

The Coloradoan, Friday, August 27, 2010

LARIMER COUNTY

Guided hikes, programs slated

Throughout September, the Larimer County Parks and Open Spaces Department will host a series of guided hikes and programs in the region.

The events include:

> 9 a.m. Sept. 18 — "Look Out! Here Comes the Fall." Join Naturalists Jay and Caroline for a hike at the Devil's Backbone Open Space, west of Loveland on U.S. Highway 34. This two-hour hike is rated easy. The program is free.

For more information, call (970) 679-4561.

> 10 a.m. Sept. 18 — "Bear Necessities." Join former veterinarian and naturalist Bob for a presentation about bears and their local habitats at Hermit's Cabin at Hermit Park Open Space. This is a free, stationary program.

For more information, call (970) 679-4561.

The Coloradoan, Sunday, August 29, 2010

LARIMER COUNTY

Open Lands seeking grant applicants

Larimer County Department of Natural Resources' Open Lands Program is accepting applications for the 2011 Small Grants for Community Partnering project.

Grant categories include:

> Protection or enhancement of open space, trails, natural areas, wildlife habitat, river areas and wetlands on private or public land.

> Agriculture.

> Increased access to open spaces.

> Research on open spaces.

Applications are due by 3 p.m. Sept. 24. The awards will be announced in February. Grant selection criteria, application and other information are available at www.larimer.org/parks/openlands/smallgrants.htm.

Reporter Herald 9/7/2010

Explore outdoors in depth

Nature Notes Club to offer guided hikes, share skills for creating journals

BY PAMELA DICKMAN
REPORTER-HERALD STAFF WRITER

Ever finish a scenic hike just to realize you forgot what flowers and animals you saw?

Ever wish you could put pen to paper to record your outdoor experience?

Larimer County has a new group just for you — the Nature Notes Club.

The Department of Natural Resources is offering six weekly hikes for residents who want to create their own nature journal.

Come to all.

Come to a few.

But come prepared to learn about ecology, geology, wildlife, sketching and other ways to enhance the outdoor experience.

A volunteer naturalist will lead a short hike to a scenic locale at different county open spaces, offering information and ideas.

Once there, participants are encouraged to let their creative juices flow and record their feelings, thoughts and experiences.

Hikes will be 8-11 a.m. on different Sundays:

- This week and Sept. 19: Devil's Backbone, west of Loveland.

- Oct. 3: Ramsay-Shockey Open Space, southwest of Loveland.

- Oct. 10: Hermit Park Open Space, just outside Estes Park. If the weather does not cooperate, the outing will move to Horsetooth Mountain Open Space west of Fort Collins.

- Oct. 24: Soderberg Open Space near Horsetooth Reservoir.

The final session, Oct. 31, will be inside the Bison Visitor Center at Carter Lake, where participants will put the final pieces of their nature journals together.

All it takes is a love of the outdoors, a desire to create and a notebook, camera and drawing equipment.

Organizers urge participants to bring a small stool, snacks and water and to dress for the weather.

To join the Nature Notes Club, contact Rob Novak at 679-4561 or rnovak@larimer.org.

Connection 8/28/10
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in region are slated**

Throughout September, the Larimer County Parks and Open Spaces Department will host a series of guided hikes and programs in the region.

The events include:

- 9 a.m. Sept. 18 — "Look Out! Here Comes the Fall." Join Naturalists Jay and Caroline for a hike at the Devil's Backbone Open Space, west of Loveland on U.S. Highway 34.

Participants will learn the amazing ways animals and plants wind down from a busy summer and transition into fall. This two-hour hike is rated easy. The program is free.

For more information, call 679-4561.

- 10 a.m. Sept. 18 — "Bear Necessities." Join former veterinarian and naturalist Bob for a presentation about bears and their local habitats at Hermit's Cabin at Hermit Park Open Space, southeast of Estes Park along U.S. Highway 36. This is a free, stationary program. A \$6 vehicle entrance fee will be charged.

For more information, call 679-4561.

- 7 p.m. Sept. 22 — "Masters of the Air — Falcons." Join a naturalist at this talk at the Devil's Backbone Open Space out-

door classroom, west of Loveland along U.S. Highway 34. Participants will learn what makes falcons so well suited for flying, hunting and why they are considered Masters of the Sky. This is a free, stationary program.

For more information, call 679-4561.

Connection 8/28/2010
**Small grant apps
now being accepted**

Larimer County Department of Natural Resources' Open Lands Program is accepting applications for the 2011 Small Grants for Community Partnering project.

The program disperses a portion of the Help Preserve Open Spaces sales tax dollars throughout the county for community projects up to \$2,000 per project.

Since 1998, 101 local projects have received about \$131,000

NORTH FORTY STATE 2010

Birding fair date planned at open space

The annual Northern Colorado Birding Fair will spread its wings on Sept. 25 at Fossil Creek Reservoir Regional Open Space south of Fort Collins. Guided bird walks will be available at 7 and 7:15 a.m., activities will run from 8 a.m.

to 3 p.m., and there will be hourly presentations and interactive clinics during the event. This year's fair will also include tours to local birding hot spots. Children who complete the Birding Fair Passport may earn special prizes, and a silent auction is also on the agenda. The

day, sponsored by Larimer County Department of Natural Resources, is geared to the entire family. Admission is free, but donations will be accepted. For information, contact 679-4561, movak@larimer.org or www.larimer.org/naturalresources/birding_fair.

September guided hikes

Saturday Sept. 18, at 9 a.m.

"Look Out! Here Comes the Fall."
Join Naturalists Jay and Caroline for a hike at the Devil's Backbone Open Space, located just west of Loveland on Highway 34, where you will be treated to all the amazing ways that animals and plants wind down from a busy summer and transition into fall. You'll hear about the rutting of mule deer and elk, where the flowers all go, and how trees change the colors of their leaves. Hike rating: easy. Program is free, and no registration is required. Approximately two-hour program. Please direct questions to Rob at 970-679-4561.

Saturday, Sept. 18, at 10 a.m.

"Bear Necessities." Join former veterinarian and County Naturalist Bob

for a captivating presentation about local bruins, that ranges from their habits to habitats at the Hermit's Cabin at Hermit Park Open Space, located just south-east of the town of Estes, off of Highway 36. Learn the best ways to avoid trouble with bears and all about their lifestyles. This is a stationary program. No registration required. Program is free; a \$6/vehicle entrance permit applies. Approximately one-hour program.

Wednesday, Sept. 22, at 7 p.m.

"Masters of the Air - Falcons." Have you ever seen a raptor fly by so fast you couldn't even make out what it was? Find out if it was a falcon at this naturalist-led talk at the Devil's Backbone Open Space's outdoor classroom, located just west of Loveland off of Highway 34. Find out what makes falcons so well suited for flying and hunting and why they are considered to be "Masters of the Sky." Stationary program. Program is free and no registration is required. Approximately one-hour long program. Please direct questions to Rob, at 970-679-4561.

To learn more about Larimer

County's parks and open spaces, go to www.larimer.org/naturalresources.

SENIOR CONTENT

CELOPADDON 3/29/10

LARIMER COUNTY

Open Lands seeking grant applicants

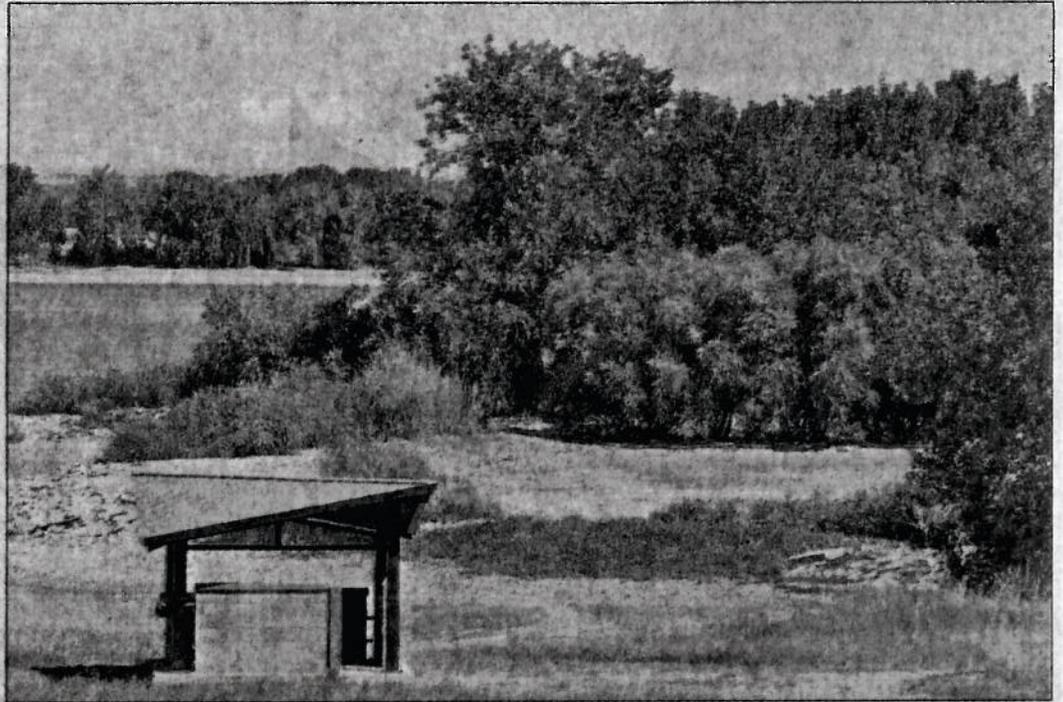
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Land near Fossil Creek Reservoir is purchased



V. Richard Haro For Loveland Connection

A bird watchers hut at the Fossil Creek Reservoir Open Space overlooks a strand of trees where many birds nest. The stand of trees in the background is on a parcel of 23-acres purchased with Fort Collins open space funds to keep the nesting area protected. The land is jointly owned by Larimer County and Fort Collins, with Fort Collins maintaining the land and county rangers working the areas.

Jointly owned land now protected area

BY KEVIN DUGGAN
KevinDuggan@coloradoan.com

The Fort Collins Natural Areas program has paid \$800,000 for the 23-acre site near the east side of Fossil Creek Reservoir, an area jointly owned by Larimer County and the city of Fort Collins..

The site offers "incredible views" as well as important bird habitat and right of way for a trail that eventually will link to trail systems to the north and west of Fossil Creek Reservoir Regional Open Space, said **John Stokes**, director of the Fort Collins' Natural Resources Department.

"It's a great purchase for the program," Stokes said. "It's something we have aspired to for a long time."

The property is part of a point of land that juts into the reservoir along its eastern shoreline. It is prime habitat for raptors, including nesting bald eagles, he said.

Fossil Creek Reservoir Regional Open Space sits northwest of the interchange of Interstate 25 and Colorado Highway 392. Fort Collins and Larimer County share ownership of the open space area, which is managed by Fort Collins.

With its numerous species of migratory birds, the reservoir area is considered one of the best birding locations in Northern Colorado, Stokes said.

"We're very pleased to protect additional parts of the shoreline and the lake," he said.

The property was part of a larger parcel owned by **Gary Young**, Stokes said. The portion bought by the Natural Areas program could have been used to build two or three large-lot houses.

Robert Hau, a senior adviser with the real estate firm Sperry Van Ness who brokered the deal, said Fort Collins and county officials worked with the owner to keep the property open.

The I-25/Colorado 392 interchange is considered a southern "gateway" and is likely to see more development in the years to come, Hau said. The interchange is expected to be rebuilt in the next few years to relieve safety and congestion concerns.

Open space

Continued from Page 18

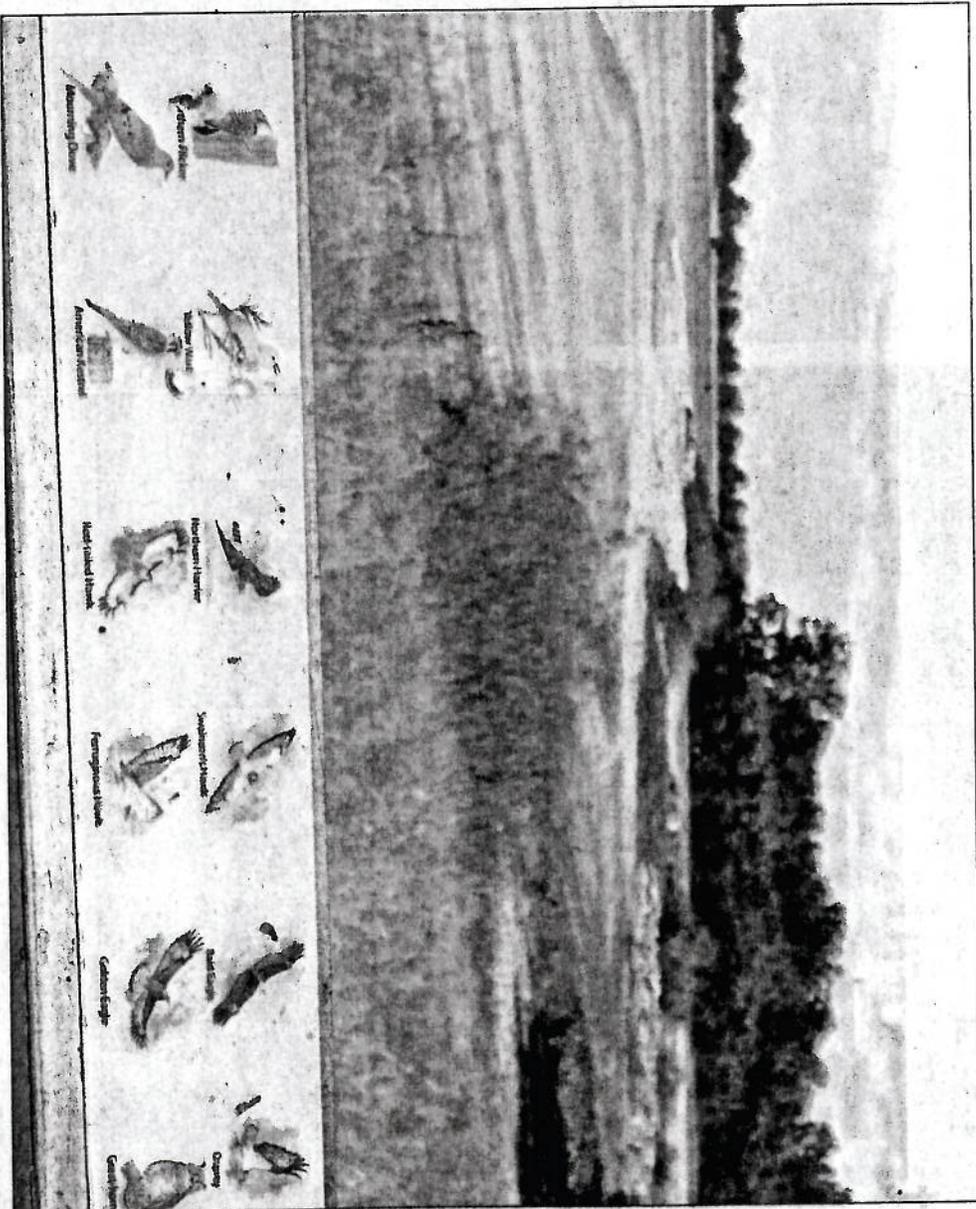
Hau said the deal is a "win-win" in that it provides a balance between conserving open spaces and leaving room for attractive development.

Public access to the site is likely to be years away because of a lack of funding for trail construction, Stokes said.

The Natural Areas program is funded through a dedicated 0.25 percent sales tax. The program also receives funding through a 0.25 percent sales tax for protecting open space collected by Larimer County.

In recent years the program has shifted its spending from acquiring land to maintaining what it already owns, Stokes said.

"We're not going to do as much land conservation as we have," he said. "But when an opportunity comes along to buy a strategic and important piece like this one, we'll take it."



A bird watchers hut at the Fossil Creek Reservoir Open Space overlooks a strand of trees where many birds nest. The stand of trees in the background is on a parcel of 23-acres purchased with Fort Collins open space funds to keep the nesting area protected. The land is jointly owned by Larimer County and Fort Collins, with Fort Collins maintaining the land and county rangers working the areas.

V. Richard Haro
For Loveland Connection

IN BRIEF

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For more information, call 679-4566.

IN BRIEF

Coloradoan 9/7/2010

County offering free firewood to area residents

The Larimer County Department of Natural Resources' 2010 Free Firewood Program is open for reservations.

Those registering must be able to cut downed logs to the lengths they want, load the wood on their trucks and assist in loading all trucks in the group.

Firewood collection begins 9 a.m. weekends through Oct. 10.

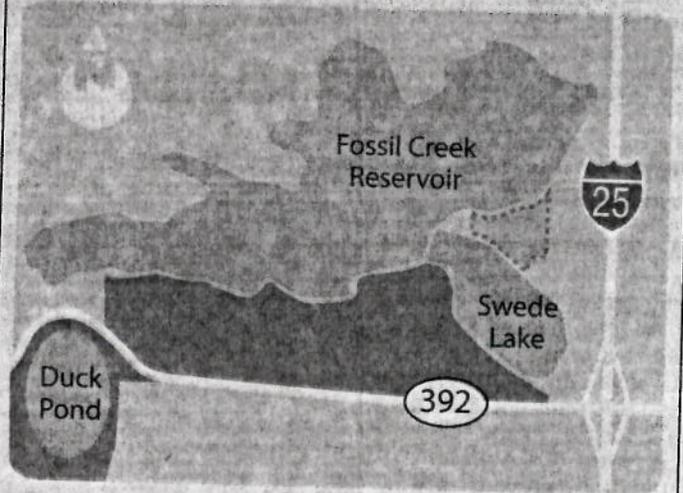
Participants must register for one of the available time slots. Attendance is limited to 12 vehicles each day. Reservations can be made at www.larimer.org/naturalresources/firewood.

Participants must have a printed receipt of signup to enter at the starting location at the Soderberg Trailhead, 3901 Shoreline Drive, at Horsetooth

Mountain Open Space, west of Fort Collins.

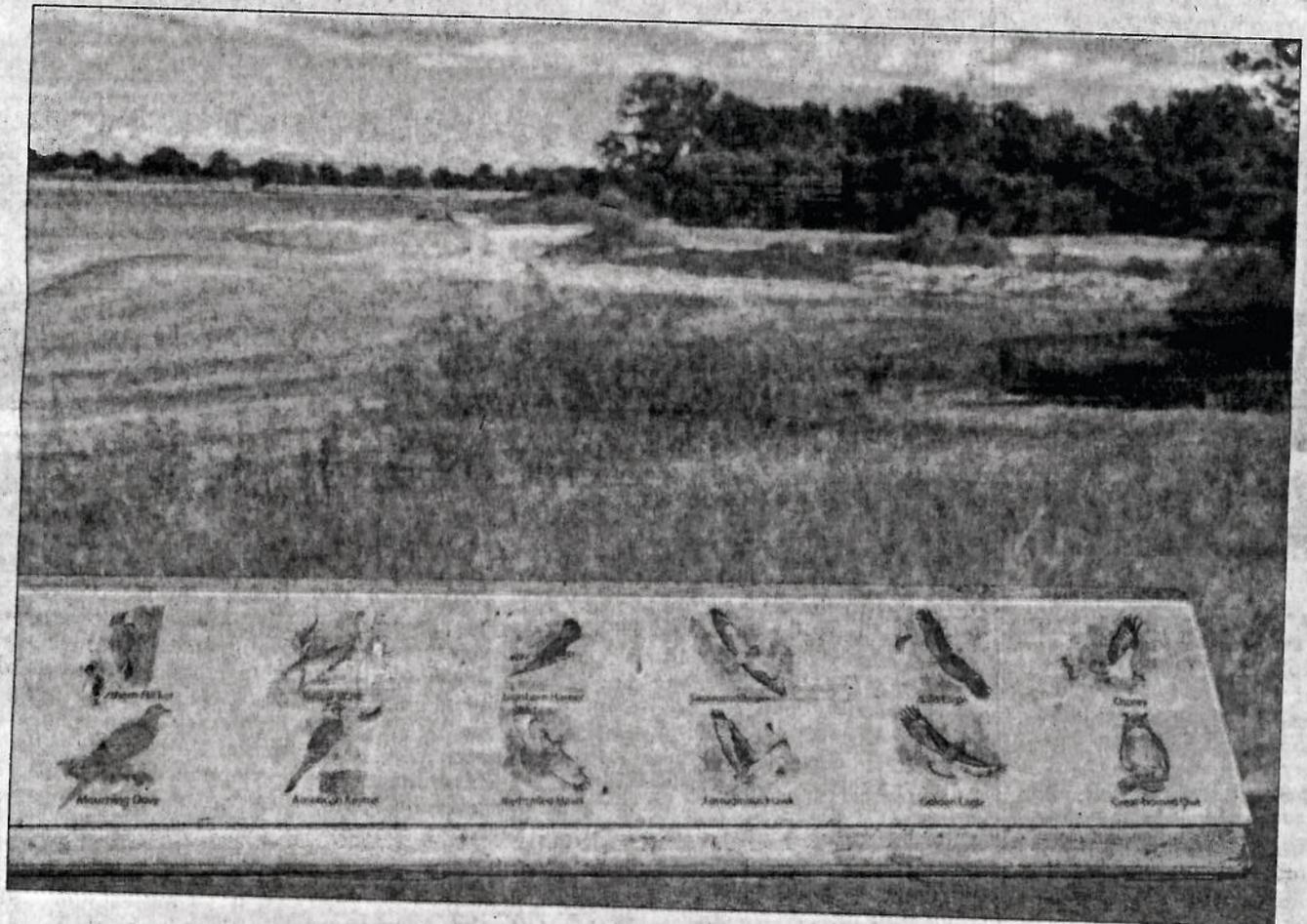
City adds land

Natural Areas purchase



Site purchased by the Fort Collins Natural Areas program Regional Open Space

Jen Smith/The Coloradoan



A panel of bird drawings is displayed at a bird watchers hut at Fossil Creek Reservoir Open Space, overlooking a stand of trees where many birds nest. The trees are on a parcel of 23 acres the city of Fort Collins purchased with open space funds.

V. Richard Haro/The Coloradoan

23-acre site near Fossil Creek costs

BY KEVIN DUGGAN
KevinDuggan@coloradoan.com
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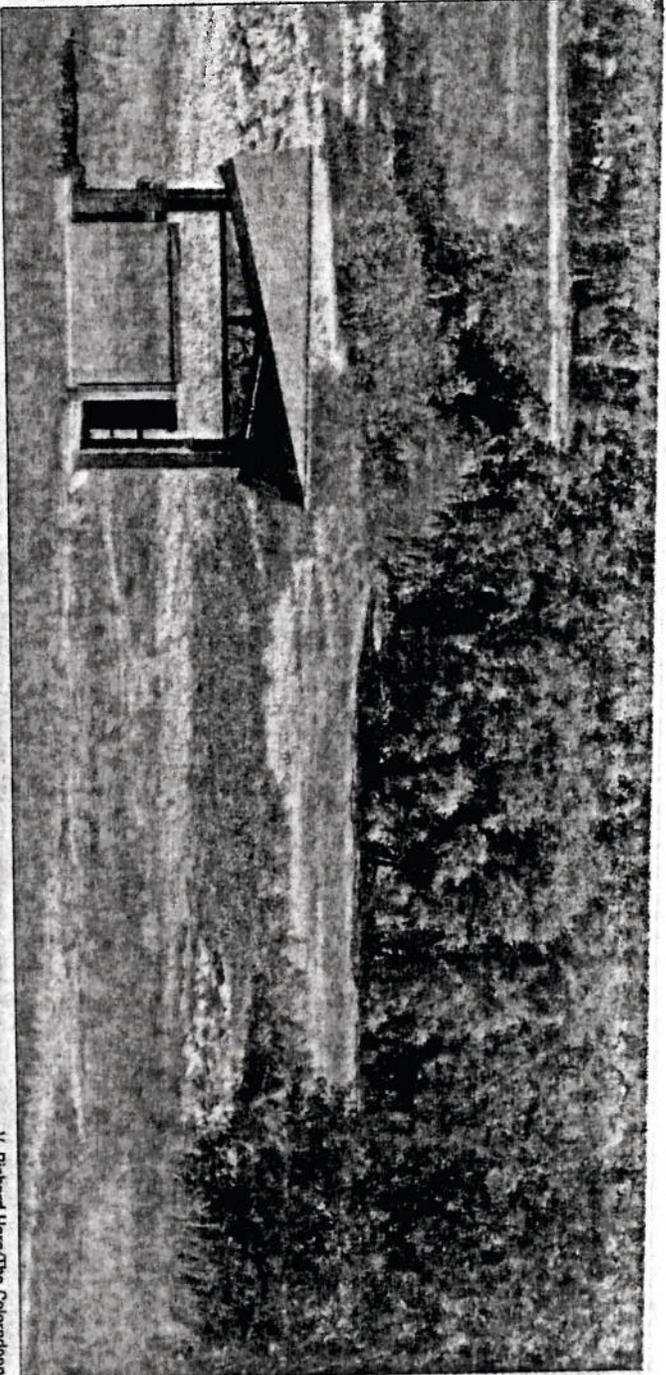
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Hau said the deal is a "win-win" for the city because it provides a balance between conserving open spaces and leaving



A bird watchers' hut at Fossil Creek Reservoir Open Space helps birdwatchers identify the different species. The area is prime bird-watching territory in Northern Colorado.

V. Richard Harra/The Coloradan

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In Your Voice
Join the conversation at
www.coloradon.com/forums

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