



## PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

Civic Center • 500 East Third Street, Suite 200 • Loveland, Colorado 80537  
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[www.cityofloveland.org](http://www.cityofloveland.org)

### LOVELAND OPEN LANDS ADVISORY COMMISSION

JANUARY 13, 2016 – 5:30 PM

#### SPECIAL MEETING AGENDA

The Lake Club, Centerra

4555 Long Pine Lake Drive, Loveland, CO 80538

**4:45pm – Commission Members are invited to tour the High Plains Environmental Center Operations**

Notice of Meeting Posted

Call to Order

Public Comment

Approval of Meeting Minutes (November 18, 2015)

City Council Liaison Report – Hugh McKean

Larimer Co. Open Lands Advisory Bd Rpt – Kerri Rollins/Hugh McKean [OLAB Agenda/Minutes](#)

**5:30-6:15pm Guest Presentation:** High Plains Environmental Center, Board of Directors

**6:15-6:45pm Reports/Correspondence:**

1. Open Lands Project Report (*attached*)
2. Property Acquisition Updates (*verbal*)
3. Open Lands and Trails Division Reorganization (*attached*)

**6:45-7:15pm Discussion/Action Items:**

4. Election of Officers
5. Property Naming – Wenninger/Black Properties (*attached*)

**7:15-8:00pm Executive Session:** Property Priorities Discussion

**Reminders/Events:**

Jan. 21 – [PEEPs Program](#) “This Old Log House,” 9:30 & 11 am at Loveland Library, 300 N. Adams

Jan. 23 – [Guided Walk at River's Edge Natural Area](#), 10 am at River's Edge, 960 W. 1<sup>st</sup> St.

**Commission Member Discussion Topics**

**Adjournment**

**Next Regular Meeting:** February 10, 2016

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### CITY OF LOVELAND OPEN LANDS ADVISORY COMMISSION

Special Meeting Minutes – November 18, 2015

Chilson Recreation/Senior Center, 700 E. Fourth St., Loveland, CO 80537

**Commissioners Present:** Rick Brent, Gale Bernhardt, Andy Hawbaker, Ross Livingston, Jim Roode, Jean Whittaker, Bill Zawacki.

**Commissioners Absent:** Darren Pape, Nathan Thompson, Hugh McKean (City Council Liaison), Kerri Rollins (Larimer County Liaison).

**Staff Present:** Debbie Eley, Brian Hayes, Marilyn Hilgenberg, Michele Van Hare.

**The public meeting was called to order at 8:00 pm.**

**Approval of October 14, 2015 Meeting Minutes:** Gale Bernhardt made a motion to approve the minutes as written; Jim Roode seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously as written.

**Larimer County Open Lands Advisory Board Report.** Commission members participated in the Annual Northern Colorado Regional Open Space Meeting prior to the commission meeting. Highlight reports from each agency were presented, and breakout session topics included collaboration, communication, and 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary open space celebration ideas.

#### Reports/Correspondence:

##### 1. Open Lands Projects Report.

Wenninger/Black Property. A public naming contest will be held to name this new natural area. Fencing, gates and signage will be installed to identify property boundaries.

River's Edge Natural Area. Signs and kiosks are being installed throughout the property. Volunteer trail hosts continue to monitor use and educate the public about the site. The Swisher property cleanup is complete and the final environmental inspection revealed no issues. The site will be graded and access will be planned to connect with existing trails.

Ward Trust Property. The Ward Trust acquisition will be recommended for full funding (\$500,000) at the GOCO Open Space committee meeting on November 17. The GOCO Board will make final decisions at their Dec. 12 meeting. Closing is planned for late 2016.

Sunset Vista. Environmental and cultural surveys are underway for the Long View Trail.

Conservation Easement Monitoring. All conservation easements have been monitored for 2015. Notable weed populations were documented on several sites, similar to many areas this year resulting from excessive precipitation and previous flooding.

Morey Restoration. Planning for the ecological restoration of the previous pond area includes wetland and riparian habitats.

Environmental Education and Public Outreach. Staff and volunteers have been busy with PEEPs programs, the Halloween Festival at the Museum, and planning, collaborating, recruiting and training. Six new interpretive panels will be installed at River's Edge this fall, providing information about wildlife, habitats, flooding, and history of the site.

**2. Acquisitions Update.** A purchase and sale agreement for the Ryan's Gulch property has been completed. Larimer County and Berthoud have committed to partnering, and a GOCO large-scale open space grant will be pursued. Staff continues to research the Pfeiff property acquisition, discussing water issues with city and state officials and acquisition options with the owner.

**Executive Session:**

The regular session was suspended and Executive Session convened at 8:10 pm. The Executive Session ended and regular session reconvened at 9:05 pm.

**Reminders/Events:**

Nov. 19 – [PEEPs](#), 9:30 & 11 am at Loveland Library, “Yip, Yap & Yowl with Clan Coyote”

Nov. 20 – Volunteer Appreciation Lunch, 11 am at Loveland Library

Nov. 21 – [Guided Natural Area Bird Walk](#), 8-10 am at River's Edge Natural Area

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 pm.



## **LOVELAND OPEN LANDS ADVISORY COMMISSION**

**AGENDA ITEM: 1**

**MEETING DATE:** January 13, 2016

**DESCRIPTION:** Open Lands Project Report

### **SUMMARY:**

Quick Win Projects/Property Management. Oxbow Natural Area is now open, with improvements recently completed including a soft-surface trail, fencing, and gates. Trail restoration at Morey Wildlife Reserve is about 50% complete, with removal of the “emergency road” underway. Winter weather and muddy conditions have slowed progress there recently. Fencing and signage have been installed at the Wenninger and Black properties, noting the closed status of the site. The soft-surface trails at Mariana Butte are partially complete, with the loop expected to be finished in the spring.

Christmas Bird Count. Members of the Foothills Audubon Club and other local birders completed a successful Christmas Bird Count on Dec. 31-Jan. 1. As in past years, the Loveland count included a thorough survey of public access sites as well as Open Lands closed to the public. Overall bird numbers were down this year, likely due to very cold weather recently and fewer geese in the area. Volunteers will continue to survey sites year-round, providing valuable information for site management purposes and leading guided bird walks for the public.

River’s Edge Natural Area. Installation of sign kiosks is nearly complete. The Swisher property is being graded and incorporated into the site. The Mineral addition trail and bridge are being designed for installation this spring. Recent public use has included cross-country skiing on trails when conditions permit. Volunteer trail hosts continue to monitor use and educate the public about site rules, including encouraging dog walkers to keep dogs on leash. Staff is considering holding a River’s Edge “dog day” and possibly a ski/snowshoe demo day for the public this winter.

GOCO Grants. *Ward Trust Property.* The Ward Trust Open Space project was awarded full funding (\$500,000) at the GOCO Board meeting on December 10. Closing is planning for the end of 2016. *Youth Corps.* GOCO also awarded Loveland two weeks of Larimer County Conservation Corps saw crew time, for removal of Russian olives in Cottonwood Run Natural Area, between Taft and Wilson Ave.

Environmental Education. The numbers are in for EE in 2015. In the course of giving grade school, pre-school, and adult programs, 895 youth and 326 adults were reached with educational programming. In 2015, we initiated the Trail Host Program at River's Edge, created a new EE program for pre-schoolers, and had our first Senior tour program. For this coming spring we will offer three field trip programs (up from 1 last spring) to grade school teachers, we have set another senior's tour of open lands, and we'll be offering special "Days" at Open Lands sites for public and family experiences. We will continue to offer guided natural area walks and bird walks as well. On the planning board are the "Venture" programs, which involve getting more people to experience their open lands and natural areas; more to come as plans develop. A lot of outreach planned for 2016!



## **LOVELAND OPEN LANDS ADVISORY COMMISSION**

### **AGENDA ITEM: 3**

**MEETING DATE:** January 13, 2016

**DESCRIPTION:** Open Lands and Trails Division Reorganization

### **SUMMARY:**

**Open Lands and Trails Division Reorganization.** After the resignation of Natural Areas Manager, Rick Anderson, in April, new Parks and Recreation Director, Elizabeth Anderson, committed to the Open Lands Commission and City Manager that she would assess the long-term Open Lands Division and Departmental needs. Marilyn Hilgenberg, a 25-year veteran in the Department, served as the Interim Open Lands Manager for the remainder of 2015.

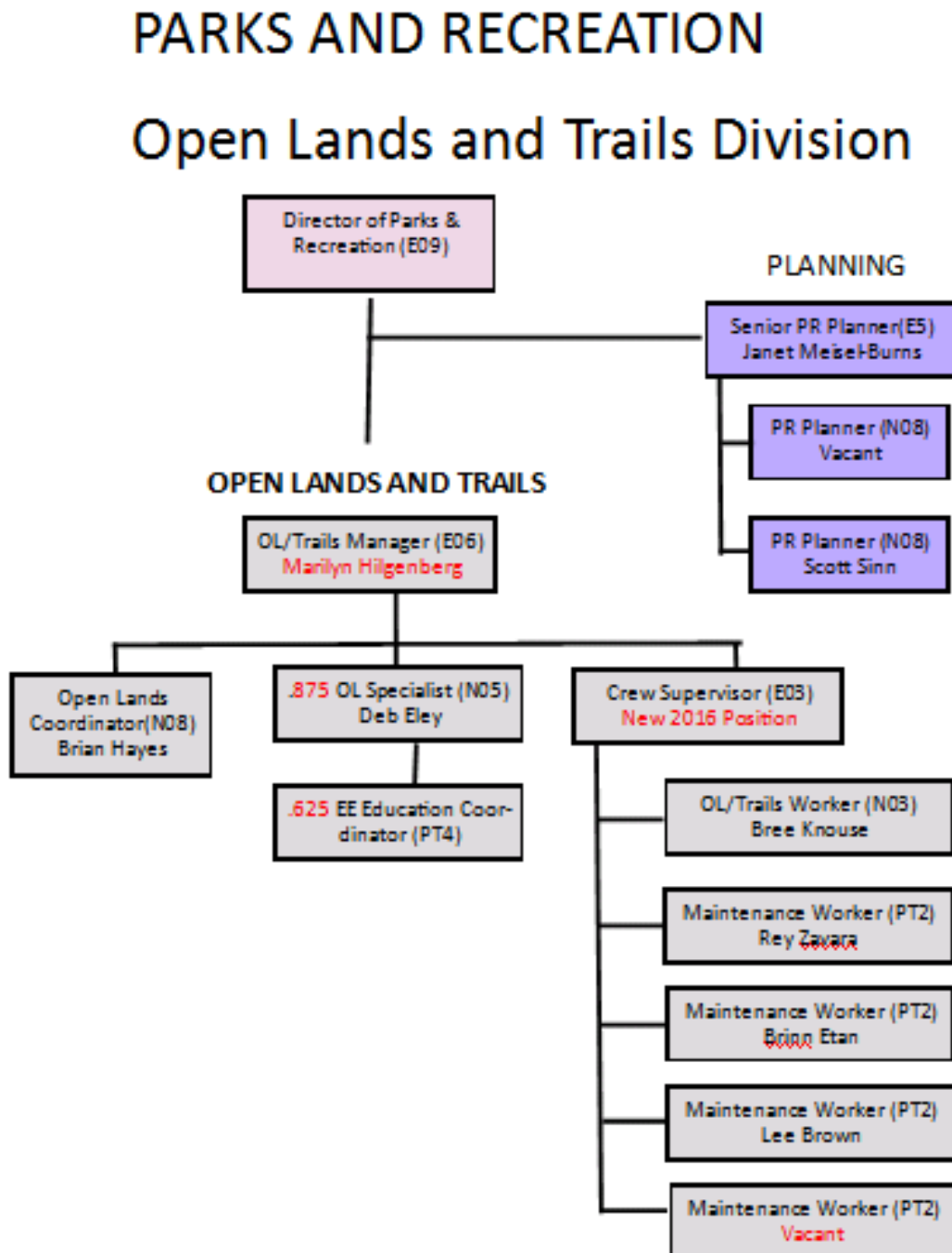
In assessing the organizational alignment of the Department, it was determined that the open lands program and recreational trail system should be managed under one division. In addition, it was determined that a field supervisor position should be hired to actively manage the development and maintenance of open lands and trails throughout the community. Thirdly, the need for additional in environmental education and community outreach was identified and budgeted for. To achieve these goals, the following realignment has been initiated for 2016:

- Marilyn Hilgenberg was promoted to the full-time Open Lands and Trails Manager
- Recruitment for an Open Lands and Trails Crew Supervisor is underway.
- Deb Eley, Open Lands Specialist, hours will be increased to 35 hours per week.
- Michele Van Hare, Environmental Education & OL Volunteer Coordinator, hours will be increased to an average of 25 hours per week.
- 0.5 FTE of additional planner time was included in the 2016 budget.

### **Budget Impact:**

There are separate designated funding sources for Loveland's Open Lands and Trails. Open Lands are funded through Loveland's share of the Larimer County Open Space Tax and Open Lands Capital Expansion Fees. Trails are funded through the Conservation Trust Funds (Lottery) from the State and the Trails Capital Expansion Fees. The cost of the new organizational structure will be proportionately allocated between the designated open land and conservation trust funds.

New Organizational Structure:



**Commission Action Recommended:** Informational.



## **LOVELAND OPEN LANDS ADVISORY COMMISSION**

### **AGENDA ITEM: 5**

**MEETING DATE:** January 13, 2016

**DESCRIPTION:** Property Naming – Wenninger/Black Properties

#### **SUMMARY:**

The Wenninger and Black properties were acquired in August 2015, totaling 155 acres of foothills habitat and offering 360-degree views of Loveland, Devil's Backbone, and the Front Range. A public naming contest was held from November-January to solicit name suggestions, resulting in 120 unique names submitted by more than 60 individuals.

In accordance with the Open Lands Naming Policy, priority consideration should be given to names that reflect the site's unique ecological features, such as plants or wildlife native to the foothills and hogback area, geological features, habitat types, or physical identifying features. Proposed names should not create confusion with existing parks, streets, or subdivisions.

The area provides important habitat for mule deer, bobcat, coyote, red and gray fox, and potentially elk, mountain lion, and black bear. Many species of small mammals also call the area home, along with prairie falcons, golden eagles and other raptors.

The following names meet the naming policy criteria and have been selected for review by the commission:

1. Falcon Ridge
2. Kestrel (Wings) Ridge
3. Hitching Post (Ridge)
4. Namaqua Vista / Ridge
5. Panoramic Ridge
6. Ridge Top
7. Rock Ridge
8. Sandstone (Cliff) Ridge
9. Sundance Ridge
10. Two Views
11. Whispering Winds