



# PLAN JEFFCO UPDATE

JULY 2017

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## It is PLAN Jeffco's 45<sup>th</sup> Birthday

## We are Celebrating with a Party at the Lookout Mountain Nature Center

PLAN Jeffco is pleased to announce it will host a Summer Picnic in the Park to celebrate its 45<sup>th</sup> Anniversary on Tuesday, August 29 from 4 p.m. – 8 p.m. All ages are invited to attend the celebration at Lookout Mountain Nature Center and Preserve, located at 910 Colorow Rd. in Golden. The event will be free to attend and open to the public.

Guests can pack their own picnics, or will be able to purchase BBQ, vegetarian cuisine and ice cream from gourmet food trucks on-site at the Nature Center. Guests are encouraged to bring picnic blankets and chairs to relax and enjoy the gorgeous landscape throughout the evening. PLAN Jeffco's Summer Picnic in the Park will be held rain or shine, as an indoor location is accessible inside the Nature Center as needed.

Additionally, three 30-minute guided hikes will be available for attendees to enjoy, including:

- Bird-watching: Led by PLAN Jeffco Board Member and Audubon Society Technical Specialist Ann Bonnell, participants will enjoy a hike with a discussion and view of the birds of the area.
- History: Led by Andrea Keppers and will discuss the history of Lookout Mountain while enjoying a hike on a portion of the mountain's trails.
- Bio-diversity: Led by Jefferson County Open Space Education Specialist Alicia Vermily, this tour will discuss the surrounding environment and how that impacts what grows in the area.

Mary Ann Bonnell, Jefferson County Open Space Visitor Services Manager and Park Ranger #1, will provide a keynote lecture at 6:00 p.m. Bonnell will discuss the stewardship of the land and its inhabitants, including the increase in some unwanted visitors, such as coyotes, rattlesnakes and moose in Jefferson County.

**Advanced registration will be encouraged so that we can be certain to have enough food; birthday cake will be served. The registration is through Eventbrite and the following will take you to the registration site - <http://tinyurl.com/ya4a45n7>**

**More information will be available on the [www.planjeffco.org](http://www.planjeffco.org) website as we complete the details.**

# *Conifer Community Park at Beaver Ranch*

## *Master Plan*

Beaver Ranch (Conifer Community Park) is a unique park in the Jefferson County Open Space program. The site was donated by the Quigg Newton family to a Denver church in the 1960's as a site for a church camp. A moderate-sized lodge, a smaller lodge (Tepee), and about ten small sleeping cabins were built. After some years, the Denver area Kiwanis Clubs took over management of the site and operated it for about 20 years with summer camp programs for Denver youth and rentals for other organizations. In the late 1980's, the Denver YMCA purchased the property and operated it as a camp for youth and rentals to other



organizations. The facility operated at a significant financial loss and in 2000 the YMCA decided to sell it. A number of Conifer area residents were concerned that the site would become a housing development and requested that Open Space purchase the property. Open Space purchased options to acquire the property in 2000 and 2001 and closed on the property in 2001.

A non-profit group, Beaver Ranch Coalition, Inc (BCRI), was organized by Conifer area residents to operate the park. Open Space management took the position that the group's role would be similar to a park and recreation district operating a park leased from Open Space. As such, the BCRI made annual requests to Open Space for annual grants to allow upgrading of the facilities, including the main and Tepee lodges and adding a level sports field. As sources of revenue to the park, the BCRI contracted with two commercial operations to develop a disc golf course and install zip lines. The other sources of revenue were lodge and camp site rentals.

The forested area needed thinning and BCRI arranged for the South Platte Conservation District to mitigate a portion of the forested area.

The BCRI grant request in 2015 was for upgrading the park entrance. However, there was an opportunity for the U. S. National Park Service to work with BCRI and Open Space and develop a master plan for the site. The park entrance was put on hold and development of a master plan proceeded. The goal was to develop a vision and a plan that can be implemented over time.





## *Conifer Community Park at Beaver Ranch Master Plan continued*

During the Master Plan process, Open Space management realized that because the BCRI was not supported by tax funds, there was no way they could take care of all the property. A first task was to separate the active and passive areas, with Open Space taking responsibility for the passive areas, the forest and trails.

Traffic management was the first problem that needed addressing in the active areas. The road through the park is barely two lanes wide, with a fairly steep pitch. It connects the two lodges, the camping area and dog park, and the access point to the zip lines. The initial part of the plan is to move the entrance to make access to Foxtan Road safer, and increase the available parking near the entrance. The Tepee Lodge will be the last point of vehicular access. This will require moving the dog park to the northeast corner of the park, close to the parking areas. The disc golf course office will be moved closer to the parking lot, . This will necessitate a walk to the start of the course, which can be mitigated by adding one or two holes to the course. Access to the zip line will be by walk-in or a shuttle.



## Regional Master Plans

There are 28 Open Space Parks; they are grouped into eight regions for management purposes. Open Space has started the process of updating the regional management plans for these eight regions. The first region being updated is the Mesas Region which includes North and South Table Mountain Parks plus Mount Galbraith Park. The approach of the regional plans is to gather and evaluate data for each park and develop park visions. The next step is to develop goals and objectives for each park. The third step is an implementation plan which would include the details of any planned development. With or without implementation, the fourth and final step is monitoring the park and adaptively managing its resources.

All management plans will reflect a balance between protection of the resource and providing opportunities for passive recreation; this is the Protect/Provide continuum. The latter includes trail corridors, parking areas, kiosks, and restrooms. For existing parks the impacts of recreation will be determined along the trails and other areas of public use by making temperature plots (graded shading) that is darkest at the trail and then fades as one gets further from the trail, up to a 150-foot theoretical distance of impact. This visualizes the impact that public use has on the parks. The plots then would have added areas of high protection needs, i.e. wetland, riparian areas, nesting areas, grasslands, and forest areas. This Protect/Provide continuum provides the framework for developing the on-going management strategy for the park.

The Priority Management Goals for each park are:

### North Table Mountain Park

Understand and assess hydrologic features, such as wetlands, ponds and drainages to limit impact on these resources.

Zero net-loss of raptor nesting habitat.

Improve visitor access.

Improve visitor education and communication both on the trails and at the kiosks.

### South Table Mountain Park

Protect areas that provide opportunities for future recreation amenities.

Zero net-loss of raptor nesting habitat.

Study and develop management plan for the K-Pg boundary. The **Cretaceous–Paleogene (K–Pg) boundary**, marks the end of the Cretaceous Period, the last period of the Mesozoic Era, and marks the beginning of the Paleogene Period, the first period of the Cenozoic Era. Its age is usually estimated at around 66 million years ago. The K–Pg boundary is associated with the Cretaceous–Paleogene extinction event, a mass extinction which destroyed a majority of the world's Mesozoic species, including all dinosaurs except for birds.

Improve visitor access.

Fulfill existing management obligations

### Mount Galbraith Park

Manage current and future access.

Acquire where appropriate, additional land to improve visitor access and parking.

Assess visitor access to the summit of Mount Galbraith Peak.

Improve visitor communication and education efforts.

Preserve areas of unfragmented vegetation.



## OSAC NOTES    OSAC NOTES    OSAC NOTES

There was no May 2017 meeting.

**June 1 STUDY SESSION:** The study session was a field trip to observe the progress on the extension of the Peaks to Plains Trail to the “Big Easy” area. See separate report on the Trail in this newsletter.

### **REGULAR MEETING:**

Mary Ann Bonnell presented the updated park regulations. It had been about 4 or 5 years since the last changes were made. The proposed regulations are simplified, the language is more consistent, and regulations covering new areas are covered. Some of the fines for non-compliance will be increased.

### **Planning & Projects Team Update,** Presented by Nancy York & Scot Grossman

Nancy noted that this year Open Space had reviewed more than 300 cases and provided comments on 17. One of interest is a 25-acre parcel east of Meyer Ranch on South Turkey Creek where the owner is considering a private dog park.

The FLAP grant from the Federal Highway Admin to bring the Rocky Mountain Greenway Trail across Rocky Flats has been approved. Concerns by Broomfield of the impact to the trail on Walnut Creek has led to moving the [which trail? The Walnut Creek trail or the Greenway trail?] trail to the south and west sides of the Fish & Wildlife Service property. This route also has the possibility of being used as part of the proposed Front Range trail. Confirmatory soil samples and analysis will be done before the project begins. Design work is planned in 2018 with construction beginning in 2019.

Three updated regional management plans are scheduled: Ranch area (Regional Map 1), North Plains (Regional Map 2), and the Mesas (including Mt. Galbraith.)

A trail plan for South Table is scheduled for this year.

The 1996 Water Resources Management Plan is being updated.

Projects underway, in addition to the P2P on the west end of the county, include a new water diversion structure on the South Platte in Pine Valley Park to allow Open Space to maintain their water right. Removal of the Hall dam in Mt. Galbraith Park is underway. The P2P trail at the canyon mouth is funded and proposals are due later in June and a contract will be issued in the fall. It will be a design-build contract with design in 2018 and construction in 2019.

**Mesas Region Management Plan Update,** Presented by Regina Elsner & Andrew Valdez. Regina and Andrew gave a detailed review of the plan development process. See a separate article in this newsletter.

### **July 6, 2017**

**STUDY SESSION** – Tour of Conifer Community Park at Beaver Ranch and presentation of the almost-finished master plan for the park.

### **REGULAR SESSION** –

**Real Estate Update,** Joy Lucisano reported on progress in the first one-half of 2017.

Completed projects include:

Joint acquisition of the North Floyd Hill Property with Clear Creek county and GOCO. MALT holds a conservation easement and will develop the plan for the site.

Installation of a cell phone tower on the Wheat Ridge Recreation Center.

Transfer of part of the reverter on the Walker-Branch Park to Citizens Park to allow Edgewater to build a combination police station and recreation center on the site.

Projects in progress include:

Completion of the purchase of the balance of the



## OSAC NOTES OSAC NOTES

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Meyer property at Aspen Park. Volunteers are inventorying the personal property to determine what will remain with the house and outbuildings.

Acquisition of the Frank Martin Trust property on Golden Gate Canyon Road; this is adjacent to the already-owned Termentozzi property.

Deeding Clement Park to Foothills Park and Recreation District.

**2018 Budget Update**, presented by Tom Hoby, Andy Scanlan & Gina Barton.

Maintaining a reasonable fund balance, greater than \$10 million, is not possible over the next few years. The fund balance at the end of 2016 was almost \$13 million. The estimated balance at the end of 2017 will be \$4 million. The proposed 2018 budget has an expected year-end fund balance of \$4 million and the projected budget for 2019 has an expected year-end fund balance of \$7 million. The last of the 1999 bond issue will be paid in 2019, making about \$8 million more available in 2020.

The remaining debt is:

- 1999, \$100 million issue, \$17 million
- 2001, \$30 million issue, \$9 million
- 2005, \$30 million issue, \$15 million

Requests above the 2017 budget levels include:

21 items in the operating accounts totaling \$600,000.

Making two part-time staff full time, adding 5 temporary positions to the trails team, and continuing the Be Wild Coordinator, for a total of \$138,000.

Capital expenditures of \$3,600,000 including \$2,400,000 for the Peaks to Plains Trail at the mouth of the canyon, \$500,000 for beginning the underpass for the Van Bibber Trail at McIntyre St, \$160,000 for design of a trailhead for South Table Mountain Park, and seven other smaller capital projects.

The 2018 budget does not assume any major acquisitions. The sales tax revenues are anticipated to increase at 3% for 2017 and 3.5% in 2018 and 2019. Revenue increases above these amounts would be required to generate significant funds available for acquisitions.

**Park Regulations Update**, Mary Ann Bonnell reviewed her June presentation and the update was approved. Most of the changes simplify the wording. The Commissioners will act on these in August or September.

### **Director's Report**

Gina Barton, Administration and Real Estate Manager. Gina joined our team on June 19 which allowed her to spend several weeks transitioning with Don Klima before he departed. We are excited to have her on the team and we know she is going to be a great asset.

**Beaver Ranch Park Community Meeting.** On June 7, the Planning and Natural Resource teams hosted a Community Meeting at Beaver Ranch Park. The meeting drew 100 interested community members who learned about the Park Master Plan and shared their input. Topics included parking, access, trails, recreation opportunities and an overview of on-going forest management projects.

**Friends of Evergreen Dog Park Working Group.** On June 9, JCOS attended the first Friends of Evergreen Dog Park Working Group. The Working Group consisted of two people from each of the following organizations: Evergreen Metro District, Evergreen Park & Recreation District, Friends of Evergreen Dog Park and JCOS. JCOS representatives are Nancy York, Open Space Planning Supervisor and Tom Hoby. The first meeting was hosted at the Evergreen Metro District and was dedicated to developing a program (desired amenities, site attributes, design ideas and management practices) for a new dog park location and a timeline with milestones.

**30th Annual Rhubarb Festival.** On June 10, JCOS participated in the 30th Annual Rhubarb Festival in Pine, Colorado. Volunteers spoke with over 400 people from all over the United States, even visitors from Germany. Stewardship and visitor safety messages were shared.

# 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 303.237.9493 for membership information.

**Our membership rate is:**

**\$35 per year**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to PLAN Jeffco and send to:

PLAN Jeffco  
11010 W 29th Avenue  
Lakewood, CO 80215

## 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

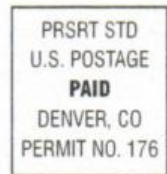
[jklitz@comcast.net](mailto:jklitz@comcast.net)

Thanks





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Jefferson County Citizens for  
Planned Growth with Open Space

# PLAN JEFFCO NEWSLETTER

## OSAC NOTES OSAC NOTES

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**Trail Stewardship Team Starts Season.** On June 15, the Trail Stewardship Team (TST) of 100 Jeffco youth began their summer season of learning valuable trail and life skills. The nationally acclaimed TST helps to maintain and improve natural surface trails, mitigate noxious weeds and restore natural areas each summer. Each TST worker can expect to cover 200 miles in eight weeks by hiking to and from the job site for trail maintenance.

**Evergreen Rodeo Parade.** On June 17, JCOS unveiled our new parade float at the Evergreen Rodeo Parade. With life-size, realistic photo cutouts of animals, as well as trees, a park bench, and attractive banners with leaves that flutter in the wind; the new float is eye-catching and representative of parks.

**Swift Water Rescue in Clear Creek.** On June 19, JCOS Park Rangers joined the Golden Fire Dept. and Arvada Fire Protection District to close US Highway 6 and rescue two teenagers who had become stranded while tubing down Clear Creek. The teens were cited for "unlawful conduct on public property" by Colorado State Patrol and will likely face a fine.

**Denver Post Feature.** On June 20, the Denver Post's

front page feature was the rattlesnake study on North Table Mountain Park that our staff is conducting along with Adaptation Environmental Services, as part of a small research grant. This was a great demonstration of how we create balance between conservation and the visitor experience.s.

**Updated Trail Assessments.** The trail assessments, which details the trails that are slated for work in 2017, will soon be updated on the website. This data lets visitors know what trails will be worked on and shows the criteria behind priority trail work.

**New Planning & Zoning Director.** Chris O'Keefe will succeed John Wolforth as the County's Planning & Zoning Director. His first day in the job is August 7, 2017. Chris has served as Planning Director of New Hanover County (Wilmington), North Carolina for the past 11 years and has been a county employee for 27 years. Once on board he will serve as a member of the Open Space Advisory Committee.