

Colorado Springs Utilities Watershed Access Plan

Guiding Statements

Guiding statements clarify the most basic assumptions about use and management of the watersheds and provide context for what types of recreation are appropriate and how it should be managed. These foundation elements form the boundaries that will ultimately frame decisions concerning recreational use on watershed lands.

Values

Colorado Springs Utilities values responsibility, collaboration, people, trust, and continuous improvement.

- Future recreational activities and facilities will strive to ensure these values through a balance of operational needs, environmental stewardship, and uses.

Safety

Colorado Springs Utilities fosters an Incident and Injury Free (IIF) culture.

- All recommendations for future recreational activities on watershed lands will place a high priority on ensuring public safety. 1 Yes
- Recreational facilities and activities will be planned and designed in such a way that minimizes public use of watershed system roads. 3 Yes 8 No

Water

One of Colorado Springs Utilities' primary responsibilities is to provide a high-quality, reliable source of drinking water.

- Potential future recreational activities will be managed to avoid any impacts to water quality, quantity or delivery. If full avoidance is not possible, any adverse impacts from proposed recreational activities will be monitored and mitigated appropriately 3 Yes
- Recreation activities and facilities will be designed and located so as to avoid conflicts with existing infrastructure as much as is practicable. 2 Yes

Environment

Colorado Springs Utilities is committed to being a steward of the environment.

- Proposed recreation facilities and activities will be designed and managed in such a way that avoids sensitive flora, fauna and their habitat. 3 Yes
- Proposed recreational facilities and activities will be designed and managed to avoid impacts on critical water resources, such as wetlands and fens. 3 Yes
- Recreational facilities and activities will be located, designed and constructed in a sustainable manner to ensure their long-term continued operation with minimal impact on the environment. 3 Yes
- Any adverse impact on natural or cultural resources, as a result of direct or indirect effects from recreational activities, will be monitored and mitigated. 3 Yes

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Fire

Fire poses serious risk to the safe and effective delivery of high quality drinking water.

- Proposed recreational facilities and activities will be designed and managed to minimize increased risk of wildland fire on watershed lands or adjacent properties.

Desired Visitor Experience

A diversity of non-motorized uses will be provided on watershed lands, as is consistent with other guiding statements.

- The South Slope Watershed provides a unique opportunity for solitude and respite from everyday stresses. Recreational facilities and uses will be developed and managed to promote this type of experience. 2 yes
- A diverse range of recreational activities and facilities on watershed lands will be available and accessible to visitors and residents. 1 yes
- Interpretive amenities will be provided that celebrate the unique history of water delivery in Colorado Springs; the majesty of Pike's Peak; and the surrounding natural resources. 1 yes
- Recreational uses and facilities will contribute to improving the quality of life for Colorado Springs residents and visitors. 1 yes

Partners

Colorado Springs Utilities strives to be a good neighbor.

- No decisions will be made that may affect other landowners or partner agencies without consulting with affected parties. 1 yes
- Proposed trails or trail networks on watershed lands will be designed so as to connect only with existing or planned system routes on adjacent properties. 1 yes

Financial

Colorado Springs Utilities currently does not have a mechanism for funding recreational use on all City-owned watershed lands.

- The design, development, operation and maintenance of recreational infrastructure will be done in a manner that does not place an undue financial burden on Colorado Springs Utilities' customers.
- Recreational facilities will be located, designed and constructed in a manner that ensures their long-term continued operation with minimal on-going financial commitments.
- A funding strategy that is sustainable over the long term will be sought for long-term operation and maintenance of recreational facilities.
- Partnerships and volunteers will be critical to the long-term financial success of recreational activities and facilities on watershed lands.