



PLAN JEFFCO UPDATE

FEBRUARY 2020

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2020 Open Space Conservation Awards

January 30th, Jefferson County Open Space hosted this annual volunteer and partner appreciation breakfast at the Lakewood Cultural Center. Almost 300 persons, including several PLAN Jeffco Board members, were on hand to help celebrate this year's recipients.

Aspen Rookie Volunteer Award – given to a first-year volunteer who epitomizes the enthusiasm of the Open Space Volunteer Program. This year's recipient is Ian Francescato for his extraordinary work as a Trailhead Steward. As an Apex Park Trailhead Steward, Ian's responsibilities include: 1) keeping the kiosk supplied with maps, etc; 2) keeping the restrooms clean and stocked; 3) keeping the grounds around the trailhead picked up and clean; and 4) anything else that he can do to encourage good stewardship by the visitors.

Rocky Mountain Juniper Stewardship Award – given to 6-year volunteer Tom Ging, who works with the Real Estate Group. In the past 48 years, Open Space has completed or participated in more than 500 acquisitions, granted hundreds of easements, plus acquired documents from proposed properties that never became acquisitions. Tom has taken on the task of totally organizing the files and determining a protocol for what must be saved and what can be discarded. This protocol has led to the scanning and cataloging of all real estate documents.

Douglas Fir Partnership Award – given to Mountainsmith, <https://mountainsmith.com>. Mountainsmith is located at 701 Pine Ridge Road in North Golden. Formed in 1979, they are manufacturers of all types of outdoor gear and developers of the lumbar pack and K-9 packs.

2020 Open Space Conservation Awards - Continued

Mountainsmith has had an ongoing partnership with Open Space for many years; they offer discounts on their product lines for OS staff and volunteers. They participate in volunteer trail days and sponsor events that get people into the outdoors, as well as supporting the JCOS Adventure Club for foster children.

Blue Spruce Outdoor Connections Award – given to Great Outdoors Colorado for their quarter-century partnership with JCOS. They have awarded 176 grants, \$47M, to conserve 6440 acres of land in Jefferson County alone. Major grants to JCOS have helped in the preservation of the Clear Creek corridor.

Gambel Oak Pioneer Award – given to Denver Mountain Parks for their pioneering spirit and preservation efforts in the early 1900s that have influenced and helped guide Jefferson County Open Space. JCOS has an agreement with Denver Mountain Parks that allows JCOS to build trails crossing their park land. These include the trails at Flying J Ranch Park, Mt Falcon Park, and DMP's Corwina Park, O'Fallon Park and Pence Park.

John Litz Award – given to Jan Wilkins for her 15 years of service on the Jefferson County Open Space Advisory Committee and her other volunteer efforts in the realm of open space conservation. Jan chaired the committee that pushed for the Open Space bonds in 1997-98. Following passage of the bonds measure by 74% of the voters, Jan joined OSAC, served as Vice-Chair, and helped preserve nearly 20,000 acres of Open Space lands. She served on the committees for the Party for the Parks (2013) and the 2014 OS Master Plan. Said John Litz, as he was presenting the award, “The main thing about Jan is that you could always count on her to be a solid performer and do everything that she possibly could to further the effort.”

When she accepted her award, Jan Wilkins said “None of this (meaning the Open Space Program) would be possible if it weren't for everyone else.”

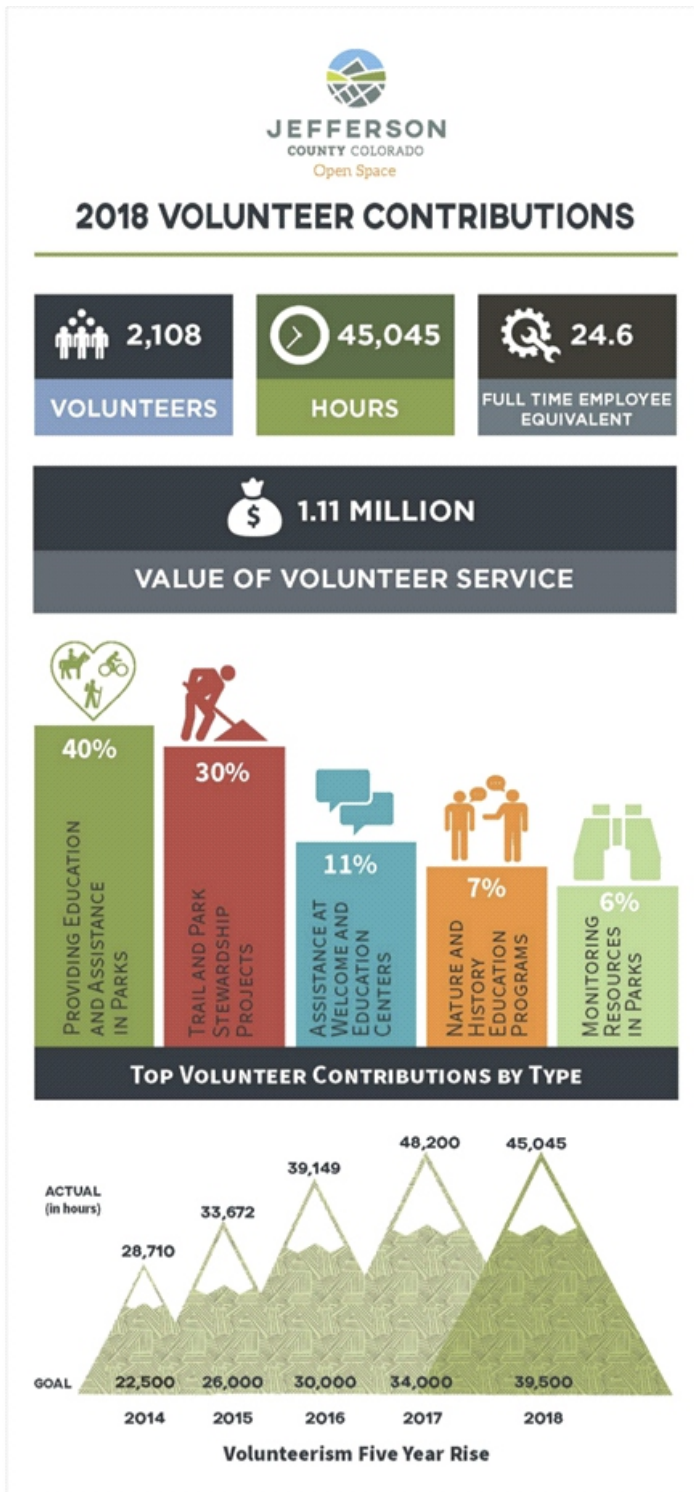
If you'd like to get more involved with Open Space, if you're interested in learning more about the program, the annual Volunteer Fair will be held at the JCOS Headquarters, 700 Jefferson County Pkwy, Suite 100, Golden. You can check out all volunteer positions on Thursday, 2/20, from 4:30 to 6:30 PM and again on Saturday, 2/22, from 10 AM to 1:30 PM.

Newsletter addresses

You may have noticed that the address box on this newsletter looks different. PLAN Jeffco has changed from managing the mailing list with a spreadsheet to using a cloud-based membership management software. When transferring the information we were not able to exactly match what was in the spreadsheet. Over the next few months we hope to make appropriate adjustments.



JCOS Volunteer Training Meeting



Figures from: <https://www.jeffco.us/1567/Volunteer>

Jefferson County Open Space (JCOS) has a small army of very active and enthusiastic volunteers. This graphic from their web site illustrates their numbers and contributions with 2019 data.

Multiple times throughout the year JCOS hosts training sessions for these volunteers. On October 19th, 2019, many of these volunteers gathered at the Golden Community Center for a most informative four-hour training meeting that included presentations by Mary Ann Bonnell (Visitor Services Manager), Irene Weber (Natural Resource Senior Specialist), and Andrew DuBois (Citizen Science Coordinator). These presentations were focused on two of the numerous volunteer opportunities available through JCOS: Park Hosts and Nature Educators.

Several PLAN Jeffco Board Members attended the meeting, to learn from the presentations and to continue to deepen our understanding and appreciation of JCOS programs and participants. Mary Ann Bonnell focused her remarks on visitor experiences and interactions with each other, while Irene Weber and Andrew DuBois focused on information and concerns regarding interactions with plants and animals, respectively. The presentations were lively, the crowd friendly and collaborative, and the light breakfast well received. Registration was limited to 200 and the large meeting room was comfortably filled.

PLAN Jeffco collaborates with JCOS whenever possible. In 1991, PLAN Jeffco began lobbying for a volunteer coordinator staff position; the Director agreed in 1994. The end result was the appointment of Jana Johns, the third Volunteer Coordinator, who has done an astounding job of organizing, directing and managing the Open Space volunteer program. PLAN Jeffco continues to strongly support the acquisition and sustainable management of the Jefferson County Open Space lands.

by Jean Tate

The Fire on Bald Mountain

by Michelle Poolet

September 20th marked the start of the Bald Mountain fire near the top of Clear Creek Canyon. A total of 17 acres burned over the course of a day and a half. The fire was entirely contained on a parcel of land owned by Jefferson County Open Space (JCOS). The property has a conservation easement on it that is held by Clear Creek Land Conservancy. CCLC is working jointly with JCOS to monitor the burn area and formulate restoration plans that preserve the conservation values of the property.

Though the fire was contained on JCOS land and didn't reach the nearby residential area of Mount Vernon Country Club, there were strong concerns that if the wind shifted, the fire would quickly make its way up one of the gullies and reach homes before it could be stopped. Fortunately, the massive joint response by fire crews contained the fire and extinguished all of the hot spots within about a week. Interestingly, this fire occurred outside the boundaries of all of the nearby fire protection districts. Therefore,

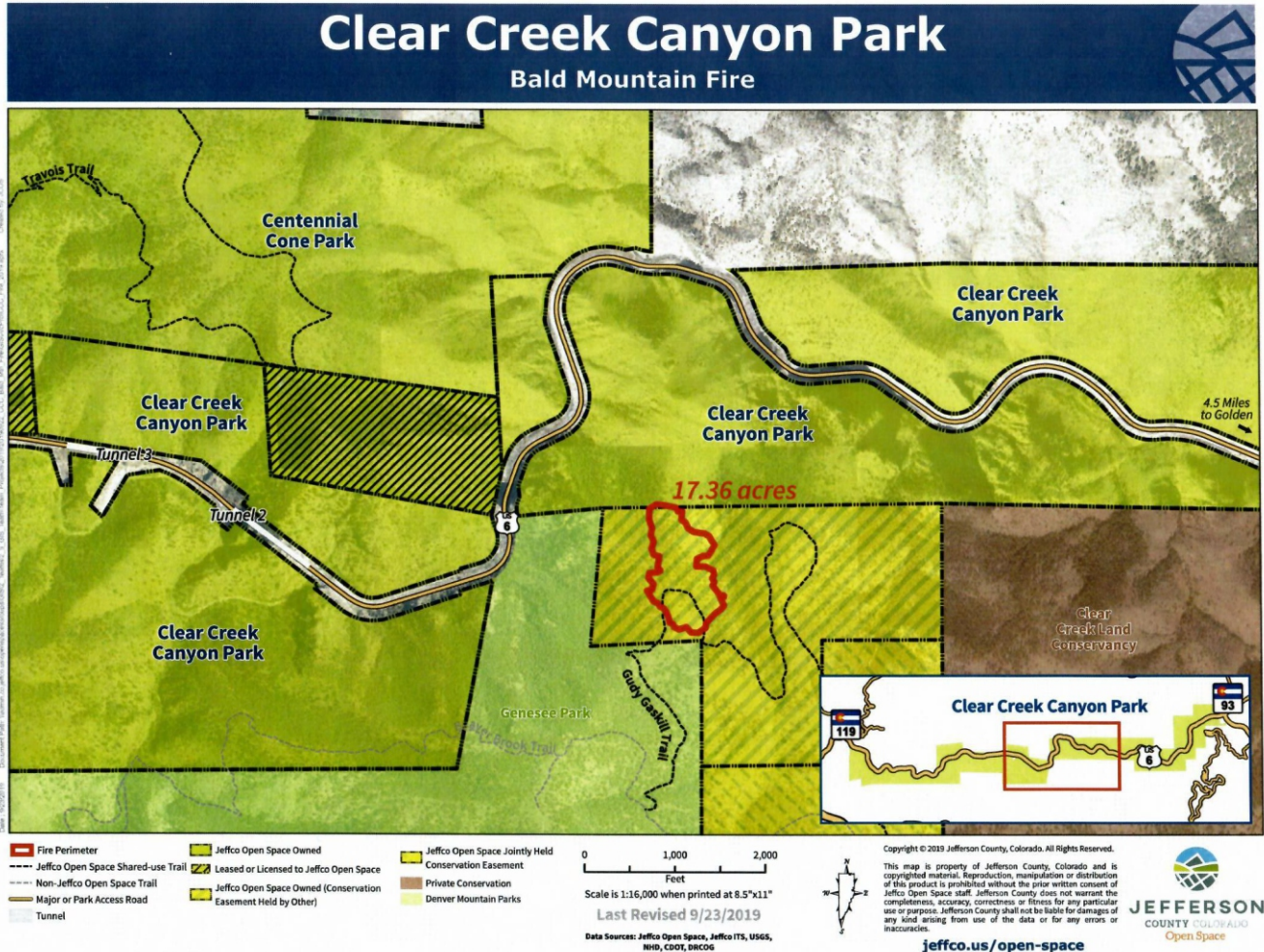
responsibility for responding to the fire fell on the Jefferson County Sheriff's Office. By pure luck, there were significant firefighting resources available for this fire because the equipment that had been used for fires throughout the west during the summer was still nearby in the State. Equipment was rapidly deployed, and crews quickly created a perimeter and contained the fire.

The Gudy Gaskill Trail runs through the southern half of the burn area and the view has changed quite substantially for hikers on the trail. Take a look at the before and after photos of the area, and it's clear what a difference fire can make to an ecosystem. The spring will likely bring an abundance of wildflowers and new growth in the burn area, so you may want to plan a spring hike on the Beaver Brook and Gudy Gaskill Trails as soon as the flowers start blooming.

A huge THANK YOU to all of the people who responded to the fire.



The Fire on Bald Mountain, Continued



Gudy Gaskill Trail
<Before
After>



P2P Trail - Mouth of Clear Creek Canyon - Update

by Vicky Gits

Fact Box Mouth of the Canyon Project

Length: 1.75 miles from end of city of Golden Clear Creek Trail to Tunnel One and around the tunnel oxbow along US 6

June 2019: Construction begins on south side of Clear Creek

December 2019: Informal lot closed and construction begins at US 6/Hwy 93/58 intersection

February 2020: Build begins at east portal of Tunnel One

Projected completion: Spring 2021
Distance to Big Easy Trailhead near Mayhem Gulch: about 8 miles
Next segment: Tunnel One to Huntsman Gulch (5 miles)

Elements

Paved, 10-foot-wide multi-use trail, 1.75 miles.

Trailheads: 2 expanded and gated with space for 30 and 140 cars, respectively.

Restrooms: new vault and new flush restrooms.

Bridges: 2 standard multiuse bridges; 1 four-foot-wide, hiker-only suspension bridge connecting Tunnel One to trail on south side of creek and the Welch Ditch Trail.

Restoration of half mile of the historic wooden flume for hiker-only use (Welch Ditch Flume).

Contractor: Concrete Express Inc.
Designer: Muller Engineering, Yeh and Associates, Stream Landscape Architecture and Planning, ERO Resources.

Restrooms, Welch Ditch Restoration and stairs: Jeffco Open Space Stewardship.

An ambitious makeover promising to transform 1.75 miles on both sides of the creek west of Golden near Tunnel One at the entrance to Clear Creek Canyon is ready to take a major leap this spring.

Known as the Mouth of the Canyon Project, it is one of the biggest building projects Jefferson County Open Space has ever undertaken. The projected cost is \$15 million, with completion projected in spring 2021. The bulk of the work will take place in 2020 when the crew expands to about 40 to 45 people.

Work on the trail began in June 2019 with construction on the south side of Clear Creek, where in July, a crew uncovered about 10 rusted, crumpled cars, probably driven off Lookout Mountain Road either accidentally or on purpose.

The next milestone was December 2019 with the closing of an informal, dirt parking lot on the south side of US 6, just west of the US 6/Hwy 93/58 intersection.

Starting at the Hwy 93 overpass, a new concrete trail will open up the creekside to bicycle traffic and provide access to the views behind the oxbow of Tunnel One, the historic wooden flume trail (Welch Ditch) and a new suspension bridge. The entire concrete trail segment is handicap accessible as well.

The construction of a 10-foot-wide, multipurpose, concrete trail is a huge undertaking, but equally significant are new parking facilities, restrooms, bridges, access behind Tunnel One, climbing access and restoration of the Welch Ditch wood flume. A total of three bridges and two new trailheads with restrooms and expanded parking are in the works.

The trail is an important segment of the future Peaks to Plains Trail from Loveland Pass/Eisenhower Tunnel to the South Platte in Denver. There are preliminary plans for the

P2P Trail - Clear Creek Canyon - Continued

untouched segment between Tunnel One and a point near Mayhem Gulch on US 6, where the prototype trail opened in 2017.

Target completion 2021

The opening is expected to take place in spring of 2021, said Jeffco Projects Team Supervisor Scot Grossman, who managed the construction of 3 miles of Peaks to Plains multi-use trail along the river at Mayhem Gulch and US 6.

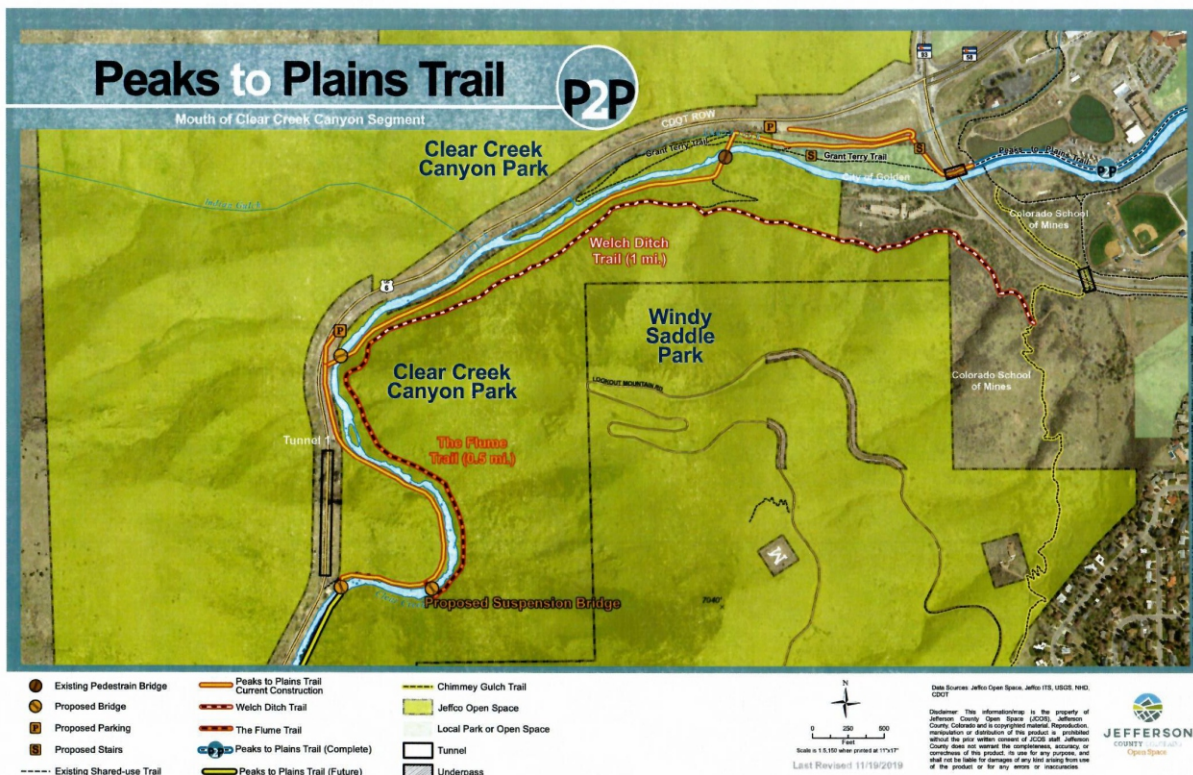
The target time frame is a few months beyond the original estimate due to unexpected difficulties involved with gathering permits from the many jurisdictions involved in the complicated, partly urban waterway.

During construction, the existing pedestrian trails will continue to be open to the public except for occasional closures of a few hours, Grossman said.



Scot Grossman, June 2019

The project is spearheaded by Jefferson County Open Space and primarily paid for by a half-percent open-space, county sales tax (\$12 million). Great Outdoors Colorado is providing \$2 million and CDOT/Federal Highway Administration contributed \$650,000.



P2P Trail - Clear Creek Canyon - Continued

Parking lots closed for improvements

The most visible evidence of progress as of mid-January 2020 is the closing of the undesignated parking lot at the intersection of Hwy 93 and US 6/58 for expansion and redesign. The spaces will increase from 50 to 130 and a new flush restroom will be built.

The now-closed parking lot provides direct access to the Grant Terry Trail and existing Grant Terry Bridge.

A smaller pullout/parking lot at the entrance to Tunnel One about a mile west is set to close permanently sometime in February to prepare for a new 40-space lot nearby with new restroom facilities.

This lot, which is also accessible from Hwy 6, will provide additional access to the new pavement trail to be built following around the oxbow in the river, where the tunnel cuts through.

Both lots will have deceleration lanes off the busy highway.

The bridge to the flume

In the oxbow, a hiker-only suspension bridge will transport visitors from the main concrete trail across the creek to the historic Welch Ditch wooden

flume, which will be repaired and reopened to the public as a hiker-only trail. This feature is currently closed.

The suspension bridge will be four feet wide and look more like “Golden Gate” in San Francisco, not like “Indiana Jones,” Grossman said.

The wood-constructed section of the Welch Trail is part of an irrigation system that delivered Clear Creek water to farms and orchards east of Golden from the late 1800s for over 100 years. Now closed, it will become a half-mile-long, hiker-only trail. It is intended to stay rustic and historic and continue to smell like the creosote wood preservative.

During summer, despite all the construction, the main Grant Terry Trail from US 6 to the Grant Terry Bridge is expected stay open except for intermittent closures of a few hours.

The logistics of the Mouth of the Canyon are expected to be quicker than the previous build higher up the canyon because there will be several access points: the oxbow/Tunnel One on the west, from the south side and at both parking lots/trailheads.

The main contractor is Concrete Express Inc. Muller Engineering is the primary designer, and Jeffco Open Space staff are building the restrooms and stairs and cleaning up the historic Welch Ditch Trail.



OSAC Notes - OSAC Notes

by John Litz

September 15, 2019

Study Session: A field trip to view the 75-acre Warner property adjoining Meyer Ranch Park along South Turkey Creek Road. The property is a mixture of forest and clearings, and fits perfectly into Meyer Ranch Park. It contains some buildings from the 1870s and a small house which has been modified over time.

Regular Session:

Mary Ann Bonnell and Andy Scanlan presented the Dinosaur Ridge Master Plan. The Plan is a consolidation of the many recommendations to improve the visitor experience, resource preservation, recreation management, programming, facility and amenity functions. The Plan includes detailed sections on improving visitor safety, drainage and rockfall mitigation, unifying the signage, developing standards for physical improvements, and determining the future visitor center location and site configuration.

The Advisory Committee approved proceeding with acquisition of the Warner Property. The property will preserve the viewshed in the area and provide trail connections to Meyer Ranch Park. Because the property had been rezoned for development, the \$1,400,000 price is above what Open Space is accustomed to paying.

The Director, Tom Hoby, reported that the August 15 fire at the Deer Creek Canyon Park was contained in three days with the help of 58 agencies and organizations. The Park was reopened in one week.

Hoby also reported that Open Space Staff are progressing in assembling a County-wide trails plan.

October 3, 2019

Study Session: A field trip to view the progress on the restoration of the ground and vegetation at the now-closed Elk Meadow Dog Off-Leash Park. Much of the area has naturally revegetated, although many areas were heavy in invasive grasses. These are being controlled. The edges of the stream channel are being recontoured to reduce erosion from water coming through culverts under Stagecoach Road. .

Regular Session:

Joy Lucisano and Steve Snyder reviewed the policies relating to non-Open Space uses in the parks. These include commercial uses and large group gatherings. The policies focus on ensuring non-interference with individuals' passive use of the park.

Nancy York reported on the Vision to Action Framework progress; i.e. the planning process for the next five years. This included an overview, the public engagement plan, the Advisory Committee participation, milestones completed, and future milestones.

Gina Barton presented an update of the 2017 Master Plan for Beaver Ranch Park. The plan now is being used to define the roles of Open Space and the Beaver Ranch Community, Inc. as regards the maintenance and operation of the park.

Director Tom Hoby reported that the Jeffco Outdoor Adventure Club (a hiking and outdoor activity program for youth in Foster Care) received the Colorado Open Space Alliance's Blue Gramma Award for Outstanding Achievement in Community Partnership and Collaboration.

On National Public Lands Day, 480 volunteers spent 2,529 hours cleaning up 10,300 pounds of waste along 12 miles of Clear Creek Canyon.

OSAC Notes - Continued

November 7, 2019

Study Session: Field trip to the completed Windy Saddle Trailhead and to the mouth of Clear Creek Canyon to view progress on the trail construction.

Regular Session:

Approved release of the reverter on a portion of the park property at the Mountain View Town Hall to allow construction of a carport for protection of their police vehicles.

Approved Open Space entering into a new easement with the Church Ditch Water Authority to allow a public recreation trail over the Authority's Highway 6 access road and a segment of the Church Ditch.

Mike Foster reported that development of South Table Park will begin in 2020. Many of the 22 miles of social trails will be revegetated and the mileage of designated trails will be doubled.

December 5, 2019

Study Session: A group of six Masters of the Environment students from the University of Colorado, Boulder, presented a Resiliency Framework for JCOS. The framework defines what resiliency means to JCOS and provides guidance to evaluate future projects and programs in three spheres: social, ecological, and built infrastructure to aid in funding prioritization.



Three engineering students from the Colorado School of Mines developed an improved stormwater infrastructure system for Pine Valley Ranch Park to reduce the erosion and decrease the maintenance necessary after heavy rains.

There was no Regular Session.

January 9, 2020

Study Session: Matt Robbins presented standardized information and symbols for recipients of Open Space funding for acknowledging that funding in their literature and signage. A primary reason is to minimize confusion as to the entity that is responsible for the property.

Regular Session:

The meeting started with a video review of 2019 JCOS highlights.

Felicity Hannay and Bob West were recognized for their 13 years of service on the Open Space Advisory Committee.

Gina Barton reviewed a revised license agreement that Beaver Ranch Community, Inc. will make with the disc golf course operator.



If you have not!!! Join PLAN Jeffco or renew your Membership today!

PLAN Jeffco is the county-wide volunteer citizen’s group that organized and drafted the Open Space Resolution that resulted in the formation of the Jefferson County Open Space Program in 1972. We currently function as a watchdog group, observing meetings of the Open Space Advisory Committee, participating in subcommittees, and issues groups, proposing and working for important acquisitions, and keeping citizens informed of what is going on in their Open Space Program. PLAN Jeffco provided the leadership for the successful vote for bonds in 1998.

PLAN Jeffco works for open space and we work for you! Please sign up or renew your membership now! Your address label shows the date of your last renewal. Call 303.237.9493 for membership information.

Our membership rate is:

\$35 per year

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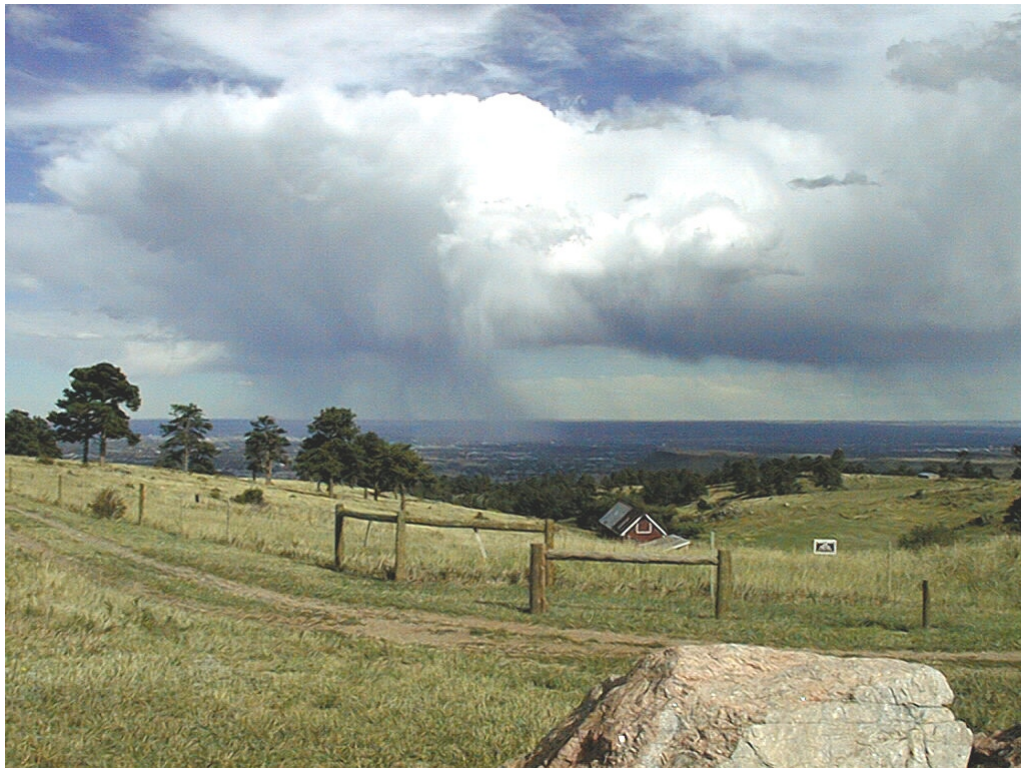
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Jefferson County Citizens for
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PLAN JEFFCO NEWSLETTER



White Ranch overlooking the Metro area