



Quarter 2 2025 REPORT



Nine 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.

We Are NoCo Places.

Q2 2025 Updates & Accomplishments

HAPPY TRAILS TO STEVE COFFIN

Founder.
Leader.
Architect.
Instigator.
Executive Director.

Steve Coffin is all of these things to NoCo Places. When he started the coalition in 2018 he likely didn't know just how much it would grow and how committed the group would become. However, it was under his guidance and leadership, and through his infectious enthusiasm and passion, that the coalition became what it is today.

Steve is as dedicated to public lands as any of the actual employees of public land management agencies that make up the NoCo Places executive committee. His tenacity, skill, and commitment served as the compass that guided the coalition in the right direction and ensured its success.

What a legacy Steve has left us. He set NoCo Places up for the future, and now the new Executive Director, the executive committee, staff, and partners will set the course to forge onward and explore uncharted territory. The commitment is solid, the groundwork has been laid, and the map is charted. Now we hit the trail.

With sincere gratitude,
NoCo Places



"As Colorado's population grows, and as more and more people go to the mountains, it becomes increasingly important that we all work together to protect and preserve what makes our state so special. My hope as I retire is that I had some small impact doing just that."

~ Steve Coffin



Q2 2025 Updates & Accomplishments

NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

NoCo Places has named a new Executive Director to succeed founder Steve Coffin, who is retiring. JD Tanner, Ed D, CPRE, will join the coalition and lead it into the future of implementing the coalition's Conservation and Recreation Vision.

Dr. Tanner joins the regional partnership from the Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics, where he served as Director of Education and Training. He has over 25 years of experience as an outdoor educator and administrator, bringing a perspective gained from over 18 years in higher education. He has lived in Colorado for over ten years. Dr. Tanner has a Doctor of Education (EdD) in Educational Leadership from Southern Illinois University, a Master of Science in Education (MS Ed) in Recreation Resource Administration from Southern Illinois University, and a Bachelor's Degree in Outdoor and Therapeutic Recreation from Southeast Missouri State University.

Dr. Tanner has experience in developing, managing, and implementing innovative outdoor programs, securing major grants and donations, and building strategic partnerships with federal, state, and local land management agencies. His skills in developing partnerships with the BLM, NPS, USFS, and state land managers to advance public lands education and stewardship programs are well established. In addition, his experience in forging relationships and building consensus among multiple stakeholders will greatly benefit NoCo Places.

Welcome, JD!

[Read the News Release Announcing JD Tanner](#)



From the desk of JD Tanner . . .

"As the new Executive Director of NoCo Places, I'm incredibly excited to join this passionate and dedicated community working to protect and celebrate the special places of Northern Colorado. While very new to the organization, it's already clear how much potential we have to deepen our impact through meaningful partnerships, hands-on stewardship, and community-driven programs. I look forward to building on the great work already underway and helping lead NoCo Places into an exciting next chapter. There's a lot to look forward to — and I'm honored to be a part of it."

GRANT FUNDING

Grant Award! NoCo Places was awarded a \$25,000 Directors Innovation Fund grant from CPW for Stakeholder Engagement in the Lefthand Canyon OHV area. NoCo Places will lead both a stakeholder and agency group initiative to determine future uses of the Lefthand Canyon OHV area, which has been closed to motorized use since the 2013 floods.

Thank you, CPW, for your invaluable support!

UNAUTHORIZED TRAILS UPDATE

NoCo is working on the next phase of our unauthorized trails project. The coalition is currently working with RRC Associates to develop an unauthorized trails dashboard. Similar in design to the mobile phone data dashboard, this resource will enable NoCo land managers to view the prevalence and impacts of unauthorized trails on the NoCo landscape at a regional level.

The trail data comes from existing unauthorized trails mapping that each agency had undertaken, plus the over 345 miles of unauthorized trail data collected last summer by NoCo Places. This data will be overlaid with NoCo's biodiversity mapping, allowing land managers to develop a prioritized list of actions for these identified trails. As a result of the developed criteria, trails may be rehabilitated, continue to be monitored, or, in some cases, become part of an existing trails system.

While the data NoCo has is by no means a complete picture of unauthorized trails across the region, the dashboard allows additional mapping and data collection to be added as it becomes available.



NOCO TRAININGS START OFF STRONG

The first in a series of training workshops hosted by NoCo Places was held in May in Fort Collins. These training workshops are designed for the staff of participating NoCo agencies to learn and share ideas around meaningful engagement in equity, diversity, and inclusion work in the region.

The first workshop focused upon Tribal and Indigenous engagement. Facilitated by Keystone Policy Center, the workshop began with presentations from Ernest House, a Senior Policy Director and the Director of the Center for Tribal and Indigenous Engagement at Keystone Policy Center, and Gemara Gifford, the Founder and Principal Consultant of Mending Mountains Collective LLC.

The workshop was comprised of three sessions:

1. A brief history of tribal nations and indigenous communities in Northern Colorado
2. Deep dive on Colorado's guidance framework for tribal collaboration
3. Action planning for NoCo Places

Keystone facilitators wrapped up the session with a group exercise that resulted in key takeaways and recommended actions.

Next up in the workshop series is a training session on all abilities engagement. This session, taking place in the fall, will be outdoors and interactive. For more information contact John Hannon at JohnHannon@HJHsolutionsllc.com



Gemara Gifford and Ernest House present to the group



Christine Zenel, Keystone Policy Center, facilitates the group's collective ideas for recommended actions



Larimer County Commissioners Jody Shaddock-McNally and John Kefalas vocalize their support for the training



NEWS FROM OUR NEIGHBORS

The Metro Denver Nature Alliance is a coalition of 50+ nonprofits, agencies, researchers, and local partners in the Metro Denver area. They are a neighboring Regional Partnership to NoCo Places—two of the participating counties overlap. Metro DNA is developing a Regional Vision for People and Nature, and they want to hear from you. Please complete and share the survey linked below!



Take the Survey

Complete the survey and you'll be entered to win a \$50 gift card to a local metro Denver business! There will be up to 6 winners, announced on September 10, 2025.

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Visit website for information on the conservation and recreation vision and shared messaging