



FINAL REPORT

LEFTHAND OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLE AREA STAKEHOLDER DIALOGUE

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Introduction

In early October 2024, NOHVCC (National Off-Highway Vehicle Conservation Council), through a challenge agreement with the USFS (U.S. Forest Service) Boulder Ranger District, funded by an off-highway vehicle grant from Colorado Parks & Wildlife, hired Keystone Policy Center (Keystone) to conduct a stakeholder dialogue on the future management of the Lefthand OHV Area. This report reviews the process of the dialogue and the management history of the area. It summarizes key findings from the meetings and lists the management ideas generated by stakeholders who participated. Lastly, it addresses next steps to transition from dialogue to action.

Process overview

For the Lefthand Off-Highway Vehicle Stakeholder Dialogue, Keystone facilitated a series of four stakeholder meetings, bringing together representatives from diverse interest groups to better understand the history and challenges of the Lefthand Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) Area and to explore potential future management options given the changed conditions since the existing management guidance was written. The group of 28 stakeholders included representatives from government agencies, environmental organizations, mountain biking associations, motorized recreation communities, hunters and anglers, and local residents. An initial list of interested parties was compiled based on organizational participation in previous USFS planning efforts and expanded during a series of assessment interviews.

Participants approached the meetings with a mix of curiosity, skepticism, and enthusiasm for the opportunity to discuss key issues and work toward progress. Throughout the sessions, they identified concerns related to management, enforcement, fire risk, diverse user groups, trail systems, access, parking, habitat protection, water resources, and private property. The group also began to envision potential management solutions to address these challenges.

By the conclusion of the stakeholder dialogue meetings, participants had developed a stronger understanding of the complexities surrounding the Lefthand OHV Area and fostered a sense of collaboration across diverse perspectives. While challenges remain, the group's discussions laid the groundwork for exploring actionable solutions that balance recreation, environmental stewardship, and community needs. The insights and ideas presented in this report will serve as a valuable foundation for adapting existing management guidance to the changed conditions within the area.

Background of the Lefthand OHV Area

The Lefthand Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) Area, located within the Boulder Ranger District (BRD) of the Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forests and Pawnee National Grassland, has long been a hub for diverse recreational activities. It is managed primarily for OHV use, as written in the Forest Management Plan, and it is the only area where OHV recreation is prioritized on the BRD. Despite this emphasis, for decades, this area has welcomed hunters, hikers, mountain bikers, highliners, and recreational shooters in addition to motorized users.

In 2005-2006, the BRD conducted an analysis of the road and trail network within the Lefthand OHV Area. This assessment was conducted in response to resource damage caused by the area's increasing usage, including resource damage, watershed degradation, and motorized encroachment into a core habitat area designated by the Roosevelt National Forest as critical for wildlife. Negative behaviors in the area included the creation of unauthorized routes, user conflicts, trespassing, and illegal parking, which caused congestion along the State highway right-of-way. The environmental assessment outlined several key objectives:

- Align management practices with the Forest Plan for the Lefthand OHV Area.
- Emphasize motorized travel on 4WD routes and single-track trails.
- Explore opportunities to formally manage the area through a concession permit or partnership.
- Designate a sustainable system of roads and trails, which could include relocating or closing routes to protect sensitive meadows, dry drainages, and riparian zones.
- Consider developing a trailhead with safe parking, informational signage, and sanitation facilities.
- In the Fairview Peak Core Wildlife Habitat Area, minimize recreational impacts on wildlife and ecosystems by discouraging additional use.
- Protect natural resources while providing quality recreational opportunities within the Lefthand OHV Area.
- Obtain required easements for access for administrative use and the public.
- Eliminate unclassified routes and cease the creation of more undesignated routes. Close any user created routes on discovery.
- Restore impacts caused by motorized use.
- Decrease the spread of noxious weeds.
- Provide facilities/improvements that fit into the landscape.
- Decrease vandalism, parking, trashed-out camping areas.

- Provide protection for the wildlife core habitat area at Fairview Peak.
- Increase/improve signage and install traffic control devices to keep people on route.
- Decrease trespass onto private land.
- Promote responsible use through education.
- Provide and maintain safe and adequate parking/staging areas.

Following this assessment, the District Ranger adopted “Alternative B with modifications,” an alternative listed in the Environmental Assessment, resulting in the Lefthand Off-Highway Vehicle Travel Management Plan. This 2006 Decision Notice included a comprehensive set of management, road, and trail actions, many of which were successfully implemented before 2013. The action implementation status at the time of this report is listed in Appendix B.

In 2013, a flood caused extensive damage to several miles of motorized roads and trails in the area. As a result, the implementation of the management plan was halted, motorized access was suspended, and, as of the end of the dialogue, it had not yet been reinstated. This event significantly altered the recreational landscape of the Lefthand OHV Area, presenting ongoing challenges and opportunities for future management.

In response to the changed conditions in the area, including the proliferation of unauthorized trails and damage from the 2013 floods, the United States Forest Service (USFS) entered into a cooperative agreement with the National Off-Highway Vehicle Conservation Council (NOHVCC) in July 2024 to guide the next steps for travel management in the Lefthand OHV Area. As part of this initiative, NOHVCC engaged the Keystone Policy Center (Keystone) to facilitate the development of a stakeholder group.

This group gathered at four meetings with the goal of fostering a collaborative vision for the area’s future. The meetings aimed to establish a shared understanding of the area's recreational and management history while working together to develop and refine concepts for management moving forward. In addition to these stakeholder meetings, Keystone organized two interagency meetings, bringing together representatives from relevant agencies to collaborate on potential solutions and align efforts to implement the applicable management policy in recognition of changed conditions.

Process Detail

Stakeholder outreach and convening

Given the Lefthand OHV Area's specific use and unique history, Keystone chose a tailored, direct outreach approach instead of holding open public meetings. The facilitators started by reaching out to groups and individuals identified by the USFS, including those involved in the 2006 Decision Notice and those who had submitted comments at the time. To set the scope of dialogue and populate the stakeholder group, Keystone conducted one-on-one assessment interviews. These interviews explored participants' knowledge of the area's history, their perspectives on current challenges, their vision for the area's management, and their recommendations for others who should be included in the stakeholder group. Interviewees included representatives of state and local government, conservation organizations, and communities and/or private landowners in the area, as well as public lands users representing hunting and angling, motorized use (both 4-wheel and motorcycle), mountain biking, and other forms of non-motorized recreation.

Keystone selected stakeholders for their ability to represent a distinct perspective on the issues and speak on behalf of a larger group with similar interests to their own. The group was aiming to inform future management through joint learning and problem-solving rather than to build consensus on a single recommendation, so it was more important to have a range of interests and expertise than to have the group's interests be perfectly balanced by numbers.

Overall, Keystone facilitators reached out to 42 individuals and conducted 32 interviews. From these interviews, Keystone did not receive a response from 8 individuals, and 20 participants were invited by Keystone to join the stakeholder group. In addition to the stakeholders, 3 representatives from the Boulder Ranger District attended meetings to provide information from the agency's perspective. Two representatives from NOHVCC participated in the meetings as sponsors and conveners of the dialogue. Each stakeholder was allowed to designate an alternate to attend meetings on their behalf if needed, resulting in a total of eight alternates participating across the four meetings. A list of the primary stakeholder representatives and agency/convening participants is provided in Appendix A.

Structure and goals of meetings

In preparing materials and agendas for the meetings, Keystone drew extensively on the background information and resources provided by the USFS, as well as insights gathered

during the assessment interviews. The meetings were structured to foster a deeper understanding of the issues facing the Lefthand OHV Area and to identify ways to adapt existing management guidance in response to the changed conditions within the area. However, the group was not tasked with reaching a consensus. Each meeting agenda was informed by the outcomes of the previous meeting and adapted to meet the evolving needs of the group. The meetings were two hours each and were held in locations within Boulder County. The objectives of each meeting were as follows:

Meeting One, October 8, 2024

- Confirm the stakeholder norms and expectations for the dialogue.
- Review the status of the Lefthand OHV Area and themes from stakeholder interviews views.
- Identify components of a shared vision for the Lefthand OHV Area.
- Identify information needs to enable an informed dialogue.

Meeting Two, November 12, 2024

- Build a shared understanding of the 2006 Decision on travel management at the Lefthand OHV Area and learn from each other's knowledge and perspectives on the area.
- Identify ways in which the intended future management of the area may need to be modified in response to changed conditions.
- Identify specific locations in the area to address at the next meeting.

Meeting Three, November 26, 2024

- Anticipating the implementation of the 2006 Decision, consider potential negative effects that will either emerge or remain unresolved.
- Identify initial creative options for addressing these concerns.

Meeting Four, December 17, 2024

- Acknowledging the range of interests in the stakeholder group, begin to build integrated solutions for Lefthand.
- Review and confirm next steps as the dialogue comes to a close.

Interagency Meetings

Keystone facilitated two interagency team meetings during the project, held in December 2024 and January 2025. Participants included representatives from NoCo PLACES, the USFS/BRD, Boulder County Parks and Open Space, City of Boulder Open Space &

Mountain Parks, Lefthand Fire Protection District, Boulder County Sheriff's Office, and Colorado Parks and Wildlife. These meetings aimed to foster interagency coordination and address capacity challenges related to the Lefthand OHV Area.

In the meetings, the agencies discussed the cross-jurisdictional coordination that would be required to implement the 2006 travel management decision in response to changed conditions. The main topic of conversation was how to reestablish motorized access to the area in a way that would not worsen the congestion along Lefthand Canyon Drive. The team committed to continue to meet to assess the feasibility of addressing this challenge with policy and infrastructure.

Follow-up

Following each meeting, Keystone shared draft meeting notes with participants, allowing at least 72 hours for review and feedback. The finalized meeting summaries were published and are a companion document to this report.

Key findings from stakeholder dialogue

The participants in the Lefthand Canyon Off-Highway Vehicle Area Stakeholder Dialogue brought a wide range of relationships and experiences with the Lefthand OHV Area. Some had lived in or recreated in the area for decades, observing its transformation after the 2013 flood. Others had only experienced the area in its post-flood state, while some had never visited it at all. Participants noted significant changes in how the area had been used over time, shifting from a shared space for recreational shooters, motorized users, and non-motorized users to one now primarily used by non-motorized users due to the 2013 flood damage and closure order.

During the intake interviews and the first stakeholder meeting, participants shared their concerns and aspirations for the Lefthand OHV Area. These discussions culminated in the development of a collective vision statement by the stakeholder group:

“Ten years from now, the area currently known as the Lefthand OHV Area will

- Contribute to the availability of multiple use recreational opportunities in the region, including challenging trails, in a way that maximizes safety and minimizes user conflict.
- Contribute to the viability of natural resources in the region, including wildlife that live in and move through it.

- Benefit from active management, including infrastructure, education, and enforcement, that is responsive to the carrying capacity of the area and will contribute to its safety and resilience.
- Be managed in coordination with the public, limiting risks and negative impacts to those who live nearby and welcoming the support of those who use the area.”

Throughout the meetings, participants developed a deeper understanding of the factors that shaped the current status of the Lefthand OHV Area. They explored the 2006 Decision Notice governing the area, its layout—including boundaries, forest perimeters, known trails (both authorized and unauthorized), species activity, and total acreage. Additionally, they gained insights into the area's recreational demand and current usage patterns, and methods for assessing carrying capacity.

The supplemental documents contain detailed meeting notes that outline the discussions held during each meeting. Below is a summary of the key concerns raised and discussed throughout the four stakeholder meetings, organized by issue area.

Management and Enforcement

Stakeholder group participants voiced concerns about a lack of communication and presence from managing agencies in the area since the flood. They worried that, without active management, unauthorized trail building would persist. Additionally, participants expressed worry over the absence of a clear point of contact to address issues as they arose. Finally, some participants raised concerns that portions of the 2006 Decision Notice no longer aligned with the current needs of the area.

Fire Risk

Participants expressed concerns about activities with a higher risk of triggering wildfires, such as camping, shooting, and the use of fireworks. They worried about the potential impact on local landowners and felt that the lack of active management and enforcement in the area was insufficient to address the general risks of fire. Opinions were split on the risks and benefits of established campfire rings.

User types and trail system

Some participants were concerned that the 2006 Decision Notice no longer reflected the needs of the diverse user groups that had used the area since the 2013 floods. Others were troubled that, while the management plan prioritized OHV use, OHV use had not been allowed in the area since the flood. Concerns were also raised that hunters might lose access to this area during certain times, such as early morning and late evening, when they

might start their hunt or pack out a harvest. Moreover, access to this area would be necessary for reaching their hunting grounds. Additionally, participants noted that unauthorized trails had been appearing on maps and recreation apps, raising further issues. Safety concerns were also highlighted, particularly regarding motorized and non-motorized users sharing the same trail system, with speed differences being a significant factor. Finally, some participants feared losing access to the unique trail system at Lefthand OHV, which offered more challenging trails for recreation than other options in the region. The trails mentioned here included both routes authorized by the 2006 Decision Notice and those that had been built by users and were not part of the authorized trail system.

Access and parking

Some participants expressed concerns about the lack of adequate parking both before and after the flood, which had contributed to roadside congestion at the Lefthand OHV Area. They were also worried that the current parking capacity was insufficient to support reopening the area to OHV users and believed these issues would need to be addressed beforehand. Additionally, participants highlighted concerns about the limited funding available for necessary infrastructure improvements.

Habitat protection

Some participants voiced concerns about changes in ecological conditions since the floods and emphasized the need for an assessment of the environmental impacts resulting from shifts in the area's use. Additionally, some participants emphasized the need to protect specific areas, such as Fairview Peak, Carnage Canyon, and Spruce Gulch, due to their importance as valuable wildlife habitats and critical riparian zones. They also expressed concerns that unauthorized trail construction might be damaging the environment and that infrastructure, such as the existing makeshift parking areas or potential future parking or facilities developments, could have adverse effects on wildlife and downstream water resources.

Water resources impacts

Some participants observed that, thanks to ongoing monitoring and restoration efforts, the area's water resources were in good condition. However, they expressed concerns that new trails crossing mining tailings could introduce toxic metals into water sources. Additionally, they highlighted the potential for developed parking lots and facilities to negatively impact downstream water quality.

Private property

Participants observed that the use of private roads and off-trail use had caused numerous trespass incidents over the years. They expressed concern that unauthorized trail construction could result in further encroachment onto private property, such as at the east entrance of Castle Gulch. They also worried that an increase in users in the area may lead to a rise in trespassing incidents on private land.

Recreational sport shooting

In interviews and conversation, participants observed that the area's use for recreational sport shooting had caused safety concerns for other recreational users, nuisance for adjacent landowners, and resource damage from dumping of trash including large items used as targets. Recreational sport shooting was permitted as a dispersed use on the Boulder Ranger District, but this use had been restricted from the Lefthand OHV Area around the same time as but under a different order than that issued for motorized use. Hunting, as distinguished from recreational sport shooting, was never restricted and had continued to be allowed in the area. Concern was raised that recreational sport shooting might return to Lefthand if the temporary restriction to motorized use were raised.

Proposed management approaches

The following ideas and their desired outcomes were generated by individual stakeholders both in group discussion and in private reflection, submitted in writing during the group's last meeting. They are grouped by six general issues experienced by stakeholders in the Lefthand OHV Area ("the area") and subdivided into the action categories of education, engineering/maintenance, and policy/enforcement. Some ideas, such as signage, appear repeatedly as they address multiple issues.

Though the ideas are aligned in their goals of reducing the issues, and though many are compatible with each other as integrated solutions, some represent opposing approaches to the same issues. None of them represent consensus agreements, and the list should be seen as the compiled thinking of the group's members, informed by their joint learning. When this work continues, it may serve as a set of raw materials for review or inclusion during resumed implementation of the 2006 Decision Notice. Since the Decision and the underlying Forest Plan are the applicable policies guiding future management, each idea has been assessed for its consistency with these documents. Ideas that are less consistent would require some degree of additional analysis to be implemented. In addition to the listed ideas that directly address issues in the area, stakeholders expressed a general desire for the U.S. Forest Service to continue to engage them in conversation as the agency continues its planning and implementation at Lefthand.

Issue 1: Conflict between recreational users on trails

Anticipating the implementation of the remaining incomplete tasks in the 2006 Decision Notice and the restoration of OHV use to the area, the group identified safety concerns with motorized and non-motorized users using the same trails. The ideas reveal some differences of opinion on the application of direction- and use-specific designations to trails and on the types of OHV use that should be restored to the area. There were also a variety of options around daytime use.

Stakeholder ideas	Desired outcomes	Consistency with existing policy
Education		
Trailhead signage, including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Area rules and regulations Guidelines for trail use courtesy Maps with trails and designated use areas 	Reduce conflict between use types	Consistent with 2006 Decision Notice
Trail ambassadors representing agency partners as well as non-governmental entities such as use-focused groups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Messaging would be tailored to each user group, with a focus on educating casual users 	Reduce the incidence of bad user behavior, especially through ignorance of area rules and norms	Consistent with 2006 Decision Notice
Engineering/maintenance		
Create designated use and/or direction-specific trails for <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Motorized recreation Mountain bikes Hiking/running 	Reduce the risk of collision between uses that travel at different speeds	Consistent with 2006 Decision Notice but may require additional analysis
Allow for two-directional and multiple use of all trails in network	Retain the largest variety of experiences for all uses	Consistent with 2006 Decision Notice
Establish designated parking areas differentiated by user group	Reduce conflict for parking space between uses	May require additional analysis
Safety issues, including those related to the reintroduction of motorized use should be evaluated and addressed. All design elements and construction should meet all recreational safety objectives and applicable regulations and standards based on allowable uses.	Address safety risks associated with a change of uses.	Consistent with 2006 Decision Notice but may require additional analysis

Policy/enforcement		
Implement date and time restrictions, allocating specific access times and locations for each user group. Options: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement a dawn-to-dusk daytime use rule for motorized use • Allow evening mountain bike use on lower trails • Implement dawn-to-dusk daytime use rule for both motorized and mountain bike use • Allow 24-hour use for pedestrian users, including hunters 	Reduce time-of-day overlap between user groups on the same trails	Consistent with 2006 Decision Notice but may require additional analysis
Should access be restored for motorized use, limit it to motorcycles	Enable users to pass each other safely on narrow trails	Consistent with 2006 Decision Notice but may require additional analysis
Should access be restored for motorized use, grant access to all vehicles for which the trails and roads were designated in the 2006 Decision Notice	The route designations in the 2006 Decision Notice accounted for the safe width of permitted vehicles	Consistent with 2006 Decision Notice but may require additional analysis
Implement a fee collection system for the area	Reduce casual use, which includes less considerate behavior, and increase the perception of the area's value	Consistent with 2006 Decision Notice

Issue 2: Barriers to recreational access to the area

The main hurdle to recreation at the Lefthand OHV Area is the removal of key access points physically by the 2013 flood and subsequent restoration efforts. Another major barrier is the lack of formal parking areas and resulting congestion along Lefthand Canyon Drive.

Stakeholder ideas	Desired outcomes	Consistency with existing policy
Education		
Improve signage at trailheads and parking areas, including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area rules and regulations • Trail system map • Designated parking areas • Congestion alerts along Lefthand Canyon Drive 	Clarify appropriate access and use of the area Increase safety for through traffic on Lefthand Canyon Drive	Consistent with 2006 Decision Notice
Engineering/maintenance		
Create safe parking areas with sanitation facilities	Increase the safety of parking Reduce the negative sanitary impacts of an informal trailhead	Consistent with 2006 Decision Notice but may require additional analysis or feasibility
Assess access points in addition to those currently in use	Distribute usage between more access points	May require additional analysis
Close problematic and unauthorized parking areas, installing barriers	Increase the safety of driving Lefthand Canyon Drive	Consistent with 2006 Decision Notice
Implement a shuttle system for those who can carry their equipment with them	Reduce congestion from parked vehicles at trailheads	May require additional analysis
Policy/enforcement		
Implement a reservation-based fee collection system for the area	Enable management of user numbers Fund active management	May require additional analysis

Impose fines for misuse of the area and illegal parking	Reduce congestion and increase safety along Lefthand Canyon Drive Reduce impacts from misuse	Consistent with 2006 Decision Notice or Outside the scope of analysis
Implement day use only restriction for parking areas	Reduce long-duration parking	Consistent with 2006 Decision Notice
Provide a hotline or other system for area residents and users to submit suggestions and concerns directly to the U.S. Forest Service	Increase agency knowledge of and responsiveness to bad behavior Reduce call load on the 911 line for non-emergency situations	Outside the scope of analysis

Issue 3: Trespass on private land

The pattern of public and private landownership around the area is complex. Many routes were established prior to the area's use for recreation, crossing into private land without much indication. Off-trail recreation and unauthorized trail building has added further complexity to the network, making private land trespass an issue.

Stakeholder ideas	Desired outcomes	Consistency with existing policy
Education		
Post trail signage clearly indicating if a trail leads to private property at the preceding intersection	Reduce the incidence of trespassing by convenience after users have invested time in a trail that dead ends at a property boundary	Outside the scope of analysis
Post signage at trailheads and parking areas, including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The consequences of trespassing Updated maps that exclude routes that cross into private property 	Reduce the incidence of trespassing due to a lack of information	May be Consistent with 2006 Decision Notice

Offer comprehensive online planning resources for users	Improve the ability of users to prepare ahead to be more sensitive to the needs of adjacent landowners	Outside the scope of analysis
Engineering/maintenance		
Reroute some trails further away from private land	<p>Reduce noise and other negative effects for residents</p> <p>Reduce the likelihood of users using private land to shortcut a longer trail</p>	Consistent with 2006 Decision Notice but may require additional analysis or feasibility
<p>Reinforce signage by rerouting trails and/or with physical barriers such as gates, fencing, and other impassable objects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include regular inspection and upkeep of these features 	Reduce access to private land	Consistent with 2006 Decision Notice but may require additional analysis or feasibility
Avoid the creation of trails that lead directly to private land	Limit the number of access points for users to use to trespass	Consistent with 2006 Decision Notice but may require additional analysis or feasibility
Policy/enforcement		
Implement date and time restrictions, allocating specific access times and locations for each user group	<p>Reduce noise disturbance to adjacent landowners</p> <p>Reduce/eliminate the use of campfires with evening gatherings and overnight stays</p>	May require additional analysis or feasibility

Provide landowners with communication improvements so that landowners and concerned citizens know who to contact with concerns about trespassing	<p>Increase agency awareness of trespassing incidents</p> <p>Enable quicker response times for actions that might prevent further incidents</p>	Outside the scope of analysis
Enable more on-site patrolling by personnel capable of providing education and assistance, and potentially also authorized to issue citations, such as through cooperatively managed/funded trail ambassadors	<p>Increase the perception that the area is actively managed, resources to enable respectful use, and consequences for bad behavior</p>	Outside the scope of analysis

Issue 4: Wildlife habitat impacts and other natural resource degradation

The Lefthand OHV Area includes some sensitive natural resources, including drainages, that the route network authorized in the 2006 Decision Notice was designed to protect. The area itself abuts designated wildlife habitat areas to the north that prohibit certain kinds of recreation. Unmanaged off-trail and out-of-bound use threatens the integrity of these areas.

Stakeholder ideas	Desired outcomes	Consistency with existing policy
Education		
<p>Post signage to educate users about wildlife habitat and natural resources, including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maps of designated wildlife habitat areas • The importance of staying on designated trails • Guidelines for encountering wildlife 	<p>Educate users on a code of ethics for the area and the importance of following them</p>	Outside the scope of analysis

Engineering/maintenance		
Design and install vehicle barriers	Prevent travel into sensitive areas	Consistent with 2006 Decision Notice but may require additional analysis or feasibility
Stand up a dedicated crew to repair and improve trails, restore and close unauthorized trails, and implement monitoring efforts. Action to resolve erosion or structural degradation should be taken as soon as possible after it is detected.	Prevent, identify, and reduce impacts to soil and water. Routine maintenance ensures the resilience of these resources.	Outside the scope of analysis
Trails and parking lots should be designed and upgraded to be more sustainable	Reduce the rate at which resource degradation takes place from normal use	Consistent with 2006 Decision Notice
Site trails away from sensitive habitat and mine tailings	Reduce impacts to wildlife, ecology, and water resources	Consistent with 2006 Decision Notice but may require additional analysis or feasibility
Place caps on top of old post-and-cable installation or remove altogether throughout the area	Prevent animals from being trapped inside hollow posts	Outside the scope of analysis
Policy/enforcement		
Establish and post a contact number for reporting instances of resource degradation	<p>Increase agency awareness of resource degradation</p> <p>Enable quicker response times for site restoration and preventative actions</p>	Outside the scope of analysis

Establish trail ambassador program or otherwise increase enforcement presence	Prevent users from entering closed areas Discourage the creation of unauthorized trails	Outside the scope of analysis
Restrict motorized and mountain bike use to designated roads and trails	Promote responsible recreation and reduce natural resource impacts Discourage the creation of unauthorized trails, which disturb habitat integrity	Consistent with 2006 Decision Notice but may require additional analysis
Implement time-of-day restrictions, limiting nighttime use to a small number of authorized exceptions	Reduce disturbance to wildlife from overnight use	Consistent with 2006 Decision Notice

Issue 5: Unauthorized trails/routes

The 2006 Decision Notice identifies an authorized network of roads and routes, with the direction that all other existing routes should be closed and restored. In addition to existing roads that were not included for motorized travel, new unauthorized trails were constructed after the decision. Of all the issues, the question of what to do with these unauthorized user-constructed trails had the least convergence in proposed solutions between stakeholders.

Stakeholder ideas	Desired outcomes	Consistency with existing policy
Education		
Implement an education campaign, led by agency Public Information Officers (PIOs) on the damage caused by unauthorized trails	Raise awareness about the damage caused by unauthorized trail construction	Consistent with 2006 Decision Notice
Agencies update COTrex and collaborate with private trail apps, such as AllTrails and OnX to remove unauthorized routes from these platforms	Remove the implied permission to use routes due to their presence on a map	Outside the scope of analysis

Post signage and provide handouts at trailheads and at other key points within the area to indicate which routes are open for use	Reduce the use of closed and unauthorized trails	Consistent with 2006 Decision Notice
Engineering/maintenance		
Close and rehabilitate unauthorized trails, retaining sufficient authorized trails to meet the area's needs. The extent of unauthorized trails can serve as an indicator of demand.	Adjust the trail system to more closely match the current expressed desire for trails	Consistent with 2006 Decision Notice
Retain and maintain all of the unauthorized trails that are in regular use	Enable continued access to existing recreational opportunities	Will require additional analysis.
Policy/enforcement		
Establish an on-site staff/ambassador presence to identify, report, and rehabilitate unauthorized trails	Prevent the continued expansion of unauthorized trails	Outside the scope of analysis
Implement and enforce fines for individuals who develop unauthorized trails	Discourage the construction of unauthorized trails	Outside the scope of analysis
Restrict mountain bike use to designated roads and trails	Discourage the use of unauthorized trails and disincentivize the construction of unauthorized trails	Consistent with 2006 Decision Notice but may require additional analysis
Apply aerial monitoring techniques, including drones and helicopter overflights to monitor changes to the trail system	Enable quick response to changes in the trail network	Outside the scope of analysis
Establish partnerships between the U.S. Forest Service and user groups to rehabilitate unauthorized trails	Coordinate resources and align the shared intent of the agency and recreational users	Outside the scope of analysis

Issue 6: Wildfire risk

The area is within the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) and is surrounded by residences, camps, and other facilities that are vulnerable to wildfire. Recreational activity is a major contributor of fire starts in the WUI.

Stakeholder ideas	Desired outcomes	Consistency with existing policy
Education		
U.S. Forest Service proactively inform the public about activities with high fire risk	Raise awareness about fire safety and high-risk activities/conditions	Outside the scope of analysis
Post signage at trailheads about fire risks associated with smoking, campfires, and hot pipes	Reduce the behaviors associated with human-started fires	Outside the scope of analysis
Post signage at previously used camping areas that warn of fire hazards	Prompt best practice for recreational fire use	Outside the scope of analysis
Engineering/maintenance		
Remove fire rings from the area	Remove the implication that human-started fires are acceptable in the area	Consistent with 2006 Decision Notice
Policy/enforcement		
Prohibit fires and camping with an area-wide ban	Reduce the risk of wildfire from untended or incompletely put out campfires Align fire ban policies across jurisdictions to make enforcement more straightforward	Consistent with 2006 Decision Notice but may require additional analysis.
Implement a dusk-to-dawn closure for all users	Limit the use of campfires, which are associated with dusk-to-dawn presence	Consistent with 2006 Decision Notice
Enable more on-site patrolling by personnel authorized to issue citations, such as through cooperatively managed/funded trail ambassadors	Enforce fire regulations Identify and prevent campfires	Outside the scope of analysis

Keystone process recommendations

Reflecting on the limited scope of this dialogue – four 2-hour stakeholder meetings – it is remarkable how much joint learning and relationship building took place. As a result of these meetings, the stakeholders and the U.S. Forest Service are better informed of each other's knowledge, perspectives, needs, and limitations. Communication, once limited to 1-on-1 exchanges, has widened and deepened. Discussions regarding site challenges and opportunities increased the group's understanding of the management context of the Lefthand OHV Area, informing future action.

Nevertheless, this dialogue is only the first step in stakeholder-informed and community-supported management for the area. Given the results of this process, Keystone would recommend that the conversation resume, both between agencies and between the agencies and stakeholders, with as little of a break as possible. Major criticisms of the area's management after the 2013 flood included how little management appeared to be taking place and how little communication was happening between the agency and interested members of the public. It would be best for all involved not to return to these dynamics in the coming years.

Given the changed conditions since the 2006 Decision Notice, it was evident that some elements of the initial decision would need to be modified, which was one of the stated assumptions of this dialogue. Since these conditions include not only the physical changes caused by the flood but also the increased use and continued construction of unauthorized trails in the area by non-motorized recreational users, it will be beneficial to continue the conversation on how to balance these interests in light of reintroducing motorized recreation to the area.

Notwithstanding the remaining disagreements between the stakeholders, Keystone sees potential in an ongoing concrete, detailed, and action-focused conversation to develop integrated solutions. The more these solutions are cooperatively built, the more the agency can anticipate getting stakeholder buy-in and community support for their implementation. The Lefthand OHV Area, the public land user, and the surrounding land and community would only stand to benefit from this kind of collaboration.

Appendices

Appendix A: Dialogue Participants

Stakeholder Group Members

Eric Harms	Jamestown Homeowner
Mark Matlin	Jamestown Homeowner
Rafael Salgado	Cal-Wood Education Center
Karen Sharen	Homeowner
Erica Simpson	Balarat Nature Center
Juliet Bonnell	Boulder County Parks and Open Space
Randy Wilbur	Boulder County Sheriff's Office
Marni Ratzel	City of Boulder Open Space and Mountain Parks
Luke Svare	Colorado Parks and Wildlife
Chris O'Brien	Lefthand Fire Protection District
John Hannon	NoCo Places
Janet George	Backcountry Hunters and Anglers
Dave Kuhny	Boulder County Trail Riders
Adam Mehlberg	Colorado Association of 4 Wheel Drive Clubs
Keith Douglas	Colorado Off-Highway Vehicle Council
Wendy Sweet	Boulder Mountain Bike Alliance
Paul Wells	Friends of Lefthand Trails Alliance
Bev Baker	Boulder County Audubon Society
Gerry Kelly	Boulder County Nature Association
Matthew Bitters	The Watershed Center

Conveners and Facilitators

Matthew Henry	Boulder Ranger District, USFS
Roneva Keel	Boulder Ranger District, USFS
Kevin McLaughlin	Boulder Ranger District, USFS
Marc Hildesheim	NOHVCC
Tom Metsa	NOHVCC
Jonathan Geurts	Keystone Policy Center
Modesta McGrath-Martínez	Keystone Policy Center

Appendix B – Status of Management Actions Listed in the 2006 Decision Notice¹

Action	Status as of 2013
Pursue legal public access where needed to provide a sustainable road and trail network where there is private land and to also provide legal access for private landowners. Pursue acquisition of isolated private in-holdings.	Brandt Easement obtained on NFSR 287.1 in Castle Gulch. Remaining not addressed or controversial.
Provide education to promote responsible use including a handout with recommended items to have (tree strap, spill kit etc.). Use Tread Lightly and Leave No Trace programs as well.	Implemented through a grant provided to one of our partners (the TrailRidge Runners 4X4 Club).
Have a map to hand out which will include rules and regulations.	Implemented through a grant provided to one of our partners (the TrailRidge Runners 4X4 Club).
Decrease user conflict and increase user safety by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establishing a right of way (who has the right-of-way) - Establishing one-way routes (those rated as extreme) and providing pull-outs where needed on the other routes. - Provide trail ratings 	Rights of way are complete and on the Lefthand map. Trail ratings are complete and on the map. Pullouts and one-ways not done because of funding issues.
Eliminate connecting motorized/mechanized recreational uses to Fairview Peak and the core habitat area. Close Fairview Peak to motorized and mechanized use and pursue administrative access only for enforcement purposes.	Implemented except for acquiring admin. access over private land for enforcement purposes.
Identify and put into place a sustainable and manageable road and trail network.	Implemented.
Provide signing to meet Agency signing standards and provide enough signs along routes and in critical areas.	Implemented.

¹ Source: U.S. Forest Service, Boulder Ranger District

Close roads within creeks.	Implemented.
Close or relocate roads causing damage to streams, wetlands, or riparian areas. Harden roads where needed to reduce erosion/water issues if critical to road and trail network.	Implemented. Several large-scale road and restoration projects were completed through a 319 Grant awarded to one of our partners (James Creek Watershed Initiative) totaling over \$350,000.
Use existing routes—keep creation of new ones to a minimum (e.g. re-routes and connectors are okay) when designing a sustainable road and trail network.	Implemented.
Determine and assign route difficulties to all designated routes using guidance from Forest Service Manual 2309. Provide signs with difficulty ratings and maintain those routes to their difficulty rating.	The difficulty ratings have been established and are on the Lefthand OHV Area map that the Forest Service hands out to visitors. They have not been posted on the ground yet. The Forest Service has been maintaining the roads to their difficulty rating through the 319 grant.
Provide single-track for motorcycles and mountain bikes only. No ATVs/OHVs on these trails as they are not designed to accommodate ATVs/OHVs.	Implemented, however one trail remains closed until target shooting issues are resolved.
Routes will be multiple use routes for all users with the exception of single-track—no ATVs/OHVs on single-track.	Implemented.
Provide post and cable or other traffic control devices where needed to protect resources and to keep motorized users on route.	Implemented, however manual direction will require that these barriers be retrofitted to be in compliance with Forest Service direction that was unknown at the time of implementation.

<p>Add a single-track loop opportunity using routes 845.1 to 286.1B to 286.1 (or route U-at, both will be available to the rider) to routes U-av to U-aw to U-ay, to U-bc connecting back to 845.1. The northern portion of U-aw will need to be re-located out of the draw and onto the ridge, and the southern portion closed. In addition, a connector will need to be constructed to join U-bc to 845.1. Add to decision from Alternative C.</p>	<p>Completed, but remains closed until target shooting issues are resolved.</p>
<p>Provide toilet, trash, and information facilities at 5-points.</p>	<p>Information implemented but remaining development awaits funding opportunity.</p>
<p>Provide a rock crawl route using routes 286.1 to access the rock crawl route, to 286.1.D to RC-B to U-bj. This will require that 286.1 be widened in order to accommodate traffic heading to the rock crawl route. 286.1D will have rock crawl obstacles and bypasses around those obstacles so that non-rock crawl off-highway-vehicles may also find opportunities along this route.</p>	<p>Implemented but remains closed because of unresolved winch point and post and cable issues.</p>