

2020 EAST OF ASPEN/INDEPENDENCE PASS MASTER PLAN
Appendix A – Existing Conditions Report
Draft 3.29.21

INTRODUCTION

East of Aspen/Independence Pass Overview

The East of Aspen/Independence Pass planning area (Planning Area) is one of the gateways to Pitkin County and the Aspen area. State Highway 82, Pitkin County's major transportation route, traverses the area and offers spectacular views of Richmond Hill to the south and Independence Pass to the east. While residential development exists within close proximity to Aspen, the majority of the land within the planning area is federally owned (United States Forest Service (USFS), or locally owned by Pitkin County Open Space and Trails. The federally owned lands consists of sub-alpine, alpine wetland and mountain tundra areas within the upper Roaring Fork River drainage. The upper reaches of the Planning Area to the County line contain pristine wilderness. The Hunter-Fryingpan and Collegiate Peaks Wilderness Areas encompass most of the Planning Area.

The Planning Area also includes the spectacular Hunter Creek area and Smuggler Mountain as well as the eastern portion of land along Richmond Ridge. The planning area includes the boundaries of the Aspen Mountain Ski Area and other private ownership on the face of Aspen Mountain.

This appendix includes existing conditions data and information which supports and informs the policies and implementation measures contained in the 2020 East of Aspen/Independence Pass Master Plan to which this document is appended. The information contained herein is intended to provide a snapshot of the existing conditions within the Planning Area for each of the policy topics covered in the Master Plan. These policy topics are listed as follows:

- Existing Land Use & Planning Area Description
- Zoning
- Growth Management/House Size
- Water/Sewer
- Air Quality
- Roads
- Transit
- Natural Environment
- Open Space/Trails/Recreation/Tourism
- Agriculture

- Scenic Quality
- Affordable Housing
- Commercial Development (see Existing Land Use section)
- Historic Resources
- Mineral Extraction

Previous Land Use Plans

In 1985, the Pitkin County Planning Commission adopted the Roaring Fork East Neighborhood Master Plan to address two neighborhoods known as the Mountain Valley Neighborhood Planning Area and the Roaring Fork East Neighborhood Planning Area. The plan boundary included the portion of the upper Roaring Fork Valley generally bounded by the City of Aspen to the west, Difficult Campground to the east and the mountain ridges to the north and south. The document revised, expanded upon, and replaced the 1974 Roaring Fork East Amendment to the 1966 Aspen Area General Plan.

The overriding theme of the Roaring Fork East Neighborhood Master Plan was to preserve the existing character of the area and to plan for the most visually pleasing entrance to the City of Aspen for residents and visitors to the resort. The plan resulted in a series of goals, objectives, and a future land use map.

Since adoption of the Roaring Fork East Neighborhood Master Plan in 1985, the Aspen Area Community Plan ("AACP") was adopted and has been updated several times, with the most recent update completed in 2012. The current Aspen Area Community Plan contains an urban growth boundary Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) that includes the Preserve and Mountain Valley Subdivisions (previously included within the Roaring Fork East Neighborhood Master Plan). Consequently, the planning area for the East of Aspen/Independence Pass Master Plan begins immediately east of these two subdivisions and the Aspen Urban Growth Boundary and extends east to the Pitkin County line at the top of Independence Pass.

EXISTING LAND USE & PLANNING AREA DESCRIPTION

The East of Aspen/Independence Pass Planning Area is the second largest planning area in the County, containing 112,302 acres. However, less than 4,000 acres are private lands while the remaining 108,000 acres are federally owned. For planning purposes, the area has been broken into four neighborhood planning areas ("NPAs") that either reflect a dominant

development pattern or a natural terrain break. The NPA’s are depicted on Figure 1 and are described in the paragraphs below. Table 1 below provides the existing land use acreage for the private lands within each of the NPA’s and for the entire Planning Area. Figure 3 is a map that shows the existing land use pattern within the Planning Area. This map highlights the predominance of public open space and illustrates that the private lands primarily occur in three areas; along Highway 82 within the Tagert Lake West NPA; along Richmond Ridge within the Aspen Mountain/Richmond Ridge NPA; and adjacent to the Aspen UGB in the Smuggler/Hunter Creek NPA.

**TABLE 1
Existing land Use Acreage (Private Lands)**

Existing Land Use Category	Tagert Lake West NPA	Tagert Lake East NPA	Smuggler/Hunter Creek NPA	Aspen Mtn/Richmond Ridge NPA	Total Planning Area
Private Open Space	0.7		54.8	11.0	66.5
Condominium	2.3				2.3
Commercial	0.5			2.5	3.0
Mining Claim		668.66	39.4	1345.1	2053.2
Public Open Space	316.9		476.7	9.3	803.0
Recreation			5.0	324.2	329.2
Right-of-Way	0.2				0.2
Residential Single-Family	336.8		111.9	103.4	552.1
Utility		0.05			0.1
Vacant	120.7		54.6	12.3	187.6
Total	778.1	668.7	742.6	1807.8	3997.2

Tagert Lake West NPA (5,874 acres)

Residential development exists primarily to the northwest of, or down valley from, Tagert Lake, within close proximity to Highway 82. This NPA is located between Tagert Lake on the southeast and the North Star Preserve on the northwest; and abuts the Aspen Urban Growth Boundary. It contains all the residential development along the Highway 82 corridor from the edge of the Aspen Urban Growth Boundary to Tagert Lake. This portion of the planning area will be referred to in this Master Plan as “Tagert Lake West NPA.”

Tagert Lake East NPA (53,313 acres)

This area runs from the Tagert Lake West NPA south to the County line along Highway 82 and also incorporates Lincoln Creek Road to the County boundary. Two historic townsites (Ruby and Independence) are located within the Highway 82 and Lincoln Creek Road corridors. With the exception of a gravel storage area, a water diversion, mining remnants, trailheads and developed campsites, this portion of the planning area is primarily undeveloped public lands and mining claims from which many

development rights have been transferred via the County's Transferable Development Rights ("TDR") program.

Aspen Mountain/Richmond Ridge NPA (12,544 acres)

This long, narrow NPA follows Richmond Ridge from the City of Aspen south to the County boundary. The NPA contains the Aspen Mountain Ski Area and numerous of the mining claims that cover Aspen Mountain and Richmond Ridge. With the exception of the ski area improvements and structures, there is very little residential development on the mining claims within the Planning Area. The properties in this area do contain a number of Rural and Remote (RR) residential cabins, though many of the parcels in the area have been sterilized through the County's TDR program.

The Aspen Mountain Ski Area consists primarily of private mining claims and some federal lands. The 1998 Aspen Mountain Ski Area Master Plan generally directed, development within the ski area. Several elements of the 1998 Ski Area Master Plan have been implemented since 1998, including construction of the new Sundeck restaurant facility to replace the previously existing structure at the top of Aspen, installation of snowmaking on the lower portion of Aspen Mountain and replacement of the Ruthies chairlift.

In 2018, by BOCC Reso 070-2019, the "2018 Aspen Mountain Ski Area Amended and Restated SKI-REC Master Plan, Activity Envelope and Site Plan Review" was approved by the Board of County Commissioners. The 2018 Ski Area Master Plan only affects the existing ski area. Specific improvements approved include additional snowmaking, replacement of lifts and replacement of certain facilities.

The base of the Aspen Mountain Ski Area is located within the City of Aspen and is not included within the Planning Area. However, several private parcels on the face of Aspen Mountain, outside the ski area boundary, are within the NPA.

Smuggler/Hunter Creek NPA (40,571 acres)

This NPA comprises the northeast portion of the overall Planning Area. With the exception of limited residential development on Smuggler Mountain Road and in the lower Hunter Creek Valley, most of this NPA is in public ownership. There are several private residential parcels at the base of Red Mountain along the north side of the Hunter Creek Valley. Since the adoption of the 2003 East of Aspen/Independence Pass Master Plan, the County, in partnership with the City of Aspen, acquired many of the parcels on Smuggler Mountain for open space.

Subdivisions, Special Review Uses and Seasonal Special Permits

Table 2 provides a list of the approved subdivisions within the Planning Area. The special review uses and seasonal special permits that have been approved within the Planning Area are listed in Table 3.

**TABLE 2
Subdivisions**

Neighborhood Planning Area	Name	# Lots	Date approved
Tagert Lake West	Cooper/Aspen Park Re-Subdivision	2	1985
Tagert Lake West	Lewis Residential GMQS	1 lot and 1 affordable housing unit	1983
Tagert Lake West	Aspen Park Subdivision	5	1979
Tagert Lake West	Jacobs-Thurston/Aspen Park Re-subdivision	3	1986
Tagert Lake West	Aspen Park Re-Subdivision	2	1985
Tagert Lake West	Tagert Lake Ranch	4	1996
Tagert Lake East	Golden Age Special Review for TDRs	6	1995
Smuggler/Hunter Creek	Randall Park	2	1980
Smuggler/Hunter Creek	Benedict Hunter GMQS	1 lot and 1 affordable housing unit	1992

**TABLE 3
Special Use Permits**

Neighborhood Planning Area	Name
Tagert Lake West	Aspen Adventures (paragliding and climbing)*
Tagert Lake West	Aspen Kayak Tours* *Note: Commercial operators on the North Star Preserve Open Space in the Tagert Lake West Area change annually, subject to the Pitkin Open Space & Trails/USFS Permitting process

Tagert Lake East	T Lazy-7 Snowmobile Tours
Tagert Lake East	Ride for Independence Pass (bicycle race)
Tagert Lake East	Independence Gravel Pit (annual review)
Tagert Lake East	Twin Lakes Reservoir and Canal Co. Special Review
Smuggler/Hunter Creek	10th Mtn. Huts (Benedict and McNamara)

Transferable Development Rights (TDRs)

38 properties within the overall Planning Area have been sterilized through the Pitkin County’s TDR program. As a result, roughly 1433 acres of land have been deed restricted against future development. The largest parcel in the area from which TDRs have been removed contains approximately 648 acres and is located on Richmond Ridge. The mining claims which comprise the Independence Townsite (154 acres) have also been deed restricted against development using the County’s TDR program, as have most of the mining claims in the Ruby Townsite at the south end of the Lincoln Creek Valley.

Commercial Development

Other than campgrounds and commercial recreational uses existing commercial uses within the Planning Area are limited to the Wildwood School, scattered small-scale professional offices, the Independence Gravel Pit and the Twin Lakes water diversion. The Independence Gravel Pit operation is subject to annual review by Pitkin County.

ZONING

Zoning Descriptions

There are roughly 3,997 acres of privately owned lands within the Planning Area. The private lands are divided into 10 zone districts as described in Table 4 and in illustrated on the Zoning Map (Figure 5). Table 4 provides a summary of the intent statements for each zone district and identifies the properties contained within each district (left-hand column).

**TABLE 4
Zone Districts Summary**

Zone District	Intent
AR-2 <i>1 Dwelling</i>	The intent of the AR-2 (Agricultural/Forestry/Residential) zone

<p><i>unit per 2 acres of land.</i> (Small areas near The Preserve and Stillwater Ranch Subdivisions)</p>	<p>district is "to provide for a moderate density, transition zone between moderate and low-density residential land uses. This zone district primarily contains existing housing concentrations with densities exceeding those in surrounding areas. It is not intended to be used to accommodate new development in the Rural Area of the County.</p>
<p>AR-10 <i>1 Dwelling Unit per 10 acres –</i> (Bulk of the Planning Area)</p>	<p>The intent of the AR-10 (Agricultural/ Residential) zone district is "to accommodate small scale agricultural activities and large-lot residential development that maintains the rural character and appearance of the land. Because few agricultural activities can be accomplished on a 10-acre lot, the majority of such land will be used for residential uses. Residential development should be clustered and/or grouped at the edges of valleys or wooded areas in order to minimize the visual disruption of the natural landforms and to avoid the appearance of unrelated homes spread randomly across the land."</p>
<p>LIR-35 <i>1 Dwelling unit per 35 acres of land –</i> (Owl Creek Meadows, Mandalay North, Guber Family Trust Lot Split, 7-Star Open Space Parcels A & C, Brush Creek Ranch Parcel)</p>	<p>The intent of the LIR-35 zone district (Low-Impact Residential) is to allow low-density, low-intensity residential development. The principal land use in this zone district is residential, with typically associated accessory uses. The zone district seeks to limit the intensity of development to moderate sized buildings and structures, thereby minimizing the impacts of construction, servicing and occupation of the residences to preserve the rural character of the land, protect onsite natural resources, minimize employment generation associated with more intense development, and otherwise limit the demand for public services. Lands appropriate for this zone district are properties that are rural in character with environmental or agricultural resources, or environmental hazards or properties otherwise sensitive to intensive development."</p>
<p>R-15 - <i>1 Dwelling unit per 15,000 sf of land -</i> (Portions of Smuggler Grove, Ardmore, and Lower Shadow Mtn.)</p>	<p>The R-15 (Moderate Density Residential) zone district is intended to provide areas for moderate density, single-family, residential dwelling units with customary accessory uses.</p>
<p>R-30 - <i>1 Dwelling unit per 30,000 sf of land -</i> (Red Mtn. land along Hunter Creek)</p>	<p>The R-30 (Suburban Density Residential) zone district is intended to provide areas for suburban density, single-family and duplex residential dwelling units with customary accessory uses. Recreational and institutional uses customarily found near residential areas are also contemplated. R-30 zoning</p>

	should only be applied to lands designated for this density on the Pitkin County Comprehensive Plan, or to rezone already-developed areas into conformity with actual development patterns and densities.
R/R - 1 Dwelling unit per 35 acres of land - (Most federal land)	The R/R (Rural & Remote) zone district is intended to; (i) conserve and protect the natural environment and its resources, while allowing for limited recreational uses and limited residential development; (ii) preserve the small-scale, low-density backcountry character and lifestyle; (iii) retain undeveloped areas, and; (iv) allow for the transfer of development rights to areas that are more appropriate for development. The district accommodates only small new structures and very limited types of development.
RS-20 - 1 Dwelling unit per 20 acres of land - (Small area along Woody Creek)	The RS-20 PUD (Resource Planned Unit Development-20 Acre) zone district is intended to: preserve the open character of land divided into tracts between 20 and 30 acres, promote land uses consistent with the applicable Pitkin County Master Plan, and prevent inappropriate development on such tracts, regardless of whether such lands have been formally subdivided. The zone district is intended to allow only very low impact resource or residential uses on such lands and applies to areas closer to urban growth boundaries than those zoned RS-30.
SKI-REC - Development density set by master plan - (Aspen Mountain Ski Area)	The SKI-REC (Ski-Recreation) zone district is “intended for lands that are used for downhill and cross-country skiing and other uses permitted by a Federal or other public agency, such as grazing, hunting, and passive and other recreational uses. The district also accommodates affordable housing. Development activity within the SKI-REC zone district is subject to a master plan.
TR -1 - 1 Dwelling unit per 35 acres of land - (Shadow Mountain Mining Claims)	The TR-1 (Transitional Residential-1) zone district allows for low density, low intensity residential development and customary accessory uses consistent in character with historic mining. The purpose of the district is to allow residential use that minimizes impacts of construction, servicing and occupation of the residences; to decrease employment generation that would occur with more intense development; to otherwise limit the demand for public services; and preserve the character of lands in this zone district. The zone district seeks to limit the intensity and scale of development to small sized buildings and structures, as a transition from high density and intensity within the Aspen Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) to the Rural and Remote (RR) area where zoning reflects a low intensity of use.

<p>TR -2 – 1 Dwelling unit per 35 acres of land – (Shadow Mountain Mining Claims)</p>	<p>The TR-2 (Transitional Residential-2) zone district allows for low density, low intensity residential development and customary accessory uses. The purpose of the district is to allow residential use that minimizes impacts of construction, servicing and occupation of the residences; to decrease employment generation that would occur with more intense development; to otherwise limit the demand for public services; and preserve the character of lands in this zone district. The zone district seeks to limit the intensity of development to moderate sized buildings and structures, as a transition from high density and intensity within the Aspen Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) to the Rural and Remote (RR) area where zoning reflects a low intensity of use.</p>
--	---

Existing Zoning Conditions by Neighborhood Planning Area

Tagert Lake West NPA

Much of the private property and some adjacent public land within this NPA is zoned AR-10. The remainder of the area is zoned Rural/Remote (R/R). The NPA has 319 acres of locally owned conservation land, including the Northstar Preserve and James H. Smith parcels. The entire valley floor and the Tagert Lake Ranch parcels are zoned AR-10. Of the 67 parcels on the valley floor, between the Aspen UGB and Difficult Campground, 49 have existing units. This leaves 15 existing vacant parcels that have not been sterilized and retain some development potential. However, there are only two parcels that may have the ability to subdivide further, for a maximum of four additional new parcels. There is also the potential for nine additional lots on in-holdings surrounded by National Forest in the area of Tagert Lake. These four parcels are adjacent to State Highway 82 and are separated from other privately held AR-10 parcels on the valley floor by National Forest lands. (See Buildout section for a summary of the build out potential for the Tagert Lake West NPA.)

Tagert Lake East NPA

The entire Tagert Lake East NPA is zoned Rural/Remote. While there are some privately owned mining claims within this area (approximately 27), the majority of the area is publicly owned. Some of the mining claims in the Ruby Townsite area up Lincoln Creek Road have been developed with small cabins, but development rights from the remaining claims have been retired through the TDR program as the result of a 2014 Board of County Commissioners approval. The Ruby Townsite is located within a Proposed Wilderness Area. 148 acres in the Independence Townsite and

93 acres in the area of the historic Ruby Townsite have also been sterilized through the use of TDRs. Approximately 23 R/R development rights have been severed from parcels within the NPA leaving a potential for nine additional development rights which could either be used to develop R/R cabins or could be transferred to qualifying sites through the TDR program.

The USFS allows special uses within this area, such as commercial snowmobile tours. The County and CDOT have also permitted special events for the area, such as the Ride for the Pass (an event to support the non-profit Independence Pass Foundation).

Aspen Mountain/Richmond Ridge NPA

The Aspen Mountain Ski Area is zoned SKI-REC. All the privately owned mining claims outside of the ski area boundary that gain access off of Little Annie/Midnight Mine Roads are zoned Rural/Remote (R/R). Most of the land within this NPA is publicly owned and zoned either AR-10 or Rural/Remote. The Rural/Remote areas lie further from the winter-maintained portions of Highway 82. Several privately-owned parcels on the face of Aspen Mountain are within this NPA and are zoned AR-10.

There is a maximum buildout potential for 43 1,000 square foot cabins based on R/R zoning. However, many of these parcels have merged and/or would require Growth Management allocations and subdivision approval. The buildout analysis indicates that only 11 dwelling units could likely still be developed taking the units removed by conservation easements and other restrictions into account.

Smuggler/Hunter Creek NPA

Smuggler Mountain

The private property located below the high point of Smuggler Mountain Road, as seen from Aspen, is zoned AR-10. Two smaller parcels in this area are zoned R-30. The portion in and around the Hunter Creek Toll Road is zoned R/R (Rural & Remote). The undeveloped lands above the private property on Red Mountain are zoned AR-10. The remainder of the Smuggler/Hunter Creek area, generally located behind the ridge as seen from Aspen, is zoned Rural/Remote (See Buildout section below for more information regarding remaining buildout potential).

In 1993, Smuggler Mountain was included within the "Metro Area" boundaries of the AACP. When the AACP was updated in 2000 the "Metro Area" was changed to the Urban Growth Boundary and it was felt that Smuggler Mountain was not appropriate for inclusion in the UGB. The citizen work in 1993 concluded with a recommendation to purchase

Smuggler Mountain as open space and recreational land. The following comments were included in the 1993 AACP:

“31. Purchase Smuggler Mountain for open space and recreation.

It is the position of the Open Space Committee that Smuggler Mountain be purchased as open space and a recreation area for the community. We feel that it is one of the highest priorities the City and County should have relative to recreation, access to public lands and visual character.

Smuggler Mountain is the last remaining undeveloped mountainside as seen from the gondola. It has increasingly become one of the highest used recreation areas of our community. Smuggler Mountain also provides access to the USFS public lands.

We are not opposed to housing on the lower portions of Smuggler with development no higher than the existing level of development (excluding the Cooper housing located higher on the side of the mountain).”

Over the intervening years, nearly all the Smuggler Mountain parcels have been acquired by some combination of Pitkin County, the City of Aspen and/or the Aspen Valley Land Trust (AVLT). Only a few parcels within the NPA remain in private ownership and the largest of those was conserved in 2006, through an easement held by AVLT.

Warren Lakes

Two 10th Mountain huts exist in the planning area adjacent to Warren Lakes as a special use on USFS land. At one time the Warren Lakes area was privately owned but is now in USFS ownership.

NE Red Mountain

12 parcels of AR-10 zoned land exist to the northeast of the Red Mountain Subdivision. Two of these parcels are owned by the Aspen Valley Land Trust (“AVLT”), Pitkin County, or as common area for the Red Mountain Subdivision Homeowners Association. The remaining seven parcels contain four units with a maximum build out potential under AR-10 zoning of 30 units.

NW Red Mountain

One additional parcel (151 acres) of the Duroux Ranch remains in the northwest section of the NPA and is zoned AR-10. This parcel is owned by the Aspen Center for Environmental Studies (“ACES”).

The Hunter Creek Valley

The Hunter Creek Valley, which is zoned R/R, has long been a valued recreational area for the Aspen region. The Valley is primarily within the ownership of the USFS. The Hunter Creek Toll Road, a county road, traverses the area. It is closed to vehicular travel with the exception of limited use during hunting season. The Valley also contains several mining claims acquired by County Open Space and Trails to remove future development potential and preserve the valley floor

Buildout

According to the data provided in the 2003 East of Aspen-Independence Pass Master Plan (see Table 5 below), the annual growth rate between 1985 and 2001 was approximately 1.9%. Since 2003, only 2 additional dwelling units have been constructed within the Planning Area, which translates to a growth rate of .165% over the 19-year period.

**TABLE 5
Growth Rate**

Planning Area	Existing Units (1985)	Existing Units (2001)	Mean Annual Growth Rate (1985-2001)	Existing Units (2020)	Mean Annual Growth Rate (2001-2020)
EOA/Independence Pass	49	64	1.9%	66	.16%

The 2003 Master Plan showed that of the 261 residential units that could be built in the Planning Area (based on maximum buildout under existing zoning), 64 units had been built. Therefore, only 24% of potential growth had been realized for the entire East of Aspen/Independence Pass planning area at that time (see Table 6 below from the 2003 Master Plan).

**TABLE 6
Total "Maximum" Buildout Potential (2003 Master Plan)**

Planning Area	Existing Units (2001)	Buildout Potential by Zoning	Percentage Built Out
EOA/Independence Pass	64	261*	24%
Tagert Lake West	43	74	58%

* 73 potential units are located in the R/R zone and are less likely to be built upon, given their remote location and potential merger issues.

The buildout numbers from 2003 (Table 6) represent a gross buildout scenario which assigns development potential to some federal lands and

R/R-zoned parcels. The following paragraph is taken from the 2003 Master Plan and describes why reductions from this analysis are necessary to provide a more realistic estimate of the residential buildout potential.

“Further analysis indicates that the maximum likely build out potential for the entire planning area is significantly less when U. S. Forest Service properties are eliminated (54 units) and when the Bureau of Land Management properties are eliminated (35 units). The maximum 261-unit potential drops to 172 likely units provided that federal lands will not be residentially developed. Additionally, the 73 potential units recognized in the R/R zone district are likely inflated by a factor of 50 % when the realities of ownership, subdivision, Growth Management (discussed below) and the potential for severance of TDRs are considered. Therefore, the likely or more realistic buildout is approximately 137 units in the entire planning area. This leaves approximately 73 “likely” units yet to be built in the entire planning area.”

Table 7 shows the current (2020) buildout numbers for the overall Planning Area. Current numbers show that the percentage of total buildout that has been realized to date remains low at just over 25%. This is based on the method used in the 2003 Master Plan which is a simple division of the existing units by the total hypothetical buildout under zoning. It's important to note that the current buildout table (Table 7) provides a more refined metric for predicting buildout potential which accounts for the number of units that have been removed from the potential buildout through conservation easements, OST acquisition, and other subdivision restrictions. The analysis summarized in Table 7 also excludes all federal lands and includes an estimate for “Maximum Remaining Buildout Potential” as well as “Likely Remaining Buildout Potential.” The Likely Remaining Buildout Potential is based on 60% of the maximum buildout potential, which is a modifier that has been commonly used in the buildout analyses elsewhere in the County. Table 7 shows that the current remaining buildout potential is between 32 and 54 dwelling units which is significantly lower than the 73 units estimated in 2003.

TABLE 7

East of Aspen/Independence Pass Planning Area Buildout (2020)

Zone Districts	Private Land ¹			Land subject to Conservation Agreements ²		Maximum Buildout Allowed by Zoning (Dwelling Units) ⁴	# Dwelling Units Removed from development potential due to Conservation or subdivision restrictions	Buildout Potential after accounting for reduction from Conservation and subdivisions restrictions	# Existing Dwelling Units	Maximum Remaining Buildout Potential (Dwelling Units)	Likely Remaining Buildout Potential (Dwelling Units) ³	% Built Out based on maximum potential (Units)	Avg. House Size (sq. ft. based on heated area)
	Parcels	Acres	%	Acres	%								
Total Acreage: 112,302	246	3,997	4%	2,212	55%	261	140	121	66	54	32	122%	5,170
R-30	1	12	0%	12	0.3%	1	1	-	-	-	-	100%	No Data
AR-10	86	1,244	31%	615	15.4%	152	62	90	56	33	20	170%	5,678
RR	79	1,833	46%	1,236	30.9%	87	61	26	6	19	11	32%	1,117
TR-1	6	31	1%	28	0.7%	5	4	1	-	1	1	0%	No Data
TR-2	16	114	3%	104	2.6%	16	12	4	4	1	1	400%	5,858
SKI-REC	58	762	19%	216	5.4%	-	-	-	-	-	-	100%	9,811

¹ Includes privately-held parcels, parcels in conservation easement, Pitkin County-owned parcels, City of Aspen-owned parcels and property owned by public entities for civic uses. Does not include right-of-way or USFS lands.

² Includes conservation easements, Pitkin County-owned open space, City of Aspen-owned lands, TDR Sending Sites, private open space and common areas.

³ Likely scenario assumes that approximately 60% of maximum buildout potential is likely to be built due to physical restraints such as slope, avalanche paths, and riparian zones as well as historical development patterns related to economic conditions and growth management. Individual caucuses may wish to work with Community Development Department to revise likely buildout based on local knowledge of properties.

⁴ Maximum buildout assumes the mining claims and other parcels located within the Aspen Mountain Ski Area boundary have no residential development potential.

It's likely that the "Percentage Built Out" number will always remain low in this Planning Area since development will be hampered due to mountainous topography and the difficulty of getting to Aspen from many of the Rural/Remote zoned parcels, though such development is technically allowed by zoning.

Tagert Lake West Buildout

The bulk of private residential development potential is, and will continue to be, located within the Tagert Lake West NPA. Consequently, a separate buildout table is provided for this area to portray how much development exists and how much more is potentially allowed by zoning. Buildout data can be used to help determine whether existing zoning is appropriate, given existing and desired land use patterns in the area. **Table 8** provides a summary of the buildout data when the 2003 Master Plan was prepared. At that time, private property within the Tagert Lake West NPA was 58% built out as shown in Table 6. The maximum buildout potential in 2003 was estimated to be approximately 31 additional residential dwelling units.

TABLE 8

Tagert Lake West Buildout Summary (2003)

Planning Area	Acres	Private Parcels	Built	Vacant	Potential # "Additional" Parcels Under Zoning	Total # of Parcels Under Zoning	Max. Potential New Units in the Planning Area
East of Hwy 82	91	22	18	4	0	22	4
West of Hwy 82	53	30	23	7	4	34	11
Tagert Lake Parcel	208	4	2	2	13	18	16
Total	352	57	43	14	17	74	31

NOTES:

1. There are 356+ acres of locally owned open space in the planning area.
2. There are approximately 16 additional potential existing units within the planning area. (Some may be pre-existing, non-conforming legal dwelling units, several are legal caretaker dwelling units and some are unknown).
3. There are potentially 3 additional parcels within the planning area that are not noted with parcel IDs by the Pitkin County Assessor’s Office.

The current buildout analysis for the Tagert Lake West Area is summarized in Table 9 below. The current estimate for the “Maximum Remaining Buildout Potential” is 34 dwelling units which is three units more than the 2003 estimate. This increase is likely due to a difference in how open space was defined or to a difference in methodology in applying the density standard for each zone district.

TABLE 9

Tagerts Lake West Subarea (Easet of Aspen Caucus Area)

Zone Districts	Private Land ¹			Land subject to Conservation Agreements ²		Maximum Buildout Allowed by Zoning (Dwelling Units)	# Dwelling Units Removed from development potential due to Conservation or subdivision restrictions	Buildout Potential after accounting for reduction from Conservation and subdivision restrictions	# Existing Dwelling Units	Maximum Remaining Buildout Potential (Dwelling Units)	Likely Remaining Buildout Potential (Dwelling Units) ³	% Built Out	Avg. House Size (sq. ft. based on heated area)
	Parcels	Acres	%	Acres	%								
Total Acreage: 5,874	68	778	13%	319	41%	108	24	84	50	34	20	60%	5,321
AR-10	68	778	100%	319	41%	108	24	84	50	34	20	60%	5,321

GROWTH MANAGEMENT/HOUSE SIZE

In Pitkin County, Growth Management deals with the rate, location, quality and quantity of growth. The location of growth is typically determined on a site-specific basis at the time of land use review.

Rate and quantity of growth are determined through zoning allowances, annual competition for a specific amount of square footage allowed via the Growth Management Quota System (“GMQS”), and through Growth Management exemptions.

In 2001, house size within the Planning Area ranged from 300 to 14,894 square feet, with an average house size of 5,170 square feet. In January 2000, new Growth Management regulations were adopted in Pitkin County, which resulted in house size restrictions. The East of Aspen/Independence Pass planning area lies within the Rural Growth Management portion of the County. Consequently, new homes are limited to 5,750 square feet, which may be exceeded subject to purchase and approved use of a Transferable Development Right(s) as a Growth Management exemption, or through success in the Growth Management

Quota System competition for square footage. Only two homes were built in the Planning Area between 2003 and 2020. As previously noted, the average annual growth rate for the planning area was 1.9% for the period between 1985 and 2003. However, the annual growth rate for the years since 2003 was only .16%.

The growth management approval that has been granted through the GMQS competition process is listed in the following table.

TABLE 10
GMQS Competition Allotments

NEW DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS

	Growth Mgmt Area	Planning Area	Parcel ID #	Allotment Granted (sf)
2019				
Valley View Ajax – 1 new parcel	Rural	East Aspen	273730401003	1,160

In addition to the GMQS allotment listed above, Table 11 lists the growth management exemption approvals that have been granted within the Planning Area. In 2006 the County amended the Land Use Code to eliminate the use of TDR's for initial development rights in the rural area. As a result, most of the TDR exemptions that have been granted within the Planning Area were used to allow additional floor area to an existing dwelling. The parcels listed in the table below, referred to as "Receiver Sites," are also depicted on the TDR Sending and Receiving Sites Map (Figure 4), along with the parcels from which TDR's have been transferred (Sending Sites).

TABLE 11
TDR Receiver Site Inventory

Parcel_ID	Property Name	TDRs Approved	Purpose	Approval Doc	Year Approved
273728300006	Wildwood Land (aka Parvenir)	1	Additional Floor Area	HO 039-2001	2001
273728300005	Aspen Meyer (aka Batista)	1	Additional Floor Area	HO 34-2002	2002
273729100530	Wildwood Estate Holdings	1	Additional Floor Area	HO 05-2003, AD 29-2011	2003
273734301003	Tagert Lakes	5	Additional Floor Area	BOCC 028-2002, BOCC 048-2002	2003
273729100004	Mountain Queen	1	Additional Floor Area	BOCC 132-2004	2004
273720400007	Northstar Ranch LLC	2	Additional Floor Area	HO 24-2005	2005
273720100002	ZGNY	2	Additional Floor Area	HO 42-2005	2005
273728300007	Benson	1	Additional Floor Area	HO 29-2006	2006
273720400014	Stella Polare	1	Additional Floor Area	HO 14-2007	2007
273728300001	Caine	2	Additional Floor Area	HO 20-2007	2007
273728300008	Carney	1	Additional Floor Area	HO 14-2004, HO 12-2008	2008
273728302002	SNL Aspen Leaf LLC	1	Additional Floor Area	HO 06-2009	2009
273728300020	Skokos	1	Additional Floor Area	BOCC 35-2009	2009
273720100529	Montgomery	2	Additional Floor Area	HO 03-2009, HO 03-2012	2009
273728301008	LNS Holding LLC	1	Additional Floor Area	HO 06-2011	2011
273720400013	Silverstein	1	Additional Floor Area	HO 07- 2017	2017

WATER AND SEWER

Drainages

All of the waterways within the Planning Area lie within the Roaring Fork River drainage. Figure 1 is a map which shows the streams and water bodies within the Planning Area. The major streams within the Planning Area include the Roaring Fork River, Lincoln Creek, Hunter Creek, and a portion of Woody Creek. There are also numerous other minor streams and drainages within the Planning Area.

Water Diversions

The Grizzly Creek Reservoir, Twin Lakes Tunnel and Hunter Creek water diversions greatly impact the release of water that comes through the rest of the Roaring Fork River watershed within and beyond the East of Aspen/Independence Planning area.

Water Service

As shown on Figure 7, the City of Aspen Water Service Area extends into the western portion of the Planning Area, near the Aspen City Limits, and includes the lower portion of the Aspen Mountain Ski Area, the Smuggler Mountain Area, and the land south of Hunter Creek to a point roughly one and one quarter mile east of the City Limit. The District boundary terminates at the City Limit along Highway 82 and the Roaring Fork River. Consequently, the District does not serve the most developed portions of the Planning Area. A majority of the residential development within the Planning Area relies on wells and septic systems.

Water Quality

The East of Aspen/Independence Pass planning area contains the headwaters of the Roaring Fork River and supports excellent water quality, biodiverse alpine, subalpine and montane riparian communities.

Sewage Disposal

The Aspen Consolidated Sanitation District (ACSD) provides sewer service to a few properties immediately adjacent to the City of Aspen within the Planning Area and to a handful of properties to the south of The Preserve. The District boundary is depicted on Figure 7. The remainder of the Planning Area relies on individual septic systems. Where older septic systems exist, it is difficult to ascertain system failures and potential impacts on water quality.

ROADS

Service Level and Classification

The following principal roads exist within the planning area:

- a. State Highway 82
- b. Lincoln Creek Road
- c. Smuggler Mountain Road
- d. Hunter Toll Road
- e. Richmond Ridge Road
- f. Aspen Mountain Road (aka Summer Road)

With the exception of Highway 82, the remainder of these roads are unpaved. The Hunter Toll Road is closed to vehicular traffic at the USFS boundary, with the exception of limited access during hunting season. Traffic counts and service level information for the county roads is provided in the following table:

TABLE 12
County Road Traffic Counts

ROAD NAME	SERVICE LEVEL	TRAFFIC COUNTS							Average
		2002	2003	2004	2008	2016	2017	2019	
Richmond Hill (Lower) @ intersection Summer Road	Limited	7/02 12	8/03 27 7 dy avg	9/04 21 5 dy avg		8/16 1 2 dy avg	7/17 5 2 dy avg	7/19 1	11
Richmond Hill (Upper) 1.5 mile marker	Limited		8/03 17 7 dy avg	9/04 12 7 dy avg	8/08 8 5 dy avg			7/19 4	10
Hunter Creek Toll closure gate	Limited						9/17 6 5 dy avg		6
Smuggler Mountain (Upper) .5 mile marker	Limited	6/02 41						7/19 4 3 dy avg	23
Lincoln Creek	Limited						8/17 122		122
Summer Road below the top	Limited		8/03 106 7 dy avg	9/04 32 7 dy avg		8/16 6 2 dy avg	7/17 50	7/19 17	42

Source: Pitkin County Engineering

Highway 82

Highway 82 is a state highway under the jurisdiction of the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) with respect to improvements and maintenance. CDOT currently has no improvements planned for the highway or the established parking areas. CDOT keeps traffic counts for Highway 82 broken into segments, two of which cover the length of the highway through the Planning Area. One of these segments begins near the intersection of Original Street and Cooper Avenue in the City of Aspen and ends at Lincoln Creek Road. The other segment begins at Lincoln Creek Road and terminates at a point approximately 9 miles past Independence Pass. The traffic counts are provided in Annual Average Daily Trips (AADT). The count for the segment from Aspen to Lincoln Creek Road is 1,200 AADT with 2.3% of those trips being truck traffic. The traffic count for the segment from Lincoln Creek to the other side of the Pass is 1,100 AADT with 1.9% being truck traffic.

Since Highway 82 is not maintained by the County it is classified only as a State Road in the 2020 Pitkin County Road Maintenance and Management Plan. During the winter months, typically from November to the end of May, Highway 82 is plowed to the closure gate at Tagert Lake and from there to the other side of Independence Pass it remains closed. Oversized vehicles (over 35 feet) are prohibited from traveling over Independence Pass at any time. A great deal of effort has been put forth by the Independence Pass Foundation (a non-profit organization) to

stabilize unstable road cuts along Highway 82 on the upper portions of Independence Pass.

The 2020 North Star Preserve Management Plan recommends formalizing and managing recreational parking along Highway 82 to access the North Star Preserve and the Roaring Fork River as a near-term and ongoing and action.

Lincoln Creek Road

Lincoln Creek Road is listed in the County's Road Maintenance and Management Plan as a Limited Service Area Road. It is a gravel, rural/recreational road that has low to limited traffic volumes. It receives no winter maintenance and is approximately 11 miles long. While the road is owned and maintained by the County, it primarily provides access to Forest Service lands including the Lincoln Creek Campground, New York Creek, Tabor Creek and Grizzly Creek trailheads, among others. It also provides access to the Grizzly Creek Reservoir and the Twin Lakes Water Diversion System, as well as the historic Ruby Townsite and several privately owned, remote mining claims.

Smuggler Mountain Road

Lower Smuggler Mountain Road is listed in the Road Maintenance and Management Plan as a Low Maintenance Area road and Upper Smuggler Mountain Road is classified as a Limited Service Area road. It is a gravel, rural/recreational road that has low to limited traffic volumes and which receives limited to no winter maintenance. It provides recreational access to publicly owned lands in the Warren Lakes area, the Hunter Creek Valley and 10th Mountain Huts, as well as to privately owned residences and property along Smuggler Creek Road and in the lower portion of the Hunter Creek Valley.

Hunter Creek Toll Road

The Hunter Creek Toll Road is listed in the Road Maintenance and Management Plan as a Limited Service Area road. It is a gravel, rural/recreational road that has low to limited traffic volumes and which receives no winter maintenance. It provides recreational access to publicly owned lands in the Hunter Creek Valley and 10th Mountain Huts, as well as to privately owned residences and property in the lower portion of the Hunter Creek Valley.

The Hunter Creek Valley and Toll Road have a specific management plan for maintenance and use that was developed by the Pitkin County Public Works Department in conjunction with the Hunter Creek Task Force in 1999-2000 (see Attachment B). The Toll Road is closed to vehicular travel

at the USFS boundary, except for limited access during hunting season. It is gated at the Hunter Creek trail node where parking is provided to handicapped and senior users.

Richmond Hill Road

Richmond Hill Road is approximately 10 miles in length and is listed in the Road Maintenance and Management Plan as a Limited Service Area road. It is a gravel, rural/recreational road that has low to limited traffic volumes and which receives no winter and limited summer maintenance. It provides access to public and private lands on the “back” side of Aspen Mountain as well as to huts and public lands to the east and south of Aspen Mountain. While the road is owned and maintained by the County, it primarily provides access to Forest Service lands. Richmond Hill Road receives heavy use, providing access to skiing, biking, hiking, jeeping and dirt biking, as well as snowmobiling in winter months. Such heavy, mixed use may degrade the quality and safety of the recreational experience sought by those using the area. In 1999, a citizens group developed a “Richmond Ridge/Little Annie Management Plan” to address this issue, among others. A copy of this plan is provided as Attachment G.

Aspen Mountain Road

Aspen Mountain Road/Summer Road is approximately 4.5 miles in length and is listed in the Road Maintenance and Management Plan as a Low Service Area road. It is a gravel recreational road that has low to limited traffic volumes and receives no winter, and limited summer, maintenance. During the winter it provides for skier access and ski area maintenance and during the warmer months it provides bike, pedestrian and vehicular access to public and private lands on the front and back sides of Aspen Mountain.

Transit

The only portion of the East of Aspen/Independence Pass planning area that is served by mass transit (beyond the Urban Growth Boundary) is the Tagert Lake West NPA. The last formal bus stop on Highway 82 up Independence Pass is located at the base of the Mountain Valley Subdivision (outside of the Planning Area). Beyond Mountain Valley, the Roaring Fork Transit Authority (“RFTA”) provides an “East End” dial-a-ride service which will stop and pick up on-demand to a point about one-quarter mile up Highway 82 beyond Mountain Valley. There was a pause in RFTA’s dial-a-ride service during the 2020/2021 COVID pandemic, with service anticipated to resume after the pandemic.

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Wildlife

According to the 1997 "Roaring Fork Biological Inventory," the Upper Roaring Fork River (within the East of Aspen/Independence Pass planning area) supports a plethora of biodiversity and is the longest stretch of relatively pristine riparian vegetation observed on the Roaring Fork River. An elk migration corridor, which crosses the publicly owned North Star Nature Preserve, allows big game to move from Richmond Ridge through the Roaring Fork Valley to the Hunter Creek Valley. The North Star Preserve also contains very sensitive wetland and riparian habitat that has remained well protected. These wetlands are a major habitat for bears, a variety of songbirds and Blue Heron. The Upper Roaring Fork drainage includes sub-alpine, alpine wetland and mountain tundra areas and sustains a variety of wildlife including:

- Black Bear
- Mountain Lion
- Bobcats
- Coyotes
- Mountain Goats,
- Elk (summer)
- Bighorn Sheep (summer)
- Deer
- Moose
- American Martens
- Osprey
- Falcons
- Eagles
- Boreal Toads (potentially)
- Snowshoe Hares and
- Cutthroat Trout

The 1997 "Roaring Fork Biological Inventory" also notes that the Warren Peak area, which includes Smuggler Mountain, Warren Peak, the headwaters of No Name Creek, and the confluence of No Name Creek and two other unnamed creeks, contains high quality wetlands and rare plant species and communities.

Figures 9 and 10 show the mapped Elk and Mule Deer habitat within the Planning Area. The lower portion of the Aspen Mountain/Richmond Ridge area and the southwest-facing slope along the highway in the Tagert Lake West sub area contain elk winter range and production area habitat. The same habitat is located on the slopes between Smuggler

Mountain Road and the lower portion of the Hunter Creek Valley. The majority of this land is publicly owned. Mule Deer winter range habitat exists in the northwest portion of the Planning Area, above the Red Mountain neighborhood in the Smuggler/Hunter Creek NPA.

Wildfire

Figure 11 shows the mapped wildfire hazard within the Planning Area. The wildfire hazard mapping is limited to the northwest portion of the Planning Area, including most of the Tagert Lake West and Aspen Mountain/Richmond Ridge NPA's. The wildfire hazard maps are intended to identify those areas where conditions are favorable for wildfire. Actual wildfire hazard for private lands must be determined on a site-specific basis and will be addressed via the County's Activity Envelope/Site Plan Review process when development is proposed. However, the majority of the Planning Area is public land located within the White River National Forest. Periodic drought conditions throughout the western states and research related to the effects of climate change have facilitated coordinated efforts between local governments and the state and U.S. Forest Service to establish fire plans for both the public lands and the interface between public and private lands.

Mosquito District

The 1985 Roaring Fork East Neighborhood Master Plan recommends that environmentally sound methods of insect control be pursued. A mosquito control district has since been established to address the issue of mosquito control.

Slopes/Flooding

The Planning Area is characterized by numerous mountains and steeply sloped valleys, which are subject to erosion, debris flow and hazardous flooding. Warren Creek overflowed its banks in the spring of 2003 causing significant damage to private property and to Highway 82. There have also been numerous avalanches in the upper portion of the Planning Area including the north facing slopes along Highway 82 near the Independence Townsite. Management of USFS lands above the Roaring Fork Valleys is important to avoid potential impacts associated with erosion and flooding in the valley below.

OPEN SPACE/TRAILS/RECREATION & TOURISM

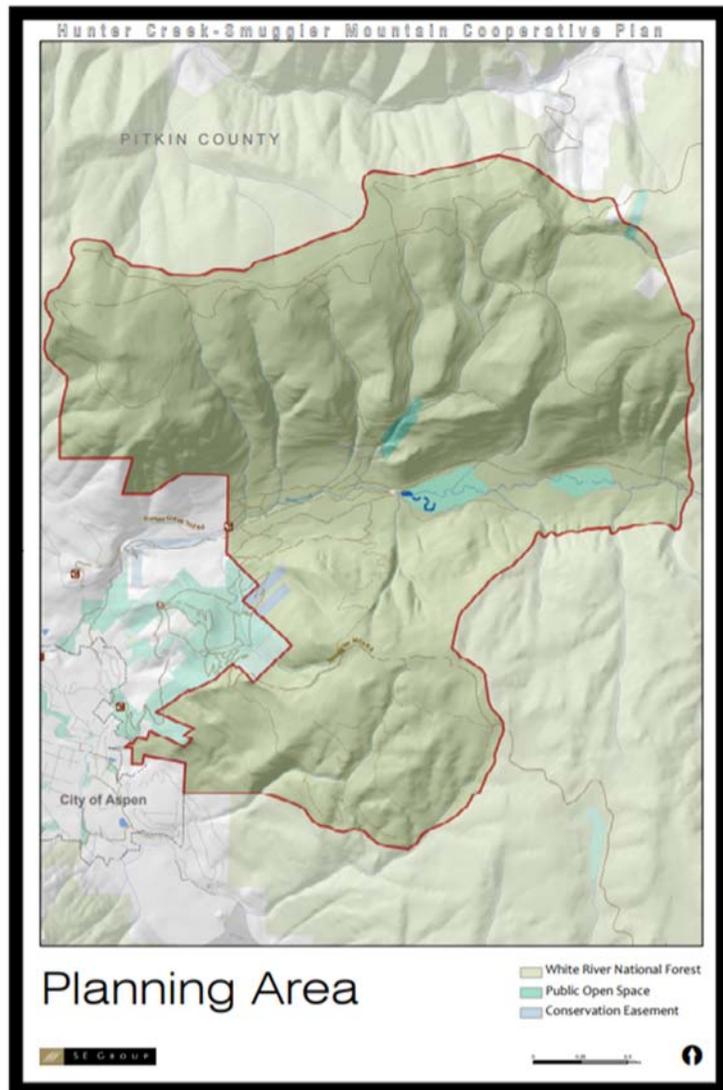
Existing Open Space Parcels

In addition to extensive federal public lands which function as open space, Pitkin County Open Space and Trails, the Aspen Center for Environmental Studies and the City of Aspen own numerous open space parcels in the East of Aspen/Independence Pass planning area. Figure 12 shows the lands within the Planning Area which have either been acquired for open space purposes or have been sterilized through conservation easements, or both.

The major open space properties include the North Star Nature Preserve area and the cluster of parcels located on the west-facing slopes of Smuggler Mountain and in the lower portion of the Hunter Creek Valley. The North Star Nature Preserve area, which is located immediately south of the Aspen UGB along the west side of Highway 82, encompasses the North Star Ranch and James H. Smith parcels. The adjacent 65-acre parcel is owned by the Aspen Center for Environmental Studies (ACES.)

As recommended in the 1985 Roaring Fork East Neighborhood Master Plan, the first resource management plan for the North Star Nature Preserve was adopted and implemented by the Open Space and Trails Board in 1989. That plan directed use of the North Star Preserve in such a way as to preserve the natural resources on the property, while allowing for limited public use and access. Updates were adopted by the Board of County Commissioners in 2000, 2004 and 2015. The 2001 James H. Smith North Star Open Space Interim Management Plan also preceded the 2015 plan, which combined the management of both properties. The most recent update to the North Star Preserve Management Plan was completed in June of 2020. The current management plan is a very comprehensive document that includes a thorough review of the existing conditions and past planning documents as well as a description of the natural resources, biodiversity and hydrology associated with the land, as well as the recreation uses, which have been occurring on the property since it was acquired for open space. The recreational use of the Roaring Fork River through North Star has increased significantly over the last decade, often exceeding existing parking infrastructure capacity between the river put-in at Wildwood (on USFS property) and the North Star Pedestrian Bridge take-out. The overarching management objective for the North Star Preserve is to manage the area for scientific and educational purposes, while still allowing for passive recreation.

In 2008, the County adopted the Smuggler Mountain Open Space Management Plan. In 2012, the County participated in a multi-jurisdictional planning process with the City of Aspen, US Forest Service and several environmental and recreational groups, including the Aspen Center for Environmental Studies, which culminated in the creation of the Hunter Creek – Smuggler Mountain Cooperative Plan. This plan provides a long-term vision for the use and management of a 4,681-acre area that includes Smuggler Mountain and the lower portion of the Hunter Creek Valley below No Name Creek as shown on the Planning Area Map below, which was taken from the Plan.



Existing Trails

Figure 12 also shows the trails within the Planning Area. The trail system includes trails intended for year-round use as well as those limited to non-

winter use. The following paragraphs provide a brief discussion of the existing trails for each of the four NPA's.

Smuggler/Hunter Creek NPA

Above the existing residential development areas, the Smuggler Mountain Road functions as a de facto trail, which receives heavy use by pedestrians and cyclists. The Hunter Creek Toll Road has been the subject of a lawsuit over whether the road is publicly or privately owned. The U.S. District Court for the District of Colorado ultimately decided that the road is in fact under County ownership. Since that time, the County, USFS and the private landowners involved in the suite entered into a settlement agreement that addresses the access and management issues related to the roadway. The road is closed to vehicular traffic at the USFS boundary for the majority of the year, with an exception for those using the road for hunting during specified seasons when the gate is open. Limited parking is available at the gate for Seniors.

Tagert Lake West NPA

In the Tagert Lake West area, the East of Aspen Trail runs along Highway 82 and the north side of the Roaring Fork River from the City of Aspen to the Difficult Campground. There is also a short section of trail that runs along Highway 82 to and through the Snyder Park Subdivision. The 1985 Roaring Fork East Neighborhood Master Plan recommends that the portion of the Salvation Ditch that runs through this area be incorporated into the trail system;. However, a specific alignment for the trail has not been designated as of the date of this Plan.

Tagert Lake East/Lincoln Creek NPA

While not a trail per se, Independence Pass is closed to winter vehicular travel and a limited amount of parking is accommodated at the closure gate. It is a popular destination for recreation including hiking, cross country skiing, as well as for those accessing back-country skiing opportunities on foot or by snowmobile.

There are 13 established U.S. Forest Service trailheads in this area with combined parking totaling 142 spaces. These trailheads are known as:

- Difficult Day Use Area
- Grottos picnic Area/Trail
- Upper and Lower Lost Man
- Independence Townsite
- New York
- Grizzly Reservoir
- Anderson/Petroleum Lakes

- Weller Lake
- Discovery/Braille Trails
- Linkins Lake
- Tabor Lake
- Grizzly Trailhead

Campgrounds

The planning area contains five campgrounds with a total of 107 campsites. The U.S. Forest Service has been managing significant overuse and resource damage in some of these areas. No expansion of the campgrounds is anticipated by the U.S. Forest Service as of the date of this Master Plan. The following is a list of the campgrounds:

- Difficult
- Weller
- Lost Man
- Portal
- Lincoln Gulch
- Lincoln Creek

Commercial Recreational Uses

The U.S. Forest Service and/or the County issue seasonal recreational special use permits within the planning area for businesses and events including but not limited to :

- Blazing Adventures
- Aspen Paragliding
- T Lazy-7 Snowmobile Tours (on Independence Pass beyond the winter road closure gate)
- Ride and Ski for the Pass (2 annual events)
- Pro-Cycling Challenge (2012 & 2013)

Commercial recreational operators and permits change annually for use of the North Star Nature Preserve.

In addition to these uses the County has granted intermittent filming permits for car commercials and still photo shoots within the Planning Area. The quantity of special events and temporary commercial use permits issued for the East of Aspen area has increased since the 2003 Master Plan was adopted.

Commercial recreational use on the North Star Preserve is directed through the existing North Star Preserve Management Plan, which was updated in June of 2020. The Aspen Mountain ~~AF-SKISKI-REC~~ Master Plan,

as approved by the County, identifies activities within the Aspen Mountain Ski Area boundary.

AGRICULTURE

There are few, if any, irrigated agricultural lands within the East of Aspen/Independence Pass planning area.

SCENIC QUALITY

Figure 13 is a map showing the lands which are included within the mapped Scenic View Protection Area. All new development within the Scenic View Protection Area, including expansions to existing structures, is subject to review under the applicable section of the Pitkin County Land Use Code. The Scenic View Protection Area is confined to the areas close to the Aspen Urban Growth Boundary and along Richmond Ridge.

AIR QUALITY

The City of Aspen and Pitkin County both place a high value on preserving the best air quality possible. The City of Aspen has been monitoring air quality for over 25 years. This is primarily due to the fact that air quality in the upper Roaring Fork Valley was found to be in violation of the EPA's 24-hour standards for fine particulate air pollution (PM-10) as articulated in the Clean Air Act. Figure 8 is a map showing the former PM-10 Non-attainment area which was established as a result of the EPA standard violation back in the late 1980's. As seen on this map, the northwest portion of the Planning Area is within the Non-attainment area. Due to regular monitoring and the enforcement of regulations adopted to address fine particulate air pollution, air quality in the Aspen area was re-designated as meeting the Clean Air Act standards in 2002. The Aspen Environmental Health Department provides current air quality monitoring data on its website: (<https://www.cityofaspen.com/298/Current-Air-Quality>).

A major component of fine particulate air pollution is caused by vehicular traffic. Estimates indicate that up to 83% of the upper valley PM-10 pollution comes from dirt kicked up by traffic driving on paved roads. The popularity of RFTA transit service and changes in road maintenance practices have helped achieve the significant reductions in PM-10 pollution. The fact that traffic counts on Highway 82 through the Planning Area are modest and that Independence Pass is closed during the winter helps reduce air quality concerns.

CLIMATE CHANGE AND PREPAREDNESS

To address preparedness , the 2012 Hunter Creek – Smuggler Mountain Cooperative Plan recommended forest management practices which were utilized in 2012/2013 in the Hunter Creek/Smuggler Mountain area to improve forest health and address wildfire potential in the Wildland/Urban Interface.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

There are only two known deed restricted affordable housing units within the East of Aspen/Independence Pass planning area.

MINERAL EXTRACTION

In recent years, mineral extraction has not been actively pursued in this planning area.

HISTORIC RESOURCES

In 2006, the County adopted historic preservation regulations in the Land Use Code. The purpose of these regulations is to provide for the recognition, protection, enhancement, perpetuation and continued use of historic sites and structures. These regulations established an historic inventory and an historic register. In 2008 the County adopted the Preservation Handbook for Historic Properties. This document provides guidelines for the preservation and restoration of historic sites and structures. There are two properties within the Planning Area that are included in the Pitkin County Historic Inventory. These properties are listed below and are shown on Figure 14.

- Bunta/Manning Annex Cabin
- Difficult Lane Property

In addition to these properties, there are several other historic resources within the Planning Area which are considered important but have not yet been included on the County's Historic Inventory. These properties should be considered for inclusion in the inventory.

- Smuggler Mountain Mine
- Compromise Mine on Aspen Mountain
- Independence Townsite on Independence Pass, and
- Ruby Townsite up Lincoln Creek
- Independence Pass Toll Road

- Cabins in the Hunter Creek Valley

PLANS AFFECTING EAST OF ASPEN/INDEPENDENCE PASS

The following federal, County and municipal land use and management plans potentially influence the planning area:

- A. Pitkin County Road Maintenance and Management Plan (2019) - This plan directs the management and/or improvement of County roads.
- B. Aspen Area Community Plan (2012) - The AACCP establishes an Urban Growth Boundary area for the City of Aspen that is intended to generally define the boundaries of urban annexation and development. The boundary abuts the western end of the Tagert Lake West planning area, the northern end of the Aspen Mountain/Richmond Ridge planning area and the western end of the Smuggler/Hunter Creek planning area.
- C. White River National Forest Management Plan (2002) and related amendments. - This plan directs management of the White River National Forest in terms of allowed uses on the National Forest.
- D. Roaring Fork East Neighborhood Master Plan (1985) - This plan covers the area from (and including) Mountain Valley up through the North Star Preserve.
- E. Roaring Fork Valley Biological Inventory (1997)
- F. Aspen Mountain Ski Area Master Plan (2018)
- G. Richmond Ridge/Little Annie Management Plan (1999)
- H. North Star Preserve Management Plan (2020)
- I. Smuggler Mountain Open Space Management Plan (2008)
- J. Hunter Creek – Smuggler Mountain Cooperative Plan (2012)
- K. Pitkin County Nordic Trails Plan (2015) - The Nordic Trails Plan identifies the potential for Nordic skiing on the East of Aspen Trail between North Star and Difficult Campground, and recommends a larger parking area at North Star for this purpose, as well as improved trail connections. Improving the Benedict Trail-to-North Star route is also recommended.

ATTACHMENTS

Figure 1: Planning Area Boundary Map

Figure 2: Existing Subdivisions Map

Figure 3: Existing Land Use Map

Figure 4: TDR Sending and Receiving Sites Map

Figure 5: Existing Zoning Map

Figure 6: Residential Buildout Map

Figure 7: Water & Sewer Districts Map

Figure 8: Non-Attainment Area Map

Figure 9: Elk Habitat Map

Figure 10: Mule Deer Habitat Map

Figure 11: Wildfire Hazard Map

Figure 12: Open Space & Trails Map

Figure 13: Scenic View Protection Area Map

Figure 14: Historic Inventory Map

DRAFT