



**Jefferson County
Open Space**
enriching life

MASTER PLAN
2014-2019



Acknowledgements

2014-2019 Jeffco Open Space Master Plan Acknowledgements

This Plan represents the combined efforts of a variety of individuals and organizations whose time and expertise were generously contributed. The Citizens of Jefferson County deserve the greatest acknowledgement for creating and sustaining the Jeffco Open Space legacy. To all, we say our most sincere, thank you.

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History



*“Take nothing but memories,
leave nothing but footprints.”*

Chief Seattle

Jefferson County Open Space is the Nation’s first sales tax funded county open space program. It has grassroots beginnings dating back to 1972 with two pivotal organizations: *PLAN Jeffco* and *The League of Women Voters of Jefferson County*. To preserve the scenic vistas and open lands within the County, these organizations proposed a unique concept to the Board of County Commissioners. They recommended the collection of a one-half of one-percent sales tax in Jefferson County to fund the program.

The enabling resolution, the *Jeffco Open Space Enabling Resolution*, requires these funds to be used, “*exclusively for the planning for, developing necessary access to, acquisition, maintenance and preservation of open space real property for the use and benefit of the public.*” In 1980, this resolution was amended by the voters to add authorization for the expenditure of these funds for construction, acquisition and maintenance of park and recreation capital improvements. When Jefferson County voters approved the *Jeffco Open Space Enabling Resolution*, no “sunset” or end date was included, thereby ensuring perpetual land conservation, stewardship of open space and parklands, and access for public enjoyment.

Since 1972, Jeffco Open Space has acquired over 52,817 acres of land with approximately one-fifth dedicated to cities or districts that provide parks, recreation services and open space within those jurisdictional service areas. Throughout the unincorporated County, 28 Open Space Parks provide trail-based outdoor recreation, nature and history education hubs, and conservation of scenic landscapes, natural resources, historic sites and wildlife habitat. On privately owned lands, 3,177 acres have been preserved through conservation easements.



Parks and Trails

Approximately one-third of all Open Space sales tax collected is shared with cities in the County for parks and open space purposes. This is known as their “attributable share”, and it is based on a formula using the number of motor vehicle registrations within each city. Although the districts that provide park and recreation services in the County do not receive an attributable share of the sales tax proceeds, they are eligible like the cities for partnership grants for land acquisitions and capital projects to provide outdoor recreation to their communities and service areas. The primary mechanism for those partnerships is the *Jeffco Open Space Local Parks and Recreation Grant Program* (Local Grants) that offers supplemental funding for city and district projects.

The graphic at the right indicates the number of acres acquired by the County on behalf of the cities and districts as well as funds distributed through Local Grants and former Joint Ventures through 2013.

Jeffco Open Space Sales Tax Funds

Cities	Acres Preserved	Open Space Sales Tax Funded Land & Amenities
City of Arvada	1,869.24	\$41,554,576.00
City of Broomfield	7.90	\$456,875.00
City of Edgewater	16.70	\$2,227,004.00
City of Golden	399.38	\$13,426,128.00
City of Lakewood	2,607.80	\$39,455,132.00
City of Westminster	3,071.13	\$38,402,565.00
City of Wheat Ridge	346.81	\$13,981,386.00
City Totals	8,318.96	\$149,503,666.00
Towns		
Town of Bow Mar		\$25,000.00
Town of Morrison	104.78	\$2,822,442.00
Town of Mountain View	0.35	\$159,485.00
Town Totals	105.13	\$3,006,927.00
Districts		
Apex Park and Recreation District (formerly North Jeffco Park & Recreation District)	35.59	\$6,033,146.00
Bowles Metropolitan District		\$42,200.00
Coal Creek Canyon Park and Recreation District		\$42,000.00
Columbine Knolls Grove Recreation District	10.66	\$1,663,895.00
Evergreen Park and Recreation District	44.45	\$3,569,310.00
Foothills Park and Recreation District	1,048.65	\$37,947,411.00
Ken-Caryl Park and Recreation District	203.34	\$2,834,978.00
Leewood Metropolitan Recreation and Park District		\$553,860.00
Normandy Estates Metropolitan Recreation District		\$468,715.00
Pleasant View Metropolitan District	65.68	\$2,837,188.00
Prospect Recreation and Park District	30.52	\$2,685,449.00
South Suburban Park and Recreation District		\$4,000.00
District Totals	1,438.89	\$58,682,152.00
GRAND TOTALS	9,862.98	\$211,192,745.00

Ongoing Partnerships

Jefferson County Open Space works to achieve complementary organizational goals and objectives with partner agencies on the Federal, State and local level. An example of Jeffco Open Space partnership efforts includes the on-going collaboration with the *Jeffco Outdoors Foundation* on the *Jeffco Outdoors Map Series*. Through this program, Jeffco Open Space provides a map and the Jeffco Outdoors Foundation shares health messaging on the reverse side of the map. This project was created in collaboration with *Jefferson County Public Health*.

Encouraging consistent natural resource and visitor management is an important component of partnerships across the Jeffco Open Space local landscape. Quarterly meetings with city and district directors across the County address mutual priorities and opportunities for collaboration. Staff with Jeffco Open Space also works with local land trusts, user advocacy groups, and community organizations on a myriad of efforts.

Public Parks and Open Space Provider Continuum

The settings and services provided by Jeffco Open Space are different from those provided by the County's cities and districts. Jeffco Open Space provides nature-based parks in unincorporated areas with development usually limited to trails and associated facilities, such as restrooms and parking at trailheads. The cities and districts provide more developed parks and recreation areas. The continuum shown below shows the role of public entities in providing varying types of open space, parks and nature-based outdoor experiences.

Provider Continuum

Neighborhood & Community Parks, Sports Facilities, Golf Courses	Local Trails	Regional Trails	Nature-Based Open Space and Parks
			
Park & Recreation Districts		Cities	
Jeffco Open Space - Grant Funded		Denver Mountain Parks	
Jeffco Open Space - Grant Funded		Jeffco Open Space - Managed	
		State Parks	
		Federal Lands	

VISION

Enriching life throughout Jefferson County with an abundance of open space, parks, trails and nature-based outdoor experiences.

MISSION

To acquire property rights for the preservation of open space and parklands, protect natural and park resources, and provide for healthy nature-based experiences.

VALUES

Seven values guide Jeffco Open Space on a daily basis, demonstrating a commitment to accountability and transparency in the organization's day-to-day efforts. These values are extensions of the Vision, Values and Goals established by the Jefferson County Board of County Commissioners and drive how Jeffco Open Space conducts business.

- ▶ **Responsible Stewardship** – *Manage our financial, human, natural and park resources ensuring the best possible value to tax payers.*
- ▶ **Innovation** – *Explore and research new ideas and implement them when prudent.*
- ▶ **Collaboration** – *Work jointly with others to create mutually beneficial partnerships.*
- ▶ **Balance** – *Balance our decisions by considering outdoor recreation and conservation costs and benefits in our everyday approach.*
- ▶ **Trust** – *Maintain public confidence by behaving ethically, consistently and reliably with transparency and accountability.*
- ▶ **Excellence** – *Strive for the best results at every task and in all endeavors.*
- ▶ **Learn and Share** – *Learn from others and share information in a way that is easy to access and understand.*

Jeffco Open Space Master Plan Purpose

The purpose of this **Jeffco Open Space Master Plan** is to provide an overarching strategic focus and direction. The Plan reflects the Vision, Mission, Values and Acquisition Criteria of the Jeffco Open Space organization. The Goals and associated Strategies provide the framework to accomplish this Plan in a five-year period from 2014 to 2019. The specific use and management of Open Space Parks is set forth in separate Regional Management Plans.

Before updating this Plan, a 2011 Citizen Survey was conducted. This was the first statistically accurate survey completed by Jeffco Open Space. Also, a survey of critical biological resources, including wetland and riparian areas, for Jefferson County was conducted in 2010 - 2011 by the Colorado Natural Heritage Program (CNHP) as an update to a similar survey completed in 1993. The surveys established a baseline for citizen preferences, and an inventory of biological resources for proactive landscape conservation. This critical information contributed to developing goals and strategies for this 2014 Master Plan update.

Previous Jeffco Open Space Master Plans

The Jeffco Open Space Master Plan was last updated in 2008. There have been a total of six Master Plan updates occurring over the life of the Program in 1978, 1980, 1989, 1998, 2003 and 2008. This 2014 Plan includes quantifiable goals and strategies that have been developed with accountability in mind, and actions taken to advance these goals will be communicated each year in an annual report.

Current Plan Update Process

The 2011 *Countywide Open Space Citizen Survey* was used to develop goals and strategies outlined in this Plan. Fifteen public meetings were held in the spring, summer and fall of 2013 to seek input from interested parties on the focus and direction of the Plan and to garner representation from communities and interest groups across Jefferson County. A group of Jeffco Open Space staff and members of the Jeffco Open Space Advisory Committee met a number of times to refine the draft. The involvement of the Advisory Committee and the public was critical to the success of this Plan’s vision and goals.

Related Plans and Studies

Several studies and related plans have contributed information to Jeffco Open Space leadership, staff, our partners and stakeholders in guiding activities. These resources are updated more frequently than this Plan period of 2014 through 2019 and are made available as web links.

Jeffco Open Space Accomplishments 2008-2013

Below is a summary of achievements, many of which were outlined as goals in the 2008 Jeffco Open Space Master Plan. The highlights of the last five years include:

Preserved 1,900 acres of land including:

- McLeod property added to the Lookout Mountain Nature Preserve – 24 acres
- Pearce property added to White Ranch Park – 186 acres
- Rocky Flats - Section 16 added to Rocky Flats National Wildlife Refuge – 617 acres
- Booth/Rodgers properties added to Coal Creek Canyon Park – 613 acres

JEFFCO OPEN SPACE TIMELINE									
■ EVENT ■ PRIMARY ACQUISITION OF PARK									
Land and Water Conservation Grant of \$750,000; Clement Park	Crown Hill Park dedicated	Ad Hoc Committee reviews program direction; Elk Meadow/Means (1977-1986); County Campus; Meyer Ranch; Arvada/Westwood Golf Course; Pine Valley Ranch	Lair o’ the Bear and AD Hoc Committee report completed; Acquisitions moratorium; Clement Park dedicated	Management Review Audit concluded; Land Acquisition Subcommittee formed by OSAC and Park Host Program implemented	Master Plan completed; Acquisitions moratorium lifted; Trails 2000 plan drafted; and Meyer Ranch Park dedicated	Crown Hill Urban Wildlife Sanctuary dedicated	Mount Lindo; Ken-Caryl Recreation Center Land and Lair o’ the Bear Park dedicated	Deer Creek Canyon; Bear Creek corridor; Foothills/Leslea the Ridge; Mount Lindo and Bear Creek Canyon	North Table Mountain/Coors and Dinosaur Ridge Visitors Center
1982	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993

Open Space Advisory Committee

The [Open Space Advisory Committee](#) (Advisory Committee), also referred to as OSAC, meets monthly for a study and regular session meeting and meets regularly with the Board of County Commissioners. The Advisory Committee may hold special meetings with stakeholders. The 12-member Advisory Committee is made up of three City representatives, three County representatives including one planner employed by the County, three citizens-at-large, one recreation district representative, and two alternate members.

The Advisory Committee reviews and makes recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners regarding the following:

- Jeffco Open Space Budget
- Terms of Purchase and Sale Agreements as to Real Property Interests
- Local Park and Recreation and Nonprofit Grants
- Purchase, sale, lease, or transfer of water rights
- All acquisitions, dispositions, trades and gifts of interests in real property
- Naming of Open Space Parks
- Intergovernmental agreements
- Such other matters that the Committee deems appropriate or are recommended by the Director

The Advisory Committee also works with Open Space staff regarding the following:

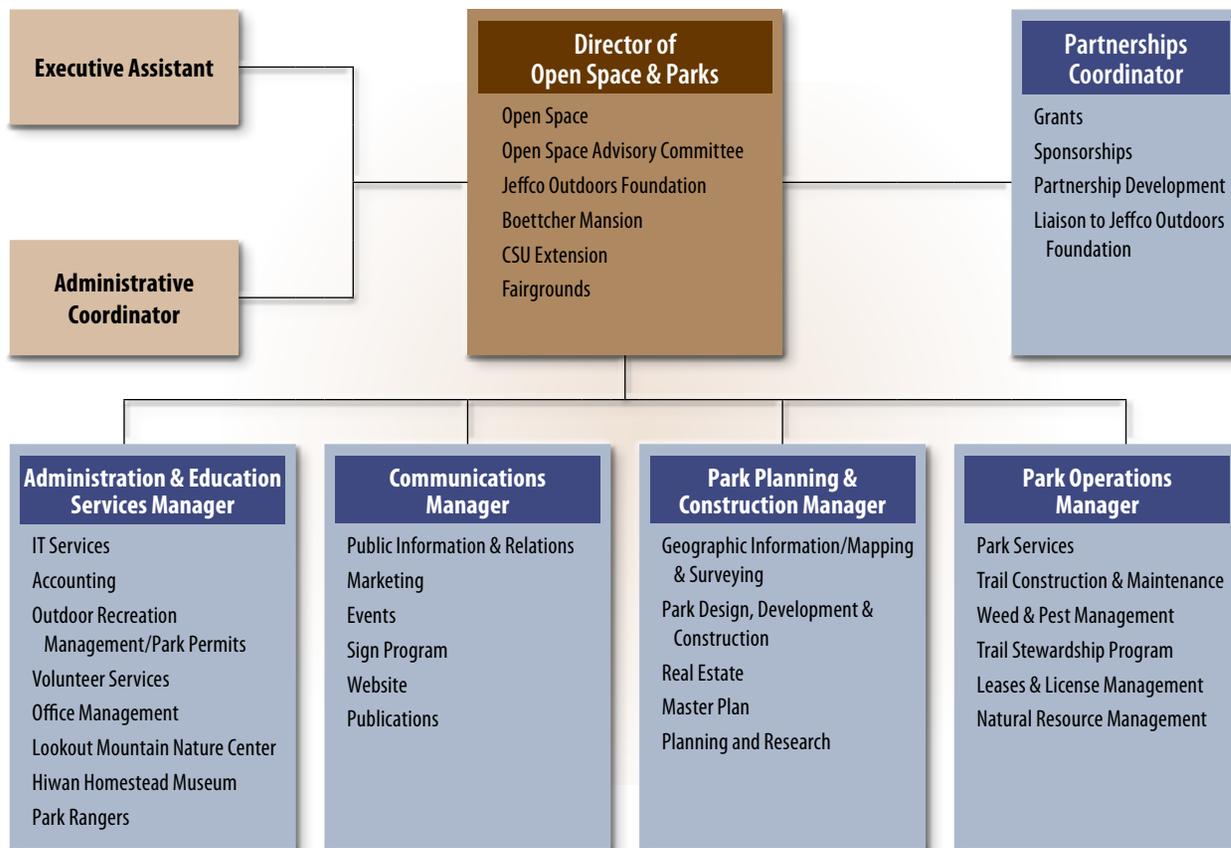
- The periodic development of and revisions to the Open Space Master Plan
- The review of plans for new Open Space parks and major development of Open Space parks and/or trails including plans and budgets
- Meetings with Cities, Districts, citizens/homeowners groups, etc.

JEFFCO OPEN SPACE TIMELINE									
■ EVENT ■ PRIMARY ACQUISITION OF PARK									
Citizens Park/Edgewater; Alderfer/Evergreen Mountain; South Table Mountain/Coors (Trust for Public Land); Fehringer Ranch/Foothills; South Table Mountain/GOCO \$5 Million Grant and Jeffco Counties in Partnership/Denver	Clear Creek Trail adjacent to Highway 58; Windy Saddle Park Trailhead and Flying J Ranch Park dedicated	Rooney Sports Complex lease/Golden; Chatfield/Tanglewood Exchange and Centennial Cone Park Alternating Weekend Use implemented	Ralston Creek/Foss; Grant Terry Bridge and Mount Tom/Termintozzi	Master Plan Update; Mt. Tom/Thompson; Reynolds Park/Open Lands, Inc.; Cub Creek Trail Easement; Meyer Ranch/Option	Cathedral Spires/Petrites-Heinen; Coal Creek Canyon/Brothers Conservation Easement; Hiwan Homestead/Grove; Lookout Mountain Nature Preserve/McLeod; Matthews/Winters Park/Rooney; Van Bibber Park/Public Service; Mayham Gulch Trailhead completed; Apex Park Trail Management implemented	Bachman/Golden; Hildebrand Ranch Park/State Land Board Lease; Hildebrand Ranch Park dedicated	Coal Creek Canyon/Booth; White Ranch/Pearce; Westminster Hills Open Space/Conservation Easement; Section 16 Rocky Flats/State Land Board	Coal Creek Canyon/Booth Minerals; Foothills P&R/Harriman & Bergen Water lease; Reynolds/Faller; Windy Saddle/Clear Creek Land Conservancy	Clear Creek Canyon/Welch Ditch Trail; North Table Mountain/Golden Berm; Party for Parks celebrating Jeffco Open Space 40th birthday; Denver Mountain Park's 100th Anniversary and Great Outdoors Colorado 20th birthday
2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013

Open Space Staff

Jefferson County Open Space is under the leadership of the Director. The Director oversees the Open Space staff of approximately 96 full-time employees. These employees work in one of four management areas, including Administration and Education Services, Communications, Park Operations, and Park Planning and Construction.

- Support functions from *Administration and Education Services* include providing safe and enjoyable outdoor experiences through nature and history education offerings as well as ranger and volunteer patrol of parks and trails and outdoor recreation coordination. Budget, accounting, and administrative services are part of this management area.



- A broad range of tools and techniques are employed by the *Communications* team to provide public information on activities of Jeffco Open Space and promote public involvement.
- The majority of Open Space staff are involved in *Park Operations*, performing field work, building and maintaining a trails network, managing natural resources and maintaining park facilities using best management practices.
- *Park Planning and Construction* assesses potential open space lands for acquisition by the real estate and planning teams, reviews and creates plans, designs, surveys, GIS and other maps, as well as develops, constructs and maintains facilities for public use.

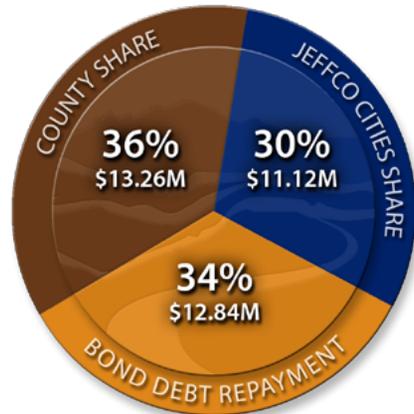


“In every walk with nature, one receives more than he seeks.”

John Muir

Financial Management

Jeffco Open Space Tax Allocation



Total = \$37.22M*

*Based on 2014 estimates

Current and Potential Funding Sources

The voter-approved one half of one percent sales tax to fund Jefferson County Open Space is the primary revenue source for land acquisition, administration, management, city share back, and Local Grants. When Jefferson County voters approved the Jeffco Open Space Enabling Resolution, no “sunset” or end date was included, thereby ensuring perpetual land conservation, stewardship of open space and parklands, and access for public enjoyment.

The Enabling Resolution provides that cities within the County receive an attributable share of the sales tax fund for local park and open space purposes. This share amounts to nearly one-third of all Open Space sales tax collected. The allocations to cities are based on a formula derived from motor vehicle registrations. Districts that provide park and recreation services do not receive an attributable share as outlined in the Enabling Resolution.

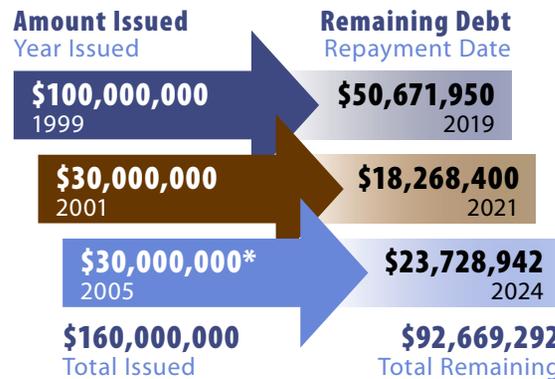
In 2014, the total Open Space sales tax revenues are estimated to amount to \$37.22 Million with \$11.12 Million or 30 percent to be distributed as attributable shares to the cities within Jefferson County.

In 1998, voters approved the issuance of Bonds to generate \$160 Million for acquiring open space lands. This issuance was passed with the understanding that the bond debt repayment would leave the attributable shares of the cities whole and be drawn solely from the County share.

This bond debt repayment (\$12.84M in the chart) will be repaid fully in 2024. The largest share of the bond debt repayment will take place between 2014 and 2019, with nearly 30 percent of the Jeffco Open Space budget designated for principal and interest payments for prior land acquisitions.

The Bond funds have enabled the County to nearly double the Open Space property portfolio from 1999 through 2010 by acquiring 19,824 acres of land for Jeffco Open Space as well as parkland for cities and park districts from the original \$160 Million.

Potential funding sources to bolster projects and priorities for Jeffco Open Space include Jefferson County’s share of proceeds from the Colorado Lottery, grants from State sources including Great Outdoors Colorado, Colorado State Trails, Colorado Parks and Wildlife and the Colorado Historical Fund, and special opportunity partnerships with businesses, other local, state and national agencies, non-profit organizations and private foundations. Additional potential funding sources include land dedication/fees obtained through the County subdivision platting process, intergovernmental agreements, partnerships with land trusts, friends associations, gifts and bequests through the Jeffco Outdoors Foundation, bonds, private sector sponsors, irrevocable remainder trusts and life estates, fees for service, special fundraisers, and in-kind services.



*Reflects 2013 Bond Re-finance

Jefferson County receives proceeds from the Colorado Lottery to be used for parks, recreation, open space and trail projects and programs. These funds are distributed on a per capita basis for the unincorporated areas of the County and are placed in the County’s *Conservation Trust Fund* (CTF) as required by law. A portion of these funds have been used for the local and nonprofit grant programs for cities, park districts and nonprofit organizations administered by Jeffco Open Space. At the discretion of the Board of County Commissioners, the remaining Jefferson County CTF dollars could be used to support eligible Jeffco Open Space or local government projects.

Financial Goals and Strategies

The Open Space sales tax is used for operating costs for 41,000 acres of land owned or managed by Jeffco Open Space. That includes 28 parks, approximately 227 miles of trails, and facilities such as the Lookout Mountain Nature Center, Hiwan Homestead Museum and Baerden at Pine Valley Ranch Park as well as 3,177 acres of conservation easements on privately owned lands.

Jeffco Open Space, for planning and budget purposes, estimates a conservative 2 percent per year increase in sales tax revenue and a 3 percent increase in annual operating costs. A 5-year Income Statement is provided below as an example of revenues, expenditures and total fund balance.

Income Statement by Year

YEAR	Fund Balance BEGINNING	+ Annual REVENUE	- Annual EXPENDITURES	= Fund Balance ENDING
2008	\$28,039,099	\$17,653,374	\$12,955,841	\$32,736,632
2009	\$32,736,632	\$14,498,100	\$16,149,845	\$31,084,887
2010	\$31,084,887	\$19,531,734	\$12,889,813	\$37,726,808
2011	\$37,726,808	\$11,742,092	\$15,639,398	\$33,829,502
2012	\$33,829,502	\$12,543,230	\$14,150,877	\$32,221,855

In 2011, a “10-Year Funding Plan” was developed by staff and the Advisory Committee to identify how available funding would be allocated for Bond debt payments, operations, land acquisition and capital projects.

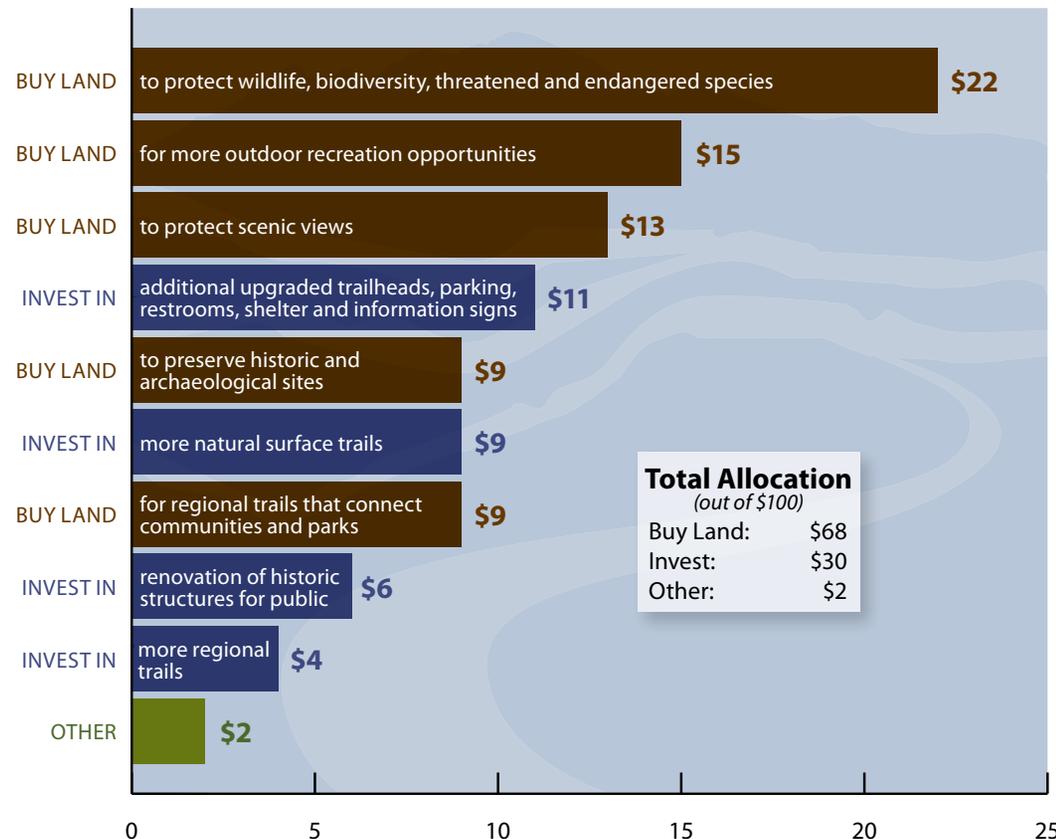
Within the 10-Year Funding Plan these goals were identified:

1. Develop guidelines for expenditures for Jeffco Open Space land acquisitions and capital projects.
2. Continue to be a supplemental funding partner to cities, districts that provide park and recreation services, and nonprofit organizations, and create equitable funding and grant guidelines.
3. Use the established guidelines and insure flexibility to take advantage of land and project opportunities that come forward in the next ten years.

The 2011 Citizen Survey asked the public how Jeffco Open Space tax dollars should be spent. Respondents were asked to allocate how they would spend \$100 on items that include land and park and trail improvements. The results are shown below.

- Respondents choosing to “buy land” allocated \$68 of the \$100 in funds available.
- Respondents choosing “invest in improvements” allocated \$30.
- \$2 went toward other expenditures not defined.

The Jeffco Open Space 10-Year Funding Plan aligns with these preferences setting aside \$32 Million for land acquisition (68 percent) and \$15 Million for capital projects (32 percent).

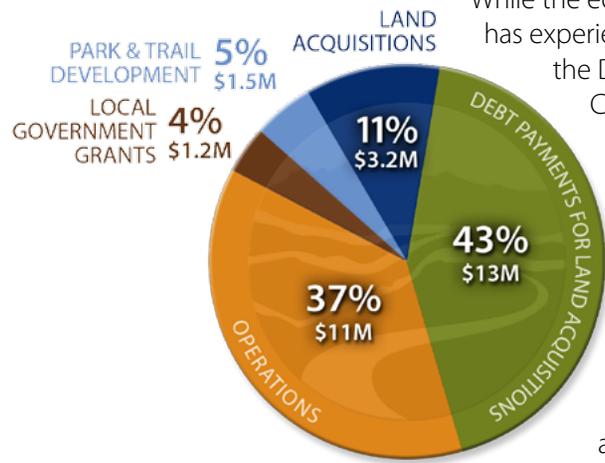


Dollar Allocation

With \$5 increments being the smallest amount you might use, if you had \$100 to spend on land and/or park and trail improvements, how would you allocate those funds?

“Show me a health community with a healthy economy and I will show you a community that has its green infrastructure in order and understands the relationship between the built and the unbuilt environment.”

William B. Rogers



Jeffco Open Space Budget

While the economy is showing signs of improvement, Jefferson County has experienced many of the same financial constraints as the rest of the Denver metropolitan area. Each year, the Board of County Commissioners approves the County’s financial plan, which includes the annual Jeffco Open Space Budget. While each year’s budget will vary, the 2014 proposed budget is provided here for reference. Additional budget documents that are amended annually are made available through a link to the [Jeffco Open Space](#) website.

In order to take advantage of opportunities as they arise, flexibility is important. For example, it may be wise to phase or defer capital projects to take advantage of a priority land acquisition. If capital projects are accelerated, adequate reserves or funding strategies should be in place to take advantage of priority land acquisitions that may come to fruition.

Jeffco Open Space Local Park and Recreation Grants

The Jeffco Open Space [Local Park & Recreation Grants](#) provide supplemental funding to assist cities and park districts in implementing their priority land acquisitions and/or capital projects. This Program replaces the previous Jeffco Open Space Joint Venture (JV) and Conservation Trust Fund (CTF) Programs.

Grant funding is recommended by the Advisory Committee and awarded by the Board of County Commissioners (BCC). All cities, towns and districts that provide public park and recreation services are eligible to apply for Local Grants. Currently, 12 cities/towns and 12 districts are eligible to apply for Local Grants.

Jeffco Open Space Nonprofit Organization Grants

The Nonprofit Organization (NPO) grants program provides funding assistance for public park and recreation programs and projects occurring on public lands and/or facilities in accordance with State of Colorado Conservation Trust Fund (CTF) requirements. The Conservation Trust Funds are proceeds from the Colorado Lottery. This Jeffco Open Space administered program is for nonprofit, 501(c)(3) organization with a mission or purpose of providing or enhancing parks, recreation, trails, land conservation, and/or environmental stewardship and education.

“Happy Trails to you until we meet again.”

Dale Evans

Current Conditions, Changes and Trends

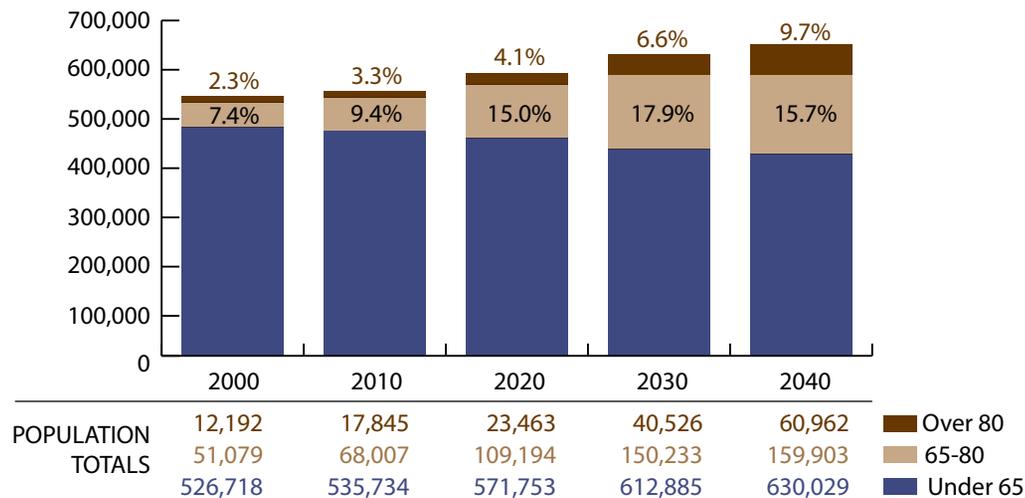
The world has changed over the past five years and will continue to do so. In order to be effective in fulfilling the Jeffco Open Space mission and serving the citizens of Jefferson County, the organization must consider current conditions, changes and trends and adjust practices accordingly. There are 13 noteworthy changes and trends described here that were considered in the creation of the 2014 Master Plan.

Population Growth and Demographics

Population in the Denver Metro Area is projected to increase by 10 percent or 290,000 people by 2020. Since Jeffco Open Space offers the closest foothills and mountain experiences to the largest population center in Colorado, this Plan anticipates an increasing interest and use of Jeffco Open Space as a result of this population growth.

Jefferson County is the state’s fourth most populous with 534,543 residents. Jeffco is home to nearly one in ten Colorado residents, according to the 2010 Census.

The Aging Well in Jefferson County Initiative and the Colorado State Demography Office project that by the year 2040 roughly 25 percent of the County’s total population will be over 65, effectively doubling this age group based on 2010 U.S. Census data for the County.



The largest Jefferson County racial/ethnic groups are Caucasian (79.9%) followed by Latino (14.3%; 2010 U.S. Census). Latinos account for the fastest growing population in both the United States and Colorado. By 2040, the forecast for Colorado’s Hispanic population is estimated to be 2.6 million or 32 percent. For Jefferson County, an 18 percent increase in the Hispanic population is expected by 2040, when 32.5 percent of the County’s population will be Latino.

An aging constituency and increases in minority populations will further create the need for open space acquisition and open space park development programs to provide for healthy nature-based experiences that are accessible by the vast majority of Jeffco residents.

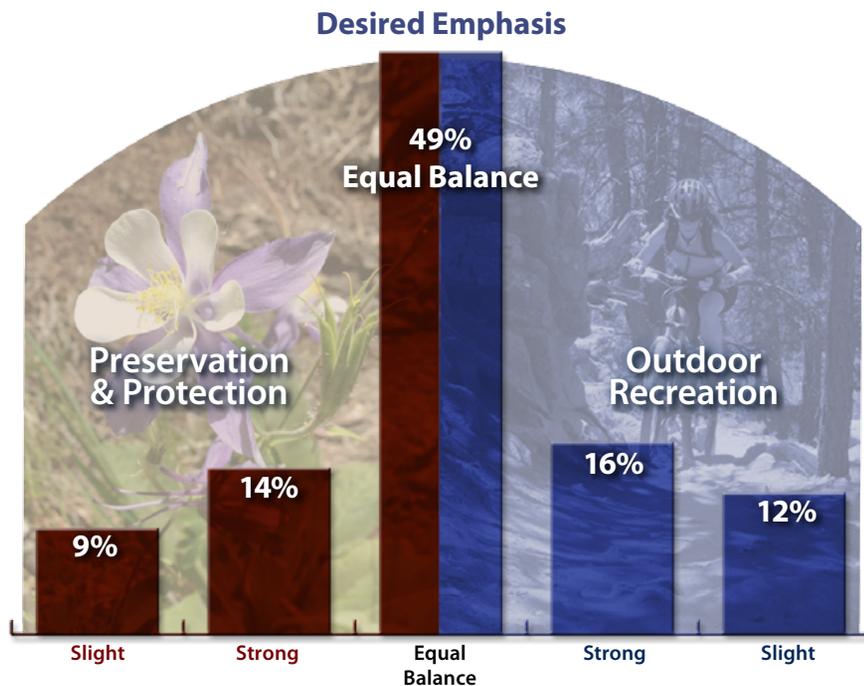
Economic Conditions

The economy in Jefferson County is improving according to data from the Metro Denver Economic Development Corporation and survey data suggest that people are choosing to get outdoors closer to home in an effort to likely save time, money and extend their time in a natural setting. What they are finding is an abundance of great nature-based outdoor experiences that will likely keep them closer to home even as the economy improves.

Citizens Want More Open Space and Trails

In surveys, contacts and public meetings the message from the people of Jefferson County is clear, they want Jeffco Open Space to continue preserving open space and parklands and providing access to nature-based experiences with more trailheads and trails. It is important to strike a sustainable balance between natural resources, park protection and public access.

To help guide Jeffco Open Space activities in this area over the next five-years, the 2011 Citizen Survey included questions to gauge public desires related to resource protection and provisions for outdoor recreation. One key question (see below) asked about use of the land based on a continuum between preservation/protection and outdoor recreation. Survey results suggest Jeffco citizens desire an equal balance.



“The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others.”

Mahatma Gandhi

People Have Less Free Time Than Ever

According to the 2011 Citizen Survey, the top reason people don’t get outdoors to reduce stress and do things that are good for their body, mind and spirit is lack of time, with 55% indicating no time/other personal issues as why they don’t use Jeffco Open Space parks and facilities.

Our Health

While Colorado continues to be regarded as one of the healthiest and most active states in America, there is still a great deal that can be done to improve health. A national trend toward more sedentary lifestyles is a major contributor to increased risk factors such as heart disease, diabetes, obesity and self-reported lack of physical activity. Only 39 percent of Jeffco children ages 5-14 met the physical activity guidelines in 2009. In 2010, the percentage of adults considered obese in Colorado (Body Mass Index of 30 or greater) reached 21.4 percent. In Jefferson County, 20.4 percent were classified as obese according to the Colorado Department of Health and Environment (CDPHE).

The 2014-2017 Jefferson County Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) is the first step in formulating a multi-disciplinary plan to reverse these trends. Opportunities for physical activity at Jeffco Open Space parks can result in the improved health of park users. Deepening partnerships with Jeffco Public Health and others is critical to reversing undesirable health trends in our communities.

Technology Advances

It's all around us; websites, smart phones, social media, text messaging, mobile applications, tablets, webcams and screen entertainment galore. Today's instant information age places greater importance on providing information that is easy to obtain and understand, as well as user-friendly mechanisms for feedback. Also noteworthy are advances in outdoor gear that allow people to enjoy the outdoors longer and in varying weather conditions. Today's mountain bike technology, for example, gives riders more confidence to go faster and longer and tackle challenging terrain. Smart phones and many applications allow for tracking of time, speed, distance and location while outdoors. Another advancing technology is the Quick Response Code (Q.R. Code) matrix barcode that provides web-based information when scanned using a reader application.

Children Are Less Connected With Nature and the Outdoors

According to the Center for Disease Control and the National Recreation and Park Association, today our children spend an average of seven hours per day in front of screens and just seven minutes per day of unstructured activity in the outdoors. Larimer County Colorado's "Plug Into Nature" study address the perceived disconnect with time, location and cost as the three greatest barriers to families deciding to spend time outdoors. This lifestyle affects their health and well-being and leaves them lacking the understanding of, and connection with, nature that is necessary to cultivate the next generation of conservationists.



Balancing Preservation and Nature-Based Experiences

The public expects Jeffco Open Space to preserve natural resources, to provide people with healthy nature-based experiences, and to help people make the priceless connection between the two. The famous quote of Aldo Leopold, considered the founder of the science of wildlife management, applies here *"Conservation is a state of harmony between men and land."* As indicated in the 2011 Citizen Survey, the public desires are a balance between preservation/protection and outdoor recreation.

Trail Experiences

For many years Jeffco Open Space has strived to make the vast majority of trails open to a variety of non-motorized uses, including hiking, trail running, mountain biking and horseback riding. As use in Jeffco Open Space Parks has increased, some would say that the quality of their trail experience has declined. Even friendly and cooperative trail users can become frustrated on a busy day as they often need to move off the trail to let another hiker, mountain biker or equestrian safely pass. Given projected population growth, trail use is likely to increase and will need to be studied and addressed to sustain and enhance the visitor experience. The 2011 Citizen Survey indicated that 73% of respondents felt that a smoke-free environment was extremely important to the quality of their experience when visiting a Jeffco Open Space Park. Making the Parks and trails smoke-free is also something that can be studied to determine if it enhances safety and the trail experience.

Community Involvement

The people of Jefferson County care deeply about open space, parklands and trails, and they want to be involved in planning their future, and in enhancing and caring for these treasures. The public can and does get involved in a number of ways including volunteering, attending community and Open Space Advisory Committee meetings to provide input on projects and initiatives, sharing feedback by completing surveys, sending written correspondence, and in personal contacts with staff, park rangers, hosts and patrollers.

Jeffco Open Space Funding

The \$160 Million in Bond Funds have been spent to preserve nearly 19,824 acres of land. Jeffco Open Space continues to repay the bond debt, although, this leaves Jeffco Open Space with about 75 percent less funding

for land acquisitions and capital projects between now and 2019 when the first \$100 Million in Bonds will be repaid. Even with this reduction, however, sound financial planning has ensured that funds have been set aside to repay the bond debt, care for the land, and leave an average of \$4.7 Million per year for land acquisition and park and trails development projects over the next five years. Actual allocation is dependent upon opportunity.

Forest Health, Water Scarcity, Weed and Pest Management

A number of natural phenomena threaten the health of the community, plants, wildlife and scenic resources. Those threats include the mountain pine bark beetle and other pests, noxious and invasive weeds and other plants, wildfires, flooding, drought, and climate change. According to Dr. Kevin Trenberth, National Center for Atmospheric Research, a warming climate results in shorter snow seasons, runoff occurs earlier creating less snowpack, greater risk of drought, heat waves, wildfires and expansion of pests. A warmer atmosphere is able to hold more water and result in extremes in the hydrological cycle. These extremes include more intense precipitation, longer dry spells, increased risk of flooding and drought, and more intense storms, hurricanes and tornadoes. The challenge will be to manage water when it is available for future use and conduct proper assessment of floodplains and risk.

Ongoing Stewardship

Jeffco Open Space is responsible for the stewardship of 52,000 acres that includes 28 regional parks and a trail system that spans 227 miles. Care-taking activities include routine maintenance, trail restoration and replacement, and repairs of ongoing facilities like restrooms and parking areas. All of these changes and trends create unique challenges and opportunities today and over the next five years. (Also see Land Stewardship Strategies on Page 26)



Challenges and Opportunities

The current conditions, changes and trends discussed previously represent both new and ongoing challenges and opportunities to further the Jeffco Open Space mission. The organization can take advantage of these with creativity, new thinking and collaboration.

Balance Between Preservation and Nature-Based Outdoor Experiences

The 2011 Citizen Survey indicated that Jeffco Open Space must address a desire by Jeffco citizens to balance preservation of public lands and resources with nature-based outdoor access and experiences. This balance is being addressed through the Acquisition Criteria. The objective as outlined in the 5-year Goals and 8 Strategies is to achieve preservation of key real estate while also enhancing nature-based outdoor experiences.

Growing Population Will Require More Open Space

As the population of Jefferson County and the surround Denver Metro area continues to grow, Jeffco Open Space is working to provide more open space and parkland while ensuring that those public lands are protected. The focus is on sustaining and enhancing quality of life in the County while preserving the natural resources. To meet the

need for additional public lands, the Master Plan directs Jeffco Open Space to use every available tool to acquire more land, including actively pursuing donations of land and conservation easements and expanding existing and creating new partnerships to meet land acquisition goals.

Creating Greater Awareness About Time And Cost-Efficient Nature-Based Outdoor Experiences

Jeffco Open Space Parks and trails are dispersed throughout the County and provide no-cost, enjoyable, close to home nature-based outdoor experiences. While census and survey data suggest that Jeffco residents have limited free time and constrained financial resources (see Section III), parks and open space are close to home and are free. The organization is working to provide information about park and trail opportunities to encourage residents to enjoy their public lands, supporting a

healthy lifestyle, while keeping their costs down. In addition, Jeffco Open Space can connect with residents who may support the acquisition and preservation of public lands by providing information that helps people learn more about the County's resources and future needs.

Promoting the “Nature Prescription”

We almost always feel better about life and ourselves after a visit to our favorite outdoor place. While these benefits have always existed, studies now show that getting outdoors in nature is good for the body, mind and spirit – and overall health. Getting outdoors regularly makes people more productive, prevents many illnesses and reduces health care costs. In addition, promoting the health benefits associated with getting outdoors can create a deeper appreciation of open space and parks and inspire visitors to care for the public lands, open spaces and trails.



Improving Communication – Recognizing Generational Preferences and Using Technology

The 2011 Citizen Survey indicated that the most effective way to reach people is through the internet, direct email and at Open Space Parks. While these methods are effective, some prefer social media or traditional media such as newspapers, radio and television. The challenge and opportunity here is to develop a diverse communication strategy to share the qualities and benefits of Jeffco Open Space as well as receive public input for specific projects or ongoing topics.



“Nature Deficit Disorder”

Because youth and families spend less time outdoors than they used to, they have less understanding of and appreciation for nature than older generations. In *Last Child in the Woods*, a 2005 book written by Richard Louv, he coined the phrase “Nature Deficit Disorder” to explain the far-ranging disadvantages of youth spending less time outdoors. While this phenomenon has improved since his book was published, we still have a long way to go in getting young people and families more engaged with nature. The competition is formidable – video games, smart phones, tablets and a plethora of other enticing screen-based indoor entertainment divert people from venturing outdoors. We must work with the education, local parks and recreation, faith and nonprofit communities to develop fun and safe approaches, materials and programs that inspire youth to get outdoors with their families.

Enhancing and Expanding Trail Experiences and Safety

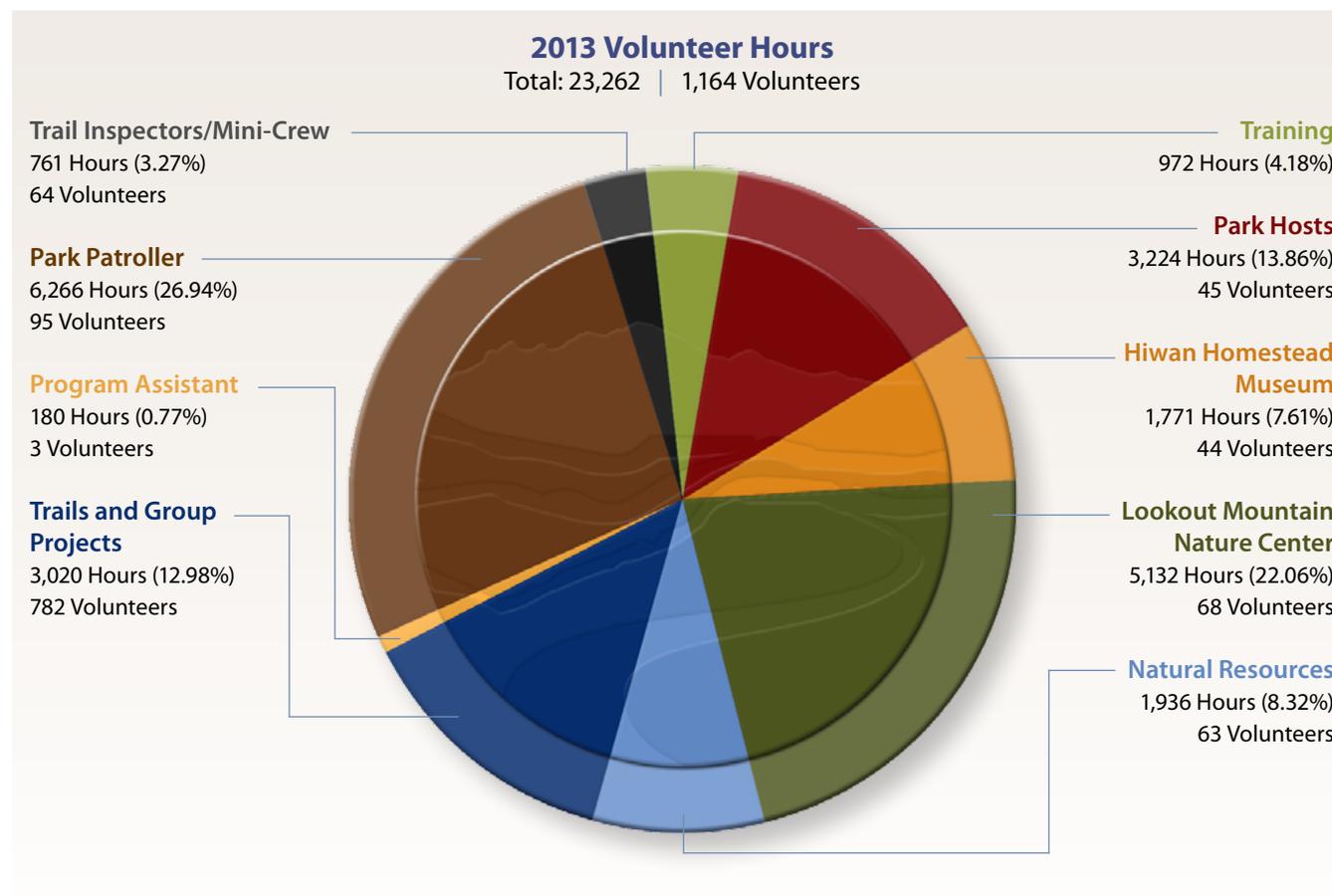
Trails connect us to nature, and can provide for healthy unstructured exercise. With the increase in use by larger and a more health minded population we will need more trail opportunities for uses that have differing requirements. While multiple use trails have served the masses well for many years, it is time to explore more alternating use, directional use, and single use trails to enhance the experience and safety for hikers, runners, equestrians and mountain bikers.

Greater Community Involvement

A greater level of community involvement will help address today’s challenges and those that will come over the next five years. Jeffco Open Space will provide public forums to discuss Open Space Regional Management Plans, projects, policies, initiatives and stewardship. Getting a broad range of citizen perspectives from multiple generations can be a challenge. Those who tend to participate in meetings are often older and/or retired so they have more time to invest, or else they are park neighbors. While these perspectives are important, Jeffco Open Space is committed to seeking out the views of others. Of particular interest is hearing from younger generations and from Jefferson County residents who may have less time to get involved because of work, family or other life obligations. Addressing this issue will require using current tools of the day such as online and park-based surveys, social media, and focus groups at convenient locations and times.

Volunteers

Jeffco Open Space has benefited from a long history of volunteer support. There is strong sense of community involvement in Jeffco Open Space planning and stewardship activities today from volunteers, park visitors and neighbors. This Master Plan includes efforts to use the organization’s resources wisely to get more people involved, particularly as volunteers.



Growing and Creating Partnerships

Jeffco Open Space has many partnerships with other public and nonprofit land conservation organizations including the cities and districts that provide park and recreation services. These groups include Denver Mountain Parks, Denver Water, the State of Colorado, Great Outdoors Colorado, Mountain Area Land Trust, the Clear Creek Land Conservancy, The Trust for Public Land, and neighboring cities and counties. Since 1998, the nonprofit Jeffco Open Space Foundation, now known as the Jeffco Outdoors Foundation, has been a strong partner. Jeffco Open Space continues to grow partnerships with businesses, and with Jeffco Public Health and healthcare providers. One of the most effective ways to address challenges faced by Jeffco Open Space is to strengthen existing partnerships and develop new ones. The strength and depth of these partnerships vary and all of have the potential to be more robust.

Current Conditions, Changes & Trends	Challenges & Opportunities	5-Year Goals & Strategies
<p>Population Growth & Demographics</p> <p>Citizens Want More Open Space and Trails</p>	<p>Growing Population Will Require More Open Space</p>	<p>Land Preservation; Communications and Community Involvement; Volunteerism</p>
<p>Balancing Preservation and Nature-Based Experiences</p> <p>Forest Health, Water Scarcity Weed & Pest Management</p> <p>Ongoing Stewardship</p>	<p>Balance Between Preservation and Nature-Based Outdoor Experiences</p>	<p>Land Stewardship; Trails; Nature and Park-Related History Education; Visitor Stewardship</p>
<p>Trail Experiences</p>	<p>Enhancing and Expanding Trail Experiences and Safety</p>	<p>Trails; Visitor Stewardship</p>
<p>Community Involvement</p>	<p>Greater Community Involvement</p>	<p>Communications and Community Involvement; Visitor Stewardship</p>
<p>Technology Advances</p>	<p>Improving Communication – Recognizing Generational Preferences and Using Technology</p>	
<p>People Have Less Free Time Than Ever</p>	<p>Creating Greater Awareness About Time and Cost Efficient Nature-Based Outdoor Experiences</p>	<p>Nature and Park-Related History Education; Volunteerism; Visitor Stewardship; The Nature-Health Connection</p>
<p>Jeffco Open Space Funding</p> <p>Economic Considerations</p>	<p>Growing and Creating Partnerships Volunteers</p>	<p>Land Preservation; Trails; Volunteerism; Visitor Stewardship</p>
<p>Our Health</p> <p>Children are Less Connected with Nature and the Outdoors</p>	<p>Promoting the “Nature Prescription”</p> <p>“Nature Deficit Disorder”</p>	<p>Land Stewardship; Trails; Nature and Park-Related History Education; Volunteerism; Visitor Stewardship; The Nature-Health Connection</p>

Framework for Land Acquisition

Jeffco Open Space Practices and Policies

Acquisition guidance starts with the Enabling Resolution. There are also specific County policies that honor the Enabling Resolution and specify Open Space Program Terms, Priorities, Use of Funds and Transfers of Property.

The Jeffco Open Space Master Plan is for planning purposes only and has no effect on zoning or property values. Jeffco Open Space only works with willing sellers and does not use eminent domain. Upon written request by a landowner, Jeffco Open Space will remove their property from consideration for Open Space acquisition. [County Policy Part 6, Management and Use of County Property, Chapter 4, Open Space, for further detail on how Open Space Funds May Be Expended for the Acquisition of an Interest in Real Property.](#)

Criteria for Setting Priorities

In an effort to evaluate which lands should be considered for acquisition, the Acquisition Criteria have been identified to support the Jeffco Open Space vision, mission, values and goals. These Acquisition Criteria target broad-scale objectives for successful acquisitions. For example, the Front Range Mountain Backdrop/Foreground Preservation Area has been a five-county planning effort since 1998. This geologic and visual amenity runs north/south from Wyoming to south of Colorado Springs along the hogback.

Acquisition Approaches and Tools

Jeffco Open Space can acquire land, water and mineral rights for preservation in a variety of different ways. Among the more common methods are fee-simple acquisitions, conservation easements, agreements, leases or licenses, trail easements, option agreements, first right of refusal, land donations through the Jeffco Outdoors Foundation or others, testamentary gifts, and partnerships with nonprofit land preservation organizations.



Acquisition Process

Any individual can submit a proposal for acquisition consideration. While one acquisition criterion is sufficient for property consideration, multiple criteria will usually build a stronger case for acquisition. Any property proposed for acquisition is reviewed internally. Rather than having the Acquisition Criteria establish a formula-driven recommendation for acquisition, they are used along with field trips to the site, financial and other considerations to compile a recommendation to the Open Space Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee reviews staff analysis at meetings that are open to the public, and citizen participation is encouraged unless there is a specific reason for an executive session. Jeffco Open Space works only with willing sellers and negotiates terms that meet the overall objectives and purpose of the acquisition. Once a project has received a recommendation from the Open Space Advisory Committee and approval by the Board of County Commissioners, staff can complete final terms.

Mutually beneficial partnerships are created to acquire and/or manage regional conservation, health or stewardship projects. That can include public-private nonprofit partnerships for land preservation, including collaboration with conservation organizations, cities, districts, the Jeffco Outdoors Foundation, and others in grant seeking and other alternative fund sourcing.

Acquisition Criteria

1. Natural Resources

- a. Critical Biological Resources identified in the Colorado Natural Heritage Program Study
- b. Habitat for Threatened, Endangered species and species of concern and rare plant communities
- c. Conservation that creates or sustains continuous wildlife corridors
- d. Significantly biodiverse areas
- e. Jeffco Open Space Conservation Study Areas
- f. Water and mineral rights

2. Nature-Based Experiences

- a. Regional trails that link multiple jurisdictions (e.g., Peaks to Plains Trail)
- b. Park to Park trails that connect Jeffco Open Space and other public parks (e.g., White Ranch Park to Golden Gate Canyon State Park)
- c. Additional trails within Jeffco Open Space Parks
- d. Community and neighborhood access to nature-based experiences, outdoor recreation, open space and parklands
- e. Other land and water-based opportunities such as climbing, photography, wildlife viewing, fishing, rafting/kayaking, cross country skiing, snowshoeing, ice climbing, sledding, ice skating, etc.

3. Scenic Resources

- a. Front Range Mountain Backdrop/Foreground Preservation Area
- b. Areas of scenic significance along transportation corridors
- c. Scenic views to and from Jeffco Open Space Parks
- d. Special visual qualities, such as rock outcroppings, meadows, ridgelines, peaks, unusual landforms and other geological features

“Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better. It’s not.”

Dr. Seuss

4. Historic, Archaeological and Paleontological Resources

- a. Historic sites or places that contain elements reflecting the County’s cultural richness
- b. Significant archaeological and paleontological resources

5. Contiguity & Buffers

- a. Connections between Jeffco Open Space and other public and preserved lands
- b. Contiguity within the Jeffco Open Space system, including in-holdings
- c. Buffers for wildlife corridors, habitat, plant communities and other uses

6. Congruence with other Plans

- a. Jefferson County Comprehensive Plan or Community Plans
- b. State, local, city and district plans



5-Year Goals and Strategies

5-Year Goals

These Goals chart a course for Jefferson County Open Space for the next five years, 2014-2019. Necessary to ensuring a thriving program today and into the future, all eight of these measures are connected and related.

- | | |
|--------|--|
| GOAL 1 | Land Preservation – Increase land preserved at least 1,700 acres, from 52,817 acres to a minimum of 54,517 by 2019. |
| GOAL 2 | Land Stewardship – Refine stewardship standards and systems and implement for all Jeffco Open Space lands by 2019. |
| GOAL 3 | Trails – Expand the Jeffco Open Space trail system by 25 miles, from 227 miles to 252 miles by 2019 |
| GOAL 4 | Communications and Community Involvement – Develop and employ a Communications and Community Involvement Plan. |
| GOAL 5 | Nature and Park-Related History Education – Increase current program participation by 27,000, from 75,000 people per year to 102,000 people by 2019. |
| GOAL 6 | Volunteerism – Increase volunteer support by 16,850 hours, from 22,500 hours per year to 39,350 hours by 2019. |
| GOAL 7 | Visitor Stewardship – Create “Share and Care” program to promote individual and group stewardship of public lands and increase educational contacts by 12,000, from 11,000 to 23,000 by 2019. |
| GOAL 8 | The Nature-Health Connection – Create five additional, regional Jeffco Outdoors maps in collaboration with the Jeffco Outdoors Foundation and private partners by 2019. |

Strategies to Achieve 5-Year Goals

1. Land Preservation Strategies:

- a. Prioritize preserving property in the 2010-2011 Colorado Natural Heritage Program areas as well as the Conservation Study Areas (see Maps 4a, 4b and 5).
- b. Build and strengthen relationships with private landowners, land trusts, and federal and state entities to preserve lands that meet Jeffco Open Space Acquisition Criteria.
- c. Actively use all acquisition approaches and tools including donations, right of first refusal, option agreement, partnerships, conservation easements and development requirements.
- d. Employ partnerships and use innovative approaches.
- e. Pursue grants and alternative funding to leverage acquisitions.

2. Land Stewardship Strategies:

- a. Develop and implement standards to define the appropriate balance between protecting natural and park resources and providing outdoor recreation opportunities.
- b. Conduct inventory baselines of all new properties and update all existing inventories of Jeffco Open Space properties, and prepare Open Space Regional Management Plans, which identify and implement appropriate actions.
- c. Partner with other land stewardship agencies and park users to identify unique resources and determine their specific threshold indicators to guide sustainable public access of new properties and management of existing open space parks.
- d. Develop GIS databases and reports of natural resource analyses to assist in and guide decisions on park development and management.

- e. Establish monitoring protocols to ensure sustainable balance is achieved between land preservation and nature-based experiences on all Jeffco Open Space properties.
- f. Offer receptacles at Jeffco Open Space Parks for recycling of various materials brought into parks by patrons (e.g., plastic, aluminum, glass, paper, etc.) and explore recycling partnerships.
- g. Create and maintain an Asset Management Plan with a maintenance spreadsheet.
- h. Work with both private and public landowners and public land managers to protect and steward significant natural resources.

3. Trails Strategies:

- a. Complete White Ranch Park to Golden Gate Canyon State Park – 8 miles.
- b. Complete Clear Creek Canyon Segment Peaks to Plains Trail – 4 miles.
- c. Complete the North Fork Trail connecting Reynolds Park to the Colorado Trail.
- d. Seek opportunities to expand the Trail Stewardship Team.
- e. Increase volunteer projects and partnerships, such as use of the Trails Co-op, since volunteers and other partners play a pivotal role in the management and extension of trail networks.
- f. Use contractors when appropriate for trail construction or maintenance.
- g. Work with Denver Mountain Parks and other public land agencies on cooperative trail projects.
- h. Keep the trail user's experiences in mind knowing that trails serve as a conduit to nature for most visitors.
- i. Promote "muddy trail" closures when the resources warrant.



4. Communications and Community Involvement Strategies:

- a. Collaborate, develop and implement guidelines for regular communication with the public, other agencies and internally.
- b. Develop and implement community involvement processes for regular community involvement to address varying needs and desires for use of Open Space lands.
- c. Conduct a statistically valid, quantitative survey in 2016 or 2017 as a follow-up to the 2011 Citizen Survey and in preparation for the regular update to this Master Plan.
- d. In partnership with the community, define and promote methods for citizens to communicate needs and interests.
- e. Develop and implement community involvement guidelines and strategies appropriate to each circumstance.
- f. Use the information from survey respondents indicating that the best way to reach them was direct email, internet/website and at the park facilities/program location.
- g. Continually improve and update the website.
- h. Produce and distribute an annual report.

5. Nature and Park-Related History Education Strategies:

- a. Promote programs with Get Outdoors Colorado.org and Jeffco Open Space websites.
- b. Implement a central reservation and registration software system to simplify marketing and registration.
- c. Foster an outdoor ethic to nurture and train existing and future Jeffco Open Space stewards.
- d. Recruit and partner with advocacy and nature-based outdoor groups, school groups, etc.
- e. Use existing Jeffco Open Space staff, volunteers and partners to offer more nature and history education programs at Jeffco Open Space and local parks.
- f. Continue to partner with Jeffco Outdoors Foundation to provide bus transportation for school groups to attend education programs.
- g. Collaborate with cities, districts and nonprofits that provide park and recreation services.
- h. Provide and facilitate programs that appeal to all ages and families.
- i. Ensure that conservation, stewardship and healthy lifestyle messages are taken into account with all programs.

*“Let Nature
be your teacher.”*

William Wordsworth

6. Volunteerism Strategies:

- a. Recruit and partner with advocacy and nature-based outdoor groups to host more volunteer events.
- b. Continue to offer multiple volunteer opportunities from a one-day event to a longer commitment.
- c. Recruit volunteers from multiple age groups and cultural backgrounds.
- d. Increase volunteer support to enhance existing programs and new opportunities, sustain services to park visitors, and support the Jeffco Open Space vision and mission into the future.
- e. Partner to ensure that conservation, stewardship and healthy lifestyle principles are taken into account with all programs.



7. Visitor Stewardship Strategies:

- a. Create a comprehensive “Share and Care” individual stewardship program.
- b. Provide friendly and easy to understand information about how individual visitors can protect and share park and natural resources.

- c. Collaborate with our partners to share the principle that getting outdoors promotes a healthy lifestyle and often leads to stewardship of conserved lands that host their favorite activities.
- d. Incorporate the “Leave No Trace” program at Jeffco Open Space Parks.
- e. Establish criteria and guidelines for “stay on trails” in resource sensitive areas.
- f. Partner with Jeffco Public Health to create smoke-free environments at all Jeffco Open Space Parks.
- g. In partnership with volunteers, businesses and public agencies emphasize dog-waste removal and litter pickup events.
- h. Promote use of receptacles at Jeffco Open Space Parks for recycling of various materials brought into parks by patrons (e.g., plastic, aluminum, glass, paper, etc.).
- i. Reach out to all trail users through our “Share the Trail” trailhead etiquette program and partner with trail users to encourage communication by cyclists with our “Ring That Bell” program.

8. The Nature-Health Connection Strategies:

- a. Partner with the Jeffco Outdoors Foundation to produce 5 new regional Jeffco Outdoors Maps of all public outdoor recreation opportunities for the public available in a region, as well as multiple safe access points, on an easy to use map, knowing that this will help disperse use.
- b. Partner with Jeffco Public Health and use the 2013 Healthy People Healthy Places Community Health Assessment (2013) and Community Health Improvement Plan (2014-2018) for Jefferson County to promote healthy lifestyles.
- c. Pursue healthcare provider partnerships for new activities that could strengthen conservation, stewardship and healthy lifestyles.
- d. Ensure that conservation, stewardship and healthy lifestyle messages are taken into account with all programs.
- e. Promote the mind, body and spirit connection by being outdoors.



Land Stewardship

Stewardship principles are management practices done in a sustainable manner. Jeffco Open Space faces a daily need to balance stewardship responsibilities with providing nature-based outdoor recreation experiences. There are various methods and approaches to manage this balance. Ultimately, Jeffco Open Space aims to pursue management projects and activities that fold in conservation, stewardship and healthy lifestyles. The following statements express the intention of these principles:

Conservation – Land acquisition and management must balance preservation and healthy nature-based experiences as expressed through public sentiment in the 2011 Jeffco Open Space Citizen Survey as well as the Colorado Natural Heritage Program.

Stewardship – Jeffco Open Space has been entrusted with the care of natural, park and financial resources in our County through public involvement, responsible management and education.

Healthy Lifestyles – Jeffco Open Space properties offer a variety of personal nature-based experiences that are close to home and good for body, mind and spirit. By promoting personal health benefits of getting outdoors, more visitors will be inspired to become stewards of the lands that provide these opportunities. According to Tom Vilsack, Agriculture Secretary with the USDA, *“The connection between healthy forests, healthy communities and healthy lifestyles not only promotes physical activity, it fosters environmental awareness and stewardship among young people as we face critical environmental challenges, such as the effects of climate change.”*

Open Space Regional Management Plans

A Master Plan is by nature broader than a management plan. In 1999, Jeffco Open Space initiated a management planning process for its 28 Open Space Parks. While this approach was beneficial, it was also cumbersome to sustain 28 separate plans. The 28 park plans have been consolidated into nine Open Space Regional Management Plans. The regions are created from multiple parks proximate to one another (see Map 8.)

The Open Space Regional Management Plans are part of the Jeffco Open Space system-wide effort to provide stewardship of natural and park resources and sustainable levels of nature-based experiences for visitors. Developed by staff interdisciplinary teams, the plans identify management needs and opportunities and then recommend approaches and actions to respond appropriately. Another component of the Management Plans is the Management Unit Classification. Jeffco Open Space has adopted classifications for Sensitive Areas, Natural Areas, Parkland Recreation Areas and Special Protection Areas.

For each of the nine Open Space Regional Management Plans, a Regional Park Supervisor oversees activities and is the point person for the public and staff. This supervisor has multiple responsibilities relating both to the operational section of Jeffco Open Space that they oversee (such as Trails, Planning, Rangers, Hiwan, etc.) and to the activities of their assigned region. This allows for a better understanding and more communication among staff of the multiple cross-sectional duties needed to complete any given task. These nine Regional Management Plans are being developed and updated on a rotating three-year cycle with three plans reviewed and updated each year. This process will include community involvement on the three under review each year, starting with the first three Regional Management Plans to be updated in 2014. Please reference [Resources](#) for the most current and updated Open Space Regional Management Plans.

5-Year Capital Improvement Plan (5-Year CIP)

Funding for actions to address projects identified in the Regional Management Plans comes from the [Capital Improvement Plan](#). This allocation of capital improvement funds allows for strategic planning and project management. Established at approximately \$10 million over the next five-year period, these funds are dedicated to park, trail and trailhead construction and renovation.

Park Asset Management Plan

Land stewardship includes the perpetual care of park assets including trails, trailheads, restrooms, information kiosks, roads, buildings and other facilities located on Jeffco Open Space Park properties. These assets need to be restored or replaced as they reach their useful life or as conditions change from use or wear. Since many Jeffco Open Space Park assets are maturing, it has become more important than ever to develop and implement an Asset Management Plan. This best management practice will allow Jeffco Open Space to anticipate costs and workloads associated with the perpetual care of these resources

and allow us to continue to provide the high level of service and quality of facilities that park visitors have come to expect.

A sound asset management plan begins with sustainability – designing and building facilities that are both green and long lasting. During the design process of new or restored park facilities many factors are considered to create sustainable amenities. These include how facilities will be used, where they are located, and how they can be maintained efficiently. The use of materials and products that are green, local, have a long life, require minimal repairs, and endure damage from the elements and vandalism are important factors as is the use of alternative energy such as solar. The Asset Management Plan, once fully completed, will provide a schedule for appropriate maintenance and replacement so that cost and resources can be allocated adequately.

Management Tools

Seasonal and temporary park or trail closures are used as a stewardship tool. This type of closure can be used to protect wildlife during a critical

period in their life cycle, for visitor safety, and to protect trails from deterioration during adverse weather conditions.

Another management tool is prescribed or controlled burns. This is a technique used in forest and open land management where fire, as a natural part of forest and grassland ecology, is used to reduce fuel build up that can result in hotter wild fires and manage weed and shrub growth on open space properties. Prescribed burns in Jefferson County are overseen by local fire control authorities following County and State rules and regulations. Prescribed burns in Jeffco Open Space are planned and announced in advance of being conducted.

Surveys

Jeffco Open Space monitors and manages natural resources and creates a baseline survey of this information. A combination of data collection tools has been and will be used to track visitation numbers and visitor experiences at Open Space Parks. This data will be used in policy decisions, Park actions, staff/resource allocations, and trail and trailhead

design. The 2011 Citizen Survey was the first statistically accurate survey for Jefferson County, and it is anticipated that this type of survey will be conducted again prior to the next 5-year Master Plan update.

Education

Education and interpretive programs and exhibits are a strong component and means to share the value of the natural, historic, archeologic and paleontologic resources while protecting the character of the Parks. Knowledge provides a foundation for appreciation. Nature-based education and history programs are conducted by staff and volunteers from the Lookout Mountain Nature Center and Hiwan Homestead Museum. Park Rangers conduct programs on resource protection, wildlife behaviors, and maintaining a safe and enjoyable outdoor experience through their education contacts. Other education partners include organizations such as Dinosaur Ridge, Colorado Parks and Wildlife, and Colorado State University Extension.



Annual Monitoring and Reporting



Monitoring, Evaluating and Reporting Progress

The Jeffco Open Space Master Plan is intended to provide overall guidance for the five-year period from 2014 through 2019. The Plan purposefully defines success with measurable goals and identifies specific strategies – progressive and focused activities – that support and lead us to desired outcomes.

The best and most thoughtful plans anticipate change and unforeseen situations and have provisions to address them accordingly. This five-year journey may have events and circumstances, such as changes in technology, the economy, outdoor activities, the health of our community and environment and natural disasters, that require Jeffco Open Space to be flexible and innovative. To keep abreast of these possible changes, the organization must monitor the environment and make adjustments when necessary and prudent.

Most importantly, Jeffco Open Space must have a continuous focus on the goals and the strategies that will lead to success. The organization must reference and use this Master Plan regularly, monitor and track progress, evaluate how effective efforts have been, and share progress with the community. The following tools will be used to appropriately monitor, evaluate and communicate progress:

1. **Tracking progress** toward achieving goals and reporting milestones in the monthly e-newsletter *Panorama* and on the [website](#).
2. **Continuous learning** through surveys, research, conferences, training and engagement with peer agencies and partners to insure that staff understand and are able to respond to emerging challenges and opportunities.
3. **Annual review, goal setting and budget process** – each year, the staff and Open Space Advisory Committee will review progress toward the Master Plan goals, the effectiveness of the approaches being used, and new or emerging challenges and opportunities. This information will be used as a basis for creating initiatives to further Master Plan goals, priorities and budgets for the coming year.
4. **Producing and distributing an Annual Progress Report** - this report will summarize prior year achievements and highlights, provide a financial update, and identify initiatives to further Master Plan goals and priorities for the coming year.



Glossary of Terms

10-Year Open Space Funding Plan - A plan developed in 2011, for fiscal management of Jeffco Open Space funds from 2011-2020 that include guidelines for land acquisition and capital project expenditures.

Alternating Use Trails - Trails that are designated for trail runners, hikers and equestrians or mountain bikers for a particular period.

Attributable Share - The portion of the Open Space sales tax funding allocated to the cities within Jefferson County for park and open space purposes. It is based on a formula using the number of motor vehicle registrations within cities, and it amounts to roughly one-third of all Open Space sales tax revenue collected.

Bike Right - A series of events presented by the Jeffco Open Space Rangers to emphasize responsible riding and share techniques with visitors who mountain bike the trails. Area mountain bike groups and bike shops are frequent partners in presenting this information.

Biodiversity - The genetic, species and ecosystem diversity within and among all living organisms, and the landscapes in which they occur.

Board of County Commissioners (BCC) - The Board of County Commissioners, elected by the voters of Jefferson County, provide leadership and vision in guiding Jefferson County government. They are charged with overseeing the organization, programs and budgets of the County to benefit citizens, including Jeffco Open Space.

Bond Funds - A total of \$160 Million, borrowed against future Open Space sales tax revenues, was approved by the voters of Jefferson County in 1998 for the specific purpose of enabling Jeffco Open Space to pursue property acquisition on an accelerated schedule.

Capital Improvement Plan (5-Year CIP) - A budgetary mechanism that recommends allocations for capital projects within the Jeffco Open Space program over a five-year period using estimates of sales tax revenues, operating expenses and

fund reserves.

Capital Projects - Significant projects usually involving construction whereby the infrastructure or other physical assets of Jeffco Open Space are expanded or improved. Associated plans and budgets are prepared in advance of construction commencement.

Colorado Natural Heritage Program (CNHP) - Established in 1979, the CNHP is a nonprofit, scientific organization affiliated with the Warner College of Natural Resources, Department of Fish Wildlife & Conservation Biology, at Colorado State University. Jefferson County contracted CNHP in 2010 to conduct a survey for critical biological resources in Jefferson County, which went through 2011 and was completed in 2012. A wetland and riparian survey was conducted concurrently with funding provided by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 8 Wetland Program Development Grant. The purpose of these surveys was to provide scientific data on biological resources for land managers, planners, and the citizens of

Jefferson County for conducting proactive landscape planning. The document is intended to be a tool protecting and for managing lands that support rare, imperiled and/or sensitive plants, animals, and significant plant habitats.

Conservation Easement - A legal agreement between a landowner and a land trust or government agency that permanently limits uses of the land to protect its conservation values. The conditions of the land are monitored to ensure adherence to the terms of the conservation easement and to protect the conservation values in perpetuity.

Conservation Trust Funds (CTF) - Proceeds from the Colorado Lottery are distributed to Colorado municipalities for park and open space purposes. Jefferson County distributes its portion of these funds through a competitive grant process administered by the Open Space Division. These grants are reviewed by the Open Space Advisory Committee and recommended to the Board of County Commissioners for approval.

Denver Mountain Parks (DMP) - Property owned by the City and County of Denver within Jefferson County and others that was acquired by Denver pursuant to the recommendations of a 1912 Frederick Law Olmstead Plan for parks and scenic drives.

Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG) - A nonprofit association of local governments that is dedicated to making the nine-county Denver region a great place to live, work and play. Created in the midst of the 1950s post-war growth boom, DRCOG continues its founding philosophy today by bringing city and county governments together to work on common issues that affect the region's future.

Directional Use Trails - Trails that allow use in a specific direction.

Districts - a local political subdivision of the state that provides a specific service. In this Master Plan, the districts referred to are usually park and recreation districts, or metropolitan districts that provide park and recreation services.

Ecological Systems - As defined by the Colorado Natural Heritage Program, Ecological Systems are dynamic assemblages or complexes of plant and/or animal communities that 1) occur together on the landscape; 2) are tied together by similar ecological processes, underlying abiotic environmental factors or gradients; and 3) form a readily identifiable unit on the ground. These systems provide a coarser level unit than plant associations and alliances as defined under the International Vegetation Classification standard, and are more easily identified on the ground.

Enabling Resolution - The November 1972 Board of County Commissioners Resolution approved by Jefferson County voters to establish the Open Space sales tax, for specific purposes. This Resolution established the Board of County Commissioner-appointed citizen Advisory Committee. In 1980, the voters approved an amendment to the Resolution that added the ability of Open Space funds to be used for construction, acquisition and maintenance of park and recreation capital improvements.

Fee Simple - Ownership of most or all property rights upon a parcel of land.

Front Range Mountain Backdrop/Foreground Preservation Area (FRMB/F) - A five-county planning effort to identify and preserve the visual backdrop of the front range of the Rocky Mountains from Wyoming to south of Colorado Springs. Using funds from Great Outdoors Colorado, the counties of Larimer, Boulder, Jefferson, Douglas and El Paso cooperatively mapped and pursued for acquisition properties that met the FRMB/F criteria.

Geographical Information System (GIS) - An information system capable of integrating, storing, editing, analyzing, sharing, and displaying geographically referenced information.

Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) GOCO can refer to either the GOCO Trust Fund made of proceeds from the Colorado Lottery, or the board of trustees that administers and allocates funds from the trust. GOCO was established by a voter-approved amendment to the Colorado Constitution for

the purpose of providing grant funds to the four quadrants of Local Government, Open Space, Wildlife and State Parks. Jeffco Open Space competes for GOCO grants for parks, trails and open space projects.

Green - A description of practices, designs and materials produced in an environmentally and ecologically friendly way.

Jeffco Open Space - Jefferson County Division funded through sales tax and authorized to preserve open space and parklands, protect natural and park resources, and provide for healthy nature-based experiences.

Jeffco Outdoors Foundation (formerly Jeffco Open Space Foundation) - A 501(c)(3) nonprofit, supports public and nonprofit organizations that preserve parks, open space and remarkable places and provide quality outdoor recreation opportunities and education programs that foster conservation and health.

Jeffco Outdoors Regional Maps A series of maps that showcase public parks and outdoor recreation

opportunities in eight regions of Jefferson County. These are provided through the generous support of local businesses and individuals.

Jeffco Public Health

Improvement Plan - The County's Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP). This plan outlines how the organizations that contribute to improving health in Jefferson County will work together to address some of the County's leading causes of chronic disease and death. The process relies on current health data as well as community input to target health priorities and identify strategies that have been proven to make a difference. Jeffco Public Health will implement the plan and update it at the end of each three-year cycle.

Land Trusts - Not-for-profit organizations that seek out landowners for donation or sale of conservation easements or other property interests for any number of conservation purposes.

The League of Women Voters of Jefferson County - Since 1952, the League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan organization,

encourages the informed and active participation in government and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

Leave No Trace - The member-driven Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics teaches people of all ages how to enjoy the outdoors responsibly, and is the most widely accepted outdoor ethics program used on public lands. www.lnt.org

Local Park and Recreation Grant Program

- A program of Jeffco Open Space for the purpose of providing supplemental funding to assist cities and park districts in implementing their priority land acquisition and/or capital projects. This program replaces the former "Jeffco Open Space Joint Venture and Conservation Trust Fund Programs".

Mineral Rights - Rights to subsurface land and profits. Typically, when real estate is conveyed, the grantee receives all rights and title to the land, including everything above and below the surface, unless accepted by the grantor or previously severed from the surface rights.

Multiple Use Trail - Also referred to as multi-use, this overarching philosophy for user management upon Open Space lands allows for non-motorized hiking, equestrian and mountain biking uses.

National Natural Landmark

- The National Natural Landmarks (NNL) Program of the National Park Service recognizes and encourages the conservation of sites that contain outstanding biological and geological resources, regardless of landownership type. It is the only natural areas program of national scope that recognizes the best examples of biological and geological features in both public and private ownership. NNLs are owned by a variety of land stewards, and participation in the program is voluntary.

open space - Lands with potential for Jeffco Open Space to acquire. That can be property that is owned by a public entity other than Jeffco Open Space such as Denver Mountain Parks, land trusts, cities, and districts that provide park and recreation and/or open space services. It can also apply to privately owned land such as by a homeowner's association, which is

typically designated as open space through zoning or a subdivision plat document. Public access to private open spaces is usually restricted.

Open Space - Properties that Jeffco Open Space owns or manages.

Open Space Advisory Committee (OSAC)

- A citizen's committee established in the Enabling Resolution and appointed by the Board of County Commissioners whose purpose is to advise and make recommendations to the Commissioners regarding Open Space acquisitions and management.

Open Space Regional

Management Plan - A location specific document that defines the vision and articulates the management actions intended for the Open Space Parks in the particular region. These plans are crafted by a cross section of professional Open Space staff and are used as a management tool.

Outdoor Recreation - Outdoor recreation, broadly defined, is any leisure-time activity conducted outdoors. Within the vast range of such a definition lies an almost

unlimited number of possible activities, including hiking, biking, bird watching and picnicking. Jefferson County Open Space offers parks for independent outdoor exploration and experiences as well as outdoor recreation programs. The combination is to fulfill the fundamental need for recreation, play and leisure, to promote opportunities for lifelong learning, and to empower visitors and participants to explore the natural world.

Park Asset Management Plan

A document ensuring that Jeffco Open Space appropriately plans and budgets for any capital maintenance and asset replacement.

Parklands - Properties used for developed or undeveloped regional, community and neighborhood parks, greenways and trail corridors. May also be a city or district park other than Jeffco Open Space Parks.

Park Resources - Resources that could be found at any particular Jeffco Open Space Park that include natural, historic, paleontologic, archeologic, geologic and other resources.

PLAN Jeffco - A volunteer citizen organization based in Jefferson County, Colorado. Since 1971, PLAN Jeffco has advocated conservation of lands as Jeffco Open Space.

Potential Conservation Areas

Areas for potential conservation that have been identified by the Colorado Natural Heritage Program as places that are essentially in a natural undisturbed state, or not seriously disturbed by human activity and may contain critical biological resources.

Preserve - The conservation of important wildlife, flora, fauna or features of geologic or other special interest and managed accordingly.

Preservation - A conservation tool that prioritizes the land and natural resource values over direct public use. Preserved lands are managed, maintained or restored for their intrinsic resource values and functions, while providing ecosystem services available to all.

Regional Trail System - Trails that connect public lands, parks and other trail systems.

Ring that Bell - A cooperative program between Jeffco Open Space and Colorado Mountain Bike Association to improve on-trail communication. The use of bike bells alerts other trail users to a mountain biker's approach using the International Mountain Biking Association "Rules of the Trail" to promote responsible and courteous conduct on shared-use trails.

Scenic Corridors - Viewscapes that have been identified for protection.

Share and Care - An umbrella title for events, programs and projects inviting park visitors to take personal responsibility for sharing the trail and caring for parks and natural resources. From basic regulation adherence to taking on official volunteer status with Jeffco Open Space, Share and Care begins with learning and ultimately actively caring for the parks, the resources and public trails in Jefferson County.

Share the Trail - A series of events presented by the Jeffco Open Space Rangers at park trailheads to reinforce the importance of everyone's role in park and trail etiquette.

Single Use Trails - A trail is managed to allow a specific type of use such as hiker only.

Smoke-Free - A tobacco and marijuana free environment that does not include campsite fires unless there is a fire ban.

Sustainability - The capacity to endure; a state of balance achieved when equal consideration is given to conservation, health and stewardship. This approach is focused on balancing the needs and management of people, the planet and prosperity.

Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP)

A collaboratively developed strategic plan administered by Colorado State Parks that sets the framework and provides overall direction and tone for outdoor recreation planning in the State.

Threatened and Endangered Species (T&E)

The Endangered Species Act was passed by Congress in 1973 to protect species of plants and animals which were in danger of disappearing from the earth. Animals listed as endangered or threatened by the US Department of the Interior

are protected by the law on both public and private lands.

Trail Easement - An assignment of a property right to allow for passage over property from one point to another.

Trails Co-op - A collaborative effort organized by Jeffco Open Space to foster safe and enjoyable trail experiences for the mutual benefit of hikers, runners, equestrians and mountain bikers. The Co-op is comprised of volunteers, community partners and staff members engaged in education, stewardship and information exchange to accomplish this shared goal.

Trails Stewardship Team (formerly Youth Work Program or YWP) - A summer youth employment program for Jeffco residents age 14-18 involving park and trail maintenance and trail construction.

Water Rights - A right to use, in accordance with its priority, a certain portion of the waters of the State of Colorado by reason of appropriation of the water. A real property right that is subject to appropriation and can be severed from the land and transferred.

Wildlife Corridors - Areas used by wildlife for movement to and from seasonal habitats.

Appendices

THE COMMISSIONERS HEREBY MOVE THAT THE PROVISIONS SET FORTH BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS ON THE 28TH DAY OF AUGUST, 1972, IN RESOLUTION NO. CC80-711, BE REPEALED AND REMANDED TO THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS FOR REPEAL AND REENACTMENT AS FOLLOWS:

BEFORE THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OF THE COUNTY OF JEFFERSON
STATE OF COLORADO

RESOLUTION NO. CC80-711
RE: OPEN SPACE

Amendment of the Jefferson County Open Space Sales Tax Resolution to authorize construction, acquisition and maintenance of capital improvements.

WHEREAS, Resolution No. CC80-711, adopted September 26, 1972, as amended, "where proposed for a county-wide sales tax"; and

WHEREAS, the Board of County Commissioners of Jefferson County, Colorado (the "Board"), adopted a County-wide sales tax proposal by Resolution adopted by the Board on August 28, 1972, repealed and reenacted by the Board on September 26, 1972, and as so repealed and reenacted, approved by the electors of the County at the election held on November 7, 1972 (the "Jefferson County Open Space Sales Tax Resolution"); and

WHEREAS, the Jefferson County Open Space Sales Tax Resolution specifies the purposes for which the funds derived from such sales tax can be expended and the interests which can be acquired therewith; and

WHEREAS, it is the desire of the Board to amend the Jefferson County Open Space Sales Tax Resolution to expand the open space purposes for which the sales tax proceeds may be expended.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF THE COUNTY OF JEFFERSON, STATE OF COLORADO:

SECTION 1. The 8th Resolved paragraph of the body of the Jefferson County Open Space Sales Tax Resolution which specifies the purposes for which the sales tax proceeds may be expended and the interests which may be acquired with such proceeds be amended as follows: (New material is in capital letters; deleted material indicated by dashes through words.)

"Be it further resolved that all of the net proceeds received by Jefferson County, Colorado, from the Director of Revenue of the State of Colorado from the aforementioned sales tax WHICH ARE AVAILABLE FOR EXPENDITURE FOR THE OPEN SPACE PURPOSES SET FORTH IN THIS PARAGRAPH shall be expended only for the planning for, developing necessary access to, acquiring, maintaining, administering, and preserving open space real property or interests in open space real property, and developing parks and trails thereon, AND CONSTRUCTION, ACQUIRING AND MAINTAINING PARK AND RECREATIONAL CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS for the use and benefit of the public, such open space real property or interests in open space real property to include but not be limited to land in its natural state, parks and recreation lands, PARK AND RECREATION CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS, greenbelt and agricultural buffer zones, scenic easements, floodplains, paths and trails, historic monuments, wild rivers, wilderness areas, wildlife habitats, community open space lands, etc., or the payment of indebtedness incurred for such acquisition, and any expenditures as may be necessary to protect such open space properties or interests in real properties so acquired from any and all threatened or actual damages, loss, destruction or impairment from any cause or occurrence."

WHEREAS, the Board desires to amend the Jefferson County Open Space Sales Tax Resolution to expand the open space purposes for which the sales tax proceeds may be expended.

1972 Enabling Resolution

The following is the amendment of the Jefferson County Open Space Sales Tax Resolution, which authorizes construction, acquisition and maintenance from the sales tax general fund.

Commissioner Clement moved that the following Resolution be adopted:

BEFORE THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OF THE COUNTY OF JEFFERSON
STATE OF COLORADO

RESOLUTION NO. CC80-711
RE: OPEN SPACE

Amendment of the Jefferson County Open Space Sales Tax Resolution to authorize construction, acquisition and maintenance of capital improvements.

WHEREAS, the Colorado General Assembly made effective on July 1, 1967, through Chapter 138, Article 10, Colorado Revised Statutes 1963, as amended, provisions for the imposition of a sales tax by counties in the State; and

WHEREAS, the Board of County Commissioners of Jefferson County, Colorado (the "Board"), adopted a County-wide sales tax proposal by Resolution adopted by the Board on August 28, 1972, repealed and reenacted by the Board on September 26, 1972, and as so repealed and reenacted, approved by the electors of the County at the election held on November 7, 1972 (the "Jefferson County Open Space Sales Tax Resolution"); and

WHEREAS, the Jefferson County Open Space Sales Tax Resolution specifies the purposes for which the funds derived from such sales tax can be expended and the interests which can be acquired therewith; and

WHEREAS, it is the desire of the Board to amend the Jefferson County Open Space Sales Tax Resolution to expand the open space purposes for which the sales tax proceeds may be expended.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF THE COUNTY OF JEFFERSON, STATE OF COLORADO:

SECTION 1. The 8th Resolved paragraph of the body of the Jefferson County Open Space Sales Tax Resolution which specifies the purposes for which the sales tax proceeds may be expended and the interests which may be acquired with such proceeds be amended as follows: (New material is in capital letters; deleted material indicated by dashes through words.)

"Be it further resolved that all of the net proceeds received by Jefferson County, Colorado, from the Director of Revenue of the State of Colorado from the aforementioned sales tax WHICH ARE AVAILABLE FOR EXPENDITURE FOR THE OPEN SPACE PURPOSES SET FORTH IN THIS PARAGRAPH shall be expended only for the planning for, developing necessary access to, acquiring, maintaining, administering, and preserving open space real property or interests in open space real property, and developing parks and trails thereon, AND CONSTRUCTION, ACQUIRING AND MAINTAINING PARK AND RECREATIONAL CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS for the use and benefit of the public, such open space real property or interests in open space real property to include but not be limited to land in its natural state, parks and recreation lands, PARK AND RECREATION CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS, greenbelt and agricultural buffer zones, scenic easements, floodplains, paths and trails, historic monuments, wild rivers, wilderness areas, wildlife habitats, community open space lands, etc., or the payment of indebtedness incurred for such acquisition, and any expenditures as may be necessary to protect such open space properties or interests in real properties so acquired from any and all threatened or actual damages, loss, destruction or impairment from any cause or occurrence."

1980 Amending Resolution

Commissioner Stone moved that the following Resolution be adopted:

BEFORE THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OF THE COUNTY OF JEFFERSON
STATE OF COLORADO
RESOLUTION NO. CC98-468

RE: OPEN SPACE. SECOND AMENDMENT TO THE JEFFERSON COUNTY OPEN SPACE SALES TAX RESOLUTION TO PROVIDE FOR A CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND, TO AUTHORIZE THE ISSUANCE OF BOND TO FINANCE ACQUISITIONS OF PROPERTY FOR OPEN SPACE PURPOSES, TO REMOVE THE LIMIT ON SPENDING OF SALES TAX REVENUES RECEIVED FOR OPEN SPACE, AND TO PROVIDE FOR AN ELECTION TO AUTHORIZE THE ABOVE.

WHEREAS, the Board of County Commissioners of Jefferson County, Colorado (the "Board"), adopted a County-wide sales tax proposal by Resolution adopted by the Board on August 28, 1972, repealed and reenacted by the Board on September 26, 1972, and as so repealed and reenacted, approved by the electors of the County at the election held on November 7, 1972, and subsequently amended by Resolution CC80-711, adopted by the Board on September 9, 1980, and approved by the electors on November 4, 1980 (the "Open Space Sales Tax Resolution"); and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Sections 29-2-111 and 30-26-504, C.R.S., a county that has a sales or use tax is authorized to create a capital improvement fund for the deposit of any portion of the sales or use tax revenue allocated for capital improvement purposes only; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Sections 29-2-112 and 30-26-501 to -513, C.R.S., a county that has pledged sales tax revenue solely for capital improvement purposes and has created a sales and use tax capital improvement fund may, in anticipation of collection of sales or use tax revenues, issue revenue bonds payable solely from the fund for the purpose of financing capital improvements; and

WHEREAS, the Board wishes to establish a capital improvement fund for open space purposes, and also to issue sales tax revenue bonds for the purpose of acquiring interests in open space real property; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Article X, Section 20 of the Colorado Constitution, an election is required to allow the Board to issue the debt; and

WHEREAS, Article X, Section 20 of the Colorado Constitution specifies certain language required for the ballot question, and requires that the maximum amount of debt and maximum repayment cost be specified in the ballot question even though the maximum amounts may not be issued; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Article X, Section 20 of the Colorado Constitution, the revenues from the Open Space Sales Tax are subject to limitation; and

WHEREAS, the Board intends to ask the electors to allow the County to collect and spend all revenues generated by the existing Open Space Sales Tax for open space purposes, but not to increase the rate of taxes; and

WHEREAS, the Board has an Open Space Master Plan that is amended from time to time and intends to consider for acquisition those interests in real estate that may be identified in the Master Plan and other real estate interests that may be desirable.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF THE COUNTY OF JEFFERSON, STATE OF COLORADO:

SECTION 1. AMENDMENT OF OPEN SPACE SALES TAX RESOLUTION. The Open Space Sales Tax Resolution is amended to add the following paragraphs:

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board establish a Capital Improvement Fund within the Open Space Fund pursuant to Sections 29-2-111 and 30-26-501 to -513, C.R.S., and pledge to the capital improvement fund that amount of sales tax revenue from the Open Space Fund, interest earnings and reserves as will be specified by subsequent resolution to fund the evaluation, acquisition, and associated acquisition costs of interests in real property to be used for open space purposes, as defined in the Open Space Sales Tax Resolution, together with all principal, interest, premiums, reserves, and costs of any debt financing incurred for such purposes, for so long as required to repay any debt financing, and for so long thereafter as may be specified by the Board.

1998 Bond Resolution

Commissioner Stone moved that the following Resolution be adopted:

BEFORE THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OF THE COUNTY OF JEFFERSON
STATE OF COLORADO
RESOLUTION NO. CC98-468

RE: OPEN SPACE. SECOND AMENDMENT TO THE JEFFERSON COUNTY OPEN SPACE SALES TAX RESOLUTION TO PROVIDE FOR A CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND, TO AUTHORIZE THE ISSUANCE OF BOND TO FINANCE ACQUISITIONS OF PROPERTY FOR OPEN SPACE PURPOSES, TO REMOVE THE LIMIT ON SPENDING OF SALES TAX REVENUES RECEIVED FOR OPEN SPACE, AND TO PROVIDE FOR AN ELECTION TO AUTHORIZE THE ABOVE.

WHEREAS, the Board of County Commissioners of Jefferson County, Colorado (the "Board"), adopted a County-wide sales tax proposal by Resolution adopted by the Board on August 28, 1972, repealed and reenacted by the Board on September 26, 1972, and as so repealed and reenacted, approved by the electors of the County at the election held on November 7, 1972, and subsequently amended by Resolution CC80-711, adopted by the Board on September 9, 1980, and approved by the electors on November 4, 1980 (the "Open Space Sales Tax Resolution"); and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Sections 29-2-111 and 30-26-504, C.R.S., a county that has a sales or use tax is authorized to create a capital improvement fund for the deposit of any portion of the sales or use tax revenue allocated for capital improvement purposes only; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Sections 29-2-112 and 30-26-501 to -513, C.R.S., a county that has pledged sales tax revenue solely for capital improvement purposes and has created a sales and use tax capital improvement fund may, in anticipation of collection of sales or use tax revenues, issue revenue bonds payable solely from the fund for the purpose of financing capital improvements; and

WHEREAS, the Board wishes to establish a capital improvement fund for open space purposes, and also to issue sales tax revenue bonds for the purpose of acquiring interests in open space real property; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Article X, Section 20 of the Colorado Constitution, an election is required to allow the Board to issue the debt; and

WHEREAS, Article X, Section 20 of the Colorado Constitution specifies certain language required for the ballot question, and requires that the maximum amount of debt and maximum repayment cost be specified in the ballot question even though the maximum amounts may not be issued; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Article X, Section 20 of the Colorado Constitution, the revenues from the Open Space Sales Tax are subject to limitation; and

WHEREAS, the Board intends to ask the electors to allow the County to collect and spend all revenues generated by the existing Open Space Sales Tax for open space purposes, but not to increase the rate of taxes; and

WHEREAS, the Board has an Open Space Master Plan that is amended from time to time and intends to consider for acquisition those interests in real estate that may be identified in the Master Plan and other real estate interests that may be desirable.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF THE COUNTY OF JEFFERSON, STATE OF COLORADO:

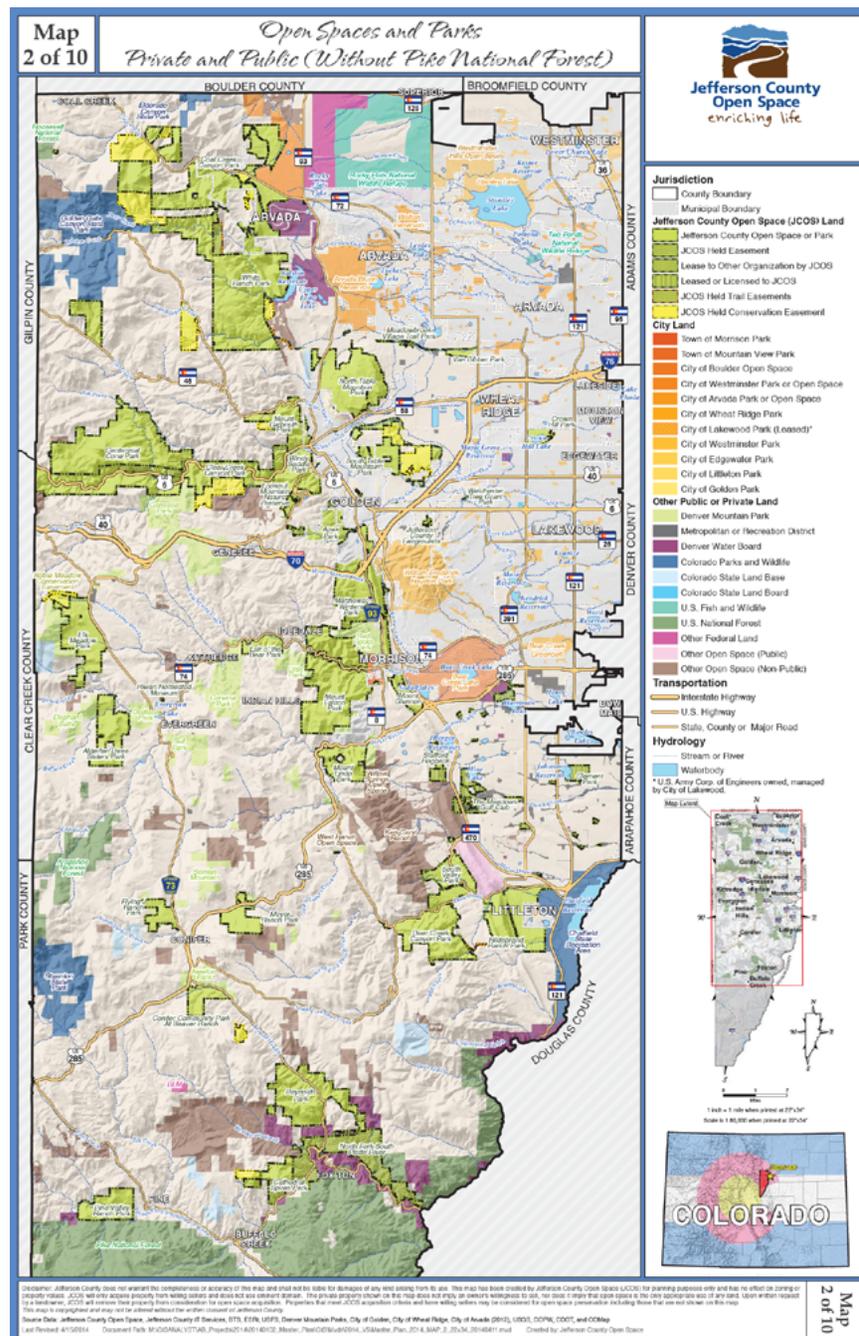
SECTION 1. AMENDMENT OF OPEN SPACE SALES TAX RESOLUTION. The Open Space Sales Tax Resolution is amended to add the following paragraphs:

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board establish a Capital Improvement Fund within the Open Space Fund pursuant to Sections 29-2-111 and 30-26-501 to -513, C.R.S., and pledge to the capital improvement fund that amount of sales tax revenue from the Open Space Fund, interest earnings and reserves as will be specified by subsequent resolution to fund the evaluation, acquisition, and associated acquisition costs of interests in real property to be used for open space purposes, as defined in the Open Space Sales Tax Resolution, together with all principal, interest, premiums, reserves, and costs of any debt financing incurred for such purposes, for so long as required to repay any debt financing, and for so long thereafter as may be specified by the Board.

1998 Jeffco Open Space Administrative Policy

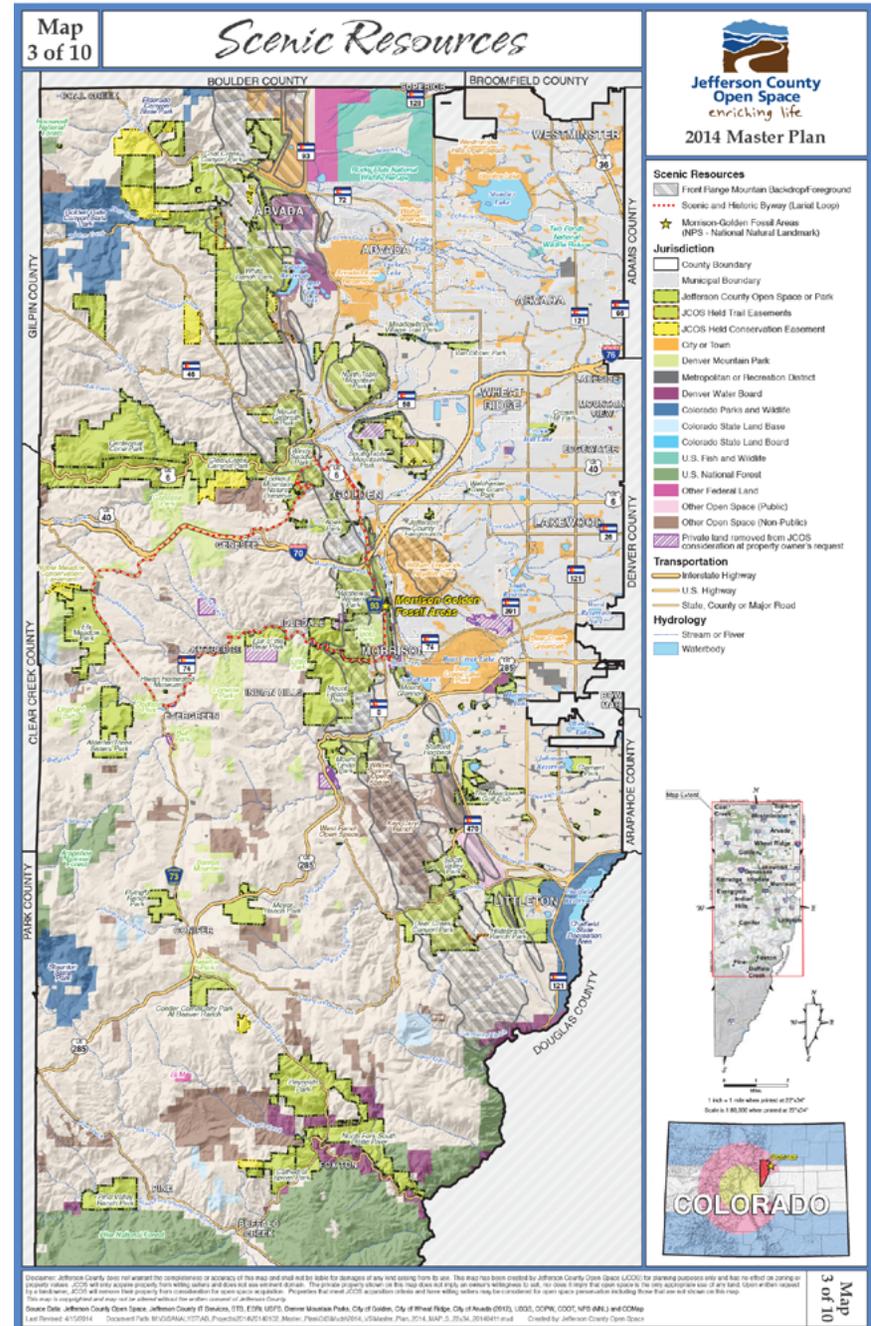
Map 2 - Open Spaces and Parks - Private and Public (Without Pike National Forest)

Map 2 refines our focus of Map 1 to the northern ¾ portion of Jefferson County. At this closer scale, it is easier to note which Jeffco Open Space lands are held in either easements or fee ownership and which lands are owned by our public land agency partners. While Pike National Forest is not depicted in its entirety on this map, the northernmost portion of it is, including the small town of Buffalo Creek and its popular recreational opportunities.



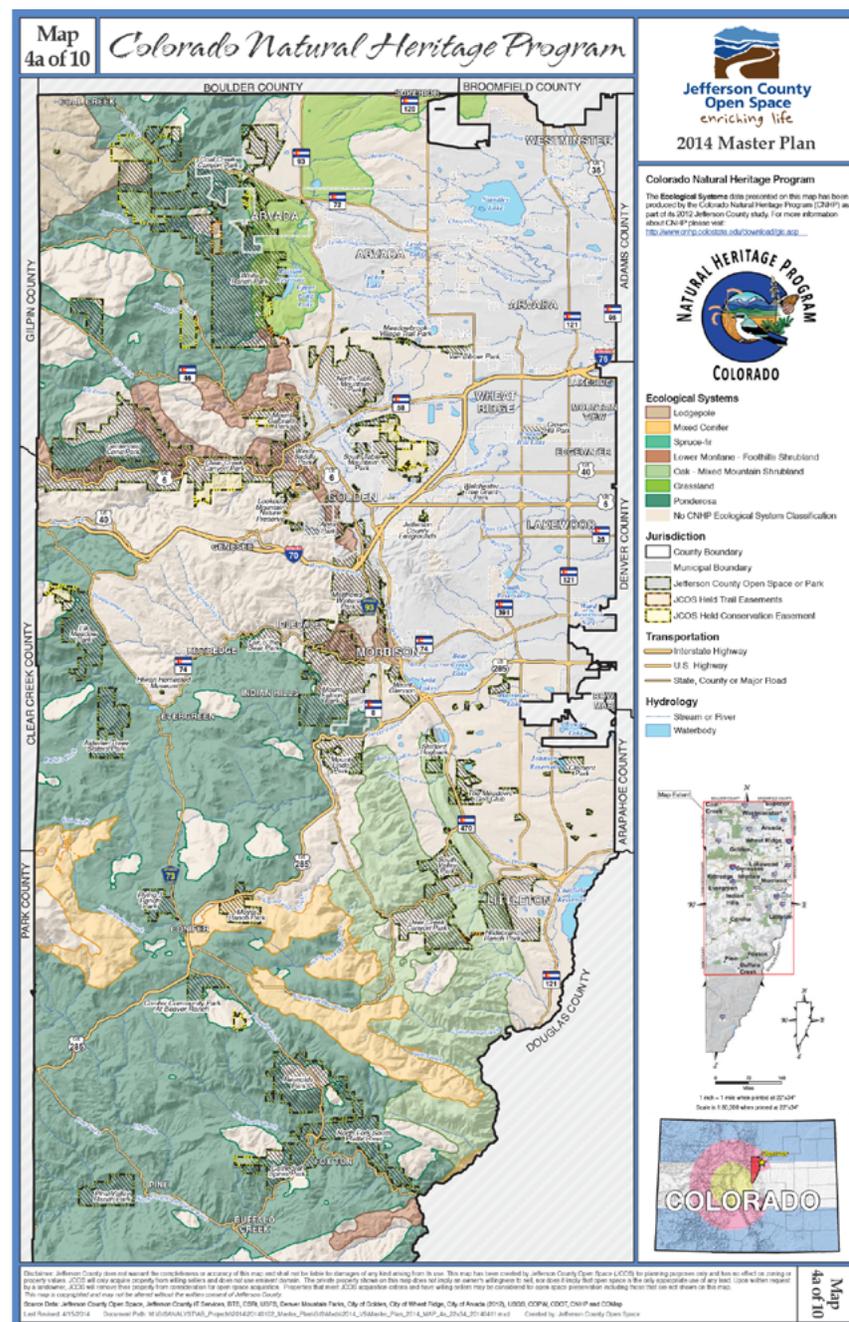
Map 3 - Scenic Resources

A dramatic intersection of the Great Plains and Rocky Mountains, the Front Range Mountain Backdrop is a unique ecological and physical resource seen and enjoyed by many. Through a collaborative effort dating back to 1998, Larimer, Boulder, Jefferson, Douglas and El Paso Counties joined to prioritize the preservation of areas with high visual and natural resource value. Map 3 depicts the overlaid boundaries of those areas, the Front Range Mountain Backdrop/Foreground Preservation Area, in Jefferson County, in addition to the Lariat Loop National Scenic and Historic Byway. Other scenic resources for Jeffco Open Space will focus on acquisition criteria including areas of scenic significance along transportation corridors, scenic views to and from Jeffco Open Space Parks, as well as, special visual qualities, such as rock outcroppings, meadows, and other geologic features, just to name a few. Such resources are not represented specifically on this map.



Map 4a. - Colorado Natural Heritage Program

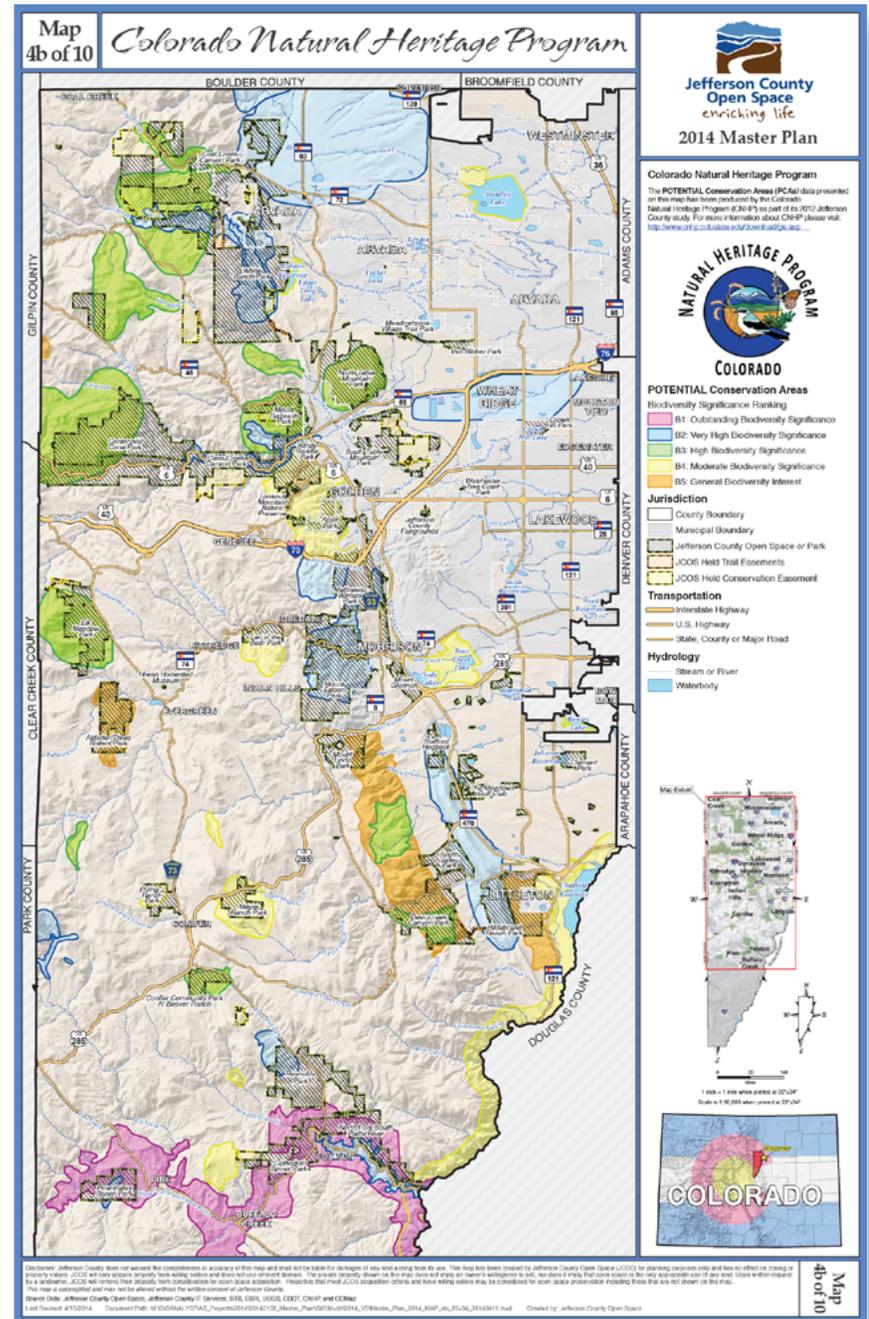
The data on these maps has been produced by the Colorado Natural Heritage Program (CNHP), as part of its 2012 Jefferson County Open Space study. The foundational information for Map 4a depicts latest 2012 comprehensive inventory conducted by the CNHP for rare animals, plants, wetlands, riparian areas, and plant communities. Such documentation of critical biological resources adds support to Jeffco Open Space’s acquisition criteria, assisting to direct our focus toward lands worthy of conservation and preservation. Map 4a goes further by including the varied underlying Ecological Systems, as defined by CNHP, for a better sense of biodiversity, connectivity and cohesiveness.



Map 4b. - Colorado Natural Heritage Program

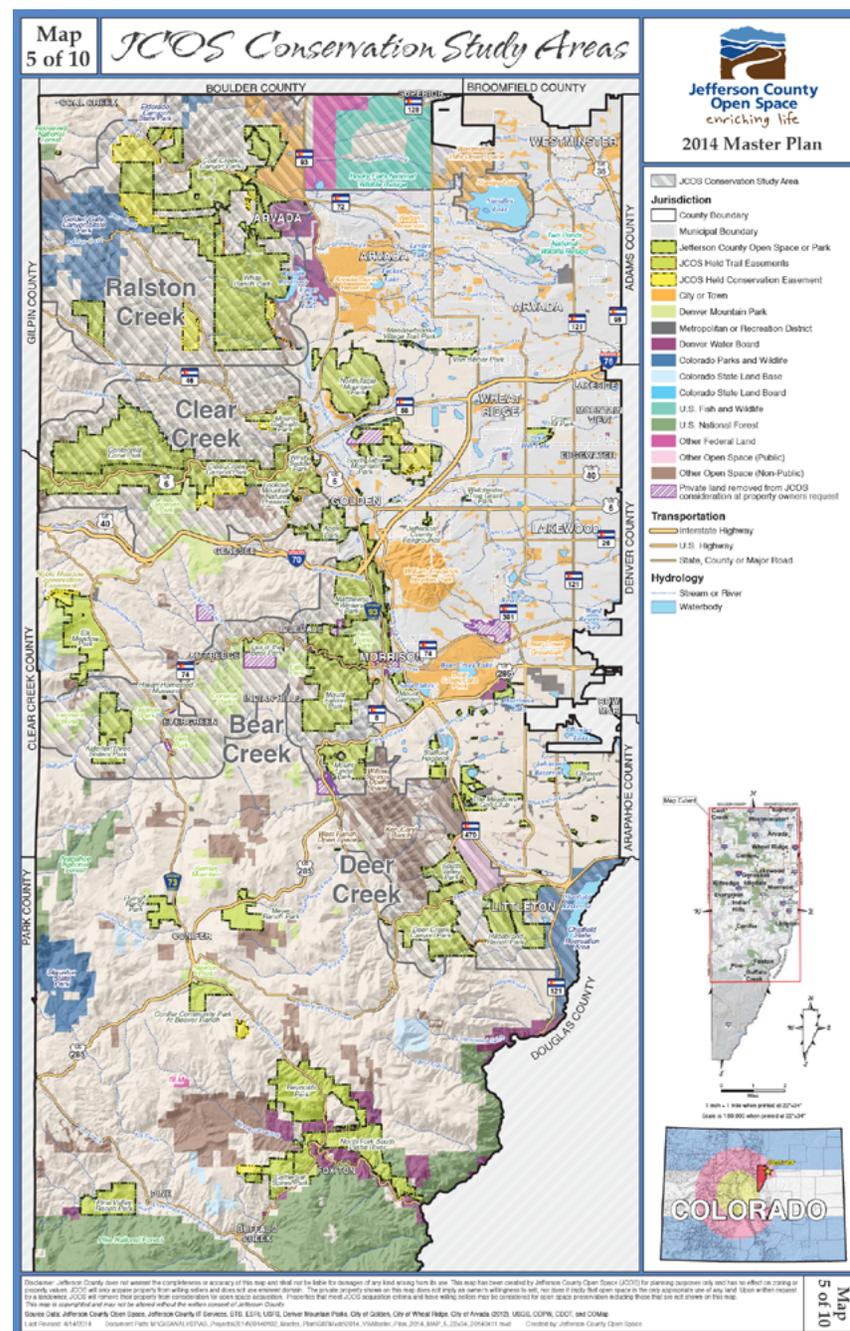
The data on these maps has been produced by the Colorado Natural Heritage Program (CNHP), as part of its 2012 Jefferson County Open Space study. Map 4b highlights the Biodiversity Significance rankings (B1-B5). Of particular interest to note, about 2% (10,117 acres) of the land in Jefferson County (494,535 acres) are classified as wetlands.

The CNHP boundaries of POTENTIAL Conservation Areas (PCA) have changed since the first survey of this type was conducted in Jefferson County in 1993, with availability, or lack thereof, to access properties to conduct the inventories being one of many factors. So as inventories were conducted on the sites where access was granted, existing information was then confirmed or new information was collected resulting in CNHP amending PCA boundaries accordingly. As a result, Jeffco Open Space is aware the CNHP 2012 PCAs, as depicted on this map, are not totally inclusive of all critical biological resources in this County and will continue to work with willing landowners and partners for the preservation and/or conservation of such resources when brought to our attention. Another note of interest: the results of the 1993 survey had documented 8 rare animals, 10 rare plants and 16 rare plant communities, while results of the 2010/2011 update survey documented 11 rare or imperiled animals, 35 rare or imperiled plants, 1 fungus, and 29 wetland and upland plant communities of concern in Jefferson County.



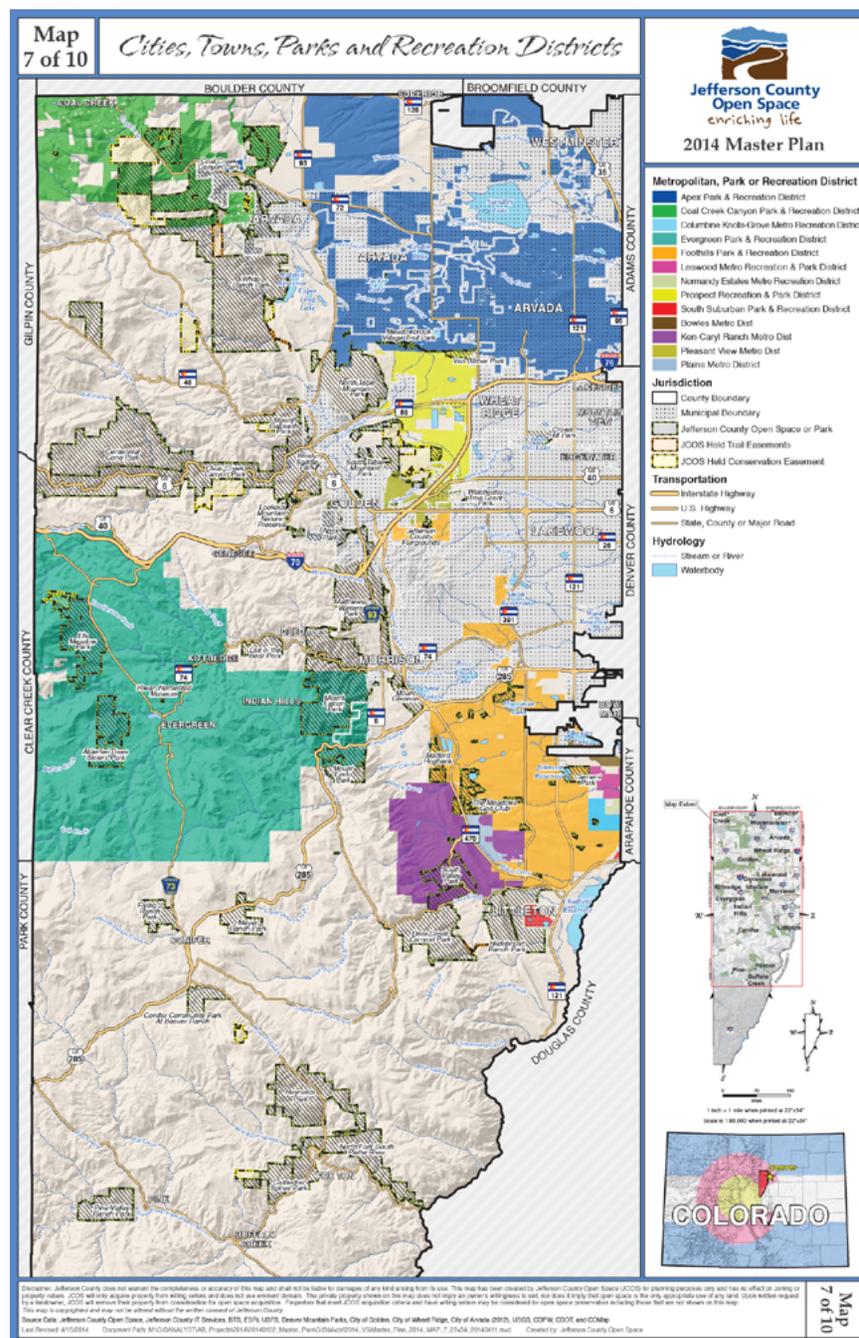
Map 5 - Conservation Study Areas

This map depicts opportunities for open space land acquisition and project objectives at a landscape level across Jefferson County. The Jeffco Open Space 10-Year Funding Plan identifies significantly less funding available for land acquisition from 2011-2020 as a result of allocations to bond debt repayment. The Plan emphasized several strategies such as partnerships, the use of conservation tools, and alternative funding to make the best use of available dollars. Consequently, Jeffco Open Space is looking at a targeted acquisition strategy that identifies large areas that have significant wildlife, natural resource, scenic and outdoor recreation values. Map 5 depicts Conservation Study Areas (CSAs) containing the majority of priority lands. These CSAs roughly follow four of the major drainages in the County: Ralston Creek, Clear Creek, Bear Creek and Deer Creek. This “landscape level” approach could generate more partnerships and funding for future projects. Note: the outlined CSAs are intended to be used as a tool to focus Jeffco Open Spaces acquisition criteria and would not negate the pursuit of acquisition of lands outside of these boundaries. At the same time, these boundaries do not imply that all lands within the noted CSAs are suitable for acquisition/conservation.



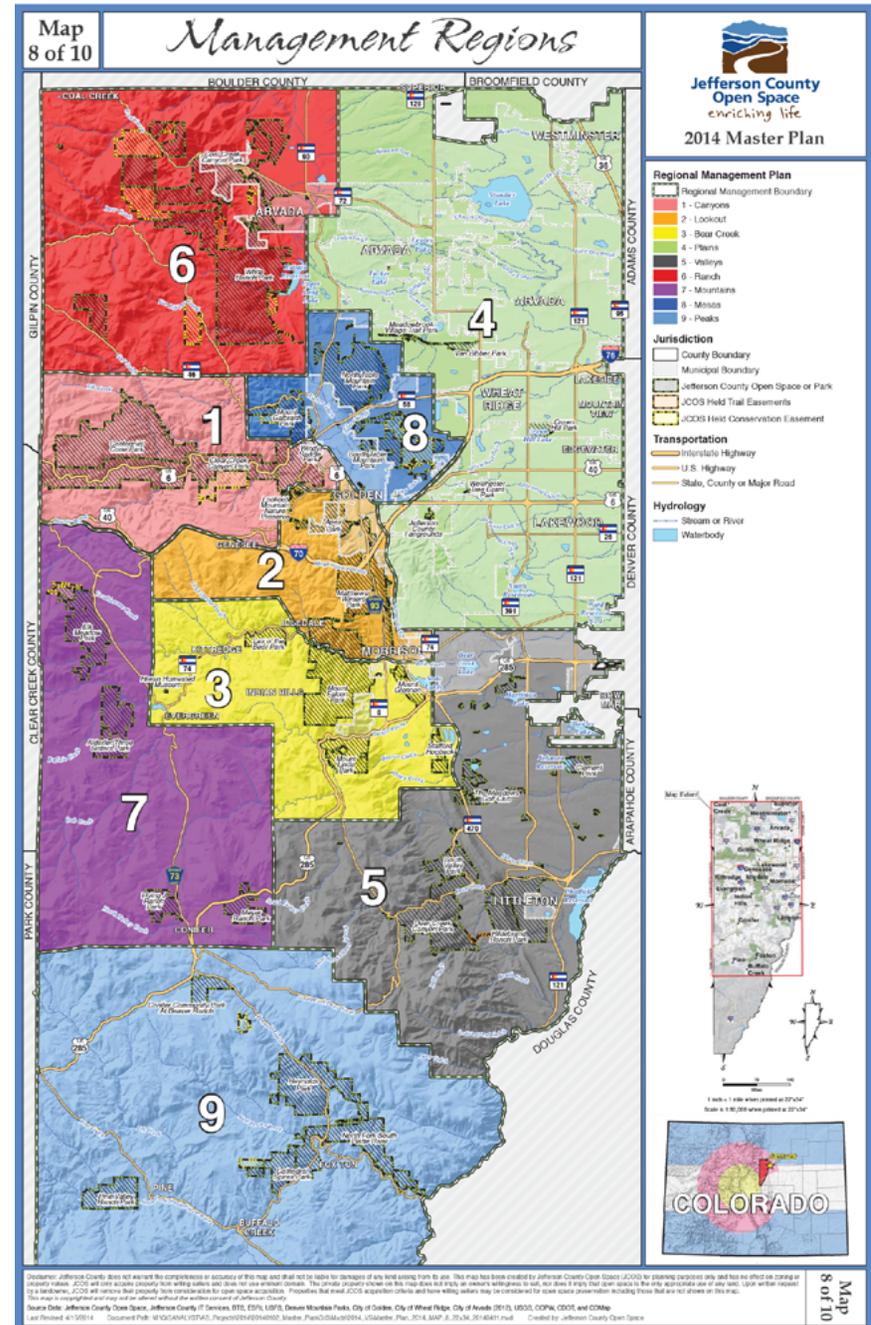
Map 7 - Cities, Towns, Parks and Recreation Districts

As the 4th largest growing County in Colorado, Jefferson County has many Cities, Towns, Parks, Recreation, and Metropolitan Districts that provide park and recreation services within its boundaries. This provides many partnership opportunities, ultimately benefiting the general public, residents and non-residents alike. Depicted on Map 7 are the most up-to-date boundaries of these varied entities along with the outlined boundaries of Jeffco Open Space stewardship lands and parks.



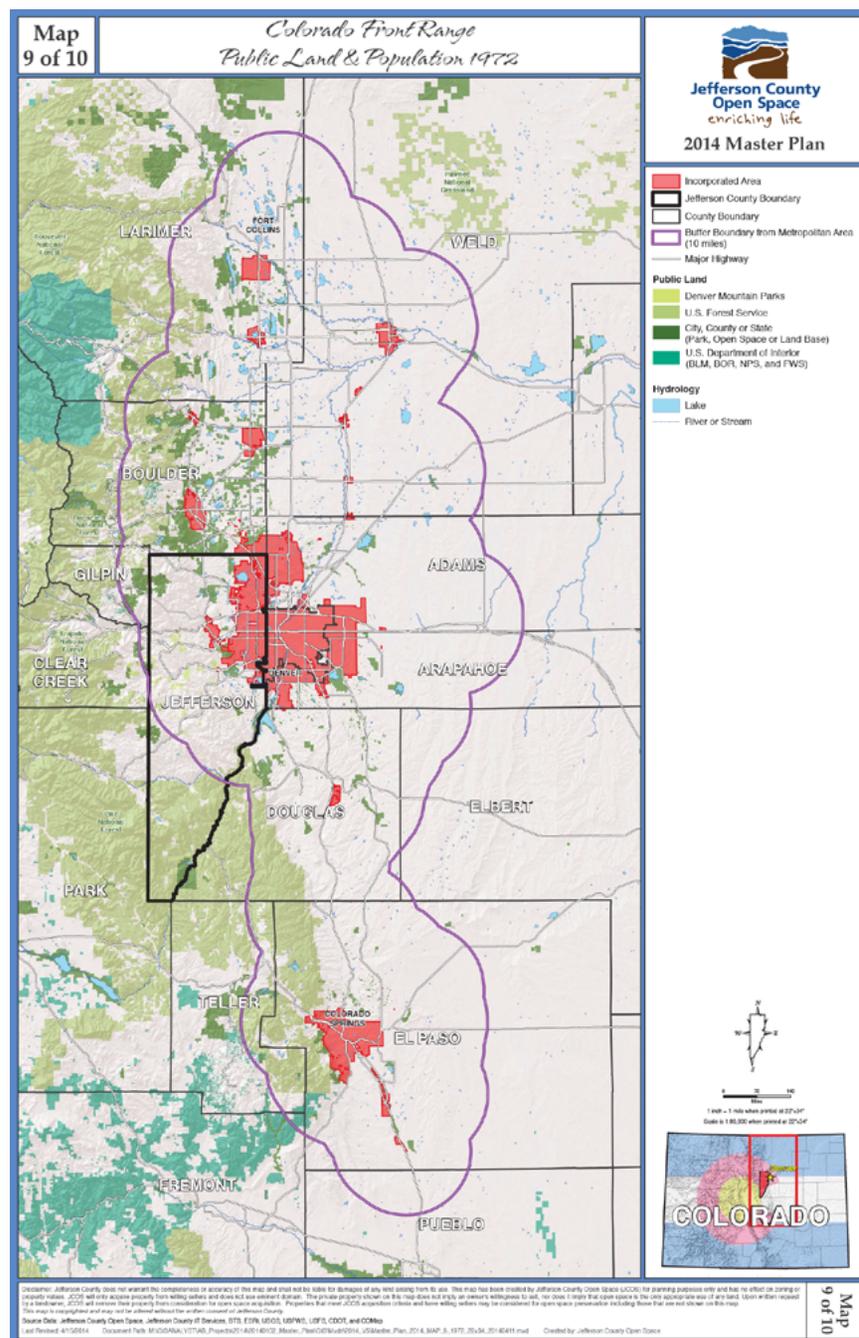
Map 8 - Management Regions

The Management Regions depicted tie to Jefferson County Open Space Regional Management Plans earlier discussed in the document. They are part of the strategy to efficiently care for the 28 Jefferson County Open Space Parks in the system. These nine regions, each with a designated supervisor, have been created as a way to more seamlessly oversee the activities of the region. This includes, but is not limited to, the management of regional trails, Jefferson County Open Space lands, public land agency partnerships, and effective review of potential properties for acquisition. An important aspect of these regions is maintaining and improving lines of communication with stakeholders and the public. Please reference [Resources](#) for the most current and updated Jefferson County Open Space Regional Management Plans.



Map 9 - Colorado Front Range Public Land and Population 1972

Map 9 depicts the public lands in Jefferson County in 1972. One aspect that makes the County unique is its location between the largest urban population center in the State, the Denver Metropolitan area, to the east and the Rocky Mountains to the west. Prior to the authorization of Jeffco Open Space, there were limited public lands in the County, primarily comprised of Denver Mountain Parks and distant National Forests. Neighboring counties had national forest lands proximate to population centers which provided communities such as Colorado Springs, Castle Rock, Boulder and Fort Collins access to public recreation relatively near where people lived. Easy access to National Forests allowed these county-owned lands to be managed for purposes other than recreation. Many of these properties were protected through conservation easements or agricultural leases and provide little, if any, public access.



Resources

[Open Space and Parks Website](#)
[5-Year Capital Improvement Plan](#)
[10-Year Funding Plan](#)
[2010-11 Colorado Natural Heritage Program Study](#)
[2011 Jeffco Open Space Citizen Survey](#)
[2013 Jeffco Open Space Master Plan Listening Log](#)
[Front Range Mountain Backdrop/Foreground Preservation Area Study](#)
[Jeffco Open Space Financial Information](#)
[Jefferson County Comprehensive Plan](#)
[Jefferson County Policy Part 6, Management and Use of County Property, Chapter 4, Open Space](#)
[Local Park and Recreation Grant Program Information](#)
[Nonprofit Grant Program Information](#)
[Open Space Regional Management Plans](#)
[Park Asset Management Plan](#)
[Planning and Zoning Community Plans](#)
[Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan \(SCORP\)](#)
[Quarterly Reports to the Board of County Commissioners, current year](#)
[Annual Report, current year](#)

Cities and Park & Recreation Districts

[City of Arvada](#)
[Apex Park and Recreation District](#)
[City and County of Broomfield](#)
[Bowles Metropolitan District](#)
[City of Edgewater](#)
[Coal Creek Canyon Park and Recreation District](#)
[City of Golden](#)
[Columbine Knolls Grove Recreation District](#)
[City of Lakewood](#)
[Evergreen Park and Recreation District](#)
[City of Westminster](#)
[Foothills Park and Recreation District](#)
[City of Wheat Ridge](#)
[Ken-Caryl Park and Recreation District](#)
[Town of Bow Mar](#)
[Leewood Metropolitan Recreation and Parks District](#)
[Town of Morrison](#)
[Normandy Estates Metropolitan District](#)
[Town of Mountain View](#)
[Pleasant View Metropolitan District](#)
[Prospect Recreation and Park District](#)
[South Suburban Park and Recreation District](#)





**Jefferson County
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