



“Open Space: Open to All”

September 18-20, 2017

Beaver Run Resort

620 Village Road, Breckenridge, CO 80424

SESSION DESCRIPTIONS

Monday, September 18

Session 1 - 10:30 – 11:45 a.m.

1A – Ranger Program Standards: The Call for a National Dialogue - Ken Brink, Jr., Larimer County Natural Resources. Ken’s presentation was born from a full-year of program review at Larimer County Natural Resources. This process paired with Ken’s personal experience working within Colorado’s State Parks system led him to believe that we are in need of a national dialogue about the critically important role of rangers. Ken recently presented to the Parks Law Enforcement Association and is scheduled to present to the National Association of State Parks Directors this fall. This program focusses on history, roles, branding, and what makes rangers unique and important to the future of natural resource management

1B – Volunteer Stewardship in Colorado: A Watershed Moment – Ann Baker Easley, Executive Director, Volunteers for Outdoor Colorado, and Jason Bertolacci, Project Manager, Statewide Stewardship Initiative. With Colorado’s rapidly growing population, booming recreational economy, changing climate and uncertain national political landscape, the need to care for and conserve our public lands heritage has never been greater. Join us to discuss \$1.2m dollars in new grant funding — and how local organizations and land managers can leverage the new Statewide Stewardship Initiative to promote effective volunteer engagement to steward and protect Colorado’s lands and waters. Help shape stewardship efforts for years to come.

1C – There Goes the Neighborhood! Water Quality Challenges – Anne Murphy, Town of Breckenridge Open Space; and Mark Beardsley, EcoMetrics. Cucumber Gulch, the crown jewel of the Town of Breckenridge’s open space program, is the site of an extensive preservation and wetland restoration project. Located at the base of the popular Breckenridge Ski Resort and surrounded by mountain home and resort construction, the Gulch is experiencing significant water quality challenges from increasing sediment loads. This session will review the Town’s adaptive management techniques to protect water quality and the numerous wildlife that live and breed in the Gulch.

1D – “BEING ecological” - Rob Burdine – Superintendent, City of Lafayette Open Space; and Martin Ogle, Entrepreneurial Earth LLC. This presentation will describe how Lafayette Open Space is practicing “community ecology” through an interdisciplinary/inclusive open space education program. We have provided a common ground in which we collaborate with other city, local and national entities to blend “traditional” environmental education with sustainability, natural history, human history, the arts, youth, local agriculture and more. A significant part of this collaboration involves making connections between environmental literacy and careers through work with local and national organizations, summer Youth Corps programs and various local youth outlets.



1E – (Repeated in session 7E) Investing in Colorado, Exploring Colorado’s Return on Investments in Conservation Easements: Conservation Easement Tax Credit Program and Great Outdoors Colorado, Michael Menefee, Conservation Scientist, Colorado Natural Heritage Program. The State of Colorado has invested substantial financial resources assisting state agencies, local governments, and private nonprofit land trusts in the voluntary acquisition of conservation easements from willing landowners. Two of the State’s principal efforts to incentivize the acquisition of conservation easements are the Conservation Easement Tax Credit program and Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO). Although these programs have funded acquisitions for over 22 years, there is little quantitative information about the benefits Colorado residents receive from the State’s investments. This study examines the ecological and economic benefits to the public from the Conservation Easement Tax Credit program and GOCO-funded conservation easements.

Land conservation efforts in Colorado target ecologically important areas and provide a significant economic stimulus to the State’s economy and tangible benefits to its residents. Given the perpetual nature of conservation easements, these benefits are expected to continue to accrue into the future and increase on a per-acre basis due to Colorado’s increasing population and wealth and decreasing supply of open lands. These findings suggest past and current land conservation efforts are sound economic investments benefiting current and future Colorado residents.

Come to this session to learn more about the exciting results of this study that show the citizens of Colorado reap at least \$4 for every dollar invested and enjoy the conservation benefits of hundreds of thousands of acres of conservation priorities being protected on private lands for current and future generations.

1F – Directors, Managers, & Board Members - Join your peers to discuss trends and issues that will affect land and visitor management in the near term and long term. Tom Hoby, Director of Jeffco Open Space, will seed the discussion with a short presentation covering:

- Managing visitors, and turning them in to stewards—would a comprehensive and unified approach help us all?
- Striking a balance between public access and protection—what is the carrying capacity of our lands, and visitors? How should it be determined?
- Data driven decision making—should we standardize data collection and metrics? Would this be beneficial to your organization and conservation?
- Continuous Conservation—How is your organization responding to our population growth, protecting special places, and the need for more public access?

After the presentation, we’ll break into small groups for exchange of ideas and more discussion.

Session 2 – 1:00 – 2:15 p.m.

2A – Trail Builder Roundtable - Tony Overlock, Town of Breckenridge Open Space. This session offers trail building professionals a forum to share trends in trail design and construction- including innovative tools and equipment, bike park and pump track construction, user management and trail building lore. All participants are asked to arrive to the round table with one “would you believe?” story from trail design or construction.



2B – Working with Youth Volunteers in Outdoor Stewardship – Dan Williams, Senior Projects and Trainings Manager, and Allison Bell, Families and Youth Coordinator, Volunteers for Outdoor Colorado. The session will provide participants with skills and tools that actively engage youth in the outdoors. Participants will learn about successful youth engagement, appropriate outdoor stewardship activities, motivating youth, and more. The presentation will be interactive and participants will receive take home content to fill their working with youth “tool box.”

2C – Working with Oil & Gas Operators -Chris Castilian, Executive Director of Great Outdoors Colorado. You've found that perfect open space parcel, you're ready to move forward on acquisition and then you find out the oil and gas companies are interested in the resources under "your" perfect property. Well, that kills that deal - or does it? Chris Castilian, Executive Director of Great Outdoors Colorado, brings a wealth of experience from the oil and gas industry and will help you find ways to work with the companies interested in the resources under the ground. Come with your questions and be ready to look at the oil and gas industry a little differently.

2D – Challenges and Impacts of Conservation Education in the Foothills of Mount Kenya - Bevin Carithers , Resource Protection Supervisor, Boulder County Parks and Open Space and Co-Founder of Mount Kenya Conservation Education Initiative ; Mary McCormac, Northeast Region Education Coordinator, Colorado Parks and Wildlife; Kristi Schaad, Earth Science Instructor, Legacy High School, Broomfield, CO; and Tom Moe, Program Coordinator/Co-Founder, Mount Kenya Conservation Education Initiative. During the summer of 2017, environmental educators from Colorado journeyed to a small village at the base of Mount Kenya to engage 60 young men and women in the conservation and protection of the amazing natural resource surrounding Mount Kenya National Park and UNESCO World Heritage Site. Armed with an undeniable passion for conservation, wildlife protection, and the outdoors, the volunteers set out to provide once-in-a-lifetime opportunities for Kenyan youth to experience the outdoors and discover conservation issues in their own community. Although grounded in the foothills of Mount Kenya, this powerful presentation will illustrate how environmental education, hands-on experience, and mentorship can have a dramatic impact on the lives of under severed youth in communities near and far.

2E – Diversity of Recreation Opportunities - Ericka Pilcher, Recreation and Cultural Stewardship Supervisor, Mark Gershman, Environmental Planning Supervisor, and Deryn Wagner, Environmental Planner, City of Boulder Open Space and Mountain Parks. Do you work for a public land agency with a mission to provide outdoor recreation opportunities? Recreation frameworks help managers and their partners define desired conditions for experiences, settings, and acceptable changes in resource conditions on public lands to provide a diverse range of recreational opportunities. This session includes breakout group discussions with other professionals about outdoor recreation frameworks, and your successes and challenges incorporating planning, management, and monitoring into daily business.

2F – Transcending Differences: How to Engage Underrepresented Communities – Topher Downham, Education & Outreach Coordinator; Juanita Echeverri, Interpretive Naturalist; and Casey Bries, Education & Outreach Coordinator, City of Boulder Open Space and Mountain Parks. Join City of Boulder’s Open Space & Mountain Parks to learn about three successful programs that connect



underrepresented communities to public lands. OSMP's Education & Outreach staff will share various strategies, partnerships, and tips on how to reach and engage persons with mobility impairments and memory loss, non-native English speakers, and the LGBTQ+ community. Following an overview of these three emphases, participants will break out into groups to further explore the topic of their choosing.

Session 3 - 2:30 - 3:45 p.m.

3A – Approaches to Procurement and Project Management for Your Trail Project - Jason Meyer, Project Manager, El Paso County; David Deitemeyer, City of Colorado Springs; and Greg Mazu, Single Track Trails. This panel discussion on procurement and project management will pull from previous experience and real world examples to discuss common issues that come-up in the field, and what to do minimize scope creep and change orders in your procurement process. Bring your questions, what you're currently working on, examples of what's worked, and ideas to improve the process.

3B – Young Trail Blazers – Deryn Wagner, Senior Planner and Halice Ruppi, Youth Programs Coordinator, City of Boulder Open Space and Mountain Parks; and Mara Mintzer, Growing Up Boulder Director, Community Engagement Research and Design Center (CEDaR) Center, University of Colorado Boulder. Not only are young people future stewards of open space, they are citizens in their own right now, stakeholders who deserve a seat at the table just like anyone else. In Boulder, a unique partnership helped Open Space and Mountain Parks engage young people in a recent trail planning process. Staff and partners are excited to share lessons learned and explore remaining questions with your input.

3C – Do You Know Your Outfall from a Hole in the Ground? Jesse Clark and Paul Thomas, Stream Design. Many of the best urban open spaces are associated with natural drainage-ways, and are frequently on the receiving end of man-made structures (i.e. culvert outfalls) that convey storm water. When integrating drainage infrastructure into multi-purpose stream corridors/ponds, the details can really make the “place”. This presentation will discuss the experiential and aesthetic benefits afforded by drainage infrastructure elements that have been designed to enhance the natural values of the open space -- versus those which have paid little or no attention to context.

3D – Generation Wild - Rosemary Dempsey, GOCO Director of Communications. Generation Wild is an integrated, statewide marketing campaign created by Great Outdoors Colorado to reconnect kids with nature and get them to experience the incredible benefits that are right outside the front door. It features the list of 100 things to do before you're 12. Rosemary Dempsey, GOCO's Director of Communications, will be joined by a member of the creative team from Suple Advertising to discuss research insights, concept development, production and early results. Because kids grow better outside.

3E – Empirically Understanding Visitors – Deonne VanderWoude and Colin Leslie, Human Dimensions Program, City of Boulder Open Space and Mountain Parks. Empirically understanding who visitors are, when and where they go, and the experiences they have, is essential when planning and managing for inclusivity and diversity. This workshop will introduce participants to some of the scientific theories and methods employed by OSMP to empirically quantify visitation. Specific topics will include: sample



design, survey and automated counter methodology, and analysis. Participants are invited to bring trail maps of their areas, for use during group activities and discussions.

3F – Beyond the Traditional Field Trip - Deborah Price, Education Liaison, and Jim Drew, Volunteer and Site Coordinator, Boulder County Parks & Open Space. Elementary field trips are a standard for most open space organizations, but what about middle school youth and homeschoolers? Hear how Boulder County Parks and Open Space has incorporated middle school STEM clubs and community clubs into citizen science projects, worked with older homeschool students and diverse school populations, and designed field trips especially for this age group. Engage in discussion about what other organizations are doing as well.

Session 4 – 4:00-5:15 p.m.

4A – CPW Statewide Online Trail Map – Eric Drummond, Colorado State Parks and Wildlife, GIS Analyst, Research, Policy & Planning. The Colorado Trail System (CTS) mapping project endeavors to map every trail in the state of Colorado. The effort has made tremendous progress mapping ~40,000 miles of recreational trail by curating authoritative information from over 200 agencies. The first half of the COSA presentation will provide a high level overview of the project's accomplishments and shortcomings since its 2015 inception. The second half will be a structured Q & A session designed to gather input from attendees to guide how CTS can improve engagement with local open space agencies to better keep CTS data up-to-date and authoritative.

4B – Lessons in Climbing Management – Eric Krause, Park Ranger, Christine Hartman, Natural Resources Specialist, Eric Holzman, Park Ranger, Jefferson County Open Space
Holding over 70 established climbing areas, and over 1,000 individual routes, Jefferson County Open Space sees significant rock climbing use, and all associated impacts. Over the past two years, we have undergone numerous proactive updates to the management of rock climbing for both existing and new areas. Throughout this process, we made mistakes, had successes, and learned a whole lot. We would like to pass this experience along to other organizations that may be facing similar challenges.

4C – Turning Risk into Reward: Hazard Risk Reduction – Anne Miller, Colorado Department of Local Affairs, and Anne Kuechenmeister, Michael Baker. By combining the efforts of the parks department, planning department, and elected officials, communities can develop effective strategies that both reduce risk to natural hazards and preserve open space. Session speakers will highlight several tools that leverage land use practices for hazard risk reduction with the acquisition and management of natural lands and parks, as well as spur discussion on how to communicate these multiple benefits to community members and park users.

4D – Culturally Modified Trees: Trees, Myths, Legends – Ross Williams, Park Planner, El Paso County Parks; John Anderson, JW Anderson & Associates; Dr. James Jefferson, Southern Ute Indian Tribe Elder, Southern Ute Reservation; Jimmy Arterberry, Tribal Historic Preservation Officer, Comanche Nation. Learn more about culturally modified trees (CMTs), especially in regards to their presence on public- or privately-held lands and open space. Panelists will cover tribal perspectives, public policy and



best practices, public education and outreach, and tree documentation and data collection. Presentations will be followed by Q&A with the panelists.

4E – Principles for Advancing Outdoor Recreation and Conservation – Dan Zimmerer, Statewide Partnership Coordinator, Colorado Parks & Wildlife; Representative for outdoor recreation; Representative for Colorado lands conservation. Colorado is the first state to adopt the [Principles for Advancing Outdoor Recreation and Conservation](#). These seven principles aim to guide collaboration among outdoor recreationists, conservationists, and public land managers and serve as a starting point for collective, strategic conversations and actions to conserve our lands, waters and wildlife. Learn about the Principles, how organizations are applying them now and how you can use them to support your work and Colorado's' open space.

4E – Self Defense for Park Visitors – Mary Ann Bonnell, Visitor Services Manager, Shaun Howard, Ranger Lead and Coordinator of Volunteer Park Patrollers, and Maria Stelacio, JeffCo Open Space. Our program was created to fulfill the requests of park visitors who wanted to feel safe on the trails. We will teach you how to create and implement a safety and self-defense program for the public. While physical self-defense is important avoiding the situation is better. This training incorporates both psychological and physical techniques to help people feel and be safer in their daily lives.

Tuesday, September 19
Session 5 - 9:15 – 10:15 a.m.

5A – E-bikes and Trails: Measuring Impact and Acceptance - Mary Ann Bonnell, Visitor Services Manager, and Neil McNutt, Park Ranger, Jefferson County Open Space. No longer an emerging trend and technology, e-bikes are an increasingly common sight on trails, particularly urban commuter trails. By law, many jurisdictions ban e-bikes on trails as they are considered a motorized vehicle. In practice, many park visitors and trail commuters are currently utilizing e-bikes with and without incident. We have two goals for our study. One is to compare human attitudes and beliefs about the impact of e-bikes before and after an e-bike demo. The second is to measure visitor perceptions of e-bikes and e-bike impacts on visitor experience.

5B – Creative Solutions for Managing Canada Geese in an Urban Environment - Vicki Vargas-Madrid & Kelly Uhing. Denver Parks (DPR) has been managing Canada geese on a local level for many years. Because Canada geese are a protected species under the Federal Migratory Bird Act, options for managing populations are limited. Some citizens of the Denver area are asking for a more aggressive approach to goose control in Denver Parks. Learn what DPR is doing to manage geese in an attempt to meet a healthy balance between natural resource management and concerns of the community, and share your ideas and strategies for managing goose populations in your park/open space/ or wildlife area.

5C – Drones: Land Conservation from 400 Feet AGL - Rick Bachand, Environmental Program Manager, City of Fort Collins Natural Areas Department. Drones or Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) are poised to revolutionize the practice of Land Conservation and Management. Emerging Drone technology is in its infancy and promises a plethora of applications to modernize how conservation professionals inventory baseline conditions, conduct annual monitoring, and manage data through an integrated iPad



system! This session takes a three-fold approach providing an overview of the legislative basis and provisions of the FAA's Part 107 ruling; describing important technological considerations, and; present case studies that highlight the range of applications to the Open Space community.

5D – Dredges, Flumes, and Adits: How History Shapes Open Spaces – Anne Murphy, Town of Breckenridge Open Space; and Larissa O’Neil, Breckenridge Heritage Alliance. The Town of Breckenridge owes its history to the intrepid miners who sought gold in its hills. This rich mining history shaped the Town’s open space program: flumes are an integral feature of the trail network, dredge boats provide interpretative viewpoints along trails and open space, and mine adits that once fueled the local economy are protected landscapes. This session will focus on the intersection of history on an open space program in partnership with the local historical alliance.

5E – Acquisition Roundtable: Magnificent Plains – Justin Spring, Trust for Public Land, Alexandra Castino, Larimer County Open Lands, Josh Tenneson, Arapahoe County Open Spaces. Land conservation in Colorado is larger than the Rocky Mountains. Come learn about specific conservation activities that are taking place across the state’s magnificent plains. Presenters will also discuss lessons learned from a recent water sharing deal that Larimer County just concluded. Have interesting acquisitions that you would like to share? We’ll build in plenty of time to discuss your creative approaches to acquisition.

5F – Lessons From Inspire: Part I – Jackie Miller, GOCO. GOCO’s Inspire Initiative was conceived to promote diversity, equity and inclusion in the outdoors through community leadership. This first of two sessions on GOCO’s Inspire Initiative will provide an in-depth look at work being done in two programs: Leadville’s promatora model, and Westminster’s “unlikely” partnership with Growing Home – a community based organization that serves underrepresented youth and families.

Session 6 - 10:30 – 11:30 a.m.

6A – Predator, Prey, and People: Big Game Hunting on Jefferson County Open Space - Ben Stanley, Park Ranger, and John Queen, Resident Ranger, Jefferson County Open Space. With the loss of large predators and urban sprawl reaching further into the foothills, the population of elk and mule deer in Jefferson County has soared beyond the healthy carrying capacity defined by CPW. JCOS has successfully provided hunting opportunities at Centennial Cone Park for elk and mule deer since 2001. The hunting program has encouraged healthy game distribution while engaging a visitor base not typical at Centennial Cone.

6B – Track Chairs: Making Our State Park Trails Accessible for All – Zach Taylor, Manager, Staunton State Park. The concrete jungle can be wild and untamed but wilderness is always calling. This breakout will focus on how accessibility for disabled visitors to Staunton State Park went from an idea to a reality in less than 1 year. The non-profit group, Friends of Staunton State Park will discuss, along with Park Manager Zach Taylor, how their partnership has been able to form relationships with the community, with sponsors and donors and how they can now provide disabled visitors the chance to “hike” at the state park.



6C – Good News: Raptor Recovery - Will Keeley, Wildlife Ecologist, City of Boulder Open Space and Mountain Parks; Kevin Grady, Heil Valley Ranch Caretaker; and Karen Blaugrund, Volunteer, Boulder County Parks & Open Space. Landscape changes, conservation efforts, research, adaptive management, volunteer efforts and federal regulations have contributed to some successes in raptor populations in Boulder County: Cliff-Nesting Raptors, Bald Eagles, and Forest Raptors. Join this session to learn more about the programs and methods. You will be treated with some fantastic photos!

6D – Mines to Open Space – Jason Lederer, Senior Resource Specialist, Summit County Open Space and Trails; Brian Lorch, Director, Summit County Open Space and Trails. Summit County has a long and storied mining history, but today’s major economic driver is outdoor recreation. The region’s mining legacy left behind a scarred landscape, contaminated streams, and toxic sites. Largely abandoned following the mining bust, Summit County’s recreation boom started with ski area expansion in the 1960’s and was a catalyst for a new recreation driven economy. This session focuses on efforts to transform mine-impacted lands recreationally viable public open space.

6E – Issuing Permits and Capacity: Where to Draw the Line? – Kristin Powell, Lead Ranger, City of Fort Collins Natural Areas Department, Therese Glowacki, Resource Management Manager, Boulder County Parks & Open Space; Alicia Alexander, City of Boulder Open Space & Mountain Parks. Panelists from Boulder County, City of Boulder, and Larimer County will discuss the pros and cons of issuing permits within our open spaces: capacity issues, and increasing requests for research, recreation and educational activities. Audience participation will provide feedback from other programs and help identify options for restrictions and limits when issuing permits.

6F – Lessons from Inspire: Part II – Jackie Miller, GOCO, and Zoe Shark, City of Ft. Collins Natural Areas. This second of two sessions on GOCO’s Inspire Initiative will delve into culturally relevant nature play parks, and Fort Collins’ GOCO Inspire Initiative. Discover the successes and challenges of “Project Outdoors: Plug in to Nature in Northwest Fort Collins” including the youth and community-driven planning process, the extensive community engagement, and the plan that resulted for places, programs, and career pathways.

Wednesday, September 20

Session 7 - 10:30-11:45 a.m.

7A – Bark! How Jeffco Deals With Dogs and Their Humans - Shaun Howard, Ranger Lead and Coordinator of Volunteer Park, and Shaina Young, Communications Specialist, Jefferson County Open Space. As with any visitor group, dogs and their owners can present unique challenges to land managers. Explore how one organization meets these challenges by striking a balance between the welfare of K9s, their humans, wildlife and open space. Through integrative community programs like Bark Rangers and #LetsDooIt! that foster positive change and stewardship behavior, agencies big and small can adopt a more inclusive management and enforcement approach.



7B – Lessons from the Old and the Young: 100 and 1 Years of Managing a Mountain Park – Jeremy Call, Logan Simpson; Brad Eckert, Denver Mountain Parks Planner; Brad Jensen, Draper City Parks and Trails Project Manager. More than any other type of open space property, mountain parks are being loved to death. Not unlike National Parks, they face challenges of statewide visitation; deferred maintenance; user conflicts; inadequate enforcement; highly sensitive resources at the wildland/urban interface; a shift from peak seasons to year-round seasons, with corresponding year-round complaints from once seasonal vacation homes; and either a lack of devoted advocates or just the opposite – too many opposing activists. And too often they attempt to be too inclusive: offering something for everyone and are quickly overrun.

7C – Soil Health: Stop Treating Soil Like Dirt! - Sylvia Hickenlooper, USDA-NRCS Soil Conservationist. In partnership with the NRCS, Boulder County Parks & Open Space has monitored soil health on Boulder County open space croplands for four years. This three-phase project includes assessment, awareness and implementation of soil health management systems. Sylvia will discuss: What is soil health? How is soil health being monitored on open space? And why is this resource management movement sweeping the nation?

7D – CAFÉ: Diversity - Dr. Amy Lethbridge and Linda Strand. Café Diversity will offer conference participants a chance to both wrap up what they learned during the conference and set a course for addressing open space diversity issues in their agency and as a State. Amy Lethbridge will coordinate round table discussions about diversity with open space systems statewide. Bring your questions, your comments and your ideas for the future. We'll record your ideas and share them with all COSA members.

7E – (Repeat from session 1E) Investing in Colorado, Exploring Colorado's Return on Investments in Conservation Easements: Conservation Easement Tax Credit Program and Great Outdoors Colorado, Andrew Seidl, Agriculture and Resource Economics Professor, Colorado State University. The State of Colorado has invested substantial financial resources assisting state agencies, local governments, and private nonprofit land trusts in the voluntary acquisition of conservation easements from willing landowners. Two of the State's principal efforts to incentivize the acquisition of conservation easements are the Conservation Easement Tax Credit program and Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO). Although these programs have funded acquisitions for over 22 years, there is little quantitative information about the benefits Colorado residents receive from the State's investments. This study examines the ecological and economic benefits to the public from the Conservation Easement Tax Credit program and GOCO-funded conservation easements.

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thousands of acres of conservation priorities being protected on private lands for current and future generations.

7F – GOCO 101: A Grant-Writing Workshop & Input Session - Michele Frishman, GOCO Open Space Program Manager; Amanda Hill, GOCO Open Space Program Coordinator; and Chris Yual-Farrell, GOCO Open Space Program Coordinator. GOCO open space staff will discuss the grant programs we make available annually to land trusts and local governments. Additionally, we will provide tips on writing successful applications and planning enjoyable, informative site visits. We will conclude with a follow-up to our 2016 customer satisfaction survey by asking for feedback on our programs and processes. This session will be particularly valuable for new employees of grantees and those who do not regularly apply to GOCO.