



## Parks & Open Space

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<b>TO:</b>	Board of County Commissioners
<b>DATE/TIME:</b>	Tuesday, May 28, 2019, 3:00 pm
<b>LOCATION:</b>	Commissioners Hearing Room, 3 <sup>rd</sup> floor, Boulder County Courthouse, 1325 Pearl Street, Boulder, CO
<b>AGENDA ITEM:</b>	<b>Ron Stewart Preserve at Rabbit Mountain Elk and Vegetation Management Update</b>
<b>PRESENTER:</b>	<b>Therese Glowacki, Manager, Resource Management Division Ben Kraft, Wildlife Biologist, Colorado Parks and Wildlife</b>
<b>ACTION REQUESTED:</b>	<b>Approval for Year Three Implementation</b>

### **BOCC Ron Stewart Preserve at Rabbit Mountain Elk Update Year Two Summary**

The second year of the public harvest program of the elk and vegetation management plan on Ron Stewart Preserve at Rabbit Mountain ended on January 31, 2019. The second managed hunting year went smoothly and is moving Parks and Open Space (POS) in the direction outlined in the management plan: reducing the numbers of elk using Ron Stewart Preserve year-round, reducing impacts to the diverse vegetation, and getting elk to move beyond their six-mile high use area. Following is a summary of the past season.

The season ran from September 17, 2018 through January 31, 2019.

We improved communication with the public with the use of a large lighted orange highway sign near the entrance to Ron Stewart Preserve at Rabbit Mountain. We also were able to open the park early on two weeks due to hunters being successful early in the week.

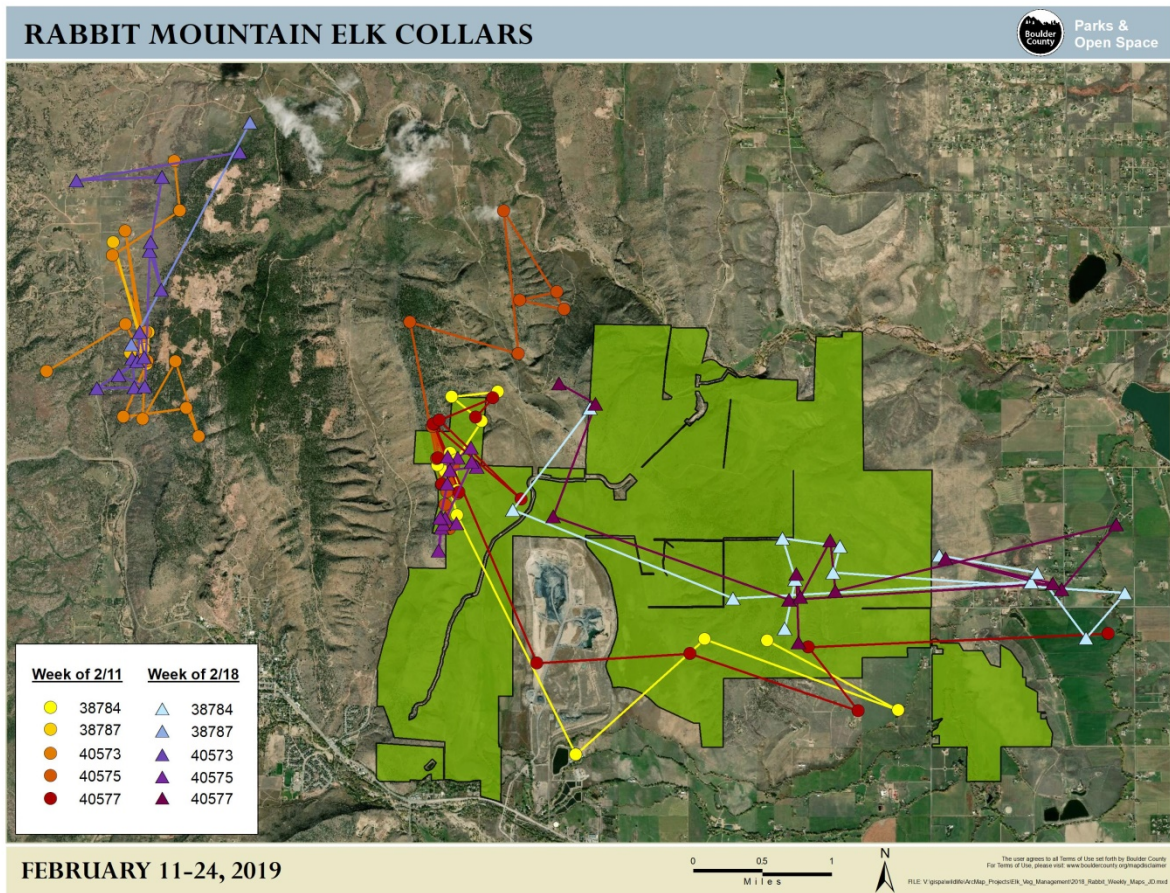
Feedback was very low this year we received less than 10 few emails commenting on the closures.

#### Harvest Overview

- 1) Total participants = 51
- 2) Total harvest on BCPOS = 31
- 3) Total harvest for subunit and game tags on private land = 27
- 4) Total harvest in the subunit = 58

POS and Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) staff continued monitoring the radio collared elk, including regular coordinated monthly counts. The high count this winter was 168, about 100 fewer elk than last year. New collars have been added to the Rabbit Mountain herd and the Heil Valley Ranch herd for continued monitoring.

Elk distribution has expanded during hunting, with elk still spending time on Rabbit Mountain and utilizing agricultural areas (crops and corn) over the summer, but increasingly spending more time on the CEMEX mine area, Indian Mountain, and even making it into Larimer County.



Proposals for the third year efforts:

- 1) Keeping 3 hunters/week
- 2) Limiting Youth Hunters to 3/year
- 3) No hunting will occur the weeks of Thanksgiving (November 25-December 1) and Christmas (December 23-29). We will also open park on Martin Luther King (Monday, January 20).
- 4) Staff will resume the shrub vegetation monitoring at the end of the month, reading the control plots at the north end of Ron Stewart Preserve at Rabbit Mountain.
- 5) Hazing continues until calving begins

**Requested Action:** Approval of recommendations