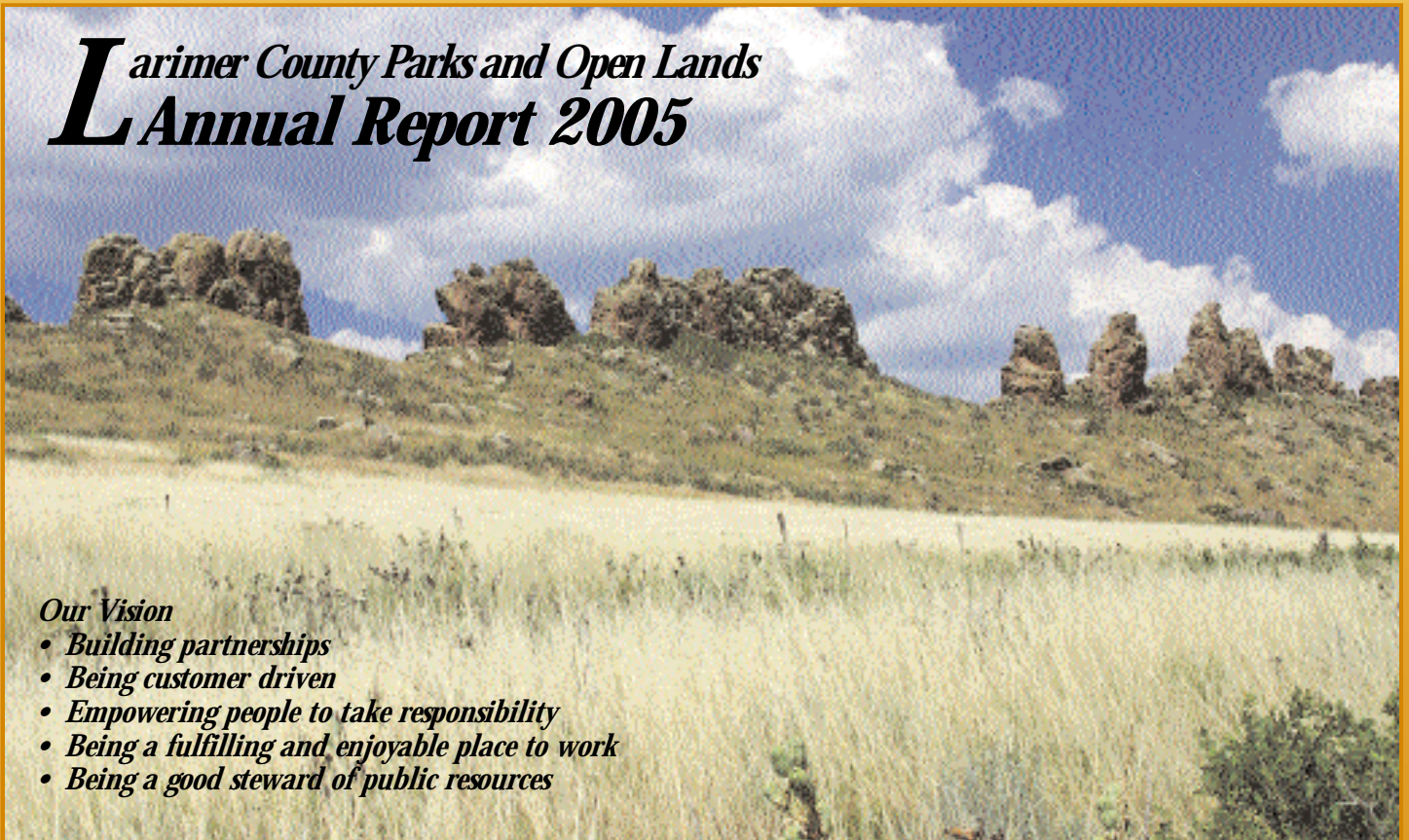


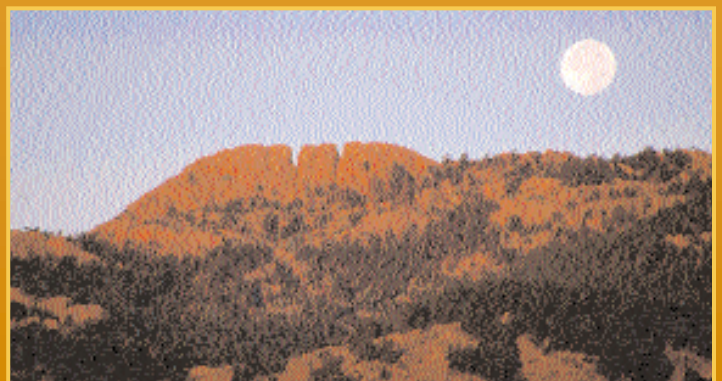
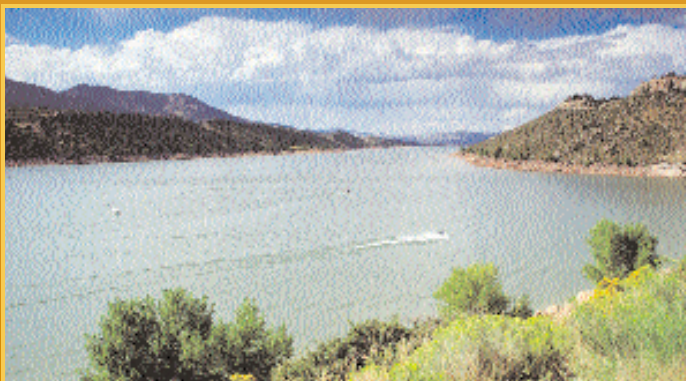


# *Larimer County Parks and Open Lands Annual Report 2005*



## *Our Vision*

- *Building partnerships*
- *Being customer driven*
- *Empowering people to take responsibility*
- *Being a fulfilling and enjoyable place to work*
- *Being a good steward of public resources*



A message from the Director  
**Dear Larimer County Citizens,**

It is my pleasure to present to you the 2005 Annual Report for the Parks and Open Lands Department. The department fully embraces and practices the vision established by our County Commissioners, as indicated on the cover of this report.

The Open Lands Program continues to meet the goals set forth by the citizens' initiative established almost 10 years ago. Nearly 23,600 acres of fee title land have been established for public use and more than 14,800 acres of land have been protected through conservation easements. Dedicated staff has excelled in providing education, land acquisition and stewardship, trails development and outreach/fundraising services. We appreciate the Open Lands Advisory Board for their commitment to this successful program.

**Larimer County government officials**

Board of County Commissioners:  
 Glenn Gibson, Kathay Rennels, Karen Wagner  
 County Manager: Frank Lancaster  
 Public Works Director: Marc Engemoen

The Parks Program has financially recovered and has provided citizens and visitors with many additional improvements for their recreational enjoyment. A newly formed master plan task force will recommend continued development of park and outdoor recreation amenities into the next decade. I applaud the staff for their relentless pursuit to provide quality, safe, outdoor recreation opportunities to our visitors.

The Weed Program and Forestry Services staff are working diligently to meet the land stewardship needs of citizens following the Weed Control District mission. New global positioning system equipment has assisted staff in effectively mapping and identifying weed infestations, reducing labor costs and helping private landowners to control invasive species.

Our Volunteer Program continues to support the entire department in a multitude of services from park ranger assistants and campground hosts to trail adoption. The newly formed "Friends" group has an exciting future, providing donated funding for department programs and activities.



*Parks and Open Lands Leadership Team: Patricia Brennan, Dan Rieves, Commissioner Glenn Gibson, Gary Buffington, Mark Caughlan, Debra Wykoff. Not pictured: K-Lynn Cameron, Mike Carroll. Photo: Greg Good*

A special thanks to our administrative staff for their commitment to the financial and emotional health of the department.

We anticipate an exciting future with many challenges ahead. We are especially appreciative of the unyielding support of our department by the Board of Commissioners with the many programs that benefit the citizens of Larimer County.

Gary K. Buffington  
 Director, Parks and Open Lands Department

## The Friends of Larimer County Parks and Open Lands

"Friends" is a new 501(c)(3) local non-profit organization dedicated to promoting the importance of Larimer County Parks and Open Lands, in our communities, and for future generations. Projects have focused on enhancing the public's experience and access to many of Larimer County's parks and open lands, including: donating picnic tables to the Soderberg Open Space Trailhead at Horsetooth Mountain Park in partnership with Whole Foods Market; providing wildlife viewing equipment for public use at Fossil Creek Reservoir Regional Open Space in partnership with REI; and raising funds from the "Festival

of Giving" shopping event in partnership with Foothills Fashion Mall. "Friends" raised over \$7,000 their first year in operation and set a goal to double that in year two.

Meetings are held every other month to plan quarterly outings to be offered to the public to attract new members. Friends host "sneak preview" tours of open lands properties not yet open to the public, and other outings such as boat tours on Horsetooth Reservoir. Members serve on committees to meet their goals of fundraising, supporting departmental projects, and advocating increased community and corporate support for the Larimer County Parks and Open Lands Department.

**"My involvement with the Friends is a natural outgrowth of my involvement in the Parks and Open Lands Naturalist and Park Ranger Assistant Programs. I am always interested in these and other volunteer programs and found a valid need for such a group to sponsor and support fund raising and work projects to improve the parks and open lands within Larimer County."**

*Duane Pond, President of The Friends of LCPOL*

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2	
4	
5	6

Cover:  
 1. Rick Price  
 2. Rick Price  
 3. Rick Price  
 4. James Steele  
 5. Kelley Savage  
 6. Rick Price

# The state of conservation in Larimer County and Colorado

## History of conservation efforts

Larimer County has conserved over 38,400 acres of open space since 1996 when voters passed the 1/4-cent *Help Preserve Open Spaces* (HPOS) sales tax. Similar efforts have occurred throughout the state in order to protect lands from residential development, to conserve the area's natural and cultural resources, and to provide outdoor recreational opportunities. To date 46 land trusts and 40 local government open space programs, including Larimer County, have protected more than 1.6 million acres within Colorado. Even with these great accomplishments there is a large portion of Colorado which remains unprotected. "Colorado Conservation at a Crossroads," a report published by the Colorado Conservation Trust (CCT) in 2005, found that funding for priority lands over the next decade will fall far short of what is needed.

## Population growth

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, Colorado outpaced the National growth average by more than three times from 1990-2000. Colorado population is expected to continue growing at record rates over the next 25 years. Larimer County in particular is projected to nearly double its current population of 252,000 making it the third fastest growing county in the Front Range. This equates to added pressure on our ecosystem including fragmentation of important landscapes and elimination of wildlife migration corridors. A study of the development patterns and projections in Colorado by Dr. David Theobald, Natural Resources Ecology Lab at Colorado State University, showed that Larimer County is projected to have the fourth highest change in developed acres over the next 25 years. With an expected increase of over 69,000 acres, Larimer County is behind only Weld, Park and Douglas Counties in projected developed acres. Most of these acres are agricultural lands in private ownership. According to Theobald, preserving a significant amount of these lands and their agricultural heritage will be difficult since most of these private landowners are nearing retirement age. Current economic



*The importance of conservation to protect the quality of life in Larimer County is obvious to old timers and newcomers alike. Photo: Charlie Johnson*

conditions make selling their land for development more attractive.

## Lack of funding and the future of conservation

For the last 10 years, Larimer County has relied on the *Help Preserve Open Spaces* sales tax revenue for a large part of its funding for land protection. Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) has also been a major funding partner with the County for land purchases. However, these two funding sources are not adequate to cover the costs of future acquisition and development projects identified as priority projects over the next 13 years.

GOCO granted \$48 million towards conservation projects throughout the

state in 2004, which has limited its funding capabilities over the next 3 to 5 years. Only 18 out of 64 local governments have sales tax revenue similar to Larimer County. It is estimated that there is a \$1.2 billion gap between funding available and that needed for priority projects over the next decade. Many efforts are being made to help bridge the financial gap which will benefit these counties as well as Larimer County.

Larimer County will need \$65 million to fund priority acquisition and development projects over the next 13 years. The *Help Preserve Open Spaces* sales tax is projected to fall short of that mark by \$50 million. Larimer County's Open Lands Program will continue relying on leveraging tax dollars with matching contributions from organizations like GOCO. The generous donations the County has seen from private landowners since the program's inception will also be vital to future conservation.

Larimer County and the State of Colorado are at an important stage in land conservation. The decisions we make in the immediate future can change the landscape we know and love, forever. We have the opportunity to preserve those lands for future generations. With your support, we will continue to conserve the special places of our County and provide a fulfilling and enjoyable place for us all to live and recreate.

**“ Open lands are like precious stones, requiring maintenance to maintain their beauty. Carelessness requires time and effort to regain their luster.”**

*Glenn Gibson,  
County Commissioner District 3*

# Masterpiece galleries

Art curators all dream of finding a masterpiece in a private collection and bringing it to a public venue. Parks and Open Lands has had a unique opportunity to become the curator of two masterpieces, the Soderberg and the Eagle's Nest Open Spaces, which both opened to the public in 2005.

When Soderberg Open Space was purchased in 1998 followed by Eagle's Nest Open Space in 2000, there was not just an exchange of money for land. Larimer County saw richness of texture in the landscape that would please the senses of thousands of visitors. Here was opportunity to preserve a primal harmony of plants and wildlife. As with the acquisition of any masterpiece, the new owner became the historical custodian of all the forces, people and events that molded the land into its present form.

How to present these masterpieces? How to immerse the public in true appreciation of the attributes? How to preserve and protect the original qualities? These were the considerations over the next few years in planning an interactive exhibition.

The Soderberg Trailhead, with 30 parking spaces, picnic tables, a restroom and an informational kiosk, was the gallery presenting the Soderberg Open Space Grand Opening in April of 2005. Today visitors can fill their palettes with views of historic ranch buildings of the Soderberg Homestead and enjoy the 3/4-mile Swan Johnson Trail which traverses the 114-acre open space before joining trails at the adjacent Horsetooth Mountain Park. South from the trailhead, Inlet Bay Trail winds around a cove of Horsetooth Reservoir and leads to the soon to open Blue Sky Trail, an avenue to another collection of open space treasures.

The unveiling of Eagle's Nest Open Space to the public was in June of 2005. From the trailhead perched on the mountain-side one mile south of the community of



*The cowboy leads eager visitors to the doorstep of a masterpiece to find their own inspiration in these new open spaces. Photo: Charlie Johnson*

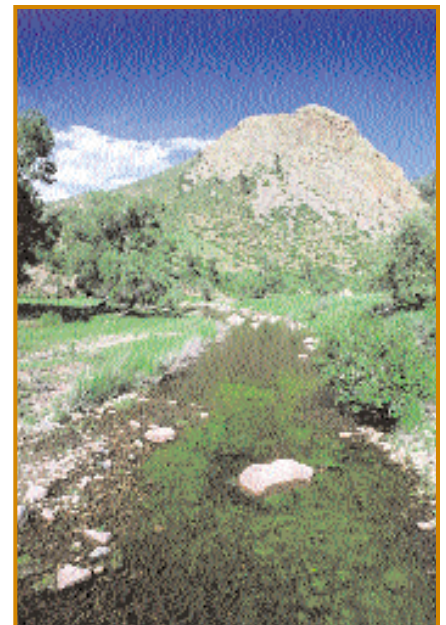
Livermore, a vast panoramic canvas of a classic western landscape surrounds the visitor. The high mountain country, the mesas, the red sandstone rims, the craggy granite cliffs, the rolling grasslands, and the river valley below all change hue and dimension with the passing of the sun and seasons. Five miles of trail through this 755-acre open space transport the visitor to a different reality of solitude and time. The dominant foreground is the ageless interaction of wildlife and their environs,

while the shadows show glimpses of ancient and modern Native Americans, wagon trains, cavalry troops, cowboys, ranchers and homesteaders. Some shadows bleed through the present as cattle are seen grazing amidst the buckbrush and riders on horseback trail by.

At each of these great works of art are descriptive placards, but interpretation of their meaning is left to each individual. How will you be inspired?

**“ The opportunity to present to the public Soderberg and Eagle's Nest Open Spaces, is truly rare. These open lands give the public a chance to sense the true agricultural and western flavor of our County. These are truly the pay-back for the investment that the public has supported so well. ”**

*Kathay Rennels,  
County Commissioner District 1*



*The North Fork of the Cache la Poudre River meanders around Eagle's Nest Rock. Photo: Charlie Johnson*

# Looking for a home away from home?

There's a hot trend afoot in camping, and campers across North America are taking to it like Yogi Bear™ to a full stuffed picnic basket.

It is cabin camping. That's it—camping not in a tent or RV, but in a rustic cabin that provides nearly all the creature comforts of home in a beautiful and fun environment.

Cabin camping fits today's lifestyle: convenience in a fast-paced world. People pressed for time can now jump in their automobiles, head for a campground, and stay in a rustic but comfortable cabin.

Larimer County entered this cottage industry in the spring of 2004 with three cabins at Horsetooth Reservoir. Due to their popularity, four more cabins were added to Horsetooth and two were placed at Flatiron Reservoir in the spring of 2005.

These cozy little hideaways rent for \$50 per night for up to five people (April- September), \$30 per night for up to five people (October–March). Each cabin features a 12' x 16' room with 12' x 8' covered front porch, three padded bed surfaces (one double bed and one bunk bed). Each site has a fire grate, electricity, lights, ceiling fan, heat and air and a table and chairs. Cabins are ADA accessible.

To see if these cabins might be your home away from home, make reservations by going to [www.larimercamping.com](http://www.larimercamping.com), or call 1-800-397-7795.



Cabin camping—the ultimate luxury in today's fast-paced world. Photo: Sue Burke

*“My young daughter and I test drove one of the new cabins at Flatiron this past spring and a quiet night's stay for me was a grand adventure for her. I appreciated not having to set up the tent or make the monthly payment on an RV that wouldn't see enough use. The outing also required far less gear than a typical night's stay at a campground. From my daughter's perspective we were truly roughing it, just like in the old days.”*

*Dan Rieves, Johnstown CO*

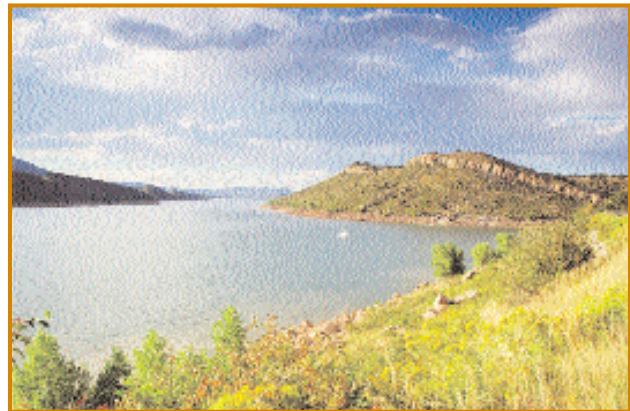
## What are people doing at Horsetooth?

One of the best reasons to live in Colorado is the abundance of outdoor recreation! Whether you hike, camp, boat, fish or enjoy any of the many other outdoor opportunities in Colorado, chances are you enjoyed one of those activities in a Larimer County Park or Open Space. Last year, Larimer County conducted a visitor survey to find out just how many people enjoyed the recreation in the Horsetooth District. We found that over 650,000 like-minded Coloradoans visited the Horsetooth District in 2005.

While visitation was spread over all the various parks and open spaces within the District, a large portion was drawn to South Bay, Inlet Bay and Satanka Cove at Horsetooth Reservoir. The majority of those visitors participated in boating, camping and fishing activities. The second largest group was hikers, enjoying several

popular hiking areas throughout the District, including Horsetooth Mountain Park. Picnickers and climbing groups also accounted for a large portion of visitation on the east side of Horsetooth Reservoir.

The information collected in this study will help Larimer County better understand the usage of the different sections of the District and how to better prioritize future improvements to facilities and services. This data will be used to design public promotion of our parks and open spaces, while conserving our natural resources and maintaining recreational opportunities.



What they're do is boating, water-skiing, fishing, hiking and camping and having fun doing it!

Photo: Charlie Johnson

### Horsetooth District survey results

Location	Visitation
Horsetooth Reservoir	539,929
Horsetooth Mountain Park	122,435
Eagle's Nest Open Space	3,404
<b>Total 2005 annual visitation</b>	<b>665,768</b>

## *Volunteers for Outdoors Colorado, volunteer for our county*

As the sun rose over Horsetooth Reservoir, more than 200 volunteers from local communities emerged from their tents ready for a day of work and fun on the Blue Sky Trail. While eating breakfast and packing lunches, the dedicated volunteers formed crews and met crew leaders to go over the trail building plans for the day. After a short ride to the site, volunteers hauled pickaxes, McLeods and shovels up the mountain to their assigned section of trail. Each person, young and old, put heart and sweat into the project; and a trail began to take shape. At the end of the second day, the volunteers could look back with satisfaction at over a mile of trail they constructed with love and dedication.

Meandering through 4,000 acres of protected foothills open space, the Blue Sky Trail will connect the Devil's Backbone to Horsetooth Mountain. It has been on Larimer County's wish list for over ten years and will be one of the premiere regional trails in Northern Colorado for hiking, biking, and horseback riding. The 16-mile trail will only cross one road making it a safe and serene adventure. Built in stages over the last seven years, the final stage is completing the remaining eight miles of natural surface trail and the County Road 38E trail underpass near Horsetooth Reservoir.

In October, Larimer County teamed with Volunteers for Outdoor Colorado to construct more than a mile of the Blue Sky Trail that connects with the Rimrock Open Space Trail (a trail project VOC assisted in completing in 2001).

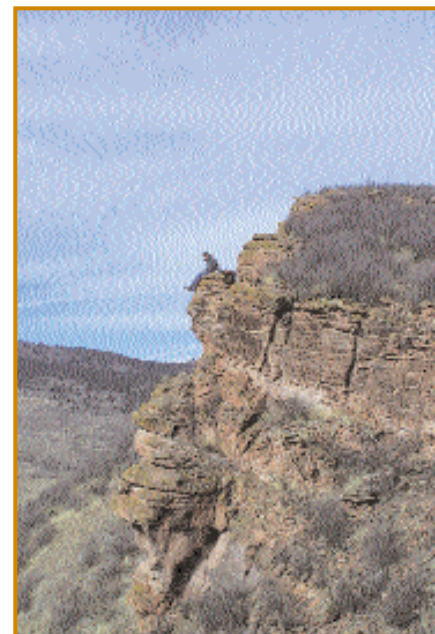


Photo: Rick Price

*“Parks and Open Lands has to be one of the finest places to volunteer. The people are great, the teamwork is rewarding and the environment is beautiful.”* Brian McNoldy, volunteer trail crew leader

Volunteers for Outdoor Colorado is a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting and empowering citizens and visitors to be active stewards of their public lands in Colorado.

The Blue Sky Trail will be dedicated to the public in June 2006. While the construction of this trail will be finished there are always chances to be a volunteer with the County in constructing new trails or maintaining the current trail system. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact our Volunteer Program at (970) 679-4552 or email [dflahavhan@larimer.org](mailto:dflahavhan@larimer.org).



*Sitting on the edge is the place to be when visualizing the protection of the important places of our world.* Photo: Greg Good

*“Excellent trail crew leader and project—the whole weekend was a blast! Thanks for letting volunteers have this opportunity.”*

Allison L., volunteer trail crew, VOC Blue Sky Trail Project

*“I’m local and I will bring my grand kids here! I love this idea and I will do it again. Thanks for extra water on the trail!”*

Matt S., volunteer trail crew, VOC Blue Sky Trail Project

## *Building trails to the future*

Imagine hopping on your bike and riding non-stop from LaPorte to Greeley along the scenic Cache la Poudre River or taking a stroll between Fossil Creek Reservoir Regional Open Space and Boyd Lake State Park or getting to work or school on a trail instead of a congested roadway.

These are just a few of the possibilities that the regional trail system, proposed in the 2001 Larimer County Open Lands Master Plan, will provide upon completion. In 2005, Larimer County took steps forward, making these regional trails a reality.

The Master Plan identifies 20 priority regional trail corridors connecting communities, open spaces, natural areas, and other sites of interest throughout Larimer County. Over time, the County will negotiate trail easements with willing landowners and build trails along the priority trail corridors identified in the Master Plan. However, because of the extent of the potential trail system (over 200 miles), we determined that a more focused effort was needed to tackle the most essential trail corridors first.

This past fall, the Board of County Commissioners and the Larimer County Open Lands Advisory Board participated in a trail prioritization. From this exercise, the eight highest priority trails were identified:

1. Lower Poudre River Trail
2. Red-tail Ridge Trail
3. Boxelder Creek Trail
4. Lower Big Thompson River Trail
5. Lonetree Trail
6. Berthoud Trail
7. Duck Lake Trail
8. Long View Trail

The results of the trail prioritization will be used by Larimer County as a guide in pursuing the most important regional trail opportunities at this time and will

provide a more focused approach in negotiating and securing trail easements, obtaining funding for trail construction, building partnerships with municipalities and adjacent counties, and designing and constructing trails. In the coming years, Larimer County anticipates the regional trail system will be expanded for the enjoyment of our citizens.



*Whether used as alternative transportation or pure recreation, regional trails connect communities, natural areas and other places of interest throughout the County.*  
Photo: Walt Hubis

## *What do you get when you combine trails and Larimer County's Small Grant's Program? A recipe for success!*

Where could you learn about cool community projects that benefit the environment and support Parks and Open Lands in Larimer County, as well as enjoy tasty food, chat with good friends and meet new folks all at the same time? At the First Annual Larimer County Small Grants Awards Ceremony and Silent Auction Fundraiser of course!

**The main ingredients:** New Belgium Brewing Company provided the food, beverages and ambiance of its quaint setting, and Larimer County brought the entertainment. Together these efforts created a fantastically fun event, attracting 125 guests for an evening of learning and outrageous bidding on nearly 100 donated auction items.

Guests learned about environmental projects in Larimer County as recipients were awarded funding from the Open Lands Small Grants Program. Projects included trail construction, weed eradication and xeriscape demonstration gardens.

A heavy helping of donated auction items was a necessity for this recipe. Items were donated from local businesses and restaurants, and also included fishing and horseback riding excursions, event tickets, and sporting equipment—just to name a few! Bidding on silent auction items continued throughout the evening. Auction proceeds totaled \$3,000 and benefited construction of the Blue Sky Trail. The trail will connect the Devil's Backbone Open Space in Loveland to Horsetooth

Reservoir and Mountain Park in Fort Collins, creating a 16-mile regional trail that will be open to hikers, bikers and horseback riders in June 2006.

**The icing on the cake!** Held in 2005 for the first time, this awards ceremony and fundraiser is now an annual event. The 2006 Small Grants Awards Ceremony and Silent Auction Fundraiser will be held on April 7 and will benefit construction of seven miles of Larimer County's portion of the Poudre River Trail, which will connect Fort Collins to Windsor. This section of trail, which will cost about \$300,000 per mile, is one of the last sections needed to complete this 45-mile regional trail project that will connect LaPorte to Greeley and beyond.

# Getting out and about in your parks and open spaces!

## Carter Lake County Park

At three miles long and about one mile wide, Carter Lake is one of northern Colorado's premier boating destinations. Located in the foothills west of Loveland, Carter Lake is a popular spot for sailing, fishing, camping, swimming, scuba diving, rock climbing, and water skiing.



## Devil's Backbone Open Space

Hike along a dramatic geologic formation and enjoy long mountain views. This unique open space, located approximately 2 miles west of Loveland on U.S. Highway 34, is popular with trail enthusiasts of all types and levels.



## Eagle's Nest Open Space

Near Livermore, this open space provides breathtaking views of the Laramie Foothills. Along the North Fork of the Cache La Poudre River you will discover the mountain mahogany foothills interspersed with rabbitbrush and ponderosa pine, which provide a diverse habitat for deer, elk, coyote, mountain lion, black bear, and small mammals.



Eagle's Nest Rock is a local landmark, as well as home to nesting golden eagles. In fact, eagles have nested here for over a hundred years!

## Flatiron Reservoir County Park

Forty-seven acres of water surrounded by 200 acres of public land make a perfect setting for your family to circle round the campfire for the evening before settling in for the night. Flatiron Reservoir, west of Loveland, also provides exceptional shoreline fishing opportunities.



## Fossil Creek Reservoir Regional Open Space

Recognized as an Important Bird Area (IBA) by the National Audubon Society, this area boasts more than 210 species of birds that frequent the reservoir. This new open space facility features over two miles of trails with bird viewing blinds and an observation deck that allow avid birders as well as families the opportunity to watch bald eagles in the winter and migrating waterfowl in the spring and fall. Located just west of the I-25/Windsor interchange, this open space is easily accessible to all!



## Horsetooth Mountain Park and Open Space

Located on the west side of Horsetooth Reservoir, this scenic 2,711-acre park and open space is the first successful land conservation effort in Larimer County. Horsetooth Rock is the outstanding feature in the park and a familiar landmark in Larimer County. Horsetooth Mountain Park offers over 29 miles of trails for hiking, mountain biking and horseback riding.



## Horsetooth Reservoir County Park

Just imagine awaking next to glistening waters as the sun begins to rise over the red rimrock. The only plans for the day are water-skiing with the wind in your hair and the sun on your face. This is what's awaiting you at Horsetooth Reservoir located in the foothills west of Fort Collins. The reservoir is 1,900 acres of water surrounded by 2,000 acres of public land making it popular for fishing, boating, swimming, water-skiing and camping.



Recreation at a glance	Acres	Vehicle Permit Required	Camping with Permit	Camper Cabins	Camping/ Cabin Reservations	Electrical Hookups	Sanitary Dump Station	Back Country Camping	Miles of Trail
Carter Lake County Park	2100		A						4 A
Devil's Backbone Open Space	2198								7
Eagle's Nest Open Space	755								5
Flatiron Reservoir County Park	247		A						
Fossil Creek Reservoir Regional Open Space	843								2 A
Glade Park County Park	3								
Horsetooth Mountain Park	2711								29
Horsetooth Reservoir County Park	3900		A						2
Pinewood Reservoir County Park	427		A						
Pleasant Valley Trail at Lions Park	20								2 A
Ramsay-Shockey Open Space	177								4 A
Rimrock Open Space	742								7

A — Meets Americans with Disabilities Act guidelines.



**Pinewood Reservoir  
County Park**

Fishing in the cool of the morning while enjoying the view of Blue Mountain are among the top reasons to visit this reservoir located west of Loveland near Carter Lake.



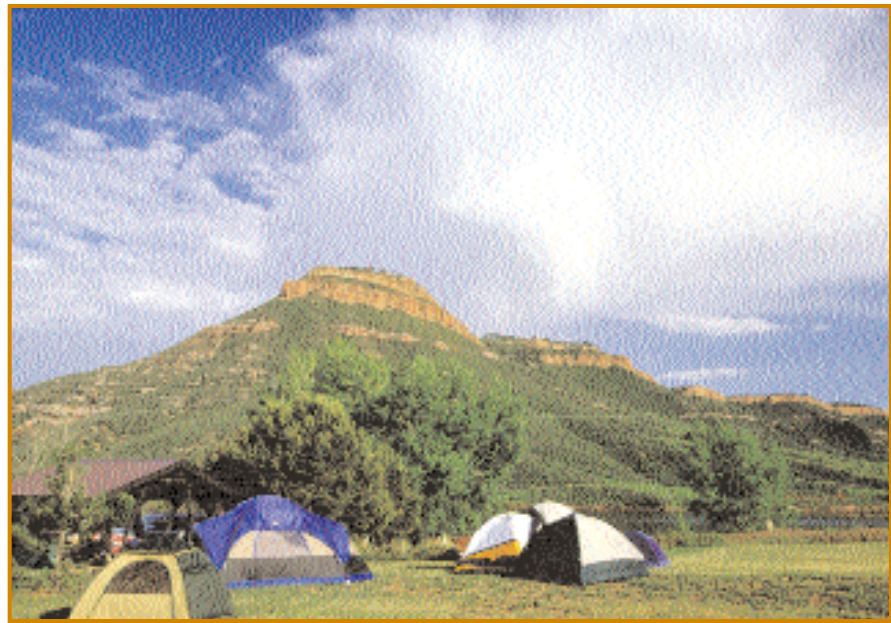
**Pleasant Valley Trail and  
Lions Park**

Bike, jog, walk or stroll on the Pleasant Valley Trail as it winds its way along the Poudre River and through the community of Laporte towards Bellvue. The trailhead at Lions Park on the Poudre River in Laporte is a perfect spot to enjoy a picnic or cast a fly in hopes of catching that elusive trout.



**Ramsay-Shockey Open Space**

Nestled against Pinewood Reservoir west of Loveland, this mountain open space features a four-mile trail system in a ponderosa pine forest that is perfect for a family outing. If you keep a sharp eye out, you will most likely see signs of deer and elk.



Relaxing around camp after a day in the sun just can't be beat! Photo: Efrain Padro

**Rimrock Open Space**

Situated in the hogbacks south of Horsetooth Reservoir, this scenic open space is accessed through Coyote Ridge Natural Area south of the Larimer County Landfill on County Road 19. Topping the hogbacks gives you expansive views of the plains to the east and high mountain peaks to the west. On any given day raptors circle overhead in search of a meal.



*Photo thumbnails:*

1. Walt Hubis
2. Sharon Veit
3. Jane M. Culler
4. Charlie Johnson
5. Charlie Johnson
6. Walt Hubis
7. James Steele
8. Charlie Johnson
9. Meegan Flenniken
10. Scott Bacon
11. Greg Good

Hiking	Horseback Riding	Mountain Biking	Leashed Dogs Allowed	Boating	Boat Ramp	Marina	Fishing	Swimming Beach	Bird Watching	Picnic Tables	Drinking Fountains	Restrooms
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**“T**hat was the best field trip this year. It taught me a lot about animals and plants. It also taught me that I should come up there more often if I am learning about earth science again.” Jaci, 4th grader at Big Thompson Elementary



Photo: Judy Swenson



Photo: Richard Snell

**“O**ne of the few places we have left to experience the non-digital world is in nature. Spending time in nature, even just viewing it, brings us a sense of peace and perspective. Parks and open lands truly define a community’s quality of life.”

Larry Kendall, former Open Lands Board member

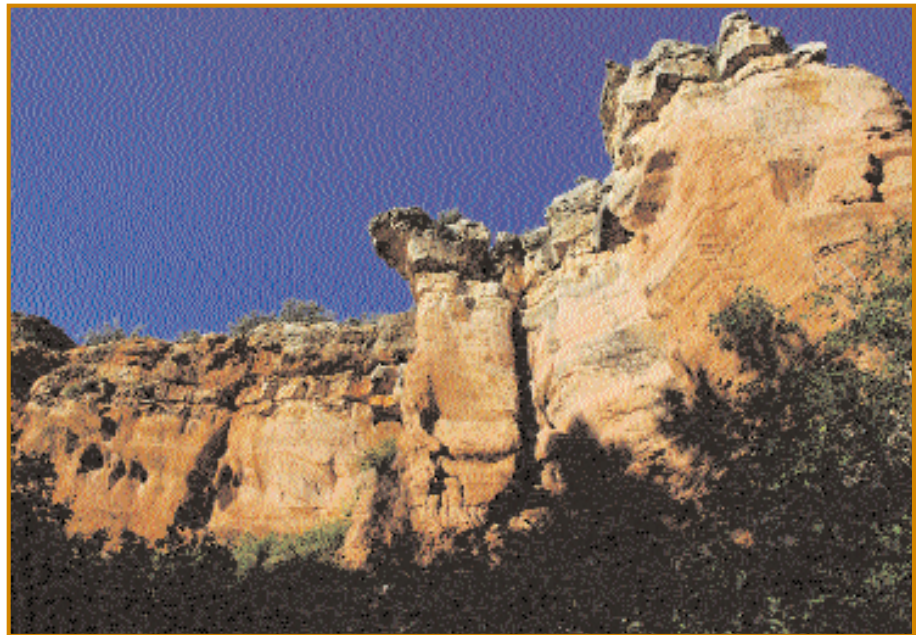


Photo: Rick Price

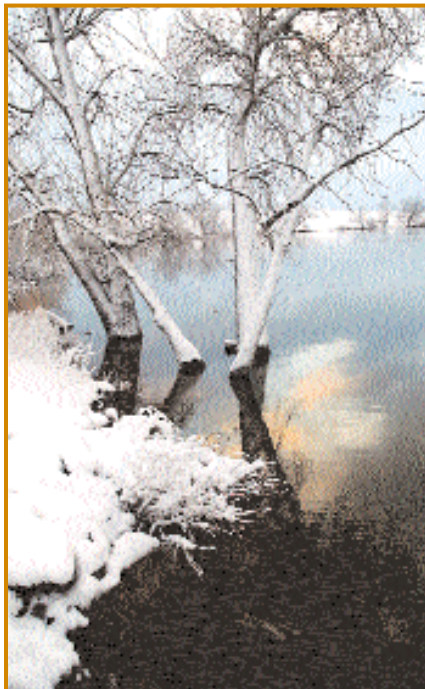


Photo: James Steele



Photo: Walt Hubis



Photo: Charlie Johnson

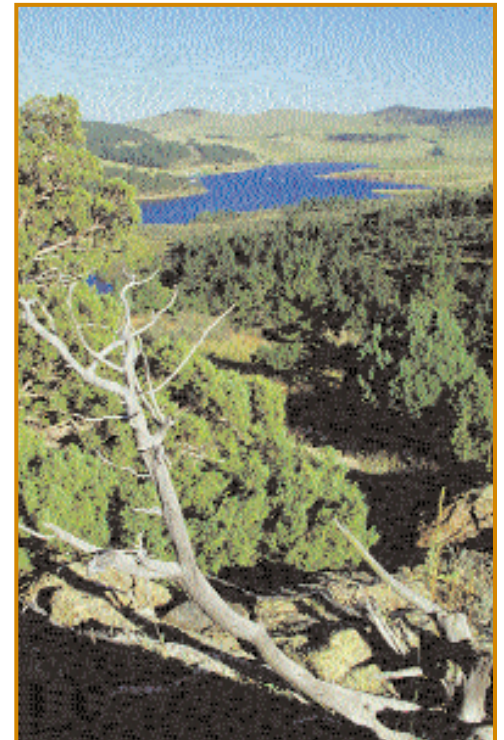


Photo: Scott Bacon

**“L**arimer County has seized the opportunity to preserve the varied parks and open spaces. As a volunteer, it is a great privilege to help residents and visitors understand these treasures they are walking on.”

Sue Pinkham, volunteer naturalist

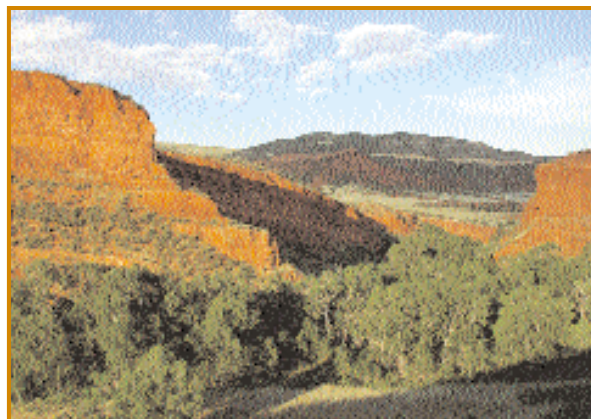


Photo: Rick Price



Photo: Charlie Johnson



Photo: Efrain Padro

**“T**hese lands are a wonderful addition to the Open Space Program and should only grow in value to the public.”

Barbara Rustein, visitor on a public tour of Red Mountain Open Space



Photo: Charlie Johnson

**“I** volunteer for the Open Lands Board because I cannot think of many contributions to my community more important than helping preserve a legacy of what our area was once like.”

Mark DeGregorio, current Open Lands Board member



Photo: Richard Snell

**“A**s the smoke from the campfire swirls into the air and the campers of all ages fall into the mood, it's so rewarding to be a storyteller.”

Katy Little, volunteer storyteller



Photo: Richard Snell



Photo: Walt Hubis



Photo: Rick Price



Photo: Walt Hubis

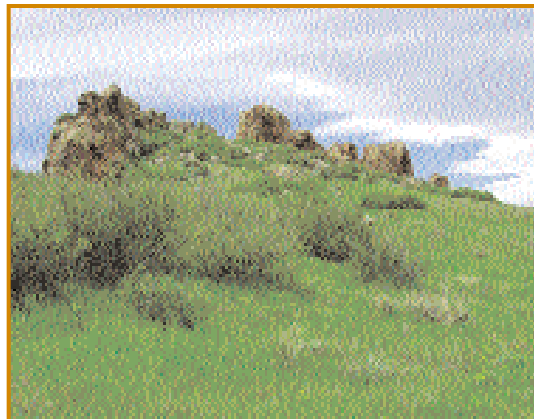


Photo: Sharon Veit

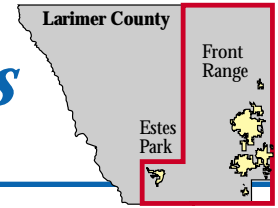
**“I** loved the hike because of all of the stuff I saw. The backbone was awesome, but I thought it looked more like a stegosaurus backbone than a devil's backbone! I ran into a yucca plant, it hurt! I really liked the Keyhole, the view was awesome. I have been on a lot of hikes but yours was the best!”

Gabe, 4th grader at B. F. Kitchen Elementary

# 2005 Acquisitions and Improvements

\*lead agency on project

CE = Conservation Easement



## Laramie Foothills

**A. Ackerman II CE.** This 320-acre parcel is a key piece of the Laramie Foothills-Mountains to Plains project. This conservation easement contributes to the effort of protecting agricultural lands, irrigated cultivation, dryland farming and grazing lands.

*Appraised Value: \$134,000*

*Partners: Landowner Donation: \$67,000*

*Larimer County Open Lands\*: \$67,000*

## Big Thompson River

**B. Sylvan Dale Addition CE III (Green Ridge).** This 11-acre donation from the City of Loveland is an addition to the Sylvan Dale Green Ridge CE. The 151-acre Green Ridge parcel abuts the existing 595-acre Sylvan Dale Legacy Lands Conservation Easement.

*Appraised Value: \$50,000*

*Partners: Landowner donation: \$50,000*

## Devil's Backbone to Horsetooth

**C. Siefke CE.** This 35-acre foothills conservation easement, donated by the Siefke family, is located in the Muley Park Subdivision, north of Devil's Backbone Open Space and just west of Rim Rock CE. This property, visible from Devil's Backbone Open Space, is comprised mostly of foothills grasslands and mountain mahogany shrublands.

*Appraised Value: \$93,000*

*Partners: Landowner Donation: \$93,000*

## Poudre River

**D. Fonken IV CE.** This 35-acre parcel is the fourth donation by the Fonken family. The 373-acre Fonken CE is just south of Poudre Park off of Hwy. 14, and includes forested hillsides bisected by three drainages.

*Appraised Value: \$100,000*

*Partners: Landowner donation: \$100,000*

## Estes Valley

**E. Cohen CE.** This 130.84-acre conservation easement's primary significance is as a viewshed protecting Rocky Mountain National Park. The Cohen CE is highly visible from Twin Sisters and Longs Peak, two popular hiking destinations in the Park.

*Appraised Value: \$1,500,000*

*Partners: Landowner donation: \$1,000,000*

*Estes Valley Land Trust\*: \$200,000*

*Great Outdoors Colorado: \$200,000*

*Boulder County: \$25,000*

*Larimer County Open Lands: \$75,000*

## Capital Improvements

**F. Horsetooth Reservoir.** Upgrades to the South Bay Campground, include new electrical camp sites, new camper cabins and a new entrance station. Vehicle parking spaces were added in the marina and boat ramp areas, and parking spaces were reconfigured to maximize use of available space.

*2005 Project Cost: \$323,620*

*Partners: US Bureau of Reclamation: \$131,085*

*Colorado Lottery: \$114,827*

**G. Carter Lake.** Improving boater's accessibility to the reservoir, two new custom-built docks were constructed.

*2005 Project Cost: \$54,486*

*Partners: US Bureau of Reclamation: \$27,243*

*Colorado Lottery: \$27,244*

**H. Flatiron Campground.** In an effort to establish Flatiron Reservoir as a four-season camping destination, electrical service was added as an amenity to the campsites.

*2005 Project Cost: \$155,971*

*Partners: US Bureau of Reclamation: \$79,456*

*Colorado Lottery: \$76,515*

**I. Eagle's Nest Open Space.** A trailhead and five miles of trail were developed on this 755-acre open space, which opened to the public in 2005.

*2005 Project Cost: \$273,506*

**J. Soderberg Open Space.** The Soderberg Trailhead, with 30 parking spaces, picnic tables, restroom, informational kiosk and the 3/4-mile Swan Johnson Trail which traverses the 114-acre open space were constructed and opened to the public.

*2005 Project Cost: \$324,473*

*Partners: American Society of Civil Engineers—*

*N. Colorado Branch: \$29,700*

*Friends of Larimer County Parks and Open Lands: \$2,210*

**K. Pleasant Valley Trail.** The Pleasant Valley Trail, designed by the Engineering Department, spans approximately two miles along the Poudre River from Lions Park to Watson Lake State Wildlife Area.

*2005 Project Cost: \$383,300*

**“W**e're an outdoor family, and it is so personally gratifying to see these lands maintained for future generations to enjoy. Being associated with the Parks and Open Lands Program is one of the best parts of my job.”

*Frank Lancaster, Larimer County Manager*

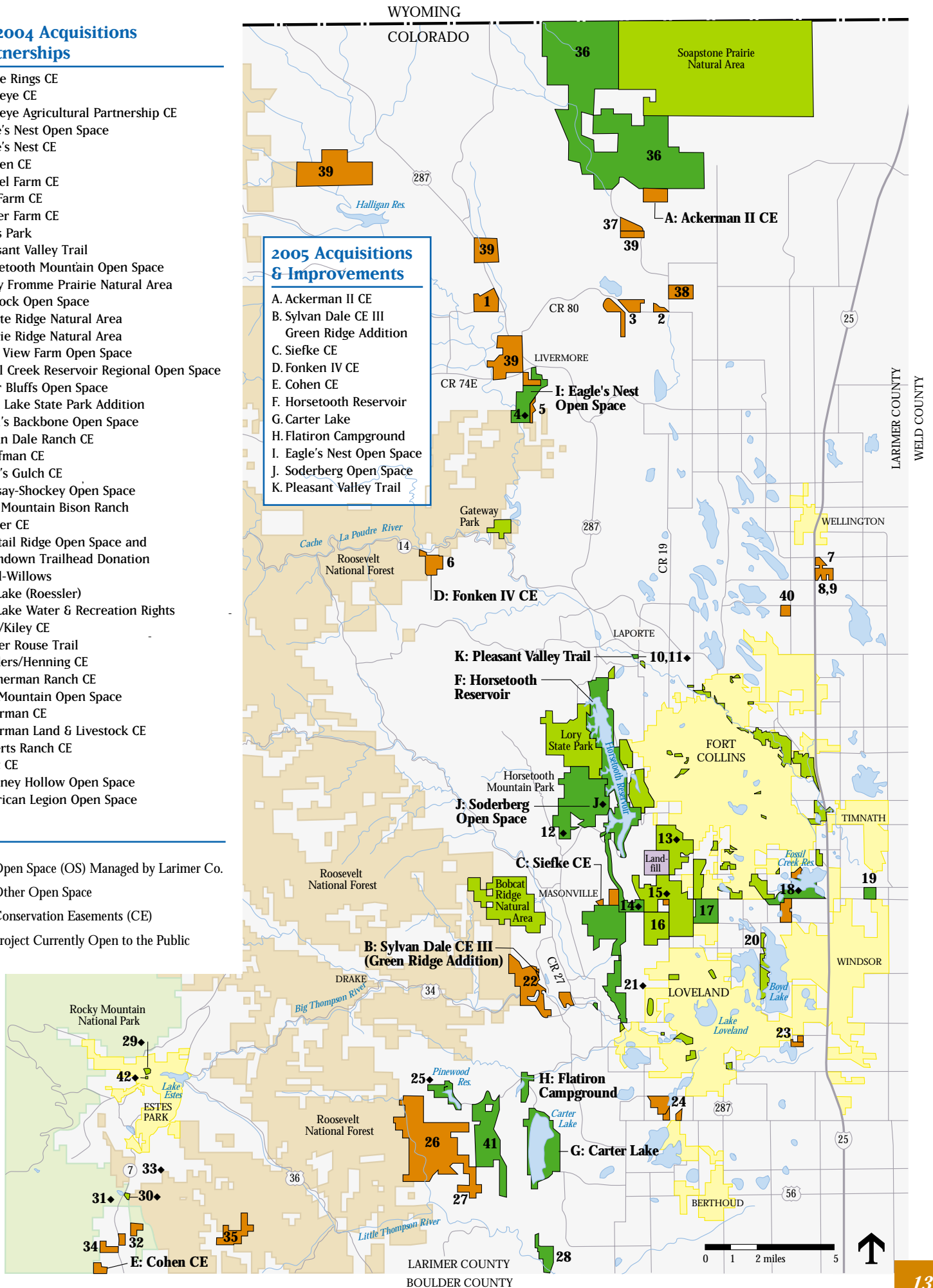
## 1996-2004 Acquisitions & Partnerships

1. Teepee Rings CE
2. Buckeye CE
3. Buckeye Agricultural Partnership CE
4. Eagle's Nest Open Space
5. Eagle's Nest CE
6. Fonken CE
7. Kerbel Farm CE
8. Bee Farm CE
9. Weber Farm CE
10. Lions Park
11. Pleasant Valley Trail
12. Horsetooth Mountain Open Space
13. Cathy Fromme Prairie Natural Area
14. Rimrock Open Space
15. Coyote Ridge Natural Area
16. Prairie Ridge Natural Area
17. Long View Farm Open Space
18. Fossil Creek Reservoir Regional Open Space
19. River Bluffs Open Space
20. Boyd Lake State Park Addition
21. Devil's Backbone Open Space
22. Sylvan Dale Ranch CE
23. Kauffman CE
24. Ryan's Gulch CE
25. Ramsay-Shockey Open Space
26. Blue Mountain Bison Ranch
27. Harper CE
28. Red-tail Ridge Open Space and Southdown Trailhead Donation
29. Knoll-Willows
30. Lily Lake (Roessler)
31. Lily Lake Water & Recreation Rights
32. Mills/Kiley CE
33. Homer Rouse Trail
34. Childers/Henning CE
35. Smitherman Ranch CE
36. Red Mountain Open Space
37. Ackerman CE
38. Ackerman Land & Livestock CE
39. Roberts Ranch CE
40. Kraft CE
41. Chimney Hollow Open Space
42. American Legion Open Space

- Open Space (OS) Managed by Larimer Co.
- Other Open Space
- Conservation Easements (CE)
- Project Currently Open to the Public

### 2005 Acquisitions & Improvements

- A. Ackerman II CE
- B. Sylvan Dale CE III  
Green Ridge Addition
- C. Siefke CE
- D. Fonken IV CE
- E. Cohen CE
- F. Horsetooth Reservoir
- G. Carter Lake
- H. Flatiron Campground
- I. Eagle's Nest Open Space
- J. Soderberg Open Space
- K. Pleasant Valley Trail



## Donations from local families make a difference in land conservation

Preserving land for the future was very important to at least five Larimer County families in 2005 and these families were able to donate or sell conservation easements at discounted prices to Larimer County. Including the \$1,310,000 in land value received in 2005, the Open Lands Program has received over \$7 million since 1996 in land donations, bargain sales and cash donations. These donations have been very important in allowing the Open Lands Program to stretch its dollars to protect more of the special places of Larimer County. If you are interested in preserving your land through donation or bargain sale or making a donation to the County's Open Lands Program and want to understand the tax advantages to these types of donations, please contact K-Lynn Cameron at (970) 679-4575.

Donation over \$1,000,000	David & Susan Jessup (1999-2005) Rob Cohen (2005)	Sylvan Dale Ranch CEs Cohen CE
\$500,000 to \$999,000	Jake Kauffman & Son, Inc. (2001) Paul Jonjak & Family (1999)	Kauffman CE Blue Mountain Bison Ranch CE
\$300,000 to \$499,000	H.A. & Elaine Fonken (2002-2005) Curt & Jennifer Heckrodt (2000) Jack & Beth White (2000) Bob Ramsay (1999)	Fonken CE I, II, III, IV Red-tail Ridge Open Space Rimrock Open Space Ramsay-Shockey Open Space
\$100,000 to \$299,000	Eldon & Trulie Ackerman (2004-2005) Catherine Roberts (2004) Royce Hopkins (2004) The American Legion (2004) Dan Miller & Mary Beth Simon (2002-2003) Patricia Block (2002) Larry & Anne Peterson (2002) Dave Sitzman (2001) Grace Dunkin (2001) Joe & Pat Harper (2000) Jon & Susanne Stephens (2000)	Ackerman CE I, II Roberts CE Hopkins CE American Legion Open Space Miller-Simon CE I, II Block CE Peterson CE Kerbel Farm CE Ryan Gulch CE II Harper CE Ryan Gulch CE
\$5,000 to \$99,000	Charles and Judith Siefke (2005) New Belgium Brewing (2002) Southdown, Inc (2001) Miller, Left Hand & Park Creek Ranches (2001) Robert & Ann Avis (2000) Byron & Beverly Williams (1999) Audra & Don Hughey (1998) Stephanie Steppel-White (1997)	Siefke CE Fossil Creek Reservoir Open Space Red-tail Ridge Open Space Buckeye Agricultural Partnership CE Eagle's Nest CE Fossil Creek Reservoir Open Space Horsetooth Mountain Open Space Coyote Ridge Natural Area

2005 Donations

CE = Conservation Easement

## Buckeye property owners take initiative to protect their ranches

In the rural areas of the County, it's often difficult to determine what represents a "neighborhood." It's also rare to find a group of "neighbors" who have formed a unique partnership with local preservation groups to protect their ranching lifestyle. Property owners in the Buckeye area, about 16 miles northwest of Fort Collins, have accomplished both, and in the process have established a model for cooperative action.



Grass roots efforts protect Larimer County's agricultural heritage.  
Photo: Walt Hubis

The Buckeye area has a rich history of ranching and irrigated agriculture. Ranch owners Dan Miller and Mary Beth Simon realized in the late 1990's that they needed to be proactive in protecting their livelihood and lifestyle from the potential encroachment of 35-acre subdivisions. The couple began to educate themselves about the conservation tools available, and about the local entities who might assist them. Since that time they have enlisted neighboring property owners and family members in a true grass-roots movement which has protected almost 1,000 acres. Larimer County has been fortunate to play a role in this on-going project.

In the fall of 2005, an auction was held to dispose of considerable

land owned by Holcim Inc., including 283 acres in the Buckeye neighborhood. These acres were acquired at auction by Dan Miller, Mary Beth Simon, Bryant and Patty Miller, and Catherine Roberts. At the request of the Buckeye group, Larimer County agreed to provide \$25,000 in financial assistance, plus \$6,000 in transaction costs. A conservation easement will be placed on the property (along with an additional 37 acres on Chuck Miller's ranch), resulting in the protection of 320 acres. It is expected that tax credits will again be utilized to recover some of the value donated by landowners for the conservation easement.

To those who have been involved in this experience, the Buckeye project is a perfect example of what can be achieved when the passion of landowners is coupled with the vision and resources of the Open Lands Program. It truly is a model for grassroots action by those citizens seeking to protect their land and preserve their lifestyles.

# Funding the future of conservation and recreation

Citizens of Larimer County offer financial support to the Open Lands Program through the 1/4-cent *Help Preserve Open Spaces* sales tax, which expires in 2018. In addition the Parks Program is funded by revenues generated from park entrance fees and lottery dollars. In an effort to be proactive the Open Lands Advisory Board reviewed future funding options for both programs. Options researched allow the Parks and Open Lands Department to remain financially stable while continuing to provide land protection and outdoor recreation opportunities to the citizens of the County into the future.

The *Help Preserve Open Spaces* sales tax is currently shared between Larimer County and eight county municipalities, including Fort Collins, Loveland, Estes Park, Berthoud, Wellington, Timnath, Windsor and Johnstown. Of the funds generated from the open space sales tax, 58% is split between the municipalities,

and Larimer County receives 42%. During 2005, the Open Lands Advisory Board met with these municipalities to review the financial status of the individual programs funded through the open space sales tax. The Board found that many towns are in the process of accumulating funds for large priority projects, while cities like Fort Collins and Loveland, with established programs, are actively funding land purchases or developing new properties or facilities for public access.

The goal of reviewing the future funding options from the *Help Preserve Open Spaces* sales tax is to ensure there is a financially stable structure for:

- The continuing operation and management of existing and future open lands.
- Allowing future open lands acquisitions to move forward.
- Providing a funding source to the Parks Program.



*Devil's Backbone in a winter coat. Photo: Rick Price*

- Continuing to provide a share of the sales tax funds back to the communities which primarily generate the tax.

Larimer County intends to continue providing world-class outdoor recreation opportunities and land stewardship that the citizens of the County have come to expect and appreciate. Proactive planning, such as this, will ensure that there is a stable financial map in place to accommodate these services into the future.

## Open space tax revenues benefit all of Larimer County

The 1/4-cent *Help Preserve Open Spaces* (HPOS) sales and use tax revenue is shared with the county's eight municipalities. The tax continues through 2018, and is not imposed on food. The total revenue collected to date is over \$77 million.

Distributions to municipalities are based upon the highest yield of either population or sales tax generation. This revenue sharing agreement ensures that residents from throughout the county receive benefits from the Open Space sales tax.



*Looking forward to the dedication of Bobcat Ridge, a Fort Collins natural area, in 2006. Photo: Pat Hayward*

### Annual Revenue Receipt of Open Space Tax Dollars\*

	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	Total
Larimer County	2,259,975	2,485,421	2,707,553	3,067,810	3,294,869	3,565,146	3,527,084	3,532,580	3,750,211	3,811,306	32,001,955
Berthoud	71,154	80,969	87,574	101,539	110,862	122,889	124,139	123,913	126,810	127,480	1,077,330
Estes Park	161,905	178,198	193,453	224,779	222,608	229,886	218,802	218,445	234,908	239,502	2,122,486
Fort Collins	2,107,473	2,319,562	2,487,606	2,850,066	3,109,001	3,323,372	3,235,748	3,205,119	3,374,671	3,417,517	29,430,134
Johnstown									9,457	8,932	18,389
Loveland	847,210	932,139	1,003,872	1,146,823	1,234,060	1,321,205	1,304,378	1,314,655	1,405,098	1,432,517	11,942,134
Timnath	4,221	4,646	5,025	5,732	5,742	5,887	5,599	7,083	11,480	11,684	67,100
Wellington	29,848	32,520	40,557	47,494	53,444	64,589	67,642	66,730	75,185	79,698	557,706
Windsor									17,416	20,115	37,531
<b>Totals</b>	<b>5,481,786</b>	<b>6,033,455</b>	<b>6,525,640</b>	<b>7,444,243</b>	<b>8,030,585</b>	<b>8,632,974</b>	<b>8,483,392</b>	<b>8,468,525</b>	<b>9,005,237</b>	<b>9,149,131</b>	<b>77,254,968</b>

\* These figures are unaudited. Audit to be completed in mid 2006. Figures in this chart have been rounded when appropriate.

# Stewardship at its best

The Larimer County Weed District, a program in the Parks and Open Lands Department, is responsible for pest management on all county-owned property and county roadside rights-of-way. This responsibility includes controlling noxious weeds and other nuisance species causing property damage or posing risk to public health or safety.

The policy of Larimer County is to control undesirable plants with a structured, logical approach to the extent economically practicable, and as needed for resource protection and enhancement, as well as the accomplishment of resource management objectives and the protection of human health.

When controlling invasive species the District strives to achieve the following:

- Control noxious weeds and prevent their establishment and spread
- Maintain compliance with federal, state, and local noxious weed laws
- Eliminate competition of undesirable plants with native and/or planted vegetation
- Protect cultural and historic resources
- Maintain diverse landscapes and populations, rare plants and plant communities
- Use an integrated approach to weed control, including preventive, biological, chemical, physical (mechanical and manual), and cultural (environmental manipulation) techniques

Another main function of the District is to enforce the Colorado Noxious Weed Control Act through extensive landowner contact and motivation. The District also provides the citizens of Larimer County with several programs such as cost-sharing on weed management, sprayers for loan, and educational programs on vegetation and integrated pest management.

Additionally, the District maintains partnerships and weed management agreements with several land management agencies in the region including the Division of Wildlife, State Land Board, Town of Estes Park, Forest Service, Bureau of Reclamation, and the Bureau of Land Management. These partnerships reflect our desire to promote sound integrated pest management across jurisdictional boundaries and promote communication and cooperation among governmental agencies at all levels.



Volunteer "Weed Warriors" working hard to eradicate noxious weeds on parks and open lands.  
Photo: Maxine Gull



*Myrtle spurge* (top) is an escaped ornamental from rock gardens and is now on road sides and in rangelands. The milky latex is poisonous causing severe skin irritations.



*Mediterranean sage* (left) is an aggressive escaped ornamental in the mint family. The leaves are woolly and strongly aromatic. It is found in the southeastern part of Larimer County.  
Photos: Colorado Department of Agriculture



# Mobilizing communities to volunteer

"Get Outside" is the slogan used to motivate citizens engaging them to become a part of the Volunteer Program, actively caring for their parks and open lands. Over 2,300 volunteers contributed more than 30,600 hours in 2005 through participation in 33 different events. Volunteers kicked off the season by planting 100 trees and shrubs at Horsetooth Reservoir. They spent countless hours assisting visitors at the reservoirs and in the campgrounds during the summer. They helped monitor conservation easements, counted prairie dogs, trimmed trees in heavy forested areas, removed firewood, constructed a group shelter and sand volleyball court, patrolled trails, worked in the office, designed newsletters and brochures, and entered mounds of data into the computer. They took scenic and recreation photos, helped plan and staff special events and attacked noxious weeds. No task is too menial for this dedicated group who for

willingly picked up debris found on trails, in campgrounds and along the shorelines.

Volunteers also helped maintain trails through the Adopt-a-Trail Program. They devoted themselves to 33 trail work days this year performing basic trail maintenance on 13 of 19 trails needing work. This effort was accomplished by 12 different community groups. Many of these groups adopt the same trail year after year. They also assisted with the construction of the new Blue Sky Trail.

In summary, the total hours contributed by volunteers to the department in 2005 would be the same amount of hours provided by approximately 15 full time staff members. The added value they bring in dollars would amount to over a half of a million dollars each year.

Hats off to these unsung heroes.



*Trees for the land and smiles for our volunteers—a winning combination! Photo: Rick Price*

*“I can't imagine a more enjoyable and rewarding way of spending time in our beautiful area: walking/hiking/keeping it clean and being thanked for it.”*

*Claudine Szwaja, volunteer trash collector*

## A day in the life of a volunteer naturalist

Each and every endeavor that we carry out in Parks and Open Lands stimulates all of our senses simultaneously. Even though we may be walking the same trail, experiencing the same guided hike, hearing the same talk, smelling the same flowers, looking for the same animals, we will take away with us a perspective that no one else on the planet can share. That's part of why people find time spent in nature is so satisfying. Because we each interact with the environment in ways that are unique, our experiences are very, very personal. Enhancing these experiences for our visitors is a strength of our education programs and the volunteers that staff them.

It is difficult to know how to answer people who ask what our Naturalists do. Typically—well, there is no typically! We have naturalists that rise with the sun to catch the sights and sounds of the day as it's born, clean and crisp with the promise of fresh starts and second chances that a new day brings. A symphony of bird songs

greet them as they arrive on site. Some volunteers make and record observations we need for accurate resource inventories. Others lead morning nature hikes to awaken awareness and inspire stewardship in a public that is eager to learn more about the world around them. Still others, our "night owls," prefer to explore the mystique of starry skies, sometimes without the aid of moonlight. A few delve into the endless intrigue of things that "go bump in the night," while others prefer to tell stories around a campfire to campers relaxing after a day of fun in the sun.

So you see, there is no typical day for our volunteers. Each person connects with the environment in different ways and so too their differing experiences help us connect to a varied public in ways that are unique and special. We always have room for more! Help us reach out to our visitors in new ways. Give me a call so we can explore your special interest areas.

Ann Montoya 970-679-4561.



*Photo: Rick Price*

*“In the beginning I thought I was volunteering to make a difference in the lives of others, but I have found that they are making a big difference in MY life.”*

*Lisa Coalwell, volunteer naturalist and office assistant*

# This is for the birds!

One of the state's unique bird habitats is right here in Larimer County. Fossil Creek Reservoir Regional Open Space was created through a partnership with the City of Fort Collins and Northern Poudre Irrigation Company, preserving 843 acres along the shores of Fossil Creek Reservoir. The reservoir plays host to a variety of waterfowl, raptors and songbirds throughout the year. Birds migrating through the region use the Rocky Mountains as a landmark on their journeys to and from their northern and southern destinations. The reservoir attracts as many as 210 different species of birds every year. Since the reservoir was preserved by Larimer County and its partners as a bird sanctuary in 2004, it has become a perfect location to celebrate and educate people about our feathered friends.

The First Annual Northern Colorado Birding Fair was an opportunity to not only display

our open space to the public, but to also have an entertaining and educational event highlighting the residents of the reservoir. Larimer County partnered with other government and non-profit organizations, as well as local private businesses, to sponsor the fair. The estimated 800 people that attended the event were treated to a variety of educational hands-on activities, informational booths, bird walks and presentations by local professionals.

This event was the first ever of its kind in Northern Colorado and proved to be a great example of how government, private, and non-profit organizations can join forces to create a fun and educating experience for the public. Because of the fair's success, plans have already begun for the 2nd Annual Northern Colorado Birding Fair. Mark your calendars now and plan to attend on Saturday, September 23, 2006. We hope to see you there!



Scouts having fun learning about birds at Fossil Creek Reservoir. Photo: Rick Price

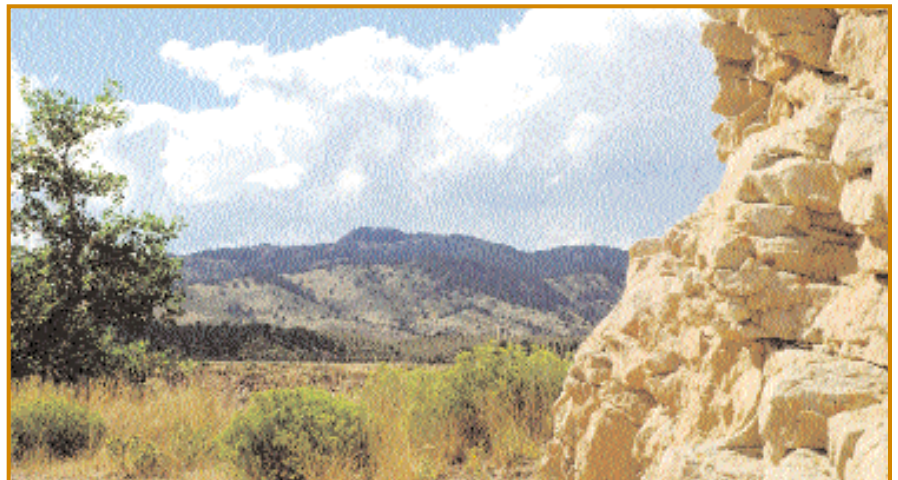
## Preserving an icon

In the early 1980's, Horsetooth Rock, a Larimer County icon, and the Soderberg Ranch came under the threat of development. In response, Colorado State University students circulated a petition to purchase the lands for a park by extending an existing one-cent sales tax for six months. The initiative passed and in 1982 Horsetooth Mountain Park was established.

The original management plan for the park was drafted in 1982, and updated in 1998 to serve as a tool for resource protection and recreation management of the area. The plan is currently being updated to improve visitor experiences and protect sensitive resource areas and can be viewed at: [www.larimer.org/parks/html\\_plan/](http://www.larimer.org/parks/html_plan/)

Highlights from the management plan update include the following proposals:

- The County Rd. 38E trailhead will be redesigned.
- The Nomad Trail may potentially be closed to minimize disturbance to rare butterflies.



Horsetooth Rock, a familiar landmark, is a popular destination for hikers, bikers, and horseback riders. Photo: James Steele

- Shoreline Trail, a social trail, will be formally recognized.
- Horsetooth Rock Trail will become a hiking-only trail. Both the Service Road and Audra Culver trails will remain multi-use.
- Horsetooth Falls Trail will become a hiking-only trail and, if feasible, realigned outside of the riparian area along Spring Creek.

- Management zones have been defined for the park to define appropriate levels of visitor use and facilities.
- Backcountry campsites will be designated.

The updated plan will map a course to preserve this icon for the next decade. Whether you were one of the over 122,000 people who visited the park in 2005 or you just admire its beauty from a distance, rest assured, these lands will continue to be protected and enjoyed.

# Inventory of Open Lands Acquisitions

Name	Acreage	Acquisition Cost	Larimer Co. Open Lands	Donation/Bargain Sale	Partnerships	Public Access	Comments
<b>Laramie Foothills</b>							
Red Mountain Open Space	13,448	9,700,800	1,846,400	—	GOCO 7,854,400	Yes, 2010	Fort Collins hold GOCO CE
Eagle's Nest Open Space	755/72	2,054,500	1,360,000	54,500	2 Partners 640,000	Yes, 2005	LLT holds restrictive covenants
Tepee Rings CE	*504	170,000	69,000	100,000	LLT 1,000	No	Managed by LLT
Roberts Ranch CE	*4960	3,000,000	200,000	109,000	3 Partners 2,691,000	No	Monitored by TNC
Ackerman I & II CE	*566.5	504,000	230,456	167,000	NRCS/FRPP 106,544	No	
Ackerman Land & Livestock Co. I CE	*318	430,000	260,318	—	NRCS/FRPP 169,682	No	
<b>Buckeye/Waverly Ag Lands</b>							
Buckeye CE	*494	203,753	28,000	5,900	TNC & LLT 169,853	No	Monitored by LLT
Buckeye CE 3 & 4	*70	190,000	60,000	130,000	TNC & LLT —	No	
<b>Wellington Ag Lands</b>							
Kerbel Farm CE	*83	376,778	98,749	179,280	Fort Collins 98,749	No	
Bee Farm CE	*139	365,302	182,651	—	Fort Collins 182,651	No	
Weber Farm CE	*69.1	198,138	99,069	—	Fort Collins 99,069	No	
Kraft Farm CE	*130	460,000	460,000	—	— —	No	
<b>Poudre River</b>							
Fonken CE Phase I, II, III & IV	*210	550,000	0	550,000	— —	No	4 of 10 CE donations complete
Lions Park	20	0	0	—	— —	Yes	
River Bluffs Open Space	161	1,920,000	720,000	—	GOCO 1,200,000	Future trail	Greeley holds GOCO CE
<b>Fort Collins/Loveland Separator</b>							
Long View Farm Open Space	599.4	3,027,000	1,594,500	—	3 Partners 1,432,499	Future trail	Leased for dryland farming
Cathy Fromme Prairie Natural Area	240	1,000,000	180,000	—	2 Partners 820,000	Yes	Managed by Fort Collins
Prairie Ridge Natural Area	792	3,139,000	437,881	—	3 Partners 2,701,119	Future trail	Monitored by LLT & Lar. Co.
Fossil Creek Regional Open Space	843.5	7,988,750	3,744,550	19,650	Fort Collins 4,224,550	Yes	
Coyote Ridge Natural Area	839.3	1,885,499	523,583	21,500	Fort Collins 1,340,416	Yes	Managed by Fort Collins
Boyd Lake State Park Addition	30	405,000	90,000	—	5 partners 315,000	Yes	Managed as Boyd Lake SP
<b>Devil's Backbone to Horsetooth</b>							
Rimrock Open Space	472/*274	2,362,240	2,262,240	—	Fort Collins 100,000	Yes	
Soderberg Open Space (HTMP)	114	460,000	460,000	—	— —	Future	Managed as part of HTMP
Devil's Backbone Open Space	2197/*46.4	9,458,020	2,581,920	93,000	4 Partners 6,783,100	Yes	
Hughey Open Space (HTMP)	282	310,000	129,000	31,000	GOCO 150,000	Yes	Managed as part of HTMP
Culver Open Space (HTMP)	287.9	1,500,000	975,000	—	2 Partners 525,000	Potential	Fort Collins holds GOCO CE
<b>Big Thompson River</b>							
Sylvan Dale CE	*1172	2,622,616	922,436	1,325,240	2 Partners 375,000	Possible trail	
Block CE	*35	200,000	100,000	100,000	— —	No	
Kauffman CE	*73.6	800,000	0	800,000	— —	Possible trail	
<b>Berthoud/Loveland Separator</b>							
Ryan's Gulch CE	*438	2,027,844	290,900	381,000	4 Partners 1,355,944	Future trail	Monitored by Loveland
<b>Blue Mountain</b>							
Ramsay-Shockey Open Space	177	325,000	0	325,000	— —	Yes	
Blue Mountain Bison Ranch CE	*4100	2,666,000	1,350,000	666,000	GOCO 650,000	Guided tours	Co-monitored by LC and LLT
Chimney Hollow Open Space	1,847	3,842,000	2,892,000	—	GOCO 950,000	2010	Loveland holds GOCO CE
Harper CE	*240	295,000	0	295,000	— —	No	Monitored by LLT
<b>Little Thompson River</b>							
Red-tail Ridge Open Space	320	951,559	286,500	—	4 Partners 665,000	Future trail	Monitored by LLT
Red-tail Ridge Trailhead/Trail	**15.1	43,699	0	43,699	— —	Future trail	Monitored by LLT
<b>Estes Valley</b>							
Childers/Henning CE	*160	800,000	0	752,000	Private 48,000	No	Monitored by EVLT
Smitherman Ranch CE	*520	520,000	130,000	—	2 Partners 390,000	No	Monitored by EVLT
Homer Rouse Memorial Trail	1.5 miles	40,000	10,000	—	Estes Park 30,000	Yes	Managed by EVRPD
Lakes Estes Trail	4 mi. (ph.III)	232,500	100,000	—	4 Partners 132,500	Yes	Managed by EVRPD
Lion Gulch Trailhead	—	21,521	10,000	—	USFS 11,521	Yes	Managed by USFS
Lily Lake/Roessler	18.2	400,000	40,000	—	3 Partners 360,000	No	Managed by RMNP
Lily Lake Water & Rec. Rights	14 ac.ft.	551,000	45,000	236,000	6 Partners 270,000	Yes	Managed by RMNP
Mills/Kiley CE	*192	335,000	45,000	—	2 Partners 290,000	Homestead	Monitored by EVLT
Knoll-Willows Open Space	20.5	345,000	55,000	—	2 Partners 290,000	Yes	Monitored by EVLT
American Legion Open Space	1.6	200,000	25,000	125,000	2 Partners 50,000	Limited	Monitored by EVLT
Cohen CE	131	1,500,000	100,000	1,000,000	2 Partners 400,000	No	Monitored by EVLT
<b>Fee Simple Acreage Total</b>	<b>23,596</b>						
<b>CE Acreage Total</b>	<b>14,867</b>						
<b>Fee Simple &amp; CE Acreage Total</b>	<b>38,463</b>	<b>\$70,377,519</b>	<b>\$24,995,153</b>	<b>\$7,509,769</b>		<b>\$37,872,597</b>	

Properties managed or monitored by Larimer County Parks & Open Lands

EVLT Estes Valley Land Trust  
 EVRPD Estes Valley Recreation & Park Dist.  
 GOCO Great Outdoors Colorado  
 HTMP Horsetooth Mountain Park  
 LLT Legacy Land Trust  
 RMNP Rocky Mountain National Park  
 TNC The Nature Conservancy  
 USFS U.S. Forest Service

\* Conservation Easement  
 \*\* Trail Easement

# Larimer County Open Lands Program—celebrating ten years of success

Thanks to Larimer County citizens, there is a dedicated revenue stream to protect the special places of our county. And we want you to know Larimer County is dedicated to being a good steward of those public resources—your tax dollars and your open spaces.

Since the inception of the *Help Preserve Open Spaces* sales tax 10 years ago, Larimer County made it a priority to be accountable to you. We leverage your sales tax dollars whenever, and wherever possible. We negotiate donations that make financial sense to willing landowners and Larimer County; we develop beneficial financial deals with our partners; and we structure compelling grant proposals to Great Outdoors Colorado. We are proud to report that since 1996 for every tax dollar Larimer County spends, that dollar is leveraged with \$1.76 in grants, donations or partnerships!

Landowners have also been generous in the past 10 years donating over \$7 million in land value. This equates to more than 25¢ donated for every tax dollar spent for open space. Clearly, landowners in Larimer County are serious about preserving their lands.

We can appreciate and enjoy the protected beauties of Larimer County because you are willing to dig into your pockets to compensate the families who have been the stewards of these lands over the years. This is truly a community effort, thanks to Larimer County's citizens and land owners.



K-Lynn Cameron  
Open Lands Program Manager

**“The Open Lands Program is the best investment in all of Larimer County. Its very existence enhances the quality of life for all of Larimer County. Happy 10th Birthday to the Open Lands Program and all who have made this possible.”**

Karen Wagner,  
County Commissioner District 2



Over the past 10 years, the Open Lands Advisory Board and staff have been instrumental in the success of this popular program. Photo: Charlie Johnson

**“Vistas, open spaces, special places to recharge my soul—these are priceless jewels in my life; volunteering my time and experience to help preserve such places in Larimer County pays back to me and to my grandchildren.”**

Bob Streeter, Open Lands Board member

A special thanks to our Open Lands Board Members: Peter Kast, Chair, Jean Carpenter, Lori Jeffrey-Clark, Mark DeGregorio, Brian Hayes, Ben Manvel, Bill Newman, Duane Pond, Sue Sparling, Bob Streeter, Ted Swanson and Jim White.

From the Chair of the  
Open Lands Advisory Board  
**Ten years and counting...**

It is hard to believe, but the Open Lands Program is 10 years old! My how time flies, and what a list of accomplishments we have to celebrate. Thanks to the efforts of K-Lynn Cameron, staff members, and many dedicated board members who have served, the intent of the voters who passed the open space tax 10 years ago has resulted in a remarkable list of achievements!

- Since 1996, Larimer County and its partners have protected 23,596 acres fee simple and 14,867 acres with conservation easements for a total of 38,463 acres. Some of these open spaces include Devil's Backbone, Fossil Creek Reservoir, Eagle's Nest, and Red Mountain Open Spaces while conservation easements include Blue Mountain Bison Ranch, Sylvan Dale Ranch, Bee Farm, and Fonken to name a few...
- The program was awarded over \$16 million in grant funding to protect open space, wildlife habitat and develop outdoor recreation facilities...
- More than 25 miles of trail have been constructed for you to enjoy...
- And to make all of this happen in the best way possible, we have partnered with willing landowners, government agencies and land trusts for many land acquisitions, facility developments and on-going resource and recreation management activities.

Wow! As we turn to the next 10 years, plenty of work still remains. And through the continued efforts of everyone involved, we will see even more progress.

I wonder what the next 10 years will bring? I do know it will be exciting, challenging and rewarding! Stay tuned...



Peter C. Kast  
Chair, Open Lands Advisory Board



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