



# Parks & Open Space

5201 St. Vrain Road • Longmont, CO 80503  
303-678-6200 • POSinfo@bouldercounty.gov  
www.BoulderCountyOpenSpace.org

## **PARKS & OPEN SPACE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING**

Time/Date of Meeting: 6:30 p.m., Thursday, Feb. 27, 2025

Location: Boulder County Courthouse  
1325 Pearl Street, Third Floor, Boulder

<b>TO:</b>	Parks & Open Space Advisory Committee
<b>FROM/PRESENTER:</b>	Jarret Roberts, Recreation and Facilities Division Manager Nick Walendziak, Crux Environmental LLC
<b>AGENDA ITEM:</b>	NoCo Places Illegal/Unauthorized Trail Inventory
<b>ACTION REQUESTED:</b>	Information Only

We are pleased to update you about the Illegal Trail Inventory Project, an initiative conducted under the collaborative efforts of NoCo Places and a subset of partnering agencies, including Boulder County, Clear Creek County, Gilpin County and the USFS. Along with existing inventories from the other five agencies, this project provides critical insights that advance NoCo Places' Conservation and Recreation vision across the Front Range.

### **Background on NoCo Places**

NoCo Places (<https://www.nocoplaces.com/>) is a partnership of nine public land management agencies in Northern Colorado, including county, state, and federal entities. Together, we work to ensure sustainable outdoor recreation while conserving the unique landscapes of our region. This project is a direct reflection of NoCo Places' commitment to tackling regional challenges through collaboration. Issues such as illegal trails span agency boundaries and looking holistically, allows landscape-level solutions.

### **Importance of Understanding Illegal Trail Use**

Illegal trails present significant challenges to public land management, including ecological degradation, wildlife disruption, and public safety concerns. These unauthorized routes often emerge from well-intentioned but unsustainable recreational use. By systematically documenting and understanding these trails, we can better address user behavior, reduce environmental impacts, and align recreation opportunities with conservation priorities.

### **Project Overview**

This project, executed by Crux Environmental, consisted of three phases:

1. **Background and Research:** Publicly available data layers, social platforms, and field visits were used to identify potential illegal trail hotspots.
2. **Mapping:** Illegal trails were categorized into five classes based on their development and impact, with Class 1 representing minimal disturbance and Class 5 being highly developed. Features such as bridges, jumps, drainage issues, and safety concerns were also documented. Visitor intent and user group assumptions were noted.

3. **Final Report:** A comprehensive report was produced summarizing the findings and providing actionable data.

This project focused on major parks and high-use areas, it is not comprehensive of all the managed lands but provides high-level insight and sets the stage for expanding the inventory with the developed protocols.

This presentation will focus on the 62.16 miles of illegal trail inventoried on Boulder County Parks and Open Space land as part of this project and the protocols set up to further expand this inventory.