

Chu property trailhead proposal

POSAC Recommendation to BOCC

Aug. 24 2018

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Proposed Chu Trailhead - Vicinity Map

2018



Boulder County Open Space - Public
Broad Ownership Category Name

County Open Space	Joint County and Municipal Open Space
	County Conservation Easement



Map is for informational purposes only.
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- The Chu property is a 6.57 acre parcel located in the Town of Superior on the west side of McCaslin Boulevard.
- In 2014, the Town of Superior acquired the Chu property for open space with a contribution from Boulder County in return for a conservation easement
- The two parcels that border the Chu property on the west are the Erin Arsenault property that is jointly-owned by Boulder County and the City of Boulder and the Mayhoffer 2 property, owned by the Boulder County.
- The Boulder County Parks & Open Space (BCPOS) department manages both properties, which are used for hiking and biking recreational activities upon the Meadowlark Trail traversing them

Board consideration

Chu Property – Easement agreement

- Are trailhead and other improvements are consistent with open space uses?

BCPOS adjacent property

- Impacts of new trail connection
- Amendment to Marshall-Superior-Coalton Trail Corridor Management Plan
- IGA with City of Boulder

Chu Property

Under the terms of the deed of conservation easement, the county is considered a co-applicant and will need to sign off on the land use application pertaining to the property. The easement also grants the county the right to review and approve or deny applications from the town to ensure consistency with the preservation and protection of the natural condition, aesthetic, and ecological features of the property for scenic, open space, agricultural, passive recreational, wildlife habitat, and environmental uses.

BCPOS adjacent properties

A new connector trail from the Trailhead to the Meadowlark Trail is proposed, which would be constructed on BCPOS lands.

The new trail would require an amendment to the management plan for this area. The county has an obligation to give the City of Boulder Open Space and Mountain Parks division the opportunity to review and provide comments for any changes proposed to the Erin Arsenault property.

Proposed trailhead plan



POS staff has reviewed the proposal and is supportive of moving forward with the project.

The planned trailhead and improvements are consistent with passive open space uses allowed as part of the easement agreement.

Input from staff included fencing considerations and a new gate to accommodate the needs of the existing agriculture use on BCPOS property.

There will be some minimal grading and construction activity on a small portion of BCPOS property.

Staff consulted the County Attorney's office to inquire about these and the proposed connector trail on BCPOS lands.

Their guidance is that an exchange of real property rights is not anticipated to be needed.

A formal agreement outlining that the town must construct the improvements per the plan is recommended.

The trailhead also would be maintained by the town.

Superior also is willing to maintain the new trail connector.

As the trail is a short segment that connects to our existing system, it could be assigned to the county and maintained as part of the BCPOS trail network.

Staff direction

Formal IGA or MOU detailing:

- Town of Superior responsible for project elements , including permits and approvals
- Fencing and gates to protect Ag. uses
- Town of Superior acquire permits or approvals



Upon approval of this amendment BCPOS would develop an IGA with the Town of Superior that would provide specific conditions related to the trail connection such as:

Town of Superior responsible for project elements including construction, revegetation of disturbed area, and maintenance of trailhead and associated parking lot.

New fencing and gates would need to be installed as part of the construction of the trail connection

Town of Superior would acquire and be responsible for any needed permits or approvals

POSAC Action Requested

Recommendation to BOCC

Approval of trailhead improvements and trail connection

Suggested motion language

I move to approve the staff recommendation for the Chu trailhead development improvements and an amendment to the Marshall-Superior-Coalton Trail Corridor Management Plan as outlined in the staff memo.

Recommendation to the Boulder County Commissioners for approval of the trailhead improvements to the Chu property and for the trail connection on the Erin Arsenault Open Space as depicted on the attached plan to connect the new trailhead to the Meadowlark Trail. If approved, the trail connection will amend the Marshall-Superior-Coalton Trail Corridor Management Plan.



ELDORADO CANYON TO WALKER RANCH CONNECTION FEASIBILITY STUDY

Parks and Open Space Advisory Board
Information item • Aug. 23, 2018
Marni Ratzel • Resource Planner II



Support for a feasibility study to evaluate a multiuse trail that includes bicyclists is identified in the [Walker Ranch Management Plan](#) and the City of Boulder Eldorado Mountain/Doudy Draw and West Trail Study Area (TSA) plans. The connection also is identified as one of “the Colorado 16” (16 in 2016) priority trails in the [2016-2026 Colorado State Trails Plan](#) and Department of Natural Resources [Colorado the Beautiful](#) program

Project purpose

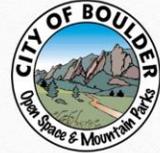
Consider options for multi-use trail between Walker Ranch Open Space and Eldorado Canyon State Park.



While there is an existing pedestrian/equestrian link, the trail is too steep and rocky to accommodate bicyclists.

Objectives

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



Primary objectives of the Eldo-Walker connection are:

Improve access to the Walker Ranch Loop trail.

Expand the range of trail-based recreation opportunities.

Reasonably accommodate bicycles while maintaining the currently allowed activities of hiking, running, and horseback riding.

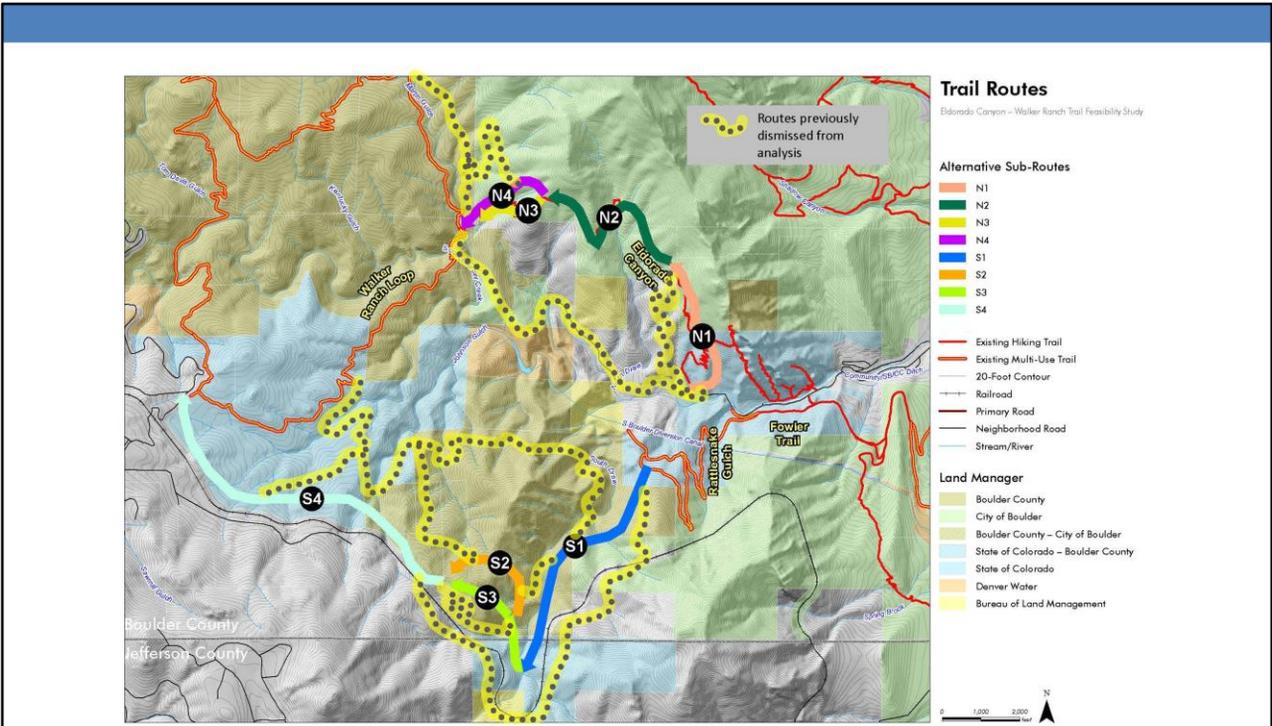
The feasibility study is supported by three partner agencies – Boulder County, the City of Boulder and the Colorado Parks and Wildlife. It is co-funded by Boulder County Parks & Open Space (BCPOS) and the City of Boulder Open Space and Mountain Parks (OSMP) departments. The local agencies are working in partnership with Colorado Parks and Wildlife and Eldorado Canyon State Park on the study.

Conceptual Alignment

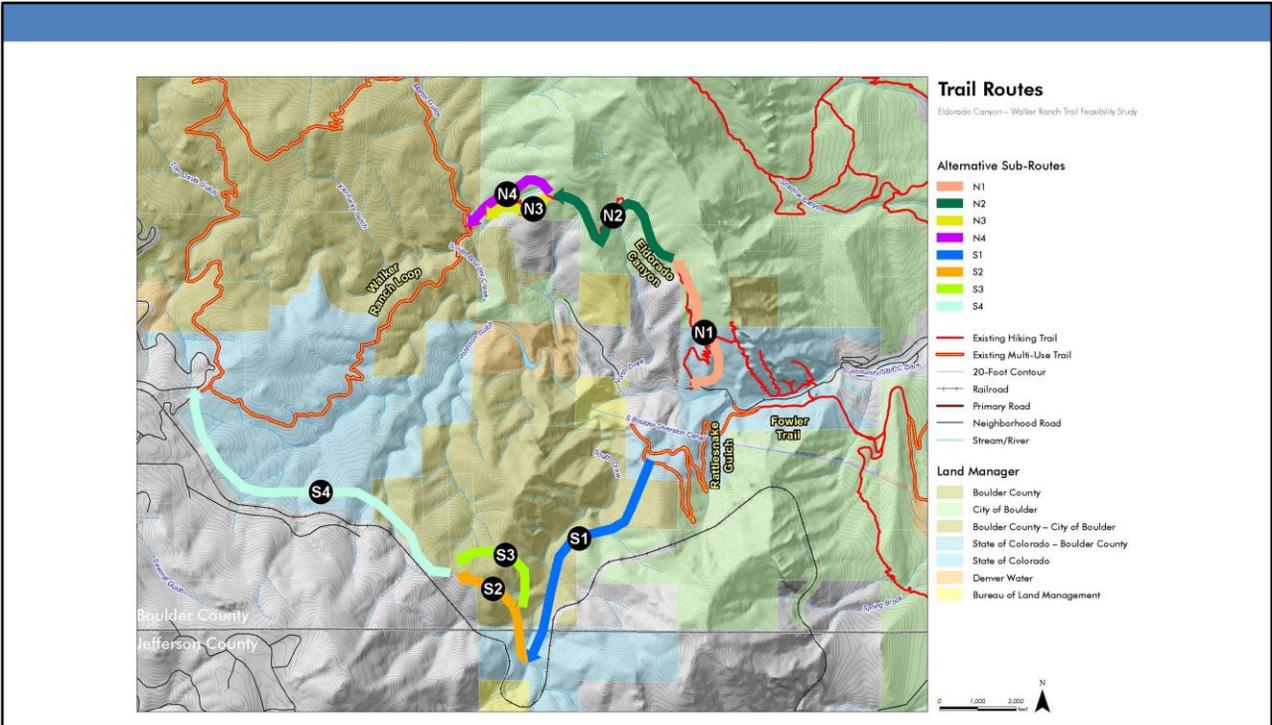
- Minimize environmental impacts
- Provide a meaningful visitor experience
- Meet design standards to construct and maintain a sustainable trail
- Technically feasible and fiscally responsible



Envisioned as a trail similar in character to the Walker Ranch Loop, an evaluation of conceptual trail alignments seeks to determine whether there are options that would



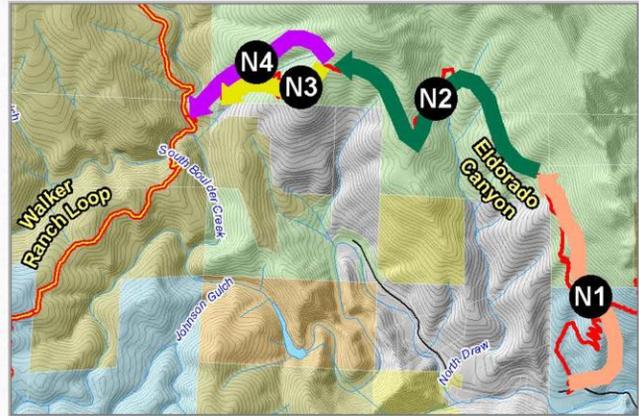
The feasibility study identified over a dozen trail alignments for initial consideration. Through field visits and meetings with adjacent property owners, there were several routes dismissed.



Two alignment corridors, each with four sub-alignments were retained for further analysis. The project is considering options to complete the connection on either the Northside or Southside of South Boulder Creek. A “Do Nothing” option that would not complete a connection accommodating biking activities also is included in this analysis.

North Route

- Generally follows existing Eldorado Canyon Trail
- Connects into the Walker Ranch Loop near South Boulder Creek.
- On lands owned and managed by OSMP and Eldorado Canyon State Park
- Approximate length: 4.9 miles



N1: realignment of the existing ECT. New trail would climb at a shallower grade

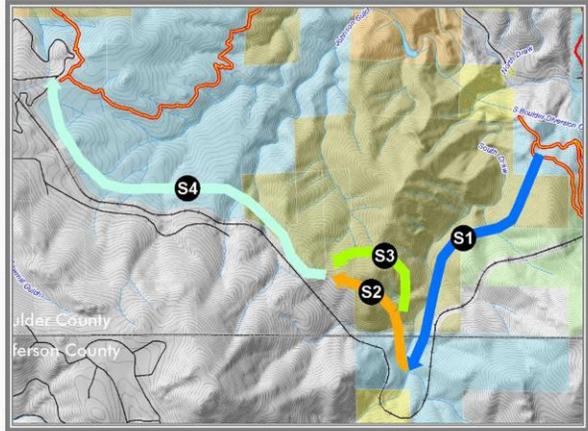
N2: follow existing ECT. Short re-routes and improvements

N3: follow existing ECT. Multiple short re-routes and improvements

N4: realignment of the existing ECT to achieve shallower grades. Most of the existing ECT would be restored

South Route

- New trail construction
- Connects into the Walker Ranch Loop at the Crescent Meadows Trailhead.
- On lands owned and managed by BCPOS, OSMP and Eldorado Canyon State Park
- Approximate Length: 7.7 miles

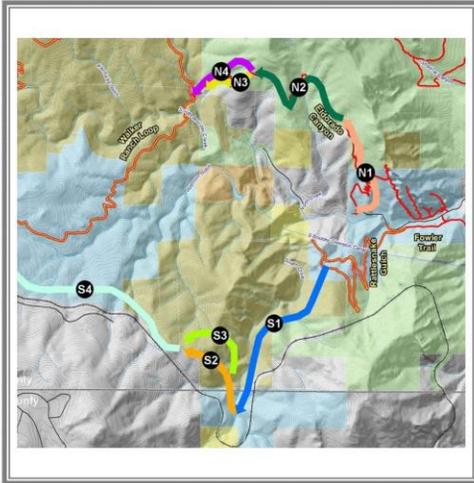


S1: follows a high contour from the existing Rattlesnake Gulch Trail around South Draw

S2: follows contours to the north climbing to reach a high saddle, then follows an existing two track to reach the Chute Road access point

S3: follows contours climbing to a lower saddle where it would turn west and follow an old logging road and reach the Chute Road access point

S4: descends toward a crossing of Johnson Gulch then climbs back to crescent Meadows following an existing two-track road to reach the trailhead

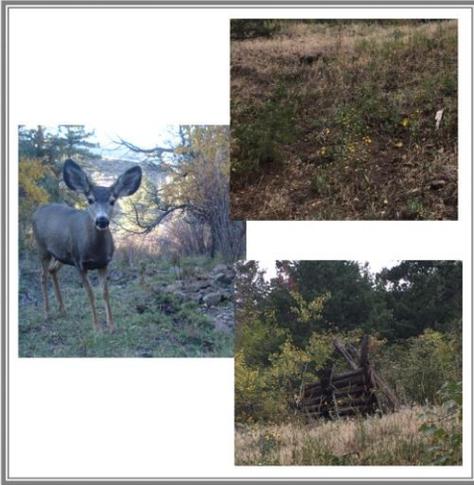


Analysis Criteria

- Environmental and Cultural Resources
- Visitor Experience and Trail System Contiguity
- Trail Construction
- Trail Management and Maintenance
- Eldorado Canyon State Park Interface

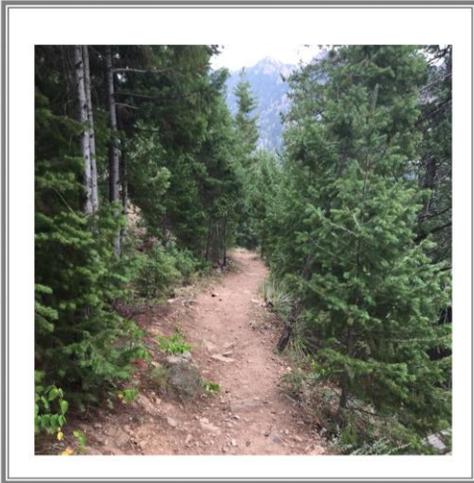
The study will include a comparative analysis of conceptual level trail alignment options. The conceptual level trail alignments will be evaluated with criteria relating to:

- Environmental and cultural resources.
- Visitor experience and trail system contiguity.
- Trail construction.
- Trail management and maintenance.
- Eldorado Canyon State Park interface.



Environmental and Cultural Resources

- Wetland and Riparian Areas
- Significant Natural Communities
- Sensitive Wildlife Habitat
- Regional Habitat Fragmentation
- Cultural Resources



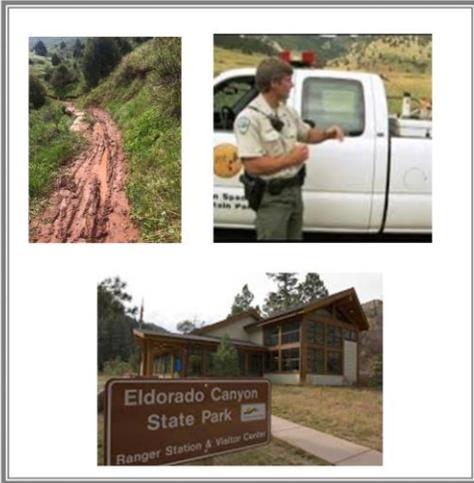
Visitor Experience and Trail System Contiguity

- Regional Trail Connectivity
- Trail Aesthetic and Character
- Recreation Opportunity and Constraints



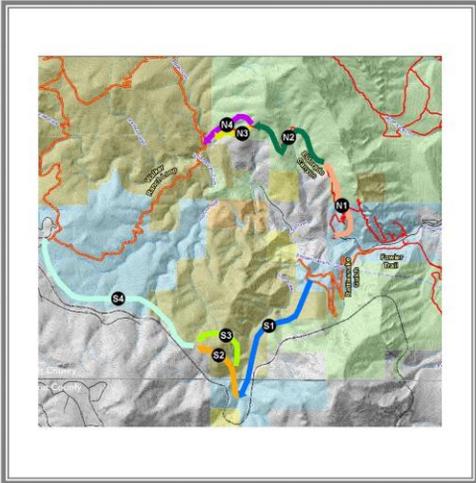
Trail Construction

- Structures and Treatments
- Construction Costs



Trail Management and Maintenance

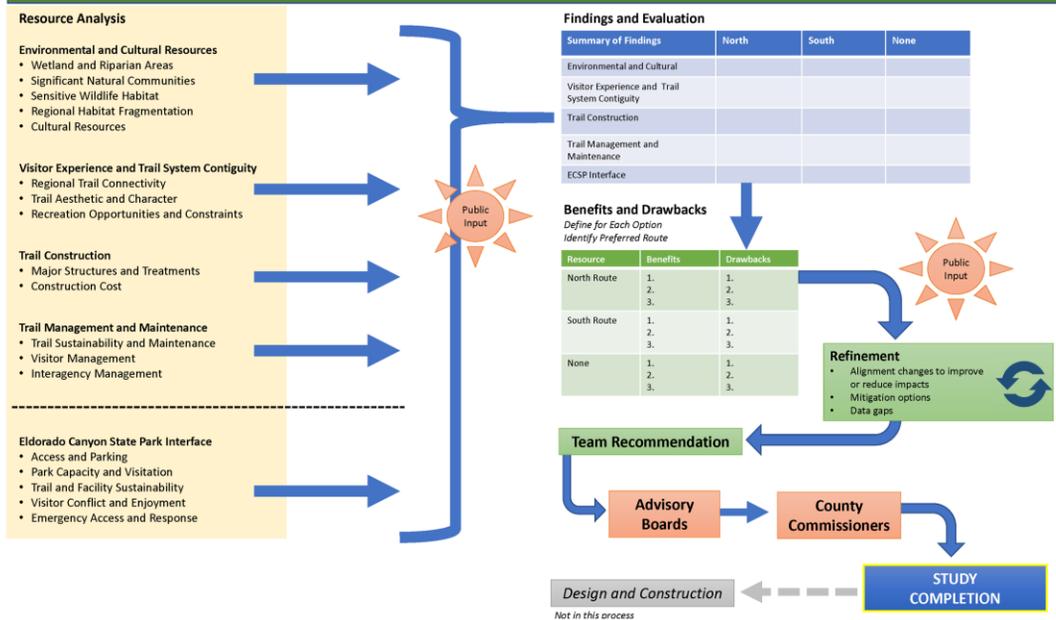
- Trail Sustainability and Maintenance
- Visitor Management
- Interagency Management



Eldorado Canyon State Park Interface

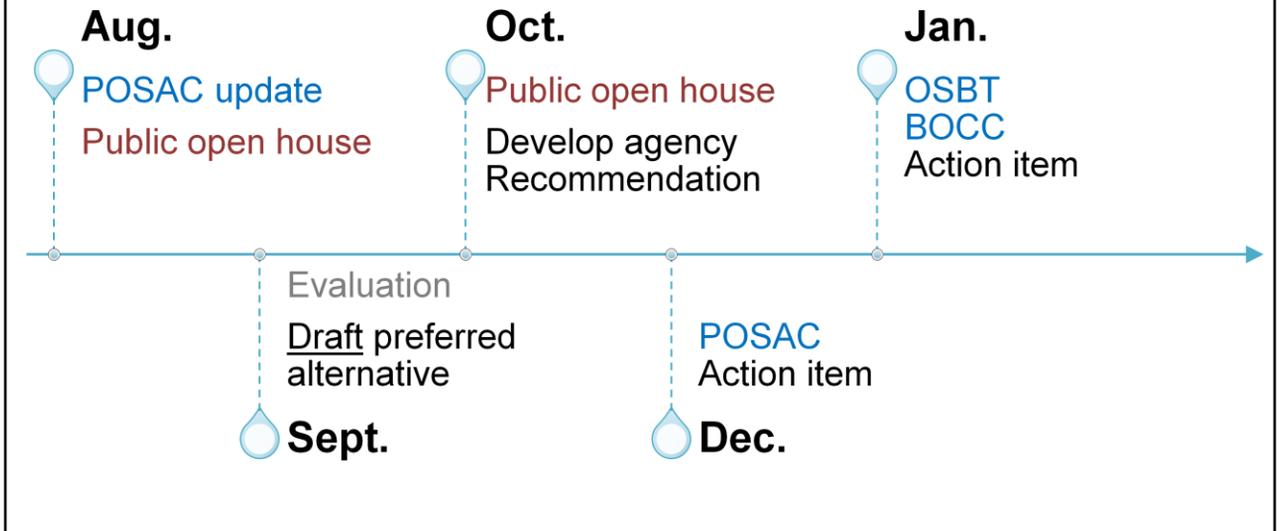
- Access and Parking
- Park Capacity and Visitation
- Trail and Facility Sustainability
- Visitor Conflict and Enjoyment
- Emergency Access and Response

Eldorado Canyon – Walker Ranch Trail Study Analysis Process



The findings and recommendation of the feasibility study will guide next steps. If a new multi-use alignment is recommended, additional work would be needed to design a trail that minimizes impacts to environmental resources, meets design standards to construct and maintain a sustainable trail, and provides a meaningful visitor experience for multi-use recreationalists.

Timeline and Process



The purpose of the Open House next week is to present the work completed to date on developing a range of conceptual alignment options for further study, the proposed analysis plan for evaluating impacts to resources, and a timeline for completing the feasibility study. Members of the public are encouraged to attend and learn about the Eldorado to Walker Connection Feasibility Study and provide feedback related to conceptual trail alignments and the proposed evaluation criteria.

We would return to POSAC in Dec. with a partner agency staff recommendation on a preferred alignment.



Questions?
Eldorado Canyon to Walker Ranch Feasibility Study