A feasibility study was conducted to consider opportunities for a multi-use trail between Eldorado Canyon State Park and Walker Ranch Open Space. The purpose of tonight’s open house is to present the findings and preliminary recommendations.

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.
Located in south-central Boulder County, Eldorado Canyon State Park and Walker Ranch Open Space are part of a broad landscape of publicly-owned, protected lands in the South Boulder Creek watershed. The three partner agencies each own and manage public lands within the feasibility study area.
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
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 “No Action” option that would not complete a connection accommodating biking activities also is included in this analysis.

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
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

With no new trail connection, the No Action option would not achieve the desired objectives of the project that have been codified in public planning and policy documents guided by public engagement.
There also are a number of existing conditions that present challenges which the three partner agencies are committed to working with the community towards long-term solutions.

Eldorado Springs area has experienced transportation, parking and access issues for decades.

Highway 170. There is only one road extending several miles from Highway 93. The road serves entrances for trailheads for city public lands, the state park, Eldorado Springs, Artesian Springs pool, and residences to the west of the state park. It also is transitions from a public
Eldorado Canyon State Park’s parking spots are filled during peak times, particularly on weekends and holidays during the summer months. On many days, visitors cannot enter the park due to capacity issues. Illegal parking on the road’s shoulder in the community of Eldorado Springs and along the road back to Highway 93 is a common challenge for the public land managers and the community.

Choosing a North or South route will strengthen the capacity and momentum for the community and partner agencies to collaborate on providing accessing, connecting visitors to enjoyable experiences, and addressing transportation issues. Therefore, the focus of the feasibility study is on analyzing and comparing the north and south route alternative options.
## 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
• We’ve provided The Summary of Overall Findings as hand out to help you become more informed about the analysis results of the feasibility study.

• More information on the benefits and impacts can be found in the following analysis topic summaries below and in the corresponding sections of the report.

• Please use the handout as guide as you review the open house posters presented at the open house.

• All the information also is available on the project web page, which is posted on the project web page.
• We’ve provided The Summary of Overall Findings as hand out to help you become more informed about the analysis results of the feasibility study.

• More information on the benefits and impacts can be found in the following analysis topic summaries below and in the corresponding sections of the report.

• Please use the handout as guide as you review the open house posters presented at the open house.

• All the information also is available on the project web page, which is posted on the project web page.
• We’ve provided The Summary of Overall Findings as hand out to help you become more informed about the analysis results of the feasibility study.
• More information on the benefits and impacts can be found in the following analysis topic summaries below and in the corresponding sections of the report.
• Please use the handout as guide as you review the open house posters presented at the open house.
• All the information also is available on the project web page, which is posted on the project web page.
### 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

---

*Both* would provide an enjoyable and quality visitor experience, expansive views and go through a similar diversity of landscape types and meet desired bike trail design standards, with the exception of the Rattlesnake Gulch Trail which would be the access trail for the south route in ECSP. They also may result in increased visitor conflict, due to increased trail visitation and the introduction of a new visitor type into the trail system.

**North:**
- is shorter (3.9 - 4.8 miles) with an elevation gain/loss of +1,010/-610 (E to W), will accommodate more year-round use due to the combination of aspect and shade cover, and have no temporal or seasonal use restrictions are anticipated.

**South:**
- is longer 6.5 – 7.1 (7.8 including Rattlesnake Gulch Trail) with an elevation gain/loss of +930/-480 (+1,860 including Rattlesnake), provides a new trail experience in an area that is currently inaccessible, and may result in temporal and seasonal use restrictions.
We’ve provided The Summary of Overall Findings as hand out to help you become more informed about the analysis results of the feasibility study.

More information on the benefits and impacts can be found in the following analysis topic summaries below and in the corresponding sections of the report.

Please use the handout as guide as you review the open house posters presented at the open house.

All the information also is available on the project web page, which is posted on the project web page.
After collaboration to complete the Trail Feasibility Study and careful consideration of the findings, Boulder County Parks & Open Space, the City of Boulder Open Space and Mountain Parks, and Colorado Parks and Wildlife are jointly recommending the North Route (using segments N1-N2-N4) as the preferred alignment for an Eldorado Canyon to Walker Ranch multi-use trail connection.

We presented the feasibility study findings and preliminary recommendation to the public for feedback.
Public Input

Engagement opportunities
- Attend Nov. 28 Open House
- Project web page
- 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

Questionnaire responses
- 671 unique respondents
- 590 completed questionnaires
- 260 written comments

Written correspondence
- 8 individuals commented
- 4 organizational letters
  - Boulder County Audubon Society
  - Boulder Mountainbike Alliance
  - Boulder County Nature Association
  - Eldorado Springs Community Association
Around three quarters 76% (512) are either supportive or very supportive.
About 20% are not supportive and just 3% are neutral.
Respondents in support of the partner agency recommendation expressed that they prefer the north route because it achieves the intended objectives of providing an enjoyable and quality visitor experience, meets desired bike standards, and has minimizing environmental impacts.
About 20% of respondents do not support the agency recommendation. Of these respondents, the majority prefer the no action/existing conditions option. Just a dozen representing about 9% of respondents support the south route option.
The most selected reasons people expressed in support of the south route were that

• It would retain the existing ECT for hiking/equestrian use only,
• Visitor conflicts may be less than on the north route
• And it provides a new trail experience, with many selecting it because it is a longer route than the north route option.
About 13 percent of respondents expressed support for the No action/existing conditions option. Expressing concern for bike users impacting existing trail/park users. Environmental / cultural issues. And the overarching concerns for impacts to the state park and eldorado springs community associated with traffic, parking and access.
94% all the 59 respondents from Eldorado Springs do not support the partner agency recommendation – these 54 respondents unanimously prefer the no action/existing conditions option.
Another key demographic was residence. About ¾ of the respondents live within Boulder County. With just over half from Boulder and 10% from Eldorado Springs.
We also looked at the level of support by primary activity, which indicated strong support for the agency recommendation by those who bike, while only about half of hikers and just over a 1/3 of climbers expressed support for the partner agency recommendation.
Open Space Board of Trustees input

- Impacts the north would have on OSMP Habitat Conservation Area (HCA) lands.
- The process going forward if they were to approve the north.
- Reasonable assurances/ knowing more about how the ECSP/town interface can be addressed.
Next Steps

**TONIGHT:** POSAC Update
Dec. 20 - Staff briefing on feasibility study and preliminary agency recommendation.

Agency Recommendation Finalized
Late-Dec. - Partner agencies confirm or refine recommendation of a preferred alternative.

Boulder County Parks & Open Space Advisory Committee Meeting
Jan. 24 - Public Hearing to consider agency recommendation.

City of Boulder Open Space Board of Trustees Meeting
Feb. 13 - Public Hearing to consider agency recommendation.

Boulder County Commissioners Public Hearing
March - Consider the partner agency recommendation and finalize a preferred alternative.
Questions?
www.BoulderCounty.org/eldo-walker-connection/