



South Metro

LAND CONSERVANCY

SMLC's mission is to increase understanding and appreciation of the profound importance of open spaces, natural areas and trails in the lives of people of all ages. SMLC does this through advocacy, open space acquisition and educational projects.

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South Metro Land Conservancy Annual Newsletter 2022

Dear SMLC Supporters:

While working on the new SMLC website earlier this year, I sat quietly and reread every SMLC newsletter published since we were founded almost 30 years ago. (Thank you, Bobbie Sheffield, for maintaining such excellent records!) In a number of newsletters, Margaret Mead's famous words appear:

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."

I was deeply struck by how seriously SMLC's founders and board members took these words to heart. Newsletter after newsletter highlighted major open space victories that indeed have made the south metro area a better place to live. You can see the updated list of projects on our new website at www.smlc.land.

Today's SMLC Board strives to continue in that spirit. We are still an all-volunteer board without paid staff. All of our funds are devoted to furthering SMLC's mission with minor administrative costs.

Toward that end, we are proud and thrilled to tell you that the Powers Park Vision Plan is complete. It was a significant undertaking for us: procuring outside funding through grants; executing and managing a design consultant contract (Stream Landscape Architecture + Planning); undertaking thoughtful outreach to enlist meaningful feedback from neighbors and senior citizens; and submitting plans to officials at the City of Littleton, South Suburban Parks and Recreation and Mile High Flood District for review. (Please see article on Page 2)

We now have a plan that will serve decision-makers as support for funding the park renovation is pursued...a future park that will serve people of all ages in a dense part of the community and connect them to nature close to home.

We are very thankful for your continuing support!

Sincerely,

Patricia Cronenberger, President



Photo from South Platte Park, courtesy of [Maureen Ravn timer](https://maureenravn timer.com/) - <https://maureenravn timer.com/>

There are a number of ways you can stay up-to-date on SMLC activities: Facebook, Instagram and our website (www.smlc.land). Also, we are building an electronic newsletter list – please send your email addresses to us at info@smlc.land. We promise we won't overload your inbox!

Did you know?

Not only do leaves absorb sunlight and particulate matter from pollution, but the tree canopy also breaks the weight of rain, which is absorbed by roots, easing flooding. Trees also protect and feed wildlife, give off moisture, provide cooling shade and offer social, environmental, and economic benefits. (Loyola Marymount University Center of Urban Resilience)

Powers Park Reimagining is Complete!

It all started when the SMLC Board learned that South Metro Housing Options (SMHO, Littleton's public housing authority) was planning a 51-unit apartment building on a corner of Powers Park. SMHO was interested in ideas that could make this park a true asset for the seniors and disabled who will live there.

Once SMLC committed \$10,000 towards commissioning a landscape architect to develop the vision plan, SMHO, a private foundation and the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment contributed toward this \$30,000 project. SMLC is grateful for their funding support as well as help provided by North Littleton Promise (NLP) on neighborhood outreach. One of NLP's parents served as a Spanish-speaking translator at last July's neighborhood gathering where people were able to express their preferences for the kinds of amenities they'd like to see in the park.

SMLC also wishes to thank the City of Littleton and South Suburban Parks and Recreation for all their guidance and feedback during the development of the plan and for the awesome commitment of our consultant, Stream Landscape Architecture + Planning (<https://streamla.com/>).

What's next? A lot of work lies ahead to secure funding so this park can go beyond being a hole in the ground to retain floodwater to be a true park that the neighbors will enjoy...A place where they can play, walk, roll, sit and connect with nature. Next steps include getting this project in the City and SSPRD's master plans and their Capital Improvement Programs.

See more about the project and view the final report and drawings at <https://www.smlc.land/our-projects/>



SMLC organized a gathering at Powers Park to receive feedback on park improvements from neighbors.



Drawings by Stream Landscape Architecture + Planning depicting proposed improvements within the Powers Park Vision Plan.



Powers Park Vision Plan

Did you know?

Did you ever wonder for whom Powers Park is named? Check out the final report at <https://www.smlc.land/our-projects/>

SMLC Sponsors Nature Activities

Once again SMLC will sponsor the South Platte Park naturalist staff and Nature Van at the City of Littleton's "Meet, Greet and Eats" this summer. This was a huge success last year and attracted young and old alike to help them understand the wildlife in the ponds and creeks in their neighborhood park and demonstrate the value of floodplain nature in parks.



At SMLC's invitation, Generation Wild's "Wilder" came to Littleton. He was a big hit at Progress Park.

The SMLC Board also will be on hand with the drawings for the Powers Park Vision Plan so you can see them up close. Please stop by and visit with us!

Meet, Greet and Eats 2022 Schedule:

- Wednesday, June 15 at Ketring Park
- Wednesday, July 13 at Trailmark Park **Nature Van will not be present
- Wednesday, Aug. 24 at Berry Park



South Platte Park naturalist staff at Progress Park last summer.

South Suburban Master Plan Update is Underway

South Suburban Parks and Recreation District is in the early stages of updating its 2017 master plan. This 2022 plan update will set the District's goals and priorities for the next 5-10 years, while building on the existing master plan's four guiding principles: quality first, enrich wellness, connect to nature, and lead sustainability.

South Metro Land Conservancy was recently invited to, and participated in, a stakeholders' roundtable with South Suburban to discuss our hopes and expectations for the updated plan.

Other roundtable attendees included the cities of Littleton and Lone Tree, Southeast Metro Stormwater Authority, High Line Canal Conservancy, and Highlands Ranch Community Association.

During the roundtable, South Metro Land Conservancy advocated for environmental sustainability, more natural areas in local parks, and for the Powers Park reimagining.

South Suburban is asking for community input on the master plan update. Anyone interested can sign up to receive news at <https://www.ssprd.org/Newsletters/Master-Plan-Updates.html>. There will also be various in-person events throughout the summer that South Suburban is still in the process of scheduling. Updates on those events, as well as more information on the master plan, can be found at <https://www.ssprd.org/Master-Plan>.

Remembering Bruce Kramlich

Last year, SMLC and the community lost a “Great Conservationist”, Bruce Kramlich. Bruce was one of SMLC’s founders and served on the SMLC Board for many years in varying capacities. He brought his business and financial expertise to the board, helping to manage its funds and maintain its relationships with state and national conservation organizations. In 2020, SMLC honored Bruce by adding his name to the SMLC boulder in the roundabout just west of the Carson Nature Center. Despite masks and social distancing, we managed to have a lovely celebration with Bruce’s family in attendance. Even off of the board, Bruce remained a stalwart supporter of SMLC. Upon his passing his family asked that donations be made to South Metro Land Conservancy. SMLC and Bruce’s family have discussed possible ways to further honor his memory and we will let you know what we decide to do. Thank you, Bruce, for all that you did to make life better for all of us.



Bruce Kramlich, former SMLC board member, during the 2020 rock engraving ceremony.

Kelly Ingebritson Joins the SMLC Board

SMLC is delighted to report that Kelly Ingebritson joined the board early this year. Kelly brings a valuable perspective to SMLC with her professional work in the land conservation world. Since 2008, she has worked at The Conservation Fund, a national conservation non-profit organization with a Colorado office. That office has completed 185 projects statewide adding up to 278,000 acres including the Greenland Ranch conservation easement between Denver and Colorado Springs along the I-25 corridor.

Kelly’s expertise includes conservation real estate transactions, government relations, legislative drafting, grant writing, coalition building, and conservation funding at the local, state, and federal levels. Kelly holds a Juris Doctor from the University of Denver Sturm College of Law and has a Bachelor of Science in Education from Miami University of Ohio. She lives in Littleton, has a strong passion for connecting people and nature and enjoys hiking with her husband and daughter. Welcome, Kelly, to the SMLC Board!



Welcome aboard, Kelly!

New Plants for the Plant

Littleton and Englewood jointly own one of the largest wastewater treatment plants in the state. The plant and its facilities are called South Platte Renew reflecting the work at the plant of turning wastewater into clean effluent that is discharged into the South Platte River. The plant is several acres in size with extensive grassy areas around the treatment facilities that could feature more native and xeric landscapes. In other words, places that will help insects and birds thrive. SMLC is excited to be working with staff at the plant on their plans to possibly convert their grassy areas to places that help nature thrive in the south metro area. Stay tuned for more information as the project progresses.



Members of the SMLC board and Skot Latona, manager of South Platte Park, cleaning up the SMLC roundabout located at the Carson Nature Center's entrance to South Platte Park.



SMLC is delighted to showcase Maureen Ravnik's beautiful photos in our newsletter and on our website. Maureen has lived in Colorado since 1971, including 20 years in Littleton. She is retired and spends her time traveling and photographing. Thank you, Maureen! www.maureenravn timer.com

our purpose...

Without question, being outdoors and experiencing nature is central to our daily lives. South Metro Land Conservancy is the principled voice for nature in places close to home. Using creativity, strong relationships and unfaltering passion, we seek opportunities to preserve, educate, promote and align a grand vision for how we all connect with nature.



THANK YOU!

You may also make your donation electronically by going to the South Metro Land Conservancy website (<http://www.smlc.land>) and clicking on the “Donate” button on the homepage. Your contributions are vital to our work.

Facebook: @southmetrolandconservancy **Instagram:** smlc_co

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