

**RESOLUTION OF THE PITKIN COUNTY PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
ADOPTING AMENDMENTS TO THE 2018 SNOWMASS-CAPITOL CREEK CAUCUS
MASTER PLAN AND CERTIFYING THE 2023 MASTER PLAN FOR THE VALLEYS
OF CAPITOL CREEK AND LOWER SNOWMASS CREEK TO THE BOARD OF
COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF PITKIN COUNTY, COLORADO.**

Resolution No. PZ 001-2023

RECITALS

1. By State statute, the Pitkin County Planning and Zoning Commission (P&Z) has the responsibility and the authority to adopt master plans for Pitkin County.
2. Adopted plans are used by the public, appointed and elected officials as a guide in consideration of County-wide land use related policies, as well as future land use designations, planning issues and development proposals within the Plan area boundaries.
3. The Pitkin County Land Use Code specifically requires consideration of master plans as a criterion of approval for certain types of land use reviews (including, but not limited to special review, location and extent review, code amendments, rezoning, activities of local and state interest, and growth management exemptions).
4. Recommendations made within all of the respective Caucus/Neighborhood master plans will be considered by appointed and elected officials in the context of consistency with over-arching County land use policies and programs, and broader community goals, including but not limited to infrastructure and essential community facility needs. If a determination is made by the elected and/or appointed officials that a plan recommendation is inconsistent with broader community goals and does not benefit the community as a whole, such recommendation may be considered, but not implemented.
5. All of the respective Pitkin County Caucus/neighborhood plan updates will be adopted by the Planning & Zoning Commission separately. At such time as all of the plans have been adopted, they will be reviewed as a whole to ensure that there are no inherent conflicts that will impair the County's ability to achieve overarching community goals, land use policies and functional needs. Subsequently, the P&Z will identify and consolidate common plan themes in an update to the *2003 Overview of the Pitkin County Comprehensive Plan*. The Comprehensive Plan will provide the overall framework and approach for planning in rural Pitkin County, and the neighborhood plans will provide detail for specific areas.
6. The Snowmass-Capitol Creek Caucus Board worked with residents and property owners within the Caucus Area, depicted on the attached map (Exhibit B.) to prepare an update to the 2018 Snowmass-Capitol Creek Master Plan, adopted by the Planning & Zoning Commission in pursuant to Resolution PZ 2018-1. The 2023 Master Plan for the Valleys of Capitol Creek and Lower Snowmass Creek, is intended to address issues/topics that have become relevant since the 2018 Master Plan was adopted. The revised Master Plan was approved by the Snowmass-Capitol Creek Caucus Board in October of 2022 and in April, 2023.
7. The Pitkin County Planning and Zoning Commission reviewed the Master Plan for the Valleys of Capitol Creek and Lower Snowmass Creek at a public meeting and duly noticed public hearing on May 2, 2023 at which time public comment was heard with respect to the

RECEPTION#: 695727, R: \$0.00, D: \$0.00
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Pg 1 of 18, 06/27/2023 at 11:58:46 AM
Ingrid K. Grueter, Pitkin County, CO



Plan.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Pitkin County Planning Commission that it does hereby adopt amendments to the 2018 Master Plan by Resolution and certify the Master Plan for the Valleys of Capitol Creek and Lower Snowmass Creek, attached as Exhibit " A." to the Board of County Commissioners.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING PUBLISHED in The Aspen Daily News on April 6, 2023.

APPROVED AND ADOPTED on the 2nd Day of May, 2023.

PITKIN COUNTY PLANNING AND
ZONING COMMISSION:

By

Chelsea Clark

Chelsea Clark,

Chair

Date: Jun-26-2023

ATTEST:

Bonnie Shiles

Bonnie Shiles,

Administrative Assistant

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Richard Neiley

Richard Neiley

County Attorney

APPROVED AS TO CONTENT:

Suzanne Wolff

Suzanne Wolff,

Community Development Director

Exhibit A

Master Plan for the Valleys of Capitol Creek and Lower Snowmass Creek

Adopted by the Pitkin County Planning & Zoning Commission on May 2, 2023



I. PURPOSE AND FUNCTION OF THIS MASTER PLAN

This master plan was created by the Snowmass-Capitol Creek Caucus to protect and preserve the quality of life and the rural/agricultural character of the Snowmass-Capitol Creek area in Pitkin County, Colorado; and to protect and preserve the scale of existing development.

The beauty and tranquility of this place where we've each chosen to live is not an accident. In several instances, it could have gone in very different directions. One example, a major ski area was proposed on Haystack Mountain in the early 70s. If the people who lived here then had not been forward thinking, there could now be at least 10,000 more people in our little valley.

Though Nature provided the gift of this valley, keeping it in the condition we found it has required many decades of individual commitment and neighborly community effort, some of which is manifest in this plan and in county regulations.

Sustaining the integrity of this valley requires each of us to consider our actions on the land in light of the deep experience of those who came before us. The resolute language in this master plan reflects that experience. We hope you will take it to heart.

The master plan serves four functions, which are:

1. The governing document of the Caucus, defining policies upon which all Caucus-board decisions are based. (Decisions are based also on occasional surveys of Caucus residents.)
2. Recommendations to county government regarding its policies and decisions regarding the Caucus area.
3. A comprehensive long-range plan to guide development in the Snowmass-Capitol-Creek-Caucus area.
4. A guide for current and future landowners in the Caucus area.

II. VISION

The Snowmass and Capitol Creek valleys beautifully represent the Rocky Mountains of Colorado. Even though they are near the resort towns of Aspen and Snowmass Village, the character of these valleys is still predominantly rural/agricultural and remains substantially unchanged. Although there may be half as many ranches as there were 35 years ago, open pastures and meadows, along with abundant wildlife still abound.

Qualities valued by the residents of these valleys include natural watersheds, wildlife habitat, undisturbed expanses of natural vegetation and riparian corridors, and the quality and quantity of water in Snowmass and Capitol Creeks and their tributaries.

We experience our valleys through views of open meadow foregrounds, framing dramatic peaks, colorful hillsides, and distant ridgelines — and through the quiet, safety, and the feel of precious soil in our hands, and under our feet.

Agriculture — which here primarily consists of large-scale livestock grazing, equestrian activities, and irrigated farming of alfalfa and native grasses — is an essential resource and means to preserve the open rural character of our valleys. We support a range of techniques to ensure its continued presence and viability.

In short, buildings here are subordinate to the magnificence of our natural surroundings.

III. INTRODUCTION

Until 1960, Pitkin County was sparsely populated, with just over 2,300 people and over 104,000 acres of agricultural land in private ownership. Since that time, the permanent population has grown by nearly eight times, while agricultural land decreased to one quarter of its 1960 acreage.

This master plan applies to all development proposals in the Caucus area, including remodels

or expansions of existing homes, proposed receiver sites for transferable development rights (TDR), planning and construction of new homes, and commercial, institutional, and recreational development. The Caucus is a legally constituted nonprofit (501c3) neighborhood coalition established for the purposes of advising residents and the Board of County Commissioners and county planning staff on land use and other issues in our Caucus area, ensuring that homes, structures, and commercial activities reflect the jointly held vision of residents. The Caucus is not a regulatory agency; rather it advises the county, which retains all state-enabled regulatory authority.

The Caucus area is approximately 17,000 acres. Current zoning in the Caucus area continues to support the character of our two joined valleys – Snowmass and Capitol Creek valleys- and includes predominantly large-lot rural agricultural land-use patterns, and subdivisions with relatively small lots and large areas of protected open space.

We encourage new residents, homebuilders, and homeowners to visit our website. We strive to keep it updated. If you are looking for something that is not there, please contact one of the Board members directly. Contact information is on the website: www.snowcapCaucus.org.

This Master Plan is based on the consensus of our residents as derived through many Caucus meetings over many years. While we cannot make every neighbor happy, we have honored all opinions and suggestions expressed by the residents of both valleys. We remain an open and receptive Board. We invite all our neighbors to participate in our community and to come to the Board with any comments, concerns, and opinions on matters related to the Caucus.

IV. RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

All residential development in the Snowmass-Capitol Creek Caucus area should be consistent with and complimentary to the rural character of the area. The natural environment should dominate a person's experience of the valley. To this end, our caucus strongly advocates that single-family residential housing be of moderate size and bulk and are compatible with the size of the lots on which they are built.

The development of a new home and/or significant remodels should be subject to the following standards, incorporating our long-range view of protecting and maintaining the rural and natural ambience of this special valley.

- In accordance with County code, there should be no multi-family homes, condominiums, apartments, townhouses or trailer homes.
- Structures and driveways should be sited for preservation of open space, irrigated agricultural lands, and pasture.
- The Caucus supports the maximum house size limitation of 5,750 square feet.
- Criteria for site development within the Caucus area include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Visual impacts from Snowmass Creek Road, Capitol Creek Road, East Sopris Creek Road and from neighboring parcels,
 2. Traffic impacts related to the proposed development,
 3. Landscaping and vegetative screening including xeriscaping and other water conserving measures and topographical features such as berms and inclusion of natural hills and draws as a means to minimize visual impacts,
 4. Strict adherence to the Pitkin County Lighting Code in support of maintaining dark skies in the Caucus area,
 5. All new and remodeled houses should strive for net zero for energy consumption,
 6. All new and remodeled houses are encouraged to use of state-of-the-art, efficient plumbing fixtures,
 7. Parcels with pre-existing land use approvals for house sizes larger than 5,750 square feet should be honored with permanent vesting of house size, while meeting all current Pitkin County Land Use and Building Codes and Caucus guidelines.
- Existing homes of any size and vacant land with established development approvals that have not lapsed are considered approved until those approvals have lapsed.
 - Outbuildings should be reflective of our western rural character. We recommend that the County work with the Caucus to develop design parameters to ensure that scale and materials for outbuildings are consistent with surrounding rural character.
 - We expect neighbors building or remodeling homes to first approach their Homeowners' Associations (HOA's) and comply with the HOA's rules and regulations, as well as Caucus guidelines, which are the basis for Caucus recommendations to the County.
 - With respect to Transferable Development Rights (TDRs), the Snowmass Capitol Creek Caucus supports the creation and export of TDRs from the Caucus area. We do not support the use of TDRs generated within or outside of the Caucus area to increase house size above 5750 square feet.

B. Scale and Siting

When reviewing proposals for new structures, the Caucus board may request the use of story poles showing height and corners of proposed structures to enable the Caucus Land Use Committee to visualize proposed buildings or structures.

To be compatible with the goals and values of this Caucus, new buildings will:

1. Not dominate the landscape, but instead are sited and designed in harmony with the topography of the site to minimize visual impact from roads and neighboring homes.
2. Not include overhead beams or arches over driveway entrances

3. Include landscaping that minimizes visual impacts, though landscaping should not be the primary screening solution.
4. Be ranch-style
5. Be sited where they are compatible with local topography
6. Include broken roof lines
7. Use native landscaping.

C. Materials and Landscaping

To be compatible with the goals and values of this Caucus, new buildings will be designed with:

1. Low reflectivity roofs.
2. Fire-resistant roof materials as required by County code.
3. Earth-tone siding, exterior paint, and stains that fit in with the immediately surrounding natural environment.
4. Landscaping of plants and trees indigenous to the Snowmass and Capitol Creek Valleys on a scale that is in character and size with the surrounding environment.
5. Invasive-species and noxious-weed management. The Caucus supports related County policies and programs, and encourages more aggressive enforcement of noxious-weed regulations.
6. Modestly sized, permeable parking areas
7. Fencing that is consistent with rural, western character, preferably wood rail, split rail, barbed wire, or smooth wire. All new fencing, including fencing on lands assessed as agricultural properties, should be built to meet wildlife-friendly standards. Abandoned fencing, both wood and wire, that is no longer serving a functional purpose should be removed. Existing fencing should be made wildlife friendly by using techniques such as short sections of smooth wire and/or “lay-down” fences in areas of known wildlife crossing.

D. Visual Impacts

To be compatible with the goals and values of this Caucus, structures will be designed and managed to

1. Reflect rural western character
2. Screen or enclose materials and trash
3. Preclude ridgeline development.
4. Be consistent with Pitkin County scenic-overlay review standards.

E. Lighting and Windows

To be compatible with Caucus commitment to the sanctity of the night sky:

1. Landowners preclude light trespass on their neighbors by using downward facing spot or flood lights and by lighting roadside gates only consistent with County regulations.

2. Proposals for building construction will include an exterior lighting plan, which the Caucus board will review.
3. Structures do not include highly reflective windows.
4. Many birds die when they fly into windows. A wide range of solutions to prevent bird collisions are now available. Highly reflective windows that appear to be sky or vegetation are a frequent cause of collisions. (See the Roaring Fork Audubon website for suggestions.)
5. Holiday outdoor lighting will comply with county regulations, which allow holiday lighting only between November 15 and January 30.

The Caucus requests the County to consider additional restrictions on outdoor lighting to further minimize the impacts of outdoor lighting as new information and technology becomes available,

A. Floodplain Development

The Snowmass-Capitol Creek Caucus strongly encourages homeowners and landowners to protect our fragile rivers and streams. In siting, designing, and constructing a home and/or pasture, landowners are advised that the Snowmass-Capitol Creek Caucus:

1. Supports federal, state and county restrictions that protect streams and riparian areas through setbacks, buffers, and erosion control.
2. Encourages landowners to preserve native habitat and vegetation for wildlife by avoiding destruction of native vegetation adjacent to streams, and in wetlands and riparian areas.

Where local streams abut or flow through private property, landowners and HOAs should develop plans to address flood hazard and response to flood events.

V. COMMERCIAL AND INSTITUTIONAL USES

- A. All proposals for new commercial or institutional uses, excluding home occupations, are reviewed by the Caucus board.
- B. The Caucus is concerned about the traffic, parking, roadside trash, and similar impacts associated with commercial and institutional development and how these impact our rural character and natural environment.
- C. Existing retail commercial development in the vicinity of the Snowmass Conoco and Post Office is sufficient to meet the needs of residents.
- D. To preserve the rural character of our valleys, the County Land-Use Code should be revised as necessary to ensure that the following uses are allowed by special review, or prohibited respectively, as specified below.
- E. The following proposed uses will be reviewed by the Caucus board:

Special review	Incompatible with our rural character and natural environment
Commercial Nordic Skiing	Commercial Snowmobiling
Small Lodge or Guest Ranch	Commercial Motorcycling & ATVs
Commercial Equestrian Activities	Golf Courses
Wind Turbines	Private Clubs
Hydroelectric production	Retail Outlets & Processing Facilities
Cultivation of controlled substances.	Mining, mineral exploration, oil and gas drilling and exploration, sand and gravel pits, rock crushers, concrete batch plants, and any other heavy extractive operations.
Polo Fields	Permanent Camps & Schools
Greenhouses	Greenhouses with visible lighting
Seasonal and Permanent Employee Housing	Special Event Venues

- F. In addition to these uses, both commercial and institutional uses that exist when this plan is approved are “grandfathered” uses, provided they continue to be operated in a manner consistent with their land-use approvals, the goals and values of this plan, and the Pitkin County Land Use Code.
- G. The Caucus supports county special-event regulations, which include but are not limited to:
 - 1. Prohibiting noise levels that exceed 50dB at the property line after 11pm at night and 55dB during the day.
 - 2. Providing notice of the event to neighbors well prior to the event.
 - 3. Timely response to neighbor’s complaints
- H. The Caucus supports local-food production and would like to work with the County on the definition and standards for sustainable local food systems.

VI. ROADS AND TRANSPORTATION

County roads in the Caucus area should be maintained as rural roads. Safety improvements should be made as necessary. Our roads serve residents, guests, and emergency vehicles as well as public bicycle and running events. Safety for drivers, cyclists, and pedestrians and

horseback riders on our roads is a paramount concern for the Caucus.

- A. The Caucus requests support from the County Sheriff and County Road-and-Bridge Department to:
 - 1. Prevent overnight parking on county roads and (unlawfully on) private property
 - 2. Limit parking at the upper end of Capitol Creek Road to:
 - a. In summer, Cow Camp and Hay Park, Capitol Lake trailheads only
 - b. In winter, Hay Park trailhead only
- B. The County is responsible for regular maintenance of County roads to eliminate washboards and other safety hazards, but our roads should not be further widened or straightened.
- C. The County shall seek approval from the Caucus before removing mature trees from County land and rights of way, even for the purpose of increasing road safety.
- D. The Caucus supports the current mass transit system in the Roaring Fork Valley and the Park-n-Ride facility at the intersection of Snowmass Creek Road and Highway 82. We support innovations that expedite mobility in the valley when they are consistent with the environmental standards of this plan.
- E. The Caucus encourages all institutional uses and special events within the Caucus area to use shuttle services to reduce vehicle trips.
- F. The Caucus strongly encourages property owners, guests, and service workers to obey posted speed limits, which are between 10 and 35 mph. Our roads are narrow and circuitous; cyclists, pedestrians, livestock, wildlife, and pets are often present.
- G. Timely snow plowing should be a priority on all County roads accessing residences.
- H. The County should explore additional methods to indicate locations on our roads where caution is advised.
- I. The County should consider alternatives to the use of Magnesium Chloride (MgCl₂) on our roads for dust suppression and to melt snow/ice.
- J. The Caucus would like to work with the County on proposed/future senior and disabled transportation options.

VII. RECREATION AND TOURISM

- A. The Caucus supports preservation of existing recreational opportunities in our area.
- B. Bike use:
 - 1. Due to the absence of wide shoulders and usable space to expand local roads, the Caucus does not generally support the expansion of Caucus-area roads to accommodate bike lanes. To preserve the rural character of our roads, the Caucus prefers that bike paths be separated from roads where possible.
 - 2. However, the Caucus would consider wider shoulders where they will result in safety improvements for cyclists and pedestrians and less negative effects than the addition of a bike path adjacent to or separated from the road.
 - 3. The portion of Snowmass Creek Road between the intersection of Highway 82 and Snowmass Creek Road, and the “T” intersection of Snowmass and Capitol Creek Roads is particularly dangerous for pedestrians and cyclists. It should be

- considered for safety improvements.
- C. To preserve ecological values, the Caucus supports protection and ecological management of lands managed by the US Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management. The Caucus embraces expansion of Wilderness Areas. The Caucus requires ecologically meaningful buffer zones on private lands where they abut public lands and wilderness.

VIII. INFRASTRUCTURE

- A. The County should support the highest quality high-speed internet services, telecommunication services, and cable television services and reception in the Snowmass-Capitol Creek Caucus area, while minimizing scenic and other impacts associated with these facilities.
- B. We recommend that where practicable, all utility extensions within the Caucus area be installed underground.

IX. WASTE MANAGEMENT

The Caucus understands that at current use levels, the Pitkin County landfill will have to close about the year 2036. (It has a 40-year lifespan with an expansion possible). This will have many consequences to our level of service as well as increased expense.

- A. We support existing programs that divert materials from our waste stream to extend the landfill's life.
- B. The Caucus encourages our neighbors to participate in residential waste management plans that include food composting. Refer to landfillrules.com —one of the best waste management programs in the state — for the latest information.
- C. The Caucus requires that all trash containers be bear proof.

X. NOISE POLLUTION

To protect the natural quiet:

- A. The Caucus discourages fireworks, drone aircraft, night beacon lights, and loud amplified music.
- B. The Caucus opposes new landing strips and vertical-takeoff-and-landing areas in the Caucus area.
- C. Special event permit applications should be referred to the Caucus. As indicated in the commercial section of this plan (V.), the Caucus supports County special-event regulations, which include:
 1. Prohibiting noise levels that exceed 50dB at the property line after 11pm at night and 55dB during the day.
 2. Providing notice of the event to neighbors well prior to the event.
 3. Timely response to neighbor's complaints

D. The following uses of firearms are incompatible with the goals and values of this master plan.

1. Excessive discharge of firearms on private lands
2. Any discharge of automatic and semi-automatic firearms
3. Any use of tracer rounds

XI. SIGNAGE

To be compatible with this master plan:

- A. All signs, including security, political and real estate signs, should be of minimal size and located on private property.
- B. Political signage will be displayed no longer than 45 days before an election or 7 days after an election.
- C. Special event notices should be of minimum size and allowed on public rights of way for no more than ten days.

XII. WATER

Caucus encourages water users to practice wise use of our water resources –both the surface waters of Snowmass and Capitol Creeks, and ground water. The Caucus offers information on local water resource issues in our publications: *The Future of Instream Flows in Snowmass Creek* (AMEC 2012) and the booklet *Water User’s Guide for Protecting Flows in Snowmass Creek* (2015) and *Capitol Creek Hydrological Analysis and Decision Support* (2021). The *Water User’s Guide and Capitol Creek Hydrological Analysis*, available on our website, describe voluntary programs to conserve water and protect instream flows offered by the Colorado Water Conservation Board and the non-profit Colorado Water Trust. The Caucus also recognizes that the Roaring Fork Conservancy’s *Roaring Fork Watershed Plan* may provide Caucus citizens with some guidance on water resource issues and projects that should be prioritized in the Caucus area.

A. Right to Use Water:

1. The Caucus recommends that residents consult a water attorney and/or the State of Colorado Division of Water Resources to learn about water rights specific to their property. The following paragraph is not intended to convey legal advice, but rather to provide an overview of water use considerations in a rural residential area.
2. Water rights are important and valuable property interests and can be transferable. If water rights are being conveyed with your property, review these rights with a water attorney. Landowners should not assume they have the automatic right to use the water from any rivers or streams next to or running through their property.
3. The Caucus reminds residents that ground water supplies and surface water supplies are limited and precious.
4. The Caucus supports voluntary actions by water-rights holders to transfer water rights to protect instream flows in our Creeks.

5. The Caucus supports a county-wide water conservation plan to protect the Caucus area from unreasonable depletions of groundwater.
6. The Caucus encourages the County to protect the quality and quantity of ground aquifers generally, and through the development of Source Water Protection Plans with assistance from the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, and with the implementation of applicable best management strategies.
7. The Caucus strongly discourages the transfer of water rights out of the Snowmass and Capitol Creek Basins and encourages the preservation of water rights and resources in our local creek basins.
8. The Caucus encourages the efficient use of best management practices in agricultural and domestic irrigation to protect healthy flows in our creeks.
9. The Caucus strongly recommends that landowners research Pitkin County requirements for fire mitigation, including provisions for water tanks or ponds to protect against wildfire emergencies. Residents who elect to install ponds may have to obtain a water right from the State of Colorado for the pond. A water right may be required to confirm the priority, right and use of the pond. Even with a water right, pond owners may be required to obtain an augmentation plan.
10. The Caucus is similarly committed to protecting water quality in our streams. We strongly encourage that:
 - a. Irrigators minimize the use of pesticides and fertilizers, which if used improperly, can be transported to local waterways.
 - b. Livestock owners use fencing and other best management practices to minimize land disturbance near streams, wetlands, and other riparian areas.
 - c. Landowners who stable and graze livestock use fencing to ensure barnyard waste does not enter the Creek.
 - d. Horse outfitters and private horse owners staging in the Hay Park Trail parking lot clean up their animals' waste and litter to avoid waste entering the Creek.

B. Landscape irrigation is the largest component of residential water use. The Caucus encourages efficiency in home irrigation through:

1. Efficient irrigation systems (e.g., soaker hoses, micro sprinklers).
2. Active irrigation scheduling that reduces evaporation by limiting operation of landscape irrigation systems to early morning or evening.
3. Use of rain sensors on automatic sprinkler systems, which will override the programmed watering schedule and shut off the system during or after significant rainfall.
4. Avoiding sprinkler use during windy times.
5. Use of low-water landscaping including the use of native plants instead of sod, to minimize the need for supplemental watering.

6. Minimizing lawn size and using Pitkin County Native Grass mix.
7. Seeking further water-efficiency guidance from HOAs.
8. Allowing ponds for irrigation purposes and state-approved augmentation plans only, not for aesthetic purposes

C. The Caucus recommends that the County provide incentives for the re-use of gray water for domestic irrigation and establish effective regulations governing gray water re-use.

D. To prevent damage to riparian habitat and to prevent siltation of streams, livestock access to streams and riparian areas should be prevented. The Caucus encourages landowners to:

1. Provide livestock drinkers and stock tanks for livestock watering as an alternative to allowing livestock direct use of local streams and ditches.
2. Fence livestock off waterways to avoid erosion and degradation of riparian areas and water quality.

Water rights holders — an important opportunity: To help restore Colorado rivers, especially during drought years, you can sell your water rights, or portions of them, without losing them permanently. To learn more, contact the Colorado Water Trust. <https://coloradowatertrust.org/>

XIII. ENERGY USE

Local governments in Pitkin County continue to demonstrate commitment to energy and climate stewardship through improvements to building codes, incentive programs, demonstration projects and the like. The Caucus encourages homeowners and builders to explore every opportunity to increase energy efficiency, which will save money and reduce climate impacts. The following are offered as guidelines.

- A. Advanced energy-efficient building designs, passive solar designs, and energy-efficiency retrofits are the first priorities for reducing the use of purchased energy, cutting energy costs and pollution, and minimizing the size and cost of solar systems.
- B. The Caucus encourages home designs that use solar, ground-source heat pumps and other renewable-energy resources that minimize fossil-fuel consumption and CO₂ emissions.
- C. Special attention should be paid to minimizing energy use in homes that are unoccupied.
- D. In consideration of neighbors
 1. The glare produced by light reflecting from solar panels should not create unreasonable impacts of intensity and duration for neighbors.
 2. If glare creates unreasonable off-site impacts, then vegetative screening, panel repositioning, replacement of panels with non-glare alternatives, or other effective means of mitigating glare may be required.

3. View-plane obstructions and issues related to height, width, and bulk should be minimized when installing solar panels.
- E. The Caucus encourages the use of renewable energy sources. Off-site renewable electricity options are available from Holy Cross Energy and Clean Energy Collective. Holy Cross and Community Office for Resource Efficiency have energy efficiency programs, rebates, and financing.
 - F. The Caucus encourages examination of the potential for community solar (i.e., ground mounted, separate from buildings) and a micro-grid in the valley in ways that are compatible with the master plan.

XIV. CLIMATE

The Caucus aligns with scientific consensus/science-based targets on global climate change and to impact our Caucus area and the entire Roaring Fork Valley. The Caucus encourages home and landowners to understand climate vulnerabilities, curb carbon and methane pollution (and any other climate warming gasses) wherever possible, and take proactive steps to prepare for climate resilience.

Mitigation – Residents are encouraged to get educated on local, regional and global climate science, risks, and mitigation efforts taken by Pitkin County, the State of Colorado and US to with the US goal of decarbonize energy systems entirely by 2035 and to honor global science-based targets. Learn to calculate environmental consumption to include water, energy, gasoline, waste, organics, methane, etc. Identify ways to shrink your “footprint” (EPA footprint)

Stewardship – Homeowners should weatherize and electrify home and transportation: Take advantage of CORE, Holy Cross, and federal rebate programs that include stoves, EV charging, batteries, etc. Go carbon neutral with the help of buying renewable energy credits - see the Energy section and Caucus website for more pointers.

Regeneration – Explore how your land can be climate positive by practicing regenerative farming, planting native plants along with planting carbon-sequestrating crops like Switchgrass.

XV. WILDFIRE

The Caucus cooperates with the County Sheriff’s office, the Basalt Rural Fire Protection District and the Snowmass Wildcat Fire Protection District and other appropriate government agencies to establish and administer wildfire policies and programs to minimize the danger and destruction associated with wildfires within the Caucus Area.

- A. Every homeowner should refer to pitkinwildfire.com to obtain information on wildfire prevention in your home, mitigation, and evacuation.
- B. To the extent feasible, driveways for new homes should be designed to allow passing areas for fire truck access, though the wider dimension should not be used for the entire length of the driveway.
- C. Individuals should become very familiar with their local HOA emergency plans and County rules regarding evacuation planning for people and livestock.
- D. The Caucus will collaborate with homeowners' associations, the County and other appropriate agencies to develop a coordinated evacuation plan for all areas of the Caucus, including properties within a homeowners association and those that are not. The plan should incorporate an emphasis on self-reliance in the event of a natural or man-made disaster.
- E. Controlled burns on public and agricultural lands are common and consistent with wildfire prevention.
- F. Landowners should actively maintain the vegetation on their property to the wildfire-mitigation standards of the Pitkin County Land Use Code and local fire protection agencies.

XVI. ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

Preservation of the natural environment and rural character is the Caucus's highest priority. We advocate the safeguarding in perpetuity of open space, wildlife habitat, and agricultural land through conservation easements, land covenants and deed restrictions, development of backyard wildlife habitat, and other means.

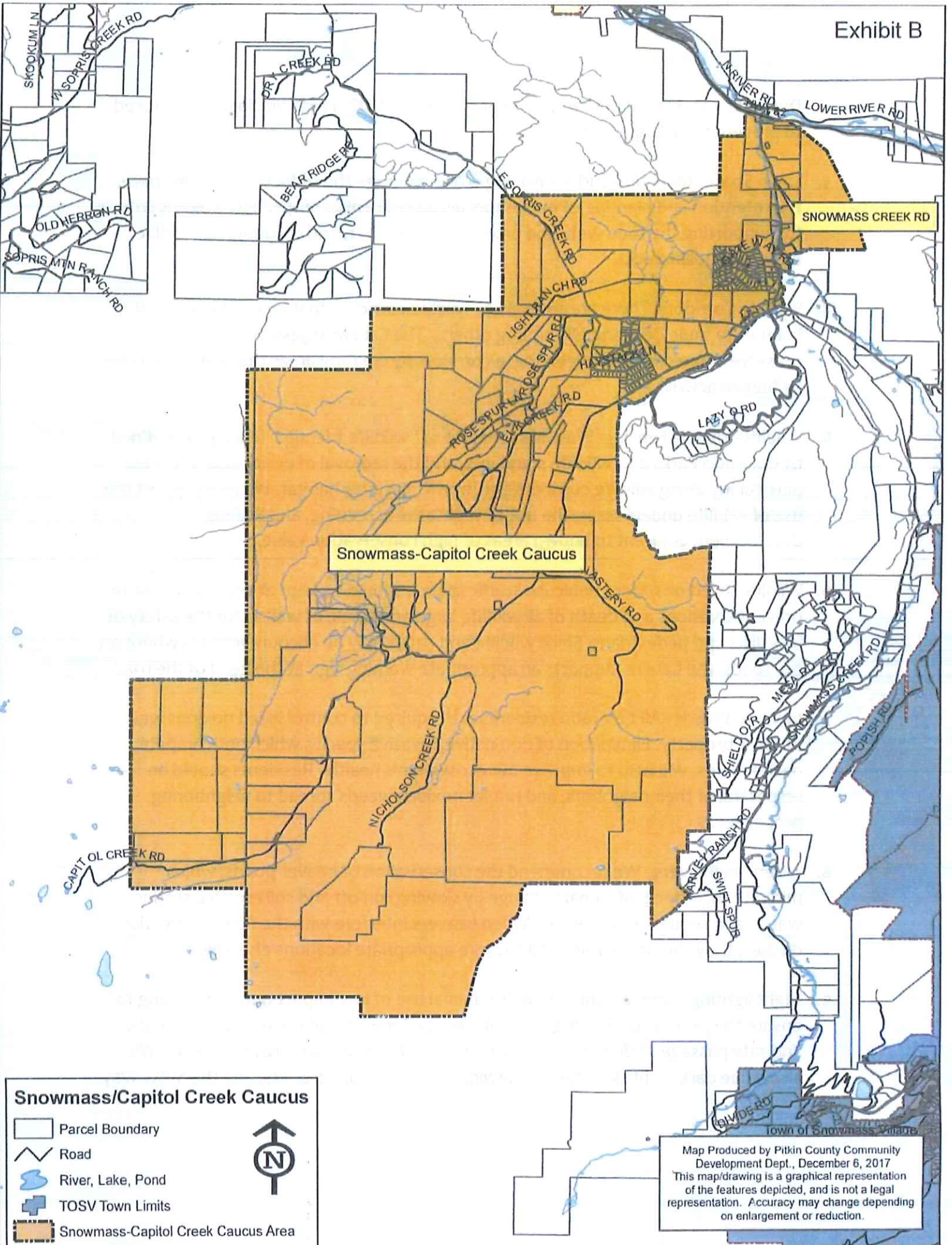
The Snowmass and Capitol Creek valleys serve as habitat and migratory routes for large mammals including elk, deer, moose, bear, mountain lions, bobcats, coyotes, and beaver, as well as dozens of species of smaller mammals, birds, fish, amphibians, and invertebrates, which all play a crucial role in the biotic web. An important role for the Caucus is to understand, monitor, and protect the valley for wildlife and plants who don't have a voice. The need to sustain healthy ecosystems informs our entire Master Plan and decisions of where and how development can occur. To achieve this, we recommend the following policies:

A. Biota: Flora and Fauna



1. Biodiversity Surveys - We encourage the use of the Roaring Fork Biodiversity Study as a valuable tool to use in analyzing development proposals, to protect parts of our valley with higher conservation values, and to make habitat improvements in areas with lower conservation values.
2. Pet control - All pet owners are required to have their pets under control at all times to protect wildlife. Please note that Colorado Parks and Wildlife Department has the authority to kill domestic animals shown to be harassing wildlife or livestock.

Domestic cats should primarily be kept indoors and otherwise be closely monitored to prevent the killing of birds.

3. Lawn Space Reduction and Re-Wilding- We encourage the reduction of lawn space, the retention and planting of native species on residential properties, which is critical for supporting the food web, and provide food, shelter, and corridors for wildlife, birds, and pollinators.
4. Wildlife Corridors- There are several key wildlife corridors that connect important habitat for mule deer and elk, among others. The Caucus supports efforts to preserve connectivity between these corridors by creating areas that are undisturbed by human activity.
5. Wildlife-friendly Fencing- We advise the use of “wildlife friendly” fencing, as defined by Colorado Parks and Wildlife standards, and the removal of unnecessary fences, particularly along wildlife corridors and in critical winter habitat. We also support the use of wildlife underpasses, the use of vegetative screening, and limiting development adjacent to known areas of high conservation value.
6. Wildlife Killed on roads - Vehicular traffic speeds should be kept at very moderate to prevent collisions and death of all wildlife large and small, as well as for the safety of bicyclists and pedestrians. Since wildlife and cattle may be encountered anywhere on our roads, the Caucus supports an appropriate warning sign at the head of the road.
7. Invasive Weeds - All Colorado residents are required to control listed noxious weeds on their property. Elimination of non-native, invasive species which out-compete native plants, will help to improve our ecosystem’s health. Residents should be respectful of their neighbors, and not let noxious weeds spread to neighboring properties.
8. American Beavers - We recommend the conservation of beaver ponds, which mitigate the effects of climate change by slowing run-off and soil erosion, storing water, and sequestering carbon. When beavers interfere with the flow of irrigation ditches, they should be removed to more appropriate locations elsewhere.
9. Night lighting—We recommend only minimal use of low-impact outdoor lighting to ensure the proper functioning of natural ecosystems, including migration of birds, and safe passage of deer, elk, and other wildlife between pasture and stream. We also value dark night skies for the viewing of moon, stars, planets, and the Milky Way.



Snowmass/Capitol Creek Caucus

-  Parcel Boundary
-  Road
-  River, Lake, Pond
-  TOSV Town Limits
-  Snowmass-Capitol Creek Caucus Area



Map Produced by Pitkin County Community Development Dept., December 6, 2017
 This map/drawing is a graphical representation of the features depicted, and is not a legal representation. Accuracy may change depending on enlargement or reduction.