
City of Glenwood Springs

South Canyon Area Master Plan

Glenwood Springs, Colorado



An in-depth ecological assessment and suitability analysis provide the foundation for holistic master planning that protects a rural canyon in balance with the needs of a nearby town and mountain visitors.

SERVICES

Conservation Planning
Ecological Restoration

The City of Glenwood Springs sought to develop a planning framework to address the 3,000-acre South Canyon area's history, land use, and natural resources while accounting for its vulnerabilities to catastrophic fire and recreation demands. To ensure a comprehensive approach, the city collaborated with an integrated design team led by Design Workshop (DW), supported by Biohabitats.

Biohabitats reviewing existing information and performed a GIS suitability analysis to identify potential conservation opportunities and challenges. Analysis included surface water, vegetative cover types, coal seam fire locations, soil qualities, wildfire history, sensitive habitat, wildlife migration routes, topography, and land uses. Biohabitats visited the site to understand and observe stream conditions, extent of different plant communities and species composition, ground-truth GIS data, and map additional features. Biohabitats finalized the suitability analysis, providing a map of highest-priority areas. Combined with expertise on fire mitigation, DW developed three planning alternatives spanning a range of approaches to the City of Glenwood. Biohabitats reviewed the options and provided feedback and recommendations on ecological restoration, conservation planning, and potential Hot Springs development.

With Biohabitats' input, DW created a master plan package that met sustainability goals and set the stage for public and stakeholder engagement. The final plan will be used in Glenwood Springs' strategic planning efforts to identify a path forward for funding and implementation.