

Department of Natural Resources

ANNUAL REPORT | 2022



Welcome

A Note from the Director



Photo: Rod Cerkoney

After two years of incredible uncertainty, a new normal is taking hold, and we are enthusiastically looking to the future. In-person gatherings have returned, along with travel and the normalcy of shopping, dining out, and attending events. Many lessons were learned during this incredible time in the history of the Department of Natural Resources and the world. In 2022, our team worked together to align a new path towards a refreshed mission and vision, along with identifying five core values that we hold true to how we collectively serve our community and each other. The journey to launch the Department's first strategic plan, COMPASS, was accomplished focusing on six guiding priorities. A touchstone for the next five years, COMPASS will guide our work, our service to those who share a connection to this amazing landscape, and our culture in new and exciting ways.

Daylan Figgs, Director



MISSION

We connect People, Nature & Place



VISION

Healthy Landscapes, Healthy People



VALUES

Excellence, Integrity & Trust,
Collective Good, Staff Well-being,
Courageous Leadership

Advisory Boards

Land Stewardship Advisory Board

Patrick Bickley
Ryan Blake
Tasha Carr, Chair (through August 2022)
Jesse Dillon
Ronald Harris, Chair
Michael Hayes, Vice Chair
Janae Malpas
Joshua Wenz

Open Lands Advisory Board

Gale Bernhardt
K-Lynn Cameron, Vice Chair
Mike Carter
Mark DeGregorio
Paul Hudnut
Peter Kelly
Dave Marvin, Chair
Gary Miller
Ward Nelson
Tom Shoemaker
Linda Stanley
Steve VanderMeer

Parks Advisory Board

Pete Blume
Adam Crossan
Robert Harris
Kristina Kachur, Vice Chair
Kathy Maher
Scott Murray
John (Bill) Prater
Ruthie Rollins, Chair
Phil Stout
Jill Wuertz

Larimer County Officials:

Board of County Commissioners
John Kefalas, Jody Shadduck-McNally,
Kristin Stephens

County Manager: Lorenda Volker
Linda Hoffman (retired April 2022)

**Community Planning, Infrastructure
and Resources Director:** Laurie Kadrich



LARIMER
COUNTY

NATURAL RESOURCES

Cover Photo: Dawn Wilson
1,547-acre open space
conserved in 2022
(formerly Heaven's Door Ranch)

Highlights from 2022

Open Space Acquisition Finalized



Photo: Dawn Wilson

Larimer County Natural Resources secured a major land acquisition for natural resource protection and public recreation this year. The county acquired a 1,547-acre property (formerly known as Heaven’s Door Ranch) conserving it into perpetuity as a future open space at the mouth of the Big Thompson Canyon along Highway 34. As a highly visible and easily accessible location, the property holds great significance to the county, its municipal partners Fort Collins and Loveland, and the community. In addition, Larimer County and the

City of Fort Collins partnered to conserve a 675-acre addition to Bobcat Ridge Natural Area, which fills an important gap in a well-established wildlife movement corridor. Regional partner Great Outdoors Colorado joined the county and City of Fort Collins to conserve 428 acres of the Quarter Circle Lazy H Ranch via conservation easement (CE). If you have traveled along County Road 74E to Red Feather Lakes, you would recognize the signature viewshed that this CE will now ensure remains intact in perpetuity.

Aligning Together with COMPASS

COMPASS is the Department of Natural Resources’ new guiding path of strategic priorities, goals, and actions buoyed by a clear mission, vision, and set of values. Adopted in 2022, this shared department-wide, staff-led strategic planning effort served as a catalyst to align everyday individual work within six broad priorities:



PROVIDE REGIONAL LEADERSHIP



FOSTER A POSITIVE WORK CULTURE



PROACTIVE LAND CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT



PLAN AND PROVIDE NATURE-BASED OPPORTUNITIES



APPLY LEVELS OF SERVICE



MAINTAIN A SUSTAINABLE FUNDING STRATEGY

To learn more about COMPASS, visit larimerdnr-compass.org

Diverse Web of Service Builds Positive Visitor Experiences

Have you ever wondered what it takes to serve over 1.5 million visitors that venture into Larimer County's parks and open spaces every year? A whole lot of dedication, collaboration, and toilet paper. In fact, over 15,000 rolls of it annually! The various web of support that is needed to build a safe and positive experience for visitors includes efforts by maintenance and landscape professionals, planners, trail professionals, grant writers, rangers, land stewardship managers, ANS inspectors, entrance station attendants, guest services reps, public information and education staff, event coordinators, volunteers, accountants, and many partners. While these team members often go about their business behind the

scenes without any fanfare, each and every role is critical to providing visitors a safe and positive experience. In 2022, rangers tracked over 50,000 community contacts, of which 99% were positive, educational or customer service-driven.

Photo: Brett Southworth



Bottom left: Setting parking stops ensures visitors know where to go when visiting a day use area.



Photo: Jen Murray



Photo: Larimer County

Top right: ANS staff celebrate after intercepting a mussel-infested boat at Horsetooth Reservoir. **Bottom right:** Bathroom cleaners are an essential service to all visitors who enjoy our parks and open spaces.

Partnership Expands Restoration of Cameron Peak Fire Burn Area

Land restoration and vegetation management following the Cameron Peak Fire ensures sustainable landscape health. An expansion of an existing vegetation management partnership with the United States Forest Service (USFS) solidified this year, which triggered treatment of noxious weeds within the Cameron Peak Fire burn area. Noxious weeds thrive in recently burned areas because of decreased competition from native plant species and increased sunlight. Over 6,600 acres of the Arapaho Roosevelt National Forest were surveyed following the fire, and Natural Resources Department staff treated 280 acres of the surveyed area targeting 19 state-listed noxious

weeds. This effort ensures a watershed scale benefit by preventing the spread of weeds from higher elevations.



Photo: Chris Metz

Land stewardship staff treating noxious weeds in burn area during the summer.



2022 at a Glance


2,389

Acres of land conserved; equaling 56,644 total acres of land conserved 

67,760

Aquatic Nuisance Species (ANS) inspections at Horsetooth Reservoir & Carter Lake 

93%

Larimer County-managed trails maintained at 'B' level or greater 


2022 

2022 Starburst Award from the Colorado Lottery for the Sky View Campground

\$7 Million

Grant and partnership dollars secured 


4.27 Miles


Open space fence converted to "wildlife friendly" (2,150 lbs recycled) 

21,840

Volunteer hours donated (equal to 10.5 full-time employees) 

May 13, 2022

Grand Opening Sky View Campground at Carter Lake 

2022 

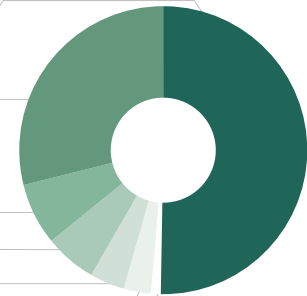
2022 Colorado Weed Management Association Partnership Award for Northern Colorado Big Game Critical Winter Range Restoration Team

Financial Summary

Larimer County Natural Resources revenues are realized from several sources and totaled \$25,583,568 in 2022. Expenses for 2022 were \$21,211,560. Future land acquisition and capital improvement projects are funded through the difference between annual revenue and expenses.

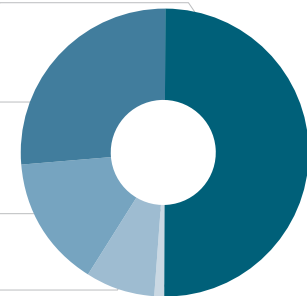
2022 Revenue \$25,583,568

Specific Designated Taxes	51%
User Fees & Service Charges	29%
Donations/Other Revenue	7%
Miscellaneous Revenue	6%
Colorado Trust/Lottery	4%
Intergovernment	3%
General Fund	1%



2022 Expenses \$21,211,560

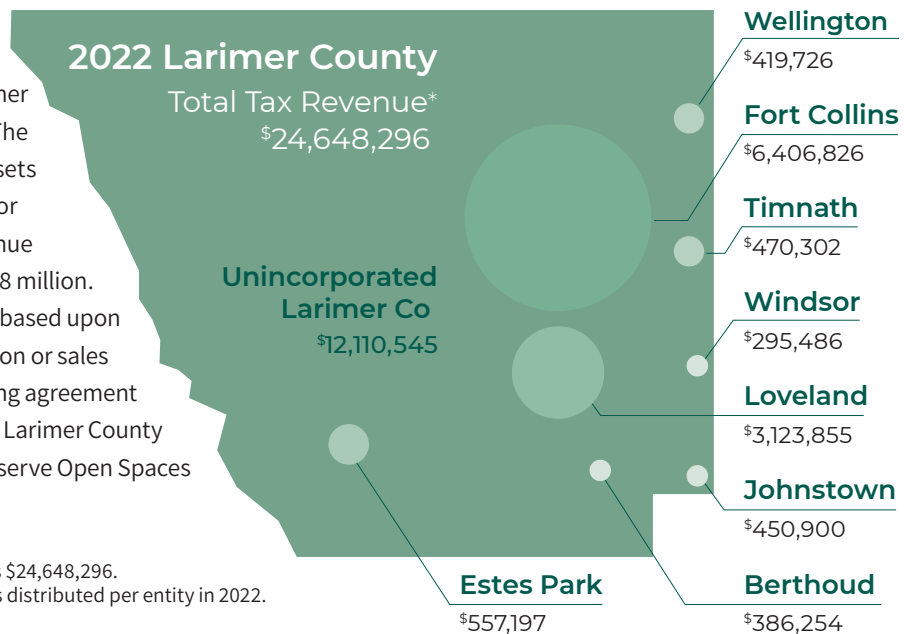
Open Space Acquisition / Development	51%
Reservoir Parks Operations / Personnel	27%
Open Space Maintenance / Personnel	15%
Weed District / Enterprise	7%
Reservoir Parks Capital Expense	1%



*These figures are not audited. Audit will be completed in mid-2023. Figures in this chart have been rounded where appropriate.

Help Preserve Open Spaces Tax Revenues*

Revenue from the 1/4-cent Help Preserve Open Spaces sales and use tax is shared among Larimer County and eight municipalities. The tax was extended in 2014 and sunsets in 2043. It is not imposed on food or prescription drugs. The total revenue collected to date is more than \$308 million. Distributions to municipalities are based upon the highest yield of either population or sales tax generation. This revenue sharing agreement ensures that residents throughout Larimer County receive benefits from the Help Preserve Open Spaces sales and use tax.



*Total tax revenue collected in 2022 was \$24,648,296. This graphic illustrates how the tax was distributed per entity in 2022.