



PLAN JEFFCO UPDATE

JULY 2015

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JOIN IN HONORING THE LAND TRUSTS CONSERVING JEFFCO'S OPEN SPACES AT:

PLAN Jeffco's Annual Dinner with our County Commissioners to Celebrate 43 years of Conserving Jeffco's Open Spaces

Monday, September 21, 2015, at 5:30 p.m.

Our Honorees are Clear Creek Land Conservancy, Colorado Open Lands and Mountain Area Land Trust. Their efforts have protected over 11,000 acres in Jeffco and over 290,000 acres in Colorado. For this we all owe them a big THANK YOU.

PLAN Jeffco invites you to attend this Annual Dinner with open space enthusiasts, Open Space Staff and the County Commissioners.

**The Vista at Applewood Golf Course
14001 West 32nd Ave., Golden 80401**

Tickets are \$45 and include a hors d'oeuvres reception with open bar, a buffet dinner and dessert. The menu is on our website, planjeffco.org. Purchase online at planjeffco.org or call 303-526-1348 (leave a message) to make a reservation.

PLAN Jeffco is a nonprofit citizen organization formed in 1972 to campaign for a one-half percent sales tax to purchase parklands for public benefit. It also oversees and provides input and inspiration to the Jeffco Open Space Division, which has acquired more than 53,000 acres and manages more than 42,500 acres of public land and parks.

For information contact Michele Poollet, PLAN Jeffco board member, ContactUs@PLANjeffco.org, 303-526-1348.

Meadow to Mountain: Mountain Area Land Trust

By Vicky Gits

Mountain Area Land Trust's first success was helping to preserve Elk Meadow Open Space Park near Evergreen, one of the most visible and most loved scenic parks in the foothills area.

Still a viable elk grazing area today, 23 years ago, the land previously known as Noble Meadow was on track to become a high-end housing development.

Under a cooperative land-purchase agreement, the developer/owner Hiwan Ridge Development donated the 281-acre conservation easement to MALT; Jefferson County Open Space purchased 117 acres, Evergreen Park and Recreation District purchased 10 acres for athletic fields and the community raised \$200,000 toward the purchase price of \$2.28 million.

Six counties

Based in Evergreen, MALT is active in the mountain areas of Boulder and Jefferson counties, as well as Clear Creek, Park, Gilpin and Teller counties.

It currently has about a dozen active conservation efforts in progress, said executive director Jeanne Beaudry, who joined the organization in January 2009. In its focus area of Jefferson County, MALT holds 47 conservation easements over 7,567 acres. In total MALT has conserved 14,707 acres in 68 private conservation easements and one fee-held property from 1992 through December 2014 in six counties.

Saving the aspens

Exemplifying its spirit of stewardship, in 2014 MALT spearheaded a project that fenced off a dying grove of aspen saplings on one of its large properties in Clear Creek County. Known as a desirable bird habitat, the trees were being overgrazed by mule deer and elk. MALT provides long-term monitoring as well.

Location: Evergreen

Year founded: 1992

Executive director: Jeanne Beaudry

Conservation easements in Jefferson County: 47

Acres preserved in Jefferson County: 7,567

Total conservation easements: 68

Total acres in conservation easements: 14,707

High-altitude research

This summer MALT is partnering with Volunteers for Outdoor Colorado and others to design and build a one-mile loop trail at Pennsylvania Mountain Natural Area. The site has been used for scientific research for more than 37 years.

Beaudry said preserving an area on Pennsylvania Mountain was one of her most memorable and significant efforts to date. "Pennsylvania Mountain Natural Area is so biologically significant. It encompasses research, 1,800-year-old bristlecones and recreation."

"There are only two other high-altitude research areas where they study climate change and effects on trees, animals and pollinators. It was private property and slated to be sold for building large homes."

MALT purchased 92 acres of the 500-acre site in 2014 as part of a multiphase project.

Nationally accredited

MALT earned national accreditation from the Land Trust Accreditation Commission of the Land Trust Alliance in September 2012. Achieving national accreditation is a documentation process requiring years of effort and means a group meets the highest professional standards.

MALT was certified by the Colorado Conservation Easement Oversight Commission in March 2010, as required by state law.

Mountain Area Land Trust - Continued

A few of MALT's successes are:

North Fork of the South Platte River near Bailey, 71 acres, 2015. Conservation easement on scenic property formerly used as a retreat owned by a bicycling club in the early 1900s. Preserves half mile of river frontage.

The Nicholas Family Mountain, 50 acres, 2014, Bailey, near the Mount Evans Wilderness. Includes several rustic cabins from the early 1900s and mountaintop views. Family-owned for three generations, it was the family's dream to see it conserved forever.

Bristlecone view Horizon and Bristlecone View Horizon South Park County ranch near Fairplay, 1,400 acres, 2011. Visible from both U.S.285 and Highway 9, this large conservation easement by a single owner preserves views on the way to mountain resorts in Summit County.

Long Meadow Ranch, Park County, 240 acres, 2013 Historic ranch on U.S. 285 on the North Fork of the South Platte River.

Public-private projects in Jefferson County (partially owned and managed by other public entities)

- Elk Meadow Open Space
- Beaver Brook Watershed
- Bergen Nature Trail
- Blair Ranch
- Owen property Upper Bear Creek

Conservation easements in Jefferson County include the following:

Chatfield Turkey Farm, 43 acres, Jefferson County, 2013. Historically part of a turkey farm. Today provides habitat for big-game including elk, mule deer, black bear, turkey and mountain lion.

Roller-Roller estate, 57 acres, 2013, near Conifer and U.S. 285, the Roller-Roller estate is adjacent to the James Q. Newton Park on the south. Current and proposed use is outdoor recreation and outdoor education. Access will be provided through outdoor and conservation classes.

Upper Bear Creek near Evergreen, 2013, 70 acres. Habitat for mountain lion, black bear, turkey, mule deer and more. Preserves scenic enjoyment along upper Bear Creek Road.

Mission statement: “Our mission is to save scenic vistas, natural areas, wildlife habitat, water resources, working ranches and historic lands for the benefit of the community and as a legacy for future generations.”

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

Please sign up or renew your membership now! Your address label shows the date of your last renewal. Call 303.237.9493 for membership information.

**Our membership rate is:
\$35 per year**

Name: _____

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Make checks payable to PLAN Jeffco and send to:

PLAN Jeffco
11010 W 29th Avenue
Lakewood, CO 80215

or you can join or renew on the web at:
planjeffco.org

MALT Preservations



Elk Meadow , Linda Besler, April , 2015



Columbines, Allan Casey, July 16, 2015

Keeping the Canyon Beautiful: Clear Creek Land Conservancy

By Vicky Gits

Clear Creek Land Conservancy works in the Clear Creek drainage basin from the Continental Divide to Golden, covering parts of Clear Creek, Gilpin and Jefferson counties. Its focus is Clear Creek Canyon, a ruggedly beautiful and historically development-threatened area.

CCLC has conserved lands in and around Mount Vernon, Cody Park, Rilliet Park, the Beaver Brook Trail and throughout Clear Creek Canyon.

The nonprofit treasures the canyon as a place “where people and nature exist together for the benefit of both.” The organization aims to ensure the canyon remains its “near-to-natural state forever.” (Board of Directors job description, 2014)

The goal of the land trust is to preserve as many acres as possible and steward them successfully in perpetuity. However, the increasing level of state regulation is having a significant effect on the pace of land conservation, said Claire Riegelman, CCLC executive director.

“Though the increased regulation is helping to ensure sound conservation transactions, the additional administration and costs are making it more difficult for land trusts and landowners to conserve land,” Riegelman said.

Inspirational donation

Carla Coleman, a Denver psychologist and early conservationist, inspired the creation of CCLC by donating a 240-acre conservation easement on the Clear Creek Canyon side of Lookout Mountain in 1986. She and her husband owned a cabin in Rilliet Park on Lookout Mountain.

CCLC supports the Peaks to Plains Trail construction on Clear Creek and holds the conservation easement on the key Oxbow Parcel, (2009), at the west end of tunnel 5 on Highway 6.

Remaining flexible

CCLC is working on a multifaceted project in the Mount Vernon area that exemplifies an important aspect of the work done by land trusts: flexibility. “Land trusts have plans for how they hope projects will proceed, but the projects rarely if

Location: Golden
Year founded 1986
Executive director: Claire Riegelman
Jefferson County: 1,901.7
Gilpin County: 260
Clear Creek County: 74.42
Total acres protected: 2,236
(Includes acres acquired and owned in fee; acres covered by a conservation easement and acres acquired and transferred to public entity.)

ever, follow those plans. The projects succeed because land trusts stay on their toes and remain flexible in order to preserve as many conservation values as possible,” Riegelman said.

Conservation in action

The conservancy's role has two parts: active conservation through conservation easements and stewardship of its conserved lands in perpetuity. For example, last November, CCLC took measures to camouflage red graffiti defacing rock outcroppings on the Beaver Brook Trail.

The 8-mile-long Beaver Brook Trail extends from Windy Gap on Lookout Mountain to Stapleton Drive in Genesee Park off Interstate 70 and is owned and managed by three entities: Jeffco Open Space, the Clear Creek Land Conservancy and Denver Mountain Parks.

CCLC received its state certification in 2009.

A few of CCLC's successes are:

Carla Coleman Conservation Easement, 240 acres, 1986. First conservation easement donated to CCLC. Includes more than one mile of the east end of the Beaver Brook Trail.

Mount Vernon, 160 acres, 1996, includes over one-half mile of Beaver Brook Trail

Rilliet Park, 273.5 acres, 1997, donated by homeowners corporation, Rilliet Park Association.

Clear Creek Land Conservancy - Continued

Estella Leopold “Shack West,” 260 acres, 2006, donated by ecologist Aldo Leopold's daughter, Estella, who lived there in the '70s. Shack East is the property Aldo Leopold made famous in the book, “Sand County Almanac.”

Northwoodside Asset Transfer (CCLC – Northwoodside Merger) 644 acres, 2008.

Lookout Mountain land, 2.3 acres adjacent to Windy Saddle Park, 2011. Transferred to Jeffco Open Space.

Mission statement: “Clear Creek Land Conservancy is dedicated to the preservation, conservation and stewardship in perpetuity of the open spaces and natural and scenic resources of the mountain and foothills region of the Clear Creek area.”



Clear Creek in Winter, Terri Rosevear, 2014

Citizens Saving Vanishing Vistas: Colorado Open Lands

By Vicky Gits

“Colorado Open Lands was an experiment. It was the incorporation of a citizens effort to save what Coloradans love about Colorado,” wrote former Gov. Richard Lamm (1975 to 1987) in an introduction to COL's 30th anniversary report in 2011.

A statewide land trust based in Lakewood since 1982, Colorado Open Lands is an outgrowth of the 1980 Colorado Front Range Project, a citizens group created by then-Gov. Lamm to help shape the state's future.

In 1982, Colorado Open Lands helped prevent the 3,200-acre Evans Ranch at the foot of Mount Evans in Clear Creek County from becoming a subdivision with hundreds of homes. With the help of a loan from the Gates Family Foundation, COL purchased the land, which was strategically divided into five lots, preserving the bulk of the property.

As of 2015, the nonprofit had 267,687 acres in its portfolio of conservation easements. Conservation easements enable private owners to use their land while agreeing to maintain it in a natural state and forgo real estate development. The landowner receives significant state and federal tax advantages for having donated or sold the easement and the land remains private. The conservation easement “runs with the land,” meaning it applies to present and future owners.

In connection with holding conservation easements, land trusts are responsible for stewardship of the related land, which includes inspecting it on an annual basis and verifying it is being maintained according to the terms of the easement agreement.

Passing the torch

Dan Pike, the former president and CEO of Colorado Open Lands, retired late last year after 17 years.

“Dan Pike has been an iconic leader in the land conservation industry both in Colorado and the national stage,” said Tony Caligiuri, president and CEO, who joined the organization in November

Location: Lakewood

Year founded: 1982

Executive director: Tony Caligiuri

Conservation easements in Jefferson County: 6

Acres preserved in Jefferson County: 1,903

Total conservation easements: 297

Total acres statewide in conservation easements: 267,687 in 40 counties

from the National Wildlife Federation where he was senior vice president for conservation and education. “Pike was a leader in building Colorado's first statewide land conservation organization into an organization of national stature,” Caligiuri said.

In 2004, Pike secured the conservation easement on 80,000 acres of the Trinchera Ranch in Costilla County, marking the largest such easement in Colorado history. Now owned by investor Louis Bacon, Trinchera previously was owned by Malcolm Forbes, who set up the conservation easement in 2004.

Pike also chaired the commission that helped establish the parameters for certifying land trusts that hold conservation easements where the state tax credit is used.

In June 2013, COL announced another major achievement with conservation easements on 21,000 acres of Louis Bacon's Tercio and Red River ranches near Trinidad in southern Colorado.

Pike also initiated outdoor excursions, fishing opportunities and farm-products access to help connect people to conservation lands.

Growth impacts

Caligiuri said current conditions are somewhat less favorable to conservation efforts. “We are currently in a period of economic growth which can impact land values and diminish the ability of land trusts to conserve important

Colorado Open Lands Continued

landscapes. At the same time, many land trusts established in previous decades are evaluating their own capacity to steward land in perpetuity and the wisdom of too many organizations doing similar work. This is prompting some exciting conversations about partnerships and innovative evolution of the land conservation industry, which should help strengthen the outlook for the future,” Caligiuri said.

While continuing to pursue conservation easements, COL has launched a pioneering program to connect people to conserved land. The Conserved Colorado initiative allows buyers to purchase items such as beef, wine and family vacations, from people who have chosen to permanently conserve their land.

“Conserved Colorado allows people to support conservation through their buying power, and creates an additional incentive for property owners looking at the potential benefits of conserving their land,” Caligiuri said.

COL is certified by the state Conservation Easement Oversight Commission and also accredited by the national Land Trust Alliance. Colorado requires that all easement holders be certified by the state under a law signed by Gov. Bill Ritter in 2008 in order for donors to receive the tax credit.

COL in Jefferson County

Conservation easements: 6

Total acres: 1,903

- Bear Tooth Ranch - North Hogback Valley
- Heine Wildlife Sanctuary - Wheat Ridge
- Indian Hills
- Knoebel (B Bar K) South turkey Creek
- Mirador Ranch - North Mountains
- Williams Wildlife Preserve (Five Fridges Farm) - Wheat Ridge

A few of COL's successes are:

Trinchera Ranch, 80,000 acres, 2004. Costilla, County, San Luis Valley. Malcolm Forbes- donated conservation easement, largest conservation easement in Colorado history.

Pine Cliff Ranch, Douglas County, 3,400 acres. Donated by Sedalia resident James Rathbone Falck for protection in 1986.

Heil Valley Ranch, 1,200 acres. Now part of Boulder County's North Foothills Open Space, Heil Valley Ranch was a conservation easement to ensure the protection of County-owned open space purchased using Great Outdoors Colorado funds.

Wahatoya Valley, 1,019 acres, late 90s. Spanish Peaks area.

Wahl-Coleman Ranch, Park County, 3,600 acres, 1999. Protects iconic gateway views from Kenosha Pass.

Heron Pond Natural Area, 46 acres. South Platte River Greenway

Allis Ranch Preserve, Douglas County, 830 acres. 1.5 miles of West Plum Creek

Bar K Ranch III, Gunnison County, 480 acres,

Mission statement: “Our mission is to preserve the significant open lands and diminishing natural heritage of Colorado through private and public partnerships, innovative land conservation techniques and strategic leadership while bringing a statewide perspective based on our staff's collective 100-plus years of experience.”



CCLC Stewardship near Centennial Cone, Spring 2015, Claire Riegelman



Mirador Ranch, adjacent to the North side of Golden Gate State Park, June 2014, Colorado Open Lands

OSAC Notes, OSAC Notes

OSAC Notes

June 4, 2015 - Study Session

A field trip to observe the construction of the Peaks to Plains Trail in Clear Creek. This segment of trail begins in Clear Creek County and will continue downstream in Jefferson County to about the Mayhem Gulch Trailhead. Thus far most of the construction has been in Clear Creek County and includes a tunnel under Highway 6 and return under the bridge where Highway 6 intersects with Highway 119. The trail routing ranges from at the creek side to up the slope away from the creek to avoid potential Prebles Mouse habitat. Bridges will be installed in the Jefferson County section as well as access points for fishing.

Regular Meeting

Alex Head have a brief presentation on the proposed Golden Giddyup. A bicycle event to be held in September 2016 to raise funds for trail construction and also to give bicyclists the opportunity to be volunteer stewards of the existing trails.

Nancy York gave a presentation on the status of acquisition proposals and park planning projects. Presently staff are monitoring 17 referrals from the County Planning and Zoning and are evaluating 8 proposals for acquisition.

The Advisory Committee approved final terms for acquisition of the 37-acre Pendleton Property on the North side of Highway 285 across from the main Meyer Ranch Park. The property is also adjacent to a Denver Mountain Park. This acquisition will provide the opportunity to add trails to the part of Meyer Ranch Park that is North of the highway.

The Advisory Committee approved final terms for acquisition 1,037 acres on or adjacent to Douglas Mountain. Essentially it is the property on the Northwest corner of Golden Gate Canyon Road and Robinson Hill Road.

The southern boundary is behind the homes along the North side of Robinson Hill Road. About 75 acres are on the East side of Golden Gate Canyon

Road and include stone “Centennial House” built in 1876.

Natural Resources – The properties border the Mount Tom Potential Conservation Area identified by the Colorado Natural Heritage Program. The properties are also surrounded by the Clear Creek and Ralston Creek Jeffco Open Space Conservation Study Areas. During a preliminary site visit, heartleaf arnica (*Arnica cordifolia*) was found and serves as an indicator of a healthy, well functioning ecosystem. Previously, a prairie falcon nest had been identified on Douglas Mountain.

Nature-Based Experiences – The potential for trail development on these properties is limited by the steepness of the slopes throughout. A series of many switchbacks may be required to reach the higher elevations at sustainable grades. Access to the property is limited. Potential trailhead locations could be along Golden Gate Canyon Road, which has the potential to have impacts on the property’s natural resources, or a much smaller trailhead along Robinson Hill Road, the only other public road adjoining the property.

Historic, Archaeological and Paleontological Resources – The 75-acre property on the north of Golden Gate Canyon Road contains multiple historic structures, most notably the Centennial House built between 1872 and 1876. It served as a stage stop for travelers along the historic Gregory Toll Road. Originally referred to as Sheep Mountain, Centennial Cone was renamed because of the Centennial House. The property on the southern extent has been certified through the American Tree Farm System as a sustainable Tree Farm, illustrating the property’s significance to the local wood products industry. Historic cabins also exist on the property south of Golden Gate Canyon Road.

Scenic Resources – The properties are the scenic high point along the western reaches of Golden Gate Canyon Road. The property on

OSAC Notes - Continued

the south contains Douglas Mountain and provides an opportunity to preserve the special scenic qualities of this peak. On the upper end of the southern property, there are multiple locations that provide scenic views, including of Centennial Cone Park and Mount Tom.

Contiguity & Buffers – The property on the north side of Golden Gate Canyon Road is adjacent to 573 acres owned by Jeffco Open Space.. The south property is approximately one mile north of the 3,369 acres of Centennial Cone Park. These properties fill a gap within the Jeffco Open Space system, providing contiguity and additional buffers for wildlife corridors, habitat and plant communities, as well as other uses.

Congruence with Other Plans – During previous referral processes for these and similar properties, these properties have been identified as part of the North Mountain Community Plan. This Plan recommends securing as much open space as possible and preserving resources within the Golden Gate Canyon Road Visual Resource Corridor and diffusing the impacts of recreational development throughout the area.

The acquisition would facilitate future trail connections between Centennial Cone Park, Golden Gate Canyon State Park, and White Ranch Park.

July 9, 2015 - Study Session

A field trip to the Dog Off Leash Area and Elk Meadow Park. Open Space staff have made a number of changes to the access area to improve safety of the visitors and their pets. The Off Leash Area now is fenced from the parking area and is accessed through gates. Visitors are requested to not unleash their dog until through the gates. There still is some problem with improving the safety in crossing Stagecoach Road.

Regular Meeting

Lisa and Shawn Kluesner, Natural Resource staff, made a presentation on citizen participation in collecting conservation data. Some of the programs have been in place for up to 20 years. The objectives are: identify - quantify - protect - monitor - engage - explore - share - learn

Bird surveys - 2375 hours , 184 species

Raptor monitoring - 70 nests, 6100 hours in the last ten years, 61 volunteers

Nest watch - 141 nest boxes and snags, monitored weekly, 1600 hours, 41 volunteers

Frog watch - 12 parks, 776 hours, 41 volunteers

Bud Burst - 11 parks, 11 plant species being monitored, 623 hours, 15 volunteers

Butter fly monitoring - 23 parks, 600 hours, 36 volunteers, 78 species

Thea Rock discussed the various types of social media and how Open Space is using it. Most important is that the Rangers are using Twitter to post current trail conditions - #jeffcotrails. Open Space posts videos to You Tube, photographs to Instagram, and general information to Facebook.

Joy Lucisano presented the quarterly Real Estate report. There are 50 open County acquisition proposals totaling almost 13,000 acres. Of these 29 (10,600 acres) are active with staff frequently contacting the owner and 21 are inactive as the present owner has no immediate interest.

There are 50 projects in the unincorporated areas of the County relating to leases, easements, and licenses. Thirty-one are active projects, many relating to potential trail routes.

There are 24 projects for cities and or recreation districts. The active projects are leases or easements; whereas the many of the inactive projects relate to potential acquisitions.

Continued on Page 12

OSAC Notes - Continued

The Advisory Committee approved final terms for acquiring the Indigena and Laramie Ridge properties on the ridge between Coal Creek and Ralston Creek, West of Blue Mountain Estates. The acquisition consists of three parcels. A 344-acre in-holding in the acreage acquired from the Booth family in 2013, fee acquisition of a 619-acre parcel West of the in holding on which Open Space has held a conservation easement for about 15 years, and 113 acres on the North slope of the ridge. The sellers will retain a 10-acre portion of this latter property that contains the structures.

The properties scored very high in Master Plan values.

Natural Resources - 6 of 6: lots of meadows on South facing slopes

Nature-based experience - 5 of 5:

significant opportunities for trails

Scenic Resources - 2 of 4: good views of the Front Range, plains, and Continental Divide

Contiguity & buffer - 3 of 3: abuts White Ranch on the South, Coal Creek properties on the North, plus Blue Mountain and Golden Gate State Park on the West.

Congruity to other plans - 2 of 2:

identified as open space in the North Mountain Community Plan

Historic, archeologic & paleontological - TBD of 2: Note that a wagon road from Boulder to Central City crossed part of the property.



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Jefferson County Citizens for
Planned Growth with Open Space

PLAN JEFFCO NEWSLETTER