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Residents to review draft Arapahoe County open space master plan *Arapahoe County hosts final open house for citizen input on Parks, Trails and Open Space Master Plan*

Aurora, CO --- They're your parks, trails and open spaces and when Arapahoe County asked for your input, they got it.

"We'd like to thank our residents for taking ownership of their county's parks, trails and open spaces," said Arapahoe County Commissioner Chair Rod Bockenfeld. "The Open Space Master Plan recommendations are a direct result of the feedback from thousands of residents and partners who have participated in the master planning process during the last six months."

A draft of the master plan, which will serve as a guide for making strategic decisions about the program's future, is now available for public review and input. Citizens can review the plan recommendations at an open house, anytime between 4 – 8 p.m., March 23 at the County's CentrePoint Plaza, Aurora, or online at www.greenways.com/arapahoe through April 2. The web site also provides resources, and residents can sign up to receive periodic updates via e-mail.

Key recommendations of the plan include creating an interconnected system of parks, open space and trails countywide and protecting water quality and wildlife habitats of key riparian corridors across the county through varied conservation efforts. The plan applauds and supports the County's regional efforts in partnering with cities and special districts to protect key features including the South Platte River, Cherry Creek, Arapahoe Grasslands and High Line Canal.

In just five years, the County has protected more than 15,000 acres of land that preserve natural habitats and wildlife corridors, protect sweeping vistas and provide outdoor recreation for residents of all ages, thanks to the voters who generously approved the Arapahoe County open space sales and use tax in 2003.

For every \$1 spent in Arapahoe County, a quarter-of-a-penny is used to preserve urban and rural open space and natural areas; protect lands that preserve water quality; provide, maintain and improve neighborhood parks, sports fields, picnic facilities and multi-use trails; protect wildlife habitat and corridors; preserve agriculture and ranchlands; and enhance and maintain designated heritage areas.

The tax collection began Jan. 1, 2004 and is set to expire Dec. 31, 2013 unless citizens vote "yes" to continue the program during a future ballot question reauthorization.

For more information, go to www.greenways.com/arapahoe or call Bob Finch, Arapahoe County Open Space, at 720-874-6734.

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To download photos click on the link: <ftp://www.co.arapahoe.co.us/Pub/CM/Photos/OpenHouse/>

OpenHouse1_map – Residents point out where they'd like to see trail connections in Arapahoe County during the first open house in Centennial.

OpenHouse1_Bob&group – Arapahoe County Open Space Manager Bob Toll provides citizens with an overview of the county and the accomplishments of the Open Space program during the first open house in Centennial.

RonMillerTalksTrails_ByersOpenHouse2009 – Byers resident Ron Miller points out suggested locations for bike trails during the Arapahoe County open space master plan open house.