TRACKS & TRAILS

YOUR GUIDE TO FREE EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES ON CITY OF FORT COLLINS NATURAL AREAS

JUNE–OCTOBER 2017

City of Fort Collins Natural Areas

naturally yours

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City of Fort Collins

Discover Your Natural Areas!

Natural areas are special places to explore and treasure. The City of Fort Collins Natural Areas Department manages more than 40 natural areas encompassing over 36,000 acres and 100 miles of trails—there's probably a natural area near you! Check the maps on pages 42-45 or visit *fcgov.com/naturalareas.*

Fort Collins natural areas are open from 5 a.m. until 11 p.m. except Bobcat Ridge, Gateway, Reservoir Ridge, and Soapstone Prairie natural areas, which are open dawn to dusk. Soapstone Prairie is closed December–February.

Safety

The activities and events offered in this guide often take place in natural areas where you are responsible for your own safety. Outdoor activities include the potential for serious injury, death, or property loss. Choose activities that match your abilities. Be prepared for changing weather conditions. No pets are allowed at *Tracks & Trails* programs.

What the Symbols Mean

Handicapped accessible; wheelchairs welcome. Paved or hard-packed trails; distance is 1 mile or less with moderate inclines. *Auxiliary aids and services are available for persons with disabilities.* V/TDD: Dial 711 for Relay Colorado.

Asistencia disponible en español a ningún costo.

16+ Some programs are not suitable for all audiences and have age restrictions indicated by a symbol such as this. Children must be accompanied by adults on all programs.

New for 2017! Registration is required for all programs. Go to *fcgov.com/register* to register. Set up your account with your name, phone number, and email. By registering, you will receive reminders and updates. For assistance, call 970-416-2815 or email *naturalareas@fcgov.com*.

Registrations and Cancellations

Everything you need to know about an activity can be found in four places:

- *fcgov.com/register* for descriptions and registrations
- *fcgov.com/naturalareas* for cancellations and updates
- Like City of Fort Collins Natural Areas on Facebook for news and information
- Follow @FCNaturalAreas for cancellations, updates, and trail conditions.

Activities may be canceled due to inclement weather. Check *fcgov.com/naturalareas* before you go! Field trip leaders may cancel an activity in progress for safety reasons.

Program Leaders

Master Naturalists are highly trained volunteer educators who lead most of the *Tracks & Trails* activities. They love to share their enthusiasm, knowledge, and passion for natural areas. You'll have lots of fun and gain a deeper understanding of your natural areas by attending a Master Naturalist-led program.

Programs for Groups

Groups of six or more are required to schedule their activities at a separate time. To request an activity for your group, contact Alex, Community Educator at 970-416-2043 or *amchenry@fcgov.com*. At least two weeks advance notice is required. All activities are free.

Groups of 15 or more visiting a natural area without a Master Naturalist must apply for a permit in advance, at *fcgov.com/naturalareas/permits.php*. Permits are free and help ensure there are no conflicts on the day you plan to visit.

Kristi Schwickerath

JUNE NATURAL AREA ACTIVITIES

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1 Nature Nuggets: Animal Hide-n-Seek, p.19	**2** Artists on the Ridge, p.30 Skygazing at Fossil Creek Reservoir, p.25	**3** Wildflowers Through the Seasons, p.33 Family Nature Club, p.21
4 Natural Areas Challenge at Open Streets, p.14	**5**	**6** Nature in the City: Community Projects Development Series, p.15	**7** Stroller Strolls, p.19	**8** Nature Nuggets: Slinky Snakes, p.20	**9** Adult Night Walk, p.23	**10** Celebrate Native Plants, p.15 Intro. to Nature Journaling, p.30
11	**12**	**13** Nix Farm Native Plant Garden Tour, p.33	**14** Wildflowers Through the Seasons, p.33	**15** Nature Nuggets: Animal Hide-n-Seek, p.19 The Story of the American Bison, p.35	**16** Campfire at the Cabin, p.23	**17** National Trails Day, p.15 Astronomy at Bobcat Ridge, p.24
18	**19**	**20** From Shore to Ocean Depths, p.36	**21** Toddlers on the Trail, p.19 Night Hike for Teens, p.39	**22** Nature Nuggets: Slinky Snakes, p.20	**23** Archaeological Dig Tour, p.28 Campfire at Nix Farm, p.23	**24** Bugs, Blooms and Nature Captured in a Naturalist's Notebook, p.30 Soapstone Treasures: The Bison Archaeological Connection... p.29
25 Hike Through the Ages, p.29	**26** The Web of Life at Bobcat Ridge, p.33	**27** Wildlife Yoga for Kids, p.31 Family Night Walk, p.23	**28** Archaeological Dig Tour, p.28	**29** Nature Nuggets: Tricky Tracks, p.20 Soapstone Bison: Creating the Herd, p.27	**30**	

Registration is required for all programs. Register at *fcgov.com/register* or call 970-416-2815. **Check for cancellations** at *fcgov.com/naturalareas* before you go!

JULY NATURAL AREA ACTIVITIES

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1 Skygazing at Fossil Creek Reservoir, p.25
2	**3**	**4**	**5** Senior Sensory Roll and Stroll, p.37 Archaeological Dig Tour, p.28 Perspectives in Nature, p.31	**6** Nature Nuggets: If Skulls Could Talk, p.20	**7** Natural History of Bobcat Ridge, p.33	**8** Smithsonian at Lindenmeier, p.29
9 Mountain Bike Ride Along the Poudre River, p.34	**10**	**11** Grassland Disturbances: Perceived Negatives Can Be Positive!, p.27	**12** Wildflowers Through the Seasons, p.33 Stroller Strolls, p.19	**13** Nature Nuggets: Tricky Tracks, p.20 Nature in the City: Community Projects Development Series, p.15	**14** Campfire at the Cabin, p.24	**15** Astronomy at Bobcat Ridge, p.24
16	**17**	**18** Adult Night Walk, p.23	**19**	**20** Nature Nuggets: If Skulls Could Talk, p.20	**21** Family Night Walk, p.23	**22** The Story of the American Bison, p.35 Family Nature Club, p.21
23	**24**	**25** Meditate and Regenerate, p.31	**26** Toddlers on the Trail, p.19	**27** Nature Nuggets: Tall Tree Tales, p.20	**28** Campfire at Nix Farm, p.24	**29** Flood Education Day, p.15 Skygazing at Fossil Creek Reservoir, p.25
30	**31**					

Registration is required for all programs. Register at *fcgov.com/register* or call 970-416-2815. **Check for cancellations** at *fcgov.com/naturalareas* before you go!

Norm Kelly

AUGUST NATURAL AREA ACTIVITIES

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1 Nature in the City: Community Projects Development Series, p.15	**2** Stroller Strolls, p.19	**3** Nature Nuggets: Night Owls and Buggy Bats, p.20	**4** Wildlife Yoga for Kids, p.31	**5** Wade the River, p.16 Big Landscapes, Small Details, p.31
6	**7** Senior Nature River Stroll, p.37	**8** Campfire at Nix Farm, p.24	**9** Wildflowers Through the Seasons, p.33	**10** Nature Nuggets: Tall Tree Tales, p.20 State of the Poudre: A River Health Report Card, p.27	**11** Teen Mountain Bike Ride Along the Poudre River, p.39	**12** Natural History of Pineridge, p.34 Adult Night Walk, p.23 Walk the Gangplank, p.37
13	**14**	**15** Environmental Leadership for Teens, p.39	**16** Toddlers on the Trail, p.19 Family Night Walk, p.23	**17** Nature Nuggets: Night Owls and Buggy Bats, p.20	**18** Campfire at the Cabin, p.24	**19** Soapstone Treasures: The Bison Archaeology Connection, p.29 Family Nature Club, p.21
20	**21**	**22**	**23**	**24**	**25**	**26** Naturalists at Soapstone Prairie, p.34 Astronomy at Bobcat Ridge, p.24
27	**28**	**29** Black-Footed Ferret Exploration, p.35	**30**	**31**		

Registration is required for all programs. Register at *fcgov.com/register* or call 970-416-2815. **Check for cancellations** at *fcgov.com/naturalareas* before you go!

Chris Metz

SEPTEMBER NATURAL AREA ACTIVITIES

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1	2 Wild by Wild, p.16
3 Loren Eiseley: Scientist, Poet and Time Traveler, p.29	4	5	6 Senior Sensory Roll and Stroll, p.37 Amphibian Decline: Global to Local, a View From the Trenches, p.27	7 The Story of the American Bison, p.35	8 Adult Night Walk, p.23	9 Environmental Stewardship Project for Teens, p.39 Skygazing at Fossil Creek Reservoir, p.25
10	11 Rustic Women of Soapstone Prairie, p.29	12	13	14 If Skulls Could Talk Senior Stroll, p.37 Black-Footed Ferret Exploration, p.35	15 Astronomy at Bobcat Ridge, p.24	16 Nature's Harvest Fest, p.17
17	18	19	20	21	22 Campfire at the Cabin, p.24	23 Family Nature Club, p.21
24	25	26	27	28 Ancient People of Fossil Creek, p.27	29	30 National Public Lands Day, p.17 Mountain Bike Ride at Soapstone, p.34

Registration is required for all programs. Register at *fcgov.com/register* or call 970-416-2815. **Check for cancellations** at *fcgov.com/naturalareas* before you go!

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OCTOBER NATURAL AREA ACTIVITIES

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1	2	3	4 Black-Footed Ferret Exploration, p.35	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13 Campfire at Nix Farm, p.24	14 Hike Through the Ages, p.29 Introduction to Animal Tracking, p.34 Family Nature Club, p.21
15	16 Make a Difference Week, p.17	17	18	19	20 Artists in Autumn, p.31	21 Rustic Women of Soapstone Prairie, p.29 Astronomy at Bobcat Ridge, p.24
22	23	24	25	26	27 Skygazing at Fossil Creek Reservoir, p.25	28
29	30	31				

Registration is required for all programs. Register at *fcgov.com/register* or call 970-416-2815. **Check for cancellations** at *fcgov.com/naturalareas* before you go!

City of Fort Collins

SPECIAL EVENTS IN 2017

The following events are organized by the Natural Areas Department and partnering organizations. Registration is required for some but not all of these events.

Natural Areas Challenge at Open Streets

Sun. June 4, 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
Red Fox Meadows Natural Area

Open Streets works with communities to raise awareness of the network of amazing trails available for navigating Fort Collins on foot or by bike. Join us at Red Fox Meadows to complete various natural areas challenges and win prizes! Free, no registration required. Information at *fcgov.com/openstreets.*

Nature in the City: Community Projects Development Series

Tues. June 6, 5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.
Thurs. July 13, 5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.
Tues. Aug. 1, 5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.
Nix Farm, 1745 Hoffman Mill Rd.

The City of Fort Collins' Nature in the City program envisions a connected open space network for people and wildlife. Residents, neighborhoods, and HOA's are invited to develop project ideas and apply for funding to help make this happen. Applications are due this fall for 2018 projects. Join us to learn about available resources, review previous projects, and address common pitfalls. We will cover a different topic each session and there will be time for individual consultations to help you fully communicate your vision. Come to as many sessions as you like. **Registration is required** at *fcgov.com/register.*

Celebrate Native Plants! Native Plant Speaker Series

Sat. June 10, 10:00 a.m. – noon
The Gardens on Spring Creek, 2145 Centre Ave.

It's Native Plant Week. Come celebrate and learn all about native plants and how to use them in your yard from a diverse collection of riveting speakers. Please join us at 10 a.m. for the welcome followed by a variety of 15-minute breakout sessions. Check *fcgov.com/gardens* for updates.

National Trails Day

Sat. June 17, 8:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
Bobcat Ridge Natural Area

Get outdoors and give back! Volunteers of all ages are invited to help maintain the trails at Bobcat Ridge. Kid-friendly projects and activities will be available. A free celebratory lunch will be offered at noon. This project is sponsored by City of Fort Collins Natural Areas Department, REI, Backcountry Delicatessen, and Larimer County Conservation Corps. All volunteers under the age of 16 must be with an adult 18+. Free, **registration is required** at *fcgov.com/register.*

Flood Education Day

Sat. July 29, 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
Spring Park, 2100 Mathews St.

Visit the Natural Areas booth to learn about the ecological benefits of floods as we commemorate the 1997 Spring Creek flood. Other hands-on booths will cover flood safety and preparedness, the importance of flood mitigation and the history of flooding in Fort Collins. Join for a guided walk or bike tour along the Spring Creek Trail. For information visit *fcgov.com/follow-the-flood.*

City of Fort Collins

Wade the River

Sat. Aug. 5, 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
Lee Martinez Park, 600 North Sherwood St.

Wade the river with dip nets and collecting trays to discover what lives beneath the surface of the Cache la Poudre River. Biologists will be on hand to help identify your finds. Fishes, insects, larvae, algae, and more are easily seen with field microscopes. All equipment is provided. Bring your own towels, wear closed-toe shoes that can get wet, and sun and mosquito protection. No registration required but you can get a reminder and updates by signing up at *fcgov.com/register.* The river is dynamic and so are we; we may have to change dates, locations, or cancel for safety reasons.

Wild by Wild: Photographs of Wildlife by Wildlife

Sat. Sept. 2, 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
Fort Collins Museum of Discovery, 408 Mason Ct.

Stop by and view the gallery of the latest wild animal "selfies" taken by remote cameras. Fun family activities include checking a camera, finding wildlife signs, guessing animal sounds, and voting for the best image. Free, no registration required but you can get a reminder and updates by signing up at *fcgov.com/register.*

Registration is required for all programs. Register at *fcgov.com/register* or call 970-416-2815.

Nature's Harvest Fest

Sat. Sept. 16, 9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
The Gardens on Spring Creek, 2145 Centre Ave.

Celebrate local nature and agriculture! Everyone is invited to a free day of fun and learning for the whole family that includes live animals, interactive activities, live music, food, vendors, presentations, giveaways, and more! Check *fcgov.com/gardens* for updates.

National Public Lands Day

Sat. Sept. 30

Save the date for a family-friendly project that celebrates giving back to the open spaces you love! Project registration, location and description will be available in late August at *fcgov.com/naturalareas/volunteers.php.* Free, **registration is required** at *fcgov.com/register.*

Make a Difference Week

Oct. 16 – 20

Pitch in and make a difference. Help the Natural Areas Department support the mission of United Way by volunteering in our community. **Registration is required.** Project information and registration will be available in early fall. Visit *impact.uwaylc.org* for information.

Check for cancellations at *fcgov.com/naturalareas* before you go!

City of Fort Collins

BUDDING YOUNG NATURALISTS

These activities are designed for families with young children. Organized groups should schedule programs at a separate time; contact Alex, Community Educator at 970-416-2043 or *amchenry@fcgov.com.*

Stroller Strolls

10:00 – 11:00 a.m.

Head off on adventure—toddler style! Bring your child (under 3 years old), stroller, and snacks to explore from the ground up in a kid-friendly natural area.

DATE	NATURAL AREA
Wed. June 7	**Ross** Meet at the playground at Rolland Moore Park.
Wed. July 12	**Fossil Creek Reservoir** Meet at the parking lot.
Wed. Aug. 2	**Prospect Ponds** Meet at the south parking lot.

Toddlers on the Trail

10:00 – 11:00 a.m.

Load your toddler into a backpack and join the fun! These activities are similar to Stroller Strolls but travel where wheels cannot. Bring your child (under 3 years old), backpack, and snacks.

DATE	NATURAL AREA
Wed. June 21	**Magpie Meander** Meet at Soft Gold Park, 520 Hickory St.
Wed. July 26	**Riverbend Ponds** Meet at the parking lot off Timberline and Cairnes Dr.
Wed. Aug. 16	**Butterfly Woods** Meet at the Lions Open Space parking lot.

Nature Nuggets

9:30 – 10:30 a.m. or 11:00 – noon

Bring your little ones (ages 3-7 years) to learn about nature with stories and hands-on activities. Parents/guardians must be present at all times. The 9:30 program is repeated at 11:00 a.m. Please be on time. Organized groups should schedule programs at a separate time; contact Alex, Community Educator at 970-416-2043 or *amchenry@fcgov.com.*

DATE	NATURAL AREA	DESCRIPTION
Thurs. June 1 Thurs. June 15	**Lee Martinez Park** Meet at the parking lot by the tennis courts.	**Animal Hide-n-Seek** Animals can blend in without even trying. Discover how camouflage works in the wild.

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Nature Nuggets, continued

DATE	NATURAL AREA	DESCRIPTION
Thurs. June 8 Thurs. June 22	**Fossil Creek Reservoir** Meet at the parking lot.	**Slinky Snakes** Discover what it is like to be a snake and learn what makes these animals unique.
Thurs. June 29 Thurs. July 13	**Ross** Meet at the Rolland Moore Park playground.	**Tricky Tracks** You may not always see wildlife but they leave clues behind!
Thurs. July 6 Thurs. July 20	**Nix Farm** 1745 Hoffman Mill Rd.	**If Skulls Could Talk** Predators and prey have different skulls. Discover why and learn how to tell the difference.
Thurs. July 27 Thurs. Aug. 10	**Magpie Meander** Meet at Soft Gold Park, 520 Hickory St.	**Tall Tree Tales** If trees could talk, what would they say? Hear stories behind the bark.
Thurs. Aug. 3 Thurs. Aug 17	**Riverbend Ponds** Meet at the parking lot off Timberline and Cairnes Dr.	**Night Owls and Buggy Bats** Discover fun survival secrets of these night creatures.

Registration is required for all programs. Register at *fcgov.com/register* or call 970-416-2815.

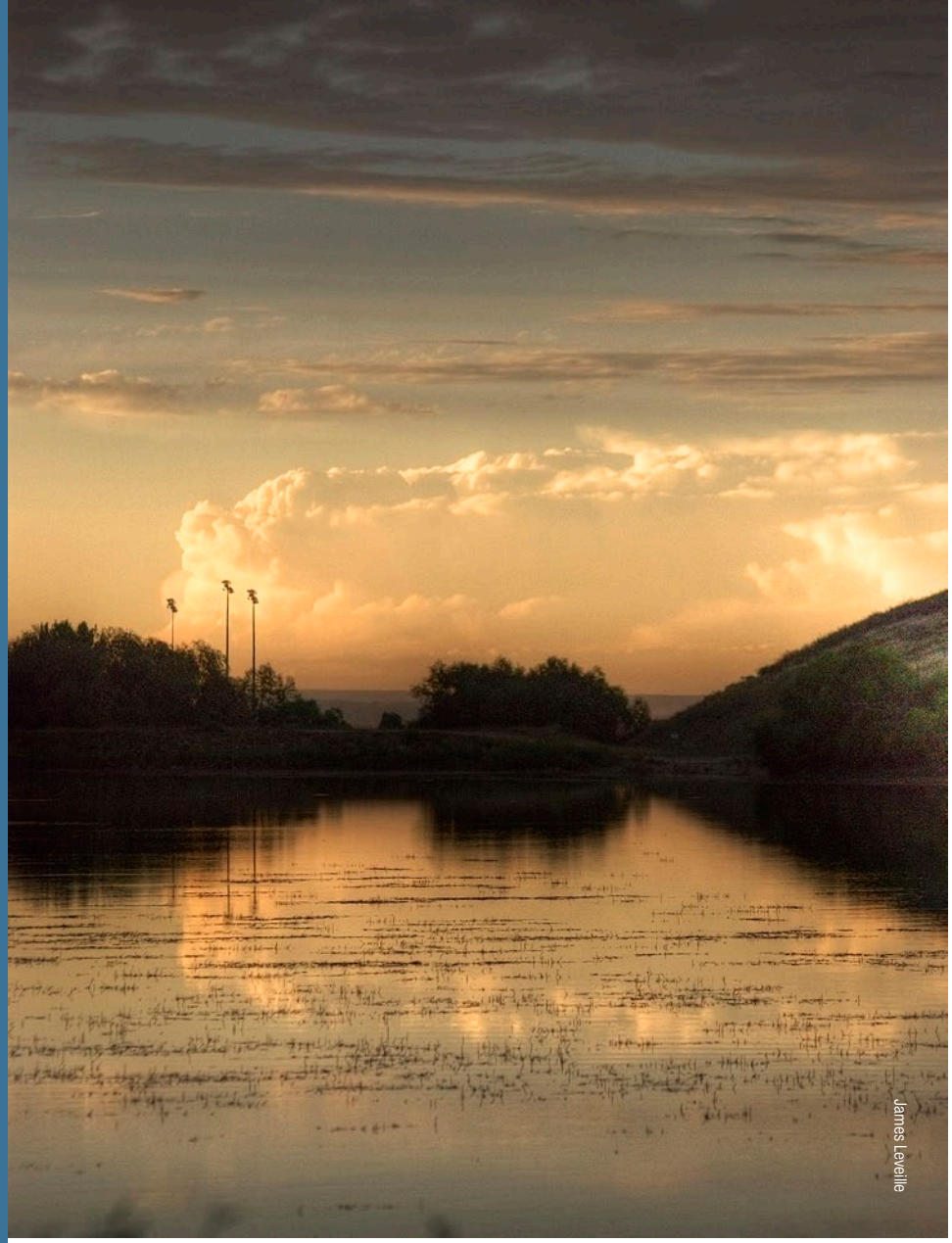
City of Fort Collins

Family Nature Club

Calling all families with children 12 and under! You probably know that kids who spend more time outside have greater attention spans, are more creative, and tend to be healthier. Sometimes it's difficult to get kids outside. In the Natural Areas Family Nature Club, you'll meet other families with similar interests and challenges. We'll visit a different natural area each month and discover fun family activities and resources. Monthly commitment encouraged but not required. Plan to be outside in all weather, get dirty, and have fun! Parents must actively participate in all sessions. Space is limited; register early.

DATE	TIME	NATURAL AREA
Sat. June 3	9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.	**Nix Farm** 1745 Hoffman Mill Rd.
Sat. July 22	9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.	**Red Fox Meadows** Meet at the parking lot off Taft Hill Rd.
Sat. Aug. 19	9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.	**Butterfly Woods** Meet at the Lions Open Space parking lot.
Sat. Sept. 23	9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.	**North Shields Ponds** Meet at the parking lot.
Sat. Oct. 14	9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.	**Bobcat Ridge** Meet at the parking lot.

Check for cancellations at *fcgov.com/naturalareas* before you go!


James Leveille

NATURAL AREAS AFTER DARK

Explore and enjoy your natural areas after the sun goes down! Organized groups should schedule programs at a separate time; contact Alex, Community Educator at 970-416-2043 or *amchenry@fcgov.com.*

Natural Night Walks

Walks are offered near the full moon with lots of natural light—no need for flashlights! Dress warmly, wear closed-toe walking shoes, and bring water to drink. **Location provided at time of registration.** 0.5 - 2 miles; easy.

Family Night Walks

Families enjoy a short walk with interactive activities and stories about nocturnal animals and night senses.

DATE	TIME	NATURAL AREA
Tues. June 27	8:00 – 9:00 p.m.	SW Fort Collins
Fri. July 21	8:00 – 9:00 p.m.	NW Fort Collins
Wed. Aug. 16	7:30 – 8:30 p.m.	SW Fort Collins

Adult Night Walks 16+

Adults experience a longer, quieter walk with time for reflection. Children 16 and older may come to adult hikes but must be accompanied by parents.

DATE	TIME	NATURAL AREA
Fri. June 9	8:00 – 10:00 p.m.	NW Fort Collins
Tues. July 18	8:00 – 10:00 p.m.	SW Fort Collins
Sat. Aug. 12	7:30 – 9:30 p.m.	NW Fort Collins
Fri. Sept. 8	7:15 – 9:15 p.m.	SW Fort Collins

Campfire Programs

Spend an evening cozy by a campfire complete with stories and s'mores! These programs are suitable for all ages. Dress warmly and bring water to drink.

Campfires at Coyote Ridge include a hike on a marked trail to the cabin. Meet your naturalist guide there and enjoy a campfire and stories on the deck. Please allow 30-40 minutes to reach the cabin. The campfire begins at the time listed below. Bring a flashlight for the walk back. 2 miles; easy.

Campfires at Nix Farm do not include a hike and are wheelchair accessible. Bring lawn chairs or blankets to sit on if you like (limited seating available).

DATE	TIME	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION
Fri. June 16 Fri. June 23	8:00 – 9:30 p.m.	**Coyote Ridge Cabin** **Nix Farm** ♿	**Nighttime Navigation** Discover how bats, bugs, and other animals use their senses to navigate at night.

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Campfire Programs, continued

DATE	TIME	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION
Fri. July 14 Fri. July 28	8:00 – 9:30 p.m.	**Coyote Ridge Cabin** **Nix Farm**	**Starlight Stories** Join us for a night of folklore by the fire and learn of the important role stories play in our natural history.
Tues. Aug. 8 Fri. Aug. 18	7:30 – 9:00 p.m.	**Nix Farm** **Coyote Ridge Cabin**	**Insects in the Night** Find out the amazing adaptations insects use to thrive in the darkness.
Fri. Sept. 22 Fri. Oct. 13	7:00 – 8:30 p.m. 6:30 – 8:00 p.m.	**Coyote Ridge Cabin** **Nix Farm**	**Fireside Frights** Who is it out there? Learn what animals are doing while you sleep.

Astronomy at Bobcat Ridge

Enjoy a brief, family-friendly astronomy program followed by skygazing. Volunteers from the Northern Colorado Astronomical Society provide telescopes for your viewing pleasure. Dress warmly, bring water and a blanket or chair to sit on in the parking lot. Program begins at the picnic shelter, a 0.25 mile-walk. **Please arrive on time! The gate closes shortly after start times and parking is not allowed on the road outside the gate.**

DATE	TIME	DESCRIPTION
Sat. June 17	8:30 – 10:30 p.m.	**Jumpin' Jupiter** Learn about the largest planet in our solar system.
Sat. July 15	8:30 – 10:30 p.m.	**Delightful Darkness** Learn to love the dark! Darkness is necessary for both people and wildlife.
Sat. Aug. 26	8:00 – 10:30 p.m.	**The Future of Pluto** Learn what's in store for this dwarf planet.
Fri. Sept. 15	7:30 – 10:00 p.m.	**The Magnificent Milky Way** Learn about our amazing galaxy and see the Milky Way in the autumn sky.
Sat. Oct. 21	6:30 – 9:00 p.m.	**Meteor Mayhem** Experience the peak of the Orionid meteor shower.

Registration is required for all programs. Register at *fcgov.com/register* or call 970-416-2815.

Jeremy White

Skygazing at Fossil Creek Reservoir

Volunteers from the Northern Colorado Astronomical Society provide telescopes for your viewing pleasure and share their knowledge about stars, planets, galaxies, and more. Dress warmly and bring a blanket or chair to sit on. Meet in the parking lot.

DATE	TIME
Fri. June 2	9:00 – 11:00 p.m.
Sat. July 1	9:00 – 11:00 p.m.
Sat. July 29	9:00 – 11:00 p.m.
Sat. Sept. 9	8:00 – 10:00 p.m.
Fri. Oct. 27	7:30 – 9:30 p.m.
Fri. Nov. 24	7:30 – 9:30 p.m.
Sat. Dec. 23	7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

Check for cancellations at *fcgov.com/naturalareas* before you go!

NATURAL AREAS AFTER DARK

City of Fort Collins

SCIENCE BEHIND THE SCENERY 16+

These informative talks are designed for adults to learn more about research and science related to natural areas. Parking is limited—please carpool, bike or walk. Bring a snack if you like.

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DATE	TIME	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION
Thurs. June 29	7:00 – 8:00 p.m.	**Community Room, 215 N Mason** Enter through the north door.	**Soapstone Bison: Creating the Herd** Dr. Jennifer Barfield, CSU, tells the story of the Laramie Foothills bison herd at Soapstone Prairie. Discover the amazing reproductive techniques used to establish the herd.
Tues. July 11	7:00 – 8:00 p.m.	**Nix Farm** 1745 Hoffman Mill Rd.	**Grassland Disturbances: Perceived Negatives Can Be Positive!** Ray Aberle, M.A. will discuss his research on the role of fire and grazing in creating well-functioning and healthy grassland systems.
Thurs. Aug. 10	7:00 – 8:00 p.m.	**Community Room, 215 N Mason** Enter through the north door.	**The State of the Poudre: A River Health Report Card** Jen Shanahan, Watershed Planner, will talk about the recently completed Poudre River Health Report Card. Come learn about how to assess river health and how the Poudre River scores.
Wed. Sept. 6	7:00 – 8:00 p.m.	**Nix Farm** 1745 Hoffman Mill Rd.	**Amphibian Decline: Global to Local, a View From the Trenches** Amphibian decline may seem like an exotic issue, but here in the Front Range of Colorado, some frogs are in trouble. Dr. Erin Muths will discuss a variety of amphibians and detail some of the local research on the secret life of toads.
Thurs. Sept. 28	7:00 – 8:00 p.m.	**Community Room, 215 N Mason** Enter through the north door.	**Ancient People of Fossil Creek** Discover what life may have been like for the ancient inhabitants of the plains. Anthropologist Dr. Jason LaBelle uncovered artifacts from over 1,200 years ago at Fossil Creek Wetlands.

City of Fort Collins

VOICES OF THE PAST

From ancient to modern times, northern Colorado has been a great place to live. Discover people of the past that have lived in and shaped our community. Organized groups should schedule programs at a separate time; contact Alex, Community Educator at 970-416-2043 or *amchenry@fcgov.com*. Please bring water, food, sun protection, and any other comforts you might need.

DATE	TIME	NATURAL AREA	DESCRIPTION
Fri. June 23 Wed. June 28 Wed. July 5	9:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.	Location provided at time of registration.	**Archaeological Dig Site Tours** Witness Anthropologist Dr. Jason LaBelle and his team of CSU students conduct an archaeological dig. Discover what life may have been like for the ancient inhabitants of the plains. 0.5 miles; easy. 16+

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Registration is required for all programs. Register at *fcgov.com/register* or call 970-416-2815.

DATE	TIME	NATURAL AREA	DESCRIPTION
Sun. June 25 Sat. Oct. 14	9:00 a.m.–3:00 p.m.	**Soapstone Prairie** Meet at the south parking lot; approximately one hour driving time from Fort Collins.	**Hike Through the Ages** Explore with experts in geology, ecology, and history to learn how Soapstone Prairie came to be, the creatures that keep it functioning, and the homesteading and ranching history of this area. Options for moderate 3-mile or moderate-strenuous 6-mile hike. 12+
Sat. June 24 Sat. Aug. 19	9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.	**Soapstone Prairie** Meet at the south parking lot shelter; approximately one hour driving time from Fort Collins.	**Soapstone Treasures: The Bison Archaeology Connection!** Learn about the acquisition of Soapstone Prairie, the history of the American Bison, and the treasures uncovered at the Lindenmeier archaeological site. 16+
Sat. July 8	10:00 a.m. – noon	**Soapstone Prairie** Meet at the north parking lot; approximately one hour driving time from Fort Collins.	**Smithsonian at Lindenmeier** Travel back in time to learn how Paleoindians survived the high plains and how the Smithsonian Institution archaeologists uncovered their story in the 1930s. 0.25 miles; easy. 12+
Mon. Sept. 11 Sat. Oct. 21	1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.	**Soapstone Prairie** Meet at the north parking lot; approximately one hour driving time from Fort Collins.	**Rustic Women of Soapstone Prairie** Discover three pioneer women homesteaders and get a glimpse of early life on the prairie. 0.25 miles; easy.
Sun. Sept. 3	10:00 a.m. – noon	**Soapstone Prairie** Meet at the north parking lot; approximately one hour driving time from Fort Collins.	**Loren Eiseley: Scientist, Poet and Time Traveler** Through his own words, learn how this scientist and writer made a key discovery in the 1930s at the famed Lindenmeier site. 0.5 miles; easy. 12+

Check for cancellations at *fcgov.com/naturalareas* before you go!

VOICES OF THE PAST

CREATIVE BY NATURE

Set your creative side free and experience nature in a new way. No art experience required! Children under 16 must be accompanied by an adult. Bring drinking water, a snack if you like, and something to sit on (a stool, jacket, pad, etc.). Feel free to bring your own art supplies or borrow ours. Organized groups should schedule programs at a separate time; contact Alex, Community Educator at 970-416-2043, *amchenry@fcgov.com*.

DATE	TIME	NATURAL AREA	DESCRIPTION
Fri. June 2	9:30 a.m. – noon	**Reservoir Ridge** Meet at the west parking lot off County Rd 23.	**Artists on the Ridge** Treat yourself to a day in the field and learn to sketch among pine trees and geologic fault lines. 3 miles; moderate. 9+
Sat. June 10	9:00 – 11:00 a.m.	**Reservoir Ridge** Meet at Primrose Studio.	**Introduction to Nature Journaling** Be introduced to the art materials easiest to use in nature, types of journals, and journaling techniques. Participate in studio and outdoor nature journaling. 0.5 mile; easy. 9+
Sat. June 24	9:00 a.m. – noon	**Reservoir Ridge** Meet at Primrose Studio.	**Bugs, Blooms & Nature Captured in a Naturalist's Notebook** Learn how to use art as a tool for discovering and capturing the details of plants, insects, and other creatures. 1 mile; easy. 9+

Continued on next page

Registration is required for all programs. Register at *fcgov.com/register* or call 970-416-2815.

Creative by Nature, continued

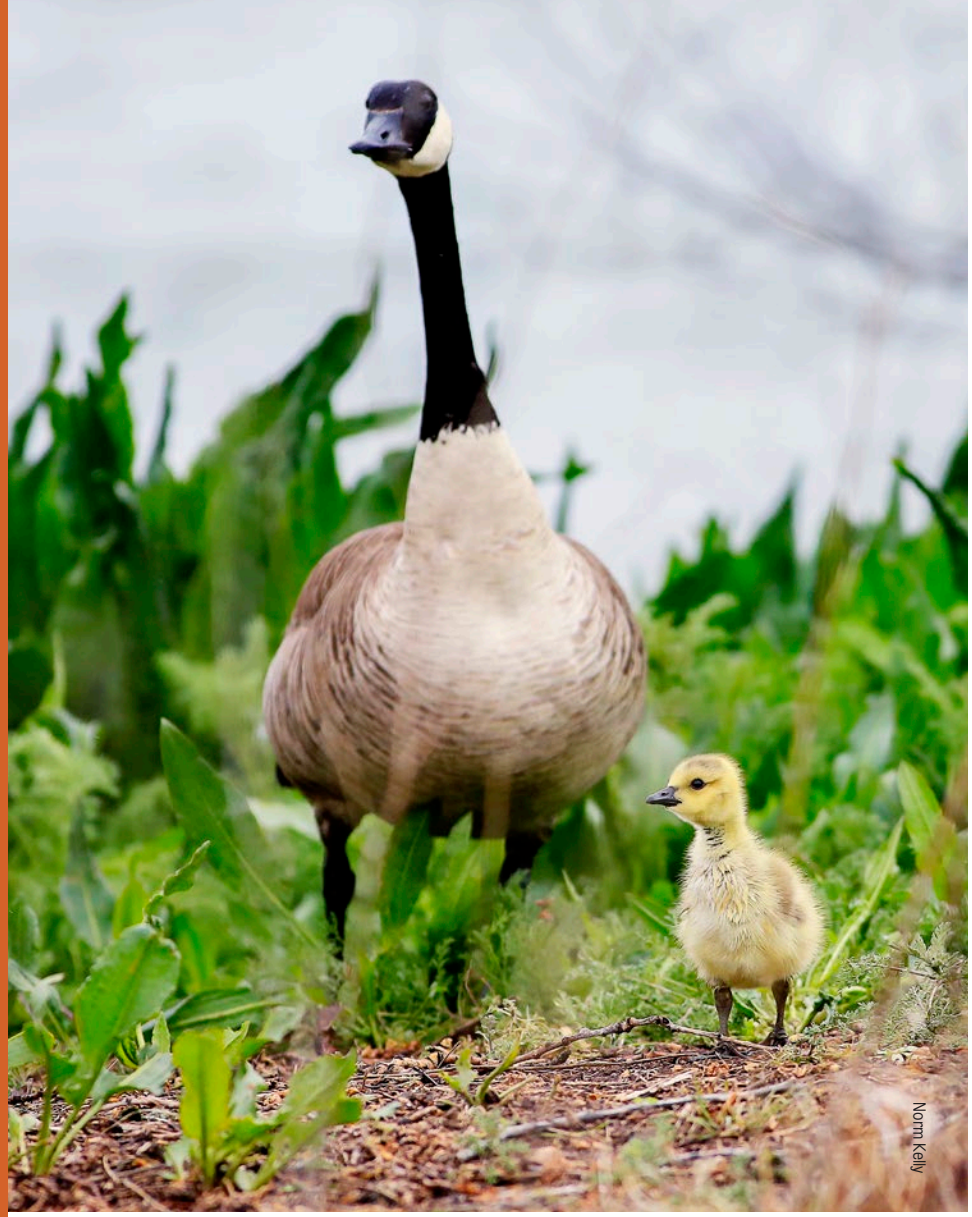
DATE	TIME	NATURAL AREA	DESCRIPTION
Wed. July 5	5:30 – 7:30 p.m.	**Bobcat Ridge** Meet at the parking lot.	**Perspectives in Nature** Work with pen and pencil to develop your perspective drawing skills while observing plants in their early growth phase. 1 mile; easy. 9+
Sat. Aug. 5	9:00 – 11:00 p.m.	**Fossil Creek Reservoir** Meet at the parking lot.	**Big Landscape, Small Details** Enjoy the journaling opportunity to record the foothills and red rock landscape in evening light. Learn tips and techniques on capturing landscape formations and plant life. 0.5 miles; easy. 9+
Fri. Oct. 20	5:30 – 7:30 p.m.	**Nix Farm** 1745 Hoffman Mill Rd.	**Artists in Autumn** Practice your art skills on varied media to capture the colors of fall. 0.5 miles; easy. 9+

Natural Areas Yoga

Relax, slow down, and enjoy a calm moment in nature. All skill levels welcome. Bring water and your own yoga mat and/or towel. Participants are encouraged to take a walk through the natural area before or after the yoga session.

DATE	TIME	NATURAL AREA	DESCRIPTION
Tues. June 27 Fri. Aug. 4	9:30 – 10:30 a.m.	**Red Fox Meadows** Meet at the parking lot off Taft Hill Rd.	**Wildlife Yoga for Kids** Get moving with some stretching and balancing as we explore different animal poses. Ages 12 and under; parents must be present.
Tues. July 25	6:00 – 7:00 p.m.	**Red Fox Meadows** Meet at the parking lot off Taft Hill Rd.	**Meditate and Regenerate** Relax and de-stress with this restorative practice while enjoying the simple beauties of the natural area. 16+

Check for cancellations at *fcgov.com/naturalareas* before you go!



NATURAL DISCOVERIES

Enjoy a variety of programs and hikes with trained naturalists. Organized groups should schedule programs at a separate time; contact Alex, Community Educator at 970-416-2043 or *amchenry@fcgov.com*. Be prepared! Bring water, food, sun protection, appropriate footwear, and any other comforts you might need. Unprepared individuals may be denied participation for their safety.

Continued on next page

Natural Discoveries, continued

DATE	TIME	NATURAL AREA	DESCRIPTION
Sat. June 3 Wed. June 14 Wed. July 12 Wed. Aug. 9	10:00 a.m. – noon 5:30 – 7:00 p.m.	**Soapstone Prairie** Meet at the north parking lot; approximately one hour driving time from Fort Collins. **Bobcat Ridge** Meet at the parking lot.	**Wildflowers Through the Seasons** Take a walk to see what is in bloom and learn about native plants. 1-2 miles; easy. 12+
Tues. June 13	9:00 – 10:30 a.m.	**Nix Farm** 1745 Hoffman Mill Road	**Jewel in the City: The Nix Farm Native Plant Garden** Learn why native plants are important for birds, pollinators, and other wildlife. Explore the Nix Native Plant Garden and come away with some wildflower seeds and ideas for incorporating native plants in your home gardens.
Mon. June 26	10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.	**Bobcat Ridge** Meet at the parking lot.	**The Web of Life at Bobcat Ridge** Learn how the varied plant and animal communities of Bobcat Ridge support the web of life. 3-4 miles; easy. 16+
Fri. July 7	10:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.	**Bobcat Ridge** Meet at the parking lot.	**Natural History of Bobcat Ridge** Hike through three different habitats, discovering the unique qualities and connections between them. 3 miles; moderate.

Continued on next page

Natural Discoveries, continued

DATE	TIME	NATURAL AREA	DESCRIPTION
Sun. July 9 Sat. Sept. 30	9:00 a.m. 10:00 a.m.	**Lee Martinez Park** Meet at the parking lot; bike route will be dirt trails along the Poudre River. **Soapstone Prairie** Meet at the south parking lot.	**Mountain Bike Rides** For beginner and advanced riders alike! Bring your bike and helmet. Members of Overland Mountain Bike Club will lead the ride and Master Naturalists will provide fascinating information about the area. Multiple route options; easy-strenuous.
Sat. Aug. 12	9:30 – 11:00 a.m.	**Pineridge** Meet at the west parking lot. Do not park at Maxwell for this program.	**Natural History of Pineridge** Explore the natural history along the lower tree line and prairie and learn about the ecological connections between the prairie, shrub lands and ponderosa forests. 1 mile; easy.
Sat. Aug. 26	10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.	**Soapstone Prairie** Approximately one hour driving time from Fort Collins.	**Naturalists at Soapstone Prairie** Enjoy a day of learning about the wonders of Soapstone Prairie. Stop by any time. Naturalists will be stationed at the south parking lot, the Lindenmeier Overlook, the bison viewing area and the Towhee Trailhead near the north parking lot.
Sat. Oct. 14	8:30 – 11:30 a.m.	**Nix Farm** 1745 Hoffman Mill Rd.	**Introduction to Animal Tracking** Learn the basics of animal tracking with the opportunity to practice your new skills. 16+

Black-Footed Ferret Exploration 16+

Explore one of North America's rarest animals in this unique opportunity. We will journey together to Soapstone Prairie for a presentation about black-footed ferrets. Then we will hike and search for this elusive resident. **Registration is required** and participation is limited to protect the animals. Bring snacks, water, closed-toed shoes, warm layers, and a flashlight. Transportation provided from Fort Collins. 1-2 miles; moderate with uneven terrain.

DATE	TIME
Tues. Aug 29	6:00 – 11:00 p.m.
Thurs. Sept. 14	5:30 – 10:30 p.m.
Wed. Oct. 4	5:00 – 10:00 p.m.

The Story of the American Bison

See American Bison in their natural habitat, the shortgrass prairie! Observe the herd and learn of their amazing story. Bring binoculars, snacks, water, closed-toe shoes, and sun protection. 0.25 miles; easy. *Please note: The bison are constantly on the move and we cannot guarantee that they will be visible.*

DATE	TIME	NATURAL AREA
Thurs. June 15	4:00 p.m. – 6:00 pm	**Soapstone Prairie** Meet at the south parking lot; approximately one hour drive time from Fort Collins.
Sat. July 22	10:00 a.m – noon	
Thurs. Sept. 7	4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.	

Continued on next page

City of Fort Collins

Geology–Ecology Explorations 12+

Explore with experts in geology and ecology to uncover the secrets of the oldest rocks in Fort Collins and how the landscape was shaped by natural forces to form the ecological landscape. Bring sun protection, lunch, water, sturdy shoes, and rain gear.

DATE	TIME	NATURAL AREA	DESCRIPTION
Tues. May 23	9:00 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.	**Bobcat Ridge** Meet at the parking lot.	**From Basement to Desert** Discover the oldest rocks in Larimer County, the Great Unconformity, and the red rocks shed from the Ancestral Rockies. We will examine the transition from the prairies to the foothills, and the plants and animals that are characteristic of each. 4 miles; moderate.
Tues. June 20	9:00 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.	**Coyote Ridge** Meet at the parking lot.	**From Shore to Ocean Depths** Discover the deep connection between geology and ecology as we examine the Cretaceous Seaway from the top of Coyote Ridge. Learn how these sediments deposited, uplifted, and eroded. 4 miles; moderate.

Continued on next page

Geology-Ecology Explorations, continued

DATE	TIME	NATURAL AREA	DESCRIPTION
Sat. Aug. 12	9:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.	**Soapstone Prairie** Meet at the north parking lot; approximately one hour driving time from Fort Collins.	**Walk the Gangplank** Discover the geologic secrets of rocks shed from the Rocky Mountains and how these influence human and wildlife activity. 5-6 miles; moderate.

Senior Strolls

These programs are accessible and meant to be enjoyed by seniors with limited mobility. Programs will move at a slow pace and are accessible for wheel chairs and walkers. Shade and/or an indoor facility are available at all locations. If your organization or group would like to set up a separate program, please contact Alex, Community Educator at 970-416-2043 or *amchenry@fcgov.com.*

DATE	TIME	NATURAL AREA	DESCRIPTION
Wed. July 5 Wed. Sept. 6	9:30 – 11:30 a.m. 9:30 – 11:30 a.m.	**Nix Farm** 1745 Hoffman Mill Rd. **Fossil Creek Reservoir** Meet at the parking lot.	**Sensory Roll and Stroll** Experience the wonders of nature through your five senses on this guided nature walk. Following the walk, take time to express your experience using art media.
Mon. Aug. 7	10:00 a.m. – noon	**Butterfly Woods** Meet at the Lions Open Space parking lot.	**Nature River Stroll** Learn about the Poudre River corridor and the plants and animals that make it their home. Stroll along the river to see this web of live in action.
Thurs. Sept. 14	9:30 – 11:00 a.m.	**Nix Farm** 1745 Hoffman Mill Rd.	**If Skulls Could Talk** Enjoy a short stroll along the Poudre Trail while learning about the wildlife the river supports. Skulls will be used to show the similarities and differences between different animal species.

Diane Wenaff

SPECIFICALLY FOR TEENS

Gather your friends, embrace adventure, and build your leadership skills through these unique programs designed just for teens (ages 13-18). Bring water, snacks and sun protection. If you have a group that would like to attend one of these, or are interested in setting up a separate program, please contact Alex, Community Educator, at 970-416-2043 or *amchenry@fcgov.com.*

Continued on next page

Specifically for Teens, continued

DATE	TIME	NATURAL AREA	DESCRIPTION
Wed. June 21	8:30 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.	**Pineridge** Meet at the west parking lot. Do not park at Maxwell for this program.	**Night Hike for Teens** Bring your friends and come celebrate the first day of summer with a hike in the dark. Learn how wildlife communicates at night and test your nighttime navigation skills.
Fri. Aug. 11	10:00 a.m. – noon	**Lee Martinez Park** Meet at the parking lot near the tennis courts.	**Mountain Bike Ride Along the Poudre River** For beginner and advanced riders alike! Bring your bike and helmet. Members of Overland Mountain Bike Club will lead a ride on dirt trails along the Poudre River and Master Naturalists will provide fascinating information about the area. Multiple route options; easy-difficult.
Tues. Aug. 15	9:00 a.m. – noon	**Nix Farm** 1745 Hoffman Mill Rd.	**Environmental Leadership** Build your leadership skills and learn about opportunities to get involved with local organizations. Lunch will be provided.
Sat. Sept. 9	9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.	Notified once registered.	**Environmental Stewardship Project** Get your hands dirty and spend a day with your friends outside! This is an opportunity to actively participate in the restoration of your natural areas. Participants will play a role in choosing a project and site once registered.

Natural Areas Visitor Center

Fort Collins Museum of Discovery, 408 Mason Court, Fort Collins
Tuesday–Sunday, 10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., Thursdays until 8:00 p.m.

Check out the Natural Areas Visitor Center in the lobby of the museum. Play with the interactive map, watch live endangered black-footed ferrets, and relax at the ripple tank. Pick up a map or other natural areas information while you're there. *No admission fee!*

Schedule Your Next Meeting at Primrose Studio

Primrose Studio is a quiet facility in a beautiful setting in northwest Fort Collins. It is perfect for small classes and retreats.

Hours: Tues. – Sat. 8 a.m. – 10 p.m. Closed holidays.

Cost: Private groups: $200 for up to 5 hours and $40 per additional hour. Non-profit and government rates: $100 for up to 5 hours and $20 per additional hour. Three-hour minimum required. Learn more at *fcgov.com/naturalareas/primrose.php* or 970-416-2815.

City of Fort Collins

Cate Dillon

Volunteer With Us!

The natural areas are yours to enjoy and explore; get involved with the stewardship of these special places. With more than 36,000 acres and more than 40 natural areas there is a lot to care for!

Group volunteer projects are great for team-building, networking, and camaraderie. Don't have a group? Individuals and families can also participate. Projects include trail maintenance, litter clean-up, plantings, and more. Contact Diane, Service Learning Educator at 970-456-3685 or *dwendt@fcgov.com*.

There's More to Explore

Keep up on natural areas happenings. New activities and events are added throughout the year. Check:

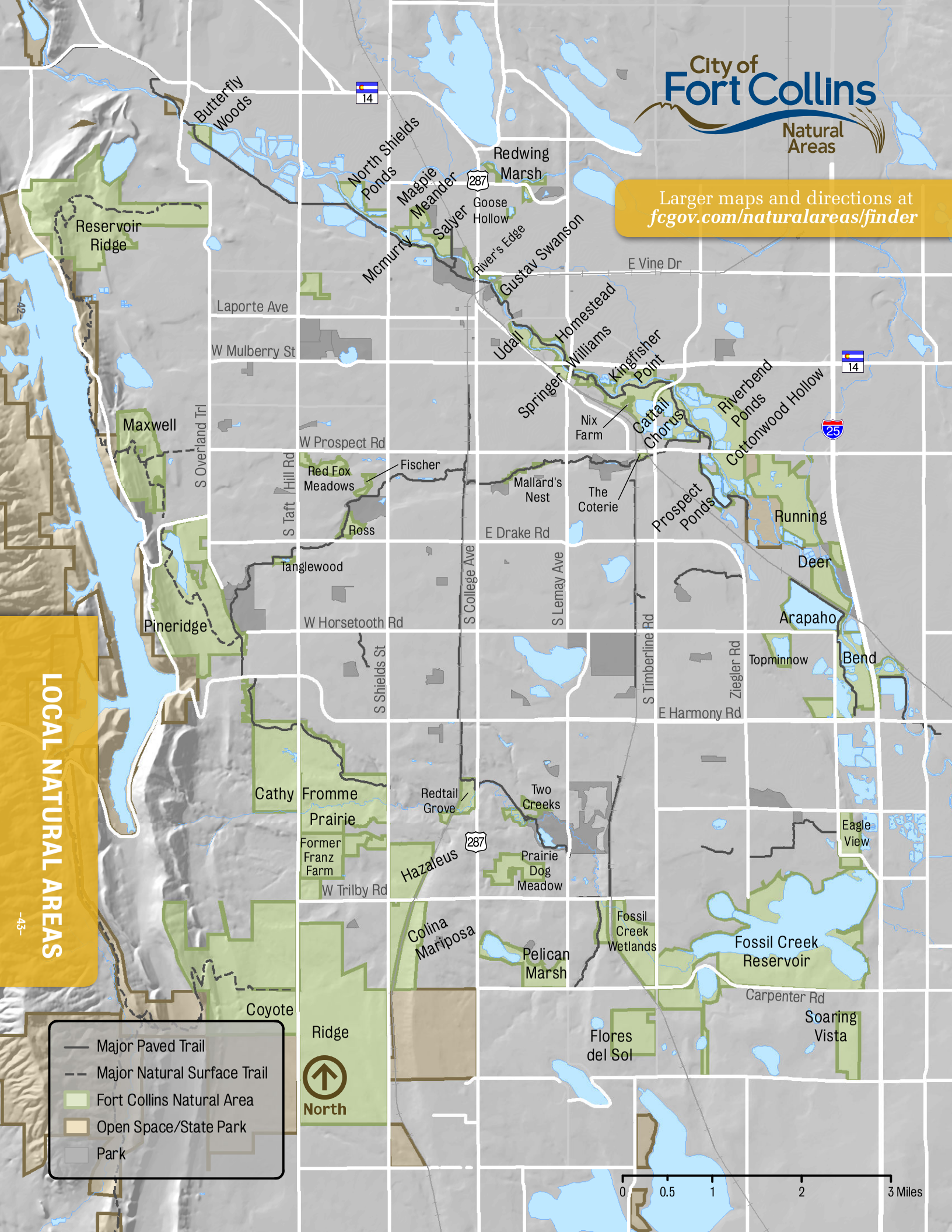
- *fcgov.com/register* for descriptions and registrations.
- *fcgov.com/naturalareas* for cancellations and updates.
- Natural Areas Enews, a monthly email newsletter that includes trail recommendations, news, and volunteer opportunities at *fcgov.com/naturalareas* (upper right hand corner).

Share Your Story #FCNaturalAreas

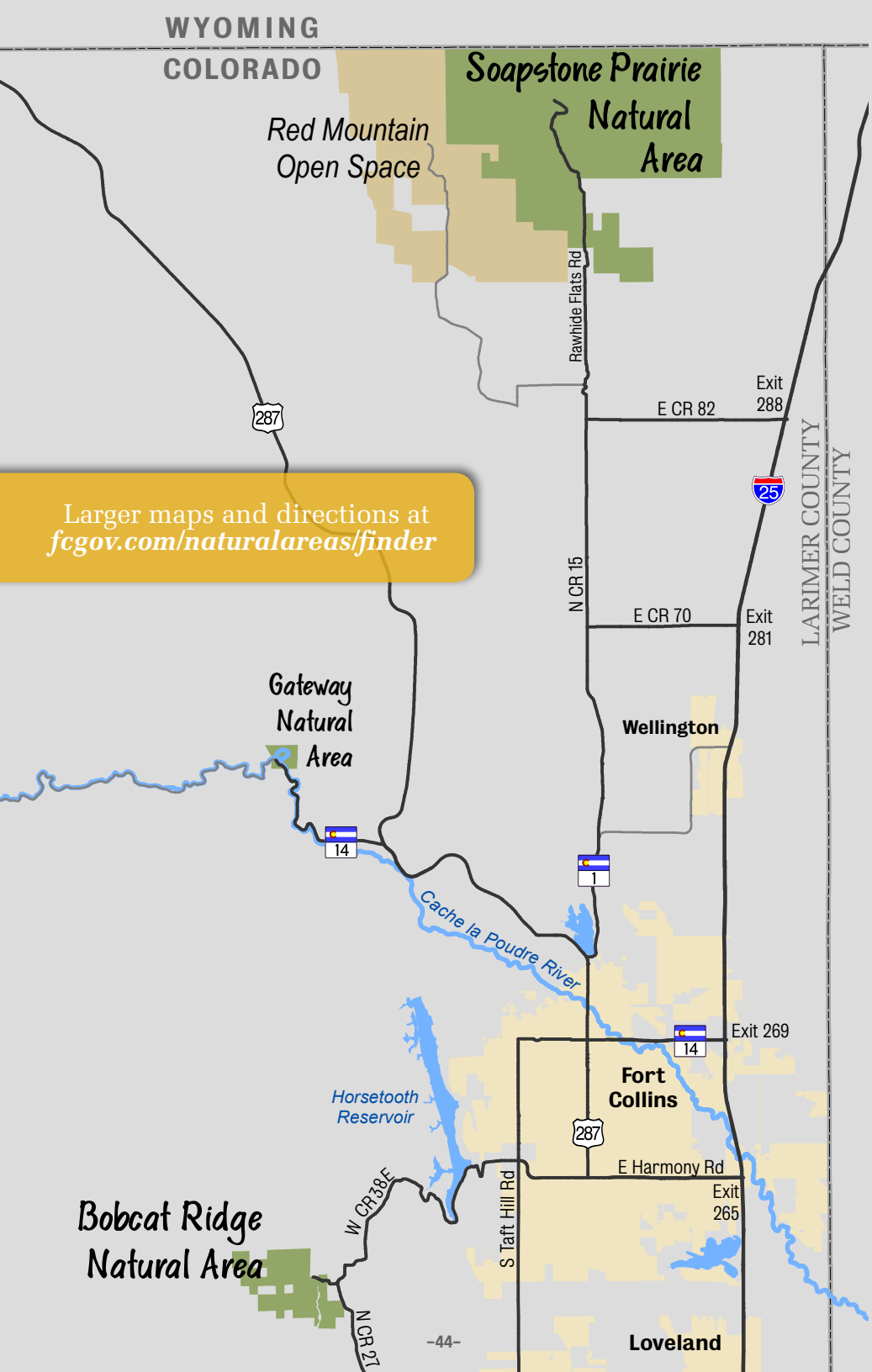
YOU are part of Fort Collins natural areas! Join the conversation!

City of Fort Collins Natural Areas

Instant news, trail conditions, and program cancellations @FCNaturalAreas



LOCAL NATURAL AREAS



Larger maps and directions at
fcgov.com/naturalareas/finder

REGIONAL NATURAL AREAS

City of Fort Collins

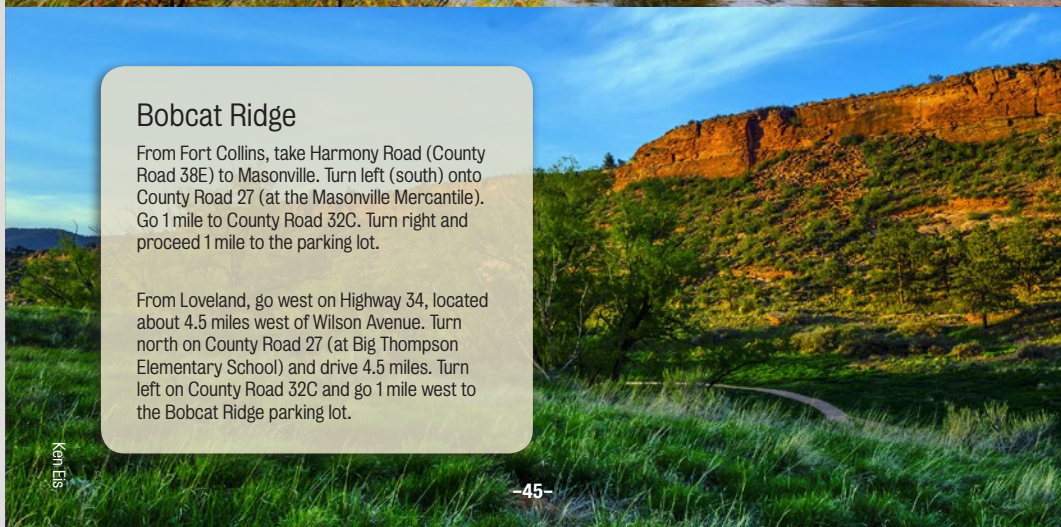
Soapstone Prairie

Travel north on Highway 1 (Terry Lake Road). Turn left (toward Waverly) on County Road 15. Travel north and turn right onto Rawhide Flats Road. Go 6 miles to the entrance station. Please obey posted speed limits. Soapstone Prairie is about 25 miles from Fort Collins and takes approximately one hour driving time.

City of Fort Collins

Gateway

Travel north on Highway 287. Turn left onto Highway 14 (Poudre Canyon Highway). Go 5 miles and turn right into the entrance.


Ken Eis

Bobcat Ridge

From Fort Collins, take Harmony Road (County Road 38E) to Masonville. Turn left (south) onto County Road 27 (at the Masonville Mercantile). Go 1 mile to County Road 32C. Turn right and proceed 1 mile to the parking lot.

From Loveland, go west on Highway 34, located about 4.5 miles west of Wilson Avenue. Turn north on County Road 27 (at Big Thompson Elementary School) and drive 4.5 miles. Turn left on County Road 32C and go 1 mile west to the Bobcat Ridge parking lot.

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City of Fort Collins

Thank you! The Natural Areas Department is funded by Fort Collins and Larimer County voters. Your sales tax dollars conserve land and provide funds for trails, shelters, restrooms, parking lots, and educational activities.

City of Fort Collins Natural Areas

Natural Areas Department **970-416-2815**

Rangers **970-416-2147**

fcgov.com/naturalareas

naturalareas@fcgov.com

Register for activities at *fcgov.com/register*

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