



Larimer County Natural Resources

QUARTERLY BOARD REPORT

Q3 2025

JULY · AUGUST · SEPTEMBER



COMPASS PRIORITY

PROACTIVE LAND CONSERVATION & MANAGEMENT

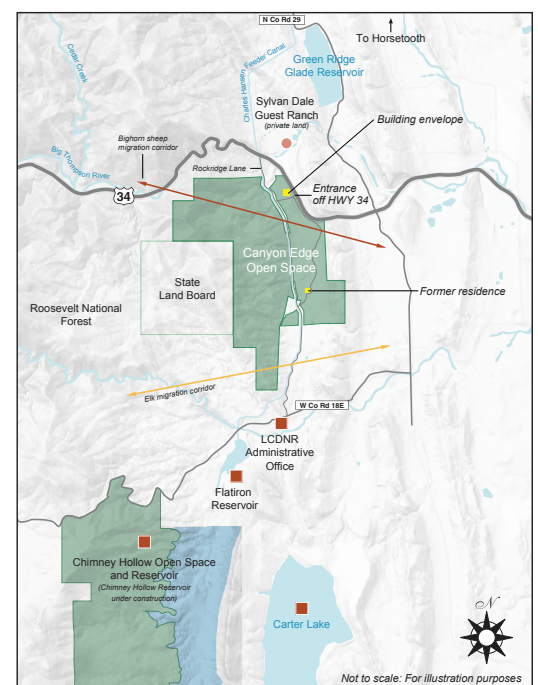


Canyon Edge Open Space earns Starburst Award for conservation impact

Larimer County, in partnership with the cities of Fort Collins and Loveland, received the 2025 Starburst Award from the Colorado Lottery for the acquisition of Canyon Edge Open Space. The award, presented in August to the Board of County Commissioners, recognizes exemplary projects funded through Lottery proceeds.

Acquired in November 2022 for \$9 million, the 1,500-acre property was under immediate threat of development. Swift coordination and a \$1.5 million Centennial Program Grant from Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) helped secure the land's protection. Located within the Blue Mountain Land Conservation Priority Area and near the Big Thompson River and Buckhorn/Redstone priority areas, Canyon Edge plays a key role in regional landscape connectivity, habitat conservation, and future public access.

The award highlights the power of partnerships in protecting irreplaceable natural resources and reinforces the long-term community benefits of proactive land conservation.



Honoring a legacy through preparedness and collaboration



On August 20, the five-year anniversary of Ranger Brendan Unitt's passing was marked with the annual Brendan Unitt Boat Rescue Training Day at Horsetooth Reservoir. The event honors Brendan's legacy while preparing rangers and partner agencies for real-world water emergencies.

This year's training was the largest yet, with boats and personnel from Carter Lake, Horsetooth, Boyd Lake, Chatfield, Cherry Creek, and Longmont, along with Fort Collins Natural Areas rangers, seasonal Big Thompson District rangers, Larimer County staff, and Emergency Services medics. Ten scenarios were run during the day, supported by 15–20 role players and six private boats to simulate realistic emergencies. Inlet Bay Marina generously donated two personal watercraft rentals, while Sam's Club of Fort Collins contributed a \$150 gift card to provide meals and hydration for participants.

The training reflects a continued commitment to preparedness, collaboration, and honoring Brendan's legacy by ensuring first responders are ready for critical moments.



COMPASS PRIORITY
SUSTAINABLE FUNDING STRATEGY

Efforts underway to enhance operations and reduce costs

In Q3, the Business Services Division implemented key operational upgrades to improve financial accuracy, reduce staff time, and support department-wide consistency. Permit revenue reconciliation was automated, cutting daily processing time from two hours to just ten minutes and eliminating manual entry. The department also transitioned to a unified credit card processor, MSB, aligning with county-wide standards and enabling expanded online payment options.

A Fleet Liaison transition is underway, with division managers now engaged in reviewing workflows and finalizing 2026 vehicle replacement plans. The FY2026 budget was submitted on schedule, with post-approval plans to enhance reporting clarity through simplified account coding and regular check-ins.

Work also began on a centralized Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) library and the development of process maps to support training, cross-coverage and audit readiness. These efforts lay the groundwork for more transparent, sustainable, and resilient operations across the department.

Early Detection Rapid Response targets high-priority noxious weeds



COMPASS PRIORITY

PROACTIVE LAND CONSERVATION & MANAGEMENT

In 2009, Larimer County Department of Natural Resources (LCDNR), in partnership with the Colorado Department of Agriculture, launched the Early Detection Rapid Response (EDRR) program to eradicate emerging noxious weeds threatening the local economy and environment. Now in its sixteenth year, the program continues to provide significant benefits to the county and its residents.

During this summer, staff mapped and addressed, through management or landowner contact, all known land parcels with eighteen high-priority noxious weed species. To prioritize sites for treatment, staff considered multiple factors, including landowner permission, total acres infested, and biological characteristics such as seed viability in the soil and plant reproduction strategies. On parcels with high-priority weeds where LCDNR crews cannot provide on-the-ground management due to limited resources, staff inspectors verify that the responsible landowner is managing these noxious weeds independently. Ongoing monitoring and early intervention remain essential tools in preventing the spread of invasive species across Larimer County.



EDRR crew digging Black Henbane in the Estes Park area.

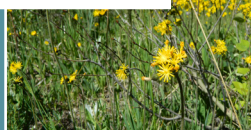
HIGH-PRIORITY NOXIOUS WEEDS

STATE LIST A

CYPRESS SPURGE



MEADOW HAWKWEED



ORANGE HAWKWEED



HAIRY WILLOW-HERB



MEDITERRANEAN SAGE



PURPLE LOOSESTRIFE



KNOTWEEDS



MYRTLE SPURGE



YELLOW FLAG IRIS



STATE LIST B

ABSINTH WORMWOOD



BLACK HENBANE



CHINESE CLEMATIS



COMMON TANSY



OXEYE DAISY



PLUMELESS THISTLE



ERADICATED

YELLOW STARTHISTLE



WATCH LIST

GARLIC MUSTARD



To learn more about noxious weeds in Larimer County, visit:
larimer.gov/naturalresources/weeds

SPOTTED KNAPWEED





Federal Lands Access Project gains speed at reservoirs



Parking area paving and access improvements at Carter Lake and Horsetooth Reservoir ramped up this summer, with revenue-impacting portions on track to finish by the end of 2025. Led by Central Federal Lands in coordination with the project contractor, the accelerated timeline minimizes disruptions during peak recreation months.

At Carter Lake, active construction is underway at the new Quarry lot, North Pines, Eagle Campground, Big Thompson Day Use Area, and along County Road 31. At Horsetooth Reservoir, paving is progressing at South Bay, Inlet Bay, and along West County Road 38E.

Looking ahead, finishing work will continue into 2026, with a new turn lane into South Bay at Horsetooth Reservoir scheduled for completion by Memorial Day. Advancing the schedule not only saves both dollars and resources but also helps ensure safer, smoother access for visitors during Larimer County's busiest outdoor season.

New team members bring energy and experience



COMPASS PRIORITY
POSITIVE WORK CULTURE

This quarter, new staff members joined various divisions, bringing fresh perspectives, strong skills, and a shared commitment to public service and stewardship. Their diverse backgrounds and personal interests add depth to the team, helping the department better serve Larimer County's residents and natural spaces.



Kelsey Provost

Business Services Division Manager

With a strong background in public administration, Kelsey is focused on enhancing operational systems and team support. Outside of work, she enjoys hiking, fishing, paddleboarding, pickleball, and drawing.



Ang Antonacci-Sarnecki

Senior Accountant

With a background in financial management, Ang enjoys Pilates, hiking, cycling, quilting, and spending time with family.



Ashley Krueger

Education & Volunteer Coordinator

Ashley is passionate about connecting people to nature and spends her free time gardening, illustrating, fishing, hiking, and observing bees and birds.



Liz Munsterteiger

Communications Coordinator

Liz brings a foundation in design and visual storytelling. Away from work, she's a fan of classic movies, photography, home improvement, and college sports, especially CU football and KU basketball.

Financial Summary

Larimer County Natural Resources Department has five primary revenue sources including Colorado Lottery proceeds, the Help Preserve Open Spaces Sales Tax, user fees on open spaces, user fees on reservoir parks, and the weed district property tax. Below are the July 1 through September 30 revenue summaries and operating expenses as compared to the same period the previous year.

Open Spaces

	2024	2025	
REVENUE			
Help Preserve Open Space Tax	\$6,583,604	\$6,846,467	
User Fees Revenue	\$1,202,684	\$1,258,657	
Service Charges Revenue	\$137,162	\$118,984	
Miscellaneous Revenue	\$6,435	\$103,920	
Interest Revenue	\$923,225	\$782,984	
Total	\$8,853,110	\$9,111,012	3%
Grants/Partnerships	\$163,876	\$6,158,059	
<i>\$2Mil from GOCO, \$3Mil from City of FC Livermore Conservation</i>			
EXPENSE			
Personnel Expenses	\$1,468,024	\$1,430,969	
Operating Expenses	\$2,493,537	\$2,439,141	
Total	\$3,961,562	\$3,870,110	-2%
Countywide Indirects	\$171,593	\$155,130	-10%
Acquisitions/Projects	\$101,620	\$16,586,654	
<i>Redtail, Livermore, HP Shop, Etc</i>			

Conservation Trust - Lottery

	2024	2025	
REVENUE			
Revenue	\$764,081	\$ 743,891	-3%

Reservoir Parks

	2024	2025	
REVENUE			
User Fees Revenue	\$4,384,547	\$4,371,317	
Service Charges Revenue	\$269,186	\$226,943	
General Fund	\$100,561	\$67,000	
Miscellaneous Revenue	\$68,317	\$68,976	
Total	\$4,822,611	\$4,734,236	-2%
Grants/Partnerships	\$145,413	\$235,249	
EXPENSE			
Personnel Expenses	\$4,073,817	\$4,321,592	
Operating Expenses	\$321,391	\$296,003	
Total	\$4,395,209	\$4,617,595	5%
Countywide Indirects	\$477,104	\$491,940	3%
Projects	\$232,847	\$279,181	

County Weed District & Enterprise

	2024	2025	
REVENUE			
Property Taxes	\$1,063,355	\$1,049,275	
Service Charges Revenue	\$259,446	\$247,355	
General Fund	\$78,862	\$108,000	
Miscellaneous Revenue	-	-	
Total	\$1,401,663	\$1,404,630	0%
Significant Donation/Other Revenue			
Sale of Mulberry Building	\$516,474		
EXPENSE			
Personnel Expenses	\$516,537	\$550,237	
Operating Expenses	\$574,600	\$569,783	
Total	\$1,091,137	\$1,120,020	3%
Countywide Indirects	\$30,318		-100%
<i>Indirect Exemption for 2025</i>			



MISSION: We connect people, nature and place.

VISION: Healthy Landscapes, Healthy People.



NATURE-BASED OPPORTUNITIES



PROACTIVE LAND CONSERVATION
& MANAGEMENT



LEVELS OF SERVICE



REGIONAL LEADERSHIP



SUSTAINABLE FUNDING
STRATEGY



POSITIVE WORK CULTURE



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BOARD
REPORT

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CONNECT WITH US

Larimer County Department of Natural Resources
1800 S. County Road 31, Loveland, CO
(970) 619-4570
larimer.gov/naturalresources

