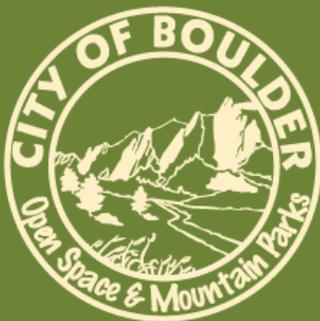




Photograph by Ann Duncan



CITY OF BOULDER  
OPEN SPACE AND MOUNTAIN PARKS  
ANNUAL REPORT 2010

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## *Letter from the Director of Open Space and Mountain Parks*

**W**elcome to the City of Boulder Open Space and Mountain Parks annual report.

This report is created to offer a look back over the past year, to recount some of the work completed in 2010 and a look into the future at what we plan to tackle in 2011. This report is our way of sharing the diverse and meaningful work this department does in protecting the valuable resources and providing a high-quality visitor experience for all who come to this special place.

The people of Boulder showed exceptional foresight in electing to establish a sales tax to protect this extraordinary natural system right here in our community. We feel privileged to work toward the continued protection of this unique land system for perpetuity. There are very few places in the country where you can be in a world-class natural environment that contains the abundance and diversity of plant and animal life that make up these lands. The commitment of our talented and hard-working staff is to maintain the quality of this environment while providing an enjoyable experience for all who visit this system.

Among the important projects of 2010 was the planning work directed at the mountain backdrop, the West Trail Study Area. Staff provided critical background information to inform the work of a group of residents convened to develop management recommendations for the West Trail Study Area. But while the planning work was underway the work of the department did not stop. Restoration staff worked to restore three riparian corridors, three grassland areas and a lakeshore, the community outreach team delivered over 342 programs to 15,000 visitors and our rangers fought on both the Fourmile and Dome fires.

You can read about these projects and many others in this 2010 Annual Report. You can also get a glimpse into our future plans for 2011. I hope this report has provided you some insight about the work of this department and our direction for the future. I want to thank you personally for your continued help and support for this important work protecting this community treasure.

*Mike Patton*



ECOLOGICAL SYSTEMS •

# RESOURCE SYSTEMS



COMMUNITY OUTREACH • RANGER-NATURALISTS • ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING • RESOURCE INFORMATION

# Ecological Systems: Wildlife Program



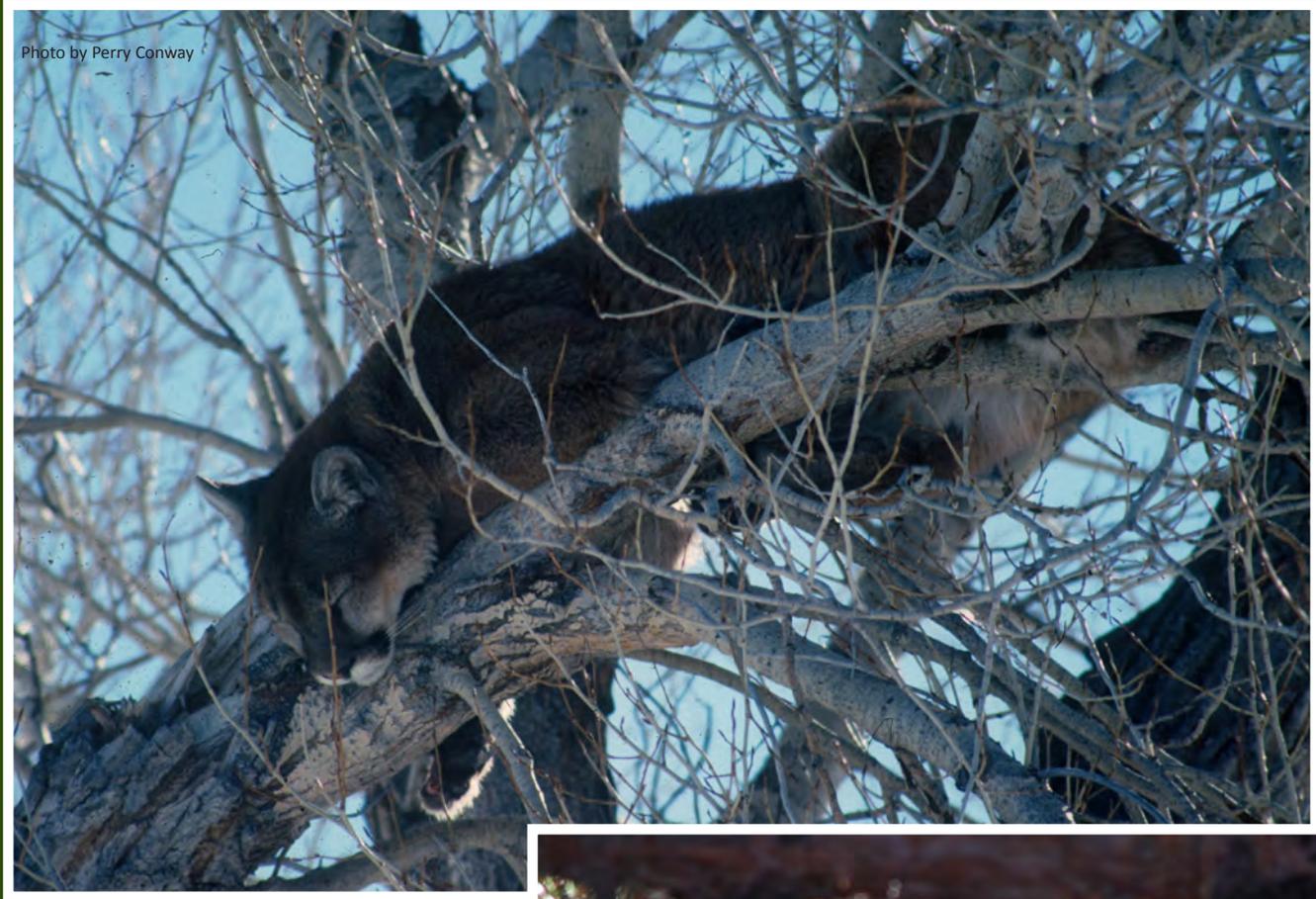
## Wildlife Program

The wildlife program at Open Space and Mountain Parks (OSMP) coordinates a variety of activities including research, monitoring, supporting and participating in planning projects, providing wildlife information to the community, and actively managing or restoring habitat for wildlife. Field work monitoring and researching wildlife communities and populations are completed to collect baseline data to understand more about the distribution of species on the system and to monitor the response of animal, bird, and frog populations to changes in grazing regime, new trail development, or other management actions. This information allows OSMP to better make adaptive management decisions and support planning processes such as the Grassland Ecosystem Management Plan, the West Trail Study Area (TSA) Plan and others.

## 2010 Accomplishments

- Provided support and wildlife information to inform the deliberations and recommendations of the Community Collaborative Group (CCG) for the West TSA.
- Assisted in completion of and city council acceptance of the department's Grassland Ecosystem Management Plan followed by first steps in implementation of wildlife-related actions called for in the plan.
- Sponsored wildlife research projects with outside researchers looking at topics including mountain lion habitat use and management, bobcat population and disease dynamics, impacts of climate change on grasshopper life cycles, Coal Creek riparian area bird community, dynamics of sylvatic plague in prairie dog populations, impacts of climate change and elevation on small mammal communities and many others.
- Spent over 900 person hours monitoring wildlife populations on OSMP including forest hawks and owls, grassland birds, cliff-nesting raptors, bats, forest and riparian songbirds, elk, deer and turkey, northern leopard frogs, black-tailed prairie dog and New Zealand mudsnails.
- Completed habitat restoration projects and planning to improve habitat or movement for native and game fish, elk, shrub-nesting and riparian birds, and northern leopard frogs.
- Offered presentations to community and staff groups to discuss topics of interest related to wildlife.





Mountain lion resting in a tree.



Bobcats sleeping in a tree.

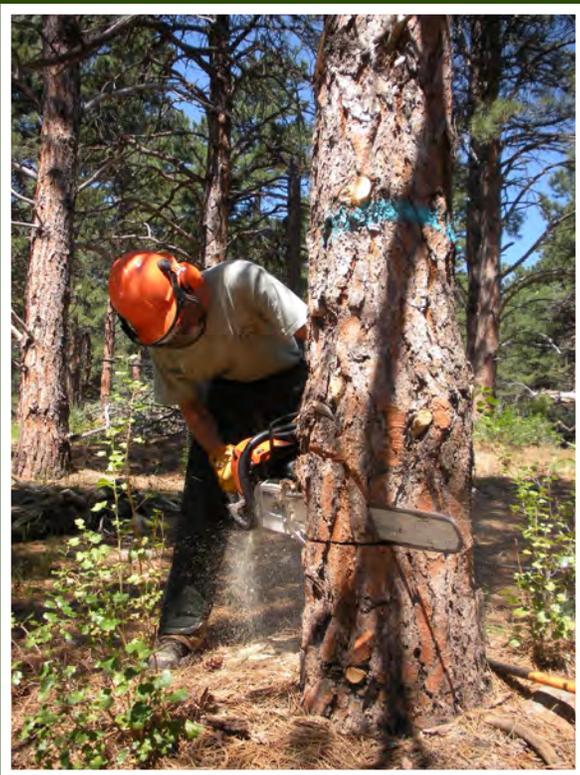
# Ecological Systems: Forest Ecosystem Management Plan

## *Forest Ecosystem Management Plan*

The 2010 field season was the seventh consecutive year Open Space and Mountain Parks committed full-time resources to the implementation of the Forest Ecosystem Management Plan (FEMP). In total, 131 ten-hour days were spent on forest management by the OSMP crew between April 5 and December 22, 2010. Over the course of the season, 125 forest acres were thinned. All of the thinning projects were focused in low elevation ponderosa stands that posed a significant wildfire threat to homes in the urban interface, were highly susceptible to mountain pine beetle, and where wildlife habitat could be improved.

Much of the success during the 2010 season can be attributed to a grant from the Colorado State Forest Service and a continued collaborative effort with the city Fire Department mitigation crew. In 2010, OSMP secured over \$50,000 in grants to complete forest-thinning projects. Between the 2009 and 2010 seasons OSMP forest management has benefited from close to \$90,000 in grant funding. OSMP also coordinated closely with the city Fire Department Wildland Division and received valuable help in the field from the fire mitigation crew.

Open Space and Mountain Parks forestry staff also worked on a wide variety of other departmental priorities. Crew members helped with Integrated Pest Management (IPM), hazard tree removal, restoration projects, and monitoring projects. The OSMP forest crew is also an important part of OSMP's fire-fighting resources. The forest crew responded as initial attack to the Fourmile and Dome fires and also served a longer-term role on both fires completing suppression and mop-up operations.



A member of the OSMP Forest Restoration Crew cuts a Ponderosa pine as part of a forest health and fire mitigation projects.

## *2010 Accomplishments:*

- Thinned over 125 acres of low elevation ponderosa pine forests in the Shanahan Ridge and Anemone Hill areas. Both of these areas have high ecological value and are adjacent to communities at high risk to wildfires.
- The OSMP forest management crew played an important role in wildfire response. The crew spent over two weeks helping contain and suppress both the Fourmile fire and the Dome fire.
- Sampled over 130 vegetation cover plots in forest treatment areas to measure the effectiveness of management work.
- Secured over \$50,000 in federal and state grants to help implement forest restoration and fire mitigation projects on city lands.



OSMP firefighters look on as a slurry bomber drops fire retardant on the Dome fire.

# Ecological Systems: Integrated Pest Management

## *Integrated Pest Management*

The Integrated Pest Management (IPM) program manages over 54 invasive species each year using mechanical techniques as the primary method of control. In 2010, invasive species management played a significant role within the OSMP Legacy Restoration Program. The two programs will continue to coordinate projects and seasonal staff as funding becomes available through coordinated long-term planning efforts.

A primary goal of OSMP's IPM program is to reduce the amounts of herbicides and other chemicals used to control invasive species. Towards that end, OSMP makes use of our wonderful volunteers, community groups, prescriptive livestock grazing and fire, and even biological controls like beneficial insects to help control weeds and other invasive species.

## *2010 Accomplishments:*

- IPM staff identified a large and dense infestation of New Zealand mudsnails in Dry Creek east of Baseline Reservoir. Mudsnails can reach concentrations above 500,000 per square meter, covering the entire surfaces of rocks and stream bottoms, endangering the food chain by out-competing native snails and other aquatic life. Fish populations then suffer because the native species are their main food source. Because effective control methods currently do not exist, the best management consists of preventing the spread of mudsnails to other waterways, most notably nearby South Boulder Creek. A fence was built between the creek and the trail to control access and educational signs were erected to inform the public of the ecological threat posed from this pest.
- Mechanical controls (hand pulling, digging, mowing) were used to manage over 3,000 acres of invasive species on OSMP lands. Volunteers, AmeriCorps, Junior Rangers and seasonal staff are largely responsible for this effort.
- The City of Boulder has hired a team of consultants including the IPM Institute of North America, the Pesticide Research Institute and Osborne Organics to review the city's current IPM practices and make recommendations for updating the city's IPM program. OSMP staff took part in the hiring process and is working closely with other city staff and consultants on this project.



AmeriCorps assisting the IPM crew to remove garlic mustard from a drainage at Chautauqua.



IPM crew working to remove invasive trees and shrubs in the Bluebell Creek drainage.

# Ecological Systems: Legacy Restoration Program

## Legacy Restoration Program

OSMP has developed a comprehensive Legacy Restoration Program that identifies and prioritizes ecological restoration needs from a system-wide perspective. It provides a coordinated restoration approach and allocates resources to address unmet and newly emerging needs such as new acquisitions or updated management plans.

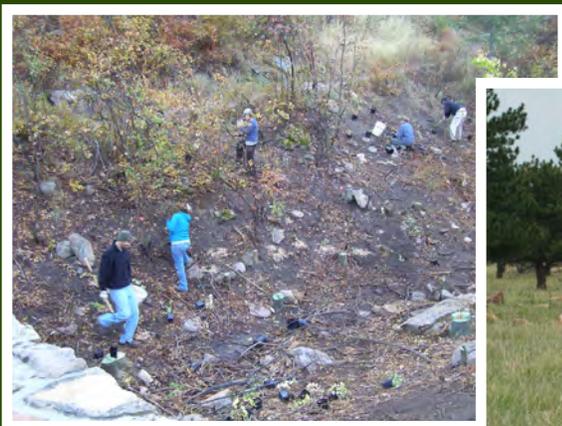
This year, the Legacy Restoration Program expanded significantly by adding a three-person seasonal Ecological Restoration Crew to help complete six discrete projects, performing numerous seed and plant collections (for later replanting), and expanding the OSMP nursery/plant holding facility. Many projects involved multiple parties, including the seasonal crew, standard staff, Boulder County Parks and Open Space staff and contractors, Wildlands Restoration Volunteers (WRV) and other members of the public.

## 2010 Accomplishments:

- Three riparian corridors, three grasslands and one lake shore were restored.
- A multi-year stewardship agreement along Boulder Creek was created with WRV.
- A multi-year seed collection partnership was initiated for OSMP's southern grasslands. More than 10 different species were collected, totaling nearly 150 pounds of seed; much of this will be grown out in "increaser" fields to generate more seed. Additional seed was collected in preparation for upcoming trail projects, large IPM treatments, and other ground disturbances.
- Nearly 200 forbs, grasses and shrubs were collected from OSMP's grasslands and forests for replanting in 2011.
- Previously closed and restored undesignated trails in the Eldorado Mountain/ Doudy Draw TSA were monitored and maintained.

## What to Look for in 2011:

- Continuation of a number of multi-year restoration projects including those at Bluebell Shelter, South Boulder and Boulder Creeks.
- Implementation of undesignated trail closures and restoration in the West TSA and elsewhere across the system.
- The restoration of aquatic and riparian habitat along South Boulder Creek from Baseline Road to the town of Marshall.



OSMP crew planting native trees/shrubs in the Bluebell drainage.



OSMP planting salvage on the Jewel Property.



### Spotlight on Grassland Vegetation Monitoring

To monitor the success of OSMP’s grassland management and track trends in grassland health over time, OSMP established a system-wide grassland vegetation monitoring program. Over 150 permanently marked monitoring sites provide OSMP a system-wide understanding of the health of the grasslands it manages. Currently, monitoring sites only occur within the mesic bluestem prairie, xeric tallgrass prairie, and mixedgrass prairie mosaic habitat types, but more sites are planned in the future.

OSMP compares the results of the grassland vegetation monitoring to standards established in the Grassland Ecosystem Management Plan. Results from 2010 monitoring confirm that OSMP’s management strategies are maintaining or improving some facets of grassland health, such as native species richness, but the strategies could use some tweaking to improve the other facets of grassland health.

#### 2010 Accomplishments:

| Habitat                   | Number of Native Species | Cover of Native Species |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| Mesic Bluestem Prairie    | Fair                     | Needs Improvement       |
| Xeric Tallgrass Prairie   | Good                     | Fair                    |
| Mixedgrass Prairie Mosaic | Fair                     | Needs Improvement       |



Seed collection on Rocky Flats with Wildlife Restoration Volunteers crew.

## Community Outreach: Outreach Services



Mark Wesson and Jeff Kagan perform at the much loved Meadow Music.

### Outreach Services

*Thank you for taking our 3rd grade class on the field trip to Chautauqua Park. I learned a lot about the foothills. You taught me a lot about animals and plants. You taught me what riparian is and that night when I went home and asked [my parents] what it was and they had no clue what it meant! I learned a lot and hope to go back again.*

*Signed, Keila*

– Participant on an OSMP education field trip

The OSMP Community Outreach team touches people's lives. The open space lands surrounding Boulder are one of the defining features of the city, and one of the primary reasons people choose to live here. The Community Outreach workgroup's mission is to facilitate the community's connection to the land, to help them find meaning through a deepening understanding of Boulder's natural and cultural history. OSMP provided 342 free educational programs to the community, reaching over 15,000 people. These programs took the

form of both free public nature hikes known as "Natural Selections," and special programs requested by various community groups, organizations and schools. Of 342 programs, 116 were for the public, and 226 were specially requested by community groups or schools. The Community Outreach programs, taught throughout the OSMP system, covered a wide range of topics, and included outdoor learning opportunities for the disabled and the Spanish-speaking communities. OSMP engaged a dedicated crew of 40 Volunteer Naturalists after they received training in teaching methods and open space issues. Volunteers taught 134 programs in 2010, allowing OSMP to accommodate most educational hike requests. Participants are asked to evaluate the programs they attended. In 2010, Community Outreach classes and hikes received an average satisfaction rating of 9.52 on a ten-point scale.

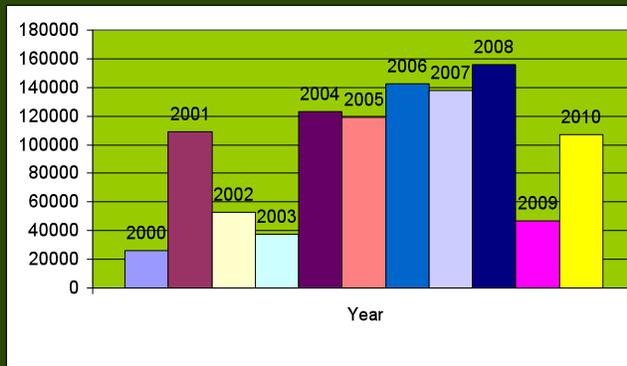
*Last summer I went on many OSMP-organized hikes that are unique and challenging to the senses: a yoga hike; a collage-making hike; a journaling hike...not to mention the 'regular' hikes, interspersed with moments of silence to just look, listen, feel, smell, taste - that lead to the face of the Flatirons - or to a vista overlooking a valley where once there was an inland sea and dinosaurs walked where we stood. And the best, most amazing thing about all these activities and education: THEY'RE FREE.*

--Natural Selections hike participant, nominating OSMP's Community Outreach team for a local award

The outreach staff is the "face of OSMP" at trailheads, the Ranger Cottage and community events; they engage the community in thousands of conversations about the values of OSMP lands. Outreach enhances the community's OSMP experience, fosters appreciation, and encourages visitors to safely and responsibly enjoy their time in nature. The Ranger Cottage was open with a full schedule starting in April. The outreach team visits over 100 OSMP regulation boards at trailheads, keeping them updated and stocked with brochures.

## Community Outreach

This graph charts OSMP's outreach contact numbers since 2000.



### 2010 Accomplishments:

- OSMP staff and volunteers treated over 9,000 attendees at the Fourth of July event at Folsom Field to a musical program. Songs highlighted the values of OSMP and ways to care for it.
- OSMP's Arts Program fosters and nurtures the public's artistic exploration and appreciation of OSMP lands, and creates a deeper connection between the public and the land through the artist's inspiration, work, and educational programs and exhibits. In 2010, OSMP offered 14 arts programs and hosted four guest artists.
- Outreach staff made over 40,000 face-to-face contacts at the Chautauqua Ranger Cottage, sharing facts about OSMP wildlife and trails, and keeping visitors up to date on regulations.
- Outreach at Farmers' Markets, trailheads and events yielded over 50,000 face-to-face contacts.
- A total of 107,100 outreach contacts were made to strengthen OSMP's connection with the community.
- The Meadow Music children's education and music program grew in 2010. Attendance increased to almost 5,000 for the 11 programs offered.
- More than 15,000 people learned about OSMP's plants, animals and history through 342 nature education programs.
- Flagstaff Nature Center, which is staffed 100% by volunteers, welcomed 2,452 visitors.

### What to look for in 2011:

- More Meadow Music, Farmers' Markets, and festivals including the Folsom Field Fourth of July event.
- The Ranger Cottage will be open all year.
- An exciting new wheelchair hiking guide.
- A new version of the Coyote Bob & Ranger Paula comic book.
- A wide variety of free public educational programs.
- More new and unique ways to connect with the land and community.
- A wide variety of free public educational programs.
- More new and unique ways to connect with the community.



# Community Outreach: Volunteer Services

## Volunteer Services

Another important way OSMP connects with the community is by providing an opportunity for people to give back to the land in a meaningful way. In 2010, volunteers contributed over 33,146 hours to OSMP. Volunteers greet visitors on trails, monitor wildlife, restore natural habitats, pull noxious weeds, build trails, monitor rare plants, assist with wildland fire mitigation, and assist staff in a variety of other ways. OSMP volunteers provide inspiration to staff and community members alike.

### 2010 Volunteer Accomplishments:

- Two AmeriCorps National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC) teams helped immensely. They removed invasive Mediterranean sage and myrtle spurge; assisted with restoration projects at the Doudy Draw access road; helped maintain a number of local ditches; and assisted the forestry crew in Sunshine Canyon and Shanahan areas.
- National Public Lands Day: Sixty volunteers resurfaced trails and restored stream banks at Dry Creek. It was amazing to see an area improve in a day with so many helping hands.
- Local community groups participated in multiple-day programs involving several projects or one-day projects. These groups included the Flatirons Climbing Council (FCC), University of Colorado Sewell Hall, Saint Peter's Summers Youth Group, New Vista High School, WhiteWave Foods, Pure One Natural Pet Store, Cisco & Webroot Software, and the Sierra Club.
- At the annual Pick-Up Poop (PUP) Derby (Boulder City Improvement Association), volunteers cleaned up at both Dry Creek and Sanitas.
- Volunteer Naturalists provided educational nature programs for all ages, both on trails and in classrooms. These volunteers commit to a 70-hour training program and give valuable programs in return.
- BearCare Team members helped Boulder residents better understand how to live safely with bears.
- The Native Garden Team helped plant and maintain the native garden at Chautauqua.
- Bike Patrollers provided assistance and information to mountain bikers and other trail users, helping to increase visitor compliance and reduce user conflict.
- The Open Space Board of Trustees researched issues, advised on policy, recommended purchases, and guided OSMP staff.
- Members of the Community Collaborative Group (CCG) spent many dedicated hours coming up with citizen recommendations for the West TSA Plan.



Bird watching with Dave Sutherland.

### *What to look for in 2011:*

- National Trails Day project June 4: Green Bear Trail reroute.
- OSMP applied for AmeriCorps NCCC teams for the winter, spring, and summer terms.

If you are interested in volunteering and would like to see a listing of volunteer opportunities, go to our Web page at [OSMP.org](http://OSMP.org) and click on "Get Involved."



### *Spotlight on Susan Ross*

Susan Ross began work with the Open Space and Real Estate Department as a Coordinator of Volunteer Services in 1990. She laid the foundation for the current large and active volunteer program, creating the Trail Guide volunteer team and working with other staff to offer stewardship and youth projects to the community. After the merger with Boulder Mountain Parks in 2001, Susan continued to coordinate a diverse range of volunteer opportunities. Susan has worked with thousands of volunteers over the course of her career, many of whom have stayed with the program year after year.



# Ranger-Naturalists

## Ranger-Naturalists

Rangers play a key role in OSMP operations. They are, in many ways, the “touchstone” between the community and the department and the front line in the areas of emergency management, search and rescue, wildland firefighting, wildlife management and law enforcement on OSMP properties. Patrolling on foot, horseback or bike, rangers perform the critical responsibilities of public safety and natural resource protection, as well as enforcing new and existing rules and regulations. Their patrols encounter hundreds of OSMP visitors, natural hazards, lost parties, and a myriad of other things that change from day to day. On any given day they could be helping a new visitor decide which of OSMP’s many trails to take with their young children for an enjoyable first-time hiking experience, fighting a wildfire, answering visitor questions about a wildlife sighting, assisting in search and rescue operations, or responding to a mountain lion report.



Ranger Pete Taylor helps a fawn.

Rangers are trained and are the first to respond to wildlife rescue, threat, or protection calls both within the city limits and on OSMP lands. OSMP rangers act on behalf of the Colorado Division of Wildlife (CDOW) when quick action and timely response to a wildlife emergency is necessary. In 2010, rangers responded 64 times to wildlife calls on OSMP and 62 times to wildlife calls in the city limits. Most of the calls are due to mountain lions, bears, aggressive coyotes, and injured deer. In addition, rangers work closely with the CDOW on capture operations when an animal has to be removed and relocated for public safety. This year, rangers were also given the ability to tranquilize and sedate deer when they are caught in fences, hammocks, construction sites, and to remove objects from the animal or the animal from an object. So far, three animals have been successfully rescued because of these new capabilities.

Many of the ranger contacts are educational. They work closely with the OSMP Community Outreach work group providing numerous programs to the public each year. In 2010, rangers provided a total of 90 formal programs and additionally provide a constant educational resource while on the trails. Rangers coordinate several OSMP volunteer programs and projects including bat and raptor monitoring, Boulder mountain bike patrol, and the Volunteer Naturalist program.

OSMP rangers are highly trained and experienced. They must maintain all types of certifications including Colorado Peace Officer Standards and Training certification (identical to that of any police officer), firearms, wildland fire red cards, and first responder or Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) certifications. Rangers participate in numerous trainings with the Boulder Police and Fire Departments each year. One of OSMP’s rangers became certified as a victims’ advocate this past year. At the same time, many rangers have training and educational backgrounds in natural resource management, biology, and specialized wildlife skills. Our rangers have assisted CDOW with two important research studies in recent years. One of these is a radio-telemetry study of mountain lions; the other, a study of chronic wasting disease in deer.



Ranger Keule



Ranger Jasper and Ranger Stoner

### **2010 Accomplishments:**

- Provided a critical first responder role for CDOW on wildlife calls.
- Played key staff role on the CCG.
- Acquired sedation capabilities in cooperation with CDOW and rescued three deer.
- Acted as liaison to CDOW and assisted with the Mountain Lion Study.
- Continued participation in numerous volunteer, educational outreach, and biological monitoring projects.
- Assisted on the Eisenberg plane crash recovery and investigation.
- Fought Fourmile fire.
- Fought Dome fire.
- Assisted on numerous search and rescue missions and EMT calls.
- Trained a new Pressure Points and Contact Tactics (PPCT), driving, and firearms instructor.
- Participated in a Police Department mountain bike training certification program.

Fourmile Fire

# Environmental Planning: Grassland Ecosystem Management Plan

## *Grassland Ecosystem Management Plan*

In May of 2010, City Council unanimously approved OSMP's Grassland Ecosystem Management Plan. The plan describes the management actions, policies and acquisition priorities to conserve the ecological and agricultural values of over 25,000 acres of city-owned open space. While grasslands and agricultural landscapes dominate this area, the plan also addresses the restoration and protection of wetlands, riparian areas, shrublands and the variety of other habitat patches that contribute to the diversity of the grassland landscape. This Annual Report contains references to OSMP's progress on Grassland Plan implementation under Legacy Restoration Program, Agricultural Program, and Trail Study Area Monitoring.

## *2010 Accomplishments:*

- City Council unanimously approved the Grassland Plan.
- Staff monitored upland vegetation across the entire grassland planning area for a second consecutive year.
- Ecologists initiated system-wide grassland bird monitoring.
- Agricultural lease managers and wildlife ecologists coordinated on hayfield management and monitoring to protect bird species of special concern.
- Planners began to clarify the city policies and practices regarding prairie dog management and regulation.
- Agricultural staff identified OSMP lands for local organic food production and established a lease with a local farmer to prepare the land for production. This first ever small organic farming lease will diversify OSMP's agricultural portfolio and provide important lessons about the benefits and costs of managing lands for this use.



Resource monitoring coordinator/ecologist, Marianne Giolitto, monitored over 150 transects across more than 15,000 acres grassland in 2010.

### What to look for in 2011:

- South Boulder Creek aquatic habitat restoration upstream of South Boulder Road.
- Ongoing control of priority invasive exotic plants.
- Grassland restoration through tree removal, prescriptive grazing and prairie dog relocation.
- Agricultural improvements including prairie dog relocation, fencing and improvements to water-delivery structures.
- Establishment of long-term ecological monitoring of riparian areas.



Plant ecologist, Lynn Reidel, conducts annual vegetation monitoring.



### Spotlight on Matt Jones

Matt Jones' career came full circle this fall with his election to the Colorado General Assembly. Matt joined the staff 17 years ago after serving as a legislator in the Colorado State House. While with OSMP, Matt finalized the Open Space Long Range Management Policies, and worked to improve the social science knowledge of the department. He oversaw surveys of community residents and open space visitors and led a study intended to estimate the levels of visitation on OSMP. Matt represented the city in interdepartmental projects including groups focused on the stewardship of Rocky Flats. Matt also participated as a member of the Colorado Open Space Alliance steering committee and on the Educational Steering Committee of the Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics. As an OSMP staffer Matt really enjoyed his participation as a wildland firefighter.



# Environmental Planning: West Trail Study Area Plan

## *West Trail Study Area Plan*

The purpose of the West Trail Study Area (TSA) Plan is to provide management direction and list the actions that will protect resources and improve the visitor experience in the West TSA. Staff's focus in 2010 was on working with the Community Collaborative Group (CCG), which had been selected by a caucus of OSMP visitors and community members during the fall of 2009. OSMP staff had suggested the CCG model to provide a high level of community participation in plan development knowing that the West TSA was among the most treasured and popular destinations in the OSMP land system.

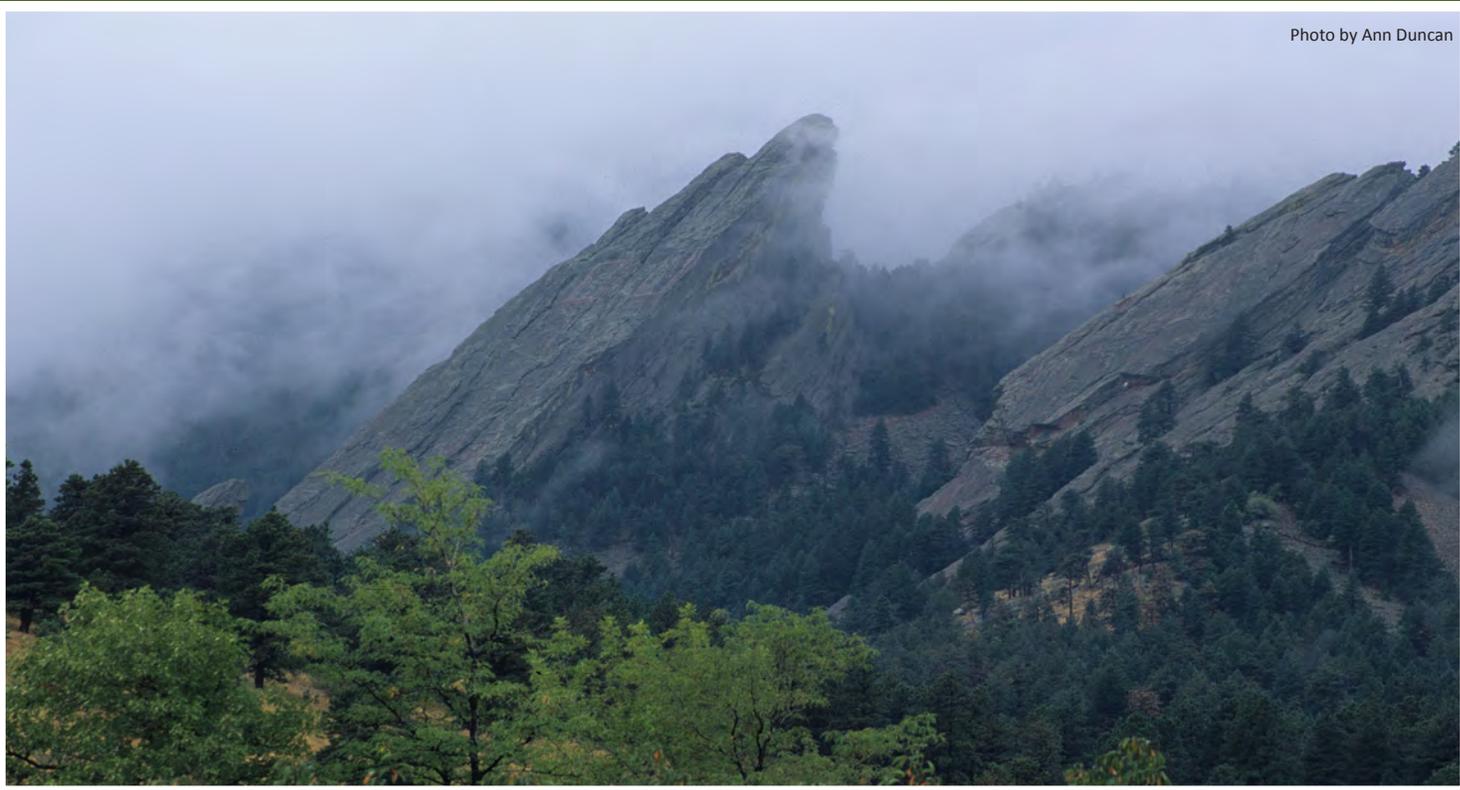
Fourteen community members representing interests associated with recreation, natural resources, cultural resources, and neighborhoods as well as an OSMP staff member make up the CCG. The group was asked to think broadly about near and long-term opportunities to maintain or improve the quality of the visitor experience, neighborhood and resource sustainability in the West TSA.

## *2010 Accomplishments:*

- CCG members and OSMP staff discussed the legal and policy sideboards for the plan.
- The group also discussed topics of the CCG's choosing (e.g., OSMP's budget, habitat suitability modeling, trail management costs and issues).
- The CCG and staff shared information about natural, cultural and recreational resources in the West TSA.
- The CCG members discussed ideas about the current and desired future conditions of these resources and their visions for the future of the entire TSA.
- CCG members drafted initial proposals for achieving their visions.
- These proposals were discussed in meetings about four TSA subareas.
- The CCG reached consensus on management recommendations and integrated the four subareas into a single package.
- The CCG recommendations were distributed for comment and public comment was taken at an Open House and a specially convened Open Space Board of Trustees meeting.
- The OSBT discussed the CCG's recommendations during a study session in December.

## *What to look for in 2011:*

- A final report from the CCG.
- A draft plan integrating the recommendations of the CCG.
- Community, Open Space Board of Trustees, and City Council review of the draft West TSA Plan.
- Acceptance of the CCG plan by City Council.
- Early implementation actions.



### *Spotlight on Joe Mantione*

Joe Mantione retired this past fall after nearly 25 years with the city. Joe's major accomplishments with OSMP were authoring the Visitor Master Plan, the Marshall Mesa/Southern Grasslands Trail Study Area Plan, and building the framework for the department's Strategic Operating Plan. Joe also led the project team in the development of the West TSA, specifically the Community Collaborative Group. Joe was the first and only planner of the Mountain Parks division prior to its consolidation with Open Space and before that was the Comprehensive Planner for the City of Boulder, where he was responsible for several revisions of the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan and the Area III Planning Project. Although retired, Joe is looking forward to continuing his volunteer work in ecological restoration and helping other organizations develop, refine and articulate their conservation strategies

# Environmental Planning: Trail Study Area Monitoring

## *Eldorado Mountain/Doudy Draw TSA Monitoring*

Building on work over the past several years, OSMP continued monitoring wildlife, trail conditions, restoration success, recreational use and conflict, as well as visitor compliance with regulations in the Eldorado Mountain / Doudy Draw TSA. Some results of this monitoring are now available. For example, OSMP knows that the Spring Brook Loop Trail sees about as many visitors per year as the South Boulder Creek Trail west of Highway 93, while the Eldorado Mountain Habitat Conservation Area (HCA) sees less than half as many visitors. OSMP also has an understanding of conflict levels along the Spring Brook Loop Trail. Look for more monitoring results on the OSMP Website.

## *Spring Brook Loop Trail Conflict Study*

During the summer of 2009, OSMP conducted an on-site survey at two exit points along the Spring Brook Loop Trail. The goals of the survey were to characterize the visitors traveling along the Spring Brook Loop Trail and describe the conflict visitors experienced, if any, while traveling on this new multi-use trail. For the purposes of the survey, OSMP defined conflict in terms of goal interference (i.e. Did the behavior of other visitors prevent visitors from having a good experience or achieving what they hoped to do during their visit?). Over 700 visitors to the Spring Brook Loop Trail completed the survey.

### **Results:**

- Most (68%) visitors to the Spring Brook Loop Trail were cyclists. Other visitors tended to be hikers (18%) or runners (13%).
- The typical visitor visited the Spring Brook Loop Trail twice a month.
- Six percent of the survey respondents reported experiencing conflict on the day of the survey.
- Ten percent of the respondents reported experiencing conflict during the past six months.
- A greater percentage of hikers reported experiencing conflict than participants from any other activity group. Ten percent of hikers reported experiencing conflict on the day of the survey.
- Survey respondents indicated that cyclists and dogs were the top two sources of conflict.
- When reporting conflict, only 7% of the visitors characterized the conflict they experienced on the day of the survey as “serious” (rather than “moderate” or “slight”).



### **2010 Accomplishments:**

- A third year of extensive wildlife monitoring including pellet plots (deer, elk, and turkey), songbird point counts, raptor call-back surveys, turkey and grouse transects, and deer bed mapping.
- A third year of monitoring visitation to the Eldorado Mountain HCA and Spring Brook Loop Trail.
- A second year of monitoring.
- Restoration success in closing 11 undesignated trails.
- Visitor compliance with on-trail and dog-specific regulations on Spring Brook Loop Trail.
- Trail conditions along the Goshawk Ridge Trail.
- Condition of 33 undesignated trails and new undesignated trail development near Spring Brook Loop Trail and Goshawk Ridge Trail.

### **What to look for in 2011:**

- Results of monitoring visitor compliance with on-trail and dog-specific regulations on Spring Brook Loop Trail.
- Results of the trail condition and undesignated trail restoration monitoring.
- Estimated visitation levels to the Eldorado Mountain HCA and Spring Brook Loop Trail for 2010.



Spring Brook Loop

# Environmental Planning: Resident Survey

## Resident Survey

In the spring of 2010, OSMP commissioned a telephone survey of registered voters who lived within the City of Boulder. The goal of the survey was to gauge residents' opinions about OSMP's delivery of community service and land management and about public policy issues faced by the department as well as document the characteristics of residents who visit OSMP. Four-hundred Boulder residents participated in the survey.

### Results:

Residents visit OSMP quite frequently, and have been doing so for a long time.

- Over half of respondents reported that they visited OSMP twice a week or more.
- Nearly all respondents had been visiting OSMP for as many years as they had been living in Boulder.

Residents give favorable evaluations of OSMP.

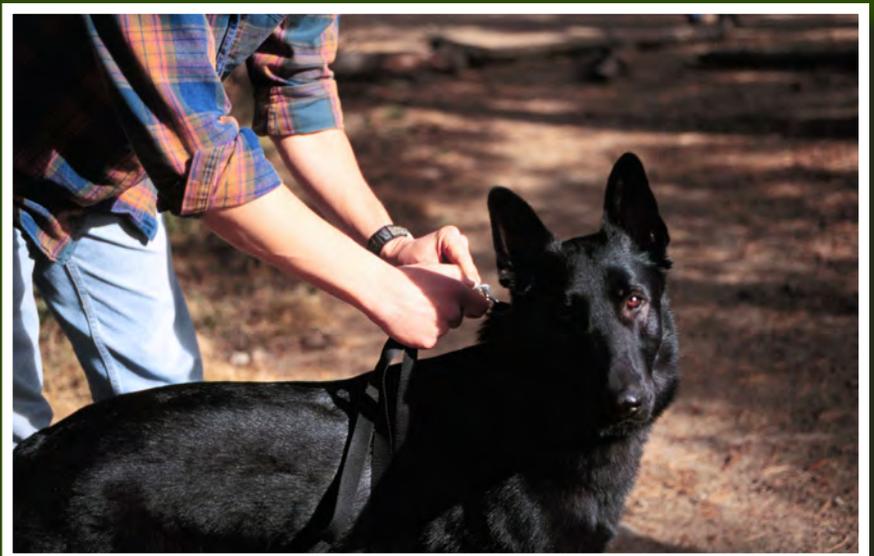
- Nearly three-quarters of respondents rated the job that OSMP is doing, in general, as excellent or very good.
- Over 80% of respondents considered the opportunities to do their activities in OSMP areas very adequate, and 70% rated their ability to access destinations in OSMP areas as very adequate.
- Most (95%) respondents rated their experience on OSMP as excellent or very good.

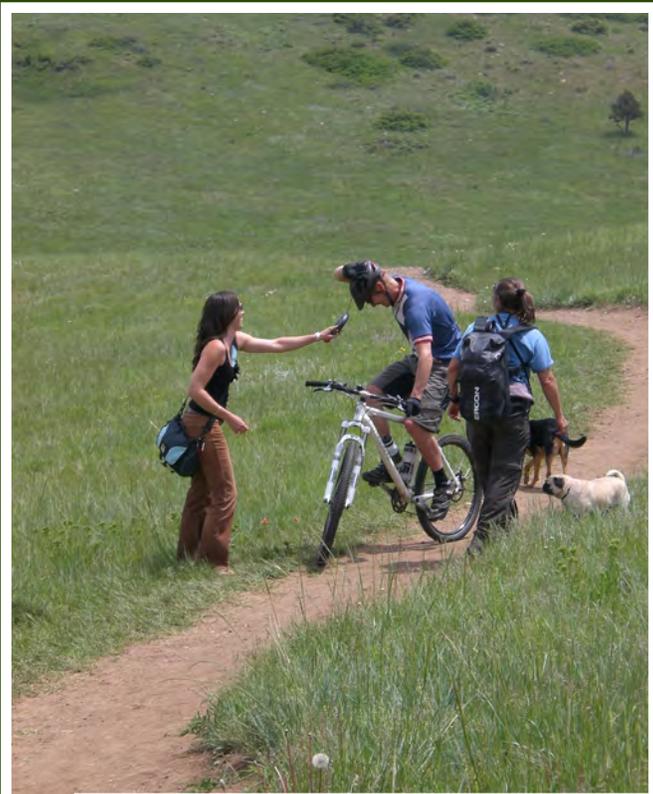
Residents are divided on the most important purpose of OSMP but say OSMP is doing a good job balancing its management.

- Twenty-nine percent of respondents indicated recreation was the most important purpose of OSMP, while 22% named preservation and 20% considered "aesthetic purposes" (i.e. enjoying/accessing nature, relaxing, etc.) to be the most important purpose.
- Most respondents (78%) felt OSMP strikes the right balance between recreational uses of OSMP areas and protection of the environmental resources.

Most respondents deemed the following management actions very or somewhat appropriate:

- Increasing education and outreach on trail etiquette.
- Requiring dogs to be on or near trail.
- Enforcing existing regulations more vigorously.
- Testing and certifying dog obedience before dogs are allowed under voice and sight control.
- Requiring one-way travel for cyclists on a trail.
- Establishing more dog on-leash areas.





Few residents (less than half) felt that the following actions should be taken:

- Limiting times of day for cyclists on a trail.
- Establishing more dog-prohibited areas.
- Alternating days for cyclists and hikers on a trail.
- Residents perceive that the contribution of OSMP to the Boulder community extends beyond the preservation of the land itself.
- Virtually all respondents felt that OSMP contributes to a healthy environment and the overall quality of life in Boulder.
- Approximately 80% of respondents felt that OSMP also contributes to the economic vitality of the Boulder community and provides opportunities for people of diverse backgrounds to, at least, a moderate extent.



# Resource Information Systems

## *Resource Information Systems*

Open Space and Mountain Parks uses spatial and tabular data to assist and guide the department's management decisions. The Resource Information System (RIS) Group provides innovative technical solutions and data analysis to inform department workgroups and the public on the current status of the OSMP system and developing trends. RIS staff trains staff from other work groups on Geographic Information System (GIS) use and GPS data collection techniques. Many map products, as well as an interactive trail map, are available to the public on the OSMP Website.

## *Mapping the West Trail Study Area*

To date, the RIS lab has produced over 330 individual maps and calculated almost 90 statistics to support the West TSA planning process. Examples include:

- Calculating the number of miles of trails of various designated use and providing accurate estimates of increase or decrease as the plan developed and moved forward for approval.
- Providing habitat suitability models for vulnerable and important wildlife species so that the plan development could be informed by how changes might impact wildlife and habitats of concern.

For over a year, the CCG gathered around sub-area base maps and mylar overlays designed to help guide their discussion and capture recommendations on how to improve the sustainability of the West TSA. These 14 months of recommendations were boiled down into 22 maps and insets that make up the Community Collaborative Group Preliminary Recommendations Report.

## *2010 Accomplishments:*

- Created a user-friendly interactive trail map using Google maps and ArcGIS Server.
- Provided mapping support for the West TSA process.
- Created new databases: Acquisitions, Ecological Restoration, and the Visitor Use Databases.
- Enhanced the Trails Database to include an area for collecting and analyzing data from trail work performed.
- Created new spatial datasets for burned ditches, historic districts, emergency helicopter landing zones, ranger districts and New Zealand mudsnails.
- Maintained core services (e.g. spatial data maintenance, map creation, staff trainings and database updates).

## *What to look for in 2011:*

- Improve OSMP's internet presence with easier to navigate and more reliable maps.
- Create custom GIS/GPS tools to provide a more efficient mapping work flow.
- Tie spatial data and non-spatial tables into a seamless data source.
- Create mobile applications for field data collection and data viewing.

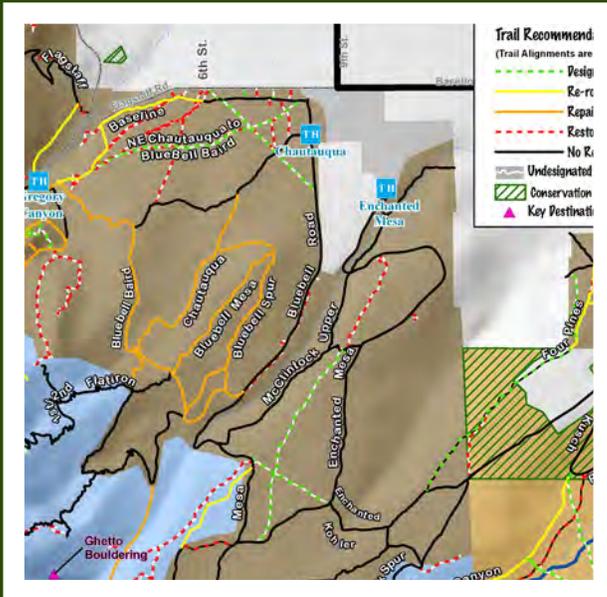
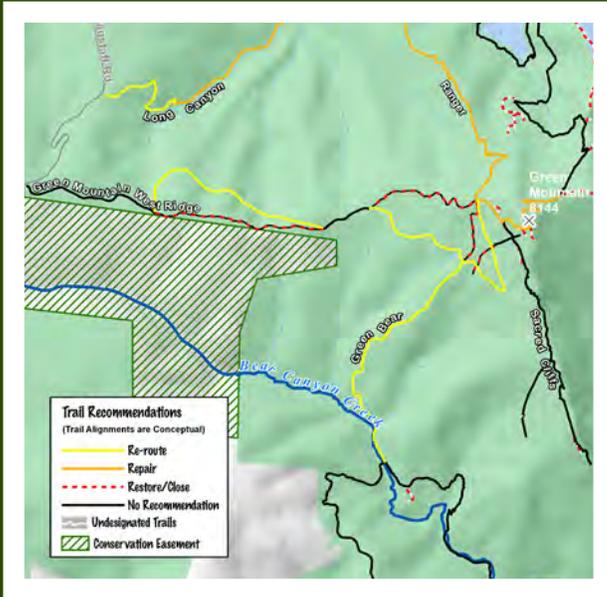
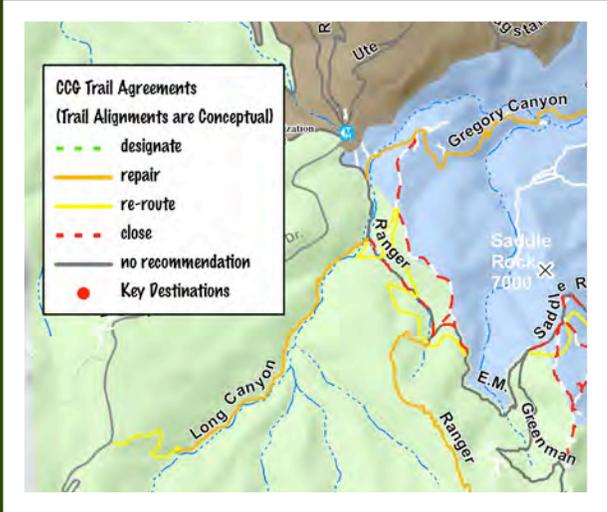


Photo by Daren O'Brien



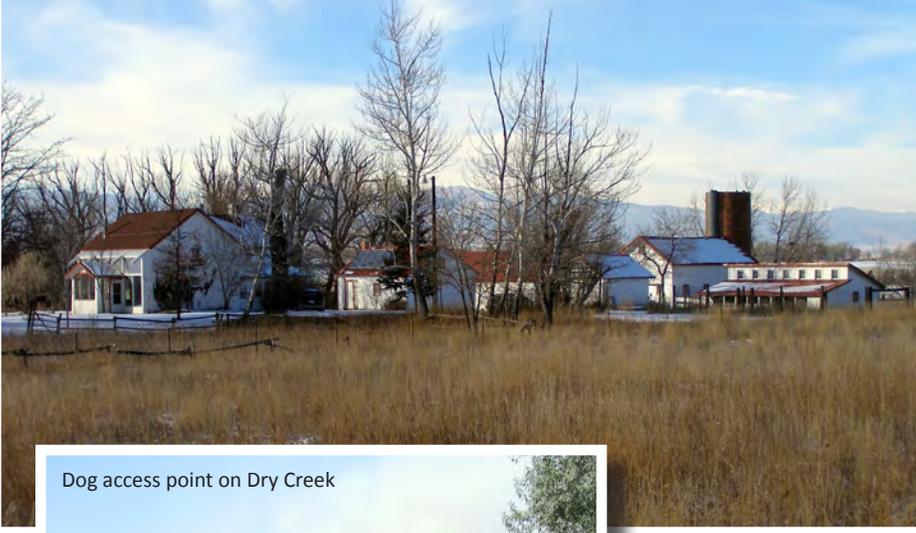
## LAND AND VISITOR SERVICES



FACILITIES AND OPERATIONS • WATER RESOURCES • AGRICULTURAL PROGRAM • VISITOR ACCESS • JUNIOR RANGER PROGRAM

# Facilities and Operations

Historically landmarked Woodley Farm



Dog access point on Dry Creek



## Facilities and Operations

The Facilities and Operations work group is responsible for preventative maintenance and repair of OSMP office buildings, nature centers, leased residences, agricultural buildings, roads, parking lots and signs. More than 100 buildings and structures on OSMP properties require some type of maintenance.

## Energy Conservation

Facilities and Operations is also implementing energy conservation measures in conjunction with the City of Boulder Energy Strategy Team to improve long-term energy conservation in OSMP facilities. In 2010, improvements were made to the Cherryvale campus and the Annex and Ute buildings.

These improvements included improved weather-stripping, caulking and window replacement at the Annex and Cherryvale south.

## 2010 Accomplishments:

- Created fire breaks for fire mitigation during the Fourmile fire.
- Worked with Ecological Systems staff to develop a plan and design structures to control sediment and gravel in roadside drainages on Flagstaff Road.
- Completed a riparian bank stabilization project with dog access points on Dry Creek.
- Numerous remodel and painting projects including the Cherryvale South conference room, the Weiser Room and the Hawkins House.
- Mowing projects included over 890 acres for the IPM program as well as landscape mowing and grounds maintenance at OSMP facilities.
- The sign group replaced six deteriorating and outdated trailhead identification signs.



### *What to look for in 2011:*

- In conjunction with the City of Boulder Energy Strategy Team, plans are underway for a solar array at the Cherryvale campus which may be constructed in 2011.
- At least six more trailhead identification signs will be replaced. A new visitor information kiosk will be installed at Greenbelt Plateau Trailhead and many new signs will be installed as a part of the West TSA Plan implementation.



#### *Spotlight on Dan Sturm*



Dan Sturm retired in November 2010 after working 30 years for the City of Boulder. During his time with the city, he worked with both the Parks and Recreation Department and the Open Space and Mountain Parks Department. His primary responsibilities for OSMP included the inspection and maintenance of the many structures and facilities on the OSMP landscape. His knowledge and experience of the unique facilities on OSMP will be missed. Dan had a special interest in “artifacts” and was instrumental in the planning and installation of the antique farm equipment display at the Cherryvale campus.

#### *Spotlight on Bill Dimond*

Bill grew up in the Boulder area and, in fact, explored much of what is now the southern part of OSMP as a boy. He first joined OSMP as a Junior Ranger, and he never left. He worked several jobs during his more than 35-year career here, most recently and for several years, as OSMP’s Fleet and Equipment Maintenance Technician. His duties included much more than just managing the OSMP fleet. He kept the Ute shop operating efficiently while providing a clean and healthy working environment. He also provided safety training for both standard and seasonal staff. In both working and in personal ways, Bill touched the hearts of most all OSMP employees.



# Water Resources

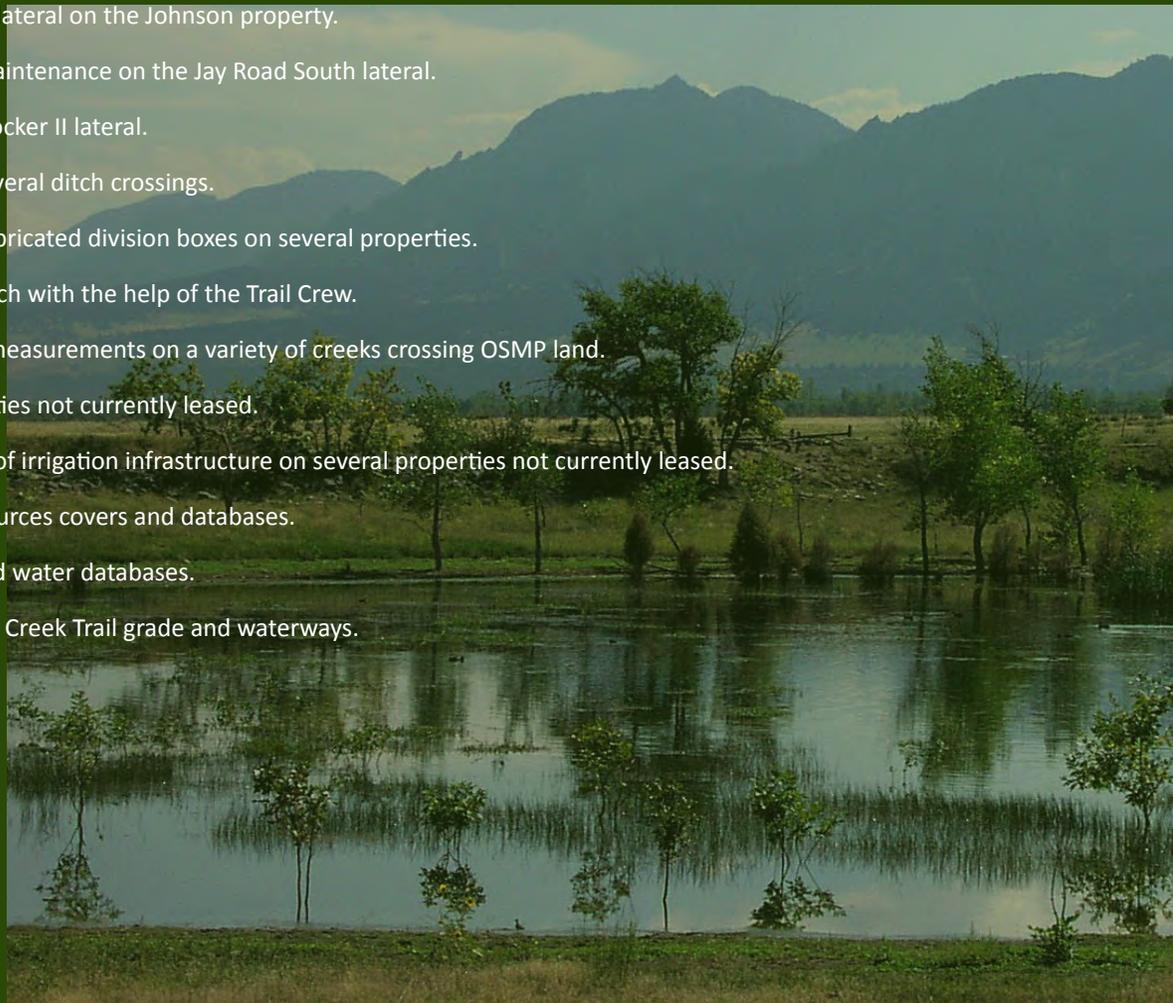
## *Water Resources*

OSMP has a large and valuable (over \$50 million) water-right portfolio that is used to irrigate nearly 6,000 acres of land. Many of OSMP's water rights are in the form of ditch company stock. This means that OSMP participates in managing and operating several ditches, reservoirs, and ditch companies. Staff represents OSMP interests at 33 ditch and lateral company meetings. Staff sits on 13 ditch boards, and serves various capacities, including president, vice president, and secretary/treasurer. Special assignments with ditch boards include hiring and supervising ditch riders and superintendents; review, negotiation, and preparation of annexation and ditch crossing agreements; bylaw revisions; providing direction for legal matters in water disputes; assistance with ditch operations; and hiring and supervision of contractors for ditch company capital improvement projects.

Staff also operates several ditches and reservoirs wholly owned by OSMP. Staff cleaned various ditches and delivered water to the Egelston #1, Egelston #3, Egelston #4, Schearer, Burke Hodgson, and Mesa Reservoirs. In addition, almost 15 linear miles of ditches and laterals were cleaned with the help of AmeriCorps and jail crews. Additional duties for ditch operation include record keeping required by state law.

## *2010 Accomplishments:*

- Installed concrete diversion boxes on the Lore and Ellison properties.
- Cleaned and rerouted a field lateral on the Burke II property.
- Constructed a drainage lateral on the Johnson property.
- Completed extensive maintenance on the Jay Road South lateral.
- Installed pipe on the Crocker II lateral.
- Replaced culverts on several ditch crossings.
- Installed concrete prefabricated division boxes on several properties.
- Lined the Silver Lake Ditch with the help of the Trail Crew.
- Completed water flow measurements on a variety of creeks crossing OSMP land.
- Irrigated several properties not currently leased.
- Completed evaluations of irrigation infrastructure on several properties not currently leased.
- Updated GIS water resources covers and databases.
- Maintained and updated water databases.
- Surveyed South Boulder Creek Trail grade and waterways.



**Legal matters addressed:**

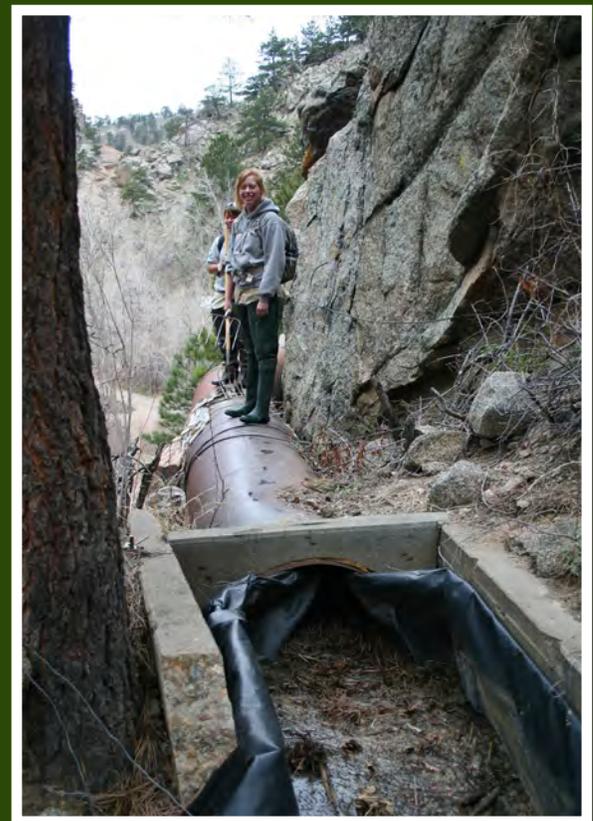
- Led the city team in negotiations concerning the enlargement of Gross Reservoir resulting in completion of an Intergovernmental Agreement with Denver Water and the City of Lafayette regarding in-stream flows for South Boulder Creek.
- Arapahoe Pit augmentation.
- Boulder County Walden Ponds water right application.
- Illegal use of water from Kolb and White Rocks laterals.

**Projects in Progress:**

- Arapahoe Pit augmentation
- Goodhue Ditch fish passage project
- Green Ditch fish passage project



Water Diversion box that serves Lore Property.



AmeriCorps volunteers help clean ditches.



Mesa Reservoir after filling with water from Silver Lake Ditch, 2010.

# Agricultural Program

## *Agricultural Program*

The Agricultural Program continued to serve the Boulder Valley agricultural community by providing 14,000 acres of OSMP land for agricultural uses. The most wide-spread agricultural use was livestock grazing. In addition to providing a valuable agricultural opportunity to local ranchers, livestock grazing also acts as an important grassland management tool.

Livestock grazing is an important weed management and habitat maintenance treatment for most of the native grassland communities on the OSMP landscape.

The irrigated cropland areas on OSMP lands are used primarily to produce hay products including grass hay and grass/alfalfa hay mixtures. This forage is fed to the producers' own livestock and sold to small acreage animal owners throughout the Boulder Valley.



Baling hay.



Cattle round-up on OSMP lands.

### **Other major products included wheat, barley and corn.**

The graph shows the number of acres of each crop grown on OSMP croplands. OSMP maintained lease contracts with 26 agricultural users and collected over \$141,000 in agricultural lease revenue in 2010.

|                        |             |
|------------------------|-------------|
| Agricultural Land Use: |             |
| 78%                    | Grazing     |
| 19%                    | Hay/Forage  |
| 3%                     | Annual Crop |

### **2010 Accomplishments:**

- Infrastructure improvements:
  - Replaced fences for agricultural purposes on the Richardson, Bennett, Steele, Swartz, Nu-West, and Boulder Valley Ranch properties.
  - Refurbished the livestock tanks in the Tallgrass West agricultural lease area.
  - Rebuilt the dam on the stock pond on the Moore Family property.
- Leased a property for OSMP's first designated organic farm offering the region local food production.
- Coordinated with wildlife staff to design habitat protection measures in agricultural areas that are inhabited by northern leopard frogs, prairie dogs and song birds.

### **What to look for in 2011:**

- In support of City Council goals, OSMP will continue and expand efforts to develop properties for local, organic food production.
- OSMP will be working with its lessees in 2010 to develop natural and organic beef production locally.
- Continue to implement grazing management improvements identified in the Grassland Ecosystem Management Plan.



#### **Spotlight on Roy Bell**

Roy Bell retired on November 30, 2010 after 18 years of service to the Open Space and Mountain Parks Department. Roy was a Natural Resource Specialist during his tenure with the department and was responsible for the agricultural management of leased properties. His many contributions to the Agricultural Program will be missed in the future. Planning reclamation projects and developing special seed mixes for various OSMP projects was one of Roy's favorite tasks. Roy played a large role in reclaiming the former wheat/fallow cropland on Lookout Road to native grass species.



# Visitor Access: Trails Program

## Trails Program

OSMP provides over 140 miles of trails for visitor use. Each section of each of those miles will need maintenance or other measures to improve them at some time in the future. Toward that end, the OSMP trails staff is committed to work each year in two areas:

(1) Maintain existing trails by performing system-wide light trail maintenance (i.e. corridor clearing, cleaning water diversion structures and safety hazard remediation).

(2) Complete trail projects to improve the visitor experience and the physical sustainability of OSMP trails. This includes rerouting trails, installing trail features to manage water and improving user conditions within existing trail corridors.

Staff hikes every foot of every designated trail to evaluate its condition each year in order to determine whether or not it still complies with the guidelines established in the OSMP Trail Maintenance Objectives. This information is used to set maintenance priorities for the year.

## 2010 Accomplishments:

- Planned work for the Goat, Four Pines, Saddle Rock and Green Bear Trails.
- Completed trail construction projects with Boulder County including: Mayhoffer/Singletree, Fourmile Canyon, and IBM Connector Trails.
- Rerouted and improved drainage at Cottontail Trail (north of Lookout Road).
- Resurfaced the following trails: Wonderland Lake, Cottonwood, South Boulder Creek, Boulder Valley Ranch, East Boulder and Dry Creek.
- Improved Bear Canyon Trail.
- Repaired the Boulder Falls Trail.
- Replaced bridge at the Green Mountain Lodge outhouse.
- Installed section of raised trail on Fowler Trail.



Cleaning trail tread at Boulder Falls.



Drainage work at Cottontail Trail.



Drainage work and resurfacing at Eagle Trail.

**Learn more about the OSMP trail system online at: [www.osmp.org](http://www.osmp.org).**

There is more information about the following subjects:

- System-wide trail maps – interactive
- Trail descriptions
- Trail closures
- Upcoming trail projects
- Trail use – rules and regulations
- Circle Hike Guides
- Trail Condition Monitoring
- Five-year Trail Maintenance Work Plan
- Protocol for Designated Trail Monitoring
- Trail Condition Monitoring for each of the four Trail Study Areas
- Trail Design Standards
- Maps of Areas of Concerns including constructed features

***What to look for in 2011:***

OSMP’s annual light maintenance effort will continue to keep the existing trail infrastructure in stable condition. Specific trail major maintenance and construction projects are yet to be determined and will depend on the slate of projects outlined in the West TSA presented to City Council in March.



Trail work

# Visitor Access: Trailhead and Maintenance Services

## Trailhead and Maintenance Services

Most national parks and other natural areas have one, two, or at most, only a few access points into their systems. These are gateways to public lands. OSMP is a bit unique in that it has 35 official gateways (trailheads) and over 100 smaller gateways classified as access points. OSMP trailheads and access points are classified by the amenities that OSMP provides and maintains at each.

Access points have few if any amenities and are classified from A1 to A3.

Trailheads have several amenities including parking. These are classified from T1 to T3.

## OSMP Visitor Access Classifications

|           |                |                                    |
|-----------|----------------|------------------------------------|
| <b>A1</b> | <b>Low-Use</b> | <b>Four Pines at 17th Street</b>   |
| <b>A2</b> | <b>Medium</b>  | <b>Eagle Trail at coffee plant</b> |
| <b>A3</b> | <b>High</b>    | <b>South end of Sanitas Trail</b>  |
|           |                |                                    |
| <b>T1</b> | <b>Low-Use</b> | <b>Greenbelt Plateau</b>           |
| <b>T2</b> | <b>Medium</b>  | <b>South Teller</b>                |
| <b>T3</b> | <b>High</b>    | <b>Chautauqua</b>                  |

## 2010 Accomplishments:

- Completed replacement of the old trash can structures with new and functionally advanced Bear Saver/Back Saver cans which are bear proof and designed for much easier servicing which reduces staff injuries.
- Began the Mallory Cave gate system design and construction to protect this valuable bat maternity site. Bats nationwide are under threat from a disease called white-nose syndrome which is suspected to be spread by humans visiting bat-nesting sites.
- Assessed all trailheads and access points in the West TSA to aid planning efforts.
- Not to be forgotten is the weekly servicing of all major trailheads to ensure amenities are available and in the best condition possible. In 2010, this included close to 200 hours of graffiti removal and over 2,000 hours supervising jail crews, community service individuals and volunteer groups in the field.



Gregory Canyon Trailhead



Townsend's Big-eared bats



Bear-proof trashcans



Centennial Trailhead

### ***What to look for in 2011***

- Complete construction and installation of the Mallory Cave gate system.
- Improve accessibility for persons with mobility challenges at several access points.
- Rebuild the fishing/viewing dock at Sawhill Ponds.
- Renovate the South Boulder Creek West Trailhead, adding horse-trailer parking.
- Rehabilitate Fourmile Trailhead – remove asphalt and islands, install new kiosk.
- Assess Gregory Canyon Trailhead, Flagstaff Summit, and Chautauqua to determine what improvements can and should be made.

# Junior Ranger Program

## *Junior Ranger Program*

The Junior Ranger Program engages youth in meaningful work that makes a difference to our open lands and community. Since 1965, the program has provided teens with an opportunity to build job, team and stewardship skills. Junior Rangers are young people 14-17 years old from Boulder and the surrounding area who want to work and to serve their community through OSMP.

Junior Rangers contribute to essential maintenance projects on OSMP. Job duties include general trail maintenance, invasive weed removal, clean-up work and other maintenance projects. Junior Rangers also participate in environmental education and team-building activities that help ground their work experience. Participants are encouraged to explore the land around them and develop a personal relationship with the place that is their home.

Through needed community work, teens develop awareness, knowledge and respect for natural and human communities while cultivating personal growth.



## *2010 Accomplishments:*

- Eighty Junior Rangers served OSMP this summer for more than 11,000 hours of service.
- Over 42 miles of trail were serviced for light maintenance targets.
- Junior Rangers were exposed to resource management projects throughout the department including IPM, forest management, visitor access services, rangeland management and restoration, and trails maintenance.
- Junior Rangers comment that this is “an awesome job” and reflect that the team environment, community spirit, shared work of value to Boulder, and exposure to new ideas about their home are key reasons why they enjoy serving.





Photo by Christopher Brown

# REAL ESTATE SERVICES



ACQUISITIONS AND CONSERVATION EASEMENTS

# Acquisitions and Conservation Easements

## *Acquisitions and Conservation Easements*

**45,000 acres and \$200 million later....**

The City of Boulder owns and manages more than 45,000 acres of Open Space and Mountain Parks land in and around Boulder, Colorado. Established in 1967, the Open Space program has acquired 400 separate properties at a cost of \$208,000,000. Becoming a more mature program, current acquisitions are generally neither as large nor as numerous as in the earlier years. However, each new property is an important connection to the existing landholdings and fulfills at least one of the acquisition purposes of the city's charter provisions on Open Space.

In addition to acquiring new properties for the program, the Real Estate team is an important part of Open Space operation and management. It protects existing lands by insuring that all newly proposed easements or dispositions are properly vetted through the process established in the Open Space charter. The Open Space system includes a web of pre-existing easements requiring management of construction activities and impacts when accessed by the easement holders such as Xcel Energy. Further, the Real Estate work group monitors more than 100 conservation easements which the Open Space program has acquired on about 10,000 acres. Additional responsibilities of the work group include many unforeseen real estate issues that arise from the ownership of a 45,000-acre open space program.

The Real Estate team helps make projects successful for the city's general fund departments such as Transportation, Utilities, Parks, and Housing. The specific services provided in 2010 included leasing, appraisal, site search, title research, analysis and insurance, property management, right-of-way cost estimating, real property disposal, cultural resource management, Indian relations, litigation settlement and support. Real Estate staff members are certified by the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) to provide acquisitions for federally funded projects. Staff enjoys Multiple Listing Service (MLS) access and can provide real estate brokerage services.



### *Spotlight on Ann Goodhart*

Ann Goodhart retired after 32 years with the City of Boulder. She spent 31 of those years with the department and held several different positions, retiring as the Division Manager of Real Estate Services. During Ann's tenure with the city, the acquisition program was expanded from a small greenbelt ring around the city to a major planning component of the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan, shaping the development of the city by acquiring interests in 33,000 acres of open space lands.



## 2010 Accomplishments

The Real Estate acquisition team took advantage of the 2010 real estate market that was still in the doldrums from the economic recession. The focus was on properties with pricing near actual market value. By contacting the owners of desired properties, monitoring Web-based real estate sites and working with local real estate agents, a well priced purchase was completed and several promising negotiations were started. Some specific accomplishments are listed below:

- Completed the yearly monitoring of the most critical and environmentally sensitive conservation easement holdings. On one property where OSMP had recommended a change in the cattle grazing patterns, a rare flower, the prairie gentian, had reappeared. This was the result of the conservation easement specialist working together with the owners and their lessees, the OSMP agricultural manager, and the OSMP plant ecologist. (See the photograph below.)
- Completed the Baseline Report for the National Institute of Science and Technology (NIST) Conservation Easement.
- Acquired water rights for agricultural and in-stream flow purposes.
- Acquired a 40-acre parcel contiguous to existing Open Space holdings.
- Provided project management and staff coordination for large projects across easements on Open Space lands including the United Power project on 2 miles of the Jewell Mountain property, the Xcel Energy transmission line project across seven miles of property, and the Denver Water Board underground water pipe project.
- Despite the uncertain budgetary and economic times, the Real Estate work group has been able to engage a number of critical landowners in promising negotiations on parcels of critical importance to the program.
- Created [www.CityofBoulderRealEstate.org](http://www.CityofBoulderRealEstate.org) to post information about city real estate for sale.

## What to look for in 2011:

- Compose the new 2011 – 2016 Acquisitions Plan.
- Negotiate the purchase of four or five important new properties.
- Continue monitoring and managing conservation easements.
- As approved by Open Space Board of Trustees and the City Council, sell two vacant farmhouses acquired in Open Space land purchases over the years.
- Process the dispositions of the Eldorado Springs Fire Station site and the Stratton house site.
- Complete the acquisitions for the Euclid & Broadway underpass.
- Process the disposal of all or part of the recently completed City Yards Subdivision.
- Provide real estate support to other OSMP work groups and other departments throughout the city.



The Lappin property



Prairie gentian on Ertl Conservation Easement

Photo by Ann Duncan



# CENTRAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES



CULTURAL RESOURCES • FINANCIAL SERVICES • PERMITS

# Central and Administrative Services

## *Cultural Resources Program*

2010 was a very interesting and productive year for cultural resources at OSMP! A number of projects were completed, some planned and some on an emergency basis. As well as “bricks and mortar” work, the cultural resources program coordinator participated in the West TSA planning process and was involved in the community through a number of speaking engagements and field trips.

### *2010 Accomplishments:*

#### **Halfway House and Restroom:**

Chimney inspected and cleaned, building cleaned, woodwork repaired.

#### **Green Mountain Lodge:**

Chimneys inspected, cleaned and firebox masonry repaired, woodwork repaired.

The roof was repaired with historic tile and modified to prevent damage from falling vegetation and moisture.

#### **Flagstaff Stone Shelter:**

Logs were repaired.

#### **McGilvery Cabin:**

A Historic Structures Assessment was prepared and some temporary, emergency repairs were made.

#### **Viele Shed:**

Worked with conservator, engineer, masons and the lessees, to complete emergency repairs to east wall, which was collapsing.

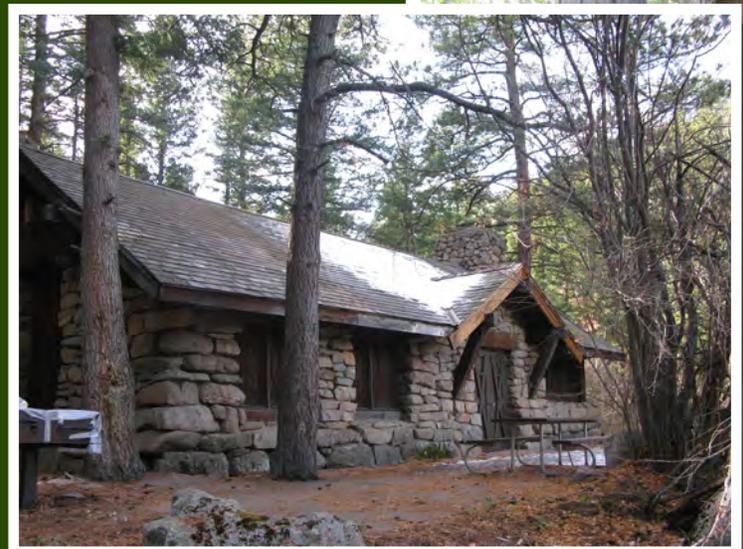
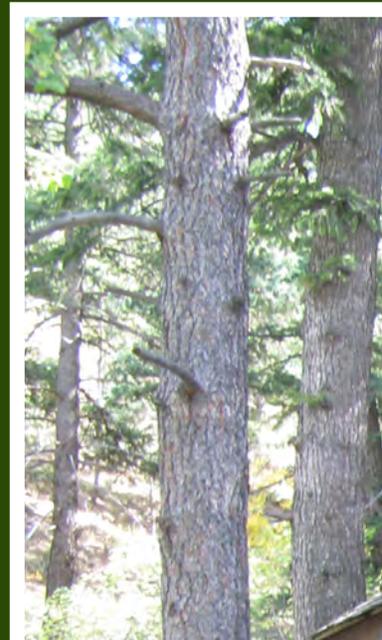
Damage to the other walls was also repaired.

#### **Chapman Drive:**

Chapman Drive was included in Boulder County Flagstaff Mountain Cultural Landscape District.

### *What to look for in 2011:*

- Opening of Green Mountain Lodge to the public!
- Chapman Drive: embankment repair
- Viele VanVleet Historic Farm: corral and fence repair
- Fox Barn: repair
- McGilvery Cabin: repair



Green Mountain Lodge

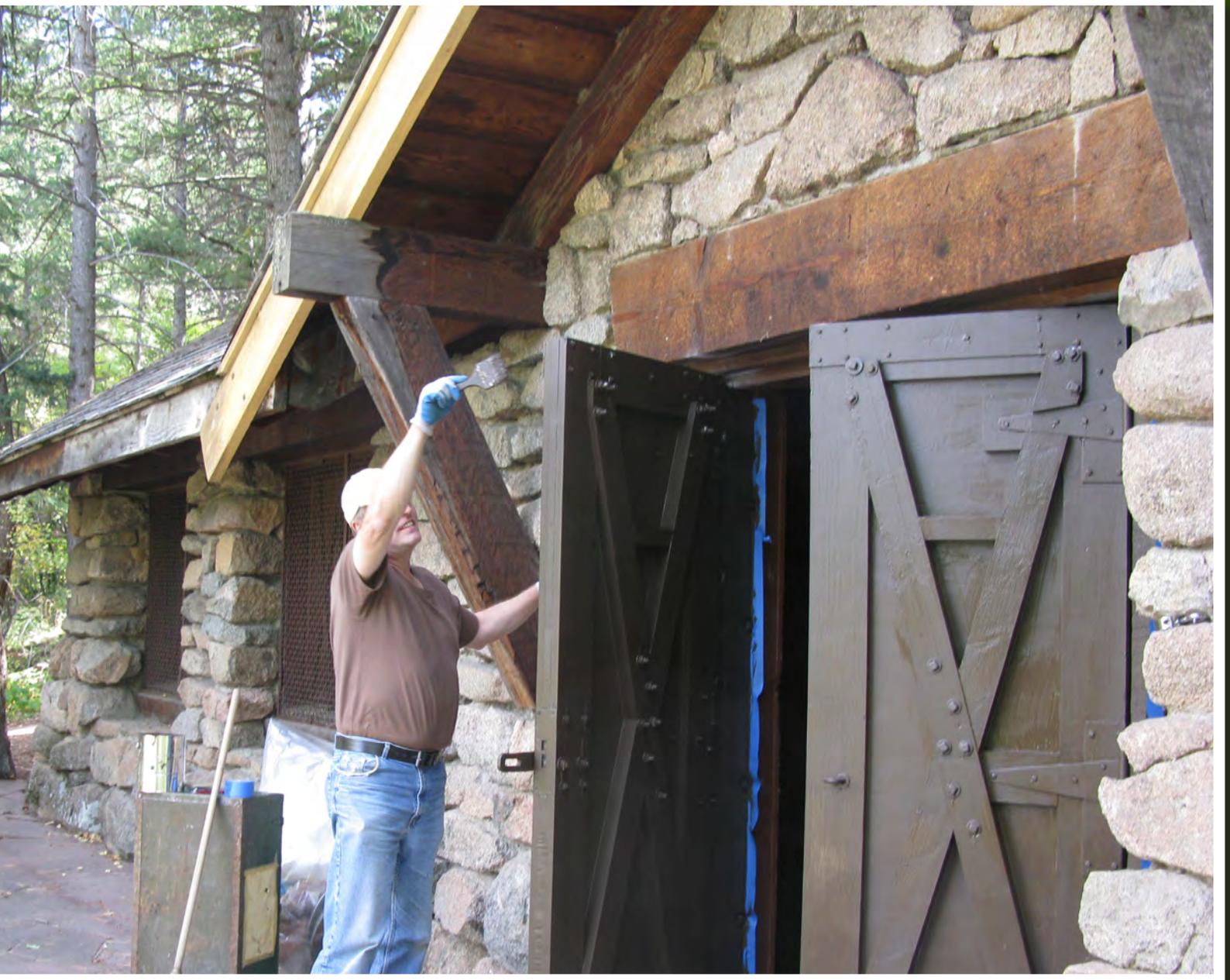
Restoration work on Green Mountain Lodge



Stone Shelter on Flagstaff Mountain



Work on the Viele Shed



# Central and Administrative Services: Financial Services

## Financial Services

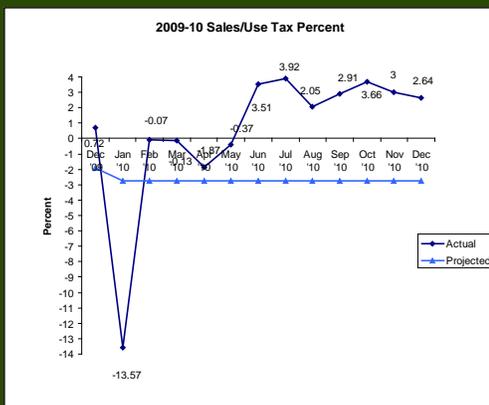
The Financial Management Services group is responsible for processing financial transactions in accordance with municipal, state and federal laws and regulations and following generally accepted accounting principles. The group is also responsible for preparing and submitting the department's Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) and operating budgets and providing analysis throughout the year to staff. In addition, Financial Management Services staff provides financial and accounting advice to project managers throughout the year. Staff is also responsible for providing administrative coordination for the BoulderCard program, the parking fee system on Flagstaff Mountain, and database administration for the department's timesheet database.

### 2010 Accomplishments:

- Completed preparation for parking fee expansion (expansion delayed until 2011).
- Timely submission of both 2011 CIP and operating budgets.
- Tracked and analyzed impacts of November 2010 ballot issues on the department; prepared and submitted various contingency budgets to the City Manager's Office and Budget Office.
- Continuous monitoring of sales tax revenue in light of the projected decrease.
- Provided accounting and financial advice regarding the department's assumption of dog licensing for the City of Boulder in 2011.
- Implemented streamlining of process to purchase additional voice and sight tags therefore reducing time needed for processing refunds.
- Implemented Priority Based Budgeting in the department.

### What to look for in 2011:

- Implement accounting processes for the city's dog licensing program.
- Assume responsibility for recording and depositing the revenue collected from dog license sales.
- Implement the expanded parking fee system.
- Review the possibility of remote access to the timesheet database.



The sales/use tax projection for 2010 was for a 2.75 percent decrease from 2009. January 2010 saw a significant decrease that was due to an anomaly in reporting. Subsequent monthly sales/use tax returns were higher than projected for 2010. Complicating department planning was the possibility of several issues on the November 2010 ballot that, if passed, would have had a significant negative impact on future sales/use tax revenues and would change how the department managed its finances in the future. None of the state ballot issues passed and revenue for 2010 was higher than projected.



### *Spotlight on Delani Wheeler*

Delani Wheeler retired at the end of May after over 30 years working in land conservation for the city. Delani served many roles across the department including Property Agent, Assistant Director, Interim Superintendent of Operations, Deputy Director, Acting Director, and most recently as Central Services Division Manager. She worked steadfastly for the attainment of departmental goals and during her tenure the program grew from approximately 9,000 to over 45,000 acres. As its revenue base expanded from 0.40 cents to 0.88 cents per dollar in dedicated sales tax, its staffing grew from approximately 9 people to over 90 positions funded in the 2010 budget. This was accomplished through the support of Boulder's citizens who approved numerous ballot initiatives over the past 23 years

to expand and extend Open Space sales taxes and create and expand charter protections for the preserved land system. Since 2001, Delani also served on the steering committee of the Colorado Open Space Alliance which supports education and networking opportunities for Colorado's land conservation community. This includes an annual conference attended by members of over 50 publicly-funded land conservation agencies from across the state. Delani has continued in this role since her retirement.



# Central and Administrative Services: Permits



## Permits

Commercial Use, Special Use, and Off-Trail Permits manage commercial and large group activities, and off-trail use in HCAs. OSMP has designed these programs to help minimize impacts to natural, agricultural and cultural resources and preserve the quality of the visitor experience. Learn more about the permit programs at [www.osmppermits.org](http://www.osmppermits.org).

- *Commercial Use Permits* are designed for any activity for which fees are charged or a donation is required for services and that bring people or animals to OSMP lands. Examples include guiding or instruction in climbing, environmental education, horseback riding as well as dog walking, filming and photography.
- *Special Use Permits and Permission Letters* are designed for any group activity with 25 or more participants. Examples include group hikes, rides or picnics, and school field trips.
- *Off-Trail Permits* are designed for any activity occurring off a designated trail in HCAs. Designated trails are marked with signs that include a trail name and can be found on OSMP's online maps.

### 2010 Accomplishments:

- Continued administering the permit programs.
- Continued to provide education and outreach to the community about the permit program and HCA values.

### What to look for in 2011:

- Review Commercial Use permit program.
- Continue administering the permit programs.

## PERMITS ISSUED IN 2010

| Permit Type            | Number of Permits Issued | Number of Planned Trips | Number of People |
|------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|------------------|
| <b>Commercial Use*</b> | 65                       | 1,728                   | 21,648           |
| <b>Special Use**</b>   | 36                       | 152                     | 9778             |
| <b>Off Trail</b>       | 465                      | 465                     | 797              |
| <b>Total:</b>          | 566                      | 2,345                   | 32,223           |

\*Total number of commercial use planned trips and people are the estimated numbers given by permit holders at the beginning of 2010.

\*\*Permission letters included in total number of special use permits, trips and people.



A commercial operator teaching a photography class.



ENJOY.  PROTECT.