

Natural Areas Annual Report 2006



HISTORY

The Loveland Open Lands Plan was adopted in June 1996. This plan gave City staff direction to form an Open Lands Advisory Commission, which was completed in December 1996. Larimer County voters approved a citizens' initiative in 1996 to create an open space sales tax of 0.25%, which provides the majority of the funding for the Loveland program. In 1999, Larimer County voters extended this sales tax until the year 2018. Loveland adopted the 2003 Open Lands Plan in February of that year.

In 2002, open lands preservation efforts were enhanced by the City's adoption of a Capital Expansion Fee for open lands. A fee of \$662 for each new dwelling unit provides additional resources for open lands based on residential building activity.

OPEN LANDS ADVISORY COMMISSION

The Open Lands Advisory Commission is comprised of volunteers who live in or near the City and represent the City's diverse land use interests. Meetings are held on the second Wednesday of each month. Members advise staff and City Council regarding open lands issues.

Members include:

Rick Brent
Karl Cordova
Kathy Hartman, Vice Chair
Sylvia Hickenlooper
Carol Johnson
John Lewis
M. Stephen McMillan
Nancy Meredith
William Zawacki, Chair

Jan Brown, Council Alternate
K-Lynn Cameron, Larimer County Liaison
Brian Hayes, Staff Liaison
Gene Pielin, Council Liaison

MEADOWBROOK NATURAL AREA UPDATE



*Two great horned owlets near their nest
at Meadowbrook Natural Area in May*

In March 2006, Capital Pacific Holdings donated 6.77 acres of land adjacent to Meadowbrook Natural Area to the City, increasing the size of this natural area to 26.1 acres. A management plan for the property was developed by University of Colorado at Denver students in the Urban and Regional Planning Program. The plan was reviewed by City staff, the Open Lands Advisory Commission, and the Colorado Division of Wildlife. In June, an open house meeting was held at Group Publishing's headquarters adjacent to the natural area. Neighbors and other interested parties were invited to review and comment on the draft plan for the property. Suitable comments were incorporated into the plan and in August, the management plan was completed and adopted. Components of the plan that have been implemented include the installation of bike racks, trash cans and a doggie bag dispenser, and the removal of non-native Russian olive trees around the pond. Neighborhood residents and other citizens enjoy using the soft-surface trail along the Loudon Ditch, as well as the paved recreational trail through the property. The management plan is available on the city's website at:
www.cityofloveland.org/parksrec/opennatural.htm.

Volunteers Make a Difference!

Volunteers are a vital part of the Natural Areas Program. The Environmental Education program relies on adult volunteers to teach fourth and fifth grade students about Colorado wildlife, habitat, life zones, and water resources at Viestenz-Smith Mountain Park.

Volunteers also make a difference by spending time cleaning up local natural areas. The annual spring waterway cleanup on Earth Day was sponsored by the Big Thompson Watershed Forum and the City. Sixty-five volunteers cleaned up 2.75 miles of the Greeley-Loveland Irrigation Canal and Dry Creek, removing 5 tons of trash from these waterways. The Forum and the City also sponsored the 5th Annual Big Thompson River Revival in September. Approximately 200 volunteers removed 10 cubic yards of trash from the Big Thompson River between Wilson Ave and Hwy 287, as well as the Jayhawker Ponds.

Students from Front Range Community College's Exotic Species Elimination Project spent numerous hours removing Russian olive trees from Meadowbrook Natural Area and RFJY Natural Area in 2006. The volunteers cut hundreds of Russian olive trees in these natural areas and treated stumps to inhibit regrowth. Removal of these non-native invasive trees will allow native species to flourish and improve habitat for wildlife.



*Mule deer and Russian olive trees
at RFJY Natural Area*



*Students enjoy learning at Viestenz-Smith Mountain Park's
Environmental Education Center*

Environmental Education Program

In 2006, the Environmental Education program at Viestenz-Smith Mountain Park was offered to both fourth and fifth grade students in Loveland, Berthoud and Fort Collins. The program, located in the Big Thompson Canyon west of Loveland, is available in the spring and fall, and was attended by a total of 1,194 students in 2006.

The program focuses on Colorado wildlife and wildlife habitat and provides students an excellent opportunity to learn about Colorado's natural resources in a hands-on, outdoor setting. Trained volunteers guide the students through a variety of educational activities such as small-group learning stations about wildlife management and Colorado life zones, a wildlife slideshow, a nature hike and a food chain game. With a total of 331 hours logged by volunteers in 2006, it is easy to see why they are the backbone of this special program. Collectively, their donation of time allows the program to remain cost-efficient. Individually, program volunteers offer a unique teaching style and personal interest in the outdoor environment, leaving a lasting impression on many students and teachers.

Again in 2006, a student fee of \$3.00 was charged to help recover part of the program's costs. Scholarships are available on a case-by-case basis to assist students who cannot pay the fee. The City of Loveland would also welcome sponsorships from local businesses willing to help fund the program. If you are a local business and would like to sponsor this valuable program, or, if you enjoy the outdoors and would like to become a volunteer for the program, please contact Pam Unfred at 970-203-9903 or e-mail at: unfred@ci.loveland.co.us.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the City of Loveland Natural Areas Program is to identify, preserve, protect and enhance open space, natural areas and other significant lands. This ongoing process is accomplished through cooperation with and respect for private and public landowners, surrounding municipalities and counties, natural resource agencies, and other organizations with similar interests. The City is assisted in this effort by the Open Lands Advisory Commission, a citizen advisory board.

Natural Areas	Acres	Acquisition Value \$	Loveland's Funds \$	Donation \$	Partnerships	Public Access/ Management
Boyd Lake/Greeley Loveland Irr.	25	302,040	13,520		GOCO, State Parks	Yes - State Park
Boyd Lake North-Hirsch	40	554,064	277,032		State Parks	Yes - State Park
Boyd Lake South-Hirsch	42	558,570	279,285		State Parks	Yes - State Park
CTM Place	1	100,000		100,000	NA	No - Loveland
Centennial Natural Area	1	150,000		150,000	NA	No - Loveland
Devil's Backbone-Hunter	247	833,000	75,000		Larimer County, Stryker Short	Yes - County
Devil's Backbone-Wild	135	472,500	75,000		Larimer County	Yes - County
Dunkin CE	52	294,635	104,635	100,000	Larimer County, Berthoud	Future Trail - Owner
Hidden Valley 1st	42	395,765	395,765		NA	No - County
Hidden Valley 2nd	178	1,688,235	1,479,835		Larimer County	No - County
Hopkins CE	60	339,700	188,100	130,700	Larimer County	No - Owner
Lazy J Bar S CE Parcel 1	100	520,000	143,994	160,006	GOCO, Larimer County, Berthoud	No - Owner
Lazy J Bar S CE Parcel 2	191	1,112,586	678,586	100,000	GOCO, Larimer County, Berthoud	No - Owner
Lazy J Bar S CE Parcel 3	35	70,847	70,847		NA	No - Owner
Long View Farm	479	2,464,507	410,669		GOCO, Larimer Cty., Ft. Collins	Future Trail - County
Loveland Sports Park CE	37	378,981	378,981		NA	Future Trail - Owner
Meadowbrook Natural Area	19	500,000		500,000	NA	Yes - Loveland
Meadowbrook Natural Area	6	100,000		100,000	NA	Yes - Loveland
Morey Wildlife Reserve	28	762,142	54,142	533,000	GOCO Legacy	Future Trail - Loveland
Namaqua Natural Area	6	102,078	2,078		GOCO Legacy	Future Trail - Loveland
Prairie Ridge	785	3,139,836	1,892,829		GOCO, Larimer Cty., Ft. Collins	Future Trail - Loveland
Sylvan Dale Ranch	477	595,000	75,000	148,750	GOCO Legacy, Larimer County	No - Owner
Sylvan Dale Ranch-Green Ridge	140	619,980	32,600	230,000	GOCO Legacy, Larimer County	No - Owner
Sylvan Dale Ranch-Red Ridge	149	488,000	32,620	168,000	Larimer County	No - Owner
Walden West CE	31	78,000		78,000	NA	No - Owner
Waterford Place CE	10	150,000		150,000	NA	Future Trail - Owner
Totals	3,316	\$16,770,466	\$6,660,518	\$2,648,456	\$7,461,492	

Donations to the Natural Areas Program

Ken Morey
Keirns Construction
Jon & Susanne Stephens
Allied Investments
Capital Pacific
Grace Dunkin
Loveland Redit-Mix
Doug Erion
Don Marostica
Waterford Apartments
Walden West LLP

*Morey Wildlife Reserve
Meadowbrook Natural Area
Lazy J Bar S Conservation Easement
Hopkins Conservation Easement
Meadowbrook Natural Area
Dunkin Conservation Easement
Conservation Easement Breakfast
Centennial Natural Area
CTM Place
Waterford Place Conservation Easement
Walden West Conservation Easement*





City of Loveland

Natural Areas Program
500 East Third Street
Loveland, Colorado 80537
www.CityofLoveland.org



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