



YEARS OF **CONSERVATION**

**2021 PRESERVATION
PROGRESS**



JEFFERSON
COUNTY COLORADO
Open Space

THANK YOU



Dear Friends and Nature Lovers,

Thanks to tremendous and ongoing community support, Jefferson County Open Space is celebrating *50 years of Conservation* this year! Since voters created our organization in 1972, we preserved over 56,000 acres of open space and parkland, developed 27 parks and 261 miles of trails and supported countless local projects to enrich life in Jefferson County. Each year we build on these successes and share many of those accomplishments in this annual report. This progress is a direct result of your support and a talented and passionate team of professionals, volunteers and partners working together to advance the goals of our five-year strategic plan, the *Conservation Greenprint*.

The pandemic has been a learning experience for all of us. It reminded us that people need nature and nature needs people to protect and respect its home. We thrive when we connect with nature. Nature thrives when we protect its home. This simple notion brought us to our Vision "*Nature, heritage and humanity thriving in wild harmony*".

With increased visitation to our parks and many newcomers it is more important than ever to practice low impact stewardship and courtesy to one another. This comes in simple forms – know before you go, park safely, stay on designated trails, adhere to closures, keep pets on leash and picking up after them and practice the golden rule when encountering others. Nature needs your help so it can thrive and allow you to thrive.

With gratitude for your ongoing support and stewardship...

Happy Trails,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tom Hoby".

Tom Hoby, CPRE
Director
Jefferson County Open Space



VISION

Nature, heritage, and humanity thriving in wild harmony

MISSION

PRESERVE open space and parkland
PROTECT park and natural resources
PROVIDE healthy, nature-based experiences

VALUES

We believe **respect** fosters **collaboration** that inspires **innovation**

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The original caretakers of the lands we now call Jefferson County Open Space Parks include the Tabeguache and Moghwachí bands of the Ute Nation, the Arapaho and Cheyenne Tribes, and other Indigenous Peoples. Their knowledge, resilience, and cultural and spiritual ties to these lands inspire us to continue their legacy by practicing informed stewardship, providing equitable access, teaching sound outdoor ethics, and treating nature and humanity with respect.

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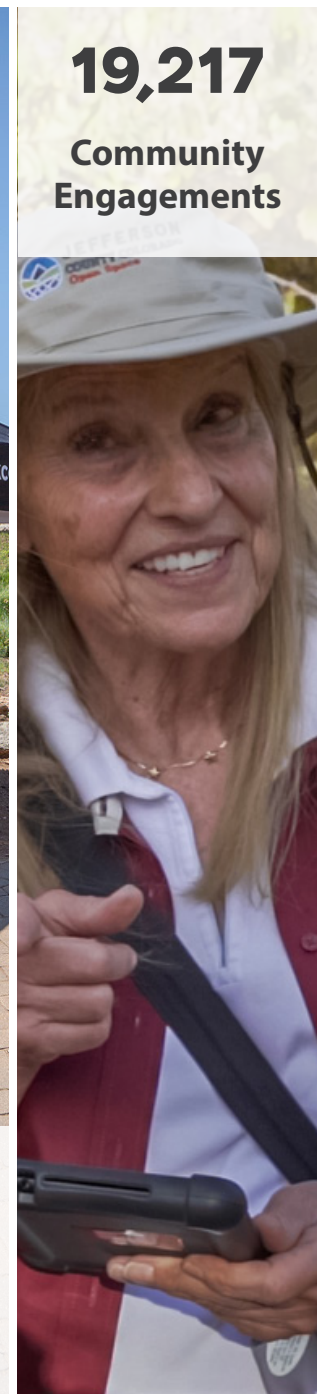
2021

CONSERVATION GREENPRINT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In 2020 we adopted The Conservation Greenprint 2020–2025, a strategic framework for the preservation of open space and parkland, protection of park and natural resources, and provision of healthy, nature-based experiences in Jefferson County. This document outlines Jefferson County Open Space goals for the next five years and provides measures for success.



188,794
Stewardship
Education
Contacts



19,217
Community
Engagements



19,598
Volunteer Hours



1,250.3
Acres Acquired



7,363
Acres Treated
for Weeds



124
Acres Treated for
Forest Health



22
Acres Restored
for Habitat



\$2.71M
Jeffco Trails Plan
Partner Funding
Awarded



12.9
Trail Miles Built



24
Visitor
Experience
Standards
Implemented

12
Trailheads
Improved or
Developed

CLEAR CREEK CANYON PARK

SPECTACULAR GATEWAY OPENS

On August 21, 2021, this beautiful entry to Clear Creek Canyon opened for all to enjoy and cherish. Featuring two new full service, accessible trailheads, two additional miles of the Peaks to Plains Trail, the first ever suspension bridge in our system and .5 miles of the historic Welch Ditch, the Gateway was an immediate hit with visitors from near and far. Connecting with downtown Golden, the Gateway honors our mining history with rustic treatments and protects important vegetation and wildlife habitat with designated, sustainable access points to the creek. A must do, put it on your list!





COLLABORATIVE CONSERVATION

PRESERVING 1,192 ACRES

JCOS worked closely with the Goltra family to permanently preserve 1,192 of the 4,800 acres they own just outside Golden adjacent to Mount Galbraith, Clear Creek Canyon, and Centennial Cone Parks. The family previously sold 3,672 acres of their property to JCOS that is now Centennial Cone Park.

Funding for the acquisition will come from a land exchange with Martin Marietta Materials referred to as the Heritage Square Exchange. Once completed, this transaction will preserve 1,267 acres including the Goltra, Bachman Farm, Alpine Slide, and Magic Mountain Reservoir properties in exchange for 64 acres of land owned by JCOS.

FOREST HEALTH PLAN

ENHANCING HABITAT, REDUCING FUELS

Wildfire has been on our minds for all 50 years we have been a conservation organization. We crafted our original Forest Health Plan over 30 years ago to enhance habitat for wildlife, sustain healthy trees, and importantly, reduce fuels and fire risk. Today, the focus on wildfire risk is greater than ever largely due to catastrophic events caused at least in part by an overabundance of forest fuels. As a conservation organization and public landowner, we believe our role is to lead by example with sound practices and a solid plan to achieve our goals. To do so, we updated our plan using robust geospatial information and mapping that identifies the highest risk areas that require strategic focus and treatments. Although our update centered on properties we own and manage it became evident early on that our efforts were beneficial to all public and private lands in the County. We look forward to working with our public land partners and private landowners alike to make Jeffco wildfire safe.





TRAIL COURTESY

FRIENDLY FACES MAKE FRIENDLY PLACES

People love public parks. It's their place to re-create, recharge, and lead a healthy lifestyle. The Colorado front range is the population center of our state with millions that enjoy the outdoors in a variety of ways. High visitation coupled with multiple activities requires planning, patience, and tolerance of others. We all have a role in making our parks and trails friendly and can do so with a few simple courtesies to others. To promote this simple notion, we partnered with many to get the good word out – our fellow public land managers in the region, the Colorado Mountain Bike Association, the Toyota Dealers Association, Yeti Cycles and the FRONT Singletrack Collective to promote simple friendly messages to new and seasoned outdoor lovers – whenever possible stay on the right side of the trail, pass on the left and when passing use a friendly greeting as you approach, ask to pass on the left and then say thanks. Friendly faces make friendly places.



INCLUSIVITY

TRAIL USABILITY

In a continuing effort to provide equitable access for visitors of varying abilities, JCOS is in the process of auditing Open Space trails to determine where and when “usable trails” can be created. Usable trails provide a prolonged trail experiences for those individuals using mobility devices where ADA requirements cannot be met. Prolonged experiences can be created by simply hardening the trail tread and removing obstacles that might impede mobility devices. The National Park Service joined in on a partnership to improve trail usability for individuals who use mobility devices.

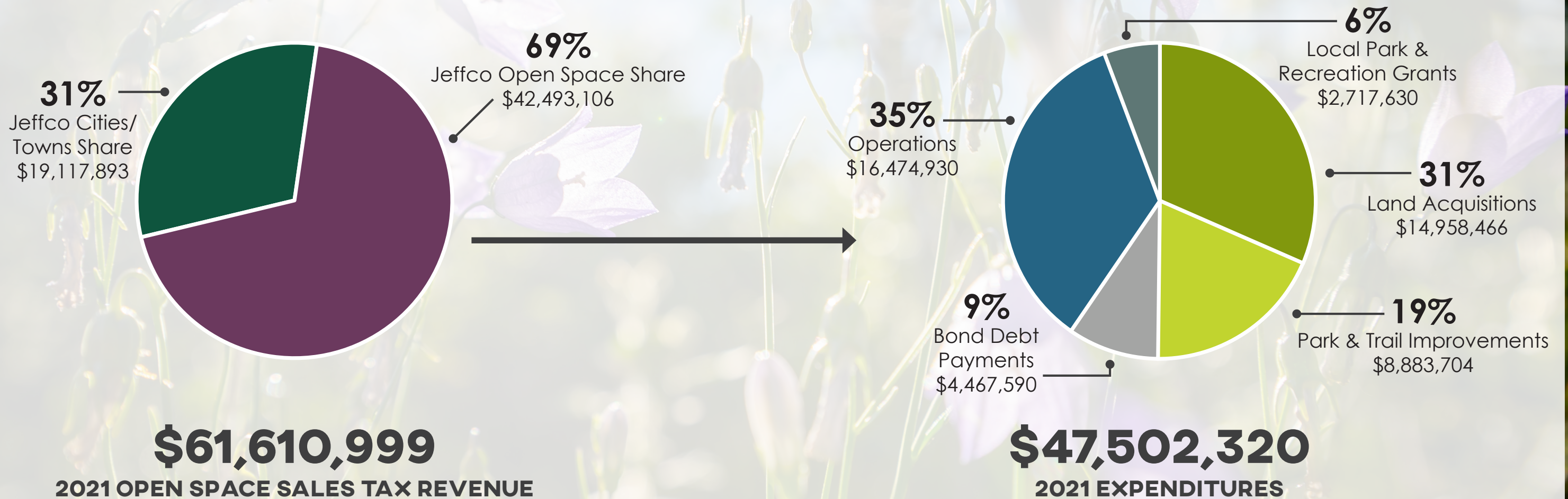
PARK ACCESSIBILITY

JCOS piloted a program giving park visitors the opportunity to take advantage of reduced fares from rideshare company Lyft, in hopes of helping with parking congestion at some of our busiest Front Range trailheads and access points. JCOS wants to help improve access to our parks while encouraging alternative transportation and reducing congestion at our trailheads or parking areas.

INVESTING IN CONSERVATION

FUNDING

Jefferson County Open Space is funded by a dedicated half cent sales tax. Every time you support Jefferson County businesses, you invest in public open space, parks, and healthy outdoor experiences.





JEFFERSON

COUNTY COLORADO

Open Space

CONTACT

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Elk Meadow Park, Anne Friant