

Education & Outreach 2021 Annual Report

OVERVIEW

2021 was another year that challenged the Education and Outreach (E&O) staff to be both flexible and innovative. The ever-changing Covid restrictions limited what we could do, and plans shifted accordingly.

Guided by the [OSMP MP CCEI Focus Area Strategies](#) and aligned with the [Education & Outreach Framework](#) topics and

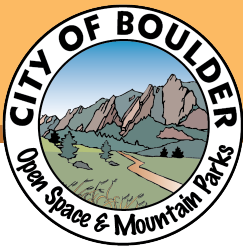
themes, OSMP offered programs when and where we could and looked to partners and volunteers to help meet our goals. The E&O team met the year with caution, creativity, and practicality, with safety in the forefront

of all we did. OSMP offered a variety of public programs to inspire environmental literacy and new involvement in OSMP. We welcomed community members of differing backgrounds and abilities; heightened community understanding of land management efforts; fostered health and wellness; and connected youth to the outdoors. We incorporated emerging research and social science data, and adapted traditional programming to community needs of accessibility, mental wellbeing, and social cohesion. All things considered, E&O accomplishments were impressive, and the team stayed strong and positive. Enjoy this E&O summary. For a detailed inventory of 2021 programs and activities, click [HERE](#).

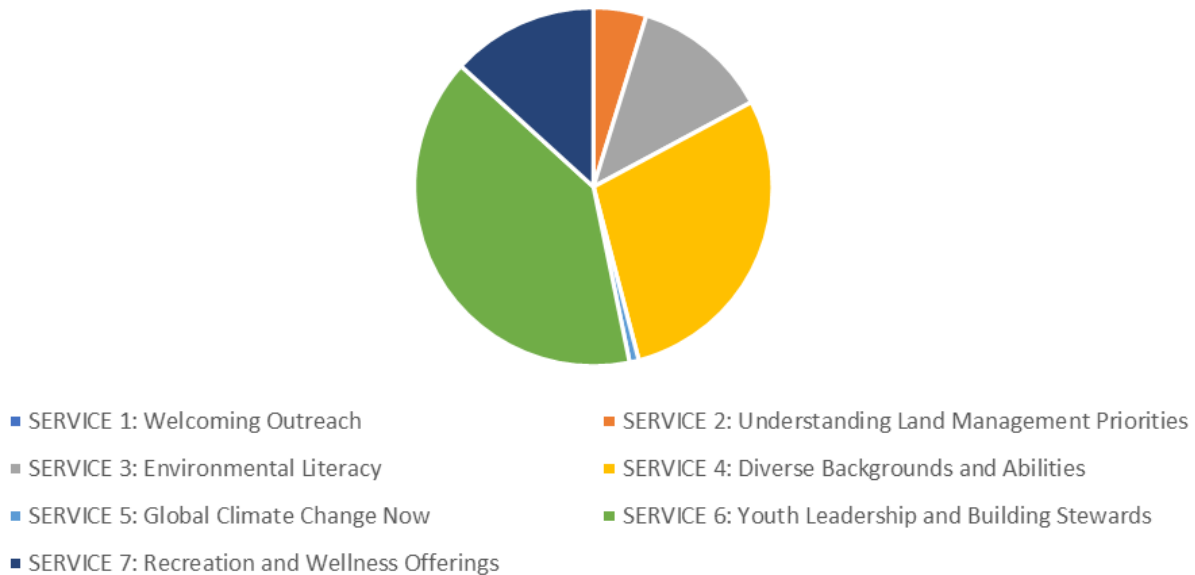


Impact: E&O staff and volunteers reached **17,116 people through 362 activities**. Outreach staff and public contact volunteers contacted **an additional 142,348 people** through trail and trailhead outreach.

Understanding our reporting language: The E&O Strategic Plan is broken into **7 SERVICES**. Each Service has several associated PROGRAMS. In 2021, we provided **362 ACTIVITIES** delivering on our programs. "Activities" include presentations, hikes, events, trainings, and more. This language is consistent with our Count Me In database.



Activities by E&O Service



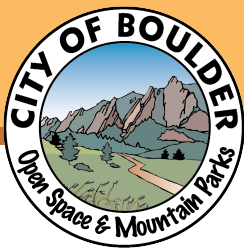
Activities are categorized by their **primary** E&O Service but can meet multiple goals. For example, we oftentimes touch on understanding land management priorities during activities for designed for youth. Note, Service Area 1 is better described below.

SERVICE 1:

Welcoming Visitors and Community Members, and Presence on the Land (Master Plan CCEI 2)

Staff continued to welcome visitors at trailheads and on trails throughout the OSMP system. Messaging shifted daily, from be careful on the ice to please walk through the mud instead of around it. Resource protection, responsible recreation and visitor safety were also common topics. Staff helped visitors find the best trail option and shared information about natural and cultural history. Outreach staff also assisted with other department priorities including trail closures, New Zealand mudsnail outreach, wind damage assessments and rescues. Volunteer Visitor Ambassadors worked side by side with staff, allowing us to reach even more people.

The Ranger Cottage remained closed in 2021 due to COVID, so we continued our pivot to trailhead outreach and presence on the land. In 2021, a much smaller Outreach team made over **66,245** contacts. We found the connections made at the trailheads were very well received. (In pre-Covid 2019, Outreach staff made over 92,000 contacts at the Cottage and another 9,000 at Trailheads)



PUBLIC CONTACT VOLUNTEER EFFORTS

Visitor Ambassadors: 7 volunteers, 210 shifts, 816 hours, and over 30,392 contacts.

Bike patrol: 30 volunteers, 549 shifts, 961 hours. Contact numbers are still being calculated but will be over 5,000.

Trail guides: 40 volunteers, 1060 shifts, 2452 hours, 37,842 contacts.

Flagstaff Nature Center: 12 volunteers, 109 shifts, 322 hours, 2,869 contacts.

Impact: Altogether, staff and volunteers had a significant "Presence on the Land" making over **142,348 welcoming contacts**.



SERVICE 2:

Understanding Land Management Priorities (Master Plan CCEI 8)

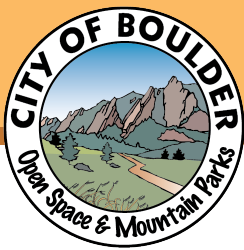
To heighten community and neighborhood understanding and involvement in OSMP management and planning work, we targeted education and outreach efforts to support on the ground actions. We offered a staff and volunteer training on wildfire, and public programs on prairie ecosystems and agriculture methods. We also continued our popular seasonal public hike offerings at White Rocks and Jewel Mountain. Rangers and other staff subject matter experts joined in these activities.

Impact: E&O staff and volunteers reached **289 people through 17 Understanding Land Management Priority activities**.



VOICE AND SIGHT EDUCATION CLASSES AND EVENTS

Online course completion continues to grow, with over 85% of survey respondents agreeing that the online course improved their understanding of the city's Voice & Sight control requirements. **In 2021 5,201 people completed the class**, which is the largest one-year participation rate since the inception of the Voice & Sight Education requirement in 2014. Additionally, the number of tags issued remains steady, indicating the program is reaching its goal of educating more dog guardians without increasing the total number off-leash dogs on the system. This does not account for unregistered dogs, however. Total course completions total 18,588 in-person and 10,170 online to date. This includes those who have renewed their education requirement after five years.



OSMP staff held a 3-day dog waste removal campaign **Let's DOO It** to change the visitor behavior of leaving dog waste in bags (or unbagged) along the trail. OSMP staff went to 4 previously identified locations: Chautauqua, Dry Creek, Sanitas, and Shanahan Ridge, and placed a bright orange flag wherever there was a dog waste bag or dog waste within proximity of the trailhead. Flags and signs remained in place and visible to visitors for 2 days. Then staff, volunteers, and the public helped pick up and remove the dog waste. We also handed out compostable waste bags and promoted the compost program. [Read Full Report](#)

Impact: We are educating the public about our V&S program. Through the Let's DOO It event, OSMP connected with **418 dog guardians about the importance of removing dog waste, and 55 pounds of waste were collected. In 2021 5,201 people completed the V&S class.**

SERVICE 3: **Environmental Literacy (Master Plan CCEI 6)**

OSMP offered a variety of public programs to inspire environmental literacy. These included a variety of natural and cultural history hikes, from wildlife (bears, mountains lions, bats, snakes, birds) to the history of OSMP. Leave No Trace Principals were woven into all programs. We also continued to add in self-guided, virtual, and hybrid programs.

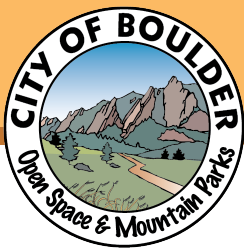
Impact: OSMP reached **1,025 people through 44 environmental literacy activities.**

SERVICE 4: **Diverse Backgrounds and Abilities (Master Plan CCEI 1)**

Spanish Speaking Communities

OSMP launched two new partnerships and continues to work with local organizations serving historically under-represented communities. These collaborative efforts contributed towards a better understanding of what makes individuals and communities feel welcome and able to participate in outdoor activities and stewardship programs. In partnership with **El Centro Amistad**, we hired community liaisons who helped with recruitment of Junior Rangers and advertised and assisted with our educational programs. We also collaborated with Thorne Nature Experience to help support a





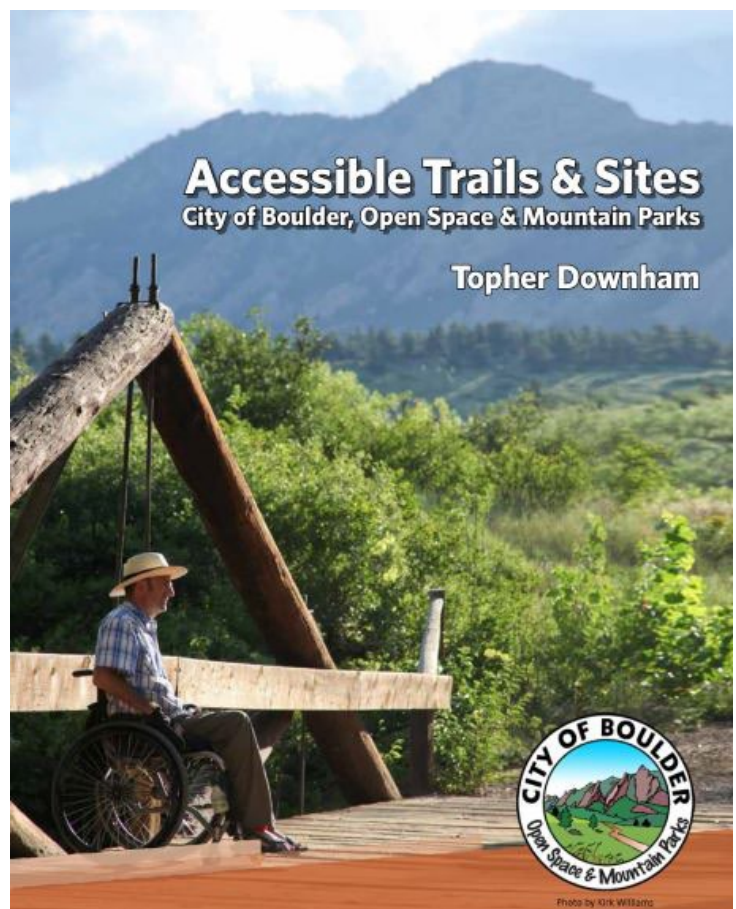
bilingual educator to support the Nature Kids Boulder pilot project. This successful partnership set the stage for advancing the **Nature Kids Boulder** work into 2022. See link to [Nature Kids Boulder Community Engagement Report](#) and [NKB Newsletter](#). Together we provided **25 programs for 381** participants, including Nature Kids Boulder programing, bilingual school presentations, and our bilingual arts programs. In 2020, through the [Equity Signs Project](#), partners helped us identify opportunities to improve OSMP signage to be more welcoming and accessible. Based on recommendations from the Spanish speaking community, **new and improved signs were designed and installed** in 2021 at Sawhill Ponds, with very positive feedback. Partners will continue to participate in implementing Education and Outreach Framework (EOF) recommendations.

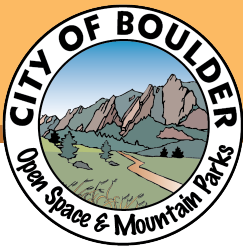
INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' HERITAGE

David Ford, Casey Bries and Curry Rosato represent the E&O team on OSMP's **Peoples' Crossing Tribal Working Group**. The first meeting occurred in October 2021. The group decided to meet quarterly and agreed on a 2-year timeline to envision and co-create the following deliverables: Interpretive Sign, Storymap and fourth grade curriculum. The group will meet quarterly, beginning in February 2022.

PEOPLE EXPERIENCING DISABILITIES

2021 was another strong year for accessibility programming, getting people out and moving in the outdoors. Winter months were slow due to the colder temperatures, but in April, program and requests quickly increased through the rest of the year. Staff lead 12 wheelchair use trainings; 3 accessibility presentations; 48 all-terrain handcycle experiences; 8 disability hikes; and 2 accessibility events. Family Roll and Strolls were a real hit. **In total, we served 1,519 people.** We are also excited about the newly revised Accessible Trails and Sites guide.





OLDER ADULT PROGRAMS

OSMP offered **7 activities reaching 92 participants**. This included 3 outdoor hikes, in person; 2 indoor art events at the West Age Well Center, 1 virtual program exclusively for older adults, and 1 virtual program open to all and advertised by Older Adult Services. We appreciate our partnerships.

LGBTQIA+ PROGRAMS

In 2021, OSMP partnered with local organizations that support the LGBTQIA+ community in providing programs that help to connect this historically excluded population to the land and its healing capabilities. This was accomplished through our ongoing collaboration with Out Boulder County (OBC). OSMP and OBC facilitated **3 activities with 17 participants**. In addition, through our Wellness programming, OSMP began newly coordinated efforts with Natural Highs, a recovery program that elevates the experiences of youth. Queer & Trans Youth are 2-4 times more likely to use substances than their cisgender-heterosexual peers ([LGBTQ Youth & Substance Abuse Fact Sheet](#)). This higher risk is attributed to the threat and real experiences of discrimination, victimization, and homelessness related to their gender identity or sexual orientation. In 2021, OSMP and Natural Highs facilitated **5 activities reaching 99 participants**.

Impact: E&O staff and volunteers reached **1,343 people through 102 activities for people of historically excluded communities**.

SERVICE 5: Global Climate Change Now ([Master Plan CCEI 6](#))

Phase 1: Develop Content and Messaging

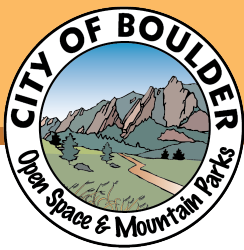
Understand what is happening on the global and national level; determine what effects climate change is having on OSMP; share actions OSMP and the COB are implementing, explore ways to engage the public in climate action. For messaging, understand the common pitfalls of climate change communication; develop strategies and techniques on how to communicate about climate change effectively; and determine ways to build hope and resiliency. This phase has been completed and will continuously adapt alongside the changing nature of climate change and public perception.

Phase 2: Training & Educating Staff and Volunteers

Provide training and education opportunities to help staff and volunteers understand content and messaging with a focus on CC&P and other public facing staff and volunteers.

Phase 3: Public Education and Outreach

Develop educational programming through public hikes and youth programming. Develop climate specific outreach including information that gives hope and opportunities to volunteer for Climate Actions.



Other accomplishments include presenting at COSA, partnerships with outside organizations, and collaboration with VSLP. Our work on Climate Change has been captured [here](#).

SERVICE 6: Youth Leadership and Building Stewards (Master Plan CCEI 3 & 7)

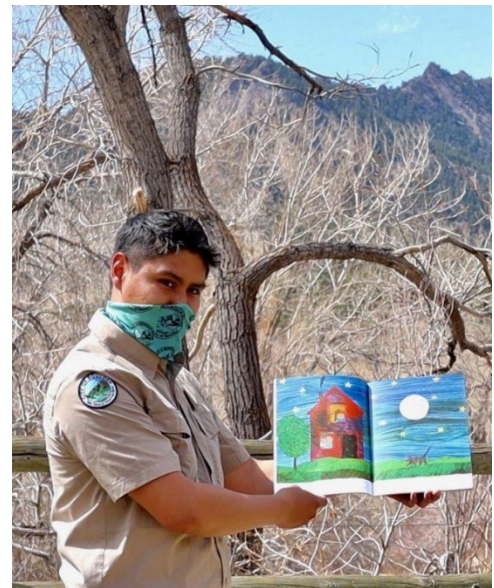
School Programs

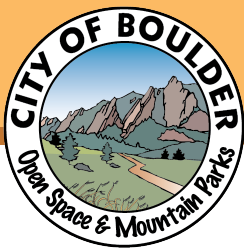
This year, the OSMP E&O team, BVSD schools and partners worked together to create opportunities for a **continuum of OSMP environmental education programming** in a format that adhered to County & BVSD COVID protocols. From virtual field trips to schoolyard programs and walking field trips and assemblies, we provided 57 activities for 5,382 youth.

Collaborations with BVSD and Growing Up Boulder (GUB)

In early 2020, OSBT unanimously approved the Gunbarrel Hill Integrated Site Plan (ISP), and staff have been coordinating implementation efforts since. For example, during the 2020-2021 school year, Heatherwood 4th grade teachers and students collaborated with OSMP and Growing Up Boulder (GUB) staff on two actions identified in the ISP: Wood Brothers nature discovery in Fall 2020 and Gunbarrel Hill restoration efforts in Spring 2021. OSMP staff hosted a comprehensive site visit for 4th graders at each site where students were steeped in educational programming about the land, the plants, and the animals who inhabit them. Through this project students (1) developed ideas to encourage interactive nature discovery opportunities for youth, responsible recreation, and a stewardship ethic and (2) created artwork for signs to communicate the natural history and to inspire responsible recreation behavior in the adjacent Gunbarrel Hill area. The program is aligned with the following Master Plan strategies: connecting youth to the outdoors (CCEI.3), inspiring environmental literacy and new involvement in OSMP (CCEI.6) and developing a learning laboratory approach to recreation (RRSE.9).

In 2022, OSMP will collaborate with GUB and BVSD's Columbine Elementary on the "Nature Connection,





Hope, and Action" project. It uses the Colorado Landscapes unit as its foundation, and builds upon the successful integration of curriculum, outdoor learning and youth leadership/action learned from the Wood Brothers Project last year at Heatherwood Elementary. [This one page document](#) describes the project further.

This year we offered 5 small, in-person **school assemblies**. We worked with the contractor and BVSD staff to develop pre and post program materials so that students could get more from the assembly experience. **925 students and staff participated in this activity.** Pre-pandemic numbers for the assemblies reached between 8 and 9,000 students at over 20 schools.

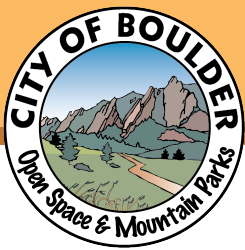


Partnerships: E&O worked closely with many community partners including [Growing Up Boulder \(GUB\)](#) and [Heatherwood Elementary on the Wood Brothers project](#); Boulder Valley School District (BVSD) on development of the [Fourth grade Colorado Landscapes integrated Science, Social Studies and Health Unit](#); [E Movement](#) on promoting virtual environmental education resources and more to offer a continuum of OSMP environmental education programming in a format that adhered to County & BVSD COVID protocols

FAMILY PROGRAMS

Many popular programs, such as Nature Discovery, remained suspended during COVID. We hosted **7 Meadow Music** events this year, pivoting to match distancing precautions. The first 4 were at the Bandshell. Preshow cleanup was necessary and armed security was provided by P&R and the Downtown Boulder Partnership (DBP). We were part of a huge effort to "reactivate and reclaim" the civic area. And we were very happy to return to our traditional Chautauqua Green for our last 3 shows. **We had 2,183 participants attend our 7 activities.** For comparison, pre-pandemic levels for this event were between 5-7,000 participants per year.





Wake Up the Bear/Tulip Fairy Fest, and 5 other on-line shows were well received with a total of over 1,500 participants. **The Fall Fest and Munchkin Masquerade** both saw great turn out with 250 and 2,900 participants respectively. We held 3 **Caroling Hikes** in conjunction with Chautauqua's Winter Fest. A total of 138 people joined us for these festive gatherings. We were also able to do 7 virtual **Storytime** programs with a total of 238 participants.



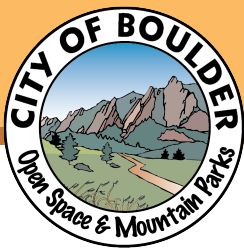
Impact: E&O staff and volunteers provided **142 activities** reaching **10,618 youth and families**.



SERVICE 7: **Recreation and Wellness Offerings (Master Plan CCEI 5 & RRSE 6)**

Recreational Offerings

It has been an exciting year for new recreational offerings. Our **"Community Connections Hikes"** and **"Full Moon Sunset Hikes"** were a **big hit**. Staff worked to develop an original program called "The Flatirons: Icons of Boulder," a hike which focused on the history, geology, and climbing culture of the Flatirons. It was extremely well received. The **Trails Challenge** gained in popularity thanks to articles in



The Daily Camera, Denver Post, and the Boulder Magazine. Staff led Trail Challenge Hikes which help folks learn about and get started on the challenge. 2021 was also a great year of building **partnerships** which have helped us meet our goal of reaching new audiences. Collaborations have been formed with **Protect Our Winters, Always Choose Adventures, and Colorado Mountain Club**. Lastly, we have been able to provide multiple recreational based trainings for **volunteers** including How to Coordinate a Rescue, Winter Hiking Essentials, and Wildfires. In total we offered **20 activities**.



Wellness Offerings

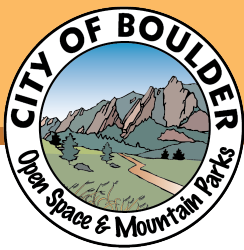
Wellness programs experienced a year of opportunity, growth, and community capacity building. Reflected in public health data, **mental health** in Boulder adults and youth alike became a growing concern and has likely impacted visitor motivations to access OSMP lands. From working with healthcare providers, survivors of domestic violence, yoga practitioners, and those in addiction/recovery, wellness programs celebrated the many **benefits of getting outdoors**. OSMP evolved a collaboration with Boulder Community Health to expand work in addiction recovery, youth behavioral health, and assisted in developing quite possibly the first behavioral health IOP/PHP program in the nation funded by insurance, where public lands are an integral part of a patient treatment program. We delivered **25 in-person and virtual activities**.

OSMP and the Arts

Public programs ranged from poetry to movement. Participants from all ages and backgrounds had many opportunities to try their creative expression with inspiration from the land. Artists provided materials and inspiration for 8 hikes. A highlight this year was a collaboration with Young Women's Voices for Climate Change and their performance both in-person on top of Flagstaff and videos created by the team for public viewing. Our first ever Artist in Residency opportunity was with this group of young women and their mentors. For a full report, refer to the bottom of the PMP found here: [Project Management Plan Art Program.docx](#) Staff and artists led **8 activities reaching 332 participants**.



Impact: E&O staff and volunteers provided **47 activities reaching 1,195 people**.



E&O PLANS AND INITIATIVES

Education Outreach Strategic Plan

This plan both describes the strategic work of the Education and Outreach (E&O) team and guides programming into the future. It is designed to be a working document that is aligned with both outcomes and strategies of the Open Space and Mountain Parks (OSMP) Master Plan (MP) as well as other department and city directives. [E&O Strategic Plan 2021.docx](#)

Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI) [OSMP Master Plan CCEI 1](#)

E&O staff continue to work on citywide and department level JEDI work, supporting internal operations. Here are some highlights for the year.

Equity Assessment

OSMP led the development and implementation of a departmental equity assessment tool, called out in the citywide [Racial Equity Plan](#). The goal of this tool is to standardize reporting of departmental trends as they relate to citywide outcomes. The project team began its pilot rollout to OSMP in Q4 2021 and will continue into 2022 before integrating with additional city departments. OSMP staff collaborated with other city departments to develop a toolkit aimed to assist staff, council members, and board/commission members to plan, prepare for and react to challenging interactions during public engagements. Here is a link to the work for [Productive Atmospheres](#). This is an effort to create a space that supports the diversity of identities and voices represented in our community as well as meaningful and inclusive civic participation.

Equity Ambassadors

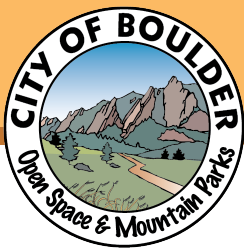
OSMP supports citywide Racial Equity Training goals through the commitment of two Equity Ambassadors who dedicate time to facilitating the Bias & Microaggression training. The city aims to train 100% of all staff by the end of 2022, and this ambitious goal cannot be realized without Equity Ambassadors.

JEDI Teams Toolkit

OSMP led the development of a toolkit that serves as guidance for department leaders and selected team members to develop and evolve their departmental JEDI teams in alignment with citywide racial equity outcomes. The project team will begin rollout of the toolkit in Q1 2022.

Departmental Integration

JEDI team members facilitated the Social Change Ecosystem activity for two workgroups in 2021 and plan to expand this in 2022. In addition, OSMP will pilot department-wide implementation of equity performance review goals in 2022.

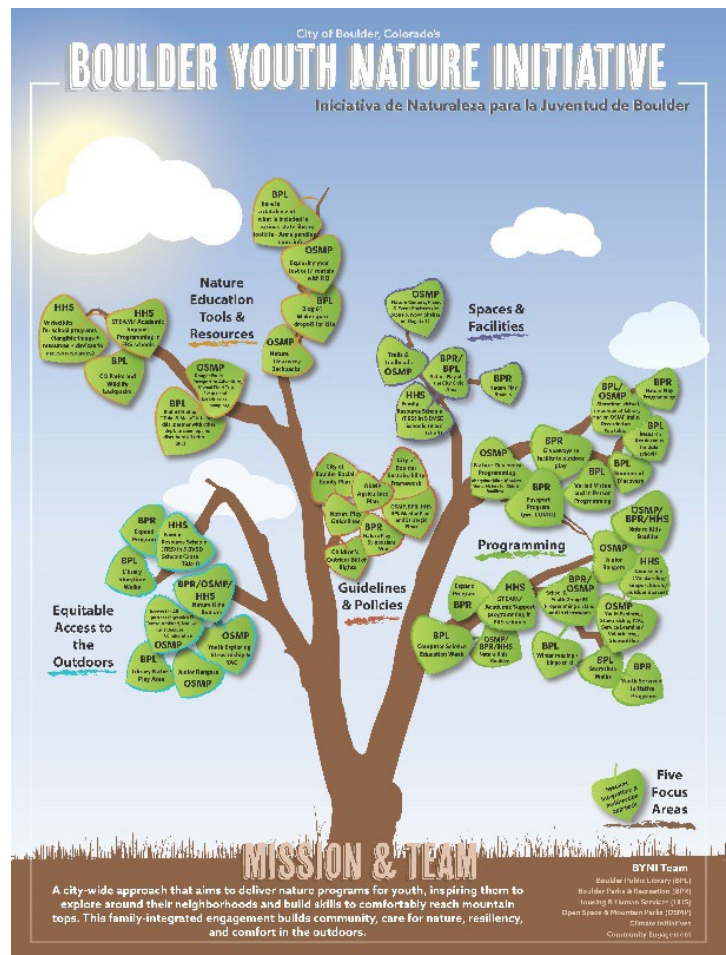


Boulder Youth Nature Initiative

Boulder Youth Nature Initiative (BYNI)/Iniciativa de Naturaleza para la Juventud de Boulder (INJB) is a city-wide approach that aims to deliver nature programs for youth that inspire them to explore around their neighborhoods and build skills to eventually reach mountain tops. This family-integrated engagement builds community, care for nature, resiliency, and comfort in the outdoors. Again in 2021, five city departments worked together sharing resources, collaborating on programming, and finding ways to strategically advance youth connections to nature. BYNI has recently been working with key community partners: Growing Up Boulder (GUB), Boulder Valley School District (BVSD) and E Movement to look for ways better serve youth on a larger scale.

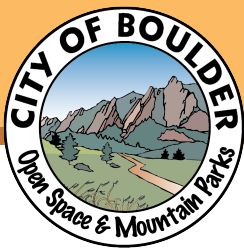
[Link to March 2021 Update](#)

[Link to December 2021 Update](#)



In 2022, we plan to explore and advance:

- BYNI Operating Framework leveraging learnings from the City of Boulder Volunteer Cooperative and developing systems-level strategies to sustain and enhance outdoor learning for Boulder youth
- Inventory of City of Boulder services, guidelines and policies and partnerships connecting youth to and inspiring care for nature
- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion concerns
- Leadership and Innovation working to show the nation a replicable model for youth and the outdoors
- Public Spaces offering a spectrum of access to nature and the outdoors for youth to learn, discover and play



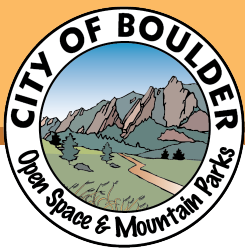
EDUCATION AND OUTREACH EVALUATION PLAN

The purpose of the E&O Evaluation Plan is to help OSMP determine how CCEI Master Plan strategies, as applied through youth and family education programming (OSMP E&O Strategic Plan Service 6: Youth Leadership and Building Stewards), are achieving desired MP outcomes. This is to support an iterative process of E&O program design and implementation.

The CCEI focus area envisions OSMP's role in supporting an inclusive community of stewards who together seek to find our place in open space public lands. OSMP E&O programs and initiatives, as outlined in the E&O Strategic Plan, aim to support community members' quality of life through nature connection, health, and well-being, as well as environmental stewardship for the next decade and beyond.

Our Theory of Change: Increasingly, more people of all ages and backgrounds are becoming less connected to their local natural spaces. Research shows that connection with nature not only inspires care for the natural world, but in turn, offers a myriad of health and social benefits, particularly when time in nature is made both accessible and a priority. By creating and offering intentional place-based programs that engage the community through the land, OSMP will inspire appreciation for, connection with, and stewardship of Boulder's unique ecosystem. We seek to serve children, youth, families, and the broader community. In doing so, OSMP will reach towards its mission to help build a healthier, more equitable and resilient community. [Link to the E&O Evaluation Plan and Logic Model.](#)

In 2022 we plan to refine the evaluation tools, develop a rubric, implement the plan and tools through our school programming, specifically the 4th Grade Colorado Landscapes field trip and 3rd grade Wildlife Education program. Results will be analyzed, shared, and used to inform programming into the future. In addition, we plan to utilize lessons learned to develop a logic model and plan for evaluation implementation in other E&O Services.



CERTIFIED INTERPRETIVE GUIDE TRAINING

This year we offered two Certified Interpreter Guide (CIG) classes through the National Association of Interpretation, one in April and one in November. Twenty people, mostly rangers and E&O staff, graduated from this comprehensive and engaging interpretive training program. Our aim is to have consistent and effective communications and to advance staff skills and capacities for delivering education programs and making meaningful outreach contacts. This will also lead to greater visibility on the land, consistent messaging, and efficient program delivery.



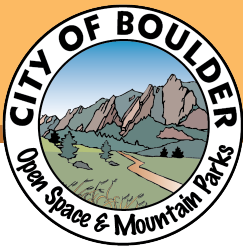
EDUCATION OUTREACH FRAMEWORK

The Education and Outreach Framework (EOF) is a tool we use to standardize and guide Education and Outreach Levels of Education Service for different OSMP sites. It guides interpretive themes; programming; interpretive facilities and amenities (e.g., signs); and print/web-based media for audiences across the OSMP system. It is used to inform long-term and annual on-the-ground planning efforts for E&O programs. This year, we are implementing the EOF at Gunbarrel Hill, Sawhill Ponds, Flagstaff Summit and South Mesa, creating new outdoor spaces to teach environmental literacy and to advance nature discovery opportunities for youth and families. We are planning for the EOF at The Peoples' Crossing and Ft. Chambers/Poor Farm.

The EOF topics and themes we use to tell our stories include:

Care for the Land: OSMP lands preserve numerous fragile ecosystems and vanishing species, while hosting over 6 million annual visits. It is essential that all generations work toward resilient ecosystems, to care for, support and nurture OSMP lands for their sake and for future generations.

OSMP History & Conservation: Over generations, the vision, activism, and commitment of Boulder's community has created a unique system of protected public lands that strives to meet the needs of the community and local plants and animals.



Youth in Nature: Youth and families can discover the joy and wonder of nature on OSMP, developing a lifelong sense of place and personal ownership in their local environment.

Cultural History: For thousands of years, people living in the Boulder area have cherished the landscape of OSMP as a home rich in natural resources and as a place to connect to the outdoors.

Natural History: Millions of years of evolution, coupled with a unique climate and landscape, have endowed OSMP lands with an unprecedented richness of species.

Health and Wellness: The landscape of OSMP provides visitors with diverse opportunities to connect with and interact with nature.

Climate Change: The climate crisis is a serious global challenge that will have profound impacts on human and natural systems. OSMP is proactively managing these systems to withstand and adapt to the effects of the climate crisis, relying on good science and individual actions.

Social Equity and Justice: Many people throughout history, representing diverse cultures and backgrounds, have shaped the land we call OSMP. OSMP is public land belonging to all the people of Boulder, and serves everyone regardless of age, sex, ability, language, culture or religious affiliation.

Agriculture: OSMP lands foster the tradition of local agriculture as a facet of Boulder's landscape, to honor our heritage and history, and to feed our community.

Youth Leadership: The future of OSMP and the survival of its many species depend on committed and dedicated stewardship by today's youth as they grow into leadership roles to take their places as the authors of the next chapter of the land's story.

