



The Corral Bluffs Chronicle

News from the Hoodoos

December 2010

ANDERSON PARCEL UPDATE

On October 26th, Colorado Springs City Council voted 6 to 3 in favor of acquiring the 75-acre parcel owned by the Anderson family. However, a few small real estate issues have caused a delay. The acquisition request will be brought before Council again for a new vote. The first City Council reading is December 14th and the second is January 11th.

A big thank you to everyone who attended the City Council meeting on October 26th! We believe the new vote will be merely a technicality and a turnout of support won't be needed again. Hopefully Council will vote the same way and a closing date will soon be set.



View from the Anderson parcel looking south



Bob White, Connie and Bob Johnson on Nov. 7th

CLEANUP HELP NEEDED

Please help finish cleaning up an old farmer's dump just north of Corral Bluffs Open Space. Cleanup is every Sunday from 1:00 - 4:00PM (except holidays and bad weather days). With your help, we hope to finish it this winter.

Most heavy items have been removed, but many, many small items still need to be sorted into piles for recycling.

Meet at the corner of Hoofbeat & Davis Road at 1:00PM. A map and weather updates are at corral-bluffs.com. Wear old clothes, work gloves, sun-screen and tough-soled shoes. Bring water and snacks for yourself.

If you've never seen Corral Bluffs, we'll take you on a short hike before you help with the cleanup.



Air Force Academy Squadron 27, November 14th

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL TIME

If it's been a year or more since you've become a member of Corral Bluffs Alliance, please renew your membership now by filling out the form on the last page. We put your money to good use. In 2010 we pledged \$2000 toward maintenance of a new land purchase at Corral Bluffs. We appreciate your continued support!



THE LITTLE TOAD WITH THE BIG VOICE

On warm spring and summer nights after a heavy rain, you may hear the Plains Spadefoot Toad. They're common in eastern Colorado grasslands and their chorus can be heard up to two miles away.

Only about 2-1/2" long, this little toad spends about 10 months of the year underground and only emerges to breed. They attach masses of about 10 – 250 eggs to submerged plants or other objects in ponds or temporary standing water. The eggs hatch in 2 - 3 days. Tadpoles quickly develop and metamorphose in about 36 - 40 days.

The spadefoot eats spiders, snails, earthworms, centipedes, moths, caterpillars and beetles.



Plains Spadefoot Toad

When the rains dry up, spadefoots use the dark-colored "spade" that grows on their back feet to dig themselves (rear end first) into their burrows.

There are four varieties of spadefoot in Colorado, each with a distinct croak. The Plains Spadefoot, Great Basin Spadefoot and New Mexico Spadefoot are common. Couch's Spadefoot is also found in southeastern Colorado, but is rare. The Colorado Division of Wildlife lists it as a Species of Special Concern.



Notice the black "spade" on the back foot.

GUIDED TOURS

CoBA is using a new easier tour route of the Corral Bluffs Open Space for 2011. It includes the western valley and a view from the western ridge.

Tour dates (weather permitting):

March 5th, 2011 Saturday 10:00AM

April 2nd, 2011, Saturday 10:00AM

May 7th, 2011 Saturday 8:00AM

June 4th, 2011 Saturday 8:00AM



Nov. 6th guided tour group

In addition to our regular guided tours, special tours are available for groups of ten or more. Email corralbluffs@aol.com to reserve your place or to organize special group tours. See corralbluffs.org for more details.

Please remember, Corral Bluffs is not yet open to the public, except through guided tours. There are many months of expert studies and master planning ahead before public access is available.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

We'd really welcome help with the following:

- collecting plant specimens
- finding and controlling noxious weeds
- newsletter writing & editing
- grant writing
- trash pickup
- organizing & leading public hikes
- educational presentations
- fundraising & special events
- membership development
- volunteer recruitment, training & recognition

Please write to corralbluffs@aol.com for more information on how you can help.

CORRAL BLUFFS AND BANNING LEWIS RANCH

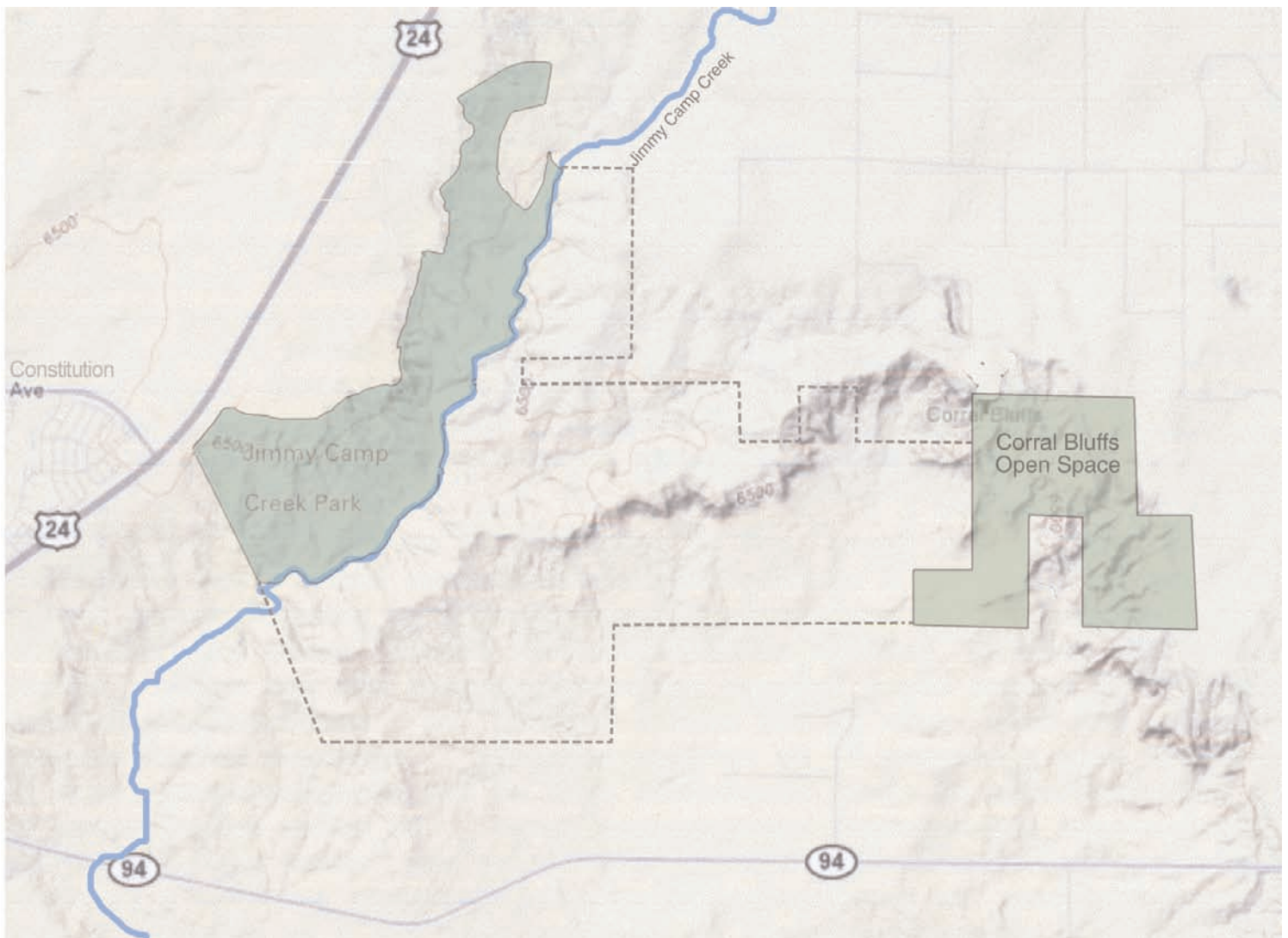
On October 28th, Banning Lewis Ranch (BLR) filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy, citing more than \$242 million in debts. According to the Gazette, they're seeking bankruptcy protection "due to uncertain economic and financial conditions, generally, and the financial condition of the company."

A large portion of Corral Bluffs (approximately 2,480 acres) is owned by BLR. This acreage would help connect Corral Bluffs Open Space to Jimmy Camp Creek Park. Preserving the Bluffs as open space is a goal that BLR shares with Corral Bluffs Alliance, the City Park & Rec Department and open space advocates. General discussions have tentatively leaned towards preservation of a trail corridor as development gets closer—sometime in the next 50 years. As BLR reorganizes their debts, there may be an opportunity to preserve more of the Bluffs before housing development occurs.

There was also an article in the Nov. 19th

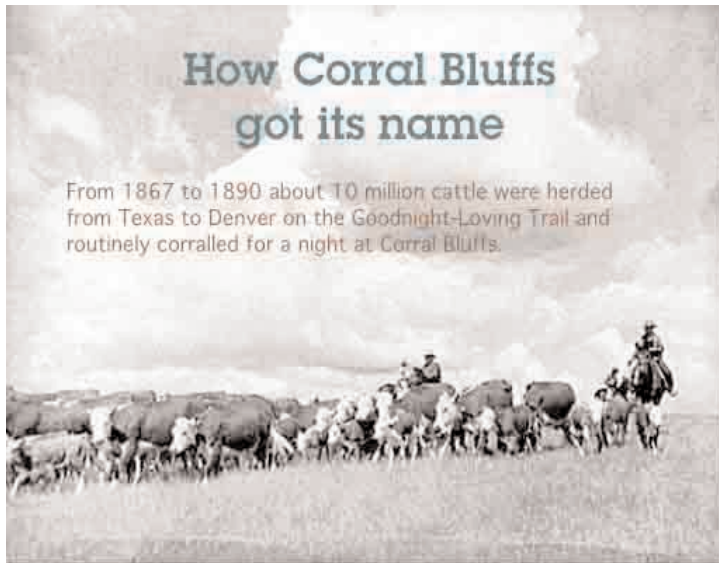
Colorado Springs Business Journal written by long time TOPS supporter and former Colorado Springs Councilman John Hazlehurst. He quotes Steve Spelman, BLR's CFO, who said, "We're kind of in the early stages (of bankruptcy), but once things are resolved, we'd be open to discussions about anything." Councilman Bernie Herpin said, "It's intriguing, especially since we're a little lopsided in open space. There isn't much in the southeast part of town."

Advocates anticipate BLR would receive a mix of cash and open space credits. Susan Davies of the Trails and Open Space Coalition said, "TOPS would have to be involved, and GOCO (Great Outdoors Colorado), maybe the Trust for Public Lands. And El Paso County, since the park would benefit county residents as well." Corral Bluffs Alliance is hopeful an arrangement beneficial to all parties involved can be negotiated.



POWER POINT PRESENTATION AVAILABLE

CoBA has developed a PowerPoint presentation full of beautiful photographs and interesting facts about Corral Bluffs' history, geology, archaeology, paleontology, wildlife and plants, as well as the vision for preserving more of the Bluffs. If you know of a group who'd enjoy this presentation, please contact Jackie Hilaire, CoBA President, at corralbluffs@aol.com to schedule a time.



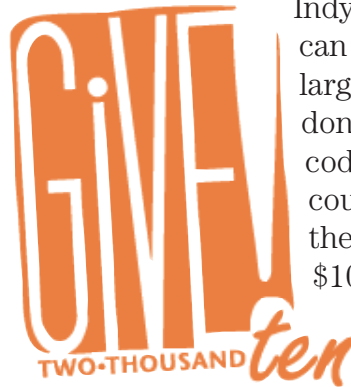
One slide from our PowerPoint presentation

Please send newsletter corrections or submissions to corralbluffs@aol.com.

HELP TOSC WIN AN ADDITIONAL \$1000

The Trails and Open Space Coalition (TOSC) is one of the non-profit organizations in this year's IndyGIVE Campaign. If they can get donations from the largest number of unique donors and/or number of zip codes in El Paso and Teller counties by December 31st, they'll win an additional \$1000. Just a \$10 donation will add to their numbers. Please visit indygive.com to donate.

If you donate \$25 or more, you'll receive rewards from various local businesses. It's possible Corral Bluffs Alliance will be one of the non-profits in next year's IndyGive campaign.



NEW BLUEBIRD BOX PROJECT

Volunteers are needed to organize the construction and installation of bluebird boxes near Corral Bluffs. This is a brand new Wildlife Habitat Council project in cooperation with Waste Management. Please write to corralbluffs@aol.com for more information.



I'D LIKE TO JOIN CORRAL BLUFFS ALLIANCE.

(Please check one level.)

Supporter - \$25. You'll receive email updates on how you can help.

Contributor - \$100. Same as above, plus you'll receive a free bumper/window sticker

Conservationist - \$500. Same as Contributor above, plus the knowledge that you're contributing toward land acquisition, expert research, required technical studies, educational materials, postage, printing and advertising.

Make your check out to: Corral Bluffs Alliance. Your donation is tax-deductible.

Mail to: Corral Bluffs Alliance, P.O. Box 81, Peyton, CO 80831

Please print clearly

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Home Phone (_____) _____

Cell phone (_____) _____

Email _____

I'm enclosing \$_____ toward maintenance of new open space at Corral Bluffs.

I'd like to volunteer time to help.