



PLAN Jeffco

Working to conserve Jefferson County Open Spaces since 1972



Spectacular fall collar in the high country, photo courtesy of John Gritts.

The PLAN Jeffco Monthly September 2026

We're back! We fine folks at PLAN Jeffco hope that y'all had a wonderful and fun-filled summer. Now that the season is turning cooler and wetter, we hope that your experience in our Jeffco Open Space parks will be even more wonderful. Now – let's catch up with what's been happening at Jeffco Parks & Open Space and around the land conservancy community in general.

Don't forget, 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, Instagram, 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?



THE BEETLES HAVE FLOWN - NOW WHAT?

In January'26, a blog post titled "Mountain Pine Beetle Infestation 2026" appeared in this blog. Eight months later, sometime toward the end of summer, the Mountain Pine Beetles (MPBs) will have flown. Now what are you supposed to do to inhibit the spread of the MPB? Read on at <https://planjeffco.org/the-beetles-have-flown-now-what/>

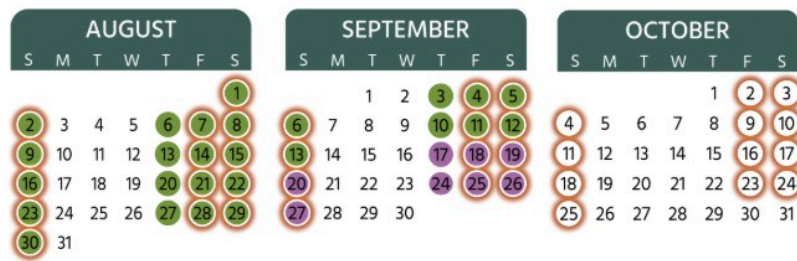


WINTER IN THE PARKS - HOW TO STAY SAFE

Even though it's only September, there's no time like the present to post this safety reminder for activity in the parks during the winter months, especially given the extraordinary climate pattern we're experiencing with the 2026-2027 El Niño.

Our parks are "primitive" parks. Don't expect the trails to be groomed for you. Make sure you have micro-spikes with you, just in case you need them.

Be prepared for any type of weather, especially as you gain in elevation.
Know before you go. <https://www.jeffco.us/1531/Alerts-Closures>



Elk Creek Elementary
13304 US HWY 285
Pine, CO 80470

Marshdale Property
26624 N Turkey Creek Rd
Evergreen, CO 80439
**Site closes at 3:00 p.m.*

Blue Mountain Open Space
23401 Coal Creek Canyon Rd
Arvada, CO 80007

Tincup Ridge Slash Yard
101 Rooney Rd
Golden, CO 80401
Fridays, Saturdays, & Sundays: May 15–Oct 25

Accessible calendar: [JEFFCO.US/SLASH](https://www.jeffco.us/slash)
Please arrive no later than 30 minutes prior to closing.
Hours for site locations: 9:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.*

SLASH 2026

Newly released 2025 data from Jeffco Sustainability's Climate Action Dashboard shows Jefferson County continues to see increased debris cleared for wildfire mitigation as part of Jeffco Parks & Open Space's SLASH program.

Debris cleared for wildfire mitigation increased from 38,103 cubic yards in 2024 to 41,536 cubic yards (equal to over 1,000 school buses) in 2025. As Jefferson County experiences severe to extreme drought this summer, it's more important than ever to see this increase in wildfire mitigation. It's a win for our Open Space, a win for sustainability, and a win for our community's resilience.

<https://www.jeffco.us/4410/Climate-Action-Plan-and-Dashboard>

UPCOMING EVENTS

<https://planjeffco.org/plan-jeffco-board-meeting-schedule/>

If you would like to attend a PLAN Jeffco Board meeting, please contact us at ContactUs@PlanJeffco.org prior to the day of the meeting.

WHAT WE DID LAST SUMMER



Cathi Schramm, PLAN Jeffco Board member, poses with multiple bags filled with weeds that have been eradicated from a portion of the Clear Creek Trail, west of the McIntyre Trailhead.
Photo courtesy of MAPoollet.

Summertime vacations, traveling, and just plain relaxing took a few of the Board members away from town, but those of us who were still around gathered in July for our regular Board meeting – minutes are posted in the website Library, <https://planjeffco.org/library/meeting/minutes/>.

The August meeting was a little different, as the Board convened for our regular meeting at the Open Space Volunteer Appreciation Picnic (8/20/26) at the Pelican Point shelter, Bear Creek Lake Park. We were joined by former PJ Board members and Aaron Roth, the new JCPOS Director. It was a great opportunity to catch up with Open Space staff and other volunteers. We did not record minutes for this meeting.

September 26th, National Public Lands Day, two Board members joined other Open Space volunteers for cleanup and weed control along the Clear Creek Trail, west of the McIntyre Trailhead. As you can see in the accompanying photo, there were a LOT of weeds to wrangle!

if you would like to send a donation to help support the cause
just click on the button below!

I'd Like to Help

Other New Stuff on the Website

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

PLAN Jeffco September Board Meeting Minutes 9/17/2026 – DRAFT
<https://planjeffco.org/portfolio-item/pj-board-meeting-minutes-9-17-2026-draft/>

PLAN Jeffco July Board Meeting Minutes 7/16/2026 – FINAL
<https://planjeffco.org/portfolio-item/pj-board-meeting-minutes-7-16-2026-final/>

PLAN Jeffco June Board Meeting Minutes 6/18/2026 – FINAL
<https://planjeffco.org/portfolio-item/pj-board-meeting-minutes-6-18-2026-final/>

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

PLAN Jeffco Monthly – June 2026
<https://planjeffco.org/portfolio-item/plan-jeffco-monthly-june-2026/>

PLAN Jeffco Monthly – May 2026
<https://planjeffco.org/portfolio-item/plan-jeffco-monthly-may-2026/>

PLAN Jeffco Monthly – April 2026
<https://planjeffco.org/portfolio-item/plan-jeffco-monthly-april-2026/>

NOTE: due to recent changes in the security settings for some free PDF readers, you may find that the embedded links in these newsletters are non-operational.

These PDF readers have defaulted their Trust Managers and/or security settings to disallow live links and to restrict links from accessing documents or pages on the Internet.

If you have downloaded this newsletter and are accessing it as a PDF and the links are still non-operational, it will be necessary to manually type the URL into your browser in order to access the desired page on the Internet. We're terribly sorry for this inconvenience.

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.

In-Person Meeting – Thursday July 9th, 6:00 PM

Action Items:

- **Pleasant View Metropolitan District** – Pleasant View Community Park Public Service Company Easements JCOS26-02, Resolution #26-07, Joy Lucisano: Jeffco will grant two permanent utility easements to Public Service Company for gas and electric service at a new maintenance building at Pleasant View Community Park. Combined acreage: 0.07 acres. All fees will be waived, the maintenance building will be used for park & open space purposes and will benefit Pleasant View Community Park.
- **Coal Creek Canyon Study Area** – Rodgers JCOS25-10, Resolution #26-08, Ed Perkins: seeking approval for a long-envisioned in-holding land

acquisition in the heart of the Coal Creek Canyon Study Area. Total acquisition cost \$2M, in two phases. Phase 1: acquire 11.3 acres for \$1M, excludes ~ 1.5 acre building envelope plus driveway, additional \$250,000 down payment on envelope property while original owner remains in residence. Phase 2: within 6 months of original owner vacating, close on 1.5 acre envelope, remaining \$750,000 transferred.

- **2026 Off-Cycle Trails Partnership Program Funding**, Resolution #26-09, Emily Guffin: seeking approval for an off-cycle Trails Partnership Program Grant to capitalize on a timely opportunity to enhance transit-based accessibility for Crown Hill OS Park, i.e. an RTD bus stop at West 32nd Ave & Kipling. Extended conversation about the Trails Partnership Program, its purpose and intent. This is in the initial planning stages, resolution passed unanimously.
- **2026 Jeffco Open Space Budget Recommendation**, Resolution #26-10, Hillary Merritt: presentation. Open Space Initiatives: manage park assets; steward ecosystem health; engage, learn, lead; enhance nature-based experiences, preserve land. Sales tax has been flat, not expected to change in near future, must prioritize expenditures. Extended discussion, especially about the completion of the Clear Creek Trail. After the opening of the Huntsman segment (planned for November 2026), one additional mile will be constructed, then an indefinite pause. Budgets presented for personnel, one-time (mostly park maintenance & education), on-going maintenance, capital improvements – all followed by enthusiastic discussions. Motion to approve, passed unanimously.

Field Trip Meeting – Thursday August 6th, 3:00 PM

Tour of Meadowbrook Park which will highlight trail construction progress, including recent bridge installations, private properties and parkland associated with active real estate projects, and areas of ongoing noxious weed treatment, fire mitigation, and habitat restoration.

In-Person Meeting – Thursday September 3rd, 6:00 PM

Joint meeting with the Jeffco Board of County Commissioners, presenting the 2026-2030 Conservation Greenprint

Action Items:

- **City of Lakewood Bear Creek Greenbelt** – Public Service Company Subordination Agreement JCOS26-09, Resolution #26-11, Hillary Merritt: approval for Jeffco to subordinate the Open Space Reverter on two properties funded through the Land Conservation Partnership Program so that the City of Lakewood may grant an easement to Public Service Company for an underground powerline, which will provide service to a new trailhead and restroom that Lakewood is constructing on the Bear Creek Greenway. The utility easement will encumber 0.179 acres, Lakewood will pay a processing fee of \$3,000. Lakewood will be responsible for minimizing impacts to the Greenbelt.
- **North Table Mountain Park** – West 56th Avenue CDOT JCOS26-07, Resolution #26-12, Hillary Merritt: approval to accept two parcels located at Hwy 93 and West 56th Ave from CDOT. JCPOS needs this property to extend the Tucker Gulch Trail from the North Table Mountain Trailhead to West 56th Ave. This **acquisition** has been a high priority in the 2020-2025 Conservation Greenprint. CDOT will convey the property (1.151 acres in total) to JCPOS at no cost. JCPOS must use the property only for

“nonproprietary public use” or the property will revert to CDOT. Construction expected to start in fall 2026.

Upcoming Meeting – Thursday October 1st, Study Session, 3:30 – 5:00 PM,

Jeffco Open Space Foundation Reenvisioning 2026

<https://www.jeffco.us/Calendar.aspx?EID=16855>

In-person meetings are generally held in the Ponderosa Room, Open Space Building, 700 Jefferson County Pkwy #100, Golden.

*Check the calendar for upcoming agendas
<https://www.jeffco.us/1581/Advisory-Committee>
Find all available past meeting documents & videos at
<https://www.jeffco.us/4528/Past-Meeting-Videos-and-Documents>*

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: Starting 10/19, Meyer Ranch Park will be fully closed for forest health work. Closure expected through spring 2027.

REOPENED: Hildebrand Ranch Park and Black Bear Trail accesses are open as of Thursday 9/29

CLOSED: Beginning Mon, Sept 28, Meadowlark Trail at Deer Creek Canyon Park will be closed from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Mon-Thurs

CLOSED: Prairie Falcon Trail at South Valley Park is closed due to structural damage to the boardwalk.

CLOSED: The upper tier of Tiers of Zion will be closed from mid-August through mid-October for maintenance work.

REMINDER: Some JCPOS parks have designated-use trails or alternating use days.

JEFFCO PARKS & OPEN SPACE



Boettcher Mansion, Lookout Mountain Nature Preserve History Tours

Who built the rustic, Tudor arts and crafts style mansion that sits atop Lookout Mountain, in the middle of the Open Space Nature Preserve? The Boettcher Mansion, originally called the Lorraine Lodge, was completed in 1917 and incorporated into the National Register of Historic Places in January 1984.

You can arrange for a personalized guided history tour of this extraordinary building complex and discover how it came to be part of JCPOS by calling the BOMA Front Desk Monday through Thursday, 8 AM to 12 noon, 720-497-7630. During the summer months, when the gardens are in bloom, you can even treat yourself to a combination garden & history tour and watch the sunset from the highest spot on Lookout Mountain.

What's Our Director Been Up To?

All summer – actually, since Aaron Roth stepped into the role at the head of Jeffco Parks & Open Space, our Director has been intimately acquainting himself with the individual parks and the organizations that support the Open Space system. This summer he joined some of the OS rangers on North Table Mountain Park, visited the quarry, Golden Cliffs, and Cottonwood Canyon, meeting visitors, and discussing management priorities as he learned in detail about Ranger operations. He was at the Meadowbrook section of Van Bibber Park to review construction progress, creek restoration work, and related trail improvements.

In addition to all the in-the-park activities, Roth has been reviewing organizational issues, interviewing new and replacement staff, attending County Town Hall meetings about SLASH, forestry, pine beetle response, and wildfire mitigation. And to add some levity to the long, long workdays, Roth was able to attend two volunteer appreciation events, the JCPOS BBQ and the CSUE (ENOR's parent organization) volunteer event.

Clear Creek Trail, Huntsman Section

Two rock staircases, part of the 268 climbing area above the soon-to-be-opened Huntsman Trailhead, are now complete. One of the staircases has 15 steps, the other has 23. The Trails Team constructed 15 switchbacks, building large rock retaining walls along the lower sections to support and stabilize the switchbacks.

In August, JCPOS was the recipient of the Metro Vision Award from the Denver Regional Council of Governments. This award recognizes excellence, innovation, collaboration, and leadership in problem-solving among communities and their partners. JCPOS earned the award for the Clear Creek Trail's Huntsman Segment. The Huntsman Segment achieves Metro Vision's goals of protecting and connecting people to the region's diverse natural resource areas, pace, parks, and trails by delivering high-quality access without compromising natural resources.

Watch the newest [Clear Creek Trail - Huntsman Segment Construction Update Video](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VnBwecGTJ0g) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VnBwecGTJ0g>.

Deer Creek Canyon Park Quarry Fire Vegetation Update

It's been a year (early August 2025) since the horrifying wildfire in Deer Creek Canyon Park. Early this spring, blue-green sterile tritcale seed and mulch were distributed across the most erosion-prone slopes. Now other species from the seed mix are wrapping the slopes in a thick blanket of

protective vegetation: mountain brome, slender wheatgrass, yarrow, and western wheatgrass are all native species that are thriving despite the drought.

ENOR 2026 Ends On A High Note

Nothing says summer in the Rockies like the smell of ponderosa pines, sunscreen, and smiles. Connecting kids to these Colorado traditions is a big part of what makes summer one of Jefferson County CSU Extension's favorite seasons.

This year marked the 52nd year for the environmental exploration summer day camp, Eagle's Nest Owl's Roost (ENOR). Sessions ran from June 6 to July 10, and through ENOR, CSU Extension got over 300 grade schoolers outdoors on a different Front Range hike every day over the course of a week. Campers connected with nature, learned about conservation, and explored Colorado's history.

Do you have a grade-schooler or know of one who would like to become part of ENOR? Registration for the 2027 season opens January 1st. For more information go to <https://extension.colostate.edu/jefferson/offering/enor-environmental-discovery-camp/>

Hiwan Heritage Park & Museum Time Capsule

In 1976, the Centennial Pioneers Junior Historical Society buried a time capsule somewhere on the grounds of what is now the Hiwan Heritage Park & Museum. This summer, in celebration of the 50th anniversary of the burial, there was a gathering to unearth the capsule -- but it was never found!

Undeterred, the Evergreen Mountain Area Historical Society buried a new capsule. Reportedly, inside the capsule were a small 3D-printed yellow duck (a representation of the Evergreen Duck Derby held the same day), a COVID test, and a Coca-Cola can with a FIFA design. The new capsule will rest on the Hiwan grounds for the next 50 years.

Tucker Gulch Trail Starts Moving Forward

The Tucker Gulch Trail project is officially headed toward construction! JCPOS recently hosted two public engagement pop-ups at the North Table Mountain West Trailhead, where staff connected with approximately 50 visitors to share the final design and upcoming construction schedule. Public feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with hikers, cyclists, families, and neighbors all expressing strong support for the project. Visitors were also supportive of the planned reconstruction of the West Trailhead and the additional parking it will provide, increasing capacity from 77 parking spaces to 130. The project is on track to break ground this fall, with anticipated completion next spring. As part of the trailhead reconstruction, the West Trailhead will be closed for approximately one month during the spring, exact dates to be determined.

The Tucker Gulch Trail is a new regional trail connection extending from the North Table Mountain West Trailhead to West 56th Avenue. Located almost entirely on JCPOS-managed land, this trail will complete a missing link in the regional trail system north of Golden.

Van Bibber Park Gets Three New Bridges

In late July, three steel bridges were installed across Van Bibber Creek as part of the Van Bibber Trail Extension project. All three bridges were fabricated in Greeley and made the journey south to the job site, where

cranes were waiting to swing them into place. The 63 and 78-foot-long bridges will be part of the regional concrete trails, and the 50-foot-long timber-decked bridge will provide a creek crossing for the adjacent soft-surface trail.

Before this project is completed and the trail opened to the public next year, four additional bridges will become part of the trail corridor.

Wildlife Watch: Bighorn Sheep

In July members of the Open Space Natural Resources Team participated in Colorado Parks and Wildlife's (CPW) summer survey of the Georgetown bighorn sheep herd. They surveyed in Clear Creek Canyon, which contains important habitat for both lambing and winter foraging.

The purpose of the summer survey is to estimate overwinter survival and lamb production. Seven bighorns were spotted across three locations, including rams and ewes, but no young were observed this year.

Bighorn sheep in this herd are currently being affected by pneumonia, which is spread through contact with domestic sheep and goats. Pneumonia outbreaks can kill large portions of a herd, and surviving adults can become carriers and pass the disease to lambs each year. The Natural Resources Team is working with CPW to try to limit the spread of this disease.

Stay up-to-date with what's happening at Open Space:

<https://www.jeffco.us/1541/Event-Calendar>

Open Space Projects	Status	Expected Completion
Beaver Ranch park improvements	under construction	Spring 2027
Clear Creek Canyon Huntsman Segment	under construction	October/November 2026
Clear Creek Canyon Central Segment	design	TBD
North Table Mountain trailhead improvements & Tucker Gulch extension	design	Summer 2027
Settlers Drive SLASH site	design	TBD
Stafford Hogback new trailhead	planning	Summer 2028
Van Bibber - Indiana to the Fairmont trail	under construction	Spring 2027
Lookout Mtn Nature Center - roof replacement & solar install	procurement	Fall 2026

For additional information on Open Space events go to the



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>



Aspen grove in autumn, photo courtesy of CarbonFibrePhotos

COUNTY NEWS & HAPPENING

Jeffco Wildfire Resiliency Code Took Effect July 1

This is a reminder that the Jefferson County Wildfire Resiliency Code (WRC) is now in effect. The WRC includes structure hardening and defensible space requirements for unincorporated properties in the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI). The WRC requirements only apply to new building and zoning permits.

Additional information can be found on the County's WRC web page.
<https://www.jeffco.us/2672/Defensible-Space-Wildfire-Mitigation>

News & Press Releases: <https://www.jeffcosheriffco.gov/news>
Help shape Jefferson County's all-hazard safety plan. The county's Hazard Mitigation Plan is open for your input, May 21 – June 5, 2026. Share your thoughts to help protect our neighborhoods from wildfire, flood, and severe weather.

<https://www.jeffcosheriffco.gov/news>

TOGETHER JEFFCO <https://togetherjeffco.com/>

Jefferson County is in the fifth and final phase of the Together Jeffco Plans and Regulations Update! Together Jeffco is a three-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).

The Unified Land Use Code (ULUC) is in progress. View the project at <https://togetherjeffco.com/uluc>

OUR CONSERVATION PARTNERS

NOCO PLACES - A Common Voice for Public Lands

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

Stewarding Colorado's Northern Front Range Through Regional Collaboration

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.

In service to the Conservation Community and you, our conservation advocates, PLAN Jeffco has become a NoCo Places Stakeholder. We will be attending NoCo Places meetings quarterly, and look forward to reporting on plans for a more organized, coordinated, multi-county conservation vision. If you have thoughts or concerns, please don't hesitate to contactus@planjeffco.org, so we can represent you at NoCo Places.

Colorado Parks and Wildlife

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

Human-Bear Conflict Reduction Grants Awards Announced

<https://cpw.state.co.us/human-bear-conflict-reduction-grants>

Northwest Region Big Game Proposals – CPW is seeking public input

<https://engagecpw.org/northwest-region-big-game-proposals>

New Beaver Regulations and Harvest Data

<https://cpw.widencollective.com/assets/share/asset/oficnkebcs>

Gray Wolf Reintroduction News

<https://cpw.state.co.us/wolf-sightings>

Big Game Hunting Opportunities

<https://cpw.state.co.us/conservation/north-american-model-of-wildlife-conservation>

Colorado State Forest Service

<https://csfs.colostate.edu/>

Resources for Communities, Homeowners, Wood Businesses, Educators

2025 Report on the Health of Colorado's Forests

<https://csfs.colostate.edu/forest-management/forest-health-report-2025/>

Jefferson Conservation District

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

Forest restoration, wildfire mitigation, and noxious weed management in Jefferson County, Colorado and surrounding areas.

JCD assists private forest landowners in planning and implementing projects with the shared goals of wildfire mitigation and forest ecosystem restoration. JCD helps landowners plan and manage forestry projects on their land to reduce wildfire hazard and restore ecological integrity.

Bird Conservancy of the Rockies

<https://www.birdconservancy.org>

Bird Surveys = 26,114

Products Informing Conservation = 105

Landowners Supported = 638

Acres Restored/Enhanced = 33,901

People Reached via Education = 41,641

Tickets Available: A Night for the Birds Gala

When: Friday, October 16th, 6-9 PM

Where: Denver Museum of Nature & Science

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

Denver Audubon

<https://denveraudubon.org>

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

Flocktoberfest: Live Owl Presentation with Nature's Educators

When: October 3-4

Where: Denver Audubon Kingery Nature Center

Get tickets at <https://www.denveraudubon.org/>

Colorado Open Lands

<https://coloradoopenlands.org/>

725,538 acres of land

3508 miles of waterways

812 projects in 50 counties

Waterman Property, Archuleta County, 330 acres near Pagosa Springs

Boundaries: Borders the Rio Blanco to the north, San Juan National Forest to the south, and sits adjacent to the El Rancho Pinoso conservation easement.

Landscape: Features scenic views of the San Juan Mountains and enhances ecological connectivity across protected lands.

Habitat: Riparian, includes over 1 mile along the Rio Blanco and 0.5 miles along Leche Creek.

Agricultural Use: Features irrigated native grass meadows and pastures supporting livestock grazing.

Wildlife: Provides critical habitat for bald eagles, northern leopard frogs, elk, mule deer, mountain lions, and black bears.

Stewardship Legacy: Originally developed through the Southwest Land Alliance, the property's conservation easement is now managed by Colorado Open Lands following a 2020 merger.

Mountain Area Land Trust

over 28,000 acres of land in a 6-county area

<https://savetheland.org/>

Teaching Stewardship Through Trail Work and Outdoor Play

During Summer 2026, the Mosquito Range Heritage Initiative (MRHI) and the Boys and Girls Club of the High Rockies (BGCHR) partnered to run the six-week Teens on Trail program at Sacramento Creek Ranch (SCR) and other Park County recreation sites.

Silver Plume, 311 Acres of Republican Mountain Protected

On June 11, 2026, MALT, in partnership with the Town of Silver Plume, permanently protected 311 acres on Republican Mountain via a voluntary conservation easement.

Historical & Cultural Preservation: Protects dozens of cultural and archaeological sites tied to early silver mining within a National Landmark District.

Public Access & Recreation: Expands Silver Plume Mountain Park and secures safe public access to the historic 7:30 Mine Trail.

Wildlife Protection: Preserves vital winter range and lambing grounds for the Georgetown bighorn sheep herd, one of Colorado's largest and most genetically significant populations.

Environmental Health: Safeguards local watershed resources and forested mountain landscapes.

Collaborators: Driven by the Town of Silver Plume (population ~200) and MALT, alongside History Colorado, Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO), and 23 additional partners.

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/whats-new>

Executive Summary & Key Events

Rally 2026 (Land Trust Alliance Conference): Recently held in Denver, featuring field trips, host table outreach (over 300 postcards sent), and key talks, including a plenary on Tribal leadership and conservation partnerships.

Spring Summit 2027: Announced for May 24–26, 2027, at Colorado Mountain College in Steamboat Springs.

Public Agency Roundtable: Public agency partners discussed funding, strategic planning, and toured petrified tree groves conserved via easements at Cherokee Ranch & Castle / Douglas County Open Space.

Legislator Tours:

Odom Farms (Wheat Ridge): Tour with state legislators highlighting a planned co-housing community (CedarRoot) for neurodiverse adults paired with agricultural conservation via Colorado Open Lands.

Hanna Ranch (Fountain): Tour with state representatives demonstrating how conservation easement tax credits assist family ranching against drought and development pressures.

Conservation & Land Spotlights

Rancho Del Corazón Conserved: A 217-acre ranch in Conejos County along the Rio San Antonio was conserved via the Rio Grande Headwaters Land Trust with Transaction Cost Assistance Program funding.

New Lesser Prairie-Chicken Preserve: Southern Plains Land Trust acquired a 2,100-acre preserve in Kiowa County to protect critical habitat and breeding grounds along Big Sandy Creek for the imperiled bird.

MIRASOL Film Release: Palmer Land Conservancy announced that the award-winning documentary MIRASOL, Looking at the Sun is now available to watch online for free.

Douglas Land Conservancy

<https://douglaslandconservancy.org/>

To protect and conserve the natural character, habitats, ecosystems, and open spaces of the Central Front Range region of Colorado

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

Get Your Oak Leaf Symposium Tickets

<https://douglaslandconservancy.org/oak-leaf-symposium/>

Tickets are on sale now for DLC's 2026 Oak Leaf Symposium!

When: October 22, 10am-3pm

Why: educational symposium — Cultivating Lifelong Stewards through Outdoor Experiences

Stewards of Golden Open Space

<https://stewardsofgolden.org/>

[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>

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>

Project 1201, Sunday October 4th 9:00 AM, Project work on Green Mountain

Project 1198, Sunday October 10th 9:00 AM, Rock work on Turkey Trot Mt. Falcon

Project 1202, Sunday October 18th 9:00 AM, Project work on Turkey Trot Green Mountain

Go to website, click on Project number to sign up.

SOLVE (Save Open Lands, Vistas and the Environment)

PLAN Jeffco's sister organization in Clear Creek County

<http://www.solveccc.org>

Links: <https://www.solveccc.org/Links.html>

Library: <https://www.solveccc.org/Library.html>

Flaming Foliage Relay Race, September 11-12, 2026

Volunteers from SOLVE were joined by the Operational Director from PLAN Jeffco to assist with this year's Flaming Foliage Relay Race, a "fun run" (as described by some of the participating runners) that takes place over two days and 165 miles, from Idaho Springs to Buena Vista, on single-track trails, over Guanella, Georgia and Fremont passes.

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](#)

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

WANT TO SUPPORT OUR WORK?

I'd Like To Support Your Work

WATCH THIS SPACE...Local Goings-on

Gross Reservoir Updates as of August 2026

Legal update

In 2025, Denver Water appealed a federal district judge's remedy order related to tree removal and reservoir expansion. On July 31, 2026, a three-judge panel for the 10th Circuit Court of Appeals heard oral arguments on the case. The court will now consider the parties' arguments before issuing a decision. Denver Water remains committed to resolving the remaining legal issues and completing this important project.

Project Update

Completed: Roller-compacted concrete (RCC) placements are complete.

North Shore Activity:

Dismantling and removing the RCC batch plant.

A barge has been launched in the reservoir for underwater upgrades to the auxiliary outlet works at Gross Dam.

Ongoing Construction:

Conventional concrete placement on top of the new spillway and in the stilling basin.

Drain drilling and electrical work.

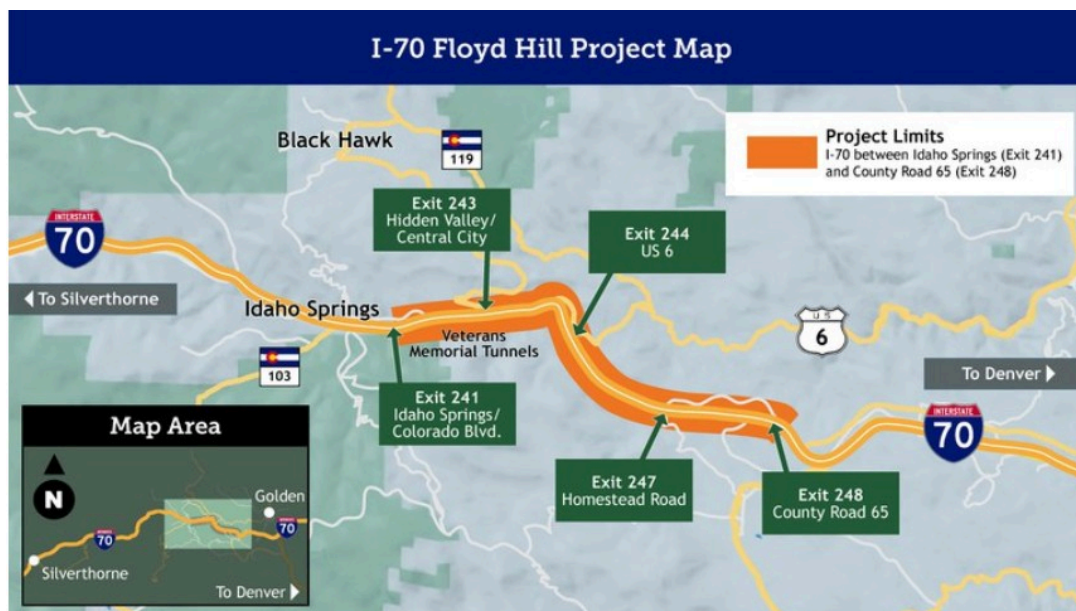
Recreation & Community Info

Boater Shuttle: Free boater shuttle schedules will be updated in the coming weeks via email to recreation update subscribers.

Navigation & Access: Check the Project My Map online for current road restrictions and recreation access.

Office Hours: In-person office hours take place at Canyon Coffee every other Wednesday from 8:00 AM–10:00 AM (weather permitting).

Contact: Visit grossreservoir.org or email grossreservoir@denverwater.org.



Map of the I-70 Floyd Hill Project limits spanning I-70 between Idaho Springs (Exit 241) and County Road 65 (Exit 248). The map includes the key exits within the project limits including Hidden Valley/Central City (Exit 243), US 6 interchange (Exit 244) and Homestead Road (Exit 247). Map courtesy of CDOT, <https://www.codot.gov/projects/i70floydhill>

I-70 Floyd Hill Project Update As of 9/25/26

Project Overview

Scope: Covers 8 miles of I-70 from west of Evergreen to eastern Idaho Springs (adding a third WB express lane, frontage road section, and interchange improvements).

Timeline: Construction began July 2023. New alignment targeted for 2028; full project completion in 2029.

Key Traffic Shifts & Closures

US 6 Off-Ramp Closures (Exit 244):

Daytime: WB off-ramp closed 9 a.m.–3 p.m. (Sept. 29 & Oct. 1). Detour: Continue to Hidden Valley (Exit 243) and return on EB I-70 to US 6.

Upcoming Nighttime Full Closures: WB I-70 closed at US 6 from 9 p.m.–5 a.m. on Oct. 11 & 12 (backup dates: Oct. 19 & 20) for segmental bridge construction. Detour: Use US 6 off- and on-ramps.

Lane Closures & Local Road Impacts

I-70 Lane Closures:

WB I-70: Overnight single-lane closures from 8 p.m.–6 a.m. (Sept. 27–Oct. 1) between Exit 244 and Exit 241.

EB I-70: Daytime right-lane closures between Exits 243 and 244 (7 a.m.–5 p.m., Sept. 29–Oct. 1; 9 a.m.–2 p.m., Oct. 2). Daytime shoulder closure on Express Lane (Sept. 29).

US 40: Daytime flagging operations between US 6 and Tonn Valley Drive (7 a.m.–5 p.m., Sept. 28–Oct. 2).

Clear Creek Greenway Trail: Flagging east of Exit 241 for noise wall construction (7 a.m.–5 p.m., Sept. 28–Oct. 2). Note: Trail remains closed between US 6 and Hidden Valley through 2029.

East Idaho Springs Road: Alternating single-lane traffic over the Clear Creek bridge (7 a.m.–5 p.m., Sept. 28–Oct. 2).

Future Major Closures

Mid-to-Late October: Overnight EB I-70 closure (Exits 241 to 243) to shift traffic onto the new bridge.

Mid-November: Overnight EB I-70 closures at US 6 (Exit 244) to install bridge construction equipment.

Is there a project in your neighborhood that you'd like more information on? Here's a link to Jeffco Planning and Zoning, where the new interactive map showing ongoing applications and active permits is located (scroll down to the bottom of the page): <https://www.jeffco.us/786/Planning-Zoning>.

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 land 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!

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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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