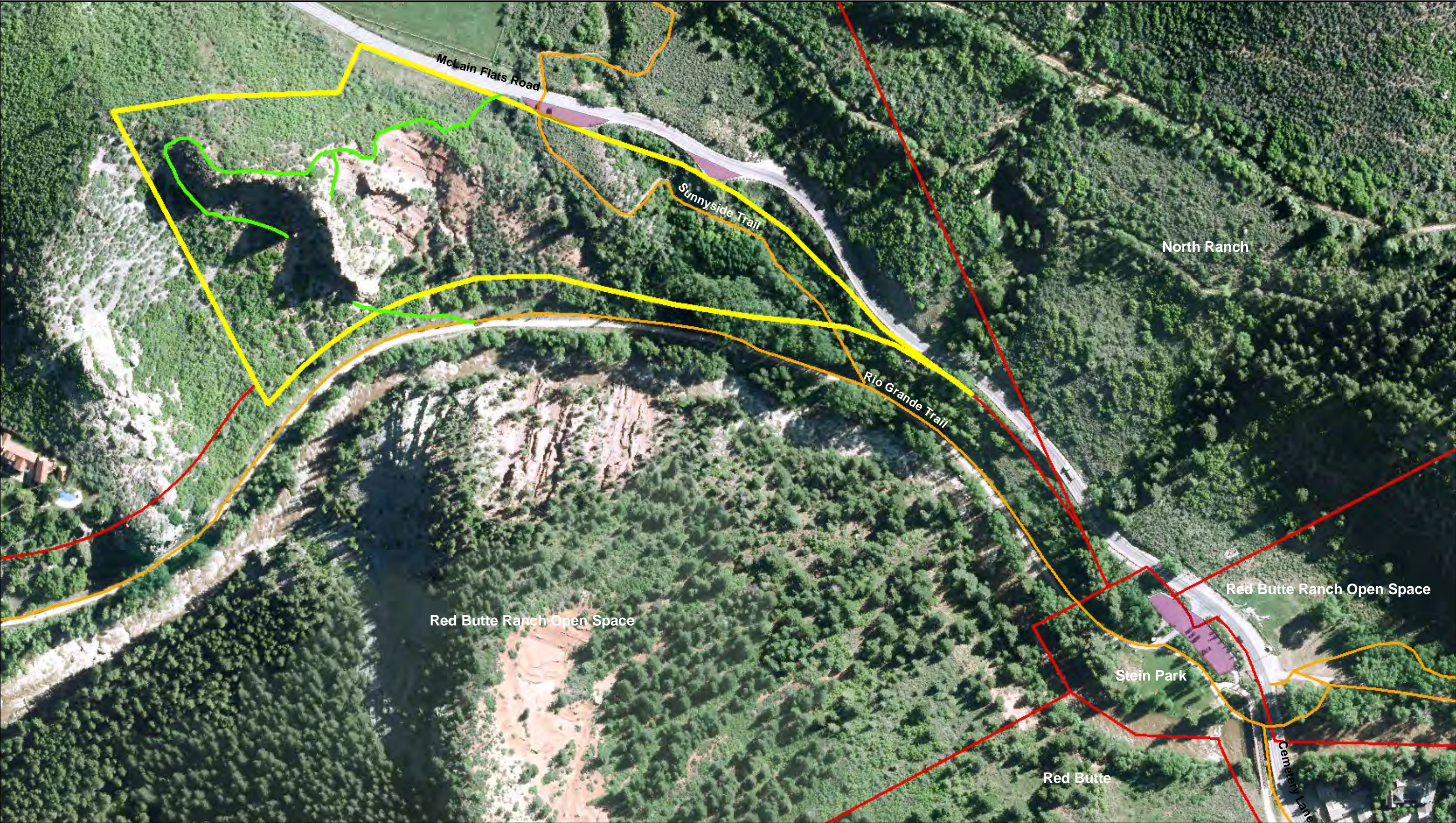


GOLD BUTTE CLIMBING MANAGEMENT PLAN



JULY 2013



Gold Butte Climbing Area

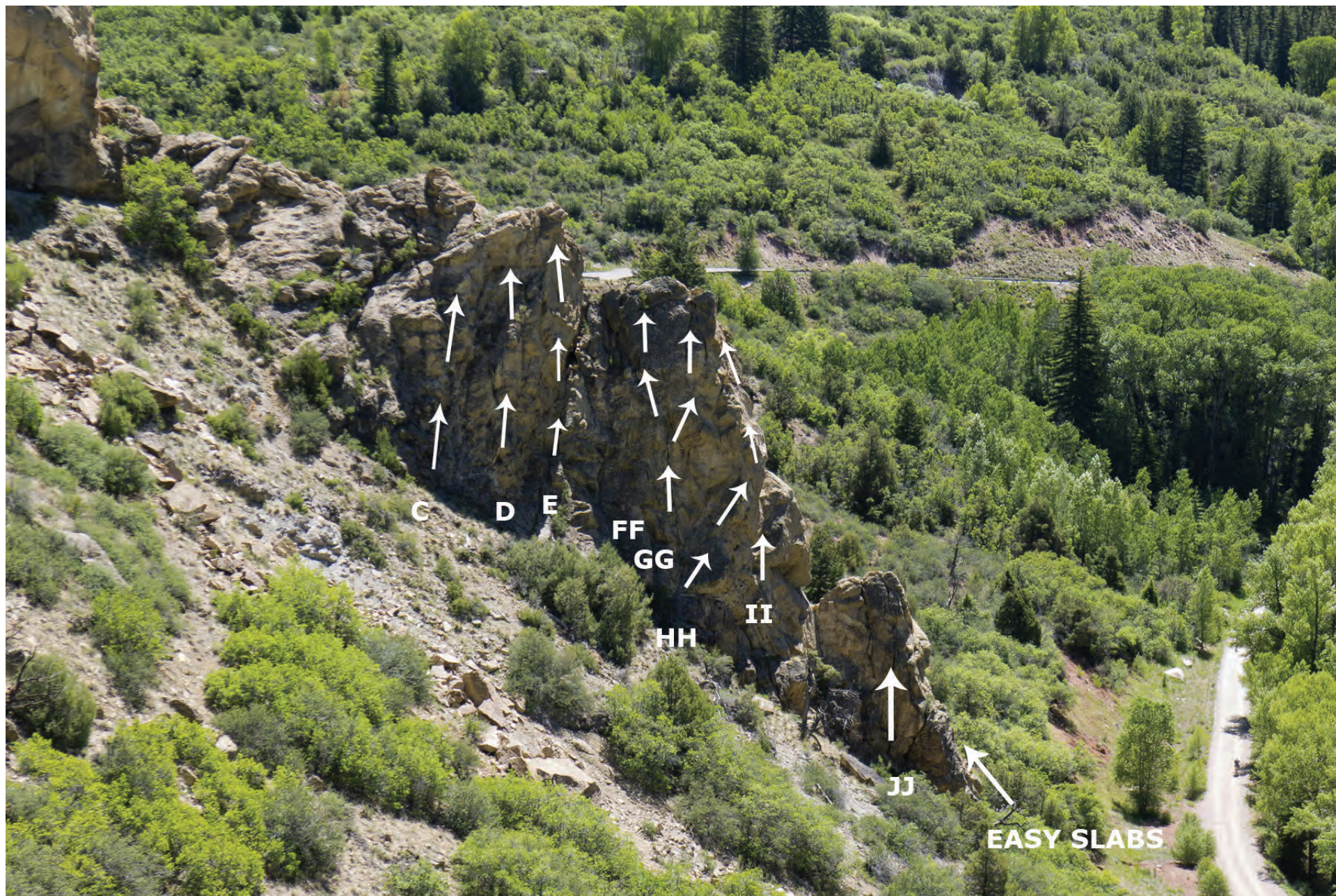
-  **Gold Butte Climbing Area**
-  **Trailhead Parking**
-  **Existing Trails**
-  **Access Trails**
-  **Open Space**



Boundaries for Gold Butte are approximate











Introduction

Perched high above the Rio Grande Trail and Roaring Fork River outside of Aspen, prominent Gold Butte once beckoned local climbers with enticing routes and easy access from town. The feature was, however, on private property and access to it was limited for decades.

Pitkin County Open Space and Trails (OST) acquired the parcel as open space in January 2013 and immediately began working with an enthusiastic steering committee of local climbers to develop this climbing management plan. Pitkin County is also thankful for the help of the Access Fund, which is an international non-profit dedicated to the protection and enhancement of climbing areas.

All forms of rock climbing and rappelling are inherently dangerous. Climbing recreationalists are solely responsible for their personal safety as well as the safety of those whom their pursuit may affect (ex: hikers, other climbers). Proper safety and personal equipment (and understanding its appropriate use), proper training, and pre-climb inspections of the route to be ascended or rappelled, are the minimum recommended practices. It is also necessary for climbers to understand all generally accepted climbing ethics and protocols, as well as all OST specific regulations.

OST, and its staff does not maintain, inspect or otherwise deem safe & reliable, any of the fixed hardware (FH) installed for climbing or rappelling use; nor is the rock itself inspected or maintained. Any FH has been installed by climbing recreationalists, and is maintained by various climbers.

All OST management plans are adaptive and evolutions of insight, ethics, universal practices, gear and hardware, laws, liability issues, safety, wildlife and habitat considerations will be considered in future amendments.

Climbing Management

Fixed Hardware Management

Fixed hardware (FH) may only be installed on routes specifically depicted in this plan. Anchors can also be placed to allow top rope access on these identified routes.

Fixed hardware will not be allowed without OST approval. Anyone seeking new fixed routes should go to www.aspenpitkin.com/openspace to fill out the Fixed Route Application, which will be reviewed by both OST and the Steering Committee.

If anyone comes across hardware they feel is unsafe and needs replacement please notify OST and the request will be reviewed with the Steering Committee.

Access Routes and Staging Areas

Before Gold Butte is opened to the public, sustainable and safe access routes will be created. OST will work with the Access Fund and local climbers to get these routes aligned and constructed. Staging areas for the climbs will be improved and new trails to route climbers around staging areas will be constructed. Signs will be installed as necessary to educate climbers on the proper ways to access Gold Butte. Social trails are a management issue and cause negative impacts. OST will work with the local climbing community to avoid any need for social trails and reclamation of them if they appear.

Wildlife and Dogs

A wildlife study was done during the creation of a conservation easement on the private land directly adjacent to Gold Butte. The wildlife mapping by the Colorado Division of Parks and Wildlife does not show any critical habitat, winter

or summer on Gold Butte. Also, no threatened, rare, or endangered species were found on Gold Butte. The majority habitat type on Gold Butte is Gambel oak-mixed montane shrublands, which are in excellent condition. Trails will be limited to what is necessary for climbing access to avoid impacts to this habitat.

Wildlife that uses the property are mule deer and a multitude of small animals that include some cliff nesting birds. The climbs will always be monitored to avoid any impacts to migratory birds that are found nesting on Gold Butte.

Dogs will not be allowed on Gold Butte due to the steep and narrow staging areas and to avoid conflicts with wildlife and other users.

Trailheads, Parking, Facilities

There are two main parking areas for access to Gold Butte. The Sunnyside pull-off on McLain Flats Road provides very limited parking and is heavily used for access to the Sunnyside Trail. Stein Park provides more parking and connects directly with the Rio Grande Trail, which provides easy access to Gold Butte via the Sunnyside Trail. The park also has picnic areas and a porta-potty during the spring, summer and fall.

Additional parking and trailhead facilities will be discussed in the Roaring Fork Gorge Management Plan.

Commercial and Special Use

Commercial use will be allowed at Gold Butte. A Commercial Use Permit will be required with the following stipulations beyond what is allowed in this plan: 1) follow Leave No Trace Principles; 2) limit group size to six (6) people maximum; 3) be considerate of other users; 4) not pre-place top-ropes to “reserve” climbs or leave unattended top-ropes; 5) at least one guide in the group have the minimum guiding certification of American Mountain Guide Association (AMGA) Certified

Single Pitch Instructor; 6) all commercial use must use the Stein Park Trailhead for parking.

Commercial Use is also regulated through the Pitkin County Land Use Code. To apply for a commercial use permit contact Pitkin County Community Development at 970-920-5526.

For all special events requests go to www.specialevents.aspenpitkin.com to fill out an application.