

Final Review  
June 15, 2011

Heron Lakes Phase I/2010-233  
Heron Lakes Phase I

**Project Number:** 2010-233 **Staff** Johnson

**Public Name:** Heron Lakes Phase I

**Values (shown in bold):**

<b>Scenic</b>	<b>Significant Plants/Natural</b>	Agricultural
Buffer	<b>Communities</b>	Geological/Paleontological
<b>Wildlife</b>	<b>Outdoor Recreational</b>	<b>Educational</b>
<b>Wetlands</b>	Historic/Archaeological	Other (explain in narrative)

**Property Description:** This project area was originally identified as a priority in the 2001 Larimer County Open Lands Master Plan and is located west of the US 287 Bypass, adjacent to and east of Lone Tree Reservoir and adjacent to McNiel Reservoir. A short time after the Master Plan was adopted, the property was annexed to the Town of Berthoud and a plat approved. The current plat of the 591-acre Heron Lakes property allows for a golf course, commercial use and almost 600 homes. With new zoning allowances adopted by Berthoud since plat approval, density could double if applied for and approved by Berthoud.

The Town of Berthoud has approached Larimer County to collaborate in the potential purchase of a portion of the Heron Lakes PUD, wanting to provide a mixture of open space and development for tax generating purposes. Partners recommend protecting approximately 40 acres (phase I), which is a portion of the Heron Lakes PUD, via fee simple acquisition. The Town of Berthoud will be responsible for all property management, facility development, and public recreational aspects of the project.

The vision of this project is the creation of a hub for trail connectivity (including the Colorado Front Range Trail) and public recreation for the citizens of Larimer County, the Town of Berthoud and the City of Loveland. Of significant regional importance is that this project will contribute major segments of trail for connection from downtown Berthoud to Loveland's Growth Management Area and beyond.

The proposed 40 acres consists of flat grasslands surrounded by cottonwoods and McNiel and Welch reservoirs. The viewshed to the west includes a spectacular view of Longs Peak. The Colorado Natural Heritage Program has rated this area as "B5" for its significant bald eagle activity and the Colorado Division of Wildlife has recognized the area for significant waterfowl habitat. A regionally significant great-blue heron rookery is located on the adjacent property shoreline of Lone Tree Reservoir near the southwest corner of the property and is home to 52 nesting pairs. Additionally, an active and successful osprey nest is located on the south end of the property. Both of these wildlife resources will be protected by requiring appropriate seasonal closures of specific trail segments. Alternate trail alignments through the Heron Lakes PUD will allow for year-round public use.

The phase I concept is to acquire 40 acres of the property in fee which will

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provide public trails. A 3-5 acre public trailhead with parking is also proposed near the east portion of this acquisition.

**Quadrangle:** Berthoud and Carter Lake Reservoir  
**Short Legal:** Sections 9 and 10 T4N-R69W  
**Acreage** 40  
**Current Zoning:** PUD  
**Adjacent Zoning:** PUD; A-Ag  
**Water Rights:** None  
**Mineral Rights:** Intact  
**Liens** Yes - we will get a release of mortgage  
**Value Estimate:** \$1,274,280 (or \$31,857/ac)

**Ownership**

Owner/Seller Jim Birdsall/Jim Turner/3rd partner

**Partners**

	<u>Description</u>
City of Berthoud	Own and manage
City of Loveland	Co-hold CE with Larimer County
Great Outdoors Colorado	
Larimer County Open Lands Program	Co-hold CE with Loveland

**Property Rights Involved (shown in bold):**

First Right of Refusal	<b>Conservation Easement</b>	Partial Interest
Option to Purchase	Lease	
<b>Fee Simple</b>	Development Rights	
Fee Simple w/Conditions		

**Purchase Price:** \$1,274,280.00  
**Price Per Acre:** \$31,857.00  
**Financial Terms:** Fee Simple

**Larimer County Natural Resources  
Open Lands Program**

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<b>Funding Sources:</b>	<b>Amount</b>
City of Berthoud	\$174,280.00
City of Loveland	\$50,000.00
Great Outdoors Colorado	\$950,000.00
Larimer County Open Lands Program	\$100,000.00
Total:	\$1,274,280.00

**Closing Date(s):** For phase I approximately August/September 2011

**O.L.A.B.**

**Recommendation** 6/23/2011

**B.O.C.C. Approval:**

**Evaluation Criteria**

Values	<b>Staff</b>
Environmental/Ecological	Medium
Scenic/Aesthetic/Sense of Place	High
Outdoor Recreation	High
Historical/Archaeological	No Rating
Agricultural	No Rating
Geological/Paleontological	No Rating
Information/Education	Medium
Context	High
Political Factors	High
Price	Medium