



About NoCo Places

Eight county, state, and federal public land agencies from north-central Colorado are actively collaborating to address the challenges the mountains and foothills in this region are facing from high visitation and a growing population. We are committed to sustainable solutions, equitable actions, and beneficial land management practices for the long-term conservation of Colorado's public lands and the quality of the visitor experience.



Larimer County

The Challenge

Visitation to our mountains and foothills has skyrocketed in recent years, causing congestion on the trails, impacts to wildlife and the environment, and putting at risk what makes Colorado a special place.

Leaders from Boulder, Clear Creek, Gilpin, Jefferson, and Larimer Counties; Colorado Parks and Wildlife; the US Forest Service Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forests; and Rocky Mountain National Park are actively collaborating to address this challenge.

Mission Statement

NoCo Places collaborates to protect and conserve natural and cultural resources while providing equitable access and a quality recreation experience for current and future generations.

Q2 2024 Accomplishments

This report highlights the successes and progress of NoCo Places since our [First Quarter 2024 report](#).

CONSERVATION AND RECREATION VISION



The Conservation and Recreation Vision is nearly complete! A public announcement should be made in the next couple of weeks, and it will also be posted to the NoCo website. Stay tuned for a special edition of the NoCo eNewsletter. A huge thanks to all those who provided input, whether through the stakeholder focus groups, the NoCo Partners group, or other ways. Meanwhile, you can find all of the information and data that went into the Conservation and Recreation Vision on this [page of the NoCo website](#).



COMMUNICATIONS EFFORTS

Spring and Summer Common Messaging

The “Headed Outdoors?” common messaging campaign that launched in May continues to build momentum and has received great media coverage.

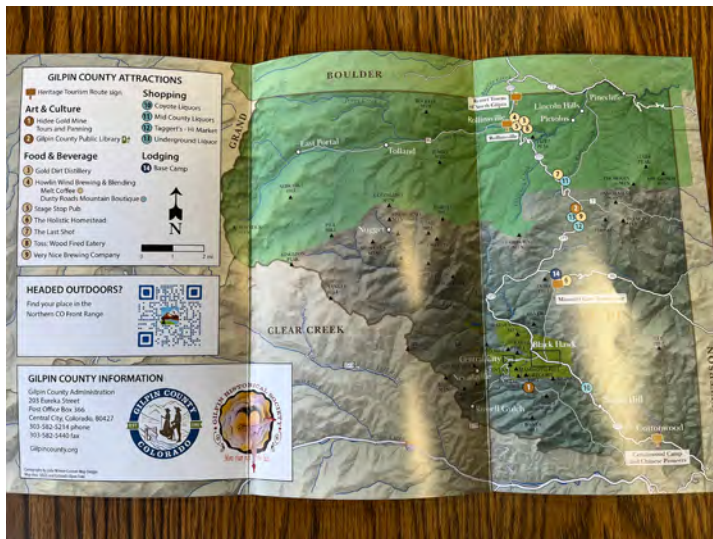
Campaign Objectives:

- Reach a broader audience through partnership with tourism groups in the NoCo region
- Share land stewardship messages with an audience that is likely unfamiliar with Colorado public lands
- Educate target audience on the different areas of public land in the NoCo region (thus offering alternatives when areas are sold out or full)



The sticker and story map are available in both English and Spanish.

Stickers with a QR code linking to the story map and interactive map are displayed/given out in the following visitor centers in the NoCo region: Estes Park, Boulder, Fort Collins, Central City, Idaho Springs, and Georgetown.



New visitors using the map are encouraged to know before they go to public lands, and have alternatives in mind in case of sold-out timed entry reservations or full parking lots.

Gilpin County included the QR code on their new local attractions map.



Visit Fort Collins visitor center

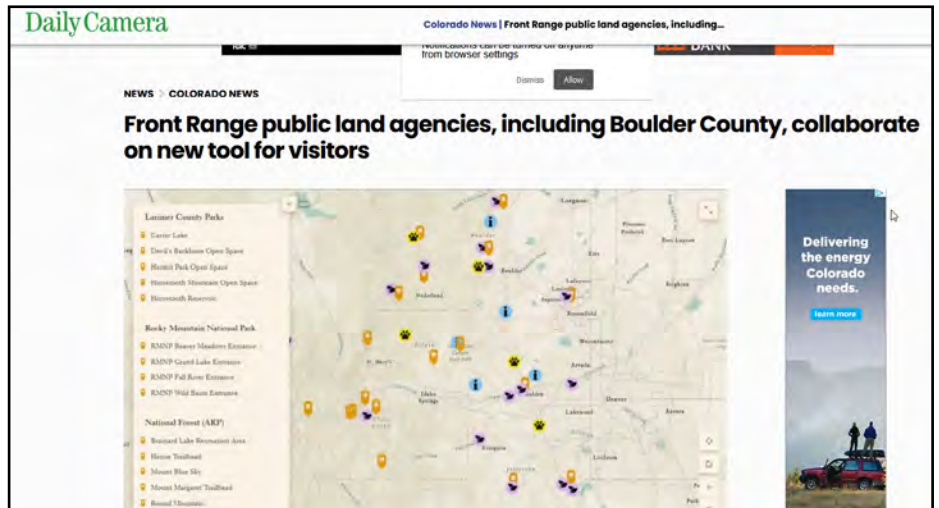


Visit Boulder visitor center

Media Coverage



Click to watch CBS4 video feature



Headed Outdoors Campaign, Phase 2

This summer, phase 2 of the campaign will see the Headed Outdoors regional interactive map reaching the target audience in new ways. Table-top cards on metal stands are being provided to NoCo's tourism contacts in the region for use at local restaurants, hotels, chambers, and other businesses who already share tourism messaging.



Table-top card design for tourism centers to share with restaurants and other local businesses.



Share the Regional Map

EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION EFFORTS

The NoCo EDI work group continues to meet and discuss ways to collaborate and share best practices and resources between agencies. In Q2 meetings, the group benefited from the following presentations from members in the group.

Boulder County EDI Programs and Priorities

Boulder County's CRISP, the Cultural Responsiveness & Inclusion Strategic Plan, was developed to foster greater engagement of the Boulder County Latinx community in the full range of opportunities available through Boulder County Parks & Open Space. The CRISP provides guidance on, among other strategies, strong relationship building, staff training, organizational change, cultural relevance, capacity building, inclusive storytelling and interpretation, and inclusive planning.

An overview of the Boulder County Parks & Open Space Indigenous Ways & Land Commitment Team was also provided, which is a separate group from the one involved with the CRISP. This team works to further strengthen Boulder County's overall Tribal and Indigenous engagement efforts.



Courtesy of Boulder County

CPW Research and Next Steps on Timed Entry

Colorado Parks and Wildlife initiated a timed entry reservation system at Eldorado Canyon State Park in 2022 but became concerned about the barriers it might pose to historically underserved communities. CPW hired a consultant to conduct listening sessions with members of the Hispanic/Latinx community who were invited by HECHO. The participants were asked to share their perspective on what some of the cultural barriers might be for this population when it comes to the timed entry system. What CPW learned was that the online timed entry system did create a barrier to park equity and accessibility, especially for the Hispanic/Latinx population. The agency is in the process of identifying changes it can make to improve the system so it is equitable for all.



Courtesy of CPW

Larimer County EDI Programs and Priorities

Larimer County Department of Natural Resource's EDI programs and priorities includes the ISTAR program (Indigenous Science, Arts, Technology, and Resilience) which brings diverse Native youth and their families from the Fort Collins area together to connect with traditional technologies, science, and arts.

Larimer County DNR planned an overnight camping trip at Carter Lake in partnership with American Adventure Sports Club, which seeks to get traditionally underserved youth outdoors for their first time.

The agency also hosted well-received LGBTQIA+ hikes this summer. In addition, they are working on website accessibility, translating kiosks and other communications materials in Spanish, and providing an Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (EDIA) training called 'New Perspectives' for staff.

CONFERENCE PARTICIPATION

Members of the NoCo Places Executive Committee presented at the Colorado Parks and Wildlife Partners in the Outdoors conference in April. The session, titled NoCo Places Collaborative Efforts, focused on sharing the collaboration and partnership that has taken place during the work for the Conservation and Recreation Vision effort.



NoCo Places presenters at Partners in Outdoors conference, L to R: Steve Coffin, Katie Matthews, Shannon Schaller, John Hannon, and Tom Hoby.



NEW NOCO CONSULTANT

Thanks to a grant from Colorado Parks and Wildlife, NoCo is able to hire part-time help to support our programmatic work. We are thrilled that the person selected through an RFQ process is John Hannon, an active participant with NoCo since its inception. John is retiring in the coming weeks from years of service with Rocky Mountain National Park. His role at the Park as Management Specialist in Visitor Use Planning, Visitor Transportation, and Commercial Services will bring deep expertise in managing various NoCo programmatic efforts such as the unauthorized trails mapping effort, our EDI work, region-wide volunteer strategies and camping and concessionaire opportunities, and implementation of action plans identified in the Conservation and Recreation Vision. John will begin in August.



Tackling Goals

We will achieve our goals by:

- **Inspiring an outdoor stewardship ethic** among visitors and recreationists that promotes an awareness of their impact on the land and wildlife, reduces those impacts by educating them on how they can mitigate or manage them, and creates a personal sense of ownership, responsibility and pride in better protecting those resources.
- **Building community support for increased funding** for public land management, and exploring opportunities and mechanisms for sharing financial resources across jurisdictions in the NoCo region.
- **Increasing the amount of conserved and/or restored land**, and protecting the land that is already conserved and/or restored.
- **Supporting outdoor recreation and visitation** in areas best suited for that activity.
- **Improving the quality of the visitor experience**, particularly in areas facing the greatest threats from overuse and congestion, through management approaches, education, more effective infrastructure and other means.
- **Ensuring that the region continues to provide and support a wide range** of quality outdoor experience opportunities.
- **Increasing the visitation by historically underrepresented communities** and Americans with Disabilities Act/Architectural Barriers Act (ADA/ABA) communities.
- **Reducing conflict and promoting compatibility among visitors** and recreational use types, and increasing the safety of outdoor experiences.

Upcoming

After a year of work building a conservation and recreation vision for the NoCo region, 2024 will be focused on incorporating feedback from the stakeholder outreach focus groups, finalizing the vision, and implementing the vision per agency and NoCo collectively.