



JEFFERSON CONSERVATION DISTRICT 2022 ANNUAL REPORT

AWARDS / IN THE NEWS



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On April 19, 2022, Jefferson County Open Space presented JCD with the Gambel Oak Pioneer Award for innovation in conservation at the 2022 Conservation Awards event.



In July of 2022, JCD hosted Governor Polis and State and Local officials at one of their private-lands forestry projects in Evergreen, Colorado. The press conference highlighted State investments in forest health and wildfire mitigation, which JCD is utilizing through grant programs from the Colorado State Forest Service and Department of Natural Resources.

FORESTRY PROGRAM



Above: after JCD forestry treatment

JCD assists private forest landowners in planning and implementing projects with the shared goals of wildfire mitigation and forest ecosystem restoration. Typical projects range in size from 40-200 acres, and are completed by professional logging contractors managed by JCD. Project sites are selected based on landowner interest, terrain and access suitability.

A big thank you to the nine different forestry contractors JCD partnered with to get this work done in 2022. Thank you also to the landowners, whose long-term vision for resilient forest ecosystems allowed this work to happen.



Left: after JCD forestry treatment



2022 

381 acres treated





 **9** individual properties

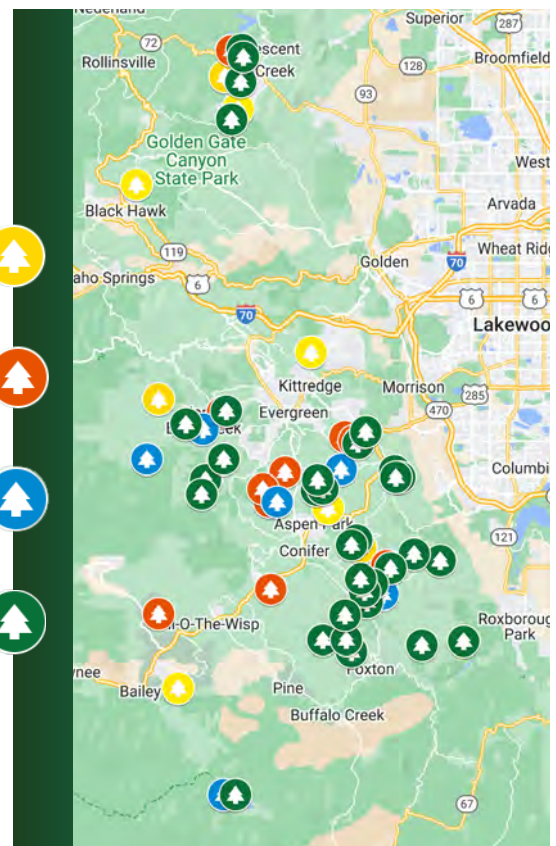
9 individual contractors 

at a cost of **\$1M** 

\$1.6M state grants awarded for future projects

\$620,000 federal grants awarded for future projects

- Projects in outreach 
- Projects in planning 
- Current Projects 
- Completed Projects since 2012 



NOXIOUS WEED MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Below: Canada Thistle,
Cirsium arvense



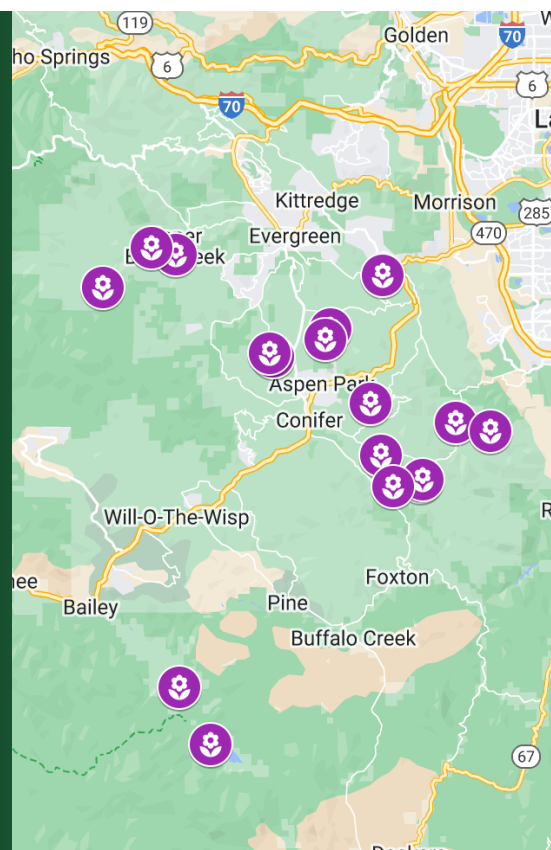
As part of a holistic forest restoration approach, JCD follows up its forestry projects with weed management plans to encourage native plants and suppress exotic species. Thank you to the weed management contractors and to the landowners who made the 2022 weeds season a success.

In 2022, JCD piloted a seasonal Vegetation Technician position to assist with JCD’s annual weed management program, overseen by JCD’s Vegetation Specialist Marenna Disbro. By having another person helping with the weeds program, JCD was able to spend more time meeting with landowners and overseeing work conducted by contractors. The Vegetation Technician also provided help to the SLASH, forestry, and seeding programs. JCD and landowners found this to be very helpful and JCD intends to continue having this position in the future.



Left: Yellow Toadflax,
Linaria vulgaris

2022 Noxious Weed Treatment Projects



PARTNERSHIPS & COLLABORATIVES

Partnerships with agencies and stakeholders are key to the success of JCD's conservation programs, so thank you to our many partners who provide funding, technical feedback, outreach assistance, and collaborative problem-solving.

JCD is a regular participant in the following collaborative partnerships and meetings:

- [Jefferson County Wildfire Commission](#)
- [Upper South Platte Partnership](#)
- [Northern Colorado Fireshed Collaborative](#)
- [Coal Creek Canyon Collaborative](#)
- [Bear Creek Watershed Association](#)



JCD HOSTS GOVERNOR POLIS PRESS CONFERENCE

Below is an edited version of Garrett Stephens' original speech given at the DNR and Governor Polis Press Conference on July 11, 2022.

by Garrett Stephens, Director of JCD

Finding meaningful solutions to big-picture societal issues demands teamwork and buy-in from the entire community. Facing the wildfire problem is no different; to borrow a metaphor, it takes a village to manage a forest.

In Jefferson County and across the Front Range, land ownership in the foothills is a patchwork of dense neighborhoods next to large ranches intermixed with city, county, state, and federal public land. Over the last 10 years entities such as Evergreen, Inter-Canyon, and Elk Creek Fire Protection Districts, Colorado State Forest Service, Colorado Forest Restoration Institute, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, Denver Water, Aurora Water, and Jefferson Conservation District have partnered

together to collectively pursue cross-boundary, large-scale forest treatments so that the forest ecosystem and the communities that rely on it will be resilient to future wildfire. Together, in the last 10 years, this group has treated over 5,000 acres in the greater Conifer and Evergreen communities. But with over 1 million acres in need of treatment on the Front Range, the work is far from finished.

All those partnerships still don't paint the full picture of the village that it takes to manage the forests around here. Active and engaged landowners and residents are a huge piece of the puzzle. Now you might think, do people who move to the mountains really want to cut down trees? With the right education, the answer is YES,



and in fact, there is so much interest that those of us that assist private landowners like the Fire Districts, State Forest Service, and Jefferson Conservation District have more work than we can handle.

Elected officials at all levels of government also play a critical role in this process, specifically in terms of raising awareness and funding for this important work to happen. Why funding, you might ask? Aren't all these trees worth lots of money? The answer in this part of Colorado, and in many parts of the fire-dependent Western United States is NO. Our steep, rocky, dry environment simply does not grow tall, straight trees quickly enough to support a robust, market-driven timber industry. Around here, the cost of removing a tree far out-

weighs what little revenue these trees might bring in.

[And this brings me to the last member of the village: crews like Mile High Youth Corp](#) and the logging and wildfire mitigation contractors who do the work on the ground. Without them, none of this work is possible. On behalf of all of us agency folks who plan these projects, thank you to our contractors.

And thank you, for being part of our "village" that is bringing awareness and support for forest restoration and management to protect the community, homes, and land we all love and cherish.

SLASH PROGRAM



In 2022, JCD partnered with Jefferson County to help operate their longstanding annual Slash Collection Program. The program provides a low-cost disposal option for woody debris generated by the community from defensible space and wildfire mitigation efforts. JCD's role was to staff and manage the slash collection sites while Jefferson County maintained processing and hauling responsibilities.

Collection days were doubled in 2022 over past years, and as a result the amount of slash collected nearly doubled. For this new partnership, JCD hired one full time employee and two seasonal employees.



URBAN AGRICULTURE PROGRAM



In 2022, JCD wrapped up the Regenerate Wheat Ridge project, a 12-month grant-funded partnership with the City of Wheat Ridge. The project involved several community education events focusing on regenerative agriculture, and it also resulted in the creation of a technical guide to assist urban growers in finding suitable urban properties for growing their products. The project was made possible through a grant from the National Association of Conservation Districts.



Thank you to Amy DePierre, for joining the JCD team to lead this project so successfully.





LINER NOTES

MEET OUR TEAM



OUR MISSION

To provide leadership through impactful partnerships to enhance and sustain our natural resources.

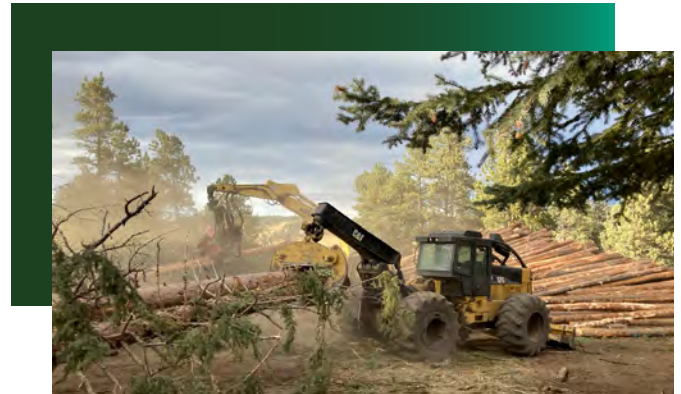
WHAT IS JCD?

Founded in 1942, Jefferson Conservation District (JCD) is a special district and political subdivision of the State of Colorado (defined by C.R.S Title 32 Article 1 and C.R.S 35.70.101-35.70.122). JCD is one of 74 conservation districts in Colorado, and one of 3,000 conservation districts across the United States.

MEET OUR BOARD

A big thank you to JCD's volunteer Board of Supervisors; without you, none of this locally-led conservation work would be possible.

- Cathy Begej, President
- Gayle Gordon, Vice President
- Don Moore, Secretary/Treasurer
- Karen Berry
- Bill Von Vihl
- Christina Burri
- Lorrie Ray



OUR WORK

JCD staff, overseen by a Board of Supervisors, help private landowners in Jefferson County and surrounding areas plan and implement conservation projects involving forest restoration, wildfire mitigation, and noxious weed management.

CONTACT US

To contact us or learn more, please [visit our website.](#)

