

OCTOBER 31, 2018



# PHILLIPS MOBILE HOME PARK

HEALTH IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND SITE PLANNING

SCOPING REPORT

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## BACKGROUND

### HISTORY & HEALTH IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Pitkin County purchased the Phillips Mobile Home Park in early 2018. The Phillips Mobile Home Park has provided affordable housing options in the Woody Creek/Old Snowmass area since the 1960s. The Phillips family purchased the property for farming and in the 1960s turned some of the property into a mobile home park. Since that time, it has provided essential housing options and been an asset to our community.

When the Phillips family was ready to sell the property, Pitkin County stepped in to help preserve the valuable community asset. As a free market listing, the property would have been scrapped with the eviction of over 40 residents, regrading and revegetating the area and developing 1-2 single family homes. Both the Phillips family and the County wanted to avoid that scenario.

The County purchased the Phillips Mobile Home Park from the Phillips family for \$6.5 million for approximately 65 acres of land on both sides of the Roaring Fork River. The purchase was accomplished with the use of funds from the County's Employee Housing Impact Fee. The property was desirable to the County as an addition to its affordable housing inventory as well as the three large irrigated fields that benefit from significant water rights and access to both sides of the Roaring Fork River. The County intends to incorporate the inventory of affordable housing units into its employee housing program.

In an effort to ease the transition for residents, it retained the previous manager of the park to continue property management. Shortly thereafter, the County began planning for the future of the site. An approach was identified that included using the Health Impact Assessment process to guide the planning process with limited additional site planning services included in the project scope. The hybrid planning approach is intended to bring forward three possible future scenarios for the 65 acres of land in early 2019.

The Health Impact Assessment process, as adapted in this setting to accommodate site planning, includes four phases- Screening, Scoping, Assessment, and Recommendations (see graphic on next page). The stages are iterative and cumulative as information and understanding grows during the study process. This document represents the findings as of the second phase of the work and builds on the screening report submitted on September 12, 2018. During this phase, health determinants are identified that will be used to assess scenarios for change, and site planning issues are identified that will need to be addressed in any ultimate site plan for the property. Possible resolution of issues is not presented until the Assessment phase and that can be frustrating for the reader; please know that there are usually solutions to problems.

Pitkin County, the City of Aspen, and the Aspen Pitkin County Housing Authority have a history in preserving mobile home parks and it is useful to remember that many issues were overcome at Smuggler, Aspen Village, Woody Creek, and Lazy Glen Mobile Home Parks. No two solutions are exactly alike and each was rooted in the specifics of that situation. The approach varies on the level of involvement by the governmental agency and the requirements for resale, occupancy, and applicable restrictions. Each one of those projects had to address a list of opportunities and challenges. This document presents that list for Phillips Mobile Home Park.

# PHILLIPS MOBILE HOME PARK

## TIMELINE

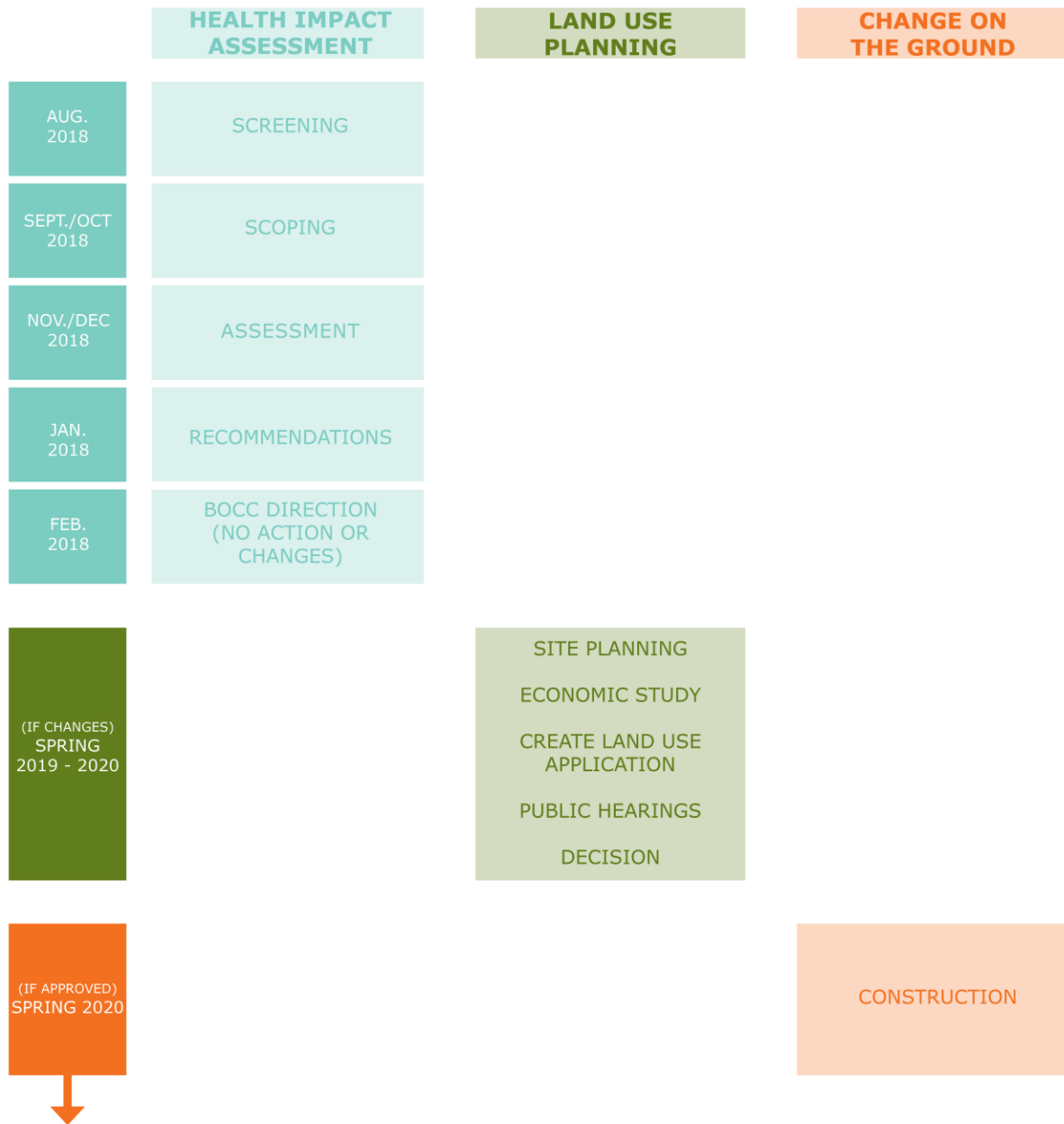


Figure 1 - Timeline

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## CURRENT CONDITIONS

### RESIDENT INPUT

Efforts are ongoing to meet individually and in groups with the current Phillips residents. A well-attended Open House was held early in the planning process to identify issues and provide residents with information on the planning process and timeline in order to defuse concern about immediate change. The HIA team feels that this effort was a success.

Individual interviews have begun and will continue through the Assessment phase, and a written interview will be offered to residents who are not reached with a personal interview. At the time of this report, about one-third of mobile home owners will have been individually interviewed with a goal of reaching one-half.

Another community gathering will be offered with the release of this report.

The key takeaways thus far from the interviews are:

- Housing stability is a key issue for residents. There are obvious concerns about their ability to maintain residence and/or ability to recover their investment in their property
- There is an interest in acquiring a lot for their mobile home by a super-majority of owners
- The location and setting of Phillips are considered a benefit by residents
- On-site management is seen as a benefit given the proximity of units and infrastructure in place
- There are concerns and misunderstandings regarding APCHA regulations

We are still learning more about the residents of the mobile home park, but are in the process of collecting information on who lives here, why they choose to live here, where they work, what they find inviting about living here, and what changes they might suggest for the future of the community. Summary findings looking at the makeup of the community will be included in the assessment report to be completed in early 2019.

### NON-RESIDENT INPUT

In addition to resident interviews, non-resident interviews will continue through the Assessment phase. A partial list of interviewees and or agencies contacted include: APCHA, CDOT, RFTA, Colorado Division of Water Resources, Janet Mitchell (realtor), Woody Creek Metro Board, Basalt Fire, Pitkin County Sheriff, Pitkin County Open Space and Trails, Pitkin County Healthy Rivers and Streams, ROC USA and Pitkin County Planning and Engineering.

The key takeaways thus far from the interviews are:

- There are engineering issues that are discussed later in the report that must be addressed in order for the site to come into conformance with the Pitkin County Land Use Code
- In addition to the employee housing value of the property, there are open space and river/riparian values that could lead to funding partnerships if the property is subdivided
- There are several issues related to the current placement of mobile homes on the property

In addition to the various interviews, SGM has performed initial engineering and mapping work to prepare base maps for the site and to further assess infrastructure, and DHM has performed a rapid ecological assessment on the property. The information gained in these efforts is reported on the following pages.

## MOBILE HOMES

When people discuss mobile homes, manufactured homes, trailers, or tiny homes there is often confusion. For the purposes of this report, the most important distinction is between homes constructed before the Department of Housing and Urban Development created construction standards in 1976, referred to as “Pre-HUD mobile homes” or after those standards were adopted, referred to as “Post-HUD or manufactured homes.” In addition to the construction differences, Pre-HUD mobile homes can generally be relocated within a site but not moved to a new location and are typically not eligible for traditional financing. In our area, Alpine Bank will finance mobile homes through their portfolio loan program with 20% down, which is not common.

Many Phillips owners have made additions to their original units including porches and storage. Some have done extensive interior remodeling and insulation upgrades as well.

There are two distinct sections of the mobile home park, divided by the Roaring Fork River. The Riverview section lies between SH 82 and the river and the Hillside section lies east of the river with the mobile homes located east of Lower River Road.

The inventory of Phillips residences is still underway but information to date is:

### RIVERVIEW

- 4 rental cabins
- 4 pre-HUD mobile homes
- 2 manufactured homes

### HILLSIDE

- Ranch house
- 15 pre-HUD mobile homes
- 9 manufactured homes
- 3 recreational vehicles and 2 units that appear to be converted travel trailers
- 1 unit age still to be determined





*Figure 2 - Cabin*



*Figure 3 - RV*



*Figure 4 - Pre-HUD MH*



*Figure 5 - Manufactured Home*

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## HEALTH IMPACT SCOPING

The health impact scoping effort for the Phillips MHP focused on selecting for study the most important social and environmental determinants of health. These are determinants that are likely to be positively or negatively impacted by the alternative project scenarios, and in turn impact health. This was accomplished by:

- Identifying possible health determinants by: (1) gathering baseline health data and information on public health priorities from County and State health professionals; (2) listening to Phillips residents' concerns and learning about their experiences, and; (3) identifying links between health and the data gathered by the site, engineering and environmental analyses.
- Selecting the most significant health determinants by considering factors such as: (1) the magnitude, severity, and certainty of impacts, and stakeholder priorities, and; (2) any potential inequity in the distribution of impacts based on population characteristics such as age, gender, socioeconomic status, race or ethnicity.
- Further evaluating the health determinants by considering (and diagraming) the pathways that can reasonably link the project alternatives (actions and policies) to health, whether by direct, indirect, or cumulative paths.
- For each determinant, identifying research questions to be tackled during the Assessment phase, as well as research tasks, data needs, and potential sources.

## PUBLIC HEALTH PRIORITIES IN PITKIN COUNTY

This Fall, Pitkin County released its *Regional Community Health Assessment* for 2018-2022 in collaboration with Eagle and Garfield Counties. The *Assessment* and Colorado Department of Health and Environment (CDPHE) statistics show that Pitkin County is outperforming Colorado overall in nearly all health measures. A couple of statistics stand out, however, and are either raised as “issues of concern” in the *Assessment*, or may be especially pertinent to the Phillips HIA, or both. The *Assessment* “issues of concern” are:

- Mental health
- Suicide
- Substance use
- Access to health care
- Housing
- Water quality
- Additionally, Pitkin County’s aging population is pertinent to housing issues.



## POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS AND THE EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION OF HEALTH IMPACTS

Self-assessment by residents interviewed to date indicates that these individuals believe they qualify for APCA housing based on income or are retired. Measures of home values at Phillips include the mean of the Assessor's "actual value" of 22 Phillips units of \$37,259, and mean sale price of \$39,425 of 36 units in 1996-2018. These values are approximately 10% of median residential property values (including land value) in the region overall (latter values as reported in the *Regional Community Health Assessment*). These data suggest that it is likely possible to describe most Phillips residents as belonging to a "vulnerable population" (in HIA parlance) based on socioeconomic status in the Pitkin County context. Clarification of how APCA policy will be interpreted and applied at Phillips may shed light on whether any group of residents – retirees, for example, or those living in the oldest units – may be disproportionately impacted by change at Phillips.

## HEALTH DETERMINANTS SELECTED FOR ASSESSMENT

- Housing stability (APCHA; affordability): This is the highest priority health determinant, and most on the minds of current Phillips residents. As previously mentioned, the housing stability of Phillips residents is being impacted by the current planning and transition phase, and will be further impacted by changes to the site and policy, to greater or lesser degrees depending on individual situations. Over time, for those residents who can stay, and for others who may move to Phillips, housing stability should improve. Housing instability is intertwined with other health determinants; for example, it is both shaped by socioeconomic status and shapes it. When people pay a high percentage of income for housing, experience homelessness, move frequently, live far from good jobs, live in overcrowded conditions, or have poor health due to substandard housing, these factors may in turn limit access to well-paying jobs, healthful foods, health care, recreation and exercise.
- Housing quality (aging units): Given the advanced age of many of the Phillips units, it is reasonable to attempt to discern their quality. While indoor inspections are not included in the HIA scope, a small amount of information may be forthcoming from resident interviews or questionnaires. Substandard housing can have safety hazards such as wiring problems, inadequate heating and cooling, mold and mildew from leaks, and impact allergies, respiratory and infectious disease, and is especially implicated in the health of children and elderly people.
- Safety of housing, site and infrastructure (fire; flood; water; septic; roads): The positive health impacts of improvements to housing, site, and infrastructure safety are relatively straightforward to predict. On the other hand, the negative impacts of cost and impacts related to home siting are more complicated. These latter impacts are particularly responsive to the alternative decision scenarios, suggesting that this determinant will remain particularly dynamic as the planning process unfolds.
- Community quality (amenities; aesthetic, rural, and natural qualities; pets): There are many facets to community quality and its potential to impact health. These include location and access to services, amenities for recreation and play, and community gathering places that offer opportunities to strengthen community cohesion and build social capital. Some communities are rich in these assets, while other places attract residents for different reasons, such as a rural setting and natural beauty, which can also convey important health benefits. Early indications are that many Phillips residents may emphasize the latter types of values. It will be important to understand these choices and to weigh priorities and costs of desired amenities. It is also important to consider whether and how to factor in needs and desires of future residents who

may be attracted to an evolved Phillips community – particularly if more families with children choose to live there.

- Governance (homeowners’ association; maintenance): Thus far, current Phillips residents seem interested in adopting some form of governance such as a homeowners’ association. Effective local governance can improve health by providing opportunities for individuals to participate in democratic processes, increasing social capital and feelings of control over one’s destiny.
- Transportation (RFTA; school bus): Residents appreciate their location midway between Aspen and Basalt and find it convenient rather than isolating. There is seasonal transit service to the Hillside area connecting to the Brush Creek Intercept lot. From an HIA perspective, effective public transportation not only improves environmental health, it can impact public health by improving access to health care, jobs, education, and other health-promoting goods and services. This public good is especially important for those without autos, people with disabilities, the young, and elderly people who no longer drive.

### SAMPLE PATHWAY DIAGRAM

As mentioned above, diagrams were used during scoping to illustrate and evaluate the pathways that can reasonably link the project alternatives (actions and policies) to health, whether by direct, indirect, or cumulative paths. Below is a sample of a pathway diagram; this one illustrates how improvements to wildfire mitigation, defensible space between units, and fire flows might impact health.

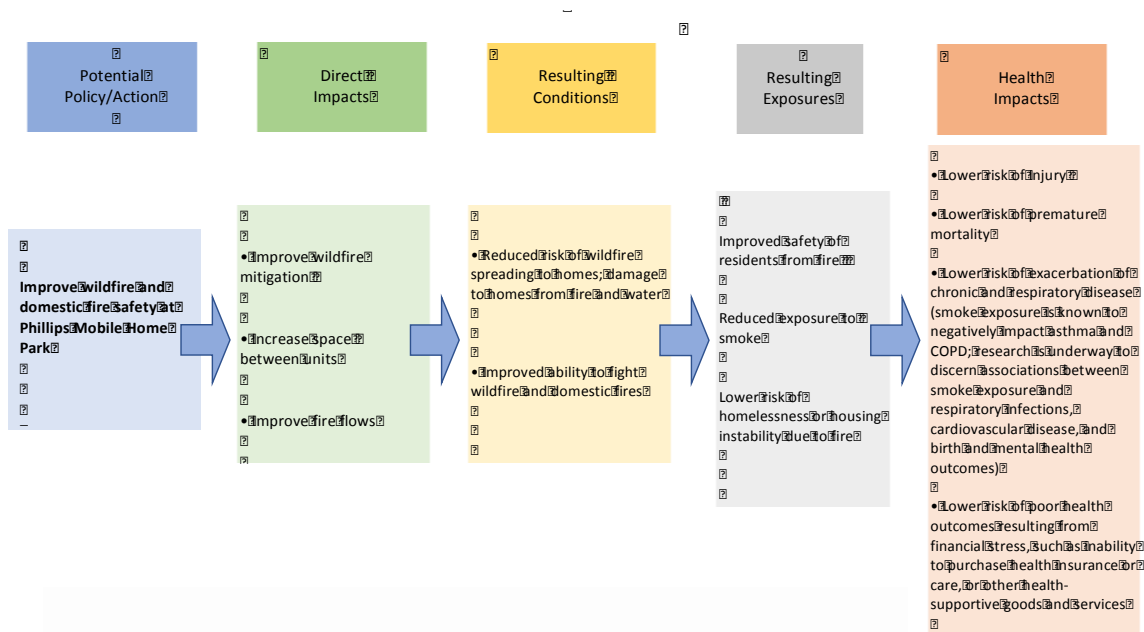


Figure 6 - Pathway Diagram for Site and Infrastructure Safety: Wildfire and Domestic Fire Mitigation

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## **ZONING & AREA PLAN**

The property is currently zoned AR-10 (Agricultural/Residential- 10 acre) and the current use is non-conforming. A proposal to rezone the property to make it conforming was denied in 1979. However, later that year the Board of County Commissioners passed a Resolution affirming its support for continued mobile home usage and identifying an area for potential relocation of units to bring the park into conformance. The relocation area identified was to the southwest of the existing homesites in the field above the irrigation ditch.

In order to subdivide the site for lot sales, a rezoning to MHP (Mobile Home Park) would be advised. The mobile home lot layout would need to meet the standards of that district.

The Woody Creek Master Plan supports conversion of the existing units to affordable housing without any expansion of density.

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## **RIVERVIEW FINDINGS**

### **FLOODPLAIN**

- Portions of five of the mobile homes and manufactured homes are within the FEMA 100-year floodplain on maps that are expected to be adopted soon
- Portions of four of the mobile homes and manufactured homes are also within the FEMA 500-year floodplain
- The cabins are not in the floodplain
- Several aspects of the infrastructure at Riverview are within the FEMA 100-year floodplain including the water supply well and wellhouse, septic tanks and the leachfield associated with the on-site wastewater treatment system and the loop access drive on the lower bench near the river.

### **BOUNDARY**

- Three of the mobile homes and manufactured homes appear to be outside of the Phillips MHP property
- Three of the mobile homes and manufactured homes appear to be partially outside of the Phillips MHP property
- Portions of the wastewater system are located outside of the Phillips MHP property
- The property impacted is owned by the State Land Board; there may be an option of purchasing additional land, if desired

### **WATER**

- Water is supplied from a spring box located near the Roaring Fork River and is chlorinated
- The water supply is modest and does not offer fire suppression opportunities; additional pumping would likely draw water from the river
- The water supply is tested even though that is not required due to the small number of units served
- The spring box and wellhouse are located in the floodplain

## WASTEWATER

- The septic system and leach field for the cabins, mobile homes, and manufactured homes appear to be at least partially located outside of the Phillips MHP property
- Finding land on-site for a suitable leach field is problematic

## ROADS & ACCESS

- No CDOT Access Permit to the property was found. There are currently two access points from SH 82 to the Riverview units
- Highway 82 in the vicinity of the Riverview entries does not have an existing Access Management Plan either in place or in progress
- Water lines are located in the driveway along the river
- Accident reports were obtained for Highway 82 on this side of the site although the reports did not indicate a history of accidents associated with the intersections from the highway

## FIRE

- No water storage is in place for firefighting; the well cannot support fire flows. A storage tank and hydrant/s would be prescribed
- The road system appears to accommodate fire truck needs
- Maximum grade for the north access needs to be limited to 10%
- A defensible space assessment would be performed in the area to be subdivided

## ECOLOGICAL RESOURCES

The Roaring Fork River and its associated riparian habitat are an important resource for humans and wildlife. Protecting the health and quality of the River and its associated wetlands and riparian areas is critical for the health of the area. Appropriate planning to avoid and mitigate impacts for the listed constraints should be considered for future planning and development.

### **Potential constraints associated with the Roaring Fork River include the following:**

- Consideration for stream setbacks, water resources and riparian wetland areas as described in Pitkin County Land Use Code
- Dimensional setbacks for housing as documented in Pitkin County land Use Code
- Mapped floodplain

### **Opportunities:**

- Restoration to quality of riparian and instream functions as appropriate and required
- Restoration of riparian vegetation would decrease erosion and significantly improve water quality
- Improvement to instream aquatic habitat
- Identifying locations for instream improvements to increase habitat diversity with the river would greatly improve overall aquatic habitat and increase overall utilization from fish and wildlife.
- Creation of wetlands may be a consideration to increase diversity of habitat on the property and improve overall ecosystem health
- Improvement to existing surface water infrastructure including repair of leaks in ditches, diversion structures and degraded ditch banks would improve water quality and use

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## HILLSIDE FINDINGS

### FLOODPLAIN

- Floodplain exists along undeveloped stretches of the river corridor and riparian zone
- The ranch house, residential units and related infrastructure are not in the floodplain

### BOUNDARY

- Portions of five units appear to be located in RFTA's rail corridor
- Portions of two leach fields for Hillside appear to be off the property
- Portions of the wastewater infrastructure are located outside of the Phillips MHP property
- A patio area for the ranch house has an encroachment license from RFTA

### WATER

- Water is supplied from a conventional well uphill from the residential units
- Water lines are mostly located under units, which would make a system upgrade somewhat easier as it could be centered in the roadway with less disruption of service
- Storage is not available for fire flows

### WASTEWATER

- There are two wastewater systems for the rental units and one for the ranch house. The two rental systems both have leach fields that are partially off the property. The southern system has septic and "jet" aeration tanks that appear to be in RFTA Rail Corridor
- Finding suitable land for replacement leach fields that can operate from gravity will be a challenge
- The investigation and report prepared by JVA Consulting Engineers in 2017 offers several options for possible replacement wastewater treatment systems

### FIRE

- No water storage is in place for firefighting; the well cannot support fire flows. A storage tank and hydrant/s would be prescribed
- The road system is likely to need some adjustment to accommodate fire truck radii requirements
- Fire separation of 10' is required between units (5' from lot lines) if the property is to be subdivided
- Overhead power lines will need to be measured to assure that the 13'6" clearance is maintained
- A defensible space assessment would be performed in the area to be subdivided

### ROADS & EASEMENTS

- A Holy Cross Access Easement overlays portions of nine units
- The sightlines at both connections to Lower River Road will need to be addressed during site planning if there is subdivision
- No accident reports were found for the County roadway on this side of the site

## **PARKING**

- Current parking is an informal layout that is generally working with vigilance by residents. The parking would need reconfiguration for subdivision. Guest parking would need to be addressed in future planning.
- Vehicle and motorized recreation “toys” are currently stored on the up valley side of the site. This would need to be reassessed during site planning.

## **DEBRIS FLOW**

- The previous owners did some work to direct debris following a previous incident
- SGM has concerns about debris flow risk in a major event to units 12, 45, and 46. Additional work is being done to further assess the risk to those units but not yet complete
- The Eli Cerise Ditch is routed above the Hillside units and has some potential for blockages and potential flooding into the area

## **ECOLOGICAL RESOURCES**

A variety of opportunities for preserving, restoring and enhancing the ecological conditions on the property exist. The Hillside neighborhood includes a total of 4 agricultural fields comprised of mixed grasses, alfalfa, and clover. The three fields located to the south of the mobile home park are flood irrigated historically producing enough yield for one annual cutting. There was no cutting in 2018. The northern field is not irrigated. There are opportunities to use the existing fields and water rights for continued agricultural use or for restoration of the fields to a native landscape providing great ecological benefit to wildlife and the ecosystem as a whole.

Water rights for the site are provided by three springs, two wells, the Eli Cerise Ditch and the Last Chance Ditch.

Several vegetative zones are found on the site. The Gambel Oak and Sagebrush Steppe areas are of higher quality for wildlife, and consideration for these areas may be of benefit to the greater ecosystem. Similarly, the Cottonwoods along Eli Cerise Ditch may provide shelter for wildlife and bird species and are a consideration for site planning options.

There are no mapped wildlife mitigation patterns within the area, but the two gulches to the east of the property provide this function and a variety of wildlife have been observed on the site.

### **Consideration going forward for the following:**

- Consideration for the Sagebrush Steppe and other potential wildlife habitat including Gambel Oak mixed montane shrubland and montane riparian vegetation
- Noxious vegetation control to mitigate weed growth. Controlling noxious and nuisance vegetation would limit the spread of these species and improve overall wildlife habitat.
- Full use of water rights for agricultural and ecological / restoration

Moving forward, from an ecological standpoint, developable land within the Hillside neighborhood includes the existing mobile home park with the exception of the discharge zone located in the middle of the property, and the eastern and southern most agricultural field. Non-developable areas include the riparian corridor and the vegetative zones located on the eastern portion of the property.



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## NEXT STEPS

The Team's immediate next step will be sharing the findings with Phillips residents. This will be followed by continued outreach activities and interviews during the Assessment Phase. Assessment will include development of three planning scenarios for the Phillips site and describe how those scenarios might address the planning issues identified to date. The scenarios will also be assessed to predict how each may positively or negatively impact the health determinants (recommendations for mitigating impacts will be developed as a part of the final phase, Recommendations and Reporting). These would be brought forward to the County in early 2019 for BOCC review.

The Assessment Phase will be followed by The Recommendations Report, which will be used as a guide for future phases of the project. Future phases of the project would include master planning, land use planning and the associated approval process, and finally construction.

In addition to resident outreach, outreach will be offered to the Woody Creek Planning Commission during the Assessment phase. Outreach to potential partners, stakeholders, and technical experts will continue as well.

Further refinement of mapping and technical information will inform the scenarios that are presented to the County.