



About NoCo PLACES

Eight county, state, and federal public land agencies from north-central Colorado are actively collaborating on ways 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.



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 2050 collaborates to protect and conserve natural and cultural resources while providing equitable access and a quality recreation experience for current and future generations.

Q1 2023 Accomplishments

Below is a summary of the work NoCo has completed since our [Fourth Quarter 2022 report](#).

NOCO CONSERVATION AND RECREATION VISION

The effort to create a conservation and recreation vision for the NoCo region is moving forward with big steps taken this quarter.

We worked with the Colorado Natural Heritage Program (CNHP) to create a map that reflects the sensitive species and habitat in the region such as wildlife species activity maps, important bird areas, wetlands, and potential conservation areas. A work group conducted a detailed review of this first map and provided CNHP with input that was incorporated in January. We also worked with CNHP's [CODEX mapping tool](#) to better understand other conservation issues and human disturbance in the region, and reviewed The Nature Conservancy's Resilient and Connected Network map, EnviroScreen (an environmental justice mapping tool) and other data.

On March 29, we held a visioning workshop with the NoCo Partners where we used mapping tools to address the interaction between the natural resources and recreational assets of the NoCo region.

The objectives of the workshop were to:

- Develop a common understanding of current conditions in the NoCo region
- Generate guidance for identifying priorities in the NoCo region
- Begin to identify opportunities for cross-jurisdictional coordination and joint action that operationalize NoCo's goals

The workshop included a panel discussion by NoCo agencies where they shared their insights on what the maps mean for their jurisdictions and for cross-jurisdictional collaboration. Then the room broke into three breakout groups and rotated between them for in-depth discussions on conservation, recreation and conservation, and landscape disturbance.

We also hired a contractor (RRC Associates) to acquire and analyze mobile phone data of visitors to specific locations in the NoCo region that will be incorporated into our analysis and discussions. They are in the process of cleaning up and analyzing this data and will present their findings at a special Partners meeting on April 17.

The next step in this effort will be to secure funding to conduct stakeholder outreach to gain input into the desired future conditions of the region. We anticipate that outreach to occur in the fall.

Many thanks to Colorado Parks and Wildlife and to the NoCo agencies whose financial support is making this project possible.

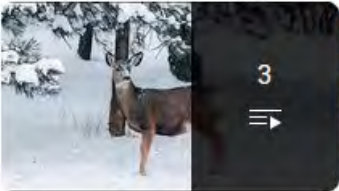

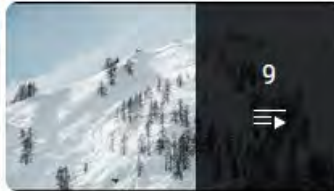


Q1 2023 Accomplishments Continued

COMMUNICATIONS EFFORTS

On January 20, NoCo launched a common messaging campaign centered around winter recreation safety messages under the Know Before You Go theme. The messages were communicated via 17 multiple video shorts designed for social media. A [joint news release](#) shared by all NoCo agencies provided important winter safety statistics and linked to the videos, and we created a new page on the NoCo website for [winter recreation safety tips](#). The messages fall in the categories of skills before thrills, all season stewardship, and winter wildlife awareness, and were covered with the different video shorts. Each video was translated into Spanish and there are Spanish playlists on the [NoCo YouTube channel](#).

NoCo YouTube Channel Playlists with Winter Recreation Safety Videos

		
Winter Wildlife Awareness View full playlist	All Season Stewardship View full playlist	Skills Before Thrills: Winter Edition View full playlist

Next up for NoCo communications is promotion of the state [COTREX app](#). A priority for NoCo is to make this the go-to app for trail use because it is the most accurate trail tool and because it is free. The NoCo Communications Subcommittee is working closely with state CPW and DNR employees on the campaign materials, including a video and social media graphics. The campaign will launch on May 20, Colorado Public Lands Day.



REGIONAL PARTNER INITIATIVE

NoCo continues to work closely with CPW's Regional Partner Initiative and their efforts to create a state conservation, recreation and climate plan. The work NoCo is doing to create the conservation and recreation vision will be folded into the state plan.





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

We are just getting started; more is to come. After two years of research, in the year 2022 we are focusing on solutions and implementation. Discussions are underway on steps we can take together to achieve our mission and our goals.

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