

Natural areas are destinations and exciting opportunities to experience:

- Nature in the city
- Wildlife corridors
- Diverse wildlife habitats
- Birds, waterfowl and small mammals
- Native plant communities
- Wildflower meadows
- Remnants of Denver's natural history

Natural areas offer:

- Adventure and fun
- Mystery and intrigue
- Outdoor activities
- Outdoor education
- Play and discovery
- Recreation and enjoyment
- Seasonal change
- Volunteer opportunities
- Solitude and peace



Approximately 3000 acres within the urban environment retain or have the potential to re-establish fundamental natural features and critical wildlife habitats. These areas include wetlands, riparian corridors, shrublands and upland prairies.

Denver Parks & Recreation
Natural Areas Program
201 West Colfax Ave
Denver CO 80202
www.denvergov.org/natural_areas/



City & County of Denver
John W. Hickentlooper, Mayor



Denver's Natural Areas

Enhancing the City's natural legacy

Denver's Natural Areas

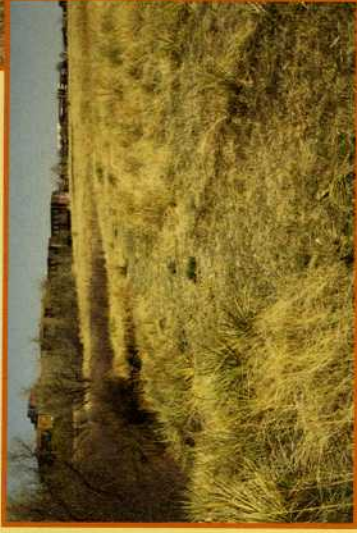
Denver, located between the Rocky Mountains and eastern prairies, was founded in 1860 at the confluence of Cherry Creek and the South Platte River. The transition from mountain to prairie brought a complex tapestry of native grasses, trees, shrubs and wildflowers that supported a diversity of wildlife, Native Americans and settlers.

As Denver prospered with growth and development, it surrendered over 80 percent of its natural landscape, original native plants and wildlife.



Urbanization of the landscape

Appreciating the region's natural history, the Department of Parks and Recreation in 1999 initiated the Natural Areas Program to restore and protect what remains.



Babi Yar in 1998 before restoration

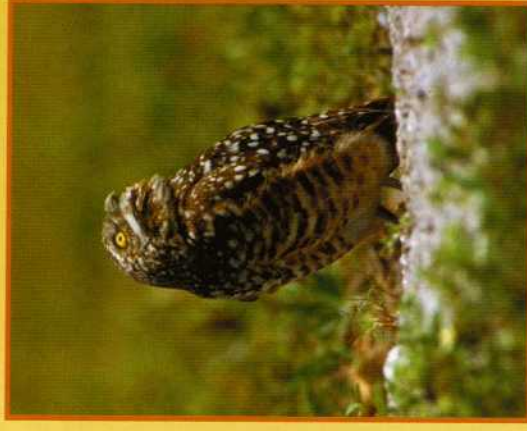
Natural areas are important for native plant communities, wildlife, water quality, environmental health, scenery, recreation, science and education.

Good stewardship of our natural areas guarantees present and future generations the opportunity to understand, experience, appreciate and live with nature. Restoring these areas will revive unique ecosystems of the prairies and waterways and enhance our existing parks, thereby, providing more for everyone to enjoy.

Natural areas include sites with natural scenic and historic values, such as Cherry and Sand Creeks, remnant prairies, such as Babi Yar, and special habitats for wildlife like burrowing owls.



Babi Yar in 2002 after restoration



Burrowing Owl

Denver's Natural Areas allows us to reconnect with nature, for quiet renewal, relaxation and pure pleasure.