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**Town of Gypsum**  
*Conceptual Recreational Trails Plan*

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- Appendix B BLM ARMP Guidance - Gypsum Hills ERMA

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

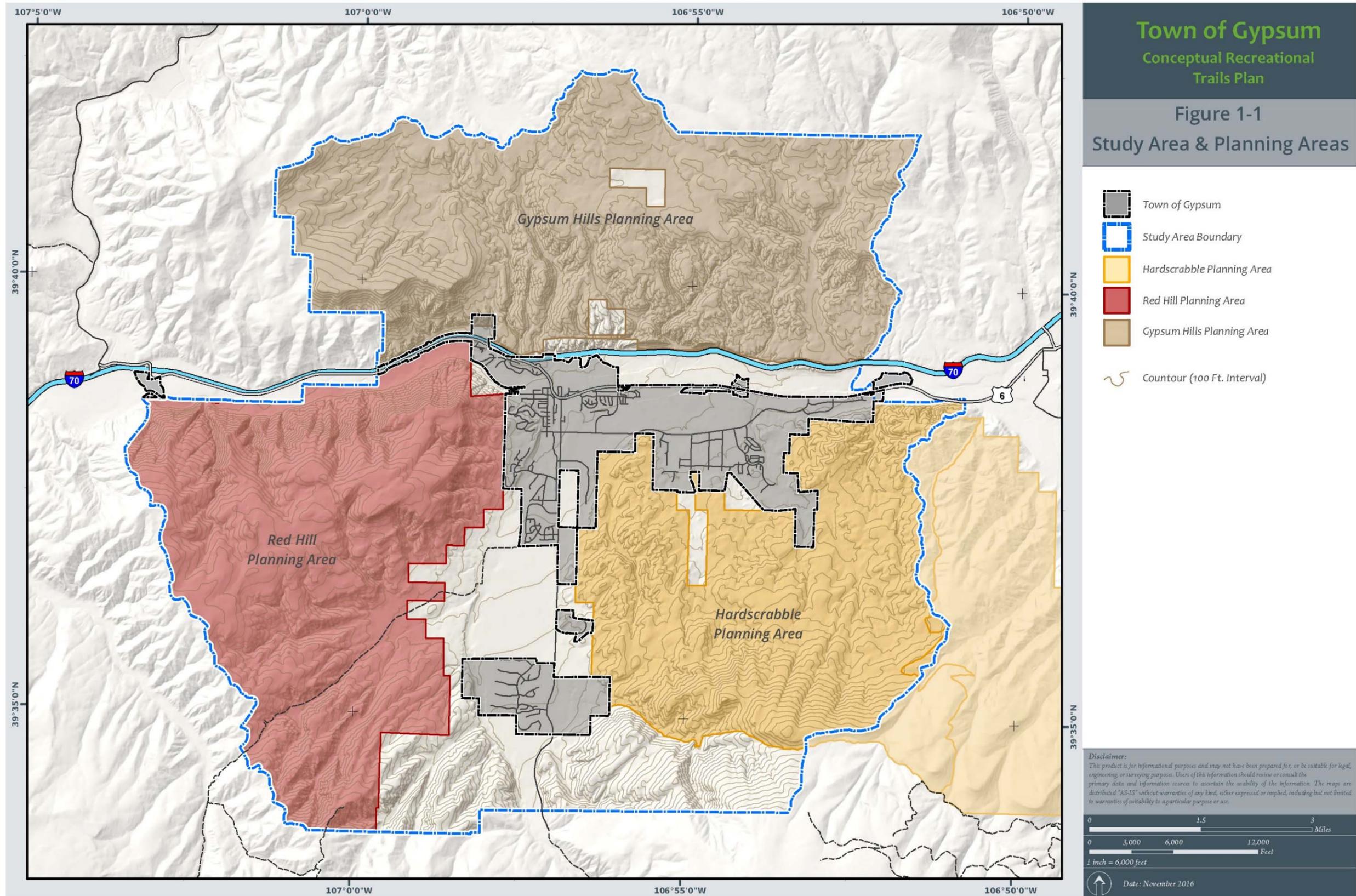
At the direction of Town Council, this Recreational Trails Conceptual Plan has been developed to evaluate the potential for additional soft and hard-surface trails within and around the Town of Gypsum. This plan also addresses environmental and regulatory constraints and opportunities for trail development.

### 1.1 Goals

This Conceptual Plan is intended to accomplish the following goals:

- Identify existing trails and routes within and around the Town.
- Identify opportunities to increase connectivity of existing trails, including connecting the Town's urban center and paved trail/sidewalk network, to the surrounding soft and hard surface trails.
- Identify opportunities to increase the size of the recreational trail network in and around the Town boundaries.
- Identify environmental and regulatory constraints which may limit the type or location of new trails.
- Identify areas which may allow for a diversity of trail experiences that matches the diversity of Town of Gypsum resident and visitor trail users, and that caters to the desires of hikers, mountain bikers, dog walkers, and motorized user groups.
- Produce a Conceptual Plan which can be incorporated into the Town's Master Plan.

Figure 1. Study and Planning Areas



## 2.0 PLAN PROCESS

As part of the planning process, existing publicly-available lands and resource data was acquired from the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and Eagle County. Additionally, existing sidewalks and hard-surface trails were digitized within the Town (as these features are not currently available). Because of the extensive area managed by the BLM with the study area, a number of data layers from the BLM were used which depicts BLM management zones and areas with environmental constraints, or “stipulations” which would guide any trail development for the protection of natural resources on BLM lands (such as steep slopes, erosive soils, etc.).

Based on the existing data, different trail connection opportunities and new trail development opportunities were identified. Much of this process was guided by how the existing trails networks occur, and how new opportunities would fit with the existing trails and environmental constraints.

### 2.1 BLM Guidance

Like many mountain communities in Colorado, the Town of Gypsum is significantly influenced by the ownership and management of adjacent public lands. In this case, the Town abuts large areas of public lands managed by the BLM’s Colorado River Valley Field Office (CRVFO).

In June of 2015 the BLM adopted their updated plan for managing lands within the CRVFO; the Resource Management Plan (RMP). The RMP provides the BLM and the public broad-scale direction for the management of public lands and resources, including BLM-managed lands around the Town of Gypsum. RMP decisions may be changed only through an amendment or revision process. The RMP provides guidance on how public lands are managed under the principles of multiple use and sustained yield.

As part of the revised RMP, the BLM designated the Hardscrabble area south of Town as a Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA). SRMAs are administrative units where the existing or proposed recreation opportunities and recreation setting characteristics are recognized for their unique value, importance, or distinctiveness, especially as compared to other areas used for recreation.

SRMAs are managed to protect and enhance a targeted set of activities, experiences, benefits, and desired recreation setting characteristics. The Hardscrabble/East Eagle SRMA is further subdivided into two recreation management zones (RMZ); the area south of Town is termed RMZ II. Within the SRMA, recreation and visual resource management is recognized as the predominant land management focus, where specific recreation opportunities and recreation setting characteristics are managed and protected on a long-term basis.

#### 2.1.1 Hardscrabble-East Eagle SRMA, Recreation Management Zone II

The Hardscrabble-East Eagle SRMA, Recreation Management Zone II (hereinafter referred to as the Hardscrabble SRMA) is pertinent to the planning process, as it provides management guidance on all BLM lands south and east of Town. Any proposal from the Town for additional trails or a change in management of trails in this area must be in compliance with the BLM’s guidance for this area.

### 2.1.1.1 Summary of Hardscrabble SRMA Guidance

The following is a summary of relevant management guidance from the BLM's RMP<sup>1</sup>. A number of additional guidelines are presented for this SRMA; however, only guidelines pertinent to trails are presented here.



#### **Camping Restrictions:**

- Parking, camping and overnight use is prohibited on BLM lands along the North Hardscrabble Access Road (Spring Creek) within 300 feet from the centerline of said road located in T. 5 S., R 85 W., Track 80, 6th PM.
- In areas open to camping and overnight use, apply a 14-day camping limit on BLM lands from September 1 to March 31. From April 1 to August 31, apply a 7-day camping limit. Campers must relocate at least a 30-mile radius away and may not return within 30 days to a previous campsite.

#### **Special Recreation Permits [SRP]:**

- The CRVFO would evaluate the need for new SRPs or new uses on existing permits every 5 years. SRPs are issued as a discretionary action for activities that: 1) are consistent with resource/program objectives, 2) are within budgetary/ workload constraints, 3) would satisfy a demand from the public that the applicant can factually demonstrate is not being met and 4) would not cause public health and safety issues or create user conflicts.
- Vending permits are prohibited except for special events.

#### **Lands and Realty:**

- ROW avoidance areas are applied to the SRMA.
- The SRMA is retained for long-term management.

#### **Visual Resource Management:**

- The SRMA is classified as VRM Class II and managed under VRM Class II objectives. [see section 2.1.3 Visual Impact Guidance below for additional details].

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<sup>1</sup> Available at: [http://www.blm.gov/style/medialib/blm/co/field\\_offices/crvfo/crvfo\\_rod.Par.64638.File.dat/07%20Appendix\\_F\\_Recreation\\_FINAL\\_6-12-15.pdf](http://www.blm.gov/style/medialib/blm/co/field_offices/crvfo/crvfo_rod.Par.64638.File.dat/07%20Appendix_F_Recreation_FINAL_6-12-15.pdf)

**Comprehensive Trails and Travel Management:**

- The area is classified as limited to designated routes (All modes and types of over-land public travel, except foot and horse travel, are limited to designated routes).
- The SRMA is closed to motorized and mechanized travel from December 1 to April 15 to protect wintering big game species.

*Note: A site-specific travel network of roads and trails available for public use and any limitations placed on that use are included in the Approved RMP (see Appendix A.3) to the extent practical. The final network of routes would be determined through RMP implementation.*

**Best Management Practices:**

- Reroute trails that cause natural or cultural resource damage or trespass on private property.
- Construct (estimated 12-15 miles) trails to create loop trails, link existing trails and create trail connections to new access points. Construction of new trails would not be emphasized until the majority of trail reroutes have been completed.
- Designate a motocross track with a staging area/camping area (pending an environmental assessment) in the Spring Creek area to be managed under a Recreation and Public Purposes lease by a partner.
- With stakeholder involvement, apply adaptive management (e.g., Limits of Acceptable Change) which focuses on a cycle of *designing-implementing-monitoring-evaluating-adjusting* implementation actions to respond to future recreation issues and the results of monitoring.
- If future monitoring indicates that Recreation Setting Characteristics (RSCs) are not being achieved, visitor health and safety issues exist, resource damage is occurring or user conflicts need to be addressed, the CRVFO may implement additional visitor use restrictions for private and commercial recreation use.

**Administration:**

- Administrative use authorizations for motorized access are granted on a case-by-case basis.

**Information and Education:**

- Create an SRMA brochure/map including information on: targeted outcomes, RSCs, estimated times, ethics, wildlife protection, private-public land ownership and stewardship information; to help preserve the recreation opportunities and the special landscape character of this place.

**Monitoring:**

- Monitor outcome attainment and preferences through customer assessments (e.g., focus group interviews or visitor studies) on five year intervals or as funding allows. Monitor activity participation and RSCs annually during the primary use season of Mid-April through October.

### 2.1.1.2 ACEC Guidance

Portions of the Hardscrabble-East Eagle SRMA are within a BLM-designated Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC). RMZ II (the area of the SRMA near the Town of Gypsum, and the focus of this report) is not within an ACEC.

### 2.1.1.3 Visual Impact Guidance

The Hardscrabble SRMA is managed for Visual Resource Management (VRM) Class II adherence. The BLM provides the following guidelines for any activity within a Class II area, and any activity or trail development project within the SRMA would need to comply with this guidance:

**VIS-MA-02.** Within VRM Class II areas, concentrate all new disturbances within existing ROWs or within 200 meters (656 feet) of existing disturbances in order to maintain overall scenic quality in utility corridors and in high-sensitivity transportation corridors identified and analyzed in the Visual Resource Management Update. This recognizes existing disturbances while not foregoing protections for high-sensitivity transportation corridors.

In addition, the BLM has stipulations for surface occupancy and surface disturbing activities in VRM Class II areas with slopes over 30 percent and high visual sensitivity. The BLM has a No Surface Occupancy (NSO) stipulation in these areas to preserve the visual setting and integrity. Lands with high visual sensitivity are those lands within 5 miles of the sensitive viewshed corridors of moderate to high visual exposure, where details of vegetation and landform are readily discernible, and changes in visual contrast can be easily noticed by the casual observer. For projects in these areas, the BLM will require visual impact assessments to gauge the level of potential visual impacts (NSO-22).

## 2.1.2 Gypsum Hills Extensive Recreation Management Area

The BLM has termed the area north of Town the “Gypsum Hills”, and has designated this area as an Extensive Recreation Management Area (ERMA). In the Gypsum Hills ERMA, the recreation and visual resource emphasis is on interdisciplinary travel management and visitor services maintains the existing landscape and supports participation in a variety of established recreation activities (e.g., motorsports, rock crawling, mountain biking for cross-country (XC) type bikes, hiking, hunting and scenic driving) commensurately with other land uses and protecting winter wildlife habitat.



Gypsum Hills ERMA guidance includes:

**Special Recreation Permits:**

- The CRVFO would evaluate the need for new SRPs or new uses on existing permits every 5 years.
- SRPs are issued as a discretionary action for activities that:
  - are consistent with resource/program objectives (*e.g., SRPs may not be authorized/amended if desired use levels are meeting or projected to exceed desired levels of RMAs or recreation sites*)
  - are within budgetary/workload constraints (*e.g., If the CRVFO is unable to fulfill or complete all the necessary steps of issuing and managing an SRP, then an SRP may not be issued*)
  - would satisfy a public demand that the applicant can factually demonstrate is not being met (*e.g., SRPs may not be authorized/amended if a similar service is being offered in an area and there is no market research, demand analysis, recreation monitoring, or staff knowledge indicating a public demand exists*)
  - would not cause public health and safety issues or create user conflicts (*e.g., An SRP may not be issued if BLM lands together with projected public use levels are insufficient to accommodate the proposed use*).
- Vending permits are prohibited except for special events.

**Comprehensive Trails and Travel Management:**

- The area is classified as limited to designated routes (All modes and types of over-land public travel, except foot and horse travel is limited to designated routes). In other words, open travel “play zones” are not a feasible development on BLM lands in the ERMA. Development must occur via specified routes.
- Over-snow travel is prohibited on portions of the ERMA.

*Note: A site-specific travel network of roads and trails available for public use and any limitations placed on that use are included in the Approved RMP to the extent practical. The final travel management network of trails would be determined through RMP implementation.*

**Best Management Practices**

**Management:**

- Consider designating separate trails for different uses when safety and recreation conflicts become an issue.
- Construct new routes on an interdisciplinary-basis in concert with other resources/resource programs. The focus of new routes should be to: form loop routes, link existing routes, create route connections to new access points, construct new motorized single track loops (estimated 14-18 miles), and reduce conflicts (*e.g., recreation, trespass on private property, resource*).
- Develop new recreation amenities (*e.g., trails, trailheads, restrooms*) to effectively address recreation activity demand created by growing communities and

recreation tourism if 1) the proposal is consistent with interdisciplinary land use plan objectives and 2) sufficient funding and long-term management commitments are secured from managing partners.

- BLM funding (sometimes substantial when circumstances require it) and staff would be directed toward effectively addressing visitor health and safety, use/user conflict and resource protection issues created by recreation activities.
- If future monitoring indicates visitor health and safety issues exist, resource damage is occurring or user conflicts need to be addressed, the CRVFO may implement additional visitor use restrictions for private and commercial recreation use.

**Administration:**

- Administrative use authorizations for motorized access are granted on a case-by-case basis.

**Information and Education:**

- Work with local chambers of commerce, tourism groups clubs, and businesses to provide definitive recreation information (i.e., accurate recreation information, user ethics, and use/user expectations) as opposed to promotional marketing.
- Provide visitor services and information (e.g., visitor brochures/maps, web-based materials, directional and informational signage, facilities, on-the-ground staff presence) sufficient to maintain activity participation, achieve ERMA objectives and reach resource stewardship goals.

**Monitoring:**

- Monitor: visitor use, visitor health and safety, resource conditions, and the physical qualities of the landscape with the help of recreation-tourism partnerships (e.g., towns, user groups, recreation-tourism organizations, outfitters, CPW).

### 2.1.3 Red Hill Area

The Red Hill Area does not occur within any specially designated management zone (e.g., no SRMA, ERMA, ACEC, etc.). In the Red Hill area, potential development is guided by the BLM's RMP conditions to protect different resources, including air, soils, water, vegetation, wildlife and plants, cultural and paleontological resources, and visual resources; there is no "special guidance" for the Red Hill area.

As part of this report development process, Olsson queried BLM GIS data to identify areas that would be unsuitable for trail development; in the Red Hill area, only steep slopes and visual retention areas were readily identified as potentially restricting trail development. However, any trail alignment should be compared to



guidance in the RMP for the other environmental resources to ensure permitting could move forward through the BLM's environmental review (NEPA) process. Common items for consideration include:

- Avoiding impacts to rare plants (Harrington's penstemon).
- Avoiding impact to nesting raptors and birds (no construction during nesting seasons).
- Avoiding or minimizing impacts to sensitive wildlife and plant species habitats (clustering or co-locating disturbances in areas already impacted).

## 2.2 Eagle County Guidance

Within the Analysis Area of this Plan, there are large areas within unincorporated Eagle County. Proposed trail development within these areas would entail coordination and permitting with Eagle County. There are three primary guiding documents that are applicable to trail development in Eagle County:

- Eagle County Comprehensive Plan (*adopted 2005*)
- Eagle Valley Regional Trails Plan (*adopted 2001*)
- Eagle County Land Use Regulations (ECLUR) (*as amended*)

### 2.2.1.1 Eagle County Comprehensive Plan

The 2005 Eagle County Comprehensive Plan establishes a vision and framework for the future of Eagle County, and reflects the vision and desires of Eagle County residents. The Plan includes general goals and policies that apply to all areas of the County. Any proposed trails within unincorporated Eagle County should be shown to demonstrate general conformance with the goals and policies of the Plan.

The Comprehensive Plan is generally supportive of trail development, so long as care is taken to avoid significant environmental impacts. The Plan identifies recreation as the single most important reason for choosing to live or buy real estate in Eagle County for both residents and second homeowners. The Plan also recognizes the positive benefits trails have on quality of life, healthy lifestyles, economic development, and multi-modal transportation options.

Certain goals, policies and discussions of the Plan that relate specifically to trails are as follows:

#### **General Development – Section 3.2**

**Goal:** *The impacts of development in Eagle County are carefully monitored, and future development occurs in a manner that preserves a high quality of life, a diverse and sustainable economy, the area's scenic beauty, a healthy natural environment and a vibrant, well designed community.*

**Policy a.** *Those attributes that support quality of life options unique to Eagle County today should be preserved for future generations.*

#### **Infrastructure and Services – Section 3.5**

**Goal:** *Eagle County's infrastructure and community services support all present and future community needs and encourage efficient travel, healthy lifestyles, a stable economy and the preservation of environmental quality.*

**Policy a.** Developed areas in Eagle County should be served by multiple modes of transportation.

**Policy b.** Pedestrian paths should be safe, well-designed, well maintained and appropriately networked within and between communities.

**Policy d.** Bike paths should be safe, well designed, well maintained and appropriately connected within and between communities.

**Policy j.** The management and distribution of recreation areas and facilities in Eagle County should be implemented in an environmentally conscientious manner.

### **Recreational Facilities discussion (page 81-82 of Comp Plan)**

Both road biking and mountain biking have grown as popular recreational pursuits in Eagle County over the last ten years. Cyclists living in or visiting the area have a wide variety cycling preferences, from flat easy terrain to challenging climbs and descents. The area provides both backcountry roads and 81 established single track trails for mountain bike enthusiasts, and many increasingly utilize summer lift operations at the ski areas to engage in the relatively new sport of downhill biking. Road bikers use paved recreational paths and/or local roads and highways. Safety is an issue for road bikers who mix with traffic, and efforts are ongoing to work with CDOT to provide wider shoulders on several of the more popular routes.

All trails should be sized to accommodate anticipated uses. Walking trails can be narrow, multi-use trails should be wide enough to handle two-directional bicycle traffic, walkers, and joggers. Consolidating information on existing routes is important to educate the public on what routes may be the most fitting to their desired experience and/or skill level. The completion of the Eagle Valley Core Trail and the addition of new cycling routes should continue to attract destination cyclists as well as enhance the quality of life for Eagle County residents.

### **Wildlife Resources – Section 3.7**

**Goal:** Preserve and/or enhance the quality of wildlife habitat, and the vitality of wildlife populations in Eagle County.

**Policy d.** Development in areas critical to the continued well-being of Eagle County's wildlife populations should not be allowed.

**Policy e.** Where disturbances to wildlife habitat cannot be avoided, development should be required to fully mitigate potential negative impacts.

**Policy i.** Access to public lands and opportunities for public land recreation should be balanced with the need to preserve quality wildlife habitat.

### **Recreation and Wildlife discussion (page 136 of Comp Plan)**

Recreational uses on public lands can impact wildlife on both the landscape scale and the site scale. Hunting has a long tradition in Eagle County, is important economically during the fall season, and is a critical management tool utilized by public land managers to control the distribution and numbers of animals in specific areas. Other forms of recreation can create other negative impacts. The mere presence of humans, vehicles

*and domestic animals in areas frequented by wildlife can have negative psychological effects, causing stress in animals as they must alter their instinctual travel routes and feeding patterns. Stress increases susceptibility to disease and can reduce reproduction rates.*

*Eagle County should continue to work with public land managers to place the appropriate restrictions on recreational uses and intensities of use in areas indicated by the Division of Wildlife to be important to wildlife. As cited earlier in this section, residential, commercial and recreational development that removes critical habitat, or diminishes the use by wildlife of these habitats, should not be allowed.*

### 2.2.1.2 Eagle Valley Regional Trails Plan

The Eagle Valley Regional Trails Plan was adopted in 2001, and was created to specifically identify the vision and goals for a regional trail system to connect the communities of the Eagle River Valley, including Gypsum. The primary focus of the Plan is to create a paved arterial trail that will span the county from Vail Pass at the east end to Glenwood Canyon at the west end. The Plan also addresses the provision of trail links to other existing or planned public trails. The components of the Plan are intended to create a network of non-motorized transportation routes and recreation opportunities throughout Eagle County. The Plan also specifically provides alignment and design details for the envisioned valley-wide, shared use, non-motorized off-road trail system.

Within the analysis area for the Town of Gypsum, the Regional Trails Plan identifies an “Off-Road Shared Use Trail” (Core Trail), most of which is now existing within the Study Area. The existing trail deviates slightly from the 2001 Plan, in that it follows Cooley Mesa Road instead of the identified alignment of Hwy 6 and the railroad corridor. The Cooley Mesa Road trail segment is identified as a “Proposed Spur Trail” in the Plan. However, a segment of paved trail exists paralleling Hwy 6 from Valley Road to Jules Drive, which is consistent with the Plan. Nevertheless, the existing Core Trail meets the overarching vision of the Plan in that it provides a continuous paved arterial trail that connects communities of the Eagle Valley.

In order to be consistent with the Regional Trails Plan, a future connection from Jules Drive to Cooley Mesa Road along Hwy 6 would provide a more direct linkage between the Town of Gypsum and the Town of Eagle. The Town of Gypsum may also seek to achieve consistency with other design and maintenance recommendations of the Trails Plan, such as:

- Ensure a minimum 10' trail width for the majority of the Core Trail, with 1-2' clear areas on both sides graded for drainage.
- Ensure 12' wide trail sections in areas with heavy use by a variety of user types.
- Where possible and where there is demonstrated need, provide a parallel or adjacent 3-5' wide soft surface jogging path.
- Ensure trail segments are compatible with a design speed of 20 mph, including turn radii and sight distances.
- Ensure/ provide proper safety devices such as railings where necessary, per the specifications of the Trails Plan.
- Maintain proper vertical clearances of 10' or more.

- Maintain positive drainage of trail segments.
- As a regional trail passing through several jurisdictions, ensure compatibility of trail system signage that is consistent with the Trails Plan and the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD).

### 2.2.1.3 Eagle County Land Use Regulations (ECLUR)

The Eagle County Land Use Regulations (as amended) provide a comprehensive set of regulations to provide for orderly growth in Eagle County. The purpose of the ECLUR is to protect and promote the health, safety, environment, and general welfare of the present and future residents of and visitors to Eagle County, while respecting private property rights. The regulations apply to development of all land in the unincorporated area of Eagle County, including trails.

Article 4 of the ECLUR provides detail on various Site Development Standards, including those for trails. Section 4-630 identifies specific improvement standards for sidewalks and trails. It should be noted that the County trail standards are flexible, and design variances may be approved in certain cases with demonstrated reasoning. A general summary of these standards is as follows:

#### **Trail Standards (not including singletrack or soft-trails)**

- Minimum width – 10' with 1-2' of clear area on each side.
- Minimum surfacing – 3" of asphalt over 6" of compacted aggregate base course.
- Grades – 1-2% maximum grade recommended; 5% for under 500' length; and 10% maximum for very short distances.
- Drainage – 2% cross slope; up to 5% cross slope in curves.
- Easements – Trail easements shall be platted as public easements, unless trails are within a public road right-of-way.
- Public Lands Access – Existing trail connections to public lands should be maintained or replaced, Creation of public lands access is recommended where appropriate. Paved surfacing may not be appropriate for public lands access trails.

Note: The County Trail Standards are generally consistent with those of the Regional Trails Plan as discussed above.

#### **Sidewalk Standards**

- Minimum width – 4' for attached sidewalks, and 6' for detached sidewalks.
- Minimum Thickness – 4" of 3000psi concrete over 6" of compacted CDOT Class 6 base course.
- Curb Ramps – shall be installed per the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- CDOT Standards – Curbs, gutters, and walks shall be constructed to comply with CDOT standards.

While the ECLUR addresses trail and sidewalk standards for paved conditions, it does not specify standards for soft surface trails, such as crusher-fines trails or natural-surface single-track trails. Other resources are available for the development of these trail types, including the International Mountain Bicycling Association's (IMBA) [Trail Solutions](#) design guide

(<https://www.imba.com/catalog/book-trail-solutions>), and American Trails' design/ construction guidelines (<http://www.americantrails.org/resources/trailbuilding/>).

Other portions of the Site Development Standards (Article 4) may apply to specific trail projects depending upon the nature and location of the improvements. These could include the following:

- Division 4-1. Off Street Parking and Loading Standards
  - Applicable to trailhead design and development.
- Division 4-2. Landscaping And Illumination Standards
  - Applicable if a given trail project includes lighting or landscaping.
- Division 4-4. Natural Resource Protection Standards
  - Specific application to wildlife protection.

#### 2.2.1.4 County Land Use Review Process

Trail improvement projects in unincorporated Eagle County are subject to land use review and permitting, and may fall under the review procedures of a Limited Review Use, depending upon the nature of the proposed trail improvement. Limited Review Uses are those that may be considered compatible with other uses in a zone district, and have minimal impacts. They are subject to an abbreviated review of the standards applicable to the proposed use.

The process for a Limited Review Use generally includes an initial consult with County Staff, preparation and submittal of a development application, public noticing, and a Public Hearing with the Board of County Commissioners.

#### 2.3 Other Environmental Constraints

In the process of developing trail opportunity maps, the following environmental issues were considered regarding the potential appropriateness of trail development in certain areas. Most notable is guidance from the BLM. The BLM incorporate a number of stipulations to surface disturbing activities to protect and minimize impacts to natural resources. Protection and impact minimization is mostly ensured through the use of No Surface Occupancy and Controlled Surface Use stipulations.

No Surface Occupancy (NSO) stipulations, a major constraint, includes stipulations that may be worded, "no surface use/occupancy," "no surface disturbance," "conditional NSO," "no ground disturbing activity," and "no surface occupancy." Use or occupancy of the land surface for development and other surface-disturbing activities (as defined above) is prohibited to protect identified resource values or resource use.

Controlled Surface Use (CSU) stipulations is a category of moderate constraint stipulations that allows some use and occupancy of surface lands while protecting identified resources or values. A CSU stipulation would allow the BLM to require special operational constraints, including special design or relocating the surface-disturbing activity by more than 200 meters (656 feet) to protect the specified resource or value.

Although not common practice, BLM policies allow for the granting of exceptions, modifications, and waivers to stipulations. This determination is typically documented with an appropriate level

of environmental review. This determination should be made on a case-by-case basis after asking not one, but a series of questions, such as:

- Would the BLM remain in compliance with laws and regulations?
- Is the proposal in conformance with the objectives of the RMP?
- What would be the level of harm to the protected resource, both locally and regionally?
- What would be the economic or public safety concerns if an active operation near completion was halted to comply with a seasonal closure?
- Are the impacts temporary, rather than long term?
- Is the resource being protected rare, or is it relatively common (For example a special status species)?
- Based on existing knowledge of a species and its use of an area, would impacts be confined to single or a small number of individuals, or would there be impacts on local or regional populations? Would impacts be allowed under existing law and policy?
- Is off-site mitigation an appropriate option (For example, where individual or cumulative impacts cannot be effectively mitigated on site)?
- Can the impacts be reduced to an acceptable level through intensive use of environmental best management practices?

### **Standard Exceptions**

An exception exempts the holder of the leasehold/land use authorization from the stipulation on a one-time basis. Depending on the specific exception, the stipulation may or may not apply to other sites within the leasehold/land use authorization to which the stipulation applies.

In situations where a surface-disturbing activity/lease stipulation is excepted, the activity could be subject to additional conditions of approval, reclamation measures, or BMPs. Measures applied would be based on the nature, extent, and values potentially affected by the surface-disturbing activity. Excepted surface-disturbing activities/lease stipulations are given on a one-time, case-by-case basis and will not necessarily constitute subsequent approvals.

### **Standard Modification**

A modification is a fundamental change to the provisions of a lease/land use authorization stipulation, either temporarily or for the term of the lease/land use authorization. Depending on the specific modification, the stipulation may or may not apply to other sites within the leasehold/land use authorization to which the stipulation applies. A 30-day public notice and comment period may be required before modification of a stipulation.

### **Standard Waiver**

A waiver permanently exempts a leasehold/land use authorization from a stipulation attached to the lease/authorization; that is, the stipulation no longer applies to that leasehold/authorization. No waivers are authorized unless BLM staff has verified that the areas mapped as possessing the attributes to which the stipulation applied do not possess those attributes.

#### **2.3.1 Rare Plants (BLM)**

In areas around the Town, the BLM incorporates management guidelines to protect rare plants, in particular Harrington's penstemon (*Penstemon harringtonii*). The BLM implements Controlled Surface Use (CSU) stipulations to protect sensitive plants outside an ACEC. The BLM will apply CSU constraints to surface-disturbing activities within a 100-meter (328-foot) buffer around occupied habitat for sensitive plants outside ACECs to protect BLM sensitive plant

populations and habitat outside of ACECs (CSU-6). In areas of suitable habitat for Harrington's penstemon, the BLM is likely to require surveys prior to approving any trail construction or other disturbance. In typical years these surveys can only be completed in June and July (dependent on the flowering time of the penstemon).

### 2.3.2 Steep Slopes (BLM)

On slopes >30%, the BLM incorporates management guidelines to maintain soil productivity and provide necessary protection to prevent excessive soil erosion on steep slopes. The BLM implements No Surface Occupancy (NSO) constraints on slopes steeper than 50 percent (NSO-2).

### 2.3.3 Erosive Soils (BLM)

On slopes steeper than 30 percent or on areas with fragile and saline soils based on NRCS soil description and surveys (regardless of slope), the BLM implements a CSU stipulation. The purpose is to; reduce erosion potential, to maintain soil stability and productivity of sensitive areas; ensure successful reclamation; and minimize contributions of salinity, selenium and sediments likely to affect downstream water quality, fisheries and other downstream aquatic habitats (CSU-1). This CSU would apply to the widespread evaporitic and gypsiferous soils around the Town.

### 2.3.4 Wildlife Habitat (BLM and CPW)

To protect raptor nesting and fledgling habitat, the BLM implements a NSO prohibiting surface occupancy and surface-disturbing activities within a buffer zone centered on a nest site (used within the last 5 years) and surrounding habitat (NSO-8).

To protect mule deer Critical Winter Range and elk Winter Concentration Areas, the BLM implements a Timing Limitation (TL) prohibiting surface occupancy and surface-disturbing activities from December 1 to April 15. All of the Hardscrabble SRMA is within a winter range TL area (TL-2). Additionally, Eagle County and CPW also provide guidance limiting surface occupancy (including snowmobiling) in winter range areas.

### 2.3.5 Stipulations for Water Resources and Public Water Supply (BLM)

In municipal watersheds and public water supply drainages, the BLM prohibits surface occupancy and surface-disturbing activities within 1,000 horizontal feet of either side of a classified surface water supply stream segment (measured from the average high water mark), for a distance of 5 miles upstream of a public water supply intake. The stipulation is for the purpose of protecting municipal watersheds, drinking water quality, human health, aquatic habitat and for protecting a watershed that serves a "public water system" (NSO-3). There is an additional CSU on lands located greater than 1,000 horizontal feet but less than 2,640 horizontal feet of a classified surface water supply stream segment (CSU-2).

Near some perennial streams, water bodies, riparian areas, and areas supporting aquatic dependent species, the BLM may prohibit surface occupancy and surface-disturbing activities (NSO) within a buffer distance of 328 horizontal feet from the outer edge of the riparian/wetland zones. This is to: 1) maintain the proper functioning condition, including the vegetative,

hydrologic and geomorphic functionality of the perennial water body; 2) protect water quality, riparian/wetland vegetation and aquatic habitats; 3) provide a clean, reliable source of water for downstream users; and 4) benefit fisheries, amphibians, waterfowl, migratory birds, and their habitat, and other aquatic or riparian dependent species (NSO-5).

Along Intermittent and Ephemeral Streams, the BLM may apply a CSU constraint within 100 feet from the edge of intermittent or ephemeral stream drainages to maintain and protect water quality, stream stability, aquatic health, seasonal use and downstream fisheries, and sediment processes downstream (CSU-3).

Around Riparian/Wetland Vegetation Zones, the BLM can apply a CSU constraint from 328 to 500 horizontal feet from the outer edge of the riparian/ wetland zones to: maintain proper functioning condition (including the vegetative, hydrologic and geomorphic functionality of the riparian and wetland zones); protect water quality, fish habitat; aquatic habitat; provide a clean, reliable source of water for downstream users; and indirectly benefit migratory birds, wildlife habitat, amphibians, and other species (CSU-4).

### 3.0 RESULTS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Through the analysis process, there appears to be reasonable connectivity from the Town core area out to other trail opportunity areas. We have labeled these opportunity areas as Gypsum Hills (north of Town and I-70), Hardscrabble SRMA (south and southeast of town), and Red Hill (southwest of town). An extensive soft-surface trail system currently exists on BLM-administered lands in these three areas, that serves a variety of recreational uses, including foot and equestrian travel, mechanized travel for mountain biking, and a variety of motorized trails accommodating ATV, OHV and motorized single-track uses. While these areas occur immediately adjacent to the town boundary, connectivity to these lands and recreational trails from town core zones are somewhat impeded by the town's existing hard trail network that stop just short of reaching these public lands.

Our findings including connectivity, existing trails networks, opportunities for trails expansion and trail expansion challenges and obstacles are discussed for each of the three planning areas in further detail below.

#### 3.1 Hardscrabble Planning Area

The Hardscrabble SRMA and RMZ II abuts the southeastern boundary of the Town.

- There is a mosaic of NSO and CSU stipulations throughout the area to protect steep and erosive soils and protect scenic viewsheds. These stipulations challenge, but do not preclude, future trails expansion.
- The SRMA is accessed from multiple points of entry east of Gypsum Creek Road and south of Cooley Mesa Road behind the existing commercial/industrial park and residential areas; these access points are not developed nor well-defined.
  - The existing paved-surface trails network in town does not provide connections to points of access east of Gypsum Creek Road. The paved trails network nearly reaches many of the access points south of Cooley Mesa Road, facilitating access from the town core; however, once leaving the paved trails network and entering the Hardscrabble area, bikers and pedestrians are required to utilize the existing network of unimproved roads to access specific trailheads within the SRMA.
  - **Recommendation** - developing official trailheads at each point of access with designated parking, maps and signage to indicate specific trail location by use, trail length and level of difficulty.
  - Currently this is a high-use area with a variety of informal and official BLM system trails allowing all uses (e.g., foot/equestrian, mechanized, ATV and motorized single-track). While relatively few trails are designated as foot/equestrian use, overland travel is a permissible use for hikers and equestrian riders throughout the SRMA. Areas near Town are dominated by ATV and motorized single-track; generally speaking, the vast majority of motorized single-track occur in the eastern portions of RMZ II adjacent to the boundary with RMZ 1, while the ATV trails mainly occur within the Hardscrabble area of the SRMA (in RMZ II).

- CRVFO RMP currently proposes expansion of motorized trails system in this area, particularly motorized single-track (approximately 12-15 miles).
  - **Recommendation** - Prior to future trails expansion, we recommend completing a full mapping and inventory of all SRMA trails (in western RMZ I and all of RMZ II) to better identify open vs. closed trails, determine areas for recommended improvements and quantify trail availability by use type. The current BLM database is inaccurate and out of date, and should not be used for additional planning by the Town.
  - Subsequently, the more accurate trails maps should be examined to establish potential connections in the existing network that form looped trail systems and prolong the trail user's experience on currently established trails for the various user groups.
  - In addition, the eastern portion of RMZ II (closer to Eagle) should be better analyzed to identify the potential for expanding or upgrading/modifying the existing network of mechanized trails. No specific trail expansion zones have been developed for the Hardscrabble area as the mosaic pattern of NSO and CSU stipulations in this area require precise planning efforts to avoid impacting the sensitive resources in this landscape.
  - Our review of the SRMA indicates ample opportunity for trails redevelopment or expansion, so long as proposed trails are planned in accordance with the guidance set forth in the RMP and avoid the sensitive resources protected by the NSO's and CSU's.
- **Recommendation** - Given the recent approval of the Dry Lake motosports park located north of town in the Gypsum Hills area, we recommend converting the proposed motocross track to a Hardscrabble 4WD park. The 4WD park would require a small footprint of land and include typical obstacles encountered by OHV and 4WD passenger vehicles on backcountry trails, including steep hill climbs, water features, rutted roads and rock gardens and shelves. The purpose of the 4WD park is to provide a venue to test driver and vehicle ability, teach driver safety and promote good stewardship of backcountry trails and roads.

### 3.1.1 South Gypsum to South Eagle Trail

One of the goals of this process is to identify a potential mountain bike trail from the south side of Eagle to the south side of Gypsum. We investigated some options for this but there are a number of challenges that make identifying a potential route, or even a "zone" in which to place a trail infeasible at this time. These include:

- Incomplete and inaccurate data of existing trails – We only have access to BLM and Eagle County GIS data, and the current trail alignments and uses do not appear to be accurate compared to on-the-ground conditions. Better trail data is needed.
- Potential incompatibility of users - much of the area between Gypsum and Eagle is

heavily used by motorized recreation (OHVs and dirt bikes); creating a mountain bike trail through this area would need to be carefully selected so mountain bikers have a good experience, and potential motorized use of a new trail is minimized.

- Steep slopes – This area has a lot of steep-slope areas; careful planning of what kind of trail is desired need to occur;
  - Is a difficult trail acceptable, or is the trail more of a “link”?
  - In order to keep grades manageable for most riders, a lot of switch backs may be necessary; is a longer trail acceptable, or is the trail supposed to be a quicker ride?
  - Access on either end may be through private lands, are some land owners more amenable to allowing access than others?

It appears that a route can be located through this area, but a more thorough investigation process is necessary, and better trails and use data would be needed.

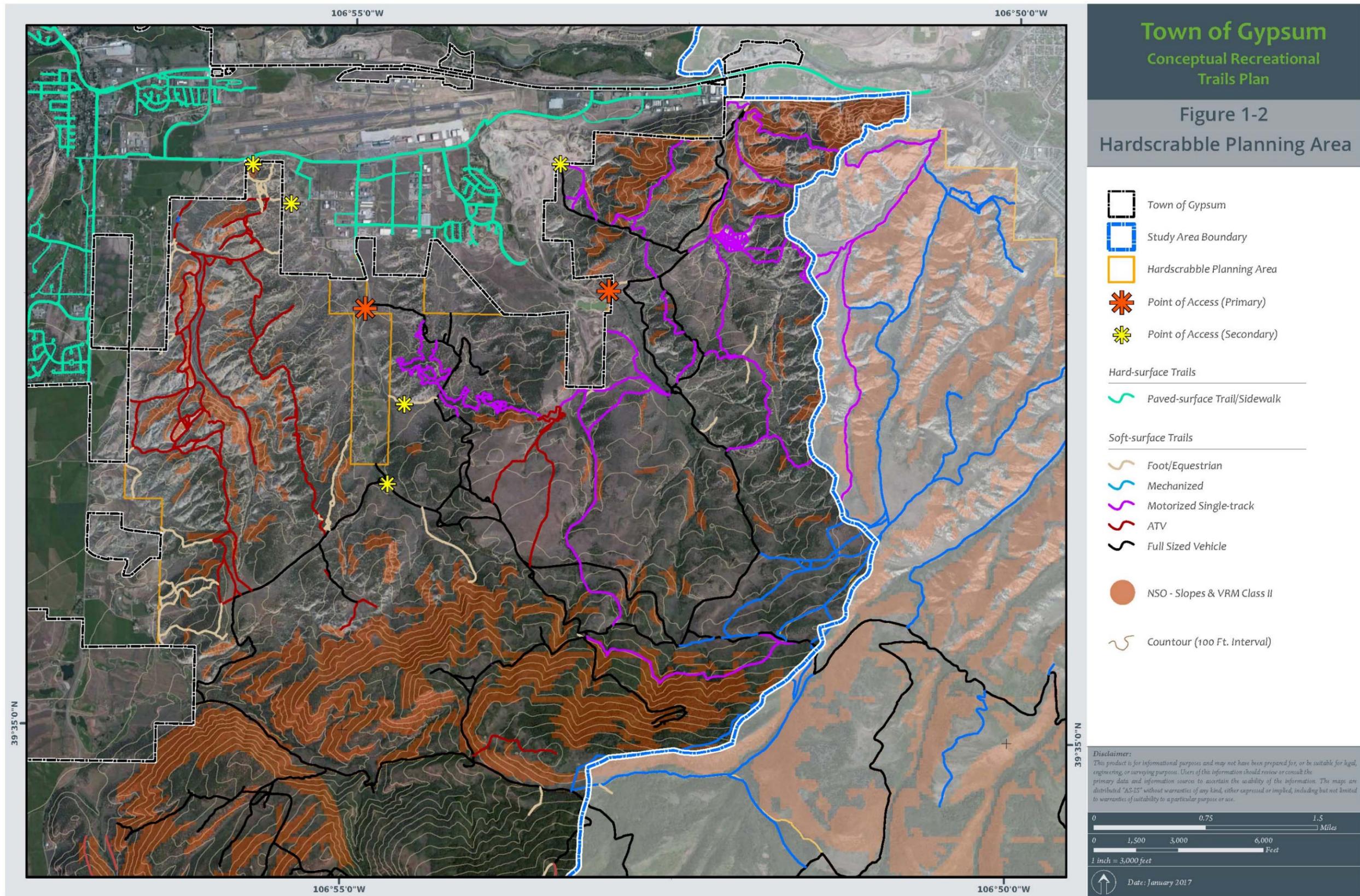
### 3.1.2 Next Steps

1. **Complete Accurate Mapping of Trails** – current maps are inaccurate and do not provide trail use designations or difficulty such that accurate planning can continue. This can be done using Town staff, trail consultants, volunteer trail user groups, 3<sup>rd</sup> party contractors, etc.
  - a. Collect data with accurate GPS units and identify problem areas (such as erosion issues where resource damage is occurring).
  - b. Categorize trail use (OHV, full-sized vehicles, single-track [motorized and non-motorized]).
  - c. Identify illegal or “bandit” trails that are causing resource damage, trespass issues, etc.
  - d. Consider uploading trails data to Town website for users to download onto mobile devices (phones, pads) to help keep users on legal routes, avoid trespass, etc.
2. **Develop Official Trailheads** – With parking, signage, trash cans, maps and descriptions of trail opportunities/difficulties.
  - a. To be done after accurate trail maps are created
  - b. Include education materials on rules, resource protection, website links to download trails data
3. **Investigate New Trailheads** – Approach landowners and BLM regarding new trailheads to provide legal, safe, and sustainable access points.
4. **Investigate New Trail Opportunities** – After accurate trails mapping is complete, assess if additional trails are needed, or if existing network can meet needs; it may be that with additional signage and some trails work, the existing network can meet the public’s needs. Given the amount of existing routes in the area, new trails may not be

needed, but the area may simply need better signage and management (which is much cheaper than building new trails).

- a. **Gypsum to Eagle Connector** – More careful investigations of a route from south Gypsum to south Eagle is necessary.
5. **Investigate Hardscrabble 4WD Park** – meet with BLM and user groups to see if a 4WD “park” could be an option to provide new opportunities for public use and education.

Figure 2. Hardscrabble Planning Area



### 3.2 Red Hill Planning Area

Red Hill is an area of public lands that abuts the town's western boundary. This opportunity area includes the Red Hill mountain summit and the BLM lands that exist on either side of Cottonwood Pass Road at the lower elevations. There is a 1,500-foot difference in elevation from the valley floor to the top of Red Hill.

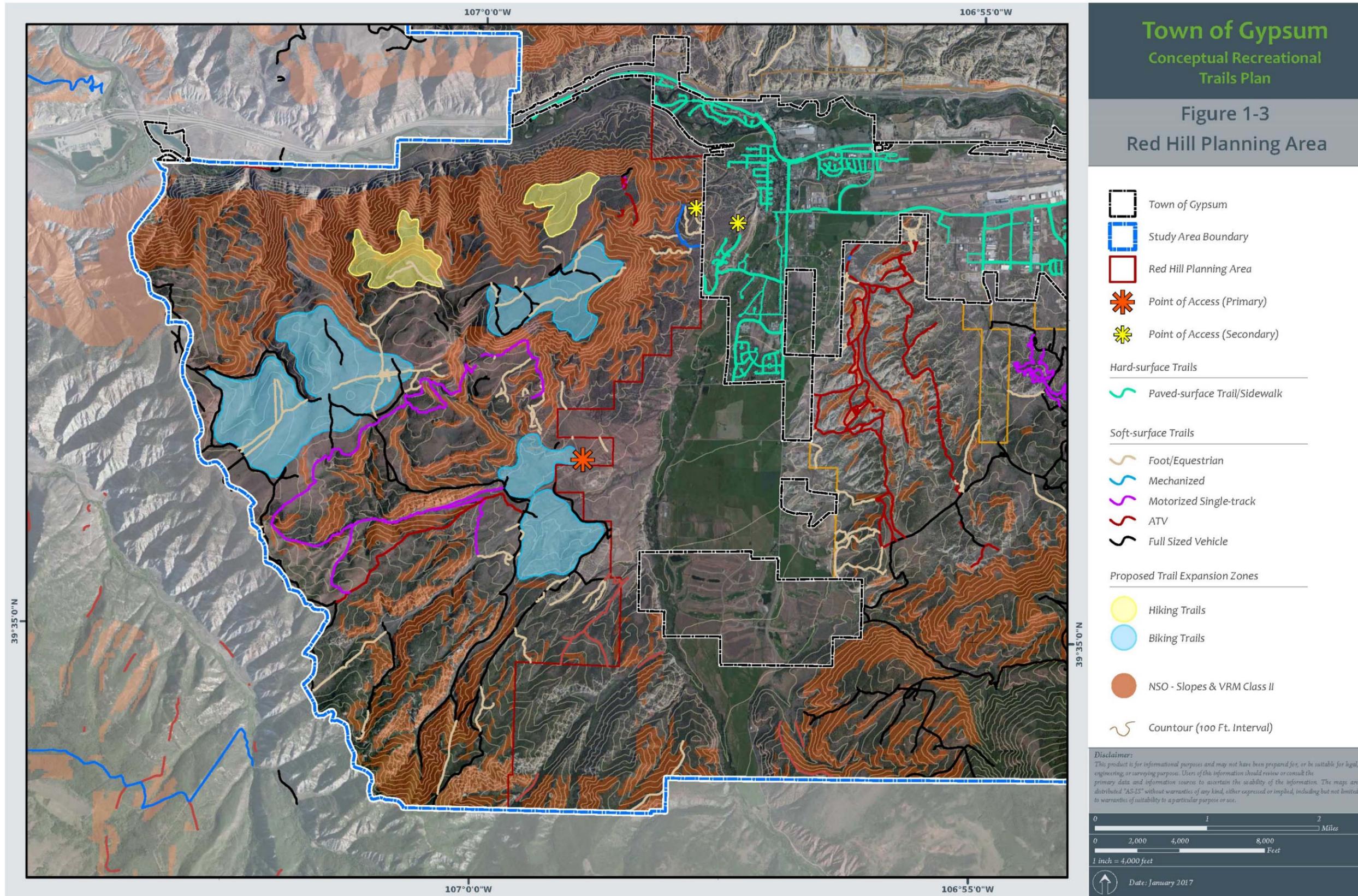
- BLM stipulations exist on nearly the entire Red Hill area to protect steep and erosive soils, as well as visual impacts, substantially constraining the potential for new trail construction to connect the mountain summit with the valley below.
- Lower portions are easily accessed on Cottonwood Pass Road and the intersection with Red Hill Road. The upper summit area is currently accessed by climbing Red Hill Road on the southern side of Red Hill; at the summit, the road joins with Red Hill Beacon Road and winds down the east face of Red Hill to connect with Highlands Road on the western edge of town, providing a secondary point of access to the summit and forming a complete loop accessible to bikes and motor vehicles.
- Red Hill currently hosts a variety of informal and official BLM system trails allowing all uses (i.e., foot/equestrian, mechanized, ATV and motorized single-track). However, there is only one trail officially designated as mechanized along lower portions of east face of Red Hill. Relative to other recreation lands, this area receives moderate use. ATV and motorized single-track exist on upper and lower portions of southern face; motorized single-track forms a complete loop, requiring some on-road travel along Red Hill Road. Upper summit trails are primarily foot/equestrian and a small network of unimproved roads.
- **Recommendation** - Red Hill is identified in this Plan as an area for expanded hiking and biking trails due to proximity to population zones in the town core, minimized existing motorized recreation, and outstanding views from the upper summit to the Colorado River corridor, the Flat Tops, New York Range and Gore Range. We identified two zones for small hiking trail loops located on the upper summit north of Red Hill road, above the Eagle River below. We identified two zones for stacked-loop bike trail systems on the upper summit as well; one smaller zone on the eastern rim of the summit (south of Red Hill road) and a larger secondary zone located on the upper and western portion of the summit (west of Red Hill Road). Two additional zones also identified at lower elevations to the south and north of Cottonwood Pass Road; these areas are more gentle, rolling terrain, supporting pinyon-juniper woodlands capable of receiving stacked-loop bike trails.

#### 3.2.1 Next Steps

1. **Complete Accurate Mapping of Trails** – current maps are likely inaccurate and do not provide trail use designations or difficulty. This can be done using Town staff, trail consultants, volunteer trail user groups, 3rd party contractors, etc.
  - a. Collect data with accurate GPS units and identify problem areas (such as erosion issues where resource damage is occurring).
  - b. Categorize trail use (OHV, full-sized vehicles, single-track [motorized and non-motorized]).

- c. Identify illegal or “bandit” trails that are causing resource damage, trespass issues, etc.
  - d. Consider uploading trails data to Town website for users to download onto mobile devices (phones, pads) to help keep users on legal routes, avoid trespass, etc.
- 2. **Improve Signage from Town to Red Hill** – Signs helping visitors and residents access official trailheads is lacking.
- 3. **Meet with BLM for New Trail Opportunities** – Much of the Red Hill area is significantly constrained for new trail development.
  - a. This plan identifies areas most suitable for new trails (motorized and non-motorized).
  - b. Meet with BLM to see if these areas can be developed.
  - c. To be done after accurate trail data is collected and new maps are created.

Figure 3. Red Hill Planning Area



### 3.3 Gypsum Hills Planning Area

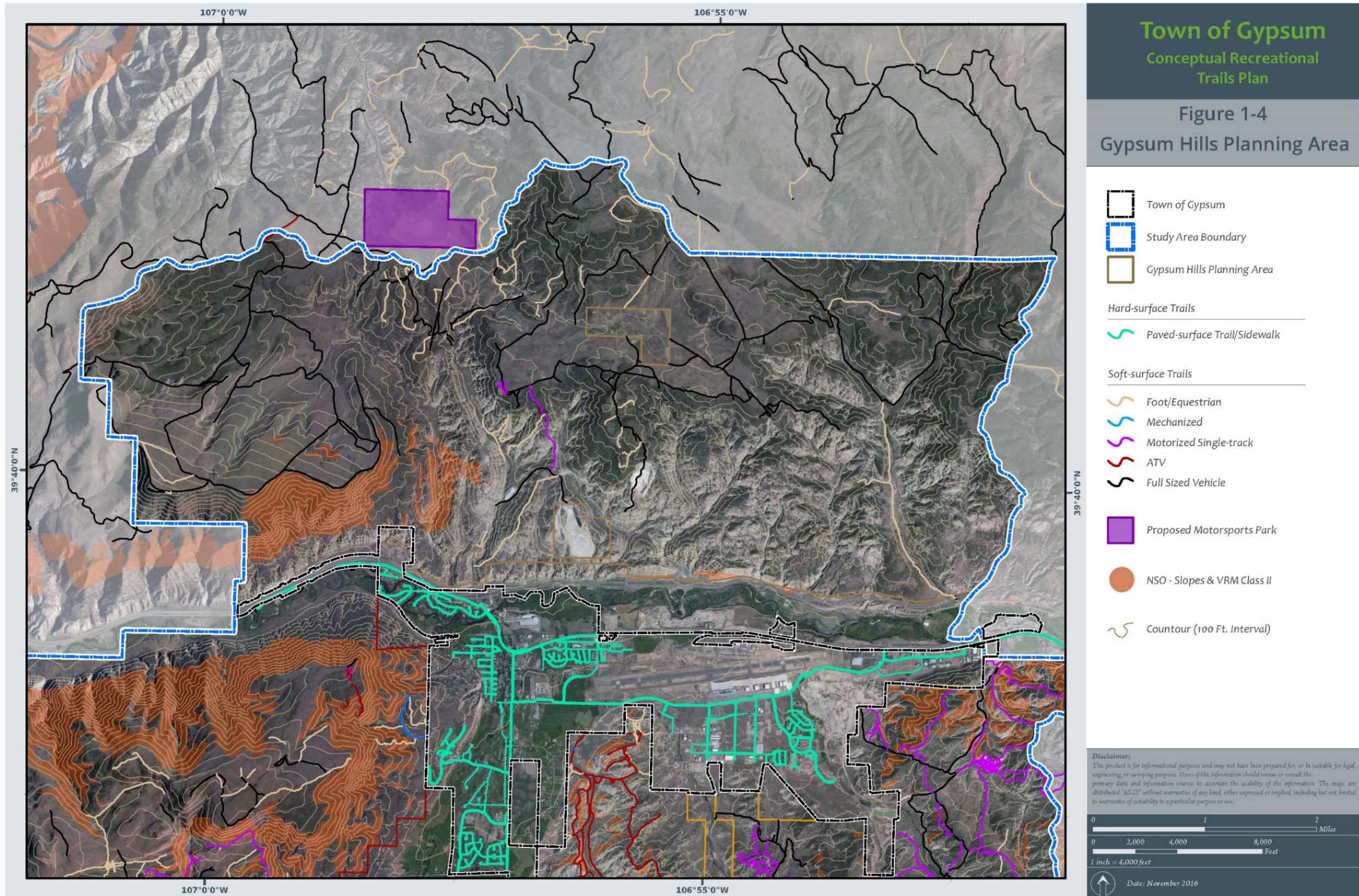
The Gypsum Hills area north of Town must take into consideration the large areas of BLM lands to the north. Any potential trail activities within the Planning Area should ensure they are compatible with adjacent land uses. The recent purchase of the Dry Lake motocross facility will undoubtedly drive future planning in this area.

- This area could see mechanized (mountain biking), foot trail (hiking or equestrian) or motorized trail development.
  - The Gypsum Hills area could provide opportunities for any of these activities
- **Recommendation** – Whatever trail opportunities the Town would want to explore in this area, the trails should be segregated and not be “multiple use trails”. The Dry Lake motocross facility would seem to direct that additional motorized trails in the area would make sense, but the Hardscrabble area already provides a lot of motorized opportunities. Development of trail systems in this area will be constrained by BLM restrictions on visual impacts, steep slope/fragile soil development, municipal watersheds, and other factors. However, these restrictions are not so extensive as to preclude significant additional trail mileage.

#### 3.3.1 Next Steps

1. **Review Mapping of Trails** – existing trails should be double-checked, and information on trail use designations or difficulty would be beneficial. This can be done using Town staff, trail consultants, volunteer trail user groups, 3<sup>rd</sup> party contractors, etc.
  - a. Collect data with accurate GPS units and identify problem areas (such as erosion issues where resource damage is occurring).
  - b. Categorize trail use (OHV, full-sized vehicles, single-track [motorized and non-motorized]).
  - c. Identify illegal or “bandit” trails that are causing resource damage, trespass issues, etc.
  - d. Consider uploading trails data to Town website for users to download onto mobile devices (phones, pads) to help keep users on legal routes, avoid trespass, etc.
2. **Investigate New Trail Opportunities** – After accurate trails mapping is complete or deemed acceptable as-is, then additional planning can continue.
  - a. There are a lot of opportunities in this area – but only “single track” or designated trails; there is no opportunity for “play areas.”
  - b. Meet with BLM to assess new trail interests; resource protection will be a high priority, so trails must be well planned and designed.
  - c. Motocross park will likely drive opportunities.

Figure 4. Gypsum Hills Planning Area



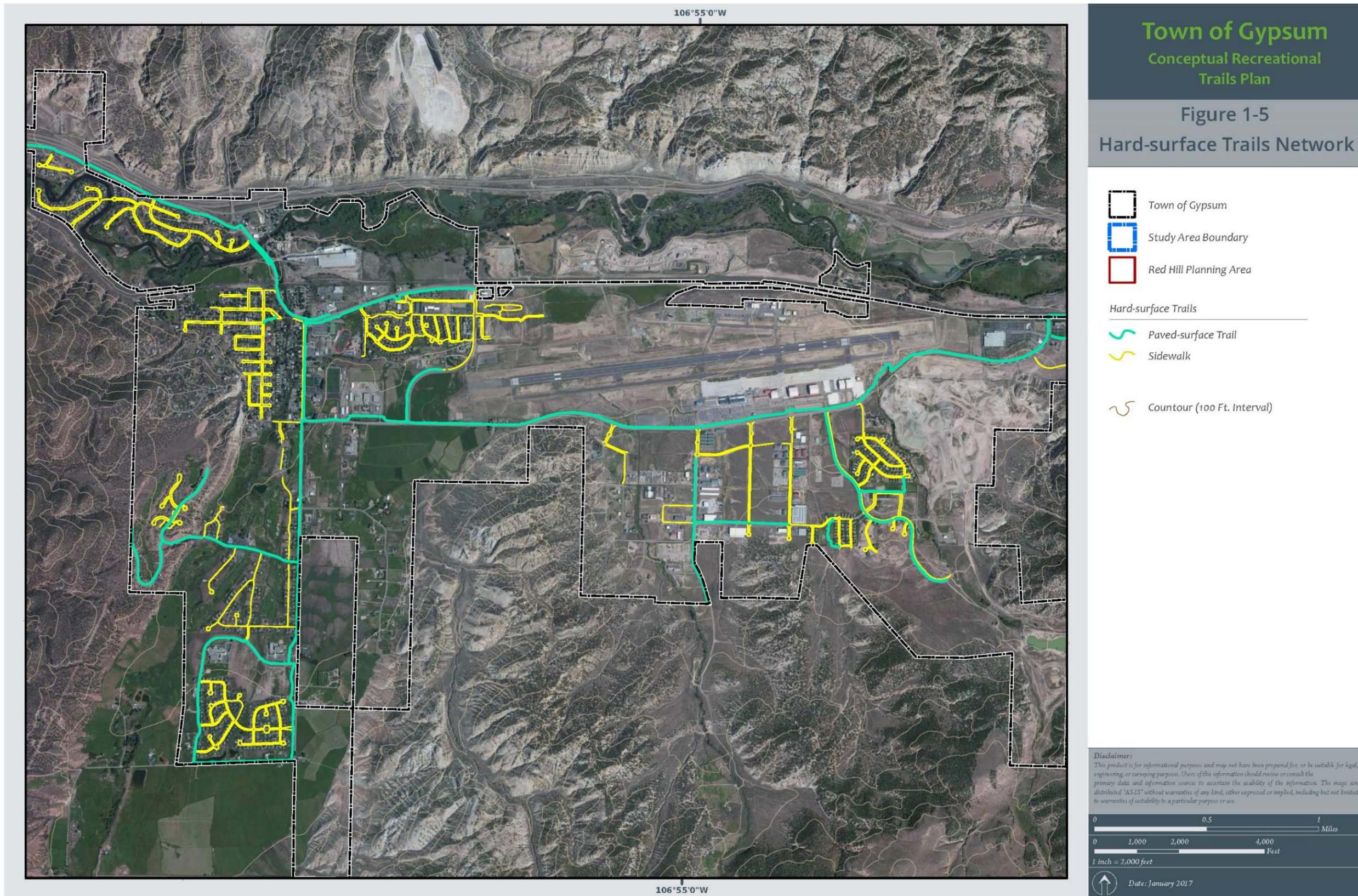
### 3.4 Connection from Town Core

Within the town there is abundant connectivity and there are numerous routes for accessing in-town destinations and residential zones via a broad network of sidewalks and paved-surface trail systems, including the Eagle Valley Core Trail.

Opportunities for expanding the current hard-trail system within the town are limited, but could nevertheless benefit from minor extensions as sidewalk networks are built to accommodate ongoing and future residential developments. The existing network of sidewalks and paved-surface trails adequately accommodate the needs of casual walkers and facilitate in-town pedestrian travel.

- **Recommendation** – Signage to help direct users to trailheads
- **Recommendation** – Investigate grant options to help with signage, trails, and public engagement (such as GoCo grants [<http://www.goco.org/>])

Figure 5. Town Hard-Surface Trails



### 3.5 Public Engagement Process

As an integral step in the process of trails planning, it is recommended that the Town of Gypsum conduct a public outreach process to solicit planning-level input from area trails users and land managers.

Different types of trail users often have vastly different preferences and needs for trail experiences. With considerations for population growth and technological advances in trail equipment and vehicles, trail system planning and development has become far more intricate and complex over the past decade. Often times, certain user-types are seeking (and expecting) a very specific type of trail experience, whether it be a flow-style mountain bike trail, an enduro-style cross-county motorcycle trail, or a hiking and equestrian trail that offers solitude and scenic overlooks. As a newer trend in trail planning, certain trails may be designed for very specific needs and users, as many trail uses may not be compatible with one another. One potential outcome of a public outreach process may be the establishment of user “zones”, where specific areas may be planned for distinct user experiences, such as motocross riding, cross-country skiing, or family/ kid-friendly walking trails.

Avid trail users should be consulted during the trail planning process, and users generally prefer to be involved and contribute their local knowledge and experience to such efforts. This Plan recommends that the Town of Gypsum conduct individual public outreach meetings with the following user groups, which have generally compatible trail preferences and needs:

- Public Land Managers (BLM, Forest Service, CPW, Eagle County, Town of Gypsum, Town of Eagle)
- Hikers & Equestrian Users
- Mountain Bikers (including winter fat bikers) & Trail Runners
- Road Cyclists & Bicycle Commuters
- Motorcycle Users (motocross and enduro user types)
- OHV Users (Jeep/4x4 and ATV/UTV users)
- Snowmobilers
- Cross Country Skiers & Snowshoe Users

By conducting individual meetings with these trail users, the Town can successfully collect a vast amount of information that can be channeled into a trails planning effort that meets the majority of current and future needs of local user groups, while also bolstering tourism potential with a well-planned trail system.

### 3.6 Cost Estimates for Trail Construction

#### Soft Trail Estimates

- For machine-built trails- approximately \$2 linear foot.
- For hand-built (using paid crews, as opposed to volunteers)- approximately \$4 linear foot
- For hand crews in harder terrain (lots of vegetation, having to construct benches, etc., approximately \$10 linear foot

To determine costs, a grid system can be employed in a GIS to categorize constructability: X%

is easy, X% is moderate, X% is difficult- then this can be applied to a conceptual trail alignment to generate cost estimates.

### **Hard Trail Estimates**

- For 10-foot-wide concrete trail, cost estimate is \$82 per linear foot, for a site with moderate construction access.
  - \$65/ft for concrete work + 10% for dirt work + 5% for survey, etc., + another 10% for hardship (access, stormwater, reclamation, unforeseen circumstances, etc.).
  - For more difficult sites (with excessive vegetation, steeper slopes), add another 10%.

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## APPENDIX A

# BLM ARMP GUIDANCE - HARDSCRABBLE SRMA<sup>2</sup>

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[https://www.blm.gov/style/medialib/blm/co/field\\_offices/crvfo/crvfo\\_rod.Par.56443.File.dat/01%20CRVFO\\_ROD\\_ARMP\\_FINAL\\_6-12-15.pdf](https://www.blm.gov/style/medialib/blm/co/field_offices/crvfo/crvfo_rod.Par.56443.File.dat/01%20CRVFO_ROD_ARMP_FINAL_6-12-15.pdf)

## RECREATION AND VISITOR SERVICES

**REC-GOAL-01.** *Produce a diversity of quality recreational opportunities that support the outdoor-oriented lifestyles and the quality of life of participants, which in turn can benefit local communities, regional economies, and the environment.*

**REC-OBJ-01.** *Foster a sense of awareness and stewardship in recreational participants and local community partners to maintain recreation values in: SRMAs, ERMAs, developed recreation sites and community growth areas (BLM lands adjacent to, between, and surrounding communities); as well as safeguard cultural and natural resources.*

*Note: Each recreation management area has a specific objective in addition to this overarching objective.*

### SPECIAL RECREATION MANAGEMENT AREAS

**REC-MA-01.** Designate five special recreation management areas (SRMA) (62,800 acres):

- **REC-MA-01a.** Hardscrabble-East Eagle SRMA (21,900 acres)
- **REC-MA-01b.** King Mountain SRMA (13,000 acres)
- **REC-MA-01c.** Red Hill SRMA (3,100 acres)
- **REC-MA-01d.** The Crown SRMA (9,100 acres)
- **REC-MA-01e.** Upper Colorado River SRMA (15,700 acres).

*Note: A complete management framework for each RMA can be found in Appendix F – Recreation and Visitor Services Management Framework for Special and Extensive Recreation Management Areas.*

### HARDSCRABBLE-EAST EAGLE SPECIAL RECREATION MANAGEMENT AREA

**REC-OBJ-01a (Hardscrabble-East Eagle SRMA - RMZ 1).** *Participants in surveys/assessments report an average 4.0 realization (4.0 on a probability scale where: 1 = not at all realized to 5 = totally realized) of the targeted experiences and benefits listed below, five years after the beginning of implementation.*

*Activities:*

- *Mountain biking for cross-country (XC) type bikes.*
- *Hiking.*

*Experiences:*

- *Enjoying frequent access to outdoor physical activity*
- *Developing your skills and abilities*

- *For the challenge or sport*
- *Enjoying the areas wildlife, scenery, views and aesthetics.*

*Benefits:*

- *Personal:*
    - *Improved physical fitness/ better health maintenance*
    - *Improved outdoor recreation skills*
    - *Living a more outdoor-oriented lifestyle.*
    - *Improved balance of work and play in my life*
    - *Restored my mind from stress/tension/anxiety*
  - *Community/Social:*
    - *Heightened sense of satisfaction with our community*
    - *Lifestyle improvement or maintenance*
    - *Enlarged sense of community dependency on public lands*
    - *Greater community involvement in recreation and other land use decisions*
  - *Environmental:*
    - *Preservation of the special landscape character of this place*
  - *Economic:*
    - *Maintain local tourism revenue*
    - *Increased desirability as a place to live or retire.*
- 

**REC-MA-01a (Hardscrabble-East Eagle SRMA - RMZ 1).** Supporting management action and allowable use decisions include the following:

*Camping Restrictions:*

- In areas open to camping and overnight use, apply a 14-day camping limit on BLM lands from September 1 to March 31. From April 1 to August 31, apply a 7-day camping limit. Campers must relocate at least a 30-mile radius away and may not return within 30 days to a previous campsite.

*Special Recreation Permits:*

- The CRVFO would evaluate the need for new SRPs or new uses on existing permits every 5 years. SRPs are issued as a discretionary action for activities that: 1) are consistent with resource/program objectives, 2) are within budgetary/ workload constraints, 3) would satisfy a demand from the public that the applicant can factually demonstrate is not being met and 4) would not cause public health and safety issues or create user conflicts.
- Vending permits are prohibited except for special events.

*Firearm Use Restriction:*

- The discharge of firearms for recreational target shooting is prohibited in developed recreation sites.

*Fuels/Fire Management and Vegetation Treatments:*

- Allow fuels/vegetation treatments provided that the natural character and other recreation values on BLM land are not impacted over the long-term.

*Forestry:*

- The SRMA is open to timber harvest, firewood cutting and special forest product harvest that can be implemented without affecting the desired recreation setting. Allow vegetation treatments within SRMA provided that the natural character and other recreation values on BLM land are not impacted over the long-term.

*Lands and Realty:*

- ROW avoidance areas are applied to the SRMA.
- The SRMA is retained for long-term management.
- Recommend to the Secretary of the Interior withdrawal of developed recreation sites and SRMAs from mineral entry (close to the mining laws for locatable mineral exploration or development).

*Salable Minerals/Mineral Material Disposal:*

- The SRMA is closed to salable minerals/mineral material disposal (such as moss rock, top soil, sand and gravel, scoria, fill dirt).

*Non-energy Solid Mineral Leasing:*

- All Federal mineral estate within SRMAs is closed to non-energy solid mineral leasing.

*Stipulations for Fluid Mineral Leasing and Other Surface-Disturbing Activities:*

- Apply stipulation CRVFO-NSO-25 which prohibits surface use, occupancy and surface-disturbing activities in SRMAs.

*Visual Resource Management:*

- The SRMA is classified as VRM Class II and managed under VRM Class II objectives.

*Comprehensive Trails and Travel Management:*

- The area is classified as limited to designated routes (All modes and types of over-land public travel, except foot and horse travel, are limited to designated routes).
- The SRMA is closed to motorized and mechanized travel from December 1 to April 15 to protect wintering big game species.

*Note: A site-specific travel network of roads and trails available for public*

*use and any limitations placed on that use are included in the Approved RMP (see Appendix A.3) to the extent practical. The final network of routes would be determined through RMP implementation.*

**REC-OBJ-01a (Hardscrabble-East Eagle SRMA - RMZ 2).** *Participants in surveys/assessments report an average 4.0 realization (4.0 on a probability scale where: 1 = not at all realized to 5 = totally realized) of the targeted experiences and benefits listed below, five years after the beginning of implementation.*

*Activities.*

- *Off-highway Vehicle Riding and Driving.*

*Experiences.*

- *Escaping everyday responsibilities for a while*
- *Enjoying frequent access to outdoor physical activity*
- *For the challenge or sport*
- *To be with others who enjoy the same things I do.*

*Benefits.*

- *Personal:*
  - *Living a more outdoor-oriented lifestyle*
  - *Improved balance of work and play in my life*
  - *Enhance sense of personal freedom*
  - *Restored my mind from stress/tension/anxiety*
  - *Developing stronger ties with my family or friends*
- *Community/Social:*
  - *Lifestyle improvement or maintenance*
  - *Strengthening relationships with family and friends*
  - *Enlarged sense of community dependency on public lands*
  - *Greater community involvement in recreation and other land use decisions*
- *Environmental:*
  - *Greater community ownership and stewardship of recreation and natural resources*
- *Economic:*
  - *Maintain local tourism revenue*
  - *Increased desirability as a place to live or retire.*

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**REC-MA-01a (Hardscrabble-East Eagle SRMA - RMZ 2).** Supporting management action and allowable use decisions include:

*Camping Restrictions:*

- *Parking, camping and overnight use is prohibited on BLM lands along the North Hardscrabble Access Road (Spring Creek) within 300 feet from the centerline of said road located in T. 5 S., R 85 W., Track 80, 6<sup>th</sup> PM.*

- In areas open to camping and overnight use, apply a 14-day camping limit on BLM lands from September 1 to March 31. From April 1 to August 31, apply a 7-day camping limit. Campers must relocate at least a 30-mile radius away and may not return within 30 days to a previous campsite.

*Special Recreation Permits:*

- The CRVFO would evaluate the need for new SRPs or new uses on existing permits every 5 years. SRPs are issued as a discretionary action for activities that: 1) are consistent with resource/program objectives, 2) are within budgetary/ workload constraints, 3) would satisfy a demand from the public that the applicant can factually demonstrate is not being met and 4) would not cause public health and safety issues or create user conflicts.
- Vending permits are prohibited except for special events.

*Firearm Use Restriction:*

- The discharge of firearms for recreational target shooting is prohibited in developed recreation sites and along North Hardscrabble Access Road (Spring Creek) within 300 feet from the centerline of said road located in T. 5 S., R 85 W., Track 80, 6th PM.

*Fuels/Fire Management and Vegetation Treatments:*

- Allow fuels/vegetation treatments provided that the natural character and other recreation values on BLM land are not impacted over the long-term (5 years).

*Forestry:*

- The SRMA is open to timber harvest, firewood cutting and special forest product harvest that can be implemented without affecting the desired recreation setting. Allow vegetation treatments within SRMA provided that the natural character and other recreation values on BLM land are not impacted over the long-term (5 years).

*Lands and Realty:*

- ROW avoidance areas are applied to the SRMA.
- The SRMA is retained for long-term management.
- Recommend to the Secretary of the Interior withdrawal of developed recreation sites and SRMAs from mineral entry (close to the mining laws for locatable mineral exploration or development).

*Salable Minerals/Mineral Material Disposal:*

- The SRMA is closed to salable minerals/mineral material disposal (such as moss rock, top soil, sand and gravel, scoria, fill dirt).

*Non-energy Solid Mineral Leasing:*

- All Federal mineral estate within SRMAs is closed to non-energy solid mineral leasing.

*Stipulations for Fluid Mineral Leasing and Other Surface-Disturbing Activities:*

- Apply stipulation CRVFO-NSO-25 which prohibits surface use, occupancy and surface-disturbing activities in SRMAs.

*Visual Resource Management:*

- The SRMA is classified as VRM Class II and managed under VRM Class II objectives.

*Comprehensive Trails and Travel Management:*

- The area is classified as limited to designated routes (All modes and types of over-land public travel, except foot and horse travel, are limited to designated routes).
- The SRMA is closed to motorized and mechanized travel from December 1 to April 15 to protect wintering big game species.

*Note: A site-specific travel network of roads and trails available for public use and any limitations placed on that use are included in the Approved RMP (see Appendix A.3) to the extent practical. The final network of routes would be determined through RMP implementation.*

## **KING MOUNTAIN SPECIAL RECREATION MANAGEMENT AREA**

**REC-OBJ-01b (King Mountain SRMA).** *Participants in surveys/assessments report an average 4.0 realization (4.0 on a probability scale where: 1 = not at all realized to 5 = totally realized) of the targeted experiences and benefits listed below, five years after the beginning of implementation.*

*Activities.*

- *Hunting by horseback (Scouting)*
- *Viewing wildlife*
- *Camping.*

*Experiences.*

- *Enjoying the area's wildlife, scenery, views and aesthetics*
- *To experience the natural surroundings*
- *Enjoying the closeness of family/friends*
- *For the challenge or sport.*

**APPENDIX B**  
**BLM ARMP GUIDANCE - GYPSUM HILLS ERMA**

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*Comprehensive Trails and Travel Management:*

- The area is classified as limited to designated routes (All modes and types of over-land public travel, except foot and horse travel is limited to designated routes).
- Over-snow travel is prohibited on portions of the ERMA.

*Note: A site-specific travel network of roads and trails available for public use and any limitations placed on that use are included in the Approved RMP (see Appendix A.3) to the extent practical. The final network of routes would be determined through RMP implementation.*

## **GYPSUM HILLS EXTENSIVE RECREATION MANAGEMENT AREA**

**REC-OBJ-03c (Gypsum Hills ERMA).** *In the Gypsum Hills ERMA the recreation and visitor services focus on interdisciplinary travel management and visitor services maintains the existing landscape and supports participation in a variety of established recreation activities (e.g., motorsports, rock crawling, mountain biking for cross-country (XC) type bikes, hiking, hunting and scenic driving) commensurately with other land uses and protecting winter wildlife habitat.*

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**REC-MA-03c (Gypsum Hills ERMA).** Supporting management action and allowable use decisions include:

*Camping Restrictions:*

- In areas open to camping and overnight use, apply a 14-day camping limit on BLM lands from September 1 to March 31. From April 1 to August 31, apply a 7-day camping limit. Campers must relocate at least a 30-mile radius away and may not return within 30 days to a previous campsite.

*Special Recreation Permits:*

- The CRVFO would evaluate the need for new SRPs or new uses on existing permits every 5 years. SRPs are issued as a discretionary action for activities that: 1) are consistent with resource/program objectives, 2) are within budgetary/ workload constraints, 3) would satisfy a demand from the public that the applicant can factually demonstrate is not being met and 4) would not cause public health and safety issues or create user conflicts.
- Vending permits are prohibited except for special events.

*Firearm Use Restriction:*

- The discharge of firearms for recreational target shooting is prohibited in developed recreation sites.

*Fuels/Fire Management and Vegetation Treatments:*

- Allow fuels/vegetation treatments within the ERMA provided that the natural character and other recreation values on BLM land are not impacted over the long-term (5 years).

*Forestry:*

- The ERMA is open to timber harvest, firewood cutting and special forest product harvest that can be implemented without affecting the recreation objective.

*Lands and Realty:*

- ROW avoidance areas are applied to developed recreation sites.
- The ERMA is retained for long-term management.

*Stipulations for Fluid Mineral Leasing and Other Surface-Disturbing Activities:*

- Apply stipulation CRVFO-CSU-11 which constrains surface use, occupancy, and surface disturbing activities in ERMA's.

*Comprehensive Trails and Travel Management:*

- The area is classified as limited to designated routes (All modes and types of over-land public travel, except foot and horse travel is limited to designated routes).
- Over-snow travel is prohibited on portions of the ERMA.

*Note: A site-specific travel network of roads and trails available for public use and any limitations placed on that use are included in the Approved RMP (see Appendix A.3) to the extent practical. The final network of routes would be determined through RMP implementation.*

## **NEW CASTLE EXTENSIVE RECREATION MANAGEMENT AREA**

**REC-OBJ-03d (New Castle ERMA).** *In the New Castle ERMA, cooperative management with the Town of New Castle maintains adjacent BLM lands as open space which supports participation in a variety of day-use, non-motorized recreation activities (e.g., mountain biking for cross-country (XC) type bikes, walking/hiking and river-related) commensurately with other land uses.*

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**REC-MA-03d (New Castle ERMA).** Supporting management action and allowable use decisions include:

*Camping Restrictions:*

- Camping and overnight use is prohibited in the Garfield Creek Colorado River Access Site and on surrounding BLM lands in T 6 S., R. 91 W, Sections 7 and 8.