



200,000-plus tires dumped in Larimer County gulches



[Nick Coltrain](#), nickcoltrain@coloradoan.com 10:24 p.m. MDT July 17, 2016

State gives \$495,000 to county to yank out old car tires



200,000-300,000 tires were dumped on a Northern Colorado ranch in the 1970s and 1980s.

Rolling seas of green grass, bright blue skies, stark black tire piles.

When it comes to the prairies of Northern Colorado, we all love the first two.

The third is a reality for a ranch property near Livermore.

An estimated 200,000 to 300,000 tires, spread across 17 different piles, litter the Roberts Ranch property, which is a conservation easement in Larimer County. The family that owned the land wanted to preserve it and protect it from development. It has since gone into an estate, with a likely future in a charitable trust, ranch manager Zach Thode said.

The tires were first dropped there in the 1970s. The idea? Use them as a bulwark against erosion from irrigation runoff on the property.

Then word got out that the 17,000 acres were open for tire dumping. Or, as Stephen Gillette, Larimer County's solid waste director, put it, "something didn't go as planned."

Larimer County to clean up tires at Roberts Ranch









Old black rubber is as much a part of the landscape as the rust-red dirt it rests on. For now, at least.

Larimer County to clean up tires at Roberts Ranch

Larimer County recently accepted a grant of about \$495,000 from the state to pay for the cleanup of the decades-old tire piles. If a wildfire roared through the area and the tires caught fire, it would make for an environmental disaster of toxic smoke and liquid run-off pouring from a hard-to-extinguish blaze.

That's a dramatic scenario — Thode says the gulches that house the tires make a random wildfire ignition unlikely. But there's another public health concern with the dumping grounds: Mosquitoes love it.

"The main thing is disease and mosquito habitat," Thode said. "Each tire holds water and it doesn't go away."

"It's a natural area with a lot of ecological value, and we'd like to see anything that takes from that removed."

Sally Ross, the Laramie Foothills steward with The Nature Conservancy, noted the added irony that the tires don't actually help with erosion control and, by preventing the growth of native plants, actually exacerbate issues. The fine, silty soil in the area is naturally erosion-prone, she said.

The Nature Conservancy, an international conservation group that holds the conservation easement and is charged with the land's preservation, has been involved in the planning effort for the tire removal and will help with restoration, Ross said.

"It's a natural area with a lot of ecological value, and we'd like to see anything that takes away from that removed," Ross said. "But also, to prevent erosion in the long term, (the tire removal) is a necessary action."

This tire removal effort will be the second whack at the problem. A couple of years ago, the state awarded a \$100,000 grant that led to the removal of about 22,000 tires, all of which were more organized than those that remain.

It's unclear how many tires this most recent grant will remove, county officials said.

Kerri Rollins, open lands program manager for Larimer County, said chains and cranes will likely be the key to hauling tires from the various ravines and properly disposing of them via a registered agent. Old tires can be mulched into playground flooring and used for landscaping, among other applications.

Even after the nearly \$500,000 removal effort, few think the property will be tire-free.

The few hundred thousand tires that can be spotted are those that are easiest to remove; the rest are mostly or fully buried in the soft dirt. With the difficulty in removing them, Thode is doubtful they'll come out in the near future.

REPORTER-HERALD

Loveland area offers dog-friendly trails

City, county facilities offer advice, locations for bringing along dogs on hikes

By *Shelley Widhalm*, Reporter-Herald Staff Writer

POSTED: 07/13/2016 10:35:57 PM MDT



Dawn Miller, left, and her retired greyhound racer Guy, walk along a trail at River's Edge Natural Area on June 18 with Julie Monroe, right, and her dog, Nicky, a rescue from the Weld County Humane Society during Dog Day Afternoon 2016 in Loveland. (*Michael Brian / Loveland Reporter-Herald*)

If you go

What: Information table on hiking with dogs, offered by the Larimer County Department of Natural Resources.

When: 8-10:30 a.m., Saturday, July 16.

Where: Devil's Backbone trailhead, west of Loveland off U.S. 34.

Cost: Free.

Led by: Sheri Gintner, a certified dog behavior consultant.

Taking a pet dog on a hike in Larimer County requires a little bit of planning and knowing which places are dog-friendly.

Those places are determined by the state, county or city entity overseeing the properties.

Dogs are allowed at most parks and open spaces operated by the Larimer County Department of Natural Resources.

"Planning your route and making sure you have enough water, food and resources for your dog and keeping your dog on a leash will ensure you and your dog have a great hike," said Teddy Parker-Renga, community relations specialist for the Department of Natural Resources.

Where Dogs are Allowed

Dogs are allowed in most areas of the county's parks, which have reservoirs managed by the Department of Natural Resources, but they are not allowed at any of the swim beaches for public health and safety reasons. The list of parks includes Pinewood, Flatiron and Horsetooth reservoirs and Carter Lake.

Dogs also are allowed in the county's open spaces, including Devil's Backbone, Horsetooth Mountain, Hermit Park and River's Bluff open spaces. They are not allowed in Red Mountain Open Space, which borders the Soapstone Natural Area, and on Rimrock Trail at Devil's Backbone that connects with the Coyote Ridge Natural Area in Fort Collins — both areas prohibit dogs. Dogs also are prohibited from the Fossil Creek Reservoir Natural Area, co-managed with the city of Fort Collins.

In Loveland, dogs can be brought along to the city parks, recreation trails and most open spaces unless they are wildlife reserves, such as Morey Wildlife Reserve, which prohibit dogs. The dogs need to be under the owner's control and leashed on a leash 6 feet or less.

"Sometimes we won't take ourselves out for a walk, but we'll take our dog out for walk," said Michele Van Hare, environmental education and volunteer coordinator for Loveland open lands. "It's a way to get out and have a companion. When you get to a stopping point, you have someone to share it with."

Some examples of Loveland's natural areas that allow dogs are River's Edge Natural Area (which some users use to also access the off-leash dog park at Fairgrounds Park) and the King's Crossing, Meadow Brook, Old St. Louis and Oxbow natural areas.

Limited Access for Dogs

In Rocky Mountain National Park, dogs and other pets are allowed in limited areas, but are prohibited on trails, tundra and meadows, said Kyle Patterson, public affairs officer for the park.

"They are allowed where vehicles are allowed," Patterson said.

Dogs can be in the park, as long as they are leashed, on established roads, in parking areas and in established campgrounds and picnic areas, but not in the backcountry, she said.

The leashes need to be 6 feet or less, and the dogs are prohibited from making noise that impacts visitors or wildlife, Patterson said. They cannot be left unattended in a vehicle or tied to anything, such as trees or bushes, she said.

At Larimer County's parks and open spaces, the regulations for visiting with a pet are listed on trailhead kiosks, where some have water fountains with dog bowls underneath, such as at the Blue Sky trailhead and one that will be installed at Devil's Backbone trailhead later this summer. Signs indicate the areas where dogs are not allowed.

Advice for Bringing Dogs Along

In county areas, dogs need to be on a leash of 10 feet or less.

Visitors bringing their dogs are advised to make sure they bring enough water for them, particularly because there are areas with little shade, Parker-Renga said. The leashing is for visitor and animal safety and to protect resources, he said, adding that dogs off leash can chase wildlife, trample vegetation or encounter snakes.

"A leashed dog encourages pet owners to clean up a pet's waste," Parker-Renga said. "Make sure you have a good eye on your dog as you're hiking with them and staying as close to the trail as possible. Keep an eye out where the dog is stepping as best as you can."

Dogs cannot be left unattended in a car, tent or tied to something, Parker-Renga said.

"You need to have them with you," he said. "We encourage people to bring their dogs. ... There needs to be places where people can go on a hike with their dog, and we're happy to provide those places."

Van Hare recommends dog owners watch out for prickly plants and snakes when they take their dogs on hikes or to open spaces and consider taking their dogs out in the early morning while it's still cool. She recommends checking the pads of their feet between the toes for grass seeds and other debris.

"Be real conscious of heat and (remember) the dogs are walking in fur coats, and bring plenty of water," Van Hare said.

REPORTER-HERALD

Trail work underway at Hermit Park area

By Reporter-Herald Staff

POSTED: 07/13/2016 10:28:07 PM MDT

Larimer County Conservation Corps members are helping to build a new trail at Hermit Park Open Space, two miles southeast of Estes Park.

They worked July 5-8 and will again on July 18-21, building a portion of the new trail by hand using a variety of tools, from shovels to picks to Pulaskis.

"We're excited and fortunate to have the Larimer County Conservation Corps crew help us build the new trail," said Joel Schwab, trails and open lands project supervisor for Larimer County Department of Natural Resources, said in a press release. "The crew members can get a lot done in two weeks, and we've got a lot of trail to build this summer."

The new multi-use trail will be about six miles long. It is expected to be completed over the next two years.

The trail will connect the camping areas at the open space and include new trailheads for access.

Volunteers will help build the trail in projects planned for early August and mid-October.

Soderberg trailhead lot for horse trailers to open

By Reporter-Herald Staff

POSTED: 07/06/2016 04:32:10 PM MDT

The Larimer County Natural Resources Department is wrapping up work this week at Soderberg trailhead, an access point to Horsetooth Mountain Open Space.

The trailhead is one of Larimer County's busiest trailheads, often hitting capacity for parking on weekends and holidays, Charlie Gindler, natural resource specialist, said in a press release.

He said a separate parking lot has been built at Soderberg trailhead for horse trailers only. It includes five spaces for a vehicle and trailer.

The existing parking lot at the trailhead was reconfigured with more single-vehicle parking spaces, angled parking and enhanced flow around the parking lot, Gindler added.

Most of the work is expected to be completed by Friday. Any additional work will not affect access or result in closures, Gindler said.

Soderberg Trailhead is located along Shoreline Drive on the west side of Horsetooth Reservoir.

REPORTER-HERALD

Input sought on future of Larimer parks, Ranch

Larimer creating two master plans

By Pamela Johnson, Reporter-Herald Staff Writer

POSTED: 07/06/2016 03:51:28 PM MDT

Larimer County wants to hear from residents about their vision for the future of county parks as well as The Ranch.

The Department of Natural Resources and The Ranch Events Complex are combining efforts to seek public input on two separate master plans — a strategy officials say will provide input from a wider audience on activities in the county. The two departments are separate, but both provide entertainment and activities throughout the county, officials have said.

Residents are being asked for input on how the county can improve management and facilities at Carter Lake, Flat Iron, Pinewood and Horsetooth Reservoirs as well as The Ranch.

The input will be considered in the creation of two separate master plans — an update of the 2007 parks master plan and the very first master plan for The Ranch.

The parks plan will identify priority projects and strategies to accomplish those specific goals at the reservoirs that are managed for recreation by the Department of Natural Resources.

For The Ranch, the plan will outline alternatives for the existing facilities, possible expansions and how the county will pay for these projects. Facilities at The Ranch include the Budweiser Events Center, First National Bank Exhibition Halls, McKee 4-H Youth and Community Building as well as the indoor arena and outdoor spaces.

Residents can take an online survey now at www.onegreatcountytoplay.com, and then in August, the county will hold three public meetings at different locations. Details on the Aug. 22, 23 and 24 meetings have not yet been released.

The process of creating the plans is expected to last a year.

REPORTER-HERALD

Larimer County begins reservoir, Ranch planning

By Reporter-Herald Staff

POSTED: 06/29/2016 05:05:47 PM MDT

Larimer County is beginning a year-long process to plan the future of county reservoir parks and The Ranch Events Complex.

The effort will give the public a chance to tell how the parks at Horsetooth, Flatiron and Pinewood reservoirs and Carter Lake and the fairgrounds should be improved.

Among the issues to be looked at for park management are balancing resource conservation with recreation opportunities, and evaluating the carrying capacity of the areas.

For The Ranch, managers want to determine what kinds of future facilities are needed at the fairgrounds, refine the direction of events and programs offered there, and look at whether to seek an extension of the existing sales tax or other funding.

Public meetings will be held in late August.

Members of the public can take a brief initial survey about the effort at bit.ly/29dzuRS.

For details, visit www.onegreatcountytoplay.com.



New trail coming to Hermit Park Open Space



[Stephen Meyers](#), stephenmeyers@coloradoan.com 4:23 p.m. MDT June 22, 2016



(Photo:

Courtesy of Joel Schwab/Larimer County)

Volunteers and the Larimer County Conservation Corps earlier this month started work on a new multiuse trail at [Hermit Park Open Space](#) near Estes Park.

The 6-mile trail, expected to be completed in two years, will connect the camping areas at the county-managed open space and include new trailheads for access, Larimer County Natural Resources said in a press release Wednesday.

OUTDOORS: [Trails, recreation areas still scarred from fires and floods](#)

Conservation Corps crews on June 13 began a 10-day process of clearing trees from a 3-mile corridor of the planned trail.

Great Outdoors Colorado awarded the Colorado Youth Corps Association a \$40,200 grant to fund the Conservation Corps' work in Larimer County.

THE DENVER POST

Colorado locks in more outdoor open space bit by bit amid population boom

Great Outdoors Colorado to spend \$47 million by 2018 to secure more open spaces



Anya Semenoff, The Denver Post

Golfers use the driving range at Applewood Golf Course on November 13, 2015, in Golden, Colorado. Greater Outdoors Colorado announced Monday it is one of almost 25,000 acres of land the group is working to protect.

By **BRUCE FINLEY** | bfineley@denverpost.com

PUBLISHED: June 20, 2016 at 4:31 pm | UPDATED: June 22, 2016 at 10:48 am

As more people fill more space, land conservationists at Great Outdoors Colorado are committing \$19.8 million to save four parcels covering 24,825 acres — including a golf course.

And GOCO officials say they'll spend an additional \$27.2 million by December 2018 to try to protect large landscapes in the face of development.

But the new “open space” from suburbs to rural pastures, adding to 1 million acres statewide that GOCO has helped save since 1992, won't be enough to guarantee the room to roam that Westerners traditionally enjoyed. Colorado's population density is increasing.

“If the state continues to grow at the current pace, no, \$47 million is not enough to protect everything. It’ll be a good step,” GOCO open space program director Michele Frishman said.

“Colorado will look different. Where are all these people going to live? Where are they going to recreate?”

The latest parcels:

- 4,348 acres of ranchland near Gunnison, between Crested Butte and Gothic, where the Trust for Public Land has been working to keep agriculture in business.
- 2,182 acres west of Fort Collins adjacent to Larimer County’s Horsetooth Mountain Open Space.
- 18,149 acres of Costilla County land near Alamosa, including 6 miles along the Rio Grande River.
- The [146-acre Applewood Golf Course](#) west of Denver, near Golden, where developers planned to put in housing.

The golf course purchase marks a first for GOCO. A \$3 million grant matched a community priority. Some 10,000 residents of the Prospect Recreation and Parks District, facing construction of 400 single-family homes, voted to spend up to \$9 million to buy the golf course to prevent development.

Parks board chairman Jim Zimmerman said those 146 acres have been a golf course since 1956, surviving a Coors push to mine gravel. Zimmerman said preserving the golf course could help wildlife.

“You just would really rather not have that much housing development,” Zimmerman said. “We really want the recreation value, the open space. Something of that nature.”

Launched by voters in 1992, GOCO has directed \$917 million of [state lottery proceeds](#) to 4,700 open-space projects, including creation or restoration of 900 miles of trails and 1,100 parks.

Colorado’s population (about 5.45 million) [increased by more than 100,000](#) from 2014 to 2015. State demographics data show that the density of people has increased by 25 percent in the past 15 years, from 41.9 people per square mile to 52.6.

A Colorado State University mapping project calculated that 30.8 million acres, roughly 46 percent of Colorado’s surface area, is at least partially protected against future development. Protected land includes acres owned by the federal and state governments and land under conservation or other easements that prevent construction.

Beyond the desires for recreation, population growth and development threaten wildlife and the health of grasslands and forests.

“We do need to have aggressive goals. Our goal for the next five years is conservation of 750,000 acres of land. Northwest and southeast Colorado are our priority areas,” Colorado Nature Conservancy director Carlos Fernandez said, contemplating needs of bighorn sheep.

Future conservation easements negotiated in southeastern Colorado ideally would cover 25,000 to 30,000 acres, Fernandez said.

“The bigger you can do those deals, the more that you can guarantee a diversity of wildlife for generations to come.”



Rattlesnake bites Fort Collins groom during photoshoot



Sarah Jane Kyle, sarahkyle@coloradoan.com 9:42 a.m. MDT June 22, 2016



(Photo: Courtesy of Maddie Mae, maddiemaephoto.com)

A Fort Collins groom received an unwelcome wedding gift from a rattlesnake while taking photos at Horsetooth Reservoir on Monday evening.

Johnny and Laura Benson's wedding party drove up to Horsetooth Reservoir from Bellvue to make memories and take wedding photos. As the wedding photographer encouraged the group to back up to get the perfect shot, Johnny's friends began joking about rattlesnakes and getting bit. Soon after, it wasn't a joke.



After the rest of the bridal party headed to the reception, Johnny, 44, stayed behind to take romantic sunset photos with his new bride. That's when a rattlesnake decided to make good on the bridal party's jokes and bit the groom.

Johnny and Laura received help from a Larimer County park ranger and Johnny went to Poudre Valley Hospital for treatment while his wedding guests

"freaked out," said longtime friend Nowell Vincent, 41, of Fort Collins.

Fortunately the groom, who Vincent said is "notorious for these moments in life," was soon laughing it off and was able to return to the reception to celebrate his new marriage.



What to do after a rattlesnake bite

- Look for swelling and large, bloody or dark-colored blisters forming in the bite area, which mean the bite was venomous. Some bites are dry, with no venom injected.
- Call 911 and get to the hospital as soon as possible
- Keep the patient calm and gently immobilize the bitten limb, if possible, with an improvised splint (not too tight so you don't reduce blood flow).
- Remove all jewelry, watches and any other constricting clothing near the affected area in case of swelling.
- Do NOT do any of these things: use a tourniquet, try to suck out the venom or try to catch and kill the snake.

Hike a new trail with Larimer County Passport program



[Stephen Meyers](#), stephenmeyers@coloradoan.com 3:41 a.m. MDT June 18, 2016



(Photo: Stephen Meyers/Coloradoan)

You've probably hiked Horsetooth Rock, what, like, 20 times?

How about Red Mountain Open Space?

Yeah, didn't think so.

Perhaps a little motivation will get you to visit Larimer County's other open spaces, each offering natural beauty, hiking trails and some solitude.

This month, Larimer County launched its Passport to Your Open Spaces program, which aims to encourage residents to explore, hike, bike, horseback ride the area's diverse open spaces and trails.

POLL: How many of Larimer County's 20 parks have you been to? Weigh in via the poll below. If you don't see the poll, try refreshing your page. Mobile users [tap here](#).

“It’s all about getting out there and seeing the places you haven’t been to yet,” said Teddy Parker-Renga, project manager for the passport program. “Have you ever been to Eagle’s Nest or River Bluffs? How about Red Mountain? It’s amazing how many beautiful, diverse open lands we have.”

Many of these open lands wouldn’t be available for recreation or possibly conserved if not for the Help Preserve Open Spaces Tax, which celebrates its 20th year this fall. The 20-year anniversary of the quarter-cent sales and use tax to protect open space helped put plans in motion to launch the Passport program, Parker-Renga said.

“The idea had been ruminating in our offices for a long time,” he said. “How do we both celebrate our open spaces and encourage people to check them out?”

Similar to Colorado Parks and Wildlife’s state parks passport program, Larimer County’s program features a booklet “passport” which you stamp at eight open spaces near Fort Collins.

Horsetooth Mountain and Devil’s Backbone — which both attract more than 100,000 visitors annually — are included in the passport program. Also on the program are Red Mountain and Eagle’s Nest north of Fort Collins, Ramsay-Shockey near Loveland, River Bluffs near Windsor, Fossil Creek Reservoir in south Fort Collins and Hermit Park near Estes Park.

At each open space are two wooden passport posts, at “easy” and “hard” locations. Each post features a custom-designed image showcasing the natural beauty and history of the open space.

Following directions from the passport booklet, which can be picked up at the open space trailheads, visitors hike or bike to the wooden posts to “stamp” their passports by marking over the image with a crayon or pencil to create a rubbing.

Most of the easy posts are short walks from the trailhead, while the more difficult posts require 2- to 4-mile one-way treks. The difficult post at Red Mountain is an all-day affair, Parker-Renga said.

“We wanted the program to appeal to both families and the uber athlete,” Parker-Renga said.

The passport program is more than just filling your booklet with cool rubbings and humblebrags.

Record eight of the 16 posts and you’ll receive a collapsible water bottle as a prize. Collect 12 and your prize is a T-shirt. Record all 16 images and you’ll be entered into a December

drawing for prizes, which include a tent from REI, Larimer County parks and open spaces annual pass or a two-nights' stay at Hermit Park.

After filling out your passport, mail it to Larimer County Department of Natural Resources, 1800 S. County Road 31, Loveland, CO 80537 and your prize will be mailed to you.

Don't fret if you can't complete your passport this year; Parker-Renga anticipates the passport program to stick around for a couple of years.

"Maybe we'll move some posts around. Maybe we'll have a new open space," Parker-Renga said. "It will be interesting to see where people are willing to go."

Guide to Larimer County Open Spaces

Eight open spaces are part of the Passport to Your Open Spaces program:

Horsetooth Mountain: Try the Audra Culver route to Horsetooth Rock.

Devil's Backbone: Mountain bikers will appreciate the new Hidden Valley Trail connector.

Eagle's Nest: You'll cross the North Fork of the Poudre River at this Livermore-area space.

Red Mountain: An extensive trail system for mountain bikers, hikers and horseback riders awaits at this rugged, beautiful space north of Fort Collins near the Wyoming line.

Fossil Creek Reservoir: Find some of the best bald eagle viewing in the region.

Hermit Park: Spend a weekend and camp in the ponderosa pine forest near Estes Park.

Ramsay-Shockey: Adjacent to Loveland's Pinewood Reservoir, this space features brilliant wildflowers, including bluebells larkspur and yucca blooms.

River Bluffs: Hop on the Poudre Trail here and you can ride east 20 miles to Greeley.



SCIENCE & CEREMONY

THE RETURN OF BISON TO NORTHERN COLORADO GRASSLANDS

COLEMAN CORNELIUS

MODERN SCIENCE AND ANCIENT RITUAL combined last fall as a herd of 10 American bison thundered onto the northern Colorado prairie, a major step in restoring the nation's largest iconic land mammal to this part of its historic range.

It was the first time in nearly 150 years that bison with pure heirloom genetics — from in and around Yellowstone National Park — had galloped across grasslands north of Fort Collins, and reproduction scientists at Colorado State were central to the return.

Before the release, a spiritual leader from the Crow Nation of Montana offered a prayer in his native Apsaaloké language, as the golden eagle feathers in his headdress waved in the prairie wind. Other Native American guests drummed, their voices rising in a traditional Pawnee song to welcome the bison.

Release of the Laramie Foothills Bison Conservation Herd was an achievement for conservationists, who are working to restore several indigenous species on public lands managed by Larimer County and the city of Fort Collins. The herd lives on 1,000 acres at Red Mountain Open Space and Soapstone Prairie Natural Area, about 25 miles north of Fort Collins.

The bison reintroduction is notable for both its environmental and its cultural value: The herd treads earth that some 10,000 years ago was home to giant bison and Ice Age humans, who relied on the Pleistocene mammals for meat, hides, and materials for fuel and tools — much as Plains tribes relied on American

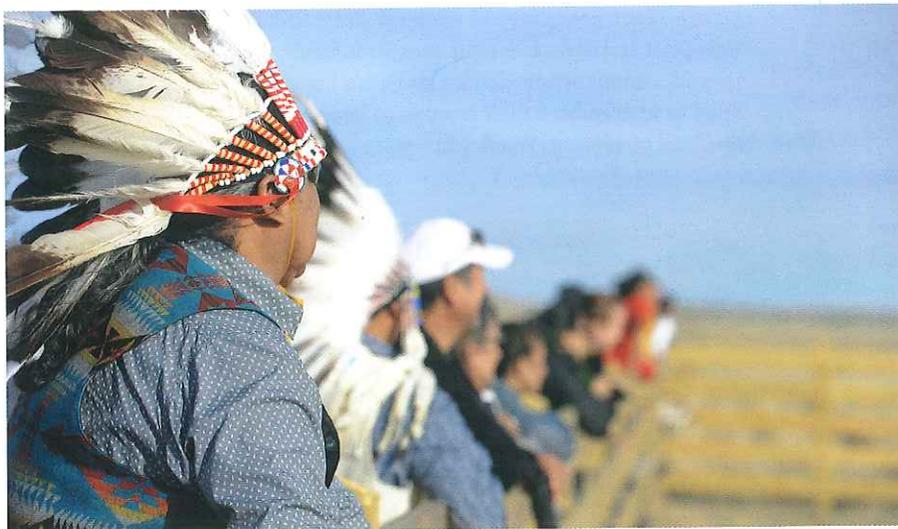
bison into the mid-1800s, when westward expansion threatened Native Americans and bison alike.

"Bringing these majestic animals back fills a void for a lot of Native American cultures," Ernest House Jr., executive director for the Colorado Commission of Indian Affairs House, told a crowd before the herd's release. "This animal is revered, and it's praised. It would bring life, and it got us to tomorrow."

Then there's the science. Unlike some other herds, the Laramie Foothills Bison Conservation Herd descends directly from heritage bison in Yellowstone National Park. This is striking because bison in the Greater Yellowstone Area often are afflicted with an infectious disease called brucellosis, which can also harm elk, cattle, and people. Brucellosis has been a barrier to moving American bison directly from Yellowstone.

Modern fertility science, supplied by CSU's Animal Reproduction and Biotechnology Laboratory, is enabling the conservation project.

Jennifer Barfield, an assistant professor and the project's lead reproduction scientist, recalled a meeting over coffee, when she and her partners realized that assisted reproductive technologies — pioneered for cattle — could be applied to bison as a workaround for infectious disease. The northern Colorado project marks the first time assisted reproductive technologies have been used to accomplish wildlife conservation. ■



"TO SEE SUCH A TREMENDOUS ANIMAL, AN AMERICAN ICON, HAVE ITS HOOVES TOUCH THE GROUND IN THIS AREA AGAIN, IT'S BEAUTIFUL. IT'S A BLESSING FOR THIS AREA. AS NATIVE PEOPLE, WE FEEL IT'S LIKE A NATION COMING BACK HOME."

TYRONE SMITH, DIRECTOR OF CSU
NATIVE AMERICAN CULTURAL CENTER

they have shown to our veterans is inspiring,” said Mark Gill, a retired Air Force colonel and CSU President Tony Frank’s chief of staff, who has taken a leading role in bolstering student-veteran programs and opportunities at CSU. “They realize, like we do, that student-veterans add experience, maturity and a valuable perspective to our classrooms and campus. The student-veterans and the entire CSU community benefit from these incredible gifts.”

“I can’t thank our donors enough. Because of their ongoing support, CSU continues its rise in the ranks of great universities for student-veterans. These tremendous gifts are not only an investment in the lives of individual students, but they are an investment in the future of the workforce in Colorado,” said Brett Anderson, vice president for University Advancement.

LINIGERS FORTIFY EXISTING SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

RE/MAX founders Dave and Gail Liniger have extended their commitment to CSU’s student-veterans by donating an additional \$3.53 million to the existing Liniger Honor, Service & Commitment Scholarship. In 2014 they donated \$2 million to create the scholarship program, which provides \$2,500 renewable per-semester scholarships to students who have served in combat. The program has provided more than 500 scholarships for student-veterans.

“The Liniger Scholarship has been a huge help and has allowed me to concentrate on my studies more and not have to work 40 hours per week to pay the bills,” said Katrina Bishop, a Navy veteran and microbiology senior, who plans to attend medical school.

ANSCHUTZ FOUNDATION GIFT CREATES NEW PROGRAM, SCHOLARSHIPS

A \$1.5 million gift from the Denver-based Anschutz Foundation has allowed CSU to greatly expand services and scholarships for student-veterans, and create an employment-related certificate program. The gift offers scholarships to spouses of CSU student-veterans who also would like to earn their degrees, and funds programs and individualized services – from tutoring to career services – to student-veterans through a new veteran community concept. The certificate program allows two people per year to learn how to manage veterans’ benefits

alongside CSU officials, and earn credentials through enrollment in a program at Mississippi State University, the only university that offers such a certificate.

“This is a great opportunity for anyone interested in learning to process veterans’ benefits, a skill that is in very high demand nationwide right now, to learn the complicated process, and get paid to do it,” said Marc Barker, director of CSU’s Adult Learner and Veteran Services and Veteran Education Benefits Office.

TWO GIFTS BOOST NEW START PROGRAM

The New Start for Student-Veterans program in the College of Health and Human Sciences’ Department of Occupational Therapy received \$300,000 of the \$1.5 million Anschutz Foundation gift to continue its work helping veterans with physical and mental trauma achieve college and career success.

The grant allows New Start to expand its services and begin to help other colleges and universities learn how they, too, can help injured veterans on their campuses. Dennis Repp, a CSU alumnus and veteran, who has donated more than \$2.5 million since 2012 to create the New Start Repp Distinguished Veterans Fund, matched the \$300,000 Anschutz Foundation gift.

Like Courtney, Dean Graby is receiving financial aid and supportive services at CSU, made possible by generous donors. He is also studying to earn a social work degree at CSU and admits that the pressure of having two parents in school, raising two small children, and adjusting to civilian life after the military can sometimes feel overwhelming. The New Start program, Liniger Scholarship and Anschutz Veteran Spouse Scholarship have all allowed him to sleep better at night, knowing he is able to care for himself and his family.

Dean Graby said he has a message for Repp, the Linigers, members of the Anschutz Foundation, and others who have donated to student-veteran programs: “Your generosity is working. Programs like New Start and the scholarship programs wouldn’t be around without private donors, and it is a huge stress relief to veterans and their families to know we have this kind of support. Thank you.” ■

AWARD-WINNING PROGRAMS

CSU has emerged as one of the country’s top destinations for student-veterans, and has received numerous accolades:



■ MILITARY TIMES

lists CSU 13th and the College of Business 29th among four-year universities on its annual “Best for Vets” list.



■ MONEY

MAGAZINE in November included CSU in its “25 Great Colleges for Veterans” list.

P*AVE

■ CSU recently was named a PEER ADVISORS FOR VETERAN EDUCATION (PAVE) campus, designating it one of only a select few universities offering the outstanding veteran peer-support program.

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THE SCIENCE

Assisted reproductive technologies, provided by CSU, allow reintroduction of American bison with original and complete bloodlines from the Greater Yellowstone Area. These include:

IN VITRO FERTILIZATION

ARTIFICIAL INSEMINATION

EMBRYO TRANSFER

LABORATORY WASHING OF SPERM CELLS AND EMBRYOS TO REMOVE BACTERIA THAT CAUSE BRUCELLOSIS

PROJECT PARTNERS

CITY OF FORT COLLINS

LARIMER COUNTY

USDA ANIMAL AND PLANT HEALTH INSPECTION SERVICE

CSU ANIMAL REPRODUCTION AND BIOTECHNOLOGY LABORATORY

A NATURAL BIRTH

IT'S AS IF THEY TIMED IT: Two woolly, red-brown dots appeared on the prairie just in time to become our national mammal.

Two cows in the Laramie Foothills Bison Conservation Herd calved the week President Obama signed the National Bison Legacy Act to make the American bison the official mammal of the United States.

The calves are the first American bison born in 150 years on this public land, where the species once grazed by the millions. In fact, they are the first calves born in the natural prairie setting since the conservation herd was released at Soapstone Prairie Natural Area and Red Mountain Open Space on Nov. 1, 2015.

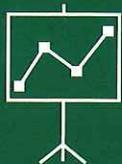
The births raised the herd's headcount to 12. And, in a reflection of a hands-off management philosophy, no one was close enough during the newborns' first



week to determine their sex. Just like it happens in the wild.

"These births are one of those hallmarks that tell us the bison are settling in well, and they'll make a home here," said Jennifer Barfield, CSU reproduction physiologist and project leader.

— Coleman Cornelius



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