

# THANK YOU

## TO OUR PARTNERS

### Partners & Collaborators

- Landowners: too many to list! They make it all possible.
- Colorado Association of Conservation Districts
- Colorado Conservation District Employees Association
- National Association of Conservation Districts
- Jefferson County Open Space
- Denver Mountain Parks
- Evergreen Fire Protection District
- Elk Creek Fire Protection District
- Platte Canyon Fire Protection District
- Inter-Canyon Fire Protection District
- North Fork Fire Protection District
- Coal Creek Canyon Fire Protection District
- Boulder Watershed Collective
- Jefferson County Wildfire Commission
- Upper South Platte Partnership
- Northern Colorado Fireshed Collaborative
- Clear Creek Watershed & Forest Health Partnership

### Contractors

- Auciello Applicators
- Colorado Forestry Management
- EZ Forestry Equipment
- Harry Spellman
- Marshall Forestry Solutions
- P&A Forestry
- SWCA Inc
- Tekler Enterprises LLC
- Timberline Forest Restoration
- Thirty-Nine North LLC
- Weed Wranglers

### Funders

- USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
- Colorado State Forest Service
- USDA Forest Service
- The Nature Conservancy
- Denver Water
- Colorado Department of Agriculture
- Colorado State Conservation Board
- Jefferson County
- Federal Emergency Management Agency
- Colorado Department of Natural Resources
- National Fish and Wildlife Foundation

# ANNUAL REPORT 2023

Published Spring 2024



**JEFFERSON**  
CONSERVATION DISTRICT



## Gratitude in Action

We're becoming more and more aware every day of humanity's impact on the environment and its ability to provide the natural resources we depend on – it's easy to be discouraged. But that awareness has ushered in an era of ecological restoration in which individuals and organizations are coming together to try and restore the resilience of ecosystems to fires and floods that historically had an integral and beneficial role in sustaining the natural resources that made this landscape livable in the first place.

I'm proud to be part of Jefferson Conservation District and the broader community who are putting restoration into action. So, thank you to JCD's board, staff, landowners, and partner agencies and organizations for collaborating with JCD in 2023 to get some excellent, science-based work onto the ground – it was truly a team effort, and we look forward to continuing in 2024 and beyond.

## News & Events

### Secretary Vilsack at Roundtable Event



In November 2023, JCD Director Garrett Stephens and other community leaders spoke at a roundtable spearheaded by Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack, where he announced that the Biden-Harris administration would invest more than \$1.2 Billion in rural cooperatives to increase economic opportunity in rural America. The investment emphasizes the vital role cooperatives play in rural development, and aligns with the administration's commitment to strengthening rural economies nationwide.

### JCD and Partners Awarded \$13.4 Million from NRCS and \$6.5 Million from FEMA

In August 2023, JCD, along with Boulder Valley, Longmont, and Larimer Conservation Districts, were awarded their first-ever Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) grant through USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service. Together, the Districts will leverage \$13.4M against state, local, and private funding to implement forest and riparian restoration practices over more than 4,000 acres to improve wildlife habitat, native plant communities, and reduce the likelihood of negative outcomes from the next fire or flood.

Separately, a long-awaited proposal to FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program was awarded in late 2023, also with a wildfire mitigation focus. Approximately 1,500 acres will be treated by JCD and various partners on the central Front Range.



# Forestry

## JCD Partners with Landowners & Contractors

JCD guides private landowners in forest stewardship by creating restored forests on their land. JCD assists private forest landowners in planning and implementing projects with the shared goals of wildfire mitigation and forest ecosystem restoration. Thank you to the forestry contractors and landowners JCD partnered with in 2023. Without their collaborative vision and efforts for long-term resilient forest ecosystems and communities, this work would not be able to be accomplished.



## Team Transitions by Welcoming New Faces

In 2023, we bid farewell to esteemed members of our forestry team, Dan Walsh, our Natural Resource Specialist, and Tatum Van Hawkins, our Conservation Forester. We honor their departures and welcome the fresh perspectives of our new team members. We are delighted to extend a warm welcome to Cragen Davies, who joins us as our new Natural Resource Specialist, and Bridgette Haggerty, who assumes the role of Conservation Forester.



**285**  
Acres Treated

**3**  
Properties

**\$1.1M**  
State Grants

**4**  
Forestry Staff  
Grants

**\$350K**  
Local Grants

**\$45K**  
Private Grants

**3**  
Forestry  
Contracts

**\$900k**  
Contractor  
Contracts

**\$19.9M**  
Federal Grants



# Weeds

**600**

Acres Treated

**2**

Contractors

**18**

Properties

**\$25k**

State  
Grants

**\$122k**

Contractor  
Contracts

**\$115K**

Federal Grants



## Evolution of the **Weeds Team**

After nearly four years at JCD, we bid farewell to Marena Disbro in 2023, our conscientious conservationist and valued colleague. As Vegetation Management Specialist, Marena left behind a strong legacy of landowner connections and a well organized program ready for her successor. To fill Marena's vacancy, we welcomed Jake Gilbert, who has a wealth of hands-on noxious weed management experience. Jake arrived right on the cusp of weed season and did a superb job getting up to speed quickly and weathering the inevitable bumps of learning a new program.



## Did You Know?

Weed treatment is required by law. Protecting our natural resources is critically important in Colorado. Make a plan to control the noxious weeds on your property to comply with local laws and the Colorado Noxious Weeds Act. See your county's noxious weed list on the CDA website for local management goals.

## Weeds **Companion** Program with **Forestry**

Noxious weeds are invasive non-native plants that aggressively dominate natural areas, farms, and disturbed habitat. Their rapid spread and invasive traits can displace native vegetation, disrupting local ecosystems. Landowners who have completed a forestry project with JCD are encouraged to join our noxious weed management program to mitigate the spread and resurgence of harmful weeds on their land and in our communities.



# Slash

**8350** yds<sup>3</sup>  
chips hauled

The Slash Program is a partnership between Jefferson County and JCD to provide local residents with a low-cost recycling opportunity for branches and woody debris (aka slash). JCD staffs the collection sites and Jeffco secures the sites and runs the grinding and hauling operations. In total, 8,350 cubic yards of chipped slash were dropped across the 7 unique sites around Jefferson County. We are so happy to partner with Jefferson County for this crucial wildfire mitigation program.

**2359**  
Unique Customers

2,359 unique visitors traveled to the slash sites set up by Jefferson County and JCD for residents to drop off their slash to aid in their defensible space efforts. The slash, once turned into wood chips, is recycled into premium mulch and compost for landscaping and gardening.



**3**  
Slash Staff

The Slash Program team was led by our Forest Biomass Coordinator, Kyle Weber, and joined by two seasonal Community Forestry Technicians, Garrick Bateman, and Meagan Bragg, who joined the Slash Program for her second season.

**5841**  
Site Visits

Over the course of the season, May - October, there were a total of 5,841 visits to the slash sites, and many of those were repeat customers. It is clear, to Jefferson County and JCD, that this much-needed program is helping residents meet their defensible space goals.



## 2023 **Slash** Program **Homeowner** of the **Year**

In 2023, the homeowners who delivered the most slash the entire season were Anne and Steven Russell from Evergreen. In total, the Russells delivered an impressive 26 loads of slash; when ground up into wood chips this equates to nearly 40 cubic yards, which fills an entire roll-off container. Congratulations to the Russells on all their hard work.

Above: 40 yard container

# 2023 Landowner of the Year

## Dr. Carew Boulding & Aaron Grider



Because JCD's primary focus is private-land conservation, the landowners themselves are JCD's most important partners in getting ecological restoration work onto the ground. Without engaged, open-minded landowners who are intentional about a stewardship ethic for their land, this work would not be possible. This is the profile for JCD's landowner of the year award, and for 2023, that award is going to Dr. Carew Boulding and Aaron Grider.

Aaron first ran into JCD in late 2019 while we were doing layout for a neighbor's forestry project, south of Bailey. Curious about the seemingly contradictory idea of cutting lots of trees in order to improve the ecosystem, Carew and Aaron soaked up the forest ecology lessons like a sponge. Over the next couple

years, they endured the long and sometimes frustrating process of seeking funding and finding a suitable contractor to complete the forestry work—this proved especially difficult given the remote location, narrow access for equipment and log trucks, and limited contractor base.

Finally in early 2022, the forestry work began, thanks in part to Jerry Scarsella with Thirty-Nine North LLC, who was willing to take on a difficult and faraway job. Another critical piece of the puzzle was a partnership with Wellington Lake Campground, who bought the majority of the wood coming off this project. Were it not for their interest in the wood and close proximity to the project, further delays were certain. Wellington Lake Road is rough on its best day,

and there just aren't that many contractors and truck drivers willing to rattle their trucks to pieces.

The forestry project wrapped up in late 2023, with many weather and mechanical delays along the way. Miller Timber Services, Vegetation Management West, P&A Forestry, and Tekler Enterprises were also crucial players in getting the logging and hauling finished. Windy Peak Outdoor School also used a lot of wood chips coming off this project, which, as you can tell by now, was truly a team effort.

Carew and Aaron's property is a very special place to their family, and yet they also have an appreciation for its connectivity and role in the broader forest ecosystem. It can be tough for landowners to see a lot of their trees get cut down, but Carew and Aaron saw the greater, long-term benefit it would bring to their property, their neighbors, and the natural

resources the landscape provides.

In an effort to offer a holistic forest restoration program that is not just focused on trees alone, Carew and Aaron are also participating in JCD's noxious weed management program which improves native plant species and wildlife habitat after forestry work has been completed.

As project managers, JCD strives to deliver a smooth and painless experience for landowners, but with so many partners and logistics involved, some bumps along the way are inevitable. Carew and Aaron certainly endured the bumps on this multi-year project, but they did so with grace and remained upbeat and communicative the whole time. They are exemplary landowners and JCD is grateful for the opportunity to know them and help steward their property.









# JCD Notes

## Board of Supervisors

Our Board of Supervisors operates entirely on a volunteer basis, and we deeply appreciate their dedication and contributions to JCD's vision.

Virtual board meetings are on the second Thursday of each month at 4:30pm. RSVP by email to join us!

Christina Burri, President  
Lorrie Ray, Vice President  
Don Moore, Treasurer  
John Fosholt  
Karen Berry  
Bill Von Vihl  
Lorrie Ray  
Gayle Gordon



## JCD Mission & Vision

JCD's mission is to provide leadership through impactful partnerships to enhance and sustain our natural resources.

We provide forest restoration, wildfire mitigation, and noxious weed management in Jefferson County, Colorado and surrounding areas. We strive to make every acre count.

## Contact Us

Email: [jcd@jeffersoncd.com](mailto:jcd@jeffersoncd.com)  
Phone: 720-661-1738



## Follow Us

Web: [www.jeffersoncd.com](http://www.jeffersoncd.com)  
X: [@jeffersoncd](https://twitter.com/jeffersoncd)

Instagram: [@jeffersoncd.colorado](https://www.instagram.com/jeffersoncd.colorado)  
Facebook: [@jeffersoncd.colorado](https://www.facebook.com/jeffersoncd.colorado)