

Recommendations -- Policy & Procedures on Open Lands

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- SUBJECT:** **Use of Power-Driven Mobility Devices on Trails by Individuals with Mobility Disabilities**
- DATE:** July 1, 2011; January 5, 2015
- EFFECTIVE PERIOD:** Until superseded
- REVIEW SCHEDULE:** Annually
- PURPOSE:** For compliance with ADA Part 35 (Title II) regulations concerning use of power-drive mobility devices by individuals with mobility disabilities, to provide consistency in response to inquiries and enforcement of policy about the use of power driven mobility devices on trails managed by the Larimer County Natural Resources Department.
- SCOPE:** All Natural Resource Department Employees
- RESPONSIBILITY:** Director and Department Program Managers
- BACKGROUND:** Effective March 15, 2011, the Department of Justice (DOJ) revised its rules effectuating Subtitle A of Title II of the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990 with respect to the use of power-driven mobility devices by individuals with mobility disabilities on lands owned by public entities.

Larimer County Natural Resources Department completed an assessment of all trails it manages to determine reasonable modifications to its policies and practices to allow the use of power-driven mobility devices by persons with mobility disabilities and to define the types and classes of devices that are appropriate for each trail. Information about the devices that may and may not be used on each trail will be posted on the Departmental website. Larimer County desires to accommodate individuals with mobility disabilities while ensuring that power-driven mobility devices do not have a significant negative impact on the immediate environment, natural or cultural resources, or visitor safety. A number of assessment factors were used to evaluate the types of power-driven mobility devices acceptable on County-managed trails including type, size and speed of device, environmental, natural and cultural resource impacts, visitor safety, and trail use volumes.

DEFINITIONS: For purposes of this policy:

Mobility Device means Other Power-Driven Mobility Device and Wheelchair collectively.

Wheelchair means a manually-operated or power-driven device designed primarily for use by an individual with a mobility disability for the main purpose of indoor, or of both indoor and outdoor locomotion.

Other Power-Driven Mobility Device means any mobility device powered by batteries, fuel, or other engines—whether or not designed primarily for use by individuals with mobility disabilities—that is used by individuals with mobility disabilities for the purpose of locomotion, including golf cars, electronic personal assistance mobility devices (EPAMDs), such as the Segway® PT, or any mobility device designed to operate in areas without defined pedestrian routes, but that is not a wheelchair within the meaning of this section.

POLICY:

1. Except as provided in Sections 2 and 3 below, individuals with mobility disabilities shall be allowed to use the following on County trails:
 - a. Wheelchairs;
 - b. Manually-powered mobility aids (e.g. walkers, crutches, canes, braces or similar devices designed for use by individuals with mobility disabilities); and
 - c. Other Power-Driven Mobility Devices
2. The following may not be used on County trails:
 - a. Gas-powered Mobility Devices;
 - b. Devices heavier than 500 pounds;
 - c. Mobility Devices and golf carts that have an outside wheel width between left and right side wheels that exceeds the width of the natural or paved trail (or any trail providing access to another trail of wider width) thereby causing the wheel(s) to roll over vegetation and resulting in potential environmental and cultural resource damage.
3. Mobility Devices may not be used on County trails if such use causes damage to the trail or facilities.
4. Other Power-Driven Mobility Devices must travel on low-pressure tires, remain on designated trails, and be capable of turning around within the trail tread in a safe manner.
5. Wheelchairs and Other Power-Driven Mobility Devices may not be operated at speeds greater than 5 (five) miles per hour (mph) and must be designed to have a maximum speed of 20 mph or less.
6. Other Power-Driven Mobility Devices may be used on County trails only on weekdays to coincide with lower visitation/use volumes with the exception of those trails at Eagle's Nest Open Space, Ramsay-Shockey Open Space, River Bluffs Open Space, and County-managed sections of the Pleasant Valley Trail – all of which have lower use volumes.
7. Only the person with the mobility disability is allowed on the Mobility Device.
8. Mobility Devices may not exceed a 55 decibel (dB) maximum sound level as heard 25 feet from the device.
9. A person using a Mobility Device may be asked to provide a “credible assurance” that the Mobility Device is required because of the person’s disability. Credible assurance may include: showing a valid State-issued disability parking placard or card or other State-issued proof of disability. In lieu of a valid State-issued disability parking placard or card or other State-issued proof of disability, a verbal representation, not contradicted by observable fact, that the Mobility Device is being used for a mobility disability shall constitute credible assurance.
10. A person using a Mobility Device may not be asked about the nature and extent of the person’s disability.
11. The Mobility Device user, or a competent assistant to the user, should be advised that even though sections of trail may appear to be passable with a Mobility Device, there is no assurance that it can be done safely. Trails are subject to the weather and other environmental conditions and change over time.

12. Safe use of any approved Mobility Device is the user's responsibility. The Mobility Device must not be operated in a dangerous or reckless manner that jeopardizes the safety of others.
13. The Natural Resources Department accepts no responsibility for storage of the Mobility Device.
14. The Natural Resources Department accepts no liability for damage to the Mobility Device or injury to the user under any circumstance.
15. The Natural Resources Department accepts no liability for damage or injury to others caused by the use of a Mobility Device.
16. The Natural Resources Department reserves the right to suspend the use of a Mobility Device on County trails or facilities if such suspension is necessary to meet a management objective of the Department.
17. Users of Mobility Devices are subject to all other park/open space policies and regulations to the extent such policies and regulations are not inconsistent with this Policy.
18. This Policy may be amended at its annual review date or any other time the Natural Resources Department in its discretion determines such amendment to be necessary or appropriate.
19. Larimer County will post on the Natural Resources Department website the Other Power- Driven Mobility Devices allowed at specific parks/open space and on specific trails.
20. Special needs not addressed in this Policy or requests for exceptions will be addressed through the Natural Resources Department Special Event Application Process.
21. Grievance and Considerations

Grievance: Any mobility disabled person who believes he/she has been aggrieved by the application of this Policy may file a grievance using the following procedure:

STEP 1. File the Grievance

Within ten days following the incident giving rise to the grievance, the grievant shall submit a written grievance to the Director of the Department of Natural Resources. The grievance shall include at least the following information:

- i. Name, address, and phone number of the person filing the grievance.
- ii. Name, address, and phone number of the person alleging a violation of this Policy, if other than the person filing the grievance.
- iii. Description of the alleged violation, including date of the incident, names of persons involved, and details of the incident.
- iv. Description of the remedy sought.
- v. Whether a complaint has been filed with the Department of Justice or other federal or state civil rights agency or court and if so, provide the name of the court or agency, name and address of a contact person, the date the charge or case was filed, and the charge or case number.

STEP 2. Acknowledgement

Within 5 working days of receipt of the grievance, the Department of Natural Resources will send a written acknowledgement to the grievant that the grievance has been received.

STEP 3. Informal Resolution

Within 30 calendar days of receipt of the grievance, the Department of Natural Resources will conduct and complete such investigation as it deems necessary to determine the validity of the alleged violation. If appropriate, the Director of Natural Resources will arrange to meet with the grievant to discuss the matter and attempt to reach an informal resolution of the grievance. Any informal resolution of the grievance shall be documented in writing and the case will be closed.

STEP 4. Written Determination

If an informal resolution of the grievance is not reached in Step 3, within 45 calendar days of receipt of the grievance, the Director of Natural Resources will issue a written determination as to the validity of the grievance, and a description of the resolution. The Director shall mail a copy of the determination to the grievant by both first class mail, postage prepaid and by certified mail, return receipt requested.

STEP 5. Review of Determination

If the grievant is not satisfied with the Director of Natural Resources' written determination, the grievant may, within fifteen calendar days of the date of the grievance, file an appeal with the Public Works Director. The appeal shall describe all facts, circumstances and law which grievant asserts support grievant's contention that the Director of Natural Resource's decision is in error.

Within fifteen calendar days of receipt of the appeal, the County Manager shall issue a written determination. The Public Works Director's written determination shall be final.

Considerations: Resolution of any specific grievance will require consideration of varying circumstances, such as the specific nature of the disability; the nature of the access to the service or facility at issue, the health and safety of the grievant and others, the degree to which an accommodation would constitute a fundamental alteration in the service or facility or cause an undue hardship to the County. Accordingly, the resolution by the County of any one grievance does not constitute a precedent upon which the County is bound or upon which other complaining parties may rely.

For questions or more information regarding Larimer County Natural Resources Trail & Facility Assessment for Other Power-Driven Mobility Device use, please contact Gary Buffington, Director at (970) 619-4560.

APPROVAL:

Gary K. Buffington, Director

Date

SUBJECT: Trail Closures Due to Wet and Muddy Conditions

DATE: January 1, 2012; October 11, 2013; October 2014

EFFECTIVE PERIOD: Until superseded

REVIEW SCHEDULE: Annually in December

PURPOSE: To establish a trail closure procedure for field staff

SCOPE: Field staff

RESPONSIBILITY: Senior Ranger/District Managers

BACKGROUND:

District managers and supervisory ranger staff need to be able to temporarily close trail areas when wet and muddy conditions exist. This decision should be based upon the amount of resource damage that will be done if the trail remains open.

POLICY:

Closures can be implemented at a specific property or system wide based on conditions. Individual trail closures may be utilized when conditions exist that would require the property to be closed for an extended period of time. **Trail Closure Protocol Initiated by Ranger Staff**

1. Rangers will assess trail conditions or will be notified by trail crew staff.
2. Ranger will
 - a. Contact ranger shift supervisor and if not available, district manager, regarding proposed closure.
 - b. Update current conditions/webpage detailing trailhead and trail closures with expected re-opening time.
 - c. Send out social media (ex. Twitter, Facebook) update detailing closure.
 - d. Call or e-mail front desk staff to notify them of the closure.
 - e. E-mail volunteer ranger assistants to notify them of the closure.
 - f. Turn road signs from [TRAILS OPEN] to [TRAILS CLOSED].
 - g. Install closure signs on trailhead gate or on specific trails during individual trail closures. (see closure booklets in sign tubs).
 - h. Close trailhead gate ensuring no one is locked inside the trailhead.

APPROVAL:

Gary K. Buffington, Director

Date

- SUBJECT:** **Geocaching**
- DATE:** May, 2003; October, 2014 October 15, 2014; January 5, 2015
- EFFECTIVE PERIOD:** Until superseded
- REVIEW SCHEDULE:** Annually (Director, Managers, Open Lands Advisory Board, Resource Stewardship Team)
- PURPOSE:** To identify guidelines for geocaching on lands owned and/or managed by the Larimer County Department of Natural Resources Department
- SCOPE:** All land owned and/or managed by the Larimer County Department of Natural Resources
- RESPONSIBILITY:** Director and Department Program Managers
- BACKGROUND:**

In response to the growing sport of geocaching, the Larimer County Department of Natural Resources and Larimer County Open Lands Advisory Board have adopted a policy and guidelines that allow geocaching while at the same time protect important natural resources and limit the County's liability in regards to unattended, closed containers being left on Department of Natural Resources properties. The main concerns related to geocaching are natural resource impacts resulting from geocaches placed off designated trails and subsequent social trail development, vegetation damage and safety/aesthetic concerns related to abandoned property. Larimer County would like to work cooperatively with the geocaching community to protect natural resources by keeping virtual caches along designated trails.

POLICY:

Geocaching is allowed in compliance with all Larimer County Department of Natural Resources regulations. Caches are allowed on any Larimer County Department of Natural Resources property under these restrictions.

1. All caches must be approved by appropriate district manager or appointed employee.
2. Types of Caches Allowed with Permission:
 - a. Virtual Caches
 - b. Earth Caches
 - c. Physical caches - Micro/Large/Multi-caches
3. Parameters of Caches - Restriction on size of cache so as not to affect LCDNR visitors or negatively impact cultural and natural resources.
 - a. Location of caches will be limited by proximity to trails (no off trail usage), sensitive and wildlife areas, and safety of participants. The caches will also be limited in proximity to other approved caches.
 - b. Caches will not be allowed to interfere with any other approved activity on LCDNR properties.

4. Geocaching Events

If a team wishes to host a geocaching event, a Special Events Permit Application would need to be filled out and approval of the event would be on a case-by-case basis. Some factors that will be taken into account for allowing one-day events include resource impacts, impacts to other visitors, number of participants, removal of all caches at the end of the event, etc.

5. New Geocaches

Geocache websites will be regularly monitored by an appointed staff member who will notify unauthorized geocachers of Department of Natural Resources policies. If the cache is not removed within an appropriate time, staff will dispose of the cache.

DISTRIBUTION:

APPROVAL:

Gary K. Buffington, Director

Date

DRAFT

SUBJECT: **Neighborhood Requested Access**

DATE: October 19, 2004; Revised March 2, 2006; January 5, 2015

EFFECTIVE PERIOD: Until superseded

REVIEW SCHEDULE: Annually (Open Lands Program Staff)

PURPOSE: To establish policy for parks/open space neighbors to access parks/open spaces.

SCOPE: All staff who work with neighborhoods adjacent to parks/open spaces

RESPONSIBILITY: Resource Stewardship Team

BACKGROUND:

The Larimer County Natural Resources Department manages Parks and Open Spaces open to the public. It is the preference of the Natural Resources Department that all users enter such Parks/Open Spaces via a designated trailhead(s). The following outlines the department's policy for public Park/Open Space access with flexibility for considering neighborhood access points if requested.

POLICY:

1. The purpose of directing user access (pedestrian, equestrian and bicycle) to designated, public trailheads is to:
 - a. Reduce multiple trails across Park and Open Space areas.
 - b. Decrease erosion and "spider web" trails.
 - c. Delineate and minimize access points to Parks and Open Spaces.
 - d. Focus ranger patrol time to specific locations
 - e. Reduce trespassing from public areas onto private property.
 - f. Potentially reduce the number of casual refuse disposal areas on public property.

2. Unapproved access to Parks or Open Spaces from private land is not allowed. The following factors will be considered with respect to requests for neighborhood access:
 - a. Any new access point must be approved by Larimer County Natural Resources Department.
 - b. Any access should benefit as large a number of individuals as possible and not only a few or a single private citizen.
 - c. Access points that provide general public access will receive greater consideration.
 - d. Accesses requested as part of a land negotiation for the larger benefit of protecting open space will receive greater consideration.
 - e. There must be majority agreement from an HOA or neighborhood in favor of having a designated neighborhood access.
 - f. The access point must be located with attention to natural and cultural resource impacts, distance to the existing trail system, and sustainability as a connecting trail. Rangers must be allowed access through the subdivision or on private roads to check for violations related to the private accesses.
 - g. Access points within ½ mile of an existing approved access or trailhead will generally not be approved unless special circumstances are operant.

3. If an access is approved between Park and Open Space lands and private lands and does not include general public (i.e., non-neighborhood resident) access (i.e., due to private subdivision roads, gated communities, etc.), rangers will not patrol for “trespassers” leaving open space and going into the private community. Rangers or other staff will also not be responsible for trash, graffiti, etc., that may occur on private land; nor will rangers patrol or respond to calls of trespass if the public uses and parks on private subdivided roads to use the access point.
4. Any user entering a Larimer County Park or Open Space by bicycle, foot or horseback, that requires a fee, must carry a walk-in/bike-in permit at all times when on the Park/Open Space.
5. If neighborhood access is permitted, a Neighborhood Access Agreement will be prepared by Natural Resources Department staff in conjunction with the applicant. The *Neighborhood Access Agreement* will specify the terms of the neighborhood access. This Agreement must be signed by both parties and all billing must be finalized before trail construction begins.
6. While Rangers will not patrol for trespassing, trash, graffiti, etc., on private lands, they will intermittently patrol the access point to ensure compliance with the conditions of the *Neighborhood Access Agreement* and use the site for access to the Natural Resources trail system for emergencies and regular patrol.
7. Existing accesses misused for such purposes as trash disposal, encroachments, vehicular access, or unauthorized grazing will be removed. Accesses where use has resulted in erosion, non-designated trails or other damage to the resource will be considered for removal.
8. Larimer County will build, maintain and patrol only those portions of a trail connection to an approved access point that are on County property. The entity requesting access will pay in full the cost of any gate, any fencing, a standard Larimer County approved sign, reimbursement to Larimer County for the cost of trail construction connecting the access to the existing park or open space trail system, all improvements up to the boundary of the private lands before entering the open space, and all long-term costs of maintaining the trail and fence associated with the neighborhood access both on private and Larimer County lands. All neighborhood access trails on County property generally will be 3-foot wide, natural surface trails. All fences generally will be 4-strand, smooth-wired fence.
9. All authorized accesses will be granted on a revocable permit basis with an annual review period. Permits can be revoked for misuse as described in Sections 5 through 7 above or violation of rules (i.e., hours of use, vehicle use, etc.). Permits will be administered by the Natural Resources Department.
10. Requests will be reviewed by the Larimer County Natural Resources Department Resource Stewardship Team and if necessary due to complex situations, by the Management Team and/or Open Lands Advisory Board.

APPROVAL:

Gary K. Buffington, Director

Date

SUBJECT: **Memorials, Plaques & Burials on DNR properties**

DATE: October 1, 2004; October 27, 2006; October 15, 2010; April 5, 2011;
January 5, 2015

EFFECTIVE PERIOD: Until superseded

REVIEW SCHEDULE: Annually

ENCLOSURES: Lcpa-21 Memorial Application

PURPOSE: To establish policy for the placement of memorials and plaques on Park District properties (excluding Open Lands properties)

SCOPE: All requests for memorials on open spaces

RESPONSIBILITY: Director and Department Program Managers

BACKGROUND:

Upon occasion the Larimer County Department of Natural Resources has been asked to consider placing memorials and/or plaques on park or open space property, as well as on facilities such as benches or trees within those properties. After careful consideration, the Leadership and Resource Stewardship Team had developed a policy to address such requests on Park District lands only. The Open Lands Program, using the recommendation of the Open Lands Advisory Board, developed a separate policy. In September, 2010, it was brought to the attention of the Department that the adopted policy for Park District lands was in direct conflict with a pre-existing Bureau of Reclamation regulation. This policy was modified to be parallel to the Reclamation regulation. In October of 2014 the policy was further edited to create one policy to cover the Parks and Open Space Districts.

POLICY:

Plaques as a Memorial

1. Plaques, markers, gravesites or other visible memorial markers will not be considered for placement on Larimer County Open Space properties or on Bureau of Reclamation lands. Plaques or other visible markers cannot be placed on trees or other items located on Larimer County Open Space properties or on Bureau of Reclamation lands.
2. Plaques or other identifiers placed on these lands under previous policy or prior to acquisition of the property by the Department may remain unless a family member or managing agency partner requests their specific removal.

Memorials

3. The Department is open to a request from the public for a memorial *furnishing* to be placed on a Larimer County park or open space.
4. Typical memorials (such as benches or picnic tables made from recycled plastic) may cost up

- to \$700 - \$1,500. Fifty percent of the cost of a memorial item must be collected in advance of the department ordering the memorial item.
5. The request must be approved in advance by the appropriate program manager and/or staff member, and must fit within the guidelines of area resource management plans and current projects.
 6. The department cannot guarantee a memorial can be placed on a specific property or at a specific location. Staff will advise which locations and furnishings are available at the time of the request. Items will not be placed in memoriam unless they also meet a legitimate business need of the department.
 7. Memorials will remain in place for the life span of the memorial item selected. The individual item placed in memoriam should be considered the memorial without further external recognition.
 8. To obtain a list of possible memorial furnishings or items, the public may call (970) 679-4570.

Plaques for installation on Memorial Furnishings

1. The Department must approve plaque material and wording before the donor orders the plaque.
2. Plaques must be made of a corrosive resistant metal, polycarbonate or similar durable material and of a color that will harmonize with the site furnishing.
3. The exposed surface of the plaque must not exceed a 4" x 6" dimension. Plaques exceeding the size limit will not be installed on site.
4. The Department will install plaques once they are received from the donor, and the donor will be notified upon installation.
5. The Department will not be responsible for vandalism and/or repair and replacement of memorial plaques. If a plaque is vandalized or damaged to the extent that it is a maintenance concern or possesses a liability to the public, the department will, at its discretion, remove it and notify the donor of the action.

Donation Memorials

1. If the situation arises where someone would like to donate either money or land to the Natural Resource Department Open Lands Program (as a memorial or otherwise) and requests special naming or recognition for that donation, then the "DNR-13 Open Lands Program Policy for Recognition of Foundation, Trust, Corporate, Business, Individual, State or Federal Financial Contributions", would apply. That policy outlines ways in which contributors are recognized for donations. If requests are made for recognition outside of those guidelines then the request must be presented to the Open Lands Advisory Board at a public meeting for discussion and decision.
2. If memorial requests are made while working with a landowner during the land acquisition negotiation process then staff will make the Board aware of these requests during the initial and/or final review phases of that potential open space and these requests will also be discussed and decided at a public Open Lands Advisory Board meeting.

Burial/Scattering of Remains

1. The burial, depositing, or scattering of human or animal remains is not allowed on Bureau of Reclamation lands, per Bureau of Reclamation policy.
2. The spreading of cremated human or animal remains is allowed on Larimer County Open Space properties within the following parameters:
 - a. The chosen area must be at least 100 feet from any water source, such as a lake or stream.
 - b. Discretion in spreading the ashes is very important and care must be given not to disturb other visitors. Early mornings are suggested.
 - c. Ashes must be spread about, rather than buried or placed in a pile.
 - d. No markers, displays or plaques may be placed anywhere in the open space.

APPROVAL:

Gary K. Buffington, Director

Date



DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

• Visitor Services • Open Lands • Weed Management & Forestry
 1800 South County Road 31
 Loveland, CO 80537
 (970) 679-4570/ (970) 679-4574 FAX
 www.larimer.org/naturalresources

Memorial Application

Name of person or group applying for memorial		
Address		Email address
City	State	Zip code
		phone number
Person's Name being memorialized		
Narrative on details of request; why would department lands be a relevant location for this memorial? Attach pages as necessary.		
Type of memorial (including materials and design) – attach drawing or picture if available (must be constructed of a durable material and shall not contain any moving or electronic parts)	Dimensions of memorial (may not exceed 3 feet height, 2 feet wide, 6 inches thick)	Proposed location of memorial
For office use only below this line		
SEE DEPARTMENTAL POLICY: DNR-14 MEMORIALS AND PLAQUES IN PARK DISTRICTS		
Is location within Larimer County parks and open spaces?		<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no
Is the location on an Open Space?		<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no
Is the location on BOR property?		<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no
Has maintenance agreement been signed?		<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no
Is the request within the scope of the policy?		<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no
Title	Name of County official	Date

SUBJECT: **Open Lands Program Policy for Recognition for Foundation, Trust, Corporate, Business, Individual, State and Federal Financial Contributions**

DATE: January 27, 2005; revised April 26, 2007; January 5, 2015

EFFECTIVE PERIOD: Until superseded

REVIEW SCHEDULE: Annually

PURPOSE: To establish policy for recognition of contributions to the Open Lands Program

SCOPE: Recognition of all contributions to the Open Lands Program

RESPONSIBILITY: Director and Open Lands Program Manager

BACKGROUND:

The Larimer County Open Lands Program actively solicits and welcomes grants, donations and sponsorships from foundations, trusts, local businesses, corporations, individuals and state and federal agencies to further the goals of the Program. Donations from these entities help to fund acquisition of and/or facility development at our open spaces. These donations and sponsorships also demonstrate community and business support; provide matching dollars for grant proposals; and leverage our open space tax dollars.

The Open Lands Program, with recommendation from the Open Lands Advisory Board has developed policy to appropriately recognize contributions from these types of entities that fits within the mission and spirit of the Larimer County Open Lands Program.

POLICY:

For Contribution of \$5000 and over:

1. Recognition in the Open Lands Program Annual Report,
2. An invitation to the Grand Opening of the open space and, along with the taxpayers of Larimer County and recognition in the press release for that event.

For contributions of \$10,000 and over:

1. Numbers 1 and 2 above, plus
2. Name recognition (no logos) in an appropriate section of the main kiosk for that open space. In that same section of the kiosk, the taxpayers of Larimer County and landowners who donated their land fee simple or through a bargain sale will also be listed.
3. In the case of a very large cash or land donation in which the entity requests additional recognition, that request will be reviewed and decided by the Open Lands Advisory Board. Public comment will also be solicited in that situation.

Agreements & Contracts

1. Name recognition as required per grant agreements with Great Outdoors Colorado and other granting agencies or affiliates. This recognition will be located in an appropriate section of the main kiosk for that open space.
2. Adopt-a-trail supporters will be recognized by a quality aluminum sign posted at the adopted section of trail giving name recognition (without logo) for their contribution. The sign will remain in place for as long as the trail is adopted.

APPROVAL:

Gary K. Buffington, Director

Date

DRAFT

SUBJECT: **Good Neighbor Practices**

DATE: February 13, 2013; [January 5, 2015](#)

EFFECTIVE PERIOD: Until superseded

REVIEW SCHEDULE: Every 5 years or as otherwise needed/directed

PURPOSE: To establish policy for potential parks/open space-neighbor conflicts

SCOPE: All staff who work with neighbors adjacent to parks/open spaces

RESPONSIBILITY: Resource Stewardship Team

BACKGROUND:

The Larimer County Natural Resources Department manages park and open space properties to protect native plant and animal species, wetlands, view sheds, and agricultural values and to provide recreational opportunities in a natural setting, when appropriate. The following outlines the department's policy for park/open space properties adjacent to private lands.

POLICY:

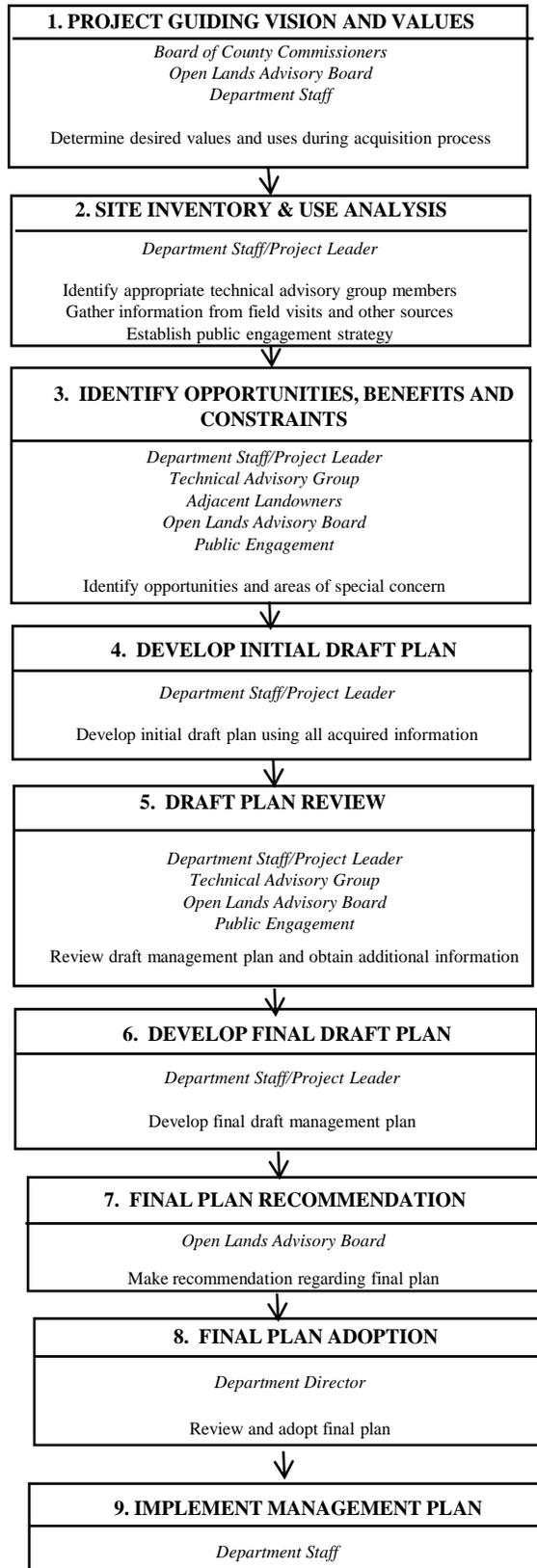
1. Wildlife are "owned" by the citizens of the State of Colorado, they don't belong to the owner upon whose land they live, feed, raise young, migrate through, etc. Deer, elk, hawks, prairie dogs, rattlesnakes, rabbits, and other wildlife common to this area naturally move around and outside of ownership boundaries. Larimer County does not fence park/open space boundaries to keep wildlife in or out. Wildlife may be managed within an open space for specific ecological reasons such as installing raptor perches to attract hunting raptors or installation of prairie dog barriers.
2. Larimer County employs agricultural best management practices (BMPs) on park and open space properties that may result in noise, odors, dust and other typical byproducts from farming or ranching activities. Practices that could have public health impacts, such as prescribed fires or aerially spraying herbicides, will be coordinated with neighbors.
3. Trails from neighboring properties into park and open space properties are prohibited, unless a neighborhood access agreement is in place between the landowners/HOA and Larimer County. Bordering neighborhoods can review the Larimer County Neighborhood Access Policy and apply for a permit.

4. Larimer County follows the Colorado Noxious Weed Act and utilizes an integrated weed management plan for each park and open space property, which may include the use of chemical herbicides, grazing, hand pulling, and insect release, prescribed fire and/or mowing.
5. Larimer County Park and open space properties will not be mowed for wildfire management purposes. Various best vegetation management practices such as grazing, prescribed fire and herbicide application are coordinated to manage plant communities and wildlife habitat.
6. Larimer County park and open space properties are managed primarily as natural landscapes. Minimal landscaping, such as native tree planting, mowing and weed control may occur in the developed areas (trailhead and campgrounds) of parks and open space properties.

DRAFT

MANAGEMENT PLANNING PROCESS FOR OPEN LANDS, PARKS AND TRAILS

The following represents potential management planning process steps. Specific steps utilized for a given management plan will be dependent upon the complexity of the management plan and the circumstances associated with a specific property.



**MANAGEMENT PLANNING PROCESS*
FOR OPEN LANDS, PARKS AND TRAILS**

***Refer to Planning Process Flowchart**

The following represents potential management planning process steps. Specific steps utilized for a given management plan will be dependent upon the complexity of the management plan and the circumstances associated with a specific property.

Management plans outline appropriate uses of open spaces, parks and trails, guides stewardship of natural and cultural resources, and identifies interpretive and environmental education opportunities. Updates are done as lands are acquired or management needs arise.

1. PROJECT GUIDING VISION AND VALUES

*Board of County Commissioners
Open Lands Advisory Board
Department Staff*

- Develop preliminary vision for the area during the evaluation and acquisition process.
- Communicate preliminary vision with key adjacent landowners and public for both the acquisition process and the management planning process.
- Acquire pertinent existing conditions information as part of the project evaluation for the acquisition process.

2. SITE INVENTORY & USE ANALYSIS

Department Staff/Project Leader

- Establish public engagement strategy
- Identify pertinent existing conditions information
- Identify appropriate technical advisory group members.
 - ◇ Subject experts – external (agency, organization or individual partners) and internal (staff members such as trails, education, visitor services, etc.)
 - ◇ Users groups
 - ◇ Other interest groups
- Gather information from advisory group and other sources.
 - ◇ Interviews
 - ◇ Field trips
 - ◇ Questionnaires/surveys
 - ◇ Research

3. IDENTIFY OPPORTUNITIES, BENEFITS AND CONSTRAINTS

Department Staff/Project Leader

Technical Advisory Group

Adjacent Landowners and Other Parties

Open Lands Advisory Board

Public Engagement

- Department staff identifies:
 - ◊ opportunities presented by the property/project;
 - ◊ benefits provided by the project to the users, the community, & adjacent landowners; and
 - ◊ constraints and issues that must be addressed in order to take advantage of the opportunities and benefits.
- Refine and develop draft of preliminary vision and/or statements of significance.
- Present preliminary vision, opportunities, benefits, and constraints to technical advisory team, key adjacent landowners and the Open Lands Advisory Board for input and advice.
- Implement public engagement strategies to explore and address vision, opportunities, benefits and constraints

4. DEVELOP INITIAL DRAFT PLAN

Department Staff/Project Leader

- Develop initial draft plan using information gathered from public engagement, resource advisory team, management staff and public.

5. DRAFT PLAN REVIEW

Department Staff/Project Leader

Technical Advisory Group

Open Lands Advisory Board

Public Engagement

- Share draft management plan with Technical Advisory Group, Open Lands Advisory Board and public for review and to obtain additional information.

6. DEVELOP FINAL DRAFT PLAN

Department Staff/Project Leader

- Develop modified/final draft management plan.
- Make available on website or other means for public review/comment.

7. FINAL PLAN RECOMMENDATION

Open Lands Advisory Board

- Review final plan and make recommendation for approval.

8. FINAL PLAN ADOPTION

Department Director

- Review and adopt final plan

Note that after a plan has been formally adopted, the budgeting for expenses associated with the implementation of the plan will be incorporated in the normal budgeting process.

9. IMPLEMENTATION OF MANAGEMENT PLAN

Department Staff

Adopted by the Larimer County Board of Commissioners ____
Adopted by the Larimer County Open Lands Advisory Board ____