

What's so special about Soapstone Prairie?



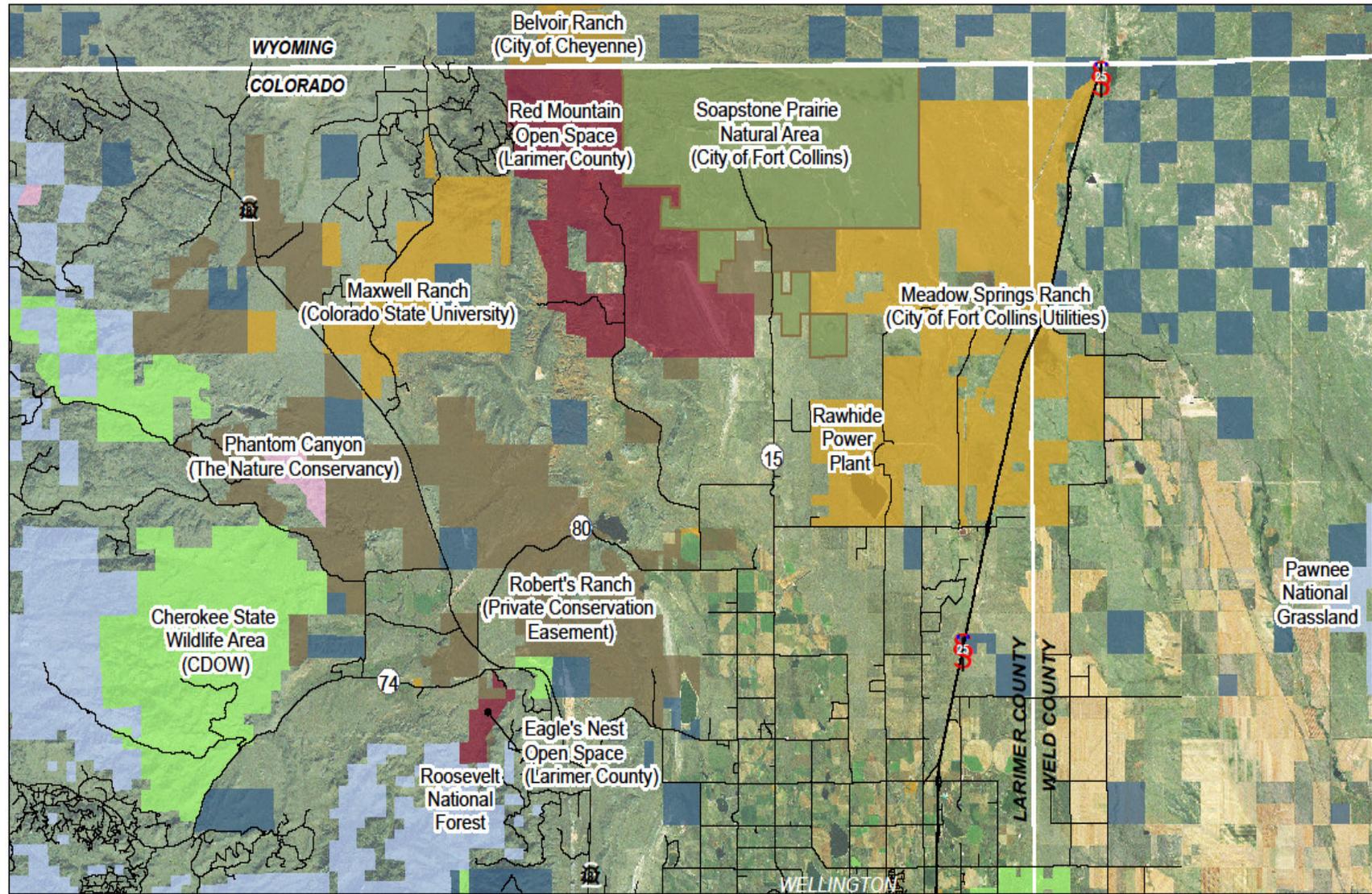
Soapstone Prairie is special because:

- Location
- Size
- Unique Topography
- Diverse Ecosystems
- Preservation of History
- Archaeology
- Geology
- Scenery
- Meteorology
- Rare Plants and Animals
- Natural Landscape
- Recreational Opportunities
- Living History
- Research Opportunities
- Cultural History

LOCATION

- 25 miles north of Fort Collins on County Road 15 (becoming Rawhide Flats Road).
- On the Border of Wyoming.
- In the heart of the Laramie Foothills: Mountains to Plains Project (55,000 acres) of an undeveloped corridor.

Laramie Foothills Mountains to Plains Project



- Fort Collins Natural Area
- State Land Board
- State Wildlife Area
- Conservation Easement
- Larimer County Open Space
- U.S. Forest Service
- The Nature Conservancy
- Other Public Lands

Updated July 1, 2008

0 0.5 1 2 3 4 5 Miles

Laramie Foothills: Mountains to Plains Project



SIZE

- ~19,000 acres (32 sq. miles)
- ~50% total acreage of all natural areas!



UNIQUE TOPOGRAPHY

- Foothills
- Plains
- Cheyenne Ridge
- 1000+ ft. topographic relief
- 6080 -7201 ft.



PAST LAND USE



Sheep late 1800's-1965 Warren Livestock



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Soapstone Grazing Assoc. 1965-2004



Diverse Ecosystems

- Shortgrass prairie & grasslands
- Foothills shrublands
- Wetlands and Riparian Areas



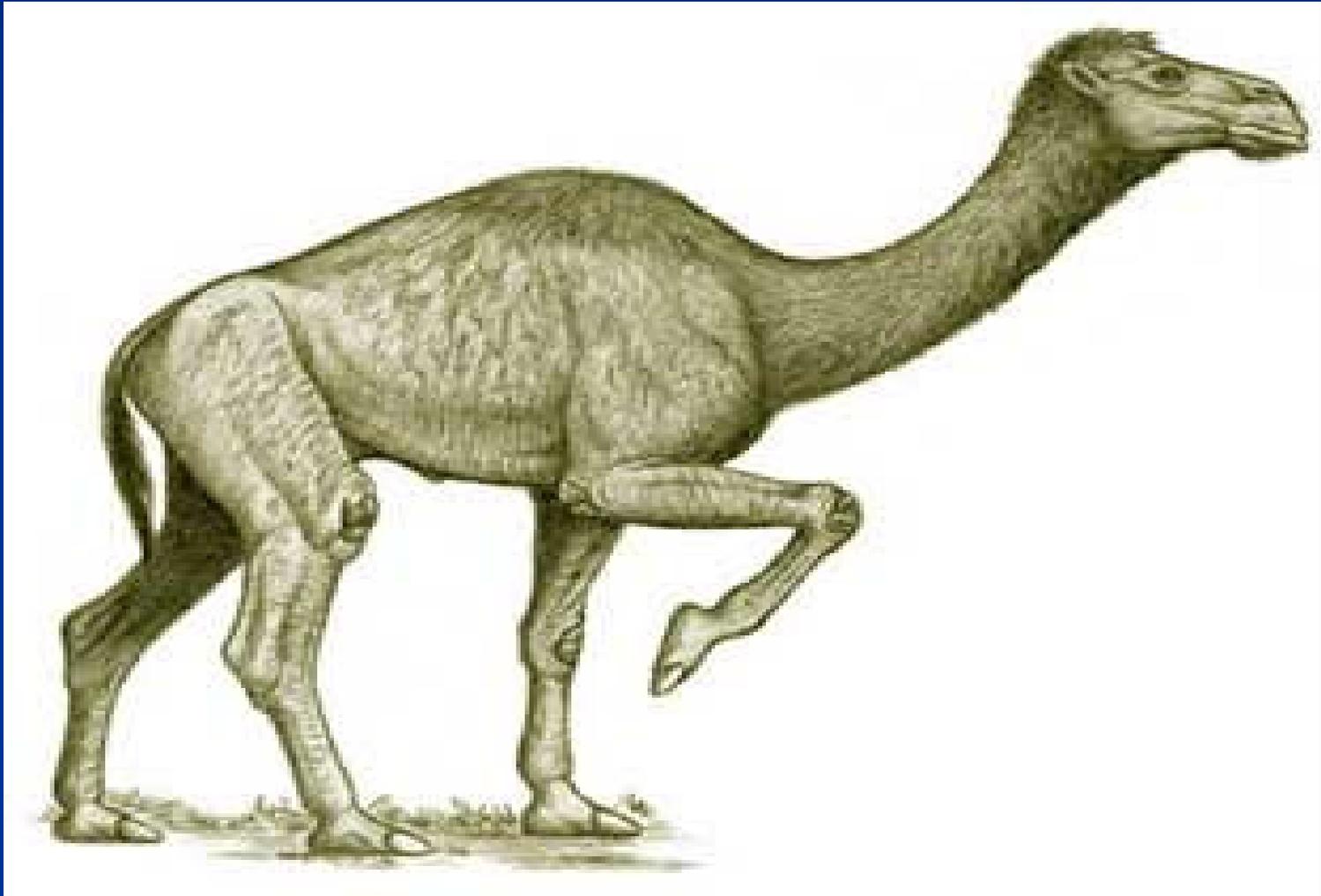








Camelops





Giant Sloth







Grassland Animals – critical overwintering grounds for pronghorn









Swift Fox

Vulpes velox



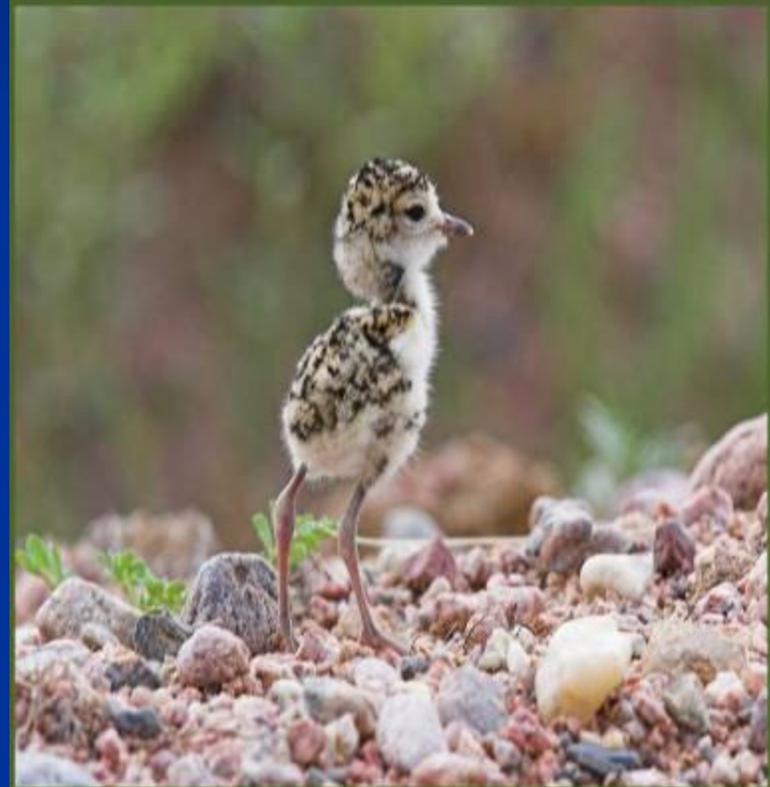
Stewardship

How can you help protect our newest natural area?

- Don't bring your dog!
- Stay on the trails, respect wildlife closure areas.
- Feed your horse weed free hay or grain 3 days before going to any natural area.
- Don't pick any plants or remove artifacts.
- Leave no trace.



Mountain Plover

















A few things to watch out for..







Lindenmeier Valley



Geology



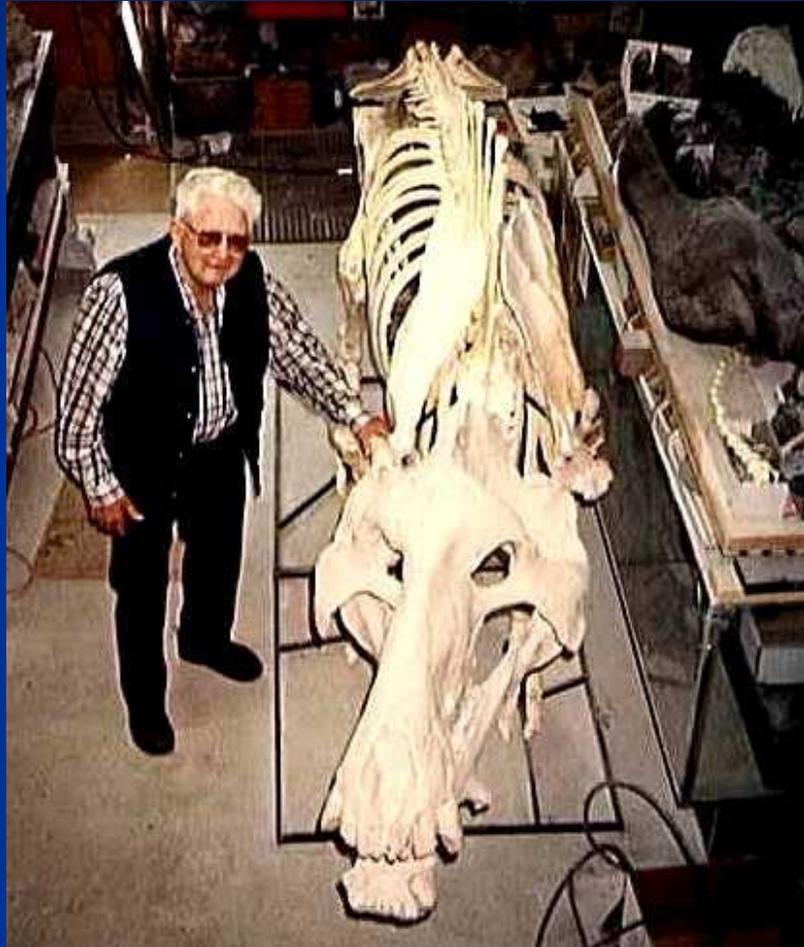
“Soapstone”



**You see Leonard, this is the Brule Formation of the
White River Group...Eocene Hell Pigs
K. Johnson DMNS**







Archeotherium “Eocene Hell Pig”





EON	ERA	PERIOD	EPOCH	Ma		
Phanerozoic	Cenozoic	Quaternary	Holocene	Late	0.01	
			Pleistocene	Early	0.8	
		Tertiary	Neogene	Pliocene	Late	1.8
					Early	3.6
				Miocene	Late	5.3
					Middle	11.2
					Early	16.4
			Oligocene	Late	33.7	
				Early	28.5	
			Paleogene	Eocene	Late	33.7
					Middle	41.3
					Early	49.0
		Paleocene		Late	54.8	
				Early	61.0	
	Mesozoic	Cretaceous	Late	65.0		
			Early	99.0		
			Late	144		
		Jurassic	Middle	159		
			Early	180		
			Late	206		
		Triassic	Late	227		
			Middle	242		
			Early	248		
		Paleozoic	Permian	Late	256	
				Early	290	
			Pennsylvanian		323	
	Mississippian			354		
	Devonian		Late	370		
			Middle	391		
			Early	417		
	Silurian		Late	423		
			Early	443		
	Ordovician		Late	458		
Middle			470			
Early			490			
Cambrian	D		500			
	C		512			
	B	520				
	A	543				
Precambrian	Proterozoic	Late	900			
		Middle	1600			
		Early	2500			
	Archean	Late	3000			
		Middle	3400			
		Early	3800?			

Rare Plants and Animals

- Colorado Butterfly Plant – the most endangered plant in the state of Colorado!
- Rocky Mt. Blazing Star – only 11 pops in CO.
- Colorado Blue Butterfly – globally imperiled.
- Mountain mahogany shrub communities – some only known from CO & WY front range!
- Variety of rare animals! Raptors, mammals, bats, birds, rodents, reptiles, (fish).

Colorado Butterfly Plant

Gaura neomexicana ssp. *coloradensis*

Federally Listed Threatened Species



Rocky Mountain Blazing Star

Liatris ligulistylis

Rare – only 11 populations in CO



Mountain Mahogany Communities



Fruits and Flowers

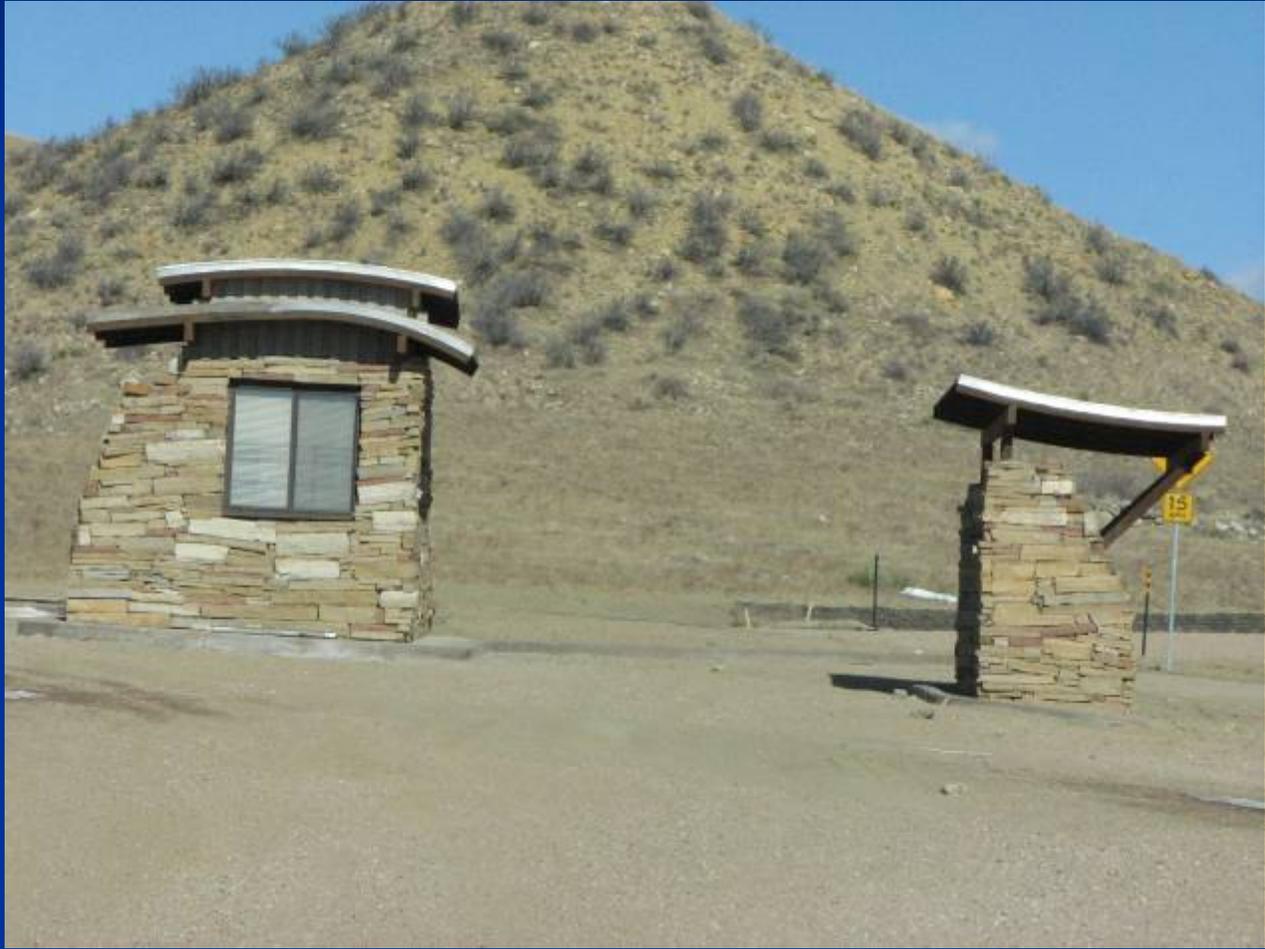




Green Gentian- 20-60 years to produce a flower stalk!!!















So what can I do?

- Places for a picnic.
- Trail heads for hiking and biking.
- Photographic opportunities.
- Over 100 guided hikes, bikes, equestrian rides, accessible programs, night programs!



Learn something!



Take a hike, buddy!



Ride a bike!



Bring your horse (south parking lot)



Enjoy the view!



Big Hole Overlook

-photo by Bill Spencer



Enjoy “the breeze”...



Listen to some music!



Or not so wild...

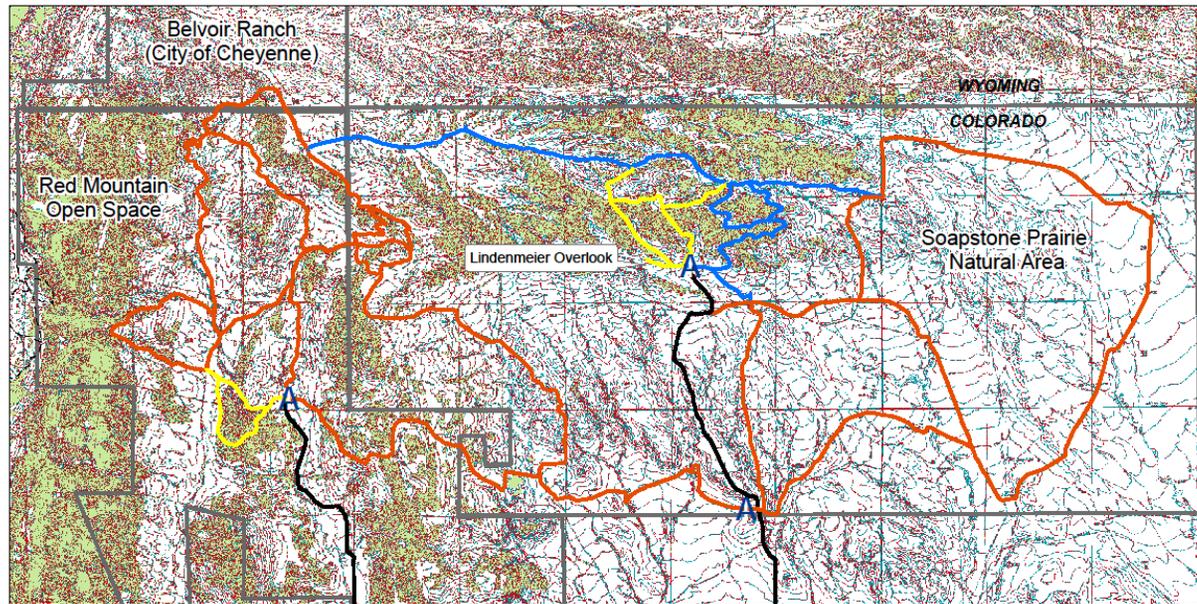


Ranching 21st Century!



Soapstone Prairie Natural Area & Red Mountain Open Space
Proposed Trails & Trailheads

July 2008



- Access Road
- Hiking Trail
- Hiking, Biking & Horseback Riding Trail

A Trailheads/ Parking areas



Because Soapstone is remote...



For Your Safety:

- Bring food, water, sunscreen and a 1st aid kit.
- Bring your cell phone (service is spotty).
- Stay on the trails.
- Keep small children close.
- Be observant of your surroundings.
- Watch the weather – storms often bring lightening and hail.
- Don't wear sandals or flip flops.

Land Management Challenges

- Natural Resource protection.
- Cultural Resource Protection
- Grazing leases.
- Rare plant/animal conservation.
- Weeds.









Summary

- Soapstone is special for MANY reasons!
- Rare landscape with rare plant and animal species.
- Cultural history – world class!
- A big landscape to get away!
- A place worth protecting!
- AND AS WE LIKE TO SAY...

Soapstone Prairie: It will blow you away!















