



Parks and Open Space

5201 St. Vrain Road • Longmont, Colorado 80503
303.678.6200 • Fax: 303.678.6177 • www.bouldercounty.org

MINUTES AND PROCEEDINGS OF THE PARKS AND OPEN SPACE ADVISORY COMMITTEE May 26, 2016

POSAC Members in Attendance

Present: Jenn Archuleta, Sue Cass, Cathy Comstock, Eric Hozempa, James Mapes, Gordon Pedrow, Jim Krug, John Nibarger, and Scott Miller

Excused: None

Staff in Attendance

Vivienne Jannatpour, Janis Whisman, Mel Stonebraker, Renata Frye, Jeff Moline, Jesse Rounds, Al Hardy, and Therese Glowacki

Approval of the April 28, 2016 Meeting Minutes

Action Taken: Sue Cass moved to accept the April 28 minutes, and Scott Miller seconded the motion. Motion carried 8-0. [John Nibarger abstained because he was not at the April meeting.]

Discussion of the New Minutes Format

Vivienne Jannatpour presented the new, shorter format. POSAC generally approved of the new format, but requested more bookmarks for the meeting audio on the POSAC webpage to make it easier to find specific sections of the audio.

Public Participation - Items not on the Agenda

- Kristin Bjornsen, 4818 Brandon Creek Dr., Boulder: She commented on the plans by HHS to develop vacant parcels near Twin Lakes Open Space

Steen 1-Transfer of Management

Transfer management of approximately 0.75 acre to Transportation Department for Lefthand Canyon Road Repairs

Staff Presenter: Janis Whisman, Real Estate Division Manager

Action Requested: Recommendation to BOCC

Public Comments: None

Action Taken: Jenn Archuleta moved to accept staff recommendation for the transfer as presented, and Gordon Pedrow seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Wheeler Acquisition

Acquisition of approximately 230 acres at Highway 52 & East County Line Road

Staff Presenter: Mel Stonebraker, Land Officer

Action Requested: Recommendation to BOCC

Public Comments:

- Albert Davis, 5152 Buffalo Rd., Erie.

Action Taken: Sue Cass moved to approve the purchase as presented, and Jenn Archuleta seconded. Motion passed 8-1 [Scott Miller voted against the purchase].

Boulder County Fairgrounds 2015 Economic Impact Study

Presenter: Brian Lewandowski, CU Leeds School of Business, Business Research Division

Action Requested: Information Only

Public Comments: None

Rocky Mountain Greenway and Rocky Flats Trails Discussion

Staff Presenter: Jeff Moline, Resource Planning Division Manager

Other Presenters: David Lucas, Project Leader, Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge Complex and Dr. Chris Urbina, Medical Officer, Boulder County Public Health

Action Requested: Information Only

Public Comments:

- Mike Barrow, 1103 Alexandria, Lafayette.

Heil 2 Small Area Plan

Staff Presenter: Jesse Rounds, Planner

Action Requested: Recommendation to BOCC

Public Comments:

- Mike Barrow, 1103 Alexandria, Lafayette

Action Taken: James Mapes moved to accept staff recommendation for the area plan as presented, and Jenn Archuleta seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-4 [Gordon Pedrow, James Mapes, Jim Krug, Scott Miller, and Jenn Archuleta voted for the plan. Cathy Comstock, John Nibarger, Eric Hozempa, and Sue Cass voted against].

Director's Update [presented by Therese Glowacki]

- POSAC is invited to join the BOCC while they visit Pella Ponds to see the condition of the property before the flood work begins this summer. The tour will be on June 10, 10:30 a.m. -12:30 p.m.
- POSAC members will attend a site visit to the Altona Schoolhouse on June 23. More information will be announced at a later time.
- Walden Ponds flood work should be finished in the next 2-3 weeks.
- Planning for the St. Vrain Creek restoration projects has begun.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 10:32 p.m.

The full audio, available staff memos, and related materials for this meeting may be viewed on our website: www.BoulderCountyOpenSpace.org/POSAC



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PARKS AND OPEN SPACE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

DATE: Thursday, May 26, 2016
TIME: 6:00 pm
PLACE: Commissioners' Hearing Room, 3rd Floor, Boulder County Courthouse,
1325 Pearl Street, Boulder, CO

AGENDA

Suggested Timetable – Please note the earlier start time this month:

- 6:00 1. **Approval of the April 28, 2016 Meeting Minutes
New Minutes Format Discussion**
2. **Public Participation - Items not on the Agenda**
- 6:10 3. **Property Transactions:**
- Steen 1-Transfer of Management**
Transfer of approximately 0.75 acre to Transportation
Department for Lefthand Canyon Road Repairs
Staff Presenter: Janis Whisman, Real Estate Division Manager
Action Requested: Recommendation to BOCC
- Wheeler Acquisition**
Acquisition of approximately 230 acres at Highway 52
and East County Line Road
Staff Presenter: Mel Stonebraker, Land Officer
Action Requested: Recommendation to BOCC
- 6:40 4. **Boulder County Fairgrounds 2015 Economic Impact Study**
*Presenter: Brian Lewandowski, CU Leeds School of Business,
Business Research Division*
Action Requested: Information Only
- 7:10 5. **Rocky Mountain Greenway and Rocky Flats Trails Discussion**
Staff Presenter: Jeff Moline, Resource Planning Division Manager
Action Requested: Information Only
- 9:10 6. **Heil 2 Small Area Plan**
Staff Presenter: Jesse Rounds, Planner
Action Requested: Recommendation to BOCC
- 9:55 7. **Director's Update**
- 10:00 8. **Adjourn**



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PARKS AND OPEN SPACE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

TO: Parks & Open Space Advisory Committee

DATE AND LOCATION: 6:00 p.m., Thursday, May 26, 2016, Commissioners Hearing Room, 3rd floor Boulder County Courthouse, 1325 Pearl Street, Boulder, CO

AGENDA ITEM TITLE: Steen 1-Transfer of Management (for Lefthand Canyon Drive Road Repairs)

PRESENTER: Janis Whisman, Real Estate Division Manager

ACTION REQUESTED: Recommendation to the BOCC

Summary

Boulder County proposes to transfer management of approximately a 0.75-acre portion of the Steen 1 open space property to the Boulder County Transportation Department for Lefthand Canyon Drive road repairs. This acreage is located on both sides of the road approximately 3/4 of a mile east of the intersection of Lefthand Canyon Drive and Licksillet Road.

Background

Boulder County Transportation is permanently repairing Lefthand Canyon Drive from the effects of the 2013 flood event. Although the road and the Steen 1 open space property are both owned by Boulder County, they are assigned to different departments for management. Transportation will be taking over management of 0.75 acres of open space land for transportation use. If the land were owned by a private party, Transportation could condemn the land it needs for the road repairs.

The Steen 1 open space property was purchased with open space sales tax dollars, so Parks and Open Space needs to be reimbursed by Transportation for the loss of open space. Both departments are part of the county, so Transportation proposed acre-for-acre swaps, rather than dollar transfers, because Transportation sometimes has to acquire more land than what is needed for road right-of-way and that might be suitable for open space. Parks and Open Space will determine if a proposed swap parcel is valuable for addition to the county's open space program. Parcels will be added to the balance sheet as decisions are made, so rather than attempt to keep the swaps exactly even each time, the swaps will be made equivalent over time. One department or the other may be 'ahead' on the balance sheet at any given point in time, and if the balance sheet becomes too lopsided in Transportation's favor over time, Transportation will make an equalizing monetary payment to Parks and Open Space.

Public Process

The resolution language creating the sales tax that was used to purchase the Steen 1 Open Space property require specific procedures be followed to sell this property, including adjacent property owner notification, newspaper notice, and a 60-day waiting period following county commissioner approval before the formal transfer is made. The notices included an invitation to attend and comment at this meeting. Public comments will be shared with you at the meeting.

Staff Discussion and Recommendation

Staff recommends the requested transfer of management and swap arrangement for approval. Parks and Open Space will maintain the balance sheet to track land transferred for transportation uses v. land received for open space, and Parks will ensure that the balance sheet doesn't get one-sided.

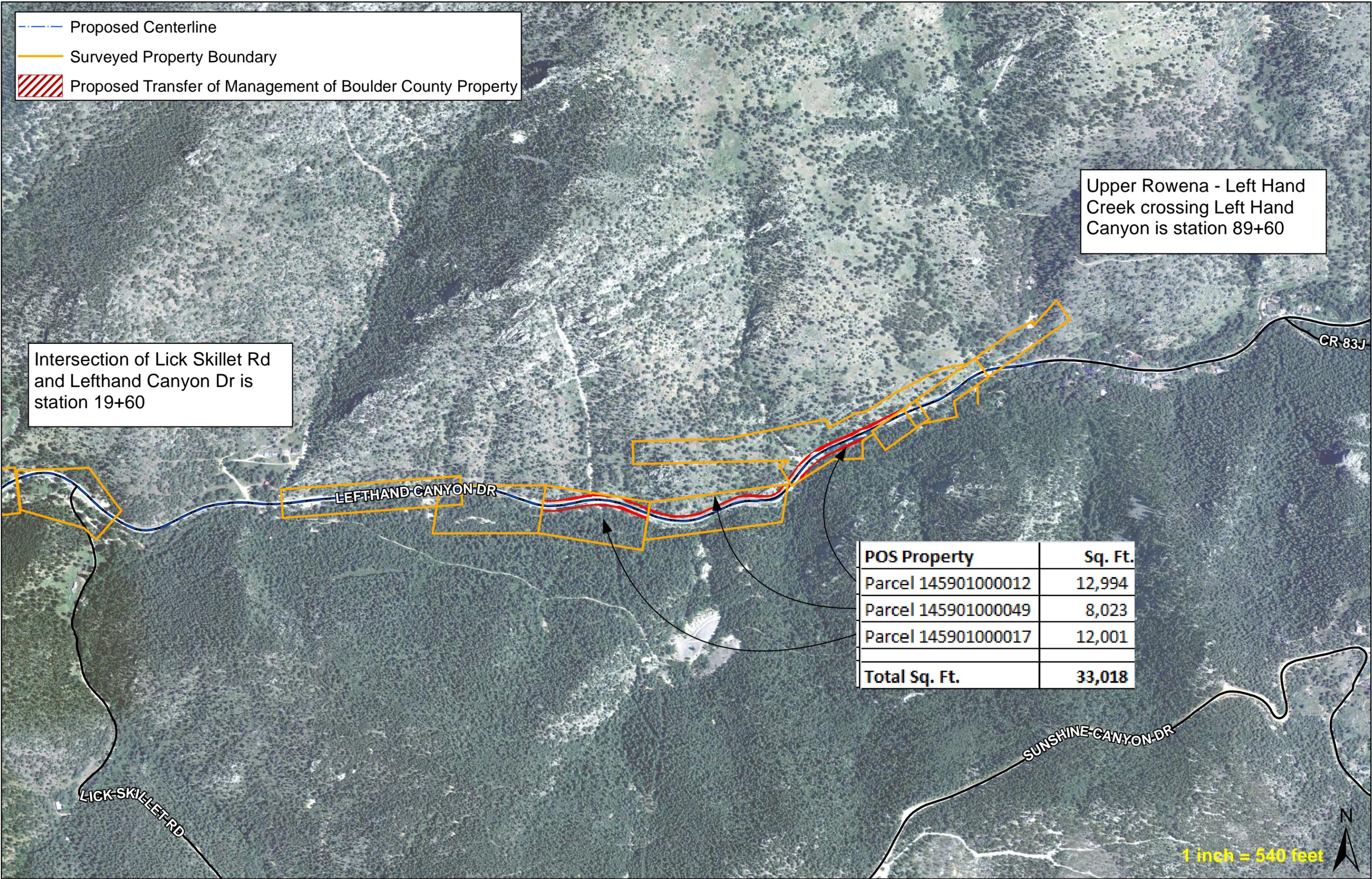
POSAC Action Requested

Recommendation to the Boulder County Commissioners for approval.

-  Proposed Centerline
-  Surveyed Property Boundary
-  Proposed Transfer of Management of Boulder County Property

Upper Rowena - Left Hand
Creek crossing Left Hand
Canyon is station 89+60

Intersection of Lick Skillet Rd
and Lefthand Canyon Dr is
station 19+60



POS Property	Sq. Ft.
Parcel 145901000012	12,994
Parcel 145901000049	8,023
Parcel 145901000017	12,001
Total Sq. Ft.	33,018

1 inch = 540 feet





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PARKS AND OPEN SPACE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

TO: Parks and Open Space Advisory Committee

DATE AND LOCATION: Thursday, May 26, 2016, 6:00 p.m. Commissioners Hearing Room, 3rd floor Boulder County Courthouse, 1325 Pearl Street, Boulder, CO

AGENDA ITEM TITLE: “Proposed Purchase of the Wheeler Ranch”

PRESENTER: Mel Stonebraker - Land Officer

ACTION REQUESTED: Approval

Summary

It is proposed that the county acquire the Wheeler Ranch later this year or in early 2017 for \$8,000,000. The property is approximately 230 acres located at the southwest corner of Highway 52 and East County Line Road. The purchase would include four residences, various outbuildings, water rights and mineral rights.

Background

The Wheeler Ranch was acquired by Jack and Dona Jean Wheeler in 1961. It has been a working cattle ranch for 55 years.

The Wheeler Ranch includes the confluence of Boulder Creek and Coal Creek. The stream corridors are habitat for a wide variety of wildlife.

Boulder County Comprehensive Plan and other Designations

The Wheeler Ranch Property is designated as part of the East County Environmental Conservation Area and contains approximately 15 acres of wetlands and 55 acres of riparian features that provide a potential restoration area for Prebles meadow jumping mouse under the Boulder County Comprehensive Plan.

Purchase Terms

It is proposed that the County purchase the entire 230 acres at a closing in late 2016 or early 2017 for \$8,000,000. The purchase prices would include the property, the water rights, mineral rights and the improvements.

Residences

The County has agreed to allow Dee Jay Wheeler and her two sons to lease back the agricultural land, one of the residences and a small agricultural dwelling unit for a period of 5 years with the right to renew for another 5 years. The agricultural land and the residences would be leased under standard county terms and conditions for similar open space properties. When the property is eventually vacated the county intends to sell the residence

and the associated agricultural dwelling unit on a lot of approximately 7 acres. While it is hard to estimate the future market value of this house and land, staff believes that a conservative figure would be \$500,000 to \$600,000.

The other two residences would be acquired subject existing leases which the county would honor until the term of the leases expire. At that point, the county intends to sell these houses as well. Each house would be sold on a lot of approximately 1.5 acres. Staff estimates that the market value for these houses would be approximately \$250,000 to \$300,000 each.

Water Rights

The Wheeler Ranch acquisition would include ¼ share of the Howell Ditch and 5 shares of the Lower Boulder Ditch collectively valued at \$400,000.

Mineral Royalties

The terms of the proposed acquisition allow for the mineral royalties to be retained by the Wheeler family for a period of 10 years. The county has agreed to this arrangement with other landowners a number of times in the past.

Summary of Wheeler Ranch Property Acquisition Terms

Total Acreage	230
Gross Purchase Price	\$8,000,000
Est. Value of Three House Lots	\$1,000,000 to \$1,200,000
Water Rights Value	\$400,000
Net Vacant Land Price	\$6,400,000 to \$6,600,000
Price per Acre (220 acres net)	\$29,090 to \$30,000

Staff Discussion and Recommendation

Staff strongly supports and recommends the acquisition of the Wheeler Ranch property. The Wheeler Ranch has been near the top of the county’s open space priority list for many years. It is a magnificent property of high quality pasture and unique wildlife habitat.

The Wheeler Ranch is not subject to any intergovernmental agreements and as such has added importance. Given its strategic location at the intersection of Highway 52 and East County Line Road if left unprotected its potential for development is high. It is the gateway to Boulder County on Highway 52 and is surrounded on three sides by protected land.

The Town of Erie has identified the parcel as one of their priorities for acquisition and we intend to work with the Town to determine their willingness to participate in the purchase. We have reached out to the Town’s staff, and they will be going to their advisory board and council to explore partnering ideas. Their most recent comments concerning the priority of this property for purchase are the following:

Adjacent to lands owned by Boulder County for conservation/preservation. Confluence of Coal Creek and Boulder Creek.

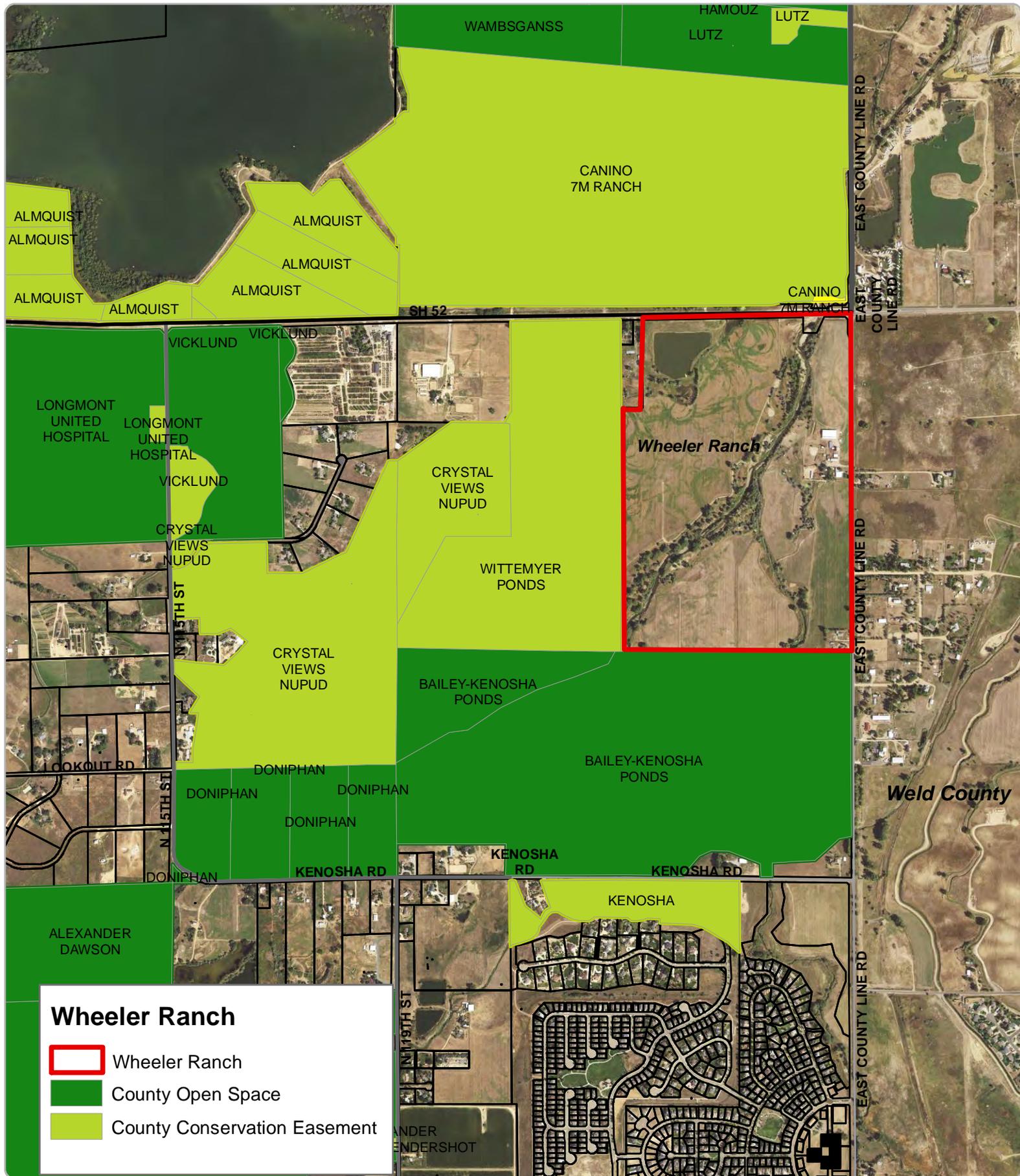
- Provides land for a critical trail connection from Erie's trail network to the St. Vrain Legacy Trail and Colorado Front Range Trail.
- Portions of the property rank very highly in Erie's Natural Areas inventory. Identified among the highest value land for potential open space values in the PROST Master Plan.
- Access to this property for the creek corridor is essential to the completion of a continuous section of trail connecting the Rock Creek/Coal Creek Regional Trail to the St. Vrain Legacy Trail.
- Erie seeks to partner financially with Boulder county on acquisition and/or preservation efforts.
- Erie is also interested in collaborating with Boulder County in pursuing grant funding opportunities or conservation donations to facilitate the preservation of this property.

Price Considerations

Last year the department had an appraisal done on a property of similar size and quality. That property *was* covered by an intergovernmental agreement. The price proposed for the Wheeler Ranch is consistent with that appraised valuation. Staff feels, given the properties unique qualities and its potential for annexation and development that the proposed price is consistent with market value. The County and the Wheeler family have been in periodic negotiations for much of the last ten years. The proposed purchase price is the product of hard negotiations and staff does not believe the property could be acquired for less. Moreover the proposed purchase price is consistent with other recent open space purchases near urbanization.

POSAC Action Requested

Approval of the acquisition of the Wheeler Ranch and the creation of the three lots as proposed.



Wheeler Ranch

-  Wheeler Ranch
-  County Open Space
-  County Conservation Easement



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PARKS AND OPEN SPACE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

TO: Parks & Open Space Advisory Committee

DATE and LOCATION: Thursday, May 26, 6:00 p.m., Commissioners Hearing Room, 3rd floor
Boulder County Courthouse, 1325 Pearl Street, Boulder, CO

AGENDA ITEM TITLE: Boulder County Fairgrounds Economic Impact Study

PRESENTERS: Brian Lewandowski, Associate Director, Business Research Division, CU Leeds
School of Business

ACTION REQUESTED: Information only

Background

The Boulder County Fairgrounds serves as a venue for the County Fair and dozens of other events year-round, from dog shows to craft fairs, roller derbies and the Tour de Cure. As the oldest county fair in Colorado, the Boulder County Fair has provided education and entertainment for generations of residents and visitors. It also serves an important community need, hosting the CSU Extension and providing meeting space to 4H and Future Farmers of America clubs.

The fairgrounds were relocated from Roosevelt Park to Nelson Road and Hover in Longmont in 1978, where it sits on 83 acres of unincorporated county land surrounded by Longmont. The site contains several barns, arenas, an exhibit building, and a 96-site campground for a total of 404,420 square feet of facilities, plus 547,200 square feet of parking.

The Boulder County Parks and Open Space Department (BCPOS) took over management of the Fairgrounds in 1983. In 2015 the fairgrounds had an estimated 337,900 visitors and 831 vendors throughout the year. The County Fair accounts for 38% of the annual visitation.

The economic impact study will help provide context for Fairgrounds improvements expenditures decisions over time.

Fairgrounds Economic Impact Study

Boulder County hired the Business Research Division, University of Colorado Leeds School of Business, to design the study and analyze the data.

The Fairgrounds Economic Impact Study had two goals: estimate the economic impact generated by the events, and obtain feedback on Fairgrounds programming and the facility.

The study analyzed data from three sources:

- Fairgrounds visitors—1,708 surveyed by BCPOS Staff and senior tax workers with a one-page paper survey instrument
- Fairgrounds vendors—128 surveyed via email
- Fairgrounds expenditures—data on operating, capital and personnel expenditures provided by BCPOS

Summary of Results

In 2015, the Fairgrounds generated an estimated \$6.9 million in economic benefit to the local economy, based on direct activity of \$9.4 million. This economic benefit of \$6.9 million is the total stimulus (including multiplier effect) based on expenditures by people from outside the area coming to Longmont specifically to attend events or work at the Fairgrounds, who would not otherwise have been spending money in the local economy.

Visitors and vendors both express satisfaction with the facility and programming. However, 588 visitors and 94 vendors offered suggestions for improvements. The most common suggestions from visitors are:

- Enhance attractions at the County Fair
- Improve information and promotion, especially for the Fair
- Pave the parking lots and otherwise control dust
- Provide additional seating in the shade
- Increase bathroom maintenance during the Fair

Similarly, the most common suggestions from vendors addressed bathrooms (primarily adding facilities closer to the farmers market), advertising and promotion, parking, enhancing attractions at the County Fair, and improving ecommerce capabilities.

Action Requested: information only

Attachment: Boulder County Fairgrounds 2015 Economic Impact Study

Boulder County Fairgrounds 2015 Economic Impact Study

A consulting report conducted for Boulder County by the:

BUSINESS RESEARCH DIVISION

Leeds School of Business
University of Colorado Boulder
420 UCB
Boulder, CO 80309-0420
Telephone: 303-492-3307
colorado.edu/business/brd

Final Report

April 14, 2016



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Boulder County Fairgrounds is a conduit for economic activity in Longmont and Boulder County. The fairgrounds provides a venue for buyers and sellers, such as in the case of farmers' market, the quilt show, and the Mollie McGee craft markets. The Boulder County Fair also provides a market for commerce, drawing the largest crowd to the fairgrounds while providing entertainment and local exhibits that reflect the culture of the community. Boulder County Fairgrounds staff estimated 337,900 visitors and 831 vendors in 2015.

In partnership with Boulder County, the Business Research Division (BRD) of the Leeds School of Business at the University of Colorado Boulder surveyed visitors and vendors to Boulder County Fairgrounds events. The purpose of the study was to assess the economic impact of events held at the fairgrounds on the Longmont economy and collect opinions regarding possible fairgrounds improvements and programming.

Of the estimated 337,900 visitors in 2015, more than 38% of these were to the county fair. According to responses from visitors approached at Boulder County Fairgrounds events in 2015, most events drew a local and regional audience. While attracting a much smaller overall number of attendees, the non-county fair events, like the quilt fair and antique shows, draw a higher percentage of out-of-town visitors than the county fair and have a higher amount of spending at the event itself. Of those attendees who stay overnight for the event, most stay in Longmont. Non-residents whose primary purpose included the fairgrounds event represented a minority of visitors surveyed. Some new economic activity was induced from the fairgrounds—25% of visitors surveyed were from outside Boulder County and were visiting Longmont primarily for the event.

Overall, visitors and vendors expressed satisfaction with the fairgrounds facilities and offerings. About 95% of visitors reported being satisfied or very satisfied with fairgrounds facilities, and 80% were satisfied or very satisfied with fairgrounds offerings. Eighty-six percent of vendors were satisfied or very satisfied with fairgrounds facilities.

Boulder County Fairgrounds staff estimated 831 vendors in 2015. Fairgrounds vendors tended to be from the Front Range. Across all fairgrounds events, out-of-town vendors staying overnight tended to stay in Longmont. Vendors at the fair spent more money during their visit to the area than other event vendors, with lodging and going out to eat the largest categories. Most vendors plan to return in the future.

The fairgrounds generated \$9.4 million in direct economic activity in the Longmont area in 2015 through on-site purchases during events and through community retail sales, dining, entertainment, overnight visitors, and other related activities. This local spending grows as money gets spent and respent in a community (i.e., the multiplier effect). The economic benefits (multiplier effect) associated with the fairgrounds totaled \$6.9 million in 2015, excluding economic activity from local patrons.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

In 2015, Boulder County contracted with the Business Research Division (BRD) of the Leeds School of Business at the University of Colorado Boulder to conduct a visitor impact analysis for the Boulder County Fairgrounds. Given the visitor focus, this study targeted events that drew audiences beyond the city and county. The primary purpose of the study was to estimate the economic impact of the fairgrounds on Boulder County. In addition, the study explored opinions about possible fairgrounds improvements and programming. The Boulder County Fairgrounds staff estimated 337,900 visitors and 831 vendors in 2015.

The study had two primary goals:

1. Conduct visitor and vendor surveys to provide an estimate of the percentage of visitors and vendors from out of the area (outside of Longmont, Boulder County, and out of state) and their expenditures, resulting in an estimate of the local economic impact of the Boulder County Fairgrounds.
2. Conduct surveys of fairgrounds visitors and vendors to explore opinions about possible fairgrounds improvements and programming.

METHODOLOGY

The Boulder County Fairgrounds hosts a variety of events throughout the year. The BRD provided two survey instruments, the survey sampling plan, and an analysis of data collected. Additionally, Boulder County was supplied with a questionnaire to be completed about fairgrounds operating and capital expenditures. Boulder County staff was responsible for survey deployment and for providing expenditures for fairgrounds operations.

The total number of completed surveys were:

- Visitor surveys: 1,708
- Vendor surveys: 128

Fairgrounds Visitor Survey

The fairgrounds visitor survey was created based on previous visitor surveys produced by the BRD and based on a literature review of other fairgrounds surveys that have been conducted nationally. The survey, which was adjusted to address additional questions important to Boulder County Fairgrounds, was a one-page, single-sided intercept paper instrument on clipboards supplied by the BRD. Deployment of the survey began in July 2015 at the Boulder County Fair and ended in October after Boulder County Fine Art & Craft fairs. A Spanish version of the survey was available during the Boulder County Fair.

Surveys were deployed during the following events:

- Boulder County Fair—7/31–8/9
- American Diabetes Tour de Cure—8/15
- Rocky Mountain STEAM Fest¹—9/5-6
- Quilt Show—9/25-26
- Pumpkin Pie Antique Show—10/10-11
- Mollie McGee Craft Markets—10/17-18
- Boulder County Farmers Markets, various Saturdays—9/19–11/21
- Boulder County Fine Art & Craft Fairs—9/26 and 10/24

Visitor surveys from the Boulder County Fair were representative of only the Boulder County Fair. Visitor surveys from all other events were aggregated and assumed to also represent events that were not surveyed.

Vendor Survey

The survey of vendors was designed for online deployment (email survey). The vendors were asked questions about their home location, duration of stay in Boulder County, lodging nights, and revenue, as well as their opinions about desired fairgrounds improvements.

Of the 39 county fair vendors who responded to this survey, only one did not participate in any events at the fairgrounds in 2015. Of the vendors from other fairgrounds events, 11 of the 101 (11%) respondents did not actually participate in 2015 (the year the survey was conducted). All respondents who reported they did not participate in events at the fairgrounds in 2015 were excluded from the results of the rest of the survey.

Fairgrounds Expenditure Questionnaire

The survey of fairgrounds expenditures included detailed operating and capital spending. The BRD collected information on the Boulder County Fairgrounds budget, non-labor operating expenditures by vendor name and ZIP code, a tally of employment by employee ZIP codes, total labor expenses (salaries and benefits), and capital expenditures by vendor name and ZIP code. This information allowed economic impacts to be estimated based on where spending occurred.

Data collected from the three surveys (attendees, vendors, and fairgrounds expenditures) were adjusted to correct for double counting. For instance, when visitors purchase food on-site from a vendor, this spending also is also present in the vendor survey, which would necessitate the adjustment. Revenue/expenditure data provided in the three surveys were entered into an input-output economic modeling tool, IMPLAN. The IMPLAN model includes custom trade flows and multipliers for Boulder County, allowing for localized analysis on the churn of dollars in the Boulder County economy, termed the *multiplier effect*. In the absence of estimated local purchasing coefficients (LPC) for goods, services, and labor, the BRD team deferred to the IMPLAN model for LPCs. The results analyzed include direct, indirect, and induced economic impacts for output, employment, and wages.

¹STEAM: Science, Technology, Entrepreneurship, Arts, and Making

DEFINITIONS

Gross Domestic Product (GDP): A measure of economic activity, GDP is the total value added by resident producers of final goods and services.

Gross Output (Output): The total value of production is gross output. Unlike GDP, gross output includes intermediate goods and services.

Value Added: The contribution of an industry or region to total GDP, value added equals gross output, net of intermediate input costs.

Company: Includes all establishments under the same responding parent entity.

Establishment: Refers to individual company locations.

Employment: Refers to headcount (full time and part time), not FTEs.

Induced: Economic activity generated through household income spending.

Indirect: Economic activity generated through the upstream or backward supply chain.

Multiplier Effect: Additional economic activity (indirect and induced) that results from direct industry activity.

VISITOR SURVEY ANALYSIS

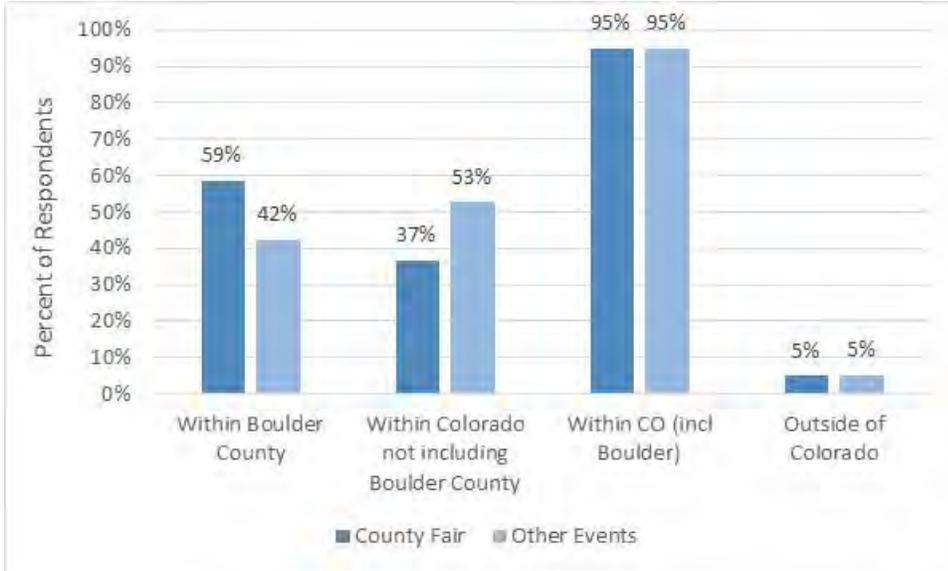
Summary

Boulder County Fairgrounds staff estimated 337,900 visitors in 2015. The county fair draws the largest number of visitors, accounting for approximately 38% of the total. According to responses from visitors approached at Boulder County Fairgrounds events in 2015, most events drew a local and regional audience. While attracting a much smaller overall number of attendees, the non-county fair events, like the quilt fair and antique shows, drew a higher percentage of out-of-town visitors than the county fair and had a higher amount of spending at the event itself. Of those attendees who stayed overnight for the event, most stayed in Longmont. Most respondents were satisfied with the fairgrounds events. However, certain key areas of improvement were suggested, including those to bathrooms, parking lots, and communications.

Area of Origin

The majority of visitors to the Boulder County Fair live within Boulder County (59% of respondents), whereas 42% of visitors to other fairgrounds events were reported as Boulder County residents.

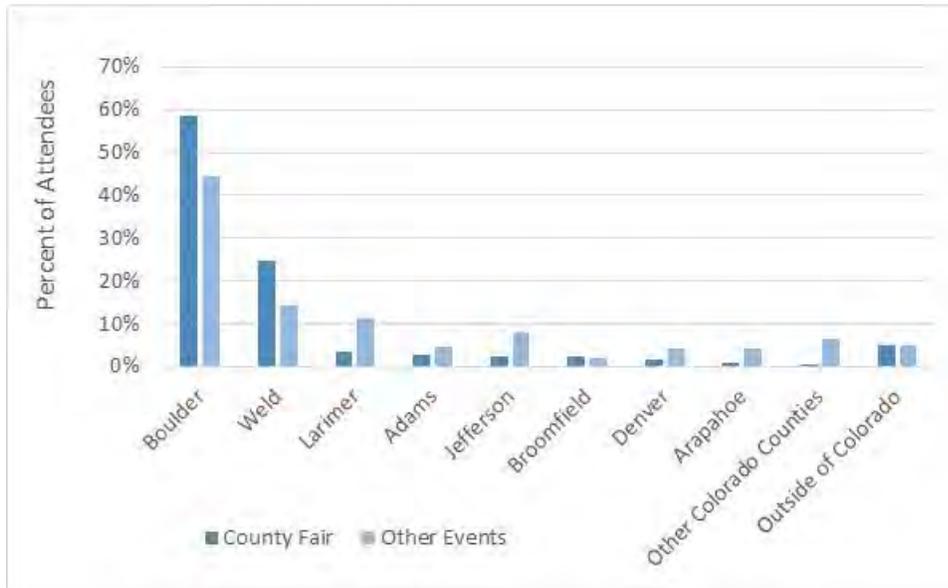
FIGURE 1: VISITOR REGION OF ORIGIN — COUNTY FAIR VS. OTHER EVENTS



n=1,661

The primary difference when looking specifically at Colorado counties of origin for attendees of the county fair versus attendees of other events at the fairgrounds is within the second- and third-most represented counties. Across the board, most attendees came from Boulder County. For the county fair, far more attendees came from Weld County than from Larimer County, whereas attendees from those two counties who attended other events were almost equal.

FIGURE 2: COLORADO COUNTIES OF ORIGIN — COUNTY FAIR VS. OTHER EVENTS

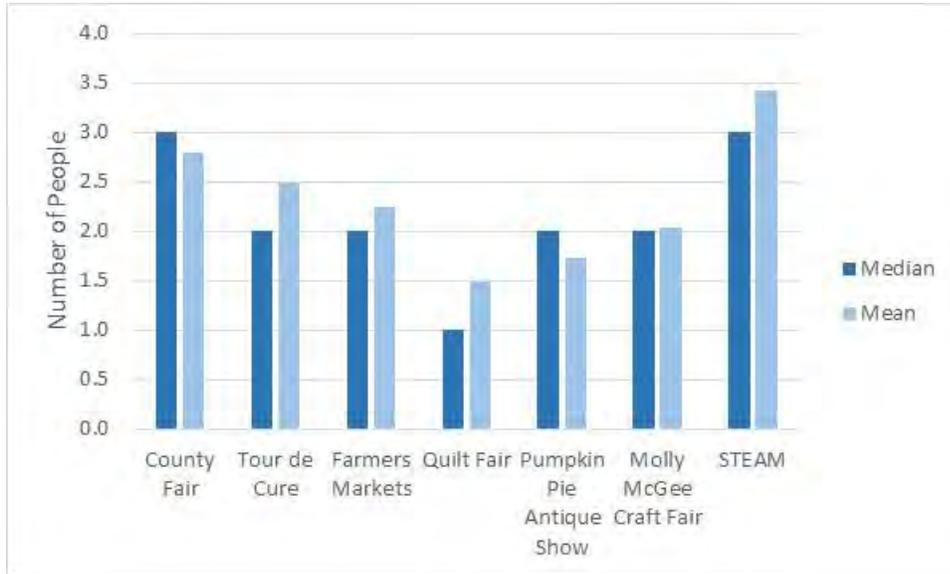


n=1,661

Group Size

The average group size for all surveyed events was 2.7 people, while the median group size was 2, skewed by the volume of relatively larger groups at the Boulder County Fair. The Boulder County Fair averaged 2.8 people while all other events surveyed averaged 2.3 people.

FIGURE 3: AVERAGE VS. MEDIAN GROUP SIZE REPORTED BY VISITORS ATTENDING FAIRGROUNDS EVENTS



n=1,658

Out-of-Town Visitors

Nonresidents whose primary purpose included the fairgrounds event represented a minority of visitors surveyed. Nineteen percent of visitors surveyed during the Boulder County Fair were both from outside Boulder County and visited Longmont primarily for the fair. This percentage was higher for the other surveyed events (40%). Combined, 25% of visitors surveyed were from outside Boulder County and were visiting Longmont primarily for the event. The composition of event offerings impacts the visitor draw (local versus non-local).

Across all events, 5% of respondents had never been to Longmont prior to that day's event. Boulder County Fairgrounds events elicited few new visitors to the city. Overall, 3% of individuals surveyed were from outside Boulder County, were visiting Longmont specifically for the event, and had not visited Longmont prior. The percentage was slightly higher for events that drew from a broad region, such as Tour de Cure (8% surveyed), than for events that targeted a local interest, such as the farmers markets.

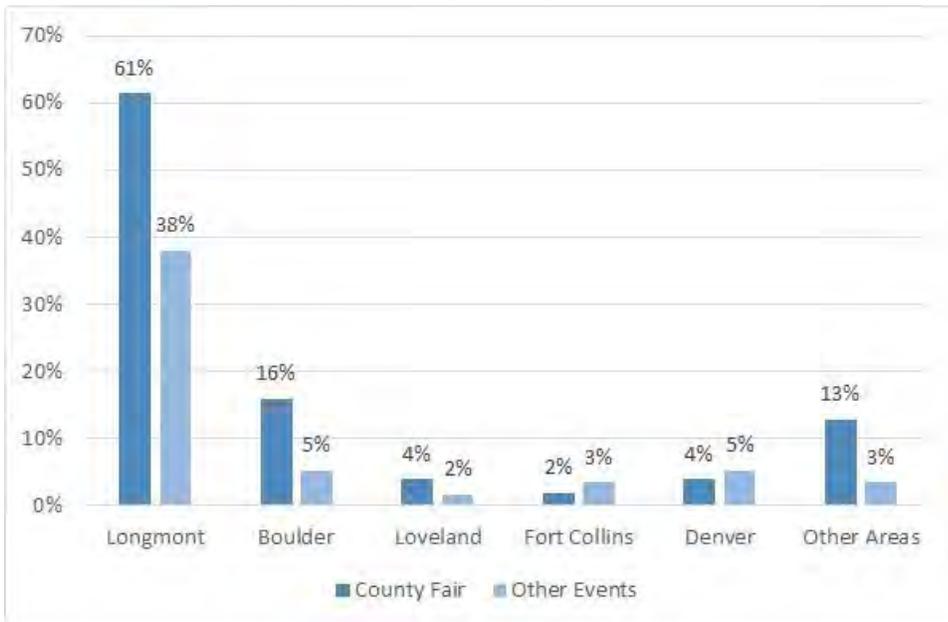
Lodging during Fairground Events

About 8.1% of visitors surveyed indicated staying away from home for at least one night during their visit. Slightly more respondents from other events (9%) planned to spend at least one night away from home than county fair respondents (8%). Fewer visitors surveyed whose primary purpose for visiting Longmont included the event (4.1%) stayed away from home overnight.

For all events, 53% of those staying away from home had accommodations in Longmont. A higher percentage of overnight county fair visitors stayed in the city of Boulder (16% of respondents) versus only

5% of overnight visitors to other events. Overnight visitors also stayed in other areas not listed in the survey answer options (9% overall).

FIGURE 4: LODGING LOCATION FOR OVERNIGHT VISITORS



n=159

Fairgrounds Spending

Spending by residents and non-residents averaged \$18.36 per person on site at the fairgrounds during the events. Spending on-site during the fair was lower per person than during the other events surveyed, and on-site spending by non-residents exceeded spending by residents. Planned average spending per person for non-residents of Boulder County totaled \$34.53 for all events surveyed. For people visiting Longmont for the primary purpose of going to the fairgrounds event, average spending per person totaled \$40.58.

Across all events, the average anticipated spending by attendees was highest for lodging, followed by retail, other purchases, and groceries.

TABLE 1: PER PERSON SPENDING PER DAY BY ATTENDEES AT EACH EVENT

Category	Percentage
Lodging	33%
Retail	13%
Groceries	12%
Other	12%
Transportation	8%
Entertainment	7%
Dining	7%
Services	7%

Spending Impact

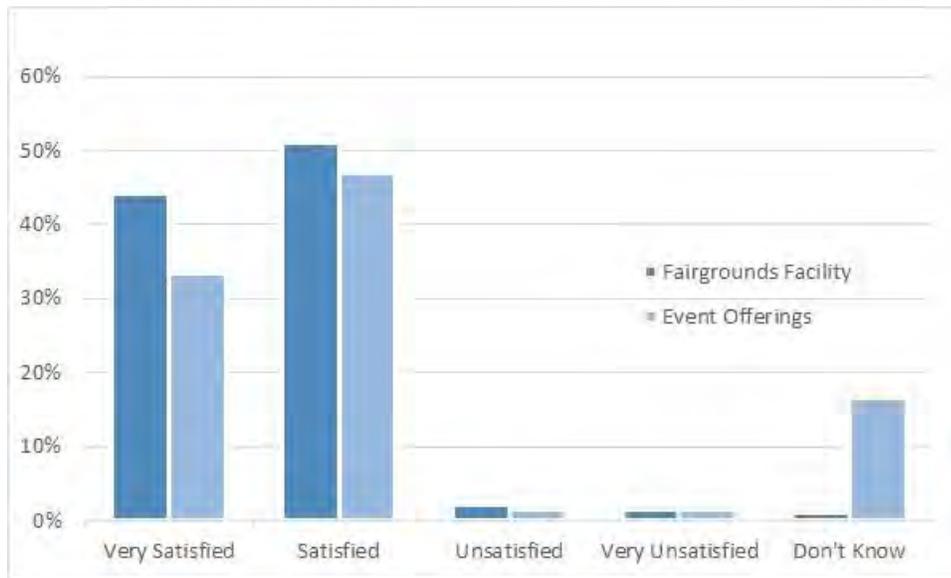
Based on on-site daily spending for the Boulder County Fair and all other events, on-site spending by visitors was estimated at \$7.5 million. Additional community spending by visitors was estimated at \$561,000.

Fairgrounds Satisfaction

Most respondents expressed satisfaction with the Boulder County Fairgrounds. The percentage of respondents who were unsatisfied with the facilities totaled 4% and the percentage who were unsatisfied with the yearly event offerings at the venue was 3%. A total of 17% of respondents across all events answered “Don’t Know” regarding their satisfaction with the fairgrounds’ calendar of events.

Satisfaction was similar between the Boulder County Fair and other events. Approximately 95% of Boulder County Fair respondents expressed satisfaction (very satisfied and satisfied) with the facility compared to 96% for other events combined. A total of 82% of Boulder County Fair respondents expressed satisfaction with event offerings through the year compared to 77% for all other events. A greater percentage of other event attendees were uncertain about their satisfaction with other event offering than Boulder County Fair attendees (21% versus 15%), suggesting that many of these attendees are unaware of the breadth of event offerings at the facility.

FIGURE 5: VISITOR SATISFACTION WITH FAIRGROUNDS FACILITIES AND EVENTS



n=1,691

Additional Visitor Suggestions

When asked about their level of satisfaction, only 4% of fairgrounds visitors who completed the survey were less than satisfied with the facilities and 3% were less than satisfied with event offerings. However, 37%, or 588, of all survey participants submitted suggestions for improvements.

The five most frequently mentioned improvements (in order) include:

1. Enhance the attractions at the county fair.
2. Improve the information and promotion of all events at the fairgrounds, especially the county fair.
3. Pave the parking lots and any other actions that can help control the dust.
4. Install additional seats and tables in the shade.
5. Increase bathroom maintenance during the county fair.

See Appendix 1 for more detail on fairgrounds improvement suggestions.

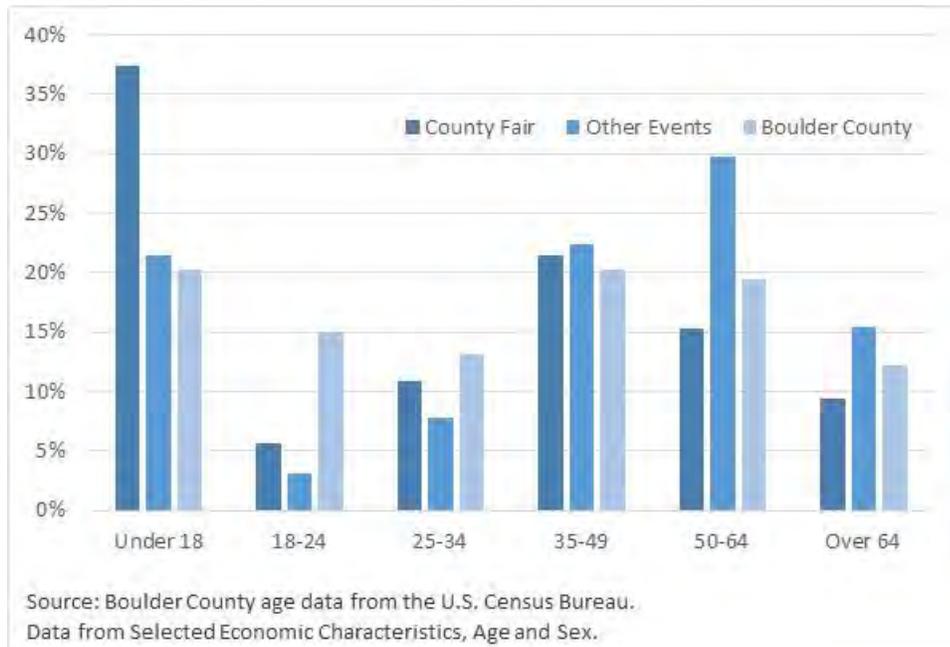
VISITOR DEMOGRAPHICS

Age

Differences exist among age groups represented at the county fair versus other events held at the fairgrounds. The county fair draws a much younger crowd than farmers markets, craft fairs, and antique shows. The largest age group at the fair was the under-18-years category (37% of respondent group). In contrast, the largest group at the other fairgrounds events surveyed was the 50–64 age group (30%).

The Boulder County Fairgrounds events drew a younger audience than the demographics of Boulder County. This is mostly attributed to the under 18 age cohort attending the Boulder County Fair. The representation of 18-24 year olds was lower than area demographics for both the Boulder County Fair and other events.

FIGURE 6: PERCENT OF VISITOR AGE GROUPS AT FAIRGROUNDS EVENTS

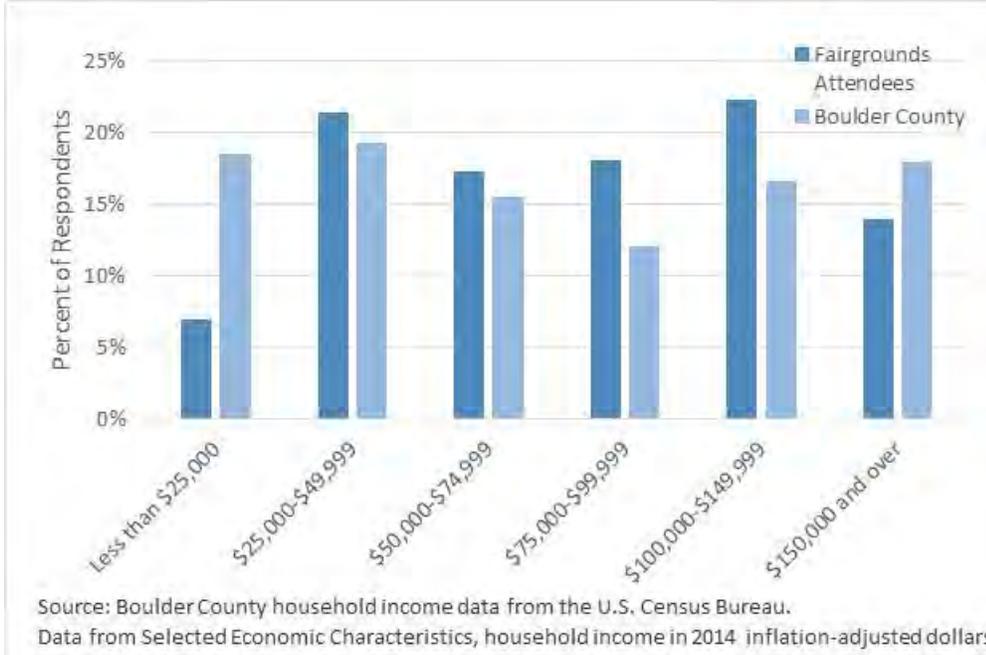


n=1,684

Household Income

Across all events, visitors to the Boulder County Fairgrounds represented a broad distribution of annual household income. The household income of surveyed attendees was similar to Boulder County, with fewer households earning less than \$24,000 and more households earning \$75,000-\$149,000 than the overall county population.

FIGURE 7: ANNUAL HOUSEHOLD INCOME OF VISITORS TO ALL FAIRGROUNDS EVENTS



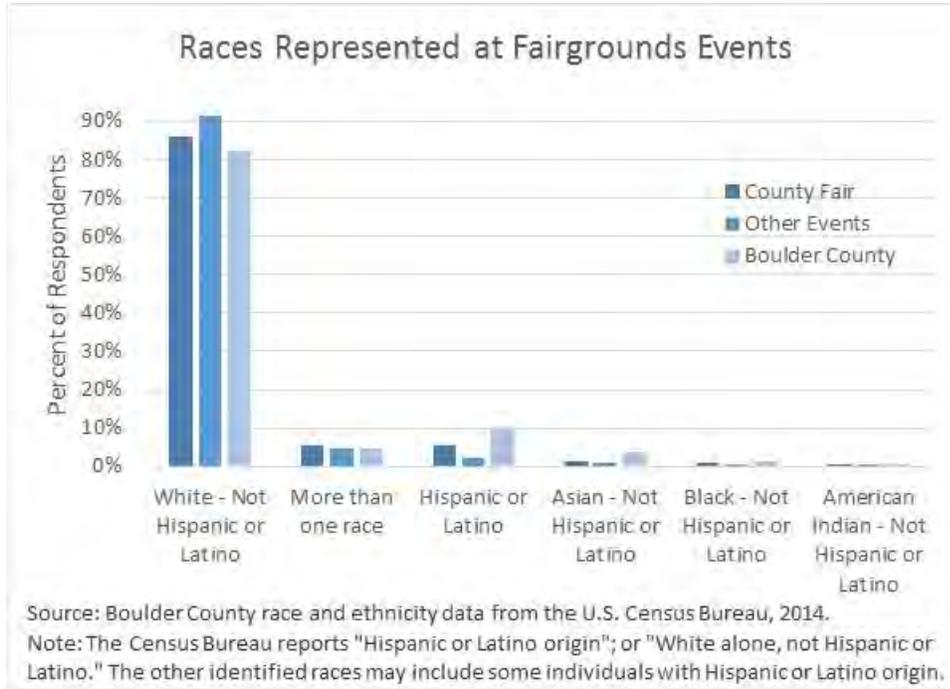
n=1,118

Race/Ethnicity

The large majority of attendee respondents across all fairgrounds events were White (87%), followed by “more than one race” (5%), Hispanic (4%), Asian (1%), Black (1%), and American Indian (1%). (Respondents indicated their own race/ethnicity, not the race/ethnicity of each group member.)

Attendees to Boulder County Fairgrounds events closely resembled the race/ethnicity profile of Boulder County.

FIGURE 8: RACE/ETHNICITY REPRESENTED AT FAIRGROUNDS EVENTS



N=1,601

VENDOR SURVEY ANALYSIS

Summary

Boulder County Fairgrounds staff estimated 831 vendors in 2015 based on estimates from event managers. Fairgrounds vendors tended to be from the Front Range. Across all fairgrounds events, out-of-town vendors staying overnight away from home tended to stay in Longmont, followed by Loveland. Vendors at the fair tended to spend more money during their visit to the area than other event vendors, with lodging and going out to eat the largest spending categories.

Vendor Events

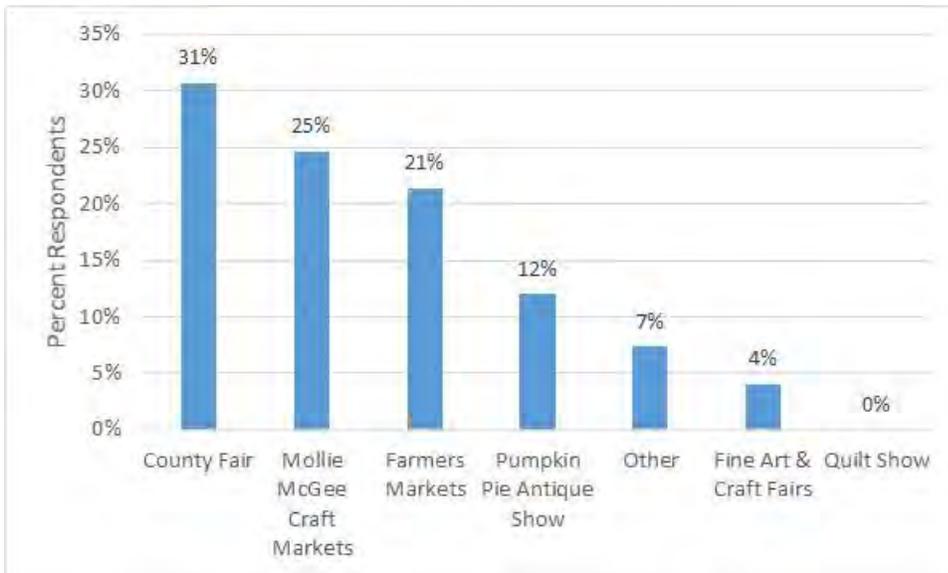
Boulder County Fairgrounds staff provided vendor participation totals by event. Overall, staff reported 831 vendors across 11 events. Some events, such as the farmers markets, were multi-week events.

TABLE 2: EVENT VENDORS

Event	Number of Reported Vendors
Mollie McGee Craft Markets	180
Handweaver Guild	124
Home & Garden Show	113
Pumpkin Pie Antique Show	86
County Fair	77
Colorado Quilt-A-Fair	71
Farmers Markets	71
STEAM	70
Boulder County Fine Art & Craft Fairs	23
American Diabetes Tour de Cure	16
Total	831

Of the respondents who completed the vendor survey, many participated in more than one event. Most were participants in the Boulder County Fair, the Molly McGee craft markets, and the Boulder County farmers markets, respectively.

FIGURE 9: PERCENTAGE OF VENDORS EVENT PARTICIPATION

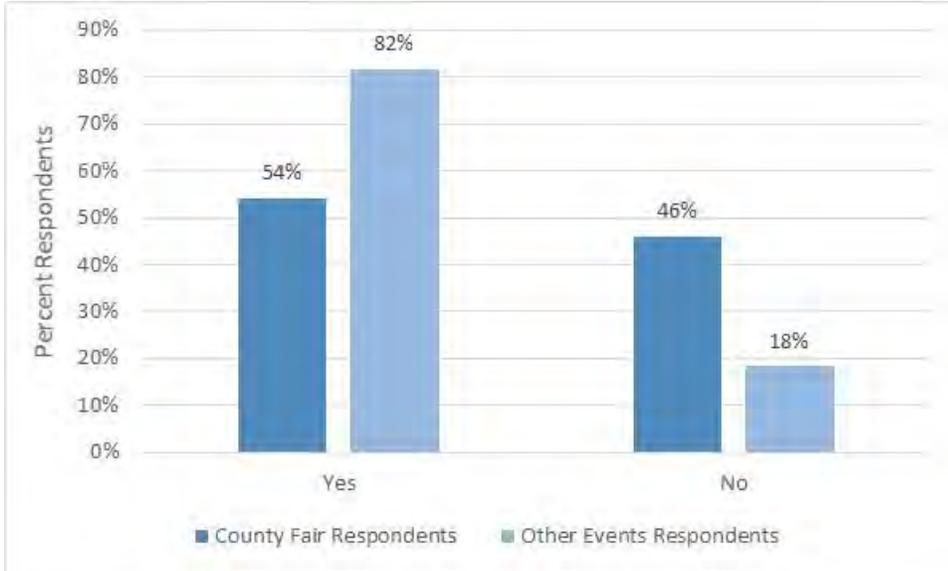


n=150

Prior Participation

Slightly over half of the responding vendors exhibiting at the county fair had exhibited there before 2015, whereas 82% of responding vendors at other fairgrounds events were return exhibitors.

FIGURE 10: VENDORS EXHIBITING AT FAIRGROUNDS EVENTS PRIOR TO 2015

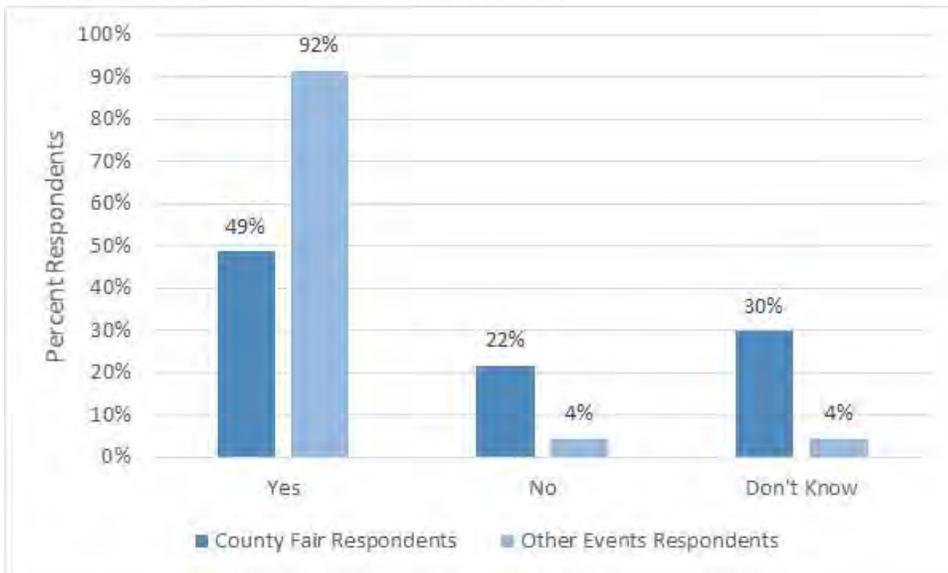


n=108

Future Participation

Of the 108 vendors who responded to the question about whether they would likely exhibit again at the fairgrounds, 49% of county fair vendors and 92% other event vendors indicated they would likely exhibit again.

FIGURE 11: VENDOR PLANS TO EXHIBIT AGAIN



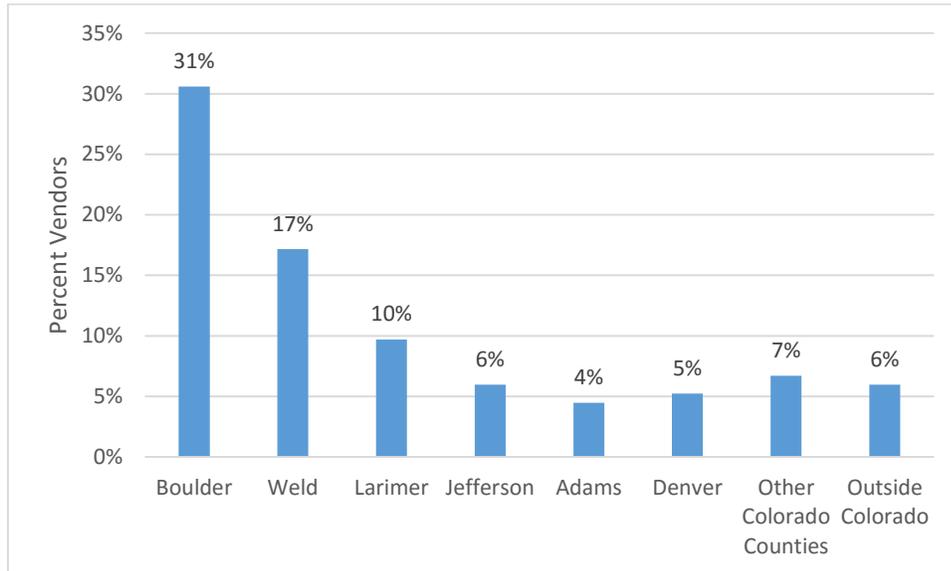
n=108

Of those respondents who did not plan to return to exhibit at the county fair, more than half indicated that their decision was due to a lack of attendance (six respondents). Lack of return on investment, poor fairgrounds management, too far from residence, and no longer in business were the other reasons given by respondents (one respondent each). For more detailed responses, please see Appendix 1.

Vendor Location

Vendor ZIP codes were used to reference vendor resident cities, counties, and states. Ninety-four percent of all vendor respondents across all fairgrounds events were from Colorado and primarily from Boulder and Weld counties, followed by Larimer, Jefferson, Denver, and Adams.

FIGURE 12: FAIRGROUNDS VENDOR COUNTY OF ORIGIN – ALL EVENTS COMBINED



n=134

Group Size

The average group size for all vendors surveyed was 2.3 people. The Boulder County Fair averaged 3.2 people while all other events surveyed averaged 1.9 people.

Out-of-Town Vendors

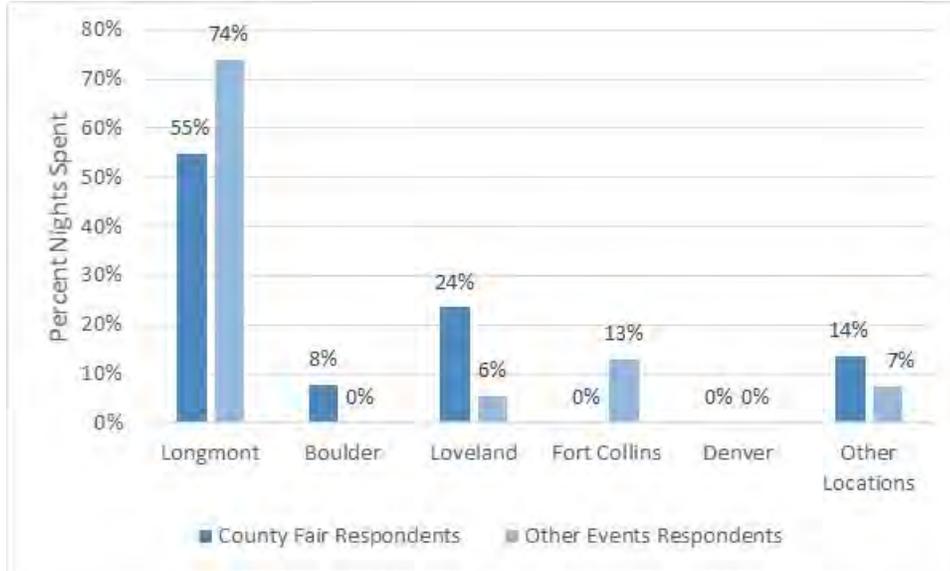
Non-residents whose primary purpose included the fairgrounds event represented a minority of vendors surveyed. Forty percent of vendors surveyed during the Boulder County Fair were from outside Boulder County and visited Longmont primarily for the purpose of the event.

Most vendors had visited Longmont prior to the event. For 12% of the vendors surveyed, it was their first visit to Longmont. Boulder County Fairgrounds events elicited few new vendors to the city. Overall, 9.5% of vendors surveyed were from outside Boulder County, were visiting Longmont specifically for the event, and had not visited Longmont prior.

Lodging during Fairground Events

About 17.5% of fairgrounds vendors indicated they spent one or more nights away from home during their fairgrounds event. Longmont received the most overnight visitors and lodging nights. Although Boulder is the nearest city in the Longmont area (15 miles from Longmont), it received fewer overnight stays from vendors compared to Loveland (17.3 miles) and Fort Collins (40.7 miles). Fifteen percent originated from outside Boulder County, visited Longmont specifically for the event, and planned to stay overnight away from home.

FIGURE 13: LODGING ROOM NIGHTS BY LOCATION FOR OUT-OF-TOWN VENDORS



n=22

Fairgrounds Spending

Spending by resident and non-resident vendors averaged \$30.88 per group on-site at the fairgrounds during the events. Planned average spending per person for vendors who were non-residents of Boulder County totaled \$133 for all events surveyed. For people visiting Longmont for the primary purpose of vending at the fairgrounds event, average spending per person totaled \$149 in the Longmont area.

Across all events, the average anticipated spending by non-resident attendees was highest for lodging, followed by entertainment, transportation, and retail.

TABLE 3: PER PERSON SPENDING PER DAY BY VENDORS AT EACH EVENT

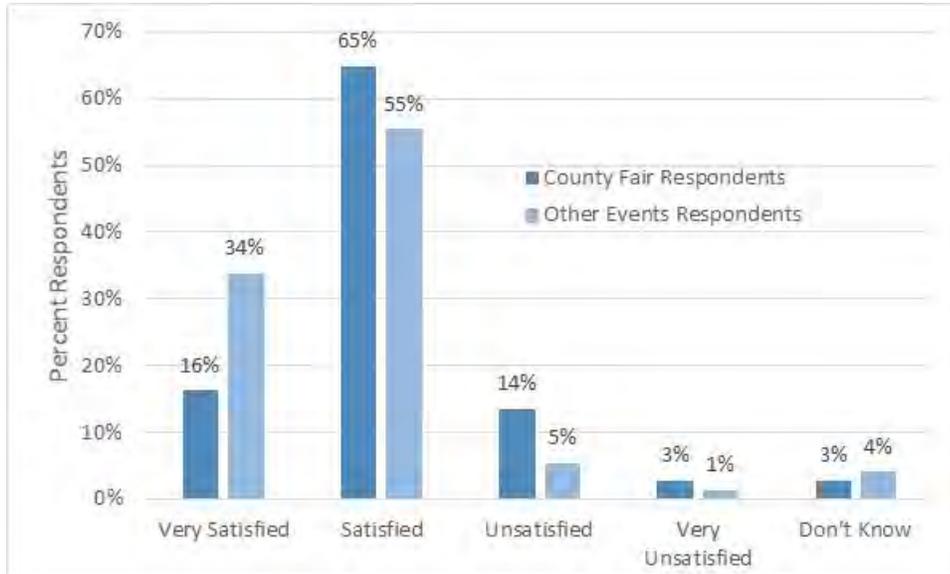
Category	Percentage
Lodging	47%
Transportation	10%
Retail Stores	10%
Served Food & Drinks	9%
Entertainment	9%
Groceries	5%
Commercial Services	4%
Other	2%

Based on total on-site daily spending by vendors, on-site spending by vendors is estimated at \$25,600. Additional community spending by non-resident vendors is estimated at \$187,600.

Fairgrounds Satisfaction

Overall, vendors indicated satisfaction with the Boulder County Fairgrounds (86% of respondents from all events). Vendors at the Boulder County Fair appeared slightly less satisfied (81% satisfaction) with the fairgrounds facility than vendors at other fairgrounds events (89% satisfaction).

FIGURE 14: VENDOR LEVEL OF SATISFACTION WITH FAIRGROUNDS FACILITIES



n=111

A total of 94 vendor comments suggested improvements at the Boulder County Fairgrounds during 2015 summer and fall events. The suggestion mentioned most often was to improve the bathrooms (28% of all suggestions from vendors), focusing primarily on adding facilities closer to the farmers markets. The second-most frequently mentioned suggestion was to improve the information and promotion for the events (24%) across all fairgrounds events, especially the county fair. Parking shortfalls were another concern mentioned by fairgrounds vendors (20%), followed by enhancing attractions at the county fair (11%); increasing the fairgrounds' eCommerce capacity through enhancements to the WiFi, cellular, and electrical capacity (6%); and managing the temperature at the facility (6%). (Details in Appendix 1.)

OPERATING EXPENDITURE DATA

The Boulder County Fairgrounds encompasses 83 acres of Boulder County property, surrounded by the City of Longmont, along Colorado's northern Front Range. The site includes 404,420 square feet of building space and 547,177 square feet of parking lots. Additionally, the site has 96 camp sites.

Construction

Boulder County Fairgrounds reported minor construction activities consisting of renovations and repairs that totaled \$58,600 in FY2013, \$104,000 in FY2014, and nearly \$79,600 in FY2015.

Operations

The Boulder County Fairgrounds operating expenditures (labor, benefits, general operating expenditures) totaled \$651,000 in FY2015. Of the direct, non-labor expenses, nearly 89% were paid to firms in Colorado, 63% to firms in Boulder County, and 54% to firms in Longmont.²

Employees (Off-Site)

The greatest single expense for the fairgrounds was labor. Employee costs (salary and benefits) exceeded \$530,000 in FY2015, of which 31% was benefits. Employees economically impact communities in which they reside through consumer activities. The gamut of consumer activity is broad, including groceries and restaurants, vehicle and heating fuel, insurance and investments, health care and hair salons, and endless others. Consumers spend their earnings primarily in their home communities, and thus expenditures are assigned to these communities. Of the fairgrounds direct employees, 88% live in Boulder County, and 63% live in the city of Longmont.

ECONOMIC IMPACT

The Boulder County Fairgrounds generates \$9.4 million in economic activity in the Longmont area (Boulder County) through on-site purchases during events and through community retail sales, dining, entertainment, overnight visitors, and other related activities. However, much of this activity stems from local visitors making local purchases. This local churn is excluded because those individuals would otherwise be spending their disposable personal income in the local economy on other goods and services. Removing local visitor purchases, the Boulder County Fairgrounds generates \$4.2 million in direct economic activity in the Longmont area.³

This local spending grows as money gets spent and respent in a community (i.e., the multiplier effect). The economic benefits associated with the fairgrounds totaled \$6.9 million in 2015. More than \$4.4 million of the total was in value added. The employment impact is estimated at 74 workers. Total income to Colorado workers is estimated at \$3.1 million.

TABLE 4: ECONOMIC IMPACT

Impact Type	Employment (Workers)	Labor Income (\$ Millions)	Value Added (\$ Millions)	Output (\$ Millions)
Direct Effect	51.9	\$2.0	\$2.7	\$4.2
Indirect Effect	10.9	\$0.6	\$0.8	\$1.3
Induced Effect	11.4	\$0.5	\$0.9	\$1.3
Total Effect	74.2	\$3.1	\$4.4	\$6.9

²These percentages are based on the ZIP code to which checks were mailed. In some cases, goods and services may have been provided by a local vender, but paid to company headquarters in another state.

³ After adjusting retail spending for margins, which excludes the cost of goods sold.

CONCLUSION

The two purposes of the Boulder County Fairground study were to quantify the economic impact of the fairgrounds and to gauge perceptions of facilities and programming.

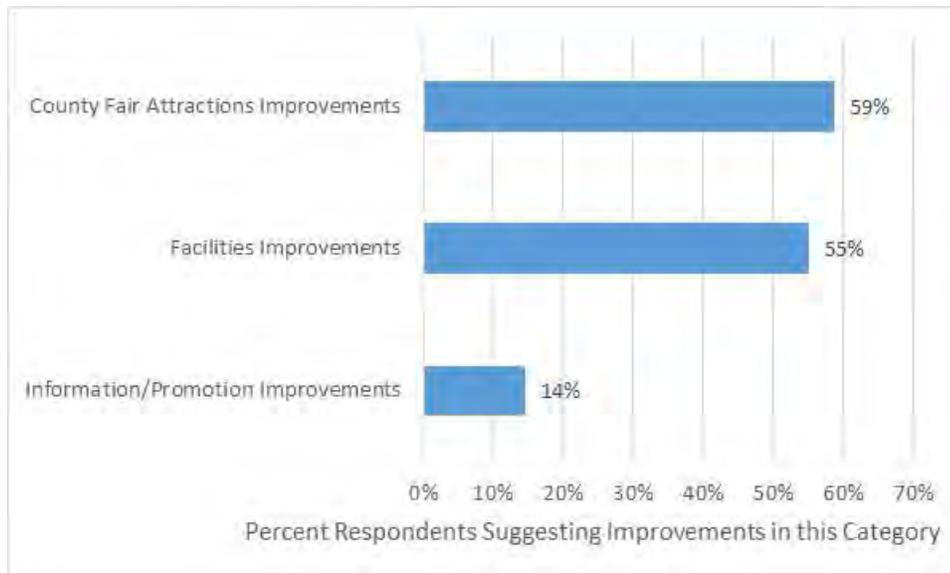
The Boulder County Fairgrounds events elicit community spending from locals and visitor spending from individuals outside Boulder County. Spending in the Longmont area due to the fairgrounds was estimated at \$9.4 million in 2015 through on-site purchases during events and through community retail sales, dining, entertainment, overnight visitors, and other related activities. Facility spending, vendor spending, and spending by non-locals generated \$6.9 million in economic activity in the Longmont area, including the multiplier effect.

Overall, visitors and vendors expressed satisfaction with the fairgrounds facilities and offerings. About 95% of visitors reported being satisfied or very satisfied with fairgrounds facilities and 80% were satisfied or very satisfied with fairgrounds offerings. A total of 86% of vendors were satisfied or very satisfied with fairgrounds facilities. Critiques came from both visitors and vendors. The primary critique from visitors revolved around attractions during the fair, information and promotion of events, and parking and parking lots. The main critique from vendors centered on bathroom availability, information and promotion of events, and parking.

APPENDIX 1: FAIRGROUNDS IMPROVEMENT SUGGESTIONS

According to the 94 vendor comments and 820 visitor comments, the Boulder County Fairgrounds improvements most frequently mentioned were: investing in higher quality attractions and entertainment at the county fair (59% of respondents suggested improvements in this category), making fairgrounds facilities improvements (55%), and overhauling the fairgrounds communications program, including all information and promotional efforts (14%).

FIGURE 15: TOP THREE IMPROVEMENT CATEGORIES IDENTIFIED BY FAIRGROUNDS VISITORS AND VENDORS COMBINED



n=683

Since the Boulder County Fair is the flagship event of the venue, improvements that directly impact this event may also increase the success of other events held at the fairgrounds.

The top facility improvements reported by respondents are those that create an inviting and comfortable atmosphere. The most frequently mentioned concern among visitors was the need to improve the parking at the fairgrounds (35% of visitors who made improvement suggestions regarding the physical facility commented on this), with particular focus on paving the parking lot to increase the number of spaces, and reduce the dust and chaos. The next most frequently mentioned area of concern among visitors was the need to provide more shade and more seating (26%), preferably more seating that is located in the shade. Also frequently reported by respondents was the condition of the bathrooms (21%), specifically the need to improve maintenance during the county fair and provide additional bathrooms in closer proximity to the farmers markets.

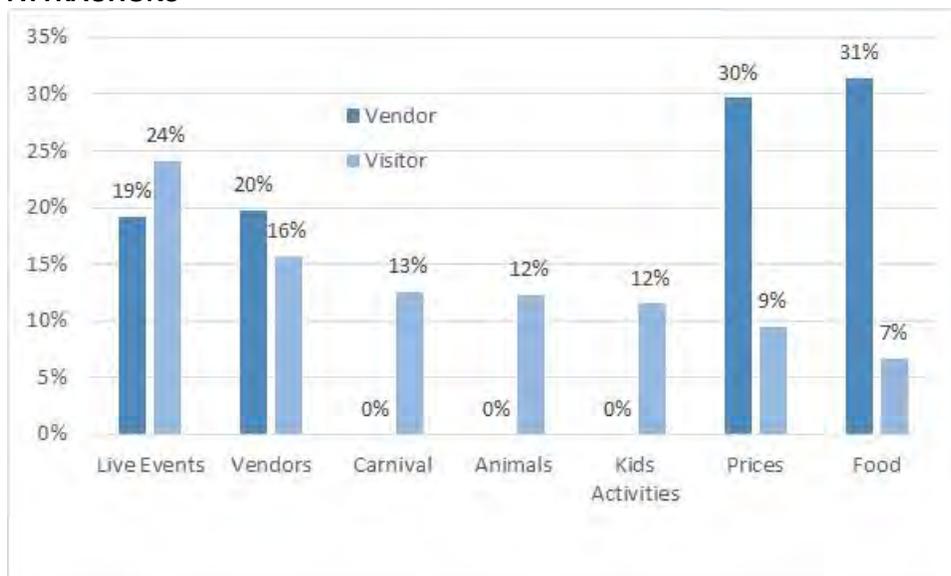
For vendors, the condition of the bathrooms was the most frequently mentioned concern (stated by 50% of vendors who provided suggestions for the facilities), followed by the parking lots (36%).

A number of comments were also made regarding improvements that, together, would increase eCommerce capacity (9% of visitor respondents and 13% percent of vendor respondents). Most of these

focused on the need for WiFi internet access, although there were also a few requests for improved cellular service and enhanced capacity for vendors’ electrical needs.

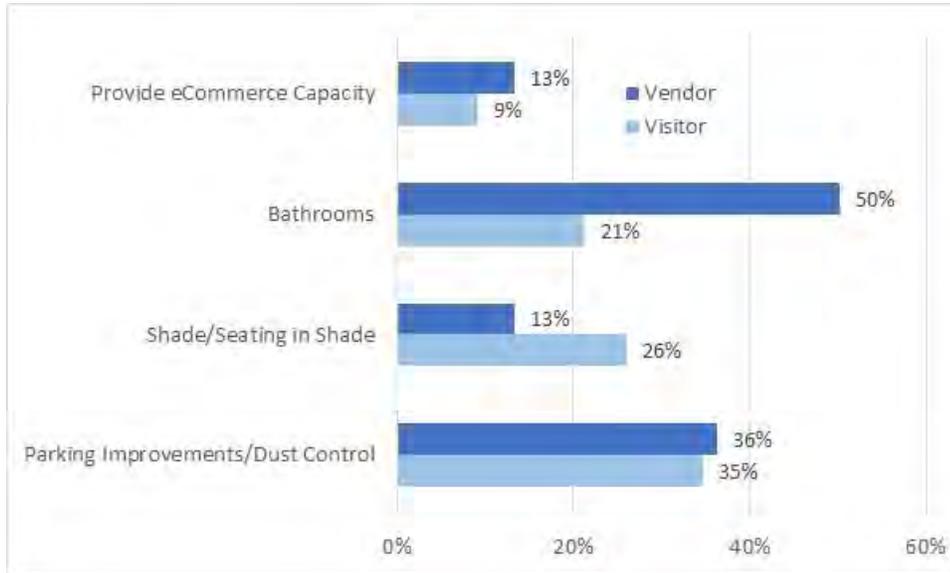
Enhancing the quality and improving the distribution of the rides, games, and music throughout the fair not only offers better direct entertainment for each visitor, but will draw more visitors to move throughout the venue. This will increase the perceived and real excitement to be experienced at the fair, and enhance the revenue opportunities for vendors. These sentiments were mentioned frequently by survey participants from both the visitor and vendor populations. Of the fair attractions improvements, a number of both visitors and vendors suggested that the number and quality of live events be increased, such as concerts, comedy, and poetry positioned throughout the venue (19% of vendors, 24% of visitors). Also, both sets of respondents mentioned a need for more, new, or better exhibitors or vendors (20% of vendors, 16% of visitors). In contrast, a much higher percentage of vendor respondents compared to visitor respondents were concerned about the high prices and inadequate food options. Other notable areas of improvement include carnival rides, animal exhibits and activities, and kid-focused activities.

FIGURE 16: PERCENT SUGGESTING IMPROVEMENTS TO VARIOUS ASPECTS OF THE COUNTY FAIR ATTRACTIONS



n=370

FIGURE 17: PERCENT SUGGESTING IMPROVEMENTS TO VARIOUS ASPECTS OF THE FACILITIES

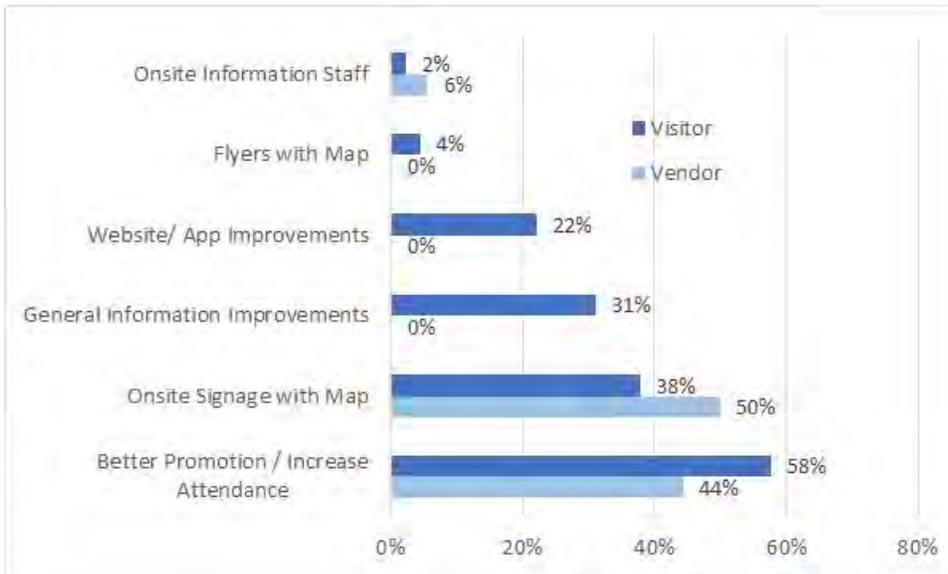


n=262

Before arriving at an event, many people begin their experience via informational portals, such as the website and other promotional channels. According to fairgrounds visitor and vendor comments, visitors are frustrated that the fairgrounds website is slow, inaccurate (especially regarding schedule changes), and difficult to navigate. In addition, many survey respondents from both vendor and visitor populations complained about the lack of foot traffic at the events, especially at the county fair. Two major reasons for the lack of foot traffic were identified by participant comments: first, a lack of promotional effort and second, a lack of exciting attractions at the fair. Participants from both sets of respondents (visitors and vendors) complained that it was difficult to find information about events at the fairgrounds and indicated a need to better inform the local residents about, and encourage them to attend, the events.

Many of the vendors who do not plan to exhibit at the fairgrounds again were those exhibiting at the fair and primarily gave reasons related to lack of attendance and return on investment for not exhibiting in the future. Improving the whole fairgrounds communications program and eCommerce capacity will directly enhance the value for fairgrounds vendors, and obviously, anything that enhances the experience for the visitors, such as better attractions and better facilities, will indirectly benefit the vendors as well.

FIGURE 18: PERCENT SUGGESTING IMPROVEMENTS TO VARIOUS ASPECTS OF FAIRGROUNDS INFORMATIONAL EFFORTS



n=63



Parks and Open Space

5201 St. Vrain Road • Longmont, Colorado 80503
303.678.6200 • Fax: 303.678.6177 • www.bouldercounty.org

PARKS AND OPEN SPACE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

TO: Parks & Open Space Advisory Committee

DATE AND LOCATION: Thursday, 5/26/2016, 6:00 p.m. Commissioners Hearing Room, 3rd floor Boulder County Courthouse, 1325 Pearl Street, Boulder, CO

AGENDA ITEM TITLE: Update and Study Session on Rocky Mountain Greenway and Rocky Flats National Wildlife Refuge

PRESENTERS: Jeff Moline, Resource Planning Manager; David Lucas, Project Leader, Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge Complex

ACTION REQUESTED: Information Only

Update

At the February 25, 2016 meeting, POSAC voted to recommend that the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) support Jefferson County's application for Federal Lands Access Program funding and that the Commissioners provide a financial contribution in 2017 toward the local match requirements for that grant application. The grant would support the planning, design and construction of an underpass of State Highway 128 and create a trail connection to the existing Coalton Trail. At the BOCC's April 5, 2016 public hearing, a number of citizens as well as Trustees from the Town of Superior raised concerns about radioactive contamination at Rocky Flats National Wildlife Refuge (RFNWR) and strongly recommended that the County eschew any support for improvements that connect Boulder County trails to the refuge.

On May 12, the BOCC approved a resolution that does provide County support for the FLAP grant but conditions it on a number of stipulations including acceptable results of future soil testing within the trail corridor. At the same meeting the Board sent letters to the manager of RFNWF and the Rocky Mountain Greenway Steering Committee respectively requesting such testing and that an alternative trail route outside the boundaries of the refuge be considered. Staff anticipates that the FLAP grant will be submitted by May 21 and will update POSAC at future meetings about any developments associated with it.

At its April 26 meeting, POSAC received public comment from citizens concerned about contamination and radioactivity at Rocky Flats and the potential for associated risks for visitors to the site and trails. POSAC directed BCPOS staff to conduct a study session on this issue at its May meeting.

Background

The Rocky Flats facility is a unique site with a complicated history. Constructed in the 1950s to assemble plutonium triggers for nuclear weapons during the Cold War, the

Atomic Energy Commission oversaw the site while private companies, first Dow Chemical and later Rockwell International, managed the manufacturing facility. During the plant's nearly 40 years of operation it suffered a number of incidents that resulted in the contamination of the area's soil and water. Some of these were the result of accidents including fires while others were the effects of the improper storage and management of radioactive waste. Clean up of the site began in 1992 and ended in 2005. In 2007, the Department of Energy (DOE) transferred 3953 acres to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. About 1300 acres, comprising the former plant site and adjacent contaminated areas, are retained by DOE and are subject to a remediation and monitoring plan agreed upon by U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, DOE, and the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment.

The plant operators and the federal government kept the Rocky Flats facility and a sizable buffer intensively secured throughout its history. Ironically, this management served to guard much of the site from conventional development pressures resulting in a protected area that, among many native plant species, harbors the federally threatened Preble's Meadow Jumping Mouse. This high quality habitat, and associated species, helped lead the federal government to designate the site as a National Wildlife Refuge. Since that time, the USFWS developed a Comprehensive Conservation Plan that will guide the development of improvements on the refuge. With recent funding allocations, site development is anticipated to start in 2017 including approximately 15 miles of trails.

Discussion

A connection to Rocky Flats National Wildlife Refuge has been a part of the Rocky Mountain Greenway Project since its inception. The steering committee for the project is reviewing a draft feasibility study for this segment of the greenway and, because the agencies that manage and monitor the site consider it safe for public use, the study routed the trail through the refuge. Since their determination that public use of the site is safe, BCPOS staff did not temper its recommendation for support of the FLAP application at the February POSAC meeting.

A variety of government and independent agencies have studied the threats and risks posed by the radioactive contamination of the site. Staff suggests a variety of websites for gaining a perspective about this extremely complex and complicated issue. First and foremost is the Rocky Flats Stewardship Council which formed in 2006 to provide ongoing oversight of Rocky Flats for local governments and communities. Their website provides extensive resources for researching various topics (<http://rockyflatssc.org/index.html>). Boulder County Commissioner Deb Gardner is on the Board of Directors of this council. The City of Westminster has a portion of their website devoted to Rocky Flats Oversight: <http://www.ci.westminster.co.us/Environment/RockyFlatsOversight>. That website includes a 2014 report by Hydros Consulting which summarizes the findings of past studies in order to perform a human health risk assessment in the offsite areas around Rocky Flats (<http://www.ci.westminster.co.us/Portals/0/Repository/Documents/Environment/RockyFlatsReviewFullReport.pdf>). Finally, several government agencies continue to

monitor portions of the site. Both the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (<https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/cdphe/rocky-flats>) and the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency (<https://cumulis.epa.gov/supercpad/cursites/csitinfo.cfm?id=0800360>) have websites that are devoted to the cleanup of the site which was put on the National Priorities (“Superfund”) List in 1989.

Next Steps

As mentioned above, the BOCC approved a resolution to support the FLAP grant with the condition that soils in the affected areas are studied to insure that trails are not constructed in areas that would expose visitors to elevated rates of radiation exposure. Additionally, the BOCC will send a letter to the Rocky Mountain Greenway Steering Committee requesting that an alternative trail alignment connecting the existing Broomfield and Boulder County trail systems is planned for a location outside the refuge.

Attachments

1. April 27, 2016 Letter from USFWS to Interested Parties



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge
6550 Gateway Road, Building 121
Commerce City, Colorado 80022-1748
Telephone (303) 289-0232 Fax (303) 289-0579



April 27, 2016

MEMORANDUM

To: Interested Parties

From: Project Leader, Rocky Mountain Arsenal NWR Complex /s/ **David Lucas**

Subject: Federal Lands Access Program Grant (FLAP) Application for the Rocky Flats National Wildlife Refuge

The Rocky Flats National Wildlife Refuge Act of 2001 (Pub. L. 107-107) formally began a process to transfer lands that buffered the Rocky Flats plant to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) to manage as a national wildlife refuge. The refuge was officially established in August 2007 when an initial 3,953 acres of land was transferred.

The Act required public use of the refuge and a Comprehensive Conservation Plan and environmental impact statement was issued in 2005 that included our plans for public use of the refuge. The Service appreciates the support of local governments as we proceed with development of public use facilities. We recognize the lingering concerns of some members of the public.

As we have discussed, the Service is committed to public engagement and transparency in this process. To that end, we have already contracted with a Boulder-based firm to assist with communications to the public. I also want to reaffirm that the Service is committed to supporting additional soil sampling to ensure that any construction activities follow State of Colorado requirements. A sampling plan must be completed that will determine the goals of any sampling program. The following information should inform this plan:

- In 2006, the Service conducted its own confirmatory sampling of lands prior to transfer. This sampling included testing for radionuclides, metals, volatiles, semi-volatiles, and PCBs. The Service's conclusion was our sample results were consistent with those

already reported by the Department of Energy and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).¹

- In 2011, the Service requested additional clarification of human-health risks to assist with development of an environmental assessment. The EPA and Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment responded that the average concentration of plutonium on the refuge was 1.09 pCi/g and that construction activities associated with Jefferson Parkway would not present health or environmental concerns.²
- Current State of Colorado construction standards³ are based on residual plutonium in soil. Similar to testing completed during the CERCLA process, the Service's testing of areas proposed for development are below this standard. Any additional sampling should provide additional site-specific confirmation for an evaluation to this standard.
- Sampling must be consistent with approved and proven techniques. Analysis must be completed using appropriate EPA methods by an EPA-approved laboratory.
- Sampling results and methods must be shared with the general public with explanation of how this information will be used to inform decisions.

The Service relies on public health agencies for their scientific expertise on human-health risks associated with past activities at the Rocky Flats site. These agencies have already determined that “the lands comprising the Refuge are suitable for unlimited use and unrestricted exposure.”⁴ The Service also believes the Refuge is safe for our workers and those who choose to visit.

¹ U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. 2006. Modified Level III Preacquisition Environmental Contaminants Survey for Rocky Flats Environmental Technology Site Jefferson and Boulder Counties, Colorado. U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. Denver, CO.

² Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment & U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. 2011. Letter to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service RE: Service's requests for additional information regarding residual risk at Rocky Flats National Wildlife Refuge. September 21, 2011.

³ 6 CCR 1007-1 Part 04 revised 8/14/2015

<http://www.sos.state.co.us/CCR/GenerateRulePdf.do?ruleVersionId=6357&fileName=6%20CCR%201007-1%20Part%2004>

⁴ Department of Energy, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment. 2006. Corrective Action Decision/Record of Decision for Rocky Flats Plant (USDOE) Peripheral Operable Unit and Central Operable Unit. EPA/541/R-06/197. September 29, 2006.



Board of County Commissioners

David Lucas, Rocky Flats National Wildlife Refuge Manager
Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge
6550 Gateway Road, Building 121
Commerce City, Colorado 80022-1748

May 12, 2016

Dear Mr. Lucas,

During Boulder County's consideration of participation in the Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP) grant application, we identified some areas of concern that we would like to address with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) regarding the health and safety of the Rocky Flats National Wildlife Refuge (Refuge). Boulder County respectfully requests that, prior to the public opening of the Refuge, the USFWS take great care in ensuring that the public has the information necessary to understand any risks associated with visiting the Refuge, including but not limited to site-specific soil sampling information in areas where trail and visitor contacts developments will occur.

We are aware that soil sampling has occurred at numerous points within the Refuge boundaries prior to and since the land transfer from DOE to USFWS. However, with the Refuge opening to public access in the coming months, we believe it is important to have timely and accurate data to help inform the public about the risks associated with visiting the Refuge. As a neighboring local government we are currently considering potential trail connections from our Boulder County Parks and Open Space lands into the Refuge, and we would like assurances that residual contamination on the Refuge is below the applicable federal and state standards human health safety for plutonium of 9.8 pCi/g.

Specifically, we request that the USFWS conduct soil sampling for the presence of any radionuclides on all sites within the Refuge where new development will occur, prior to construction. Development includes trails, trail connections, and the visitor contact center. Soil sampling should be conducted in accordance with Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) sampling and testing protocols, except that in areas where subsurface disturbance will exceed the standard depth of soil sampling per the EPA, soil sampling should occur at the depth of the soil disturbance necessary for the associated construction on that site. The soil sampling plan and results should be made available for public review. We feel that any additional sampling and analysis performed will improve the understanding of the risks or lack of risks involved in visiting the Refuge.

The compiled soil sampling data from 1999–2004 shows that there are very few sites within the Refuge where soil contamination is above the standard for health and human safety; one of the areas with elevated contamination levels is along Indiana Street, adjacent to the proposed trail alignment for the

Cindy Domenico County Commissioner **Deb Gardner** County Commissioner **Elise Jones** County Commissioner
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Mailing Address: P.O. Box 471 • Boulder, Colorado 80306 • www.bouldercounty.org • commissioners@bouldercounty.org

eastern access to the Refuge. We urge the USFWS to review the currently proposed trail alignment and consider options for mitigating the risk of exposure to visitors by rerouting the trail to an area where contamination levels are below the standard.

Based on the history of Rocky Flats, per the State of Colorado's Standards of Protection Against Radiation (6 CCR 1007-1), there may also be a need to use special controls on construction in areas where there is contamination above 1.0 pCi/g. Whether the contamination in areas of construction exceeds this level, we urge USFWS to utilize construction techniques, including dust mitigation efforts, which reduce the risk of contaminated soils moving off-site.

Boulder County also requests that the Refuge give significant consideration to the type of trail surface that is used throughout the Refuge, and evaluate the erodibility of these surfaces and potential soil exposure and movement over time. While many trails may follow existing road beds, new trail development should balance the need to minimize soil disturbance occurrence during development with long-term soil disturbance over time with visitor use.

Finally, Boulder County urges that the USFWS sign and strictly enforce the requirement that trail users stay on designated trails. The currently proposed trail alignment brings visitors very close to the DOE central operating unit, where active monitoring is in place and where contamination levels are higher than on the Refuge. In addition, the trail will bisect water ways which may contain seasonal flows of surface water moving directly from the DOE central operating unit. Visitor access should be strictly limited to on-trail use.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of these requests and we look forward to discussing the issue further. Boulder County appreciates the open dialog that USFWS has begun with local governments regarding the plans to open the Refuge; we hope to continue that dialog and work together to ensure the highest level of public safety for Refuge visitors.

Sincerely,



Elise Jones, Chair



Cindy Domenico, Vice Chair



Deb Gardner



Board of County Commissioners

Rocky Mountain Greenway Steering Committee
Attn: Ginny Brannon and David Lucas, Chairs

David Lucas, Manager
Rocky Mountain Arsenal and Rocky Flats
National Wildlife Refuges
6550 Gateway Road, Building 121
Commerce City, Colorado 80022-1748

Ginny Brannon, Division Director
Colorado Department of Natural Resources
Executive Director's Office
1313 Sherman Street, Room 718
Denver, Colorado 80203

May 12, 2016

Dear Rocky Mountain Greenway Steering Committee:

Boulder County is currently considering the potential Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP) grant proposal that would create linkages to connect Boulder County to trails to the Rocky Flats National Wildlife Refuge (Refuge). These linkages are part of the completion of the Rocky Mountain Greenway connections to and within Boulder County. During the course of this discussion, community members and our partner communities have raised concerns regarding the health and human safety risks to visitors accessing the Refuge.

We are aware that soil sampling has occurred at numerous points within the Refuge boundaries prior to and since the land transfer from DOE to USFWS and that additional sampling will likely be conducted prior to the building of new trails. With the community concerns regarding the opening of the Refuge to public access, we would like to ensure that the public has access to Boulder County trails by way of the Rocky Mountain Greenway through the Refuge and also through other trail connections.

The Refuge has been cleared for any and all uses, including visitor access to use trails. Each visitor is able to make his or her own decision regarding access to the Refuge. Given this, we would like to allow for equivalent multi-jurisdictional trail connections to be made for those who do not wish to enter the Refuge as those who choose to travel through the Refuge.

The previously conducted feasibility studies investigated a trail corridor along Indiana Street north to McCaslin Boulevard and then connecting with Superior and the Coalton Trail. We understand that there are land access, fiscal, and terrain constraints around this proposal. We would encourage the Rocky Mountain Greenway to revisit the alternatives and determine if there are other possible alternate routes available for travelling around the Refuge which are feasible for neighboring communities.

We recognize that the Rocky Mountain Greenway has made great progress over the past few years, including receiving funding from Central Federal Lands in 2012 to conduct feasibility studies to connect Two Ponds National Wildlife Refuge and the Refuge, funding from the Federal Highway Administration, and GOCO funding to support the construction to complete segments in Arvada and Westminster. Boulder County is glad to be a partner in this effort, as we understand the importance of regional trails

Cindy Domenico County Commissioner **Deb Gardner** County Commissioner **Elise Jones** County Commissioner

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in providing recreational opportunities, access to open spaces, and transportation connections. We remain committed to the future success of the Rocky Mountain Greenway in creating connections from Refuge to Refuge to Rocky Mountain National Park.

We ask for your support in establishing an alternate route around the Refuge that can continue the northward movement of the Rocky Mountain Greenway into Boulder County.

Sincerely,



Elise Jones, Chair



Cindy Domenico, Vice Chair



Deb Gardner

Cc:

Meegan Flenniken

Tom Hoby

Lisa Morzel

Gordon Robertson

Pat Schuler

Carolyn Boller

Kim Weiss

Howard Kenison

Jim Petterson

RESOLUTION 2016-59

A RESOLUTION CONDITIONALLY SUPPORTING A FEDERAL GRANT APPLICATION BY JEFFERSON COUNTY TO FUND PLANNING, DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION OF UP TO TWO UNDERPASSES AND TRAIL SEGMENTS TO CONNECT ROCKY FLATS NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE WITH ADJACENT BOULDER COUNTY TRAILS NORTH OF STATE HIGHWAY 128, AND REQUESTING ADDITIONAL SOIL SAMPLING ON THE ROCKY FLATS NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

WHEREAS, Boulder County recognizes the health and conservation benefits of connecting residents and visitors to natural environments, and supports projects that uphold those benefits; and

WHEREAS, Boulder County recognizes the value in trail linkages that provide connections between local communities for recreation, transportation, and environmental purposes; and

WHEREAS, Jefferson County is submitting a grant proposal for Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP) funding to support trail connections between local government lands and the Rocky Mountain National Wildlife Refuge (NWR); and

WHEREAS, Boulder County recognizes the value of partnership with federal, state, and local entities, and participation in this project is contingent on the joint participation of other Boulder and Jefferson County municipalities; and

WHEREAS, these connections would be a part of the Rocky Mountain Greenway, which has been established to create a regional network comprised of trails and transportation systems that connect the Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge (NWR), Two Ponds NWR, and the Rocky Flats NWR on Boulder County's southern border before continuing through Boulder County and the City of Boulder toward Rocky Mountain National Park; and

WHEREAS, Boulder County also recognizes that the lands interior to the Rocky Flats NWR were used as a nuclear weapons plant, which raises concerns regarding the health and safety of accessing the Refuge; and

WHEREAS, there has been extensive testing and soil sampling conducted on the Rocky Flats NWR and this land has been certified by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment for unlimited use; and

WHEREAS, there remain public concerns regarding the safety of human access to the lands located inside and outside the Rocky Flats NWR; and

WHEREAS, site specific soil sampling for radionuclides is appropriate in areas where public access will be allowed in order to understand the risk associated with accessing, and recreating on, the Rocky Flats NWR; and

WHEREAS, additional soil sampling for radionuclides and other contaminants known to be found at Rocky Flats NWR is appropriate in areas on the NWR where new trails and a visitor center will be constructed; and

WHEREAS, if soil sampling in areas included in the FLAP grant proposal indicate that contamination levels are above the applicable federal and state standards for human health safety, Boulder County will not participate or contribute county funds to the project; and

WHEREAS, Boulder County would also like to support opportunities for trail connections with adjacent communities and Boulder County trails, and complete the Rocky Mountain Greenway route, with an alternate option that does not require trail users to bisect the Rocky Flats NWR.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Boulder County Commissioners:

1. The Board of County Commissioners hereby pledges its support for Jefferson County's FLAP grant application with the following elements and conditions:
 - a. An agreement with Jefferson County for Boulder County, Jefferson County, and municipal partners, including the City of Boulder, to commit funds to support future planning, design and construction of up to two underpasses including a trail connection and wildlife underpass to connect Rocky Flats NWR with Boulder County lands to the north.
 - b. The pledge of support and funding commitment, beyond that required to support the costs of soil sampling and analysis, are contingent on soil sampling occurring at all sites that are included in the Jefferson County FLAP grant request.
 - i. A soil sampling and analysis plan shall be developed in conjunction with Boulder County, and Boulder County must be satisfied with the plan. The sampling plan shall include, at a minimum, the sampling methodology (what is sampled, how deep samples are taken, how locations are identified for sampling, controls for sampling, timelines for data, etc.)
 - ii. Soil sampling shall include the full panel of testing for radionuclides, at a minimum.
 - iii. At a minimum, soil sampling shall be conducted in accordance with EPA protocols and through approved EPA labs.
 - iv. The minimum number of soil samples to be conducted within each of the site areas included in the FLAP grant proposal should be determined in accordance with EPA recommended methodology.
 - c. The pledge of support and funding commitment are contingent on the results of the soil sampling demonstrating that contamination levels are below the applicable federal and state human-health standards.
2. If the FLAP grant is awarded, and before Jefferson County signs a grant agreement with the Federal Highway Administration, Boulder County shall enter into an IGA between Jefferson County and the participating local governments to address:
 - a. The funding obligations of each of the local governments and the adequacy of the funding to meet the required local match;

- b. Any ongoing maintenance requirements for the improvements supported through the FLAP grant;
- c. Conditions of each local government partner for the NEPA analysis or any other conditions which may affect the project;
- d. How the grant and project will proceed if the conditions of each local government have not been met through the environmental analysis of the project.

ADOPTED this 12th Day of May, 2016.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF BOULDER COUNTY

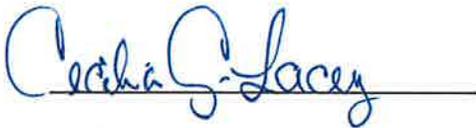
ATTEST:



Elise Jones, Chair



Cindy Domenico, Vice Chair



Clerk to the Board



Deb Gardner, Commissioner

Dear POSAC,

We are writing with regard to the Rocky Mountain Greenway FLAP grant project. We understand that at your April 28th meeting the Committee raised questions about the health and safety of the Rocky Flats National Wildlife Refuge, and requested information about any remaining contamination on the Refuge.

Due to the timing of the grant deadline, we were unable to delay consideration of this matter until POSAC could provide additional input. On Thursday, May 12th the Board, on a 2 – 1 vote, conditionally approved participation in the Jefferson County multi-agency FLAP grant proposal for the section of the Rocky Mountain Greenway which connects Boulder County (the Coalton Trail) to the Rocky Flats National Wildlife Refuge. Our support and participation is contingent upon several conditions, including soil sampling at all points of development funded through the FLAP grant, County involvement in the development of the soil sampling plans, and our approval and satisfaction that the soil sampling demonstrates that public health and safety will not be compromised. In addition to the resolution, we submitted a letter to the USFWS requesting that they conduct additional soil sampling within the Refuge on all areas where trail and other development, such as the visitor contact station, will occur. Finally, we submitted a letter to the Rocky Mountain Greenway steering committee requesting that an alternate RMG route be identified so that members of the public who do not wish to access the Refuge are able to still make regional trail connections. These conditions provide several “off-ramps” for Boulder County’s participation in the FLAP grant, allow us to gather updated data points on the Refuge and to maintain a strong connection with USFWS while they consider options for trail development within the Refuge.

We greatly value the insight and input that POSAC provides related to open space decisions in Boulder County. If the partnership is awarded FLAP funding, we welcome your input as we move forward with the FLAP grant, particularly around the environmental analysis and soil sampling efforts as they relate to Boulder County lands and visitors. BOCC staff will work with POS staff to determine the best way to gather POSAC input on this issue, so that we can incorporate your concerns into the discussions around the project if it moves forward.

Sincerely,

Elise, Cindy and Deb

Megan Davis, MPA | Policy Analyst

Boulder County | Board of County Commissioners

Office: 303.441.3562 | Mobile: 303.489.2642



Parks and Open Space

5201 St. Vrain Road • Longmont, Colorado 80503
303.678.6200 • Fax: 303.678.6177 • www.bouldercounty.org

PARKS AND OPEN SPACE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

TO: Parks & Open Space Advisory Committee

DATE AND LOCATION: Thursday, 5/26/2016, 6:00 p.m. Commissioners Hearing Room, 3rd floor
Boulder County Courthouse, 1325 Pearl Street, Boulder, CO

AGENDA ITEM TITLE: Heil Valley Ranch 2 Small Area Plan Revision

PRESENTER: Jesse Rounds, Natural Resource Planner

ACTION REQUESTED: Recommendation to Board of County Commissioners (BOCC)

Update

After approval of the draft plan by POSAC on February 25th, the Board of County Commissioners held a public meeting on April 28th to review it. Similar to the POSAC meeting, members of the public spoke about the small area planning process and trail issues. Speakers requested that the plan's trail system be revised to include a loop on the west side of the property and that a shorter, so-called "beginners' loop" be considered in the southwest portion of the site—revisions that would be consistent with previous public comment received both online and at the POSAC meeting.

The BOCC, as well as the public, also expressed concern about the amount of parking proposed in the draft plan. While the proposal to move all of the trailer parking from the existing parking lot at Heil Valley Ranch to the proposed lot on Heil Valley Ranch 2 is universally favored, many commenters felt the size of the proposed Heil 2 lot (eight regular size spaces with the option to expand to 16) was too small.

Before the conclusion of the April 28th hearing, the BOCC directed staff to revise the plan to incorporate a loop trail on the west side of the property and provide a beginner loop experience if it could be constructed without negative environmental impacts. Due to a National Trails Day project on this property June 4th, the BOCC directed staff to bring the revised plan back to POSAC for their consideration and recommendation at this May 26th meeting and following that, back to the BOCC for a decision at their meeting on May 31st.

Discussion and Analysis of Proposed Trail System Changes

Following the BOCC meeting, BCPOS staff reviewed a full suite of west side trail configurations and re-examined conditions in the field in order to create a loop trail alignment that provides a high-quality trail experience while minimizing environmental impacts. This revision would allow for the provision of single-direction bicycle use of this portion of the trail system. BCPOS staff will determine directional assignments of segments following the final construction of the trails. In addition, staff assessed the feasibility of a shorter loop trail incorporating the trail segment that originates from

Left Hand Road in the southern section of the west side and determined that if it was located north of the Lake Ditch (thus requiring only one crossing) it would not cause the degradation of natural and cultural resources. By providing these additions to the trail system, staff determined that two smaller trail segments, the proposed trail bypass west of the existing Heil Valley Ranch trailhead parking lot and the connecting trail from Geer Canyon Drive to the east side Heil Valley Ranch 2 trail, be made a lower priority and be constructed when safety and/or public use pattern need arises.

In terms of parking, staff reviewed the parking plan and is proposing that the Heil 2 lot be constructed with 20 standard spaces (with the ability to expand an additional five spaces) along with the four trailer parking spaces relocated from the existing Heil Valley Ranch trailhead. Repurposing the existing Heil Valley Ranch trailer parking would increase the Heil trailhead from 56 standard parking spaces to 68 standard parking spaces and one bus parking spot.

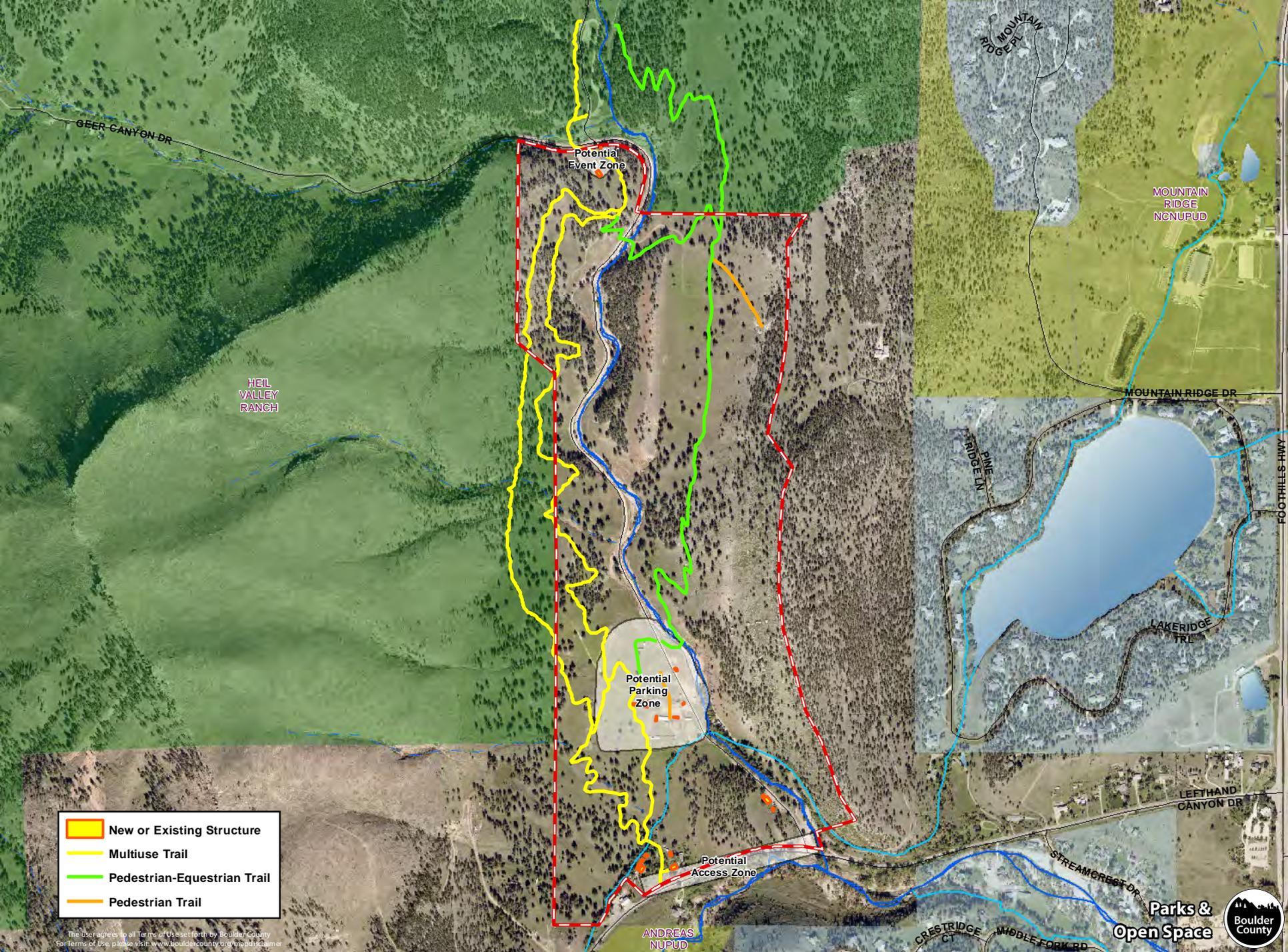
Please see the attached exhibit depicting these trail system changes. Apart from these changes, the draft plan remains the same.

Recommendation

BCPOS staff recommends that POSAC recommend that the BOCC approve the revised Heil Valley 2 Small Area Plan with the trail and parking changes proposed in this update.

Attachments

Revised Trail and Facilities Plan



- New or Existing Structure
- Multiuse Trail
- Pedestrian-Equestrian Trail
- Pedestrian Trail

The user agrees to all Terms of Use set forth by Boulder County. For Terms of Use, please visit www.bouldercounty.org/maps/3d/lander

HEIL
VALLEY
RANCH

Potential
Event Zone

Potential
Parking
Zone

Potential
Access Zone

ANDREAS
NUPUD

MOUNTAIN
RIDGE
NCNUPUD

MOUNTAIN RIDGE DR

PINE
TRAIL LN

LAKERIDGE
TRLE

LEFTHAND
CANYON DR

STREAMREST DR

CRESTRIDGE
CT

IMBLEFORK RD

FOOTHILLS HWY