Partnership Program

The Partnership Program engages businesses and organizations in annual volunteer stewardship projects and the individuals from our partner businesses and organizations understand and appreciate the nurturing that is needed to care for over 104,000 acres of county open space and 120 miles of trails.

The department currently involves 50 partners in annual stewardship projects. Some of our partners have been involved in the program since its inception in 2008, including: Boulder Area Trails Coalition, Boulder Mountainbike Alliance, Boy Scouts, Boulder Trail Runners, Century Link, Corden Pharma, Mapleton Public Schools, NEO Tech, NetApp Solidfire, Redstone Cyclery, Singletrack Mountain Bike Adventures, Tetratech, the University of Colorado MBA Leeds Program, and Wildland Restoration Volunteers. Many of our partner organizations have been involved for five years or longer, including the Alexander Dawson School, Alpha Phi Omega, Boulder Country Day School, the Defenders of Wildlife, Dell EMC, Google, New Vista High School, Qualcomm, the University of Colorado Program for Writing and Rhetoric, Volunteers for Outdoors Colorado, and Zeal Optics.

In 2019 we welcome AES Distributed Energy, Analytic Partners, the Boulder High School Mountain Bike Team, and Genscape, Inc. to the program.

In addition, this year we welcomed a new type of partner to our program, the citizen science groups. These groups include students and adults who complete a variety of educational research and stewardship projects such as wildlife camera monitoring and data collection, fishing line collection projects, and dark sky data collection. New partners of this type include the Altona Middle School, the Roarie Bummlers Homeschool, Westview Middle School, and Longs Peak Middle School.

Highlights of this year’s stewardship work

Plant Ecology
Youth groups removed invasive plants and decaying coyote willow stands. Clearing these will help stimulate new willow growth and strategically staging the cleared material will create native pollinator nesting habitats. Organizations helped us to plant Prairie Cone Flowers at our Peck Native Seed Garden, which are often used in restoration projects. Adult
volunteers did the arduous work of hand cutting invasive, thorny, black locust trees and staging them for chipping.

**Trails**
Trail volunteer projects in 2019 have been focused on work at Hall and Heil Valley Ranch. At Heil Valley Ranch, our Trail Stewardship teams have completed rock armoring and built new trails to connect climbing turns on pedestrian/equestrian trails. At Hall Ranch, volunteers have been building new drain systems to address serious erosion issues.

**Historic Preservation**
Employees from local businesses have worked on historic preservation projects involving the unglamorous work of staining and painting bathrooms, kiosks, and shelters at Walden Ponds, Stearns Lake, and Heil Valley Ranch. Some fortunate groups helped to paint the train cars at the new Heil Valley Ranch trailhead. We very much appreciate our partners that are willing to help with all types of projects whether the work is exciting or not.

**Grounds**
Grounds projects have included fencing work on the LoBo trail and planting projects at Heil Valley Ranch and the Agricultural Heritage Center.

The success of the Partnership Program would not be possible without the talented and energetic Volunteer Coordinator team which includes Ari Addes in Recreation & Facilities, Mike Rutter in Trails, Carrie Cimo in Plant Ecology, Shane Milne in Forestry, and Amanda Hatfield in Education & Outreach.

We greatly appreciate every partner and all the work that has been accomplished through their efforts!