



# Management Principles

## Shared Principles for Managing Public Lands in the NoCo Region



**Future Condition:** Ecosystems, wildlife, plants, and habitats are conserved, restored and resilient to climate change – thereby reducing and reversing trends in biodiversity losses and supporting healthy human communities.

### ECOSYSTEMS

- Management of our lands, watersheds, ecosystems, and biodiversity includes conservation and restoration activities that maintain and improve environmental health and resilience at a regional and landscape scale.
- Natural resource management is both proactive and responsive to climate change and its impacts.
- Natural resource management is informed by data, knowledge, and coordination between agencies and partners on habitat connectivity and resilience, biodiversity, and wildfire risk.
- Integrated forest health, grassland, and shrubland management tools are important for sustainably managing our environment. The beneficial use of integrated tools (e.g., prescribed fire, silviculture, sustainable biomass, vegetation and weed management, restoration, etc.) is understood by, supported by, and conducted in partnership with stakeholders and the public.
- Land acquisition, conservation, and restoration efforts are prioritized according to the greatest positive impact to and protection of areas with high biodiversity values. The connectivity and resilience of habitats are preserved and enhanced, while net loss of habitat and biodiversity are reduced and reversed.
- Conservation and restoration priorities consider opportunities for improved human health, whether through direct access to nature and/or through access to the benefits of ecosystem services including clean air and water.
- Working agricultural lands are managed and sustained in support of biodiversity and ecosystem health.



**Future Condition:** Recreation and outdoor experiences are high quality, diverse, equitable, accessible, and inclusive, meeting the needs of visitors to public lands.

### EXPERIENCES

- Region wide access to recreation opportunities easily connect people to the outdoors and offer experiences inclusive of a wide range of visitors to public lands.
- Access to recreation opportunities include close-to-home recreation experiences, regionally-connected recreation, and local and regional transportation solutions.
- Recreation opportunities welcome and recognize an expanded, culturally competent understanding what 'outdoor recreation' and 'outdoor experiences' mean to diverse groups of people.
- Recreation opportunities are improved and/or increased to meet the needs for visitors of all ages, all abilities, and historically underrepresented communities.
- Land management and planning considers and is responsive to changing and/or emergent recreation and outdoor experience trends, preferences, and expectations.
- Recreation opportunities will be increasingly managed in the NoCo region according to 'visitor use zones' that offer a variety of developed (i.e., frontcountry) and undeveloped (i.e., backcountry) experiences with specific expectations for visitation density in each zone.
- Partnerships with the private and non-profit sector are leveraged to enhance the quality of and access to recreation opportunities.

# Shared Principles for Managing Public Lands in the NoCo Region



**Future Condition:** Environmental, social, and economic sustainability guide land management and planning that balances the needs and quality of ecosystems, local communities, and the increasing volume of visitors to public lands.

## SUSTAINABILITY

- Recreational access is planned and managed with impacts to wildlife and biodiversity in mind; draws from the best available data, knowledge, and practices; emphasizes impact avoidance; and employs minimization and mitigation techniques.
- Land management proactively considers and adaptively addresses the impacts of recreation on visitor management, infrastructure, local communities, and adjacent public land – including environmental, social, and economic impacts from increased visitation.
- Land management and planning considers the impacts of recreation to climate change, including stressors to the environment and the carbon footprint of travel to recreation opportunities.
- Land management and planning considers the impacts of climate change – including fire, flood, and drought – to recreation, infrastructure, and conservation and restoration priorities.
- Recreation is managed with the understanding that sustaining high quality outdoor opportunities and experiences requires the conservation and restoration of high quality outdoor environments – and that the sustainability of high quality outdoor environments requires thoughtfully designed and managed recreation.
- A regional approach to sharing and understanding data helps inform all agencies in their decision-making abilities and helps drive regional decisions for conservation and recreation.
- Emphasis is placed on maintaining, enhancing, repurposing and/or redesigning existing infrastructure before creating new infrastructure and recreation amenities.
- Congestion and visitor conflicts from recreation are thoughtfully addressed through infrastructure design, enforcement, transportation, education, and access strategies that include consideration of social and environmental carrying capacities.
- The development of new outdoor recreational opportunities and infrastructure, and/or land acquisition for outdoor recreational purposes, are considered with region wide and local visitor demand, carrying capacities, and ecosystem/wildlife impacts in mind.
- The acquisition and/or management of properties for conservation purposes are considered for their ability to support healthy people and communities (e.g., clean air and water).
- Education, enforcement, and engineering approaches are used to advance the sustainability of recreation and minimize impacts, especially at high-use sites.

# Shared Principles for Managing Public Lands in the NoCo Region



**Future Condition:** A stewardship ethic is embraced by visitors to public lands, cultivating a community of conservationists.

## STEWARDSHIP

- Connecting people to the outdoors through access to recreation opportunities and education inspires a stewardship ethic and support for conservation.
- Stewardship education helps visitors to public lands understand the importance of high quality environments to high quality recreation experiences, and the importance of stewardship behaviors in sustaining both.
- Recreation opportunities are communicated with clear and consistent language region wide and are accompanied by education on outdoor ethics and preparedness. Common messaging tools such as Leave No Trace are used across the agencies.
- Increased and consistent, multi-agency messaging supports visitors' stewardship ethics, etiquette, safety, and preparedness – placing emphasis on the message rather than the land management jurisdiction.
- Region wide messaging focuses on planning ahead and understanding the recreation opportunities and requirements across land management jurisdictions.
- A stewardship ethic is cultivated through an evolving and coordinated landscape of information apps and data, with emphasis on sources that provide official and trusted information from land management agencies.
- Partnerships with the private and non-profit sector are leveraged to support visitor stewardship and education.



**Future Condition:** Diverse cultures, histories, and perspectives are acknowledged through cultural and natural resource protection and celebrated through regional storytelling.

## DIVERSITY

- Land management ensures that cultural resources, historic sites, and prehistoric sites are conserved and protected.
- Opportunities are maintained, cultivated, and enhanced for Tribal and Indigenous cultural and traditional access to public lands.
- Indigenous Knowledges are respectfully engaged in cultural and natural resource management; Tribal sovereignty is acknowledged.
- The story of north central Colorado's natural and cultural resources includes recognition and celebration of the region's diverse peoples and histories.
- A range of recreation experiences are provided region wide that are welcoming, inclusive, and designed for visitors of diverse backgrounds, experiences/skills, languages, identities, and cultures.
- Land management and planning proactively engage diverse partners – including through diverse representation within NoCo itself – and appropriately engage and consult with Tribal and Indigenous communities.

# Shared Principles for Managing Public Lands in the NoCo Region



**Future Condition:** Land management agencies have the management capacity and funding to meet desired conditions and are supported by the collaboration between diverse partners and the public.

## COLLABORATION

- Capacity and funding needs for land management agencies are identified to meet the needs of NoCo's people and landscapes.
- Partnerships between agencies and the private/non-profit sector are leveraged to support the capacity needs of land management agencies. These partnerships are also leveraged to support policy and funding opportunities.
- Multi-agency projects achieve shared goals across jurisdictions and consider trade-offs, opportunities, and impacts to neighboring jurisdictions and communities.
- Collaborative management strategies across agencies, the public, and private/non-profit sector partners are deployed as appropriate for improved outcomes and mutual trust; collaboration and engagement occur during both the planning and implementation phases of projects.

