



Mitigation Efforts Planned Around Skyline Trail

Fuel Reduction Project Undertaken In Conjunction with Mt. Werner Water

STEAMBOAT SPRINGS, COLORADO-May 26, 2022-With severe fire activity over the past several years and another active fire season predicted, a joint project between the city and Mt. Werner Water & Sanitation District (MWW) will look to enhance protections for the wildland urban interface (WUI) in the critical Fish Creek watershed area.

“This will be visible and impactful with the planned closures, so we wanted to provide the community as much notice as possible,” said Parks, Trails & Open Space Manager Craig Robinson. “Once the project is complete, the resulting break will provide valuable fire mitigation, watershed protection and enhanced habitat for wildlife.”

The project is being conducted by Western Timber Management under the direction of the Colorado State Forest Service. The current plan anticipates mobilization on Tuesday, May 31, and work to start on Wednesday, June 1. The project should run between 4 to 6 weeks depending upon weather, slope steepness and hand crew speed/availability.



As a result, closures will be enacted for portions of the Skyline trail from Monday through Friday (red locations on photo) but anticipate being open on weekends. Access from Heavenly View and extending to the top and over to N. Steamboat Blvd will be closed for an estimated one to two weeks due to heavy machinery. The trail from the MWW Clearwater parking lot will remain open through most of the contracting period (0.5 miles—yellow locations). Please follow closure signage for your own safety.

Approximately 46 acres is being targeted in the zone. Mastication efforts will rely on tracked machinery outfitted with drumheads or hand felling or piling material on steeper slopes. Under the plan, diseased, dead, or dying Gambel Oak/Mountain Shrub along with standing dead aspen within the project areas will be treated to provide an adequate fire break. The woody vegetation will be mulched/chipped into smaller pieces and left to decompose or piled in slash piles approximately 15 feet apart.

“This will greatly assist in providing protection to the Fish Creek Plant and surrounding areas,” commented MWW General Manager Frank Alfone. “These mitigation efforts were identified in the adopted Protection Plan a few years ago and provide key buffer zones for this valuable water resource.”

The Critical Community Watershed Wildfire Protection Plan was developed for the Fish Creek Basin which looks to protect the critical drinking water supply and infrastructure as well as overall watershed health from wildfires.

The Fish Creek Basin, a 26-square-mile heavily forested watershed area that sits primarily within the Medicine Bow Routt National Forest, provides most of the raw water for the city and district. Two reservoirs near the top of the watershed supply the direct diversion to a conventional filtration treatment plant near the city limits.

-WeServeTheCity-

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