



PHOTO TAKEN AT EAGLES NEST OPEN SPACE
LIZ MUNSTERTEIGER

Larimer County Natural Resources



QUARTERLY BOARD REPORT

Q2 2026

APRIL · MAY · JUNE



Poudre River Trail opens June 13 with community celebration & Colorado Lottery Starburst Award

In June, the Department of Natural Resources and its agency partners invited the community to celebrate the official completion of the Poudre River Trail.

The milestone fulfilled a decades-long vision: creating 45 miles of continuous, paved, multi-use trail connecting Bellvue to Greeley.

Held at Timnath Community Park, the celebration brought together representatives from partner organizations, GOCO, and the Colorado Lottery, who presented project partners with the 2026 Starburst Award.

To reflect the project's highly collaborative nature, the event concluded with a symbolic ribbon-connecting ceremony. Representatives from each partner agency linked separate pieces of multi-colored fabric, illustrating the regional teamwork that made the trail's completion possible.

More than 500 community members attended, marking this significant achievement for Northern Colorado.

PHOTOS BY GRANT SMITH, CITY OF FORT COLLINS





COMPASS PRIORITY
NATURE-BASED OPPORTUNITIES

Rangers & Reels event introduces youth to fishing at Flatiron Reservoir

Rangers & Reels Youth Fishing Day gave local youth and families a welcoming, hands-on introduction to fishing at Flatiron Reservoir. The free program served 55 participants new to fishing, including 23 children and 32 adults, with support from Larimer County rangers and two Colorado Parks and Wildlife staff members. Designed for kids ages 5 to 16 years old who were new to fishing or just getting started, the event covered casting, basic fishing skills, safe fish handling and outdoor stewardship. Participants received the gear they needed for the day, including rods and bait, and were able to take supplies home to keep learning. Sponsors Scheels and Culver's of Loveland helped make the event possible.



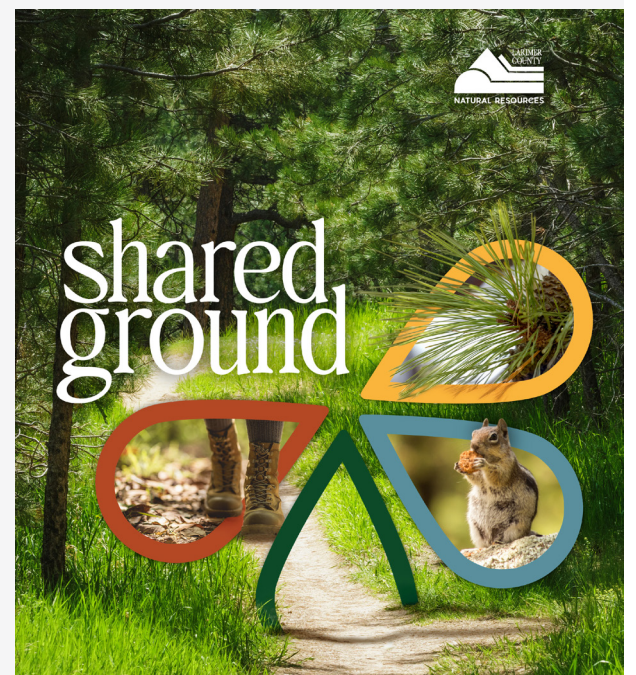
Impact of unauthorized trails ripples far beyond the surface



COMPASS PRIORITY
PROACTIVE LAND CONSERVATION & MANAGEMENT

Undesignated trails in open spaces, constructed without authorization or a public planning review process, can cause significant negative ecological, financial, and public safety impacts. Closing undesignated or unauthorized trails is essential to halt habitat fragmentation, prevent soil erosion, stop invasive weed growth, and eliminate public safety hazards. Two recently constructed unauthorized trails were discovered and restored at Horsetooth Mountain Open Space earlier this summer. Restoring the unauthorized trails to their natural state diverted LCDNR staff hours and funding away from regularly scheduled maintenance on the county's official, vetted trail network, which serves thousands of recreators daily. The department maintains zero tolerance for unauthorized trail construction in its open spaces.

To address this ongoing challenge, staff launched "Shared Ground," a community awareness campaign. Educating the public on the deeper ecological impacts of illegal trail construction while inviting the community to pledge their commitment to stay on designated, sustainably built trails. Learn more at larimer.gov/naturalresources/shared-ground



Two grants secured for restoration in the Poudre River watershed

The department is advancing final designs for two high-priority habitat restoration projects at River Bluffs and Red Mountain Open Spaces, supported by \$353,000 from two Colorado Water Conservation Board grants. Using innovative, science-driven strategies, the projects will re-establish native habitats, reconnect floodplains, and strengthen hydrologic resilience along Fossil Creek and Boxelder Creek—both tributaries to the Cache la Poudre River. Once designs are finalized, the department will seek additional funding partnerships to implement the restoration work, fulfilling a key initiative to enhance ecological function and climate resiliency of county open spaces.



COMPASS PRIORITY

PROACTIVE LAND CONSERVATION & MANAGEMENT



Existing berm decreases floodplain connection



Existing alfalfa field limits ecological diversity

New legislative amendment bolsters noxious weed compliance



BEFORE



AFTER

In 2025, the Colorado State Legislature amended the Colorado Noxious Weed Act to authorize local governments to levy fines against private landowners who violate state and local noxious weed regulations. This legislative change gives local jurisdictions an enforcement tool similar to those already used for zoning violations. To improve compliance and better control the spread of designated noxious weeds across the county, DNR will assess fines under specific, defined circumstances—such as persistent violations and impacts to neighboring properties. With this additional tool to address noxious weed spread, we anticipate that landowners will more readily and proactively manage noxious weeds on their properties.

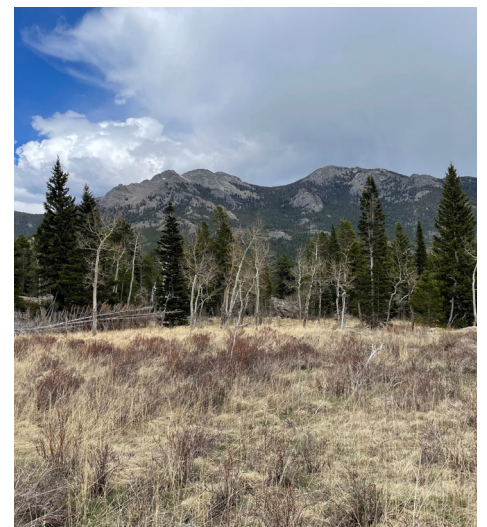
For more information, visit larimer.gov/naturalresources/weeds/law

Photos show dense infestations of the noxious weed musk thistle prior to and following compliance efforts. Landowner cooperation resulted in successful management with significantly reduced infestations allowing for desirable vegetation to re-establish.

Partnership with EVLT on Childer conservation easement

Larimer County is partnering with the Estes Valley Land Trust (EVLT) to hold a conservation easement on a 161-acre property the land trust is acquiring.

The easement, originally established in 1996 and held by the land trust, will transfer to the county when the land trust purchases the property. Situated in the Estes Valley and bordering Rocky Mountain National Park, the property buffers the park's east side and the south side of the Salvation Army High Peak Camp. The land features open grassland meadows, montane forest, extensive wetlands, and a perennial stream (Alpine Brook). It provides critical wildlife habitat and offers scenic views from Highway 7, the Longs Peak Trailhead, and the access road.



Financial Summary

The Department of Natural Resources has five primary revenue sources including Colorado Lottery proceeds, the Help Preserve Open Spaces sales tax, user fees on open spaces, and reservoir parks, and the Weed District property tax.

YTD through 06/30/26 financial comparison for 2025 vs 2026 as of 8/11/26 (preliminary and unaudited).

Conservation Trust/Lottery

	2025	2026	% YOY CHANGE
REVENUE			
	501,279	475,754	-5%
EXPENSE			
Prior year adjustment		(680)	

Open Spaces

	2025	2026	% YOY CHANGE
REVENUE			
Help Preserve Open Space Tax	3,626,991	3,641,391	
User Fees Revenue	726,511	769,685	
Service Charges Revenue	85,856	94,728	
Miscellaneous Revenue	33	575	
Grants/Partnerships	5,445,507	347,759	
Interest Revenue	467,148	567,920	
TOTAL	10,352,046	5,422,058	-48%
EXPENSE			
Personnel Expenses	795,392	855,249	
Operating Expenses	394,019	1,700,637	
TOTAL	1,189,411	2,555,886	115%
Countywide Indirects	94,121	103,191	10%
Acquisitions/Projects	16,569,029	2,518,730	

Reservoir Parks

	2025	2026	% YOY CHANGE
REVENUE			
User Fees Revenue	2,679,389	2,915,638	9%
Service Charges Revenue	103,055	136,531	
Grants/Partnerships	4,552	26,769	
General Fund	67,000	--	
Miscellaneous Revenue	61	--	
TOTAL	2,854,057	3,078,938	8%
EXPENSE			
Personnel Expenses	2,539,904	2,479,438	
Operating Expenses	1,501,134	189,970	
TOTAL	4,041,038	2,669,409	-34%
Countywide Indirects	298,972	298,521	0%
Projects	37,174	298,269	

Weed District/Enterprise

	2025	2026	% YOY CHANGE
REVENUE			
Property Taxes	1,012,297	1,084,811	
Service Charges Revenue	139,385	115,404	
General Fund	108,000	111,000	
Miscellaneous Revenue	--	--	
TOTAL	1,259,682	1,311,215	4%
EXPENSE			
Personnel Expenses	311,571	275,144	
Operating Expenses	175,153	340,122	
TOTAL	486,724	615,266	26%
Countywide Indirects	--	15,839	
<i>Indirect exemption for 2025</i>			



MISSION: We connect people, nature and place.

VISION: Healthy Landscapes, Healthy People.



PROACTIVE LAND
CONSERVATION
& MANAGEMENT



LIVING
OUR VALUES



NATURE-BASED
OPPORTUNITIES



SUSTAINABLE OPERATIONS
& FINANCIAL STABILITY



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BOARD
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CONNECT WITH US

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