



ELDORADO CANYON TO WALKER RANCH CONNECTION FEASIBILITY STUDY

Public Open House
Nov. 28, 2018



WHY?

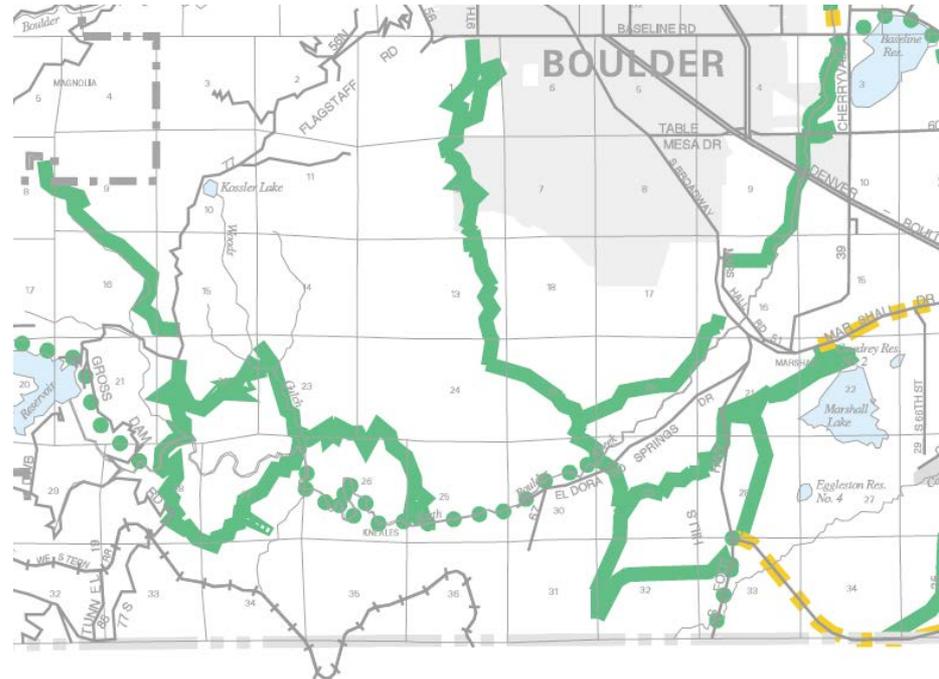
Previous planning efforts direct consideration of multi-use trail between Walker Ranch and Eldorado Canyon State Park:

- Boulder Comprehensive Plans
- Walker Ranch Management Plan
- City of Boulder OSMP Plan
- Colorado State Park plans and initiatives

County Trails Map

Legend

- Existing
- Alignment
- Corridor



Objectives

- Improve trail access
- Expand recreation opportunities
- Reasonably accommodate bicycles
- Maintaining the currently allowed activities



Land Ownership and Management

Eldorado Canyon State Park

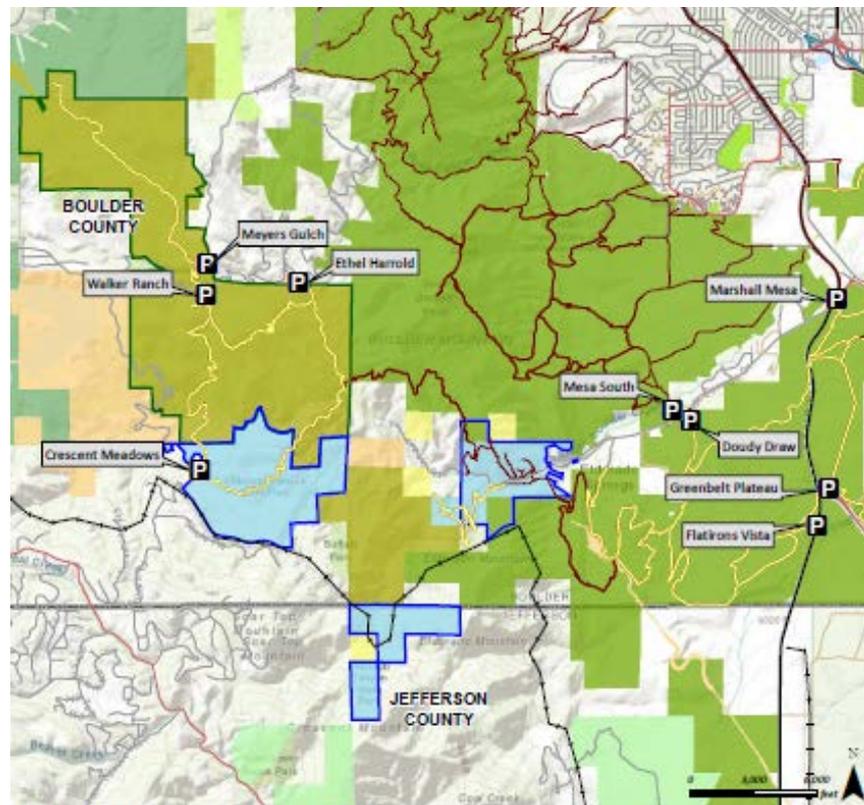
- Eldorado Springs gate
- Crescent Meadows
- Trails within ECSP

City of Boulder Open Space

- South Boulder trail network
- Eldorado Canyon Trail

Boulder County Open Space

- Walker Ranch Open Space
- BLM South area

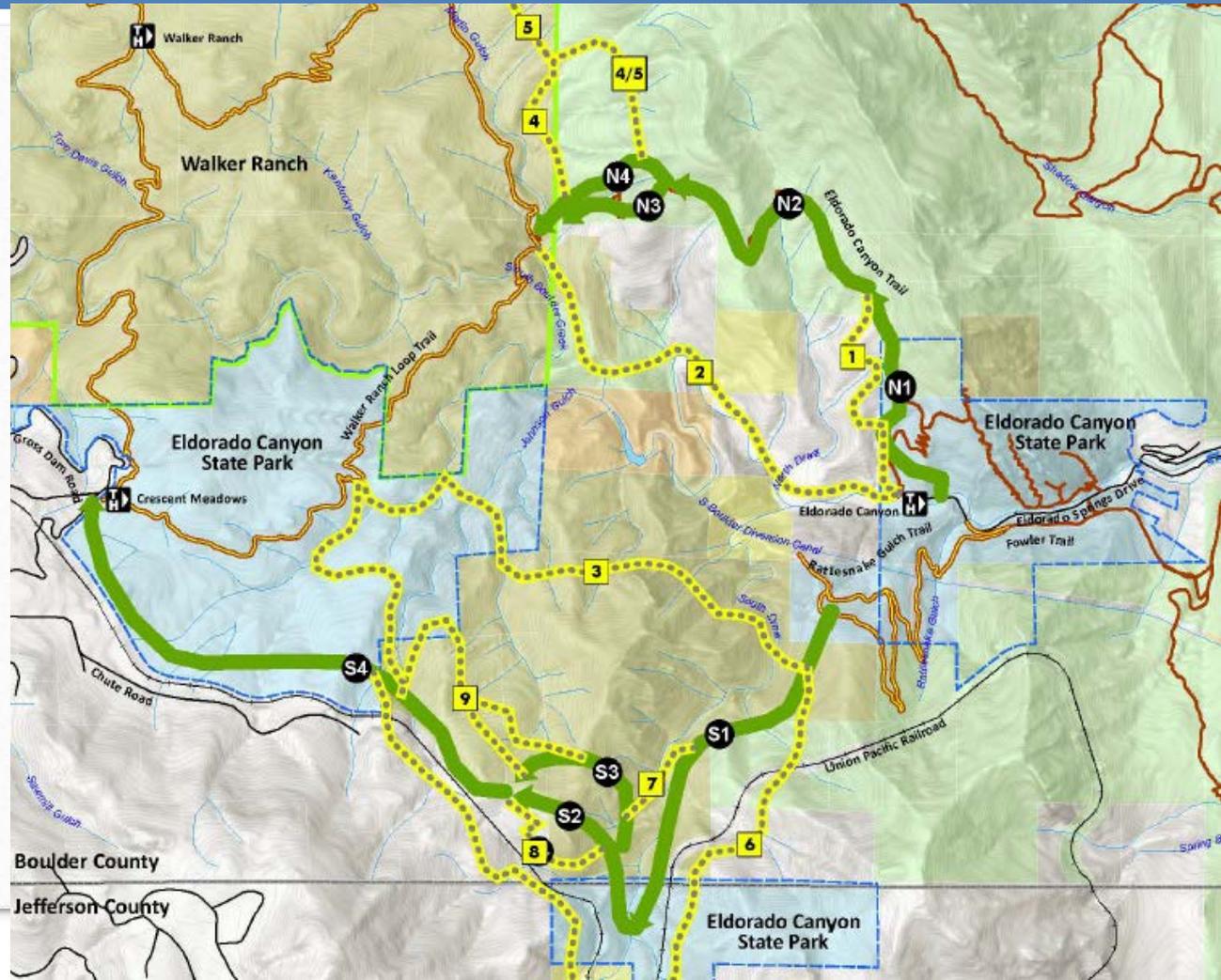


Trail Feasibility Study Process with Partner Agencies and Consultants

- Minimize environmental impacts
- Provide a meaningful visitor experience
- Meet design standards to construct and maintain a sustainable trail
- Technically feasible and fiscally responsible
- Consider ECSP impacts

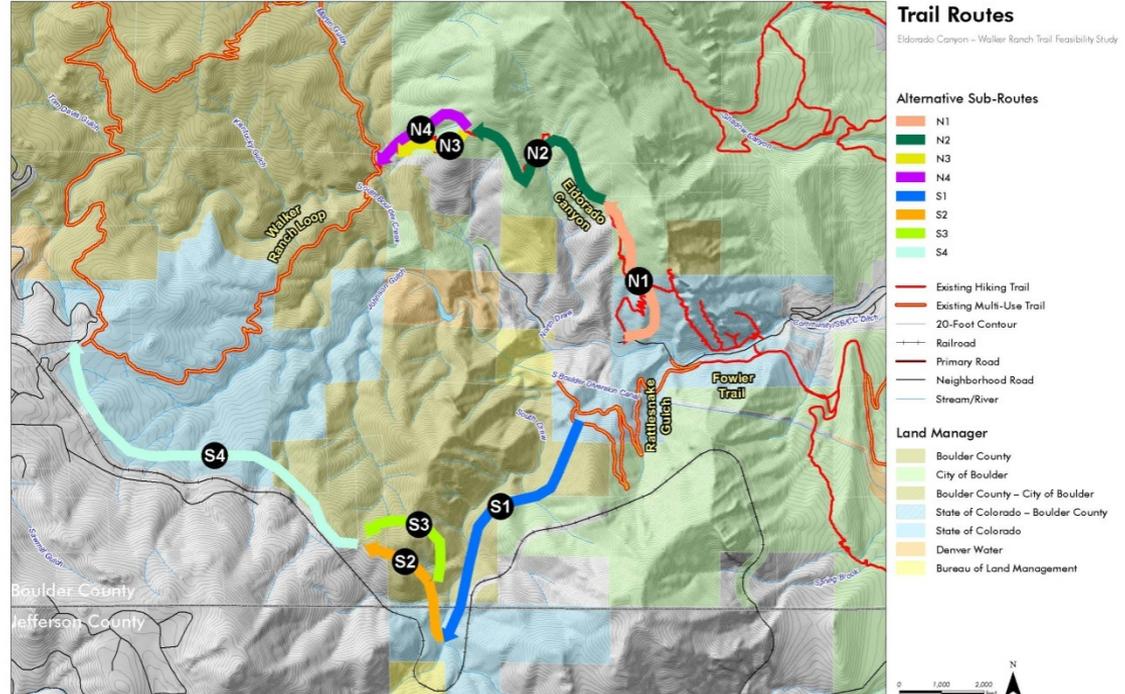


Routes Considered



Options under consideration

1. North Route
2. South Route
3. No Action

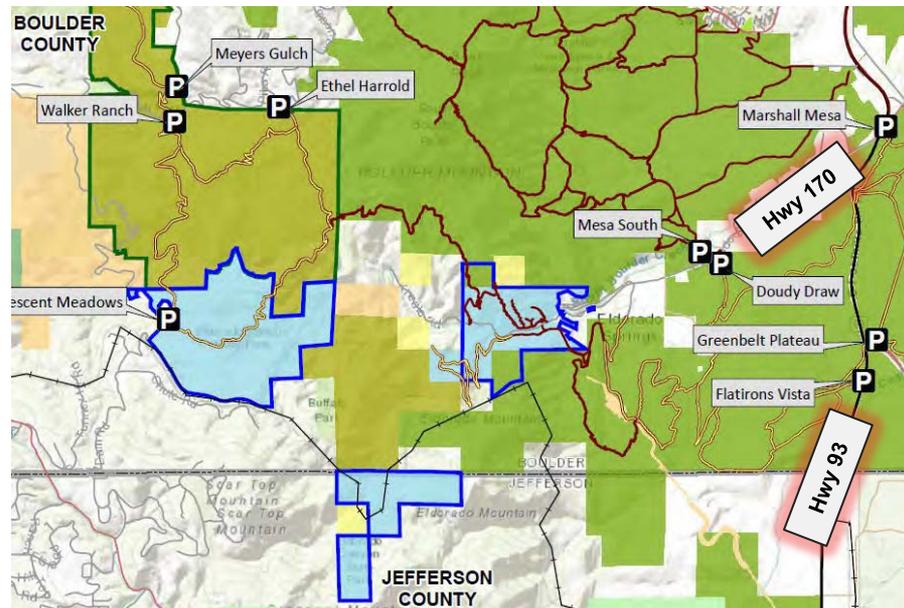


No Action Option

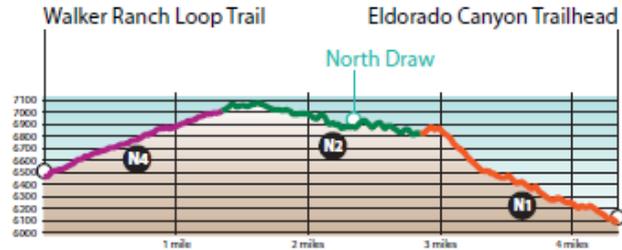
- Maintain the status quo conditions.
- Would not complete a multi-use connection that accommodates biking activities.
- Would not address current issues or achieve desired improvements

Existing Condition Challenges

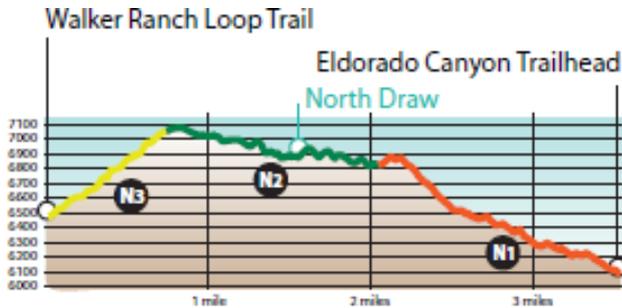
- Eldorado Canyon Road and parking are private in Eldorado Springs
- Parking capacity within the park is often full on weekends and holidays during peak summer months
- Erosion and resource impacts along Eldorado Canyon Trail



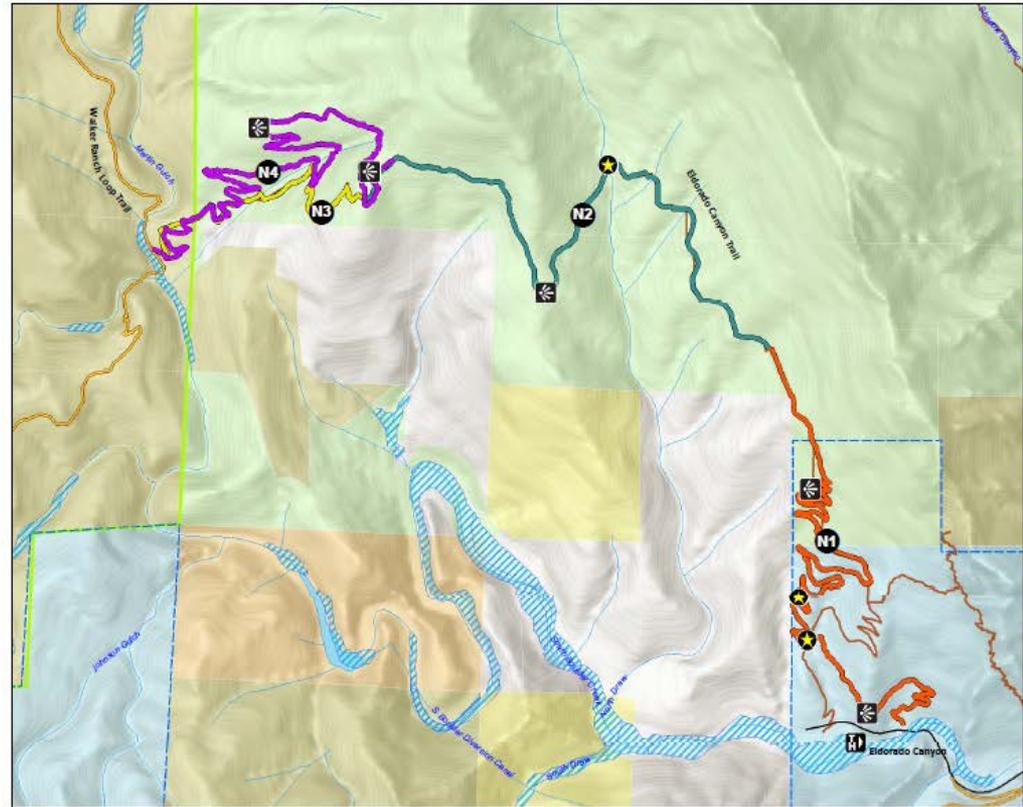
North Route Options



Total Distance = 4.8 miles

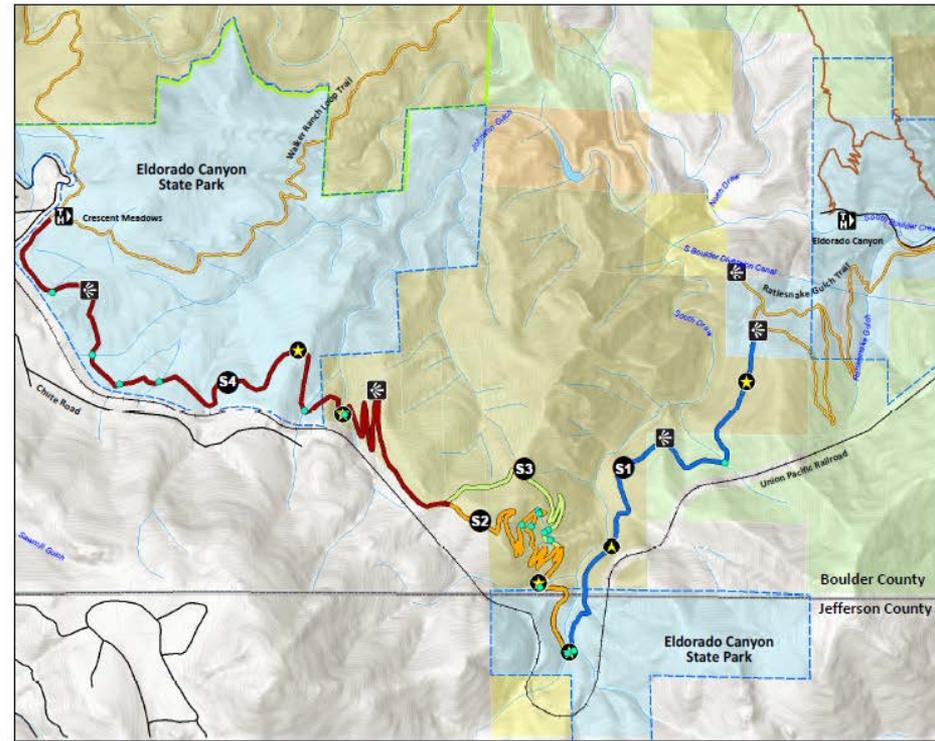
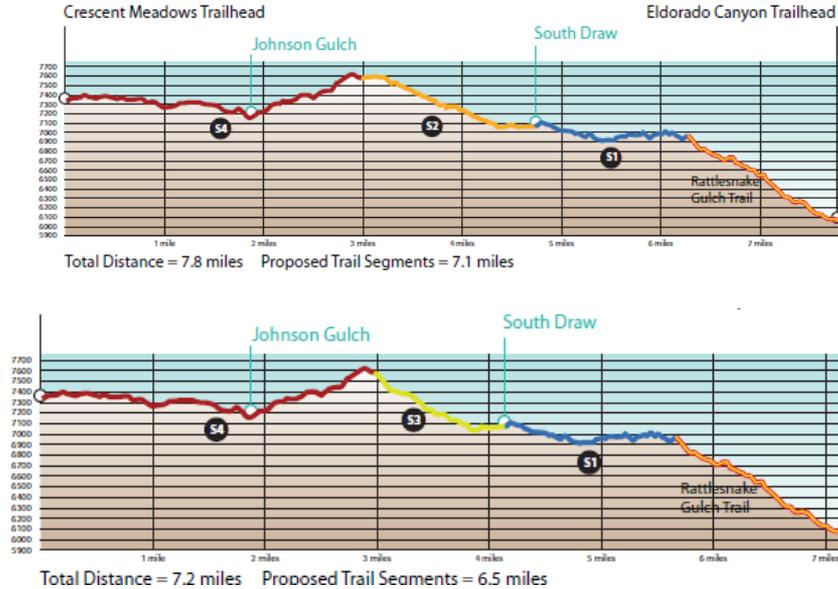


Total Distance = 3.9 miles



- Total Distance: 3.9 to 4.8 miles
- Total Elevation gain/loss (east to west): +1,010 ft/-610 ft

South Route Options



- Total Distance: 7.2 or 7.8 miles New Trail Distance: 6.5 or 7.1 mi.
- Total Elevation gain/loss: (east to west): +930 ft./-480 ft.
Including Rattlesnake Gulch trail: (+1,860 feet/-480 feet)

Analysis Criteria



Environmental and Cultural Resources

- Wetland and riparian areas
- Significant natural communities
- Wildlife habitat impacts
- Undisturbed habitat impacts



Visitor Experience

- Regional trail connectivity
- Trail aesthetic and character
- Access and parking
- Trail access opportunities
- Seasonality
- Visitor density
- Visitor conflict management



Trail Construction Costs

Trail Management and Maintenance

- Trail sustainability and maintenance
- Emergency response
- Interagency management



Eldorado Canyon State Park Interface

- Park capacity and visitation
- Access and parking
- Revenue and fee collection
- Trail and facility sustainability
- Visitor conflict and enjoyment





Summary of Overall Findings

				
Major Benefit	Minor Benefit	Insignificant	Minor Impact	Major Impact

Analysis Category	North Route	South Route
Environmental and Cultural Resources		
Visitor Experience		
Trail Construction Costs	\$360K to \$660K	\$410K to \$810K
Trail Management and Maintenance		
Eldorado Canyon State Park Interface		

Summary of Overall Findings

Environmental and Cultural Resources

- **North** has minimal new impacts
- **South** has major impacts

Eldorado Canyon State Park Interface

Both:

- Adversely impact the park
- Increase traffic, congestion, visitation, and visitor density and potential for conflict on trails

Summary of Overall Findings

Visitor Experience

Both would provide an enjoyable and quality visitor experience.

North

- is shorter (3.9 -4.8 miles)
- will accommodate more year-round use

South

- provides a new trail experience in an area that is currently inaccessible.
- may result in temporal and seasonal use restrictions.

Trail Construction

- **Both** have comparatively similar construction cost estimates

Trail Management and Maintenance

- **Both** are sustainable and can be constructed to achieve desired bike trail design standards (exception of the Rattlesnake Gulch Trail)
- **North** improves trail sustainability and emergency access

Analysis Category

Key Findings example

Summary of Trail Management and Maintenance Findings

Analysis Topic	North Route	South Route
Trail Sustainability and Maintenance		
Emergency Response		
Interagency Management		
Overall Impact Score		

Trail Sustainability and Maintenance

- **North**
 - would achieve the desired bike trail standards using the N4 alternative. Portions of N3 likely cannot achieve the standards.
 - improves the existing Eldorado Canyon Trail, which is in moderate to poor condition in some sections.
- **South** would achieve the desired bike trail standards with the exception of the Rattlesnake Gulch Trail will not meet desired bike trail standards which is the access to the south route and is not proposed to be improved.

Emergency Response

- **North** the improved Eldorado Canyon Trail would improve emergency access and response by implementing a more stable, less steep and sustainable route to facilitate emergency response. due to the improved trail sustainability and reduce grades.
- **South** - Due to the longer trail distance, emergency response times would be more complicated and longer.

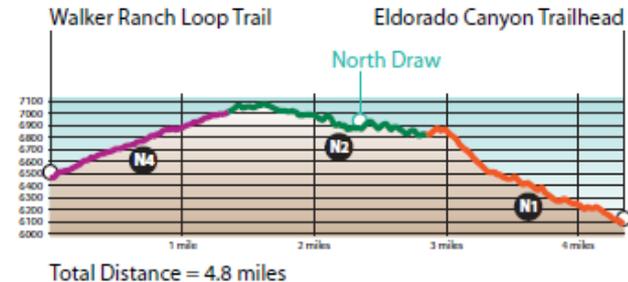
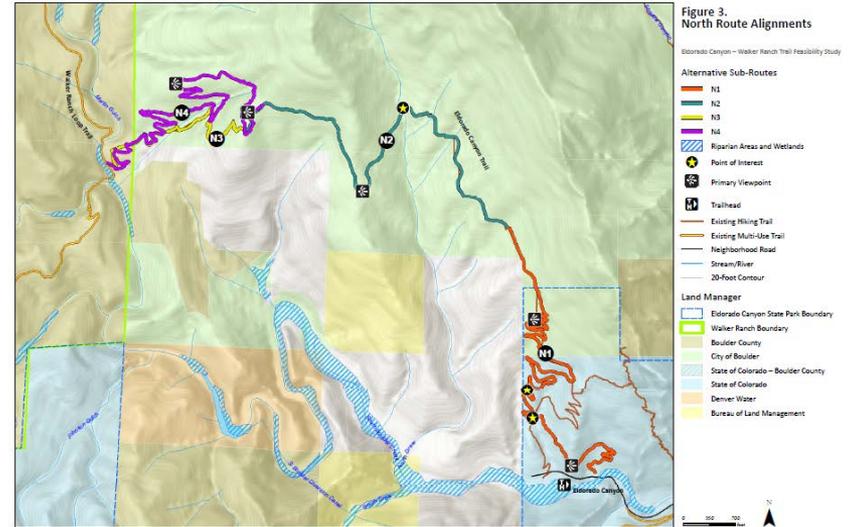
Interagency Management

- **Both**
 - The partner agencies would formalize management responsibilities and procedures for law enforcement, emergency response and trail maintenance activities as part of the implementation process.
 - The partner agencies will work together on strategies to ensure visitors have enjoyable experiences, address capacity constraints including parking and traffic issues, and to protect existing resources.
- **South** would require coordination with Jefferson County to formalize an agreement for management, and emergency response and enforcement.

Partner Agency Recommendation – Part 1

Preferred alignment is North Route using N1-N2-N4

- Provides a meaningful and quality visitor experience
- Results in significantly fewer environmental impacts than the South Route.
- Meets multi-use design standards and improve the sustainability of the existing Eldorado Canyon Trail.
- Integrates with current uses and future activities within Eldorado Canyon - State Park (ECSP).



Partner Agency Recommendation – Part 2

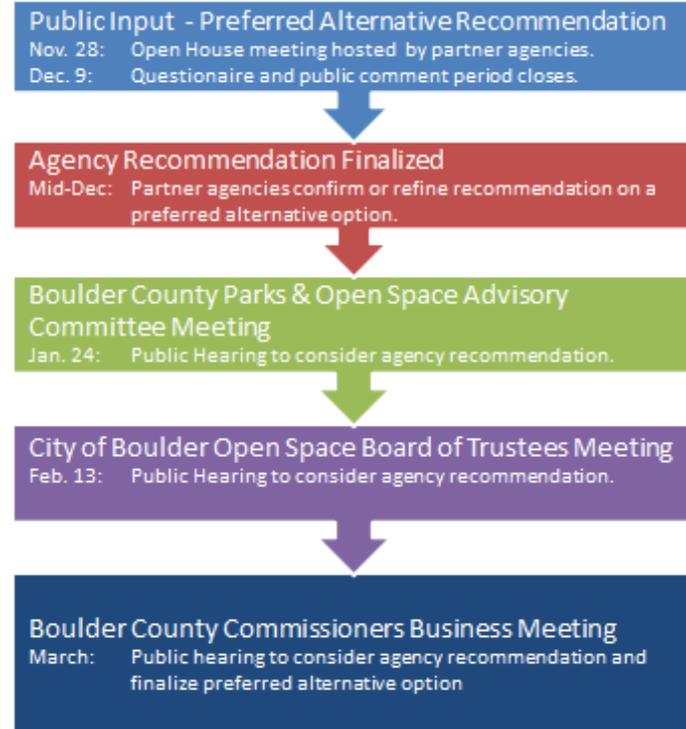
Continued collaboration

- Agreement that current challenges facing Eldorado Canyon State Park must be addressed.
- Work together towards strategies that provide access, connect visitors to enjoyable experiences, address traffic and crowding issues, and protect resources
- United by a commitment to address these challenges and implement the recommendation collaboratively

Next Steps

Share your feedback on the Agency Recommendation

- Complete online questionnaire
- Feedback received by
 - By Dec. 9 will be considered by partner agencies in developing final recommendation
 - After this date will be forwarded to Boards for consideration
- Attend Public hearings

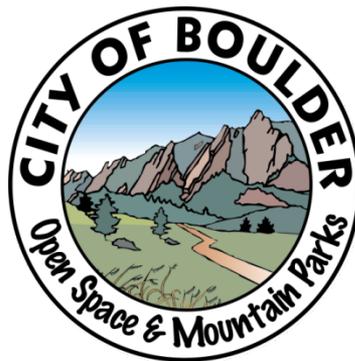


Implementation & Next Steps





**Parks &
Open Space**



www.BoulderCounty.org/eldo-walker-connection/
