



## PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

MONTHLY REPORT FROM JEFF BRAUER, DIRECTOR

MARCH 2016

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### UPCOMING PARKS AND RECREATION EVENTS

- **Wednesday, April 6**
  - Rhyolite Bike Park Dirt Crew Season Kick-off Informational Meeting, Philip S. Miller Library, 7 - 8 p.m.
- **Saturday, April 16**
  - Earth Day Wetlands Harvest and Planting, Festival and Philip S. Miller Parks, 9 a.m. – Noon
- **Wednesday, April 20**
  - Wild in Our Town, Town Hall Council Chambers, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.
- **Friday, April 22**
  - Arbor Day, Philip S. Miller Park, 8:30 a.m. – 12 p.m.
- **Wednesday, April 27**
  - Race the MAC Series Kickoff, Philip S. Miller Park, 5 – 8 p.m.
- **Saturday, April 30**
  - Ridgeline Rampage Mountain Bike Race, Philip S. Miller Park / Ridgeline Open Space, all day
- **Saturday, May 7**
  - Climb4Change, Challenge Hill, 8 a.m. - Noon
- **Saturday, May 14**
  - Philip S. Miller Park Phase Two Grand Opening, "Discover the Dream", Philip S. Miller Park, 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.
- **Sunday, May 22**
  - Tri the Rock, Butterfield Crossing Park and Pool, 7 a.m. - Noon
- **Wednesday, May 25**
  - 5th Annual National Senior Health & Fitness Day, Festival Park, 8:30 – 10 a.m.



### 2016 Colorado Bluebird Project - March is Bluebird Month!

PREPARED BY BARBARA SPAGNUOLO, NATURAL RESOURCES SPECIALIST AND LISA SORBO, POST PROGRAM COORDINATOR

Each year the Colorado Bluebird Project kicks off in March. Bluebirds have returned to Castle Rock and have already begun claiming nest boxes. The month was busy with a public open house, volunteer training, spring maintenance of the nest boxes at existing sites, replacement of multiple damaged nest boxes and outdoor monitoring demonstrations for students at Renaissance Elementary, Flagstone Elementary, Clear Sky Elementary and Castle Rock Elementary. Students and POST Partners volunteers will begin monitoring the boxes during the first week of April. Every year the project expands with more volunteers and more sites, and this year is no exception. Students and volunteers will monitor breeding activity in 167 boxes at 29 different sites, including five schools.





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Residents are encouraged to install a nest box in their own backyard to help bluebirds directly. With their bright blue color, melodic flute-like calls and bug-hunting pounces to the ground, bluebirds are a treat to watch. More information about these birds, along with ideas on how to help them at home, can be found at [crgov.com/bluebird](http://crgov.com/bluebird).

### Special Events

PREPARED BY JENNIFER MARTIN, SPECIAL PROGRAMS SUPERVISOR

Philip S. Miller Park is gearing up for summer event season with several mountain biking and trail running series, a Challenge Hill fundraiser for the Town's Special Needs Program, a grand opening celebration and the beginning of five ticketed concert event series. When applicable, trail closures will be posted online and on the Town's Facebook page.



Beginning **April 27** and Wednesday evenings through May (and beginning again in late July/early August), Race CO will host its weekly **Race the MAC** mountain bike series from 5 to 8 p.m. on the trails at Philip S. Miller Park. The trails will be closed to the public during the three hour time period, but visitors will still be able to utilize the Challenge Hill and the nearby Blue Loop trail. Parties interested in registering for the event can visit [raceco.org](http://raceco.org).

The annual **Ridgeline Rampage** cycling event will now begin on the trails at Philip S. Miller Park and will utilize the new Wolfensberger pedestrian bridge that connects Philip S. Miller Park with Ridgeline Open Space. This all-day event, scheduled for Saturday, **April 30**, attracts more than 500 riders annually. Trails will be closed at both locations for the entire day, but visitors will still be able to access the Challenge Hill and the nearby Blue Loop trail. Race information can be found at [rockymountainendurance.com](http://rockymountainendurance.com).

On the morning of Saturday, **May 7**, the Parks and Recreation Department's Recreation, Empowerment and Active Living (R.E.A.L.) Program is hosting its second annual fundraiser, **Climb4Change**. Climb4Change raises funds to support members of the community who have a disability. Through the R.E.A.L. adaptive recreation program, the Town aims to empower citizens with disabilities to lead an active lifestyle. The Parks and Recreation Department believes it is important for all members of the community to have access to recreation opportunities. Funds raised during Climb4Change are used to provide scholarships, purchase adaptive equipment and provide access to a wide variety of activities in a safe, respectful and ability-focused environment. Think of a 5K, but instead of running three miles, racers run up the stairs of the Challenge Hill at Philip S. Miller Park. There are three different events to choose from, including Race to the Top, Trail Race and Power Hour. For more information and to register, visit [crgov.com/climb4change](http://crgov.com/climb4change).



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The big event in May is the Town's **grand opening celebration of phase two of Philip S. Miller Park**. The community is invited to "Discover the Dream" left by the legacy of Philip S. Miller. The event will be held from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Saturday, **May 14**. Activities include yoga in the Amphitheater led by Philip S. Miller Library staff, a ribbon cutting celebration at 11:15 a.m. in the Amphitheater, followed by the first concert series in the Park beginning at noon. Three free concerts will include music from Josh Blackburn, Over the Castle and The Steve Thomas Band. Other activities include bump soccer, inflatable bouncy houses and obstacle courses, trackless train rides, craft tables sponsored by Douglas County Libraries and 4-H as well as STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) activities, a kids' dance party, a photo booth and many other activities including booths by the Castle Rock Police and Fire Departments. Food trucks and beverages will be available for sale. Offsite parking and shuttles will be available at no cost at the Douglas County Fairgrounds and Downtown Parking Garage as well the north parking lot at the Douglas County Justice Center. Updated information can be found online at [crgov.com/psmpark](http://crgov.com/psmpark).

The first of five **concert series celebrations** will kick off on Saturday, **May 21**. The ticketed events begin at 7 p.m. More information can be found at [crgov.com/events](http://crgov.com/events).

Saturday, **May 28** will end the month with the **Rock Hawk Trail running race** on the trails in the Philip S. Miller Park and Ridgeline Open Spaces, and will be the newest, and third race in the Bear Chase Race Series. Distances will be a 5K, 10K and half marathon, with the possibility of adding a full marathon or 50K ultramarathon in future years if the first year goes smoothly with shorter distances. The Bear Chase Trail Race has been voted the Best Trail Race in Colorado for five straight years in Competitor Magazine's "Best Of" runner poll, and we hope that same, exceptional runner experience is brought to Castle Rock.

The start/finish will be held near the Millhouse, and the course will utilize the Gold and Purple Loops in Philip S. Miller Park, then cross over to Ridgeline Open Space and use the majority of the trails at Ridgeline running in a counter-clockwise loop. There are no out/back sections on the course and it is continuous, helping to minimize trail congestion and increase runner enjoyment. This will also thin out the race after the first few miles and lessen the impact to the trail system. Aid stations with medical support will be at the pedestrian crossover at Wolfensberger Road, and the trailhead at Clear Sky Way and also at the finish line. The trails will be closed at both locations for the entire day, but visitors will still be able to utilize the Challenge Hill and nearby Blue Loop trail. Parties interested in registering for the event can visit [bearchaserace.com](http://bearchaserace.com).

### MILLER ACTIVITY COMPLEX

#### Spring Break at the MAC and Recreation Center

PREPARED BY MIKE KILMAN, FACILITY SUPERVISOR

The Miller Activity Complex and Recreation Center were both greatly impacted by a blizzard in late March, which forced the closure of many highways and facilities throughout the Denver metro area on March 23. Both facilities closed for business at 2 p.m. Unfortunately the blizzard also happened to hit during the Douglas County School District's spring break, which is a big revenue generator for the Community Center Fund.

Typically both the Miller Activity Complex and Recreation Center host over 1,000 daily admission visits at each facility during spring break on any given day. On the day of the blizzard, the Recreation Center hosted 144 people and the Miller Activity Complex had 44 guests. Spring break revenue from admissions was down by 25% and 14% respectively for the week when compared to 2015.

### PARKS, OPEN SPACE AND TRAILS – PLANNING AND CONSTRUCTION DIVISION

#### Philip S. Miller Park

PREPARED BY JEFF SMULLEN, MANAGER OF PARK PLANNING AND CONSTRUCTION

MW Golden Constructors continues to make progress on the completion of phase two improvements. The irrigation system has been installed and Span Systems, Inc. finalized the fabric cover for the Amphitheater stage. Synthetic turf was installed between the terraced Amphitheater seating and the Town issued a certificate of occupancy for the Millhouse. National Electrical Constructors installed the electrical company switches that will provide power for concerts and will add LED house lighting in late April. Finally, Tree Huggers, Inc. finalized the spading of large ponderosa pine trees throughout the Amphitheater and Millhouse area and MW Golden Constructors installed a directional sign near the entrance of the park.





Remaining work required to complete the project includes sod and plant material installation. Valley Crest Landscape will begin placing sod mid-April. The planned grand opening date is May 14.

### **Aerial Trekking Tower**

Castle Rock Zip Line Tours completed the foundation system for the Aerial Trekking Tower at Philip S. Miller Park. Erection of the structure is scheduled to begin the second week in April so that the structure may be open for use during the summer event season. Admission for the Aerial Trekking Tower will be \$29 for Castle Rock residents and \$49 for nonresidents.



### **Wolfensberger Pedestrian Bridge**

The Wolfensberger Bridge Project will link Philip S. Miller Park with Ridgeline Open Space, creating a continuous 17-mile trail loop on a connected 650 acres of park and open space property. The project will provide an important link on a future major trail loop through Town, increasing opportunities for special events and enhance the experience of trail users as well as safety concerns of crossing a major roadway.

Backfill of the pedestrian bridge was completed following installation of the bridge structure at the beginning of the month. Installation of bridge railings and stone veneer on the bridge abutments has been delayed to the blizzard at the end of the month. The Ridgeline Rampage will be held on April 30 and is the first scheduled event to use the bridge.

### **East Plum Creek Trail Southern Extension**

The southern extension of the East Plum Creek Trail is a planned two mile trail beginning at its current ending on south Perry Street and will continue to Crystal Valley Parkway.

Initial design of the trail is complete and grading quantity calculations have begun. The initial design has shown the project to be out of balance between volumes of cut and fills. Staff will review the grading plan to assess options to balancing the project's earthwork.

The Town's Stormwater Division of the Utilities Department identified stormwater erosion issues and will begin the design of storm channel improvements along the Douglas Lane tributary located in the Heckendorf neighborhood in April. The project will



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also include the south limit of the East Plum Creek Trail at Crystal Valley Parkway. The Parks and Recreation Department and Utilities Department joined efforts on similar projects in the past with great success in cost sharing and time management. The Utilities Department will take the lead on the project with oversight from Parks staff on trail improvements. The Utilities Department sponsored a design kickoff meeting on March 29, with the awarded design consultant RESPEC. Design will continue through the end of this year with construction beginning in 2017.

### GOCO Grant for East Plum Creek Trail Phase Five (a portion of the Colorado Front Range Trail)

Staff recently prepared a concept paper for a grant from Great Outdoors Colorado to help leverage existing funds associated with the construction of a two mile extension of the paved multi-use East Plum Creek Trail. This will be the Town's final section of the Colorado Front Range Trail as it travels through Castle Rock. The Town is requesting \$1,000,000 out of an allowable maximum grant award of \$2,000,000. The concept paper submittal for this project was recommended by GOCO staff for full application submittal. Final grant applications are due in early June and awards are announced in October. If awarded, the Town has up to three years to complete construction of the trail, which has already been planned and budgeted for construction in 2018.



### VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

PREPARED BY LISA SORBO, PROGRAM COORDINATOR



A comprehensive social media plan for Trail Thursdays for the Town's Facebook page was developed to keep trail enthusiasts apprised of trail conditions.

Below are excerpts from the Town's page in March.





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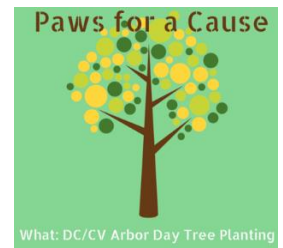
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### Ridgeline Wranglers

The Ridgeline Wranglers held their season kick-off meeting with 20 people in attendance. Nine new members joined the group! Members voiced concern at the increased use of Stewart Trail and suggested that the Town consider mandating directional use on alternating days as use continues to grow. Members discussed possible solutions in notifying the public when Stewart Trail is closed due to wet conditions. If signage was put at each of the trail access points, Ridgeline Wrangler members offered to take responsibility for putting up and taking down trail closure signs at each access point. Members informed staff of the appearance of some pointy edged rocks that come through the trail that the group may want to consider removing this year. Other than those items, general maintenance will be the group's priority.

Students from Castle View High School and Douglas County High School are partnering with POST to plan their Paws for a Cause event at Philip S. Miller Park. Both student government and green team members will plant 21 orchard trees around the new Millhouse on April 22.



### Operations

PREPARED BY BOB PERSICHETTI, HEAD GOLF PROFESSIONAL

Weather in early March was favorable for golf and the course generated good revenue for early spring.

Snowstorms on March 18 and March 23 impacted the second half of the month, causing the course to fall short of the revenue target by 15 percent. The total revenue in March 2016, \$77,574, fell short of budget by \$13,207; however the golf course is \$13,578 ahead of the first quarter revenue budget goal.

Several capital improvement projects for 2016 are being executed. Clubhouse improvements are nearing completion and site improvement projects are underway. The restroom renovations, the new entry doors at the main entry and the golf shop entry, and the addition of a second walk-in cooler are all complete. The wind screens for the main event patio and miscellaneous electrical and equipment additions in the kitchen are scheduled for completion in April. Site improvement projects scheduled for April include concrete cart paths on three holes, practice facility improvements and the addition of two on-course permanent restroom facilities. The goal is to have the majority of projects completed by May in an effort to avoid disruption to peak season business. At this point, all projects are on schedule.

### Golf Maintenance

March was very busy for the maintenance team. The irrigation system was pressured up to start off the month





and staff completed fairway aerification at record pace! Additionally, the front of the driving range tee was raised. One hundred tons of sand were brought in to complete the project.

## **Range Tee Leveling**

Other projects included removing the old sand from the bunker on hole 11. The face and drainage system were rebuilt. Green Valley Sod Farm brought in sod needed to stabilize the subsurface of the bunker and complete the face. Once the sod has fully rooted, sand will be brought in to finish the renovation project.

## **Hole 11 Sand Trap**

All of the snow fences have been removed from the course. Golf course posts, tee markers and miscellaneous supplies have been put back in position for the upcoming season. Additionally, the greens, tees, roughs and fairways have been fertilized with quick release fertilizer to give the course a quick spring green up. Staff completed the rough grade of holes 1, 2 and 18 for the concrete contractor. The forms are in place to start pouring if the weather will cooperate!



## **PARKS MAINTENANCE DIVISION**

### **General Maintenance**

PREPARED BY PARKS MAINTENANCE STAFF

March 23 marked the beginning of a blizzard. Fifty hours were spent clearing snow off all paths while also maintaining Recreation Center and Miller Activity Complex parking lots and sidewalks. Staff also assisted the Public Works Department in the storm. After the storm, the sport court shifted in the west hockey court at Metzler. This tends to occur when there is a large amount of water that flows through that area. Nearly half of the Parks staff assisted in moving the court back into place, with the snow on top of the court added to the lengthy process.



### **Open Space and Trails**

PREPARED BY JOHN JORGENSEN, OPEN SPACE AND TRAILS SUPERVISOR

The Open Space Division took on multiple projects during the month.

- Approximately 2,000 feet of electrical conduit was trenched in at Philip S. Miller Park in order to light 39 pine trees around the Millhouse and Amphitheater.





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- The corridor along the East Plum Creek Trail near the Meadows bridge was cleared, and scrub oak and other vegetation were cut back away from the concrete trail.
- Broken concrete was repaired along a section of the East Plum Creek Trail.
- The new office trailer was moved from the Utilities Department yard to the Service Center, and will serve as office space for Parks staff. The trailer is being remodeled and will be ready for occupancy in May.
- Approximately 12 hazardous trees along the East Plum Creek Trail were removed. These large ponderosa pines were dead and rotting at the base and in danger of falling onto the concrete trail.
- A fence is being built along Canyon Drive, adjacent to Rock Park to protect the public from a large, steep sided erosion cut.

## RECREATION DIVISION

### Aquatics

PREPARED BY ZACH MORRIS, AQUATICS SUPERVISOR

The Butterfield Pool renovation project continues to progress well. The large pergola spanning the eastern length of the pool was completed in March. Granite countertops and sinks were installed and wall tiles were placed and grouted. The old wader pool has been completely removed and piping and electrical preparations have begun for the installation of the new pool and splash pad. In April, the old Diamond Brite surface will be removed and replaced, along with the racing lane and target tiles in the lap pool.

The Aquatics Supervisor earned his National Recreation and Parks Association Certified Park and Recreation Professional designation.