

DNA taken to identify body
Region, A5

THURSDAY'S
DRAWING

Cash 5:

1-20-28-30-32

Reporter Nevada ~~5-28~~ **5-28**

Open Lands thinks long-range

Group to study options for when sales tax expires in '18

By JACKIE HUTCHINS
RH LOCAL NEWS EDITOR

The Larimer County Department of Natural Resources will set up a committee to look at options for continued funding — which could include going to the voters with a tax request — to prepare for the expiration of the open space sales tax in 2018.

Kerri Rollins, Open Lands Program manager, said Thursday that the group will likely start meeting in July or August and will look at the department's needs for funding to continue to maintain its existing open space, as well as possible funding for future acquisitions.

ages 6,799 acres of parks and 23,498 acres of open space on a \$12 million annual budget.

The open space sales tax, a 0.25 percent tax charged throughout the county, currently brings in about \$8 million a year.

At least 55 percent goes to eight municipalities in the county based on a funding formula that brings around \$1.4 million to Loveland, \$2.8 million to Fort Collins and lesser amounts to Estes Park, Berthoud, Wellington, Windsor, Johnstown and Timnath.

At least 35 percent, or \$2.8 million, goes to the county. The remainder goes to the county and municipalities, too, but can vary year to year.

Accountant Lori Smith said projections indicate that by 2018, when the tax expires, it will be bringing the

\$3.56 million annually into the county, and \$3.1 million of that money will be needed to fund operations.

Rollins said the committee being formed will be asked to look at long-term parks and open lands management costs as well as funding for new acquisitions and facility development.

She said some options that could be considered include decreasing the percentage of the sales tax that goes to the municipalities, increasing the tax, or using the tax just for management costs while pursuing a new tax for acquisitions and development.

Other options that the county staff sees as less viable include creating an endowment fund for management, changing entry fees or closing or restricting access to open space areas.

Ted Swanson, chairman of the Open Lands Advisory

Fee likely for Blue Sky trail

In other action, the Open Lands Advisory Board voted in support of a plan to install a self-service pay vault to collect fees at the new Blue Sky trailhead.

A \$6 vehicle fee, as is charged at other county park areas, is planned.

The trailhead, located off County Road 38E near Horsetooth Reservoir by Inlet Bay, should be ready to open to the public in about two weeks.

It will provide access to the north end of the trail, which is also accessible from the south end for fee. The

Blue Sky Trail runs along the hogbacks connecting Devil's Backbone Open Space in Loveland, Rimrock Open Space, Coyote Ridge Natural Area, Horsetooth Mountain Park and Loy State Park.

The new trailhead will offer 23 parking spaces, as well as four horse trailer spaces, a restroom, information kiosk, drinking fountain, picnic shelter with a turf area and an automated entrance gate.

The area will be open sunrise to sunset.

Board, said he does not want to wait until 2018 to go to voters to extend the tax.

Making a request early could give open lands managers time to adjust if the voters reject the request, he said.

Rollins said the municipalities will be asked to send representatives to the com-

mittee being formed, and the group also will include members of the county's Open Lands and Parks advisory boards.

Though the group will start meeting later this summer, there is no timetable for making a decision, she said. "It's going to take as long as it needs to take."

High altitude Hermit Park

By Bob McDonnell
The Surveyor

On May 23, 2008, the newest recreational area in Larimer County, Hermit Park Open Space Area, became available to local citizens.

The 1,362-acre park was owned by Hewlett-Packard until February 2007, and was only available for use by employees and their families. It is now managed by the Larimer County Department of Natural Resources.

Making the open space something for all to enjoy was a joint effort between Larimer County, Agilent Technologies, the Town of Estes Park, Estes Valley Land Trust, Estes Valley Recreation and Park District, Great Outdoors Colorado, City of Loveland, Erion Foundation, City of Fort Collins, McWhinney Foundation, Town of Berthoud and private donors.

The new area is surrounded by the Roosevelt National Forest, private land and land protected by conservation easements. It is located approximately two miles southeast of Estes Park on U.S Highway 36. At an elevation of 7880-8964 feet, the park offers a variety of amenities for those

interested in the outdoors. The open space has a variety of topographic features including open high meadow grasslands, wetland meadow draws, rounded granite rock outcrops and moderately steep forested slopes.

It is not uncommon for visitors to spot wildlife such as marmots, moose, elk, deer, bobcats and an occasional bear has been sighted. At times, the thin mountain air contains hawks and golden eagles soaring overhead.

The sprawling park has great views of the mountains including Twin Sisters and Longs Peak — and Kruger Rock that is on the property.

Campers may choose from campsites for tent camping, basic cabins and spaces for recreational vehicles. Campsites accommodate up to eight people for a maximum stay of 14 nights.

With so many acres of land and nicely spaced out camping areas, campers do not feel like they are with a crowd, and can enjoy the solitude of the area. Contributing to this sense of peace and quiet is the fact that cell phone service is spotty to non-existent.

The cabins offer bunk beds, propane lighting and heat, picnic tables and fire grates. Each building has a table with benches, covered porch, propane cook stove, and port-a-potty. Visitors must bring their own linens or sleeping bags, cook-



ware and firewood. Minimal water is available; fill your tank before arriving or bring bottled water.

Cabins may be reserved from May 1 until Oct. 1. Reservations can be made online at the county website or by calling 800-397-7795.

The park has a pavilion that can be reserved for special events. Trails for horseback riding, mountain biking and hiking are available. There are about three miles of natural trail within the park. The Homeland Meadows Trail system, an approximately 12-mile natural trail, is connected to Hermit Park.

The park is open year-round, although some areas close depending on the season, the weather and road conditions within the park.

Larimer County entrance permits and camping permits are required and can be purchased at the gate to the open space. Annual permits are available at the entrance gatehouse and online at www.larimer.org/naturalresources.

Berthoud's best sporting goods store is actually in its suburbs.

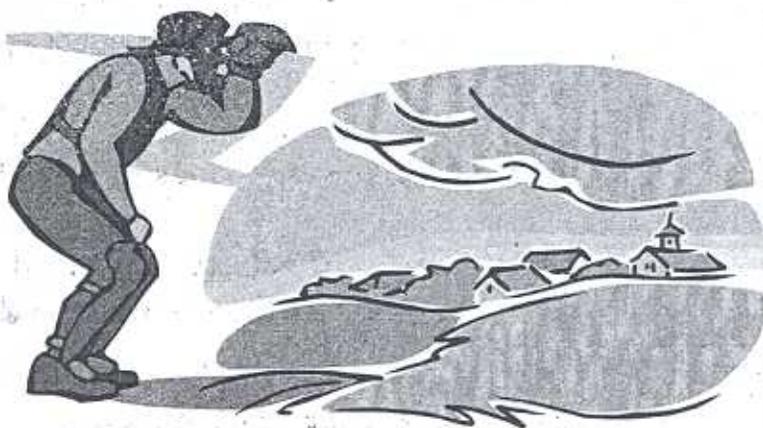
PLAY IT AGAIN
SPORTS®

LONGMONT

"We buy used everyday!"

NEW & USED
SPORTING GOODS &
FITNESS EQUIPMENT

"Trade In to Trade-up"



OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK

M-F 10:30 - 7 • Sat. 9 - 6 • Sun. 12 - 4

800 S. Hover Rd. in Longmont • Next to Hobby Lobby • 303-774-9912

PLAY SAFE, PLAY HARD, PLAY IT AGAIN!

Berthoud Weekly Surveyor 15

6-27-10

HORSEBACK TRAILS ☉ Summer in Berthoud 2010

By Kathleen Donnelly
The Surveyor

Every summer I look forward to riding my horses outside of the arena. As a horse professional that gives lessons, trains, and shows horses I know that one of the best things to help my horse relax after a show is going trail riding. Here are some of my summer favorite trails near the Berthoud area.

Coyote Ridge

I like this trail especially during the week when there is less traffic making it easy to park my trailer. There are no dogs allowed on this trail. On the weekends this is a very popular trail with hikers and mountain bikers so make sure your horse will not be spooked by a bicyclist or hiker. However one of my favorite memories on this trail is a mountain biker sharing his carrots with my horse to help my horse overcome his fear of the bicycles. There are no permits required for this trail and it is a good trail to start out on for a horse that is out of shape. Do watch for

rattlesnakes as once in a while I have run across them on this trail. Coyote Ridge is located between Loveland and Fort Collins on the west side of the road off of Wilson in Loveland (Taft Hill in Fort Collins).

Devils Backbone

Devils Backbone is another excellent option however if you want to ride the entire seven miles then be aware there are points where this trail can become a little more challenging. I have turned around at some points with younger horses that may need more experience navigating trails. No permits are required for this trail however dogs are allowed on leashes. Make sure your horse is not afraid of dogs or would kick a dog. If you think your horse may not appreciate sharing the trail let the dog owner know and get off the trail giving the hiker and dog space to get by. You may run into bicyclists and hikers along this trail as well. This is also another trail that I have come across rattlesnakes. To get to Devils Backbone turn onto Hidden Valley drive from



Highway 34 approximately two miles west of the intersection of 34 and Wilson. Get an early start as the parking lot can fill up quickly.

Carter Lake

The Carter Lake area has two trails to choose from. The Sundance Trail is accessed from the North Pines or South Shore parking areas on the west side. The Fawn Hollow Trail is located off of County Road 31 at the Southeast portion of the lake. I have not personally ridden on these trails although that may change this summer. I have heard

HORSEBACK cont. on page 22

Changing
The Caring
Experience...

Find Your Way...

to Milestone Family Medicine.



We help you raise the *whole* family - newborn to grandparent.
New patients welcome. Make an appointment today!



Berthoud
549 Mountain Avenue, Berthoud
970.532.4644 or 303.651.5100



Lyons
303 Main Street, Lyons
303.823.6535 or 303.651.5326



Niwot
6800 79th Street, Suite 102, Niwot
720.494.7100



To learn more about the
physicians, services and hours:
WWW.LIFECARES.ORG/MILESTONE

HORSEBACK TRAILS ☀ Summer in Berthoud 2010

HORSEBACK cont. from page 20

through the horse grapevine that they are fairly easy trails and can be a good start to getting a horse in shape. Hiking, mountain biking, fishing accesses and rock climbing are some of the other uses for these trails. I would suggest checking out the parking lots in a car before bringing a trailer up. That way you know if a truck and trailer will be a good fit in the parking lot. A permit is required.

Dunraven

This is one of my personal all-time favorite rides, especially in the fall when the leaves are changing color. This is a beautiful trail, but needs a horse with a little more trail riding experience as you will encounter bridges, water crossings and some rocky areas. However I have taken young horses to this area to get them more experience. If this is the case make sure you bring a friend with an experienced horse to give your horse confidence. You are more likely to run across bears or mountain lions on this trail, so be alert at all times and listen to your horse if they get unsettled. Some trail riders will put bells on their saddle to help keep the wildlife away. Make sure your horse is used to the bells or any other equipment you want to bring along.

You may also run across hikers, dogs on leashes, and mountain bikers. You can access riding into Rocky Mountain National Park from this trail and will want to check what permits may be required. To get to the Dunraven Trailhead take Highway 34 up through Big Thompson Canyon. Turn off at Drake and go northwest about six miles. After the brown sign marking the Crossier trailhead, turn right onto CR 518 or the Dunraven Glade Road. Go about two miles to the parking area.

Tips for enjoyable trail riding

- Wear an approved safety helmet. Newer helmets are lightweight and comfortable.
- Bring water for yourself and your horse. A trick I learned to bring water for your horse is to save five gallon buckets with lids. Put a garbage bag in the bucket and fill with water. Tie off the bag with a twist tie and put the lid on. This is a great way to transport water without spilling it.
- Horses need time to get in shape just like their human counterparts. Work up slowly with distance and difficulty. Check with your farrier to see if your horse will need shoes for rocky trails.



- Make sure all your paperwork is in order especially if you are traveling a long distance or out of state for a ride. Colorado law requires a horse to have a current brand inspection if you are traveling out of state or more than 75 miles. You may also need a health certificate or coggins test depending on where you are going. Check with your veterinarian to be sure.

- Make sure all your equipment is in good condition. A trail ride is not a good place to discover stitching or leather has gone bad. Also make sure your saddle fits your horse properly so that they do not become sore on the ride.

Above all have fun and enjoy your horse this summer!

Life Coaching

Extremely Affordable Rates
100% Privacy Guaranteed

*Genuinely caring and
compassionate coaching
to develop and enhance
your own wisdom and
strengths.*

Heart & Soul, LLC
Rhonda Scott, M.A.
629 8th Street • Berthoud
970.980.9383



WE'RE HERE TO HELP YOU

Hospice care & grief support

Our experienced care teams provide expert medical and comfort care for people in their last months of life, 24/7 support for families and caregivers, and help for anyone mourning a loved one.

Comprehensive services

We care for the whole person—physical, emotional, spiritual—tailoring our services to your unique situation and wishes.

Community care

A local non-profit since 1978, we serve anyone in our community, regardless of insurance or financial status.

FORMERLY HOSPICE OF LARIMER COUNTY:
SAME AGENCY, NEW NAME, SAME
COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE

Pathways Hospice

Community Care for Northern Colorado



www.pathways-care.org | info@pathways-care.org
305 Carpenter Rd., Fort Collins, CO 80525
970.663.3500

Take a hike

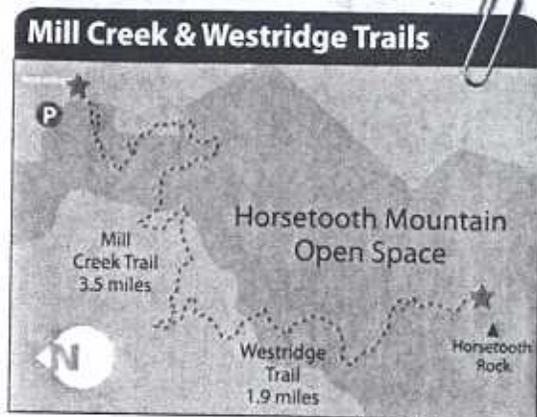
- > **Distance:** 5.4 miles one way
- > **Elevation range:** 5,853 to 7,093 feet
- > **Difficulty:** Moderate
- > **Trailhead:** Lory State Park. From Fort Collins, go north on Overland Trail Road to Bingham Hill Road (Larimer County Road 50E) in northwest Fort Collins. Take the Bingham Hill Road west to County Road 23. Turn left and go 1.4 miles to County Road 25G. Take a right on County Road 25G and drive 1.6 miles to Lory State Park. Continue all the way south to the last parking lot. The Mill Creek Link Trail starts here.
- > **Hours:** Dawn to dusk daily
- > **Fee:** \$6 daily
- > **Pets:** Yes, on leash
- > **Open to:** Hiking, mountain biking and horse-

back riding

> **Information:** Lory State Park, (970) 493-1623 or visit <http://parks.state.co.us>, or Horsetooth Mountain Open Space, (970) 679-4570 or www.larimer.org/naturalresources

> **Why go:** This combo of trails makes for a good hike or ride in the relatively less crowded sections of Horsetooth and Lory. The trail winds through ponderosa pine forests, down gulches and around interesting rock outcroppings. It offers spectacular views east to Horsetooth Reservoir and west into Redstone Canyon. It also serves as an alternative route to the top of Horsetooth Rock where the Westridge Trail meets the Horsetooth Rock Trail.

> **More trails:** See details of more trails at www.coloradoan.com/xplora



Jen Smith/The Coloradoan

WHAT'S GOING ON

saturday

Cycling

Loveland Bicycle Club Ride

9 a.m., Fossil Creek Park, 5821 S. Lemay Ave., Fort Collins. Thirty-five mile "Tour deFort" ride. Information: (970) 669-6855

Fort Collins Cycling Club

FREE 11 a.m., Spring Creek fire station, corner of Spring Park Drive and Mathews Street, Fort Collins. Friendly, no-drop road bike rides of 20 to 60 miles. Distances, destinations, expected paces and start times vary with the week. Information: www.fccycleclub.org

Fort Collins Cycling Club

Spring Creek fire station, corner of Spring Park Drive and Mathews Street, Fort Collins. Friendly, no-drop road rides of 20 to 60 miles. Distances, destinations, expected paces and start times vary with the week. See online for details. Information: www.fccycleclub.org

Hiking

Red Mountain Open Space: The Whole Enchilada

FREE 10 a.m., Red Mountain Open Space, an hour north of Fort Collins on Larimer County Road 23. Explore the county's newest open space and learn the mysteries of the ecotone. Registration is required online. Information: (970) 679-4561 or www.larimer.org/naturalresources/registration

Historic Homesteads Hike

9 a.m., Hermit Park near Estes Park. Larimer County Master Naturalists lead a trek through Homestead Meadows to give you a tour of the remaining homesteads and to share the history of the area. Cost: Free, but \$16 entrance fee applies. Information: (970) 679-4561 or www.larimer.org/naturalresources

may 30

Cycling

Loveland Bicycle Club Ride

Loveland Public Library, 300 N. Adams Ave. Medium-paced Sunday show and go ride of 40-60 miles. Call (970) 669-1316 or (970) 218-8665 for meeting time and information. Information: (970) 613-9012

CSU Oval Races

4-7 p.m., Colorado State University Oval, Fort Collins. Track-style events for single and multi-speed bikes for all ages, plus adult categories for track bikes only. Contact: tim@fcvelodrome.org. Cost: Racers under 18 free (with adult); Adults \$10; Spectators free. Information: (970) 484-3297 or www.fcvelo.org/

may 31

Running

Houska Houska 5K

9 a.m., Houska Automotive, 899 Riverside Ave., Fort Collins. Cost is donations of \$12 and more. Information: www.houskaautomotive.com or (970) 482-0156

june 1

Cycling

Loveland Bicycle Club Ride

Kmart Loveland, 2665 W. Eisenhower Blvd., Loveland. A 30-50 mile morning ride at a 13-15 mph pace. Call for time and destination. Information: (970) 667-6957

Loveland Bicycle Club Ride

6 p.m., Contact for venue information. A 10-25 mile ride. For information, call (970) 663-3364 or (970) 218-8665.

Fort Collins Cycling Club

5:45 p.m., Mulligan's, 2439 S. College Ave., Unit C, Fort Collins. Meet in parking lot. No-drop road rides of 15

to 25 miles followed by food and refreshments at Mulligan's. Beginner to advanced riders welcome. Distances, paces and routes vary to match individuals. Details online. Information: (970) 482-3554 or www.mulliganspubfc.com

june 3

Clubs and meetings

Loveland Bicycle Club Ride

6 p.m., Namaqua Park, 852 Namaqua Road, Loveland. Rattlesnake/Pinewood Hill climb of approximately 20 miles. For more information, call (970) 669-7596 or (970) 227-8708.

june 4

Cycling

Road Bike 101 Ride

FREE 6 p.m., Peloton Cycles, 3027 E. Harmony Road, Fort Collins. Intro bicycle ride of 18 to 24 miles for beginner road bikers. Information: (970) 449-5595 or www.peloton-cycles.com

june 5

Running

Fire Hydrant 5K

7:30 a.m., Edora Park, 1801 Riverside Ave., Fort Collins. Includes 5K run/walk with or without pets plus pet fair. Cost is \$25-\$35. Information: www.larimerhumane.org

Cycling

Ride de Rist

7:30 a.m., Masonville. Includes Rist Canyon Hill Climb, a road race of 28 miles with 2,800 feet of elevation gain for competitors; Rist Canyon Citizens Road Ride for the less serious and U.S. Handcycling Championships. Costs vary. Information: www.fccyclingfest.com

Reporter Herald 6-4-2016

11.8-acre parcel donated by the Crowder family in memory of their son Russell.

To access the Devil's Backbone Open Space from Loveland, take U.S. 34 to approximately 2 1/2 miles west of Wilson Avenue. Turn north on Hidden Valley Drive and follow the signs to the trailhead.

To learn more, visit www.larimer.org/naturalresources.

Boat owners can volunteer for Catch a Special Thrill

PORT COLLINS — The Catch a Special Thrill free fishing day for disabled children needs boat owners to volunteer for Saturday's event at Horsetooth Reser-

voir. This year the event has had record registration, with more than 35 children signed up but only 17 boats secured as of Thursday.

Anyone who can volunteer the time and a fishing boat on Saturday is asked to contact Kara Lamb of the Bureau of Reclamation at 962-4326.

Reservoir and entrance fees into Horsetooth will be waived for volunteers.

Trail opens in Backbone

LOVELAND — The Morrison Trail, the newest trail at the Crowder Area of the Devil's Backbone Open Space, has opened to the public.

The 1 1/4-mile round-trip natural surface trail will provide access for hikers and wheelchair users (an assistant is recommended) at the south end of the existing Devil's Backbone Open Space Trailhead.

The trail was built this spring by Larimer County trail staff members on an

Chris G

7/2016

Your government at work

Cultural Services Board to look at issues around downtown



Who: Loveland Cultural Services Board
When: 4:30 p.m. Tuesday
Where: Loveland Museum/Gallery, 503 N. Lincoln Ave.

TV/Internet: None
At Issue: The Loveland Cultural Services Board will hear several updates on issues relating to downtown during its regular monthly meeting on Tuesday. On the agenda are discussions about the alley naming project now under way, in which the city will create markers to identify the alleyways in downtown. Also to be discussed is the Art Lab and the process for downtown requests for development proposals. Other reports from the museum and Rialto Theater recent activities also are on the agenda.

Commissioners to look at pot dispensary near Loveland



Who: Larimer County Board of County Commissioners
When: 3 p.m. today
Where: Commissioners Hearing Room, 200 W. Oak St., Fort Collins

TV/Internet: www.larimer.org/bcc/broadcast.cfm
At Issue: Commissioners will hear a request from its land use department regarding a zoning violation for Nature's Medicine, a medical marijuana dispensary operating at 418 SE Eighth St., Units A5-A6. Though it is not in Loveland city limits, city officials pointed out to their counterparts at the county that it was operating in violation of zoning rules — it is closer than 500 feet to residential units. Commissioners will decide how to proceed — issue a cease operations order or allow the business to try to get its permits while in operation.

Construction Advisory Board to talk about North Cleveland plan



Who: Loveland Construction Advisory Board
When: 6 p.m. Wednesday

Where: Loveland City Council Chamber, 500 E. Third St.
TV/Internet: None
At Issue: Members of the Loveland Construction Advisory Board will hear a report from the city's planning staff about potential changes that are being considered for development rules on the North Cleveland Avenue corridor, which is developing more commercial applications. Slated to speak to board members are Kerri Burchett with Current Planning and Sean Keller with Transportation Development Review.

Commissioners look to charge for parking at Blue Sky trailhead



Who: Larimer County Board of County Commissioners

When: 10 a.m. Tuesday
Where: Commissioners Conference Room, 200 W. Oak St., Fort Collins
TV/Internet: www.larimer.org/bcc/broadcast.cfm
At Issue: Commissioners will hear a request to institute a \$6 per vehicle charge for parking at the newly improved Blue Sky Trail parking lot west of Fort Collins. When the master plan improvements are completed later this month, the commissioners are being told, the area will be opened to visitors who want to use the trail and also a turf game area, shelter and associated restroom facilities. The Open Lands Citizen Advisory Board recommended the charge to help offset the costs for the improvements.

R-H

Ranger on duty

For county open lands officials, there is no such thing as a typical workday

By PAMELA DICKMAN
REPORTER-HERALD STAFF WRITER

BIG THOMPSON CANYON — Rain steadily fell throughout Larimer County's parks and open lands Saturday, turning a typically busy day into a search for high water.

For Steve Gibson and the county's 30 other rangers, weekends are usually filled with boaters, hikers, picnickers and the like enjoying the trees, wildlife, rivers and reservoirs that Larimer County has to offer.

But when the temperatures dipped and the rain fell, only a few brave souls were out and about as Gibson patrolled — a job that keeps him and his colleagues busy year-round.

For rangers, there really is no typical day.

"It's extremely diverse," said Dan Rieves, visitor services manager and a commissioned ranger. "It could be helping a single mom put up a tent to



Gibson chats with a fisherman after checking his license Saturday afternoon on the Thompson River.

helping a boater whose boat is broken down."

Rangers also patrol the trails on foot (about 10 miles per shift) and the reservoirs on boat,

provide first aid and talk with campers and hikers about preserving the land. They also mend fences, literally, and mend disputes. After all, arguments can brew in nature too.

"Any problem you could have in your neighborhood, you could have here," Rieves said.

That's why 12 of the county's rangers, including

Rieves, are state certified officers. That means they are fully trained just like city police officers and county deputies.

They arrest drunken drivers, drunken boaters and others committing crimes.

They investigate motor vehicle accidents.

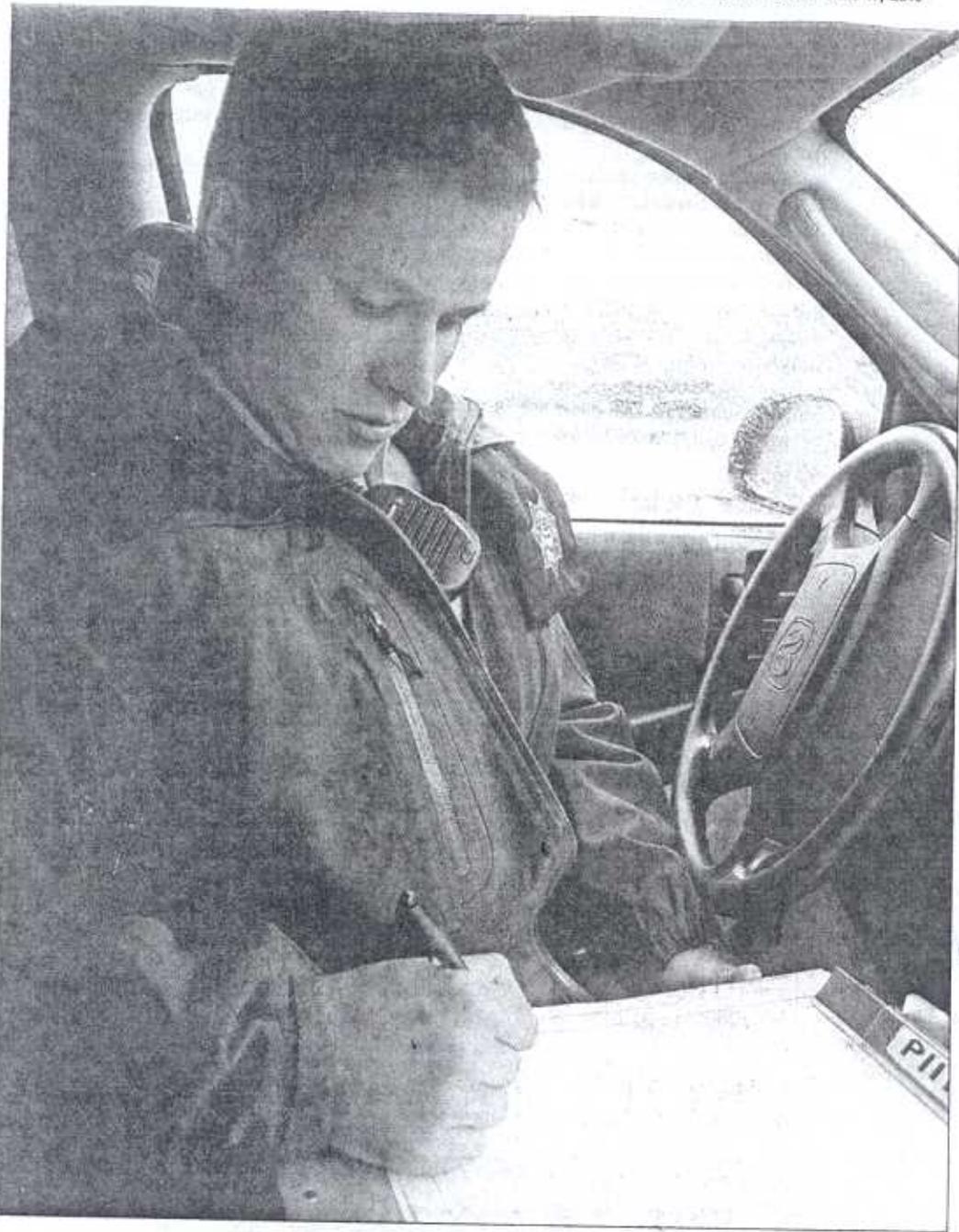
But those account for only 0.1 percent of the contacts rangers have with the public.

In most cases, they are helping out with a medical incident, simply visiting with hikers, protecting the natural resources or checking fishing licenses.



Gibson checks out a downed sign at the entrance of Sleepy Hollow.

SEE RANGERS, PAGE B5



Reporter-Herald photos/CHAD SPANGLER

Larimer County Open Space Ranger Steve Gibson fills out a duty log after checking on the trailhead at Devil's Backbone in Loveland on Saturday afternoon.

RANGERS: Nature lovers dedicated to preserving the land

FROM PAGE B1

Windsor resident Mike Greenfield was delighted to dig his fishing license out of his wallet with fingers so cold from river water they were almost clumsy.

"Thanks for checking," Greenfield said. "It makes it worth paying for."

After a few minutes of chit-chat about the trout he caught and released in the Big Thompson River at Sleepy Hollow Park that rainy Saturday, Greenfield returned to his rod and Gibson returned to patrol.

The ranger's day included checking the bathrooms at trailheads, closing doors to prevent bears from entering, stocking brochures and repeatedly checking parks along the Big Thompson and Poudre Rivers. The winding waters flowed high and fast, so Gibson and other rangers

Help those who help campers, hikers, land

Larimer County rangers are dedicated to helping those who enjoy the county's parks and open spaces and to protect the land. Volunteers can give time to help the rangers with their mission.

Ranger assistants — described by the Department of Natural Resources as ambassadors and friendly faces — hike trails and visit parks and open spaces to offer information and to be added eyes and ears to the rangers.

The county has 12 full-time rangers and adds another 19 in the

busy summer season.

Volunteer ranger assistants will receive 20 hours of training in CPR, ecology and other subjects and are asked to volunteer the same number of hours. In return, they receive a free parks pass and a chance to give back to the community and the land.

Training is set 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. Aug. 3 and Aug. 5 and 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Aug. 7 and Aug. 9. Applications are due July 16.

More information is available by contacting CJ Cullins at 679-4552 or ccullins@larimer.org.

and if water had poured over the banks.

On other recent shifts, Gibson had been called on to herd cattle back into a fenced area — humorous and challenging — and to search canals for a woman who drowned — horrific — and

of the U.S. Civil War when President Abraham Lincoln turned over the Yosemite Valley and groves of giant sequoia trees to California to preserve. Two years later, in 1866, those in charge of conservation appointed Galen Clark to look after the land

and keeping the peace.

Nearly 150 years later, rangers still are doing so on the county, state and national level all across America.

Larimer County's ranger program dates to the late 1970s or early 1980s — more than 20 years after the Department of Natural Resources was formed.

The individuals who perform this task now are ambassadors, maps, preservationists, medics and cops, when they are called to be.

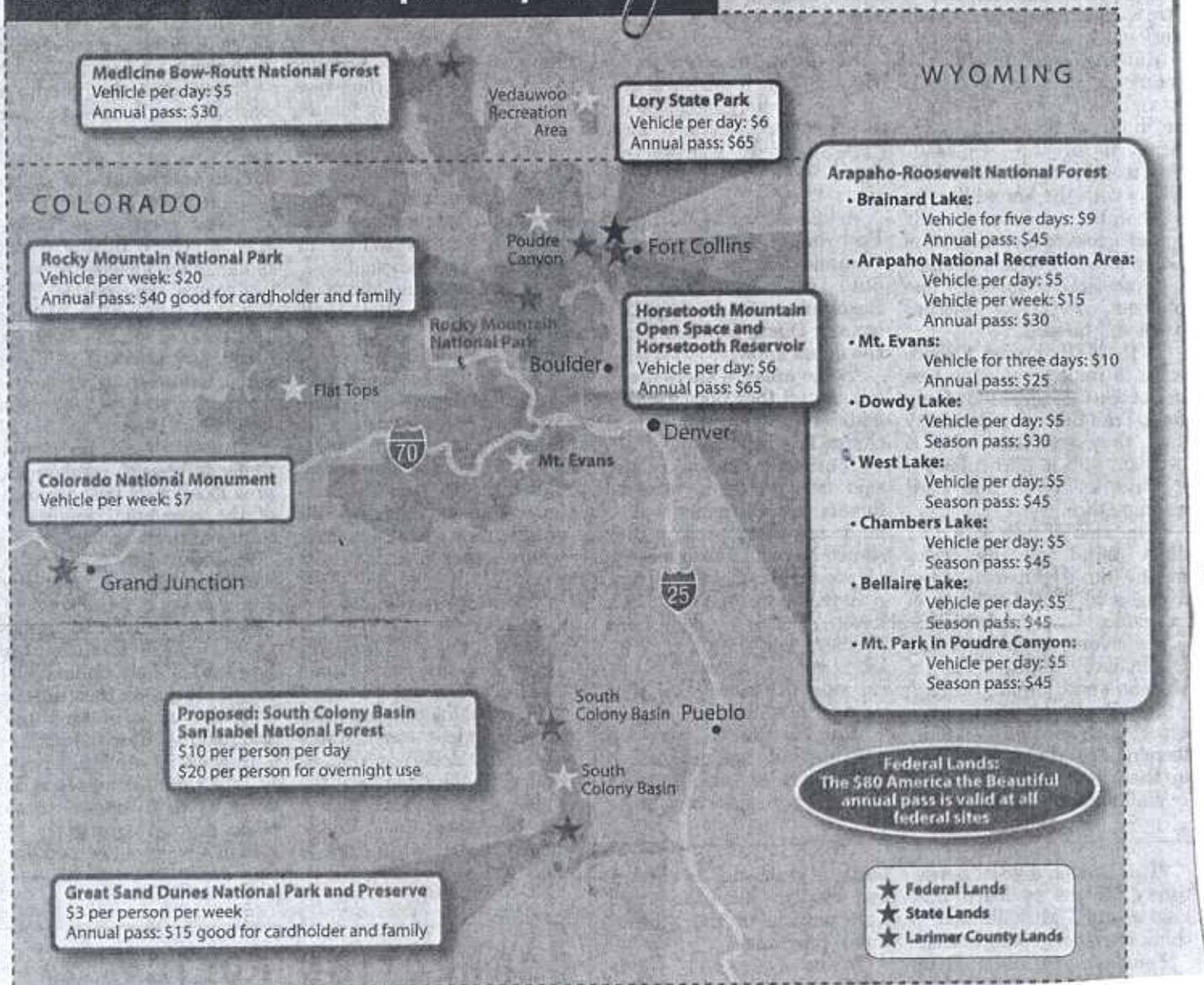
But first and foremost, they are nature lovers, dedicated to saving our natural wonders.

"The ideals behind it are trying to preserve a piece of our land for future generations," Gibson said. "I know that sounds cheesy, but it really is pushing us along."

He paused along the Big Thompson River, breathed the fresh, clean air and gestured to the riverbank.

Public lands fees creating a dust-up

Entrance fees for use of public space



Source: U.S. Forest Service, National Park Service, Larimer County and Colorado State Parks

Print page

Close
windowLongmont, Colorado
Monday, June 28, 2010

Publish Date: 6/28/2010

County survey says voters want more open space

By John Fryar
© 2010 Longmont Times-Call

BOULDER — Boulder County government should be preserving more open space, according to two-thirds of the people questioned in a county-commissioned poll this spring.

But in last year's election, 52 percent of Boulder County voters said no to a proposal to extend one of the county's existing open space sales taxes.

Boulder County commissioners are expected to decide by late July whether they'll put another sales tax question in front of voters in November.

An April public-opinion survey, reviewed by the commissioners last month and by the county's Parks and Open Space Advisory Committee on Thursday night, broached that question.

Of the 603 people who participated in the telephone survey, 73 percent said they voted in November's election. However, only 44 percent of those who recalled casting ballots in the 2009 election said they'd voted for the county's proposed open space tax extension.

But regardless of whether — or how — they voted last year, 79 percent of those polled in April said they approve of Boulder County's open space program.

Sixty-seven percent said they agreed with a statement posed by pollsters: that "Boulder County government should be preserving additional open space areas."

And 61 percent said they disagreed that "Boulder County has gone so far in terms of protecting the environment and preserving open space that it is hurting the local economy."

Further, 66 percent agreed that "Open space preservation benefits our local economy."

Parks and Open Space director Ron Stewart presented the poll's findings on a variety of open space issues to the county's open space advisory panel Thursday. He said the survey "gives, I think, a good perspective on what the general public in Boulder County feels about open space."

Boulder County now oversees more than 93,000 acres of open space. Of that total, the county is the owner or co-owner of more than 59,000 acres. And it holds or shares conservation easements limiting development on more than 34,000 acres of property that remain in private ownership.

The results

What image comes to mind when you think of Boulder County?

- 28 percent: outdoors and open space
- 20 percent: the Flatirons, mountains or other geological features
- 5 percent: the county's small-town or rural character

What justifies the closure of open space?

- 90 percent: protecting wildlife during certain times of the year
- 88 percent: preserving certain sensitive wildlife areas
- 78 percent: keeping the public off lands leased to farmers
- 66 percent: waiting two or three years for the creation a plan for managing the land
- 15 percent: closing open space to the public is never acceptable

Rate the importance of ways Boulder County now uses its open space lands.

- 92 percent: to preserve wildlife habitat
- 86 percent: to provide trails
- 81 percent: to create buffers of undeveloped land between cities and communities
- 79 percent: to keep farm and ranch land from being developed

What open space activities are personally important to you?

- 95 percent: enjoying nature
- 89 percent: hiking
- 76 percent: picnicking
- 66 percent: walking dogs
- 61 percent: mountain biking
- 55 percent: fishing
- 42 percent: horseback riding

Talmey-Drake Research and Strategy Inc. interviewed voters about open space issues in the April 19-27 telephone survey. The Boulder-based firm divided its 603-person sample in half to probe voters' opinions about two potential open space ballot questions. The results:

When 300 of the people surveyed were asked about extending collections of the existing 0.25 percent sales tax beyond 2019 and selling bonds to make more open space purchases, 48 percent said they'd vote in favor of such a proposal.

When the other 303 people were polled about the possibility of a new 0.1 percent county open space sales tax for the next 15 years, 63 percent said they'd vote for it.

Stewart said that even though it may seem "kind of counterintuitive," the April survey showed that "passing a new tax is a lot more popular than extending the old tax" that's set to expire in 2019.

Stewart suggested voters may not understand, or aren't convinced, that almost all of the next 9 1/2 years of the county's collections of the existing 0.25 percent sales tax already are committed.

Officials have said current open space tax revenues will be tied up by such obligations as repaying open space bonds the county issued to finance some of its past open space purchases.

John Fryar can be reached at 303-684-5211 or jfryar@times-call.com.