

FISHERS CANYON OPEN SPACE MASTER & MANAGEMENT PLAN



Community Open House

Jan. 22, 2025

Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services

Welcome!



- Presentation of draft master plan
- Open House with staff and planners to answer community questions
- Online draft and survey Jan. 23- Feb. 16



Acknowledgements



Thank you to the community,
Agency Partners, TOPS Working
Committee, Parks, Recreation and
Cultural Services Advisory Board,
Stakeholder Engagement Groups,
Staff and Youth!

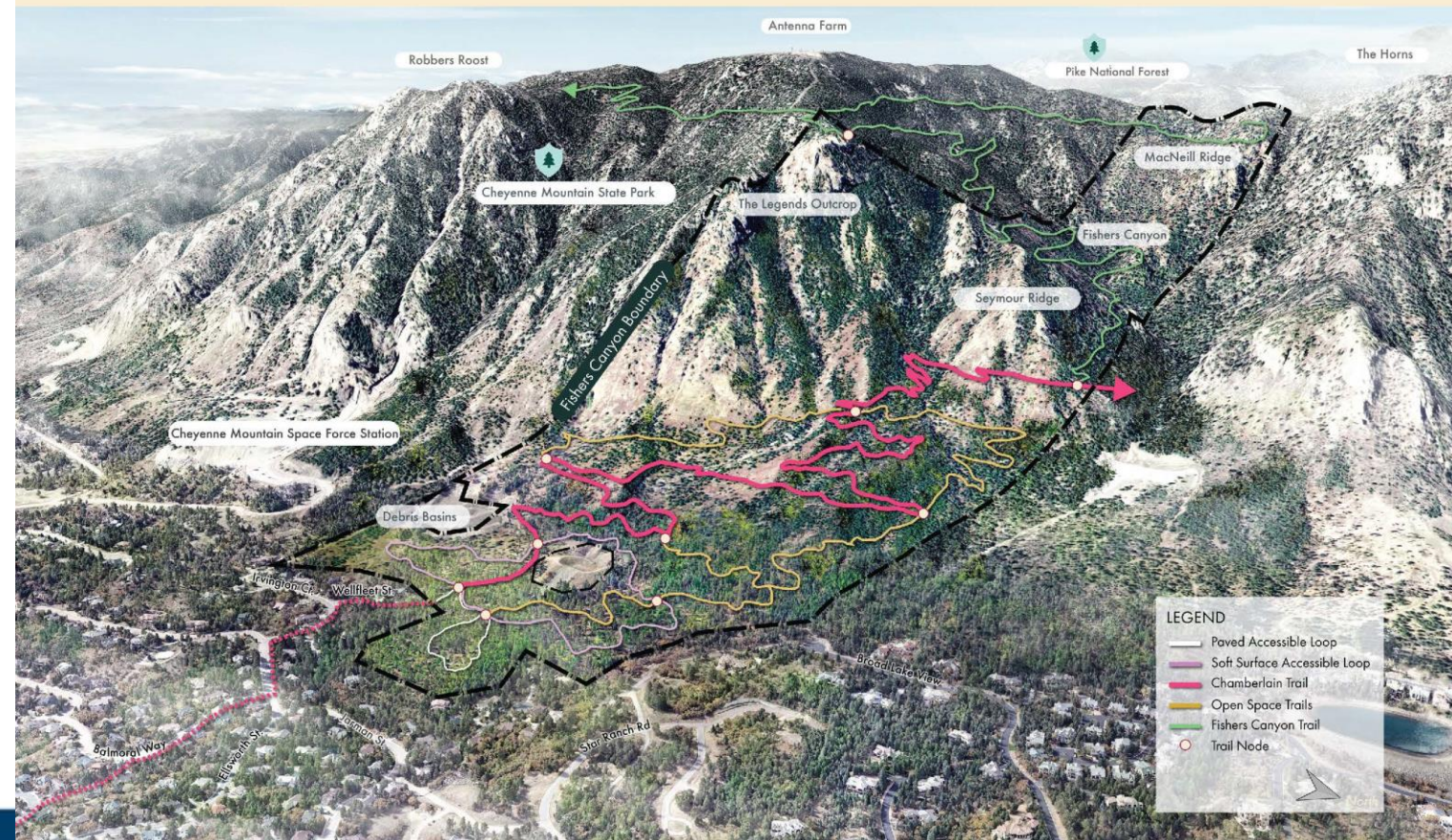
Over 2,200 participants directly
engaged to date.



Preferred Alternative

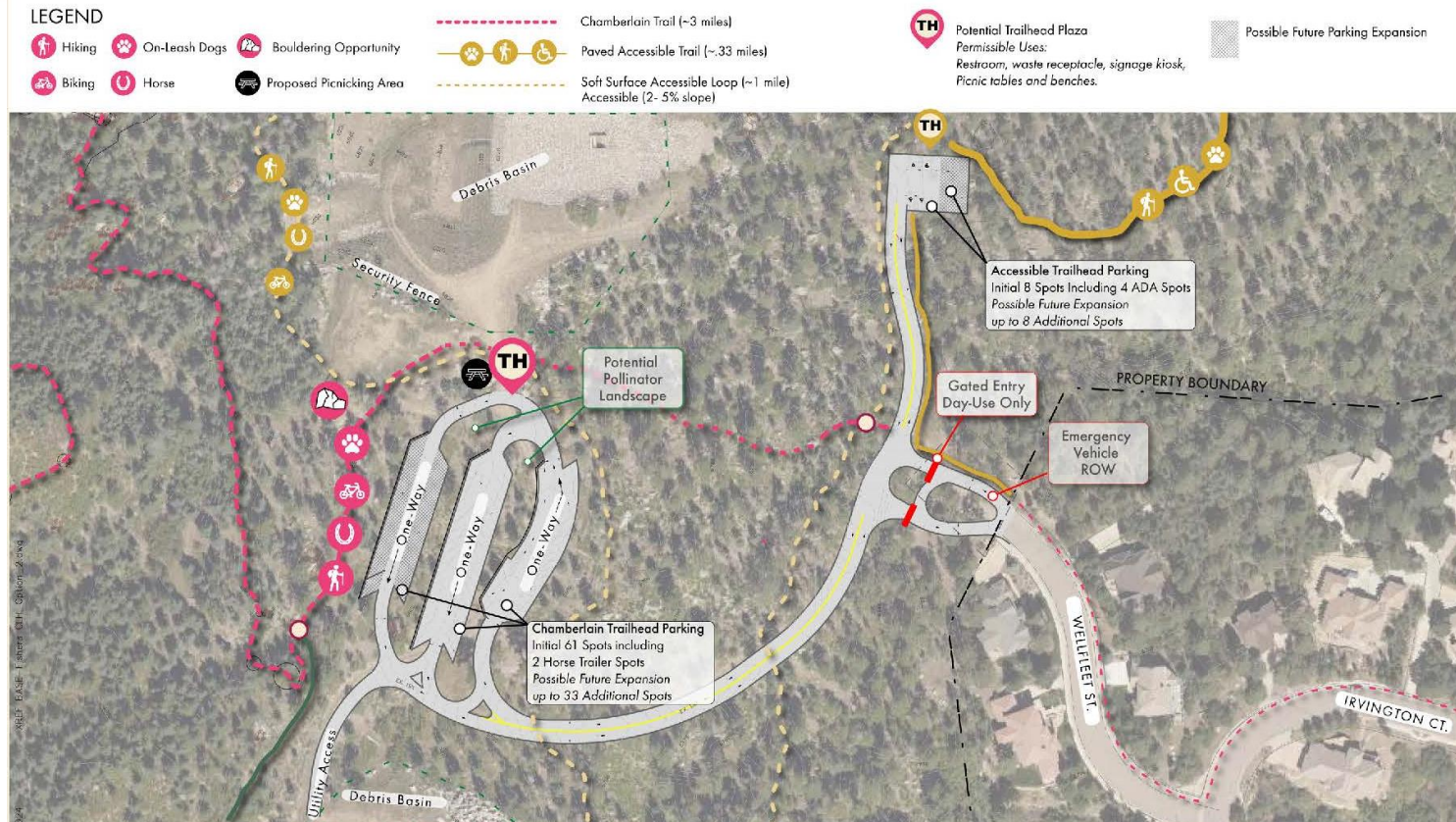
The plan is informed by the public. 75 % of the community survey respondents supported alternative 2 (more site enhancements than alternative 1) as represented in this illustrative.

Master Plan Birdseye Illustrative



Preferred Trailhead

Additionally, 60 % of the community survey respondents supported an adaptive trailhead parking range of 60-110 spots as represented in this map.



FISHERS CANYON OPEN SPACE

Preferred Trailhead Concept Road and Parking Plan

Adaptive Parking Range: Initial 69 Spots | Possible Future Expansion Up To 110 Spots*

*If more parking is needed, PRCS will initiate a public engagement process (format to be determined by PRCS leadership).

City of Colorado Springs
Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services
Consultant Team: Studia Campo, GEI, Atkins
January 22, 2024



SCALE: 1"=100'



Draft Master Plan



“Open space protection will need to be a focus over the next decade to protect many high-quality natural areas threatened by development expansion to meet the needs of a growing population.”

-2014 City of Colorado Springs Parks and Recreation Master Plan

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DEC 18/19 Fishers Canyon Open Space Master & Management Plan

DEC 18/19 Internal Review

Preface



The preface provides information on project givens, key concepts, adaptive management and fieldwork.

Preface

What is an Open Space Master & Management Plan?

The plan is a visioning document that describes physical improvements and management strategies that the Colorado Spring's Parks Recreation and Cultural Services Department (PRCS) can implement within Fishers Canyon Open Space over the next fifteen to twenty years. The plan also sets priorities, projects, future planning efforts, monitoring, management, research needs, and adaptive thresholds that guide the work of planners, rangers, scientists, and volunteers. Of note, rangers provide important site maintenance, cultural resource, and natural resource protection.

Who Informed the Master & Management Plan?

Over 1,900 community members provided thousands of comments that informed the plan's projects and priorities. Technical studies, best practices, field work, and partnerships with adjacent land managers also influenced the management strategies. These findings are woven throughout the document to transparently illustrate how input shaped the master and management plan.

Key Concepts

Five key concepts form the foundation of the master and management plan and create a shared

understanding between the community, scientists, recreationists, and land managers. Key concepts for this plan include:

Project Givens (see following pages): The givens identify elements of the plan that are not negotiable. They represent the responsibilities of the PRCS and provide the parameters for the decisions made for Fishers Canyon Open Space.

Sustainable Trail Framework: Focus groups identified themes of ecosystem health and resilience as well as sustainable recreation access as top planning objectives.¹ Reflecting on top goals for Fishers Canyon Open Space, focus group participants included thirty-three recreation, neighborhood, PRCS staff, and regional land management organizations. The majority of community participants (including 177 youth) reinforced these same values for Fishers Canyon Open Space.² This document introduces a sustainable trail framework to help staff and the public evaluate the success of the master plan trail system.

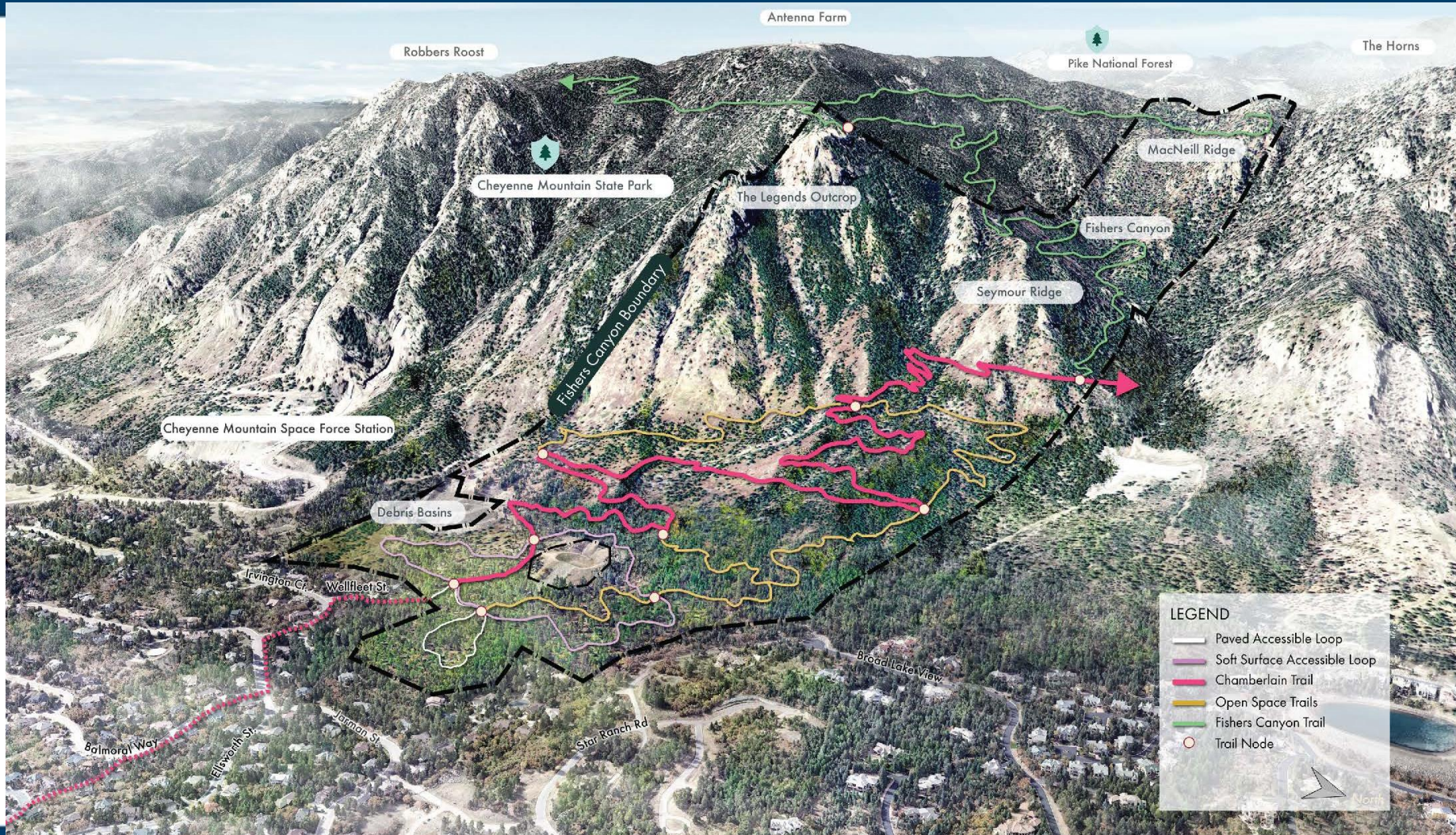
Adaptive Management: The U.S. Department of the Interior states that "adaptive management focuses on learning [how we manage natural areas] and adapting through partnerships of managers, scientists, and other stakeholders on how to create and maintain sustainable resource systems."³ The 2024 Blodgett

¹ Studio Campo. *Fishers Canyon Open Space Master and Management Plan Focus Group Engagement Summary*, February 1, 2024.

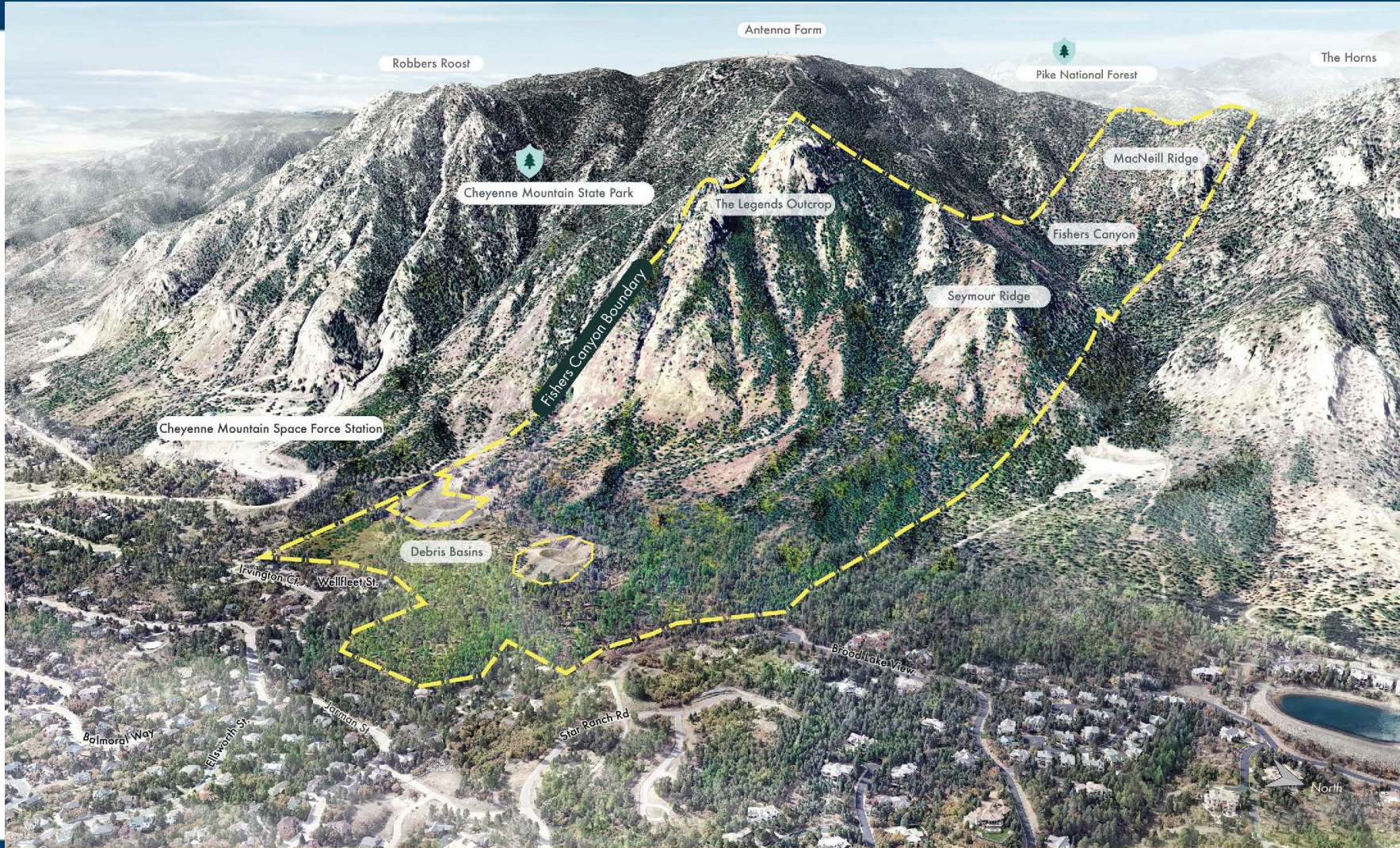
² Studio Campo. *Fishers Canyon Open Space Master and Management Plan TOPS & PAB Presentation*, October 12, 2024.

³ Williams, Byron, and Robert Szaro and Carl Shapiro. *Adaptive Management: The U.S. Department of the Interior Technical Guide*, Adaptive Management Working Group, U.S. Department of the Interior, Washington, DC, 2009.

Executive Summary

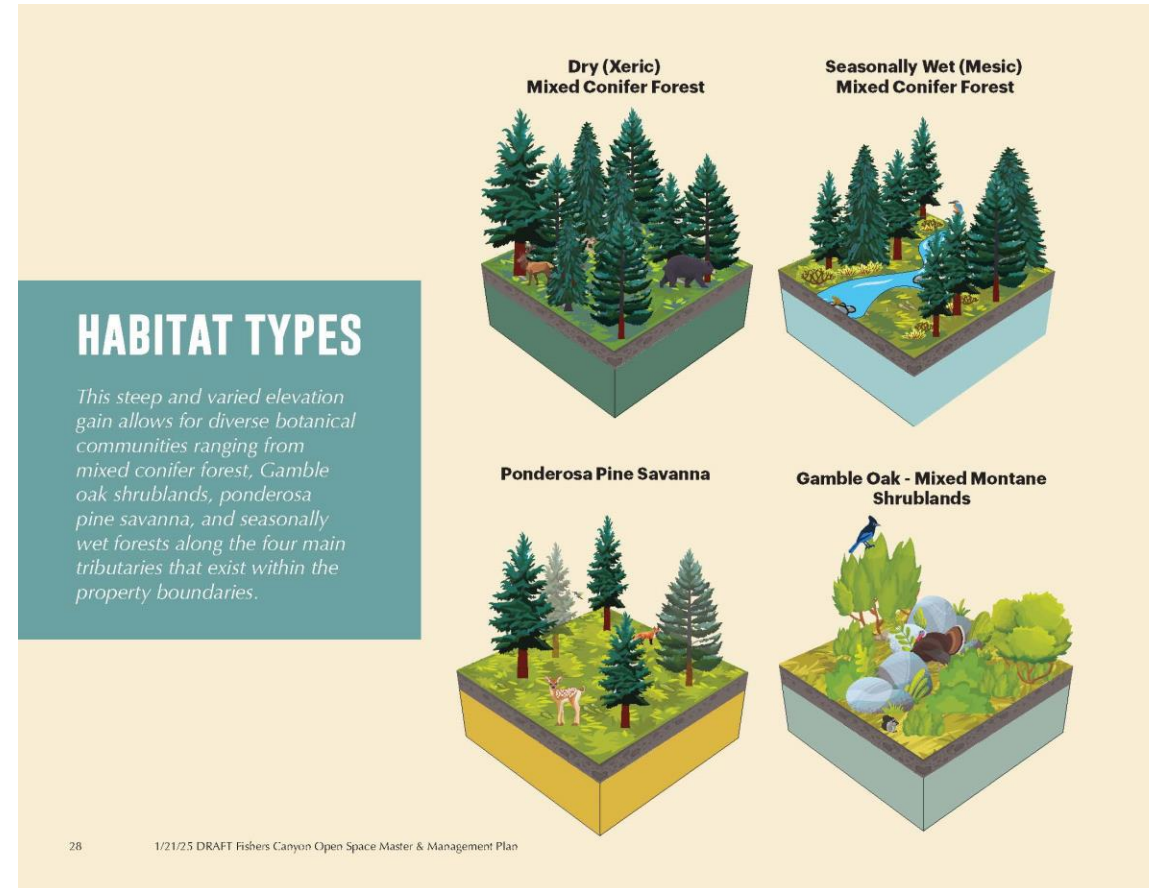


Site Introduction



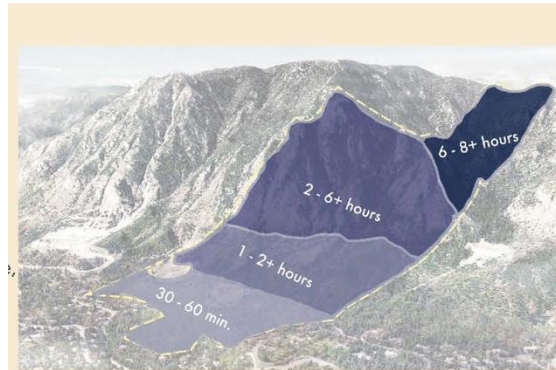
Opportunities and Constraints

- Geology
- Water
- Vegetation
- Wildlife
- Cultural Resources



Recreation Context

- Passive Recreation
- 2 and 4-Mile Assessment
- Citywide Planning Context
- Visitation Trends
- Estimated Traffic Volumes

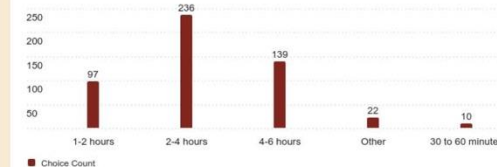


Map diagram of estimated round-trip visitation duration.

Q7 - Based on the estimated round trip duration diagram shown above and the recreation opportunities that are possible at Fishers Canyon Open Space, how often might you visit the site? (Select one)
- Selected Choice
504 Responses



Q8 - During a visit, how much time might you spend at Fishers Canyon Open Space? (Select one)
- Selected Choice
504 Responses



Community Engagement Survey #3 Future Visitation Trends Results.

Traffic Impact Analysis



- Based on the preferred parking range and anticipated visitation, traffic engineers conducted an impact analysis of the surrounding study area roadway network and found no significant impact on level of service (currently LOS A) for the study area.
- At the street perspective from adjacent homeowners, there will be an increase in traffic depending on actual site visitation.

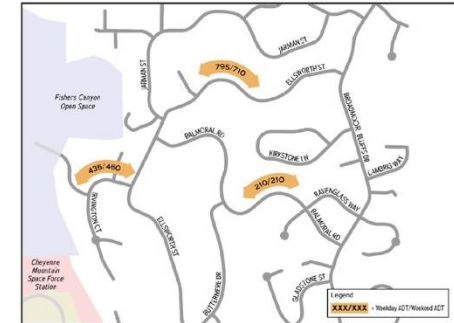


Figure 4-1 - Alternative 1 Build Bidirectional Weekday/Weekend Average Daily Traffic



Figure 4-2 - Alternative 2 Build Bidirectional Weekday/Weekend Average Daily Traffic



Estimated Vehicles Per Day



- Visitation estimates and preferred adaptive parking ranges informed estimated vehicles per day.
- This table depicts those vehicle per day estimates based on two parking alternatives. The actual visitor use of the site and the length of stay will be dependent on many factors, including the length of trail network, the number of connection points and other off-site parking availability for the Chamberlain Trail, possible connectivity to Cheyenne Mountain State Park, other use opportunities such as rock-climbing or wildlife viewing on-site, and the general desirability of the site.
- Actual visitation will depend on these factors, as well as weather and other seasonal influences.
- Additional detail in Traffic Impact Study Appendix.

Table 2.1: Fishers Canyon Open Space estimated vehicles per day for each parking alternative.

Estimated Vehicles per day to Fishers Canyon Open Space	Trailhead Parking Alternative 1 33 to 71 spots including 4 ADA	Trailhead Parking Alternative 2 69 to 110 spots including 4 ADA
<i>Weekday</i>	97	115
<i>Weekend</i>	161	217

Neighborhood Considerations

- Trailhead parking will be a **phased approach, starting smaller**, then working up as needed to provide sufficient parking and address any open space parking in the neighborhood.
- Recommendations for **PRCS standard fencing and signage** at residential property borders are included in the management plan.



Sustainable Trail Framework



- Community Values
- Stakeholder Input
- Staff Input
- Industry Best Practices



Recreation Desires

Table 3.2: Fishers Canyon Open Space Community Recreation Desires Snapshot Collated from Qualitative and Quantitative Engagement Data. Sources: Appendices: Community Engagement Summaries.

Recreation Experiences



Constituent Ranking of Recreation Desires	The Everyday Explorer Cross country mountain biking, daily dog walking, hiking, loop trails, etc.	The Joyful Observer Low-barrier accessible trails, picnicking, less remote nature experiences, etc.	The Naturalist Horseback riding, hiking to scenic views, wilderness, regional trail connections and remote nature, etc.	The Adrenaline Junkie Downhill mountain biking, rock climbing, rigorous trails, etc.
Youth	1	2		3
Neighbors	2	3	1	
Community		3	2	1
Priority for Recreation Advocacy Groups	Pikes Peak Outdoor Recreation Alliance, Medicine Wheel Trail Advocates and COSMBA	Families, Disabled Veteran Groups, City of COS Therapeutic Recreation and Community Centers	Cheyenne Mountain State Park, Equestrian Community	Rock Climbing Community, Medicine Wheel Trail Advocates and COSMBA
Operations and Maintenance Thresholds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommended increase in current number of full time operations and maintenance staff per miles of trail. The upcoming system-wide master plan should provide additional direction and priorities. 			

Master Plan



- Access Points
- Parking and Traffic
- Trailhead
- Trail Nodes
- Trail Alignment
- Refinement

Master Plan Map Legend

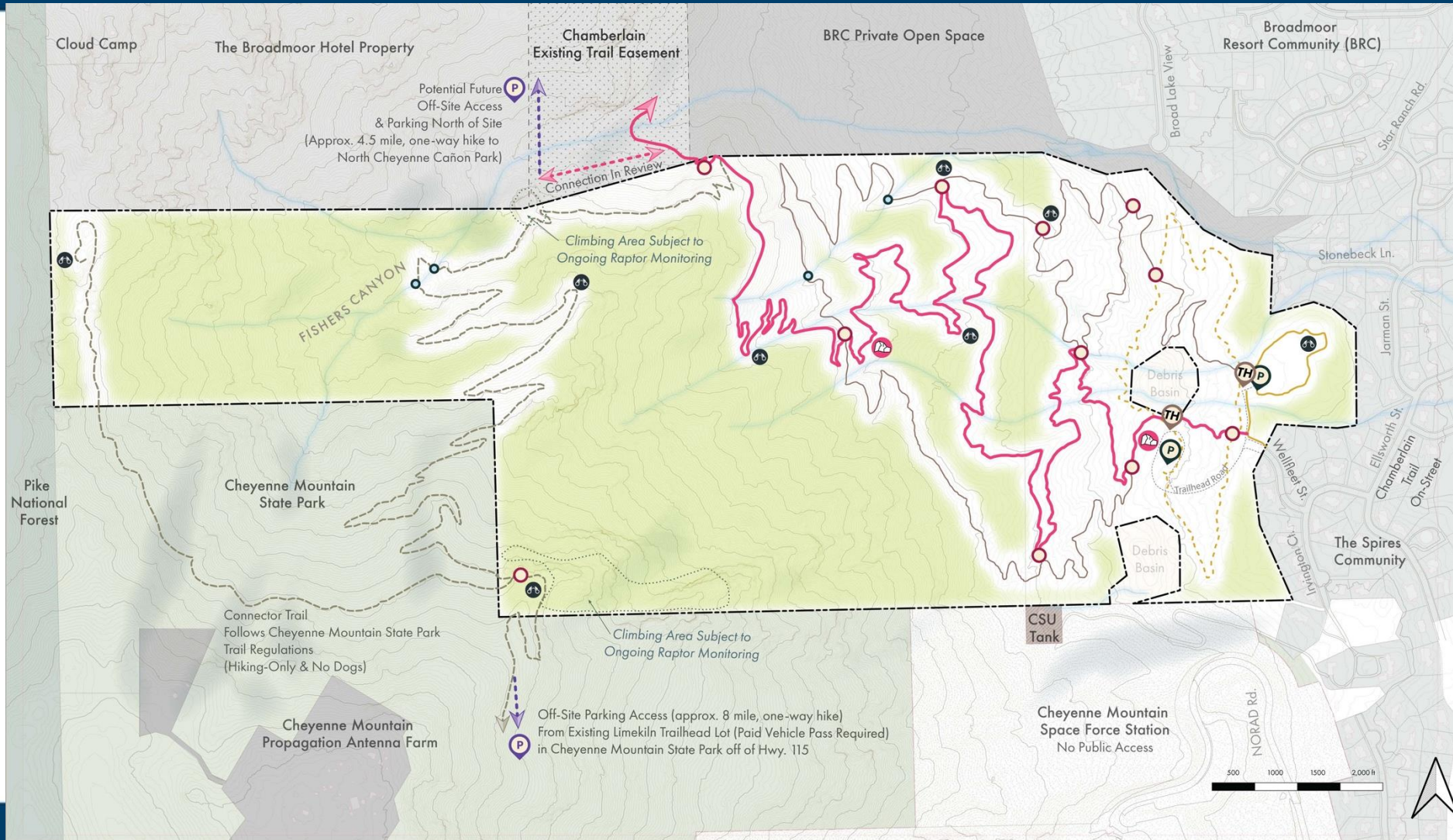
Property Line	Existing Drainages	Trailheads (2)
Chamberlain Existing Trail Easement	Natural Preservation Area Drainage Crossings (4)	On-Site Parking (69-110 spots)
Private Property	Natural Preservation Area (66% of site / ~227 acres)	Off-Site Dispersed Access (2 points)
Military Installation - No Public Access	Scenic Views	Bouldering Opportunity
	Trail Node Connections (10)	Rock Climbing Opportunity

Trail Key

	Hiking	Biking	Horse	On-Leash Dogs	Accessible (2-5% slope)
Chamberlain Regional Trail (~3 miles)					
Paved Accessible Loop (~.33 miles)					
Soft Surface Accessible Loop (~1 mile)					
Open Space Trails (~3 miles)					
Fishers Canyon Trail (~1.6 miles) <i>No dogs & subject to seasonal wildlife closures</i>					

Total approximate trail mileage = 9-10 miles

Master Plan Trail Network



Recreation Opportunities



- Multi-Use
- Hiking, Biking, Equestrians, On-Leash Dogs
- Bouldering and Rock Climbing



Single-Use Considerations



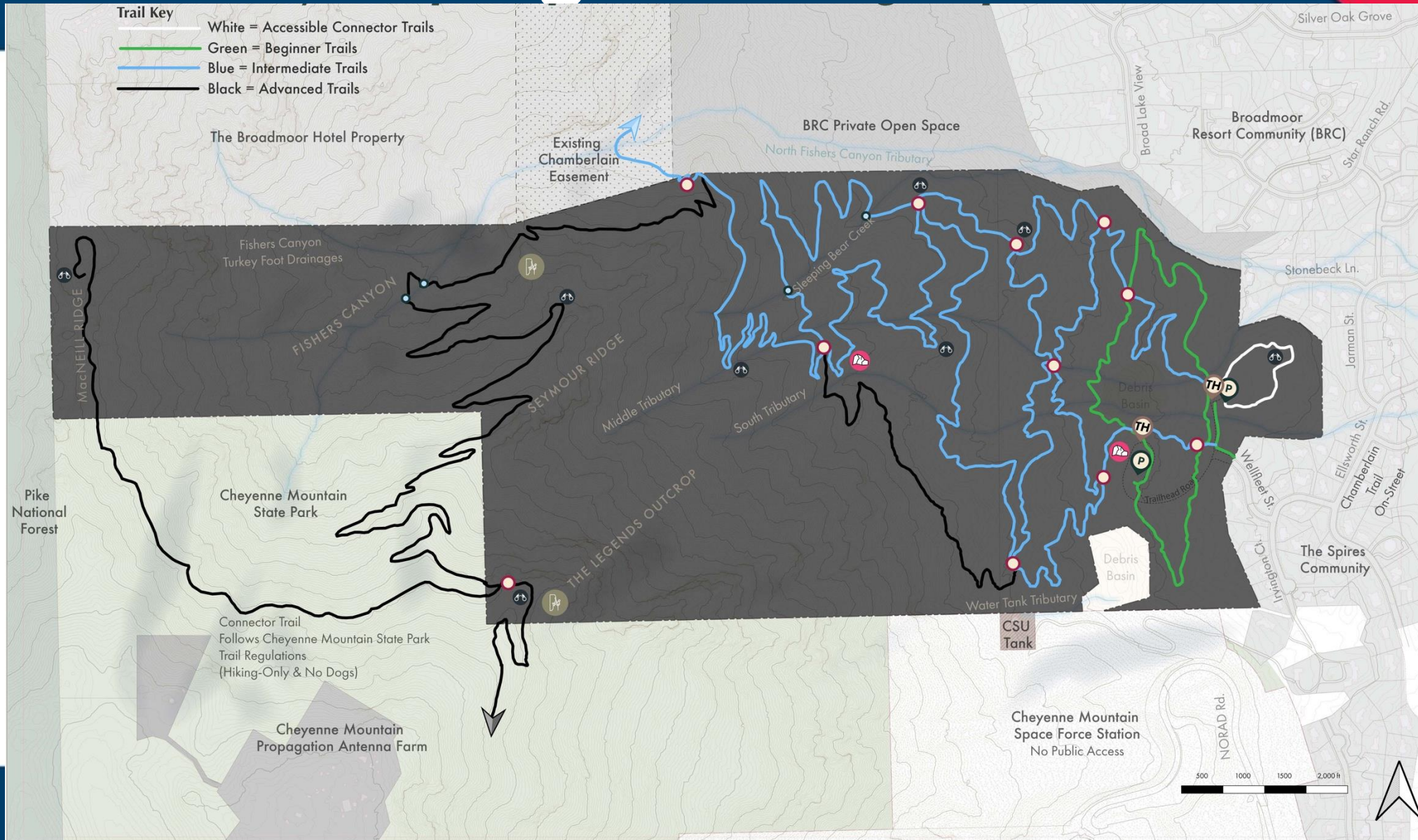
- While there has been **great interest** throughout this process for **single-use trails**, particularly downhill MTB, limited PRCS operations, maintenance and monitoring resources preclude a single-use, downhill MTB trail at Fishers Canyon Open Space.
- An additional consideration is the **unique soils** of the site that can be particularly steep and erosion prone.
- To achieve a sustainable downhill MTB trail, construction would require over building, rock armoring and structures which potentially take away from the resource values and conservation goals of the open space.

Natural Preservation Areas

- 227 acres (66% of site) is designated natural preservation area
- Considerations for Drainage Crossings and Debris Basins



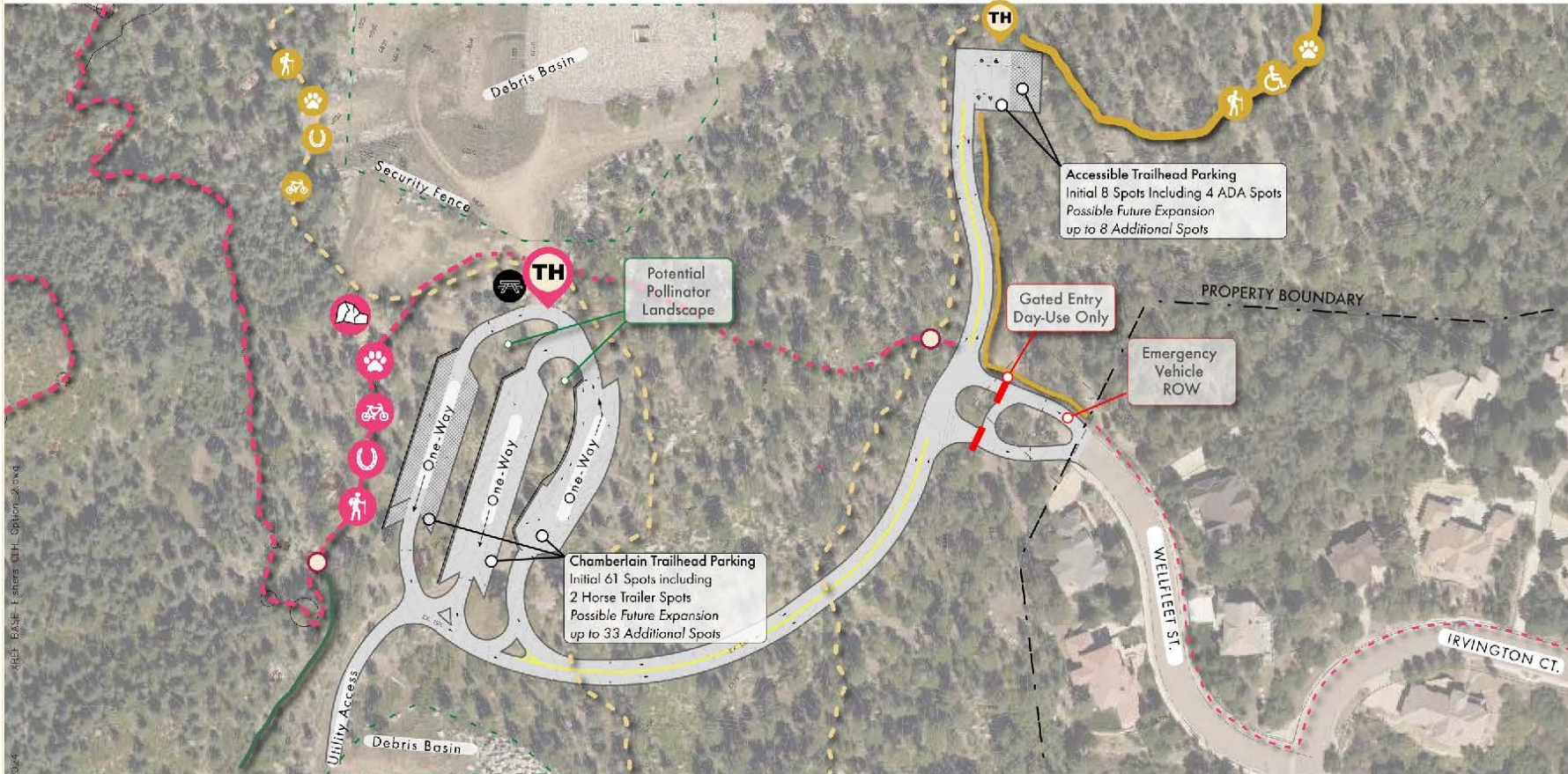
Trail Rating



Trailhead Parking

LEGEND

- Hiking
- On-leash Dogs
- Bouldering Opportunity
- Biking
- Horse
- Proposed Picnicking Area
- Chamberlain Trail (~3 miles)
- Paved Accessible Trail (~.33 miles)
- Soft Surface Accessible Loop (~1 mile) Accessible (2-5% slope)
- Potential Trailhead Plaza
Permissible Uses: Restroom, waste receptacle, signage kiosk, Picnic tables and benches.
- Possible Future Parking Expansion



FISHERS CANYON OPEN SPACE

Preferred Trailhead Concept Road and Parking Plan

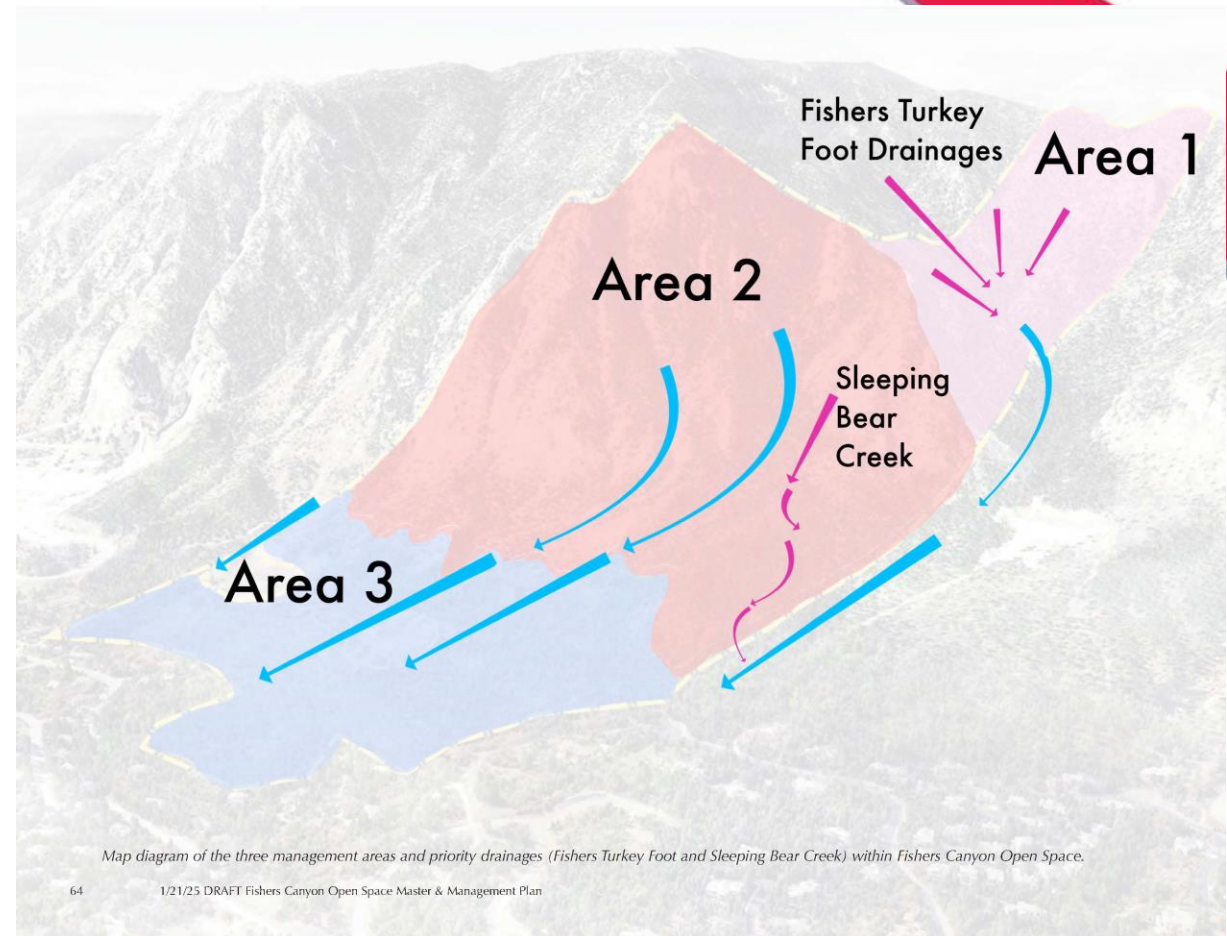
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Management Plan

- Management Areas
- Drainages and Water Quality
- Wildlife
- Trail Management
- Noxious Weed Control
- Forest Health Management
- Cultural Resource Protection
- Visitation Management
- Recommended Priorities



Design Guidelines

This section of the master plan provides recommendations for sustainable trail design and materiality.



Green- Beginner Trails

The slope is sustained at less than 5 percent with short sections up to 10 percent.

The trail conditions offer narrow to wide widths and smooth surfaces with minimal obstacles at relatively low grades.

Smooth surface without obstructions and 36" to 60" wide.

Reference Kootenay Adaptive trail design standards in the Appendices.

Keynotes:
1 Surface Course
2 Base Course
3 Compacted Subgrade
4 Variable Conditions

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Next Steps



- Open House Comment Cards
- Draft and Appendices & Online Survey Jan. 23-Feb. 16
- Spring 2025 TOPS and PAB Presentations



THANK YOU



[Coloradosprings.gov/Fisherscanyon](https://coloradosprings.gov/Fisherscanyon)

