



NoCo Places

Report

Q4 2023

About NoCo Places

Eight county, state, and federal public land agencies from north-central Colorado are actively collaborating on ways to address the challenges the mountains and foothills in this region are facing from high visitation and a growing population. We are committed to sustainable solutions, equitable actions, and beneficial land management practices for the long-term conservation of Colorado's public lands and the quality of the visitor experience.



The Challenge

Visitation to our mountains and foothills has skyrocketed in recent years, causing congestion on the trails, impacts to wildlife and the environment, and putting at risk what makes Colorado a special place.

Leaders from Boulder, Clear Creek, Gilpin, Jefferson, and Larimer Counties; Colorado Parks and Wildlife; the US Forest Service Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forests; and Rocky Mountain National Park are actively collaborating to address this challenge.

Mission Statement

NoCo Places collaborates to protect and conserve natural and cultural resources while providing equitable access and a quality recreation experience for current and future generations.

Q4 2023 Accomplishments

This report highlights the successes and progress of NoCo Places since our [Third Quarter 2023 report](#).

CONSERVATION AND RECREATION VISION



An important milestone for the region-wide conservation and recreation vision was reached in Q4! By the end of December, we had completed a total of 15 stakeholder focus groups where we explored stakeholder perspectives on conservation, recreation, and different management approaches. We engaged a total of 110 participants from a variety of groups and organizations. In addition, we conducted the same focus group exercise with the NoCo Executive Committee and the NoCo Partners group.

The stakeholder groups included the following:

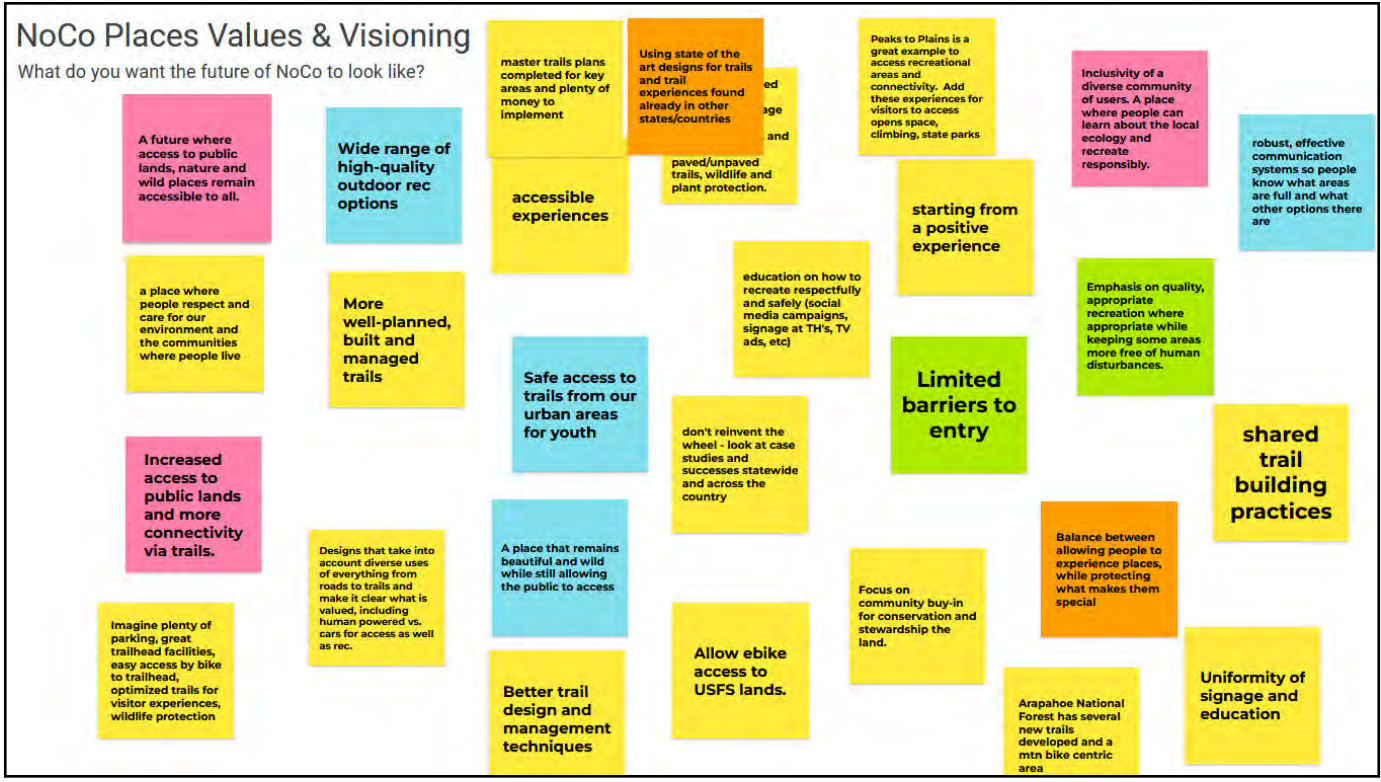
- Youth stewardship and education
- Cycling and mountain biking
- Tourism/Economic development
- Conservation NGOs
- Motorized recreation
- Tribal and indigenous groups/organizations
- Non-motorized recreation
- Trails and water stewardship organizations
- Commercial outfitters/guides
- Climbing
- All abilities
- Hunting and angling
- Private and working lands
- Forest health/freshed planning

The three-hour virtual focus groups were engaging and facilitated valuable feedback through Google jamboards (virtual sticky notes), polls, and discussions involving all participants. The wealth of information gathered during these sessions will help to guide the conservation and recreation vision.

A report summarizing what we learned from these sessions will be developed in January. Beginning in February, the Executive Committee, with help from the NoCo Partners, will take what we learned from the focus groups, the [conservation summary map](#), and the [mobile phone dashboard](#), and begin the process of developing the conservation and recreation vision for the NoCo region. Our goal is to have that vision finalized by mid-year. Stay tuned!

NoCo Places Values & Visioning

What do you want the future of NoCo to look like?



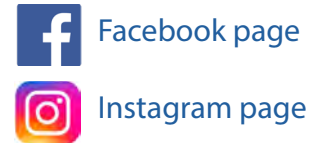
Example of a jamboard from a focus group session



Stay up to date on the conservation and recreation vision through this [page on the NoCo website](#).

COMMUNICATIONS EFFORTS

NoCo Places has gone social! Two social media accounts, one on Facebook and another on Instagram, were started for the coalition in October in an effort to make the common messaging content developed by the communications subcommittee more easily accessible and shareable. The accounts are populated with posts from each quarterly common messaging campaign, and each NoCo agency will use the variety of messages to share to their channels.



Please follow the channels and share the educational stewardship content!

Fall Common Messaging: In the fall, the communications subcommittee decided to focus on repurposing existing content and utilizing the new NoCo Places social media channels. The stewardship common messaging that NoCo has created over the past two years is still applicable and there is a desire to be consistent and repeat key messages.

Upcoming plans: The communications subcommittee is looking forward to exploring new ways to share educational stewardship messaging in 2024 and will be meeting regularly.

NoCo will be coordinating with CPW on their fire safety campaign in the spring of 2024. CPW will be adding a wildfire overlay in their COTREX app allowing users to view active wildfires. This campaign will focus on fire safety messages and up-to-date COTREX information on active fires. NoCo will coordinate on messaging and increase the reach through our new contacts made from the stakeholder focus groups.



EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION EFFORTS

The NoCo EDI work group continues to meet and discuss ways they can collaborate and share resources between agencies. A need was identified for a common place to display education and volunteer programs that are available for historically underrepresented communities.

The group is compiling a list and description of NoCo agency's programs and a new feature on the NoCo website will allow users to search for and find available opportunities for education and volunteer programs in the NoCo region. This resource will also serve the general public but the core audience is underrepresented communities and providing an easy way to find outdoor experiences in their local area.







Tackling Goals

We will achieve our goals by:

- **Inspiring an outdoor stewardship ethic** among visitors and recreationists that promotes an awareness of their impact on the land and wildlife, reduces those impacts by educating them on how they can mitigate or manage them, and creates a personal sense of ownership, responsibility and pride in better protecting those resources.
- **Building community support for increased funding** for public land management, and exploring opportunities and mechanisms for sharing financial resources across jurisdictions in the NoCo region.
- **Increasing the amount of conserved and/or restored land**, and protecting the land that is already conserved and/or restored.
- **Supporting outdoor recreation and visitation** in areas best suited for that activity.
- **Improving the quality of the visitor experience**, particularly in areas facing the greatest threats from overuse and congestion, through management approaches, education, more effective infrastructure and other means.
- **Ensuring that the region continues to provide and support a wide range** of quality outdoor experience opportunities.
- **Increasing the visitation by historically underrepresented communities** and Americans with Disabilities Act/Architectural Barriers Act (ADA/ABA) communities.
- **Reducing conflict and promoting compatibility among visitors** and recreational use types, and increasing the safety of outdoor experiences.

Upcoming

After a year of work building a conservation and recreation vision for the NoCo region, 2024 will be focused on incorporating feedback from the stakeholder outreach focus groups, finalizing the vision, and implementing the vision per agency and NoCo collectively.

 www.nocoplaces.com
 info@nocoplaces2050.com

Visit website for information on core topics, research, and downloadable materials