



# PLAN Jeffco

Working to conserve Jefferson County Open Spaces since 1972



*The elk will start dropping last year's antlers as the new ones start pushing through in late winter.  
Photo courtesy of Oatis R. Green III*

## The PLAN Jeffco Monthly February 2026

*February – the shortest month of the year, during which the sun comes up a little earlier in the morning, and sets a little later in the evening. Next month we'll start Daylight Savings Time, and we'll be anticipating (hopefully, during this extraordinarily warm and dry snow season) some of the heaviest snowfall of the year.*

*A quick reminder: when you're trekking in the parks, anticipate trails that may be frozen or snow-covered. Don't be surprised if you encounter both conditions along the same trail – maybe even some mud on a warm day, so make sure you've got the proper equipment, you have checked the mountain weather reports, and you're definitely dressed in layers!*

*Jeffco Open Space Parks are open one hour before sunrise until one hour after sunset, so use these hours to enjoy the park experience.*

*PLAN Jeffco is now a part of Colorado Gives...  
<https://www.coloradogives.org/organization/PLANJeffco>*

*... and we want to thank every reader, and especially those who have donated to the cause, so that we can continue to advocate for acquisition and protection of open spaces and Jeffco Open Space, in particular.*

Don't forget to follow us on Facebook, LinkedIn, Threads or BlueSky – or all five! The team will continue to write articles at <https://planjeffco.org/blog/>

JOIN US AT

## What's New in the Blogosphere?



### 2026 Conservation Awards

Conservation Awards night Jan. 29, 2026, at the Lakewood Cultural Center did not disappoint, with inspiring videos starring parks volunteers raving about how much they enjoy their duties, even cleaning toilets for Jefferson County Parks and Open Space.

The annual awards night is a tradition that has taken place since 2018 with the exception of 2021, when it was suspended because of COVID. Currently there are about 550 regular, ongoing volunteers donating thousands of hours per year to educate visitors, build and maintain trails, restore vegetation, give advice to hikers, supply toilet paper, pick up litter and welcome visitors. A couple of thousand also turn out for one-time projects.

Emceeding the event this year was the newly appointed director of JCPOS, Aaron Roth, former National Park Service deputy regional director of eight states, in Lakewood for 20 years. His responsibilities there included

oversight of Rocky Mountain and Great Sand Dunes national parks in Colorado. [Read more](#)



### **ENOR Environmental Discovery Camp Has Scholarships!**

You're hiking or cycling in one of our Open Space parks. You encounter a group of kids with a couple of adults, and they seem totally engrossed in a patch of shrubbery. You stop for a moment; you hear children's voices exclaiming about what they've found – they seem so excited about everything around them.

Welcome to ENOR – Eagle's Nest, Owl's Roost – Environmental Discovery Camp, which is sponsored by the Jeffco CSU Extension office. ENOR has been in the business of getting kids outdoors for more than 50 years. Jeffco Parks & Open Space was so impressed with ENOR's achievements that, in 2024, they presented ENOR with the Gambel Oak Award, as a Pioneer in Environmental Education, at that year's Conservation Awards Ceremony. [Read more](#)

---

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

[Join or Renew My Membership](#)

---

## **Other New Stuff on the Website**

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

PLAN Jeffco January Board Meeting Minutes 2/19/2026 – DRAFT  
<https://planjeffco.org/portfolio-item/pj-board-meeting-minutes-2-19-2026-draft/>

PLAN Jeffco January Board Meeting Minutes 1/15/2026 – FINAL

<https://planjeffco.org/portfolio-item/pj-board-meeting-minutes-1-15-2026-final/>

PLAN Jeffco November Board Meeting Minutes 11/20/2025 – DRAFT

<https://planjeffco.org/portfolio-item/pj-board-meeting-minutes-11-20-2025-draft/>

---

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

PLAN Jeffco Monthly – January 2026

<https://planjeffco.org/plan-jeffco-monthly-january-2026/>

PLAN Jeffco Monthly – December 2025

<https://planjeffco.org/portfolio-item/plan-jeffco-monthly-december-2025/>

PLAN Jeffco Monthly – November 2025

<https://planjeffco.org/portfolio-item/plan-jeffco-monthly-november-2025/>

---

## 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.*

### **Open Space Advisory Committee (OSAC) Field Trip February 5<sup>th</sup>, Alderfer/Three Sisters Park - Forestry Health & Park Improvements Tour**

2:50 p.m. Board the vans in the Jeffco Parks & Open Space parking lot

3:00 p.m. Vans depart

3:30 p.m. Arrive at Alderfer/Three Sisters West Trailhead

Projects Team to highlight construction/trailhead improvements.

Ranger to discuss park resident roles.

4:00 p.m. Hike into park - Natural Resource Team to discuss forest health

Untreated forest conditions increase the risk of catastrophic wildfire and pest outbreaks, such as mountain pine beetle.

From fall 2023 to summer 2024, JCPOS contracted about 260 acres of forest restoration and wildfire risk reduction.

Modeling shows this treatment should reduce tree mortality from 99% to 49% and winds needed for crown fire from 24mph to 89mph.

The area of highest priority (from Forest Health Plan) was extremely steep and rocky, so burn piles were created by hand crews. This cost was ~\$4500 per acre.

Mechanical treatment was quoted at ~\$10,500 per acre and would have limited the scope of the project.

Over 1000 piles are still present and need burned to continue risk reduction and receive final grant reimbursement.

4:30 p.m. Arrive at burn piles

Natural Resource and Ranger Teams to discuss prescribed fire.

5:00 p.m. Hike back to trailhead

Q&A while hiking

5:30 p.m. Vans depart

- 6:00 p.m. Arrive at Jeffco Parks & Open Space

*Check the calendar for upcoming agendas*

## ARTICLES OF INTEREST

---

---

### **Flooding brings life back to Rocky Mountain National Park wetlands suffering “ecosystem collapse”?**

<https://coloradosun.com/2026/02/02/kawuneeche-valley-restoration-wetlands-beavers-rmnp/>

*The Colorado Sun, Michael Booth 4:08 AM MST on Feb 2, 2026*

Surging runoff from the high peaks of Rocky Mountain National Park in 2025 overwhelmed the banks of Beaver Creek, a tributary near the headwaters of the Colorado River, and flooded two and a half football fields' worth of surrounding meadows.

And that's a good thing.

The lack of beneficial flooding from Beaver Creek since the early 2000s was one loud warning signal of a worrisome ecosystem collapse at the western entrance to one of the most popular parks in the nation.

Visible flooding in 2025, celebrated in stark aerial photograph comparisons by Grand County, meant the surges in Beaver Creek were hitting artificial beaver dams and lodges built to emulate past environmental conditions and recreate historic wetlands.

The flooding was proof that a meticulously developed plan to restore Kawuneeche's crucial watershed over decades, among multiple government agencies and nonprofits, paid for by a wide array of funders, is reporting great progress after just a couple of years. Kimberly Tekavec of Northern Water appreciated that in person, on a field trip to the area near the first western hairpins of Trail Ridge Road last June. ...

### **Could beavers be the secret to winning the fight against wildfires?**

<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/animals/article/beaver-dams-wildfires-climate-change>

The East Troublesome fire erupted on October 21, 2020, whipped by strong winds and fueled by drought-parched forests. The fire roared through northern Colorado's spruce and fir woods; it leaped roads and rivers and the Continental Divide, scaling mountain passes above tree line. It incinerated historic buildings in Rocky Mountain National Park and homes in Grand County, killing two people.

Ultimately, it torched nearly 200,000 acres, making it the second largest fire in Colorado's history. In the end, just about the only thing the East Troublesome didn't consume was beaver ponds...

### **New signs warning of radioactive materials settle one Rocky Flats controversy — for now**

<https://coloradosun.com/2026/01/29/rocky-flats-open-space-warning-signs-final-agreement/>

*The Colorado Sun Michael Booth 4:08 AM MST on Jan 29, 2026*

Some neighbors and activist groups wanted tougher alerts about past plutonium contamination, and Westminster and Boulder County finally agreed.

They argued about crucial adjectives right down to the wire, but open space officials and neighborhood activists at the former Rocky Flats nuclear weapons plant finally agreed on one thing: How scary the warning signs should be.

Postings at recently opened trail entrances to Rocky Flats National Wildlife Refuge — a former factory for 70,000 plutonium bomb triggers — will now say visiting for hiking or biking “may expose you to radioactive materials.”

State and local officials have backed the effort to transform the image and geography of Rocky Flats into an open space mecca for a metro area of 3 million people looking for green options. Review after review of past contamination worries, state public health medical director Ned Calonge has said, shows “there’s no additional radiation risk to people who recreate in the refuge area.”

Still, the new language approved by nearby Boulder County Open Space and the city of Westminster after much staff review includes stark caveats: “Radioactive and hazardous materials remain in the soil and ground water and may be present in airborne dust particles. Nearby communities and industry professionals continue to express concern about the area’s safety and its risks to human health,” the signs say. ...

### **New warning signs are going up at Colorado's former nuclear weapons site**

<https://95rockfm.com/colorado-rocky-flats-signs/>

95ROCK *Nate Wilde, January 30, 2026*

For forty years, between 1952 and 1992, Rocky Flats Plant near the Denver suburb of Arvada, Colorado, was a complex that manufactured nuclear weapons parts and specialized in creating plutonium pits, an element that has historically been used to create atomic bombs.

This type of atomic bomb production has long been shut down, notably after a raid from the FBI in 1989, and today, Rocky Flats serves as a wildlife refuge.

However, because of complaints from nearby residents, as well as the fact that the area has become a controversial destination for hikers in recent years, new warning signs are set to be erected at the site. ...

---

## **CONSERVATION AWARD WINNERS**



*Lisa Crankshaw, Coal Creek Canyon Land Steward & Trail Steward; Aspen Award Winner - outstanding new volunteer*

## Open Space Activities

---

### **Know Before You Go - [JCOS Alerts & Closures](#)**

Always check this page before heading out to the Open Space parks for current information on Park and Trail closures, openings, and other operations that may impact your Jeffco Open Space Park experience...

**NOTICE:** The Lookout Mountain Nature Center and Boettcher Mansion are slated to reopen March 1<sup>st</sup>. Trails within the Lookout Mountain Preserve will be closed through March.

[More information and map of the project area.](#)

**REOPENED:** The majority of Centennial Cone Park reopened February 1 after the recent hunting closure. Elk Range Trail, including the interior of the park, remains closed till mid-June to protect elk during their calving season. All other trails are open. Please observe the weekend alternating use schedule.

[Learn more about Centennial Cone Park closures and schedule](#)

**CLOSED:** The northeast segment of the Two Brands Trail at Hildebrand Ranch Park is closed for trail maintenance. The segment slated for maintenance will be from the service road on the north side of the park, to the east until the trail hits the Trailmark neighborhood. This closure will be in effect Monday-Thursday, 8:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m., through the spring of 2026.

[Learn more about Hildebrand Ranch Park.](#)

**CLOSED:** Matthews/Winters Park – trail improvements are planned for the Bailout switchbacks on Dakota Ridge, near Red Rocks Entrance 2, to mitigate erosion and improve long-term slope sustainability. Construction began Monday, January 12, with staging near Red Rocks Entrance 2. The Bailout switchbacks will be closed during construction, with closures expected from January through spring 2026.

[View map of closure.](#)

**CLOSED:** The West Trailhead at Alderfer/Three Sisters Park is closed for scheduled improvements beginning May 5 through spring 2026.

**CLOSED:** [Seasonal Wildlife Closures at multiple parks Feb 1- July 31](#)

**REMINDER:** Apex, White Ranch, Matthews/Winters, Centennial Cone, and most recently Lair o' the Bear Parks all have designated-use trails or alternating use days. Hikers and runners, please familiarize yourself with these designations; look for and obey signage for your own safety and for everyone's experience.

### **ADDITIONAL CLOSURES:**

White Ranch Park Sourdough Campsite Closure: December-March

## JEFFCO PARKS & OPEN SPACE

---

### **2026 Conservation Awards**

On a lovely January evening in Lakewood, 300 cheerful souls gathered to honor volunteers and partners who made extraordinary contributions to the JCPOS mission.

We celebrated with Lisa Crankshaw, who cleans trailhead restrooms with a smile, and we cheered for Cliff Deakyne, who puts his heart into everything he does. We laughed with Tim Cousineau and Wendy Woods, who showed us how to have fun while hosting, and we got a little choked up when BeyondHome shared our impact on the families we supported. OneCanopy showed us how they're helping Deer Creek Canyon Park heal, and Steve Coffin reminded us of the value of coming together for a common cause. JCPOS Director Aaron Roth brought smiles and warmth to the celebration with his wit and wisdom.

### **Conservation Greenprint 2026-2030**

Parks & Open Space's (JCPOS) five-year strategic plan was unanimously approved for adoption by the Board of County Commissioners on November 4, 2025. This framework will inform organizational action plans for the next five years and help guide work plans and projects. View the final version of this document, along with contributing resources on the [Plans & Projects page](#).

### **New Task Force Targets Mountain Pine Beetle Outbreak**

In mid-December the Jefferson County Board of County Commissioners and JCPOS welcomed Governor Polis to Elk Meadow Park for a press conference announcing an executive order establishing the Ponderosa Mountain Pine Beetle Task Force.

The task force will bring together state, local, federal, private, and nonprofit partners to advance both urgent and long-term strategies. Its work will focus on strengthening cross-jurisdictional collaboration, developing innovative solutions, enhancing forest health programs, expanding public education efforts, and improving wildfire detection, suppression, and recovery initiatives.

Governor Polis also announced plans to submit a supplemental request to the legislature outlining recommended actions to support programs that assist landowners and protect forest resources statewide.

Jefferson County Commissioner Lesley Dahlkemper highlighted local efforts and announced an upcoming MPB Landowner Assistance pilot project, scheduled to launch in early 2026.

In addition to county leadership, members of the JCPOS Natural Resources, Stewardship, and Community Connections Teams were available to answer audience questions about MPB and the Elk Meadow Park forest health project.

Information for landowners about MPB, how to manage it, and the upcoming Landowner Assistance program is available at [Jeffco's MPB](#)

[page](#).

## **ENOR Registration is OPEN!**

Get outdoors this summer with ENOR Environmental Discovery Camp, helping youth explore the greater Denver metro area with a different hike every day. For grades 4 - 8. Scholarships are available. [Register Today](#)

## **2026 Photography Permits**

Professional photography and paid photo sessions in Jefferson County Parks & Open Space require registration, and drones aren't allowed.

Permits are \$125, are good for the calendar year from 12/01 to 12/31, can be used for any and all parks in the system, [and can be purchased online](#).

Got questions? Call the JCPOS Welcome Center, 303.271.5925.

## **Announcing the Litz Scholarship**

Jeffco Open Space Foundation is proud to announce it is accepting applications for its first-ever [Litz Scholarship Awards](#). The future health of our shared public lands, open spaces, and vital natural ecosystems depends on passionate and well-educated professionals. This scholarship is intended to help students committed to these fields achieve their educational goals.

The Litz Scholarship is a scholarship to support higher education for students dedicated to protect, preserve, and provide for public lands, open spaces, and natural ecosystems.

John Litz, the father of the founders of JCOSF, was one of the founders of PLAN Jeffco. From the time of PLAN Jeffco's inception until his death in late December 2023, John guided PLAN Jeffco and Jeffco Open Space, offering ideas and schemes that enabled both organizations to continuously grow and develop. John served on the Open Space Advisory Committee for decades.

## **2026 Winter Jr. Rangers**

JCPOS Rangers and four volunteers met with the Winter Jr. Rangers for nature-based fun and learning at Hiwan Heritage Park on Sunday, February 15. Kids and their families explored nature at four interactive stations involving Leave No Trace principles, winter adaptations for people, plants, and wildlife, animal tracks and signs, and local history. We hope to see the families again at Camp Jr. Ranger on June 27.

## **A Clear Creek Rescue**

On Wednesday, February 11, Park Rangers responded to a climbing fall in Clear Creek Canyon Park. The patient had fallen 10 feet after a minor rockfall occurred on a particularly steep, hard-to-access portion of the canyon. Rangers assisted the Golden Fire Department and Golden Gate Fire Protection District with locating and establishing access to the patient. AirLife was unable to land due to the rugged terrain.

Initially, it was unclear how they would recover the patient. Alpine Search and Rescue teams were then deployed to create a rope system to get the patient down the slope and across the creek. The rescue took a total of five hours to complete and required a full Highway 6 closure.

## **Volunteer Recruitment Fairs**

Jeffco Parks & Open Space hosted two volunteer recruitment fairs plus hiring for the Trail Stewardship Team in February.

## Volunteer Recruitment Fair

Saturday, February 7, 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Jeffco Parks & Open Space Headquarters

700 Jefferson County Pkwy #100, Golden, CO

All positions, all locations: Headquarters, Boettcher Mansion, Lookout Mountain Nature Center, Hiwan Heritage Park & Museum, Natural Resources, Nature Education, Park-based, & Trails

## Trails Volunteer Open House

Thursday, February 19, 4:30 - 7:30 p.m.

The Arbor House

14600 West 32nd Ave, Golden, CO

Trails team, trail running volunteers, trails restoration team, trails stewardship team, Runners for Public Lands, Front Range Trail Conservancy, COMBA and more. Individuals, organizations, all abilities welcome, no experience necessary.

Trails Stewardship Team (TST) Applications for crew leads & crew members for summer 2026

Open from Feb 28 - Mar 28

Ages 14 through 18 by June 9th

Earn \$\$\$ this summer

<https://www.jeffco.us/3327/Trail-Stewardship-Team>

## OSWFT Gettin' Fired Up

On Sunday, February 1, Park Rangers and OSWFT Leads attended the Evergreen Fire Burn Demonstration at Evergreen Station 2. This popular live-fire event was open to the public and demonstrated how different housing materials, including siding, roofing, and decking, respond to firebrands and direct flame impingement. OSWFT and Jeffco Brush 50 were assigned to patrol and suppression at Bergen Meadow Elementary and the Island neighborhood in the event of any spot fires caused by gusty winds. No spot fires occurred, and OSWFT was able to remain focused on community outreach.

For additional information on Open Space events go to the [Open Space Event Calendar](#)



**COLORADO**  
Wildfire  
Resiliency  
Code Board

*Senate Bill 23-166 established a Wildfire Resiliency Code Board in the Division of Fire Prevention and Control to help enhance community safety and resiliency from wildfires through the adoption of codes and standards.*

*Defensible space and structure hardening requirements will apply to mountain areas and parts of the plains per the [proposed Wildland Urban Interface \(WUI\) map](#).*

*For more information go to <https://www.jeffco.us/2613/Regulation-Updates>*

## CONSERVATION AWARD WINNERS



*Katelynn Martinez, OneCanopy Revegetation Program; Douglas Fir Award – outstanding organization helping to advance conservation.*

*BeyondHome Youth Program: Cheri Godwin (left), Jenni Kinney (center), Zoe Jennings (right); Blue Spruce Award – connecting youth to healthy outdoor experiences*

---

## COUNTY NEWS & HAPPENING

---

### JEFFCO Sheriff's Office Update

<https://www.jeffco.us/m/newsflash/Home/Detail/2558>

The Jefferson County Sheriff's Office (JCSO) has new information regarding the investigation into the active shooter incident in Evergreen on February 12, 2026. ...

### JEFFCO Commissioners

Revisit the Jeffco Commissioners Virtual Town Hall from Feb. 19

<https://www.jeffco.us/m/newsflash/Home/Detail/2253>

On Feb. 19, Jefferson County Commissioners Andy Kerr, Rachel Zenzinger and Lesley Dahlkemper were joined by county staff to share important updates and answer your questions. Jefferson County's virtual town halls are a great opportunity to engage with county leadership and to learn more about what is going on at the county.

Town Hall Topics: Federal and state funding and service Impacts; Parks and Open Space; PSPS (public safety power shutoff).

View the video on YouTube: <https://youtu.be/goO084zpydo>

### TOGETHER JEFFCO

<https://togetherjeffco.com/>

*Jefferson County is in the third phase of the Together Jeffco Plans and Regulations Update. 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).*

### Jefferson County Wildfire Resiliency Code Updates

The County will be updating its defensible space and structure hardening standards to meet 2025 State requirements. This update is not part of the Together Jeffco project, but interested parties can find out more on Jeffco's website. Community Meetings will be held on December 2 and 3, 2025.

Read more on the Jeffco Planning and Zoning Page:

<https://www.jeffco.us/2613/Regulation-Updates>

View the Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) – FINAL  
<https://togetherjeffco.com/cwpp>

View the Evacuation Annex (EA) – FINAL  
<https://togetherjeffco.com/cemp>

---

## OUR CONSERVATION PARTNERS

---

### NOCO PLACES - A Common Voice for Public Lands

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

*Nine county, state, and federal public land agencies from north-central Colorado are actively collaborating to address the challenges the mountains and foothills in this region are facing from high visitation and a growing population. We are committed to sustainable solutions, equitable actions, and beneficial land management practices for the long-term conservation of Colorado's public lands and the quality of the visitor experience.*

Conservation and Recreation Vision

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

Programs and Workshops <https://www.nocoplaces.com/unauthorized-trail-rehabilitation/>

2025 Annual Report <https://www.nocoplaces.com/reports/>

### Colorado Parks and Wildlife

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

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>

### Colorado Parks and Wildlife is helping restore thousands of acres impacted by 2025 wildfires

2025 was one of Colorado's most significant wildfire seasons, with more than 265,000 acres burned statewide. This year, CPW's local area staff and Habitat Conservation Team are helping coordinate large-scale efforts to restore wildlife habitat and protect watersheds across Western Colorado. [Read the full story here.](#)

### Partners in the Outdoors Conference – Join the Waitlist

The upcoming conference will be held on April 27-29, 2026, at the Cheyenne Mountain Resort in Colorado Springs. Registration is sold out, but you can [join the waitlist](#) and/or [sign up for the Partners e-newsletter](#)

### CPW accepting applications for shooting range development grants through April 10

Colorado Parks and Wildlife is now accepting applications for shooting range construction and improvement grants through the [Shooting Range Grant Development Program](#) (SRDG).

## **Collared Grey Wolf Activity Map for February Released**

[Download the Collared Grey Wolf Activity Map](#)

[Find more Living With Wolves resources](#)

More information about the Wolf Restoration Plan [can be found on CPW's website](#).

## **Colorado Parks and Wildlife launches public engagement for new firearms safety program ahead of Aug. 1, 2026, implementation**

Firearms Safety Program: [dnr\\_cpw\\_firearmsafety@state.co.us](mailto:dnr_cpw_firearmsafety@state.co.us)

Public & Stakeholder Meetings: [dnr\\_cpw\\_planning@state.co.us](mailto:dnr_cpw_planning@state.co.us)

## **Colorado invests \$9.99 million into Outdoor Projects**

[Read more about Colorado's Outdoors Strategy](#)

## **Keep Colorado Wild Pass Program advances Colorado's outdoor recreation and conservation goals**

<https://cpw.state.co.us/news/11032025/keep-colorado-wild-pass-program-advances-colorados-outdoor-recreation-and>

### **Jefferson Conservation District**

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

February 18, 2025: [Call for Nominations for JCD Board of Supervisors](#)

A CALL FOR NOMINATIONS NOTICE BY THE JEFFERSON CONSERVATION DISTRICT§1-13.5-501, 1-13.5-1102(3), 32-1-905(2), C.R.S.TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN, and, particularly, to the electors of the Jefferson Conservation District of Jefferson County, Colorado.

January 30, 2025: [JCD on Mountain Area Land Trust Podcast!](#)

January 24, 2025: [Jefferson, Larimer, Boulder Valley, and Longmont Conservation Districts Funding Announcement: Regional Conservation Partnership Program](#)

We are pleased to announce that Jefferson, Larimer, Boulder Valley, and Longmont Conservation Districts have been awarded a total of \$13.4 million through the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP). This funding will support forest, vegetation, and riparian restoration initiatives across the Northern Front Range of Colorado.

### **Bird Conservancy of the Rockies**

<https://www.birdconservancy.org>

**Primary Source Magazine** Fall/Winter

2025 <https://online.fliphtml5.com/rtbnt/jdkl/#p=1>

**Monitor Migration:** <https://www.birdconservancy.org/nfc-lightsout/>

**Bird Banding Results:** <https://www.birdconservancy.org/what-we-do/education/bird-banding/>

**Register for Bird Camps 2026:** <https://www.birdconservancy.org/what-we-do/education/bird-camps>

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/>

Publications <https://www.birdconservancy.org/resource-center/publications/>

## Denver Audubon

<https://denveraudubon.org>

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

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

### Where To Go Birding:

<https://www.denveraudubon.org/resources#WheretogoBirding>

**Native Plants for Birds:** <https://www.denveraudubon.org/colorado-native-plant-resources#NativePlantsforBirds>

**Conservation & Research:** <https://www.denveraudubon.org/conservation-and-research#ConservationandResearch>

### Upcoming Classes, Programs & Events:

<https://www.denveraudubon.org/calendar>

## Colorado Open Lands

<https://coloradoopenlands.org/>

724,902 acres of land, 3443 miles of waterways, 807 projects in 50 counties

**Thirtynine Mile Ranch, southeastern Montrose County:** In partnership with Park County's Land and Water Trust fund, this ranch, which is located on the southern flank of Thirtynine Mile Mountain, directly south of the Pike National Forest, has been preserved. The ranch, which has been owned by the Flint family for decades, lies within the Currant Creek watershed, where the foothills of the Rockies rise into rugged terrain of forested slopes, rolling hills, and open valleys.

This high-elevation property, ranging from 9500 to 10,020 feet above sea level, hosts a mosaic of plant communities shaped by steep topography and varied microclimates. Bristlecone pine, spruce, fir, ponderosa pine, Douglas fir, and aspen give way to expansive rangelands of native grasses and shrubland. Riparian pockets with sedges, willows, ponds, and perennial streams support rich wildlife diversity, including black bear, elk, mule deer, pronghorn, mountain lion, and numerous bird species such as Brewer's sparrow, burrowing owl, golden eagle, and northern goshawk, along with many small mammals and bats.

This 1320-acre property adds to more than 7,000 acres of nearby conservation easements. Conservation easements preserve and protect a property's natural, open space and agricultural uses; they prohibit subdivision of the land into smaller parcels. Colorado Open Lands will hold the conservation easement in perpetuity, conducting annual visits to ensure the property's conservation values are protected – forever.

**Vogelaar Ranch, southeastern Montrose County:** In partnership with the Colorado West Land Trust, this ranch, which is located on Horsefly

Mesa, approximately 20 miles southwest of Montrose, has been preserved. The estate of Anita Vogelaar, whose parents bought the property and operated the ranch for decades, donated the Vogelaar Ranch to Colorado West Land Trust (CWLT), which then simultaneously conveyed an easement to Colorado Open Lands for its protection.

The ranch consists of natural habitats that include montane meadow, Gambel oak woodland, sagebrush shrubland, mountain shrubland, willow riparian areas, and aspen woodlands, all of which provide food and cover for a variety of game and nongame wildlife species. Several springs and seeps are present across the property, creating small micro-habitats dominated by willow and providing additional water resources for livestock and wildlife.

Preservation of the ranch supports ongoing protection efforts in the area. Approximately 88,000 acres of public land and over 7,000 acres of private land protected under conservation easement are within 10 miles of the property.

**New Episode of Landlines podcast:** Riverside restoration with Riparian Reconnect, a partnership dedicated to restoring Colorado riverscapes. Find Landlines by COL at RSS.com, Apple and Spotify, or stream it directly from <https://rss.com/podcasts/landlines>.

**History and Mergers:** <https://coloradoopenlands.org/history-and-mergers/>

**Stay connected with COL** via text messaging – text PROTECT to 303-988-2373.

Fall 2025 Newsletter <https://coloradoopenlands.org/publications/>

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

### **Mountain Area Land Trust**

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

over 27,000 acres of land in its 6-county area

Read about more News and Success Stories at

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

Sign up for MALT's newsletter at

<https://savetheland.org/category/newsletter/>

### **Empowering Colorado Educators: A workshop on Connecting Youth to Nature**

<https://savetheland.org/empowering-colorado-educators-a-workshop-on-connecting-youth-to-nature-and-conservation/>

Sacramento Creek Ranch Teacher Workshop

June 15-18, 2026

Co-Hosted with Colorado Open Lands

Join MALT staff for a 4-day, teacher-centered workshop to learn about wildlife, forestry, agriculture, and water! This workshop is held at MALT's Sacramento Creek Ranch property near Fairplay, Colorado.

New in 2026, the workshop will be held in the fully renovated Environmental Education and Community Center, creating an exciting new environment for place-based hands-on learning and collaboration.

Educators will take part in discussions with expert staff, develop hands-on skills outdoors, receive take-home classroom resources, and complete a lesson link project to plan how they will apply the information learned to their subject and grade level.

Participants will earn 3 CEUs (equal to 30 contact hours) towards teacher licensure recertification. This workshop is open to all Colorado K-12 teachers, including special education, literacy, administrators, and specialist positions.

Registration Opens March 9th. <https://coloradoopenlands.org/teacher-workshops/>

Questions? Contact Jeff Jordan at [Jeff AT savetheland DOT com](mailto:Jeff AT savetheland DOT com)

### **Save the Date: Conservation Trends in the West March 4, 2026**

Lori Weigel, Principal of [New Bridge Strategy](#), will share an inside look at the findings from the annual bipartisan Conservation in the West poll, which digs into Westerners' views on climate change, public lands, water, wildlife, and other important conservation issues. Get more information and register for this event at <https://savetheland.org/events/conservation-trends-in-the-west-2/>.

### **KEEP IT COLORADO**

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

*Our mission is to unite, elevate and empower Colorado's conservation community to protect the lands and waters that define our state.*

<https://www.keepitco.org/news/2025/6/24/spring-summit-2025>

<https://www.keepitco.org/whats-new>

### **Policy Update: [Extending the Conservation Easement Tax Credit](#)**

Bipartisan legislation introduced on February 19<sup>th</sup> in the Colorado General Assembly would extend the state's highly successful Conservation Easement Tax Credit Program. HB26-1230 ensures continued protection of Colorado's farms, ranches, wildlife habitat, water resources, and outdoor recreation landscapes.

### **[Over 7,000 Acres to be Conserved with Transaction Cost Grants](#)**

Keep It Colorado will award \$551,100 in assistance to six nonprofit Colorado land trusts, which will support landowners who have volunteered to protect their properties through conservation.

**Save the Date - Spring Summit**, May 27-29, 2026 at Colorado Mountain College's Spring Valley campus in Glenwood Springs. [More information here.](#)

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

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

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

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

### **Douglas Land Conservancy**

<https://douglaslandconservancy.org/>

over 28,000 acres of land in Douglas, Jefferson & Elbert Counties

Guided Hikes & Educational Events at

<https://douglaslandconservancy.org/guided-hikes-educational-events/>

Upcoming Events <https://douglaslandconservancy.org/events/>

Annual Photo Contest at <https://douglaslandconservancy.org/annual-photo-contest/>

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

**2026 Under a Wild Sky Fundraiser**, scheduled for Saturday, August 29<sup>th</sup>, Maytag Ranch, Larkspur, CO

**DLC's New Program: Reel Nature:** on January 24<sup>th</sup>, DLC inaugurated their new nature movie series with the G-rated March of the Penguins. Follow DLC for the announcement of their next movie, planned for March'26.

### **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 \(pdf\)](#)

<https://stewardsofgolden.org/accomplishments>

Stewards of Golden Open Space have been participating in the planning process for Golden's Open Space Master Plan. Phase 2 was adopted last June. Development of phase 3 is ongoing, pending support from the City of Golden.

### **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 Winter newsletter, send an email to [newsletter @ solveccc DOT org](mailto:newsletter@solveccc.org)

**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](#)

---

## WANT TO SUPPORT OUR WORK?

Join or Renew Your Membership

---

### CONSERVATION AWARD WINNERS



*Steve Coffin, former Executive Director of NoCo Places; Gambel Oak Award – a pioneer for his work with NoCo Places.*

*Tim Cousineau & Wendy Woods, Park hosts, Park host mentoring; John Litz Award – lifetime achievement for significant and longtime volunteer contributions.*

*Retaining wall and bench in the visitor area, made from locally-sourced boulders, Stagecoach Trailhead, Elk Meadow Open Space Park.*

---

## WATCH THIS SPACE...Local Goings-on

### Potential Expansion of Bear Creek Lake Drops Acreage

*Limited funding, public opposition pointing to 300-acre-foot increase over more impactful, larger options*

*Canyon Courier, Jane Reuter, 2/05/2026*

A potential expansion of Bear Creek Lake might be kept to 300-acre-feet, preserving acres of surrounding trails and riparian space that would have been engulfed by a larger expansion. That's a relief for its 800,000 annual users, the neighboring town of Morrison and the advocacy group Save Bear Creek Lake Park. ... [Read the full store here](#)

### Gross Reservoir Updates

Gross Dam's Successful Year: Dam Raise 95% Complete

Workers raised the the dam 109 feet in 2025. Next year's goal: reaching the top. ... [Read the full story here.](#)

Recreation information throughout the year:

<https://www.denverwater.org/recreation/gross-resevoir>

Project Library: <https://www.denverwater.org/grossreservoir/resources>

Get the latest news: <https://www.denverwater.org/grossreservoir/news>

For general project information, please email [grossreservoir@denverwater.org](mailto:grossreservoir@denverwater.org) or call 303-628-6348. Visit the [Project My Map](#) for the most current information.

### **I-70 Floyd Hill Project Update Week of February 22nd**

Check out the [I-70 Floyd Hill Project's photos webpage](#) to see the exciting developments underway and the most recent construction photos. <https://www.codot.gov/projects/i70floydhill/photos>

**Rock Scaling and Blasting Operations near Idaho Springs:** continue next week above eastbound and westbound I-70 between the Veterans Memorial Tunnels and Homestead Road. This work will facilitate building bridges and straightening roadway curves to improve safety and sight distance. Stay the course on I-70 - there is no detour route. Plan for delays up to 45 minutes as each traffic queue clears. All work is weather-dependent and subject to change.

**I-70 Lane Closures:** expect overnight, single- and double-lane closures on westbound and eastbound I-70 between Homestead Road (Exit 247) and US 6 (Exit 244) for fence installation and striping operations.

**Upcoming I-70 Closures for Bridge Construction:** In late March, motorists can anticipate multiple overnight eastbound I-70 closures at the bottom of Floyd Hill, between the US 6 interchange (Exit 244) and County Road 65 (Exit 248), for crews to build a temporary framework system to support the future construction of a concrete cast-in-place segmental bridge.

**Detour:** Eastbound I-70 motorists will use the eastbound I-70 off-ramp to US 6 (Exit 244), travel east on US 40 and use the County Road 65 on-ramp (Exit 248) to access eastbound I-70.

In early to mid-April, motorists can anticipate multiple overnight westbound I-70 closures at the bottom of Floyd Hill, between the US 6 off- and on-ramps, for crews to remove the pier table to prepare for construction of the concrete cast-in-place segmental bridge.

**Detour:** Westbound I-70 motorists will merge into one lane and exit at the US 6 (Exit 244) off-ramp, and then turn left to access the US 6 on-ramp to return to westbound I-70.

All work is weather-dependent and subject to change. Please stay tuned to our Project updates for more information on when the overnight closures will occur!

### **Construction for Arvada Library Redesign is Underway**

**Project Updates:** Arvada Library, which closed on January 7, is officially under construction. It is currently in the demolition phase. In this stage, flooring, walls and fixtures are being removed to make room for the new design. This exciting milestone brings us one step closer to opening the redesigned library next year!

---

---

PLAN Jeffco, a dedicated non-profit organization staffed completely by volunteers, has been at the forefront of conserving Jefferson County's open spaces for over five decades.

***Our foundational purpose from our bylaws remains clear - to advocate for and take actions to conserve and preserve open space lands in Jefferson County, while educating our visitors about the open spaces and their inhabitants.***

The "Open Space Resolution" we fought for and championed in 1972 has not only preserved our natural landscapes but has also enhanced recreational opportunities for residents and visitors alike.

[Download the Enabling Resolution](#)

We remain committed to these efforts and encourage community engagement to ensure the health and beauty of our local ecosystems.

---

**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](#)

Enjoy our postings on [INSTAGRAM](#)

Part of [LINKEDIN](#)? So are we!

Like [THREADS](#)? They're fun!

Reach for the sky, join us on [BLUESKY](#)!

---

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

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)



Try email marketing for free today!