

RH Line calls printed Jan. 3

Posted:01/02/2012 09:12:35 PM MST

Rules for Burning

"We passed through an older, rural stretch of homes that sit as close to each other as those in town. We noticed the homeowner burning stuff in his yard. Now we wonder if he is an ignorant, careless homeowner or has the county eased its rules for starting fires out in the county."

Class Sizes

"The caller in Monday's RH Line who said the student-teacher ratio in Thompson School District should be 16:1 gets an F in math. You can't just take the number of students and divide that by the number of teachers. Many with teaching degrees are counselors, media specialists and special ed teachers. The ratio for special ed is often 1:1. Don't believe this malicious propaganda about 16:1 ratio that's being pushed by the far right out to destroy public education."

"This is in response to the caller that stated that we don't need smaller class sizes in the Thompson School District. I'm a teacher, and I teach a one-two combination classroom, and I have 31 students. I have two teaching partners. One of them has 31 students, one of them has 30 students. I would encourage the caller to get their information and facts straight before they call the RH line."

Positive 2012

"As we begin 2012, I have a challenge for all of the wonderful people in Loveland to practice acts of kindness. I don't necessarily mean buying some stranger a cup of coffee or paying for their meals. But, let's try to compliment strangers daily. If someone at the grocery store smiles and gives good service, can't we please say 'thank you for your service,' 'have a great day,' or someone looks attractive in a particular color that they're wearing, can't we say 'that color looks very nice on you'? Let's make 2012 a positive and loving year for everybody."

Thanks for Goodies

"On Dec. 23, 2011, I came home and discovered a large laundry basket full of Christmas goodies, dish towels and some flower bulbs for the spring. I was so touched about the thoughtfulness of the person or persons who left it. I wanted to say to whoever it was: Thank you and have a happy new year."

"I just want to call and beg and plead with every citizen, not just in Loveland but the United States actually. When you're driving in a car in a parking lot, please slow down. There's absolutely no reason to go 10, 15, 20 miles an hour or faster in the parking lot. You're not gonna get there any faster, and all you gonna do is anger and scare people by trying to get there as fast as you can. Slow down. Getting there two seconds quicker is not going to make a difference except to maybe that person you hit in the parking lot."

Heron Lakes Open Space

"Berthoud, Larimer County, Great Outdoors Colorado, the Division of Wildlife and the city of Loveland paid for and preserved open space, Heron Lakes, based on the market appraisal that was reviewed extensively and accepted. The purchase includes open space, wildlife habitat along a lake, recreational rights to a current reservoir that is closed to the public, McNeil Reservoir, and also trail connections to Loveland for a regional trail."

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RH Line: Calls printed Jan. 2

Posted:01/01/2012 11:38:56 PM MST

Bad Behavior

"I'd like to say, as a Democrat, I am outraged with Eric Holder's conduct and behavior in his position. And as a Democrat, where is the rest of the democratic people making the same comments as I am, even the president. Enough is enough. He needs to stand down. Stand down Eric Holder and leave."

Blessings Due

"To the person that found my lost wallet, in the MetroLux parking lot: Without hesitation or even a thought of reward, but knowing only what is right, you turned the wallet into the management. I thank you very much for your kindness and honesty. My New Year's wish for you is that blessings will be heaped upon you in 2012."

Class Sizes

"To the caller who cited the average class size in our school districts at 16 students per class. This figure is extremely misleading as it is the average of all teachers to all students. Remember that there are many special needs students who receive one-on-one instruction. All of those teachers are included, which reduces the average. My daughter's third grade class has 29 students, which is nearly double the number this caller would have us believe."

"I'm a teacher in the Thompson R2-J School District, not Thompson Valley School District, which is one of our high schools, and here are my class numbers for the six classes I teach: 27, 29, 26, 31, 22 and 31, with the 22 being a Spanish 4. Sixteen students per class? I don't think I'm imagining six to 15 extra smiling faces. Media specialists or librarians, resource teachers and counselors skew the ratio, but the school cannot function without them. We all work unbelievably hard and could use the support of our community."

Skinned Dogs

"I'm calling about the article of the skinned dogs. What a sad way to start out the new year. This crime was committed by a disgusting, evil and/or sick individual or individuals. If there is anyone out there who knows about this, they should report or it makes them part of that crime too. Anyone who knows of abuse against any man, woman, child or animal should report it or it makes him part of that crime. This is very, very sad to read."

Heron Lakes Open Space

"I just finished reading the article about the open land acquisition west of Berthoud, and it must be a misprint. Berthoud, Larimer County, Loveland and GOCO paid \$35,000 per acre for open land with no water. I've been told that the going price in this area for that type of ground is \$3,000 to \$5,000 per acre. I've also been told that this parcel was either in foreclosure or was about to start the process. Why did these entities pay eight to 10 times the going rate for this property? Why would Berthoud spend \$300,000 on property five miles from town, when they can't even provide clean water for their citizens?"

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Heron Lakes Open Space offers wide possibilities

Berthoud's first open space will be home to heron rookery

By **Pamela Dickman** Reporter-Herald Staff Writer
Loveland Reporter-Herald

Posted:12/21/2011 08:12:22 PM MST

Tucked between Lonetree, Welch and McNeil reservoirs is a narrow stretch of land that, next week, will become Berthoud's first open space.

With open space experts Larimer County helping, the town will close next week on the sale of 43.27 acres of land for Heron Lakes Open Space, which in coming years will include a trail, trailhead and more.

"It's a stunning site," said Tim Katers, planner for the town. "It's pretty cool."

The acreage and a 30-foot trail easement on the north side of McNeil Reservoir cost the town and its partners \$1.4 million.

The biggest share, \$950,000, is from a Great Outdoors Colorado grant, while Berthoud will contribute \$300,000, Larimer County \$100,000 and the city of Loveland \$50,000. County officials approved spending its share Tuesday, the week before the scheduled closing.

Berthoud, like other towns and cities in the county, receives a portion of the open space sales tax, which it has banked and invested in Heron Lakes, to protect land between the reservoirs and adjacent to a 52-nest heron rookery.

Ultimately, the town hopes to buy another, larger piece of land north of McNeil and east of Lonetree to add to the open space, which will border a planned development and golf course. Phase 2, however, will come after officials develop amenities on the first phase.

Katers said open space planners will sit down during January and begin deciding upon improvements, management, grants and a timeframe for opening the area to the public.

The area is near a large osprey nest and the heron rookery and ultimately could connect Loveland and Berthoud via trail and to Boulder and Lyons as part of the Front Range Trail.

Ultimately, residents will be able to enjoy trails, the calm of open space and nature.

"You have no idea Highway 287 is just a stone's throw," Larimer County Open Lands Manager Kerri Rollins said of the remote aura of the property.

"It's a very big-feeling 40 acres."

Pamela Dickman can be reached at 669-5050, ext. 526, or pdickman@reporter-herald.com

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Larimer County backs Berthoud open space deal

An open space project tied to long-range development plans for the west side of Berthoud continues to advance.

The Larimer County commissioners Tuesday approved the county's portion of a land deal that will establish 43 acres of open space along scenic reservoirs west of U.S. Highway 287 and south of County Road 14.

The commissioners approved spending \$100,000 in county open space sales tax funding on Phase 1 of the Heron Lakes Open Space Project. Other funding partners in the project are Great Outdoors Colorado, or GOCO, the town of Berthoud and the city of Loveland.

The \$1.4 million deal will preserve a 40-acre strip of land running along the southern shore of McNeil Reservoir that includes an area between Welch and Lonetree reservoirs. It also will buy 3 acres of land along the north shore of McNeil Reservoir for a trail corridor.

Closing the deal by the end of the year will require Anadarko Petroleum signing an agreement to relinquish its surface rights on the land and final approval from GOCO, said Charlie Johnson, a senior land agent with the county.

Phase 1 will include a trailhead with amenities such as shelter, parking lot and restrooms. A second phase of the project, which is expected to come through in the next few years, is expected to preserve an additional 97 acres along the east side of Lonetree Reservoir.

Eventually, the trail will be part of a trail system envisioned along the Front Range that would run from Pueblo to Cheyenne, county officials said. The area also is identified as a priority in the county's long-range open land plan.

"I think it's a good fit," said Kerri Rollins of the county's open lands program.

The project will help protect a great blue heron rookery on an adjacent property along the shore of Lonetree Reservoir that has 52 nesting pairs. A nearby active osprey nest is among the wildlife resources in the area, county officials said.

The open space project is part of a larger plan to bring development to the area, said

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Berthoud Mayor Tom Patterson in a telephone interview.

In time, the valley will see high-end homes as well as an 18-hole golf course, baseball and soccer fields and possibly a recreation center, Patterson said.

Even as the growth comes, the area's scenic views and wildlife corridors would be protected through the open space parcels, Patterson said.

"This is going to be part of our legacy," he said. "Someday our children and grandchildren are going to say, 'Wow! I'm sure glad they got that done.'"

BY THE NUMBERS

Partners in first phase of the Heron Lakes Open Space project include:

- » Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) - \$950,000
- » Town of Berthoud - \$300,000
- » Larimer County - \$100,000
- » City of Loveland - \$50,000

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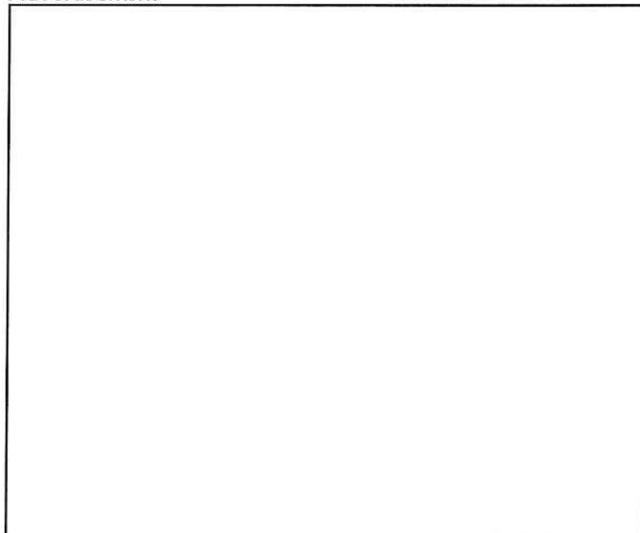
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opinion

Ditmer: Open spaces are Colorado's greatest gifts

Posted: 12/24/2011 01:00:00 AM MST

By Joanne Ditmer

Posted: 12/24/2011 01:00:00 AM MST

Forget those shining packages tucked under the tree. Colorado's most amazing presents won't be found there — and most of us are oblivious that we are the lucky recipients.

These gifts are a significant part of what makes this state so very special, and we take them for granted. Their value reflects an inbred or acquired respect for the land itself — an awareness that our vast open spaces, uncluttered by subdivisions, are integral to the Western mind and character, and are fragile and easy to destroy.

The last 30-plus years, some of the state's most innovative minds have worked to protect those lands, both private and public, to keep farms and ranches producing food and remaining the landscape of our imagination and reality.

The process of conservation easements for agricultural lands has been fine-tuned, with non-profit land trusts and government entities which facilitate and oversee easements, with specified tax benefits. This means families can maintain farms and ranches and not be priced off the land by developers. Owners sign away the right to

develop the land — even when it is sold — and that becomes a charitable donation. It continues as ag land. Food production is maintained, wildlife has habitat and winter range, and we all can continue enjoying the beauty and serenity of the Western landscape.

Keeping the ranch landscapes is a gift to all who cherish Colorado and don't want it buried under a tidal wave of development.

The Colorado Division of Real Estate founded its Conservation Easement Program in 2008, and now certifies 42 entities to hold conservation easements for which tax credit is claimed; 32 are non-profit land trusts, the other 10 state and local government entities. As of last year, 47 entities held 3,877 conservation easements covering more than 1.7 million acres.

Colorado Open Lands (COL) and Colorado Cattlemen's Agricultural Land Trust are the big statewide land trusts, but there are site-specific trusts too. COL is an offspring of Gov. Richard Lamm's 1980s Front Range Project, which gathered several hundred

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Coloradans to evaluate and define how we wanted the state to look and be at the turn of the century.

Hundreds of people volunteer their time and money for projects and efforts — irreplaceable gifts — to preserve Colorado's land and to renovate and protect historic buildings and sites.

Hanging Lake Trail, a beautiful path off Interstate 70 east of Glenwood Springs, leads up, up, up to a bowl-like lake suspended in a mountain valley in the White River National Forest. Some 80,000 visitors a year hike it — making it one of the U.S. Forest Service's most popular trails — and wear it down.

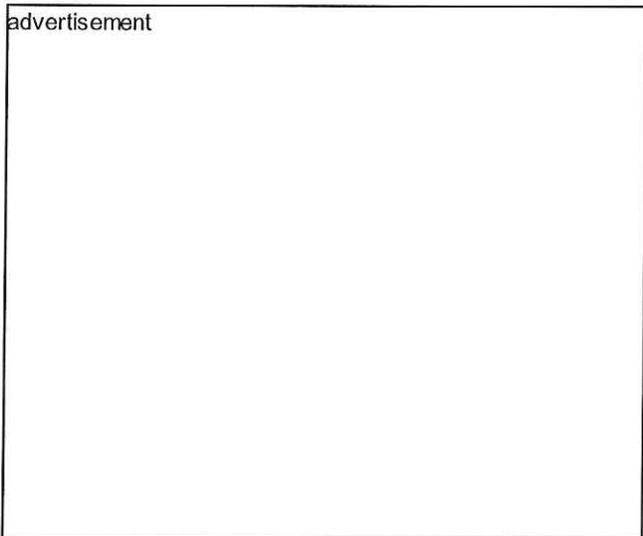
Volunteers for Outdoor Colorado paired with Roaring Fork Outdoor Volunteers the last two summers to repair the 1.2-mile trail. They built 400 feet of rock walls, five switchbacks, rebuilt 137 steps and added 30 new ones, in 2,600 hours of work — a handsome gift to Colorado.

Do enjoy the packages under the tree, and also toast all who work to keep Colorado a wonderful place to live.

Have a wonderful holiday.

Freelance columnist Joanne Ditmer has been writing on environmental and urban issues for The Post since 1962.

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Larimer County river corridor projects advance with GOCO

The board of directors of Great Outdoors Colorado, or GOCO, on Tuesday formally invited two local projects to apply for grant funding expected to be awarded next year:

» Larimer County's proposal to extend the Poudre River Trail another 4.2 miles, including an underpass of Interstate 25 that would connect trail portions built by Fort Collins and Timnath. To date, 38 miles of the long-sought 45-mile trail running from LaPorte to Greeley have been built.

» The city of Loveland's proposal to protect an additional 139 acres along the Big Thompson River, provide new public access to open space and develop a 1-mile section of trail to fill a missing connection to a 17.5-loop trail around the city.

The GOCO board also awarded Larimer County a \$75,000 grant to develop a regional study that would allow various entities in the county to update or create master plans for open space and recreation master plans in cooperation with each other.

About \$18 million in funding is expected to be available for river corridor projects in

2012. The agency received 63 proposals totaling more than \$160 million. GOCO is funded through proceeds from the Colorado Lottery.

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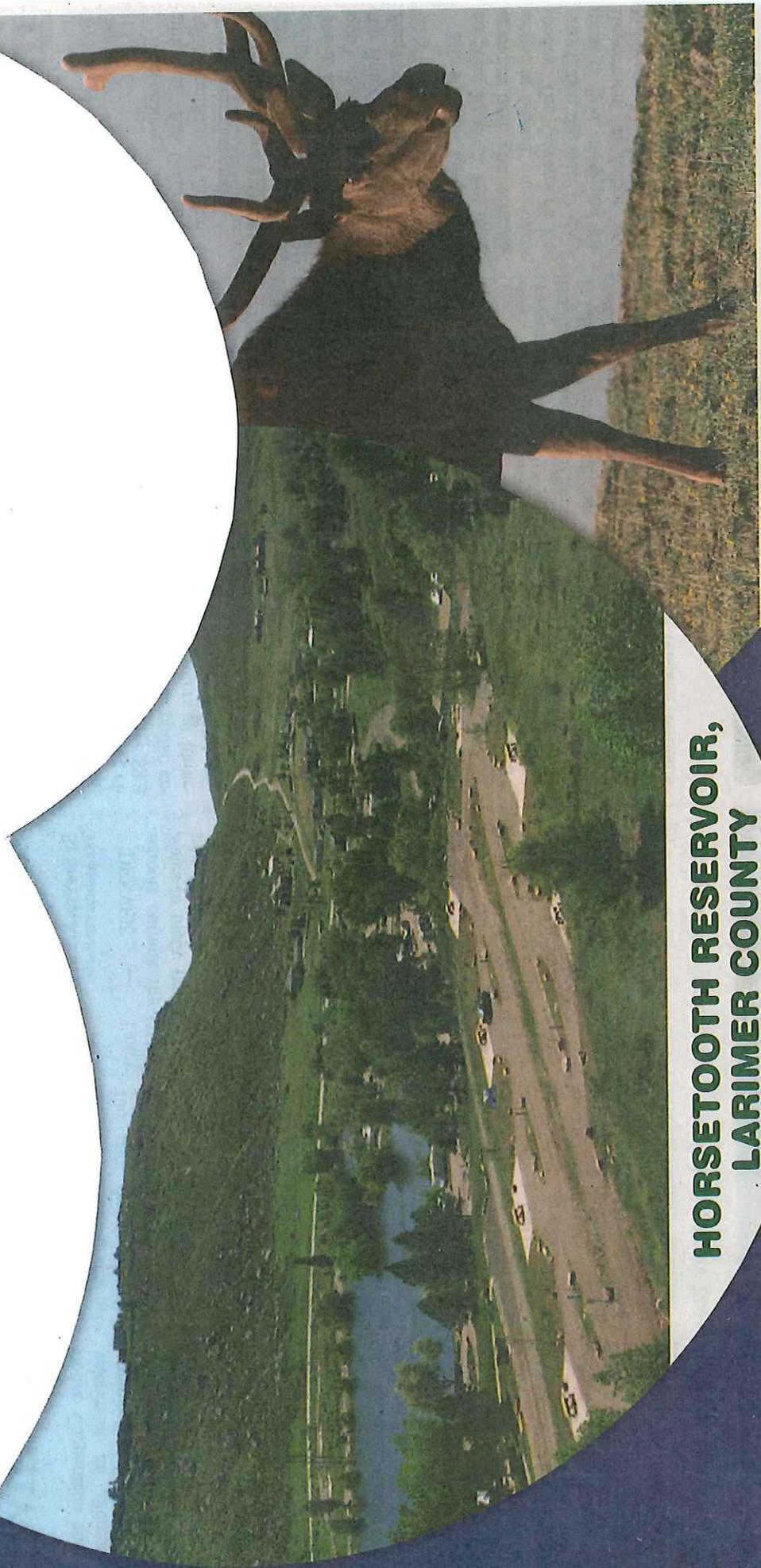
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THE NEW POWERBALL HUGE JACKPOTS FOR PLAYERS HUGE BENEFITS FOR COLORADO

Since 2001, the game of Powerball has generated more than \$350 million in proceeds for Colorado parks, recreation facilities, open space, conservation education and wildlife projects. And now Powerball is getting even bigger and better.

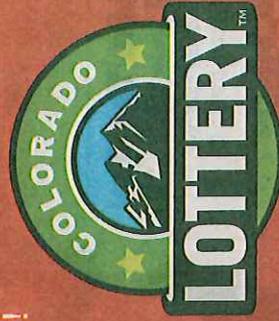
Beginning January 15th, Powerball's starting jackpots will double from \$20 million to \$40 million. It will feature more million-dollar prizes, have better overall odds of winning, and the price of a ticket will move from \$1 to \$2, nationwide. Powerball is going from big, to huge, creating the opportunity to produce a huge amount of proceeds dollars for your community and for our great state.

For those of you who love to play, but are more comfortable with the \$1 price point, you can still win big for just a buck by playing Mega Millions, Lotto, Cash 5 or several of our Scratch games. So get out and play the new Powerball. Then get out and play in one of the Lottery-funded projects in your community.

Thank you, Loveland, for helping us create a more beautiful Colorado. Don't forget to play!



Abel J. Tapia
Director, Colorado Lottery



EFFECTIVE JANUARY 15, 2012; Must be 18 to buy. Prizes equal 50% of overall sales. Overall odds of winning 1 in 32. Odds of winning jackpot prize 1 in 176 million. See coloradolottery.com for details. © 2011 Colorado Lottery.

DON'T FORGET TO PLAY™

Preston students soak in experience

Students in Amy Schmer's sixth-grade science class at Preston Middle School are taking a hands-on approach to science this semester to improve not only their education, but the lives of local wildlife.

In August, the students partnered with Sylvan Dale Guest Ranch by installing a guzzler on the ranch's property to provide a safe, readily accessible water source for bears, deer, elk, mountain lions and other animals.

"The animals had to walk a long way to get water," said student Carolynne Camp. "There's a ditch near the guzzler with a strong current that can pull animals under and kill them, so we built the guzzler so animals could get water safely."

The guzzler is a black tub - similar to a small bathtub - that draws water from underground for animals to drink.

"It's a fresh water source for wild animals and keeps out unwanted domestic animals," said student Kyle Schmer.

For sixth-grader Phillip Grube, the guzzler is a way to step away from textbooks and take an active role in the learning experience.

"I feel like this is just a lot more interesting," Grube said. "When you're just

reading out of a textbook, most students will think that it's just boring. With the guzzler, we're actually going out and having fun learning."

"It feels more important because we're actually doing something," added Reece Wilson.

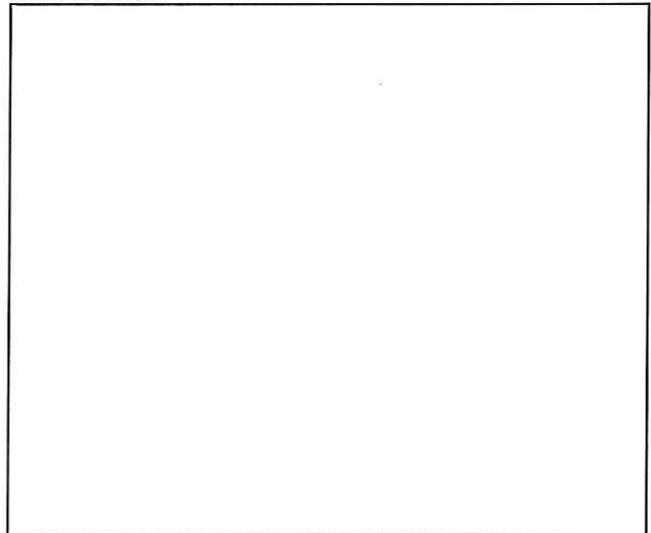
To help students learn more about local wildlife and make improvements to the guzzler, six motion- and heat-sensor cameras were installed at and around the tub to capture images of wildlife using - or not using - the guzzler.

By looking at the photographs, the class learned that while deer and elk approach the guzzler, they refuse to drink from it. Predators, like black bears, coyotes and mountain lions, drink without fear.

"We have pictures of deer close to the guzzler, but they aren't drinking from it," said student Brittany Bayhi.

The students said they are using the

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pictures and information gathered at the guzzler to make improvements. In the future, they hope to build another guzzler that will appear more natural to local wildlife.

Students also are consulting with mentors from around the world through the program Telementors, which pairs students with experts around the world for advice on projects.

Tyler Crop said his mentor works for the Colorado Division of Wildlife and has been helpful as the class seeks the best solutions for wildlife.

"We have many problems we're thinking about," Crop said. "We're still working on keeping the guzzler from freezing so animals can always drink from it, and we'll get as many pictures as we can."

As students continue their work with the project this year, Matt Geraghty said his class can take pride in the fact that they're making a difference in the lives of animals everyday.

"I really like it that we're helping out the wildlife," he said.



 **Zoom**
Three black bears are caught on film at a guzzler Preston Middle School students installed at Sylvan Dale Guest Ranch. Courtesy of Preston Middle School

WANT A CLOSER LOOK?

- » To view pictures and video taken at the Sylvan Dale Guest Ranch guzzler, visit www.offthepavement.org .
- » For more information about the Telementor project, visit www.telementor.org .



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Land Conservation Agreement Preserves 3,201-Acre Ben Delatour Scout Ranch In Northern Colorado

November 22, 2011

Contact:

John L. Coleman, Jr., Longs Peak Council, Boy Scouts of America (970) 584-2222,

john.coleman@scouting.org

Ann Barrett, The Conservation Fund, (703) 908-5809, abarrett@conservationfund.org



Larimer County, Colo. — The Longs Peak Council of the Boy Scouts of America (LPC) and The Conservation Fund announced today the permanent protection of the Ben Delatour Scout Ranch, a 3,201-acre property located 40 miles northwest of Fort Collins. A conservation easement on the Ranch secures one of the last, large forested properties in the Cache la Poudre watershed and enables the property to continue to serve as an outdoor

classroom for children and future forestry leaders.

Thanks to the dedicated support of past and current members of Congress, including Senator Mark Udall, Senator Michael Bennet and former Congresswoman Betsy Markey, \$4 million was provided for the purchase of the easement by the federal government through the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Legacy Program. In Colorado, the Forest Legacy Grant Program is administered cooperatively by the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) and the Colorado State Forest Service (CSFS) to support efforts to protect environmentally sensitive forest lands in the state. Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) provided an additional \$1.5 million in Lottery proceeds to complete the purchase.

"I'm proud to see the Forest Legacy Program put into practice for a worthy cause right here in Colorado," Sen. Udall said. "By permanently protecting an important tract of forest habitat, we can also preserve the multiple uses the community derives from it and foster the next generation of stewards for our natural resources."

"The Ben Delatour Scout Ranch is a great example of how local communities and economies can benefit from open space and the protection of the ranch is a credit to the Forest Legacy Program," said Sen. Bennet. "I applaud the dedication of the Boy Scouts, and I am glad we were successful in working together to make this happen."

The land preservation agreement between LPC and CSFS forever protects the Ben Delatour Scout Ranch from the threat of development. Negotiated by The Conservation Fund in Boulder, the sale of the conservation easement allows the LPC to continue its valuable programs for youth and forestry professionals and maintain its proactive forestry management practices.

"The conservation easement secures into perpetuity the Ben Delatour Scout Ranch as a fun and challenging outdoor platform for character development and values-based leadership training and protects the Ranch from future commercial development," stated Frank R. Ramirez, Council President. "The proceeds from the easement will be placed in the Council's endowment fund as a long-term investment, ensuring that Scouting programs at the Ranch will be available for future generations."



"The Colorado State Forest Service is extremely pleased to work with the Ben Delatour Scout Ranch to conserve this important property," said Jeff Jahnke, state forester and director of the Colorado State Forest Service. "The CSFS and the Ranch have had a long-standing working relationship that provides opportunities for students to conduct forestry work and for scouts from all over the world to see the benefits of that work firsthand."

Established in 1958, the Ben Delatour Scout Ranch is used by boys and girls organizations for a wide variety of programs designed to develop respect for the natural environment and leadership and survival skills that children will carry with them into adulthood. The Ranch serves as a training site for fire fighters and emergency responders from across the state as well as an outdoor classroom for forestry students at Colorado universities.

"At a time when youth camps across the country are being sold, Ben Delatour Scout Ranch will remain available for kids and their families, continuing to fuel the local economy and provide 150 jobs each season," said Christine Quinlan of The Conservation Fund's Colorado Office.



The Forest Legacy Program has protected more than 12,000 acres in Colorado since 2000, utilizing \$10,546,000 in Forest Legacy funds matched by \$9,320,000, primarily from GOCO and landowner donations. Since 1992, the Forest Legacy Program has invested more than \$540 million in federal funds across the country to protect 2.2 million acres valued at more than \$1 billion.

"Conserving open space, encouraging forest stewardship, training future natural conservation managers, and protecting critical wildlife habitat are just a few of the benefits the Ben Delatour Scout Ranch will continue to provide," said Glenn Casamassa, Forest Supervisor at Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forest and Pawnee National Grassland. "The U.S. Forest Service is proud to help secure this land and play a role in managing the cross-boundary landscape for generations to come."

Photos: Dr. Terry Dunn (top & bottom); courtesy Ben Delatour Scout Ranch (middle & homepage).

About the Longs Peak Council, Boys Scouts of America

The Longs Peak Council is one of the leading youth serving organizations in the area, and the Boy Scouts of America continues to be the nation's foremost youth program of character development and values-based leadership training program, serving 3 million youth. Scouting's programs and outdoor adventures prepare young people for a lifetime of character and leadership. The Longs Peak Council, Boy Scouts of America currently serves approximately 11,000 young men and women in northern Colorado, southeast Wyoming and southwest Nebraska. To learn more about the Longs Peak Council, Boy Scouts of America: www.longspeakbsa.org.

About the Forest Legacy Program

Funded through the Land and Water Conservation Fund, the USDA Forest Service's Forest Legacy Program supports voluntary partnerships between states, forest landowners, conservation organizations and others to help conserve environmentally important forests from conversion to nonforest uses. The main tool used for protecting these important forests is conservation easements to provide for jobs, water quality, wildlife, recreation and a host of other public benefits.

About Great Outdoors Colorado

Great Outdoors Colorado was created in 1992 thanks to the passage of a citizen initiative aimed to help preserve, protect, enhance and manage the state's wildlife, park, river, trail and open space heritage. GOCO receives up to one-half of Colorado Lottery proceeds to award grants to local governments and land trusts and make investments through Colorado Parks & Wildlife. www.goco.org.

About The Conservation Fund

At The Conservation Fund, we combine a passion for conservation with an entrepreneurial spirit to protect your favorite places before they become just a memory. A hallmark of our work is our deep, unwavering understanding that for conservation solutions to last, they need to make economic sense. Top-ranked, we have protected nearly 7 million acres across America.

THE DENVER POST

November 23, 2011

Colorado Scout council signs conservation pact to preserve Ben Delatour ranch

By KRISTEN LEIGH PAINTER

A council of Colorado Boy Scout administrators, worried that development pressures would someday be too tempting to resist, have signed a conservation agreement that will forever preserve the 3,201-acre Ben Delatour Scout Ranch.



Boy Scouts plant trees at the Ben Delatour Scout Ranch. The 3,201-acre camp, about 40 miles northwest of Fort Collins, has been appraised at \$7 million. (Courtesy of Longs Peak Council of the Boy Scouts of America)

"Some camps receive lucrative offers from developers. We've taken that option off the table, is the bottom line," said John Coleman Jr., Scout executive and chief executive of Longs Peak Council of the Boy Scouts of America. "The main goal was to ensure that the property would be around into perpetuity as a Boy Scout camp. And the other was to pay off some of our debts."

The \$5.5 million deal to preserve the property was financed by a \$4 million grant from the national Forest Legacy Program

and \$1.5 million from Great Outdoors Colorado. After paying fees and long-term debt, the Scouts have \$4 million to put toward an endowment.

The land, about 40 miles northwest of Fort Collins, was appraised at \$7 million, Coleman said.

Seven years ago, the camp's board began looking for a way to ensure the use of the property as a camp and training site for Colorado forestry students, firefighters and emergency responders.

The council's first application to the U.S. Forest Service was denied. In 2009, the group turned to the Boulder office of the national Conservation Fund, which helped land the competitive federal funds.

"It is really an economic decision (for the Longs Peak Council). They're land-rich and cash-poor," said Christine Quinlan, a Conservation Fund project manager. "This provides them with a way to monetize the value of their development rights and still reach their goal of protecting the ranch."

In order to receive the money, the Scouts and the Conservation Fund needed a matching donor. Great Outdoors Colorado, funded by the Colorado Lottery, stepped up.

"GOCO's role should not be overlooked," Quinlan said. "Without their existence, we would not be able to bring in the substantial \$4 million into the state."

Quinlan said about a dozen projects nationwide received money from the Forest Legacy Program in 2011. She said given the current economic condition of the federal government, this may be the last round of funding from the program.

"It happened, perhaps, just in time because we don't know what the future will be for the Forest Legacy Program budget," Quinlan said.

Applicants needed to make a strong case for preservation.

"Ben Delatour has strong connections to outdoor education," Quinlan said. "Those are irreplaceable elements."

Coleman said having \$4 million in the bank doesn't mean the Scouts can stop fundraising for the ranch.

"Those funds are designated for our long term," he said. "We still have to raise \$3 million annually to fill our operating costs."

Larimer County working on two more Big Thompson River properties

Engineer to research whether one of the parcels is buildable

By Pamela Dickman Reporter-Herald Staff Writer
Loveland Reporter-Herald

Posted:11/08/2011 07:45:30 PM MST

FORT COLLINS - A Larimer County-owned parcel on the Big Thompson River could go up for sale, depending upon whether a house or cabin could be built on the 5.7 acres near Drake.

Another lot, just west of Big Thompson Elementary west of Loveland, likely will remain in the county's hands and stay open as a fishing site.

The Larimer County Parks Advisory Board agreed Tuesday night with those recommendations from county land agent Charlie Johnson, who has been researching which Big Thompson River parcels should be sold and which ones the county should keep.

The county obtained many parcels from private owners after the deadly Big Thompson flood in 1976. The land remained basically untouched until about three years ago, when the county decided to research each parcel and sell some, with priority given to former and adjacent landowners.

The goal, according to county officials, is to keep as much public access as possible.

The two most recent lots that Johnson is working on are near the elementary school and near Drake. Members of the Parks Advisory Board approved both of Johnson's recommendations.

Keep two parcels totaling 3 acres upstream from Big Thompson Elementary School, allowing public access from county property to the center line of the river. Adjacent property is privately owned, so county officials would post signs to discourage trespassing.

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Pamela Dickman can be reached at 669-5050, ext. 526, or pdickman@reporter-herald.com.

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Estes Valley Land Trust receives donation

Long-time activist donates funds

Special to the Trail-Gazette
Estes Park Trail-Gazette

Posted:11/05/2011 04:23:09 PM MDT

Estes Valley Land Trust is proud to announce a generous donation made by a former board member, a well-known Estes Park citizen who lived in the community for many years. Wendell Amos, who made substantial contributions of his time and expertise during the 20 years he lived here, will continue his positive influence in our community with a monetary donation to sustain and advance the work of Estes Valley Land Trust.

Wendell and his wife, Nancy, who now reside at lower elevation in Naples, Fla., recently informed Estes Valley Land Trust of their intent to donate \$50,000 for capital expenses and conservation stewardship. The funds will primarily support the mission of the organization that Wendell helped to establish.

When Wendell moved to Estes Park from Texas after completing a successful career as an oil engineer for Mobile Oil Company, his interest in ecology and conservation quickly brought him to the attention of the fledgling board of the Estes Valley Land Trust, which was chartered early in 1987. Wendell joined the board in 1988 and immediately became indispensable, serving in the offices of secretary, treasurer, vice president and president over his 14 years as a director. Wendell and his dusty orange "beetle truck" became a well-known fixture in the Estes Valley during his years with the Land Trust. He was one of the first local experts on the life and habitat of the mountain pine beetle and made many volunteer on-site visits to help landowners identify and control problems associated with the pine beetle.

Even more important than his hands-on volunteer efforts were his personal relationships with the Larimer County board of commissioners. As a member in good standing of the Larimer County Open Space program, Wendell took the time to get to know the county commissioners. He learned the goals of the county, the timing for requests, the information required and the projects most needed. When the time was appropriate, the Land Trust could count on Wendell to make a thorough and convincing presentation of key conservation projects for the Estes Valley.

The Knolls-Willows conservation easement in the center of Estes Park and the addition of Lily Lake to Rocky Mountain National Park are just two examples of land conservation in which Wendell Amos played a crucial role.

He was responsible for bringing significant county funding to assist with these and other important projects for the benefit of Larimer County and the Estes Valley.

In all of Wendell's association with the Land Trust, what was so critically valuable to the organization was his overriding, visionary directive. Jim White, an EVLT director who worked with Wendell during all his years on the board, said, "He could quickly and fairly evaluate the benefits and disadvantages of projects. He listened carefully to all involved, considering the consequences and concerns. Then, once a project was under way, he could be trusted to open the needed doors and spend the time and energy to make things happen."

The relationships he established were instrumental in the county's involvement in one of the most recent and largest Estes Valley Land Trust's conservation easements, Hermit Park. This is one conservation easement where the public is invited to explore and enjoy.

Some people make a lasting and significant difference. Wendell Amos is one of those individuals, making huge contributions when he lived in Estes Park and continuing his positive influence after leaving. EVLT extends many thanks to the entire Wendell Amos family, for their years of continuing support of conservation in the Estes Valley.

If you would like to become part of the group that is preserving open spaces in the Estes Valley for future generations, or if you have questions about conservation easements, please contact the EVLT office at (970) 577-6837.

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11-11-11

Open space funds used illegally

Dear Editor:

I believe the "Help Preserve Open Spaces Initiative" funds allocated by Larimer County to the Town of Estes Park have been used illegally. The funds have been used for the renovation of Bond Park. Bond Park is the town park

used for festivals located adjacent to the Estes Park municipal building (i.e., town hall). It is bounded by the 100 block of MacGregor Avenue, Park Lane Avenue, and Elkhorn Avenue. Bond Park is owned by the Town of Estes Park and it is designated as park land on the maps showing the holdings of town owned properties. In short it is a "park."

The "Help Preserve Open Spaces Initiative," was voted into law and is in effect until the year 2018. By law, the Larimer County Open Space advisory board provides information to the Larimer County commissioners pertaining to the distribution of open space funds to municipalities in Larimer County. The very first paragraph of the "Initiative" specifies categories for use of open space funds. It states, "WHEREAS, there is citizen support in Larimer County to preserve and provide open space, natural areas, wildlife habitat, parks and trails for today and for the future; . . .". This is a generalized statement showing accumulative use of open space land for municipalities within Larimer County as well as for county use. The "Initiative" goes on to inform each municipality how 100 percent of their open space money can be spent. Different municipalities are informed as to how they may use their allotment of funds. For example, I believe Tinmouth and Berthoud can use 100 percent of their monies for any of the generalized uses stated in the "Initiative." Loveland can use their funds for "parks and recreational trails, . . ."

The "Initiative" states: "THAT Larimer County shall create a separate account for the municipality of Estes Park; and that 100 percent of the revenue attributed to Estes Park from said sales and use tax and any investment income thereon which is attributed to Estes Park shall be deposited thereto; and that the revenue deposited shall be used to fund preservation of open space, wildlife habitat and buffers to Rocky Mountain National Park and to provide trails as described in the Estes Park Hike and Bike Plan and the Estes Valley Trails Plan; and that a portion of the revenue shall be used for long-term management and maintenance of those purposes;" Estes Park cannot use these open space funds for renovation or maintenance of Bond Park, because Estes Park cannot use the funds for a "park." Nor are there any trails associated with Bond Park that apply.

The "Initiative" states: "THAT Larimer County shall distribute funds on behalf of a municipality upon the municipality representing to the county that the funds are to be used in accordance with this initiative and the county is entitled to rely upon such representation when making the distribution and shall not be responsible for any misuse of funds so distributed;"

It is our town's responsibility to use our allotment of open space funds "in accordance with this initiative." I do not think misrepresentation of the use of funds was done intentionally, but how did it happen that such poor legal advice was given to the Estes Park board of trustees and correspondingly to the Larimer County Open Space advisory board allowing this unlawful use of our open space funds?

Now is the time to right this wrong. Please write to or ask the Estes Park board of trustees not to approve the use of "Help Preserve Open Space Initiative" funds for Bond Park. That means no planning, design, renovation, maintenance, salary or benefits money should be spent from these funds for Bond Park. Please ask that any money already spent or allocated, which was used in 2009, 2010, and 2011 for planning, design, construction, salaries, benefits, or purchases of rocks, trees, pavement, etc. for use in Bond Park be put back into the Open Space Fund for future legitimate purposes. Please contact the Estes Park board of trustees before the end of their meeting on Nov. 22. They will take comments on the proposed budget for next year at this meeting which begins at 7 p.m. in the town board room at 170 MacGregor Avenue in Estes Park.

Bond Park is not "open space," it is a park. Even if one were to view Bond Park as open space, the funds could not be used because what has been done has not improved open space. Funds were used to remove healthy trees and plants, and to remove grass to add pavement. A commercial use such as livery might be allowed for open space, but certainly not the sale of jewelry or arts and crafts in open space.

Johanna Darden
Estes Park

Larimer County working on two more Big Thompson River properties

Engineer to research whether one of the parcels is buildable

By Pamela Dickman Reporter-Herald Staff Writer
Loveland Reporter-Herald

Posted: 11/08/2011 07:45:30 PM MST

FORT COLLINS - A Larimer County-owned parcel on the Big Thompson River could go up for sale, depending upon whether a house or cabin could be built on the 5.7 acres near Drake.

Another lot, just west of Big Thompson Elementary west of Loveland, likely will remain in the county's hands and stay open as a fishing site.

The Larimer County Parks Advisory Board agreed Tuesday night with those recommendations from county land agent Charlie Johnson, who has been researching which Big Thompson River parcels should be sold and which ones the county should keep.

The county obtained many parcels from private owners after the deadly Big Thompson flood in 1976. The land remained basically untouched until about three years ago, when the county decided to research each parcel and sell some, with priority given to former and adjacent landowners.

The goal, according to county officials, is to keep as much public access as possible.

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Prescription for 'Nature Deficient Disorder'

Larimer County Natural Resources and partners would like to hear residents' ideas about what can be done to better connect families with nature and outdoor recreation.

In a recent county-wide survey, roughly 75 percent of participants responded that they would like their children to spend more time in nature and outdoors than they currently do.

Come share ideas at one of the upcoming Plug in to Nature community meetings. Input from these meetings will form solutions to address a trend called "Nature Deficient Disorder" in which kids and families are not fully benefiting from all that nature has to offer.

The meetings will be interactive and engaging by utilizing games and instant polling to gather input — so bring the entire family. There will be food and drinks, as well as activities for all ages.

Fort Collins — Nov. 3, noon to 1 p.m., Community Room at Council Tree Library

Wellington — Nov. 3, 5 to 6 p.m., Leeper Center

Fort Collins — Nov. 4, 5:30 to 6:30 p.m., Northside Aztlan Center

Larimer County Natural Resources is seeking to identify practical, community-based solutions to increase families' time outdoors through Plug in to Nature, which is funded by Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO), and assisted by Design Workshop Inc.

Learn more about the project at the www.larimer.org/plugintonature, and share your thoughts at the upcoming meetings.

Chronic wasting disease study enters third year

By Stephen Clearheart-Johnson
North Forty News

Deer always go home for the winter. This makes life easier for Tom Hobbs and his team of Colorado State University graduate students studying chronic wasting disease among deer in northern Larimer County.

In January and February, teams of researchers, wranglers and helicopter crewmen will conduct their third annual capture of deer for a five-year study. Last year they captured 190 animals for testing, including 90 that had been captured previously.

Deer are captured on private lands, with the landowners' permission, by helicopter wranglers using nets. The animals are transported to a field testing site where blood, urine and feces samples are taken to study genetics and other factors. The deer are then equipped with radio transmitting collars and released.

By tracking radio transmissions, the researchers can follow deer migration patterns and social groupings as well as locate the animals for recapture. The collars also allow researchers to find animals that die and determine the cause of death.

Fewer than 1 percent of the deer are lost in the capture and testing phase, according to Hobbs. The goal is to transport them no more than three miles and release them close to their home range, although ranchers near Livermore reported captures in the Owl Canyon area last year that did not follow those guidelines.

CWD is a progressive, neurodegenerative disorder, similar to bovine spongiform encephalopathy or Mad Cow Disease, caused by infectious proteins known as prions. Sick deer appear to be starving and simply waste away, hence the name.

CWD is spread from animal to animal by saliva, feces and urine. It becomes an environ-

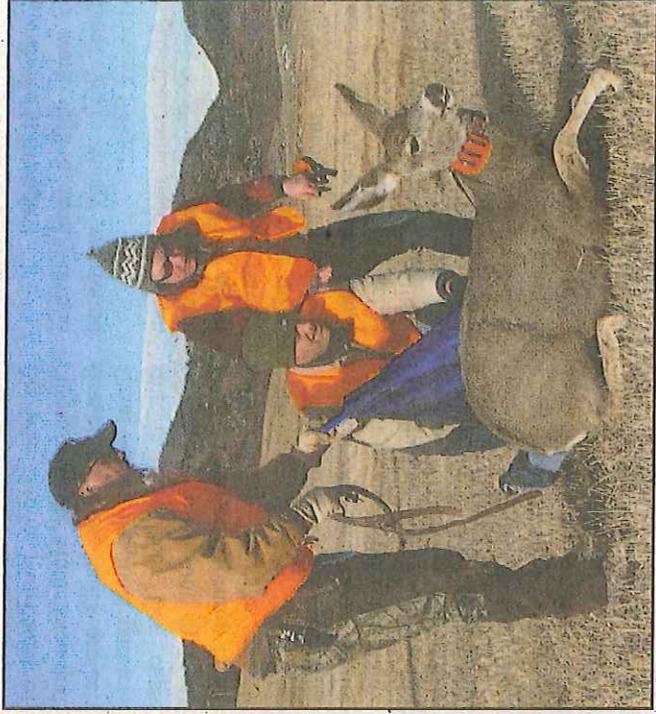
mental toxin capable of persisting in the outdoor environment for a long time.

To date, the CSU researchers have found a lower incidence of the disease than previous hunter data implied. Female deer in the study area have a 6 percent chance — or one out of 16 — of becoming infected in a given year. However, a much higher percentage of males — about one out of four — catches the disease each year, because they interact with more social groups than the females.

In the coming year, 50 percent or more of infected animals will succumb.

As they weaken, these deer also have a 20 percent greater chance of dying of natural causes, chiefly predation by mountain lions. The CSU researchers are also studying the dietary effects and possibility of CWD transmission to mountain lions by feeding infected meat to two lions in captivity.

Researchers have identified



Wired up. Researchers release a deer after taking biological samples and attaching a radio transmitter collar as part of a 5-year study of chronic wasting disease.
Photo by Stephen Johnson

two genes that determine how CWD affects individual animals. Deer carrying either gene will succumb to CWD. Yet, one gene leads to a more mild case so the deer will live longer — and can thus spread the disease further. The researchers are focusing on whether certain families of deer carry the particular genes. If so, learning how wildlife officials

might manage these families becomes a possible outcome from the study.

The CSU study is funded by a \$2.5 million grant from the National Science Foundation. More details, including a video of a deer capture, can be found at www.nrel.colostate.edu/projects/modelingCWD/news.htm.



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