

2009 Colorado Open Space Alliance Conference Session Descriptions

Session content subject to change

MONDAY, September 21

Session 1 - 10:15 - 12:00

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| 1a - | 1b - | 1c - | 1d - |
| Natural Resources round table | Outreach - Interpretive Writing | Directors and Managers | Rangers – Dealing with high profile incidents |

1a - Natural Resources: Round table discussion of current topics.

1b - Interpretive Writing: How to Write for Signs and Brochures by Sue Kenney, City of Fort Collins Natural Areas Program
Have you ever created a brochure or interpretive sign for your agency? Interpretive writing can have a big impact on your visitors' intellectual and emotional relationships with resources. Learn what constitutes interpretive writing and how to capture the readers' attention. Practice a step-by-step process to create relevant writing, analyze sample signs, share current or past projects, and give and receive constructive feedback. Bring a writing project.

1c-Directors and Managers: Round table discussion of current topics.

1d-Rangers: Join Aron Ralston, featured speaker with the Everest Speakers Bureau, in a discussion about dealing with a high profile incident from both the victim's and the agency's standpoints. Aron will also discuss teachable moments, and following your dreams as it relates to your career as a ranger.

MONDAY, September 21

Session 2 - 1:15 – 2:30

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| 2a - | 2b - | 2c - | 2d - | 2e - | 2f - |
| Fishing Flows in the Fork: Innovative Streamflow Enhancement | Create, Move, Use and Recycle: Interpretive Exhibits | It's 10:00! Do you know what your projects are doing? | GOCO Policy Update | Natural Areas Vegetation Management: An ecological approach | Alternative Funding – Filling the Gap |

2a- Fishing Flows in the 'Fork: One County's Innovative Streamflow Enhancement Efforts by John Ely, Peter Nichols & Amy Beatie with Colorado Water Trust This presentation will address natural resource management, specifically discussing opportunities for improving local streamflows. The panel will discuss three related efforts underway in the Roaring Fork basin, including the use of a local tax for local streamflow improvement; opportunities for partnership among the Colorado Water Conservation Board, Pitkin County, and the Colorado Water Trust; and strategic planning for long-term instream flow improvement. Ultimately, the discussion will move towards how these efforts can be done anywhere in the state.

2b- Create, Move, Use and Recycle--Mobile and Temporary Interpretive Exhibits by Linda Strand and Mary Ann Bonnell
We will discuss ways to create mobile and temporary interpretive exhibits, whether for short-term use in your nature center or use at an event. Your exhibits can be thematic, interactive and compelling and still be temporary and mobile. We'll cover low cost ways to create your exhibit using commercial and home-constructed exhibit bases and show how to add color and interest with fabric, artifacts and found items. All you need to bring is your imagination.

2c- It's Ten O'clock; Do You Know What Your Projects Are Doing? Creating a Database to Track Real Estate Active Projects by Anne Kelson and Cynthia Topp, CDOW

Do you store vital information about your real estate transactions on a collection of spreadsheets? When asked for statistics about acres conserved or dollars spent, are you using a calculator to produce the numbers? This workshop will demonstrate how to contract for a database that addresses many of these common needs. Participants will learn about the steps from conceptualizing their data, diagramming their workflow, communicating with the contractor, migrating their data, training their staff, and producing the final reports.

2d- GOCO Policy Update by Steve Nagy, Dale Craker & Kathleen Staks of Great Outdoors Colorado.

GOCO staff plans to conduct stakeholder meetings this summer to discuss changes to some existing policies and possible creation of new policies to address current issues in the conservation community including renewable energy development on conserved

properties, GOCO’s appraisal review process, and GOCO’s conservation easement amendment and assignment policies. This session will explain the results of the stakeholder process and the policy changes.

2e-Natural Areas Vegetation Management by *John Vickery, Denver Natural Areas and Megan Bowes, City of Boulder OSMP*
 A number of aspects of vegetation management applicable to disturbed and intact native plant communities are explored. Using examples largely from Colorado Front Range, the topics include ecosystem services of weeds; issues in plant materials selection, collection and propagation; vegetation management in urban/overpopulated prairie dog colonies; systems for prioritization of invasive plant control; livestock grazing for weed control; evaluating native plant communities and restoration potential of altered sites.

2f-Alternative Funding: Filling the Gap by *Teresa Penbrooke, Greenplay LLC*
 As traditional funding (general funds, bond issues and sales taxes, etc.) for facilities become more scarce, while at the same time constituents are demanding a higher level of service and quality, many agencies are relying more heavily on "alternative funding." What types of alternative funding are available, a brief overview of the benefits and pitfalls of each, and some proactive planning strategies that can help you reap the rewards while protecting yourself, your agency and your citizens.

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Session 3 - 2:45 - 4:00

| 3a – | 3b – | 3c – | 3d – | 3e - |
|---|--|-------------------------|--|---|
| Are You Fire Wise? Managing Hazards on Open Space | Incorporating Culture and History into Natural Areas | Best Practices Handbook | What the heck did we plant there? GIS Tools for Tracking Stewardship | Measure Your True Character, Navigating the Political Terrain, Part I of II |

3a- Are You Fire Wise? Managing Wildfire Hazards on Open Space Lands by *Kristin Garrison, Colorado State Forest Service*
 Most people think wildfires only occur in forested areas in the mountains, however if your open space consists of grass, brush, or forested areas wildfire hazards exist. This session will provide open space managers with the tools they need to assess the wildfire hazards in the areas they manage, determine mitigation techniques for those areas, and work with homeowners adjoining open space to reduce the hazards on both sides of the fence.

3b- Incorporating Culture and History into Natural Areas by *Deborah Price, Bobcat Ridge Natural Area/Fort Collins and Kate Bowell, Fort Collins Museum and Discovery Science Center.*
 Many natural areas and open spaces have human histories as rich and varied as their ecology. As such, historical and cultural affiliations are a part of the story of natural sites, rather than separate from them. How do you integrate cultural and environmental experiences so that visitors of varying interests learn to care about and promote the ideals and goals of your institution? Discover how developing cooperative partnerships between natural and cultural organizations can support interdisciplinary interpretations of natural spaces that broaden the experiences and perspectives of managers, educators, and visitors, and learn to discern appropriate cultural resources in your own community. (Note: This is designed to be mostly a discussion/round table format workshop)

3c- Best Practices Handbook
 The Colorado Local Government Best Practices Handbook presents collective guidance on the best practices for land acquisition, easement stewardship, and sound operation of local open space programs. Special attention is made to implementing sound practices related to the acquisition and stewardship of conservation easements. Contributors include Tawnya Ernst and Joy Lusiano (Jefferson County Open Space), Kathleen Staks (Great Outdoors Colorado) K-Lynn Cameron and Jerry White (Larimer County DNR) Rick Bachand (Fort Collins Natural Areas Program).

3d- What the #&\$! (Heck) did we plant there? GIS Tools for Tracking Land Stewardship Activities by *Rachel Steeves and Rick Bachand, City of Fort Collins Natural Areas Program*
 Since 2007 the City of Fort Collins Natural Areas Program has developed a customized GIS (Arc-Map) application to chronicle field management actions across the 35,000 acre natural area system. Our Resource Management Information System (RMIS) uses a geospatial approach to plan, track, and report on all management activities related to weed control, ecological restoration, wildlife habitat improvements, and similar land stewardship activities. We describe the many applications of RMIS, its limitations, and suggest future modifications depending on agency requirements.

3e- The Measure of Our True Character-Navigating Political Terrain, Part 1 (Part II is session 4e) by *Jamie Sabbach, Executive Director for GP RED, and Senior Project Consultant for GreenPlay LLC.*

In these ever-changing times, those in public service are consistently faced with significant social and economic challenges as well as ethical dilemmas based upon questionable politics, self-serving leadership philosophies and other factors. Feeling like a salmon swimming upstream and having your integrity challenged does not make for a satisfying work experience and undoubtedly leads to de-motivated staff. Understanding society’s influence on character and values, challenging risk aversion, and emphasizing the impacts of teaching, enforcing, advocating and role modeling are critical steps in enhancing everyone’s ability to “do the right thing”, and to responsibly navigate political waters.

MONDAY, September 21

Session 4 - 4:15 - 5:30

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| 4a – | 4b – | 4c – | 4d - |
| Carbon Markets and Open Space | Sex, Lies and Rattlesnakes | Denver Mountain Parks Master Planning | Measure Your True Character, Navigating the Political Terrain, Part II |

4a- Carbon Markets and Open Space by *Amanda Sutton and Rick Bachand*

The City of Fort Collins recognizes the impacts an organization has on the environment and its role in combating climate change. The City’s Natural Areas Program became interested in ways it could assist the City-wide goal and supply carbon offsets to voluntary carbon markets in the US. This presentation will discuss carbon markets, project criteria for carbon offset projects, and projects open space agencies could implement to provide carbon offsets.

4b- Sex, Lies, and Rattlesnakes by *MaryAnn Bonnell, City of Aurora Parks and Open Space*

Biologists consider rattlesnakes to be model organisms; organisms that when studied extensively can offer insight into the workings of other creatures and larger concepts. Featuring radio-telemetry and PIT-tag technology based data and information on an extensively studied population of prairie rattlesnakes in Aurora, CO, this presentation will reveal sexually dimorphic behaviors, dispel common myths, and foster appreciation for a creature many of our visitors are loathe to encounter.

4c- Denver Mountain Parks Master Planning by *Scott Robson, City and County of Denver*

In 2008, the City and County of Denver completed a master plan for their Mountain Parks properties (14,000 acres in Clear Creek, Douglas, Grand and Jefferson Counties) to provide strategies for funding, marketing and protection of the system; and to propose both large and small improvements for the next 5-10 years to take this world-renowned system of parks to world class quality.

4d- The Measure of Our True Character-Navigating Political Terrain, Part II by *Jamie Sabbach, Executive Director for GP RED, and Senior Project Consultant for GreenPlay LLC.*

In these ever-changing times, those in public service are consistently faced with significant social and economic challenges as well as ethical dilemmas based upon questionable politics, self-serving leadership philosophies and other factors. Feeling like a salmon swimming upstream and having your integrity challenged does not make for a satisfying work experience and undoubtedly leads to de-motivated staff. Understanding society’s influence on character and values, challenging risk aversion, and emphasizing the impacts of teaching, enforcing, advocating and role modeling are critical steps in enhancing everyone’s ability to “do the right thing”, and to responsibly navigate political waters.

TUESDAY, September 22

9:45 – 11:45 Session 5

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|-------------------|--------------|------|--|-------------------------|--|
| 5a – | 5b - | 5c – | 5d – | 5e – | 5f - |
| Pine Beetle Panel | Peter Forbes | | Monitoring Cucumber Gulch ★ (Introduction to Field Trip FT8) | Interpret or hide them? | Navigating CE Certification and the Local Government |

5a-Pine Beetle Panel – *Scott Reid & Jennifer Cram, Town of Breckenridge , Therese Glowacki, Boulder County Parks and Open Space , Gary Tennenbaum, Pitkin County Open Space & Trails* The forests around Breckenridge are changing. With the potential that 95% of the lodgepole pine trees will die from the Mountain Pine Beetle epidemic, the Town is looking closely at reducing the potential risk from a catastrophic wildfire and how to best regenerate future forests. This panel will discuss the different approaches that the Town has taken over time to address both forest health and wildfire mitigation on our open space properties and how our most latest strategy integrates with that of local fire district, the County, and the U.S. Forest Service.

5b and 5c- Peter Forbes – Continuing discussion from Tuesday's keynote, Peter Forbes will engage the group with illustrative exercises and examples. Peter is recognized across North America for building bridges between sectors, coalitions and organizations

and for nurturing a new land movement integrating land health, social justice, and human spirit. Peter co-founded Center for Whole Communities after eighteen years leading conservation projects for the Trust for Public Land.

5d- Monitoring Cucumber Gulch ★ (Introduction for Field Trip FT8) *Christy Carello, Metro State University, Heide Anderson, Town of Breckenridge* The Cucumber Gulch Preserve has been one of the main areas of focus for the Town of Breckenridge since the inception of the Open Space program. The Preserve, which contains approximately 188 acres, of which 77 are delineated wetlands, is one of the Town’s most treasured yet threatened resources. It provides vital habitat for the state-endangered boreal toad, moose, elk, deer, mountain lion, beaver, and over forty-seven species of birds. It also contains significant fen wetlands, which take 10’s of thousands of years to develop. It’s hard to believe that such a wildlife sanctuary exists within a mile of Breckenridge’s Main Street! This session will focus on the efforts that the Town of Breckenridge has taken through our Cucumber Gulch Conservation Monitoring Program to carefully monitor the resources of the Preserve and work with Vail Resorts and other developers surrounding the area to minimize impacts. This session will include a discussion of the VERP process and how it is being applied to this area.

5e- Stone circles, projectile points, and cabin ruins.....interpret or hide them? - Open Space lands across Colorado often contain valuable cultural resources that reflect the rich heritage of our state. From historic ranches to ancient Native American sites, these resources require both protection and interpretation. What are the laws and guidelines for dealing with such resources and what are some of the management strategies we can use? This session will explore the protection and management of cultural resources on public Open Space lands. We will review the applicable National, State, and local laws that protect historic places and look at the use of conservation easements, stewardship programs, information access, and site interpretation plans. This session will also have a panel discussion with representatives from two Colorado communities that take very different approaches to managing their cultural resources.

5f- Navigating Certification by *Hollis Glenn, Colorado Division of Real Estate, State CE Certification, is it worth the time and money?* *Jessica Jay, Conservation Law and Ariel Steele, Tax Credit Connection* Starting in 2011, open space programs that accept conservation easements that generate Colorado income tax credits will need to be certified by the state. This 2-part presentation will consist of an in-depth review of the conservation easement certification program. In the first hour, Hollis Glenn from the Colorado Division of Real Estate will cover the process for certification, provide a detailed review of the actual application, and explain the criteria for which the Division or Real Estate will evaluate the applicant. In the second hour, in a facilitated group discussion, local governments will explore the pros and cons of becoming certified and will gain the tools necessary to determine if certification is right for them. Hands-on exercises will allow participants to assess what policies they already have and what they will need to create to meet certification requirements.

12:30 - 5:00 Field trips

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| FT1 | Biking on the Summit County Recreational Pathway |
| FT2 | Advanced Mountain Bike |
| FT3 | Free Ride/Technical Trail Features bike ride |
| FT4 | Parade of No Homes |
| FT5 | Iowa Hill Walking Tour – Interpretive Facility |
| FT6 | French Gulch Walking Tour – Hiking Trip |
| FT7 | Golden Horseshoe/Mining Restoration |
| FT8 | ★Cucumber Gulch – continued from session 5d |

FT1- Biking on the Summit County Recreational Pathway (Recpath) – Recpath is a 55-mile long network of paved, non-motorized pathways that connect towns and resorts throughout Summit County. The Summit County system is connected to Eagle via Vail Pass. The Recpath is jointly managed by Summit County, the towns of Breckenridge, Dillon, Frisco, and Silverthorne; Keystone Resort, and the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT). The Summit County open space staff will lead this tour from Breckenridge around Lake Dillon and discuss the latest issues and developments related to this recreational pathway.

FT2-Advanced Mountain Bike - Leave from Beaver Run Resort and tour the interconnected single-track trails that have been developed over the last few years by Summit County and the Town of Breckenridge and have been featured lately in marathon bike races such as the Firecracker 50, Breck Epic, and the Breck 100.

FT3-Free Ride/ Technical Trail Features ride: Members of the Town of Breckenridge trail crew will lead participants to the Freeride Park, pump track, and the B-Line Trail, three freeride trails that have been designed by staff and built on open space.

FT4-Parade of No Homes: Hosted by Leigh Girven of the Continental Divide Land Trust, a tour of properties in Summit County protected from development (seating limited) through creative partnerships.

FT5-Iowa Hill Walking Tour - Interpretive Facility: A one mile plus historic trail on open space with interpretive signage throughout about the hydraulic mining industry and mining lifestyle.

FT6-French Gulch Walking Tour-Hiking Trip: A loop hike where a number of mining remnants can be pointed out and interpreted by one of the Breckenridge staff. Artifacts and sites representing all of the different forms of mining that have taken place in the Breckenridge area are present on this hike and highlighted by new interpretive signage.

FT7-Golden Horseshoe/Mining Restoration: This backcountry drive will focus on the whole Golden Horseshoe project, the issues that have been at the forefront, and the process that Breckenridge, Summit County and the Forest Service have been through to collaboratively manage this 8,000 acre area.

FT8 - Cucumber Gulch Monitoring: This walking tour of the Cucumber Gulch Preserve and the monitoring program implemented by Breckenridge will be led by Christy Carello, a professor of biology at Metro State and resident expert on all things related to Cucumber Gulch. This field trip is an extension of the breakout session 5d.

WEDNESDAY, September 23

10:15 - 12:00 Session 6

| 6a – | 6b – | 6c – | 6d – | 6e – |
|--|---|---|--|------------------------------|
| Wylie Coyote: Coexisting in Coyote Country | Generating Success: Understanding Interpretive Projects | 2. The Nature Conversation: Talking with Landowners | 5. Let's do our homework together! Draft policy documents for CE Certification | Managing for Alternative Use |

6a -Wylie Coyote: Coexisting in Coyote Country by *Mary Ann Bonnell, City of Aurora Parks and Open Space*. Back by popular demand. Successful coexistence with coyotes requires and understanding of how coyotes survive, as well as an understanding of how humans can shape coyote behavior. Public education is the key to limiting negative human/coyote interactions. This interactive presentation can be adapted for training staff internally and for public outreach on this important management issue.

6b- Generating Success: Understanding Interpretive Projects by *Rich Smith, Advanced Resource Management, Inc.* What does it really take to produce interpretive signs and media? Increase your efficiency and success by taking a realistic, detailed look at what it takes to complete various interpretive projects. Learn about typical project timelines and work flow and prepare for the unexpected by discovering typical bottlenecks and obstacles. Learn how to assess your in-house capabilities to determine if an outside contractor is needed and if so, how to develop an effective RFP.

6c-The Nature Conversation: How to do land acquisitions and (live to) talk about it with landowners and others by *Lynn Wodell, Land Acquisition Consultant* This program includes hundreds of tips I've learned by over twenty Years of experience in public open space programs for communicating with landowners during the acquisition process. The "nature conversations" with landowners are the most important conversations open space staff members and not for profit land trust members have if they are to meet preservation, protection and acquisition goals and objectives. These tips help increase both the efficiency and effectiveness of both individuals and organizations.

6d-“Let’s Do Our Homework Together!” - *Colorado Division of Wildlife* Hosts an Exchange and Discussion of the Policy Documents Required under the Land Preservation Tax Credit Program in order for Local Governments to be Certified to Hold Conservation Easements. By *Diane Gainsayer and Anne Keelson* from CDOW CDOW is among the local governments which will need to be certified to hold Conservation Easements. Although many local governments may not yet have begun to address the documentation that will likely be required next year, by September CDOW will have final drafts for many of the policy documents that will likely be required. In order to provide other government agencies with a starting point for their own drafting or review process, and to discuss the preferred approaches to many of the issues which are raised by these requirements, we propose sharing our draft policy documents with the conference participants, discussing the background and the basic procedures and considerations that guided these drafts. We invite any other participants to bring any drafts they have as well. We would then open up the session for general discussion on the topic.

6e-Managing for Alternative Use – *Heide Anderson & Tony Overlock, Town of Breckenridge , Austin Weis, City of Aspen* Many things have changed in the years since the founding charters for many Colorado open space programs were written. New user groups have appeared before our commissions demanding attention...or they have just appeared. Join this panel discussion made up of open space recreation specialists that have worked to incorporate some of these more developed uses (including freeriding, whitewater parks and Nordic skiing) into their previously traditional open space programs and find out how successful their attempts have been.