

Open Space Division · Management Report

April
2004

JEFFERSON COUNTY

Priority Land Acquisition

- The acquisition of Denver Water Board property at Fehringer Ranch is imminent. Approximately 135 acres located south of Highway 285, west of Kipling Street and north of Quincy Avenue will provide a wildlife and riparian corridor, greenbelt buffer, and future active recreation and trail corridor to be managed by Foothills Park and Recreation District.

Leadership

- The Lafarge West, Inc. Land Exchange project was the first place winner in the 2004 Local Government Innovations Awards Program category of Public-Private Partnership sponsored by the Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG).
- Staff completed an annual resource allocation exercise, which sets organization-wide project implementation priorities for the current year.

Quality Visitor Experiences

- On March 31, Reynolds Park joined Mount Galbraith as a specific-use park, allowing for hiker and equestrian uses only.
- Over 125 visitors attended North Table Mountain's first public open house, which was held on March 30.
- Open Space's second visitor survey, which will be used at seventeen parks over the next three years, has been developed. The survey includes questions soliciting visitor preferences and ratings for a variety of park services and facilities.



North Table Mountain

Environmental and Cultural Education

- Staff completed its first Hildebrand Ranch Park Neighborhood Update for distribution to the residential associations adjacent to the park. The newsletter includes the vision for the park, an update on planned development and neighborhood expectations and opportunities.



Sustainable Design interpretive panel

- Several improvements have been completed at Hiwan Homestead Museum, including the installation of security lighting and motion detectors, new furnaces, ductwork, electrical rewiring, relocation of electrical facilities and new controls for heating equipment.
- Sustainable Design interpretive panels promoting the benefits and use of recycled building materials were fabricated and installed in the interior of the Nature Center.
- Fifty-six education programs were conducted by Nature Center staff and volunteers, with 955 participants.
 - A total of 6,024 visitors frequented the Nature Center in the first quarter of 2004.
 - Hiwan Homestead Museum opened two exhibits in 2004 entitled "The Great American Quilt Exhibit," which is comprised of over 100 quilts, and a photo exhibit entitled "Pictures, Pots and Ancient Pueblos," which depicts Native American pueblo ruins and ceramics.
 - Hiwan Homestead sponsored the "Read Across America" program in cooperation with the Evergreen Public Library to commemorate the 100th birthday of Dr. Seuss. Museum volunteers read Dr. Seuss stories to children throughout the day.
 - In the first quarter of 2004, 3,000 visitors to Hiwan participated in educational programs, tours and special events.

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Natural Resource Management & Conservation

- Prescribed burns have been conducted at White Ranch, Elk Meadow and Mount Falcon Parks to reduce fuel loads and improve wildlife habitat.
- Plans for drainage improvements to the White Ranch Park parking lot are complete, with construction to take place this fall.
- Staff has scheduled a Ranch Round-Up Day at Hildebrand Ranch. Neighborhood volunteers and staff will clear brush, clean the barn and remove overgrown vegetation.



Elk Meadow Park 4/02/04 -after the burn

Regional Trail System Contiguity

- The completed Hildebrand Ranch Park Management Plan illustrates a future regional trail that will eventually connect Hildebrand Ranch with Deer Creek Canyon and South Valley Parks.

Funding Partnerships

- Staff submitted a project description of the Front Range Mountain Backdrop for consideration as a potential Great Outdoors Colorado Bonding Project.
- Open Space administered and awarded \$2 million in Joint Venture Grants to seven cities and seven recreation districts for the 2004 grant cycle.
- \$150,000 in Conservation Trust Fund grants were administered and awarded to nine agencies for the 2004 grant cycle.

Trail Development, Maintenance & Improvement

- New trail construction on South Table Mountain began in late winter and will continue throughout the summer.
- Volunteer Trails Days recruitment is underway for projects at Centennial Cone and Hildebrand Ranch Parks.

Denver/Jeffco Management Plan Implementation

- An implementation Task Force has been created, which includes a Jefferson County Commissioner, Denver City Council representative, five Open Space Advisory Committee members, five Denver Parks Board members, and the Directors of Denver Parks and Jefferson County Open Space. The first coordination meeting will be held in mid-summer.