

2014 Ute Valley Open Space Forest Restoration

Dennis Will,
Staff Forester

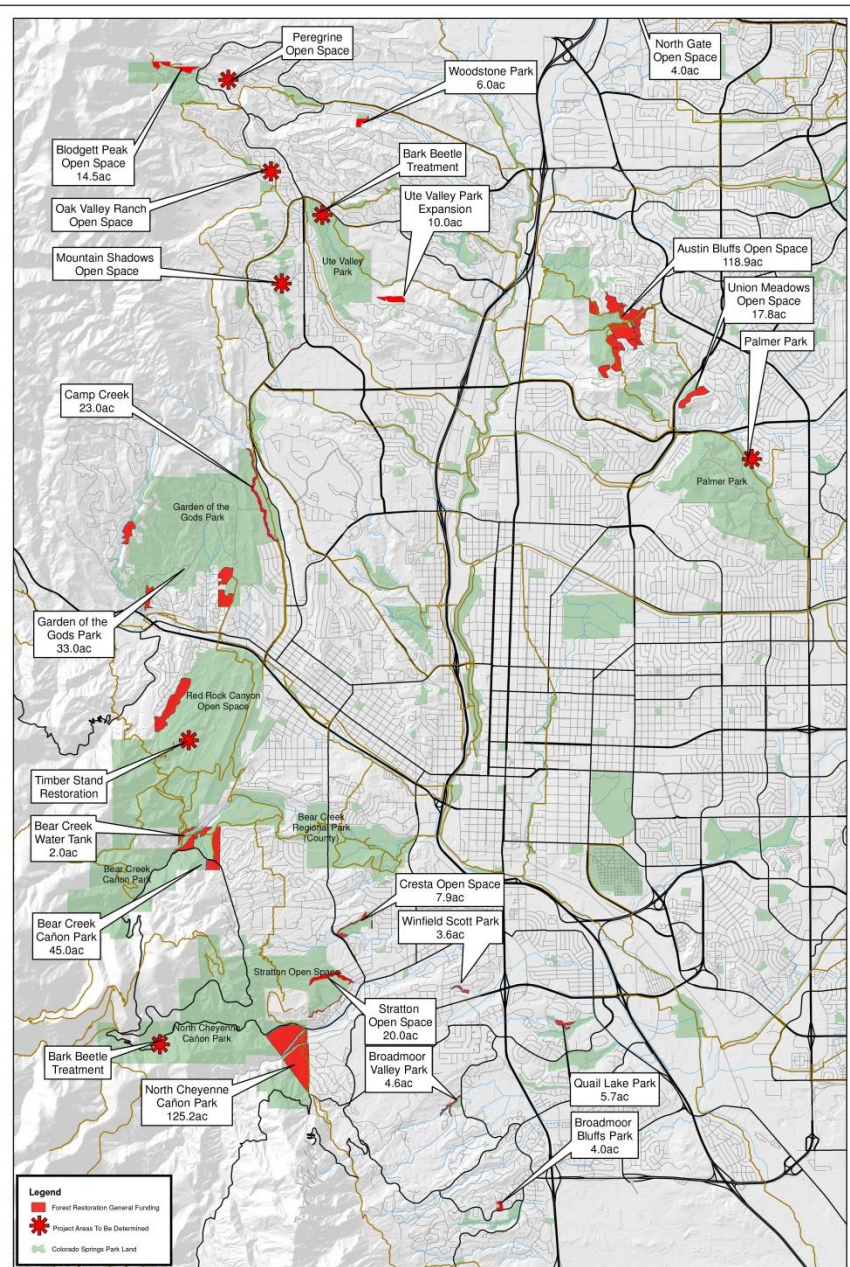
Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services,
Forestry Division



Priority Selection

- Identified parks and open spaces that have moderate to high sloping aspects with infrastructure above
- CSFS Colorado Wildfire Risk Assessment Portal
- Examined aerial photos to identify vegetation canopy cover / densities / access
- Mapped proposed treatment areas, attempted to connect existing with new areas
- Ground-truthed maps
- Assessed acreage needing treatment, available budget and estimated cost per acre to calculate baseline budget
- Assembled interested local contractors

2013 City-wide Proposed Treatment Areas



Ute Valley OS East Unit



Imagery Date: 10/22/2011 1999

© 2014 Google
38°54'37.47" N 104°50'18.56" W elev 6498 ft

Eye alt 9754 ft

Ute Valley OS West Unit



Forest Restoration:

- Defined as “actions to re-instate ecological processes, which accelerate recovery of forest structure, ecological functioning and biodiversity levels towards those typical of climax forest” i.e. the end-stage of natural forest succession
- Climax forests are relatively stable ecosystems that have developed the maximum biomass, structural complexity and species diversity that are possible

Restoration Standards:

- Diversity of “patchiness” across the landscape is the norm
- Treatments crafted to meet ecological goals while also mitigating fuel hazards
- More ponderosa & aspen, less Douglas-fir
- Increased heterogeneity
- Variable age structure & tree densities
- More and larger openings
- Preservation of larger, older trees
- Attention to rare species or habitats
- Attention to potential exotic invasive species
- Fire and it’s natural effects should be restored where possible
- Utilize mechanical treatments as surrogate to fire

The Ideal Ponderosa Stand



Ute Valley, East Unit



Ute Valley, West Unit



Union Meadows



Austin Bluffs Open Space Before Treatment



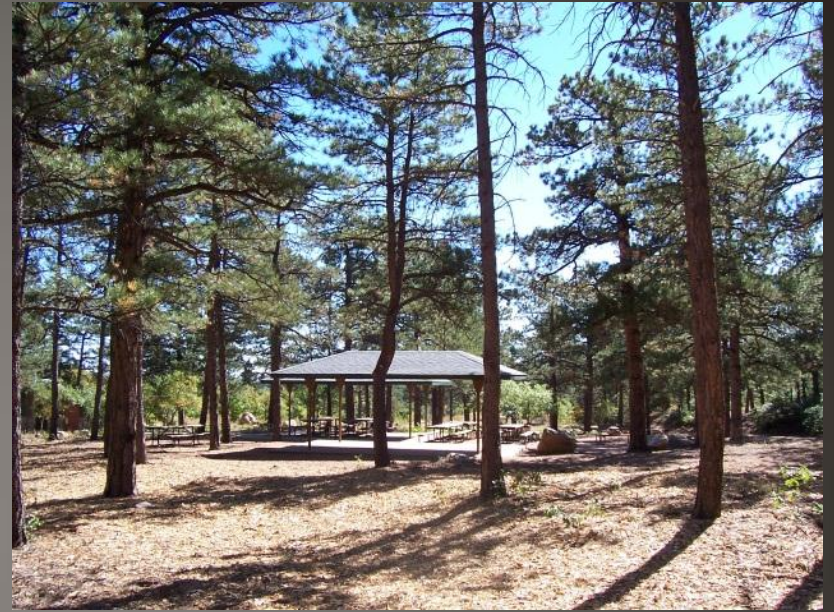
Austin Bluffs Open Space After Treatment



Woodstone Park



NCC: Mesa Picnic Area: 2005



Project Profile:

- Start Date: September, 2014
- Acres Treated: ~24
- Estimated Duration: 8 weeks
- Acres Treated per week: ~3
- Trail Closures: None anticipated
- Contractor: Mile High Youth Corps
- Number of Personnel on Site: 10
- Funding: DNR grant, City of Colorado Springs & Friends of Ute Valley Park
- Forest Management: City of Co. Spgs, Forestry Division

Treatment Standards:

- **Colorado State Forest Service:**
 - **A General Forest Restoration Prescription for Front Range Ponderosa Pine**
 - **Protecting Your Home from Wildfire: Creating Wildfire-Defensible Zones**
 - **Gamble Oak Management**
- **Front Range Roundtable:**
 - **Mixed Conifer Management Guidelines in the Southern Front Range, Colorado –(Kaufman et al)**

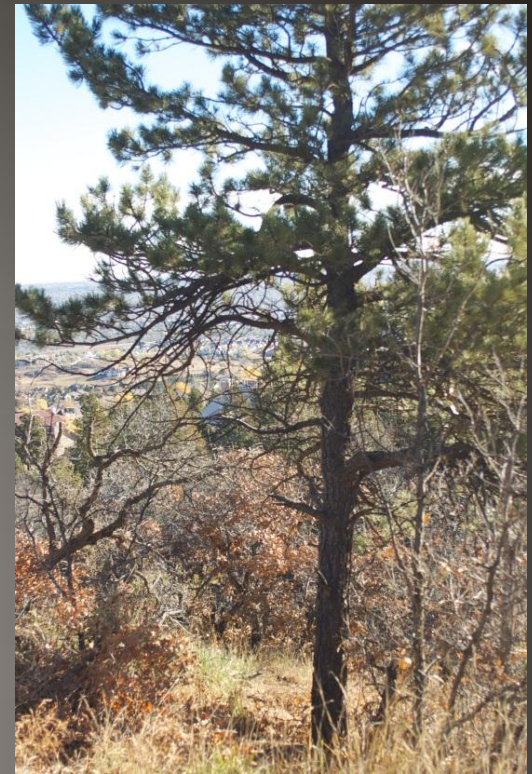
Section 16 Trailhead Before Treatment



Section 16 Trailhead After Treatment



Bear Creek OS: 2013



North Cheyenne Canyon Demo Site



North Cheyenne Canyon Demo Site



Equipment of Choice



Doing nothing is not an option

- Two large wildfires in one year
- 4 souls lost
- ~ 900 homes
- ~33,000 acres burned
- Millions of dollars wasted



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Contact Information:

- Phone: (719) 385-6550
- Email: dwill@springsgov.com

- Snail Mail: Dennis Will

City of Colorado Springs

Parks, Rec, & Cultural Services/ Forestry

1401 Recreation Way

Colorado Springs, Co. 80905

