

**EL PASO COUNTY PARKS**  
**2017 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS**

1. The trails within Black Forest Regional Park sustained significant damages from the Black Forest Fire and post-fire flooding. Several sections were damaged beyond repair, are now flood-prone, or traverse through severely charred areas within the park. A drainage plan was completed in 2016 to guide park restoration and trail repairs. A trail inventory will be completed to identify sections of trail for repair, re-route and/or closure. Trail signage will be updated to reflect any re-routes and better incorporate the trails adjacent to Cathedral Pines. Flood-mitigation and soil stabilization structures will be installed to mitigate future flooding impacts to the trails and active use area. Forest management prescriptions will be implemented to promote forest regeneration. County Parks proposes to commit \$100,000 from the regional park fee fund and \$160,000 of remaining 1A funds to implement the trail improvements.

2. FEMA made a declaration of Public Assistance on July 16, 2015 for flood damages occurring between May 4 and June 16 that impacted a variety of El Paso County Park trails. Damaged locations include: Black Forest Section 16, New Santa Fe Regional Trail, Rock Island Regional Trail, Drake Lake Natural Area, Maxwell Street, Stratmoor Valley, Willow Springs, Fountain Creek Regional Trail near Interstate 25, and the Hanson Trailhead. Estimates for all damages, debris removal and emergency response under FEMA for Parks are \$2,872,644. In 2016 the recovery team comprised of Planning Division staff and from other County departments completed repairs to Ute Pass Regional Trail, Stratmoor Valley Trailhead, Rock Island Trail, and launched design of the Willow Springs repair. Extension requests were granted to June 16, 2017 for Black Forest Section 16 and Drake Lake Natural Area. The remaining damaged areas along Fountain Creek and New Santa Fe Regional Trail will require extensions also and work will be completed next year.

3. FEMA, State and insurance-funded building repairs and installation of a new restroom at Pinerias Open Space as an alternate FEMA project were completed in 2016, paving the way for a first phase of trail and recreation improvements in the Pinerias Open Space. The first phase of improvements per the Pinerias Open Space Master Plan will be completed in 2017. The project includes approximately 8.2 miles of trail (4.2 miles of primary regional trail and

3.82 miles of single-track trail), main trailhead with separate equestrian and hike/bike parking areas, outdoor classroom and corral. The total cost of the first phase recreation facilities is estimated at approximately \$360,000. County Parks has committed \$160,000 from the regional park fee fund and \$200,000 of 1A funds for the project.

4. The Rainbow Falls Access Improvement Project includes funding from a Surface Transportation Improvement Program Transportation Enhancement Grant funds were secured through the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) in the amount of \$308,000 for access, trail, park and bank stabilization improvements at Rainbow Falls Recreation Area. These funds have been matched with \$72,000 of regional park fees and \$5,000 in third party support for a total project budget of \$385,000. The final design process was completed in 2016. Procurement of a general contractor and mobilizing for construction will commence in 2017.

5. The Maxwell Street Trailhead was severely damaged during the September 2013 flood event. FEMA, State and local funds were used to stabilize approximately 300 feet of the toe of the bank. Additional bank stabilization is needed above, upstream and downstream of the existing armoring to protect the trail and trailhead, State highway bridge and electric and water utility infrastructure. The US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) is preparing a feasibility study/environmental assessment in collaboration with El Paso County and local partners, and it will be completed in early 2017. The USACE committed \$275,000 to the study and is prepared to cover 65% of the construction costs which are estimated at approximately \$2.2 million. Construction is anticipated to begin in October, 2017. The County was awarded \$945,000 in CDBG-DR and State disaster recovery funds as the local match for the study and construction.

6. El Paso County Parks and the City of Fountain received a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) in 2015 to continue the Front Range Trail from the south end of Fountain Creek Regional Park to Highway 85/87 (Main Street) in downtown Fountain near Interstate-25. The trail will be located adjacent to Bandle Drive, before continuing along Crest Drive, then back into the open space, then to Highway 85/87. The total cost of the project is \$181,586 with \$168,586 of CDBG funds and \$13,000 from in-kind contributions. Regulatory reviews were initiated and preliminary design was completed in 2016. Permitting

and final design will be completed in the first quarter of 2017 with construction by August, 2017.

7. \$150,000 of 1A funds has been committed to upgrade the exhibits at the Bear Creek Nature Center. These funds will be coupled with \$100,000 from fundraising for a project budget of \$250,000. It is anticipated the exhibit upgrade will be completed by spring, 2017.

8. El Paso County updated the County Fairgrounds master plan in 2015 which identified existing facilities that need upgrades to improve functionality, protect infrastructure, and enhance user experiences. Upcoming projects include drainage, electric, and roof repairs, landscaping and shade structures, electric service for 4-H campground, installation of a permanent entertainment pavilion, upgrade south entrance gate area, and installing a playground / spray park. Approximately \$500,000 has been secured for the improvements from regional park fees, a Great Outdoors Colorado grant, 1A funds, and other fundraising efforts. It is anticipated a majority of the projects will be completed prior to the 2017 County Fair.

9. El Paso County completed the Fountain Creek Regional Park Master Plan in 2016 which recommended improvements to existing facilities, new park facilities and other management and maintenance actions to enhance the user experience. Phase I improvements, with \$125,000 in 1A funds and \$125,000 in regional park fees secured, will commence in 2016 and include a dog park, disc golf course, demonstration gardens, trails and athletic field renovation. Phase 2 projects will be determined in 2017 and may include a community garden, additional athletic field renovation, new playgrounds, expanded parking lots, enhanced trails, and new picnic pavilions. The Phase 2 projects will be funded in part by \$125,000 in regional park fees, and an application for \$125,000 in Community Development Block Grant application will be submitted.

10. The City of Colorado Springs deeded the 1,200 acre Jones Park site to El Paso County in January, 2015. El Paso County will continue to participate with the United States Forest Service and the City of Colorado Springs in the completion of a National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process in the Bear Creek Watershed. The projects will include trail modifications and erosion control improvements needed at Jones Park to address Bear Creek water quality issues that impact the

greenback cutthroat trout that is currently listed as threatened on the federal Endangered Species List. Funding for the improvements is provided by \$200,000 from 1A funds and \$250,000 from a Colorado Water Conservation Board grant.

11. Construction of the Ute Pass Regional Trail will be completed as outlined in the Ute Pass Regional Trail Master Plan which was approved in the fall of 2015. A \$150,000 Colorado Parks and Wildlife Non-Motorized State Trails Grant, matched with \$150,000 of 1A funds, was secured in 2016 to construct the first section between Ute Pass Elementary School and Winnemucca Road by 2018. A \$680,000 Transportation Alternatives Program Grant, matched with \$170,000 in local funds, and an \$828,000 Transportation Improvement Program Grant, matched with \$172,121 in local funds will fund final design and construction of the remaining trail by 2022.

12. The Widefield Community Park includes a playground, basketball court, baseball backstop, an 18-hole disc golf course, and the Flight 585 memorial sitting area. Upon completion of the Widefield Community Park Master Plan in early 2017, specific areas of improvement will be identified that will enhance the user experience and solidify park infrastructure. The project budget consists of \$100,000 of urban park fees.

13. The New Santa Fe Regional Trail project includes the upgrade of the trail section and drainage area that crosses beneath Highway 105 in the Monument area. The area continually traps debris and floods onto the trail causing safety concerns. In addition, the Baptist Road trailhead restroom will be upgraded including connecting to potable water. The project budget is \$90,000 which includes \$20,000 from the Town of Monument and \$70,000 of regional park fees. The work is scheduled to be complete in 2017.

14. Staff will continue to explore funding opportunities and partnerships to complete the next phase of improvements at Falcon Regional Park. A \$60,000 GOCO Mini Grant application was submitted in 2016 for funding to complete the Falcon Dog Park. If the grant is awarded, the dog park will be constructed in the summer of 2017. Falcon Dog Park supporters are interested in the formation of a friends group.