator (CSFD)

Brett Lacey - Fire Marshal (CSFD)

Dennis Will - City Forester (City of CoS)

Scott Abbott - Regional Parks Manager (City of CoS)

Cody Bear Sutton - Natural Resource Specialist (City of CoS)

Anna Cordova - Garden of the Gods Manager / Lead Archaeologist (City of CoS)

Mark Cervantes - City Archaeologist (City of CoS)

Jeremy Taylor - Forest Program Manager (Colorado Springs Utilities)

An aerial photograph of a lush green forested area. In the foreground, a large, calm reservoir is visible, bordered by a concrete dam on the left. The surrounding terrain is densely wooded with various types of trees, and some dirt paths or roads are visible winding through the forest. The overall scene is a natural, scenic landscape.

# PURPOSE

- Reduce the wildfire risk to surrounding neighborhoods and public property
- Reducing wildfire risk to wildlife habitat, recreation resources, biological areas, and natural and cultural resources
- Protect critical infrastructure by reducing wildfire risk to adjacent access roads and utilities
- Usage of 2D Tabor funds on wildfire mitigation and prevention
- Prevention of post-storm erosion by reducing the risk of catastrophic canopy loss



# NEEDS



Overgrown, contiguous fuels



Proximity to homes



Proximity to high value infrastructure



Current ability to perpetuate high severity fire



# PLANNING



Archaeological / Cultural Resource  
Survey



Tribal Consultation



Feasibility



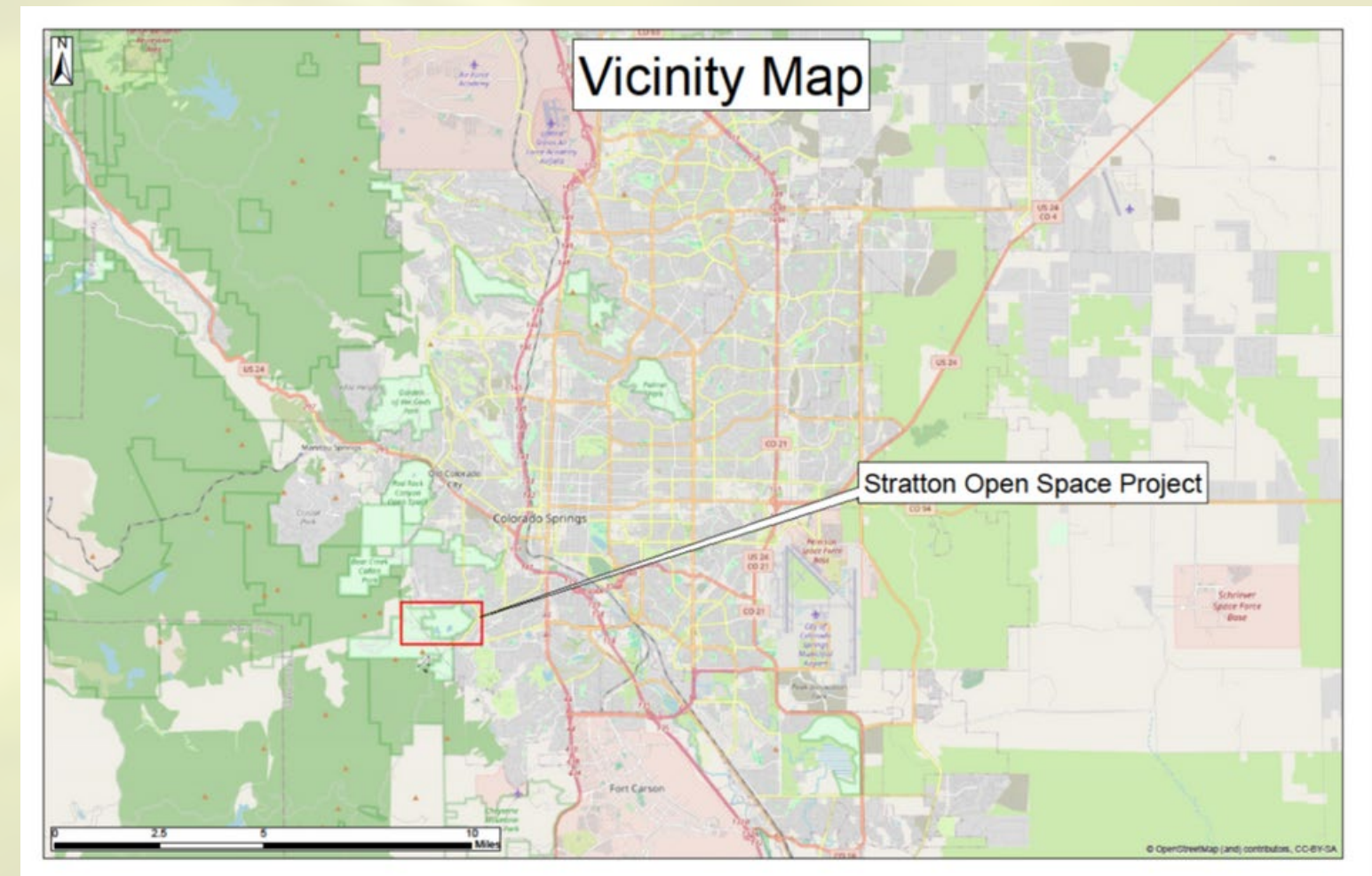
Biological Surveys



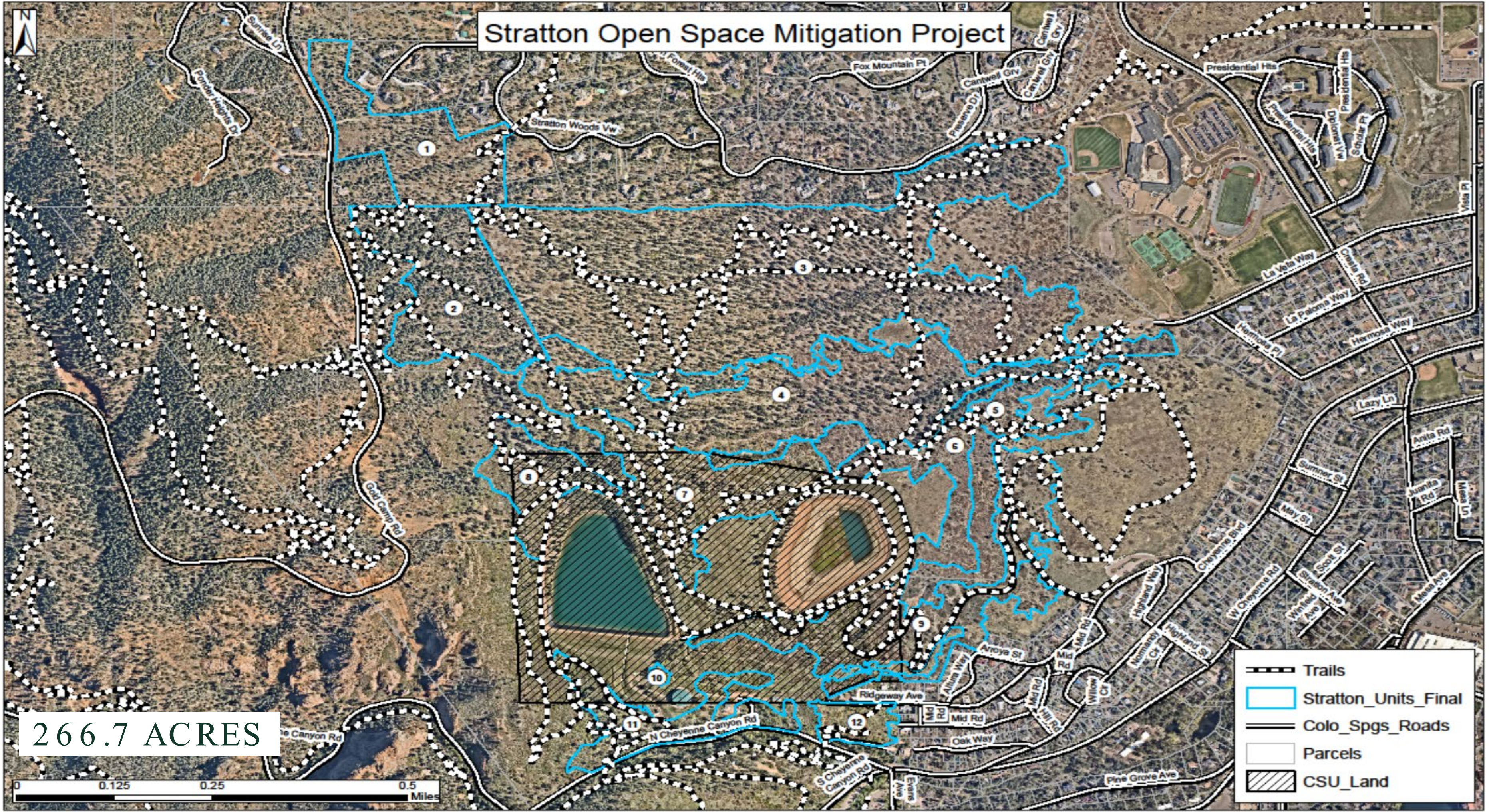
Interdepartmental Consultation

# GENERAL LOCATION

- Located in SW Colorado Springs
- The area is bordered by the Upper Skyway neighborhood to the north, the Lower Skyway and Old Broadmoor neighborhoods to the east, the Old Broadmoor neighborhood to the south, and City of Colorado Springs Parks land to the west.



# Stratton Open Space Mitigation Project



266.7 ACRES

- Trails
- Stratton\_Units\_Final
- Colo\_Spgs\_Roads
- Parcels
- CSU\_Land



# ACTIONS

- Mastication and chipping
- Hand work with chainsaws
- Harvesting / Felling
- Forwarding / Skidding
- Loading
- Hauling



# FORESTRY MACHINERY AND EQUIPMENT





# SCOPE OF WORK

## Units 1 -12 (except Unit 2)



All conifer/evergreen, 1 foot in height to  $\leq 5$ " DBH, will be cut and either chipped or masticated.

- Exception - 5 to 10 trees per acre of ponderosa pine of good form, health, and vigor will be left.



50% of Gambel oak or other shrublike species, 1 foot in height to  $\leq 5$ " DBH, will be cut and either chipped or masticated.

- Oak to be cut will focus on smaller diameter stems.
- Existing oak groups will be enhanced or made smaller to increase separation from other groups.
- Oak will be cleared from the dripline of all leave trees.
- Oak will be cleared, twice the distance of the dripline (measure outward from the bole) from all juniper leave trees.



# SCOPE OF WORK

## Units 1 -12 (except Unit 2)



All conifer / evergreen trees leave trees, except juniper, will be limbed of all live and dead limbs, 5 feet up the bole. This is measured from the ground on the high-side or uphill side of the tree, 5 feet up the bole. If trees are less than 15 feet tall, only 1/3 of live/dead crown will be limbed of all live and dead limbs.



All invasive species such as Siberian elm, Russian olive, ash, Mexican black locust. etc., 1 foot in height to  $\leq 10$ " DBH, will be cut and either chipped or masticated.



# SCOPE OF WORK

## Unit 2



All trees marked in blue paint >5" DBH will be cut, topped, limbed, bucked, skid/forwarded, and removed as merchantable material offsite.



Limbs and tops may be left to create a biomass/slash bed or mat for skid/forwarding trails. All other slash will be chipped or masticated.



# SCOPE OF WORK

## Unit 2



### Leave tree specifications

- Leave trees will be free of poor form (crooked top, sweep, lightning strikes, insects/disease).
  - Species preference (1 being most preferred leave tree species).
    - Ponderosa pine
    - Douglas-fir
    - White fir
    - Pinyon
    - Juniper



Exception – Quality nesting, cavity trees / snags. If trees, snags, or standing dead have nesting cavities, the trees will not be cut.

# BEFORE & AFTER EXAMPLES



# BEFORE & AFTER EXAMPLES





# DIS E A S E D / P O O R F O R M E D T R E E E X A M P L E S



# HABITAT LEAVE TREES



# BOUNDARY TREE VS CUT TREE





# PROJECT / SPECIFICATIONS

- Trails will have moderate to minimal cutting within the first 10 feet of the trail prism. Trees or vegetation keeping trail corridor intact will not be cut. Small areas to cross trails may be cut for mechanical / project feasibility.
- All existing, approved trails shall not be damaged. If trail is damaged, it must be returned to the condition before the project began.



# PROJECT / SPECIFICATIONS

- Traffic control, trail closures, safety signs, and permits are the responsibility of the contractor.
- Users must follow trail closures.
- Heavy equipment routes, haul routes, and skid trails are the responsibility of the contractor. This includes mobilization, de-mobilization, and routes in the project units / project area. Routes must be approved by a CSFD Wildfire Representative. All skid trails must be rehabilitated.

# WORK HOURS

Work shall be conducted weekdays (Monday-Friday) during the hours of 8:00 am to 6:00 pm, to minimize noise disturbance. Work may not be conducted on Federal Holidays / City Holidays.

# PROJECT UPDATES

Updates will be provided at: <https://coloradosprings.gov/stratton>

## Stratton Open Space

Home



Fire mitigation work will begin in Stratton Open Space in Aug. 2024. Intermittent closures of certain trails in mitigation areas may be necessary. Please follow all signs and detours and use caution around work areas.

INFORMATION

**FIRE MITIGATION WORK**

MANAGEMENT PLAN

TRAILS

FRIENDS OF STRATTON OPEN SPACE

The Colorado Springs Fire Department (CSFD) Wildfire Mitigation Section in collaboration with Colorado Springs Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services and City Forestry, will begin fire mitigation work on 266.7 acres in Stratton Open Space in July 2024 to reduce wildfire risk. Bordered by the Upper Skyway neighborhood to the north, the Lower Skyway and Old Broadmoor neighborhoods to the east, the Old Broadmoor neighborhood to the south, and more City of Colorado Springs Parks land to the west, these mitigation efforts will reduce critical fuel loading and modify fuel structure by limbing, thinning stand density, chipping of any dead and down woody debris, and the removal of live, dead, and diseased standing vegetation.

### Goals of mitigation efforts

- Reduce the wildfire risk to surrounding neighborhoods and public property
- Protect critical infrastructure by reducing wildfire risk to adjacent access roads and utilities
- Prevention of post-storm slope erosion by reducing the risk of catastrophic canopy loss
- Reducing wildfire risk to wildlife habitat, recreation resources, biological areas, and natural and cultural resources (i.e. trails, scenic vistas, riparian, historical, archeological)

### Objectives

- Reduction of woody biomass by at least 50% across the project area
- Reduce ladder fuels across all stands.
- Create defensible space adjacent to and in conjunction with residential property while providing for aesthetics.
- Maintain the natural character of lands in relationship to the surrounding area, recreational opportunities, and natural and cultural resource management.



# QUESTIONS / COMMENTS

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