

# **Open Space Advisory Board**

## **Agenda**

**April 12th, 2023  
Library 1<sup>st</sup> Floor Meeting Room  
951 Spruce Street  
7:00 PM**

*Members of the public are welcome to attend and give comments remotely; however, the in-person meeting may continue even if technology issues prevent remote participation.*

- *Call in to: +1 346 248 7799 or +1 408 638 0968 or 877 853 5247 (Toll Free) Webinar ID: 883 3175 6380 or*
- *You can log in via your computer. Please visit the City's website here to link to the meeting: [www.louisvilleco.gov/osab](http://www.louisvilleco.gov/osab)*

*The Council will accommodate public comments during the meeting. Anyone may also email comments to the Council prior to the meeting at [EmberB@LouisvilleCO.gov](mailto:EmberB@LouisvilleCO.gov).*

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Approval of Agenda
4. Approval of Minutes
5. Public Comments on Items Not on the Agenda
6. 7:05 pm Update Item: Marshall Fire Effects on Biological Integrity of Coal Creek. Presented by: and Matthew Berta and Ceiteag Hennis Students of Kristofor Voss, PhD. Environmental Biology Program Director from Regis University (20 Minutes)

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Persons planning to attend the meeting who need sign language interpretation, translation services, assisted listening systems, Braille, taped material, or special transportation, should contact the City Clerk's Office at 303 335-4536 or [MeredythM@LouisvilleCO.gov](mailto:MeredythM@LouisvilleCO.gov). A forty-eight-hour notice is requested.

Si requiere una copia en español de esta publicación o necesita un intérprete durante la reunión, por favor llame a la Ciudad al 303.335.4536 o 303.335.4574.

7. 7:25 pm Discussion Item: Brainstorming a Process for Social Trail Review for Director Consideration. Presented by, Charles Danforth, OSAB Member (30 Minutes)
8. 7:55 pm Information item: Staff Updates, Presented by Ember Brignull, Open Space Superintendent (10 Minutes)
9. 8:05 pm Information item: Board Updates (20 Minutes)
  - a. Dog Park Tiger Team
  - b. Bee City USA Tiger Team
  - c. Trails Tiger Team
10. 8:25 pm Discussion Item: Sales & Use Tax Task Force Updates. Presented by Jessamine Fitzpatrick and Helen Moshak, OSAB Board Members (10 Minutes)
11. 8:35 pm Discussion Item: Updates on City Council Discussion Item on “Changes to Boards and Commissions”. Presented by David Blankinship, OSAB Chair (15 Minutes)
12. 8:50 Discussion Item: Process for Changing the Name of the Board. Presented by Ember Brignull, Open Space Superintendent (10 Minutes)
13. 9:00 pm Discussion Item: Identify “Slow Zone” Areas. Presented by David Blankinship, OSAB Chair (20 Minutes)
14. 9:20 pm Discussion Items for Next Meeting: Joint Board Meeting with Superior: Overlook Underpass, Regional Trails, Superior Open Space Master Plan, Marshall Fire
13. Adjourn

**1. Call to Order**

David called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

**2. Roll Call**

OSAB Members Present: David Blankinship, Laura Scott Denton, Charles Danforth, Susan McEachern, Helen Moshak, Jessamine Fitzpatrick, Jojo Follmar, and Michiko Christiansen

OSAB Board Members Absent: none

Staff Members Present: Ember Brignull, Ginger Cross, Kayla Betzold

**3. Approval of Agenda**

Charles proposed pushing Discussion Item 12 to the April meeting, if the meeting goes long. Laura moved to approve the agenda as written. Jojo seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**4. Approval of Previous Meeting's Minutes**

Susan moved to approve the February OSAB meeting minutes without edits. Laura seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**5. Public Comments on Items Not on the Agenda**

-none-

**6. Staff Updates**

See Staff Updates on pages 10-11 of the March OSAB Meeting packet.

Ember added that the 2023 COSA conference has been announced. It will be Oct 2-4 in Snowmass. In the past, city staff, board members, and city council members have attended this conference. More information can be found at [ColoradoOpenspace.org](http://ColoradoOpenspace.org). Ember cautioned that this conference usually fills very quickly.

The City Council approved the Boulder County Trails and Property Recommendation packet OSAB prepared, and it has been sent to the County.

There are no new updates about the Marshall Fire pet memorial proposal. But the current proposal is to site it in the Arboretum.

The Wildland Fire and Risk Assessment open house will be held the week of May 22.

The plans for putting grazers on open space this season are moving forward and staff should be getting cost estimates shortly. There will be some final decisions made by the next meeting. The plan is for goat grazing and possibly cattle grazing. Ember is hearing strong support from council. The grazing would happen at Davidson and North Open Space in both spring and fall.

Volunteer raptor training is happening tonight.

Staff are hoping for a good candidate for a maintenance position that has been open for a year.

David asked if there are any plans for side-trail development or blocking off social trails with the Coyote Run trail work RFP. Ember answered that this is purely a maintenance plan, but there will need to be some reinforcement at known social trails as previously discussed.

There is a meeting on Wednesday, March 15, for submission of final documents with the wayfinding consultant.

## **7. Board Updates**

### **Volunteering Update:**

Susan has been working with Catherine to relaunch the Weed Whacker program for the 2023 season. Susan shared a rough draft of a flier to advertise it. The plan is to distribute it around open space to recruit volunteers. They are also planning to develop a sign for volunteers to use while they are weed whacking, so passersby will know what's going on as a recruiting opportunity.

Ginger said that she has a sign they use for staff weeding, and Ember recommended combining the two signs. Ember said staff also has designed a sticker for trash bags full of weeds. The sticker tells people that no one is dumping on open space and the bags will be picked up. Ember said that multi-day volunteers also get a green volunteer t-shirt. Helen asked Susan if the flier should include information about training requirements or time commitment. Ginger suggested adding a few bullet points to punch up the flier. Michiko asked about the weed identification training. Susan said that at the one-off weed pull events, Catherine briefly trains volunteers. Weed whackers are given a packet with more information and attend a training.

David commented that having an email for Catherine on the flier felt out of date. He'd prefer a QR code that directs a person to a page with information, rather than making people email Catherine to learn more. Michiko asked if there was a newsletter for open space. Ginger said no, but staff are brainstorming ideas about this. Ember added that they use Facebook, the utility bills, and an open space page in the Rec Center catalog to advertise for open space events and information.

Susan wants to meet with Ginger and Catherine to work on the layout and wording of signs and fliers.

Debbie asked if there was any way to monitor people who pull weeds on open space who don't know what they are doing. Ember said that was part of the purpose of the volunteer green t-

shirt, so staff can be on the lookout for this. Ember added that the larger concern is when staff sees people seeding or planting on open space.

**Sales & Use Tax Task Force Updates:**

Jessamine said there are meetings scheduled for March 13<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>. There will be an update to the board after that.

**Wayfinding Tiger Team:**

The tiger team has received aerial maps of the Powerline Trail to annotate for the sign contractors. They are also constructing a spreadsheet to itemize signs and striping for each location.

**General Updates:**

David and Charles will be meeting with Kurt from Public Works to brainstorm crossing safety issues from Aquarius to the new 104<sup>th</sup> Street Trail. Charles added that the 104<sup>th</sup> Street Trail looks great and that the crossing at the north end was his only concern. Ember added that Boulder County will be doing road improvements on 104<sup>th</sup> Street south of Dillon to Stearns Lake. Since that might include the County building a trail extension to Stearns Lake, they will wait on the road corridor improvements to the south.

David talked to Jeff Moline, who works for Boulder County Parks and Open Space, about whether there are county-wide recommendations about city changes to regional trails. He said there weren't and that the county leaves it to local municipalities to determine trail surfaces and maintenance plans. This means there aren't formal rules saying that the City of Louisville can't pave the Coal Creek Trail.

David reported about his experience at the City Council meeting last night. The half-mile stretch on the Coal Creek Trail from Dillon to the Highway 36 underpass had been incorporated into a concreting plan, but due to push back, this had been pulled off the consent agenda. OSAB wrote a memo in October 2022 recommending against paving it. Five citizens spoke individually at the meeting about their opposition to paving it, including Charles and David. Council decided against including converting this section of the Coal Creek Trail into concrete. However, the plan then evolved into a recommendation to send the suggestion back to Public Works staff. The concrete replacement project included suggestions to formalize two social trails and pave them with concrete: a social trail between two houses along St. Andrews Lane that goes up to Dillon Rd, and another on the SW corner of 88<sup>th</sup> and Dillon. Both of these were listed in the Transportation Master Plan, though drawn incorrectly. Both are estimated at just above \$100,000 to do. David thought that improving the connection to Monarch was probably the main goal of Council. Deb mentioned that the confusion about the exact location of things has been an ongoing issue in city documents, though she has seen work to improve this. David thought these trails might be a nice courtesy to areas that were impacted by the fire. Ember showed the locations on the screen. Helen asked if the trails could be designed to avoid sharp angles and bad intersections, features that the wayfinding initiative is trying to eliminate from the current network.

Helen commented that two years ago OSAB was given advisory responsibility over trails, and yet these social trails being formalized is a good example of how a lot of trail decisions get made without OSAB being asked for input. She asked whether the board should change its name to include "Trails" to help remind council that OSAB should be included in these discussions. Jessamine and David wondered if the city charter would allow for a name change.

Laura suggested that the design plans should come to OSAB for review before implementation. Ember was hopeful that they would, but she wasn't sure. David said that he felt that most board members would ultimately be in support of these plans. Laura felt that since the decision to move forward was made without the board's input and since the Open Space department will be tasked with maintaining the trails, the full board should have a chance to weigh in on the designs before they are built. Ember thought this discussion might feed into the concerns being considered in Discussion Item 12.

Susan reported that March 1<sup>st</sup> was the first meeting of the Bee City committee and it was held just before the PPLAB meeting. One of the committee members works at the Butterfly Pavilion, which is a useful connection. Susan said that the Butterfly Pavilion trains volunteers in restoration projects. John White from PPLAB and Susan will be co-chairs. Helen is also on the committee. The committee is in the process of brainstorming their ideas and Susan thinks it will be a high-energy group. Helen noted that the committee is rotating the role as secretary for their meetings.

Michiko suggested giving citizens seed bombs, but Susan cautioned that they want to make sure they only encourage seeding plants on staff lists. David asked if this committee could help guide the re-plantings on the city's burned medians. Susan thought so, and Ginger and Deb added that there is no bluegrass planned for medians. Kayla also said that there is a program, funded by Northern Water, to provide landscape templates for fire victims and the public that are water-wise and fire-wise. They will be ready by late summer. The plans will incorporate the staff's plant lists and they have been told about the Bee City initiative.

At their April meeting, PPLAB will discuss dog parks. Helen suggested that PPLAB be provided with enforcement information from the open space rangers.

#### **8. Discussion Item: City of Louisville E-Bike Rebate Program. Presented by Kayla Betzold, Sustainability Coordinator**

Kayla introduced herself. She has been the city's sustainability coordinator for a year and she works in the City Management office. She is also the staff liaison to the Sustainability Board. The guiding documents for her work are the city's Sustainability Action Plan and the city's Climate Action Goals. The current carbon inventory for Louisville is based on 2016 data, though this will be updated soon. Transportation, after buildings, is the second highest contributor to city carbon emissions. She mentioned some other initiatives she is involved in, including working with the Boulder County Electrification Plan looking for EV incentives and charging stations, and a Louisville Decarbonization plan. Electric vehicles are one strategy to lower transportation carbon emissions, but since most trips people make are short and local, the city is also looking at E-bikes.

The ultimate goal of the E-bike Pilot Program is to provide incentives to reduce car miles. The program provides a rebate to lower the cost of an E-bike to successful applicants. The rebate will be followed up with user surveys to test how much the E-bikes are getting used. A similar program in Denver has shown promising results from its follow-up surveys, including fewer car miles and frequent E-bike use. She noted that the state of Colorado is developing an income-qualified, state-wide program. Louisville may join with the state program next year, depending on how this local program goes.

The pilot program partners with Lafayette. It is limited: only ~10-15 bike rebates will be available in Louisville during this first year. Only Class 1 and 2 E-bikes will be eligible. The rebates will be done at point-of-sale, and worth \$300 or \$600 (the latter for income-qualified recipients). Community Cycles has suggested their willingness to help with education events about E-bikes.

Kayla gave some information about the details of the program, which is still in development. The applications will open on April 3<sup>rd</sup>. They are working with other income-qualifier agencies, such as SNAP, to help identify people who are income-qualifying for the program.

Helen asked what the criteria for selection for the limited number of rebates would be. Kayla said there would be a baseline criterion established by asking applicants about their commitment to replacing car trips, and then all the people who met it would be put in a lottery. Kayla added that there would be an equal number of rebates for income-qualified people and those who don't meet the income-qualified threshold. Several board members commented that the rebates should be reserved entirely for income-qualified individuals.

Kayla said some programs require applicants to commit to safe storage for their E-bike, as a means of theft reduction. Charles cautioned that storing E-bikes inside might be a fire hazard, adding that at his company E-bikes were no longer allowed in the building due to an E-bike's battery catching fire.

Helen wondered if there was a way to prioritize people with mobility issues. She wondered if a way to select for them might be to see if they are members of the Via Mobility Service.

David said he wasn't sure he liked the idea of a pure lottery; he'd rather privilege people who have needs. Kayla said this was helpful feedback. Debbie cautioned about invading people's privacy in invasive questions about income.

Susan asked if E-bikes were legal on open space. Ember said that class 1 and class 2 E-bikes, with lower-power motors, the kind that the rebate specifies, are legal on city trails.

Michiko asked about things that didn't work well from the Denver program. Kayla said the biggest concerns she heard were about safety and theft. Michiko clarified that she was more concerned about things that didn't work well during the application process. Kayla said she hadn't heard of many, except that the rebates were so popular that people all applied online when they were released and they'd run out in minutes. To address the unfairness of this problem, her plan is to make the application open for a month, then select applicants from the pool of applicants that had been received. Kayla said that if there is a lot more interest than available rebates, the program could help connect people who didn't get the rebate with other programs when they become available.

David asked whether there would be any harm in simply waiting for those other programs to come online, rather than Louisville administering its own rebate program. He asked whether the administration cost of this program might outweigh its benefit. Kayla thought the administration costs would be mostly during the front-end planning phase, and then the program would be easy to run. She also thought the local, specific data generated by this program would be useful to the city.



Jessamine recommended keeping the application language very standard and simple for people who might be turned off by a complex application process. But she liked the idea of prioritizing people with qualified income and/or mobility issues.

Jojo asked if the application would be available in English and Spanish. Kayla said yes.

David asked how the city would gauge whether the program was successful. Kayla said the survey would be helpful for determining whether the rebates were helpful.

Charles said he was all for supporting local bike shops with the rebates but asked if there were cheaper options for E-bikes. Kayla said that the program includes an online retailer, to provide a lower-cost option.

**9. Discussion Item: Past Trail Etiquette Education Materials. Presented by Ember Brignull, Open Space Superintendent**

Ember shared old etiquette materials and signs from campaigns in 2015 and 2020. She mentioned that the 2020 campaign highlighted kindness and respect for each other, as during COVID there had been an uptick in bad behavior on the City's trail network. She shared a "Do's and Don'ts" brochure, and talked about how people could sign a trail etiquette pledge and get an Open Space mask during 2020.

The current concern is about bike speeds on city trails. Ember felt that this is a behavior issue, rather than a E-bike vs. classic bike issue. Ember reported that rangers do not chase cyclists going too fast, so controlling speed on the city trails must be about education, not issuing citations to speeders.

Helen said that the "Yield" signs at Hall Ranch open space work well. David noted that those signs are for single track mountain bikers. Jessamine noted that as a pedestrian on city trails, she still has cyclists yell at her. Helen and Jessamine thought that a version of the yield sign (without equestrians) would be helpful to establish the expectation that bikes always yield to pedestrians.

Michiko asked whether there was a way to separate bikes and pedestrians. In Boulder, concrete trails are sometimes striped to separate bikes and pedestrians.

Ember asked if the board thought educational events for kids would be useful. Charles said that he remembered education events from his childhood about bike safety and rules of the road. Jessamine suggested combining it with Bike to Work Day.

Ginger cautions that any sign message needs to be short ("Peds have right of way"). Charles asked if bikes yielding to pedestrians is state law, and Ember answered that it is. Charles felt that a lot of the worst behavior isn't from regular, experienced cyclists: it is more from irregular users.

David suggested moving the signs around so they stay fresh.



Laura recalled that the board has gotten feedback from residents at Balfour speeding at the underpass under 95<sup>th</sup> Street next to Balfour. Charles suggested convex mirrors at underpasses. Striping underpasses was also suggested.

Susan pointed out that currently the open space signs all say “no motorized vehicles” and they probably need to be updated. Helen asked about one-wheels and electric skateboards. Ember said these are technically illegal on city trails. Charles pointed out that this is an argument for gravel trails, as they slow down users, limit the types of vehicles that can go on them, and are even louder to ride on, providing warning. He mentioned that since Superior paved their section of the Coal Creek Trail he is seeing a lot faster speeds.

Laura said that a 20mph speed limit is way too fast for most places in the network, and that sometimes speed limits get interpreted as recommended speeds. Ember wondered if the board might be interested in identifying potential speeding problem spots on the system map. Michiko liked the idea of identifying hazard areas in the city. Helen suggested slow zones, like at a ski resort. David said that he thought underpasses are a good target area. He also contrasted the open sight-lines at Davidson Mesa vs. the Coal Creek Trail.

**10. Discussion Item: 2023 Open Space Education & Volunteer Program Staff Recommendations. Presented by Catherine Jepson, Open Space Specialist**

Catherine could not be at the meeting, so Ember presented the planned programs document. She pointed out how staff try to cover lots of topics and user types. Ember asked if there was anything the board didn't like or would like to see.

Helen looked for Native American programming. Ember said that last year's Native American program was well attended, but it was very challenging to book someone. She was looking for suggestions if anyone had a resource or connection.

Jessamine suggested programming in Spanish or ASL. Ember thought maybe the fishing derby might be a good place to try that.

Susan recommended bird walks, especially at Hecla.

Deb recommended programming on climate change. Ember thought it was worth working with the Sustainability department on that sort of programming.

Helen suggested a Poop Fairy event. Ember said that would probably be an etiquette campaign, rather than a single educational event.

Ember pointed out that the entire budget for annual education programming is \$1000, so, what isn't contracted is completed by staff.

Michiko asked about working with BVSD. Ember said the city's work with BVSD usually is due to outreach with a single teacher. Getting regular programming into BVSD seems to be difficult.

David asked about fire-related programming. Ember cautioned that at a Marshall Fire-themed event they could get a lot of questions about city wide concerns. Currently there is an

educational fire series. Jessamine thought that maybe after the Wildfire Risk work in 2023, this sort of programming would work better in 2024.

David asked about programming with Street Faire. Ember said she'd like to work on it, but doesn't want to overcommit the staff's time, since working at the Street Faire represents a full day of work.

Michiko asked for some clarification about the Pulling for Louisville event. Ember said it is a one-day event with a little training, snacks, and free plants. In contrast, the Noxious Weed ID training is a booth designed for trail users who walk by. Ember said that the booth model has been really successful: a lot of people like to stop and talk for 10 minutes.

Susan asked about a tree event. Ember said that the city arborist does those and a tree walk and Open Space would cross-promote the event.

Michiko suggested the August Water Conservation Event should be in the spring, before the summer growing season, when it could have the most impact. Ember said that this event had been planned by the Sustainability department.

**11. Discussion Item: Brainstorming Potential Agenda Topics and a Start Time for Joint Meeting with Superior in May. Presented by David Blankinship, OSAB Chair**

David said Superior is interested in meeting, so the joint meeting would be May 10<sup>th</sup>. The Superior Open Space Council meets on the same nights Louisville OSAB does, though a little earlier. David suggested a 6:00 start time, since fire issues would be discussed, and the public might like to attend. David said last time these boards met, Louisville hosted, so maybe Superior would host this time, but that was still to be determined. Ember said that since the fire consultant would be presenting, there might be more people, so she cautioned the capacity of the room should be considered.

David asked for recommendations for the topics to be discussed. He suggested the fire consultant (already committed) and the Overlook Underpass Trail connection. Ember said that Superior is working on their open space master plan, so OSAB might want to hear about theirs before Louisville starts on one. Charles cautioned against adding too many topics, so there would be room for discussion and letting Superior choose some topics. Charles suggested discussing regional trails, especially the Coal Creek Trail.

**12. Discussion Item: Social Trails Brainstorming Process Solutions for Director Consideration. Presented by Charles Danforth, OSAB Member**

The board decided to table this discussion for April as it was getting late.

**13. Discussion Items for the Next Meeting April 12<sup>th</sup>, 2023.**

1. Changing the name of the board to include something about trails.
2. Social trails process brainstorming (Item 12 from this meeting).
3. Sales Tax Task Force update as a discussion item.

**14. Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 9:48 pm.



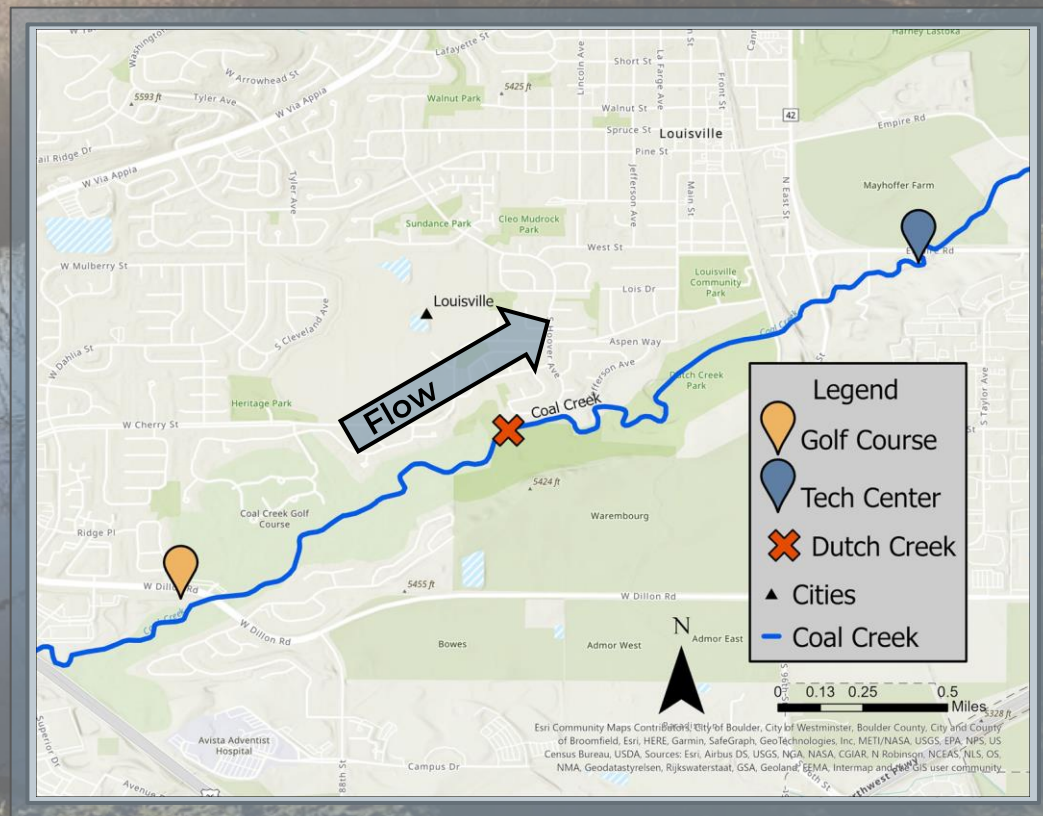
# Coal Creek: Marshall Fire Effects on Biological Integrity

Matthew Berta, Ceiteag Hennis, Rabie Barka, Sarah Luper, Kaily Meek, Elise Tanner,  
Michael Ghedotti PhD., & Kristofor Voss PhD.





# St. Vrain Watershed





# Fire Effects in Riparian Areas



# Aquatic Species Impacts



Ephemeroptera



Plecoptera



Trichoptera



Longnose Dace



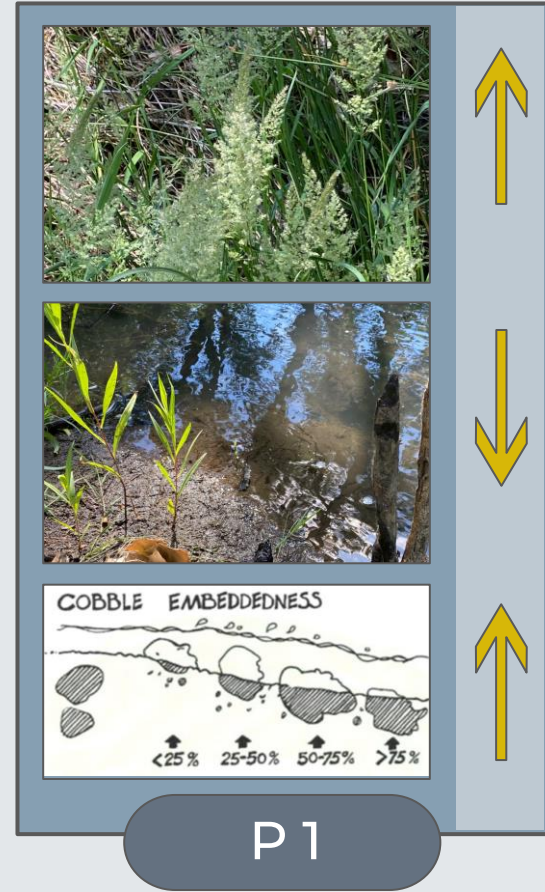
Central Stoneroller



Johnny Darter



# Fire effect on Physical Habitat



# Biological Integrity and the Marshall Fire



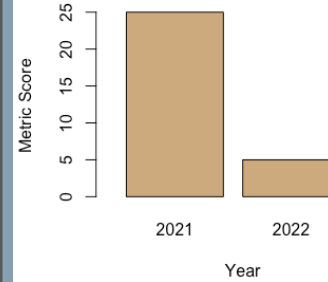
Unaffected streams



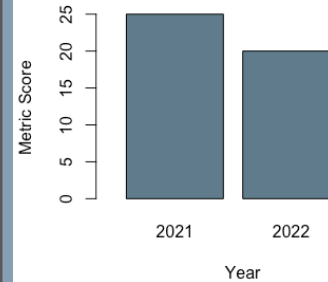
Impacted streams

H 2

## Golf Course Score



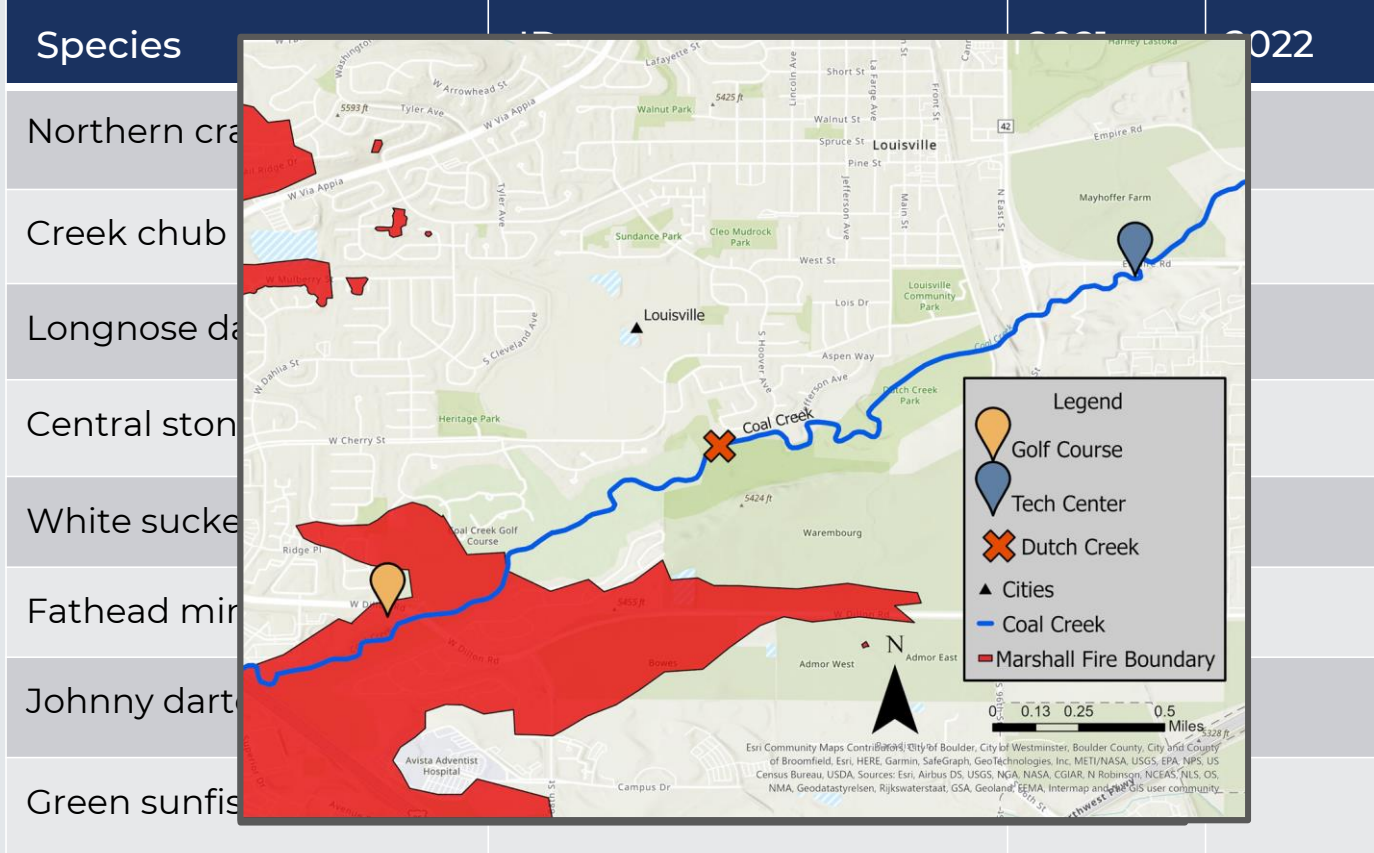
## Tech Center Score



P 2



# Before-after-control-impact (BACI)



## Question → Method



How do these sites differ in their physical habitat measures, and was there a significant effect of fire?

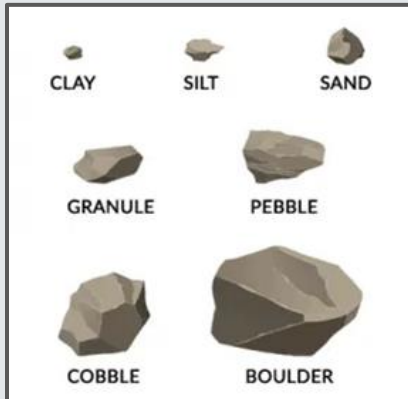
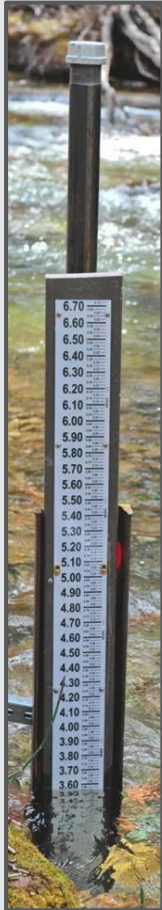
Sampled environmental variables at both sites to compare effects of fire on riparian areas using two-way ANOVAs



Was there a noticeable decrease in biological integrity due to the Marshall Fire?

Used Nebraska protocols for scoring fish communities. Used Colorado protocols for scoring macroinvertebrate communities and compared differences

# Physical Habitat Sampling





# Macroinvertebrate Sampling



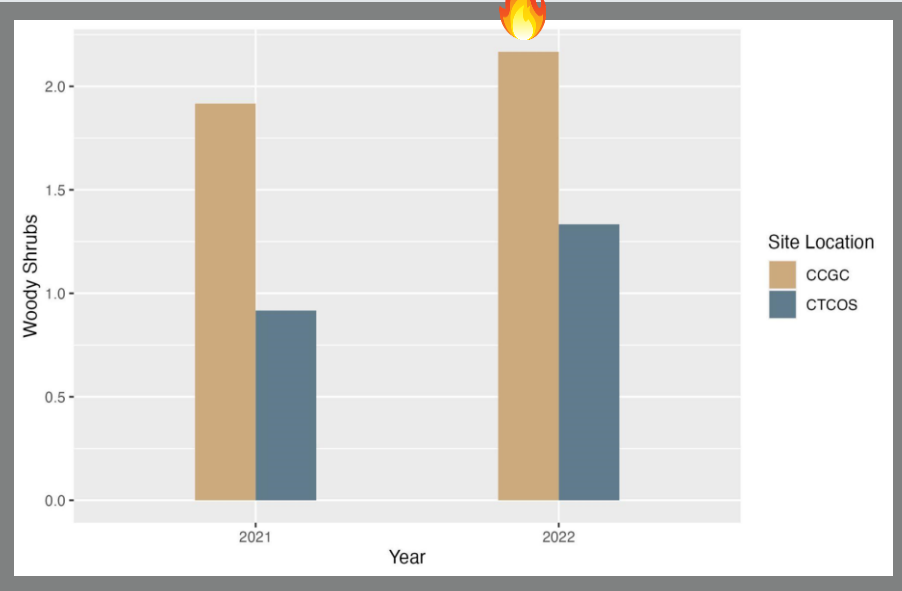
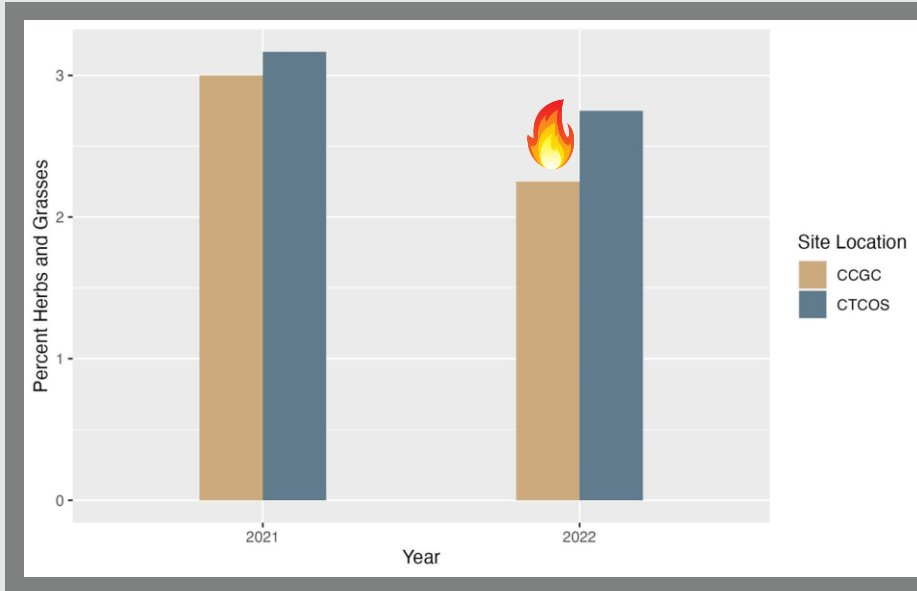


# Fish Sampling

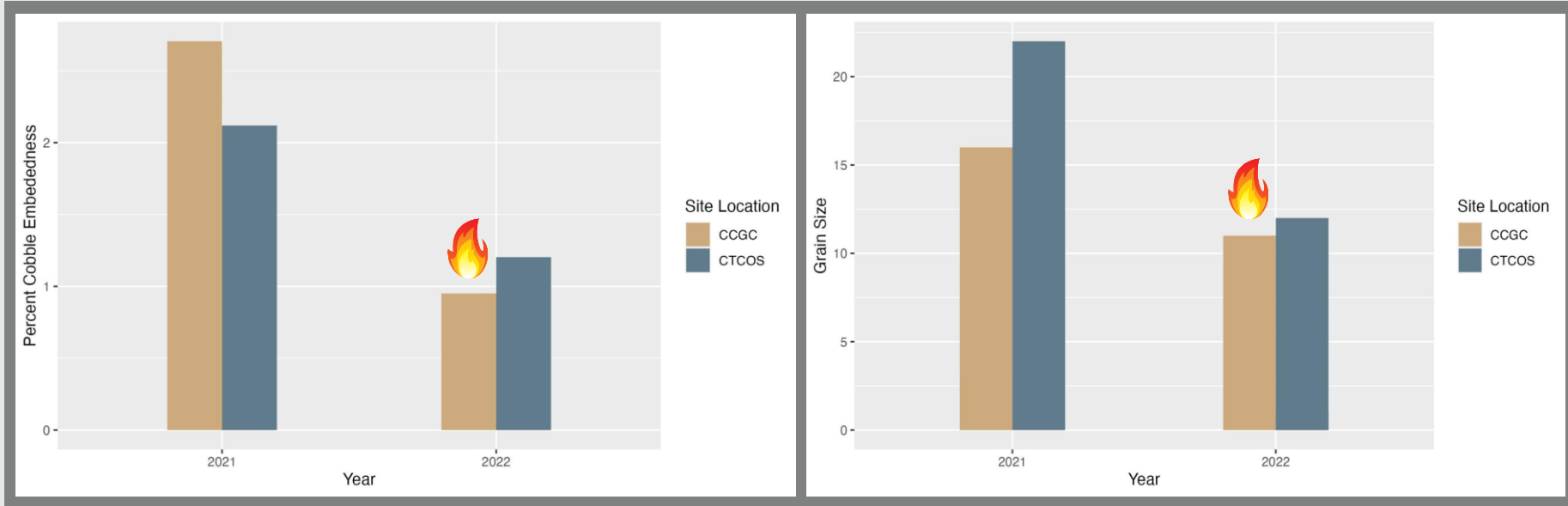




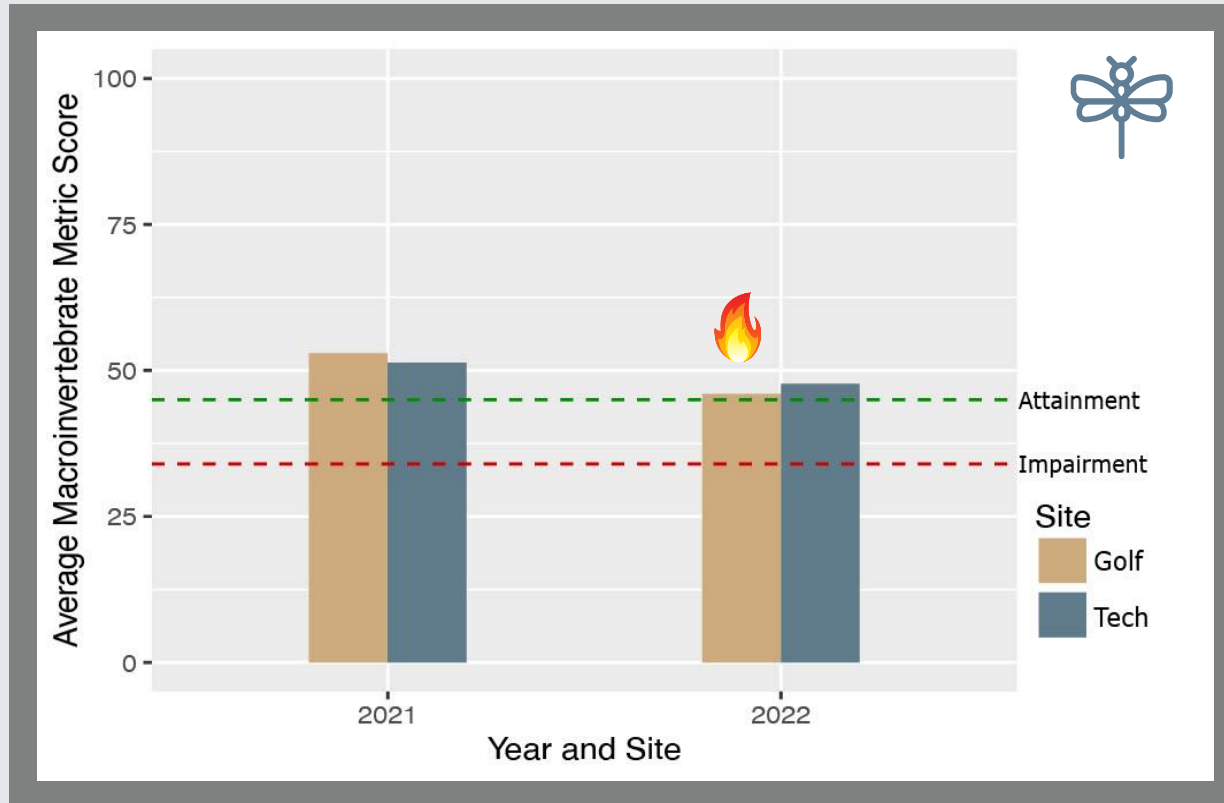
# Environmental Variables



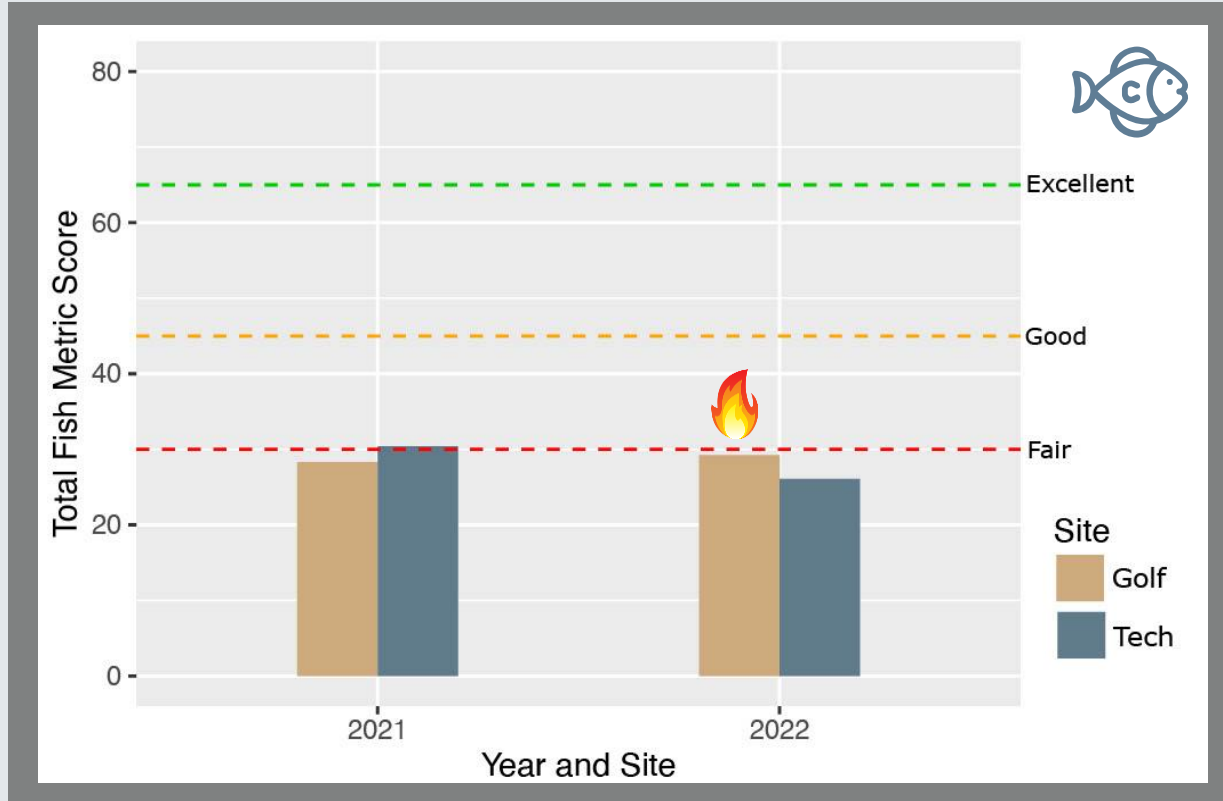
# Environmental Variables



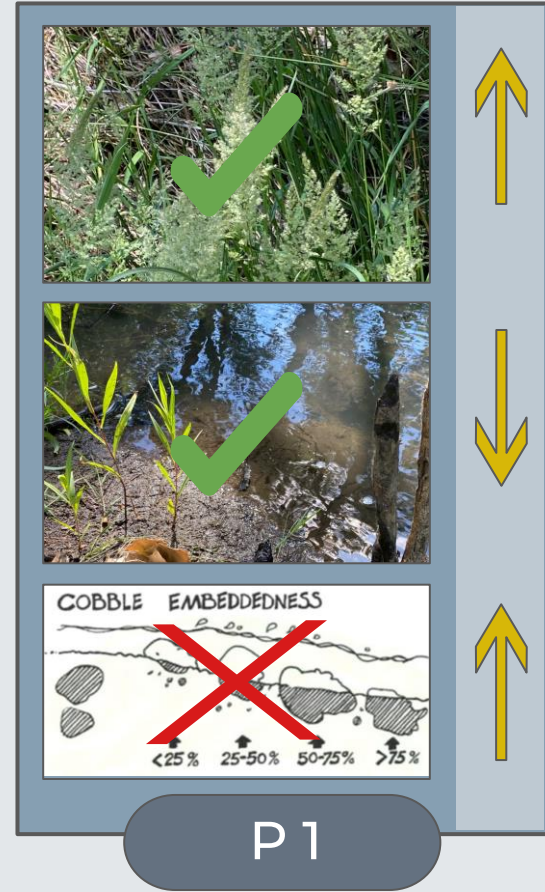
# Macroinvertebrates at Attainment Threshold




# Fish Fair Biological Integrity



# Fire effect on Physical Habitat



# Biological Integrity and the Marshall Fire



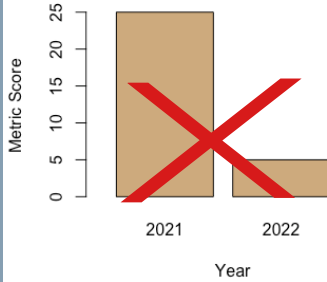
Unaffected streams

Impacted streams

H 2

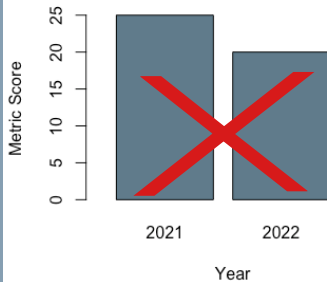
Detailed description: This section shows two petri dishes containing biological samples. The top dish, labeled 'Unaffected streams', contains a variety of aquatic insects including Stoneflies (S), Mayflies (S), Dragonflies/Damselflies (M), Midges (T), Caddisflies (S-M), and Beetles (M). The bottom dish, labeled 'Impacted streams', contains fewer and different types of organisms, including Scuds (T), Snails (T), Leeches (T), Caddisflies (M), Beetles (M), Midges (T), and Crane Flies (M). Below the dishes is a dark blue rounded rectangle with the text 'H 2' in white.

### Golf Course Score



Year	Metric Score
2021	24
2022	5

### Tech Center Score



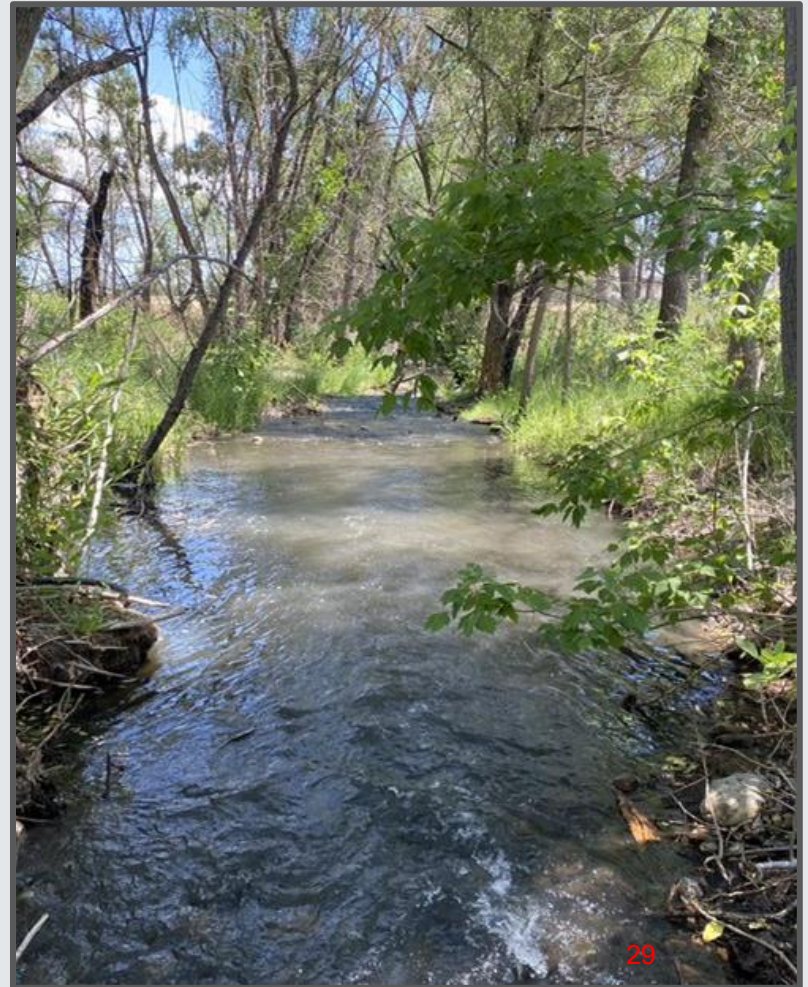
Year	Metric Score
2021	25
2022	20

P 2

Detailed description: This section contains two bar charts. The top chart, 'Golf Course Score', shows a significant decrease from 2021 (score 24) to 2022 (score 5). The bottom chart, 'Tech Center Score', shows a decrease from 2021 (score 25) to 2022 (score 20). Both charts have a red 'X' over them. To the right of the charts is a vertical grey bar with two yellow arrows pointing downwards. Below the charts is a dark blue rounded rectangle with the text 'P 2' in white.

## Biological Integrity & Future Directions

- Despite the significant toll of the Marshall Fire on human lives and property, biological integrity scores did **not significantly** decline along Coal Creek .
- Continue monitoring these sites for **long-term** effects including continued transport of sediment and alteration of chemistry.
- Management should focus on the restoration of **riparian vegetation**





# Thank you!

We would like to thank those who helped collect and analyze the data for this project:

Denise Corona, Antonio Gonzalez, Megan Gaeth,  
Reilly Miller, Klaudia Sowizral, and Aaron Ittner



We would also like to acknowledge:

The City of Louisville, Louisville Open Space  
& Boulder County Nature Association





## Memorandum

**To:** Open Space Advisory Board  
**From:** Charles Danforth and David Blankenship  
**Date:** February 28, 2023  
**Re:** Discussion Item 12: Social Trail Brainstorm Process Solutions for Director Consideration

### Social Trails Background:

Louisville OS has only two official trail surfaces: concrete and crusher fines (gravel). Any dirt-surfaced trails are unofficial and not part of the City trail inventory. OSAB did formally recommend a new dirt trail type, but it hasn't changed any City policy yet to our knowledge. Despite their unofficial status, some of these “social” trails have been in use for decades and have become a de facto part of the trail network.

In 2021-22, the Trails Tiger Team conducted a survey of “social” trails in Louisville and created a fairly complete inventory map. Minor changes occur to the network, but the major social trails have been fairly stable over the years.



Social trail network in the Warembourg Open Space



The Trails Tiger Team defined four possible social trails classes based on the desired final state of any given trail. These are

1. **Restore** to wild state (close the trail)
2. **Ignore**
3. **Designate** as an official network trail but otherwise leave alone (would require designating a third trail type)
4. **Upgrade** and designate (convert to crusher fines or concrete).

**Current situation:** There is little appetite for any comprehensive social trail policy overhaul or master plan. Staff attention and budget are limited to higher-priority items.



### One-off social trail decision framework:

In July 2022, OSAB discussed an issue in which a very popular social trail was impacted by an ongoing pipeline project. Pipeline work south of Hecla Lake disrupted a short section of trail (near 2 in the figure above, from the July 2022 packet) and workers wanted to know whether they should a) restore the area to its natural state, or b) restore the dirt trail to the way it was previously.

**Discussion Goals:** Devise a framework for dealing with similar future events where a decision about an existing trail must be made. This framework should be

- Equitable - balance conservation and sustainability concerns with current use patterns and staff resources.
  - How are utility and use patterns measured?
  - How are sustainability and conservation concerns identified?
  - How is public input gathered?
  
- Responsive - the timeline for individual decisions may be extremely short (weeks). There may not be time to convene an OSAB meeting. General guidelines we agree on as a board may need to be applied to different specifics.
  - What kind of time scale is reasonable for an informed decision?
  - What is the process by which issues are identified and decisions made?

## **MEMORANDUM**

**To: Open Space Advisory Board**  
**From: Open Space Division**  
**Date: April 12, 2023**  
**Re: Information Item 8: Staff Updates**

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### **Marshall Fire Updates Pertaining to Open Space:**

1. The Wildfire Hazard and Risk Assessment of Louisville Public Lands Project will be presenting draft mitigation recommendations at the May OSAB meeting.
2. The City has applied for a Colorado State Forest Service, “Incentives for Local Government Grant” to support fire mitigation efforts including grazing, mowing, and irrigation ditch maintenance. Award announcements will be released May 3, 2023.

### **General:**

1. Staffing Update:
  - a. Nick Potopchuck has been promoted From Open Space Maintenance Technician III to Open Space Supervisor- Maintenance and Trails.
  - b. Jan Branham, Administrative Assistant for Parks and Open Space has resigned.
  - c. Brendan Close, Senior Natural Resource Specialist has resigned.
  - d. Staff is currently recruiting to fill the Administrative Assistant, Senior Natural Resource Specialist, Open Space Maintenance Technician III, and seasonal positions.
2. Following the OSAB review of the E-bike Rebate Pilot Program, the following changes were made: income-qualified participants were prioritized, program materials were translated into Spanish, and collaboration with Boulder County Climate Equity Specialist to get the word out about the program to a regional Latinx climate equity group that has Louisville representation. Staff will also be providing phone and in person support to Spanish-speaking residents to assist with completing the application.
3. Staff are working with senior marketing specialist to design a set of fun, informative signs to be placed at major Open Space properties. Each sign will feature an animal “mascot” representative of a property’s habitat and will provide fun facts and figures about that Open Space’s history and natural characteristics.
4. The Warembourg Fishing Pond has been refilled in preparation for the season and the Fishing Frenzy.

**Trails & Maintenance:**

1. The 104<sup>th</sup> St Trail is in its final stages of construction and is expected to be completed soon. Staff met with Goodland Construction to provide feedback on trail construction punch list items. Goodland plans to begin reclamation efforts once the punch list items have been addressed. There will be another site visit after that point to finalize the project.
2. A pre-bid contractor site meeting was held on Tuesday, March, 21<sup>st</sup> for the 2023 Coyote Run Open Space resurfacing project. The City was represented by the Parks Planning and Project Manager Bryon Weber and Open Space staff. There were five contractors present at the event. The meeting consisted of touring the site and allowing the contractors to get a better understanding of the project specifications. The contractors provided feedback and asked clarifying questions about the project.

**Natural Resources:**

1. 2023 Regenerative Grazing Contract is on the City Council Consent agenda for April 11<sup>th</sup>. This grazing work will occur at Davidson Mesa in the Spring and Fall and potentially North Open Space in the Fall.
2. 2023 Goat Grazing has been awarded and staff is working on finalizing contract materials. This work will be occur at North Open Space in the Spring and Fall.
3. Staff has submitted recommendations for 2023 prairie dog management recommendations. The USFWS has confirmed they will be accepting prairie dogs for relocation in Pueblo again this year and staff is planning to relocate from select areas on Davidson Mesa and Daughenbaugh this year.
4. Cost estimates have been received for 2023 Weed Control services. Contract documents will be processed and signed with weed control anticipated to begin in May on select Open Space properties.

**Resource Protection:**

1. Rangers have observed an uptick in leash law contacts with the coming of warmer weather and longer days.
2. Rangers attended a special one-day training with Colorado Parks and Wildlife. Topics included familiarization with CPW structure and operations, methods of reaching on-call wildlife managers, and a review of different protocols for handling sick wildlife.
3. Rangers represented Louisville at the annual member meeting of the Rocky Mountain Ranger Association in Golden. The meeting included a training session about mental health resiliency for first responders.

**Education/Volunteer:**

3. The Open Space and Recreation Divisions will be hosting the Family Fishing Frenzy on Friday, April 21<sup>st</sup> from 9:00 to 1:00 PM and are looking for volunteers to assist at education stations. Volunteer help is requested for the casting or knot station. Please contact Catherine at [CatherineJ@louisvilleco.gov](mailto:CatherineJ@louisvilleco.gov) for more information and to register.
4. Education Events Upcoming:
  - a. Sunday, April 16<sup>th</sup> from 7:30 to 10:00 PM, Open Space Stargazers: Inner Planets Cavalcade. Aquarius Open Space.
  - b. Friday, April 21<sup>st</sup> – two sessions: 9:00 to 11:00 AM and 11:00 to 1:00 PM, Family Fishing Frenzy. Warembourg Fishing Pond.
  - c. Saturday, April 22<sup>nd</sup> from 9:00 to 11:00 AM, Earth Day Weed Pulling Event. Davidson Mesa Open Space. Registration is full.
  - d. Thursday, April 27<sup>th</sup> from 6:00 to 7:00 PM, Pulling for Louisville: Hecla Lake. Hecla Lake Open Space.
5. Education Events Past:
  - a. Wednesday, March 22<sup>nd</sup> from 6:30 to 7:30 PM, Raptor Training (2<sup>nd</sup> offering). City Services. 4 participants.