Mountains Region Management Plan

Includes Alderfer/Three Sisters Park, Elk Meadow Park, Flying J Ranch Park, and Meyer Ranch Park
Management Planning is an on-going process. Plans will never be considered “completed,” although, they will be reviewed periodically so they take into account environmental, social and political changes and reflect those changes.

Having reviewed its contents, this __________________________ (Name of Region) Management Plan, drafted in and revised in ___________ (date), has been adopted by the planning team members.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Signature</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>___________________</td>
<td>___________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Regional Park Supervisor</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>___________________</td>
<td>___________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Regional Planning Coordinator</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Table of Contents

Executive Summary: Mountains Region Management Plan .......................................................... viii

Chapter 1: Jefferson County Open Space Management Planning ........................................ 14

Chapter 2: Detailed Information on Alderfer/Three Sisters Park ........................................ 19

  Park Vision .......................................................................................................................... 19

  Location ............................................................................................................................ 19

  Chronology of Development ......................................................................................... 19

  Amenities .......................................................................................................................... 20

  Park Capacity .................................................................................................................... 20

  Historical Background .................................................................................................... 21

  Natural and Cultural Resources ..................................................................................... 24

  Activities .......................................................................................................................... 25

  Visitation & Use Trends ................................................................................................. 25

  Location Map .................................................................................................................. 27

  Park Map .......................................................................................................................... 29

  Acquisition History Map ............................................................................................... 30

  Management Context ....................................................................................................... 32

  Management Unit Designation Map .............................................................................. 34

  Agreements Table ............................................................................................................ 36

  Work Plan Summary ......................................................................................................... 37

  **Actions Map** .................................................................................................................. 38

  Action Items ...................................................................................................................... 39

  Discussion Items ............................................................................................................... 42

Chapter 3: Detailed Information on Elk Meadow Park ......................................................... 50

  Park Vision .......................................................................................................................... 50

  Location ............................................................................................................................ 50

  Chronology of Development ......................................................................................... 50
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amenities</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park Capacity</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historical Background</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural and Cultural Resources</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activities</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visitation &amp; Use Trends</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location Map</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park Map</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquisition History Map</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management Context</td>
<td>i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management Unit Designation Map</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agreements Table</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work Plan Summary</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actions Map</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action Items</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Items</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 4: Detailed Information on Flying J Ranch Park</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park Vision</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chronology of Development</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amenities</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park Capacity</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historical Background</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural and Cultural Resources</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activities</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visitation &amp; Use Trends</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location Map</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park Map</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 5: Detailed Information on Meyer Ranch Park

Park Vision ................................................................................. 98
Location ..................................................................................... 98
Chronology of Development ..................................................... 99
Amenities ................................................................................. 99
Park Capacity ........................................................................... 99
Historical Background .............................................................. 99
Natural and Cultural Resources ................................................ 101
Activities .................................................................................. 102
Visitation & Use Trends .............................................................. 102
Location Map ............................................................................ 103
Park Map .................................................................................. 104
Acquisition History Map ........................................................... 105
Management Context ................................................................. 107
Management Unit Designation Map ......................................... 109
Agreements Table ..................................................................... 110
Work Plan Summary .................................................................. 111
Actions Map ............................................................................. 112
Action Items ............................................................................. 113
Discussion Items ..................................................................... 114
List of Tables ........................................................................................................................................... vi
List of Figures .......................................................................................................................................... vi
Appendix A: Open Space Management Designations System ........................................................................ 116
Appendix B: Operational Documents Used in Park Management ................................................................ 123
Appendix C: Laws and Regulations ........................................................................................................... 124
Appendix D: Stakeholders and Constituencies ......................................................................................... 126
Glossary: Terms and Acronyms .................................................................................................................. 128
List of Tables

Table 2a:  Alderfer/Three Sisters Park Leases, Licenses, Easements, Contracts and Agreements ...........................................36
Table 3a:  Elk Meadow Park Leases, Licenses, Easements, Contracts and Agreements .................................................................64
Table 4a:  Flying J Ranch Park Leases, Licenses, Easements, Contracts and Agreements ..............................................................83
Table 5a:  Meyer Ranch Park Leases, Licenses, Easements, Contracts and Agreements ..............................................................110

List of Figures

Figure 2a:  Alderfer/Three Sisters Park Location Map ...................................................................................................................27
Figure 2b:  Alderfer/Three Sisters Park Map .................................................................................................................................i
Figure 2c:  Alderfer/Three Sisters Park Acquisition History Map ..................................................................................................30
Figure 2d:  Alderfer/Three Sisters Park Opportunities and Constraints Plan ..................................................................................31
Figure 2e:  Alderfer/Three Sisters Park Management Unit Designation Map ...............................................................................34
Figure 2f:  Alderfer/Three Sisters Park Actions Map .....................................................................................................................38
Figure 3a:  Elk Meadow Park Location Map .................................................................................................................................i
Figure 3b:  Elk Meadow Park Map ..................................................................................................................................................59
Figure 3c:  Elk Meadow Park Acquisition History Map ..................................................................................................................60
Figure 3d:  Elk Meadow Park Opportunities and Constraints Plan ................................................................................................61
Figure 3e:  Elk Meadow Park Management Unit Designation Map ................................................................................................63
Figure 3f:  Elk Meadow Park Actions Map .......................................................................................................................................67
Figure 4a:  Flying J Ranch Park Location Map ..............................................................................................................................i
Figure 4b:  Flying J Ranch Park Map ................................................................................................................................................i
Figure 4c:  Flying J Ranch Park Acquisition History Map ..................................................................................................................77
Figure 4d:  Flying J Ranch Park Opportunities and Constraints Plan ...............................................................................................78
Figure 4e:  Flying J Ranch Park Management Unit Designation Map ...............................................................................................82
Figure 4f:  Flying J Ranch Actions Map ...........................................................................................................................................i
Figure 5a:  Meyer Ranch Park Location Map ....................................................................................................................................103
Figure 5b:  Meyer Ranch Park Map ................................................................................................................................................i
Figure 5c:  Meyer Ranch Park Acquisition History Map ..................................................................................................................i
Figure 5d:  Meyer Ranch Park Opportunities and Constraints Plan .................................................................................................106
Figure 5e:  Meyer Ranch Park Management Unit Designation Map .................................................................................................109
Figure 5f:  Meyer Ranch Park Actions Map .......................................................................................................................................112
Executive Summary

Mountains Region
MANAGEMENT PLAN

Includes Alderfer/Three Sisters Park, Elk Meadow Park, Flying J Ranch Park, and Meyer Ranch Park
Executive Summary: Mountains Region Management Plan

Background:
In April of 1999 Jefferson County Open Space initiated a Management Planning process for its open space areas. The agency committed to developing management plans for each park and undeveloped open space in the system. In 2012, 9 regions were identified and all 29 Management Plans are now a part of one of these regions.

Management Plan Objectives and Organization:
This Mountains Region Management Plan is part of the Jefferson County Open Space system-wide effort to provide for protection and appropriate use of Jefferson County’s recreational, natural and cultural resources. This Plan is issue-driven. It identifies significant management issues at the parks and then recommends management approaches and actions to respond to those issues.

This Plan is organized as follows:
- **Jefferson County Open Space Management Planning** provides an explanation of Open Space’s approach to Management Planning throughout the Open Space system.
- **Descriptions of Alderfer/Three Sisters Park, Elk Meadow Park, Flying J Ranch Park, and Meyer Ranch Park** provide a description of the parks, their history and major attributes, trends in visitation and use, the Management Unit, action items, and work plan summaries.
- **Appendices** present information that complements the main body of text with information about the Open Space Management Designations System, and the Operational Documents used in park management.

Park Staff:

**Role of a Regional Park Supervisor:**
- Responsible for all activities at a number of parks, defined by a park region.
- Establish yourself as the public point of contact and ambassador for the Parks and properties in the region.
- Be aware of topics of interest to the public and users in the park region and communicate all items of sensitivity with your section Manager and the Communications Manager.
- Review the Regional Management Plan documents periodically and lead an annual field visit.
- Recommend Priority Actions to section manager and/or management team and coordinate the timing and implementation of these for the Park Region.
- Work with the respective section managers for budget and resource allocations necessary for appropriate scheduling and implementation of Priority Actions.
**Park Operations:**
On-site management of the Mountains Region is the responsibility of multiple Open Space sections. The Park Operations section is divided into several subsections: Park Services, Natural Resources Management, and Trail Services. Park Operation manages the daily operations of Open Space’s parks, including but not limited to, trail maintenance; fence and sign maintenance and construction; trailhead facility maintenance; forest and wildlife management; and road and parking lot maintenance. The Park Construction subsection of Park Planning and Construction provides trailhead and entry signage, structure maintenance and construction. The Ranger subsection of Administration/Education Services provides patrol and emergency services on the parks. Each subsection utilizes operational documents to guide their management activities.
Alderfer/Three Sisters Park:

Park Location and Description:
Alderfer/Three Sisters Park is located about two miles west of Evergreen, Colorado and hosts majestic views of Mount Evans, Evergreen Mountain and Elephant Butte. The dominant features of Alderfer/Three Sisters Park are the rock outcrops known as "The Three Sisters" and "The Brother." These rock formations have been landmarks for Evergreen residents since the first pioneers settled in the area.

Activities:
- Recreational: hiking, biking, horseback riding, trail running, picnicking, dog walking, bird watching, five acres of the Park is leased by Evergreen Park and Recreation District
- Educational: Naturalist-led walks
- Agricultural: Hay contract site

Park Vision:
Alderfer/Three Sisters Park is actively managed to maximize its resource values, while providing trail based recreational opportunities. The existing trail system on the Park encourages dispersed, passive recreational opportunities. The Park may be expanded where possible to enhance Master Plan values. This park is managed to assure the preservation of the scenic values of the Park, address the protection and preservation of wildlife habitat and general biodiversity of the property and to provide sustainable recreational utilization of the property where appropriate.
Elk Meadow Park:

Park Location and Description:
Elk Meadow Park is approximately 1,664 acres in size and is located on Highway 74 and Lewis Ridge Road in Evergreen. The Park has 12 miles of trails that range from ½ mile in length to almost 4 miles, from open meadows to conifer forest.

Activities:
- Recreational: Picnicking, hiking, biking, horseback riding, wildlife viewing, dog exercising, and self-guided interpretation

Park Vision:
Elk Meadow Park is actively managed to maximize its resource values, while providing a spectrum of recreational opportunities, environmental education and interpretation opportunities, and natural and cultural resource conservation efforts. Elk Meadow is unique in the Open Space system because it includes five different ecosystems that can be explored through the trails within the Park, as well as those in the adjoining Denver Mountain Park and Bergen Peak Wildlife Areas. The Park’s rich biological communities, including abundant wildlife and diverse vegetation, shall be protected as examples of successful forest management and habitat conservation.
Flying J Ranch Park:

Park Location and Description:
The 420-acre Flying J Ranch Park is located in the Conifer area at Shadow Mountain Drive and County Highway 73. It is currently a partially developed property with forest and meadowland cover. The address of the property is 9509 County Highway 73, Conifer 80433.

Activities:
- **Recreational:** Hiking, mountain biking, horseback riding, picnicking, cross-country skiing, sledding, and possibly fishing (under review)
- **Agricultural:** Haying

Park Vision:
The vision for Flying J Ranch Park is to balance human use with resource preservation through the application of management units upon the landscape, which define a spectrum of recreational opportunities, environmental education and interpretation opportunities, and natural resource conservation efforts. Flying J Ranch Park has two management unit designations, each emphasizing different priorities for the provision of recreational opportunities and protection of the park’s resources. The Parkland Recreation Service Areas, which are the two parking lots and immediately surrounding areas, emphasize the provision of amenities to serve the basic needs of the park’s visitors, including ADA accessibility, and serves as the primary trail head for access to the park’s trail system. The Natural Area management unit comprises most of the park’s area and is managed primarily for the protection of the park’s natural resources.
**Meyer Ranch Park:**

**Park Location and Description:**
Meyer Ranch Park is located just east of Conifer in the community of Aspen Park. Visitors to Meyer Ranch Park participate in a number of recreational activities including hiking, mountain biking, horseback riding, cross-country skiing, snow shoeing and sledding. Interpretive opportunities are also offered on-site by the Lookout Mountain Nature Center.

**Activities:**
- **Recreational:** Picnicking, hiking, biking, horseback riding, wildlife viewing, sledding and interpretive programming.

**Park Vision:**
The vision for Meyer Ranch Park is one that emphasizes the Park's unique position as both a place for recreation and natural resource conservation as well as an ecological buffer between developments in the mountain communities east of Conifer. Meyer Ranch Park has served as a welcoming gateway to the western mountains of Jefferson County since it was homesteaded and continues to greet park visitors to the area with open meadows, enveloping forests and picturesque vistas. The Park's rich biological communities are protected as examples of successful forest management and habitat conservation.
Chapter 1: Jefferson County Open Space Management Planning

Management Planning Approach:

Management Planning Principles:
This Plan uses four basic principles to ensure the long-term public value of Management Planning:

1) **Management Plans will be continuously revised:** Management Planning is an on-going process. Individual plans will never be considered “completed,” although, they will be considered “mature,” ready to be acted upon, when they have been reviewed. This plan shall be reviewed periodically so it has the ability to take into account environmental, social and political changes and reflect those changes.

2) **Management Plans are the primary document for communicating resource management information:** Plans will be written to clearly communicate park and region specific resource stewardship issues, management approaches, and actions to the rest of the agency, the public and other stakeholders.

3) **Park staff plays an integral role in producing and revising Management Plans:** In this way, those responsible for implementing the plan have a vested interest in making it succeed.

4) **Members of the public may participate in development of and updates to Regional Management Plans:** Directly involving park stakeholders in producing and revising plans fosters better understanding of how their particular interests fit into the larger resource Management Unit while also giving them a stake in the plan’s success.

Management Planning Steps:
For efficiency and consistency among Management Plans, Jefferson County Open Space standardized the planning process by incorporating information that is applicable throughout the agency and providing this “model” format for presenting regional and park-specific information.

Regional Management Planning includes:

1. Establishing the park Management Unit.
2. Gathering preliminary natural, cultural, developmental and recreational resource information about the park and region.
3. Requesting information and opinions from people interested in or affected by park management decisions (stakeholders) on issues of concern to them.
5. Identifying and evaluating options for resolving management issues.
6. Drafting a management plan that explains the management approach and the specific management actions proposed to address issues.
8. Reviewing the management plans periodically to evaluate progress, identify new issues, and generate annual budgets/work plans.
9. Revising the management plan to respond to new issues and to reflect management changes.

Park Management Decisions:
Resources and resource management issues vary between region and parks, but the essential challenge for the Open Space Program is accommodating public recreational use and protecting natural and cultural resources. Open Space staff utilize the following guidelines to help achieve a balance of recreational use and resource protection.

1) Systems Perspective: JCOS lands are within a larger system of outdoor spaces managed by local communities, state and federal agencies. Planning and decision-making will take into consideration the region, adjacent and nearby public lands and waters, and strive to maintain an important niche of “urban” open space and natural areas, taking into account the role of human interaction with these natural systems.

2) Public Values: There are many different values that county residents and other stakeholders have for JCOS. Planning and decision-making will consider all values and not the exclusive use or opinions of a single, smaller group. JCOS needs to respect and integrate the values and preferences of all residents, including major stakeholders such as recreationists and adjacent landowners.

3) Sustainability: Natural, cultural and recreational resource protection is of paramount concern for managing Jefferson County’s Open Space areas. Management tools and techniques, facility types and design, and visitor management techniques that minimize impacts on these resources will be favored.

4) Economic Considerations: Using the financial resources of Jefferson County efficiently and effectively is critical, but this is not to suggest the least expensive option is the preferred. Environmental considerations should be judged equally with technical and economic considerations in planning and decision-making.

5) Appropriate Recreation: It is recognized that JCOS cannot be “all things for all people,” and difficult capacity and allocation decisions are necessary.

6) Appreciation and Education: A major purpose of JCOS is to help increase public appreciation and understanding for our great outdoors and our natural/cultural environments.

7) Respect the Resource: Much is not known about how ecosystems operate or how one activity may affect it or other activities. Planning and decision-making should reflect scientific findings and monitoring efforts by JCOS. When two or more alternatives are identified through an evaluation process, the alternative that least impacts the resource and visitor experiences and preserves future options should be the preferred alternative.

Management Context:
Open Space lands are classified into Management Unit’s according to ecosystem and cultural resource protection requirements, and their capability and suitability to provide
opportunities for visitor experiences.
Open Space staff has adopted three land classifications:

1) **Sensitive Areas** are those that are very special, fragile, and highly valued for their natural or cultural features. Preservation and protection are the paramount considerations for these areas. Visitation to these areas is limited, controlled and monitored through a registration permit system.

2) **Natural Areas** are relatively large areas where ecological processes dominate and humans can typically experience a sense of solitude and remoteness.

3) **Recreation Services and Amenities Areas** provide opportunities for a wide variety of outdoor recreation experiences while ensuring the long-term sustainability of the natural resources.

Also utilized in park management is a Special Protection Area, or an SPA. It can be thought of as an overlay to one of the Management Unit Designations (MUDs) noted above. It has been created to address any unique item that requires special management actions, such as but not limited to: safety, a park access issue, natural resource concerns or restoration opportunities, cultural or environmental issues, biodiversity enhancement, time sensitive implications, a political imperative, other management consequences or opportunities. An SPA can be created within any MUD when specific resources, that are deemed significant, face real or potential impacts or opportunities that warrant special management actions. Given the preservation and protection already provided within a Sensitive Area, it is unlikely that a SPA will be needed. An effort at restoration, however, could be an applicable use of special management actions in a SPA. Specific location(s) and boundaries will be shown with the SPA labeled to denote the resource(s) in need of protection or special management. Issue-driven actions will be formulated to address the SPA.

**Management Directions:**

**Resource Management:**
Resource Evaluation Management (REM) is a framework to establish and manage specific natural, cultural and recreational resource issues. Key issues are identified and, where feasible, monitored. Indicators and thresholds may be useful in developing desired standards. Each Regional Management Plan identifies 6 steps to assess the applicable approach. Three of these steps are relevant to best management practices for resources. The other 3 relate to the use of measurable indicators and an achievable standard. In these cases the conflicting resource issues must be identified with an ability to compromise a resource issue, and clear direction as to the resource priority, to attain and manage for the identified standard. Resource monitoring provides a flow of information that may indicate a need to alter or adapt management.

Managing a diverse collection of natural, cultural, and recreational resources is a balancing act. Park staff faces increasing pressure to accommodate public recreational
use of natural and cultural resources while also protecting those resources from unacceptable degradation. How much public use is too much? What kinds of use can a resource sustain? Over the last 40 years several approaches to resource management have been developed to increase harmony between recreational use and resource protection.

Open Space Resource Management can be summarized as follows:

1) **Identify key resource and management issues** (step 5 if no indicators present)
2) **At selected times and places, choose measurable indicators of natural, cultural and recreational resource conditions:** identify quantifiable events or physical properties that gauge resource conditions, e.g., area of bare ground in campsites, incidents of vandalism, reported visitor conflicts, etc.
3) **When indicators are utilized, then measure, monitor and analyze indicators:** reach qualitative and/or quantitative conclusions of resource conditions and visitor experiences, to determine best management practices.
4) **When indicators are utilized a specific standard or threshold shall be established.**
5) **Explore and select most appropriate management option(s).**
6) **Evaluate management actions:** determine successes and/or failures of applied management actions and, if necessary, over a period of time, adapt either management actions or standards.

A resource management process recognizes that any recreational use of natural or cultural resources will cause some degree of change to those resources. Key park resources can be assessed over time to determine if their condition achieves or remains within acceptable standards. If standards are not met, either additional management actions may be selected and implemented or resource standards may be changed, whichever is deemed appropriate.

In most cases, measuring changes or impacts to all resources in an area is impractical. For this reason, only limited resources and issues will have specific indicators utilized to determine the appropriate standard and management strategy. Typically only a few resource-related or visitor experience matters of heightened public or staff concern will require indicators and associated standards. These will provide additional information and guidance with management decisions.

Another practical consideration is the ability to establish and monitor indicators. Indicators are typically quantifiable measurements or qualitative observations or events that gauge the condition of a particular resource or resources. The use of indicators is an additional tool to evaluate standards, can reduce the need for comprehensive resource inventories, and allows persons without extensive technical expertise to monitor change.

JCOS utilizes resource management techniques that are adaptive and by monitoring resources and establishing standards, is able to provide a flow of information that may
indicate the need to change a course of action.
Chapter 2: Detailed Information on Alderfer/Three Sisters Park

Introduction:

Park Vision:
The management of Alderfer/Three Sisters Park reflects Jefferson County Open Space’s mission of balancing human use with resource preservation. The Park serves as a respite from the pressures that are encountered from living in an ever-expanding urban environment. Alderfer/Three Sisters Park is actively managed to maximize its resource values, while providing trail based recreational opportunities. The existing trail system on the Park encourages dispersed, passive recreational opportunities. The park may be expanded where possible to enhance Master Plan values.

Alderfer/Three Sisters Park is managed to assure the preservation of the scenic values of the Park, address the protection and preservation of wildlife habitat and general biodiversity of the property and to provide sustainable recreational utilization of the property where appropriate. This is accomplished through the application of management units upon the landscape, which define a spectrum of recreational opportunities, environmental education and interpretation opportunities, and natural and cultural resource conservation efforts.

Location:
Alderfer/Three Sisters Park is located west of Evergreen in Township 5 South, Range 71 West, SW¼ SW ¼ of Section 4, SE ¼ and the S ½ SE ¼ of Section 5, S ½ SE ¼ and NE ¼ and N ½ SE ¼ of Section 8, SW ¼ of Section 9, and, NE ½ NE ¼ of Section 17. Lands purchased from the State of Colorado in 2005 are located in portions of Sections 16, 17 and 20.

To reach the Park from Interstate 70, take the Evergreen Parkway Exit (Exit 252), and head toward Evergreen on Evergreen Parkway. In downtown Evergreen, turn right onto Highway 73, heading south. Go to the first stoplight, which is Buffalo Park Road and turn right and continue one mile to the east parking lot. Travel an additional 1/2-mile and turn right on Le Masters Road to the west parking lot is on the right. See Figure 1a.

Chronology of Development:
1977 243 acres acquired
1979 Trail construction – Hidden Fawn, Ponderosa, Sister’s, Brother’s Trails
1980 Trail construction – Wilmot Trail
1986 96 acres acquired
1989 6 acres acquired
1988 Master Plan prepared by Design Studios West
1990 Trail construction – Bluebird Meadow, Homestead, Wild Iris, Silver Fox Trails
Five acre lease to Evergreen Park and Recreation District (house, barn, outbuildings, well)
Sawmill demolition
East parking lot/trailhead construction
1991 Trail construction – Ranch View, Evergreen West, Evergreen East
Recreation lease of 440 acres from State Land Board acquired
West parking lot, Clivus restroom and kiosk development
1992 Dedication, September
1999 Restroom burned down at west trailhead
2001 Restroom rebuilt by Evergreen Parks and Recreation and opened at west trailhead
2002 Blair Ranch property purchased
2003 Alderfer/Three Sisters Management Plan Updated to incorporate Blair Ranch Property into the plan
2004 Started the process to purchase the Evergreen Mountain State Land Board leased property
2005 Final Patent was received from the State of Colorado for the Evergreen Mountain State Land Board property. Fox-Perry property acquired.
2006 Mountain Mully, Cone flower and Bearberry trails were constructed on the Blair Ranch portion of Alderfer/Three Sisters.
2007 New vault restroom and sign built at east trailhead
2008 Additional 2 acres donated to the Park. Fox Perry house was demolished. Evergreen Park and Recreation lease amended to have Open Space be responsible for cleaning the restroom at the west trailhead.
2010 East trailhead parking lot was paved and increased size from 21 to 31 parking spaces.

**Amenities:**
- Two trailheads with one paved and one unpaved parking lots
- Two vault restrooms
- picnic facilities (leased and maintained by Evergreen Park and Recreation District)
- Two standard kiosks
- 15.5 miles of natural surface trails

**Park Capacity:**
Alderfer/Three Sisters can accommodate a maximum of 65 cars between its two parking lots. Including non-motorized access to the area, this equates to approximately 200 visitors at any one time on the Park. Current visitation data indicate that Alderfer/Three Sisters Park is approaching its visitation capacity based on facility design. There has been an increase in park visitors parking along Buffalo Park Road in the vicinity of the lower parking lot.

Data does not exist on visitor perceptions of conflict and crowding, trail condition, and natural resource quality, thus, a determination whether to increase facility capacity cannot be made at this time.
Acreage:
345 acres Alderfer/Three Sisters fee simple
440 acres acquired in 2005 from Colorado State Land Board
316 acres Blair addition fee simple
28 acres Fox-Perry addition fee simple
2 acres Marie Stobie donation
1130 total acres

Historical Background:
The dominant features of Alderfer/Three Sisters Park are the rock outcrops known as "The Three Sisters" and "The Brother." These rock formations have been landmarks for Evergreen residents since the first pioneers settled in the area. James T. Hester homesteaded the Alderfer/Three Sisters Park area in 1873. The Hester house and outbuildings were located at the foot of the rocks (near the current location of the park's Homestead Loop Trail). The original Hester house burned down in 1894. That same year, George Dollison built the present house in the meadow.

E.J. and Arlleta Alderfer moved into the ranch house and remodeled it in 1946. The Alderfer's added 45 acres to the original 240 acre homestead and also leased additional lands in the area, including the 440 acres of State School Land that is now leased by Open Space. Hay was cut annually on the ranch except during the driest years. For many years, Angus cattle were the mainstay of the Alderfer Ranch. The family also had a silver fox farm, but after the popularity of fox furs declined, the remaining foxes were released. Pasturing of horses became the dominant land use in 1970. The Alderfer's also operated a sawmill on the ranch, but the ranch was not commercially logged. Evidence of the sawmill operation (sawdust piles) can be seen near the Wild Iris Meadow Loop Trail.

The ranch property was used for recreation by neighbors and Evergreen residents, as well as the Alderfer's. Picnicking, hiking, and camping occurred on the property. There were three miles of horse and hiking trails. There was a cross-country skiing course and the Alderfer's operated a towrope for downhill skiing. A rock-climbing club used the property for practice. High school classes used the property for the study of ecology. With the family's permission, the Evergreen Naturalists Audubon Society put up a trail of bluebird nests in the Alderfer meadow in 1975.

The earliest land patent associated with the Blair property was issued on August 24, 1896 to Henry Venable. This land patent encompassed the southern 160 acres of the property. Halsey P. Gabriel homesteaded the northern 160 acres of the property in 1903. The ranch became the property of Victoria Blair sometime in the 1920s. She lived in the main house that has a log house core. It is believed that this structure could be the original Venable homestead. This structure was converted into a caretaker's residence. Victoria's son, Colonel William Blair Jr., is most commonly associated with this property. He spent most of his life in the United States Army. He resided most of the year at his ranch in Sterling, Colorado, and used the Blair property as a summer retreat. Sometime in the 1940s Colonel Blair built the structure known as...
Victoria’s Cabin. It is said that the structure was built for Colonel Blair second wife Isabelle, but it was most likely constructed before they were married. Isabelle lived in this structure until the mid-1990s, when failing health forced her to move back to her husband’s home in Sterling.

**Acquired:**

Alderfer/Three Sisters Park is composed of multiple land acquisitions. The first transaction occurred in March 1977, when 185 acres (160 acres fee simple, 25 acres gift parcel) of the original Alderfer Ranch were purchased from the Alderfer Partnership. The next transaction occurred in December 1977 and January 1978, when 57.62 acres (54.66 acres fee simple and 2.96 acres gift parcel) were purchased from the Spencer Wyant family. In May 1986, 95.87 acres (91.84 acres fee simple and 4.03 acres gift parcel) of the remaining Alderfer Ranch were purchased from the Alderfer Partnership. In conjunction with the final sale, the Alderfer Partnership negotiated with the State Land Board to assign the 440 acres that the Alderfer's historically leased as part of the Park. A recreational lease was finalized between Open Space and the State Land Board in June 1991. This lease was renewed in July 2001 for an additional two years and will be renewed on a "year to year" basis thereafter. In 2004 the State Land Board decided to put the property up for sale instead of leasing the recreational rights. The Patent (8349) for the property was received with all of the final signatures in January 2005, Open Space owns the 440 acres fee simple. An additional transaction took place in April 1989 when a 5.75 acre “gap” parcel was purchased, which was overlooked in the original acquisition. Evergreen Park and Recreation District lease the ranch house, barn, and a five-acre parcel around these facilities. A transaction took place on January 9, 2002 when Open Space purchased the property known as the Blair Ranch Estate from a Trustee representing William Powell Blair deceased. The Blair Ranch property consists of approximately 323 acres and associated water rights. The property is contiguous with Alderfer/Three Sisters Park.

Approximately 7 acres of the purchase was assigned to the adjacent property owner Mr. and Mrs. James Chiddix. Costs of the County portion of the acquisition were offset with contributions from the Jeffco Open Space Foundation and the Mountain Area Land Trust. In 2005 the Fox-Perry property consisting of 28 acres was purchased fee simple. This property is contiguous to the northeastern corner of Alderfer/Three Sisters Park. The property was acquired for preservation of the potential trail linkages to the adjacent Denver Mountain Park and Evergreen Lake, the preservation of the remaining portion of The Brother rock formation, and a trail linkage between existing trails on Alderfer/Three Sisters Park and the Blair Ranch acquisition parcel. The County acquired by deed, access rights to certain private roads, together with access rights to springs located on the Blair property. An additional 2 acres where donated by Marie Stobie in 2008. See Figure 2a.

Hank Alderfer, a son of E.J. and Arletta Alderfer, proposed that Open Space purchase part of Alderfer Ranch in 1974. The 1975 Open Space Advisory Committee (OSAC) Resolution recommending negotiations for acquisition of the Alderfer Ranch property mentioned the historic uses of the land as pasture for cattle and horses, the importance
of the land to wildlife (especially as a migration route for the Mount Evans elk herd), and that the land "would meet the recreational needs of the residents of Jefferson County" (OSAC Resolution #02-75). Open Space received the final go ahead to initiate the purchase of the Alderfer Ranch on February 17, 1977, when the Board of County Commissioners, passed Board Resolution #CC77-34. This proposal stated that the Alderfer Ranch: (1) met all criteria stated in the Open Space Ballot Initiative, (2) was in compliance with the Jefferson County Interim Open Space Park Plan, (3) is highly desirable land, and (4) that the acquisition of the property would be in the best interest of the health, safety, welfare, and morals of the citizens of Jefferson County. In 1984, OSAC authorized negotiations for acquisition of the remainder of the Alderfer Ranch Property including the ranch house and outbuildings, and acreage south of Buffalo Park Road. The Resolution noted that it "would be suitable for a community park for the Evergreen Recreation District and could include athletic fields, trails, cultural and community center activities" (BCC Resolution #CC84-1151). Purchase of this land was completed in 1986.

Open Space planned to develop softball and soccer fields on the new acquisition and then lease the fields to Evergreen Metropolitan Recreation and Park District (Hart 1986). There were few complaints about the prospect of athletic fields at Alderfer/Three Sisters Park until after the purchase was completed in May. A petition drive opposing the plan quickly garnered 279 signatures. Residents complained that athletic fields would be too expensive to build and maintain since blasting would be required to level the surface and a drainage system would have to be installed in the seasonally wet meadow. There were concerns about aesthetic issues, the loss of wildlife habitat, impacts on trail users, and increased traffic (see Open Space File 84-10). The Evergreen Recreation District voted in favor of the plan in 1986, but public opinion eventually prevailed and athletic fields were not developed.

Evergreen Recreation District, in cooperation with Jefferson County Open Space and the Jefferson County Historical Society, commissioned the development of a master plan for the property in 1988. Public input was solicited prior to developing the master plan. Three alternatives were presented for the Park: 1) passive Open Space park, 2) teaching/research ranch, and 3) living historic park. The master plan advocated the second alternative that "the Alderfer Ranch should be managed as an interpretive Open Space Park" providing "typical passive open space and trail related experiences in combination with interpretive and educational programs." However, Evergreen Recreation District could not afford to pursue the preferred alternative. Jefferson County Open Space has retained control of Alderfer/Three Sisters Park.

Open Space Park Naturalists and volunteers conduct interpretive programs at the Park. The Blair Ranch property was operated as a “gentleman’s ranch” by Colonel William Powell Blair until his death in the 1980’s. The land was placed in a trust as a life estate with his second wife Isabelle with the stipulation that the land could not be sold or developed during her lifetime. The trust broke upon her death in May of 2000 and the property was transferred to his children Victoria Powell Blair & Frank Howard Blair. The property was perceived as a magnificent acquisition since it would connect
Alderfer/Three Sisters with Denver Mountain Elephant Park and Bear Creek. The Evergreen Parks and Recreation Board of Directors passed a Resolution on June 20, 2002 that requested and encouraged Jefferson County Open Space to acquire the property. The property was acquired for open space purposes, including the preservation of wildlife habitat and riparian areas and for passive recreation uses.

In January of 2007, Open Space sold 0.06 acres to Fluekiger for a house encroachment that was on Alderfer/Three Sisters Park.

**Natural and Cultural Resources:**

- Five different major plant community types are found on the Park.
  1. Approximately 15 acres of riparian forest
     - Mixture of blue spruce with aspen, ponderosa pine and Douglas-fir with a deciduous shrub understory
     - Serves as critical habitat for a variety of different wildlife species
     - Important for wildlife travel corridor
  2. Approximately 70 acres of mountain meadow
     - Serves as critical elk and deer winter range
     - Predominantly comprised of non-native agricultural grass species
     - Are known for the dramatic display of wild iris in the spring
     - Are cut for hay in the summer
  3. Approximately 300 acres of ponderosa pine forest
     - Major forest type of the lower montane ecosystem
     - Provides high value mule deer winter range
     - Important for wildlife travel corridors
     - Potential to provide old-growth ponderosa pine community type through forest restoration practices
  4. Approximately 400 acres of lodgepole pine forest
     - Provides thermal and hiding cover for elk and deer
  5. Approximately 340 acres of mixed conifer forests
     - Forest is comprised of a mixture of Douglas-fir, ponderosa pine, aspen and lodgepole pine
     - Old-growth Douglas-fir/ponderosa pine forest is located on the top of Evergreen Mountain

- Six major noxious weeds are found on the Park that are continually treated.
  1. Leafy spurge infestations are down to ¼ acre.
  2. Musk thistle is scattered throughout the Park, mainly in drier areas.
  3. Canada thistle is found in the drainages and wetter areas of the Park.
  4. Spotted knapweed is located along Buffalo Park Road and near parking lots.
  5. Dalmatian and yellow toadflax is scattered throughout the Park.
     - Currently there are no effective control measures for this noxious weed.
     - Staff will continue to review current research that addresses the control of this plant.
• Native and rare plants
  1. Patches of Parry oatgrass and Nebraska sedge are scattered throughout the meadow portion of the Park.
     ♦ The Colorado Natural Heritage Program considers both to be species of concern.
  2. Large populations of wild iris are located in the meadows.
  3. Populations of yellow lady’s-slippers are located in several forested drainages.
     ♦ Considered as a species of concern by the Colorado Natural Heritage Program.

• Wildlife attributes of the Park
  1. Large mammals/big game
     ♦ Park is used by mule deer and elk.
     ♦ Park provides feeding, thermal and hiding cover for big game.
  2. Raptor/Avian use
     ♦ Red-tail hawks have been observed in the Park, although nests have not been found within the Park.
     ♦ Numerous avian species use the Park.

• Cultural Resources
  1. A Class III Cultural Resources Inventory has not been conducted on the Park.
  2. Old homestead foundations and other historic features are found on the Park.
  3. An old sawmill is located near Wild Iris Meadow Loop Trail. Was removed in the early 1990’s.
  4. Historic ranch buildings are located near the west trailhead.
  5. SWCA Environmental Consultants did a Historical Assessment on the Blair Ranch buildings in May 2002. They concluded that no single structure is historically significant in the history of the United States, Colorado and Jefferson County. However, if the structures are viewed as a group and assessed as a district, the property does embody the characteristics and historical integrity of a small-scale ranching operation.

• Geological resources
  1. Four major rock outcroppings (Brother and the Three Sisters) are located in the center of the Park.
  2. Majestic views of Mount Evans, Evergreen Mountain, and Elephant Butte

Activities:
Recreational: hiking, biking, horseback riding, trail running, picnicking, dog walking, bird watching, five acres of the Park is leased by Evergreen Park and Recreation District
Educational: naturalist-led walks
Agricultural: hay contract site

Visitation and Use Trends:
Over the past five years Alderfer/Three Sisters Park averaged over 62,000 visitors per year. Hiking appears to be the most prevalent type of use, with increasing use by mountain bikers. Equestrian use is generally from people that live in the immediate area. Alderfer/Three Sisters has the greatest saturation of trails per acre than any other Park in the Open Space system.
Figure 2a: Alderfer/Three Sisters Park Location Map
ALDERFER/ THREE SISTERS PARK
Conceptual Plan

Legend

- JEFFERSON CO OPEN SPACE
- PARKING
- RESTROOMS
- SCENIC VIEW
- PICNIC AREA
- EXISTING TRAIL
- SERVICE ROAD

Conceptual plan is not intended to serve as an official park or trail map and is subject to change.

Figure 2b: Alderfer/Three Sisters Park Map
Figure 2c: Alderfer/Three Sisters Park Acquisition History Map

Fig. 2: ALDERFER/THREE SISTERS PARK
Acquisitions History

- Jan. 2002
  316 acres
- April 1989
  6 acres
- December 2005
  28 acres
- January 2005
  440 acres
- June 2008
  2 acres

Feb. 2009
Figure 2d: Alderfer/Three Sisters Park Opportunities and Constraints Plan
Management Context:

This section identifies and describes the Management Units that have been designated for Alderfer/Three Sisters Park. See Figure 2e.

Sensitive Area Management Areas:
All species of wildlife, even those that are adaptable and visible, require some degree of undisturbed space and time for certain aspects of their life history (breeding, foraging, resting, hiding, etc.). If portions of the landscape are available with little to no disturbance, these species will utilize them as needed and thus continue to occupy and utilize the entire landscape. Eventually, those species of wildlife that are adaptive will become part of the more visible watchable wildlife that the public has come to observe and enjoy on Open Space parks.

There are no designated Sensitive Areas on Alderfer/Three Sisters Park.

Natural Area Management Areas:
Below is the justification for designating the majority of Alderfer/Three Sisters Park a Natural Area Management Unit and, thereby, providing public access in the form of natural surface trails.

1. Wildlife usage
   - Area is used by mule deer and elk
   - This area acts as travel corridors and feeding areas for elk.
   - Provides quality habitat for numerous wildlife species.

2. Recreational resources
   - The area provides spectacular rock outcrops and scenery.
   - The natural surface trails on the park are located in this area.

Recreation Services and Amenities Areas:
Below is the justification for designating the parking and immediately surrounding areas Recreation Services and Amenities Management Units and, thereby, providing parking, restroom facilities, picnic tables and informational signage.

1. Park access
   - This area provides the only vehicular access into the park.
   - This area was designed to allow access to all of the major trails located on the park.

2. Park facilities
   - The caretakers’ house and office for Evergreen Park and Recreation District is located in this area.
   - The area serves as a historic reminder of the past uses of the property.
   - Picnic tables are located here for public use.
   - This area provides for the basic needs of park visitors.
   - These areas receive considerable human use and, consequently, severely
limited wildlife use.
FIG. 4: ALDERFER/THREE SISTERS PARK
Management Unit Designations

Sources: Jefferson County Open Space and Jefferson County IT Dept. 2/12/09
d:\data\arcgis9\pmp\ald\ald_mud.mxd

Figure 2e: Alderfer/Three Sisters Park MUD Map
**Alderfer/Three Sisters Park Leases, Easements, Contracts and Agreements:**

Jefferson County Open Space often enters into agreements with other public and private organizations and individuals on behalf of a park. These agreements sometimes help the park to fulfill its recreational or stewardship objectives while providing a service or benefit to the other party. Agreements of this type are legally binding, and as a result, form a critical element of a park’s legal and policy context. Leases, easements, contracts and agreements entered into on behalf of this park are outlined in Table 1a below.

**TABLE 2a: ALDERFER/THREE SISTERS PARK LEASES, LICENSES, EASEMENTS, CONTRACTS AND AGREEMENTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agreement Type</th>
<th>Agreeing Parties</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15’ Utility Easement</td>
<td>Public Service</td>
<td>Permanent, non-exclusive utility easement</td>
<td>Rec. #88082068</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access Easement</td>
<td>Mountain View</td>
<td>30 foot wide ingress and egress easement to Evergreen Heights</td>
<td>Rec. #88026444 BK 2987 PG 687 Rec. #79113732 Rec. #79046010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10’ Utility Easement</td>
<td>Public Service</td>
<td>Utility easement along Buffalo Park Road</td>
<td>Book 2987, Pages 687 &amp; 691</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10’ Easement</td>
<td>Intermountain Rural Electric Association</td>
<td>Utility easement along Buffalo Park Road</td>
<td>Acquisition files</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lease &amp; Agreement for land use</td>
<td>Evergreen Metropolitan Recreation and Park District</td>
<td>Lease of 5.443 acres of land, with improvements, to operate and maintain</td>
<td>Rec. #90103406</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hay Contract</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROW Roads &amp; Pipelines</td>
<td></td>
<td>Easement for waterline and roads on north end of park</td>
<td>BK 210 PG 450 BK 212 PG 423</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROW</td>
<td></td>
<td>Public access, utilities and incidental purposes</td>
<td>Rec. #85000319</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IGA</td>
<td>Denver Mtn Parks</td>
<td>Trail connection to golf course</td>
<td>Open Space Planning Office</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Work Plan Summary:

The Figure on the following page reflects the five-year financial strategy for Alderfer/Three Sisters Park. The “issue-driven” actions identified in the Actions Map (Figure 2f) correspond alpha-numerically to the “Action Items,” portion this chapter. The Actions Map (Figure 2f) shows the temporal relationship between the issues.

Definitions:

1) System-wide Priority Criteria

A decision whether to implement a particular management action is based on system-wide priorities, which are derived from the following criteria:

- Universal Accessibility/life safety/public health
- Resource protection
- Special studies/planning
- Cyclic maintenance
***Actions Map not available***
**Action Items:**

An explanation of identified issues specific to Alderfer/Three Sisters Park and the actions proposed to resolve them follow. The issues and actions articulated below correspond alpha-numerically to Figure 2f. Implementation of the preferred management options may be limited by staffing and/or budget constraints.

A. **East Trailhead and Parking Improvements:**
The Alderfer/Three Sisters team considers it inappropriate to have portable restrooms and mini-kiosks at trailheads for extended periods of time within the park system. Design permanent restroom, review existing parking and replace the mini-kiosk with a full sized one to standardize the information that is presented for the park.

A.1. **Design East Trailhead and Parking Improvements** - Project **Completed:** 2009, Action Lead: Don Voisinet - D&D

A.2. **Implement Design Changes** - Project **Completed:** 2010, Action Lead: Jeffco Road & Bridge

B. **Visitor Satisfaction:**
Part of Open Space’s mission is to provide for the physical, psychological, recreational and social enjoyment of the park systems visitors. Evaluation of Open Space’s performance in this regard shall be accomplished through visitor surveys conducted once every three years.

B.1. **Implement Visitor Survey and establish a standard for perceptions of visitor satisfaction** - Parked was surveyed in 2002, and 2005. Next survey is scheduled for 2008. Survey took place in 2009, no new surveys are planned.

B.2. **Implement appropriate mitigation efforts if standards are not met** - The standard is for 80% of visitors to not have experienced conflict or crowding.

C. **Visitor Information Opportunities:**
Identify and develop visitor information opportunities on Alderfer/Three Sisters Park. Open Space’s Interpretive Master Plan reflects the provision of non-personal interpretive services at Alderfer/Three Sisters Park. These facilities will be developed per this Master Plan.

C.1. **Identify and develop non-personal visitor information opportunities.** Project Completion: 12/09, Action Lead: Tim Sandsmark - Nature Center. Themes have been identified, concepts will be developed from these themes. This is on the Nature Center’s latest 5 year interpretive plan with the concept plan being done in 2007

C.2. **Produce/install non-personal interpretive media** - Project Completion: 12/11, Action Lead: Tim Sandsmark
D. Determine REM standards or thresholds for social trials on the old State Land Board portion of Alderfer:
In 2006, Alderfer was one of five parks that were selected to implement the Resource Evaluation Management model (REM). As a result, staff is implementing a REM for the social trails located on the old State Land Board portion of Alderfer/Three Sisters Park. The social trails that are located on this property are part of a discussion item within this document. Staff’s recommendation was to review these trails and either incorporate them into the existing trail system or close those trails that do not. The REM process will allow us to collect data to support future management decisions regarding these trails.


E. Further evaluate building uses on the Blair Ranch Property:
SWCA Environmental Consultants did a Historical Assessment on the Blair Ranch buildings in May 2002. They concluded that no one structure is historically significant in the history of the United States, Colorado and Jefferson County. However, if the structures are viewed as a group and assessed as a district, the property does embody the characteristics and historical integrity of a small-scale ranching operation. The Management Planning team decided to allow the buildings to remain in their current condition until a suitable use is determined. The team would like to have non-personal historical interpretation of the buildings put in place when possible. Other uses that have come forth were a request by The Evergreen Naturalists Audubon Society (TENAS) to use the buildings as a nature center, and an Open Space proposal to use the buildings for a Volunteer Youth Program. TENAS has removed their request to use the buildings.


E.2. Follow through with Staff Recommendation for use of Blair Buildings – Project completion 2012 Action Lead: John Steinle, Tim Sandmark, Frank Kunze, Lance Henkal. Staff Recommends that some of the buildings be used for historical interpretive purposes. This will require that those buildings to be preserved are maintained to ensure public safety. Public access to the interior will not be permitted. Interpretive efforts could include both personal services, i.e., staff lead tours, and non-personal services

F. Evaluate west parking lot drainage to determine if addition parking can be added. – Moved into discussion items

G. Evaluate Victoria’s house to determine if it can be converted to a
picnic shelter – Moved into E.2.

H. Remove pump house and above ground water line from Blair Ranch:
Both issues are water right related. Staff researched and discovered that the water rights out of Bear Creek has Priority No. 91 for domestic use in the amount of .125 cfs and Priority No. 121 for irrigation use in the amount of .125 cfs. These are relatively junior priorities. The water commissioner told staff that there might be water available in January or February and maybe two or three times in the summer. Any water taken out of priority would be illegal unless a decreed augmentation plan was in place – which we don't have. The water commissioner hasn't received any reports of water diversions since he started in 1989. He asked that if we do divert water that we make sure to report it to him. Staff decided that we had no irrigation needs on Blair Ranch, so the water related facilities should be removed.


I. Blair Ranch trail system:
Staff will be designing a trail system that uses the existing service roads on the Blair Ranch addition to the park. Approximately ¾ of a mile of new trail will have to be constructed to facilitate a loop trail pattern. The trails will be multiple use trails.


Discussion Items:

Although the following discussion items were not considered issues by Open Space staff, they are included here for the administrative record.

1. **Adequate Parking**
   Don Voi presented information on in-house research that has been done on parking lots. He indicated that Alderfer receives average use when compared to other parking lots within the park system. There appears to be a problem with mountain bikers preferring to park at the east trailhead to get the uphill climb out of the way early in their ride. This parking lot is also the first lot that you see when you come to the park. Recently, “No Parking” signs have been placed on Buffalo Park Road to try to control on-street parking. It has been observed that there are still parking spaces available in the west parking lot when the east lot is full. A sign has also been placed to inform park users of additional parking at the west trailhead. Staff decided that encouraging parking in the west lot would relieve the congestion in the east parking lot. This will be accomplished by increasing available staff visits during weekend hours. Staff will also revisit this potential issue through the yearly management plan review process.

2. **Social Trails**
   Staff didn’t have a great deal of concern with this potential issue with the exception of concerns related to an unmanaged access point.

   Staff decided to inventory and GPS the social trails and evaluate if and how they fit into the current trail system. The trails will then either be incorporated or reclaimed. Staff has placed a sign at the access point, which informs visitors of the rules and regulations on the park. Staff has reviewed the social trails and has incorporated the trails that fit into the current system and have closed the social trails that do not. Staff will also be closing social trails on the Blair property that do not fit into the proposed trail system.

   Staff closed a social trail on the Blair addition and incorporated a single access trail from Lois Lane. Staff addressed several issues from an individual from Evergreen Heights that was concerned with the changes that we were proposing to implement. Staff sent out approximately 500 letters that outlined our proposal and only received three comments. Staff followed through with the social trail closure plan since it was determined to be best management practices and fall within our Social Trail Management Directives. Trails were closed, which created a problem between Open Space and the Evergreen Heights Sub-Division. A compromise was achieved by incorporating a couple of the social trails into the normal trail system.

3. **Entry Sign at West Trailhead**
   Staff discussed and decided that there are indeed some minor differences with this sign. The sign uses “3” Sisters instead of “Three” Sisters, and it does not have stone work on the pillars as is common with signs on other parks. Staff decided to upgrade the sign
when it is due for replacement. The condition of the sign will be reviewed on a yearly basis.

4. **Drainage Problems at West Trailhead**
Staff discussed that the parking lot was not put in the most desirable location as it relates to drainage. Staff decided the existing drainage is not ideal, but it is acceptable, and they recommend moving this parking lot if a more suitable parking location becomes available from the possible purchase of the Blair Ranch property.

5. **Evergreen Park and Recreation District Lease**
Copies of the Agreement will be made available to staff. The lease is a 25-year lease that was recorded on December 6, 1990. The Agreement calls for the lease to be reviewed by the District, Open Space staff and the Open Space Advisory Committee at least every 5 years. Staff did not come up with specific issues with the exception of the care of the restroom. It is probably inappropriate at this time to push for control of the restroom since Evergreen Parks and Recreation District is paying to have a new one built. A discussion was held on how Evergreen Park and Recreation District fits into the vision of the park. The group felt that the Evergreen Park and Recreation District site influences only a small portion of the park and it has been in existence for over ten years. Staff recommends that specific issues or concerns should be brought forward, reviewed, and put in writing before the next review date.

The care of the restroom by Evergreen Park and Recreation District was noted as a problem. Staff would like some type of signage to direct park users that the restroom is not maintained by Open Space. A sign has been placed on the kiosk indicating that Evergreen Park and Recreation District manage the restroom.

**Lease was amended in 2008 which result in the maintenance responsibility of the restroom being returned to Open Space.**

6. **Alderfer to Evergreen Golf Course Trail**
The agreement and location of the trail has been finalized. No longer an issue or item of discussion.

7. **Status of Wilmont Trail**
Staff researched this potential issue. The original park maps show this area as a parking area. Staff reviewed the use of this parking lot. It received minimal use in the past and did not alleviate congestion at the east parking lot.

8. **Possibility of a Dog Training/Bark Park Area on Alderfer/Three Sisters**
Staff decided that the present trail system does not provide a suitable area for this activity. Staff also felt that this activity was incompatible with wildlife uses of the Park.

9. **Inventory and Identify Old Dumps**
Staff indicated that there are several old historic dumps on the park that should merit some type of review. Staff decided that these dumps should be included in the cultural
inventory process. The dumps were inventoried in October 2002 and were not considered to have historical significance.

10. Evergreen Heights Encroachments
Staff had a lengthy discussion on this issue. Staff realized that this would not be an Open Space issue since we lease this property and do not own the land on which the encroachments are taking place. Staff notified the State Land Board.

Open Space acquired the property in 2005 and decided not to do anything about the encroachments with the exception of reviewing social trails. In 2006, Mr. Fluekiger contacted Open Space because it was discovered that a portion of his house is located on Open Space property. Staff is currently working with him to resolve this issue by selling him a small portion of Open Space land.

In 2008, .06 acres were sold to Patricia Fluekiger Revocable Trust to resolve this issue.

11. State Land Lease
Staff discussed the issue of a long-term recreational lease and to possibly include resource management as an Open Space responsibility. Ten years is generally the longest lease that the State Land Board offers. Open Space would have to increase their lease payments if they would assume full resource management. Open Space would be required to have the Colorado State Forest Service review and approve all forest management plans, plus Open Space would be required to pay the market value of all timber that is removed from the lease. Staff decided that it would be in Open Space’s best interest to maintain the recreation lease as it currently exists.

Property was acquired from the State Land Board in January 2005

12. Need for Hitching Rails at the West Trailhead
Staff decided to look into this concern further. It is unclear as to the need for hitching rails. Staff felt that this would require a minimal financial cost and could be easily resolved. Hitching post was installed November 2011.

13. Picnic Tables at East Trailhead
There was earlier discussion that picnic tables were removed from the east trailhead. Staff has determined that there is one picnic table at the east trailhead. Staff made the decision not to increase the picnic potential of the east trailhead based on the limited amount of parking and that the Evergreen Park and Recreation District provides picnicking in the Recreational Park Land Area.

14. Rock Climbing
Staff discussed and decided that rock climbing is an acceptable recreational use on the park. Staff recommends that traditional climbing with clean removable protection be allowed on the park. No bolted routes will be allowed on the park. Social trails leading to several boulder climbing areas have developed, with braiding and non-sustainability
issues resulting. Staff has produced a recommendation to the Climbing Committee that sustainable trails be constructed to several of these sites, along with appropriate signage indicating the name of the bouldering site. The Climbing Committee has taken this recommendation under advisement.

15. Cross-Country Equestrian Course
Staff received public input and discussed this concept. The request was to allow an unmarked course with various structures to be built in one of the Blair meadows. Staff feels as though this type of equestrian use has merit. However, staff believes that a cross-country equestrian course is not appropriate for this Open Space Park.

16. Alderfer/Elephant Butte connection trail and trail system
Open Space and Denver Mountain Park (DMP) staffs discussed the possibility of the development of a trail system on Elephant Butte. DMP decided that additional resource information was required before they could make a decision to allow trails on their property. Social trail exists to summit of Elephant Butte with a connection to official Open Space trail system. A barrier has been erected to close social trail, however park visitors continue to utilize this social trail.
Resource Evaluation Management Information:

**ACTION ITEM D:** Determine REM standards or thresholds for Social Trails on the old State Land Board portion of Alderfer.

**D.1 – Determine REM standards for trail conditions**

Action Team:
- Frank Kunze (Action Lead)
- Jason Crum

Discussion:
The Action Team met on January 9, 2007 to develop the Resource Evaluation Management actions that are to be applied to the social trails on the State Land Board portion of the Park. This is a six-step process. The first step is to identify the key resource and/or management issues that are to be addressed. For this Action Item (D.1), we choose the management of the social trails and the trail that is being called the “Meadow Trail” as the two issues that will be studied. Each issue has been evaluated separately for the remaining steps 2-6 and are listed below.

**Meadow Trail:**
- Indicators to be used
  - Width of trail
  - Braiding of trail
  - Erosion (channeling within tread)
  - Concave trail depth
- Monitoring
  - 3 times per year
  - Every 100’, a metal pin will be set on the uphill side of the trail to ground level and GPS’d to that measurements will be taken from the same spot each time.
- Threshold (The point at were corrective actions need to be taken)
  - The trail will remain a single tract trail
  - Maximum width of trail to be 18”.
  - Channel erosion along the trail tread should not extend greater than 20’.
  - The depth of any concaving of the trail will be < 4”.
- Management Actions
  - Close all but one of the braided trail sections.
  - Re-route trail section that does not respond to other actions (short section only).
  - Install water bar/dip to get water off the trail to prevent channeling.
  - Place border on side of trail to keep trail within the 18” limit.
  - Add fill material to low spots.
  - As a last resort, if the trail use is so high that the trail cannot be maintained to this level, make a recommendation to the whole PMP Team to upgrade this trail to the higher trail standard associated with the other trails on the park.
• Evaluate actions
   Yearly, at the annual PMP update meeting, review successes and/or failure with whole team to determine if the above process needs to be modified.

**Social trails:**

• Indicators to be used
   Any formation of a path that can be associated to non-wildlife use.
   Existing social trails that were in existence before Open Space acquired the property.

• Monitoring
   3 times per year
   This is an ocular observation obtained by hiking the area.
   Estimate the use of the path as low, medium or high.
   GPS paths at least once a year.

• Threshold
   No social trails wanted
   Eliminate the use of the exiting social trails

• Management action
   Light use to be signed “closed”. Develop a sign that would explain the reason why the path should not be used.
   Medium use to be signed & physically blocked. Develop a means to block the path that fits in with the environment.
   Heavy use, all of the above & rehab the trail. Re-vegetation of the path will be done for the entire length of the path.
   Keep the community informed and try to get their help on mitigation actions.
   Coordinate with the Natural Resource Section on their forest management operations in the location of skid trails. Skid trails could be located over existing social trails so when skidding is complete, the re-vegetation of the skid trail could eliminate any evidence of the social trail.
   As a last resort, if the trail use is so high that the trail cannot be maintained to this level, make a recommendation to the whole PMP Team to upgrade this trail to the higher trail standard associated with the other trails on the park.

• Evaluate actions
  Yearly, at the annual PMP update meeting, review successes and/or failure with whole team to determine if the above process needs to be modified.
Climbing Recommendations:

Parking:
Climbing areas in this park are not currently creating use that exceeds the safety or capacity of parking lots. Therefore, parking is not an issue at this time. No action recommended.

Staging:
The large majority of the climbing activity is bouldering. This has resulted in the impacts to staging areas being unorganized and dispersed. In addition, much of the staging areas are in durable locations with little vegetation. While regular monitoring is recommended, no action is recommended at this time.

Climbing Routes:
Bouldering areas seem to be gaining popularity and are published in at least one guidebook. There are currently 297 named boulder “problems” published on MountainProject.com for Alderfer/Three Sisters. The area known as “The Eggs” has one of the highest concentrations of routes in the park, and experiences the most resource damage. Overall, routes are concentrated in several popular areas, with scattered individual boulders receiving sporadic use. Obvious indications of use are limited to social trails, trampling of vegetation at the base of the boulders, and chalk left on the rock. This could become a visual eyesore to the non-climbing visitor.

Emergency Access:
No new recommendations at this time.

Natural Resources:
There are currently no high concerns for resource impacts from climbing, though some concern exists due to social trail formation and destruction of vegetation at the base of the boulders.
There is currently minimal fixed protection on the known climbing areas. Expected use should not result in the proliferation of additional fixed protection. However, discussion item #14 of the PMP states “…rock climbing is an acceptable recreational use on the park. Staff recommends that traditional climbing with clean removable protection be allowed on the park. No bolted routes will be allowed on the park.” With that in mind, the site known as Hidden Fawn Boulders (the Eggs) has anchors for two top rope climbs. These anchors do not represent bolted routes but allow limited protection at these locations.

Recommendation:
The current recommendation is to allow continued use of the area for bouldering opportunities. The known routes should be monitored for potential impacts. The trail system is inspected semi-annually by the Trails section and any developing social trails should be assessed and dealt with according to the Administrative Directive #1006 that deals with managing unauthorized trails. The PMP team has forwarded a plan to the
Climbing Committee to address issues resulting from climbing impacts, and the Committee has taken them under advisement.

The PMP team should consider options to educate or inform potential climbing recreationists to discourage the use of fixed protection.

In summary, the recommendations are:
- Allow bouldering to continue
- Monitor and address social trails
- Educate climbers on prohibition of fixed protection

**Inventory Rating Summary:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Crag</th>
<th>Parking Emergency</th>
<th>Approach Resources</th>
<th>Staging</th>
<th>Access</th>
<th>Routes</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brother- South Side</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brothers Boulder</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elephant Butt</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Energy Crag/Blockheads</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hidden Fawn Boulders (The</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eggs)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Average Scores:** 0.00 0.40 0.20 0.00 0.40 1.00 0.20
Chapter 3: Detailed Information on Elk Meadow Park

Introduction:

Park Vision:
The management of Elk Meadow Park reflects the Jefferson County Open Space mission of balancing human use with resource preservation. This is accomplished through the application of management units upon the landscape, which define a spectrum of recreational opportunities, environmental education and interpretation opportunities, and natural and cultural resource conservation efforts. Elk Meadow Park has two Management Unit Designations, each emphasizing different priorities for the provision of recreational opportunities and protection of the Park’s resources.

Elk Meadow Park is unique in the Open Space system because it includes five different ecosystems that can be explored through the trails within the Park, as well as the adjoining Denver Mountain Park and Bergen Peak Wildlife Area. These ecosystems include the open, rolling meadows visible from Highway 74; the Ponderosa pine forest that predominates the transition zone; the Douglas-fir and aspen found in the foothills zone; the thick stands of lodgepole pine in the montane zone; and finally, the sub alpine zone of lichens and rock on Bergen Peak.

Elk Meadow Park has served as a welcoming gateway to Evergreen since it was homesteaded and continues to greet Park visitors to the area with open meadows, groves of quaking aspens and secluded evergreen forests. The Park also functions as an ecological buffer between development in Evergreen. The Park’s rich biological communities, including abundant wildlife and diverse vegetation, shall be protected as examples of successful forest management and habitat conservation.

Location:
Elk Meadow is located west of the intersection of Lewis Ridge Road and Highway 74 in Evergreen. See Figure 3a.

Chronology of Development:
Unknown: Elk Ridge, Sleepy S and Painter’s Pause Trails opened
Unknown: Bergen Peak and Meadow View Trails opened
1979 Resident Ranger’s house moved to Park
1982 Shop building constructed
1993 Clivus restroom at Stagecoach entrance completed
1993 Picnic area at Stagecoach upgraded
1995 Well and hand pump installed at Stagecoach
1998 Parking lot at Lewis Ridge Road (main) completed
2000 Lewis Ridge Road widened at entrance
2001 Founders Trail and The Carol Karlin Overlook opened
2000-01 Kiwanis shelters constructed
2001  Fenced Dog Park opened
2004  Fenced Dog Park expanded
2008  Dog Off-Leash improvements constructed including parking lot, accessible trail, and accessible gate

**Amenities:**

- 13.1 miles of natural surface trails
- One restroom at the main Parking area off of Lewis Ridge Road
- One Clivus restroom at the Stagecoach Road Parking area
- Resident Ranger house
- Two information kiosks
- Three barns (two in Noble Meadow; one near Highway 74)
- Three Parking lots

**Park Capacity:**
The facility capacity of Elk Meadow Park, as illustrated on the Park Map (Figure 3b), allows for 115 cars between its two Parking lots. Including non-motorized access to the area, this equates to approximately 258 visitors at any one time on the Park.

**Acreage:**
Elk Meadow Park is approximately 1,744 acres (includes Conservation Easement)

**Historical Background:**
Elk Meadow Park is nestled in the eastern Rocky Mountains, a landform composed largely of crystalline layered rocks. The Park encompasses part of the open meadows and bordering woodlands found at the extreme headwaters of Troublesome Creek and Bergen Creek. Elk Meadow Park's extensive meadow is the result of alluvial deposits over Precambrian rocks. There are also some intrusive igneous outcrops of granite in the form of pegmatite and gneiss, a coarsely grained metamorphic rock. Despite Gold Rush period hopes to the contrary, there are no known mineral resources in the area worth the cost of mining.

For 10,000 years, hunter-gatherers migrated through the Front Range area, wintering in Jefferson County’s Hogback Valley. From 12,000 to 7,000 years ago, Paleo Indians, in a timeless symbiosis with their environment, followed wildlife and ripening vegetation from the plains to progressively higher elevations as far away as South, Middle and North Parks, over the Continental Divide and back to the Hogback for the winter, before beginning their annual cycle again. From 7,000 to about 2,000 years ago, Archaic Indians settled in camps along the foothills, occupying open ridges, valleys and shelters among rock outcrops. They chose locations offering a reliable water source, shelter, and diversity of plant and animal resources.

From 2,000 to 200 years ago semi-nomadic Plains Ceramic Stage people were the first to use bow and arrows and pottery. Although the Foothills region continued to provide hunting grounds for multiple tribes, and the Hogback Valley area continued to be used for winter camps and seasonal meeting grounds, this group began settling for longer
periods of time in one place. They developed more substantial shelters and campgrounds, supported by incipient horticultural techniques. Anchored by these new sites, their hunting parties began longer forays covering greater distances and lasting several days. One such route led up Bear Creek Canyon to the area now known as Elk Meadow Park. The Utes, Cheyenne and Arapahoe tribes visited the area, relying on it for summer hunting and as a source of lodgepole pines for their teepee supports.

Robert A. Strain homesteaded, bought property from the Denver Pacific Rail and Telegraph Company, and bought other land from other homesteaders to acquire much of the land that is now Elk Meadow Park. Strain officially homesteaded 160 acres on March 25, 1870, and was finally granted his patent on the property in 1904. In 1870 he also bought the 160 acres homesteaded by Charles S. Abbott for $500, and in 1871 paid $400 to homesteader Thomas S. Ardrey for an additional 160 acres. In 1872 Strain bought 40 acres from the Denver and Pacific Railway and Telegraph Company. Strain’s wife, Charlotta Dow, an Indian girl, homesteaded 120 acres in 1884, which brought their total land holdings to 800 acres.

Thomas Cunningham Bergen, a 39-year old farmer from Dewitt County, Illinois, along with a group of ten strong men of similar age, joined the throng moving west to the gold fields of Central City and Cripple Creek. They passed through Golden and went up Apex Gulch into a broad grassy valley, surrounded by spruce and pine. Government scouts and surveyors referred to the area as Elk Park. Bergen convinced his party of men to help him build a cabin there, in the middle of the summer hunting grounds for the Ute and Sioux bands. The Bergen Park settlement was situated strategically along the Mount Vernon toll road, which lead to the mining districts from Mount Vernon.

Bergen Park, originally being named Elk Park by government surveyors, attests to the abundance of elk found by settlers at the lower elevations of the Front Range. During the second half of the 19th Century there was a wholesale slaughter of easily accessible game, and elk were wiped out. In 1917, shortly following the creation of the Colorado State Game and Fish Department, a public subscription paid for transporting 26 head of elk from Wyoming to Idaho Springs. These were the ancestors of the present herd, which is culled annually to limit it to 1,000 head.

Elk Meadow Park was originally expected to be named Means Meadow Park. However, the purchase agreement included purchasing 320 acres in 1977 for $800,000, with the remaining 830 acres being purchased over the next seven years at a cost of $283,900 annually. In 1986 a dispute arose because, through an oversight, the County missed a payment on the last 128 acres of the property contracted for in 1977. The Means family increased the price per acre by $2,500. The Jefferson County Commissioners sued the Means family over the price increase, but lost. This discord resulted in the property being renamed Elk Meadow Park.

In the spring of 1994 John Thompson, President of Hiwan Ridge Development Corporation, negotiated with the Mountain Area Land Trust for the sale of 402 acres of Noble Meadow, adjacent to Elk Meadow Park. The asking price was $2.275 million.
The Mountain Area Land Trust and the Evergreen community raised $200,000 toward the purchase, and then approved Evergreen Park and Recreation Department selling $700,000 in bonds to help finance the purchase. Jefferson County Open Space invested $1.4 million in the project, and received a 271-acre conservation easement and deed to an additional 114 for public use. A celebration of the Noble Meadow purchase was held Sunday, June 12, 1994, and featured walking tours of the new portion of Elk Meadow Park.

Acquired:
The first portion of land acquired for Elk Meadow Park was from the Means Family in eight segments during a period from June of 1977 to May of 1986 and consists of 1,169 acres. See Figure 3c. The Open Space Advisory Committee (OSAC) passed a Resolution on November 30, 1976 and the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) on June 10, 1977, stating that the property is “ideal for a natural open space Park with scenic values and beauty.”

The second tract of land acquired was from the Mountain Area Land Trust on December 1, 1994 and consists of 113 acres in fee simple and 270 acres under a Conservation Easement. Acquisition of this property was approved by OSAC on March 3, 1994 and the BCC on March 16, 1994, noting that the property is suitable for “scenic preservation.”

On December 20, 1995 the third tract consisting of 35 acres, more or less was donated to Jefferson County and the forth tract consisting of 52 acres, more or less, donated on December 26, 1996.

The fifth acquisition is a tract that consists of 18 acres, more or less. This property was acquired for scenic, wildlife and vegetation preservation and passive recreation on July 16, 1998, and was approved by OSAC May 7, 1998 and by the BCC on June 2, 1998.

On December 19, 2008 a sixth tract consisting of seven acres was acquired from Warren and Virginia Lewis. It was approved by OSAC and the BCC and noted as suitable for protection of scenic and natural values such as wetlands and mature ponderosa pine stand. It will provide a buffer between Elk Meadow Park and nearby development.

On Nov. 4, 2009, 80 acres were donated by Robert R. Owen. The acceptance of the donation was authorized by OSAC Resolution #09-23 and BCC Resolution # CC09-419. The property is suitable for scenic preservation, wildlife and vegetation preservation and passive recreation and includes Jenkins Peak. A Conservation Easement held by MALT protects the property from subdivision, development of buildings and new roads, but allows for public trails access.

Natural and Cultural Resources:
The following is a synopsis of the natural and cultural resources found at Elk Meadow Park.

- **Five different plant types**
  - Approximately 580 acres of Ponderosa pine forest
    - 6,200 to 9,000 feet elevation range
    - Found on the lower foothills
    - High value for winter mule deer habitat
    - Dwarf mistletoe infestations occur on several locations within the Park
  - Approximately 149 acres of Lodgepole pine forest located within the south and east facing aspects of the Park within the Montane Zone (8,000 to 9,500 feet)
  - Approximately 80 acres of Douglas-fir forest. Occurs on the steeper, north facing slopes occupying the higher elevations of the Park (8,000 to 9,000 feet)
  - Approximately 40 acres of mixed Douglas-fir/Ponderosa pine forest
  - Approximately 536 acres of Mountain meadow
    - Portions of the meadows had been planted in non-native pasture grasses (smooth brome and timothy)
    - A prescribed fire program was instituted in 1998 to maintain and improve meadows by removing invading conifers, reduce fuel loading, and increase the native grass component
    - Important area for elk grazing

- **Rare plant communities**
  - Great Plains wet meadow (Bergen Creek wetlands) 216 acres
  - Montane grassland. Considered very rare in Colorado

- **Seven species of noxious weeds – Active management program is in place**
  - Leafy spurge occurs in small isolated patches
  - Musk thistle occurs on dry sites
  - Canada thistle occurs in drainages and disturbed sites
  - Diffuse knapweed has been increasing on surrounding private properties and occurs in small patches along Stagecoach Road
  - Yellow and Dalmatian toadflax occur throughout the Park, with Dalmatian toadflax being relatively common. No effective control measures have been developed, although research into biological controls is showing some promise
  - Russian knapweed is scattered in a one-acre patch

- **Wildlife attributes**
  - Two elk herds are found in Elk Meadow Park. A resident herd of a few dozen and a seasonal herd of several hundred that utilizes the meadows for grazing. The Park is also used as a calving area, with the calving grounds located along the treeline adjacent to Noble Meadow
• **Class III Cultural Resource Inventory**
  ❧ Between June 17, 2002 and August 29, 2002, SWCS Environmental Consultants conducted a cultural resource inventory of Elk Meadow Park. This inventory was completed to identify any significant historic resources or properties located within the Park boundaries and to evaluate them for their eligibility for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) and/or the Colorado State Register of Historic Places (CSRHP).

  ❧ Twenty-one cultural resources were identified, including eight historic sites and thirteen historic isolated finds. The latter do not meet any of the National Register criteria for evaluation and therefore, are not eligible for inclusion for NRHP. The eight historic sites, however, will need to be further evaluated for eligibility.

  ❧ One site that has been assessed as potentially eligible is comprised of two double-crib barns and each has their own recommendation for listing on the NRHP and the CSRHP. One of the barns is located within the Conservation Easement, and the other is within the current Park boundary. The SWCS recommends that they be managed together, despite the differences in ownership, and may be eligible for the CSRHP or the NRHP.

---

**Activities:**
Recreational activities available at the Park are picnicking, hiking, biking, horseback riding, wildlife viewing, dog exercising, and self-guided interpretation.

**Visitation and Use Trends:**
A wide variety of data is collected throughout the Open Space system to establish Visitor count data indicates that Elk Meadow Park received approximately 78,484 visitors in 2005. This number represents arrivals at the Lewis Ridge Road entrance only, and vehicle arrivals only. Survey data from 2001 show that hiking is a popular recreational use, with fifty-five percent engaging in that activity, and thirty-five percent enjoying biking. In addition, twenty-one percent of those surveyed use the Park to jog.

The visitor survey conducted from May through September in 2001 revealed that only 8% of those surveyed had experienced recreation conflict during their visit and weekend reports of conflict were significantly higher (15%) than weekday reports (7.5%). Ninety-two percent of those visitors who had experienced conflict attributed it to discourteous behavior of other visitors.

For the same months, the visitor survey in 2004 revealed that 13% had experienced conflicts; a 5% increase, highlighting a need for visitor education regarding trail etiquette and an increase in rules and regulation enforcement.

However, 2004 Visitor Survey data shows slightly different user trends. Over sixty-six percent now say they enjoy hiking and only 29.5% of visitors are biking. In addition, jogging or running also has declined with only 20% of users engaged.
A Visitor Survey was also conducted in 2008, the results of which will not be available until the second quarter of 2009.
Figure 1. Elk Meadow Park Location Map

Figure 3a: Elk Meadows Park Location Map
Figure 3b: Elk Meadows Park Map
Figure 3c: Elk Meadows Park Acquisition History Map

Fig. 2: ELK MEADOW PARK
Acquisitions history

1995-96
86 acres

December, 1994
270 acres (ease.)
113 acres (fee)

1977-86
1170 acres

December, 2008
7 acres

June, 1998
18 acres

November, 2009
80 acres

Sources: Jefferson County Open Space.
Figure 3d: Elk Meadow Park Opportunities and Constraints Plan
Management Context:

This section identifies and describes the Management Units that have been designated for Elk Meadow Park. See Figure 3e.

Sensitive Area Management Unit:
All species of wildlife, even those that are adaptable and visible, require some degree of undisturbed space and time for certain aspects of their life history (breeding, foraging, resting, hiding, etc.). If portions of the landscape are available with little to no disturbance, these species will utilize them as needed and thus continue to occupy and utilize the entire landscape. Eventually, those species of wildlife that are adaptive will become part of the more visible watchable wildlife that the public has come to observe and enjoy on Open Space parks. Elk Meadow Park has no area designated Sensitive.

Recreation Services and Amenities Management Unit:
The Recreation Services and Amenities Area, which consists of the dog park within the Dog Off-Leash Area, is currently located on the south side of Stagecoach across from the main parking lot and trail head. A small parking area with an accessible trail to and gate into the fenced dog park were added in 2007. This area experiences heavy use by both park visitors and their dogs, resulting in vegetation trampling and elimination and sheet erosion. Several management methods are being utilized to minimize these impacts. These include the rotation of open gates and re-vegetation.

Natural Area Management Unit:
The remainder of Elk Meadow Park is designated as a Natural Area, and is managed for its ability to provide a variety of passive recreational experiences, while ensuring the protection of its natural resource values. Two of the more visible natural resources include the Bergen Creek Wetlands (which were listed as a good example of a wetland community by the Colorado Natural Heritage Program), and the elk calving area adjacent to Noble Meadow. An elk viewing pullout is located along State Highway 103 (Squaw Pass Road) that highlights the large seasonal elk herd that winters in the meadow. Routing trails around this area, along with seasonal closures of the calving grounds, will protect this watchable wildlife resource.
FIG. 4: ELK MEADOW PARK
Management Unit Designations

Sources: Jefferson County Open Space and Jefferson County IT Dept. 01/19/10
D:/Data/ArcGIS9/PMP/Elk/Elk_MUD_map.mxd
Elk Meadow Park Leases, Easements, Contracts and Agreements:
Jefferson County Open Space often enters into agreements with other public and private organizations and individuals on behalf of a park. These agreements sometimes help the park to fulfill its recreational or stewardship objectives while providing a service or benefit to the other party. Agreements of this type are legally binding, and as a result, form a critical element of a park's legal and policy context. Leases, easements, contracts and agreements entered into on behalf of this park are outlined in Table 1b below.

TABLE 3a: ELK MEADOW PARK LEASES, LICENSES, EASEMENTS, CONTRACTS AND AGREEMENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agreement Type</th>
<th>Agreeing Parties</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Right-of-way</td>
<td>USA / JCOS</td>
<td>Ditches or Canals</td>
<td>Book 119/page 260 &amp; 501</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right-of-way</td>
<td>Palo Verde Park / JCOS</td>
<td>Pipe lines, springs and reservoir / per plat</td>
<td>Plat book 3/pages 160, 161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right-of-way</td>
<td>Public Service Co. / JCOS</td>
<td>Utility / power lines</td>
<td>Book 1663/page 19; book 1752/pages 383, 384</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right-of-way</td>
<td>Johnson Ditches / JCOS</td>
<td>Ditches and Springs</td>
<td>Plat book 3/page 172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right-of-way</td>
<td>County Highways and Transportation / JCOS</td>
<td>County owned Squaw Pass road</td>
<td>Book 36/page 402; book 306/page 252</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mineral reservation</td>
<td>Means / JCOS</td>
<td>Undivided 1/6 interest</td>
<td>Book 2095/page 229</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memorandum of Agreement</td>
<td>City and County of Denver / JCOS</td>
<td>Roadway Construction</td>
<td>Book 205/page 156</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Work Plan Summary:

The Figure on the following page reflects the “issue-driven” actions identified in the Actions Map (Figure 3f), which correspond alpha-numerically to the “Action Items,” portion of this chapter. The Actions Map shows the temporal relationship between the issues.

Definitions:

1) System-wide Priority Criteria

A decision whether to implement a particular management action is based on system-wide priorities, which are derived from the following criteria:

- Universal Accessibility/life safety/public health
- Resource protection
- Special studies/planning
- Cyclic maintenance
Figure 5. Elk Meadow Implementation Schema

--- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
Unmanaged Trails | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
B.1. Remove Unmanaged Trails from Dog Off-Leash Area | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
B.2. Determine Desirability of Trails in Northeast Section of Park (Complete) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
B.3. Remove Undesired Trails from Northeast Section of Park (Complete) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
Dog Off-Leash Area (DOLA) Trails | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
C.2. Construct Loop Trail - Phase I (Complete) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
C.3. Refine Design & Obtain Permits - Phase II | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
C.4. Construct Trail - Phase II | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
D.1. Address Water Issue | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
D.1.a. Finalize Design | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
D.1.b. Implement Design | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
D.2. Construct Berger Peak Trail Route (moved to a discussion item) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
D.3. Public Involvement Process | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
E.1. Obtain required permits from appropriate agencies | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
E.2. Continue with Design Phase I (moved to a discussion item) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
E.3. Continue with Design Phase II (moved to a discussion item) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
E.4. Continue with Construction Phase I (moved to a discussion item) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
**Action Items:**

An explanation of identified issues specific to Elk Meadow Park and the actions proposed to resolve them follow. The issues and actions articulated below correspond alpha-numerically with Figure 3f. Implementation of the preferred management options may be limited by staffing and/or budget constraints. Construction of sustainable trails in the Dog Off-Leash Area has been deemed a priority action by the Open Space regional Park Management Coordinators and the Management Team for 2012.

**Unmanaged Trails in the Dog Off-Leash Area:**
B.1. Remove Unmanaged Trails from the Dog Off-Leash Area
B.2. Determine the desirability of trails in the northeast section of the Park.
B.3. Remove the Undesired Trails from the northeast section of the Park.

**Dog Off-Leash Area Trail:**
C.3. Refine the design and obtain local and state permits for Phase II construction.
C.4. Construct the Phase II trail.
C.5. Refine the design & obtain local and state permits for Phase III construction.
C.6. Construct the Phase III trail.

**Dog Off-Leash Area Water Provision and Management Plan:**
D.1. Address Dog Park Water Issue
D.2.b. Refine and Implement Phase II of DOLA Plan — this was moved to “Discussion Items” in 2012.
D.2.c. Refine and Implement Phase III of DOLA Plan — this was moved to “Discussion Items” in 2012.

**Bergen Peak Trail Reroute:**
F.2. This action was moved to “Discussion Items” in 2012.
Discussion Items:

Although the following discussion items were not considered issues by Open Space staff, they are included here for the administrative record. (Note the most recent items are listed first).

1. Bergen Peak Trail Reroute was moved from action items (“F.2.”) to a discussion item in 2012 since the issue was not pressing and it will be completed as time allows.
   The issue: due to the steep terrain, trail erosion and social trails have developed. A .49 mile reroute of the trail will aid visitors to better navigate the trail. A blanket agreement with Denver Mountain Parks (DMP) along with a description and map of the planned trail alignment has been submitted to the DMP.

2. The refinement and implementation of phases II and III of a “DOLA Plan” were moved from Chapter 5 action items (“D.2.b” and “D.2.c”) to discussion items in 2012. This was due to the fact that these potential items would best be handled on an as needed basis instead of ongoing action items.

3. Jerry Miller is an adjacent property owner, north-northwest of the Stagecoach parking lot. Jerry has contacted JCOS several times in the last year regarding park visitors trespassing on his property as they look for a “short cut” back to the parking lot. JCOS staff has confirmed that the Park boundary is appropriately signed. Thus we have told Mr. Miller that to help deter visitors from cutting onto his property, we may use a sign, logs and/or a fence at the top of the trail. In addition we stated that we have no plans for another trail in that area, and we are not interested at this time in fencing our property line.

4. Trail Connection Surface –
   Elk Meadow Park will soon have concrete trails at its north and south borders, with a natural surface trail (Painter’s Pause) currently connecting the two segments in the park. To maintain continuity of this regional trail, the Elk Meadow Park Management Team may recommend a paved trail. Monitoring the use patterns of the Pioneer Trail and Painter’s Pause Trail will take place in the future to ensure a safe and desired transportation route is in place. (Issue circa 1990’s).
   The Natural Resource Section made the recommendation at the annual PMP update meeting that we consider getting visitor survey input from users as to whether or not they’d like to see concrete here (10/06).
   Continue with the application of crusher-fine on Painter Pause Trail to mitigate braiding. (2004 to present).

5. The 2004 Visitor Survey results indicated that access to potable water is a concern for our visitors at Elk Meadow Park. This concern will be monitored in the next three
years, when the next Visitor Survey will be conducted. If it is still a concern then, discussion will take place to whether JCOS needs to drill a well (Issue circa 1980’s)

The well was removed in October, 2006.

6. In 1997, Resolution #29-97 was adopted by the Open Space Advisory Committee (OSAC) in which finding #6 states “There will be no funding to study, plan, or construct a hard surface trail within Elk Meadow Park.” Furthermore, the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) adopted Resolution # CC97 and says: “No hard surface trails will be constructed through Elk Meadow Park in the next few years.”

7. Access Gate Request –
A citizen called to suggest an access gate into the Park at Bergen Parkway, where there is already a pedestrian crosswalk (this was intended as access to then “Peoples’ Path”). After a site visit by the team, it was agreed upon that parking on Highway 74 could become problematic and a good deal of cooperation would be needed from CDOT in order to make this happen. The team will revisit this idea if it becomes necessary. (10/06 rev.)

8. Crib Barns –
Subsequent to the Environmental and Cultural assessment conducted in Elk Meadow Park in 2002, two double-crib barns may be eligible for the Colorado State Register for Historic Places and/or the National Register for Historic Places. One of the barns is located within the Conservation Easement, and the other is within the current park boundary. Despite the differences in ownership, it is suggested that they be managed together.

9. There are several social trails that are being developed at Elk Meadow Park that need to be closed off due to their proximity to the elk viewing area. In addition, there is a major access road that is heavily used by the public that might be suitable for inclusion to the official trail system. A recommendation was made to address this as a base item this year (1/11).

10. There is a metal barn located behind the resident ranger’s house that natural resources and possibly other sections are considering insulating for year-round use for equipment storage, repair, etc. Natural resources will look into costs to insulate this building. The issue may become an action in the future. (10/06)
Chapter 4: Detailed Information on Flying J Ranch Park

Introduction:

Park Vision:
The management of Flying J Ranch reflects the Jefferson County Open Space mission of balancing human use with resource preservation. This is accomplished through the application of management units upon the landscape, which define a spectrum of recreational opportunities, environmental education and interpretation opportunities, and natural resource conservation efforts. Flying J Ranch has two management unit designations, each emphasizing different priorities for the provision of recreational opportunities and protection of the park’s resources.

Location:
Flying J Ranch Park is located in the Conifer area at Shadow Mountain Drive and County Highway 73. It is currently a partially developed property with forest and meadowland cover. The address of the property is 9509 County Highway 73, Conifer 80433. See Figure 4a.

Chronology of Development:
1995 37.51 acre De La Castro property acquired (see page 10).
1997 44.669 acres acquired, including a lease on the remainder.
1998 39.729 acres acquired, including a lease on the remainder.
1999 39.487 acres acquired, including a lease on the remainder.
2000 78.501 acres acquired, including a lease on the remainder.
   Approximately two miles of natural surface trail built.
   Two miles of natural surface trail built, bringing the total trail system to four-miles in length.
   Shadow Mountain Drive parking lot built.
   43 acres donated by Schoonhovens.
2001 Final 77.389 acres of Schoonhoven purchase closed.
   Boardwalk across wetlands completes final link in trail system.
2003 Construction on main trail head was begun.
   Installation of “Fire in the Pines’ Interpretive Signs completed.
2005 Construction of main trailhead was completed. This included:
   • Bridge and entry road, per agreement, with turn lanes as required by development review process.
   • Two parking lots with a total capacity of 42 vehicles.
   • One restroom at the main trailhead.
   • 3 picnic shelters.
   • New-style kiosk.
2006 Construction of new-style kiosk at Shadow Mountain parking lot
   59 acres acquired from Tracey family.
2010 Unneeded buildings on west addition to the Park were demolished.
2011 Homestead era structures preserved with roofing and protected by newly constructed dowel fence.

Amenities:

Park Capacity:
At present, Flying J Ranch can accommodate a maximum of 42 vehicles between its two parking lots. Using an average of two persons per vehicle, and including non-motorized access to the park, Flying J Ranch Park can accommodate approximately 100 visitors at any one time.

Acreage: 420.643 acres

Historical Background:
The tipi ring and other American Indian artifacts found on the Flying J property indicate a long period of use by Native American people. This is logical since the property lies close to a traditional migration route known as the Ute Trail. Arapaho and Cheyenne people hunting through the region, as well as, the more permanent residents, the Ute people, in all probability used this trail. The Native American trails through the region, blazed for centuries, were also logical travel routes for the early Euro-American prospectors and homesteaders.

As the great Colorado Gold Rush of 1858-1859 intensified, toll roads into the mountains and the rowdy gold mining camps were constructed by many entrepreneurs. Two of these early roadways -- the Mount Vernon Toll Road and the Denver, Bradford, and Blue River road -- met at the present junction of Highway 73 and Barkley Road, just opposite the Flying J property. A tollgate was constructed at the junction and a well (known to locals as the Civil War Well) was later dug to provide water for travelers. The local legend is that several men were busy digging the well in 1861 when a rider came galloping up to report the news of the first battle of Bull Run. The well still can be seen just outside the boundaries of Flying J. The area at that time was known as Bradford Junction: later name changes included Junction and Hutchinson. The local post office was officially designated Conifer in 1900.

The previous owners of the property, the Schoonhovens, purchased the ranch in 1948, and operated it as a small cattle ranch. Initially, De La Castro was purchased for active recreation and wetlands. It was discovered that wetlands prohibited the construction of ballfields, and strong public sentiment against ballfields in this location blocked the project.

Acquired:
In 1995, 38 acres were acquired from De La Castro. 280 acres were acquired from John and Marguerite Schoonhoven. The Schoonhoven heirs presently occupy an adjacent parcel of approximately 40 acres. The acquisition was a multi-year process, with the first parcel of 45 acres purchased by Jefferson County on December 30, 1997. The final 77 acres of the Schoonhoven purchase closed in 2001. In addition, 43 acres
of land to the southwest of the main portion of the Park was donated by the Schoonhovens in 2003. In 2006, 59 acres on the west boundary of Flying J Ranch Park was purchased from the Traceys. See Figure 4c.

The Open Space Advisory Committee (OSAC) passed a resolution (OS22-97) on May 15, 1997, stating that the property was acquired for preservation and recreation uses, including wetlands, wildlife habitat, scenic corridor, trails, Master Plan values, and future potential recreation uses. The earlier acquired 37.48-acre De La Castro property is included in this plan.

**Natural and Cultural Resources:**
The following is a synopsis of the natural and cultural resources found at Flying J Ranch. For additional information, contact Open Space’s Natural Resources and Planning sections.

- Wildlife occupy the area since it has been relatively isolated from human use.
- Animal species found include elk, numerous avian species, Abert’s squirrel, and pine squirrel.
- Vegetative cover types include:
  - Ponderosa pine.
  - Old growth Lodgepole pine/common juniper.
  - Blue spruce/alder/willow.
  - Mixed meadows of native and non-native grasses and forbs.
  - Wetland meadows of native and non-native grasses and forbs.
- In June 2007, JCOS natural resource staff completed a baseline vegetation and stand inventory on the 58 acre Tracy parcel. Lodgepole pine and mountain meadow are the two major habitat community types identified.
- Management on this property will be consistent with entries completed previously in the other sections of Flying J Ranch. More detailed information and maps can be accessed from the habitat unit summaries of Tracy Blocks 1 and 2. These documents will be made available in Livelink.
- A Class III cultural resource inventory of Flying J was conducted in 1998. Five archaeological sites and 16 isolated finds were recorded.
  1. One of the five sites was the remains of an open camp with lithic historic material such as chips and flakes. It is potentially eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Properties.
  2. Three of the sites contain historic refuse and open lithic scatter.
  3. One of the five sites contained a prehistoric stone circle, a hearth, and a cairn on a historic homestead site. It is potentially eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Properties.
  4. The remaining 16 isolated finds contain an assortment of refuse and mining prospects, as well as, some old agricultural equipment. These were scattered throughout the property.
- A second Class III inventory was conducted in 2004 on the 40-acre parcel donated to Open Space by the Schoonhovens. This survey discovered only one historic isolated find.
- A third Class III inventory examined the 59-acre Tracy addition to the Park was
surveyed in 2007. Only one historic site was identified and that was the group of structures that made up the original homestead. Although not considered eligible for inclusion in the National Historic Register, three of the original log structures that made up the homestead were recommended to be preserved and not demolished.

**Activities:**
*Recreational:* Hiking, mountain biking, horseback riding, picnicking, cross-country skiing, sledding, and possibly fishing (under review)
*Agrarian:* Haying

**Visitation and Use Trends:**
In 2010 and 2011, Flying J Ranch had 53,570 and 56,745 annual visitors, respectively. These figures are strictly estimates. One should be cautious basing management decisions on these figures due to some limitations of equipment in place. The data was collected from infrared trail and traffic counters, visual counts, and extrapolated data from 2008. It was observed that on average 2.04 people occupy each vehicle entering Flying J Ranch. Therefore in 2010, there were an estimated 26,000 vehicles that entered Flying J Ranch with an average of 2.04 people, which calculates to 53,570 annual visitors.

Originally, it was thought that annual visitation would not exceed 50,000 visitors based on a comparable park in the area. Meyer Ranch Park, with 48,000 visitors annually, is similar to Flying J Ranch as far as acreage, facilities, and trail mileage. While Flying J Ranch exceeded predictions, the annual visitation is similar to Meyer Ranch Park.

A Park Visitor Experience Survey was conducted for Flying J Ranch Park in the summer of 2006. Two hundred and seventy-five survey forms were collected. The analysis was completed in 2007 and the results utilized in the 2008 update to the Management Plan.
Figure 1. Flying J Ranch Location Map

Figure 4a Flying J Ranch Park Location Map
Figure 4b: Flying J Ranch Park Map

Legend:
- JCOS
- Denver Mountain Parks
- Existing Trails
- Proposed Trails
- Streams

- Picnic Area
- Restroom
- Parking
- Neighborhood Access

This plan is not intended to serve as an official park or trail map and is subject to change.

Scale: 0 450 900 Feet

April, 2011
Figure 4c: Flying J Ranch Park Acquisition History Map
Figure 4d: Flying J Ranch Park Opportunities and Constraints Plan
Management Context:

This section identifies and describes the management units that have been designated for Flying J Ranch. See Figure 4e.

Natural Area Management Unit:
Below is the justification for designating the majority of the park a Natural Management Unit and, thereby, providing public access in the form of natural surface trails.

1. Wildlife Usage
   - The area is used by 12 to 20 bull elk that use the park for winter habitat.
   - Numerous avian species use the park, including songbirds and raptors.

2. Vegetative Resources
   - Inventory results for this area indicated a mosaic of habitat. In addition to the old growth lodgepole forest, a vegetative community that contains a variety of tree, shrub, forb, grasses, and grass-like plants is present.

3. Recreational Resources
   - The area provides an ideal setting for visitors to appreciate animals in their natural habitat.
   - The area is large enough for park users to enjoy a quality recreational experience since park visitors are dispersed over a large area.

Recreation Services and Amenities Area Management Unit:
Below is the justification for designating the parking lots and surrounding areas Recreation Services and Amenities Management Units and, thereby, provide parking, restroom facilities, picnic tables and informational signage.

1. Park Access
   - The two areas provide the only vehicular access into the park.
   - The two areas were designed to allow access to all of the trails located in the park.
   - These areas will receive a high level of use during certain times of the day.

2. Park Facilities
   - This area receives considerable human use and, consequently, severely limited wildlife use.
   - These areas contain restrooms and picnic tables for public use.
   - The areas provide high quality views of surrounding areas.
   - The main trailhead provides the best opportunity to develop ADA accessible facilities.

Homestead/ Meadow Edge Special Protection Area (SPA):
This SPA is delineated to provide coordinated Action Items for the most recent property addition to Flying J Ranch Park in the southwest portion of the Park. This is the 59 acres acquired in December, 2006. This property has a combination of cultural, natural, and recreational resources, which require a specific set of actions to maximize preservation of these resources.

Since the trailhead development of the Park was completed in 2005, a number of opportunities have prompted Jefferson County Open Space staff to consider a revision to the Management Plan. One of those factors has been the acquisition of 58 acres on the western boundary of the park and its potential to provide additional access to a donated parcel immediately to the south. As a result, staff recommends the Plan now include new trails, natural resource management concepts, potential neighborhood access points, improvements to parking, and removal or historical interpretation of buildings acquired within the park.

All signs of wildlife species observed during the natural resource survey conducted in August 2009 indicate daily reliance on movement through both meadow and forest land. This is evidence of the importance of the meadow edge as an interface of habitat types. There is evidence that large mammal usage is most prevalent in and dependent on the meadow and into the first 200 feet of the forested edge. An example of this is a deer moving into adjacent forest cover to rest, browse a variety of vegetation (which is usually more diverse in this edge environment) and rub their antlers on trees.

Thus, the goals of the Homestead/Meadow Edge Special Protection Area include avoidance of adverse disruption of the meadow edge by careful trail placement and improvement of the health and diversity of the vegetation throughout this edge using natural resource management techniques. The 2010 Park Map and Action Items describe the following concepts to help meet these goals.

Trails:
A new trail would utilize an existing dirt road south of Shadow Pine Loop Trail that would travel west along the north side of the meadow. A new segment would be constructed on Denver Mountain Park property and maintain the meadow without fragmentation.

A neighborhood access has been recommended from Apache Spring Drive on the south end of the park. This access will not provide parking, but would allow for walk/horseback or bike access from the neighborhood that has been used informally for a number of years.

Natural Resource Management: Forest Health & Meadow Restoration:
Staff have identified lodgepole pine and mountain meadow as the major habitat types on the property addition to Flying J Ranch Park. Quaking Aspen and blue spruce also occur in a riparian area with the most dominant vegetation being common juniper, western snowberry, geranium, goldenbanner, and bluegrass. A small portion of the property is classified as foothill/montane grassland or meadow with woods rose, cinquefoil, goldenbanner, fleabane, common sheep sorrel, bluegrass, and smooth
brome.

Forest management will be consistent with work previously conducted on other sections of Flying J Ranch Park, but will also be dependent on the mountain pine beetle infestation that is probable for this property. Long-term resource management may include promotion of higher potential ponderosa pine and Douglas-fir by opening the canopy and spacing trees at least 10 feet apart, cooperate with Denver Mountain Parks to implement similar forest management, masticate slash and scatter chips, as well as, conduct winter pile burning, weed management, contract haying, or conduct prescribed fire in the meadow.

**Cultural Resource Management – Structures:**
Following an historic structure assessment of the buildings contained on the added portion of the park, most of the buildings had been repeatedly modified and lacked historical integrity, however, the original late 19th century homestead cabin and shed are relatively unaltered but in ruins. Staff plans to remove all but these two historic structures and create cultural history signage to tell the homesteading story. The preference is to tell the homesteading story at a distance in a manner that discourages large volumes of trail traffic to the site of the ruins of the historic buildings.
Figure 4e: Flying J Ranch Park MUD Map
**Flying J Ranch Leases, Easements, Contracts and Agreements:**
Jefferson County Open Space often enters into agreements with other public and private organizations and individuals on behalf of a park. These agreements sometimes help the park to fulfill its recreational or stewardship objectives while providing a service or benefit to the other party. Agreements of this type are legally binding, and as a result, form a critical element of a park’s legal and policy context. Leases, easements, contracts and agreements entered into on behalf of this park are outlined in Table 1c.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agreement Type</th>
<th>Agreeing Parties</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Utility easement</td>
<td>Schoonhoven, Public</td>
<td>20' wide easement for overhead power line</td>
<td>Public record, book 1026, page 364</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Service</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utility easement</td>
<td>Schoonhoven/US West</td>
<td>Easement for telephone lines along (apparently) the west side of highway 73</td>
<td>Public record, book 2405, page 474</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easement</td>
<td>USGS, JCOS</td>
<td>Easement for a research tower and access road</td>
<td>Public record, Reception #F0725571</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access Easement</td>
<td>James L. Teslow</td>
<td>Access Easement Agreement and Termination of Prior Easement</td>
<td>OS 10-05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Julie S. Frese</td>
<td>Ingress, egress access road located west of Apache Springs subdivision,</td>
<td>Reception #2011047278</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>commonly known as, Apache Springs Drive.</td>
<td>OSAC Resolution #10-07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>BCC Resolution #CC11-175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Point of Access</td>
<td>Jefferson County</td>
<td>This agreement provides a point of access 15' wide from the Wapiti Run</td>
<td>BCC Case # 07-105412</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thunderbolt Circle, LLC</td>
<td>Estates to Flying J Ranch shown on the plat and described in section 15.</td>
<td>Reception #2009057115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Public record, book 37, page 21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Work Plan Summary:**

The Figure on the following page reflects the five-year financial strategy for Flying J Ranch Park. The “issue-driven” actions identified in the Actions Map (Figure 4f) correspond alpha-numerically to the “Action Items,” portions of Chapter IV. The Actions Map (Figure 4f) shows the temporal relationship between the issues.

**Definitions:**

1) **System-wide Priority Criteria**

A decision whether to implement a particular management action is based on system-wide priorities, which are derived from the following criteria:

- Universal Accessibility/life safety/public health
- Resource protection
- Special studies/planning
- Cyclic maintenance
Figure 4f: Actions Map
**Action Items:**

An explanation of identified issues specific to Flying J Ranch and the actions proposed to resolve them follow. The issues and actions articulated below correspond alphabetically to Figure 4f. Implementation of the preferred management options may be limited by staffing and/or budget constraints.

**I. West Park Addition – Structures:**

I.1. The buildings associated with the Homestead Act settlement of this property in the 1860s are to be preserved in their current state. These remnants of will be stabilized and have obvious hazards mitigated, but will be preserved and interpreted as a reminder of the bold actions of the pioneering past. Un-needed buildings with little remaining original architectural character or with severe structural problems will be demolished. Interior fences will be removed, but not until a trail system has been constructed to guide the majority of users around the meadow area. Associated with the completion of the additional trails non-personal interpretive media will be developed to tell the story of the homestead ruins.

Actions:
1) Preserve Homestead Era Structures (Completed 2011)
2) Demolish Un-needed Structures (Completed 2010)
3) Remove Interior Fences
4) Homestead Non-personal Interpretation

**J. West Park Addition – Trails:**

J.1. The proposed new trails in the west park addition are designed to accomplish two objectives. First, the trails will provide a connection to the existing trail system for visitors entering the Park at the neighborhood access point adjacent to the Apache Springs subdivision on the south side of the Park. Second, the trail will direct trail users around the meadow set back from the meadow/forest interface to minimize impact on this biologically critical area. The additional trail length will provide a new alternative trail loop and new experiences for trail users on the Park. This trail is planned to cross Denver Mountain Parks property and, thus, will require an amended agreement with Denver before the trail may be designed and constructed.

Actions:
1) Amend DMP “Trail Plan”
2) Design New Trails
3) Construct New Trails

**K. West Park Additions – Natural Resource:**

K.1. Forest management will be consistent with work previously conducted on other sections of Flying J Ranch Park but will also be dependent on the mountain pine...
beetle infestation that is probable for this property. Long-term resource management may include promotion of higher potential ponderosa pine and Douglas-fir by opening the canopy and spacing trees at least 10 feet apart; cooperation with Denver Mountain Parks to implement similar forest management practices; mastication of slash and scattering of resulting chips, as well as, winter pile burning. Restoration of the mountain meadow will be promoted with weed management, contract haying, or conducting prescribed fire in the meadow.

L. Service Road Improvements:
L.1. With the acquisition of the new property on the west end of the Park there is no longer the need to preserve an access road within a defined easement for the use of the residents of that property. Thus a limiting parameter for the design and use of the service road has been lifted. Several elements of any future improvements have been identified. First, there is a need for continued access by IREA to multiple electrical power lines crossing the Park. Second, there is an opportunity to rebuild to service road to a more sustainable configuration as both a trail and a service road. A third opportunity is to examine the junction of the service road with the trailhead parking area to look for opportunities to improve turning movements and parking areas for equestrian users.

Actions:
1) Accommodate IREA Access
2) Redesign Trail/Service Road
3) Parking Area Improvements

M. Parking Lot Improvements: Implement the Post Occupancy Evaluation:
M.1. Based on the Post Occupancy Evaluation completed October of 2006, located in Livelink, it has become apparent that many aspects of the parking lot may not be functioning to their full extent. Therefore, the PMP group recommends implementation of many of the suggestions regarding the parking area. These improvements, beginning in 2012, will better serve the public by improving many elements of the main parking area.

Actions:
1) Design Improvements
2) Construct Improvements

N. Trail Creek Crossing:
N.1. It has become apparent that the trail creek crossing to the west of the main parking lot has becomes extremely icy in the winter months and presents a public safety issue for visitors to the park. Additionally, the current crossing is somewhat confusing to visitors.

Actions:
1) Monitor Winter Conditions
2) Redesign Trail Creek Crossing
3) Construct Improvements

**Discussion Items:**

Although the following discussion items were not considered issues by Open Space staff, they are included here for the administrative record.

1. **Groundwater Study**
   The United States Geological Survey (USGS) contacted JCOS a number of years ago requesting permission to install equipment for a groundwater study in the region. Their request was granted and two monitoring stations were installed, east of the Tracy Access Road. In cooperation with their project, natural resource staff postponed forestry work until they had completed three years of study. Dave Stannard has continued the study during and after the forestry thinning to look at any groundwater changes from forest thinning practices. Patrick O’Connell (x8707) in P&Z is also a contact for this ongoing project. In 2011, Dean Anderson has taken over the project and has requested to upgrade the sites in 2012, which was granted per Stanton La Breche, Randy Frank, Matt Cox, Bryan Posthumus and David Schott. Contact information for Mr. Anderson is: Dean E. Anderson, U.S. Geological Survey, M.S. 413, Bldg. 53, Federal Center, Denver, CO 80225-0046. (o) 303-236-5691, (c) 303-579-1104.

2. **Forest Management & Tracey Access Drive/ Trail**
   While discussing the location of a trail paralleling the Tracy Access Road, the Natural Resource crew expressed their concern that it might impact some forest management areas nearby if it was located too far east. There was also the concern of increased vandalism to the groundwater study equipment, referencing Discussion Item #1 above.

   Referencing the forest management prescriptions found in the Resource Information Appendix and the Forest Management Map provided below and under the Maps section in Live Link, there are two small clear cuts just east of the Tracy access road. The intent of these clear cuts was to determine the vegetative response after heavy treatment and provide a possible foraging area with relative seclusion away from trail based activities. The heavy forest cover and terrain variability provide this visual buffer.

   After a field visit by Jay Niemoth from Trails and Bryan Posthumus from Natural Resources, it was proposed that if the trail could be routed within or along the eastern edge of the fuel break along the road, it should have little to no impact to the treatment areas. It was further discussed that the trail connection to existing trails on the North and South should be as close to the road as practical. It was thought that trail users from the west would more likely use the trail if it was easily visible as the trail crossed the road, rather than just follow the road. The actual trail alignment would have to be coordinated with how it connects to the 40-acre parcel trail connection and the new parking lot. It would also have to meet trail standards based on grade and maintainability.
An Action in 2005-2006 lead to designation of the Tracey driveway as a trail/service road, to be maintained by the Trails Section. Signage was developed and installed to inform the public and the Tracey easement users of the dual nature of the trail/road.

3. Trails 2000 and Master Plan Trails
Trails 2000 and other Master Plan trails are shown in the Open Space Five-Year Master Plan. A corridor through the Denver Mountain Parks parcel east of Flying J Ranch Park is indicated as a Trails 2000 priority. Shadow Mountain Drive and JC Highway 73 south of Flying J are shown as potential trail corridors. Previously identified as Issue D, this will now be part of base activity. As such, the Open Space Planning section will continue monitoring of opportunities for linkage. The Planning Section will also continue to facilitate the collaboration of the Jefferson Planning & Zoning Department in pursuing these goals.

4. Trailhead and Entry Drive Improvements
The master construction contract for the entry drive was completed in 2005, along with the trailhead and parking facilities and signage. The subcontract covering maintenance and the warranty period for revegetation was in effect until August, 2007. It was necessary to monitor and enforce the conditions of the revegetation contract to meet the requirements of the State Storm Water Management Permit
(SWMP) and the Federal 404 wetlands permits issued for the Entry Drive and Trailhead projects.

5. **Post Occupancy Evaluation**
   In 2006 (after the first full year of use,) there was be a formal process of Post Occupancy Evaluation (POE) to take a look at both the process used in the entry drive and trailhead projects and product produced. The object was to better understand the process and the outcomes inherent in the project, to formally list “lessons learned” and help move our processes and products toward more consistent outcomes. The POE identified a number of base actions that were/ are being implemented when the opportunity presents itself. A number of actions were viewed as being beyond base actions, which will be re-examined during future revisions of the Conceptual Plan.

6. **Flying J Ranch Remainder**
   With a new property acquisition to the west of the existing Flying J Ranch Park boundary, there was an opportunity to reassess the boundaries of the Park and, ultimately, the Conceptual Plan for Flying J Ranch Park (See Issue A and discussion item 7, below.) During 2007 there was a reassessment of adjacent properties (beyond the newly acquired Tracey property) to identify those that might support the vision for the Park. This led to a recommendation to move ahead with a proposals for acquisitions of the remaining Schoonhoven ownership. A letter was sent to the Schoonhovens inquiring about their interest in entering into negotiations. Our inquiry generated a negative response from the Schoonhoven attorney. The team is still interested in this acquisition, but some movement on the part of the Schoonhoven family will be required to activate this acquisition negotiation.

7. **Conceptual Plan Revision**
   With Tracey property acquisition to the west of the existing Flying J Ranch Park boundary in 2006, there was a need to reassess the Conceptual Plan for Flying J Ranch Park. In 2007, baseline information on cultural and natural resources were collected. A study recommending a course of action in regard to the structures included in the Tracey acquisition was completed in 2008. In 2009, the recommendations of this study were sent to adjacent neighbors and no objections were raised. The planned actions were integrated into the 2010 conceptual plan using the Special Protection Area as a tool to coordinate various actions to maximize the preservation of cultural, natural, and recreational resources.

8. **Visitor Survey**
   Visitor surveys portray information about visitor demographics, behaviors, trends in use, and visitor perceptions not otherwise available. Data collected from these surveys will be analyzed in conjunction with visitation data obtained from vehicle and trail counters. Collectively, this information will help staff develop and implement effective management approaches for the park’s resources and its visitors’ experiences. The identification of trends based on data collected previously and current data collection efforts will also allow Open Space to proactively manage its
areas. The Visitor Survey for Flying J Ranch Park was completed in 2006. The results are shown below:
2006 Flying J Ranch Park Survey Comments by Category

TOTAL SURVEYS RECEIVED – 275
TOTAL COMMENTS RECEIVED – 43 (16%)

Compliments – 25 (58% of comments received, 9% of all completed surveys)

- Very nice job on design & use set up for this park.
- Wonderful experience!
- Loved the park
- Love this park, Thank you!!
- Great Open Space. The bathrooms are so nice.
- Good job on the park! Beautiful!
- Love this area – thank you for maintaining it so nicely.
- Beautiful Park
- The best walking park for me in Jeffco.
- Excellent facility – we are grateful it’s here.
- Nice park.
- Nice job on this park
- I enjoy Jeffco Open Space parks. I use Flying J Ranch the summer, but more often in late fall- early spring.
- Thank you – we love the Jeffco Open Space parks and we them 25 times a year.
- Thanks for all of the Open Space parks! We love visiting!
- Jeffco Open Space is the best!
- I really like the Open Space parks in Conifer- Wish there were more!
- Good trail
- The bikers were very kind to us on this visit.
- This is a great park.
- This is one of my favorite parks.
- I think Flying J Ranch is one of the best-articulated Open Space parks & I’m perfectly capable & willing to share the trail.
- Thanks Jeffco - you guys do a great job!
- We love our parks!
- I extremely enjoy coming to this Open Space for hiking and scenery experiences.

Trail Issues - 2
- Please do not designate trails for specific uses – Keep open to all at all times.
- 3 mile cutoff on loop around halfway.

Natural Resource Protection - 1
- Natural Resource man: must always come first.

Dogs - 3
- Please put bags for dog waste.
• Consider relaxing leash laws in some Open Space areas. Boulder County is a good example.
• Would love an off leash trail!!

Conflict – 7 (16% of comments received, 3.3% of all completed surveys)
• Horse poop on the hiking trails is not pleasant. Why don’t they have to carry a poop scoop and at least get it off the trail. Dogs that are allowed to run free. Twice in the last couple of years, dogs ran at me, barking & growling (no bites).
• Horse riders should be required to remove poop from trails.
• Make horseback riders clean up their horses’ scat the way dog owners do.
• Make horse people pick up after their horses too!
• My only comment about people who bike is that I’d like them to announce their presence verbally, so I know they are coming. I’m hard of hearing.
• Running dog while hiking
• Horses should sometimes yield & pick up poop.

Parking Issues – 2
• Should be more than one trailer parking space! Horse trailer sign to close to where horse night be tied.
• Would be nice to have more truck and trailer parking.

Other Comments – 2
• Wish there was some way to remove the trees from the area that is actually Denver Mountain Park property. Tire danger.
• Everyone has been courteous always bikers and leashed animals. I don’t think we need more regulations in that regard.
9. **Trails linkage history for the 40-acre Schoonhoven donation**

Upon acquisition the 40 acres donated to Open Space by the Schoonhovens was isolated and technically inaccessible to the public from the main portion of the Park. A corner of the Mack property was identified as acquisition project OS03-015, which would serve to provide public trail access to this property, as well as, staff vehicular maintenance access to this parcel. Open Space obtained rights to public trail/maintenance access across Mack in 2005.

A trail link from Shadow Pine Loop to the 40-Acre Parcel was identified in the Conceptual Plan, but was reassessed in the context of revision of the Conceptual Plan to incorporate the Tracey acquisition.

Initial trail layout within the 40-acre parcel was completed in 2004. An important objective of this layout was future accommodation of potential social trail use from neighborhoods to the south. The trail layout had no impacts on natural and cultural resources identified in studies during 2004. The PMP Team recommended that the trail loop shown on the 2006 Conceptual Plan be constructed without connections to the neighborhood to the south and that social use be monitored as described in the administrative directive on social trails. In 2006, it was recognized that there was some possibility that future rights could be obtained (through platting or other methods) to make improved trail connections to the Flying J Ranch Park trail system. The 2006 plan indicated that it was prudent to investigate these possibilities before construction of the loop within the
40-acre donation. The acquisition of the Tracey property on the west boundary reinforced this conclusion and led to the new title for this set of actions in the 2007 PMP. These trail studies and actions are now overtaken by the opportunity of reassessing the Conceptual Plan to incorporate the Tracey acquisition. After reassessment in the revision of the Conceptual Plan for 2010, the trail link remained as a valid concept and was integrated into the 2010 Conceptual Plan.

10. **Designate Interior Road as Service Road or Trail/Service Road**
The road leading from the main trailhead to the west boundary of the Park was used to access the private (Tracey) property to the west. The right to this access was granted in agreements associated with the original acquisition from the Schoonhovens. Before the acquisition of the Tracey property, Open Space had decided that this road should be designated as a trail/service road, where both trail and road functions can exist using the same road facility. This designation was completed in 2005. With the decision to manage the easement as a trail/service road, new signage and other improvements were implemented in 2006.

To fulfill requirements of the original acquisition, it was necessary to prepare easement documents, including an as-built survey of the new entrance road (with Tracey’s being a named party in the survey) and incorporate this into the existing easement legal description. The intent was to replace the description of the abandoned segment of road on the Schoonhoven property with the new-road legal, terminate that portion of the easement covering the abandoned road, and convey the new easement to Tracey. This action was completed in 2006.

11. **Issues and Discussion Items for to be considered in Conceptual Plan**
With the acquisition of the Tracey property, the opportunity to reexamine a number of issues in a coordinated planning review presented itself. These issues include: 1) the 40-acre donation property and its associated issues, 2) the issues associated with the Tracey property itself, and 3) the opportunities now presented by removal of the obligations and uses inherent in the access easement to the Tracey property. Many of these issues are detailed in the discussion items above, or set forth in the Actions in the 2010 PMP Chapter IV, but are summarized below:

Tracey Acquisition of 58 Acres, includes a cabin & shed from 1870s as cultural resources of concern. Contains an open meadow & aspen groves.

Revised Conceptual Plan for 2010 uses the Special Protection Area as a tool to identify the following coordinated objectives and actions:
- Trail link on north side of meadow.
- Avoids impact of fragmentation of the meadow.
- Natural Resource management concepts.
- Neighborhood Access Points avoids damage to fences/social trails.
- Preservation of cabin & shed - removal of un-needed buildings.
Future Actions to look at improvements to parking area, now that the limitations of the Tracey access easement are gone.

12. Teslow / Frese Access Easement - 2011
On May 12, 2011 an access easement agreement and termination of prior easement was completed between Teslow/Frese and JCOS. In December of 2000, the County acquired the southern entrance to Flying J Ranch Park as part of an approximately 43-acre donation from another party (the Schoonhovens). The road designated by the plat for this portion of the Apache Springs' Subdivision was never developed. There is a current Access Easement for the existing road, which crosses the Flying J Ranch Park donated parcel. This Easement also serves as access to the Teslow/Frese property. Through this Agreement, Teslow/Frese and the County propose to segment the Easement allowing the Teslow/Frese private road access to stop at the platted road and their property. The County Park access will be over the entire existing road. The Agreement will allow Teslow/Frese access to their property, as well as, public trail and Park maintenance access on the southern portion of Flying J Ranch Park.

13. Wapiti Run Estates – Point of Park Access - 2011
The property to the west of Flying J Ranch has the potential for new home construction. The property, undeveloped now, has been subdivided into five home sites / lots. Written into the plat for the area is an easement through two of the lots 2 and 3 to a point of access along our property boundary. The access point is limited to 15 feet. Not an issue now but should remain a topic of discussion.

This property is located at 27501 Shadow Mountain Drive in Conifer. The site is adjacent to Hwy. 73 and is contiguous to the southern boundary of Flying J Ranch Park. This 8-acre parcel is located immediately south of Flying J Ranch Park (FJR). The site includes a two story wood frame house circa 1980’s that is in good shape. The property was being considered as a fee simple purchase or easement and presented to OSAC on 1-06-12. There were discussions on the proposed site by staff as an alternative parking area but there was little support from staff to pursue the property. OSAC decided not to proceed in acquiring the property.

15. Fencing - 2011
The Park Services staff has been systematically replacing the fence along the property boundary of the park. A new section was completed adjacent to the potential Wapiti Run Subdivision (their northern boundary) as noted above in item 13. A new fencing project was started on the western boundary of the Tracy purchase. This project will continue into 2012. Prior to this, new fencing was constructed on the south end of the park between Apache Spring Subdivision and JCOS (their northern boundary).
**Chapter 5: Detailed Information on Meyer Ranch Park**

**Introduction:**

**Park Vision:**
Open Space's vision for Meyer Ranch Park is one that emphasizes the Park's unique position as both a place for recreation and natural resource conservation as well as an ecological buffer between development in the mountain communities east of Conifer. Meyer Ranch Park has served as a welcoming gateway to the western mountains of Jefferson County since it was homesteaded and continues to greet park visitors to the area with open meadows, enveloping forests and picturesque vistas. The Park's rich biological communities are protected as examples of successful forest management and habitat conservation.

Throughout Meyer Ranch Park, natural processes are allowed to dominate the landscape with minimal human intervention. Park visitors can expect an experience that is typically quiet, secluded and unhurried. The entirety of Meyer Ranch Park has been designated as a Natural Area, emphasizing our priority for the provision of recreational opportunities and protection of the Park's resources including wildlife and plant communities.

Similarly, the Midway House, historic barn and airstrip that fall within the adjoining Open Space Conservation Easement offer residents and visitors landmarks rich in local flavor, cultural history and agricultural tradition. Thus, continued opportunities for community involvement including public outreach events and the utilization of volunteer staff should remain paramount to the Park's future development. Consequently, the use of this Park as a passive, multi-use recreational area should maintain opportunities for trail-based recreation, winter activities, cultural and environmental interpretation and community outreach.

The result of this vision is a park and trail system that continues to protect the area's unique natural communities and emphasizes the Park's cultural and agrarian traditions through passive recreation and resource conservation. Ultimately, this vision could include the expansion of the trail system to the north side of U.S. Highway 285, connecting the Park to the surrounding communities and highlighting the area's natural and cultural heritage.

**Location:**
Meyer Ranch Park is located in Sections 7 and 18 Township 6 South, Range 70 West and Sections 12 and 13 Township 6 South, Range 71 West, adjoining U.S. Highway 285 just east of Conifer in the community of Aspen Park. See Figure 5a.

To reach Meyer Ranch Park from Denver, take U.S. Highway 285 south from C-470 to Aspen Park. Exit north onto South Turkey Creek Road and enter the Park on the south side of the highway.
Chronology of Development:
1986  Park acquired
1989  Parking lot, service road, restroom and picnic pads installed
1989  Owl’s Perch, Old Ski Run, Sunny Aspen and Lodgepole Loop trails constructed
1991  Overlook shelter constructed
1994  Well and hand pump installed
2000  Highway widening, two parking lots constructed, wetland mitigation begins
2001  A bench was added next to the kiosk
2011  Foot bridge was constructed.

Amenities:
Facilities at the 588-acre Park include:
- Two gravel parking lots (50 parking spaces total)
- One Clivus restroom
- One picnic shelter
- One memorial bench shelter
- Nine picnic tables
- One kiosk
- Three benches
- Three picnic grills
- 4.4 miles of natural surface trails

Park Capacity:
Meyer Ranch Park can accommodate a maximum of 50 vehicles in its parking lots. Including non-motorized access to the Park, this equates to approximately 110 visitors at any one time. A survey conducted in the summer season of 2006 indicated that visitor perception of conflict and crowding continues to be quite low. 3.0% of those Park visitor's surveyed reported having experienced conflict while on the Park compared with 5.5% noted in the 2002 survey results.

Acreage:
588 acres plus a Conservation Easement and Right of First Refusal covering 10 acres and the Midway House, and a Right of First Offer covering 53 acres of vacant land lying south of U.S. Highway 285 on the Park's western boundary.

Historical Background:
Canadian Duncan McIntyre and his three sons originally homesteaded what became Meyer Ranch Park in the 1860s, each filing a claim of 160 acres and equaling a total of 640 acres. They built a log cabin, which has since been torn down and a magnificent log barn of wooden peg construction. Carbon dating by the University of Arizona places the barn construction to 1870. It is still standing some 140 years later. McIntyre's place was recognized for the fine quality hay produced on the property and known to travelers as the Midway House, a hostelry along the Bradford Toll Road to Fairplay. 1883 was the year Louis Ramboz purchased the ranch from the McIntyres. The Ramboz family ran a successful haying, timbering and cattle operation, which included a sawmill. In 1889, contractor Joseph Grauffel of Denver built the landmark yellow home near the
barn. A wooden pipeline was built to bring spring water to the house. Plumbing and electricity would come much later.

R.W. Kirkpatrick bought the ranch in 1912, fencing in the entire property, which he operated as a working ranch. During the 1930s and 40s, a portion of their property was sold to Hopkins and Kester who ran a ski slope on the south side of U.S. Highway 285 until World War II.

Norman and Ethel Meyer purchased the ranch in 1950 and named it Broken Bar M Ranch. They used it as a working ranch, raising hay, cattle, selling firewood and Christmas trees. They remodeled and modernized the yellow house, but carefully maintained the original appearance and character. The Meyers donated 3.2 acres near the Aspen Park pond to Jefferson County for a library in the 1960s, but the library was never built.

In 1980, the Meyers offered their ranch to Jefferson County Open Space and it was purchased in 1983 for $1,705,909. Open Space retained a first-option on the remaining 10.6 acres which includes the house and barn.

Norm Meyer applied for designation of the Midway House and barn on the National Register of Historic Places, which occurred on September 9, 1990.

Jefferson County Open Space's grand opening of Meyer Ranch Park was June 24, 1989.

**Acquired:**

Meyer Ranch Park has been acquired in four transactions between 1986 and 2008. See Figure 5c. The largest acquisition occurred in 1986 with the purchase of 397 acres from Norman and Ethel Meyer. The Open Space Advisory Committee (OSAC) passed OSAC Resolution #8-84 on July 19, 1984, stating that acquisition of the property would be valuable for its mountain meadow and forest ecosystem, its historic structure and its access off of U.S. Highway 285.


August 27, 1986, Deed, Reception #86100405, Norman F. Meyer and Ethel E. Meyer - Grantors and Jefferson County - Grantee, Deed of all water and water rights associated with the two parcels of land described above in Reception #86100406.

January 29, 1999, Commissioner's Deed, Reception #F0789876, Jefferson County - Grantor, Colorado Department of Transportation – Grantee, Commissioner’s Deed for 8.002 acres of Open Space land adjoining U.S. Highway 285 for right-of-way and wetland mitigation. The County received $38,390.00, plus CDOT development of an interchange and parking area for Park access.
Mountains Region Management Plan
Jefferson County Open Space
2013

September 14, 2001, Conservation Easement with a Right of First Refusal and Right of First Offer to Purchase, cost $193,550.00: Deed of Conservation Easement, Reception #F1318256, Norman F. Meyer and Norman F. Meyer II - Grantor, Jefferson County – Grantee, grant of a Conservation Easement covering the Midway House residence and the surrounding 11 acres. Right of First Refusal (ROFR), Reception #F1318257, this is a ROFR to purchase the Midway House and surrounding 11 acres. Right of First Offer, Reception #F1318258, Norman F. Meyer and Norman F. Meyer II - Grantor, Jefferson County – Grantee, grant of a Right of First Offer covering approximately 53 acres being that portion of the west half of the southeast quarter of Section 12 lying to the south of U.S. Highway 285.

January 24, 2002, General Warranty Deed, Reception #F1408075, Special Warranty Deed, Reception #F1408076, Quit Claim Deed, Reception #F1408077, LeGault Sommet Revelateurs, LLC, Grantor and Jefferson County, Grantee. Acquisition of 128 acres on the southeast corner of the Meyer acquisition including a 1-acre Donation of ground covering the summit of LeGault Mountain. Cost of acquisition is $952,023.75.

October 7, 2008, Special Warranty Deed, Reception #2008093719. Acquisition of approximately 60 acres from the Norman F. Meyer Trust and Norman Meyer II. This property is located on the west side of the Park and was acquired for its scenic preservation, trail purposes and expansion of Meyer Ranch Park.

Natural and Cultural Resources:
The following is a synopsis of the natural and cultural resources found at Meyer Ranch Park.

Vegetation:
The vegetation components of Meyer Ranch Park described are based on inventories conducted by the Open Space Natural Resources staff and the Colorado Natural Heritage Program (CNHP).

- One site is mentioned in the Colorado Natural Heritage Inventory of Jefferson Colorado 1993. The site is the wetlands on both sides of U.S. Highway 285. The CNHP classify the wetlands as Great Plains wet meadows containing extensive Carex nebrascensis stands. The importance is to protect the habitat and control invasive species. The Natural Resources staff will accomplish this through weed control efforts, hay contracts and prescribe fire.

The vegetation cover types are typical of a Montane zone:
- Ponderosa pine (Pinus ponderosa)/Mixed conifer
- Lodgepole pine (Pinus contorta) Mixed conifer
- Douglas-fir (Pseudotsuga menziesii)/Mixed conifer
- Colorado blue spruce (Picea pungens)/Mixed conifer
- Quaking aspen (Populus tremuloides)/Mixed conifer
- Mountain meadow (containing the wetlands described earlier)
Significant plants that occur on the Park:
- Wood lily (*Liliaceae philadelphicum*) - Rare
- Yellow ladyslipper (*Cypripedium calceolus*) - Rare
- Rocky Mountain Columbine (*Aquilegia caerulea*)
- Shooting star (*Dodecatheon pulchellum*)
- Blue flag (*Iris missouriensis*)

**Wildlife:**
There are many species of wildlife that utilize this property; however, there are no known species of concern that would warrant special management.
- Elk are common throughout the Park.
- There is occasional bear use as observed through reports and signs in the picnic area. No special management is required.
- Avian use in the Park is significant and the diversity of forest and especially the occurrence of aspen may explain the number of different species. The area should be managed to keep intact the diversity.
- In 1994 and 1995 a flammulated owl (*Otus flammeolus*) survey reported a positive response near the trail junction of Sunny Aspen Trail and Old Ski Run Trail. Its presence does not require special management but merely indicates a potential old growth forest component, mostly lacking throughout the Front Range.

**Cultural Resources:**
SWCA Inc. conducted a Class III Cultural Resource Inventory in October of 2002. The complete report can be attained from the Open Space Planning section.
- Six cultural resources were found of which two are historical sites and four are historic isolated finds. The historic sites are primarily focused on the spring house and the trash scatter features. The isolated finds are two collapsed cairns, one rock alignment, and one stock dam.
- The report states that none of the cultural sites would be eligible for consideration on the Colorado State Register of Historic Places or the National Register of Historic Places. These sites are consistent with homesteading and ranching in the area.

**Activities:**
Recreational activities available at the Park include picnicking, hiking, biking, horseback riding, wildlife viewing, sledding and interpretive programming.

**Visitation and Use Trends:**
Based on the most recent Visitor Counts (2008), the annual visitation at Meyer Ranch Park is approximately 108,000. Three-quarters of the Park’s visitors engage in hiking and walking. While running/jogging and mountain biking account for about 19 percent of visitors. In the winter months, a significant number of Park visitors participate in winter activities including sledding, cross-country skiing and snowshoeing.
Figure 1. Meyer Ranch Park Location Map
Figure 5b: Meyer Ranch Park Map

Legend:
- JCOS
- Denver Mountain Parks
- Conservation Easement
- Trails
- Streams

Restroom
Parking
Picnic Area
Picnic Shelter

Figure 3: Conceptual Site Plan

This plan is not intended to serve as an official park or trail map and is subject to change.

October, 2011

Mountains Region Management Plan
Jefferson County Open Space
2013

Chapter 5: Meyer Ranch Park
Figure 2: Meyer Ranch Park Acquisition History

- Meyer Conservation Easement, First Right of Refusal 10.34 Acres
- Meyer August 1986 62 Acres
- Meyer August 1986 335 Acres
- LeGault January 2002 128 Acres
- CDOT January 1999 (-8.002 Acres)

Figure 5c: Meyer Ranch Park Acquisition History Map
Figure 5d: Meyer Ranch Park Opportunities and Constraints Plan
**Management Context:**

This section identifies and describes the Management Units that have been designated for Meyer Ranch Park. See Figure 5e.

**Sensitive Area Management Unit:**

All species of wildlife, even those that are adaptable and visible, require some degree of undisturbed space and time for certain aspects of their life history (breeding, foraging, resting, hiding, etc.). If portions of the landscape are available with little to no disturbance, these species will utilize them as needed and thus continue to occupy and utilize the entire landscape. Eventually, those species of wildlife that are adaptive will become part of the more visible watchable wildlife that the public has come to observe and enjoy on Open Space parks.

There are no Sensitive Area Management Units designated on Meyer Ranch Park.

**Natural Area Management Unit:**

Below is the justification for designating all of Meyer Ranch Park a Natural Area Management Unit, thereby, providing public access in the form of natural surface trails.

1. **Vegetative Resources**
   - Inventory results for this park indicate a high diversity of habitats. A heterogeneous forest consisting of ponderosa pine, lodgepole pine, Douglas-fir, aspen, and Colorado blue spruce, which can be found in pure stands or as a mixed conifer forest dominate the landscape.

2. **Areas of significance**
   - The wetlands should be maintained and careful consideration should be taken when designing development that may impact the wetlands.
   - The drainages that contain the rare plants should have minimum impact and future trails should be designed to stay out of the drainages.

3. **Wildlife Usage**
   - The park provides year-round elk use.
   - Avian species are very abundant.
   - There are no known wildlife species utilizing the property in such a way to require additional management.

4. **Recreational Resources**
   - The area provides an ideal setting for visitors to appreciate wildlife in their natural habitat.
   - Park users experience a natural environment with a wide range of community types.
   - Trails are currently multiple use and are spread across the entire park that allows for a quality outdoor experience.

**Recreation Services and Amenities Area Management Unit:**
There are no Recreation Services and Amenities Area Management Units on Meyer Ranch Park.
Figure 4: Management Unit Designation

Figure 5e: Meyer Ranch Park MUD Map
**Meyer Ranch Park Leases, Easements, Contracts and Agreements:**
Jefferson County Open Space often enters into agreements with other public and private organizations and individuals on behalf of a park. These agreements sometimes help the park to fulfill its recreational or stewardship objectives while providing a service or benefit to the other party. Agreements of this type are legally binding, and as a result, form a critical element of a park’s legal and policy context. Leases, easements, contracts and agreements entered into on behalf of this park are outlined in Table 1d below.

**TABLE 5a: MEYER RANCH PARK LEASES, LICENSES, EASEMENTS, CONTRACTS AND AGREEMENTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agreement Type</th>
<th>Agreeing Parties</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conservation Easement</td>
<td>Norman Meyer / Norman Meyer II (grantors) and Jefferson County</td>
<td>A permanent conservation easement covering the “Midway House” and the surrounding 10.6-acre parcel.</td>
<td>Meyer Park Acquisition folder.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right of First Refusal</td>
<td>Norman Meyer / Norman Meyer II (grantors) and Jefferson County</td>
<td>ROFR to purchase the Midway House and surrounding 10.6 acres.</td>
<td>Meyer Park Acquisition folder.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSC Utility Easement</td>
<td>PSC / Jefferson County</td>
<td>Utility Easement on 53 ac option parcel</td>
<td>Jeffco Recorder B2829 P949</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utility Easement</td>
<td>Mtn States Tel and Telegraph / Jefferson County</td>
<td>Utility Easement on 10.6 ac option parcel</td>
<td>Jeffco Recorder B329 P28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSC Utility Easement</td>
<td>PSC / Jefferson County</td>
<td>Utility Easement on 53 ac option parcel</td>
<td>Jeffco Recorder F1166086</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access Easement</td>
<td>Norman Meyer (grantors) / Norman Meyer II</td>
<td>Access Easement on 10.6 ac parcel</td>
<td>Jeffco Recorder F1318255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power Line Easement</td>
<td>Martin Blakesl (grantor) and Colorado Central Power</td>
<td>Power line easement along the north side of Hwy 285.</td>
<td>Jeffco Recorder B1022 P457</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power Line Easement</td>
<td>Norman Meyer / Ethel Meyer (grantors) and Colorado Central Power</td>
<td>Power line easement</td>
<td>Jeffco Recorder B1028 P372</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power Line Easement</td>
<td>Norman Meyer / Ethel Meyer (grantors) and Public Srvs Co of Colo.</td>
<td>Power line easement</td>
<td>Jeffco Recorder B 2829 P949</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utility Easement</td>
<td>Norman Meyer / Ethel Meyer (grantors) and Mountain States T and T Co.</td>
<td>Telephone line easement</td>
<td>Jeffco Recorder B2758 P189</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Work Plan Summary:

The Figure on the following page reflects the five-year financial strategy for Meyer Ranch Park. The “issue-driven” actions identified in the Actions Map (Figure 5f) correspond alpha-numerically to the “Action Items,” portions of this chapter. The Actions Map (Figure 5f) shows the temporal relationship between the issues.

Definitions:

1) System-wide Priority Criteria

A decision whether to implement a particular management action is based on system-wide priorities, which are derived from the following criteria:

- ADA/life safety/public health
- Resource protection
- Special studies/planning
- Cyclic maintenance
***Actions Map not available***
**Action Items:**

An explanation of identified issues specific to Meyer Ranch Park and the actions proposed to resolve them follow. The issues and actions articulated below correspond alpha-numerically to Figure 5f. Implementation of the preferred management options may be limited by staffing and/or budget constraints.

**Non-Personal Interpretive Services:**

C.1. Open Space’s Interpretive Master Plan reflects the provision of non-personal interpretive services at Meyer Ranch Park. The management action to address this issue is to design and construct interpretive wayside exhibits and/or other non-personal interpretive media in the Recreation Services and Amenities Areas of the park, per the Master Plan.

Actions to be taken:
1) Plan/design interpretive media.
2) Fabricate/install interpretive media.
Discussion Items:

Although the following discussion items were not considered issues by Open Space staff, they are included here for the administrative record.

1. **Facility Reduction in the Picnic Area**
   The team noted that the number of picnic facilities in the picnic area significantly exceeded the use of the area. Consequently, Park Services staff reduced the facilities in the picnic area during the summer of 2002. Currently the area has 9 picnic tables and four picnic grills. The team concluded that the number of picnic tables and grills may be further reduced if the facilities are not used.

2. **Trail System Expansion**
   The Conifer Area Council is still interested in having a trail connect Meyer Ranch Park and the Aspen Park Community. With this in mind, Open Space staff field tripped the Meyers property on the north side of Highway 285 to determine if there was a trail route that could connect Aspen Park without disturbing the meadows and the Meyer’s residence. A trail route that went around the north side of the meadow was determined to meet these conditions. However, additional property or trail rights would need to be acquired from the landowner. The current landowner is not interested in selling or granting any rights at this time.

   The Conifer Area Council organized another field trip to look at a trail connection through the Meyer’s property that involved Council members, the Meyer’s and Bossmans’ who are affected property owners, Open Space staff and local media. The Council’s proposed trail route would utilize the remnants of the old Bradford wagon road. Currently, the Meyer's are not interested in allowing a trail to cross their property.

   In October, 2008, Open Space purchased the approximately 60 acres the Meyer’s owned on the south side of Highway 285. This property had been sought by Open Space to make a trail connection with the residences to the west of the Park and scenic preservation. This trail connection has been listed as an Other Priority for 2010 and depending on workload, will hopefully be constructed in 2010. Some people have commented that this addition could also provide a connection to Aspen Park. However, this route has problems with road crossings, safety with using an underpass and acquiring rights to use property not owned by Open Space.

3. **LeGualt Summit Trail**
   In the past, the Team has discussed upgrading the social trail that leads to the top of LeGualt Mountain and bringing it into the Park’s trail system. However, it is not considered a high priority since the trail is not causing a problem. At the 2008 annual update meeting, the issue of whether the low maintained trail to the LeGualt
summit should be upgraded. The Team still recommends that it be kept as a low maintained trail.

4. **Miscellaneous items.**
   Along with the purchase of the 60 acres of the Meyer's property came an easement for three well sites that are operated by the Aspen Park Metropolitan District. The District has filed a request with Open Space to grant them an Access Easement that is different from their Utility Easement so that they can have better access to their wells. The District still has not developed a survey of the new access that is acceptable to staff.
Appendix A: Jefferson County Open Space Management Designations System

Jefferson County Open Space (JCOS) implements a Management Unit Designation (MUD) system as an integrated approach by which land and water areas are classified according to ecosystem and cultural resource protection requirements, and their capability and suitability to provide opportunities for visitor experiences. It is one part of an array of management strategies used by Open Space to assist in maintaining ecological integrity through a framework for the area-specific application of policy directions, such as for resource management, appropriate activities, and research. As such, Management Units provide a designation for park managers and park visitors alike. The application of Management Units requires sound information related to ecosystem structure, function and sensitivity, as well as opportunities and impacts of existing and potential visitor experiences.

The MUD system provides a means to reflect principles of ecological integrity by protecting park lands and resources and ensuring a minimum of human-induced change. In certain Open Space parks not all Management Units will be represented. In some cases, Special Protection Areas (SPAs), such as environmental or cultural areas, may be created when unique management is warranted. Park management teams will denote the SPA with the resource(s) to be addressed (e.g. Lichen Rock Garden SPA) and include the specific management actions necessary for the protection and use of such areas or sites (e.g. N.3, Enforce stay on trail requirement). The process to create a SPA is analogous to the creation of issue-driven actions (with details in Chapter IV, Management Directions, of the PMP), along with the need to map and label the specific location and boundaries of the SPA on the Concept Plan. A SPA may be removed if the management objectives have been accomplished or the underlying MUD is sufficient to manage the resource(s). This Special Protection Area will complement the Management Unit system and is important to the protection of unique and valued resources. Likewise, a temporal management technique (e.g., seasonal closures) may be considered for certain areas as part of the management planning program.

The following three Management Unit Designations (MUDs) and associated guidelines serve to, first, provide a linkage between the “vision” of the Jefferson County Open Space Master Plan and the park or field-level management plans; second, define the JCOS “system;” and finally, provide management guidance for the different types of lands within JCOS.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RECREATION SERVICES AND AMENITIES AREA GOAL STATEMENT</th>
<th>NATURAL AREA GOAL STATEMENT</th>
<th>SENSITIVE AREA GOAL STATEMENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The intent of this management designation is to provide services and amenities to the visiting public. While assuring the ecological integrity and long-term sustainability of the natural resources, outdoor recreation opportunities provide social interaction and information to enjoy and learn about the natural and cultural resources found in JCOS. Visitor conveniences, education programs, facilities and other amenities such as trailheads, parking lots, trails, restrooms and shelters may be provided, if they are needed and complement the provision of high quality nature-based outdoor recreation opportunities, and will generally be concentrated and located at public accesses on the periphery of JCOS parks.</td>
<td>The intent of this management designation is to provide opportunities for relatively large, contiguous portions of JCOS to remain as naturally operating ecosystems and for habitat conservation to be balanced with public recreation. To the extent compatible, moderate trail-based outdoor recreation opportunities may be provided to those seeking social interaction, to experience the sights, sounds, and smells of nature, and to experience limited outdoor amenities.</td>
<td>The intent of this management designation is to provide opportunities to maintain portions of JCOS that are very special, fragile, biodiverse and in need of preservation and protection. Ecological and cultural resources are to be managed for preservation versus conservation. These areas may serve as sanctuaries, as outdoor museums for archaeological and historic resources, or as outdoor classrooms for educational and research purposes. Preservation and protection of naturally operating ecosystems are the paramount considerations for these areas. Since public use will be restricted, guided interpretive services may be available. The area will be posted as a Sensitive Area.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### SPECIAL PROTECTION AREA (SPA)

A Special Protection Area (SPA) can be thought of as an overlay to a Management Unit Designation (MUD), created to address any unique item that requires special management actions, such as but not limited to: safety, a park access issue, natural resource concerns or restoration opportunities, cultural or environmental issues, biodiversity enhancement, time sensitive implications, a political imperative, other management consequences or opportunities. An SPA can be created within any MUD when specific resources, that are deemed significant, face real or potential impacts or opportunities that warrant special management actions. Given the preservation and protection already provided within a Sensitive Area, it is unlikely that a SPA will be needed. An effort at restoration, however, could be an applicable use of special management actions in a SPA. Specific location(s) and boundaries will be shown on the Concept Plan with the SPA labeled to denote the resource(s) in need of protection or special management. Issue-driven actions will be formulated to address the SPA.
### APPENDIX A:

#### GUIDELINES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recreation Services and Amenities Areas</th>
<th>Natural Areas</th>
<th>Sensitive Areas</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Allowed</td>
<td>Conditional</td>
<td>Not Allowed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conditional</td>
<td>Not Allowed</td>
<td>Conditional</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Allowed</td>
<td>Conditional</td>
<td>Not Allowed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allowed</td>
<td>Conditional</td>
<td>Not Allowed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Recreational Uses**

- **Endorsed On-trail Uses**
  - X
  - X
  - X
  - Allowed on designated trails only.

- **Endorsed Off-trail Uses**
  - X
  - X
  - X
  - Could be monitored for impacts.

- **Special Activities**
  - X
  - X
  - X
  - Allowed at designated sites, subject to size restrictions, permit required.

- **Endorsed Water-based Uses**
  - X
  - X
  - X
  - Could be monitored for impacts.

- **Pre-Existing Uses**
  - X
  - X
  - X
  - Pre-existing uses must be compatible with the goals established for these areas.

- **Off-road Motorized Vehicles**
  - X
  - X
  - X
  - X

**Interpretation**

- **Nature Study/Research**
  - X
  - X
  - X
  - Supervised program for educational and scientific purposes within Sensitive Area.

- **Educational Programs**
  - X
  - X
  - X
  - Supervised program for educational and scientific purposes within Sensitive Area.

**Facilities/Design**

- **Kiosks**
  - X
  - X
  - X
  - Preferred location is Parkland Recreation Service Areas.

- **Interpretive Waysides/Exhibits**
  - X
  - X
  - X
  - Provided in accordance with interpretive plans.

- **Memorials/Recognitions**
  - X
  - X
  - X
  - Preferred location is Parkland Recreation Service Areas.

- **Parking**
  - X
  - X
  - X
  - Preferred location is Parkland Recreation Service Areas and prefer gravel surface in Natural Areas.

- **Signs/Signage**
  - X
  - X
  - X
  - In Sensitive Area closure and other notices may be on the boundary.

Refer to the Outdoor Recreation Management Guidelines and Uses.
### APPENDIX A:

#### GUIDELINES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recreation Services and Amenities Areas</th>
<th>Natural Areas</th>
<th>Sensitive Areas</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Allowed</td>
<td>Conditional</td>
<td>Not Allowed</td>
<td>Allowed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trail Surface</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trail Bridges/Boardwalks</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilities (shelters, benches, restrooms, etc.)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historical structures</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Existing facilities/structures</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drinking water facilities</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Wildlife

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Recreation Services and Amenities Areas</th>
<th>Natural Areas</th>
<th>Sensitive Areas</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Allowed</td>
<td>Conditional</td>
<td>Not Allowed</td>
<td>Allowed</td>
<td>Conditional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mitigate Nuisance Wildlife</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fish Stocking</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Habitat Enhancement</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Releasing Wildlife</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Endangered or Threatened &amp; CO Species of Concern</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hunting</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trapping</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## APPENDIX A:

### GUIDELINES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recreation Services and Amenities Areas</th>
<th>Natural Areas</th>
<th>Sensitive Areas</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Allowed</td>
<td>Conditional</td>
<td>Not Allowed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allowed</td>
<td>Conditional</td>
<td>Not Allowed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allowed</td>
<td>Conditional</td>
<td>Not Allowed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allowed</td>
<td>Conditional</td>
<td>Not Allowed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allowed</td>
<td>Conditional</td>
<td>Not Allowed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allowed</td>
<td>Conditional</td>
<td>Not Allowed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allowed</td>
<td>Conditional</td>
<td>Not Allowed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allowed</td>
<td>Conditional</td>
<td>Not Allowed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Allowed

- **Tree/Shrubs Pruning/Removal**: Removal only if posing a hazardous condition.
- **Vegetation Management**: Native species may be planted for ecological and management reasons.
- **Fire Management**: In accordance with County Wildfire Mitigation Ordinance.
- **Forest Management**: To promote diversity, improve forest health and/or ecological restoration.
- **Wetland Protection**: In accordance with Army Corps of Engineers regs. & for ecological functions.
- **Grazing**: Typically not compatible but may be used where appropriate.
- **Closed Areas**: An allowable management tool to assure quality resource protection.

### Conditional

- **General Maintenance**: For weed control, grassland restoration and vegetation management projects.
- **Mowing**: Fencing may be erected or removed for visitor and ecological management reasons.

### Not Allowed

- **Fencing**: Fencing may be erected or removed for visitor and ecological management reasons.
- **Grading**: Receive County permits for all grading related activity if required.
- **Accessibility**: Document FSTAG recommendations.

### Natural Resource Management

- **Noxious Weed Control**: As outlined in the CO and Jeffco Noxious Weed Management Act and Plan.
- **Pest Management**: Control as outlined in the Pest Control Act.
- **Other Undesirable Weeds**:
### APPENDIX A:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recreation Services and Amenities Areas</th>
<th>Natural Areas</th>
<th>Sensitive Areas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Allowed</td>
<td>Conditional</td>
<td>Not Allowed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allowed</td>
<td>Conditional</td>
<td>Not Allowed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allowed</td>
<td>Conditional</td>
<td>Not Allowed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Easements Granted</td>
<td>Easements can be allowed or maintained if they are compatible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leases Granted</td>
<td>Leases can be allowed or maintained if they are in the best interests of JCOS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Posting Notices</td>
<td>Posting of public notices must serve a JCOS purpose.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporary Closures</td>
<td>Typically for muddy trails or other public safety and resource protection need.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix B: Operational Documents Used in Park Management

Planning & Development:

*Design and Development:*
- Design Guidelines
- Open Space Sign Manual

*Planning:*
- Current Open Space Master Plan
- Open Space Preservation Concepts Priority List

Administration and Education Services:

*Lookout Mountain Nature Center:*
- Open Space Interpretive Media Plan
- Group Program Plan
- Public Services Plan
- Guiding Principles for Interpretive Services

*Visitor & Resource Protection:*
- Recreation & Visitor Management Plan
- Park Patrol Plans
- Colorado Revised Statutes
- Open Space Rules & Regulations
- Ranger Operations Manual

Park Operations:

*Park Services:*
- Open Space Fence and Posting Standard Operating Procedures
- Jefferson County Open Space Maintenance Standards Manual

*Trails Services:*
- Natural Surface Trail Management Guidelines

Natural Resources Management:
- Resource Management Concepts

Park Construction:
Jefferson County Open Space operates within a framework of laws and regulations that govern jurisdictional behavior. Interpretation of, and compliance with these laws and regulations requires sound and thoughtful judgment. The state and federal laws and county regulations that are applicable to county Open Space lands with which park staff should be familiar before taking action are presented below.

**LAWS AND REGULATIONS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CRS 35-5.5</td>
<td>Colorado Noxious Weed Management Act</td>
<td>State law that requires control of noxious weeds.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRS 35-4-107</td>
<td>Pest Control Act</td>
<td>State law that enables the County to require control of pests.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 USC 668-668C</td>
<td>Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act</td>
<td>Federal law that makes it unlawful to import, export, take, sell, purchase, or barter any Bald or Golden Eagle, their parts, products, nests, or eggs. “Take” includes pursuing, shooting, poisoning, wounding, killing, capturing, trapping, collecting, molesting or disturbing the eagles.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 USC 703-712</td>
<td>Migratory Bird Treaty Act</td>
<td>Federal law that makes it unlawful to import, export, take, sell, purchase, or barter any migratory bird, their parts, products, nests, or eggs. “Take” includes pursuing, shooting, poisoning, wounding, killing, capturing, trapping, collecting, molesting or disturbing migratory birds.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 USC 1531-1544</td>
<td>Endangered Species Act</td>
<td>Federal law that makes it unlawful to take, possess, sell, or transport endangered species.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 USC 470</td>
<td>Historic Preservation Act of 1966</td>
<td>Federal law establishing a program for the preservation of Historic Properties throughout the Nation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exec. Order 11593</td>
<td>Protection and Enhancement of the Cultural Environment</td>
<td>Executive Order stating that the Federal Government shall provide leadership in preserving, restoring, and maintaining the historic and cultural environment of the Nation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 USC 431-433</td>
<td>Antiquities Act of 1906</td>
<td>Federal law that makes it unlawful to appropriate, excavate, injure, or destroy any historic or prehistoric ruin or monument, or any object of antiquity without permission.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Law 101-336</td>
<td>Americans with Disabilities Act</td>
<td>Federal law that guarantees equal opportunities in the areas of employment, state and local government services, public accommodations, and telecommunications. Guidelines include: Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines, Recreational Facilities Accessibility Guidelines, Outdoor Developed Areas Accessibility Guidelines.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regulation 7, Air Quality Control Commission</td>
<td>Emissions of Volatile Organic Compounds</td>
<td>By authority of Federal Clean Air Act, State regulation stipulating requirements for storage and transfer of volatile organic compounds.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regulation 8, Air Quality Control Commission</td>
<td>Control of Hazardous Air Pollutants, Part B Asbestos</td>
<td>By authority of Federal Clean Air Act, State regulation stipulating requirements for asbestos abatement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regulation 19, Air Quality Control Commission</td>
<td>Lead Based Paint Abatement</td>
<td>By authority of Federal Clean Air Act, State regulation stipulating requirements for individuals and firms engaged in lead-based paint activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Law 92-500</td>
<td>Clean Water Act</td>
<td>Federal law governing pollution in the nation's streams, lakes, and estuaries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 404 of PL 92-500</td>
<td>Permits and Licenses</td>
<td>Section of Clean Water Act authorizing the Secretary of the Army to issue permits for the discharge of dredged or fill material into the navigable waters at specified disposal sites.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regulation 61, Water Quality Control Commission</td>
<td>Point Source Discharge and Control Regulations</td>
<td>By authority of Federal Clean Water Act, State regulations that apply to all operations discharging to waters of the State from a point source.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 CCR 601-1</td>
<td>State Highway Access Code, Colorado Department of Transportation</td>
<td>By authority of the Federal Highway Administration, State law regulating vehicular access to or from any public highway.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jefferson County Development Process</td>
<td>County Planning and Zoning regulations. A complete listing can be found at <a href="http://206.247.49.21/ext/dpt/public_works/planning/zoning/build-permit-chklist.htm">http://206.247.49.21/ext/dpt/public_works/planning/zoning/build-permit-chklist.htm</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix D: Stakeholders and Constituencies

Park management often involves the need to work closely with individuals and organizations that care about the public resource. The "stakeholders" may be park users; they may be neighbors; or they may be persons who are simply interested in the park’s resources and who desire those resources to be managed in a certain way for certain outcomes. This table lists known stakeholders and constituencies. They should be informed of significant developments or changes that might occur in or for the park.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Organization</th>
<th>Contact Person (5/01)</th>
<th>Address, E-mail Address</th>
<th>Phone #, FAX #</th>
<th>Description of Interest in Park(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aspen Park Improvement Association</td>
<td>Sandra L. Miranda</td>
<td>PO Box 772, Conifer, 80433</td>
<td></td>
<td>Local community improvement organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Association member</td>
<td>Christopher Greenwood</td>
<td>9209 William Cody Dr, 80439</td>
<td>303-475-6755</td>
<td>Newsletter, active participant in the evolution of the park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colorado Department of Transportation</td>
<td>Chuck Binford, Access Manager</td>
<td></td>
<td>303-757-9123</td>
<td>Wetland mitigation and information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colorado Division of Wildlife</td>
<td>Rod Ruybalid</td>
<td></td>
<td>303-291-7155</td>
<td>Wildlife management &amp; neighboring property owner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conifer Area Council</td>
<td>Shirley M. Johnson</td>
<td>9850 City View Drive, Morrison, 80465</td>
<td></td>
<td>Local community organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservation Easement</td>
<td>Gene Eberl</td>
<td>34366 Hwy, 103</td>
<td>303-674-0775</td>
<td>Noble Meadow Easement owner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County Hwys &amp; Transportation</td>
<td></td>
<td>100 Jeffco Pkwy Golden, 80401</td>
<td>303-271-8457</td>
<td>Roads and Highways</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County Road &amp; Bridge</td>
<td>Mike Secary</td>
<td>30846 Lewis Ridge Rd.</td>
<td>303-271-5249</td>
<td>Main road maintenance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denver Mountain Parks</td>
<td>A.J. Tripp-Addison</td>
<td></td>
<td>303-697-4545</td>
<td>Neighboring property owner &amp; Management Agreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denver Mountain Parks</td>
<td>Rich Gannon</td>
<td>300 Union St, Morrison</td>
<td>303-697-4545</td>
<td>Adjacent landowner, project partner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Division of Wildlife</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>303-291-7227 ext. 0 or CSP 303-239-4501</td>
<td>Wildlife problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elk Creek Fire Protection District</td>
<td>Chief: Pete Igel</td>
<td>Administration Station One 11993 Blackfoot Rd Conifer, CO 80433</td>
<td>303-816-9385 303-816-9376 (fax)</td>
<td>Fire prevention &amp; response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evergreen Fire District</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>303-674-3145</td>
<td>Emergency/Fire protection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evergreen Metropolitan District</td>
<td>Jerry Schulte</td>
<td></td>
<td>303-674-4112</td>
<td>Inholding Water tank owner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evergreen Parks and Recreation</td>
<td>Pat Shea-Lease Caretaker</td>
<td>31677 Buffalo Park Road Evergreen, CO 80439</td>
<td>303-670-0505</td>
<td>Director 303-674-6441 Recreational Lease</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excel Energy</td>
<td></td>
<td>1225 17th St. Denver, CO 80202</td>
<td>303-271-7511</td>
<td>Utility easements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heirs of John Schoonhoven</td>
<td></td>
<td>9499 County Highway 73</td>
<td>303-674-2815</td>
<td>Adjacent landowner, legal agreements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hilldale Pines HOA</td>
<td>Shirley Johnson</td>
<td>9850 City View Drive, Morrison, 80465</td>
<td></td>
<td>Community HOA east of the park boundary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name of Organization</td>
<td>Contact Person (5/01)</td>
<td>Address, E-mail Address</td>
<td>Phone #, FAX #</td>
<td>Description of Interest in Park(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homestead HOA</td>
<td>HOA President</td>
<td>PO Box 797, Conifer, 80433</td>
<td></td>
<td>Community HOA west of park boundary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermountain Rural Electric Association (IREA)</td>
<td>Carla Zinanti</td>
<td>700 Jefferson County Parkway Suite 160 Golden, CO 80401</td>
<td>303-674-9759</td>
<td>Utility easement within the park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeffco Animal Control</td>
<td>Carla Zinanti</td>
<td>PO Box 797, Conifer, 80433</td>
<td>303-271-5070</td>
<td>Animal problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeffco Highways &amp; Transportation</td>
<td>Jeff Young</td>
<td>100 Jeffco Pkwy., Golden 80401</td>
<td>303-271-8457</td>
<td>Roadways</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeffco R-1 Schools</td>
<td>John Young</td>
<td>809 Quail, Bldg. 4 Lakewood, CO 80215</td>
<td>303-982-2338</td>
<td>Educational programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeffco Risk Management</td>
<td>Jeff Young</td>
<td>100 Jeffco Parkway</td>
<td>303-271-8440</td>
<td>Visitor Safety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeffco Road &amp; Bridge</td>
<td>Jeff Young</td>
<td>21401 Golden Gate Canyon Rd., Golden 80403</td>
<td>303-271-8440</td>
<td>Roadways</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeffco Sheriff's Department</td>
<td>Jeff Young</td>
<td>200 Jeffco Pkwy, Golden, 80401</td>
<td>303-271-0211</td>
<td>Security and law enforcement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jefferson County Planning and Zoning</td>
<td>Pat O'Connell</td>
<td>100 Jefferson County Parkway, Golden</td>
<td>303-271-8707</td>
<td>Mountain groundwater study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jefferson County Transportation and Engineering</td>
<td>Mike Vannatta</td>
<td>100 Jefferson County Parkway, Golden</td>
<td>303-271-8457</td>
<td>Shadow Mountain Drive &amp; County Highway 73 issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meyer Family</td>
<td>Norman and Ethel Meyer and Norman Meyer II</td>
<td>PO Box 4001, Golden 80401</td>
<td></td>
<td>Surrounding property owners, conservation easement holders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R-1 Schools</td>
<td>R-1 Schools</td>
<td>PO Box 4001, Golden 80401</td>
<td>303-982-6755(ph), 303-982-6804(fax)</td>
<td>Educational programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R-1 Schools</td>
<td>Conifer High School Principal Dr. Michael Musick</td>
<td>10441 County Highway 73 Conifer, Colorado 80433</td>
<td>303-982-5255</td>
<td>Use of park trails for some athletic condition training and class events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Land Board</td>
<td>State Land Board</td>
<td>1313 Sherman Denver, CO 80203</td>
<td>303-866-3454</td>
<td>State Land Board Lease</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USGS</td>
<td>Dean E. Anderson</td>
<td>U.S. Geological Survey M.S. 413, Bldg. 53, Federal Center Denver, CO 80255-0046</td>
<td>(o) 303-236-5691, (c) 303-579-1104</td>
<td>Evapo-transpiration Monitoring (See discussion item.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valley High Ranch HOA</td>
<td>Kelly Croke</td>
<td>28202 Bonanza Dr. Evergreen 80439</td>
<td>303-674-5470</td>
<td>Nearby HOA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
GLOSSARY: ACRONYMS AND TERMS USED IN THIS PLAN

ACRONYMS

ADA - Americans with Disabilities Act
CDOT - Colorado Department of Transportation
CPW – Colorado Parks and Wildlife
DWB - Denver Water Board
HCP - Habitat Conservation Plan
IGA - Intergovernmental Agreement
IPM - Integrated Pest Management
JCOS - Jefferson County Open Space
OSAC - Open Space Advisory Committee
ROW - Right of Way
REM - Resource Evaluation Management
**TERMS**

Hard-surface trail: Trails with asphalt or concrete surfaces. Hard-surface trails are typically constructed by external contractors.

Natural-surface trail: Trail developed from on-site materials and/or local soils. This could also include importation of aggregate materials (e.g., crusher fines or road base) for trail surface. Natural-surface trail construction is typically accomplished in-house.

Trailhead: Point of origin that provides information and access to a trail system. More intensely managed trailheads provide parking and information.

Interpretation: A specialized communication process that aims to provoke and inspire visitors to appreciate, learn more, or understand the object, topic, event, or site that is being interpreted, and act responsibly when interacting with natural or cultural resources.

Parks Management Planning Team: A team composed of representatives from various Open Space sections that is responsible for Management Plan development and implementation.

Open Space Management Team: A team comprised of the director and managers from each Open Space section.

REM: A framework to establish and manage specific natural, cultural and recreational resource issues. Resource monitoring provides a flow of information that may indicate a need to alter or adapt management.