

Figure 2.21

Mount Evans Geographic Area

40,787 NFS Acres 313 Non-NFS Acres 41,100 Total Acres

Management Area Prescription Allocation

1.1 - Wilderness

1.2 - Recommended for Wilderness

2.2 - Research Natural Areas

4.2 - Scenery

NFS Acres

38,649

161

154

1,823

Legend

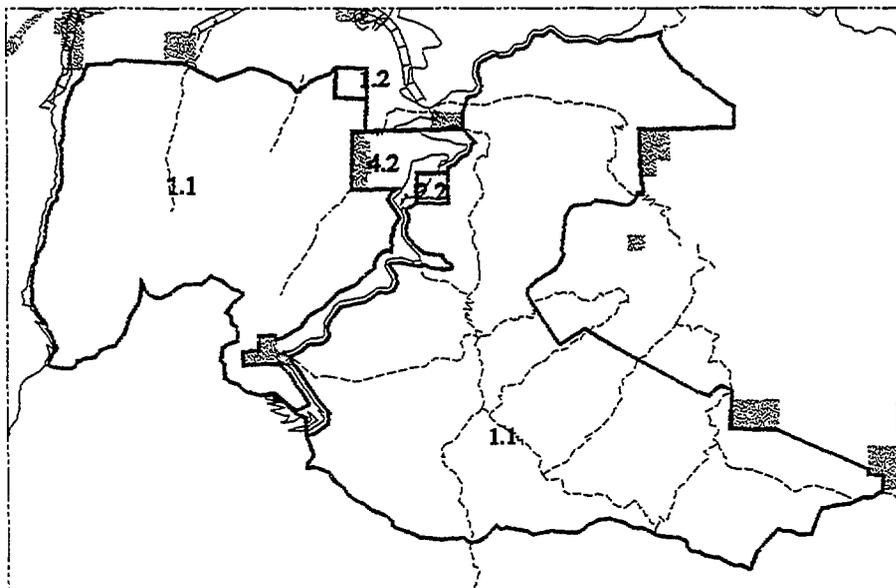
 Not NFS Lands

 Roads

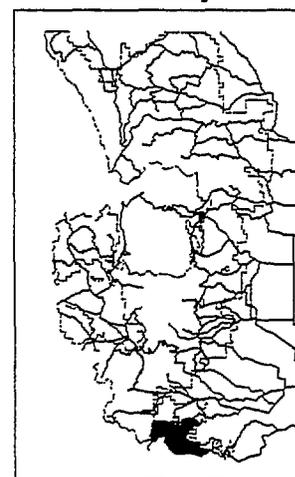
 Trails

 Utility Corridors (0.00 Mi.)

 Electronic Sites



Locator Map



Scale 1:200,000
0 1
Miles



MOUNT EVANS GEOGRAPHIC AREA

Setting

The area consists of a portion of Mount Evans Wilderness and the Mount Evans National Scenic Byway corridor bisecting the wilderness area, between Echo Lake and the summit of Mount Evans. This geographic area covers the northern half of the wilderness area, in the Arapaho National Forests; the southern portion, in the Pike National Forest, is not included. The area also includes the Mount Goliath Botanical Area, which contains a large old-growth stand of bristlecone pine. The area includes two Denver Mountain Parks. The area encompasses the upper north and east faces of Mount Evans with elevations ranging from 8,600 feet to the Mount Evans summit at 14,264 feet. Approximately one-third of the area is above timberline and consists of alpine meadow and rock. The lower portions contain mostly subalpine forests of spruce and fir and lodgepole pine. The lowest areas contain a small component of aspen and ponderosa pine. Significant bristlecone pine stands occur at elevations from 11,000 to 12,000 feet. The area provides important summer habitat for elk, and the upper elevations are habitat for a reintroduced population of mountain goat.

Mount Evans National Scenic Byway (Colorado Highway 5) is the highest paved road in North America, reaching the summit of Mount Evans. The byway corridor receives a high level of recreational use, mostly motorized travel and viewing scenery and wildlife. Mount Evans Wilderness also receives a very high level of nonmotorized recreational use. The University of Denver operates under a special-use permit an observatory at the summit of Mount Evans and a research facility at Echo Lake.

The Scenic Byway provides access through the center of the area, and is open to motorized travel only during summer months. Colorado Highway 103 and Guanella Pass National Scenic Byway (County Road 381) provide motorized access to the western and northern borders of the area. The area contains a network of about 100 miles of nonmotorized trails, most of which are within the wilderness area.

Goals and Desired Conditions

Provide opportunities for recreational use of the area while protecting the alpine ecosystems and the integrity of the wilderness area. Concentrate most use of the area within the byway corridor.

Vegetation changes occur mainly through natural processes. Timber harvesting is not allowed. A limited amount of prescribed fire may be performed, subject to an approved plan, to replicate natural conditions by reintroducing prescribed fire into fire-dependent ecosystems. The wildland fire management strategy is perimeter control except for the Mount Goliath Research Natural Area in which the strategy is direct control to preserve the old-growth character of the bristlecone pine stand. Details are shown on the *wildland fire management strategy map*.

Management Areas 1.1 (Mount Evans Wilderness) and 1.2 (Recommended Addition)

Provide opportunities for quality wilderness experiences. Maintain the current trail system within the wilderness, and reconstruct trails as needed to protect soil and water resources. Request the Colorado Division of Wildlife to monitor fish-stocking of lakes and reduce the stocking levels if fishing is causing substantial resource damage, such as bank erosion and riparian damage. Identify limits of acceptable change to the environment and manage the area to stay within these limits. Coordinate management of the area with the South Platte Ranger District of the Pike National Forest.

Accommodate recreational use along the trail corridors in which upper limits of use are based on environmental effects with less emphasis on social factors, such as people encounters and opportunities for solitude.

Management Area 2.2 (Mount Goliath Research Natural Area)

Protect the bristlecone pine stand and other vegetational values of the area. Directly control all wildfires. Provide for interpretation, enjoyment, and study of the area. Pursue a partnership with Denver Botanical Gardens to manage the area.

Management Area 4.2

Provide for recreational and educational use of the Mount Evans corridor, emphasizing viewing scenery and wildlife, environmental education, and interpretation. Manage the corridor through partnerships with the Colorado Division of Wildlife, University of Denver, City of Denver, Denver Botanical Gardens, and Clear Creek County.

Allow development along the corridor while protecting the integrity of the recreational setting. Balance recreational opportunities with protection of important wildlife habitats and alpine ecosystems.

Emphasize interpretation of wildlife and surrounding ecosystems. Provide road-side vistas, parking areas, interpretive and nature trails, and facilities to improve and increase recreational opportunities and to facilitate interpretation.

Reduce traffic congestion, improve safety, and provide interpretive services on the byway through the use of shuttles or similar strategies.

If requested, consider allowing expansion of the Idaho Springs Reservoir onto National Forest lands.

Standards and Guidelines

1. (ST) In semiprimitive Wilderness ROS, encounters will not be regulated in highly traveled corridors (modifies direction from management area 1.1 prescription).

Travel Management Strategy, Mount Evans Geographic Area

Management Area	Mode	Existing System	Convert Ways	New Rds/Trls	Extent of Additions	Extent of Obliterations
1.1	4WD	N	N	N	N	L
	MTR	N	N	N	N	N
	WMT	N	N	N	N	N
	WNM	Y	Y	Y	L	N
	NMT	Y	Y	Y	L	N
1.2	4WD	N	N	N	N	L
	MTR	N	N	N	N	N
	WMT	N	N	N	N	N
	WNM	Y	Y	Y	L	N
	NMT	Y	Y	Y	L	N
2.2	4WD	N	N	N	N	N
	MTR	N	N	N	N	N
	WMT	N	N	N	N	N
	WNM	Y	N	N	N	N
	NMT	Y	N	Y	L	N
4.2	4WD	N	N	N	N	N
	MTR	N	N	N	N	N
	WMT	N	N	N	N	N
	WNM	Y	N	N	N	N
	NMT	Y	Y	Y	L	N