

FISHERS PEAK STATE PARK MASTER PLAN

COMMUNITY INFORMATION SESSION OVERVIEW

DECEMBER 14 AND DECEMBER 17, 2020

MASTER PLAN OVERVIEW AND STRUCTURE

The Fishers Peak State Park Master Plan (Master Plan) is an overarching management guide, which will help identify desired future conditions to guide long-term management and development for the State Park. The approach to developing the Master Plan encompasses on-site data collection and analysis, local community involvement and outreach, stakeholder engagement at the regional and state-wide levels, and collaboration and guidance from a variety of subject-matter experts (largely from Partner organizations). Through this collaborative and iterative approach, the Master Plan will be informed by both science and public sentiment, and, in doing so, will work to find the right balance between the necessity for protecting the State Park with the opportunity for meaningful human access and recreation.

The Master Plan is being designed to:

- **Inform** future CPW leadership and staff on operations, needs, and issues;
- **Guide** the management of natural, cultural and recreational resources;
- **Identify** enhancement opportunities;
- **Serve** as a guide for future budget allocations and annual funding requests;
- **Develop** a phased approach for plan implementation.

Project Leadership Team (PLT): The PLT (CPW, The Nature Conservancy, Great Outdoors Colorado, Trust for Public Land, City of Trinidad and Las Animas County), works at the policy level of the Master Plan. Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) is the owner of Fishers Peak State Park and final decision-maker, but is committed to working collaboratively with the PLT to guide decisions about the future of the State Park.

Growing Partnership: While the five original partners make up the core group of organizations who got the Fishers Peak State Park project off the ground, the partnership has quickly grown to include other important organizations who have greatly contributed to the effort. These include Colorado Lottery, DOLA, CDOT, and Trinidad State Junior College.

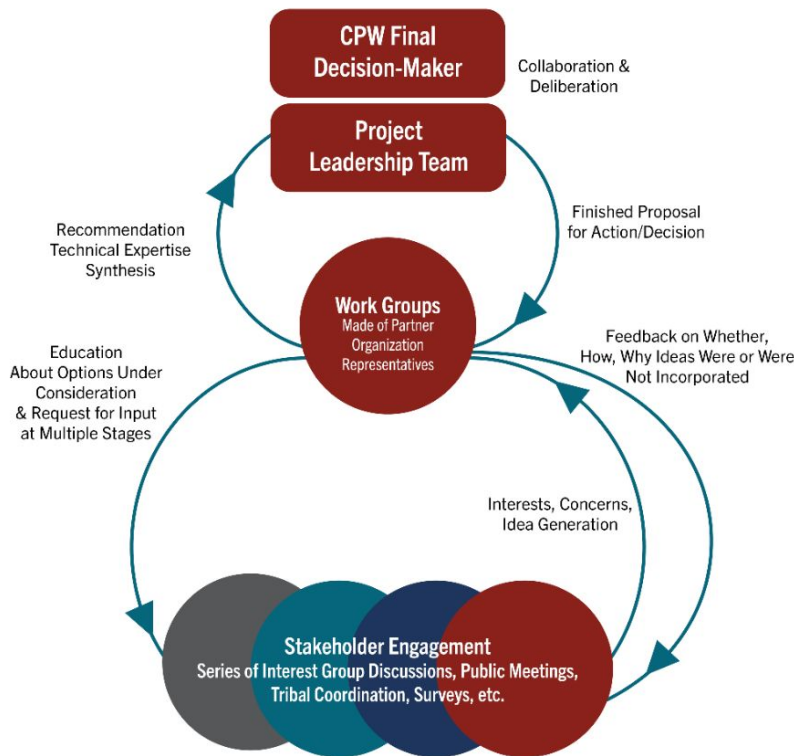
Work Groups: Work Groups, primarily made up of subject-matter and technical staff from Partner organizations, are where data and technical concepts for the Master Plan are discussed and synthesized. It is at the Work Group level that trade offs relating to potential concepts will be analyzed, providing technical input to the PLT.

Interest Group Discussions: These conversations will engage governmental and non-governmental organizations and businesses. The purpose of these discussion groups is twofold: (1) to enable interest

groups to share ideas, expertise, and thoughts on opportunities and challenges related to the park and (2) to build relationships between the Project Team (inclusive of all partners and consultants working on the project) and interest groups for the Master Plan process. The Project Team anticipates meeting with the interest groups in the first quarter of 2021 and following up with group members throughout the duration of the Master Plan. The ideas generated through Interest Group discussions will then be brought to the Work Groups for discussion and deliberation (see graphic below). Representatives of governmental and non-governmental organizations and businesses with direct knowledge and/or expertise will be asked to complete a questionnaire to place them in the appropriate Interest Group discussions. Opportunity to sign up will be available at fisherspeakstatepark.com in early 2021.

Local, Regional, and Statewide Stakeholders: Stakeholders are any individual or group that has an interest in Fishers Peak State Park outside of the partner organizations. An important piece of the Master Plan engagement effort is working with local, regional, and statewide stakeholders to understand perspectives and ideas related to the State Park. The Project Team has a number of outreach opportunities planned for engagement in the planning process, including surveys and public meetings, and stakeholders can contact the Project Team at any point during the project with ideas and questions at info@fisherspeakstatepark.com.

Inclusivity and Equity Review Panel: A small number of inclusivity experts and community leaders are working with the Project Team and partners to review the Community Engagement Plan with a goal of providing insight into opportunities to be inclusive and equitable in our outreach and engagement.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- Process
 - **What types of community engagement activities are planned? How can I be a part of the process?**
 - Ensuring meaningful involvement for the local, regional, and state-wide communities in the Master Planning process is important to the Project Team. Several activities are planned for 2021 in accordance with the Master Plan schedule. These include:
 - Public Meetings - Similar to those held in December 2020, more public meetings (virtual or in-person depending on COVID) are slated for 2021. These meetings will be milestone-based, meaning they will be scheduled at key times during the planning process when public input and communication are essential. The next round of public meetings is anticipated for Spring 2021.
 - Interest Group Discussions - Early in 2021 Interest Group Discussions will be conducted on a range of topics relevant to the development of the State Park. Be on the lookout for more information at fisherspeakstatepark.com.
 - Surveys - Surveys will be developed to gather input from a broad range of stakeholders.
 - Website Comment Form - Members of the public are encouraged to provide feedback and ideas using [this comment form](#).
 - Stakeholder Engagement Newsletter List
 - To sign up for Fishers Peak Master Plan public e-blast newsletters featuring updates and opportunities for engagement please fill out [this form](#).
 - **How is the Master Plan using the early Visioning work from the local Community that occurred in 2018?**
 - The partners used the initial [Community Visioning Document](#), developed by Trust for Public Land and the City of Trinidad, as a foundational resource on which to base the partner Visioning process. Visioning documents stemming from this process are available on the website.
- Volunteer and Employment Opportunities
 - **Can I volunteer for trail building or other opportunities at the State Park?**
 - There are no details currently available about volunteer opportunities, although there may be a number of volunteer projects available in the summer of 2021. More information will be made available at fisherspeakstatepark.com.
 - **Will there be paid positions available?**

- **Will dogs be allowed on Fishers Peak State Park? Why aren't they allowed now?**
 - Currently dogs are not allowed on the State Park while data and information is being gathered about species and ecosystems. Dog access will be further evaluated throughout the Master Planning process.
- **Will there be a trail to the peak and if so, how long might it be?**
 - There are discussions currently taking place about building a trail to the peak; however, no final decisions have been made at this time.
 - A rough estimate of a roundtrip to the top of the peak and back is 15 to 20 miles; however, more technical analysis and design considerations are required.
- **Is there a timeline for more of the State Park to be open beyond the sneak peek opportunities?**
 - The Master Plan timeline estimates completion in the first quarter of 2022. Investments and property openings would be budgeted and scheduled through subsequent CPW decision-making.
 - CPW is working on additional trail opportunities in 2021, but they may not be open to the public until 2022. Additional hunting opportunities will be available in 2021.
- **Management Techniques**
 - **Will renewable energy be used on Fishers Peak State Park?**
 - This is currently undecided. CPW does use renewable energy in certain areas, but we are currently too early in the process to make determination at this time.
 - **Will visitor conflicts be managed, such as between potential conflicts among bicycling and horseback riding?**
 - The Master Plan process will evaluate types of recreation management strategies and design techniques to mitigate visitor conflicts as well as manage impacts to species and ecosystems
- **Inclusivity and Equity**
 - **How do you plan to engage diverse users in the Stakeholder Engagement process? How will you navigate challenges for those who may not have the ability to engage virtually?**
 - It is a priority for the project partners to engage diverse users in the planning process. To support this priority, a group of equity and inclusivity experts, local leaders, and representatives of diverse users are reviewing our engagement plan and providing feedback to ensure that the Project Team is collaborating with the users we hope to engage. We are also engaging Tribes through a consultation process and setting up a number of interest group discussions. If you have ideas for ways to better engage diverse users we would love to hear from you [here](#).
 - **Will there be wheelchair/disability access?**

- Accessibility is an important consideration for the Project Team. At this time, an accessible restroom has been constructed at the main parking lot. During the Master Planning Process, we will be looking for future opportunities for accessibility in the State Park.
- Regional Connectivity
 - **Will there be access to New Mexico or neighboring Colorado state wildlife areas?**
 - Currently, the Project Team is looking at regional connectivity, but no decisions have been made. The Project Team has met with and will continue to engage partners in Raton and the state of New Mexico.
- Data Collection
 - **What is the process for collecting data about the plant and animal species on Fishers Peak State Park? What has been found so far?**
 - Data collection is an important part of gathering information to inform the Master Plan and recreation opportunities. Data will continue to be collected from the State Park to inform management strategies and understand trends as management strategies are adapted based on information available to CPW.
 - There is a large crew of experts working to create a robust inventory of the State Park. This includes documenting plants, animals, ecosystems, geological features, and historical sites.
 - There have been a number of species identified that only live in this region (not necessarily strictly on the Fishers Peak property). This means they are “globally significant.” As such, these and other species will need protection to ensure they are safe amid the management concepts developed in the master plan. More information will be made available as data collection continues.
 - To date the Project Team has identified old growth forests, at least 350-400 years old, and almost 900 species, including some insects and butterflies that live nowhere else in the world.
 - You can find a few examples of plant and animal species found on the property on the website: www.fisherspeakstatepark.com
 - **How is the human history and culture of Fishers Peak State Park being included in the Planning Process?**
 - Documenting, honoring, and preserving the human history and culture of what is now Fishers Peak State Park is a priority for the Project Team. Currently several activities are taking place to meet this priority, including developing opportunities for education, working with Tribes to integrate their stories, and identifying specific geographical points that require protecting. These efforts will be further developed and refined through stakeholder engagement and Master Planning efforts in 2021.
- Other

- **Will the State Park show up on Google Maps?**
 - CPW and the Project Team don't have control over what data is presented on Google Maps. However, there will be maps of the State Park posted to fisherspeakstatepark.com further along in the Master Planning process.