

Applications due soon for Larimer County Natural Resources artist

By Reporter-Herald Staff
Loveland Reporter-Herald

Posted:Wed Feb 14 21:13:26 MST 2018

Artists who want to help inspire people's appreciation of nature have until Feb. 23 to apply to be the Larimer County Department of Natural Resources' Visual Artist of the Year for 2018.

The selected artist will receive a free annual permit to enter county parks and open spaces and have the opportunity to create a piece of visual art inspired by one of the areas, according to a press release.

The artist is asked to host one public art-related program, and is expected to donate the artwork to Larimer County upon its completion.

The Department of Natural Resources will host a public celebration of the artwork, display the piece for public viewing at a Larimer County building, publicize the Artist of the Year whenever appropriate and reimburse the artist for the cost to frame the artwork.

For an application or details, visit larimer.org/naturalresources/photography-art/artist.

Applications are due by 4:30 p.m. on Feb. 23.

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Larimer County seeks volunteer naturalists

By Reporter-Herald Staff
Loveland Reporter-Herald

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Larimer County Department of Natural Resources is looking for people who love spending time outdoors and want to inspire curiosity for nature in others to serve as volunteer naturalists.

Volunteer naturalists teach school groups, talk with visitors to Larimer County's parks and open spaces, and lead hikes to teach about ecology, geology, local history and more.

"Being a volunteer naturalist is a great way to enhance your understanding of the natural world and gain valuable and rewarding volunteer experience," educator Heather Young said in a press release. "Plus, you're a part of a community that cares about the environment and inspires others to appreciate it."

No experience in the fields of environmental education or ecology is required. Volunteer naturalists must attend a training, pass a background check and have transportation.

In-depth training on teaching, public speaking, geology, ecology and more will be held on Wednesdays and Thursdays during the day for three consecutive weeks starting March 21.

Apply by Feb. 28 at larimer.org/naturairesources/volunteer.

For details, contact Young at hyoung@larimer.org or 619-4489.

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Fort Collins artist Larry Tucci captures Soderberg through oil painting of hawk

Larimer County unveils 2017 Natural Resources art

By Pamela Johnson

Reporter-Herald Staff Writer
Loveland Reporter-Herald

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Apply to be 2018 Natural Resources artist

Applications are due Friday for artists who want to be the Larimer County Department of Natural Resources 2018 Visual Artist of the Year.

Visual artists who work with paints, pencils, cameras and other media are invited to apply to create a piece of artwork throughout this year inspired by Larimer County's parks and open spaces. The chosen artist receives an annual entrance pass into these county natural lands and is asked to create a piece to be donated to the county and to host one public art-related program.

Applications, which are due by 4:30 p.m. Friday, are available online at www.larimer.org/naturalresources/photo-gallery/art/artist.

FORT COLLINS — A seemingly larger than life red-tailed hawk, with determination in its eyes, sharp talons and rich feathers, perches on a split rail fence. It looks mysterious, beautiful and capable of spreading its large and powerful wings to take flight on just a moment's notice.

The raptor was created in oil paints by Fort Collins artist Larry Tucci, a realistic rendition of one of the many creatures that call Soderberg Open Space home.

"A Proud Heritage — Red-tailed Hawk at Soderberg," by Tucci, the Larimer County Department of Natural Resources 2017 Visual Artist, was unveiled Tuesday outside the county commissioners' office, 200 W. Oak St. in Fort Collins, where it will hang for the next year.

Each year, the Natural Resources department chooses an artist, who then creates a piece based upon one of the many parks and open spaces that have been preserved in Larimer County through a voter-approved sales tax.

"There's a long history that connects nature to art, and this is how we can do it locally," said Teddy Parker-Renga, communications specialist for the Natural Resources department.

Tucci is the 11th artist and presented the 12th piece of art through the program. Loveland resident Jim Disney, a former commissioner, painted the first two pieces, and a different artist has been chosen each year since, creating a variety of masterpieces from watercolors to plein air to oil paintings.

Tucci is the first artist in the program to feature wildlife more prominently than the landscape itself. The beauty of Horsetooth Reservoir in the fall, with golden trees and blue skies and water, visible from Soderberg Open Space west of Fort Collins, touches the senses through the background of Tucci's painting.

By tapping the hawk, life-like yet larger than life, that pops off the canvas and, as Commissioner Steve Johnson described, into the soul.

"Art touches our souls and open spaces also touch and move our souls," Johnson said at the unveiling ceremony, touting the more than 40,000 acres of land preserved in the county.

"Thank you so much for bringing our open spaces into our courthouse and into our lives."

Tucci worked as a commercial artist in Detroit for 20 years before retiring to Fort Collins, where he meshed his love of nature with his painting skills. Now a professional fine artist, he also teaches art classes through the Fort Collins recreation department.

Nature, Tucci said, has always been an inspiration for his artwork, and he chose to feature Soderberg Open Space not just because of the rich natural heritage but also the historical human heritage, such as the lingering split-rail fences, that blend in with the views.

"Soderberg is truly alive with the spirit of our past," Tucci said in a written description of the painting. "I enjoyed combining that feeling with an impressive red-tailed hawk, now on permanent watch in this beautiful setting."

As a child, Tucci loved nature and loved to draw, but he did not learn to paint until college. Growing up in Detroit, he would fall in love with natural areas only to see them paved over for development, time and time again, which led to his love of conservation, he described. With his art, he has blended both passions.

His paintings have been featured on numerous state and regional conservation stamps, and he has exhibited his work at galleries across the United States, including a recent solo show at the Carnegie Center for Creativity in Fort Collins.

Tucci said he enjoys sharing his love of painting through art classes, and sometime this spring or summer, will offer workshops in connection with the Rocky Mountain Raptor Program where artists will be able to draw or paint with live raptors as inspiration.

Though his tenure as the 2017 visual artist has ended, Tucci is still dedicated to depicting nature's beauty through his artwork, which can be viewed at www.tucciart.com. He said, in a press release, that he hopes his art will continue to make "connections for people between amazing wild creatures and the beautiful habitat they need to survive."

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Natural Resources Office at Carter Lake closed temporarily

 Reporter-Herald Staff
Loveland Reporter-Herald

Posted: Thu Feb 22 11:43:26 MST 2018

The Larimer County Natural Resources Administrative Offices near Carter Lake will close next Wednesday, for a remodel, so the sale of parks passes and other services will move temporarily to the nearby ranger center.

The administrative offices are at 1800 S. County Road 31, near the intersection with County Road 18E, and the Ranger Operations Center is further up the road at 4011 S. County Road 31 at the north shore of the lake.

The administrative offices houses several employee and volunteer offices as well as a front desk where visitors can buy camping and day passes as well as annual passes. These services, starting at noon Feb. 28, will be available at the ranger center until the project is complete.

Hours will be 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday, and members of the public are asked to enter the building on the garden level, facing the reservoir, below the Carter Lake Marina.

The temporary move from the administrative offices, formerly known as the Bison Visitors Center, is due to remodeling of the front desk and lobby area to provide more space. The project includes removing large trophy cases and relocating the front desk to create more office space, according to Larimer County officials.

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March Guided Hikes and Programs on Larimer County Open Spaces

February 22, 2018 Theresa Rose 0

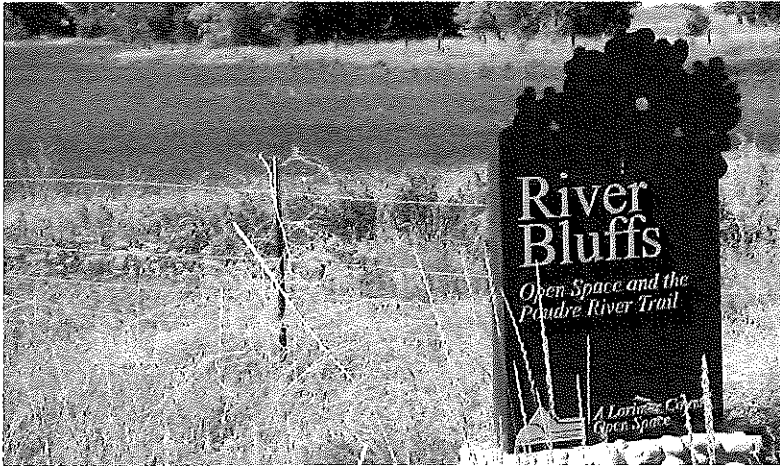


Image courtesy of explorefortcollins.wordpress.com

By Teddy Parker-Renga

Friday, March 9, 7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. “Stargazing with the Northern Colorado Astronomical Society” Join members of the Northern Colorado Astronomical Society (NCAS) for an up-close look at the night sky over the Rockies. Telescopes will be available for viewing stars, galaxies, planets and more. This open house-style program is located at the Devil’s Backbone Open Space parking lot, located just west of Loveland off Hwy. 34. Dress warmly for evening temperatures and bring binoculars if you have them. Program is free. Sign up at offerolarimer.org. Registration is encouraged, but not required. For up-to-date weather information, visit nocoastro.org. Direct questions to Heather at (970) 619-4489.



Saturday, March 10, 9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. “Big Birds of River Bluffs Open Space” Join Larimer County naturalists at River Bluffs Open Space, located just west of the I-25/Windsor interchange off C.R. 32E, for a look at the larger-than-life birds that use this river corridor. Approximately 2-hour program and bird watching. Hike rating: Easy. Please dress appropriately for the weather and bring along some water. Program is free, but **registration is required**. Please go to offerolarimer.org to sign up. Direct questions to Heather at (970) 619-4489.

Saturday, March 17, 9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. “Big Birds of River Bluffs Open Space” Join Larimer County naturalists at River Bluffs Open Space, located just west of the I-25/Windsor interchange off C.R. 32E, for a look at the larger-than-life birds that use this river corridor. Approximately 2-hour program and bird watching. Hike rating: Easy. Please dress appropriately for the weather and bring along some water. Program is free, but **registration is required**. Please go to offerolarimer.org to sign up. Direct questions to Heather at (970) 619-4489.

Saturday, March 17, 7:00 p.m. – 9:30 p.m. “Night Sky Photography” Join Larimer County naturalists at Devil’s Backbone Open Space, located just west of Loveland off Hwy. 34, to learn how to take beautiful night sky pictures. This program will teach you about astrophotography, including camera set up, focusing and a bit about composition and post-processing. Bring a camera with manual focus, lenses, tripod and a red lens flashlight if you have them.

Please dress appropriately for the weather. Program is free, but **registration is required**. Please go to offerolarimer.org to sign up. Direct questions to Heather at (970) 619-4489.

Hermit Park, Red Mountain open for the season, weather dependent

County areas offer chance to enjoy trails and wildlife

By Pamela Johnson

Reporter-Herald Staff Writer
Loveland Reporter-Herald

Posted:Wed Feb 28 21:00:00 MST 2018

Two county open spaces have reopened for the season, though Hermit Park's opening is limited with a full opening expected May 1.

Both Hermit Park near Estes Park and Red Mountain Open Space north of Fort Collins reopened Thursday. However, seasonal weather could affect the uses at these two open spaces.

Hermit Park boasts cabin rentals, campgrounds, a group picnic area and hiking, including a new trail, in a park that feels like a retreat just outside Estes Park. The scenery and wildlife viewing feel much more remote than the open space actually is, and the 1,362 acres are nestled into the hills at as high as 8,964 feet elevation with forests and wetland meadows.

The initial opening is limited to portions of the campground and cabin loop until May 1, when the entire open space is expected to open. Until that time, the road through Hermit Park will be open to the group pavilion and Kruger Rock Trail, and access to the Moose Meadow and Limber Pine trails will be on foot, bicycle or horseback, according to Larimer County.

Red Mountain Open Space, which boasts deep red rocks and rolling grasslands that spread out over 15,000 acres north of Fort Collins almost to the Wyoming border, also opened Thursday. Access to the site, and its trails, though, also depend upon the weather.

Home to some of the first humans in North America more than 12,000 years ago, the open space is now home to artifacts of this era as well as the first 100 percent biologically pure bison herd to roam the land in more than 100 years. Red Mountain is adjacent to Fort Collins' Soapstone Prairie Natural Area, and the bison pasture stretches over both.

Both sites close in the winter because of weather conditions and to protect the winter range habitat for big game, including elk and bighorn sheep.

Residents must purchase a daily use permit for Hermit Park, while Red Mountain Open Space has no entrance fee.

Visitors are advised to check out conditions ahead of jaunts to the open spaces at www.larimer.org/naturalresources or www.nocotrailreport.org. Conditions for Hermit Park also are available via phone at 619-4570, and camping reservations for Hermit Park may be made at 800-397-7795 or visit www.larimercamping.com.

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