

Conifer Area Council

HISTORY, MISSION AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

July 1, 2008 – June 30, 2009

History of Conifer Area Council

Conifer Area Council became the name of a group of concerned citizens in the Conifer area in September of 2002.

However, this group of people has a much longer and important history. Its roots go back to working on the Conifer / 285 Corridor Area Community Plan Update. A grass roots effort began in 1997 to work on the Update of the original Plan that had been adopted in 1987. The Final Draft was completed in February, 2002 after 10,000 volunteer hours of work. The final, publishable version was approved by the Jefferson County Planning Commission on September 3, 2003.

Many members of the group that spent those 10,000 hours of volunteer time then spearheaded the ongoing organization called Conifer Area Council.

Conifer Area Council is a nonprofit, nongovernmental organization, tax exempt under Section 501(c)(3) IRC. Contributions are tax deductible.

Mission of Conifer Area Council

To work as a broad based group to provide a forum to identify and address community issues.

Goals of Conifer Area Council

- Promote community participation, collaboration and action in community issue decision-making,
- Sponsor the free and open exchange of information and ideas,
- Provide the venue for periodic review and support of the Conifer/285 Corridor Area Community Plan.

Board of Directors of Conifer Area Council

July 1, 2008 – June 30, 2009

President:	Shirley M. Johnson	Director:	Pat Bouchard
Vice President:	Steph Millard / Susan Imming	Director:	Susan Imming / Debi Evans
Secretary:	Suzanne Nelson	Director:	Punky Kiefer
Treasurer:	Kay Thelen	Director:	Gene Patton
Director:	Angela Bassano	Director:	Rocky Phelps
		Director:	Michael Rura

Accomplishments of Conifer Area Council

- **Town Hall Meetings**
 - 4 meetings in September, November, February & April (80 to 200 in attendance at each meeting)
- **Other Public Meetings**
 - Economic Health of the Conifer Corridor & Beyond – October, 2008
 - Conifer Trails Information Meeting at Aspen Park Community Center – May, 2009
- **Regular updates of the Website at coniferareacouncil.org**
- **Regular updates of an extensive e-mail list to get important information, such as Town Hall Meetings and other community events, to the community.**
- **Adopt-a-Highway Community Clean Up Days – June & September**
- **Trails Team applied and granted \$124,694.00 for trails under CAC 501c3.**
- **Received \$500.00 grant for administrative costs.**
- **Received \$784.00 in contributions / donations for trails & administrative costs.**
- **Received \$400.00 for volunteers at the Conifer Mountain Music Festival.**
- **Trails Team made \$468.70 on sale of CAC Carabiners under CAC 501c3.**

History of Conifer Area Council Study / Action Teams

In 2002 and 2003, as Conifer Area Council was organized, Study / Action Team Guidelines (Appendix A) were written, along with Bylaws (Appendix B), in order to create a forum for the study and action of community issues.

In April, 2006, the Community Identity Study / Action Team was formed to determine “How to Preserve our Community Identity and Authenticity in the Face of New Development!” That Team developed the “Claiming Conifer’s Character” Survey, of which over 1000 community members responded.

The top three areas of concern which needed improvement, according to those community members were:

- **Bike paths / Hiking Trails**
- **Development Control**
- **Downtown / Main Street**

As a result of the “Claiming Conifer’s Character” Community Survey” three new “Claiming Conifer’s Character” Study / Action Teams were formed:

- **Trails Study / Action Team**
- **Smart Growth Study / Action Team**
- **Main Street-Public Places Study / Action Team**

These three Study / Action Teams combined into two teams and updated the following Claiming Conifer’s Character Vision, Mission, Strategies, Goals and Policies collectively, in April, 2009. The two new Study / Action Teams are:

- **Trails Study / Action Team**
- **Community Vision Study / Action Team**

Claiming Conifer's Character Vision:

The Conifer area. . . our mountain home where natural beauty, wildlife, and independent spirits meet.

Claiming Conifer's Character Mission:

To claim, preserve, and enhance the character and heritage of the Conifer area community.

Claiming Conifer's Character Strategies:

Through the study of options and development of detailed plans, the following strategies may be used.

- Connect trails, create walkable neighborhoods and provide alternative transportation choices
- Create indoor and outdoor public places
- Encourage options other than strip development
- Preserve and/or enhance the Conifer area's beauty, peacefulness, rural character, heritage and wildlife
- Create healthy forests and reduce wildfire risk
- Protect and maintain water quantity and quality
- Add and maintain services that meet the community's needs
- Encourage community and stakeholder involvement, collaboration, and participation
- Promote improved communication within the community
- Identify opportunities that enhance the community while serving the community, the local economy, and the environment

Claiming Conifer's Character Policies:

- The Teams will make every attempt to involve the entire community by gathering and disseminating information through public meetings, publications, surveys and other means.
- The Teams will not favor or oppose any specific residential or commercial development, but will look at opportunities to enhance the community, as a whole, by considering connectivity and inclusiveness of all developments, neighborhoods, public and private open space areas.
- The Teams shall create more specific, detailed plans of future development, trails, public places, using the above mentioned strategies, and coordinate with Jefferson County and the community to incorporate this information into the Conifer/285 Corridor Area Community Plan and other master planning efforts.

Claiming Conifer's Character Goals:

Trails Study/Action Team

The focus of this Team is to connect neighborhoods, open space parks, schools, shopping areas, and other communities in order to create opportunities for residents to enjoy wildlife, natural beauty and a sense of community, through the development of conceptual trails plans and strategies to get them built.

- This Team will help coordinate the efforts of Jefferson County Open Space, Colorado Department of Transportation, Jefferson County Highways and Transportation, Jefferson County Planning and Zoning, Denver Mountain Parks, the Mountain Area Land Trust, all other entities involved with trails, and the Conifer community.

- Based upon the “Claiming Conifer’s Character” Community Survey results, this Team will develop and offer options for a trails plan within the Conifer area and work with other communities regarding connections.
- This Team will keep track of properties in transition and will communicate with all agencies, property owners and developers to encourage trail connections to serve the Conifer community.

Claiming Conifer’s Character Goals: Community Vision Study / Action Team

The focus of this Team is to “claim” the character of the Conifer community, as determined by community residents, and the development of strategies to preserve and enhance that character and the heritage of the Conifer area.

- This Team will gather information regarding future plans and development for the Conifer area from Jefferson County and other means.
- Using this information, along with input from the community, (including the “Conifer / 285 Corridor Area Community Plan”, “Claiming Conifer’s Character” Community Survey, future conversations and surveys) the Team will assist in facilitating the communication of a more specific detailed plan for the Conifer area to include future development, open space, trails and public places.
- The Team will identify current “Public Places” and how they might be enhanced and possible new “Public Places.”
- The Team will develop concepts and strategies for a “Main Street Loop.”
- The Team will work with other community organizations such as artist guilds, local service organizations, schools, churches, etc. to encourage ideas, funding and maintenance for “Public Places” and other community opportunities.
- Meanwhile, the Team will coordinate efforts and communicate with Jefferson County and the Conifer community.

Accomplishments of the Trails Study / Action Team

The Conifer Area Council’s Trails Study / Action Team has worked hard over the last year to further develop the Conifer Core and Extended Trails Plan. The Trails Study / Action Team has met monthly as a team and has met with Jefferson County Open Space, Jefferson County Highways and Transportation, Jefferson County Planning, local developers, and area landowners.

Specific accomplishments events and activities for 2008-2009 by the Trails Study / Action Team include:

Grants: Applied for six grants and received five:

• IREA	\$ 2,000.00
• Conifer Rotary	\$ 1,000.00
• Conifer Newcomers	\$ 500.00
• Conservation Trust Fund	\$ 21,194.00
• Conservation Trust Fund	<u>\$100,000.00</u>
	\$124,694.00

Did not receive Colorado State Parks Trails Grant

Fundraising:

- Sold Carabineers
- Sold Trail Mix

Meetings and Presentations:

The Trails Study / Action Team met with and made presentations to the following groups:

- Conifer Rotary
- St. Lawrence Church
- Aspen Park Improvement Association
- Bailey Trails Group
- Open Space Advisory Committee of Jefferson County Open Space
- NEAT – North Evergreen Activity Trails
- Conifer Area Council Town Hall Meetings

Community Events:

Participated in the following community events with an information booth:

- IMHS Dog Walk
- Conifer Music Festival
- Conifer Heritage Festival
- Mountain Area Home Show

Grant money spent on the following:

- Hire consulting services of CCCD, University of Colorado Denver for a Trails Master Plan
- Hired services of Pitsker and Associates to survey Sutton Road
- Made 1000 copies of map/brochure

Obtained letters of support from:

- IREA
- IMHS
- Jefferson County Open Space
- Jefferson County Highways and Transportation
- Jefferson County Public Schools
- Conifer Chamber of Commerce
- Conifer Rotary

Meetings and Hikes with the following:

Met with the following to determine possible trail routes and wetland areas:

- Jefferson County Open Space
- Jefferson County Highways and Transportation
- Josh McGibbons – property developer
- John Harden – property owner and developer
- Terry McGee: Army Corps of Engineers

Accomplishments of the Community Vision Study / Action Team

- Reaching out to developers going to Jefferson County for information, building permits and rezoning. County staff asked to refer them to CAC. Once contacted, CAC meets with and gives information on what the community wants through surveys, and other feedback.
- Worked with Farmers Market possibilities and locations for a successful Farmers Market again at Our Lady of the Pines Catholic Church parking lot on Thursdays during the summer of 2009.
- Worked on getting a Recycling area in the Conifer area. Evergreen Disposal set up a Recycling Center at the Conifer Town Center.
- Presentation by Paula Hutman at the November, 2008 Town Hall Meeting on “Claiming Conifer’s Character – What Have We Accomplished? Where Do We Go From Here?” This was to start the conversation about what the community wants the future of the Conifer area to look like.
- Developed the “Conifer Main Street Loop Project” survey to start to determine what the community would like to see regarding: 1) Architectural Design in new or renovated buildings, 2) Infrastructure , such as bridges, roadways, trails, sidewalks, site furniture, public meeting places and parks, 3) Landscaping in new or renovated development.
- Asked community members, at the February, 2009 Town Hall Meeting to vote on their favorite Architectural, Infrastructure and Landscaping components as depicted in pictures on board displays presented by Paula Hutman.
- Many Team members took more pictures of architecture and public places ideas and again asked community members at the April, 2009 Town Hall Meeting to vote on their favorites.
- Worked with Conifer Area Council Trails Study / Action Team and Judith Bergquist at University of Colorado at Denver to include public places and other amenities in the Conifer Trails Master Plan.
- Determined five focus areas to concentrate on in the future: Architecture, Public Places, Color Conifer (wildflower planting), Historic Preservation, and Land Preservation.

Accomplishments of the Long Rangers Study/Action Team

In March of 2009 a group was formed for the purpose of improving and strengthening our non-profit organization and to concentrate on long range planning. Several members of the Board and Study / Action Teams began meeting twice a month to address:

- How to build our organization to last
- How to better mobilize our resources by recruiting new members, developing leaders, and raising money.
- How to better serve our community by bringing people together to identify and address community issues for many years to come.
- This Team read the book “Building Powerful Community Organizations” by Michael Jacoby Brown, a personal guide for creating groups that solve problems and change the world.