

Outside 285 Grant Funding Request

Date: 4/14/2026
To: Douglas County Board of County Commissioners
Through: Douglas J. DeBord, County Manager
From: Dan Dertz, Director of Open Space and Natural Resources
CC: Kirk Inderbitzen, Operations Manager
Lindsay Williams, Land Manager Specialist/Ranger
Subject: **Outside 285 Grant Match**

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| County Open Space Advisory Committee: | 3/31/2026 |
| Board of County Commissioners Meeting: | 4/14/2026 |

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

To support the Douglas County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) Parks, Trails and Open Space Master Plan Douglas County Open Space and Natural Resources (DCOSNR) seeks approval for the contribution to our partner of \$50,000.00, Outside 285, for their award of the Great Outdoor Colorado (GOCO) Community Impact Grant of \$1,610,825.00. The grant will reroute trails and add wayfinding signs in the Indian Creek area of the Pike National Forest. This work will improve public safety and enhance wildlife habitat. The Douglas County Sheriff's Office and Douglas County Search and Rescue have written letters of support for this project. The BOCC previously approved the contribution of \$100,000.00 on August 13, 2024, in support of this project while the County Open Space and Advisory Committee (COSAC) recommended approval on July 11, 2024. The newly awarded grant retains all the benefits for half of the cost due to additional partners.

The total requested amount for the Outside 285 project is \$50,000.00. Staff have identified budget savings from the trails contract to fund this request.

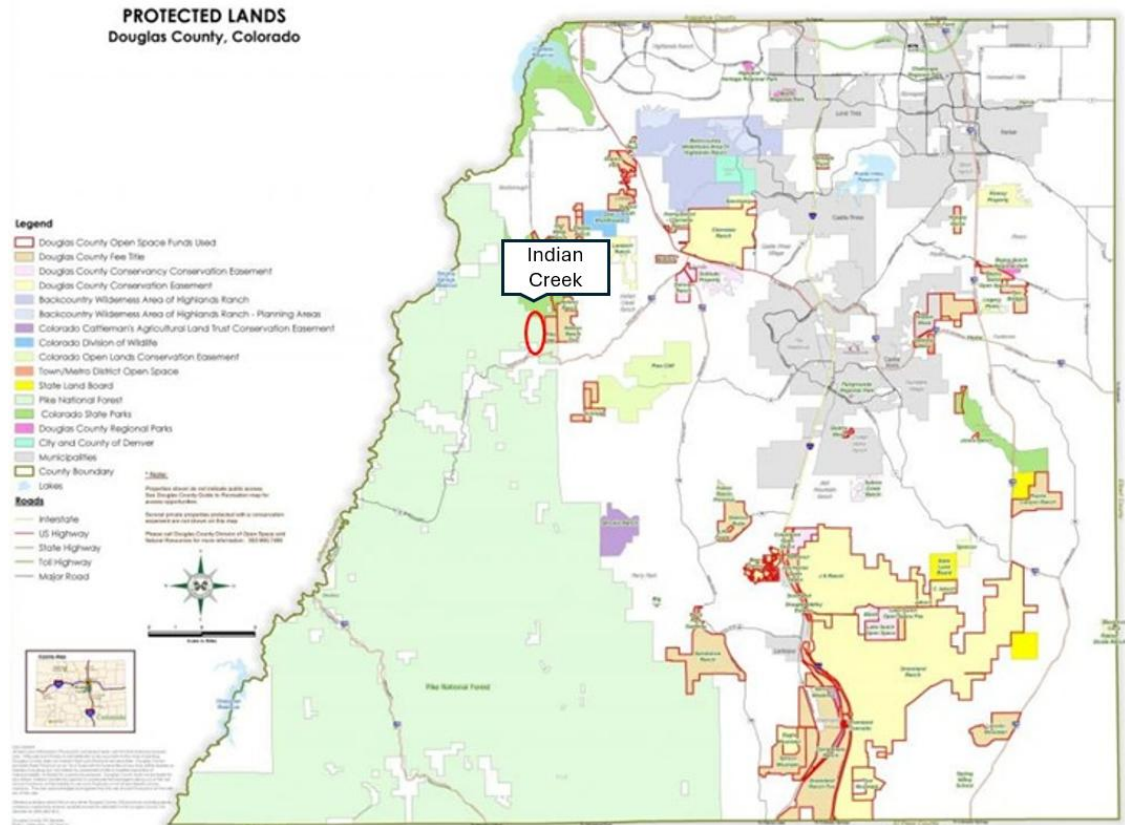
II. APPLICATION INFORMATION

A. Request

Approval of the use of Acquisitions and Trails Funds from the Parks, Trails, Historic Preservation and Open Space sales tax in the amount of \$50,000.00 to fund the Douglas County portion of the Outside 285 GOCO Community Impact Grant. The grant will increase safety for county residents and visitors, protect watersheds and wetlands, improve connections with Douglas County Open Space in the northwestern portion of the county, improve habitat, create sustainable trails, and close undesignated trails.

B. Location

The Indian Creek trail system is located off North State Hwy 67, just west of South Rampart Range Road, in the northwestern portion of Douglas County. The Indian Creek Trail System ties directly into Pike Hill and Nelson Ranch Open Spaces.



III. CONTEXT

Background

In early September 2025 Outside 285 applied for the GOCO Community Impact Grant requesting \$1,610,825.00 for work in the Indian Creek area of Douglas County (and a small portion for the Mosquito Range west of Fairplay). As a partner of Outside 285 DCOSNR agreed to contribute \$50,000.00 match if the grant was awarded, however DCOSNR informed Outside 285 that we would no longer front the full cost of the project. In December 2025 GOCO awarded Outside 285 the full amount of their request. DCOSNR will have a say in how our funding is used. Improving public access, trails and signage. This trail system connects to Douglas County Open Space Ringtail trail system to the east.

In the spring of 2024 Outside 285 approached DCOSNR to inquire about support in applying for a GOCO grant. This request for supporting \$1,000,000.00 and matching \$100,000.00

was presented to County Open Space Advisory Committee (COSAC) and the BOCC. COSAC recommended the initial request of \$100,000.00 on July 11, 2024 while the BOCC approved of this on August 13, 2024. Outside 285 delayed their application for the grant by a year after guidance was given by GOCO on how to make a stronger application.

Douglas County Search and Rescue, Douglas County Sherriff's Deputies, Douglas County Open Space and Natural Resource Rangers and State Parks Staff respond to this area as needed to aid with rescue and recovery efforts throughout the year. This area is difficult to access with limited means of communication and poor signage that leads visitors astray. The area is currently bisected with undesignated trails that were never intended to exist; therefore, visitors are unsure of their location and how to get to their destination. Furthermore, the undesignated trails disrupt critical watersheds and wetlands, and habitat that was set aside for wildlife and were never designed to be sustainable.

IV. COSAC RECOMMENDATION

COSAC previously recommend the approval of \$100,000.00 on July 11, 2024.
COSAC recommended approval of the \$50,000.00 request on March 31, 2026.

V. STAFF ASSESSMENT

Supporting Outside 285's Indian Creek Project aligns with the 2030 Master Plan Objectives OS 2C, OS 3D, and OS 3I. This project will improve public safety and access. Supporting regional trail links between open spaces areas with the National Forest. The proposed design improvements will protect and enhance wildlife habitat and ecosystems. This project will also strengthen multi-agency relationships, enhancing resource protection and emergency response capabilities. Staff have evaluated the use of the Open Space account of the PTHROS sales tax for the GOCO Community Impact Grant funding request and find the use of these funds to comply. Staff requests approval for the Outside 285 project with a matching contribution of \$50,000.00.