



PLAN JEFFCO UPDATE

JULY 2020

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SOUTH TABLE MOUNTAIN IS GETTING NEW TRAILS

PLAN Jeffco Comments on Proposed South Table Park Trails Plan

April 24, 2020

Dear Mr. Hoby,

Please consider this correspondence as the PLAN Jeffco Board of Directors (“Board”) position regarding the proposed South Table Park Trails Plan.

PLAN Jeffco was formed 48 years ago with the goal of preserving much of the open area in Jefferson County for public use. During our campaign for the Open Space Resolution in 1972, we typically referred to South Table Mountain as a perfect candidate for preservation. However, the need for willing sellers made the assemblage of South Table Mountain Park a slow process and prevented some desirable acquisitions.

South Table Mountain Park is probably the most accessible park in the Open Space system, which has led to uncontrolled over use. The park's lands have been misused over the past 100 plus years, making this the most abused property that Open Space has acquired. More than 30 miles of social

trails have developed over the years by trespassers and other users. These have led to: 1) fragmented nesting areas and other natural features; 2) trails that cross seasonally wet areas; and 3) routes susceptible to erosion.

PLAN Jeffco heartily supports Open Space plans to

- Increase the present 7 miles of designated trails to 15.6 miles;
- Restore about 20 miles of undesignated (social) trails to heal the abuse;
- Implement seasonal closures to protect the nesting birds;
- Implement “Stay on Trail” management, as most of the park land is very fragile.

Very Truly Yours,

s/Peter Ruben Morales

Peter Ruben Morales

2020 SOUTH TABLE MOUNTAIN ACTION PLAN

HISTORY OF SOUTH TABLE MOUNTAIN

South Table Mountain is a flat top mesa rising more than 580 feet above Clear Creek. The mountain is estimated to be 63 million years old. The top is protected by two basalt flows that are about 150 feet thick. It includes fossil beds and rare plant life. The mountain was the site of Northern Ute Indian ceremonies and burials.

In 1906, A. D. Quaintance opened the Castle Rock Resort as a café where visitors rode donkeys from Golden to the restaurant. In 1913, a funicular railway opened from 32nd Avenue to just below the Castle Rock. The café was converted into a very popular casino with live music and dancing. By the 1920s the casino had turned into the “Lava Lane,” a whites only dance hall offering jazz music and a place to congregate during Prohibition. Business faded and the building was taken over by the Ku Klux Klan. One night in 1923, almost a thousand white-robed members met on Castle Rock and were believed to initiate 150 men. By this time the Klan had built a road paved with cinders from Quaker Street to the Castle Rock. The credentials of all arriving were carefully checked. The Klan regularly had events on the Castle Rock for the next four years, burning

crosses as tall as 20 feet. (The author's father was a student at Mines during this period and spoke many times of the Klan's activities.)

In 1927 the dance hall burned and was not replaced. The tracks of the funicular were taken up during World War II to be recycled for steel.

In 1915, Charlie Schoock homesteaded a portion of the mesa intending to raise wheat. When his house burned down in 1916, Jack Browne bought the 80 acres from Schoock's daughter. Browne grazed cattle on this and other acreage on the mesa.

In the 1930's, Quaintance and Browne donated land to the City and County of Denver for runways for sailplanes. The State, which operated Camp George West and also owned most of the eastern half of the mesa, donated 80 acres to Denver for a quarry. The rock was used for paving in Denver and also for the rip-rap on the face of the Cherry Creek Dam. The quarry was last used in the early 1950's. The quarry became part of Denver Parks and was used by the Table Mountain Gun Club as a firing range.

Browne, in the late 1940s, erected a rodeo grounds on the South side of the mesa just West of an extension to Quaker Street. The rodeo operated for about ten years.

Indian lore tells of an underground cavern in South Table Mountain that was full of water and that they paddled their canoes inside the mountain. A confirmation of sorts is that the Gardner Denver Company used part of the Denver quarry for testing their drilling machines and drill steel. In 1972, Browne claimed that if you dropped a rock down a drilling hole you could hear it splash 80 feet below. Coors definitely has tapped a source of water for the brewery on the northwest corner of the mesa and the Crystal Springs Cave on the southwest side discharged enough water that it was piped to the State Industrial School across South Golden Road.



Photo courtesy of
Christine
Wieczorek

SOUTH TABLE MOUNTAIN

Continued

HOW IT HAS BEEN ACQUIRED

Open Space's first acquisition was 81 acres on the Northeast corner of the mesa in 1977. This property earlier had been proposed for a "Hanging Gardens" subdivision. In the 1980s Open Space leased 80 acres from the Solar Energy Research Institute (now the National Renewable Energy Laboratory, NREL.)

It is surprising that in the first 20 years of the program, there was little focus on South Table. This is because until the 1990s, with a few exceptions, Open Space was only considering properties presented to it. This changed in the early 1990s with PLAN Jeffco proposing and Open Space adopting proactive acquisition plans. In 1995-1996 about 8 acres were acquired in partnership with the City of Golden that provided legal access for the Luban trail from Golden up the West side of the mesa.

In 1999 Open Space acquired 257 acres of the Camp George West property, mostly below the NREL facility. Open Space also acquired 187 acres from NREL on the Southeast side of the mesa. Open Space acquired another 2 acres on the Golden side of the mesa in 1999. The year 1999 also brought the first significant acquisition on the mesa top with a 214-acre parcel from Golden Properties, most of which is a no-access Conservation Easement.

Acquisitions in 2000 and 2002 included the Bradburn 15 acres on the west slope and the 25 acres that had been the old rodeo site on the south side of the mesa.

Acquisition of most of the mesa top occurred in 2003 when Open Space acquired 700 acres from the Coors Brewing Company. A grant from Great Outdoors Colorado provided much of the funds for the acquisition. Open Space now had legal and developable access to about 1,300 acres of the top and sides of the mesa.

In 2008 a preliminary development plan for South Table was prepared. This plan looked at the potential for a trailhead and parking on the south side West of the Quaker Street extension. Part of this development plan was executed in succeeding years with building trail access from the southeast corner of the NREL property, improving access from the east, and upgrading some of the mesa-top trails.

The most recent acquisitions are the 14 acres under the Xcel power lines on the west side of the mesa top and some small acquisitions on the base of the eastern slope.

The balance of the mesa top is owned by Bear Creek Development (the Quaintance descendants and Bradley family). Their holdings include the 80-acre quarry site traded by the City of Denver to them for some acreage adjacent to Red Rocks Park, a 20-acre in-holding located in the southwest portion of the mesa, and the 277 acres on the northwest corner that includes the Castle Rock. Open Space has made unsuccessful, reasonable value offers for these properties over the last 25 years.

THE ACTION PLAN

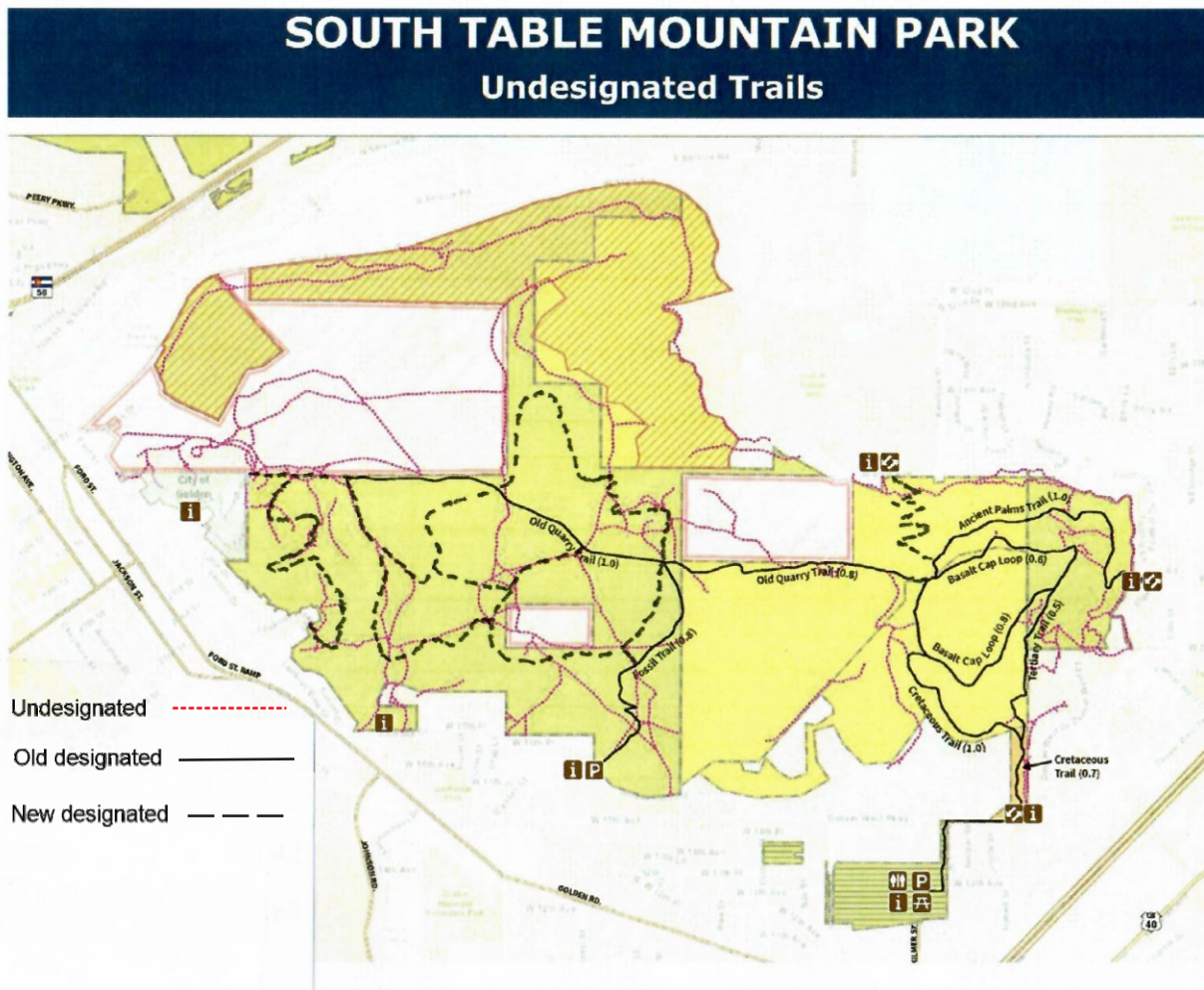
Open Space generated a second preliminary development plan for South Table in 2019 and held public meetings. A major concern was the placement of a trailhead and parking. The location determined in the 2008 plan, which was west of the Quaker Street extension was opposed by some of the attendees at the public meetings. Because of the need for sustainable trails on the mesa, Open Space proceeded with an action plan earlier this year that only addresses the trail needs. The trailhead location is yet to be determined.

SOUTH TABLE MOUNTAIN

Continued

Initiating the action plan began in April of this year with the simultaneous reclaiming of social trails and the construction of designated trails. On a 1972 tour of the mesa a plant ecologist commented on the damage to the ecology but stated that if it were protected it would soon return to its natural state and balance. The action plan's goals are to increase the 7 miles of existing designated and improved trails to about 16 miles. At the same time, they will reclaim and take out of service about 20 miles of undesigned trails. The map below shows the entrances to and the trails on South

Table. The Fossil Trail entrance is the only one with designated off-street parking (about five cars), otherwise there are no designated trailheads. Figure 1 (the start of the Fossil Trail) shows the trail leading from the Fossil Trail entrance. About one-half way up Fossil Trail it intersects with the Serpentine Trail (Figure 2). In about one-half mile the Serpentine Trail intersects with the Dome Flow trail, (Figure 3). Dome Flow ultimately intersects with the Old Quarry Trail (Figure 4).



SOUTH TABLE MOUNTAIN

Continued



Figure 1, South end start of Fossil Trail



Figure 2, East end start of Serpentine Trail



Figure 3, East quadrant of Dome Rock showing crushed rock surface.



Figure 4, Dome Rock Trail at eastern intersection with Old Quarry Trail

text and photos by John Litz

The video of “South Table Mountain Park Plan & 2020 Actions” presentation was posted on the Open Space website March 27, 2020.

To view the video on YouTube go to <https://bit.ly/3eBF8dx>.

Mount Morrison Trail Makeover

By Vicky Gits

Jeffco Open Space is exploring the idea of building a new and better trail to the top of Mount Morrison from Red Rocks Park, a much-needed improvement that promises to restore some of the landmark's former glory.

It will be one of the top planning priorities in 2020, said Mike Foster, stewardship manager for Open Space.

From about 1909 to 1919, Mount Morrison was a popular tourist destination, featuring a cable incline railway with two 100-passenger railcars. From a distance on Morrison Road one can still see the outline of the track under certain light conditions. See copy of brochure and sketch showing the incline track.

By April 1919, the city of Denver had acquired the property and dismantled the railway after one of the cars was destroyed in an accident. (Historically Jeffco, Winter 1991, Jefferson County Historical Commission.)

The existing trail is an awkward, unmarked, rugged informal path, that ascends almost 2,000 feet to 7,877 feet over numerous difficult, dangerous rocky places. Mountaineers have been known to use it as a training site for much harder and longer international climbs.

Most of the trail is on land owned by Jeffco Open Space in the Matthews/Winters Park, but it begins and ends on Denver Mountain Parks land. The unmarked trail also goes through a closed area of the park system.

There is very little room to park cars near the trailhead at Titans Road and Highway 8 west of Morrison.

“We are taking a long, hard look at why people want to use the trail and ensure it's sustainably designed,” Foster said. “It was never a (professionally) built

trail. It is undesignated. So there is erosion and rutting whenever we have rain events,” Foster said. There is also raptor habitat to protect.

Planning is complicated because there are multiple landowners.

Open Space decided not to pursue a grant from Great Outdoors Colorado for the time being, but hasn't ruled it out in the future, Foster said.



Mount Morrison railway

Mount Morrison Continued

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Rocks.

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via Colorado & Southern Railway
8:20, 9:20 and 11:00 a. m.;
1:15 and 4:30 p. m. Daily

The Four-thirty train is for the accom-
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and enjoy a night of cool, refreshing slumber
at the MOUNT MORRISON HOTEL.

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daily from Denver.

Including Admission to
THE PARK OF THE RED ROCKS,
CAVES OF THE TITANS AND
VIEW OF THE SINKING
TITANIC.

Round-Trip fare from Denver, Week
days, including trip to the top of Mount
Morrison on the Incline Railway **\$1.50**
SUNDAYS **\$1.00**

FURTHER INFORMATION at
General Offices: 206 Mercantile Building,
Colorado & Southern Ry. Ticket Office
or Union Depot.

2020-2025 GREENPRINT GOALS

Healthy Environment

- #1 VISITOR STEWARDSHIP
Interact with 350,000 park visitors to share important stewardship and safety information.
Included in existing budget
- #2 INFORMATION SHARING
Engage 10,000 community members in conversations that will positively impact our environment.
\$250K
- #3 PERSONAL INVOLVEMENT
Inspire community members to share their talents and energy by cumulatively volunteering 270,000 hours.
Included in existing budget
- #4 LAND ACQUISITION
Add 3,000 acres of public open space and parkland in Jefferson County and implement conservation priorities through the Local Partnership Program.
\$40M

Healthy Lands

- #5 WAR ON WEEDS
Treat 48,000 acres of Jefferson County Open Space lands for harmful and invasive species.
\$1.7M
- #6 FOREST HEALTH
Reduce tree density and fuel sources on 600 acres of Jefferson County Open Space land.
\$1.8M
- #7 HABITAT RESTORATION
Restore 325 acres of land disturbed by human activity and natural events.
Included in existing budget

Healthy People

- #8 EASY AND EQUITABLE ACCESS
Applying guidance from the Jeffco Trails Plan, collaborate with Jefferson County cities and districts to provide access to a trail or greenspace within a 10-minute walk or drive from home.
\$15M
- #9 TRAIL EXPANSION
Develop 50 miles of new trails in the Jefferson County Open Space Park System.
\$55M
- #10 QUALITY VISITOR EXPERIENCE
Define and implement visitor experience standards at all 27 Jefferson County Open Space parks and improve or develop 17 trailheads.
\$21.5M



PLAN Jeffco's comments

June 26, 2020

Tom Hoby, Director,
Jefferson County Open Space

Please consider this correspondence as the PLAN Jeffco Board of Directors ("Board") position regarding the Jefferson County Open Space Conservation Greenprint 2020. PLAN Jeffco was integral to the initiation of the Jefferson County Open Space program and continues to be an advocate for open space acquisition and sustainability through that program. In 1971 the Jefferson County League of Women Voters made a land use study of the County and determined that the urbanized areas were extremely deficient in park lands. At the same time the County was one of the

PLAN Jeffco's comments of Greenprint goals

fastest growing counties in the United States and rapidly losing undeveloped land. Some of the League members took it upon themselves to do something about the need for parkland and protected natural areas. PLAN Jeffco was formed in early 1972 and in discussions with the then County Commissioners, proposed implementing a 0.5% sales tax to fund the acquisition, development and maintenance of parkland and open space. With the assistance of the County Attorney a resolution was drafted for the 1972 election. PLAN Jeffco members met with all city councils and city and recreation district staff to determine their needs and request their support. Many of these needs were addressed in the final resolution. Lands suitable for acquisition were described as: land in its natural state, parks and recreation lands, greenbelt and agricultural buffer zones, scenic easements, floodplains, paths and trails, historic monuments, wild rivers wilderness areas, wildlife habitats, and community open space lands.

PLAN Jeffco members plus a few hundred volunteers door-belled over 90% of the County in 1972, requesting support for the ballot resolution plus making over 100 presentations to groups. We approached voters about the importance of preserving the above types of lands because of their intrinsic value and their worth to all county citizens and businesses. Our campaign was successful, and Jefferson County now has one of the most admired Open Space programs in the country.

The PLAN Jeffco Board of Directors, upon review, has determined that the Jefferson County Open Space Conservation Greenprint shows good response to the needs of their now mature program.

The Greenprint sets ambitious, but realistic goals for the next six years. Of particular note are the following:

- ✓ It has added focus on protecting the lands with a “war on weeds” covering 48,000 acres, increasing efforts to reduce forest density on 600 acres to reduce the potential spread of fire, and targeting 325 acres of disturbed land for habitat restoration.
- ✓ Land acquisition is not ignored with the goal of a minimum of 3,000 acres. PLAN Jeffco's highest priority has always been for acquisition. It's a particularly strong position today, given

that our lands are being so heavily used, with no end in sight to this new model of open-air experiences. Therefore, PLAN Jeffco strongly encourages Jeffco Open Space to push for a higher level of land acquisition and Open Space park buildout, to 5,000 acres of new land acquisition by the year 2025. PLAN Jeffco understands that, given the current economic conditions and the restrictions cited in the next point, this goal may not be achievable, but should at least be a target.

- ✓ The lands presently under consideration are all consistent with the suitable lands described in the 1972 Resolution. The program continues the practice whereby any land considered can only be acquired by negotiation with a willing seller, or in partnership with another agency. Studies have shown that the presence of parkland and open space lands increases the value of nearby properties.
- ✓ An expansion in the use of volunteers is envisioned. In the early 1990's PLAN Jeffco spent 3 years advocating for a volunteer coordinator, as we were aware that there were many lovers of the outdoors willing to gift their time to assist Open Space. This program has continued to grow. PLAN Jeffco's volunteers and most of the present Open Space volunteers do so for the satisfaction of protecting and enhancing the program.
- ✓ Improved open space access, important for all visitors, is proposed through plans to enable them to reach trails and parks in less than 10 minutes; improve or develop 11 trailheads; and develop a minimum of 38 miles of new trails. Although the planned trails and trailheads are not defined, we look forward to the opening of a generous amount of new parkland during this six-year plan and we trust that this will be done while still protecting the ecosystems that make our parks and open lands so desirable .

Comments -Continued

Overall, the Greenprint successfully provides a path forward to sustainably maintain current holdings and acquire new holdings in pace with our county's ongoing expansion. This will enable the quality of life these holdings provide to all Jeffco citizens and continue to support a vibrant economy that in turn will support ongoing open space acquisition.

Very Truly Yours,

<u>s/Michelle A. Poolets/</u>	<u>Peter Ruben Morales</u>
Michelle A. Poolet	Peter Ruben Morales
Co-President, PLAN Jeffco	Co-President, PLAN Jeffco

Heritage Square Land Exchange, PLAN Jeffco comments

March 16, 2020

Tom Hoby, Director
Jefferson County Open Space

Please consider this correspondence as the Plan Jeffco Board of Directors (“Board”) position regarding the proposed Heritage Square Land Exchange (HSE.)

As you know, Plan Jeffco is one of the originating organizations, along with the League of Women Voters, which proposed, sought, and advocated for the half-cent sales tax which resulted in Jefferson County Open Space. Plan Jeffco has long had, as its primary mission, advocating and promoting the acquisition of additional open space lands.

The proposed HSE is a model which the Board has carefully studied. Indeed, some aspects of the HSE were initiated by the Chair Emeritus of the Board, Ms. Margot Zallen. As a result, the Board is aware that the HSE is a model which both Plan Jeffco and

Jefferson County Open Space have seen before. Years ago, on North Table Mountain, a similar transaction allowed for the acquisition of four hundred (400+) plus acres, there. In addition, other acreage was accrued for other open space properties.

Here, the contemplated transaction would ultimately allow for the immediate acquisition of acreage around Heritage Square as additional open space, with the additional long-term acquisition of some very valuable water reservoir property. These benefits, then, are highly advantageous to Jefferson County Open Space. For these reasons, the Board supports the HSE, as a long-term and practical vision toward a more abundant and vigorous Open Space program.

Very Truly Yours,

s/Peter Ruben Morales
Peter Ruben Morales
Co-President, PLAN Jeffco



Little Bluestem

OSAC Notes - OSAC Notes - OSAC Notes

February 6

The February 6 OSAC meeting was an all day retreat at the Origin Red Rocks Hotel. The meeting started with a chronology of the Open Space program and reviewing the results of resident and partner surveys made in 2018 and 2019. In short the results indicate the desire is “more of the same,” meaning more parks, trails and parking.

The components of the Conservation Greenprint (detailed elsewhere in this newsletter) were reviewed. Draft plans for Apex, South Table Mountain, and Mount Falcon lower trailhead (detailed elsewhere in this newsletter) were reviewed.

The county-wide trails plan was discussed. It will be finished later this year. Multi-modal access to JCOS parks was discussed. At present, 93% of the visitors arrive by motor vehicle. Matthews-Winters (Dinosaur Ridge), Apex and South Table are parks with potential to be served by public transportation. Also shuttle service might be possible from the W-line at the Government Center.

Land acquisition criteria also were discussed. Financial considerations, connectivity to existing parks and trails, scenic quality, natural resource attributes, heritage preservation, access, potential for nature-based experiences, and congruence with various plans all are considered when evaluating a property.

March 5

A boundary agreement transferring some of the Douglas Mountain property to a neighbor, making the boundary in agreement with an existing fence line, was approved. The Master Plan for Dinosaur Ridge was approved.

A Fees and Cost Recovery Policy was approved. The basis is that:

1. If an activity has broad community benefit, there will be no fee.
2. If an activity has considerable community benefit, fees will cover part of the cost and tax investment.
3. If an activity has balanced individual and community benefit, fees may cover about one-half of the cost and tax investment.
4. If the activity has considerable individual benefit, the fee should recover most of the cost and tax investment.
5. If the activity is mostly for individual, the fee should be at market price for the services.

April 2, virtual meeting

The Park Permit Program was reviewed as was the implementation of the Cost Recovery Policy as it applied to permits.

May 7, virtual meeting

The potential for financial impact on Open Space due to the Corona Virus was discussed. Since the State collects the sales tax, JCOS does get the collection information about 10 weeks after the end of the month. Note: the State allows some vendors with very small collections to only report quarterly.

The final draft of the Conservation Greenprint was reviewed (see details elsewhere in this newsletter.)

OSAC Notes, Continued

June 4, virtual meeting

The public feedback on the Conservation Greenprint was reviewed and the final version was presented. The Partnership Program with cities and districts was presented. For land acquisitions Open Space will pay up to 25% for properties of local value and 50% for properties of regional value. Requests for partnering must be made after final terms have been reached. The partnering for trails also is 25% and 50%, but the requests must be made at the beginning of a year.

OSAC approved partnering in the acquisition of a 183-acre property in the Town of Superior, which lies partially in Jefferson County. The property lies adjacent to Highway 128 at the Indiana intersection. Superior will be developing the property with trails and parking. OSAC approved paying for 10% of the property cost.

OSAC approved negotiating with the Union Pacific Railroad for a lease easement to allow crossing of the right-of-way over one or more of the tunnels since the right-of-way divides the Lippincott Ranch property.



WESTERN MOUNTAIN MAHOGANY
Cercocarpus ledifolius

Progressing Steps in Open Space

Citizen Science

Open Space kicked off the spring season by coordinating an information-packed Colorado Partners in Amphibian and Reptile Conservation annual meeting on February 8th. Open space has made over 268,000 social media contacts sharing herptile conservation messages on Twitter. With volunteer recruitment and training complete, spring herptile surveys are underway. Highlights include: Tiger salamanders documented further east on North Table Mountain, new wandering garter snake hibernaculum at Crown Hill Park, new snapping turtle distribution record in Clear Creek. Rattlesnakes are dispersing from their wintering den sites. You can help improve JCOS's herptile database by sending photos of snakes, lizards, turtles, frogs, or salamanders to Andrew Dubois (adubois@jeffco.us) including the date, time, and location (GPS coordinates if available) of the observation.

Raptor Nest Monitoring

Eaglet: An eaglet is a baby eagle that will grow into a majestic bird of prey with a wingspan between six and seven feet! So far, it's been a great year for Jeffco's nesting raptors. The parks have eight active golden eagle nests with confirmed chicks hatched at three of the nests. The Natural Resources team was happy to discover a new nest in the Windy Saddle/Mt. Zion territory and are pleased that the pair seems to be taking all the construction at the Mouth of the Canyon in stride.

Jeffco also has five confirmed active peregrine and prairie falcon territories with a new one found in Clear Creek Canyon this year. We first learned about the birds last year from a post on Mountain Project and are grateful for the report from our rock-climbing visitors.

Please continue to respect seasonal raptor closures.

Progressing Steps in Open Space *Continued*

Mount Falcon Park - East Trailhead Expansion

Open Space staff are currently working with County Transportation and Engineering and Road and Bridge on expanding this parking lot. YES, it's true. In the coming weeks, staff will be reviewing a design that would add another 50-60 parking spaces just east of the current parking lot. JCOS would love to help visitors avoid parking along the park entry road and streets in the adjacent neighborhood. The trailhead will be renamed the "Morrison Trailhead" as part of this effort.

Dinosaur Ridge Update

Dinosaur Ridge re-opened for business with several COVID-19 safety modifications in place on Saturday, May 9. Like many of Open Space's nonprofit partners, Dinosaur Ridge is experiencing significant financial impacts due to coronavirus restrictions and closures.

As anyone who has enjoyed a walk, run or ride over Dinosaur Ridge knows, the pavement has been in poor condition for years. As much of the damage was due to poor drainage and stormwater management, the commitment to correct the issue started last year with repairs to stormwater infrastructure and patching. Jeffco Road and Bridge resurfaced the ridge at the end of May. The road is striped to improve safety for the challenging mix of tour buses, cyclists, hikers, MTB riders and fossil gawkers who share the Ridge.

The JCOS Trails Team installed new visitor safety and resource protection signage (NO COLLECTING and NO CLIMBING) at seven key locations on the Ridge.

Beaver Ranch Park - Cabin Demolition

Jeffco Road & Bridge demolished eight cabins, two vault restrooms, and their concrete foundations at Beaver Ranch Park. The cabin footprints were regraded and seeded as part of this work. In their

heyday, the cabins were used for camping, special events, and various clubs over the years. The cabins had come to the end of their useful life. John Litz painted cabin No. 1 three times during the years that Kiwanis was managing the facility. Tent camping sites are still available.

Park Improvements: East Clear Creek Trail Segment

Last year Open Space was awarded a \$10.25M grant from the Denver Regional Council of Governments' Transportation Improvement Program for a 3-mile segment of trail in Clear Creek Canyon Park. Taking off from our currently under construction project at Tunnel 1 and heading west to Huntsman Gulch, the East Clear Creek Canyon Segment will include two new trailheads, multiple bridges, and numerous creek access points. The project is in its initiation and procurement phase, with a draft Request for Proposals sent to CDOT for their review. Open Space is hopeful to have a design-build team under contact to start design this fall, construction starting in the winter of 2021- 2022, and completion of the project in late 2024.

Hiwan on the Porch: A Success

Hiwan Museum initiated "COVID-adjusted" operations at the beginning of June. On the first Sunday there were 50 outdoor guided tours! Many other visitors took self-guided tours and Heritage Grove was full of picnickers and dog walkers. This outdoor tour number is higher than the typical indoor tour day and is contributing to Conservation Greenprint Goal #1. The adjustment to an outdoor tour enhanced the opportunity to discuss construction of the house, which does not come up during an inside tour. The outdoor venue celebrates the Douglas family's love of nature and the outdoors, creating a strong connection to the mission and purpose of Open Space.

Progressing Steps in Open Space Continued

Parking Lot Improvements at East White Ranch

Wrapping up in mid-June was a long-awaited improvement to the parking lot surface at White Ranch Park, East Trailhead. Working with Jeffco Road and Bridge, Cory Marusin and Larry Pfifer collaborated to resurface the parking lot to improve muddy drainage. 125 tandem dump truck loads delivered 1,634 tons of material to achieve grade and remove the “hole” in the center of the lot. Included with this project will be the addition of concrete parking stops to aid with parking delineation and relieve Park Services of the task of constantly having to chalk parking spaces in an effort to reduce creative visitor parking. This improvement will update our lot spot count from 51 to 79 available parking spaces at East White Ranch Park.

Apex Park Trail Management Plan

The final Apex Park Trail Management Plan was shaped by many visitor and staff perspectives and demonstrates a true spirit of compromise. Since the public meeting in February 2020, internal and external stakeholders reviewed, analyzed and discussed major comment themes including:

- o Even/Odd (preference for designated use on even/odd calendar days, rather than day of week)
- o Directional Use (a prescribed direction riders must use for given trail segment)
- o Regional Connectivity (proposed management limits CHIMPEX and other regional connections for longer rides/runs some of the time)
- o Neighborhood Access (proposed management limits west access to certain visitor groups some of the time)

The updated plan utilizes an Even/Odd designation schedule and implements directional use on BIKER ONLY days. The updated plan removes the upper portion of the Apex Trail from the designation, allowing for neighborhood and regional access for all visitor groups on all days.

Additionally, the new plan will consider removing special use designations during prolonged winter conditions, allowing Apex trails to be “SNOWpen” for all use, all days.

Now that the plan is finalized, the JCOS team will get to work on gate installation and final sign design, fabrication, and installation. The goal is to have the new trail management going into effect on Thursday, September 10, 2020.

The new management will be on a one-year trial basis. During that time, JCOS will track multiple factors that will help measure the impact of the designated use trial. These factors include:

- o Intuitive compliance (visitors successfully navigate the designations without a lot of supervision)
- o Comment tracking (track complaints and compliments related to all visitor groups and general visitor experience)

Formalizing Mount Zion Trail

Open Space is beginning to work with Stream Landscape Architects to formalize a trail and access point from Windy Saddle Park up Mount Zion. Since the current trail grade on Mount Zion is so steep, Stream LA was sought out because of their precedent work on the Incline Trail in Manitou Springs. This programmatic phase will help us create schematic plans for the opportunities associated with this iconic summit. Open Space is excited to get this project moving and figure out some options that will work both for staff and visitors.

If you have not!!! Join PLAN Jeffco!

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 advocacy 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 is changing to an calendar year membership basis, with three category’s of membership.

**The “member” rate is:
\$35 per year**

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Check our website
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