



PLAN Jeffco

Working to conserve Jefferson County Open Spaces since 1972



Apex Enchanted Forest Trail with hikers

The PLAN Jeffco Monthly October 2024

Autumn is in full swing, with warm days and cool nights. So far, we've not seen much sign of snowfall, but it won't be long in coming. Jeffco Open Space Parks are open one hour before sunrise until one hour after sunset, so use those hours to enjoy the park experience.

PLAN Jeffco is a non-profit citizen organization, based in Jefferson County Colorado. More than 50 years ago, PLAN Jeffco was established for this purpose: from Article 1 of our Bylaws, "The purpose of PLAN Jeffco is to advocate for and take actions to conserve and preserve open space lands in Jefferson County." Since that time PLAN Jeffco has advocated for conservation of open spaces.

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.

<https://planjeffco.org/>

What's New in the Blogosphere?

2024 JeffCo Open Space Survey <https://planjeffco.org/2024-open-space-survey/>

It's that time again, when — every few years — Jeffco Open Space elicits feedback from the public on issues like planning for the parks and improving and maintaining not just the Open Space Parks, but also shared parks, trails and

open spaces. Here's your chance to voice an opinion on our Jeffco Open Space Parks. The survey will be open for just a short time, so [go to this page and start engaging!](#)

Shadow Mountain Bike Park Denied <https://planjeffco.org/shadow-mountain-bike-park-denied/>

In a seven to zero unanimous decision, last night the Jeffco Planning Commission denied Resolution 23-102980RZ, the Special Use request from the Shadow Mountain Bike Park. If you've been following this development, or if you're an avid downhill mountain biker, then you're already aware of the decision – but for everyone else, here's a bit of background and why the request was denied...

Video of the month: CBS Colorado: Work continues on bike trail through Colorado's Clear Creek Canyon [\(video\)](#)

CBS Colorado newscasters tell a story of the Peaks to Plains, aka Clear Creek Trail.

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



South Table Mountain Park combines panoramic mesa-top views, habitat for cliff-nesting raptors and proximity for many visitors to enjoy hikes, runs and rides. Stay on trail as undesigned paths degrade the mesa ecology or cross into areas where public access is not allowed. That includes the private property on which Golden landmark rock outcropping, Castle Rock, resides..

Other New Stuff on the Website

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

PLAN Jeffco October Board Meeting Minutes 10/17/2024 – DRAFT

<https://planjeffco.org/portfolio-item/pj-board-meeting-minutes-10-17-2024-draft/>

PLAN Jeffco September Board Meeting Minutes 9/19/2024 – FINAL

<https://planjeffco.org/portfolio-item/pj-board-meeting-minutes-9-19-2024-final/>

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

PLAN Jeffco Monthly – September 2024

<https://planjeffco.org/portfolio-item/plan-jeffco-monthly-september-2024/>

PLAN Jeffco Monthly – August 2024

<https://planjeffco.org/portfolio-item/plan-jeffco-monthly-august-2024/>

PLAN Jeffco Monthly – July 2024

<https://planjeffco.org/portfolio-item/plan-jeffco-monthly-july-2024/>

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

Regular Open Space Advisory Committee in-office meetings are generally held on the first Thursday of every other month, starting at 6:00 PM.

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

Alternate month meetings are in the field. We have been assured that these in-the-field meetings are open to the public; the times and locations should be published on the County calendar.

Thursday, October 3, 2024. OSAC site visit to Windy Saddle Open Space Park, the Mount Zion trail, and the Huntsman Segment of the Clear Creek Trail. Vicky Gits, our PLAN Jeffco Board member, was able to join the outing by contacting Matt Robbins, JCOS Community Connections, mrobbins@jeffco.us.

Thursday, November 7, 2024. In-person at Jeffco Open Space Office, 700 Jefferson County Pkwy #100, Golden 80401

Check the calendar for upcoming agendas <https://www.jeffco.us/Calendar.aspx?EID=12380>

Find all available past meeting documents & videos at <https://www.jeffco.us/4528/Past-Meeting-Videos-and-Documents>

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 Construction Updates

Alderfer/Three Sisters Homestead Trail. After the forestry work was completed at Alderfer, a few trails, including Homestead, needed repairs and re-routing. The Trails Team rehabbed the Homestead Trail, which reopened on September 28.

Boettcher Mansion. Boettcher recently hosted a volunteer project, led by Assistant Trails Volunteer Coordinator, nine volunteers, and Boettcher Mansion's regular Gardener Volunteers. Together, they were able to dig up overgrown weeds and grasses from a garden bed and get it prepped for planting next spring. Additionally, they were able to move existing rocks from the property to the garden to have them now as showcase pieces. Charles Boettcher would have been proud of this team for re-using existing items found on the mountain in a new and beautiful way; exactly what he did with many of the local granite rocks used to build the historic mansion walls in 1917.

Elk Meadow Stagecoach Trailhead. Construction on the Elk Meadow Park Stagecoach Trailhead has begun and is expected to continue through Summer 2025. Western States Reclamation and their subcontractors will be hard at work making improvements including an expanded parking lot, updated amenities, a new centrally located restroom, enhanced road crossing, and restoration of low-use and closed areas. During the construction closure, the Lewis Ridge Trailhead will provide primary access to the park. Once re-opened, the Stagecoach Trailhead will also provide access to a new trail experience on the south side of Stagecoach Boulevard to Jenkins Peak.

Meyer Ranch. Starting October 28, Meyer Ranch Park will be CLOSED for culvert replacements. The repairs are slated to last 30 days. The Park will be closed during this construction; this includes neighborhood access. Restrooms will be locked and will not be serviced. The double culvert replacements are on the entry road from the main parking lot into the park.

Mount Glennon. Starting October 14, bridge repair over Soda Lakes Road will begin with the mobilization of necessary equipment and material. Actual repairs will begin on October 21, with repair work slated to last until mid-January 2025. Impacts to visitors will be significant, including but not limited to a one-lane road, flagger-controlled, with reduced parking because of materials and equipment staging.

Jeffco Open Space Science & Social Events

National Public Lands Day Results. On Saturday, September 28, 412 amazing volunteers came out to 11 projects sites throughout Jefferson County. These enthusiastic individuals were able to collect 5,915 pounds of trash, seed 9,900 square feet of land, plant 2,300 native shrubs and perennials, remove acres of noxious weeds, and recycle 1,715 pounds of material. A HUGE shoutout to Volunteer Services, Natural Resources, Trails, Park Services, Community Connections, and the Ranger Teams for their remarkable assistance in creating a truly incredible community event.

Flying J Preble's Meadow Jumping Mouse Results please. Following up on last month's newsletter article about the work the Natural Resources team's study on jumping mice, it turns out that they caught zero Preble's this year. All the collected DNA samples were of high enough quality to test, and all trapped animals were identified as the western jumping mouse, *Zapus princeps*, and not *Zapus hudsonius preblei*, the Preble's jumping mouse. While the Preble's is on the List of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife (U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service), the western jumping mouse is not. All the results are shared with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and Colorado Parks and Wildlife. The USFWS monitors the results of any Preble's surveys and restoration efforts across the species' range. The long-term goal of listing under the Endangered Species Act is recovering the species to the point that it can be removed from the Endangered and Threatened species list.

REI Kids' Co-op: Explore the Parks Event. On September 7, at the REI's Kid's Co-op Event, JCOS team members had a fantastic time engaging with the community. Staff historians, the resident archaeologist, and volunteers showcased a variety of artifacts, including a T-rex tooth from South Table Mountain Park and Native American artifacts

from a few of our other parks (Crown Hill & Pine Valley Ranch Parks). The highlight for the kids was the "archaeological dig," where they had the opportunity to explore items in the dirt while learning about archaeology in Jeffco. The Jeffco table saw over 200 interactions, engaging with parents, kids, and other adults at the information table, discussing the parks, volunteer opportunities, and upcoming events, while distributing maps, stickers, and other cool swag.

Ralston Buttes Hike. In mid-September, guides from Natural Resources led a group from the public on a free, interpretive hike at Ralston Buttes. Ralston Buttes is a highly sensitive, protected area. The guides were able to explain to the visitors about the sensitive natural and cultural resources in the area; they talked about some of the difficult decisions JCOS must make as land managers, when balancing resource protection and recreation. JCOS is planning to lead this hike again next year.

Trails Symposium Wrap-up. In late September, the Trails Team headed to Salida for the Colorado Trails Symposium, an annual gathering for agency trail managers. The two-day event allows agency staff to network and share ideas through presentations and field trips. This incredible event had over 120 attendees representing 36 agencies/nonprofits, 13 sessions, four roundtables, and seven second-day site visit options.

Hildebrand Ranch Population Census. The Natural Resources Wildlife Team noted a special visitor, a burrowing owl. They suspect that this individual was making a pit stop after beginning its fall migration. Burrowing owls begin arriving in Colorado from their wintering grounds in late-March or early-April and can be found near their breeding grounds until Halloween, or later. In recent years, some burrowing owls have even begun to overwinter along the Front Range. The Western group of burrowing owls is nearly entirely dependent on burrows dug by other animals; in the plains and intermountain-west the owls are strongly associated with prairie dogs.

Seed-sational Fall. The Natural Resources Team has been planting native species that were grown from hand-collected seeds on JCOS property to improve nectar resources for pollinators. Over 4,000 plants were grown in 2024, including shrubs, grasses, and forbs. The Natural Resources Team started the planting effort this fall with wetland species, with planting projects at Van Bibber Park for National Public Lands Day, Elk Meadow Park with internal JCOS staff, and Meyer Ranch Park with JCOS volunteers. Two wildflower species associated with wetlands were planted and include Nuttall's sunflower (*Helianthus nuttallii*) and largeleaf avens (*Geum macrophyllum*).

Local High School Mountain Bike Teams Give Back. Local high school mountain bike teams have been actively working in the parks. A dedicated group of coaches, parents, and student-athletes from Chatfield High School joined JCOS staff for vital, post-fire repair work on the hand-cut fire lines on Meadowlark Trail at Deer Creek Canyon Park, constructing drainage systems on steep lines to prevent water runoff, building a buck-n-rail fence at the overlook, and seeding the fire lines. Mountain bike teams from Wheat Ridge and Lakewood High Schools teamed up to tackle a mile of trail maintenance at Apex Park, on the Apex Trail. Athletes from the Golden High School team rolled up their sleeves for heavy maintenance at North Table, on the Mesa Top Trail. Kudos to these youngsters for all their hard work.

Coal Creek Study Area Closed for Hunting. The Coal Creek Study Area is now closed for the 2024 hunting season. Colorado Parks & Wildlife (CPW) set up the hunt camp on October 6; the guided hunter outreach experiences will be happening through November 24. Volunteer Land Stewards have been reminded of the closure and CPW will post warning signs at three gates. Associated vehicles will have park permit hang tags for display. The hunt is coordinated by Pepper Canterbury, Hunting and Angling Coordinator of the Northeast Region for CPW.

Standley Lake Library Trailhead Ribbon Cutting Ceremony. On Friday, November 8 at 11:00 a.m., there will be a ribbon-cutting ceremony to celebrate the opening of the Standley Lake Library Trailhead, hosted by the City of Arvada and Jeffco Public Library (JCPL). This trailhead, which was awarded a 2021 Trails Partnership Program grant from Jeffco Open Space, will provide access from the Standley Lake Library, the existing parking area, and Kipling Street to a central public trailhead. From this hub, multiple ADA-accessible routes will lead to the Rocky Mountain Greenway. The

trailhead will include a central gathering area with an iconic shade shelter, paved plaza, seating, bicycle racks, wayfinding signage, and educational interpretive signage.



South Valley Park has dramatic red sandstone spires and stunning views of craggy outcrops. The trails are well-suited for beginning mountain bikers, and hikers who prefer more level terrain. This park is an on-trail only experience; do not climb on the delicate sandstone formations for your own safety and to protect these highly erosive surfaces. The northwest section of the park is set aside as a Sensitive Area closed to public use to protect nest sites. No off-trail use permitted at South Valley Park.

County News & Happenings

Jeffco Open Space Calendar <https://www.jeffco.us/Calendar.aspx?EID=12380>

Jeffco Open Space Plans & Projects <https://www.jeffco.us/1585/Plans-Projects>

Jeffco Fairgrounds – CSU Extension <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>

TOGETHER JEFFCO

<https://www.nocoplaces.com/>

Together Jeffco is a two-year process which combines efforts to update the Comprehensive Plan (CP), Transportation and Mobility Plan (TMP), Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP), Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan Evacuation Annex (CEMP EA), and development regulations to create a Unified Land Use Code (ULUC).

Here's what has happened or is happening now:

The Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) and the Evacuation Annex (EA) Drafts are available for public review

[Community Wildfire Protection Plan \(CWPP\) PDF](#)

[Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan's Evacuation Annex \(EA\) PDF](#)

NOCO PLACES

<https://togetherjeffco.com/>

Nine Front Range Public Land Agencies Form Regional Conservation and Recreation Vision Together

A Regional Vision and Shared

Philosophy <https://www.nocoplaces.com/conservation-and-recreation-vision/>

Our Conservation Partners

Colorado Parks and Wildlife

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

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

Colorado Trail Explorer (COTREX) app adds new wildfire alert feature for outdoor recreationists

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

CPW Podcasts <https://cpw.state.co.us/CPW-podcast>

eNews & Social Media <https://cpw.state.co.us/enews-and-social-media>

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

Jefferson Conservation District

<https://www.jeffersoncd.com/news-events>

Bird Conservancy of the Rockies

<https://www.birdconservancy.org>

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

The Primary Source Fall/Winter 2024 has landed! Get your copy at

<https://www.birdconservancy.org/primary-source/>

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/>

Denver Audubon

<https://denveraudubon.org>

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

What We're About at <https://denveraudubon.org/about-us/>

Denver Audubon Blog at <https://denveraudubon.org/blog/>

Colorado Open Lands

<https://coloradoopenlands.org/>

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

Conserved: Manzanares Creek Ranch

<https://coloradoopenlands.org/permanently-protected-manzanares-creek-ranch/>

Conserved: Greenleaf Ranch

<https://coloradoopenlands.org/permanently-protected-greenleaf-ranch/>

Conserved: San Luis Valley Ranch

<https://coloradoopenlands.org/permanently-protected-ranchland-in-the-san-luis-valley/>

Newsletters and Publications <https://coloradoopenlands.org/publications/>

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

Mountain Area Land Trust

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

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

Created: High Alpine Native Plant Demo Garden

<https://savetheland.org/volunteers-create-new-high-alpine-native-plant-demonstration-garden-for-community/>

Conserved: Rocky Top in Southern Jeffco

<https://savetheland.org/151-acres-conserved-in-southern-jefferson-county/>

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/>

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>
The Source Newsletter at <https://www.keepitco.org/the-source-newsletter>

Douglas Land Conservancy

<https://douglaslandconservancy.org/>

Guided Hikes & Educational Events at <https://douglaslandconservancy.org/guided-hikes-educational-events/>
Upcoming Events <https://douglaslandconservancy.org/events/>
Decode DC Outdoors at <https://douglaslandconservancy.org/decode-dc-outdoors/>
News at <https://douglaslandconservancy.org/news/>

City of Golden

<https://goldentoday.com/>

<https://www.cityofgolden.gov>

Events calendar: daily, weekly and monthly events are posted on the [Golden Events Calendar](#).

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/>

Map of the Golden Open Space Parks – [click here](#).

[Biological Survey of Golden Open Space Survey, Colorado Natural Heritage Program \(pdf\)](#)

[Common Native Plants of the Greater Golden Area \(pdf\)](#)

[Golden Rocks: The Geology and Mining History of Golden, Colorado \(pdf\)](#)

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

Front Range Trails Conservancy

<https://frtrails.org/>

A nonprofit that protects and advances public lands along Colorado's Front Range by effecting equitable, effective, and lasting change through trail and advocacy projects.

Trail building schedule: <https://frtrails.org/projects>

SOLVE (Save Open Lands, Vistas and the Environment)

PLAN Jeffco's sister organization in Clear Creek County <http://www.solveccc.org>

SOLVE member meetings on the 3rd Tuesday of the month, 6:30 PM in-person, United Center, Idaho Springs.

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



Van Bibber Park offers an urban get-away as well as a home and migration stop for wildlife. The Van Bibber Creek wetlands provide wildlife habitats, which can be viewed from an observation deck. Visitors enjoy mountain vistas from soft-surface trails that meander through open meadows and a 1.5-mile concrete trail that travels the length of the park and offers accessibility for strollers and wheelchairs.

WATCH THIS SPACE...Local Goings-on

Denver Water is in the process of transferring 45 miles of the 71-mile-long High Line Canal to Arapahoe County. The canal winds through 11 jurisdictions, from Waterton Canyon in Douglas County to northeast Aurora. The High Line Canal Conservancy, formed in 2014 to protect the canal, will hold the conservation easement for the 45 miles given to Arapahoe County, ensuring that the canal will be maintained as an open space park and trail, and will never be developed.

https://denvergazette.com/outtherecolorado/aurora/denver-water-high-line-canal-arapahoe-county-conservation-easement/article_e7418bbe-2f3a-11ef-8424-c3a7173bac88.html

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>

Judge rules Denver Water's permit for Gross Reservoir expansion violates federal laws, orders alternative to flooding wetlands and forest, by [Ishan Thakore](#) · Oct. 18, 2024, 4:31 pm <https://www.cpr.org/2024/10/18/judge-rules-denver-waters-permit-gross-reservoir-expansion-violates-federal-laws/>

Blast notices are still being sent out the mornings of scheduled blast activities. For addition information go to <https://www.denverwater.org/grossreservoir>

Gross Dam Road is open for public use, [read more here](#).

Stay up to date at <https://www.denverwater.org/grossreservoir/news>

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/>

Status: Hearing Process. Final Planning Commission hearing held on 9/24, Special Use request #23-102980RZ was denied.

Conceptual site plan: <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

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

<https://citizenportal.jeffco.us/citizenportal/app/landing>

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.

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PLAN Jeffco | 24395 Cody Park Road | Golden, CO 80401 US

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