

THE EAGLE



Open Space Newsletter

Fall 2011

OPEN SPACE VOLUNTEER MISSION STATEMENT: *To provide citizens of Westminster and other interested individuals an opportunity to preserve and maintain the natural beauty of Westminster's Open Space areas through gratifying, educational and enjoyable volunteer projects. Volunteer projects shall be highly visible, appealing to the community and of benefit to the areas either immediately or through long-term, purposeful planning.*



Volunteers in Action Celebrate Westminster's Centennial at City Council Community Outreach Project

You would be amazed what can happen when people put their minds and hands toward a common goal! One hundred volunteers made a tremendous difference in the Big Dry Creek Open Space and Trail on September 24, 2011, as part of Westminster's Centennial celebration and National Public Lands Day.

This area of open space was overgrown with Russian-olive trees, a noxious weed in Colorado. The trees were cut down, leaving piles of thorny, brushy limbs to be dragged to the chipper. Here's where the volunteers' helping hands came into play! But make no mistake, this was more work than play.

Volunteers dragged the limbs to Westminster staff who fed the limbs into the chipper. Using teamwork and concentration, the volunteers were able to get every limb to the chippers, making this natural area look open and inviting, while creating a much healthier habitat for native vegetation and wildlife. The removal of the Russian-olive trees revitalized this open space, and created a much healthier ecosystem.

Even though Russian-olive trees are weeds masquerading as trees, they do provide some shade and bird perches. To rejuvenate the newly cleared open space, volunteers planted native trees to replace Russian-olive trees. One hundred trees were planted to honor and celebrate Westminster's Centennial. These trees are our legacy to future generations, who will enjoy the beauty and peace of healthy, vital trees in the open space.

To celebrate the volunteers' hard work and commitment, a tasty barbeque was served. Westminster City Councillors were available with their helping hands, and to talk with volunteers throughout the day.

How can we accomplish such an important project? Westminster partnered with REI, who provided a generous grant of \$9,000 to help make this project take place. REI is not only a provider of quality outdoor equipment, it is also committed to stewardship and education. As you can see by their core purpose below, REI has a vision to help perpetuate the outdoor experience, which includes preserving and enhancing natural areas like Big Dry Creek Open Space and Trail. Westminster is fortunate to be the recipient of REI's generosity and community commitment.

Many thanks to all the volunteers who made this project so successful, as well as Westminster's City Council who support and protect Westminster's natural resources. We can all feel proud of the living legacy of 100 trees that will be enjoyed and appreciated by future generations.

Volunteers are the *heart* of our community!



REI's passion for the outdoors runs deep. Our core purpose is to inspire, educate and outfit people for a lifetime of outdoor adventure and stewardship.

Helping Hands Make the Difference!



Over 100 people volunteered their helping hands to make this project a success.



Bob Saindon and Paul Nilles are veteran Open Space/Forestry volunteers.



Alex Nazarov and son Andrew work hard to plant their tree.



Bob Cook from REI lends a hand to remove Russian-olive branches.



Mayor Nancy McNally unveils commemorative plaque with youth at the project. This picture is now in Westminster's time capsule, which will be opened in 50 years. Mark your calendars, kids!