

# 2022 PRESERVATION PROGRESS



**JEFFERSON**  
COUNTY COLORADO

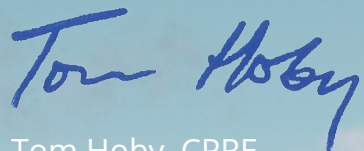
Open Space

Dear Friends and Nature Lovers,

As we celebrate 50 years of conservation there is a mix of reflection and looking to the future. With heartfelt gratitude, we reflect on the vision and wisdom of the League of Women Voters, Plan Jeffco, and of course, the voters that created something very special – the first County conservation organization funded by a sales tax in the nation. Without this, the achievements and progress we have made would simply not be possible. We also look to the future and enthusiastically accept the responsibility of building on our successes, so the next fifty years are even better than the last half-century. The important common thread to our success is your ongoing support, stewardship, and involvement. We feel you at our side every day and are grateful that the work we do is valued by so many.

Over the past five decades, our population and visitation has increased significantly. This growth comes with renewed support to preserve land, manage visitation to ensure a quality experience and provide access for all. As we look to the future, the best way we can protect our natural resources while providing access for all is to recognize our impact when we are a visitor in the home of nature. We can lessen our impact by practicing sound stewardship and adhering to park regulations and closures to protect park and natural resources. We can also make our parks and visits more pleasant by being friendly and courteous to others we encounter in the outdoors. If we all work together to do these simple things, we can make the next 50 years even better and realize our vision to have *Nature, Heritage and Humanity Thriving in Wild Harmony*.

Happy Trails,



Tom Hoby, CPRE  
Director



YEARS OF **CONSERVATION**



## OUR NORTH STAR

### 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 Moghwachi 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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# 2022

## Conservation Greenprint Accomplishments

In 2020 the Board of Jefferson County Commissioners adopted [The JCOS Conservation Greenprint 2020–2025](#), our strategic plan to preserve open space and parkland, protect park and natural resources, and provide healthy, nature-based experiences. This document outlines our goals and measures for success through 2025.

[View the full report.](#)

GOAL	2025 TARGET	2020–2022	TOTAL PROGRESS
HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT 1 2 3 4	STEWARDSHIP EDUCATION CONTACTS	350,000 Interactions	273,342 <span>78%</span>
	COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT	60,000 Engagements	47,435 <span>79%</span>
	VOLUNTEERISM	270,000 Hours	70,646 <span>26%</span>
	LAND CONSERVATION	3,000 Acres	3,202 <span>107%</span>
HEALTHY LANDS 5 6 7	INVASIVE SPECIES	48,000 Acres Treated	21,392 <span>45%</span>
	FOREST HEALTH	1,000 Acres Treated	358 <span>36%</span>
	LAND RESTORATION	50 Acres Restored	37 <span>74%</span>
HEALTHY PEOPLE 8 9 10	JEFFCO TRAILS PLAN IMPLEMENTATION	Leverage \$10M	\$5,344,635 <span>33%</span>
	NEW TRAILS	50 Miles	16 <span>32%</span>
	VISITOR AMENITIES	27 Parks/17 Trailheads	27/15 <span>100% / 88%</span>



In 2022, we helped pilot a new, county-wide initiative building allyship and diversity in Jeffco. As a planning partner of the national initiative **OUT for Safe Spaces**, our team is working hard to create an inclusive outdoor space and community. With a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion focus, we've expanded our volunteer opportunities, event participation, and partnership priorities to allow for team trainings, workshops, and collaboration across the county, including with Jefferson County Public Library and Jeffco Public Schools.

# OUTDOORS FOR ALL



National Trails Day Volunteer Event at Elk Meadow Park, Anne Friant



In 2022, we received the **Partnership Award** from the Colorado Weed Management Association. We also received a \$9,616 ReSTORE Grant and partnered with multiple organizations for a total of \$328,875 awarded funding towards science-based land management and watershed scale restoration. This resulted in treating 4,385 acres at seven open space parks, including 350 acres at Matthews/Winters Park, to eliminate cheatgrass and feral annual ryegrass from native ecosystems. The successful grant award and work was the result of more than two years of planning between the partner organizations and highlights how essential collaboration is to effective landscape-scale invasive species management.

The Northern Colorado Big Game Critical Winter Range Restoration Team partners included Boulder County Parks & Open Space, City of Fort Collins Natural Areas, Colorado Parks and Wildlife, Larimer County, and Jeffco Invasive Species Management, and Jeffco Open Space.

*Elk at Hiwan Heritage Park, Anne Friant*



# WARREN WEEDS



# PARTNERSHIPS

Our Land Conservation and Trails Partnership Programs fund up to 25% of local or up to 50% of regional trail, open space, park, or greenway acquisition projects. In 2022, JCOS awarded **\$1,426,750** for land acquisitions that were matched with partner funds to acquire 40.3 acres at a total cost of \$4,607,000. JCOS also awarded **\$2,714,882** that were matched with partner funds for a total of \$5,445,032 towards trail improvements.

### **City of Golden**

Lubahn Trail Restoration and Trailhead Improvements.

### **City of Lakewood**

Soda Lakes and Bear Creek Greenbelt Additions at South Kipling Street & South Wadsworth Boulevard acquisitions.

### **City of Westminster**

Niver Canal acquisition.

### **City of Wheat Ridge**

Randall Park acquisition and Peaks to Plains Trail Paving and Signage Improvements.

### **Foothills Park & Recreation District**

Dutch Creek Regional Trail extension.

### **Prospect Recreation & Park District**

32nd Avenue to Peaks to Plains Trail Connection.

# PREVENT WILDFIRES, FOR THE LOVE OF THE OUTDOORS.



As part of the county-wide Jeffco Wildfire Safe Initiative and to achieve our forest health goals, JCOS is an active member in several local and regional forestry and watershed partnerships.

- **Jeffco SLASH Program**  
JCOS, Jefferson County Parks & Conservation, and Jefferson Conservation District (JCD) collectively processed 9.2 million pounds of biomass in 2022, a 32% increase from 2021. As part of the Jeffco Wildfire Safe effort, we also secured \$3.8 million towards maintaining a year-round SLASH site at Tincup Ridge Park.
- **Upper South Platte Partnership (USPP)**  
In coordination with local fire protection districts, the Colorado State Forest Service, and JCD, we received \$48,003 funding for forest management work on 37 acres at Meyer Ranch Park. JCOS also received \$488,250 Forest Restoration & Wildfire Risk Mitigation (FRWRM) grant to treat 279 acres at Alderfer/Three Sisters Park.
- **Colorado Strategic Wildfire Action Program (COSWAP)**  
Secured a \$1M grant to treat both JCOS property and private property in the Evergreen/Conifer area.

# FOREST HEALTH



Slash Collection at Foothills Fire Protection District, Anne Ffiant



In 2022, we forged several partnerships to perform habitat restoration projects across Jefferson County. Restoration projects included collecting native ecotypic seed, planting and seeding native species in areas of disturbance, and closing and reclaiming unauthorized trails.

This effort included many partnerships with neighboring landowners and help from Wildlands Restoration Volunteers, Trail Runner Volunteers, Aquatic and Wetland Nursery, and City of Boulder Open Space and Mountain Parks.

*Seed Collection of Wild bergamot (*Monarda fistulosa*) at Lippincott Ranch, property owned by both JCOS and City of Boulder Open Space and Mountain Parks, Anna Theodorakos*



In 2022, we connected with Colin Heffern and Quinn Brett to better understand how we can improve trails for visitors using mobility devices. Through their eyes, we developed an ongoing working group to improve usability, increase public awareness, and move our parks to be more accessible to all.

"Usable Trails" remove barriers (like rocks), add width, and increase smooth surfaces so they can be enjoyed by those using mobility devices. This collaboration led to 16,000 new feet of Usable Trail added at Elk Meadow and South Table Mountain Parks and the inception of a new program, Recreational Adventures for People Experiencing Disabilities (RAD). Through RAD, JCOS will purchase multiple adaptive devices and coordinate a reservation system for visitors with physical disabilities.

# USABILITY

*Trail Usability project at Elk Meadow Park, Anne Friant*





# SUSTAINABLE TRAILS

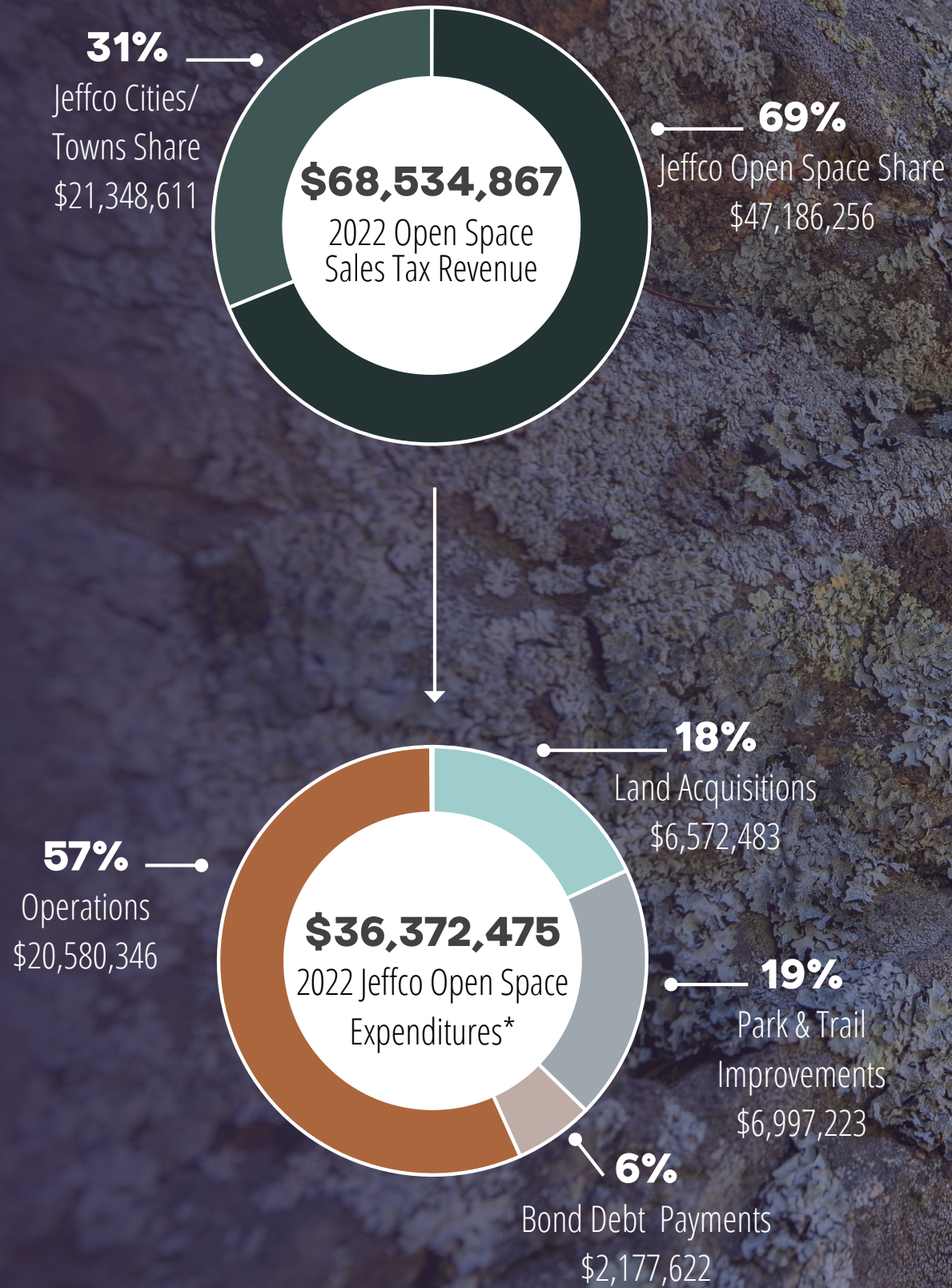
Our park system features over 265 miles of trail. Some are Accessible, some rugged, and some designated-use. We strive to build sustainable trails in harmony with the environment. One example of this is the restoration of the Mount Morrison Trail surrounding the Town of Morrison. We partnered with Denver Mountain Parks to restore this steep, rugged trail with an elevation gain over 2,000 ft in 1.5 miles. The trail was worn by years of use and seeing worsening erosion and soil loss every season.

Re-routing this popular trail to create a more sustainable grade wasn't feasible due to challenges with raptor habitat protection, restoring the existing scar, and the trail's popularity as an intense physical training ground. Instead, the original alignment was kept and the team added 125 steps built out of gabions. Re-purposing the abundant ankle-roller sized rocks lining the entire trail into fill material for steps solved multiple challenges.

*Mount Morrison Trail section BEFORE and AFTER, Nathan McCarty*

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.

# INVESTMENT



\*All revenue retained in the Open Space Fund and invested.

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