

North Slope Recreation Area virtual public meeting transcript

June 12, 2025, 11:51PM

Lisa Walters 8:59

Welcome and thank you for joining our public meeting for the North Slope Recreation Area recreational access public planning process.

This meeting is scheduled from 6:00 PM to 7:00 PM and we'll have a short presentation and opportunities to ask questions to our panel.

This meeting is being recorded and materials from this meeting and previous meetings will be posted to CSU org/Nsra review.

This will be posted into our Q&A, so keep track of our website links and e-mail addresses and other information there.

If you have questions for our team, please enter it into the Q&A. If you are having connectivity issues, please notify us either in Q&A or e-mail us at engage at CSU org.

We have moderators to help. Your questions are all be reviewed and answered as time allows. The questions and answers will also be recorded and shared to our web page at a later time.

Again, that is at CSU org slash nsrareviewcsu.org/nsra review.

We'll be using a mentimeter program within the presentation, so have your cell phone or web browser handy to put in your answers.

We are putting this link in access code into the QA section now. You want to go to menti.com. And enter the code to participate.

We will repeat this for you within the presentation.

Lisa Walters 11:44

All right.

So again, I would like to welcome you to this public meeting.

Will we be able introducing you to the North Slope Recreation area, recreational access planning process and receiving your initial thoughts and questions?

I am Lisa Walters, project manager with Colorado Springs Utilities, and I would like to introduce our two speakers for today. Otak associates representatives Mandi Roberts.

Mandi Roberts 12:13

Hello everyone.

Lisa Walters 12:13

And Kelsey Blaho.

Thank you everybody for coming again with utilities.

Wanted to just describe that we've had a lot of interest in the North Slope Recreation Area currently working on a S Catamount construction project to enhance the safety of our dam and construction project associated with that that has.

Impacted our recreation area and you know, delayed access to that reservoir for a couple years now.

So, this became a popular time, a great time for us to review our existing watershed access. And recreation access for the North Slope Recreation area.

So, I'll go ahead and let Mandi take it off.

Mandi Roberts 13:24

Thank you. Good evening everyone.

As Lisa mentioned, I'm Mandy Roberts with OTEC and our firm does consulting around recreation, planning and natural resource areas.

I'm a principal planner and analyst with our firm.

We've done a lot of work with land managers and agencies around the West and throughout the country. So, we're excited to be working with Colorado Springs Utilities and partners.

And working with all of you. So tonight, we're going to give you a little bit of background information about the North Slope Recreation area and some previous work that's that has been done.

And then we'll talk about our current study project, the scope and the process and some of the existing conditions in the study area.

And we will cover our goals for the study as well as some areas of focus that will be focused on.

In our study work and then we'll close out the evening with just a reminder of next steps.

So, with that, I think we can go to the next slide.

So as Lisa mentioned, we're using this online program. It's called Mentimeter and it's a way for people to give us input immediately and also to see the input of others on screen. So, if you'd like to participate this way, you can go to your phone.

Smartphone or to another web browser screen on your laptop or desktop and go to menti MENTI com and it will ask you for this code 67828434.

And we're just doing a little test here to see if people are going to participate this way.

So, if you would like to answer this question, what recreational activity do you participate in regularly?

Thoroughly. I'm going to go over to the mentee screen and we'll see if we have some answers. So, hold on tight here.

You want to toggle on the screen.

Kelsey Blaho 15:36

There we go.

Mandi Roberts 15:42

OK, we've got a few answers, so that's great.

3 responses so far.

So, our program is working.

That's excellent.

So, we'll go back to the presentation.

Kelsey, if you want to share your screen.

Hiking is by far the most popular recreation activity.

Alright, we go to the next slide.

And Lisa, we turn it back over to you to provide some background information.

Kelsey Blaho 16:17

Actually, I'll background a little bit and then Lisa will help.

Kelsey Blaho 16:25

So, the map you see now outlines in those areas in white, there are the North Slope Recreation area that we'll be focused on for.

This analysis, this effort that we're talking about here this evening.

So, the North Slope recreation areas on Pikes Peak, owned by the City of Colorado Springs and part of the Colorado Springs Utilities water.

Water supply system.

It's about a little over 2600 acres and includes forested watershed land and includes contains the three reservoirs that you can see kind of in teal there on the screen, the Crystal Creek Reservoir, South cat and N Cat reservoirs.

There's recreational access in the area from May through October, and that includes mostly fishing, non-motorized biking and non-motorized boating and biking.

Hiking and picnicking. And then there is vehicular access off of the Pikes Peak Highway.

[Lisa Walters](#) 17:25

Yep, great.

Great points.

Long term water supply for us here at Colorado Springs Reservoirs, Crystal Creek and S Catamount were built in the 1930s and N Catamount was built later in the 60s, so been around for a long time.

[Kelsey Blaho](#) 17:44

Yeah.

And now we have another millimeter question.

[Mandi Roberts](#) 17:48

Oh, good. OK, I that's right.

I apologize.

So, we're going to go for those of you who have already logged into mentimeter. Great. If you haven't and want to participate, just go to mentee. Com 67128434 is the code.

And I'll share my quick my screen to see if we have any answers about what do you like best about the North Slope Recreation area in a word or two.

And I also want to let you know if you don't have access to menti or you don't want to participate. That way you can just put your answers in the Q&A and they'll be published there about what you like best about the North Slope Recreation area.

So let me share my screen and see the answers that we have so far.

[Lisa Walters](#) 18:56

Yeah, clicking the screens to share.

Kelsey Blaho 18:57

Too many screens. Too many, yeah.

Mandi Roberts 18:59

Too many screens, and I'm gonna go.

Kelsey Blaho 19:01

All the tabs.

Mandi Roberts 19:02

I'm in preset mode and I need to go to the next question.

Here we go. My apologies.

OK.

Anybody put any words in about a word or two? Please tell us what you like best about N slope.

And maybe people decided to just use the Q&A.

Lisa Walters 19:32

Look at that.

Mandi Roberts 19:37

'Cause I'm not seeing any words come up that's interesting.

Oh, wait, here we go. Give it a minute.

Lisa Walters 19:44

Mm hmm.

Mandi Roberts 19:46

Excellent.

Kelsey Blaho 19:48

Think solitude. Just a good one.

Mandi Roberts 19:48

And by the way, you can enter as many words in different responses as you'd like. Excellent.

That's great.

Lisa Walters 20:08

Natural feel.

Quite nice.

Quiet solitude.

[Mandi Roberts](#) 20:14

Clean. That's great.

All right.

Thank you.

And again, if you'd rather just put your responses into the Q&A, we'll capture them that way. But we appreciate your input.

[Kelsey Blaho](#) 20:32

Kind of fun to see him come up this way.

[Mandi Roberts](#) 20:35

Mm hmm.

Most definitely.

All right. Well, shall we move on to our through the presentation?

[Kelsey Blaho](#) 20:47

Oh.

[Lisa Walters](#) 20:59

So, with looking at the recreation and access for North Slope Recreation Area, we actually started a smaller look at commercial guided recreation.

We wanted to know more about this program because we hadn't had a formalized process to address commercial guided tours or or guided recreation on the North Slope Recreation area.

So, we wanted just to collect background information on the potential effects on utilities managed watershed lands.

So, one of the tactics that we did was first initially just to go out and get some surveys that were sent to not only utilities customers, but additional recreation users of the North Slope Recreation area. We wanted to get ourselves introduced to this type of user. We wanted to know things like how is their experience, what type of activities do they normally see? And then if the commercial guided recreation had any impact on their daily visit or their visit to the North Slope Recreation area?

We did interview and talk with agencies that are well experienced in commercialized recreation and so, for example, we talked with the Forest Service with Colorado Parks and Wildlife.

And even another utility, Denver water, to get an idea of how they manage commercialized recreation and what impacts or tricks of the trade or best management practices were really going to be helpful for a commercial recreation program.

One of the other things that we were able to do was just go out and research these best management practices to consider on how to make a successful program.

From implementation, this was a program our commercialized recreation again hasn't been formally authorized for the North Slope. So, this was a project just to find out more information and what we found out. Kelsey, if you'd go to the next slide, here's the key findings that we had for.

This process, you know, obviously the public definitely values the North Slope Recreation area.

It's watershed, the water, the water resources.

The reservoirs in addition to the existing recreational uses to go out and picnic to bike and hike and.

Do some boating and do some fishing out on the reservoirs.

So it was the opinion that the opinion is split about whether or not commercial guided activities affect the quality of a general public users experience, or even if it should be allowed if.

The commercially guided activities were permitted. The public wants a process to be managed not only fairly.

But to figure out how we can get additional help with staffing costs, litter cleanup, doing stewardship education, or look at other amenities and offerings there.

Final key finding was that this needed a little bit more study within the context of a comprehensive use and policy review.

So, this is something that right now we haven't decided if this will be utilized for the North Slope Recreation area. We wanted to let our Utilities Board and our City Council have more information and make a good case decision with this. But we're wrapping this question up along with our N slope Recreational access plan. And want to pair these projects together. While we're doing this. I'm just going to take a quick check and see if there's any questions that have popped up.

OK.

I think we're good.

[Kelsey Blaho](#) 25:21

OK.

[Mandi Roberts](#) 25:23

OK, we will carry forward. Then. I'm going to go over some aspects of our current study effort.

Then we are in the early stages of our study work and pull pulling together the plan for the recreation area and these are some of the goals that we formulated to guide our work so.

You know one thing to just note is.

The area is growing.

Colorado's growing Colorado Springs is growing the West is growing and it's putting a lot more demand on our recreation lands and this includes the North Slope Recreation Area. So as we think about this plan, it's a great opportunity to really think long term about how we want to manage the recreation access and use of this area while also enhancing security measures and strengthening protect.

Ton of infrastructure, which is really critical.

For drinking water and the drinking water that a lot of folks enjoy every day that live in Colorado Springs and surrounding areas, we also want to make sure that the public is safe and secure in their use of these of these lands.

So we want to develop and enforce clear rules, regulations and procedures to ensure safety of the public as well as.

The staff who manage Colorado Springs utilities infrastructure. And uses in that area.

We want to continue to support public access and recreation activities that also align with Colorado Springs Utilities core operations and that are financially and environmentally sustainable over the long term.

And then we want to ensure that that there's adequate resource allocation for sustainable management of the North Slope Recreation Area for now and in the future. And what we mean by that is we want to make sure that we have the staff and resources available to take care of recreation in a sufficient way so that people can continue to use these areas safely. So, we really want to be realistic about what we implement and make sure that we're providing A level of service in REC.

That that can be managed over the long term effectively. OK. Next slide. Our scope really calls for analyzing the current public access and recreation activities.

That are happening in the recreation area, assessing existing trails and access points and as we look at those existing trailheads and access points to determine if there are potential opportunities for improvements and that could include things like formalizing parking areas, expanding parking could be providing wayfinding, providing more public education and other types of improvements.

We want to recommend enhancements that prioritize infrastructure protection and security, public safety and sustainability. So in alignment with the goals that I just mentioned and then develop alternatives that reduce impacts on existing operations, drinking water resources, natural resources and visitor experience.

So we want to continue to provide recreation access and enhance visitor experience but also protect the infrastructure and operations that are key to preserving the drinking water sources and the natural resources and wildlife of the area.

OK. Next slide.
Here's our process.

So, we started late last year in data collection and analysis. We are continuing to collect data and information to inform the study process. And as we are working now towards the summer, we'll be developing and analyzing potential alternatives.

For access and improvements and then we'll be bringing those back out to the public in the fall of this year.

So, we'll have another public meeting and another online meeting and between now and the fall, we'll have a lot of opportunities for public input. We have an online survey, for example, that we'll talk about at the end of this presentation.

But that's a great way for everyone to have input.

And then there'll be various events throughout the summer that people can learn about the project and provide input.

As well as through the website that was placed in Q&A. So you can follow the project and continue to provide input that way as well.

And then by later this fall and into the winter, we'll be providing a draft report with preliminary draft recommendations that will go through review. It'll go through public review and then we will have final recommendations and launch implementation and coordinate with partners.

There are other Land Management entities besides Colorado Springs Utilities. So we'll be working with them as well throughout our process and then publishing our final report and going into implementation next year. So next slide.

[Kelsey Blaho](#) 30:40

OK. And then looking starting to kind of zoom in a little bit more about what were the data we're gathering, what we're looking at, how we're progressing with that, the map on your screen now is giving?

Just kind of a general overview of some existing conditions that are in the North Slope Rec area, mostly focused on utilities, infrastructure and existing trails as the recreation access is going through the area currently.

Have a lot of functional areas on here that are highlighted where they're operational areas for utilities management. As Mandi was talking about the management of the watershed and the various activities that utilities undertake in the area there, areas where there's then conflict between utilities operations and recreational us.

Because of how some of those trails are being used. They're overlapping in a lot of areas with roads that were that are utility access roads that were originally routed and designed for that purpose. So, they're taking people to places that are sensitive for management reasons with utilities operations, but also, they're just not the areas that you really want to be in as a recreational user.

Not necessarily focusing on some of those areas that are a little bit more pleasant, a little more enjoyable to access as a recreational user.

[Lisa Walters](#) 32:01

OK.

[Kelsey Blaho](#) 32:02

So, I wanted to look at those areas, see where we can improve conditions to create a safer experience for recreational users, remove some of those conflict points.

Make it easier for staff to do their jobs, make it easier for visitors to stay safe, and then also provide a better recreational experience for recreational users in the area if they have nicer trails, nicer places to hang out, nicer amenities, look for those sorts of opportunities.

[Lisa Walters](#) 32:30

Yeah. Thank you, Kelsey.

I just also wanted to point out that there's a lot of different color swatches on this map as well and where we have the utilities managed properties that's owned by the City of Colorado Springs. We also have our neighbors. We have federal partners that we must consider with our in our planning processes as well. the US Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management parcels that are kind of tucked in and right nearby our planning area.

Also, other communities and trailhead access points. So, we have a Green Mountain Falls and the Highway 24 corridor, but also Teller County Teller County open space access points as well.

[Kelsey Blaho 33:22](#)

Continue zooming in a little bit more, so this kind of focused area on the Crystal Creek Reservoir kind of vicinity. As Mandi mentioned, we're early in some of our planning process.

We've where we've kind of started is looking at areas to focus on areas that are under review, to look at the conditions, look at various things that are happening in those areas. That's what those yellow bubbles on this map are highlighting.

So, you have a big yellow bubble around the Crystal Trail sustainability area -- looking at how the sustainability of those trails can be managed, Mandi talked a little bit about wanting to create facilities that are sustainable from a financial perspective as well as maintenance and operations and user experience.

There's also a connection between the amount of Sur Trail and the Crystal Creek Reservoir and some of the gift shop and some of the amenities that are existing in that area. And then the Catamount Shortcut Rd. is bubbled there in yellow as well. That's another one of those roads where you have sets of roads that are functioning as utilities, their utilities, service roads.

But they're also functioning as hiking and trail access, which leads to those safety concerns. Conflict points between vehicles and pedestrians. Recreational users and people doing their jobs.

This leads to some of those issues that we'd like to improve conditions for.

Then move a little bit further W into the Catamounts area. The trails and areas around the North and South Catamount Reservoir, so a lot of those areas, the trails highlighted in yellow. There are other examples of those roads where those areas where it's a utilities service road that also function as hiking and trail access. So we remove those points of conflict.

Look at how that's functioning so we can again get people off the roads, get them a little bit safer, better experience when you're recreating when they're recreating out in that area.

And then there's also some bubbles there over towards be the right side of your screen or right side of the map with the Catamount Loop Rd. Same condition with service road conflicts with trail access.

Ridge Trail and then looking at a better connection or another connection between the existing Mackinaw Trail and the Limber Pine Trail that does not involve those service roads and those sensitive or unsafe areas for people to be in.

Lisa Walters 36:09

Yeah. So, I just wanted to, you know, looking at this screen, just remind folks that these are considerations that we're looking at to again, you know take people off of utility service roads in this conflict, conflict points and put them on to better manage trail systems. So there.

Kelsey Blaho 36:10

I think that's all.

Lisa Walters 36:27

A lot of opportunity to maintain our recreational access, just giving them a better experience. For this project and I, I think that this will be a good goal for all of us and including here at utilities, is to continue to support recreation.

But just to, you know, provide a better experience and a better method of recreating on our property.

Kelsey Blaho 36:56

Absolutely. And now a couple more mentimeter questions.

Mandi Roberts 37:02

Great. I also just wanted to mention that I think we had a question the other night about the ring, the peak Trail and that is part of what will also be evaluating is how that access way continues through so. Don't worry, it's on the table. We're looking at that, OK.

So yeah, let's go to share mentimeter screen.

Same if I notice we had maybe a couple people join us. So, if you want to participate with some answers through mentimeter. You just go to menti.com on your smartphone or on your web browser and then it'll ask you for this code 67128434.

And we'll go there and see if anyone's put some input in.

So. Here we are. You want to toggle on the screen. The question, by the way is are there any or are you seeing the screen?

Kelsey Blaho 38:03

No, it's not shared yet.

Mandi Roberts 38:04

OK.

Hold on. Let me go back. My apologies.

Share screen.

Lisa Walters 38:11

Yeah. We just want to make sure that everybody knows the URL and the code to get in.

Kelsey Blaho 38:14

The question and yeah.

Kelsey Blaho 38:17

Can be thinking about your answers. OK, there we go.

Mandi Roberts 38:22

We go, OK and just a reminder that if you are having trouble getting into menti or you don't want to use it totally fine, you can just put responses in the queue and a window and that will be part of our project record as well.

Thank you.

We'll give you a few more minutes if you guys want to ask any other questions.

There's a couple of good questions on here and I'm wondering we may need to take these back to our wildlife experts and put together some responses because we are going to be responding to questions online. Just so you know.

But we are being mindful of, you know, sensitive wildlife habitat areas, buffers around creeks, wetlands, things like that.

As far as our planning work.

Kelsey Blaho 39:36

As Lisa mentioned, we also have project partners from other agencies who will help look at some of those things.

Mandi Roberts 39:48

Yeah, great input so far. And by the way, you can put multiple responses in if you'd like. Do we have any responses coming in through Q&A?

Lisa Walters 40:01

I don't see any in Q&A.

Mandi Roberts 40:04

OK. Oh, I don't want to rush the process, but it looks like we're kind of going to pause for input here, so we'll go to our next question. Oh, I was.

I need to stay on. Yeah, hold on.

Kelsey Blaho 40:17

It's another, yeah, another mentimeter.

Mandi Roberts 40:29

Sorry, I'm just having all kinds of issues here, OK?

Can you guys let me know if we need to respond to any questions that are in?

QA. OK, we got smart input since I went away.

All right. So, thank you. Some of the. So just to let me know in case you're not on menti some of the additional issues, challenges and concerns people have noted or wildlife protection.

Fire response and mitigation, which definitely will be part of our consideration emergency access. There's a comment to continue with reservations to limit overcrowding. There's also a comment to expand the seasons for more use.

So actually those two things could go together if there was expanded shoulder season use, for example, parking is identified as an issue challenge concern that there's a note here about need a route for ring the peak.

And then this one comment says the reroute of limber pine got put through March. It will never be dry.

And someone just said, oh, we better check this. I don't think that Q&A is enabled.

So, let's have our moderators check in on that. And then I'm going to go to the next slide.

All right. So, we wanted to give you an opportunity to give us some input on opportunities. Remembering the goals that we talked about earlier about, you know, realistic manageable, sustainable ideas for enhancing recreation and access.

We're really interested to know your thoughts about some additional opportunities that should be explored through this study.

Process, so feel free to either put notes here in mentee.com or to use Q&A.

Lisa Walters 43:13

Yeah, it looks like we do have Q&A working, so should be able to put in your comments. If you're not using mentimeter, it's awesome because, we can see it live. But if yeah, if there's any questions or any comments to put in Q and A, it does look like it's working.

Mandi Roberts 43:37

So, a couple ideas. Or questions winter access. We've heard that a few times.

Question about E bikes if they'll be allowed. That can be kind of challenging to manage on trails, as I'm sure everyone's aware.

Archery practice range is an idea somebody mentioned. Seasonal closures of sensitive habitat areas as needed for wildlife.

Great comment there.

We'll give it a few more minutes because I know sometimes people need time to think and we have plenty of time.

So just give it another couple minutes.

Let us know if there's anything in Q&A to relay verbally.

Lisa Walters 44:40

I have something for you. Just taking a look.

Mandi Roberts 44:44

Yeah.

Lisa Walters 44:48

Just making sure that there is a question that wasn't related to the additional opportunities, but I guess it's road paving for erosion control. Will that be considered? Will water contact be allowed for people or dogs? Was another question that was asked.

Mandi Roberts 45:08

Mm hmm.

Yeah. And I don't think we know specific answers yet, but what we're trying to do is really gather ideas and questions and make sure that we do address these through the study process one way or another, so.

Lisa Walters 45:26

Real time.

Mandi Roberts 45:26

Follow along with us.

Yeah, go ahead. Sorry.

Lisa Walters 45:29

Yeah, I was just saying real time weather on site for wind conditions.

Mandi Roberts 45:33

That's a great idea.

Kelsey Blaho 45:34

That's a good idea.

Mandi Roberts 45:37

Sustainable fishing access trails. Oh yeah. Great.

This is really at the heart of some of what we're thinking about South getting trail users off roads, which we really think could be beneficial from a safety perspective, but that that would need some new connector trails, which of course we know and we are starting to study some potential routes for those. So great input there.

Additional recreation opportunities. Trail connectivity within the area and then maintain the distinct recreation experience.

That are there in the north-south for recreation area. So that's great. Thank you so much.

Well, I think we will slowly move on then. To the to the slide presentation, Kelsey, if you go on share that again.

Mandi Roberts 46:47

All right. So, as we go through this study and planning process, we want to be thinking about important considerations and how we'll evaluate potential solutions.

So, some of the ideas that were just mentioned can fit into this mix. But so far some of the things we've identified for evaluation as part of our planning and alternatives would be the potential for relocation of trails off service roads, the potential to move trails away from utility infrastructure and the potential to improve or avoid areas with existing conflicts.

Considering necessary partner coordination and permitting, so we are working with other Land Management agencies in the area.

We're considering their permitting procedures, for example.

On federal lands managed by the Forest Service, if we make a lot of changes or introduce new improvements, that would typically need to go through an environmental review process like an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement, and that can be a lengthy process. So again, you know, we're not saying that that can't happen, but if that is a potential pathway for the future, just being aware that it will take time.

And then implementation might occur in phases over time, depending on the permitting pathways and the costs associated with certain improvements. Another couple of evaluation considerations, the opportunity for improved or additional recreation access opportunity for improved trail sustainability and maintenance and then of course estimated costs.

Well, we've got some new posts.

I was just going to see if there's anything to be added. I think we got that covered. So, we'll go with one final mentimeter question and we'll get to that now. But regarding the evaluation considerations I just mentioned, can anybody think of anything else that they want to be sure we need to cover?

Mandi Roberts 49:39

So, are we missing anything? Is there something else we need to be aware of?

I sure appreciate a lot of the wildlife comments that we've received, so we are definitely thinking about that and probably need to make sure we explicitly reference that in our evaluation considerations. But are there other things?

Other folks want to offer here or any just kind of off the cuff comments that are important to you that you want to make sure we're considering in the study process.

Kelsey Blaho 50:20

We will be developing alternatives looking at different options next.

So, these evaluation considerations then will help us as we start to develop those to kind of vet those and kind of have a lens to look through as we evaluate and kind of look at what works, what doesn't, what accomplishes the goals and how that could be done.

Mandi Roberts 50:52

Is the dam considered infrastructure with limited access for trail users?

I don't know, Lisa, if you want to address that. Just here live, it might be good to touch on that.

Lisa Walters 51:07

Yeah.

Mandi Roberts 51:07

It is considered infrastructure.

Lisa Walters 51:10

Absolutely it is. It's one of our biggest ones. It's one of the holding all the water. There are components of the dam that, you know, are critical infrastructure components, but there is a way to, you know, can safely convey users or visitors through. One big example is the location of Crystal Creek Reservoir and the Pikes Peak Highway. So that's vehicle access that goes across that top of that dam. It was considered a part of that highway alignment.

It's one of those big pieces that we're considering, you know, maintaining the vehicle access through there, but it is a challenge to try and get people and cars through that section. So, how can we improve, move or modify that type of foot access or bicycle access when we have vehicles in the same spot.

There are other locations. The other two dam areas where we recognize that to form a good route or to provide that looping experience may need to consider utilizing the dam to get from point A to point B. So that is something that we are looking at and want to figure out the ways to make it safer, reduce the conflict with vehicles coming up to a pedestrian or to a biker.

We want to make it a safe situation as well while protecting our infrastructure.

So there are some things that again we're looking forward to working with Otak to help us find those solutions. So that's a great question to consider as we move forward.

Mandi Roberts 53:07

Yeah. And again, another comment about just making sure that the trails are still connected if access to certain road segments is eliminated. And that's definitely a big part of our study that we'll be focusing on.

Anything else before we close out, Mentimeter or Q&A on this question?

[Lisa Walters](#) 53:33

Yeah.

I did get a question here and I think I will go ahead and share it just to like say that we're wanting to share this type of information and we may not have all the answers.

There was a question asked related to ring the peak. Very specific too. It asks what's the proposed route for Ring the Peak?

To connect from Mount Esther the Crow Gulch area. Again, you have to be really familiar with this location and know where these are, but that's for service trail 754 through the North Slope to Forest Service 385.

That is a great question. You know, we're trying to reduce that conflict, get people off of service roads, find those alternative trail route systems. This will accomplish two goals. It'll help with utilities goal and protecting our infrastructure, reduce that conflict. But then there would be a path that we could designate and identify as a trail system for Ring the Peak.

This is part of the process and we're glad to be at the table for Ring the Peak discussions and. Understand that it does require us to work with all of the land managers who are impacted by that system. But we're willing to be at the table and talk these things through and find some of those alternatives.

[Mandi Roberts](#) 55:16

Ready.

Any other questions coming through?

[Lisa Walters](#) 55:28

Might be a little slow.

[Mandi Roberts](#) 55:37

Now is the time for any other questions.

[Lisa Walters](#) 55:51

I found another one. Our moderators looking at one question. Since we talked about it. But the question is, will we consider permitting for guided recreation?

And that is a good question, because our job at the first part of this study in 2023 was just to gather information and understand what commercial guided recreation could mean on North Slope Recreation area. This is going to be discussed and provided to the Utilities Board and City Council for consideration.

And as we're working through our planning process for this recreational and access plan is to bundle those two pieces together and provide it to the Utilities Board altogether. So, it will be considered and looked at.

Mandi Roberts 57:18

OK. Well, we can give it another minute or two if there's any other questions folks want to ask through the Q and A. Not seeing anything else coming through.

Kelsey Blaho 58:01

Move on to our next steps and continue to put anything in the Q&A if it comes to you later.

Lisa Walters 58:05

Absolutely. And of course, we have our engage@csu.org where anyone at anytime can submit questions or ask for feedback to that e-mail address, and we will be able to communicate with you.

Mandi Roberts 58:28

So just a reminder, I mentioned this earlier, but we do have an online survey and it asks a few more questions in addition to those that we asked this evening.

So, we would love to get everyone's input on that. You can access the survey at CSU REC CSU rec org online. That's a direct link to the survey. So please share that around with folks that you know and please give us your input through that survey.

In October, we'll have another in person public meeting and another virtual or online public meeting. And at that point, we'll have some preliminary ideas and alternatives to share with you to get your further input on those, and then we'll continue to gather input throughout the summer through the online survey and other events and through our web engagement as well.

And so you can visit the website here to kind of track with us. And then we have an e-mail address if anybody would like to send emails and give us input that way. I think I'll turn it back over to Lisa because there might be some questions that have come in.

Lisa Walters 59:58

I see a comment published in the chat or sorry the Q&A that there's a person who is generally interested in mitigating impacts to wildlife, particularly the bighorn sheep population, which is already struggling with pneumonia. I think that that is a very interesting question. We already have a lot of our bighorn sheep habitat concerns in our South Slope area.

So being aware of that impact for the North Slope and other large game and other wildlife is definitely warranted.

Mandi Roberts 1:00:56

I see one that is asking how does the plan fit with asking CPW to manage Ring the Peak?

Lisa Walters 1:01:05

Oh, that's a good question.

Regarding CPW management of Ring the Peak... Well, it is a collective management of Ring the Peak with CPW providing a great resource to help plan and provide some additional resources to that project.

We recognize that we're a part of the Ring the Peak, but we are one of many land managers currently.

We have a great recreational partner in Pikes Peak, America's Mountain. And even though they manage quite a bit of the highway going up to the Summit House on Pikes Peak, they also manage recreation for us. They have a staff of Rangers to interact with visitors and help them out with any of questions that they may have or their safety concerns, providing that oversight for the recreation as well, and that they're a great partner. And so I think that we're, we're always willing to look at additional partners and how we can collectively come up with a good management strategy. It's always a challenge.

When you look at financial resources being strained, staffing resources being strained, we want to make sure that we keep our recreation areas pristine as possible and managed well. So that's a good question.

OK. Are there any other questions?

Kelsey Blaho 1:03:06

I think that's all we have in terms of our presentation. So, any other?

Any other questions or anything anyone wants to ask about?

Lisa Walters 1:03:16

Just give it another minute or so.

OK. Well, this will be active for a little while. And like I said, we can always utilize engage@csu.org. For more information, go to our website.

I just want to remind folks that this recording and other meeting materials that were presented this week will be available on the website at CSU org slash nsra review. And that will be the place where most up to date information. We'll post information for the next set of meetings and of course that is also where you can take the survey, provide your feedback and then address any additional questions or comments that you may have.

We thank you for your time coming to this virtual platform. It's always a learning curve for us, so we appreciate your patience. But feel free to reach out if there's any follow up.

With that, I want to thank Mandi and Kelsey for presenting with me today. And I hope you all have a good night.

Mandi Roberts 1:04:40

Thank you.

Kelsey Blaho 1:04:42

Thank you.