Lainson Open Space
Xcel Energy Takings
from Boulder County Interests
April 27, 2016
Xcel Proposed Easement outlined in white, approximately 10' in width, total 0.195 acre.
Power poles to be relocated and buried on the north and west sides.

Xcel Proposed Easement outlined in white, approximately 10’ in width, total 0.195 acre.

Red cross hatched areas have been transferred to Boulder County Transportation.
Isabelle at 95th looking south
Isabelle at 95th looking south
CU SOUTH

Parks and Open Space Advisory Committee
April 27, 2017
The purpose of this agenda item is to review potential BVCP changes to the "Open Space – Other" (OS-O) land use designation on a portion of the University of Colorado Boulder’s South Campus property ("CU South").

1. POSAC’s Role
2. CU South Background
3. County’s Open Space Perspective
4. Discussion
Every five years, the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan (BVCP) undergoes a Major Update process during which all the core values, policies, master plans, land use map designations, and other components of the plan are reviewed.

Requests for changes to the comprehensive plan that affect an area designated Open Space will be reviewed by the city Open Space Board of Trustees and the county Parks and Open Space Advisory Committee. The board of trustees will make a recommendation prior to any action on that change.

--BVCP Amendment Procedures 2(c)(6)
• Do you have any thoughts on how open space areas/values at CU South should be prioritized for conservation/management?
• Do you have any thoughts you would like to share with POS for incorporation in our analysis for the Land Use staff?
CU SOUTH PROCESS & TIMELINE

Previous BVCPs / Flood Study (2000-2015)

BVCP Land Use Designations (2017)

Annexation & Agreement (2017-18)

CU Master Plan, Development (2020-50)

Phase I Mitigation – Construction (2019)

Engineering – Flood Mitigation Design (2018)

Concurrent Steps

PB 4/6, CC 4/11, OSBT 4/12, POSAC 4/27
PC 5/17, PB & CC Public Hearing 5/23...

Community Engagement
OWNERSHIP

- 308 Acres
- 193 acres OS-O
- Owned by CU
• MDR, LDR, and OS-Other - desired future uses (since 1977 plan)

• OS-Other:
  “Other public and private land designated prior to 1981 that the city and county would like to preserve through various methods including but not limited to intergovernmental agreements, dedications or acquisitions.”
PRELIMINARY CU SOUTH PROGRAM

...as stated by CU:

Mid-term
- Floodwater mitigation
- Public Access
- Trails
- Athletic fields & training
- Restrooms, locker rooms
- Preserve/enhance natural open areas

Long-term
- Housing
- Small scale academic, instructional or research facilities
- Public Access
- Trails

Not included
- Large-scale sport venues
- Large research complexes
- Towers
- Freshmen housing
- Roadway bypass

BOULDER VALLEY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
COMMUNITY INPUT
OPEN SPACE AND MOUNTAIN PARKS OS-O ANALYSIS

- **High** = identified as having greater conservation value due to overlaps of resources, high viewshed value, areas of lesser conservation value that could be restored to create larger habitat blocks, and regional trail connectivity

- **Medium** = area relatively higher long-term value of recreational connections to Tantra Park.

- **Lower** = isolated OS areas and/or OS areas close to areas of human activity
The City’s Open Space Board of Trustees approved (5:0) the following recommendation at their meeting on April 12, 2017:

The OSBT moved to (1) state that it recognizes important Open Space values on the CU South property including, but not limited to, the portion currently designated Open Space Other and (2) endorse the OSMP staff report, 2015-2017 Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan Update CU South OS-O Open Space Analysis as a guide to protecting and enhancing open space values during four body review of the BVCP Land Use designations and subsequent deliberations. We believe that a close working partnership between the University and the City, combined with broad community input, can accomplish very significant benefits for OSMP charter purposes, in addition to accomplishing critically important flood mitigation.
County Comprehensive Plan Designations – “Summary”
2016 Aerial, and S. Boulder Creek Trail
OSMP (and Municipal) Parks
Preble’s Meadow Jumping Mouse Habitat
PMJM -- Federal Critical Habitat
PMJM – Federal Critical Habitat, Context
Riparian & Wetlands
Significant Natural Communities
State/County Natural Area
Natural Area -- Context
County Comprehensive Plan Designations – “Summary”
DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

• Do you have any thoughts on how open space areas/values at CU South should be prioritized for conservation/management?
• Do you have any thoughts you would like to share with POS for incorporation in our analysis for the Land Use staff?
Elk Management Plan
Rabbit Mountain Open Space
History

- POS - CPW 2013
- Collars and monitoring vegetation 2015
- Field trip POSAC invited 11/2015
- Presented to POSAC in April 2016
  - POSAC directed staff to draft plan
- On-line comments for a month
- Public Open House April 6, 2017
• Management Plan Update is prioritized on our planning horizon
• Was delayed due to Flood Recovery Planning Efforts
Colorado Natural Heritage Program - County Assessment - B1
Outstanding Biodiversity Significance
Critical Wildlife Habitat #8-
Designated due to diversity of plant associations, golden eagle, short-eared owl, avian biodiversity.
History of Elk Arrival and First Calving
Rabbit Mountain Elk Counts & Population Projection

Minimum Count

2014 Population Projection
Rabbit Mountain
500 Acres
Areas of Resource Damage
Wildlife and Plant Ecology staff study vegetation

Browse Study

Mountain Mahogany

Vegetation Study

Natives
Non-natives
Litter
Bare soil

Spring 2016
Assessment of Vegetation Condition
Mountain Mahogany
BCPOS and CPW Coordination

Satellite Collars
Deployed on Four Cows, March 2015
**Crop Damage Payments**

- $215,000 since 2000 for all of GMU 20.
- $113,000 since 2000 on fields east of Rabbit.

**Game Damage Tags**

issued to landowners 1996, 2003-2014

- Harvest of 45 total over the 12 years in all of GMU 20
Special Sub Unit Success

2015
- 100 licenses Issued
- 70 hunters
- 25 elk harvested (cows only)

2016
Boundaries Expanded
- 3 Properties - 13 Harvested
- Many more harvested through other opportunities
Alternatives Considered

> Status Quo
> Professional Culling
> Hazing
> Relocation
> Fertility Control
> Fencing
> Crop Alternatives
Hazing Efforts- Movement Patterns and Behaviors
• 20 outings - September 2015 -> March 2016
• Remained unhabituated
• When pushed west, herd moved to Indian Mountain
• Left core area for 1-6 days, but usually returned in 1 to 3 days
Use of Elk Fertility Control

• No legally approved method
  – PZP and GonaCon is for feral horses
  – GonaCon for white-tailed deer
• Cost $600 - $1000/elk, every 3 years
• Length of time to effect change
• Not proven in wild populations (in and out migration)
The property should be maintained as a sanctuary with no hunting or trapping allowed. Up until the present, continued hunting on adjacent private properties appears to help control the deer population. However, if careful monitoring of the habitat indicates resource damage is occurring (i.e. deer excess), management options to reduce overpopulations should be considered.
1996 North Foothills Open Space Management Plan

- Hunting should be maintained as an optional management tool for deer and elk populations. Hunting should be considered if deer and elk numbers approach carrying capacity level and could potentially cause damage to other resources. The county should establish methods to monitor populations and coordinate efforts with the Colorado Division of Wildlife. If it is deemed necessary to control the population, the method and timing of hunting will be coordinated with Colorado Division of Wildlife.
Goal of Elk Management Plan

• Reduce Resource Impacts
• Reestablish migration
• Reduce long-term population to 30-70
• Reduce private land impacts
• Proposed limited hunting – GMU 20 tags
• Close park during hunting
• 150 feet buffer from property edge
• Antlerless only – no trophy hunting
• Hunters orientation/proficiency test
Public Input – On-line and emails

353 Total Comments

- 231 Support the plan
- 26 Support the plan with changes
- 96 Don’t support the plan
Public Input:    73% Support the Plan or Support with Changes

- Concerned about habitat damage/want ecosystem benefits (60)
- Concerned about impacts to neighboring property owners/crop damages (44)
- Economics / cost-effectiveness (43)
- Health / behavior of elk population (33)
- Allow archery / bow hunting (14)
- Science-based management / trust wildlife managers (11)
Public Input – 73% Support the Plan – Con’t

- Provide food source (10)
- Public resource / history of hunting (10)
- Other methods ineffective or not possible (hazing, fence, etc.) (7)
- Concerned about elk / vehicle collisions (6)
- Provide education about hunting & wildlife management / youth hunters (5)
Public Input – Recommended Changes

• Minimize closure of Rabbit Mountain / impacts users (10)

• Use professional sharp shooters to cull herd / selective hunting (6)
Public Input – 27% Don’t support the Plan

- Oppose hunting on county open space/concerned about setting precedent (31)
- Public safety concerns (24)
- Impacts to other users at Rabbit Mountain / length of closure (19)
- Don’t want tax dollars going toward hunting on open space (15)
- Oppose killing animals (12)
- Issues with CPW science (11)
Public Input – 27 % Don’t support the Plan

- Concerned about planning process or time for public input (11)
- Concerned about pressure from hunting interests (8)
- Thinks CPW profits from hunting (6)
- Thinks CPW caused problem by re-introducing elk without predators / hunting predators (5)
• Request a Recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners

Questions