



PLAN Jeffco

Working to conserve Jefferson County Open Spaces since 1972



Photo courtesy of Michelle Poollet

The PLAN Jeffco Monthly April 2024

April in the Colorado High Country...a mix of sun, snow and mud. Remember to walk through the mud!

PLAN Jeffco is a non-profit citizen organization, based in Jefferson County Colorado. For more than 50 years, PLAN Jeffco has advocated for conservation of open space.

PLAN Jeffco authored the "[Open Space Resolution](#)" ballot initiative in 1972 that provided a one-half percent sales tax in Jefferson County to establish the award-winning Jefferson County Open Space program.

What's New in the Blogosphere?

Earth Day 2024 Fun at Crown Hill

What were you doing on the Saturday before Earth Day, 2024? Three of your PLAN Jeffco Board members joined 124 other Jeffco Open Space volunteers to plant more than 350 (some say as many as 600?) native trees, shrubs and forbs (grass plugs) at Crown Hill Open Space Park, along with multiple patches of native wildflowers.

<https://planjeffco.org/earth-day-2024-fun-at-crown-hill/>

SLASH 2024 is on its way!

Sustainable Lands And Safer Homes is back for 2024! The anticipated start date for the opening of the first SLASH site is May 23rd, and the program is scheduled to continue through the end of October. At the time of this writing, the location schedule has not been published, but we will advise when it's available.

<https://planjeffco.org/slash-2024-is-on-its-way/>

The Bird Family with an Attitude: The Corvids

This is a reprint of the original article published by Ann Bonnell, June 1st, 2011. Rest in peace, Ann, we will never forget you or the expertise in bird life that you were so fond of sharing. <https://planjeffco.org/enor-turns-50/>

Thank you for staying with us as we navigate the massive changes to PLAN Jeffco following the loss of our long-time Board members Ann Bonnell and John Litz.

These changes were inevitable but nonetheless unexpected.

PLAN Jeffco has openings on the Board. We would love to hear from you, we would like to hear your thoughts, we would like you to consider a Board position. If you're interested in exploring this possibility, drop us an email at ContactUs@PLANJeffco.org

Did you forget to renew your membership? Click on the button below and get caught up!

Join or Renew My Membership



Beaver Ranch cutting trail circa 2021

Other New Stuff on the Website

We ask for your patience as we work through a long-needed review and rework of our website...thank you!

Stay up-to-date with what's happening at the PJ Board meetings

PLAN Jeffco March Board Meeting Minutes 3/21/2024 – FINAL
<https://planjeffco.org/portfolio-item/pj-board-meeting-minutes-3-18-2024/>

PLAN Jeffco February Board Meeting Minutes 2/15/2024 – FINAL
<https://planjeffco.org/portfolio-item/pj-board-meeting-minutes-2-15-2024/>

PLAN Jeffco January Board Meeting Minutes 1/18/2024 – FINAL
<https://planjeffco.org/portfolio-item/pj-board-meeting-minutes-1-18-2024/>

Missed a PLAN Jeffco Monthly newsletter? Find them here...

PLAN Jeffco Monthly – March 2024
<https://planjeffco.org/plan-jeffco-monthly-mar-2024/>

PLAN Jeffco Monthly – February 2024
<https://planjeffco.org/portfolio-item/plan-jeffco-monthly-february-2024/>

PLAN Jeffco Monthly – January 2024
<https://planjeffco.org/portfolio-item/plan-jeffco-monthly-january-2024/>

What's been happening at the Open Space Advisory Committee (OSAC) meetings...

Regular Open Space Advisory Committee meetings are generally held on the first Thursday of every other month, starting at either 4:30 or 6:00 PM.

<https://www.jeffco.us/1581/Advisory-Committee>

May 2, 2024: in-office meeting, Open Space HQ, 700 Jefferson County Pkwy Suite #100, Golden. Find the agenda at <https://www.jeffco.us/Calendar.aspx?EID=5263>

MARCH 7, 2024: Information Item: Van Bibber Greenway, connecting west end of VB Park to Fairmont Trail, discussion about side-by-side trails and road/creek crossings. Equestrian community very pleased with this development.

Action Item: Wheat Ridge Reverter Exchange. Town Center Park (east of Wadsworth, north of W 38th Ave), 0.7 acres purchased in 1982 for \$160K, use as a community park never fully realized. Release the OS reverter on that parcel and place it on 1.62 acres adjacent to Stevens Elementary School, 38th & Upham St. JCOS to add an executory interest in the parcel, Wheat Ridge to refund \$140K to JCOS if property not used for park & open space purposes.

Open Space Activities

Know Before You Go!

Check these sites for additional information on Park and Trail closures, openings, and other operations that may impact your Jeffco Open Space Park experience...

[JCOS Alerts & Closures](#)

[JCOS News Releases](#)

[JCOS Newsletters](#)

Jeffco Open Space Seasonal Wildlife Closures to Begin February 1:

Each year Jeffco Open Space uses seasonal wildlife closures at the parks to protect species at sensitive times in their life cycles. This year's seasonal wildlife closures affect numerous Jeffco Open Space parks and trails. Protect the wildlife... <https://www.jeffco.us/CivicAlerts.aspx?AID=2011>

Jeffco Open Space Plans & Projects

<https://www.jeffco.us/1585/Plans-Projects>

Jeffco Open Space Master Calendar

<https://www.jeffco.us/calendar.aspx?CID=26>

Please check the JCOS Master Calendar for detailed and upcoming event information.

Peaks to Plains Construction Update

The JCOS Projects Team went out to the CEI contractor yard for a big milestone, the pouring of the first post tensioned concrete beams! There will be nearly 100 of these beams in total, and they will be used in the viaduct segments of the Peaks to Plains Trail. Post tensioning of the beams begins next week!

[Check out the Construction Update from last month!](#)

Clear Creek Canyon Closures Begins 4/8

In partnership with CEI and CDOT, JCOS will be closing the canyon and US Hwy

6 starting next Monday. 4/08/23, from 7:00 p.m. - 7:00 a.m. the next morning. These closures will be taking place overnight on weekdays, intermittently over the next few months, as the viaduct sections are installed for the next section of the Peaks to Plains Trail.

Mt Zion Trail Work Begins

Construction of the trail to the top of Mt. Zion in Windy Saddle Park is beginning this week. Parking capacity at the Windy Saddle Park trailhead will be reduced during construction to stage necessary equipment and materials for the project. Work is slated to be completed by August 1. The trail, currently unauthorized, has caused significant erosion issues on the steep terrain. The project will be formalizing the trail alignment and adding stone steps to mitigate erosion.

South Table Mountain Power Pole Replacement Begins 4/8

The planned work by Sturgeon along the Welch Ditch on the NE side of the park has been delayed by snow and high winds. Activities associated with pole replacement will likely occur Wednesday 4/17, weather dependent. This project is no longer planned to be completed over two days. All fly ops are expected to occur over one day (Currently April 17th) due to the size of the outage. Crews are currently working in the field all week digging holes. Flaggers for visitors, positioned at access points and trail junctions on the east side of South Table, will still be utilized.

Elk Meadow Lewis Ridge Trailhead Improvements Began 4/15

Lewis Ridge Phase one improvements had a soft start the week of April 15th. Road and Bridge (R&B) will be making drainage improvements and adjustments to the trailhead to accommodate for more parking and better flow. Phase One's completion goal is mid-May. The JCOS Park Construction Team will be working in tangent to install a new Gable Style Kiosk and Park Entry Sign. This work is weather dependent, dates can change or extend. No full closures are expected during phase one. Reduced parking will be part of this project, and visitors are recommended to allow work crews the right-of-way. Additional closures may be needed. After Phase One completion, all areas will be functional as the trailhead awaits Phase two. New parking areas will be striped for the summer season. Phase two will include a mill and overlay of all surfaces in the trailhead including the private residence and barn area. Phase two will likely occur in 2025 after the contracted forestry work is complete. At this point, it's anticipated that Phase two will require a closure period of 1 week.

Fire Mitigation at Van Bibber Open Space Park

Team Rubicon **Team Rubicon** (TR), Arvada Fire (AFD), and JCOS partnered over the weekend of March 23 – 24 to reduce fuels directly behind fence lines along the northeast corner of Van Bibber Park. JCOS Natural Resources Team members pre-coordinated with TR and AFD to walk the target area and mark trees for limbing or removal. JCOS Foresters provided direct oversight on both project days. TR provided over 60 volunteer sawyers (chain saw operators) and swampers (folks that haul slash and logs out). JCOS Park Services Team provided support on Saturday with the chipper and haul trucks. JCOS Volunteer Services recruited about 10 JCOS volunteer swampers in support of the effort. At the end of 13 hours of effort, an estimated 7,750 cubic feet of debris was removed from 70,000 square feet of JCOS managed land. AFD visited all but one home on the opposite side of the fence, providing defensible space assessments in advance of the project. TR removed 650 cubic feet of fuel from private land immediately adjacent to the Van Bibber Park project area. We look forward to working with Team Rubicon and our local Fire Protection Districts on future projects like this one.

Hildebrand Ranch Open Space Park Land Disturbance Permit, Jeffco Planning & Zoning

Case Number: 24-105866GPA

Case Type: Land Disturbance Permit Application

Address: Hildebrand Ranch Park Irrigation Structures

Description: REMOVE 3 HISTORIC IRRIGATION DITCH DIVERSION STRUCTURES AND REPLACE WITH SIMILAR STRUCTURES.

2024 SLASH Calendar Coming Soon

SLASH drop-offs will begin on May 23 and go through October this year. Please sign up for SLASH alerts to be notified of any schedule changes, closures, or updates to the SLASH program.

1. Go to Notify Me on the [Jeffco website](#)

2. Add your email address to the top and hit Sign In (You can opt to receive HTML emails and/or text messages)

3. Scroll down to the third section titled Alerts and find Jeffco SLASH

4. Click the email or cell phone (or both) icons to opt into alerts

Buffalo Bill Museum & Gift Shop to Close

The gift shop at Buffalo Bill's Museum and Grave atop Lookout Mountain will be no more in 2025. Denver Mountain Parks owns the building and the adjacent park and is working to figure out a future for the property.

Protecting a Key Reservoir While Restoring the Landscape

JCOS and Denver Water recently collaborated to help restore Casto Creek — a small tributary of the North Fork of the South Platte River. Both waterways drain into Denver Water's Strontia Springs Reservoir at the top of Waterton Canyon. Read the full Denver Post coverage (online subscription may be required)

County News & Happenings

Jeffco Fairgrounds

<https://www.jeffco.us/calendar.aspx?CID=27>

Jefferson County – Sustainability Commission

<https://www.jeffco.us/3406/Sustainability-Commission>

Jefferson County – COVID-19 Updates

<https://www.jeffco.us/3999/Coronavirus-Disease-2019-COVID-19>



Our Conservation Partners

Colorado Parks and Wildlife

<https://cpw.state.co.us>

<https://www.facebook.com/CoParksWildlife>

News & Media <https://cpw.state.co.us/aboutus/Pages/NewsMedia.aspx>

CPW Podcasts <https://cpw.state.co.us/aboutus/Pages/CPW-Podcast.aspx>

eNews & Social Media <https://cpw.state.co.us/aboutus/Pages/socialmedia.aspx>

News Releases <https://cpw.state.co.us/aboutus/Pages/NewsReleases.aspx>

Bird Conservancy of the Rockies

<https://www.birdconservancy.org>

<https://www.facebook.com/birdconservancy>

Summer Bird Camps Registration Open! [Click here for more information.](#)

Sign up for news releases at <https://www.birdconservancy.org/news-and-events/press-releases/>

Travel Opportunities at <https://www.birdconservancy.org/get-involved/take-a-birding-tour/>

Activity Calendar at <https://www.birdconservancy.org/events/>

Bird Conservancy Blog at <https://www.birdconservancy.org/news-and-events/>

Colorado Open Lands

<https://coloradoopenlands.org/>

<https://www.facebook.com/ColoradoOpenLands>

Permanently Protected – Aspen Leaf Ranch, April 1, 2024

The 984-acre Aspen Leaf Ranch is located 16 miles northeast of Paonia near the North Fork of the Gunnison River. This ranch was once part of a larger family-owned agricultural operation that was split among various family members. All members have worked with COL to conserve their own pieces of the original ranch, and conservation of Aspen Leaf Ranch marks the final piece of the puzzle – the entire family's ranch lands are now permanently protected.

More Conservation Updates located at <https://coloradoopenlands.org/latest-news/>

Mountain Area Land Trust

<https://savetheland.org/news/>

<https://www.facebook.com/MountainAreaLandTrustCO>

A Night of Magic in the Meadow, Tickets now on sale

<https://savetheland.ejoinme.org/MyEvents/ANightInTheMeadow2024/tabid/1407377/Default.aspx>

Saturday, June 22, 2024 from 5 - 9 p.m, this special event is held under MALT's signature white tent at a new beautiful outdoor location in Conifer, overlooking Meyer Ranch Open Space (9444 Eagle Cliff Rd, Conifer).

Read about more News and Success Stories at <https://savetheland.org/news/>

Sign up for MALT's newsletter at <https://savetheland.org/category/newsletter/>

Keep It Colorado

<https://www.keepitco.org/>

KIC is a statewide coalition of conservation organizations. They advocate for sound public policy; provide connection and collaboration opportunities for conservation partners; offer a forum to address emerging conservation issues and opportunities; pursue sustainable funding and programmatic tools and solutions; and work to advance a culture of conservation in Colorado.

News & Press Releases at <https://www.keepitco.org/whats-new>

Event Highlights at <https://www.keepitco.org/out-and-about-event-highlights>

Land Trust Events at <https://www.keepitco.org/land-trust-events>

Coalition & Industry Events at <https://www.keepitco.org/coalition-industry-events>

Douglas Land Conservancy

<https://douglaslandconservancy.org/>

DLC/DCOS Memorial Day Bird Count: DuPont Open Space, Monday, May 27th, 2024.
[Registration required.](#)

DLC/DCOS Geology Caravan Tour: Hidden Mesa Open Space, Saturday May 11th, 2024.
[Registration required.](#)

Seasonal Journey #3: Dawson Butte Open Space, Wednesday May 1st, 2024. [Registration required.](#)

Guided Hikes & Educational Events at <https://douglaslandconservancy.org/guided-hikes-educational-events/>

Decode DC Outdoors at <https://douglaslandconservancy.org/decode-dc-outdoors/>

News at <https://douglaslandconservancy.org/news/>

City of Golden <https://goldentoday.com/>

3/04/2024: The Lookout Mtn Road closure was approved by Jeffco County Commissioners.

Council meetings are always available to watch live or recorded on the City's [Meetings and Agendas page.](#)

Stewards of Golden Open Space <https://stewardsofgolden.org/>

Accomplishments: <https://stewardsofgolden.org/accomplishments>

SOLVE(Save Open Lands, Vistas and the Environment), PLAN Jeffco's sister organization in Clear Creek County <http://www.solveccc.org>

Save the Date: Fall Foliage Relay Race, 1st Friday of September '24.

Follow the postings from other conservation groups, listed at the bottom of each of our web pages

<https://www.PLANJeffco.org>

[Colorado Open Space Alliance \(COSA\)](#)

[Colorado Native Plant Society](#)

[Douglas Land Conservancy](#)

[Bird Conservancy of the Rockies](#)

[Colorado Cattlemen's Agricultural Land Trust](#)

WANT TO SUPPORT OUR WORK?

[Join or Renew Your Membership](#)



Flying J Ranch

WATCH THIS SPACE...Local Goings-on

Link

Link

Link

Link

Link

Hogback mine expansion in North Golden gets State approval

Jefferson County is now accepting public comment on a plan to rezone 77.97 acres on the hogback north of Golden to expand the existing clay mine. Submit comments to:

Jefferson County Planning and Zoning Case Manager, Matthew Karney at mkarney.co.jefferson.co.us
Case Number 23-137296-RZ Street Address 21506 W 56th Avenue

To learn more about this project, go to <https://www.jeffco.us/786/Planning-Zoning> then click Active Case Search > Planning & Zoning Search > Advanced. Scroll down, enter case number 23 137296 RZ". Case is in First Referral, application date was 2023-12-11.

A group called Protect the Hogback opposes this mine expansion,
<https://www.protectthehogback.com/>

Frei-Walstrum gravel quarry expansion, Clear Creek County

Quarry expansion is in progress. Frei family purchased the Floyd Hill Meadow (39.71893342699002, -105.40651944877656) and deeded it to MALT. MALT has started a fund-raising campaign for the costs of a conservation easement; Colorado Open Lands will hold the CE.

Bear Creek Reservoir Expansion Proposal

<https://www.lakewood.org/Government/Departments/Community-Resources/Projects/Bear-Creek-Reservoir-expansion-proposal>

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Colorado Water Conservation Board are conducting a feasibility study about making changes to increase water storage and reservoir size at Bear Creek Reservoir in Bear Creek Lake Park. For more information, visit <https://cwcb.colorado.gov/bearcreeklake>

The state expects the Army Corps to finish the key studies, remove some of the less promising alternatives, and go back to the public for meetings talking about a new project scope sometime this year: <https://coloradosun.com/2024/01/25/bear-creek-lake-expansion-neighborhood-fight-lakewood/>

Gross Reservoir Updates <https://www.denverwater.org/grossreservoir>

4/08/2024, Project Updates: This May, Denver Water and its contractor, Kiewit Barnard, will begin placing concrete to raise Gross Dam. They will build 118 concrete steps from the bottom of the existing dam to the new dam crest, 131 feet above the

existing dam. Be on the lookout for a postcard to learn more about what to expect during this phase of construction.

Denver Water is also working diligently to reopen Gross Dam Road to the public. Due to the severity of the rockfall caused by the March snowstorm, and based on guidance from geotechnical engineers, a two-phase approach has been implemented to reopen the road. The first phase, completed in late March, reopened the road for emergency responders only. Now that the road is clear of debris, phase two will begin with a full assessment of what additional repairs are needed to ensure the road is suitable for unrestricted public use. The project MyMap will be updated once an estimated timeline has been determined to reopening the road and the Fisherman's Parking Lot.

Prescribed burns around the Gross Reservoir are scheduled for the near future, weather permitting. If you have questions, please stop by Canyon Coffee for our in-person office hours on Wednesdays from 8 - 10 a.m. (weather permitting) or email grossreservoir@denverwater.org.

Recreation Activity Impact: <https://www.denverwater.org/recreation/gross-resevoir>
Project Information & Impact: <https://www.denverwater.org/grossreservoir>

Shadow Mountain (formerly Full Send) Bike Ranch Updates

<https://shadowmountainbikepark.com/>

Conceptual site plan located at
<https://shadowmountainbikepark.com/news/conceptual-site-plans-for-shadow-mountain-bike-park/>

News at <https://shadowmountainbikepark.com/news/>

Planning & Zoning Record Details
Address: Shadow Mountain Bike Park
Type: Rezoning - Commercial - Planned Development
Case Number: 23-102980RZ
Application Date: 2023-02-13
Permit Number: 23 102980 000 00 RZ
Status: 1st Referral Response
Expiry Date:
Case Manager: Dylan Monke - 303-271-8718 - dmonke@co.jefferson.co.us
Description: Special Use Application for Development of a day-use lift-served bike park as a Class III Commercial Recreation Facility. Acreage: 483.04 Acres

Here's a link to Jeffco Planning and Zoning, where the new interactive map showing ongoing applications and permits is located (scroll down to the bottom of the page): <https://www.jeffco.us/786/Planning-Zoning>

Support conservation in Jeffco, donate here so we can keep doing what we do!

JOIN or RENEW

*Know someone who might be interested in this newsletter?
Subscribe, like, share - forward this*

to them, and thank you!



About PLAN Jeffco

In 1972, PLAN Jeffco launched the citizen's initiative which created the Jeffco Open Space Program, protecting more than 70,000 acres comprising 27 parks and more than 270 miles of trails.

Follow us on [FACEBOOK](#)

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