

Long-term Sustainable Management for High-Use Recreation Areas

Identifying, monitoring, transitioning to active recreation management, and adapting to change on National Forest System lands using collaborative leadership



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Goals of the Presentation

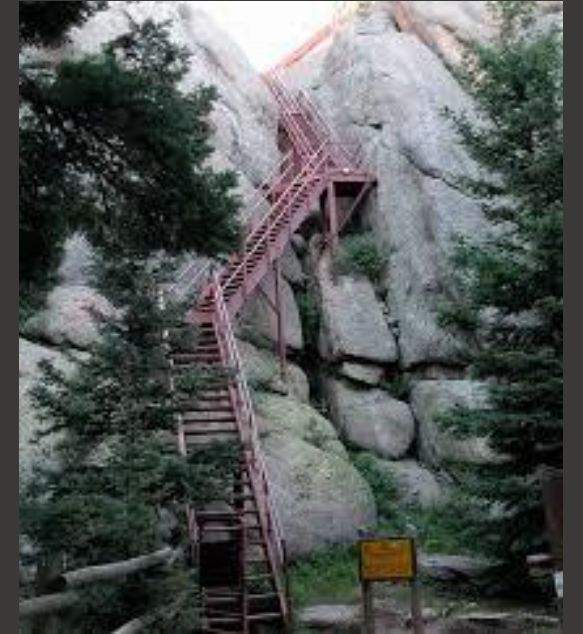
- The presentation will first summarize a natural resource management problem for a high-use recreation area solved through collaboration
- The presentation will then highlight the power of collaboratives when an unplanned source of risk altered not only the recreation area but an entire ecosystem function



Introduction

- In 2016, there were an estimated 891 million visits to federal lands for the purpose of recreation
- The number of adults participating in hiking in 2008 was estimated to be 78.3 million; by 2030 it is estimated that that number will raise to 102.2 million participants
- It is argued that popular destinations on federal lands will need long-term sustainable management for high-use recreation areas due to the increased demand
- Collaborative leadership shares responsibility

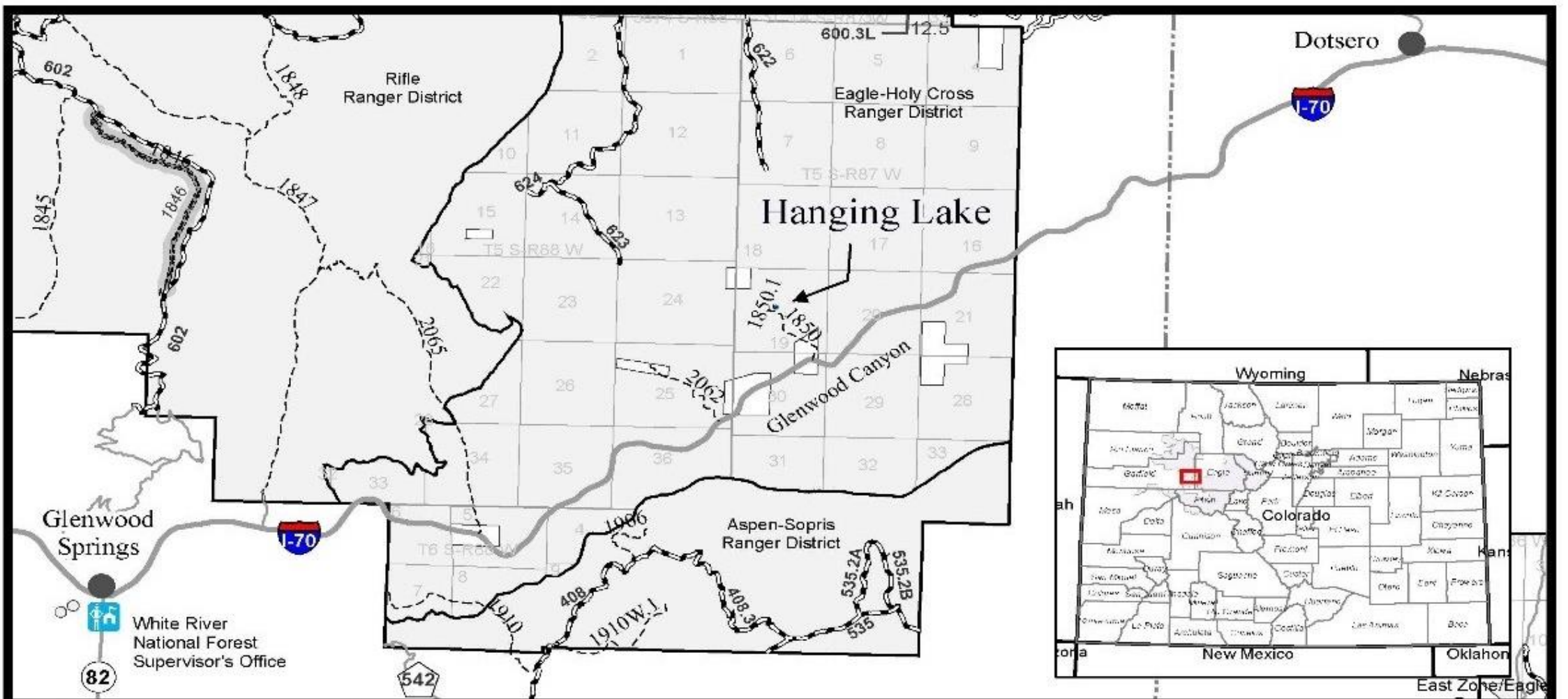




Increasing Recreation Demand:
How do you activate a
collaborative after an issue has
been identified?



Background Information



Vicinity Map



Legend

----- Trail

Roads and Trails - Motorized

1 Roads Open to All Vehicles, Yearlong

2 Roads Open to All Vehicles, Seasonal

4 Roads Open to Highway Legal Vehicles Only, Seasonal

13 Interstate

14 State or US Highway

15 Other Public Roads

10 Trails Open to Motorcycles Only, Seasonal

Hangng Lake

Cities

Forest Service Office

Counties

Ranger Districts

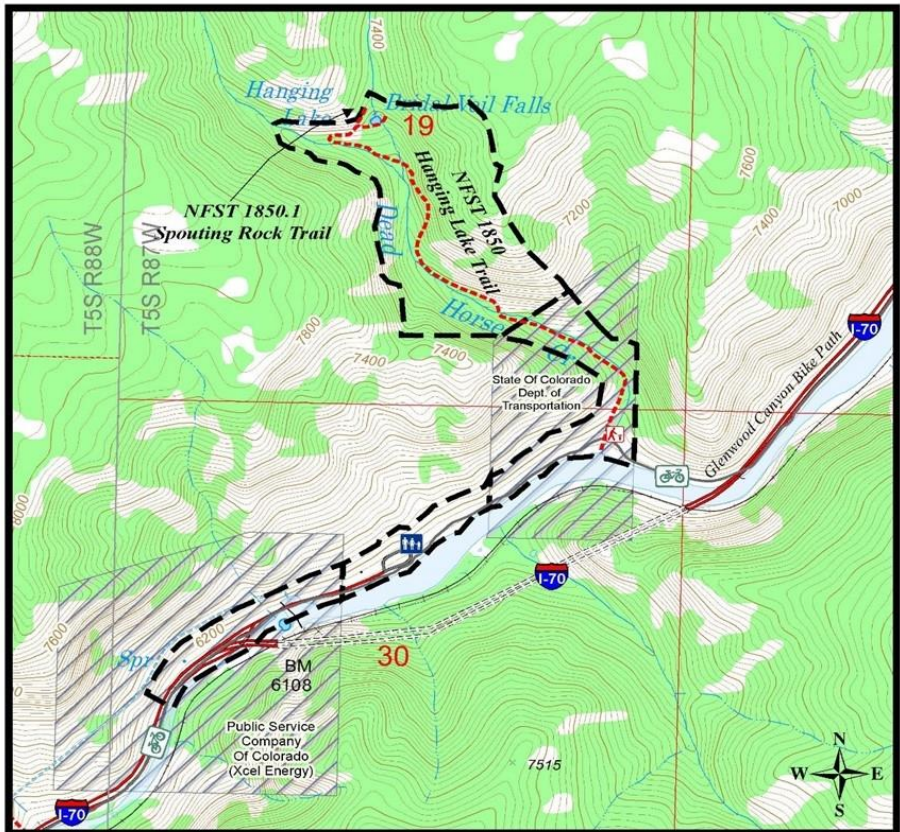
Townships, Range, Sections

USDA Forest Service

Hanging Lake Management Plan
Garfield County
White River National Forest

1:110,000

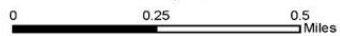
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Hanging Lake Management Plan Area

Garfield County CO T5S R87W, Sec 19 & 30
 Eagle-Holy Cross Ranger District
 White River National Forest

1:14,000



Legend

- Hanging Lake Planning Area
- Toilet
- Trailhead
- National Forest System Trail (NFST)
- Glenwood Canyon Bike Path
- Lakes
- Other Than National Forest Lands
- Township, Range, Section



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8/20/2017







Hiking to the Lake

- Short, arduous, attainable destination
 - 3.0-mile round trip
 - 1000' of vertical gain
 - A beautiful lake and waterfall at the terminus
 - An I-70 exit and close to the City of Glenwood Springs
 - Marketed as 'iconic' and a 'bucket list' must-do

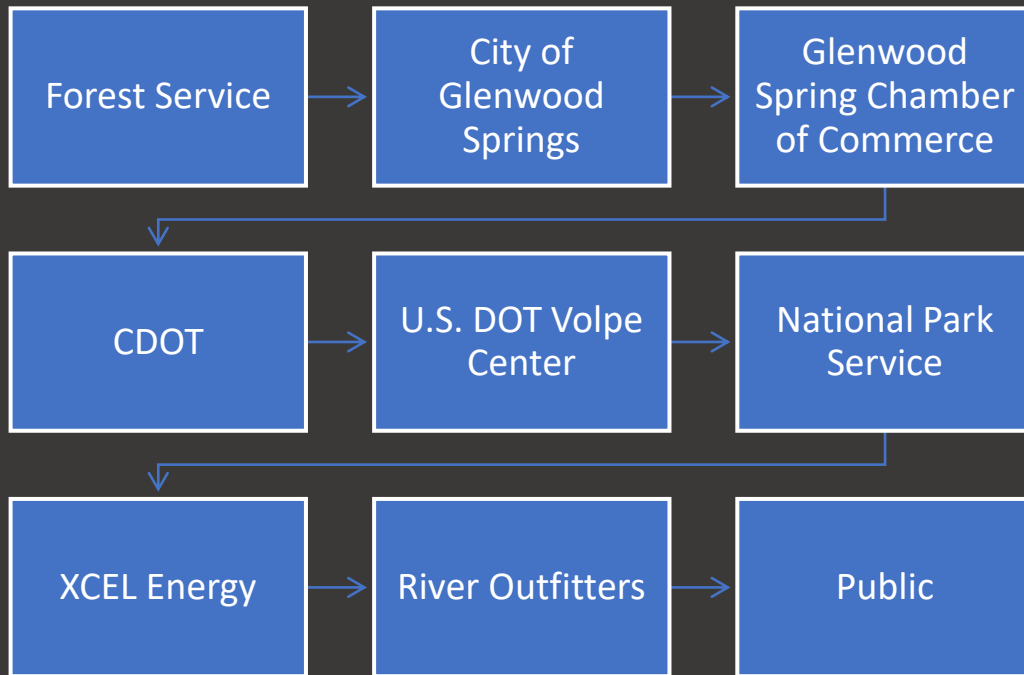
Early Recreation Management and Indicators



- In 2012, the USFS installed a trail counter which registered 78,118 May 1- Sept 30.
(Hanging Lake Area Management Plan, 2018)
- During the first multi-agency stakeholder group meeting in fall 2013, Transportation and Management Goals and Objectives were developed (Rasmussen and Deaderick, 2017)
- Ground rules set early and adaptive to new information
- In 2014, one USFS seasonal ranger worked at the Hanging Lake Area
- In 2018, seven seasonal employees staffed the Hanging Lake area
- In 2018, the Hanging Lake trail counter registered 124,201 visitors May 1 – Sept 30.
(TRAFX Data Collected by summer seasonal employees)

Transitioning to Adaptive Collaborative Leadership

The Collaborative Toolbox: Identify Stakeholders



Inform, Consult, Involve, COLLABORATE



Photo From: Denver Post



- May 2017: Hanging Lake Transportation and Operations Study
- August 2018: Hanging Lake Management Plan and Decision Notice Signed
- October 2018: Forest Service and City of Glenwood Springs enter into a formal partnership to manage the Hanging Lake Area.
- The Third-Party Shuttle provider, H2O Ventures, was announced in February 2019

Explaining the Why: The Need for Collaborative Recreation Management



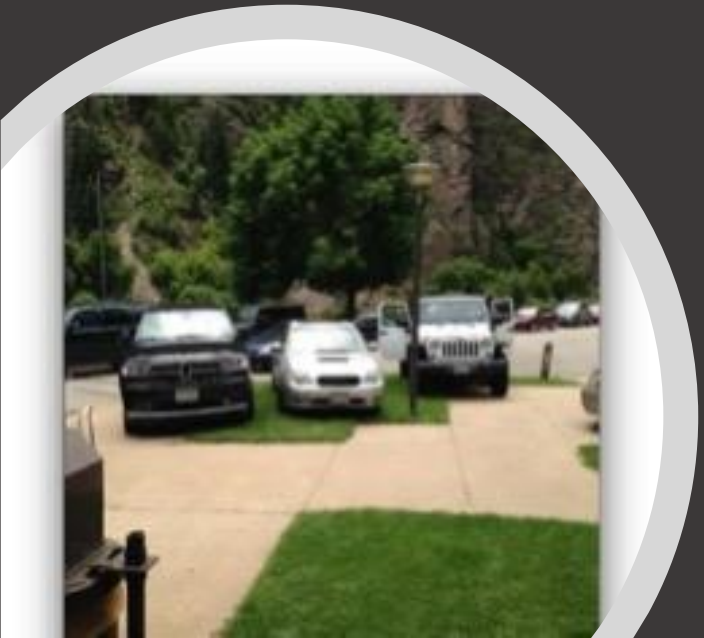
Photo From: Denver Post



Strategic Messaging

- Resource Degradation
- Parking Congestion
- Visitor Safety
- Substandard Visitor Experience

The increase in demand and advertising requires shared-ownership of the solution; Forest Service underfunded, understaffed



Objectives of the 2018 Hanging Lake Area Management Plan

- Protect Natural Resources
- Manage Congestion
- Enhance Public Safety
- Improve Visitor Experience
- Support Local Tourism (Final Hanging Lake Management Plan, February 2018)

These were the same objectives outlined in the initial 2013 meetings.





Road to Implementation:
Hanging Lake
SHUTTLE SYSTEM STARTED
MAY 1, 2019

Collaborative Activations

- Shuttle System (COGS/H2O)
- Active Reservation System (H2O)
April 1, 2019
- Off-Ramp Gate System (CDOT)
- Highway Signage (CDOT)
- Seasonal Staffing (H2O/USFS)
 - Interpretation
 - Transportation
 - Monitoring
 - Forest Protection
 - Trail Infrastructure
Maintenance and
Construction

Other Activations

- Interpretation Panels (VOPLE, USFS)
- JOINT PRESS RELEASES (ALL)

Keys to Successful Collaboration

Early, Often, Inclusive

The first multi-agency stakeholder group meeting occurred in fall 2013

Recurrent Meetings, Bi-Weekly

Professional Facilitator, Volpe

Subcommittees when Necessary

Share Responsibilities

Find the “Missing Middle”

Coordinated Messaging



Strategic Messaging with Tools and Technology

- TV and Radio Interviews
- Press Releases
- Rack Cards
- The Use of Surveys
- Information at Access Points
- Communication through Social Media, Apps, and Push Notifications





Collaboration: Resilience throughout Changing Conditions

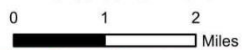


Grizzly Creek Fire

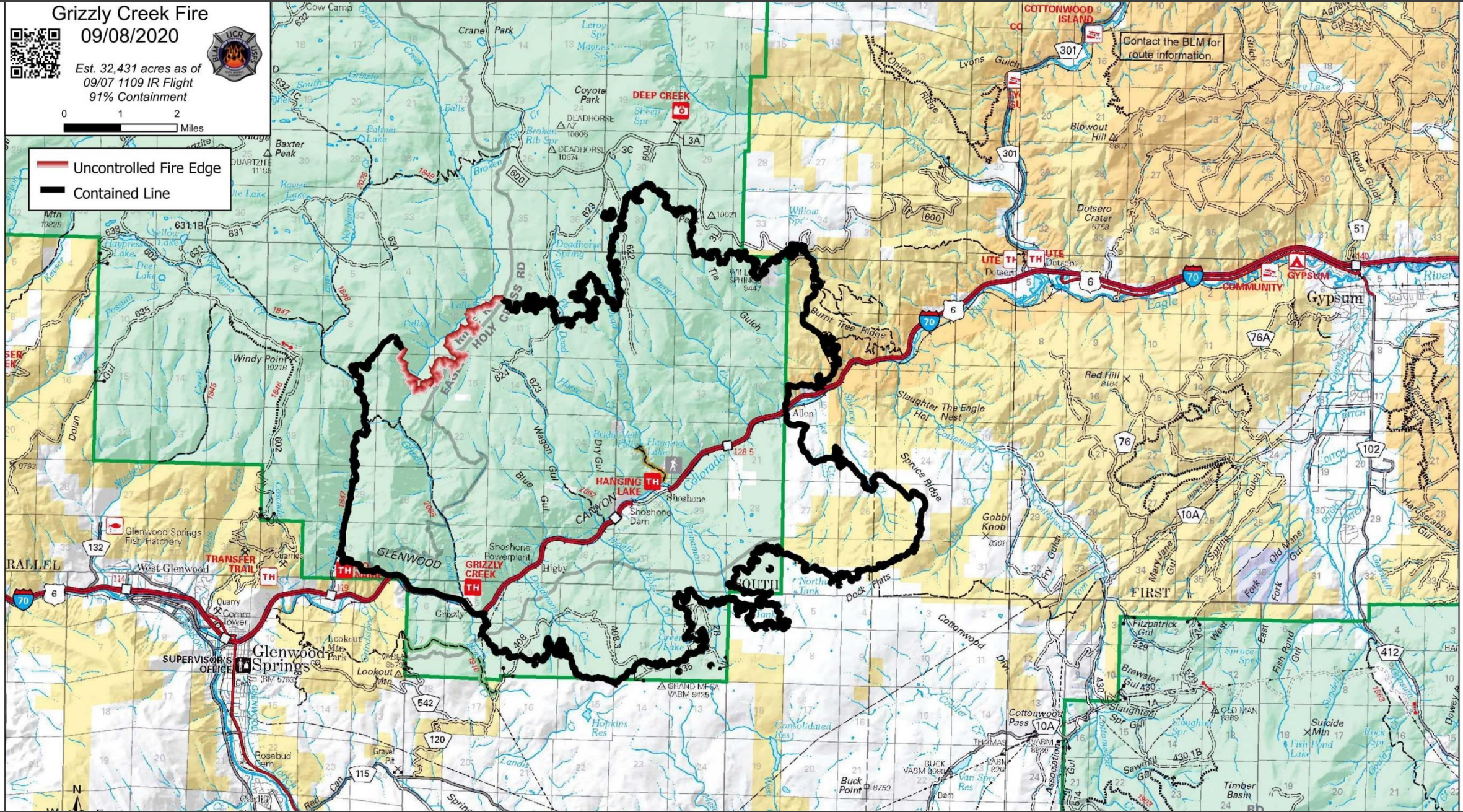
09/08/2020



Est. 32,431 acres as of
09/07 1109 IR Flight
91% Containment



Uncontrolled Fire Edge
 Contained Line



Out of the Ashes: Organizations that haven't been engaged, but are now

Roaring Fork
Outdoor
Volunteers (RFOV)

Middle Colorado
Watershed
Coalition (MCWC)

Wilderness
Restoration
Volunteers (WRV)

Glenwood
Canyon
Restoration
Alliance



CDOT Glenwood Canyon Flash Flood Weather Guidance 4/1/2021

Weather and response guidance for threat of debris flows and flash floods in Grizzly Creek burn areas of Glenwood Canyon.

*Debris flow occurring at night into the parking areas and trailheads where people are most exposed could be disastrous. Rescue and response would also be very dangerous.

Weather Product	Threshold for Action	Recommended Action	CDOT Personnel & Equipment	Messaging/VMS
Observed Weather	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Precipitation occurring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor conditions 	On Call	Public Awareness Outfitter Notifications VMS – Flood Safety Message
Observed Weather	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Precip intensity 0.25in/15min Precip Intensity 0.40in/30min Precip Intensity 0.75in/1hr Rapidly melting snow Rain on snow 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rest Areas - Closed Monitor Highway Bike Path - Closed 	Deployed	Public Notifications Outfitter Notifications VMS – Flood Safety Message/Closure Message
Weather Forecast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 30% or above chance precip intensity thresholds are met or exceeded in next 24hrs 30% or above chance of Flash Flood Watch issued in next 24hrs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rest Areas - Closed Overnight* Outfitters under CDOT permit may access rest areas and ramps Monitor Highway Bike path - Closed 	On Call	Public Notifications Outfitter Notifications VMS – Overnight Closure Message
Flash Flood Watch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential for flash flooding based on current forecasts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rest Areas - Closed Outfitters under CDOT permit may access rest areas and ramps Monitor Highway Bike path - Closed 	On Standby	Public Notifications Outfitter Notifications VMS – Closure Message
Flash Flood Warning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Life-threatening flooding is imminent or occurring; it is either detected by weather radar, indicated by gauges, or reported by storm spotters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rest Areas - Closed Highway - Closed Bike path - Closed 	Deployed	Public Notifications Outfitter Notifications VMS – Closure Message







Sharing is Caring. Other Examples?

