



PLAN JEFFCO UPDATE

OCTOBER 2001

INSIDE THIS ISSUE	
Centennial Cone	3
Annual Meeting	4
Threats	6
2002 Budget	8
OSAC Notes	10
Black Canyon 14	
Volunteer Coord.	16

**GROWTH
IT IS ALL
AROUND US**

**PLAN TO ATTEND THE ANNUAL-
PLAN Jeffco dinner meeting with the
Commissioners, OSAC, and Open Space staff**

November 8, 2001

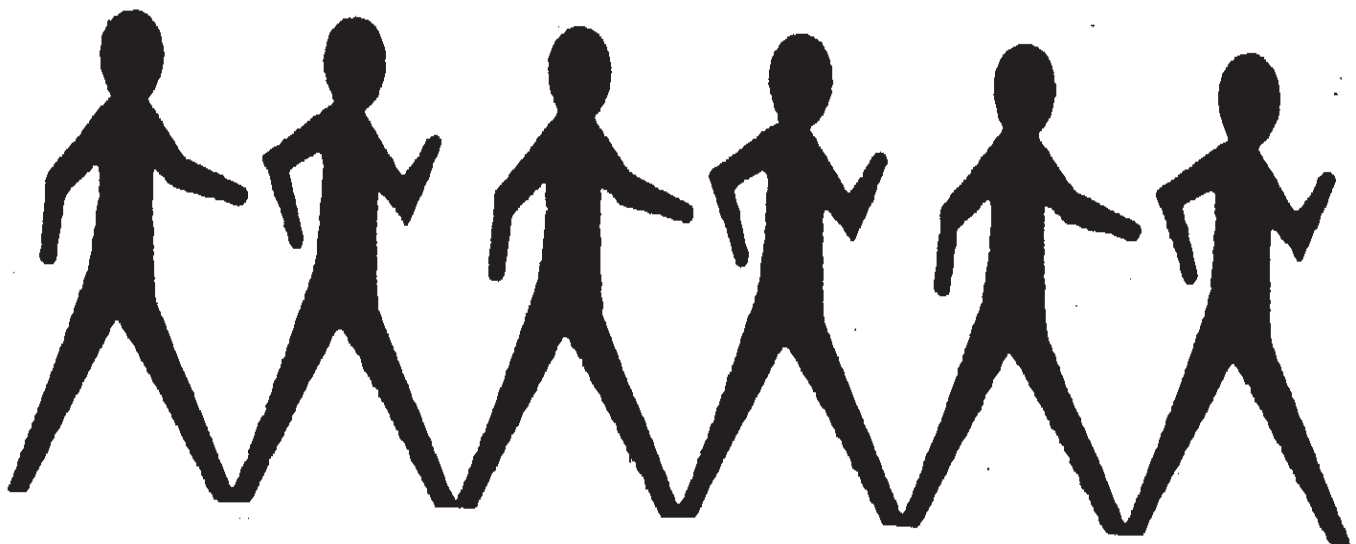
Our Featured Speaker will be:

Bill Broderick the Regional Planner for
The Denver Regional Council of
Governments

Bill will talk about the role of Open Space in DRCOG's Future Plans

November 8, 2001
Mount Vernon Country Club
Social Hour at 6:00 P.M.
Buffet Dinner at 7:00 P.M.
Dinner cost is: \$25 per person

For reservations or information, call
Sandy Bryant - 303-526-0234
Gretchen Larson - 303-526-9629



Centennial Cone — A Terrific Open Space Purchase

We have used the words “jewel” so many times to identify some great new Open Space purchase that we hate to use that word again, but the recent purchase of the area around and including Centennial Cone really is an exceptionally beautiful and unique area. This future open space park, located between Clear Creek Highway 6 and Golden Gate Canyon Road, is about five miles southeast of Golden Gate State Park. It encompasses 3,369 acres, which makes the park almost the size of White Ranch Open Space Park,

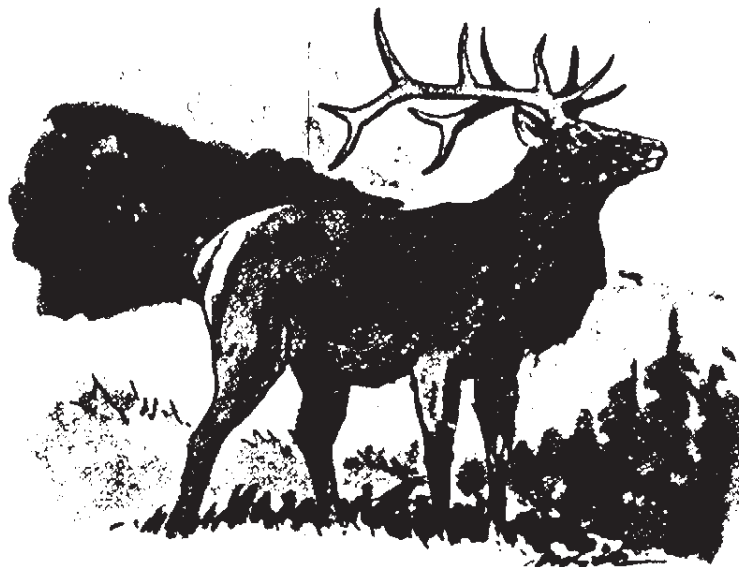
This land is home to elk, mountain lion deer, and other wild animal species. The entire park has been designated as a Natural Area, and will be managed for the elk to continue to use as a winter range and spring calving area. A trail on the north side and all trails located in the central part of the park will be closed during this time of elk use, which may run from mid-November to mid-June. However, a spur trail from the north is planned to lead to a viewing area where visitors may view the herd in its natural habitat.

Also, a carefully regulated, limited elk hunt will be held from December 1st through mid-January to help insure the continued health of the herd. The park will be closed to recreational use during that time.

The natural surface trail system will offer visitors a backcountry experience with multiple use trails designed to segregate trail use as much as possible. It is planned to offer interpretive and informational kiosks at trail heads, and wayside exhibits, and guided programs for general public audiences. A trail to the south and east sections of the park will be out of the elk range and will provide recreational opportunities throughout the year except for the short elk hunting period in December and part of January.

Current plans are to open the park to the public in the fall of 2005.

Lee Todd



SPRAWL, GROWTH, REGIONAL PLANNING

PLAN JEFFCO'S ANNUAL MEETING EXAMINES ISSUES

PLAN Jeffco was honored to have State Senator Joan Fitzgerald and Ann Livingston, representing COPIRG, (Colorado Public Interest Group) as featured speakers at our Annual Meeting of April 28, 2001. PLAN Jeffco wanted further information on the issues involved.

Both speakers explained what the bills emphasized. Proponents of Growth Control have called for Master Plan preparations by cities and counties with citizen approval. With such "official" master plans in place, implementation of the plans would be by land use regulations and local regulators. They also call for some form of approved regional planning. Regional planning is one of the areas of control that is most contentious for local entities. These entities fear any and all impositions that they envision neighboring communities might require of them.

By use of regional and local Master Plans, Urban Service Areas could be designated separating allowable new growth adjacent to urban areas, to infill development and redevelopment within respective urban areas and to selection and identification of conservation and open space lands.

Other related issues that strongly affect the debates about growth bills are whether to allow communities to use moratoriums and/or permit caps on new construction, whether to increase authority for counties to assess impact fees on new development within service areas, for roads, utilities. Another issue is how to achieve a housing balance, present open market land and housing costs are too high to provide attainable housing for those working in minimum wage jobs as well as lower middle income levels.

It was proposed that all land not

included in an Urban Service Area be classified as Rural Land. Such a designation could include significant open space or naturally productive land. Such lands would not have utilization of central water or sewer systems and also restrictions on commercial development.

Although many people would see the zoning of land to create 35-acre lots for decentralized single family housing as a less noticeable use, planners and county commissioners strongly oppose such zoning because such land use requires excessive road requirements and such owners do not have to pay for school fees, park land dedication fees and run up 10 times the service cost requirements compared to a home in an established suburban community.

This objection was raised by Don Moore, Douglas County Planner and former Commissioner Betty Miller who were both present at our meeting. Both are also supporters of regional planning. An article in the Rocky Mountain News by Denver



Balsam Fir

Mayor Wellington Webb says: "In the growth legislation I support, (at the time S.B.148), the Denver Regional Council of Governments is assigned the responsibility of maintaining a coordinated regional plan with "teeth." (DRCOG does not have effective teeth.) This is the kind of plan that could resolve the Aurora/Douglas County dispute and others like it. DRCOG's plans represent the best thinking of local elected officials of 49 local municipalities and counties, expressing our vision for the metro area for the next 20 to 25 years. But unless and until a growth management law like SB 148 is adopted, compliance by local governments with DRCOG's plans remains entirely voluntary."

DRCOG's work involves an eight-county area centered around Denver. The counties are: Boulder, Jefferson, Gilpin, Clear Creek, Douglas, Arapahoe, Adams, and Denver.

The Annual Meeting also included an in-depth report by Mark Heron, staff Trails Supervisor, on our trails system with several maps to better see our progress on completed trails. As reported in March, \$5.38 million has been budgeted for all Trails 2000 for the county and the cities through the year 2005, (hard

surface trails,) and 2 million for natural surface trails through 2005.

PLAN Jeffco's next major meeting, which we have always called "The Commissioners Dinner" since we bring together our members, the Commissioners, representatives of the Open Space Advisory Committee, the Open Space Director, and key staff members, will present a speaker from DRCOG. PLAN Jeffco presented an in depth article covering their 1999 plan in our April 1999 newsletter.

Here is your chance to talk to the County Commissioners. The Commissioner's Dinner is open to anyone interested in open space and regional planning. It has proved to be a friendly format in which to bring citizens together with government and open space representatives. Note registration requirements elsewhere in this newsletter.

By Marilyn Mueller



REAL AND PERCEIVED THREATS TO OPEN SPACE

SEPTEMBER 6, 2001 STATEMENT TO OSAC BY MARGOT ZALLEN, FOR PLAN JEFFCO

I am here tonight to talk to you for PLAN Jeffco, in our role as the watchdog of Open Space, and to share our concerns about Open Space problems and about how the Open Space Program is perceived by Jeffco citizens and others. We, in PLAN Jeffco, who wrote and campaigned for the original Open Space resolution have stuck by the Program through the good and the bad. We say thank you and congratulate you when things go well. We pointedly tell you when something is wrong. When the program did not even have funds to buy or make maps, we supplied them; when you did not have enough money to buy land, we formed a land trust and got the funds to buy Mt. Falcon and other lands. We worked with you in developing two master plans, conceived of and worked on the Ad Hoc Committee for over one year and were told by the Commissioners that our work saved the program. We also worked against diversion of Open Space funds for a jail and for roads in South Jeffco. When the well was going dry, we initiated the SOS campaign and worked hard for two years to pass the bond issue so you could accelerate preservation of key lands. When you were chastised for budgeting for recreational facilities with funds freed up by the SOS bond funds, we were there to support you and say that had been part of the deal.

We are now here because a number of actions have demonstrated that there are weaknesses in the Program that must be fixed. We are not here to point fingers of blame at anyone, least of all at Ralph or any member of the Open Space staff. We do not want to dwell on the reason for the problems but would rather focus on the solutions. But we do need to look at the causes of the problems in order to craft effective solutions. We need to fully and

frankly discuss these concerns so we can understand how we can work together to strengthen the program.

All of our concerns are fallout from the group home proceedings. I sat through the three nights of hearings and am here to say the Commissioners did the right thing to deny the group home complex along Hwy. 93. However, saying NO did not resolve the Open Space issues that scores of people testified about on the last night of the hearings.

The first problem results from the publication of the list of sites the county said it seriously considered for the facilities. The inclusion of 18 Open Space parks in the list told all of us that not only CAN the county dispose of Open Space land, including key lands just acquired with SOS bond funds, it Will or May dispose of them for a use never intended or envisioned by all those who voted for SOS or who support the program. That created a very serious problem and eroded the trust of the citizens, most of whom probably did not realize that the 1972 Open Space resolution, the Open Space law, says that Open Space lands may be sold, traded or otherwise disposed of as long as the proceeds go back to the Open Space fund. Let me tell you how serious this is and how



Deer rising from bedding area

prevalent the belief is that not only CAN the county dispose of these lands, they WILL do it. Representative Witwer, told me on the last night of the hearings, that an Evergreen resident called him and said that when a buyer for his home was told it bordered Open Space, the buyer and real estate agent said “Oh! That is a problem as the county could use it to build a group home”. Instead of it being a benefit to be next to Open Space, it became a problem. And that perception is now a problem for all of us.

Second, is the issue of the co-mingling of funds and the lack of a legally recorded delineation of which lands were General Fund lands and which were lands subject to Open Space restrictions. This led to concerns over the legality of the use of Open Space funds to tie up an entire parcel of land, part of which was proposed to be used in a manner that greatly diminished the values of the Open Space portion of the Ramsetter West property. It is inappropriate to use Open Space land as a buffer to an incompatible and potentially dangerous County land use, effectively eliminating its unfettered use as Open Space.

Third, is a problem that came as a shock to us when we were told in uncontested testimony that the water for the facility would come from ground water under the Open Space portion of the property. That ground water belonged to the Open Space Program. The county’s proposal would have illegally used Open Space property for a non Open Space use.

Fourth, is the problem caused by not assuring a seller in the deed that the land will not be used for a purpose incompatible with Open Space uses. Jennifer Ramsetter was told that the county would pay less if such assurance was to be given. Therefore, there was “protective” language put in the purchase agreement which stated that the General Fund part of her land would be used as a “buffer” for any group home. This language in the purchase agreement was arguably binding on the county due to other language in purchase agreement and if the group home had been approved the “protective” language would have been part of a legal battle with the Ramsetters and others. All this arose because the seller wanted assurances



Beaver with dam and lodge

on the future use of her land and would have had to accept a lower purchase price to have this in the deed. Why do we do this when we need to encourage people to sell their land, need willing sellers and want that land for open space purposes when we buy it? Why don’t we have enough assurances in the Open Space Resolution so that landowners are comfortable with the potential future uses without onerous deed restrictions?

Fifth, the county should take action to see that all of Ramsetter West is used as Open Space. It has very valuable scenic and other open space values and is an important link to protecting the backdrop. It is also a key link to the Rocky Flats, foothills and Clear Creek natural areas. If Open Space funds need to be used to pay back the General Fund, so be it. If this is not necessary, that would even be better. But the important thing is to protect all of it as Open Space.

Sixth, OSAC was presented one fact situation when it voted to spend Open Space funds for Ramsetter West but the final proposal discussed at the hearings on the group home complex presented a very different fact situation. Neither, staff nor the county came back to OSAC to ask its views on the change.

We need to start a dialogue and a cooperative effort to formulate solutions to these problems in a way that restores the public’s trust, including that of GOCO, in the Program and that results in a stronger and better Open Space Program. The county should take short and long term actions that range from changes in policy; to

strong statements from the Commissioners, and to putting proposed changes to the Open Space Resolution on the ballot so that Jeffco citizens can vote on protective measures to strengthen the program. Changes in the Open Space Resolution may only be accomplished if the Commissioners put the issue or issues on the ballot and the citizens vote to approve the proposal.

To start that dialogue, Plan Jeffco proposes:

..A change in the Open Space resolution that states that Open Space lands may not be sold, transferred, or otherwise disposed of unless it is a significant benefit to Open Space. We are talking about an ecological or recreational benefit not merely a financial benefit. The benefit should not be just dollars. Someone could claim that \$50 million for White Ranch, or North or South Table Mountains would be a significant benefit but that is not the kind of benefit which would strengthen the program nor one we propose. An exception for very small parcels, under 3-5 acres, should be considered.

..A change in the Open Space resolution that would state that when Open Space funds are used to acquire property, all of that property must be used for Open Space purposes. Co-mingling of funds should be allowed, co-mingling of uses should not.

..All of Ramsetter West to become Open Space property.

..When the future use of property next to Open Space is changed, especially if the county proposes the change, staff

should come back and discuss the situation with OSAC and OSAC should take appropriate action.

Thank you for the opportunity to present our concerns and our proposed solutions to you.

Open Space 2002 Budget

The proposed 2002 budget is shown on the following page. The table also includes the actual income and expenditures for 1998, 1999, and 2000 plus the projected income and expenditures for 2003 and 2004.

The 2002 budget shows a growth of only 3 percent. When the 4 percent nominal growth in salaries is considered, the other items in the operations and management budget generally show a decrease. Note that the large increase in Development and Joint Ventures in 2001 and 2002 reflect funds carried forward from previous budgets.

The projected fund balance for 2001 is rather large. If the economy recovers and projected sales tax revenues are not impacted too much, there is a possibility that additional funds can be made available for development of the newly acquired parks. Flying J is scheduled for development of parking and services in 2002 and 2003, Stockwell in 2004, Centennial Cone in 2004 and 2005, and Coal Creek in 2005.

By John Litz

Open Space 2002 Budget

JEFFERSON COUNTY OPEN SPACE DEPARTMENT BUDGETS - 1998 THROUGH 2002

	1998 Actual	1999 Actual	2000 Actual	2001 Budget	2002 Budget	2003 Projected	2004 Projected	1998-2002 Average Change
Acquisitions	8763	607	263	50	50	50	50	
Bond Debt Service	0	3576	4750	4822	9900	10970	10960	
Development	1208	905	931	6524	4960	2250	3020	26%
Joint Ventures	4263	6193	3069	7871	4000	3020	3080	-1%
Foothills Building	20	39	322	222	228	240	250	25%
Total Acquisitions and Development	14254	11320	9335	19489	19138	16530	17360	7%
Administration	1125	1126	1158	1314	1407			5%
Citizen Outreach	52	235	258	335	350			24%
Acquisitions	255	300	307	410	429			10%
Design and Development	279	278	299	335	346			4%
Planning	440	382	579	606	623			7%
Park Services	2994	3466	3260	3850	3890			5%
Pest Control	39	134	204	264	115			10%
Hiwan Homestead	227	209	240	255	265			3%
Nature Center	307	317	331	124	405			7%
Total Operations and Maintenance	5718	6447	6636	7493	7830	8380	8720	6%
Starting Balance	10764	9733	13045	27877	27850			
Attributable share	18149	19480	21274	21804	22460	22810	23666	
City Admin Fee	163	178	194	212	250	260	270	
Interest revenue	314	199	194	500	500	520	541	
Other revenue	315	1222	7394	2165	4000	4160	4326	
Total New Revenue	18941	21079	30803	24681	27210	27750	28804	7%
Total County Revenue	29705	30812	43848	52558	55060			
Ending balance	9733	13045	27877	25576	28092	2840	2724	

Note: These balances are for the individual years and do not include starting balances.

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April 5 Study Session - Stanton LaBreche and Bevin Carithers reviewed proposed changes in the Rules and Regulations for use of Open Space Parks and facilities including a proposed fine schedule. Specific definitions within the Rules and Regulations and the appropriate fine amounts were discussed. A short discussion was held relative to issuing additional bonds. The OSAC consensus was that normal acquisition processes should be used with the upcoming issue and that commissions or agent fees would not be paid from bond funds.

April 5 Regular Meeting - Guidelines for the next series of Bonds were discussed. The decision was made to not make allocations and evaluate all projects on a county-wide basis. Acquisitions in cities would be subject to a 25% match from the city.

Final terms were presented and accepted for the Winzent property on the North side of Tucker Lake. This completes the acquisition of all the properties bounding the lake.

Properties approval for due diligence and negotiations included Ternstrom, Northwest of White Ranch on the South side of Ralston Creek; R-1 surplus school sites adjacent to Kendalvue, Friendly Hills, and Columbine Knolls; and the Casey property at Lilley Gullch West of Wadsworth Boulevard.

Approval was given to issuing \$30 million in bonds on May 17th.

May 3 Study Session - The status of the 27 active trail right-of-way acquisitions was presented by Joy Lucisano. Charlie Hudson discussed the status of Trails 2000 projects. The pioneer Trail from Elk Meadow to Dedise Park should be completed in 2001, another section of trail in Morrison will be built in 2002, and the Clear Creek trail from McIntyre to Golden should be completed in 2002. Stanton LaBreche listed on-park trail projects for 2001: South Valley to

Deer Creek Canyon Park, Lair o-the Bear to Pence Park, Matthews Winters to Green Mountain, Elk Meadow Founders trail, and additional trails on Mt Galbraith.

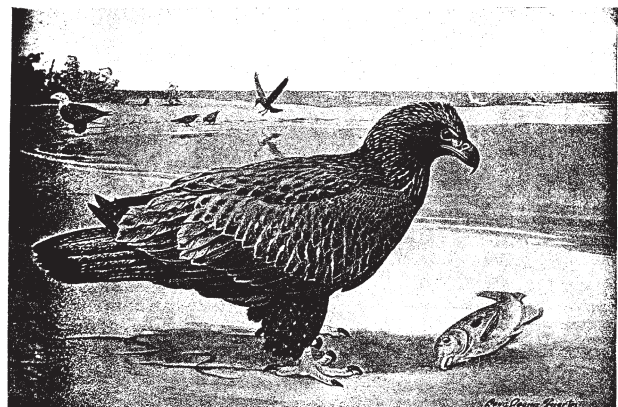
May 3 Regular Meeting - The Revised Open Space Rules and Regulations were approved. (Note these regulations are posted in each park.) Final terms were approved for the Sarad property - a Clear Creek trail property along the Church Ditch in Golden.

The Legault Summit property East of the top of Meyer Ranch Park was presented to OSAC for consideration. A motion was approved to allow Recreation Districts to make improvements to properties leased from Open Space upon approval of the JCOS Director rather than after approval by OSAC and the BCC.

Cities and Recreation Districts were asked by staff to submit documentation for their priority acquisitions.

June 7 Study Session - Staff updated OSAC on Capital requests that would be included in the 2002 Budget. These include: Bear Creek Trail in Morrison, Clear Creek Trail, Evergreen Dam to Hwy 73/74 intersection trail, shop/yard for Park Services adjacent to Golden golf course shop.

A list of priority acquisitions for the



BALD EAGLE (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus leucocephalus*) (Linnaeus)
1766, Plac

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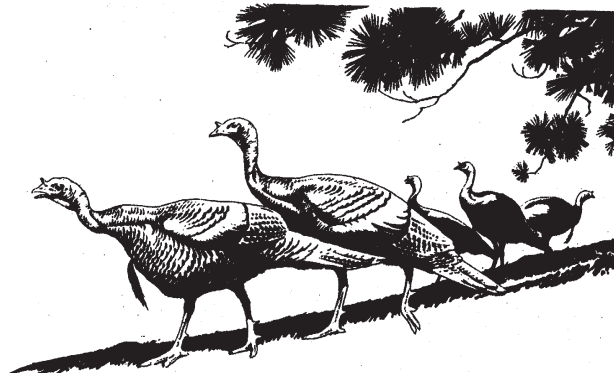
unincorporated areas were presented by Ken Foelske and Roxanne Martin.

June 7 Regular Meeting - Approval was given to removal of the reverter clause on 1,486 square feet of the Davis property in Wheat Ridge to allow adjacent landowners to continue existing use. Approved final terms for the Brown property at 25th and Chase that Edgewater plans to use for a community center. Approval was given for due diligence and negotiation on the Legault Summit property East of the top of Meyer Ranch Park.

The list of unincorporated priorities was presented by Ken Foelske. Much discussion was held relative to the properties and by consensus they were rated high, medium, and low. High priorities were based of Open Space qualities and potential willingness of the owner to negotiate.

High Priorities include:

- Hudler addition to Centennial Cone - 99-026
- McCoy addition to Centennial Cone - 99-034
- Douglas addition to Centennial Cone - 00-044
- Ralston - Clear Creek Canyon - 92-098
- King - Clear Creek Canyon - 02-103
- CDOT Right of way - Clear Creek Canyon - 94-068
- Andwich Land - Evergreen-Conifer trail - 91-107
- Lewis - Evergreen-Conifer trail - 92-122
- Blair Ranch addition to Alderfer - 00-038
- Western Paving - North Table Mountain - 94-007
- Weidner - trail corridor in Ralston Creek - 95-071
- Cotter Corp - trail easement in Ralston Creek 96-076
- Ternstrom - trail corridor in Ralston Creek - 01-009
- Chippewa - South Table Mountain - 94-020
- State Land Board - Evergreen Mtn lease -



89-124

- Faller addition to Reynolds - 96-074
- Witbak - addition to Cathedral Spires - 98-022
- Faller easement at Reynolds - 99-010
- Clear Creek Trail - 4 easements
- Denver Water Board - Ralston Creek trail - 93-113
- Public Service - Van Bibber trail - 96-007
- Open Lands - trail corridor addition to Reynolds - 00-039
- Farmers and Croke canal trail - 90-049, 93-055
- Denver Water Board - Fairmont trail extension 93-060

July 12 Study Session - The proposed 2002 Budget was presented. The budget shows a 3% increase over the 2001 budget. Capital requests are 26% lower than 2001. See separate article for budget details.

July 12 Regular Meeting - Resolutions were approved to transfer a trail easement through the Coors Technology Center to Golden and to approve the settlement of the Robinson Brick suit relative to their State Land Board lease on the Stockwell property. Discussion was held on GOCO's wanting to restrict their grant on the Stockwell property. The restriction would not allow improvements. Ralph Schell was directed to not accept the restrictions.

OSAC * OSAC * OSAC * OSAC * OSAC

Public comments were presented relating to the Juvenile Sex Offender Facility and the use of the Ramstetter Open Space as a buffer. A number of citizens presented positions that the “as planned” facility did not match what was proposed when the Ramstetter property was acquired. See separate article in this issue.

Representatives of the cities and recreation districts presented their priority acquisitions.

August 2 Study Session - Anne Kelson and Steve Snyder summarized the 2001 changes in the Open Meetings Law, in particular the rules concerning Executive Sessions. Under the new rules, Executive Sessions will be taped, but the tape can be erased 90 days after the meeting unless a court has issued an injunction.

August 2 Regular Meeting - Discussion was held on the GOCO’s offer to limit their grant to 70% of the authorized amount since their desired restriction would only apply to 70% of the property. GOCO’s restriction prohibits most improvements that are necessary for an urban-type park. OSAC passed a resolution to not accept the GOCO offer.

Approval was given to Lakewood to transfer 508 square feet of the City Commons property back to Opus Northwest. The original survey was incorrect and the 508 square feet are under the road.

The priority properties proposed by the cities and districts were reviewed. They were ranked high, medium, and low. The rankings were based of Open Space qualities and potential willingness of the owner to negotiate. Commercial-zoned properties were rated lower unless they met a critical open space need.

The properties rank high include:

- Schaff - Arvada between canals between Simms and Kipling -
- Hansen - Arvada addition to Majestic View park
- Gunter - Arvada - site on 69th Ave West of

- Sheridan
- Boyd - Arvada - natural setting at 64th and Quaker
- Casey - Foothills and Lilley Gulch and Wadsworth
- R-1 surplus - Foothills along Elmhurst East of Wadsworth
- R-1 surplus - Foothills Weaver Creek at S Cole
- Jack-in-the-Box - Wheat Ridge - 41st and Wadsworth
- Denning - Wheat Ridge - 39th and Kipling
- Arvex - Wheat Ridge 48th Ave across Clear Creek from Johnson Park
- LCB - Golden at mouth of Golden Gate Canyon

September 6 Study Session - Prior acquisitions using sales tax and bond funds for each of the cities and districts were reviewed along with purchases in the unincorporated areas of the County. Lakewood had not proposed priority properties as they were concerned about their 25% match for the properties acquired using bond



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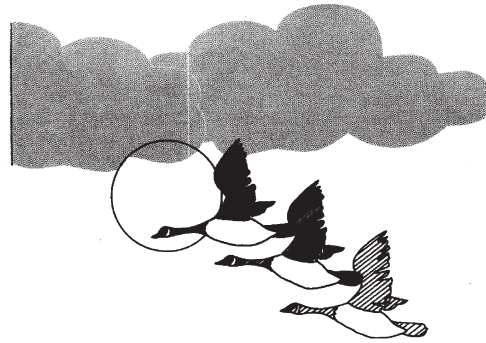
funds. Their matching expenditures were reviewed and accepted.

September 6 Regular Meeting - Final terms were approved for Open Lands trail corridor adjacent to Reynolds Park and Schaff property in Arvada between the two canals. A lease of a portion of the Rooney open space area to Golden for an dog off-leash area was approved. Kathy Hodgson and Ross Williams presented Lakewood's two priority projects. These were the Toteve in-holding in Walker-Branch Park and properties that could be aggregated for a park between 10th and 11th East of Wadsworth.

Discussion was held relating to weaknesses in the open space program that were brought to a head by the hearings on the Juvenile Sex Offender Facility. The discussion consensus was that the Resolution may need wording to eliminate the perception that Open Space can be disposed for other purposes. See the October 4 Study Session for more of this discussion.

October 4 Study Session - The study session was devoted to a discussion of Open Space protection issues raised by the proposed location of the Juvenile Treatment Center. (Note: Margot Zallen's comments to OSAC at their September meeting, elsewhere in this newsletter.) Points discussed included - The County's authority to dispose of Open Space lands for use not envisioned by the constituents, joint acquisitions with other County funds that lack a legally recorded delineation of Open Space versus other County lands, use of Open Space property for non-Open Space purposes, seller assurances of land use compatibility, and land use proposals affecting Open Space property.

October 4 Regular Meeting - Resolutions were passed by OSAC to negotiate transfer of 25 acres at the Northeast corner of Standley Lake Park to R-1 for two properties totaling 28 acres that are bounded by Westminster Open Space property and to change one of Arvada's priority properties from the Gunter to the Webb property



- both on 69th Avenue just West of Sheridan. Final terms were approved for the Hansen property adjacent to Majestic View park in Arvada and the Blair Ranch adjacent to Alderfer Three Sisters Park. The Blair Ranch price is more that Open Space would like to pay; so partnerships will be investigated prior to a December closing.

A field trip was scheduled to view the Elmgreen property along the Clear Creek County line South of Open Space property in Clear Creek. Clear Creek County is considering an extension of this property in Clear Creek County.



The Black Canyon of the Gunnison - Facts and Feelings

"A turkey buzzard helped me appreciate Black Canyon. Looking down into the dark, precipitous gorge in western Colorado, I was having trouble with perspective: The canyon looked smaller than I knew it was. Janis Gifford, a ranger at Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Monument, had pointed out that I was standing on the edge of a sheer 2,000-foot drop, that the boulders below were the size of two-car garages, and that Painted Wall, a cliff across the way, has taken climbers a week to ascend. Nothing worked. Then Janis said, "Look at the buzzard." I peered down into space, expecting to see a big bird. Instead I saw a creature that within the depths looked as small as a starling. The canyon suddenly took on enormous dimensions.

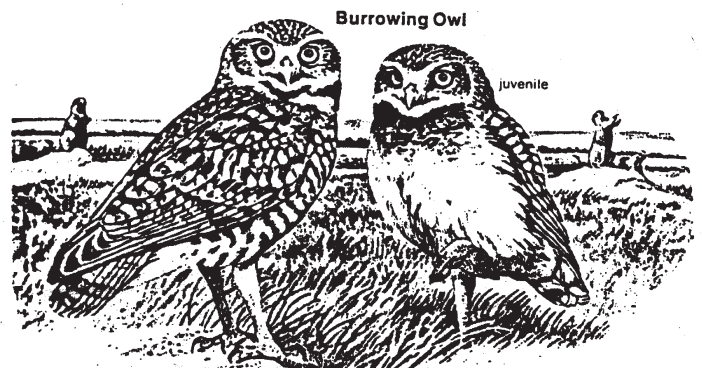
Black Canyon wears three faces. At the upper end of its 53 mile length, firs, spruce and pines climb down the walls, and the river is ponded into reservoirs by a trio of dams. The lower end, with its bare, colorful rocks and arid climate, is a desert by contrast. The most spectacular countenance, however, falls in the 12-mile middle section, named a national monument in 1933. It is a forbidding gash, split by a white-capped river, and arrayed with cliffs of granite and metamorphic rocks. The gray walls date to Precambrian times, more than 1.3 billion years ago.

The canyon is a "fortunate accident," says Wallace Hansen of the U.S. Geological Survey in Denver. "We had a hard crystalline core, an uplift of the region, and a river with a steep gradient. With that combination, we ended up with a sheer, narrow canyon."

Feeling like a mere spectator on the rim, I climbed down into the canyon with Ranger Dennis Neilson. After a fairly easy two-hour descent, we reached the foaming Gunnison River, choked with boulders, bound by cliffs. "The river is unfloatable," Dennis said with a grin of experience. "To travel through here is a matter of swimming, wading, climbing, and busting through poison ivy higher than your head."

We spent a night and a day on the dusky bottom, fishing for rainbow and brown trout and clambering over rocks. The climb back, up a loose rock gully, was a character builder. Three-quarters of the way to the top I called for a rest and collapsed in the shade. With halfhearted curiosity, I asked Dennis what kind of bird was circling overhead. "That's a buzzard," he answered matter-of-factly. I needed no further impetus to pull myself up and make it to the rim. Once again in Black Canyon I found myself indebted to a turkey buzzard."

By Thomas O'Neil
From "America's Majestic
Canyons"
National Geographic Society
Copyright 1979



If you have not!!! Join PLAN Jeffco or renew your Membership today!

PLAN Jeffco is the county-wide volunteer citizen's group that organized and drafted the Open Space Resolution that resulted in the formation of the Jefferson County Open Space Program in 1972. We currently function as a watchdog group, observing meetings of the Open Space Advisory Committee, participating in subcommittees, and issues groups, proposing and working for important acquisitions, and keeping citizens informed of what is going on in their Open Space Program. PLAN Jeffco provided the leadership for the successful vote for bonds in 1998.

PLAN Jeffco works for Open Space and we work for you! Please sign up or renew your membership now! Your address label shows the date of your last renewal. Call 303.526.0234 for membership information.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Our membership rate is:

\$25 per year

Make checks payable to PLAN Jeffco and send to:

PLAN Jeffco
26553 Columbine Glen
Golden, CO 80401

Are You wired??

If you are, PLAN Jeffco would like to have you on our email tree, so that we can inform you of special events and items that may be of concern to you. We will not share your email address without permission.

Please include with your dues payment or email to

jklitz7@ix.netcom.com



New Volunteer Services Coordinator

Former coordinator Michael Stills has left the Open Space Dept. to pursue a graduate degree and his position has been filled by Nora Simmons, who was recently a coordinator of volunteers for the Denver Botanic Gardens gift shop. Originally from Oklahoma, Ms. Simmons has been living in Colorado for four years. She has had extensive experience coordinating volunteers in the health care area, including St. Anthony's Hospital and the Mt. Evans Hospice in Evergreen.

There are around 600 volunteers working for Open Space in eight categories. Ms. Simmons is directly involved in some categories, such as for Program Assistants. There are orientation policies, training proposals and activity reviews that move through and out of her office to the other volunteer categories. Volunteers in these other categories are recruited and trained under their respective departments. Park Hosts, (greeters, information givers) from Citizen Outreach; Park Patrollers (out on the trails, checking on bikers, hikers and horseback riders) from Rangers Services; Trail Inspectors and Volunteer Trail Building from Trails; Visitor Survey

Takers and Data Entry Technician from Planning; and Cliff-nesting Raptor Observers, Avian Census Takers, and Water Fowl Observing from Natural Resources. Hiwan Homestead and the Nature Center both have many volunteers.

Those people who have been required to serve hours of community service for violations of the law are offered several choices which they may select, which include some Open Space jobs. Open Space is a popular choice because most of these people admire the Open Space program and most of these jobs are outside.

There were three dates in October where the Open Space trailer was parked at three different locations, offering recruitment for volunteers.

There is an Open House being planned for January, which will include providing information on all categories of volunteering.

Ms. Simmons is very enthused about her new job and enjoys meeting the variety of people volunteering brings to her office.

By Marilyn Mueller

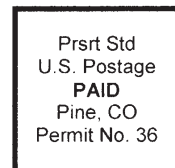


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