



PLAN JEFFCO UPDATE

MARCH 2011

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An Interview with Don Rosier

Donald Rosier is our most recently elected County Commissioner. In late December, Mr. Rosier was kind enough to spend some time with PLAN Jeffco conversing about matters relating to the quality of life in Jefferson County in general, and Open Space in particular.

Background

Rosier: I grew up in Arvada, born and raised. I went to elementary, Junior High, and High School in Arvada. I've lived in Jefferson County my entire life. After graduation from Arvada Sr. High, I went up to Colorado State University. I have a degree in Civil Engineering, and my emphasis is water resources, looking at how water interacts with the community.

PJ: And why do you still live in Jefferson County?

Rosier: I've had the opportunity to do a lot of traveling, not only in the US, but overseas. I've been very fortunate to have that opportunity, and every time I come home, it's great. I couldn't think of any place else that I would rather live than Jefferson County.

Jefferson County provides so much opportunity to be able to be so close to the opportunities that the mountains provide us. To hike, to hunt, to fish, to ski or just hang out.

As an employer, what better place is there to attract high quality employees, than Jefferson County? I think it's in an ideal location. And then you factor in our great school district, we have the opportunities for all of our children to get out and to grow...

It's interesting -- recently somebody asked me the same question, and I brought up the fact that I run into people who I went to high school with, I

went to Jr. High school with - that still live in Jefferson County, that still live in Arvada. All my family is here, **and** with the exception of one older brother, all of my wife's family lives **here, too**. You find that in Jefferson County, that when you are here, people tend to stay.

Continued on the next page



Interview with Don Rosier, continued

Open Space - The Value to Our Community

When we first spoke with Mr. Rosier during his campaign for County Commissioner, we learned that he had a positive opinion of the Jefferson County Open Space program. He indicated that he appreciated the benefits of open space on a personal level, both as an outdoorsman and a property owner. We asked Mr. Rosier to elaborate on these thoughts.

Rosier: The opportunity to get out, whether it's to hike, or whatever else, that's one of the advantages of Open Space. I live right off of Open Space. When my wife and I purchased the lot for our house and built on it, back in 1991, that property behind us was zoned residential/commercial. While our house was being built, Open Space purchased the property and it has been left in its natural condition. I benefit from Open Space every day, because that is my 'back yard'.

PJ: How do you use Open Space?

Rosier: I like to fish, I like to hike, I like to snowshoe, whether it is on Open Space property or Forest Service land. It is getting out and taking it all in and enjoying the community. It's those opportunities that are so close to us. Open Space is a component of everything I've been talking about regarding a healthy and balanced community. And there are opportunities for us to do that on private property, state land, and Open Space property. And it's that relationship that they all have, intermingled, that really makes Jefferson County the ideal location.

Commercial Development and the Relationship Between the County and Municipalities

One of PLAN Jeffco's main interests is in how we as a community manage our continued growth and development. There exists a concern that Jefferson County might, as other counties have, turn towards the development of large contiguous parcels, located outside of municipal boundaries, in an

expedient attempt to foster growth and bolster property tax revenues in the short to medium term. PLAN Jeffco feels that effort and energy ought to be applied towards filling out underdeveloped areas already within municipal boundaries. We asked Mr. Rosier for his thoughts on this issue:

Rosier: Right now, I feel that there's a great opportunity for commercial development to occur in "brown field" sites – areas that have undergone change, which may be sitting vacant, or haven't achieved their highest and best potential, and/or are in flux. The water is there, the sewer is there, typically, you have infrastructure improvements, you typically have some sort of access to public transportation, whether that's light rail or the bus system. That is typically happening more in the cities.

Development in the cities sparks improvement throughout the county. To say that development has to happen in unincorporated Jefferson County to improve the county — I don't agree with that. Development and/or employment opportunities, whether it is redevelopment or it's bringing in new opportunities, if it happens in Lakewood, Arvada, Golden, or elsewhere, it benefits the county as a whole.

Providing a more streamlined opportunity - whether it be for developers or existing employers - to look at opportunities within "brown field" areas, to redevelop is something I favor. In many cases, developers are torn away, because of what it takes to do the redevelopment. To rip it down, maybe it's an older building, and then going through the planning/permitting process.

PJ: Sometimes it's less of a headache just to start fresh?

Rosier: Exactly.

PJ: How would you, as a County Commissioner, work to encourage redevelopment?

Rosier: By working with planning and zoning, engineering, working with the cities, to say "we need to encourage re-development sites," and providing them with an opportunity to be on a streamlined process, to provide them with the encouragement, and say "hey, this is going to take a little more effort, as far as engineering, planning, but it's worth their

Interview with Don Rosier, continued

while,” If they can get it accomplished sooner, it's going to cost them less money, it's already zoned, and I believe it provides that vital opportunity for a community, to revitalize an area.

That not only helps that area, but everything around it, if you provide revitalization in certain areas, then you start taking a look at the neighborhoods, you start attracting a number of families, you start attracting more businesses coming in there, and you increase your tax base, and guess what, that 2% growth [in projected sales tax revenues] goes to 4%. Then there are opportunities to purchase properties for Open Space within the urban zone - maybe park lands or maybe some flood plains.

PJ: Do you see Open Space as having a role in trying to encourage redevelopment within the cities?

Rosier: Well definitely, because Open Space adds value to the properties. In many cases, Open Space programs are viewed as a wall to development, to growth, and I don't think that has ever been the case in Jefferson County.

Biggest Challenge - The County Budget

PJ: What do you see as the biggest challenge in front of you as a County Commissioner?

Rosier: The Budget. To look at services provided, and making sure that we don't see a loss in services and we don't see a loss in personnel. I hate having to let someone go, that is tough, because it not only affects them, it affects their family, it affects the community in general, and it's looking at how we react to these changing times as a county. There are opportunities for us to streamline, to partner up with non-profit organizations and other organizations that are out there, to still provide those services, and not cut back. If you look at the reset of property values coming up next year, you know it's a double-edged sword. For us as taxpayers, our tax bill is going to go down. From the county's side, **it's, 8 to 10 million dollars less available to the county each year.** Granted, there will probably be some services that are cut back. But, my goal is to minimize effects on all residents of Jefferson County. How we make that work is the biggest challenge right now.

The Future of Open Space in Jefferson County

PJ: What do you see as the role which Jefferson County Open Space will play in the future of the county?

Rosier: I feel that Open Space is one of the jewels of the county. We need to keep those programs going which are positive for the residents of Jefferson County. In Open Space, there are great opportunities there. Now going forward, maybe it makes a transition to fewer acquisitions and maybe more development and stewardship of what is already acquired. **Or, maybe it makes that transition later on.**

We need to look at, for instance, our library system. It's one of the best in the nation, look at all the awards they've won. It's the same thing with Open Space - we should be very proud of the Open Space program, we should be very proud of our libraries, we should be very proud of Jefferson County as a whole - and we need to continue the program, I think it's going to be a vital part of Jefferson County going forward.

PJ: When you are thinking of what you'd like the county to look like in the next 5 to 10 years, what is your vision?

Rosier: You know, it's a great question, because my vision is opportunity, I see a vibrant community, one where you can live, work and play. You don't have to travel miles upon miles to work, you don't have to travel out of this big huge metropolis to get to Open Space, to go hiking, to go snowshoeing, to do what you want. I see a balanced community, one that is not heavily pushed this way or that way, a community with the opportunity and tools, to have great Open Space and great employment opportunities. We have great fire departments, a great sheriff's department, police forces, and all those are in balance. A community where our priorities are not whacked one way or the other. Because when something gets pushed, whether it's too much this way or that way, we get out of focus, and that is not healthy.

Interview with Don Rosier, continued

PJ: Over the next 10 or 15 years, as the county starts to experience "build out", and remaining lands are either developed or preserved, what do you see as the balance? And what role do you see Open Space playing in achieving that balance?

Rosier: My personal opinion is that Open Space fits in as an integral part of being able to identify those grounds that have a high historic or ecological background, ones that need to be preserved. It's strategic to be working with development, not competing with development. It is not letting Open Space be an afterthought. We should avoid the situation where we waited too long, to acquire a parcel.

Section 16, and the Jefferson Parkway

In a conversation about development in Jefferson County, it is hardly possible to avoid the question of the proposed Jefferson Parkway. Recently, the Board of County Commissioners set forth a plan in which Open Space funds would be used to purchase Section 16 on Rocky Flats. Potentially, this land would subsequently become part of the National Wildlife Refuge. But, this action would be conditioned upon Boulder County and the City of Boulder dropping their opposition to the proposed Jefferson Parkway.

PJ: What are your thoughts on the proposal that the County Commissioners have given to Boulder, city and county, and to Golden, relating to acquiring Section 16, and not opposing the parkway?

Rosier: **Not yet** being on the Board, I'm willing to just state that, I support the Board's decision to do what they have done. It was a unanimous decision on the part of the Board, and I respect that decision.

It's an interesting proposal, and I think it's a very good proposal in the sense that, it would open up and provide security for Section 16 to make it [the Rocky Flats National Wildlife Refuge] one of the largest urban wildlife refuges in the nation, if not the largest.

Boulder has always wanted the area around Section 16 to be preserved. I believe it's a good compromise with Boulder, and looking at that corridor, it will provide an opportunity to preserve Section 16, make it a large wildlife refuge, plus looking at the growth that's

throughout north Jefferson County, and what other benefits it will have with respect to that **growth**.

So, if we can have that partnership, that works for all the municipalities, that's a good fit, where everyone can come to the table in a way that's not adversarial, that's the way to do it.

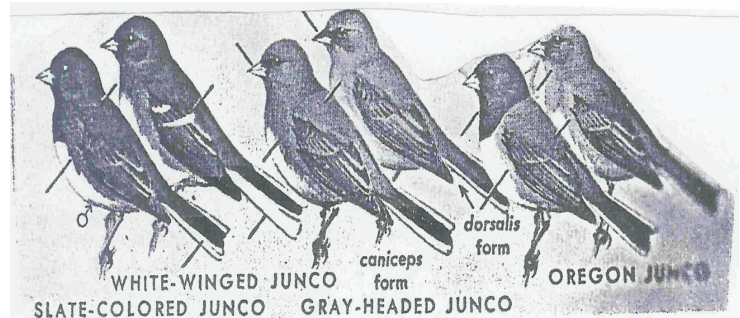
PJ: When we first asked about how to deal with the subject of transportation in northwest Jefferson County, what we understood you to say was that all parties ought to get together and "figure it out".

Rosier: The summary is, there are problems, and I think that everybody would agree, that in that area there are transportation problems.

If a given proposal doesn't fit a particular group's exact idea about how it ought to be done, they are quick to oppose it. Or, this group doesn't get along with that group, and they won't talk to them. When you start getting different groups and factions and all this fighting, it comes [down] to communication. It comes down to what can actually be accomplished — and not everyone at the bargaining table is going to be happy, but does a given proposal satisfy the needs of 95% of the people out there?

We've lost the art of sitting down, face to face, communicating, talking and working things out. And knowing that I understand exactly what you need, you know what I need, and coming to a resolution. Instead of saying, "I'm going to have this, or it's not going to happen at all."

Paul Murphy



OPEN SPACE ADVISORY COMMITTEE RETREAT - November 16, 2010

In 1998 when PLAN Jeffco was developing criteria to go to Open Space, the Commissioners, and eventually the public for issuing acquisition bonds the sales tax revenue had been increasing by 5 to 7.5% annually. PLAN Jeffco took what they thought was a conservative approach and evaluated what level of bonds could be supported by a 4% annual increase. The level determined was \$160 million. This amount of bonds was approved by 72% of the voters in the 1998 election.

Unfortunately, the first of two recessions hit shortly thereafter and for the past 11 years the sales tax revenues have only grown at an average of 1.67%. When the 2010 data are in, the growth will be larger than this average, but the economy still is a constraint. Predictions of future revenue growth need to be conservative. Open Space staff has done a magnificent job of containing costs. The acres of open space managed has more than doubled, yet the staff has only increased from 90 to 95 full-time equivalents. We have been able to refinance the initial bond issue saving over \$2 million. These actions have allowed delaying taking actions until 2011, but the time has come.

Assuming that revenue only increases by 2% per year and operations costs increase at 3% per year, the amount of revenue available for discretionary purposes in the next ten years is only \$60 million. These discretionary expenditures include: acquisitions, joint ventures, and park development.

Of this \$60 million, \$8 million is remaining bond funds, \$12 million is fund balance available for acquisition, and \$2 million is available annually after operations and debt service are paid.

The retreat began with those present - OSAC and staff - voting on their priorities for types of lands. The categories were:

- Archeological and Paleontological Cultural & Historic Resources
- Buffer Areas & Areas with Contiguity to Parks and Open Space
- Regional Parklands
- Regional Recreational Facilities
- Neighborhood Parks
- Front Range Mountain Backdrop/Foreground Preservation Area
- Natural Areas
- Regional Trails
- Community Trails

Although all categories received votes, Natural Areas, Regional Parklands, and Regional Trails received the most by a significant margin.

Acquisition accomplishments to the present were reviewed. Since 1972, 709 projects preserved 58,665 acres, and acquired 30.3 miles of trail corridor at a cost of \$310 million. By principal values of the property, these acquisitions were:

Mountain Backdrop/Foreground	115 projects	19,424 acres	\$79 million
Natural Areas	59 projects	9,686 acres	\$37 million
Multi-value (Regional Parks)	124 projects	19,259 acres	\$81 million
Trails	80 projects	30.3 miles	\$1 million
Cities	276 projects	8,352 acres	\$87 million
Park Districts	55 projects	1,945 acres	\$25 million

Note that the \$87 million for city lands only includes the County share of the purchase cost.

OSAC RETREAT - continued

OSAC has approved almost 100 acquisition projects, not all requiring funding. The projects requiring funding include about \$54 million for County-oriented projects, \$11 million for trail projects, and \$7.3 million for city projects. In addition the cities have about \$20 million of properties that have not had formal requests for acquisition. So the potential is more than \$90 million plus new projects that would arise during the next ten years.

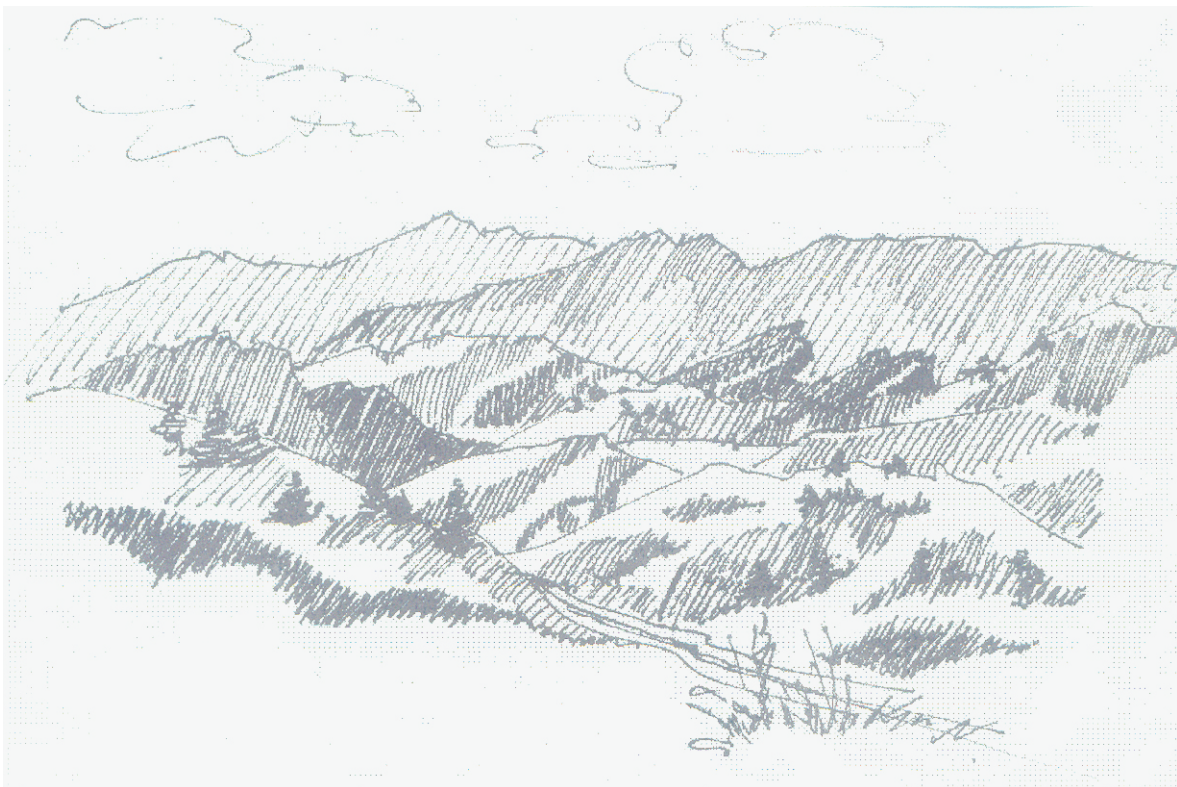
In addition to the acquisition projects Open Space has been budgeting \$2 million per year for Joint Ventures with the cities and districts plus \$2 million per year for park development. If maintained at these levels for the next ten years, the total discretionary funds would need to be \$130 million, or twice what will be available at a 2% growth rate.

Open Space acquisitions staff do have a priority list of 13 projects, but the seller is not always willing or ready. Two projects are on South Table Mountain, nine are Natural Areas, and two are Multi-Value. The estimated acquisition costs for these 13 projects is \$33

million.

The retreat ended with a discussion on the various ways to deal with the shortfall. These included being more aggressive in applying for grants (Open Space has received grants from GOCO, State Trails, State Historical Fund, and others in the past), partnering with other organizations on acquisitions/conservation easements (Open Space has done this with the Mountain Area Land Trust and Clear Creek Land Conservancy in the past), looking for other sources of funds (possibly some of the Conservation Trust Funds that the County Receives from the lottery), and reducing the amount budgeted for Joint Ventures and park development..

The retreat ended with deciding to have the Study Sessions for the January, February, and March meetings concentrate on the shortfall and alternatives.



SECTION 16

Plan Jeffco and the Jeffco Open Space Department have long identified a parcel of land know as Section 16 as a high priority for preservation. This parcel is located east of Colorado S.H. 93 and just north of Colorado S.H. 72. It consists of a full section of land, 640 acres owned by the Colorado State Land Board. Sections 16 and 36 of each township were set aside in 1876, at statehood, to help pay for educating Colorado's citizens. This particular section of land has been identified as important to Jefferson County because it is an integral part of the visual foreground of the Front Range Mountain Backdrop, has important wildlife and native grassland habitat, and is adjacent to the newly created Rocky Flats National Wildlife Refuge.

LaFarge has a lease on Section 16 and a 20-year agreement with Open Space to not mine the Western 120 acres that have relic tall grass prairie. Published information indicates that the Colorado Land Board has been requesting \$10 million to sell the property.

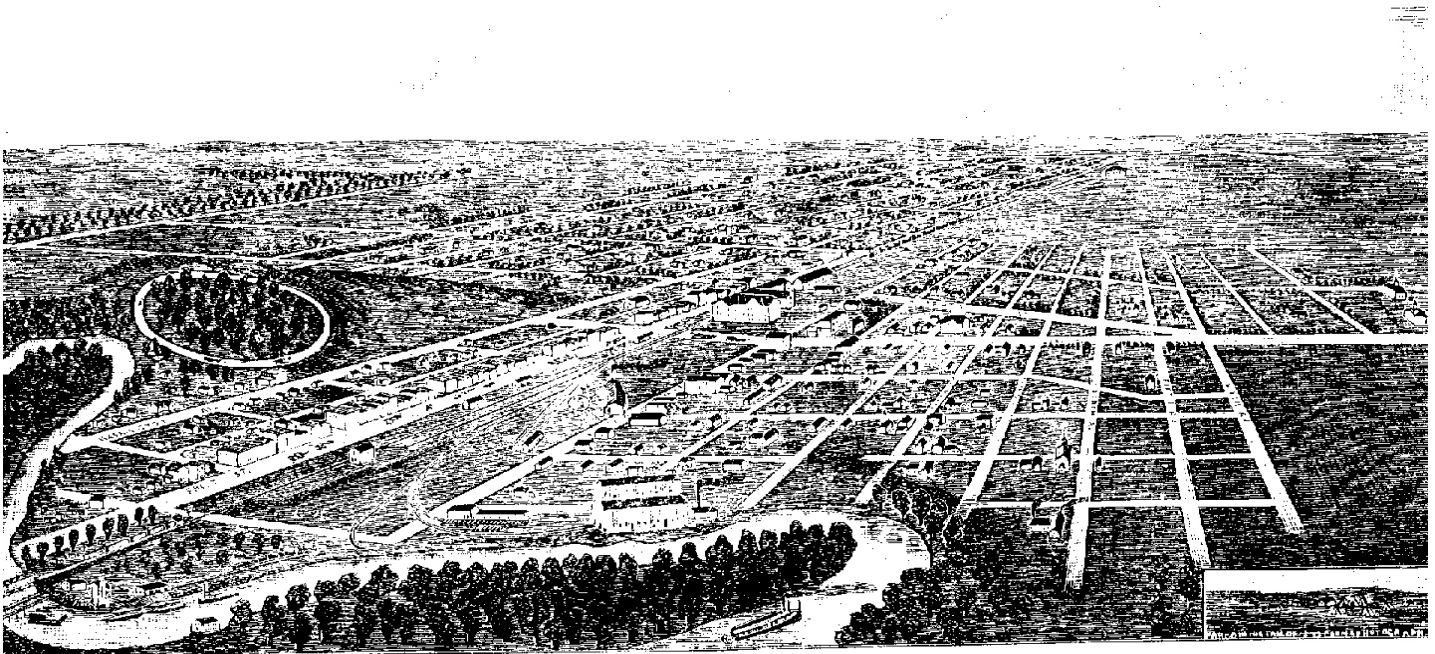
In late November 2010 the Jefferson County Board of Commissioners offered to the Boulder City Council and Boulder County Commissioners

that Jeffco would contribute \$5 million from the Open Space Fund to be used toward the purchase of Section 16 if the City and County dropped their long standing opposition to the proposed Jefferson Parkway toll road and contributed \$4 million toward the purchase. The proposed deal would require the ratification of an intergovernmental agreement with the City of Boulder and Boulder County.

In separate resolutions unanimously approved both the City of Boulder and Boulder County adopted a "neutral position" on concerning the construction of the Jefferson Parkway.. But neither has made a financial commitment toward Section 16.

Plan Jeffco membership has expressed a number of concerns with Jefferson County Commissioners proposal to tying the need to preserve Section 16 with the construction of the Jefferson Parkway. The Plan Jeffco Board's official stand has been and continues to be opposition to the construction of the Jefferson Parkway.

Don Moore



BIG BLUESTEM: PLANT OF THE FUTURE?

This fall I had an email from a botanist friend: "What's going on with big bluestem?" After he pointed it out, I noticed that, sure enough, this species, one of the dominant grasses in the tallgrass prairie (as in the source of the original Kansas sods that once housed the homesteaders), is bustin' out all over the foothills! Big bluestem typically occurs on the slopes of our mountain front, but has been expanding in recent years. In 2010, this warm-season grass had an extraordinary year. Its abundance first drew attention at Lookout Mountain, on the slopes of Windy Saddle Park and adjacent areas, where you can probably still spot patches of its russet fall color when the ground is free of snow, even if you're driving by on 6th Avenue. If you're on the Lariat Trail, big bluestem borders the south side of the road east of Windy Saddle. This time of year, when it might seem there's little to interest plant lovers, big bluestem and its cousins in the grass family provide color in the landscape.

Tallgrass prairie, whether here or in the East, is a tattered remnant of what it was in its glory days. We're lucky to have sizable patches in Jeffco; efforts to protect some have been underway for more than 20 years. It's been years since we talked tallgrass prairie here in the PJ newsletter, but the Board has continued to monitor and comment on developments in the Rocky Flats area, where our best examples of this rare ecosystem survive, including the Ranson/Edwards and Jewell Mountain properties. Boulder conveniently protected several hundred acres of the latter. [See

article on page x for recent developments in this area.] Patches of big bluestem on the foothills slopes are fine, but limited, reminders of the more extensive remnant prairie that once rolled out across the county but has retreated to a fringe along the mountain front. Most of what you see just northwest of Highways 93 and 72 is also tallgrass prairie.

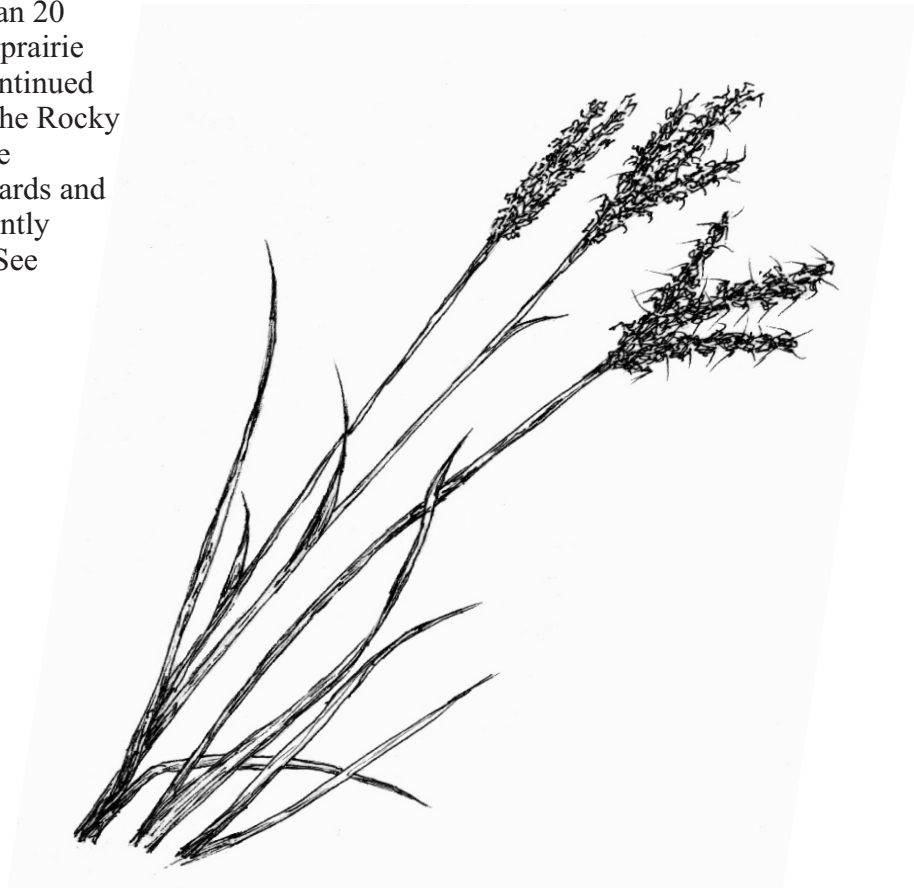
Big Bluestem in Jeffco's Landscape

Look for these foothills patches primarily on unforested south- and east-facing slopes: on most central slopes visible west of Highway 93, and on the north sides of our canyons, from Bear Creek to Golden Gate. In Mt. Galbraith Park, you can see the colorful auburn patches across the canyon as you make your way up the trail. Driving west on I-70, look for it to the north as you enter the foothills, on the slopes in Matthews-Winters Park. In the southwest part of

Big Bluestem (grass)

Andropogon gerardii

- Warm-season sod-forming grass.
- Height: 4-5 feet in Colorado, occasionally taller; to 8 ft in prairie states.
- Occurs in all but the five westernmost of the lower 48 states, as well as the central provinces of Canada. Most abundant in eastern Great Plains.
- Dominant and characteristic grass of the tallgrass prairie ecosystem.
- Flowering heads are 4-5 inches long, with 3 (or more) spreading branches, suggesting its other common name: turkeyfoot



BIG BLUESTEM: PLANT OF THE FUTURE?

Red Rocks Park, it occurs on level sites, more prairie-like, because that area has been protected and contains isolated spots where the Rocky Flats alluvium has managed to persist on lands that would otherwise have been cultivated or developed. In fall, big bluestem blends perfectly with the outcrops of the Fountain Formation.

Lack of development and a somewhat inhospitable climate have also protected the Rocky Flats area. The extremely cobbly soils, beloved of gravel companies, hampered agricultural attempts on much of the area and enhanced the available moisture content for the growth of these taller species. Because the area is unplowed, in part, these soils are considered among the oldest in Colorado, with some estimates placing their age at 2 million years. But big bluestem's expression/visibility in the landscape of any given year reflects how we're doing on overall precipitation and temperature.

The Water Year and Other Influences

Based on the 30-yr average precipitation, our wettest month of the year should be May. When it is, that's about perfect for big bluestem and other warm-season grasses (including blue grama, sideoats grama, little bluestem, and switchgrass), which are just getting started as the weather warms toward summer. By June, the cool-season grasses (such as the common lawn grasses, including Kentucky bluegrass, which take advantage of early season moisture to start growth) will be ready to flower and set seed, but you'll still have to hunt around on the ground to find evidence that big bluestem is even alive. Large clumps of hairy, velvety blue-green leaves will be your hint.

In July, those spreading clumps send up tall flowering shoots, which produce the "turkey-foot" seed heads by August. When cool-season grasses are giving it up and their seed has scattered, big bluestem ripens into the terra cotta masses that reveal its presence even from a distance.

This seasonal habit represents an entirely different metabolism (called "C4") in these plants, which use carbon along different pathways than many familiar

plants. According to some researchers, this may give them an advantage under conditions of elevated carbon dioxide (think global climate change), especially during drought. Like many grasses, big bluestem is also adapted to grazing and fire, but not if they occur too frequently.

Interestingly, although it seemed, until recent snows, that it's been droughty for several months, 2010 was an above average moisture year during its first half, giving big bluestem the start it needed. In fact, rainfall in this part of the county has been at or above normal every month from April 2009 through last June. (Later records have not yet been posted online.) Average temperatures have also hovered a degree or two above normal for several years (except 2008); most of the past decade has been warm. Temperature and moisture conditions have apparently encouraged big bluestem, a species that prefers a little more moisture and warmth than is the rule in Colorado. If we get too dry and warm, we're apt to see more of its cousin, little bluestem, but as long as it finds a moist spot, big bluestem will remain a part of the county's natural prospect. If you haven't seen it, this winter is a great time to go looking for it.

To see temp/precip data go to:
<http://ccc.atmos.colostate.edu/coloradowater.php>

Sally White



Balsam Fir

Birds of Jefferson County: Accipiters

“What is that hawk who comes into my yard and eats "my" birds?”

These hawks are probably Accipiters, a sub-group of the birds of prey most easily distinguished by their long tails and short, broad, rounded wings which allow them to maneuver in and out of trees. Their normal hunting ground is in the forest, but Accipiters have been loosing out to houses, commercial developments and highways. The many small birds that constitute their prey base have adapted to urban living and bird feeders, so seeing these Accipiters hunting in your back yard and nesting in urban settings is becoming more and more commonplace.

The two Accipiters most often seen in the Denver area are the Cooper's Hawk (*Accipiter cooperii*) and the Sharp-shinned hawk (*Accipiter striatus*) – the Sharpy. If you're in your yard and suddenly you notice that all the birds are fleeing from the feeders, and then everything suddenly gets quiet, search the trees close by. You may see a Cooper's Hawk or Sharpy quietly sitting and waiting for some small bird to fly into harm's way.

In my yard I have seen an Evening Grosbeak, which measures just over 7 inches tip to tail, taken by an Accipitor. I have also watched as a Cooper's Hawk stepped into my 2" deep birdbath and spent 15 minutes deciding whether or not to take a bath. Then he splashed about for another 30 minutes, spreading his wings and bending over sideways to bathe. The Cooper's Hawk is about 17" long. The Sharpy is smaller, about 12" long, however – because the female Sharpy is larger than the male, a Sharp-shinned female can be about the same size as a male Cooper's Hawk.

Telling the two species apart can be difficult, the accompanying photo is representative of either species, although, by consensus of opinion, we think the Accipiter is a Cooper's Hawk and his prey a sparrow of some sort. As adults, both are dark gray above and lighter below with buff-colored stripes on the breast. The most distinguishing feature of both species is the tail...long, wide and banded, alternating dark and light brown, with white tipping at the end. A Sharpy has a straight-edged tail with a little white at the outer end. The Cooper's Hawk has a rounded tail with more white showing at the end. Feather wear can modify the appearance of the tail feathers, causing identification



confusion. Adult birds of both species have red eyes while their youngsters have yellow eyes. Sharpys often have some white blotchy feathers on the back.

In flight, the Sharpy tucks its head into its wings, while the Cooper's Hawk extends its head – some have described a Cooper's Hawk in flight as “a flying cross”. A Cooper's Hawk weighs about a pound while a Sharpy weighs only about half a pound.

One day I was at my bird feeders when one came at me chasing a sparrow – couldn't tell if it was a Cooper's Hawk or a Sharpy, they were moving so fast. The sparrow went to my right and the Accipiter to my left. The sparrow got away. In the bird world there are predators and there are prey...don't be too alarmed if you witness an Accipiter doing what he's supposed to be doing at your feeder or in your yard. This is just part of the way of the wild.

Ann Bonnell

TRAILS USE TASK FORCE NOW TRAIL USERS FORUM

The Trails Use Task Force was recently re-named the Trail Users Forum (TUF). In addition, the mission statement for TUF was brought into alignment with that of the Open Space program, i.e., "to preserve open space lands and natural and cultural resources, and to provide for quality park and recreational experiences."

There are four new purpose statements to govern TUF, which are:

1. Serve as a forum for open dialogue between OS and trail/park users, to improve safety, cooperation and quality experiences;
2. Assist in identifying existing and emerging trail use issues;
3. Provide input and feedback to OS on park management practices, trail design, and other OS programs;
4. help disseminate information about OS events, policies, trail closures and changes to the trail user groups.

Under its original moniker—the Trails Use Task Force, TUF (which consists of volunteer representatives from each user group who meet with JCOS twice a year), made substantial contributions to the Centennial Cone

Alternate Days Park Management Plan. TUF in concert with The Ad Hoc Committee (which included members of Plan Jeffco) also made substantive contributions to the North Table Mountain Park Management Plan after almost two years of investigation. More recently, TUF helped JCOS with the recent changes to Apex Park (which resulted in two new trails-- Hardscrabble and Argos). The alignment of these new trails was designed to prevent the type of user conflict which had become too representative of the experience on Apex and had driven park users away.

Recent indications are that the alignment is working as conflict is down and equestrians, among others, have begun to use Apex again, after a long absence.

Apex Park is a prime example of the value of TUF. TUF representatives continue to dialogue with all the user groups, including newer groups such as trail runners. This dialogue greatly benefits the entire community of park users as it fosters an exchange of ideas, avenues for potential compromise, and ensures these all take place in an atmosphere of good will. \

Peter Ruben Morales



OSAC NOTES:

September 2, 2010 - Study Session

2011 Goals

Tom Hoby shared the Department and Division Goals for 2011. There are four Divisions within the Community Resources Department: Open Space, CSU Extension, Boettcher Mansion and the Fairgrounds. In the past each of these divisions has functioned as its own entity. Hoby believes all the missions are well aligned and that these resources could be shared to gain mutual benefit for all of the Community Resources Department.

2011 Community Resources Goals Hoby states that the broad goal is to “enrich life through conservation, outdoor recreation, educational programs and event services.” Hoby plans to achieve this broad goal and specific goals through two key initiatives:

- Naturally Green, through the use of environmentally and economically sound practices, and
- Inspiring Involvement, through effective communication and marketing, innovative programs and events and rewarding experiences.

Open Space Goals Enriching life through conservation, outdoor recreation and educational programs.

Land Management:

- 1. Initiate a two-year natural resource assessment through the Colorado Natural Heritage Program; completion scheduled for 2012.

Partnerships:

- 2. Develop stewardship programs in cooperation with cities and recreation districts to connect people to the outdoors and teach outdoor ethics and multiuse trail cooperation.

Education:

- 3. Create a website-based “Outdoor Recreation Center” to provide a wealth of information to citizens including maps, cooperative trail use, places to play, stewardship, basic skills and equipment. Use interactive or multimedia tools such as short videos and mobile phone applications when possible.
- 4. Support the Jeffco Open Space Foundation in its efforts to offer the “Life in our Parks” photo contest.
- 5. Study and develop an “information collection system” to understand resource management, citizen needs and desires, trends and best

management practices. This system will include the [needed?] tools available and a process to evaluate the best tool for the job. Sustainability:

- 6. Acquire “gold level” status for the Lookout Mountain Nature Center from the Colorado Environmental Leadership Program.
- 7. Reduce fuel use and vehicle emissions by implementing guidelines for trip planning, pooled field visits and turning vehicles off when stopped to perform a task.
- 8. Conduct energy efficiency audits and identify savings opportunities at select buildings owned by Open Space.
- 9. Identify recycling opportunities at Parks and implement where financially and practically feasible.
- 10. Complete and open the Open Space service center (the Shop).

Acquisitions:

- 11. Update the acquisition priorities of cities and develop a process to prioritize future Open Space acquisitions, in order to ensure the highest and best use of available funds.

Administration:

- 12. Define the role of OSAC sub-committees (Trail Use Task Force and Park Directors) and identify new initiatives for these groups.
- 13. Redesign and remodel the Open Space building entry to create a single reception area with a setting that is educational, inspiring and consistent with the experiences provided at our Parks.
- 14. Evaluate the merit of pursuing Agency Accreditation through the Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA) and the NRPA Gold Medal for Excellence in Park and Recreation Management from the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA). If determined to be worthwhile, pursue in 2012.

The committee then discussed what is involved when applying for the CAPRA process, which included discussion of the standards, accreditation of the organization applying and length of time for the review process. Mr. Hoby believes that Open Space has many of the required standards already in place.

The gold medal process requires submission of an application and a video. Then, a five-member selection

OSAC NOTES CONTINUED

panel determines the award. An agency is accredited for 6 years and must apply again under a more abbreviated accreditation process.

The Committee discussed having a common trail map of the county. There are a lot of separate agency maps, but no maps of the combined agencies. Information has been compiled into three different segments for the north, central and south. There was so much information and data for trails and regional connections that placing it in one map would be too much information and the GIS Technicians suggested that three quadrants would work best. Mr. Hoby stated that if we focused more on trails of a more regional nature that might be helpful. Mr. Hoby will have staff research and report back in a few months.

Mr. Hoby would like to start looking into what to do with Pine Valley Lodge, yet it is not included in the 2011 Open Space Goals.

On September 14th the Bond Funds go to auction and there could be some savings for Open Space.

Regular Meeting - Amy Ito and Joy Lucisano presented an update on the Front Range Mountain Backdrop/Foreground Preservation area and the areas that have been preserved by Open Space or local agencies.

Goal: Develop a process to update and prioritize future Open Space acquisitions to ensure the best use of available funds.

Objectives: To assess current property holdings in relation to the JCOS Master Plan Acquisition Values.

Background: GOCO funded a five-county Mountain Backdrop Study, which identified important Front Range lands from Larimer to El Paso County, for potential conservation as open space.

Front Range Mountain Backdrop/Foreground Preservation Area Resolutions passed by OSAC and the BCC in late 1998:

41, 572 total acres within Jefferson County.

15,311 total acres preserved by Jefferson County Open Space.

10,032 acres preserved by other organizations

25,343 preserved by Jefferson County Open Space and other organizations

2,762 acres left in approved projects

13,391 remaining acreage left to preserve

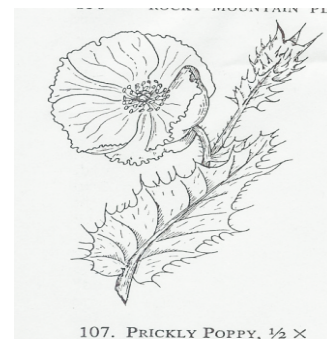
Categories Used to Determine Master Plan Acquisition Values

- Front Range Mountain Backdrop/Foreground Preservation Area
- Natural Areas
- Trails
- City & Recreation District
- Other

Approval was given to the Pearce property (White Ranch Park) consisting of approximately 186 acres. Acquisition of the property would protect a large tract of unfragmented wildlife habitat in close proximity to other Open Space properties and Conservation Easements such as White Ranch Park, Ramstetter, Ternstrom and Weidner; provide a half-mile-wide buffer between White Ranch Park and nearby residential development to the west; preserve the open, natural scenic values including views from the future trail that will connect White Ranch Park to Golden Gate Canyon State Park and preserve a critical segment of Ralston Creek, one of the most biodiverse and least developed stream corridors in Jefferson County. The property is \$5,600 per acre, or approximately \$1,041,600, with total price contingent upon the acreage determined by survey. Open Space does not have a willing seller for the southern portion of that property but will continue to pursue that portion of the property.

Tom Hoby reported that in October 2009, OSAC attended a field trip of parking options for South Table Mountain Park. Staff recommended moving forward with design plans to develop a medium sized (40-60) car parking lot with equestrian parking and a restroom facility at the Quaker Street location. OSAC concurred.

Dinosaur Ridge Amy Ito and Tom Hoby met with Joe Tempel and Sam Bartlett to learn more about their programs, services, future plans and concerns. The dialogue will continue. They invited OSAC on a field trip of the tracks and museum.



OSAC NOTES CONTINUED

October 7, 2010 – Study Session
Apex Park Trail Celebration (at Apex Park)

Regular Meeting- Approval was given for the Bachman Joint Acquisition property consisting of approximately 14.15 acres at the corner of Heritage Road and West Fourth Avenue, east of the parking area for Apex Park. The City of Golden has proposed that the acquisition costs for the project be split with the City paying \$997,500 or 75% of the purchase and the County paying \$332,500 or 25%. Total price of the property is \$1,330,000. The property provides a good trail connection from Apex Park into the community and it is also important for wildlife and open space.

The Committee agreed to forgo the Ken Caryl Manor House proposal consisting of 5.7 acres and including the Ken Caryl Manor House, located 1.5 miles northwest of C-470 and Ken Caryl Avenue with access from Mountain Laurel Drive. This proposal was submitted by the listing real estate agent for the property. The property is currently managed as a commercial event center for weddings and corporate functions and is surrounded by private open space with a trail system owned and managed by the Ken Caryl Ranch Master Association. Open Space is not interested in owning and operating such a facility. We would consider a new proposal at any point in the future. The property is currently on the market listed for \$4,000,000.

The Committee approved the Westblade Park Addition property consisting of approximately 0.73 acres adjacent to the northwestern side of Westblade Park in the city of Golden. Cost of the acquisition would be \$35,000. Acquisition of the property would provide access from Mount Vernon Road to the western portion of the Park, add additional land to the Park and be suitable for a variety of park and open space uses, including possibly active recreation. This property has been on the priority plan since 1993. Access was a partial reason for the purchase, but the primary reason for the acquisition is to clean up the boundaries of the Park.

November 4, 2010 – Study Session
Amy Ito reviewed the primary objective of the November 16th retreat which is to address acquisition priorities utilizing the six Master Plan categories and review future initiatives to ensure the highest and best use of available funds. Our funding summary will be reviewed and staff will provide recommendations for

approved projects. Projects and initiatives will be discussed to define and determine priorities.

The Visitor Experience Survey was put on hold in 2010 in order to assess the program and make recommendations. The program focuses on these key elements: linked to Master Plan goals and objectives; needs-driven; information dissemination and communication; and peer review.

Regular Meeting – Approved the Access Easement consisting of five segments on North Table Mountain Park that total approximately 21 acres. Xcel/Public Service Company has requested the Easement to formalize access to its overhead utility lines on North Table Mountain Park. Formalizing Xcel/Public Service Company's access will improve park management and natural resource protection. The County will not charge Xcel/Public Service Company for the Access Easement and in exchange for the grant of the Access Easement, Xcel/Public Service Company will terminate its existing right-of-way leading from State Highway 93.

Margot Zallen, of PLAN Jeffco commented that PLAN Jeffco reviewed the list of the 30 Open Space acquisition priorities and concluded that each of the 30 should stay on the list and is a good acquisition at this time. PLAN Jeffco will meet next year to determine if there are more lands to be preserved and submit that list to the Committee.

December 2, 2010 – Study Session

John Litz discussed changes in revenue streams in the bond funds. He showed a chart that evaluated what the acquisitions would be with two bond issues. Open Space sales tax growth in the late 1990s was 5.1% per year. He also demonstrated a 4% income. The sales tax growth has only been 1.7% the last ten years. Historically, Open Space bought more acres than it anticipated buying.

At the last Trail Use Task Force (TUTF) meeting, a proposal was presented by the hiker and mountain bike groups for night use of our park system. Their proposal included a survey of 513 respondents.

Continued of back cover

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 303.279.0664 for membership information.

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jkclitz@comcast.net

Thanks



OSAC NOTES – CONTINUED

Open Space considered the idea of night use from a staff perspective with issues of wildlife, safety and cost. Staff felt that it is an idea to consider, but it needs to fit in our master plan goals and objectives. It will take money to research the issue. A citizen survey is needed to better understand all the uses and issues of night use. One option might be to issue special activity permits. Tom Hoby noted that Open Space has committed to determine whether our park hours are adequate. Some parks like Crown Hill and Van Bibber could be used more like other parks around those facilities.

Regular Meeting - Approved Access Easements for Tanglewood Park with R-1 school district. Tanglewood Park adjoins R-1's Litz Preschool property and the county leases Tanglewood Park to the Prospect Recreation and Park District. Prospect is proposing to develop additional park amenities on approximately 1.48 acres of Tanglewood Park that will require additional parking and access.

Approved White Ranch Park Trail Easement consisting of 160 acres, located north of Ralston Creek, which links White Ranch with Golden Gate Canyon State Park. Once the trail is constructed the easement will be trimmed to approximately 30-foot wide. Construction of a trail in this area would reduce negative impacts to the Ralston Creek riparian habitat and aid in trail construction and maintenance.

Approved access over R-1 school property to Welchester Tree Grant Park. The trail easement agreement and access license properties total approximately 0.3 acres and would allow for maintenance and associated minor trail improvements along a short segment of concrete trail, along with administrative and emergency access to the park from west 10th Avenue.

A hold has been placed on city's and district's land acquisition requests, but unincorporated projects will continue.

Greg Penkowsky



PLAN Jeffco
11010 W 29th Avenue
Lakewood, CO 80215

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



Email: jkclitz@comcast.net
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Jefferson County Citizens for
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