



Parks and Open Space

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TO: Planning Commission

DATE AND LOCATION: Wednesday, July 15, 3:00 p.m. Commissioners Hearing Room, 3rd floor
Boulder County Courthouse, 1325 Pearl Street, Boulder, CO

AGENDA ITEM TITLE: Docket BCCP 08-003: BOULDER COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE Map corrections and amendments to the recently approved Environmental Resources Element maps to reflect best available information for the Rare Plants & Significant Natural Communities map and the Preble's Meadow Jumping Mouse Conservation Areas map

PRESENTERS: Parks & Open Space Staff: Justin Atherton-Wood, Kristi VanDenBosch, Tim Shafer

ACTION REQUESTED: Approval

Introduction

The Planning Commission approved the Environmental Resource Element (ERE) maps, an official component of the Boulder County Comprehensive Plan, on Dec 18, 2013. Since then, several errors have been discovered in two of the maps. In order to correct these maps, staff recommends approving the suggested revisions. As a reminder, the maps in the ERE are representations of the GIS data that is used by staff when reviewing Land Use applications, developing plans for Parks and Open Space properties, and a variety of other purposes.

In addition, Parks and Open Space staff would like to take advantage of this opportunity to incorporate a number of updates to the Preble's Meadow Jumping Mouse map. These primarily consist of changing designations of Suitable Habitat areas to Mouse Management Areas for portions of the streams and contiguous habitat where the mouse was successfully trapped in 2014.

Finally, staff would like to discuss with the Planning Commission the process for updating the maps and supplemental materials in the future.

Rare Plant Areas and Significant Natural Communities Map Corrections and Updates

1. RMNP – In Rocky Mountain National Park and adjacent areas, a number of plant communities were incorrectly included as significant. These communities have been removed.
2. Wetlands – Wetlands were included in the Significant Natural Communities map that already existed in the BCCP ERE Wetlands map. The decision was made to remove them from the Significant Natural Communities map since they are essentially duplicates and are more appropriate for the Wetlands map.
3. Rabbit Mountain – There were a number of vegetation types on the Boulder County Rabbit Mountain Open Space property that were not included in the original map that fit the approved Significant Natural Community criteria. These areas were added to the data.
4. Occurrence Description – Descriptions about the community types were not originally included in the dataset. Labels have been added to provide general descriptions for each occurrence area.

Preble's Meadow Jumping Mouse (PMJM) Conservation Areas Map Corrections & Updates

1. A PMJM capture southwest of Lyons was mistakenly omitted during the 2013 update process. Based on the criteria in the updated ERE, streams and main ditches one mile

upstream and one mile downstream were buffered 600 feet for areas within 100-year floodplains and 300 feet for areas outside and were designated as Mouse Management Areas instead of Suitable Contiguous Habitat. Mouse Management Area is the conservation zone for areas where mice have been found.

2. In 2014 a new small mammal trapping program was established by Parks and Open Space to check for the presence of PMJM on County Open Space properties. During last year's initial trapping season, there were 38 positive PMJM occurrences recorded. These capture points were added to the dataset and buffer designations and widths were updated based on the same criteria as item 1 above.

Future Environmental Resource Element Updates

At this time, County staff continue to explore methods for making the ERE information and maps more available to the public. Exactly what form the maps will take on the County website is still being discussed among staff. Land Use staff will be working with GIS staff on the technical aspects of making the maps available online to any interested parties. Details remain to be worked out in regard to the format to be used on the website, line widths for the boundaries of the resource areas, the relationship of these designated areas in their representational form to individual properties, and other details. Staff will keep Planning Commission informed about this process.

Additionally, as was contemplated during the ERE approval process, resource information and mapping is continually being collected and some of this data has a bearing on the supplemental materials and maps. As this information is gathered, staff envisions bringing periodic updates to the Planning Commission to recognize and acknowledge any changes to the maps and documents. We would appreciate input from the PC on whether a yearly update would be appropriate.

Requested Action

Staff is requesting approval of the updated Environmental Resources Element maps as part of **Docket BCCP 08-003: BOULDER COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE.**

ATTACHMENTS: Corrected Boulder County Comprehensive Plan Maps

Rare Plant Areas and Significant Natural Communities



Boulder County
Comprehensive Plan
2013 Update

Significant Natural Communities

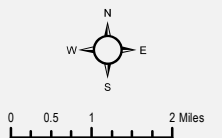
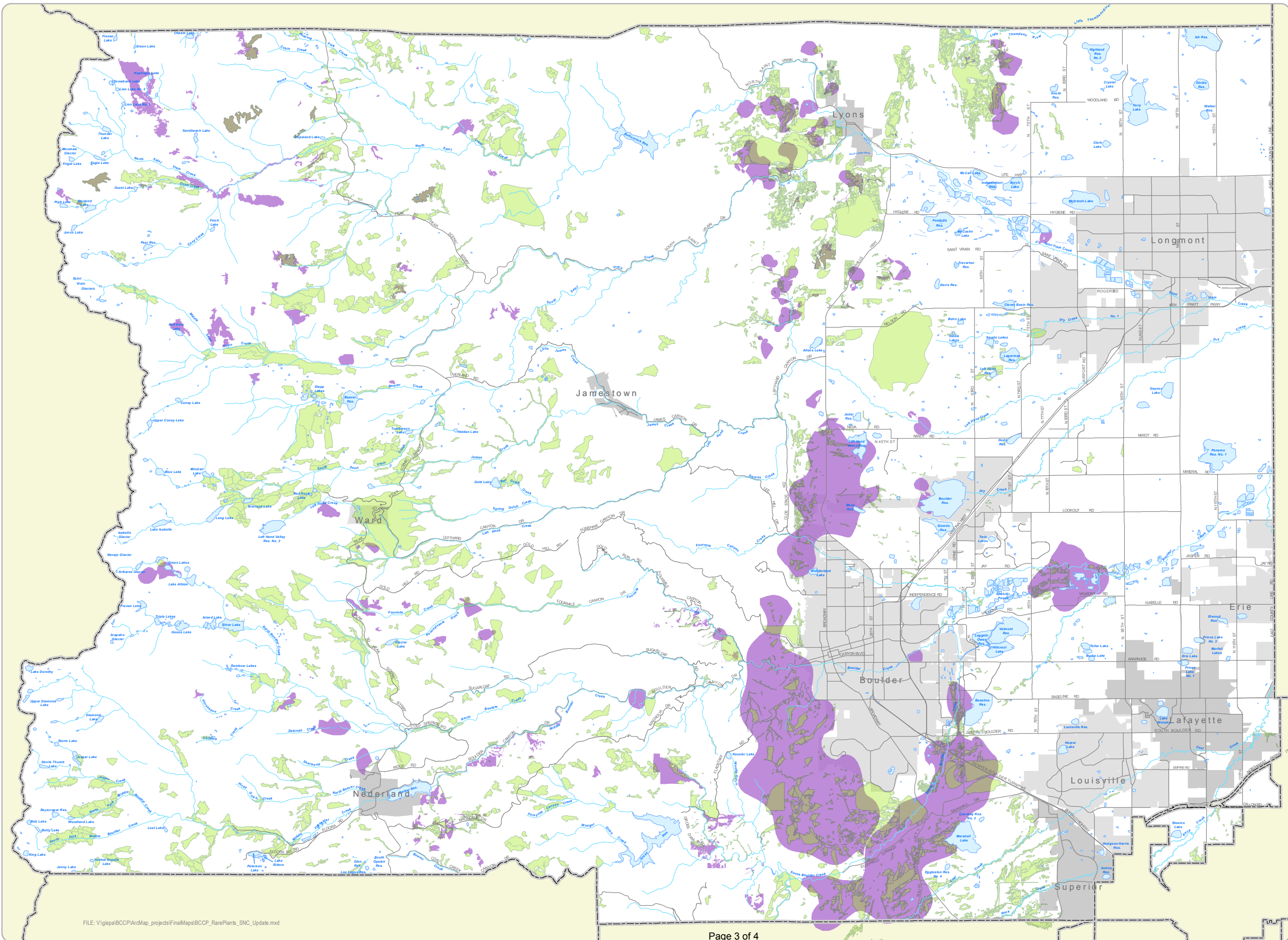


An area where a combination of plant species (a plant association) that is critically imperiled or vulnerable to extirpation is present.

Rare Plant Areas



An area known to have or have a high likelihood of having occurrences of Plant Species of Special Concern.




Habitat Conservation Areas for Prebles Meadow Jumping Mouse


 **Boulder County**
Comprehensive Plan
2013 Update

Habitat Conservation Areas Descriptions
Habitat Conservation Areas are adapted from the "Possible Conservation Zones" of the PMJM Conservation Handbook. The designations guide conservation of PMJM habitat with the overarching goal of aiding in the recovery of this Threatened species.


Zone 1 Mouse Management Area (MMA)

 Areas in which PMJM is known to occur, including adjacent habitat patches that are likely to be occupied. Management should emphasize maintaining higher quality riparian habitat and higher numbers of mice. Areas of poor quality are priorities for restoration with high expectations for success.


Zone 2 Possible Linkages

 Linkages are designated for populations that once occurred as a single unit, but are now fragmented. Linkages provide adequate structure for a few mice to "make it to the other side", facilitating dispersal, population maintenance, and genetic exchange.


Zone 3 Suitable Contiguous Habitat

 Areas of suitable habitat that are contiguous to a known population and are not known to be occupied by PMJM (i.e. PMJM either have not been captured or no trapping has occurred).


Zone 4 Potential Restoration, Contiguous

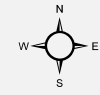
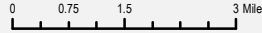
 Areas not known to be occupied but contiguous with known populations where restoration of unsuitable or degraded habitat could result in a significant increase in a PMJM population.

Zone 5 Suitable, Noncontiguous Habitat

 Areas of suitable habitat that are NOT contiguous to a known population and are not known to be occupied by PMJM.

Foothills Perennial Stream Habitat

 Areas of suitable PMJM habitat along foothills perennial streams up to 7,600 ft. in elevation not covered under one of the other designations. PMJM are known to occupy riparian habitat up to this elevation (USFWS 2004).



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