

## LARIMER COUNTY OPEN LANDS ADVISORY BOARD

*The mission of Larimer County Department of Natural Resources is to establish, protect and manage significant regional parks and open lands providing quality outdoor recreational opportunities and stewardship of natural resource values. We are committed to fostering a sense of community and appreciation for the natural and agricultural heritage of Larimer County for present and future generations.*

**Date:** November 12, 2020

**Time:** 5:00 – 8:00 p.m.

**Location:** Zoom Webinar. Public registration:

[https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_3vUh7JMjRWqmpuO84D5uqg](https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_3vUh7JMjRWqmpuO84D5uqg)

**Contact:** Please contact Sidney at [smichl@larimer.org](mailto:smichl@larimer.org) or 970-619-4462 if you are unable to attend

## AGENDA

Scheduled times are subject to change.

1. CALL TO ORDER/INTRODUCTIONS
2. PUBLIC COMMENT
3. AGENDA REVIEW
4. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF LAST MEETING MINUTES
5. INFORMATION & ANNOUNCEMENTS
  - a. Natural Resources events for this month: [larimer.org/naturalresources](http://larimer.org/naturalresources).
  - b. To sign up for Open Lands Advisory Board updates, go to [apps.larimer.org/subscriptions.cfm](http://apps.larimer.org/subscriptions.cfm), enter your email, click “Subscribe,” and check the “Open Lands Advisory Board” box.
6. UPDATES & REPORTS
  - a. Facility/Maintenance projects update – Steve Gibson/Chris Fleming
7. DISCUSSION ITEMS
  - a. Horsetooth Mountain Plan update timeline – Zac Wiebe

- b. Regional Board Meeting 2021
  - c. Department financial information/reporting discussion
8. ACTION ITEMS
- a. Steputis Conservation Easement Final Review
  - b. Devil's Backbone Open Space User Fee Recommendation
9. OTHER BUSINESS
10. NEXT MEETING SCHEDULED: December 10, 2020 via Zoom Webinar
11. EXECUTIVE SESSION: Pursuant to C.R.S. (24-6-402(4)(a)) for discussion pertaining to the purchase, acquisition, lease, transfer or sale of any real, personal or other property interest.
12. ADJOURN

*Included in PDF:*

- Agenda
- Steputis CE Final Review

*Attached Separately:*

- Minutes of last meeting
- News article

This meeting will be recorded and archived according to law. Votes require a quorum.  
Public can view agenda and minutes at:  
[http://legacy.larimer.org/boards/minutes/openlands\\_advisory\\_board.cfm](http://legacy.larimer.org/boards/minutes/openlands_advisory_board.cfm)



### FINAL REVIEW: West Red Mountain Ranch CE

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**Date:** November 12, 2020

**Staff Assigned:** Justin Core

***Property Description:***

The 884-acre “West Red Mountain Ranch,” owned by Mark and Candee Steputis is located in northern Larimer County, in the Laramie Foothills Priority Area. The ranch is situated between County Road 37 (Red Mountain Road) to the west and Red Mountain Open Space (RMOS) to the east, about one half-mile south of the Wyoming border. Private properties border the ranch to the north and south.

The ranch contains a variety of habitat types. Moving west to east across the property, grassland habitats transition to open ponderosa pine forests, which become interspersed with mountain mahogany shrublands in more rugged areas in the eastern portion of the property. Rock outcroppings are found throughout the central and eastern portions of the property, and the north branch of Boxelder Creek bisects the ranch, providing water resources and added biological diversity associated with significant riparian habitat. A variety of wildlife utilize the habitats afforded by the property. Mule deer and elk move between the ½-mile shared boundary of West Red Mountain Ranch and RMOS. The land is very well managed under a Colorado State Forest Service Forest Ag Program plan. In addition to the habitat values associated with the easement, conservation of the property will also protect scenic values and limit subdivision into 35-acre parcels, as has occurred immediately to the south. The ranch also included the original Boxelder townsite, of which only a couple stone foundations remain.

While protecting the entirety of the ranch property, the conservation easement terms allow the following uses by the landowner: three 10-acre “building envelopes” at sites where residential improvements currently exist; the right to make a one-time subdivision of the ranch to create a parcel no greater than 60 acres; three “non-residential improvements” (loafing sheds) outside of the surveyed “building envelopes”; and various other rights customary to the County’s conservation easements, including the landowner’s right to engage in non-motorized recreational opportunities, including hunting and fishing, and the right to manage the land for forest health, limited agriculture (grazing) and noxious weed eradication.

The conservation easement acquisition is a component of the 2020 Laramie Foothills Expansion Project grant funded by Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO), aided by additional partnership funding from the City of Fort Collins. Larimer County and Fort Collins will pay for transaction costs associated with the conveyance, per the terms of the Intergovernmental Agreement Concerning the 2020 Laramie Foothills Expansion Project. Additionally, the landowner has agreed to donate a portion of the conservation easement value towards the purchase price.

- Priority Area:** Laramie Foothills
- Short Legal:** Portions of Sections 21, 22, 27, 28 and 29, Township 12 North, Range 70 West
- Acreage:** 884 acres
- Current Zoning:** O – Open
- Adjacent Zoning:** O – Open
- Water Rights:** None
- Mineral Rights:** Severed; the probability of extraction or removal of minerals on the site by any surface mining method is so remote as to be negligible (per minerals report, issued August 31, 2020)
- Liens:** Mortgage (subordination is a required component of the CE Purchase Contract)

<b><i>Evaluation Criteria:</i></b>	<b><i>Staff Assessment</i></b>
Scenic Values	M
Buffer Values	H
Wetlands Values	H
Significant Plants/Natural Communities Values	H
Outdoor Recreation Values	N/A
Historical/Archaeological Values	M
Agricultural Values	L
Geological/Paleontological Values	L
Education Values	N/A
Context	H
Community Benefit	H
Partnerships/Cost-Value	H

**Partnerships:**

Mark and Candee Steputis  
 Great Outdoors Colorado  
 City of Fort Collins

**Description:**

Landowner / CE Grantor; \$300,000.00  
 donative portion of CE value  
 Funding partner  
 Funding partner

**Property Interest for Larimer County:**

Conservation Easement

**Purchase Price:**

\$1,300,000.00

(Appraised value is \$1,600,000.00)

**Funding Sources:****Amount:**

Great Outdoors Colorado  
 City of Fort Collins  
 Steputis Donation Value  
 Larimer County

\$218,000.00  
 \$378,700.00  
 \$300,000.00  
 \$703,300.00

**Closing Date:**

December 23, 2020

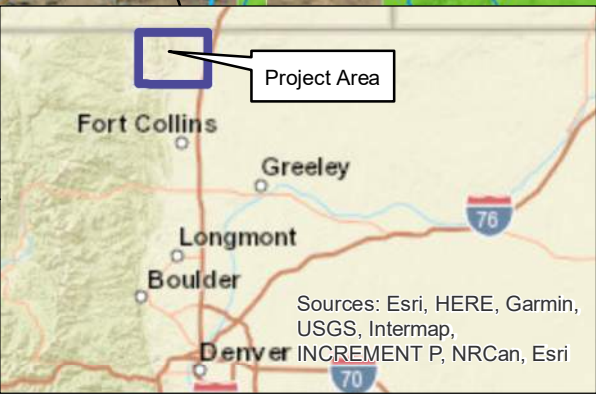
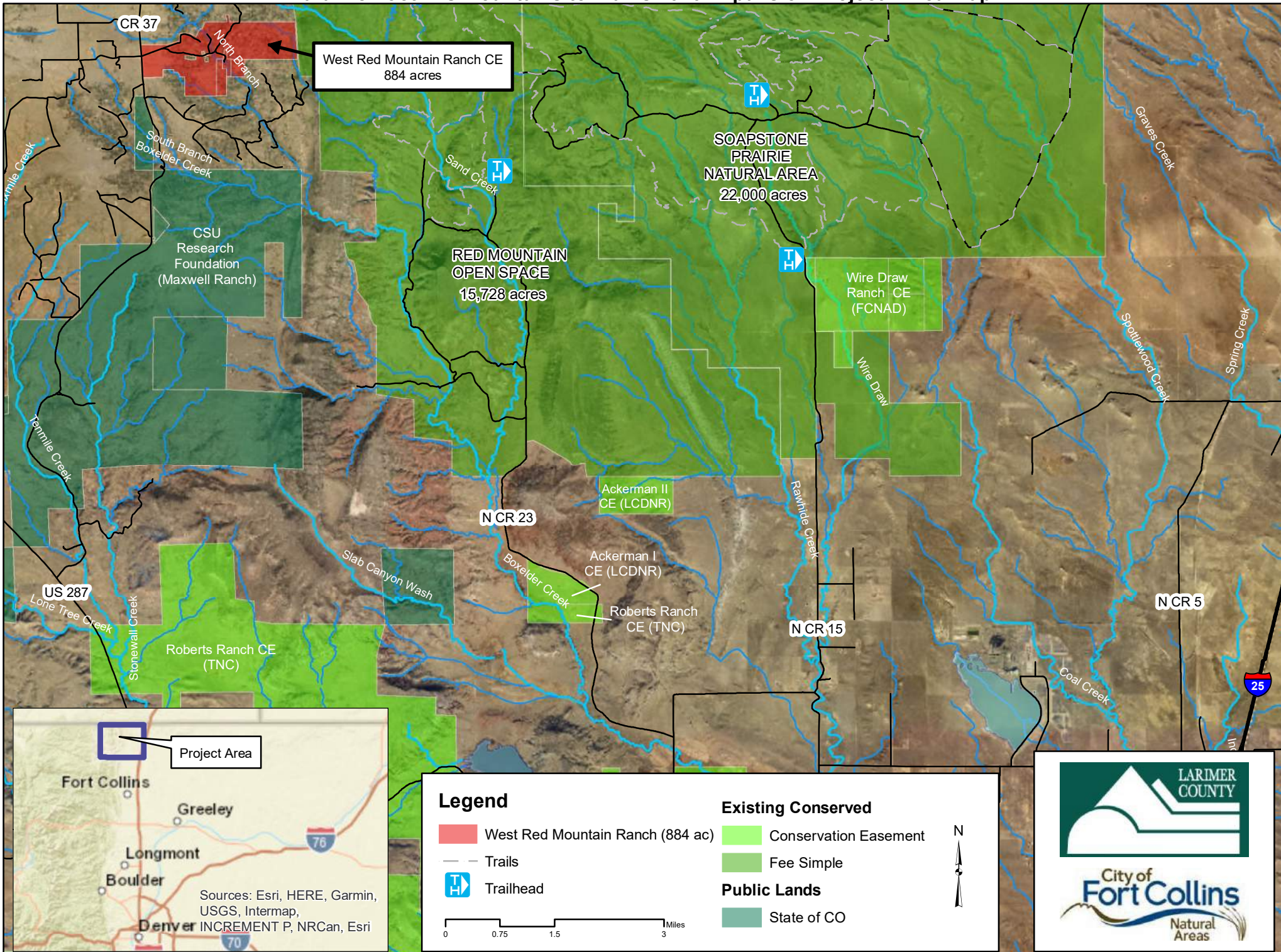
**Open Lands Advisory Board Final Review Date:**

November 12, 2020

**Board of County Commissioners Final Review Date:**

December 8, 2020

# Laramie Foothills Mountains to Plains 2020 Expansion Project - Area Map



**Legend**

- West Red Mountain Ranch (884 ac)
- Conservation Easement
- Fee Simple
- Public Lands
- State of CO
- Trails
- T  
H Trailhead

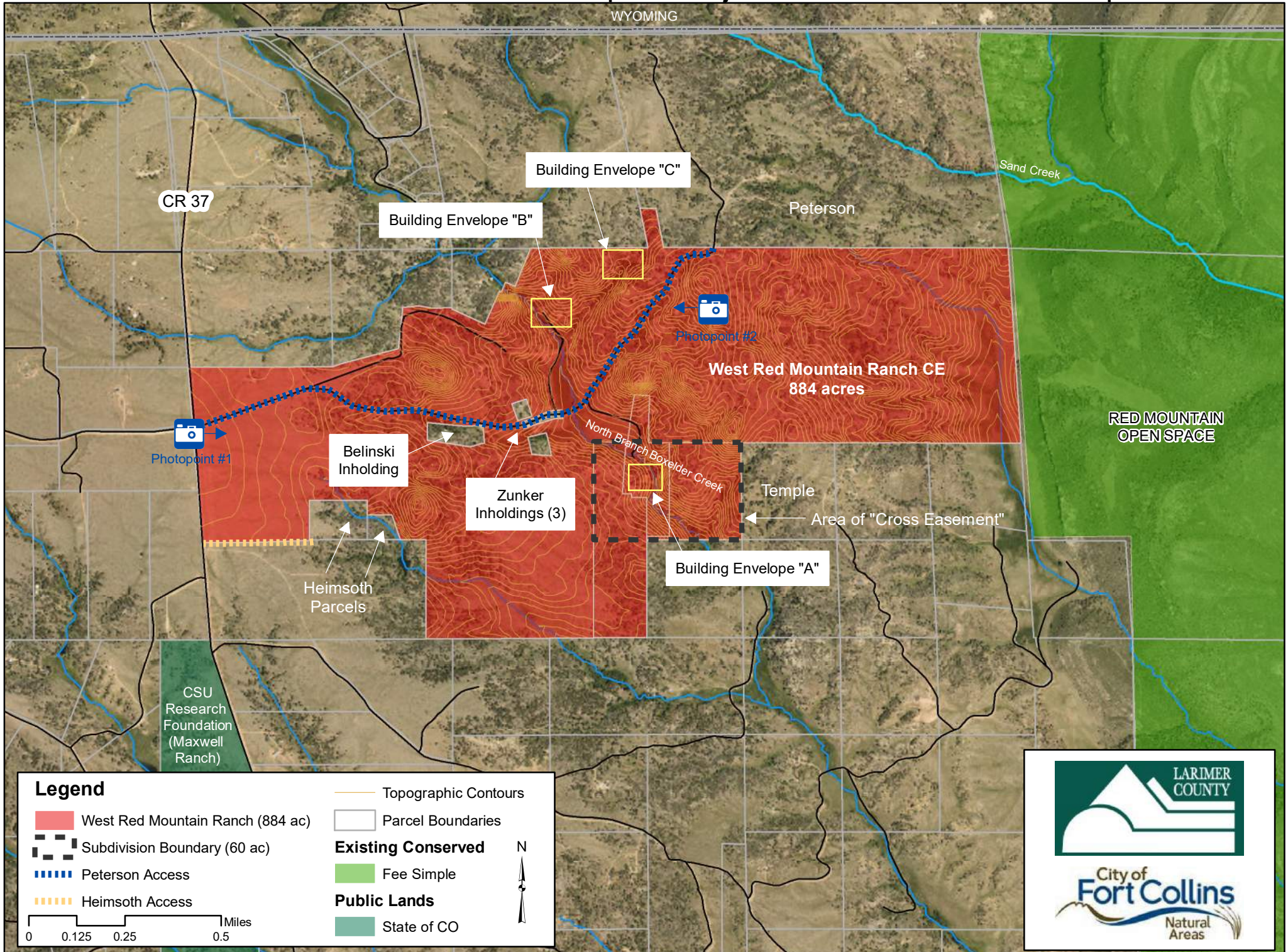
0 0.75 1.5 3 Miles

N  
↑  
↓

LARAMIER COUNTY

City of Fort Collins  
Natural Areas

# Laramie Foothills Mountains to Plains 2020 Expansion Project - West Red Mountain Ranch Site Map



**Legend**

- West Red Mountain Ranch (884 ac)
- Subdivision Boundary (60 ac)
- Peterson Access
- Heimsoth Access
- Topographic Contours
- Parcel Boundaries
- Existing Conserved**
- Fee Simple
- Public Lands**
- State of CO

0 0.125 0.25 0.5 Miles

N

LARIMER COUNTY

City of Fort Collins Natural Areas

All land in map extent Zoned: O - Open

2016 Larimer County Aerial Imagery



LITTLE PONDEROSA RANCH

ESTABLISHED 1988

NO TRESPASSING  
NO FEEDING  
KEEP OFF

NO TRESPASSING  
NO FEEDING  
KEEP OFF





