BOUNCE FORWARD
BUILDING THRIVING, HEALTHY, & EQUITABLE COMMUNITIES
MARCH 4 & 5, 12, 19, 25 & 26
Getting Away from it All: How Increases in Visitation Are Changing Public Land Management
Getting Away from it All: How Increases in Visitation are Changing Public Land Management
BOULDER'S OPEN SPACE AND MOUNTAIN PARKS TODAY: AN INTRODUCTION

- **1967** - First municipality in country to employ sales tax to fund open space
- **45,000+ Acres**
- **6.25M Visits** each year (2017)
- **$33.5M Budget** (2016)
- **150+ Miles of trail**
- **37 Trailheads**
- **273+ Access points**

### TOTAL ACRES MANAGED

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Acres</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>City of Boulder</td>
<td>45,000ac.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boulder Co.</td>
<td>103,000ac.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jefferson Co.</td>
<td>54,000ac.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fort Collins</td>
<td>36,000ac.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### MILES OF TRAIL MANAGED

- **145 Miles**
- **110 Miles**
- **236 Miles**

### NUMBER OF RECREATION TYPES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Use</th>
<th>Mileage Designed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hiking</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mountain Biking</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authorized Motor Vehicle (Emergency Response and Maintenance Access Only)</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equestrian</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessible</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Wildlife protection, including off-trail limitations in Habitat Conservation areas (HCA’s) and seasonal area closures for nesting birds.

Resource protection measures that prohibit, for example, damaging property, collecting fossils and cutting trees;

Trail stewardship, including muddy trail closures;

Public safety measures surrounding weapons, firearms and safe trail etiquette;

Fire safety including fireworks, campfires and smoking;

Oil and gas regulations;

Range management including grazing and horses;

Activities allowed only in designated areas, such as fishing, camping, bolted climbing, horseback riding, mountain biking or dog walking including voice and sight control;

Limitations on other uses include unmanned aerial vehicles or drones, model glider flying, hot air balloons and geocaching;

Prohibited activities such as graffiti, fixed-heel skiing, hunting, littering, dumping and motorized vehicles;

Commercial use, including permitting for competitive events, photography, filming and for-profit group trips;

Visitor parking, including curfews and fees and;

Other prohibited conduct, such as trespassing or use of alcohol, marijuana and glass containers.

In addition, plans, policies, and regulations define activities that are not allowed on OSMP lands because they do not fit the criteria for passive recreation. These include:

- Motorized vehicles (e-bikes)*
- Hunting
- Organized sports, competitive events
- Paintball games
- Swimming (prohibited in lakes and ponds)
- Drones
- Commercial use without a permit
- Launching or landing of hot air balloons

* The City of Boulder complies with the federal Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). In meeting the goal of accessibility, we work to ensure that visitors experiencing disabilities will be afforded experiences and opportunities commensurate with other visitors to the greatest extent practical.
The City of Boulder’s Charter provides the basis for most municipal functions, including the delivery of municipal services. Approved by city voters in 1986, Article XII, Section 176 of the charter guides the way we manage open space and, as stewards of the City of Boulder’s open space, we strive to fulfill these community-approved charter purposes. The Open Space Board of Trustees (OSBT) and City Council hold us accountable for the delivery of the broad charter policy statements listed below.

1. **Natural Areas and Features or Species of Special Value**
   Preservation or restoration of natural areas characterized by or including terrain, geologic formations, flora or fauna that are unusual, spectacular, historically important, scientifically valuable or unique, or that represent outstanding or rare examples of native species.

2. **Water, Landscapes and Ecosystems**
   Preservation of water resources in their natural or traditional state, scenic areas or vistas, wildlife habitats or fragile ecosystems.

3. **Passive Recreation**
   Preservation of land for passive recreational use, such as hiking, photography or nature studies, and, if specifically designated, bicycling, horseback riding or fishing.

4. **Agriculture**
   Preservation of agricultural uses and land suitable for agricultural production.

5. **Limiting Sprawl**
   Utilization of land for shaping the development of the city, limiting urban sprawl and disciplining growth.

6. **Urban Shaping**
   Utilization of non-urban land for spatial definition of urban areas.

7. **Floodplain Protection**
   Utilization of land to prevent encroachment on floodplains.

8. **Aesthetics and Quality of Life**
   Preservation of land for its aesthetic or passive recreational value and its contribution to the quality of life of the community.

Open space land may not be improved after acquisition unless such improvements are necessary to protect or maintain the land or to provide for passive recreational, open agricultural, or wildlife habitat use of the land. (Added by Ord. No. 4996 (1986), §1, adopted by the electorate on Nov. 4, 1986.)
The Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan and existing OSMP plans provide guidance at various scales for the delivery of OSMP's services to the Boulder community.

**Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan (BVCP)**

The BVCP is developed and jointly adopted by the City of Boulder and Boulder County to guide land use decisions in the Boulder Valley. The BVCP supports the community's vision for balancing development and preservation of the Boulder Valley. Integral to the BVCP are the core values and guidance to achieve sustainability, intergovernmental cooperation, organized urban development, protection of open space and other policies.

**OSMP Plans**

Since 1986, OSMP staff and the Boulder community have developed numerous plans to provide both general and specific guidance to inform the management of the city's open space lands and resources in accordance with the city charter. Existing OSMP plans provide guidance for managing resources and visitation.
PURPOSES, PLANS, POLICIES AND REGULATIONS

CLIMATE COMMITMENT

1. An 80-percent reduction in community greenhouse gas emissions below 2005 levels by 2050;
2. One hundred percent renewable electricity by 2030; and
3. An 80-percent reduction in organization greenhouse gas emissions below 2008 levels by 2030.

RESILIENCE STRATEGY

1. Prepare all segments of our community for uncertainty and disruption by encouraging community preparedness, creating a culture of risk awareness and personalizing resilience;
2. Capitalize on the collective problem-solving and creativity of our community by leveraging advances in data, research and observations to address emerging resilience challenges; and
3. Embed resilience into city operations and systems by transforming our approach to community resilience.

BOULDER COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN (BCCP)

1. Growth should be channeled to municipalities;
2. Agricultural lands should be protected; and
3. Preservation of our environmental and natural resources should be a high priority in making land-use decisions.
PLANNING FOR CHARTER PURPOSES

Since 1986, our staff and the Boulder community have developed 15 plans that guide the management of the open space system and its resources in accordance with the city charter.

A New Systemwide Master Plan

Focus Area: Responsible Recreation Stewardship and Enjoyment

1. RRSE.1) ASSESS AND MANAGE INCREASING VISITATION:
Continue implementing measures from approved plans to mitigate impacts of increasing visitation in specific locations, while also updating the systemwide visitor use management plan to generate and implement ideas for understanding and addressing visitation growth throughout the system and to nurture stewardship and enjoyable visitor experiences.

2. RRSE.4) ENCOURAGE MULTIMODAL ACCESS TO TRAILHEADS:
Explore and partner on a range of coordinated transportation and design solutions to reduce parking congestion, reduce greenhouse gas emissions from visitor travel and promote active living, ecosystem health and public transportation.
Regional and Local Context Communities across Colorado's Front Range are anticipating significant population increases over the next three decades. By 2050, the Denver Boulder metro area could increase by 45 percent, or an additional 1.39 million people (Colorado Division of Local Affairs; State Demographer's Office, 2017). By 2040, the City of Boulder population is projected to increase nearly 12 percent, to 123,000 residents (City of Boulder, 2017).
PURPOSES, PLANS, POLICIES AND REGULATIONS

1. Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan
2. Open Space Long-Range Management Policies
3. Systemwide Management or Geographic Area Plans
4. Related Plans and Ongoing Needs

- VISITOR MASTER PLAN
- TRAIL STUDY AREA PLANS

- Provide for aesthetic enjoyment and provide for a passive recreation experience.
- OSMP developed facilities include passive recreation amenities, such as parking areas, picnic areas, regulation boards, trailheads, trails and bridges.
- Provide and maintain highly functional and sustainable visitor facilities.
- Ensure compatibility of passive recreational activities with long-term resource protection.
- Partner with the community in passive recreation decision-making and stewardship.
- Acquire the lands or interests to provide access to the city’s open space lands and relieve the adverse effects of crowding upon resources and the visitor experience.

- 3.08 Public Access to Public Lands
  Public access to natural lands will be provided for, except where closure is necessary to protect areas from unacceptable degradation or impacts to agriculture, habitat or wildlife, for public safety or limits on access necessary to preserve the quality of the visitor experience.

- Improve the quality of visitor experiences and increase the sustainability of trails and trailheads while conserving resources.
- Balance and integrate the activities of nature and people in accordance with the Boulder City Charter.

Sustainability Framework:
Healthy and socially thriving community
Livable community
Accessible and connected community
Climate Commitment: Clean Mobility

2010 City Council Identified Overarching Issue:
Multimodal access to and parking opportunities for OSMP visitors
Programs that promote public awareness of trail etiquette
PURPOSES, PLANS, POLICIES AND REGULATIONS

WHO WILL VISIT IN THE FUTURE AND HOW CAN WE MANAGE THE SYSTEM INCLUSIVELY FOR ALL GROUPS?

- **Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan**
- **Open Space Long-Range Management Policies**
- **Systemwide Management or Geographic Area Plans**

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**VISITOR MASTER PLAN**

- Provide for aesthetic enjoyment and provide for a passive recreation experience.
- Provide and maintain highly functional and sustainable visitor facilities.
- Partner with the community in passive recreation decision-making and stewardship.

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**3.08 Public Access to Public Lands**

Certain lands provide a means for educating users on the importance of the natural environment. These public lands may include areas for recreation and preservation of agricultural use, unique natural features and wildlife and plant habitat.

**8.05 Diversity**

City/County support inclusion of racial, ethnic, socioeconomic and cultural diversity into physical, social and economic environments.

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**Sustainability Framework:**

- Healthy and socially thriving community
- Livable community
- Accessible and connected community
- Climate Commitment: Clean Mobility
Some Current Management Tactics

• Multimodal Transportation
• Area Designations
• Land Acquisition
• Education and Outreach
• Permit Programs
• Voice and Sight Program
• Trailhead Leash
• Parking Fees
• Seasonal Wildlife Closures
• Muddy Trail Closures
• Data
Park to Park

• Chautauqua Access Management Plan
  • Parking capacity study
• Free shuttle
• Limited Paid Parking – no cash
• Saturday, Sunday, and Holidays
• 10 min. ride
• Lyft rides discounted/free
Area Designations

Open Space and Mountain Parks will use an area management system as a framework for implementing Visitor Master Plan implementation strategies. Key policies, programs, and projects are targeted to area-specific needs throughout the system.

• Passive Recreation
  • Provide a high level of public access to destinations and connection through designated trails. • Maintain or improve passive recreational and educational opportunities, while protecting and preserving natural lands and resources. • Accommodate high levels of visitor use with appropriate management, trails and trail heads, and services. • Reduce conflicts among visitor activities. • Minimize the number of undesignated or "social trails;" eliminate undesignated trails when they are duplicative or damaging to resources

• Natural Area
  • Accommodate low-impact visitor activities where adequate trails exist or can be built, and resource impacts can be minimized. • Provide opportunities for passive recreational and educational activities that require topographic relief or a natural setting (e.g., hang/paragliding, climbing/bouldering, nature study, scenic viewing). • Protect the quality of natural and agricultural resources (especially where high value resources exist). • Eliminate undesignated trails when they are redundant or damaging to resources.

• Agricultural Area Designation
  • Maintain the efficiency of agricultural production and operation. • Manage agricultural production and operation to ensure safety for operators and visitors in the vicinity. • Provide, where appropriate, public access and passive recreational opportunities that have minimal impacts on agricultural production and operation or other resources. • Manage visitor access in areas of intensive agricultural production or operation to ensure visitor safety. • Eliminate undesignated trails when they are redundant or damaging to resources.

• Habitat Conservation Area
  • Maintain the efficiency of agricultural production and operation. • Manage agricultural production and operation to ensure safety for operators and visitors in the vicinity. • Provide, where appropriate, public access and passive recreational opportunities that have minimal impacts on agricultural production and operation or other resources. • Manage visitor access in areas of intensive agricultural production or operation to ensure visitor safety. • Eliminate undesignated trails when they are redundant or damaging to resources.
Today, it is estimated that about 5,000 acres remain to be acquired to fulfill a vision of a comprehensive open space system.
Data

- Human Dimensions Program
- Trail Counters
- Vehicle Counters
- Observational Studies
- Live Data
- Photo Monitoring
- Visitor Survey
- Resident Survey
Current Management Tactics

The Pandemic:

- New & unfamiliar landscape due to COVID-19
- Adaptive management needs outside of long-term planning due to emergency response
- Opportunity to try tactics on short-term basis to address emerging scenarios
- Review of actions to determine if they should continue, are out of policy, or should be discontinued
Adaptive Management

- 300 concepts and ideas reviewed
- 51 actions temporarily implemented on-the-ground
  - Suggested directional loops
  - Bulletin boards
  - Parking area closures
  - Increased educational staff outreach – outdoor stations
  - Additional marketing of trail characteristics and use patterns
  - Coordinated messaging with other agencies
  - Partnering on parking studies
  - Increased servicing of facilities
  - Additional visitor monitoring studies
  - System-wide dogs on leash recommendation
  - Gathering area closures
  - Area closures for Public Safety – Boulder Star
- Review need for public process and plan support for continued implementation
Managing Perception

[Image of a cartoon showing a person on an island shouting "BoAt!" and another person in a boat shouting "LAND!"]
### Residents' Perceptions of Crowding on or Near Trails

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>A Large Problem</th>
<th>A Small Problem</th>
<th>Not at All a Problem</th>
<th>Don't Know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chautauqua</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sanitas</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gregory Canyon</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doudy Draw/South Mesa</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wonderland Lake</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marshall Mesa</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flatirons Vista</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bobolink</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boulder Valley Ranch</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- A large problem
- A small problem
- Not at all a problem
- Don't know

(2019 OSMP Master Plan Survey)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perception</th>
<th>Reality</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We’re being overrun by out-of-towners and they are all bringing their dogs</td>
<td>82% of visitors come from within Boulder County and 91% of dog visits come from county residents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biking is off the charts</td>
<td>Biking has ranged between 9 &amp; 11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parking is a struggle</td>
<td>Only 6% report finding a parking space difficult</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Everyone has a dog and they are everywhere</td>
<td>About 1 in 3 visitor parties brought one or more dogs with them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visitor conflict is off-the-charts</td>
<td>Conflict has remained stable between 5 &amp; 7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The youngin’s are taking over</td>
<td>Visitor’s on average are getting older (similar to county demographic). College age is decreasing proportionally.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Managing Perception

Perception
- Visitation is growing “exponentially”
- Nighttime visitation is exploding
- Visitation has increased everywhere
- It’s busy all the time everywhere

Reality
- Visitation has grown by 34% (~2.4% annual growth rate)
- Nighttime use has gone down both in percent and total visits
- Changes in visitation are not equally distributed across the system
- Overall temporal patterns have remained relatively stable
  - The majority of access points receive low to medium levels of visitation
Managing Perception

2015

2019
Annual Average Daily Visits - 2016/2017 vs. 2020

Data labels indicate % change relative to 2016/2017 average daily visits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>2016/2017</th>
<th>2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sage - south at Boulder Valley</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ranch TH</td>
<td></td>
<td>223</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chaotusqua at Chautauqua TH</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>956</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coal Seam at Marshall Mesa TH</td>
<td>-4%</td>
<td>273</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dakota Ridge at Dakota Ridge AP</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>183</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doudy Draw at Doudy Draw TH</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eagle at Eagle TH</td>
<td>123%</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flatirons Vista at Flatirons</td>
<td>-81%</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vista TH</td>
<td></td>
<td>190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foothills South at Four Mile</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>364</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creek TH</td>
<td></td>
<td>283</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sanitas Valley at Centennial TH</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Boulder Creek at Bobolink</td>
<td></td>
<td>292</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TH</td>
<td></td>
<td>305</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mesa at South Mesa TH</td>
<td>-8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Data

- Gain public acceptance for management tactics
- Understand public interests and concerns
- Engage broader community perspective
- Track trends over time
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approach</th>
<th>Strongly support</th>
<th>Support</th>
<th>Oppose</th>
<th>Strongly oppose</th>
<th>No opinion/Don't know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increasing education/outreach about trail etiquette</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing low- or no-cost shuttles to trailheads</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Requiring dogs to be leashed on more trails</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closing trails for a period of time to protect wildlife and habitats</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adding amenities to less frequented areas to disperse visitors across the system</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increasing enforcement and ranger patrols</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Separating uses such as hiking, biking and horseback-riding by time and/or place</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Widening, hardening or redesigning trails to support high visitation levels</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closing OSMP parking lots when full and only letting cars in when someone leaves</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charging for parking at more OSMP trailheads</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Requiring a reservation to access high demand areas during popular times</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Thanks
Colorado Department of Natural Resources

Doug Vilsack,
Assistant Director for Parks,
Wildlife and Lands
DNR Divisions

- Colorado Parks and Wildlife
- Colorado Oil and Gas Conservation Commission
- Division of Reclamation, Mining and Safety
- Colorado Water Conservation Board
- Division of Water Resources
- Colorado State Land Board
- *Colorado Avalanche Information Center*
- *Division of Forestry (Colorado State Forest Service)*
Colorado Department of Natural Resources Budget

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Division</th>
<th>FTE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Executive Director’s Office (EDO)</td>
<td>41.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CO Avalanche Information Center (CAIC)</td>
<td>11.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Division of Reclamation and Mining (DRMS)</td>
<td>65.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oil and Gas Conservation Commission (OGCC)</td>
<td>147.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>State Land Board (SLB)</td>
<td>42</td>
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<tr>
<td>CO Parks and Wildlife (CPW)</td>
<td>894.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CO Water Conservation Board (CWCB)</td>
<td>46.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Division of Water Resources (DWR)</td>
<td>254</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,502.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Appropriation By Division
($ shown are in rounded millions)

*The Executive Director’s budget includes funding for administrative personal services and operating expenses, department-wide common policies, and annual Species Conservation Trust Fund projects.*
Colorado State Parks  (42 parks / 240,000 acres)
State Wildlife Areas (350 SWAs / 684,000 acres)
STL Public Access Program (Soon 1M+ Acres)
CPW Visitation Challenges

• Park visitation increased more than 2.2 million visitor days from FY15 through FY19.
• Eldo Canyon SP: 244K visitors in 2016 to 524K in 2018.
• 2020 increase in park visitation between 30-50% due to COVID
• Increased visitation on wildlife properties (SWA, PAP, Walk-in)
COVID-19 Response and Visitation Management Tools

- State Parks / SWAs remained open
- Hunting opportunities remained available in most circumstances
- Some campgrounds, beaches and other high-use areas closed briefly
- Social distancing & masks enforced
- High-touch facilities roped off, etc.
- Weekly meetings with fed partners and constant contact with counties
What Now? Managing Visitation

• Eldorado Canyon Visitor Use Management Plan (VUMP)
• Consideration of reservation systems, shuttles, new passes, etc.
• Keep Colorado Wild Pass
What Now?
Increasing Capacity (Mostly)

• Fishers Peak State Park Partnership
• Future State Park Nominations Process
• SB20-003 and SB21-112 - Infrastructure Investments
• CPW/State Land Board Public Access Program Expansion
• New State Wildlife Area Fees / Passes
What Now? Partnerships & Planning

• Colorado Regional Outdoor Partnerships Executive Order
• Shared Stewardship (USFS)
• Engaging in federal planning efforts (BLM RMPs)
Contact Information

• Email: douglas.vilsack@state.co.us

• Phone: 720-456-8956

• Website: https://dnr.colorado.gov/
National Park visitation trending up nationwide

The trend is most acute at our most popular parks where they are facing real challenges from overcrowding and congestion
Annual Recreation Visits

- Rocky Mountain NP
- Zion NP
Sporadic, episodic and concentrated travel to parks during the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated visitation trends.

Superintendents are bracing for yet another year of exploding visitation.
Zion National Park Monthly Recreation Visits

- 2019
- 2020
- 2021

K. Sophie Will, The Spectrum
Impacts in parks

Diminish visitor experience
Traffic gridlock, long lines for basic services, loss of quiet and solitude

Public Health and safety
Crowding on precipitous terrain, human waste

Natural and cultural resource degradation
Social trailing, wildlife displacement, soil erosion and plant loss, litter, graffiti

Park staff and infrastructure
Staff capacity, increase in search and rescue, wear and tear on trails, roads, buildings, historical structures
Impacts in neighboring public lands

Overflow visitation

Dispersed camping

Often fewer resources and staff

Visitor safety
Impacts in neighboring communities

Visitor Experience
Traffic gridlock, long lines for basic services, parking

Quality of life

Affordable housing

Community character
There is often broad agreement on the problems associated with crowding and congestion. The challenge is agreeing on the solutions.
Messaging and Communications
Managing visitors’ expectations and encouraging pre-visit planning via extensive outreach before and during a park visit.

Infrastructure and Facilities
Managing visitor movement or behavior by expanding or adjusting hardened facilities.

Transportation
Managing how visitors get into and move around a park by allowing or requiring bus or shuttle ridership, foot/bicycle traffic, etc.

Permits and Reservations
Managing the number of visitors entering a park or part of a park at a given point (time of day, day of the week/month, time of year) via pre-arranged reservations.
Any visitor use management solution will have ripple effects outside that destination on neighboring public lands and gateway communities.
Examine and deliberately solve for questions about the impact of visitor management on people who have been historically disenfranchised and underrepresented in parks.
Thank you

cmacnulty@npca.org
LEGAL REQUIREMENTS FOR VISITOR USE MANAGEMENT

Sarah Judkins, Kaplan Kirsch & Rockwell
Rocky Mountain Land Use Institute Conference
March 19, 2021
Proactively planning for visitor use maximizes the ability of agencies to encourage access and protect resources and values.

—Interagency Visitor Use Management Council

National Park Service

Forest Service

Bureau of Land Management
National Park Service

- Statutes
  - Organic Act
  - General Authorities Act and 1978 Amendment
  - National Parks and Recreation Act
- NPS Management Policies 2006
Forest Service

- Statute
  - National Forest Management Act
- Forest Service planning regulations
  - 36 CFR 219.5, 219.6
BLM

- Statute
  - Federal Land Policy and Management Act
- BLM Manual
Interagency Visitor Use Management Council
### Council Mission & Purpose

#### Council Mission
- The council’s mission is to provide guidance on visitor use management policies and to develop legally defensible and effective interagency implementation tools for visitor use management.

#### Council Vision
- Providing a unified voice for excellence in visitor use management on our nation’s federally-managed lands and waters to sustain resources and quality visitor experiences.

#### Council Purpose
- Develop interagency guidance for effective visitor use management programs that are efficient and legally defensible.
- Identify strategies for improving institutional capabilities and professional competencies, including partnerships.
- Develop shared tools and training, including a unified visitor use planning framework, and monitor their effectiveness.
- Improve internal and external communication strategies.
Work of the Council

- Communication & Outreach
- Guidance for policy and positions that inform Council products and activities
  - Visitor Use Management
  - Visitor Capacity
- Visitor Use Management Framework
  - Planning process, can be incorporated into existing agency planning and decision-making processes
- How-to guidebooks
  - Monitoring guidebook
  - Visitor capacity guidebook
Overview of the Visitor Use Management Framework
Sliding Scale Approach

Representation of the four criteria involved in the sliding scale of analysis.

LOW

Impact Risk

Issue Uncertainty

MODERATE

Level of Controversy/Potential for Litigation

HIGH

Stakeholder Involvement

Represents where the project lands on the sliding scale.

Indicates a sliding scale metric.
## Relationship to Larger Agency Planning Processes

### Table 6. Large-scale plans required for federal land- and water-managing agencies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGENCY</th>
<th>LARGE-SCALE PLANS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bureau of Land Management</td>
<td>Resource Management Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Park Service</td>
<td>General Management Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service</td>
<td>Comprehensive Conservation Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. Forest Service</td>
<td>Land Management Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration</td>
<td>National Marine Sanctuary Management Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. Army Corps of Engineers</td>
<td>Engineer Regulation 1130-2-550, Master Plan 1165-2-400</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Council Guidebooks

Monitoring Guidebook
Evaluating Effectiveness of Visitor Use Management
Edition One | June 2019

Visitor Capacity Guidebook
Managing the Amounts and Types of Visitor Use to Achieve Desired Conditions
Edition One | February 2019
Thank You

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