

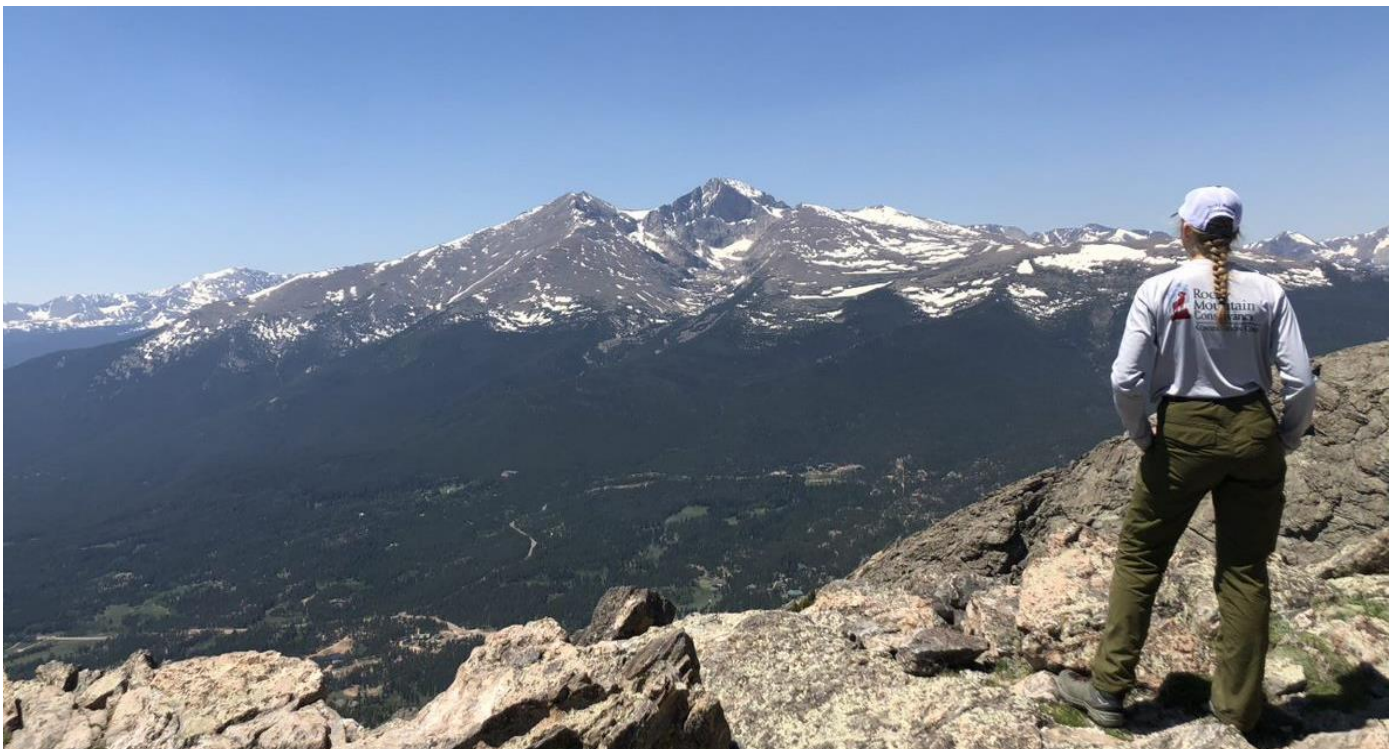


# Rocky Mountain Conservancy

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CONSERVATION CORPS

## 2021 End-Of-Season Portfolio



AmeriCorps



Proud Member of  
**The CorpsNetwork**  
Strengthening America through  
service and conservation



Since 1931, Rocky Mountain Conservancy has supported Rocky Mountain National Park and other public land partners through educational programs and philanthropic donations. Early on, the focus of the Conservancy was developing educational materials and publications for visitors to use while in Rocky Mountain National Park. Over the past eighty year, the Conservancy has grown to support its public land partners in a breadth of ways.

Currently, Rocky Mountain Conservancy contains five departments:

- **Retail** – manages nature stores throughout Colorado and Wyoming to provide visitors with educational materials and interpretive products for visitors to learn more about public lands.
- **Publications** – produces nature guides, children’s literature, natural and cultural history books, and more to enrich people’s experience in Rocky Mountain National Park and other public lands.
- **Philanthropy** – connects people to Rocky Mountain National Park and the Conservancy through a membership program and donations supporting RMNP and Conservancy programs.
- **Education** – provides field classes, internships, nature-based activities, and fellowships for people of all ages to further understand and connect with public lands.
- **Conservation** – hosts the High School Leadership Corps, Conservation Corps, and Volunteer Stewardship programs to engage local high school youth, young adults (ages 18-25), and the public (all ages) in conservation work.

### Conservation Corps Program Outline

The Rocky Mountain Conservancy created the Conservation Corps program in 2003. Initially, the program supported seven interns on one crew in Rocky Mountain National Park. In the years since, the program has grown to provide dozens of youth ages 18-25 with a summer-long internship opportunity on a variety of crews. In 2021, seven crews were based in four different locations, either within Rocky Mountain National Park or the surrounding Arapaho-Roosevelt National Forests.

#### Program Goals:

1. To empower youth with job skills, career development resources, a conservation ethic, and a connection to our nation’s public lands to create the next generation of stewards.
2. To increase participant awareness of careers related to the environment, environmental stewardship, and public lands.
3. To link Conservation Corps projects to the missions and visions of the Rocky Mountain Conservancy, Rocky Mountain National Park/National Park Service, and Arapaho-Roosevelt National Forest/USDA Forest Service.
4. To increase participant awareness and use of effective leadership skills based on positive and constructive communication and to provide opportunity for practice of these skills.
5. To increase participant awareness of the cultural and natural history and environment of the Rocky Mountain region.
6. To inform crew members in the need for and use of various methods of construction for environmentally friendly trails, restoration, and reclamation projects.
7. To provide on-the-ground conservation work for Rocky Mountain National Park (RMNP) and the Arapaho-Roosevelt National Forest (ARNF).

The main 2021 season spanned eleven weeks between June 1 and mid-August. Two crews (Rocky Fire and extended season trails) completed a season from June 1 to mid-October. All crews work directly alongside the National Park Service (NPS) or USDA Forest Service (USFS) completing conservation projects summarized in the following pages. Intentional time throughout the summer was devoted to leadership training, educational programming, and career development opportunities from outdoor professionals such as the NPS and USFS.

The program provides work clothing, rented camping gear, housing for the duration of the term, and a biweekly living stipend to all members and leaders. The program is funded through generous donor support, in-kind gear donations, grant funding, and National Park Service and USDA Forest Service project funds.

The Rocky Mountain Conservancy’s Conservation Corps is an AmeriCorps program through The Corps Network.



## Rocky Fire Crew







**Name:** Sage Thomas (Crew Leader)

**Hometown:** Highland Park, Illinois

**School/Area of Study:** University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, graduated with BS in Natural Resources in Environmental Science

**Career Goals:** Not sure yet, something with natural resources

**Testimonial/ Quote:** *"Rocky Mountain Conservancy gave me the opportunity to grow as a leader and learn a ton of new skills I would have never imagined myself doing. Like using a chainsaw to fell trees! I really enjoyed living with my crew and doing meaningful fuels reduction work in the park."*



**Name:** Alex Lorenz

**Hometown:** Rochester, Massachusetts

**School/Area of Study:** University of Denver, Daniels College of Business | Major: Business Administration – International Business

**Career Goals:** I'd really like to work in wildland fire for a few years, and then hopefully for the National Park Service in some administrative capacity farther on.

**Testimonial:** *"...I realized that the principles of accountability and ownership are the foundation of successful leadership; never before has it been so clear to me. The consequences of the absence of those crucial principles presented another learning experience for me: the importance of addressing my concerns before they become a problem for myself or others."*



**Name:** Max Sejud

**Hometown:** New Orleans, Louisiana

**School/Area of Study:** Delgado Community College, studying Music Production

**Career Goals:** To become a wildland firefighter and do some sort of wilderness conservation.

**Testimonial/Quote:** *"This summer has been a win-win situation; I was enjoying my experience in the "now", as well as providing a path for my future. I'm going to miss these goons I call crew mates; they've helped me become more mature and comfortable with myself."*



**Name:** Josh Huff

**Hometown:** Fairfax, Virginia

**School/Area of Study:** Not currently attending

**Career Goals:** In the future I plan to become either a wildland firefighter or a park ranger because I love the outdoors. I always have ever since I was a kid, and it means so much to me that I will do anything I can to protect this wonderful world we live in.

**Testimonial/Quote:** *"The motivation behind the work is to conserve the outdoors for what it is right now. I want to create an atmosphere for people to see what I've seen and grow to love a place like Rocky Mountain National Park. I hope others will see the effort I've put in feel inspired to put in their own efforts as well."*



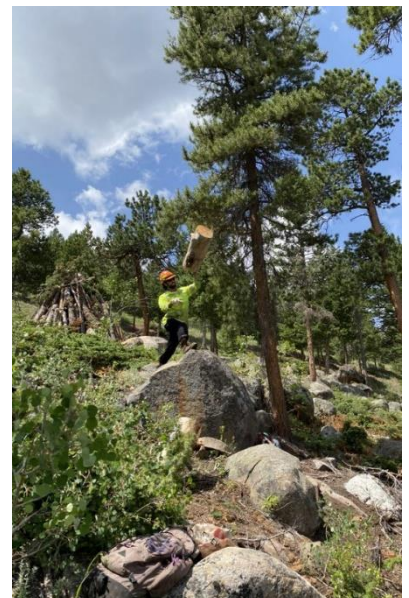
Rocky Mountain Conservancy's Conservation Corps launched its inaugural Fire Crew in the summer of 2021.

This four-person crew served a longer season than most, with a season from June 1st to October 7th.

The RMC Fire Crew has been working and training alongside Rocky Mountain National Park's fire team daily.



Primarily, the crew worked on fuels mitigation near Deer Mountain in Rocky Mountain National Park. There, they built over 150 slash piles- large bonfire-like piles of logs to be burned over the winter. They also gained dozens of hours of experience using chainsaws to fell and buck trees. As a result of their work, the landscape of the Deer Mountain area has drastically transformed from a dense, overgrown forest to a healthy (and safely distanced) stand of trees, one that is far less likely to exacerbate the effects of future wildfires and is a safer environment for firefighters to work.



Along with fuels mitigation, the Fire Crew worked on defensible spaces in the National Park, meaning they cleared a secure boundary around dozens of NPS buildings to protect and shield them from potential fires. Ultimately, all members of this crew exited their season with a nationally recognized Incident Qualification "Red Card" certification, enabling them to work as Type 2 Firefighter Crewmembers at the federal level in the future. Several members of 2021's Fire Crew plan to work as wildland firefighters for the National Park Service next season.

**Canyon Lakes Crew**





**Name:** Erin Tansimore (Crew Leader)

**Hometown:** New Kensington, Pennsylvania

**School/Area of Study:** Juniata College, graduated May 2020, BA in Environmental & Gender Studies

**Career Goals:** I'm planning to attend graduate school starting next fall to get a master's degree in Environmental Humanities. After that, I will most likely work in the environmental nonprofit and/or research sectors.

**Testimonial/Quote:** *"Getting to live and work with nine of the best people I've ever met 24/7 for ten weeks straight has been one of the best experiences of my life. I'm so grateful for every second I've been lucky enough to work, hike, eat, goof around, and laugh with these lovely humans that RMC brought into my life."*



**Name:** Blake Boyle (Crew Leader)

**Hometown:** Orlando, Florida

**School/Area of Study:** University of Central Florida majoring in Environmental Studies

**Career Goals:** I would love to work for the parks service in any capacity, ideally education.

**Testimonial/Quote:** *"I don't think this happens to everyone, but I wanted it to be my goal as a crew leader to try and play a small part in completely shattering any plans or goals they had before the season. I wished for every single person to come out of the summer questioning their future and fighting to hold onto the brief time they had at the RMC. So much so that the way they live, act and see the world will forever be changed..."*





**Name:** Ella Adams

**Hometown:** Athens, Georgia

**School/Area of Study:** Randolph-Macon College, major is undecided

**Career Goals:** Finish college and work in a national park service job or forest service job.

**Testimonial/Quote:** *"After that first week of training and getting to know each other, I knew it was going to be a great summer! During those several months with no cell service, and Wi-Fi only on weekends when we ventured into nearby towns, it was really cool. Most students would not have chosen the backcountry, and I hadn't originally either, but I was asked if I wanted to swap with another student who wanted to be in a different crew, and I'm glad I did!"*

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**Name:** Alan Alvarez

**Hometown:** Tucson, Arizona

**School/Area of Study:** Northern Arizona University | Major in Environmental Science and an emphasis in environmental management

**Career Goals:** I am still unsure of what my goals for my career are. I enjoy this type of work and would like to continue it in the future.

**Testimonial/Quote:** *"My best memory is the 30-mile hike we did over the course of 20 hours on our off day. It was hard but it is something I will never forget. It showed me that I am capable of doing tasks that I think are impossible."*

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**Name:** Daxen Brems

**Hometown:** Lakewood, Colorado

**School/Area of Study:** Arizona State University, studying Biological Sciences

**Career Goals:** To help preserve, restore, and protect wildlife and wilderness areas by working in the conservation and environmental sciences field. I want to work for a Conservation program that is dedicated to educating groups on the value and importance of both the wilderness and wildlife in the area. I desire to make a lasting impact for the planet in any capacity that I can.

**Testimonial/Quote:** *"I will never forget this season; so full of beautiful landscapes and equally beautiful friendships. From the snowcapped alpine peaks to the giant smiles on our faces, we shared an unforgettable experience. I am grateful for the opportunity I got to further solidify my love for the wilderness and my career path of conservation. I hope everyone gets to experience the deep connection I felt to the land and the people around me."*

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**Name:** Caden Williams

**Hometown:** Sacramento, CA

**School/Area of Study:** University of California, Davis studying Environmental Science and Management.

**Career Goals:** I would like to explore a variety of positions in different (but related) fields. Overall, I want my future career to marry scientific knowledge with decisive action against environmental issues.

**Testimonial/Quote:** *"Though the going was a little rough at times (mosquitoes, scraped by trees, steep ascension, wet socks), the sense of accomplishment, serenity, and togetherness of being on that ridge with my crew members, who were now some of my closest friends, was unparalleled. We made our way back down the trail during golden hour and the sunset through the trees lit our path. It was past dark when we finally made it back to our car and drove home, and we all passed out immediately."*



**Name:** Tyler Drake

**Hometown:** Fred, TX

**School/Area of Study:** I am not currently enrolled in college, but I plan to use my education award towards re-enrolling and pursuing a degree in archaeology & anthropology.

**Career Goals:** I'm not sure yet, but until I find out, more trail work!

**Testimonial/Quote:** *"Going into this job, I was mostly expecting a new and interesting working experience. What I found instead was an extended family of ten extraordinary people, a sense of purpose, and a new career path that feels rewarding. It's an amazing feeling to be making a positive difference alongside people that mean so much to you."*

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**Name:** Jillian Gehman

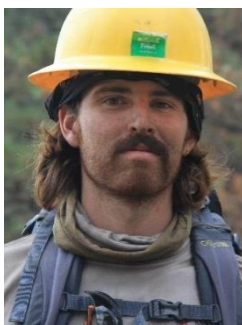
**Hometown:** Allentown, Pennsylvania

**School/Area of Study:** Lehigh Carbon Community College, Associates Degree 2019

**Career Goals:** My current plan is to travel and work seasonal jobs. The RMC has piqued my interest in crosscut and red card certifications, so I hope to acquire those within the next year. I've thoroughly enjoyed my time with the RMC, and I hope to find a career in this environment.

**Testimonial/Quote:** *"The most memorable moment of this summer had to have been our 35-mile hike. It was a gratifying moment realizing not only what we could handle as a team, but what one can handle as an individual. The fact that our team had the determination to trudge through the Rawah Wilderness for approximately 20 hours on our day off is impressive. I will never forget the memory, nor my ability to do it."*

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**Name:** Nate Hendley

**Hometown:** Charlotte, North Carolina

**School/Area of Study:** Graduate of the University of Chicago with a Bachelor of Arts in Biological Sciences (Specialization in Endocrinology)

**Career Goals:** After I do a bit of traveling and seasonal work, I plan on applying to medical school.

**Testimonial/Quote:** *This summer with the Rocky Mountain Conservancy (RMC) was one of the best of my life. While my ten weeks in the Rawah Wilderness provided me with new experiences, it reinforced many things that life has already taught me: to not be afraid to take a road less traveled, the power of a good group of friends, and how vital it is to have a vocation that you find purpose in. I am grateful to have had this opportunity and cannot justly articulate how profound and healing this time was. Thank you so much!*

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**Name:** Randie Evans

**Hometown:** Centerville, Texas

**School/Area of Study:** Blinn College, graduated with Associate of Science 2017

**Career Goals:** I am undecided on my main career goals. I've thought about doing work in a wildlife rehabilitation center. I have always wanted to work with animals in some capacity, but I also enjoy working with elderly people in living centers and home health, so I've always been torn as to where I needed to be.

**Testimonial/Quote:** *"I learned how to live in a group environment and become a cohesive crew. I would have never imagined myself being able to live and be so close with a group of ten strangers. I can genuinely say I've never made such good friends within two weeks. The level of bonding and mutual respect is unreal."*



## 2021 Work Highlights

The 10-person Canyon Lakes super-crew lived in the US Forest Service's Stub Creek cabin, deep in the Rawah Wilderness. The Canyon Lakes crew served many parts of the Canyon Lakes Ranger District, from the Rawah and Comanche Peak Wilderness areas to numerous trails along the Poudre Canyon. Over the course of the summer, the crew successfully cleared or dug nearly 200 drains to aid in trail longevity and durability. Similarly, they completed numerous trail reroute projects, in which they constructed over 300 feet of new and durable rock wall and tread that will last for decades to come.



After the devastating Cameron Peak fire of 2020, the Canyon crew worked tirelessly to rehabilitate and reopen decimated trails such as the Rawah's Blue Lake Trail and the Poudre Canyon's Roaring Creek. Thanks to their efforts on a week-long backcountry hitch, the Blue Lake trail was reopened for the public to explore and enjoy.



Over the summer, the Canyon Crew went on plenty of weekend adventures in their backyard, the Rawah Wilderness. Renting outdoor gear from RMC (free of charge) allows all corps members the opportunity to be prepared for, and safely experience, the wonderful natural areas that northern Colorado has to offer.



## Sulphur Crews



**Name:** Grace McMahon (ANRA Crew Leader)

**Hometown:** Natural Dam, Arkansas

**School/Area of Study:** Arkansas Tech University, studying Environmental Science.

**Career Goals:** My biggest goal is to someday be an interpreter at either a national or state park, but as long as I'm working outdoors and enriching the environment and peoples' lives, it doesn't matter what my job title is.

**Testimonial/Quote:** *"I have more amazing memories than I can even count, but one of my favorites from work was during our Gourd Lake hitch. We didn't make it all the way to the lake on the first day of cutting, but on the second day we cleared the entire trail by lunch time. During our break, we all celebrated by jumping into the lake! It was magical."*



**Name:** Michelle Mariscal

**Hometown:** Chaska, Minnesota

**School/Area of Study:** Hemline University: Criminal Justice

**Career Goals:** Crime scene investigation and eventually become a medical examiner

**Testimonial/Quote:** *"I chose to work here this summer because I wanted to do impactful conservation work, to see Colorado, and to meet new people. RMC allowed me to do all three!"*





**Name:** Dakota Kahler

**Hometown:** Adel, Iowa

**School/Area of Study:** University of Iowa studying Economics and Philosophy.

**Career Goals:** I am working towards becoming an entertainment attorney. If not in the music business, I would enjoy anything Environmental or Intellectual Property based.

**Testimonial/Quote:** *"I love the state of Colorado and have always felt at home there. I took a trip to RMNP in 2020 and I saw a sign advertising RMC. I checked their website for application openings every day since. I wanted to become a stronger leader, which this program helped me accomplish."*

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**Name:** Isaac D. Jones

**Hometown:** Columbia, Missouri

**School/Area of Study:** University of Missouri, Environmental Science, graduated May 2021

**Career Goals:** I hope to pursue a career in academia and research within the realm of environmental science, human dimensions of natural resources, or/and environmental education.

**Testimonial/Quote:** *"I have been wanting to get a more diverse experience beyond the confines of the Missouri border, and I believe that working for Rocky Mountain Conservancy has been a perfect fit. I could not be happier working alongside colleagues from all over the world to create sustainable solutions and offer new insight into natural history, outdoor recreation, ecology, and conservation."*

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**Name:** Katlynn Brock

**Hometown:** Manhattan, Kansas

**School/Area of Study:** Kansas State University, studying Parks Management and Conservation

**Career Goals:** Being able to work in the outdoors and putting my skills and knowledge into park management and conservation. I dream of traveling around working in parks and making connections with those who enjoy the natural world.

**Testimonial/Quote:** *"I loved our crew's camping life! We worked together to make it home away from home. Whenever something came up, we always had each other's backs and strived to make our summer experience as much fun as possible."*

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**Name:** Ozark Sutula

**Hometown:** Omaha, Nebraska

**School/Area of Study:** University of Nebraska at Omaha, Multidisciplinary Studies with areas of emphasis in Geography, Creative Writing, and Women's & Gender Studies

**Career Goals:** While my interests and areas of study are varied, I can see myself in a position with the Forest Service. In general, I hope to gain knowledge, skills, and experience in the wide realm of outdoor work, so that I may be prepared for a wide range of opportunities.

**Testimonial/Quote:** *"I've learned what it means to enter into relationship with land, what it means to live and work in a community, how to use a crosscut saw and why it's such a special skill and privilege, how much I love working with crosscuts and on trails in general and how much I want to come back in the future and do more crosscut saw work, how much I love the wilderness, that wilderness teaches me why I want to be alive, that the Forest Service is full of some incredible people, and that jobs doing land stewardship (especially with the USFS) are not out of reach for me"*



**Name:** Eli Karsh-Lombardo

**Hometown:** Denver, CO

**School/Area of Study:** Montana State University, majoring in Fish and Wildlife Ecology with a minor in Hispanic studies.

**Career Goals:** I would love to be in an outdoor educator field. I do not have specific ages or programs in mind, but I would love to be a part of something that helps teach people the aspects of nature moving forward in the age of technology.

**Testimonial/Quote:** *"Working with RMC has given me a burst of motivation to get out and start taking control of my summer experiences. I always said I wanted to camp and spend as much time outdoors as possible, and with RMC I am able to find my freedom outdoors while taking steps forward for my future."*

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**Name:** Claire Sneed

**Hometown:** Bedminster, Pennsylvania

**School/Area of Study:** THE Ohio State University, studying Earth Science with a focus on climate, water, and the environment.

**Career Goals:** Right now, I am really interested in becoming an education or interpretive ranger within the NPS. I'm also interested in performing research related to arctic regions, geochemistry, and geologic history. Whichever path I choose, I want to have a career where I can continually learn and share my experiences with others to get them excited about spending time in nature and caring for the planet.

**Testimonial/Quote:** *"I learned that the best you can do in these stressful situations is to just laugh and tackle the issue at hand the best you can. Letting anxiety take hold and paralyze you is tempting and happened to me before working in this atmosphere this summer. I have since learned to take a deep breath in these unexpected situations and to just focus on the next step instead of being overwhelmed by the entire situation"*

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**Name:** Mak Booth

**Hometown:** Bloomington, Minnesota

**School/Area of Study:** St Olaf College, majoring in Environmental Studies and an emphasis in Arts and Humanities.

**Careers Goals:** I'm still undecided of the exact career I want to go into, but my goal is to work in the environmental field either doing conservation or educational work.

**Testimonial/Quote:** *"My best memory for this season was the time we, as a crew, spent together after work. There was one evening after a rain storm my crew was throwing a frisbee around, and that was one of the best days I've had. The scenery was perfect with mountains and rainbows in the background. We were all just having a good time and enjoying each other's company."*

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**Name:** Cameron Schuler (Trails Crew Leader)

**Hometown:** Clayton, North Carolina

**School/Area of Study:** Appalachian State University majoring in Environmental Studies with a concentration in conservation and resource management

**Career Goal:** I'm unsure as of now, possibly continuing with RMC for another season or looking for local jobs using the credentials I've obtained over the past year

**Testimonial/Quote:** *"I've learned more about being a crew leader and what it means to work with a team. It's been a lot more logistical and interpersonal work than I thought, and those skills have improved."*



## 2021 Work Highlights

The only RMC Conservation Corps crew stationed on the West side of the Continental Divide, the Sulphur crew was a conglomeration of two separate crews. One crew worked with the Arapaho National Recreation Area (ANRA), while the other partnered with the trails department of the Sulphur Ranger District of the Arapaho-Roosevelt National Forests.

The ANRA crew focused on rehabilitation and maintenance of front-country campsites in and around Grand Lake, Colorado. Projects for this crew included the fixing, building, and painting over 40 picnic tables used in campgrounds and other public areas, as well as general upkeep of the Shadow Mountain Work Center. Valuable skills like roofing, use of power tools, and herbicide application on invasive species were learned and practiced through their summer season.



The crew partnering with the Forest Service trails team spent several weeks “on hitch,” where they camped in the backcountry of the National Forest and spent many long days using a decades old, 6-foot-long crosscut saw to eradicate over 460 fallen trees that were blocking numerous trails. Throughout the 11-week season, both Sulphur crews (along with a few llamas to pack in tools and equipment) were often enlisted to camp out in the backcountry and help dismantle these ecological impediments. Everyone on the Sulphur crews left this season with a nationally recognized Crosscut Bucking certification, which they earned through educational classes and experiences with the Forest Service.



The 2021 Sulphur crews wrapped up their summer with a nationally recognized Crosscut Bucking “B” certification, which they earned through a multi-day educational session through the US Forest Service. The Crosscut certification allows crew members to clear downed trees in true Wilderness areas, where machines such as chainsaws cannot be used.



Boulder Crew







**Name:** Samuel Sugerman (Crew Leader)

**Hometown:** Ann Arbor, Michigan

**School/Area of Study:** University of Michigan, Master's in Environmental Policy

**Career Goals:** Academic research at a University

**Testimonial/Quote:** *"My best memory was camping near Isabelle Lake, and the constant presence of moose to greet the day and wish me goodnight."*



**Name:** Katherine Amoresano

**Hometown:** New York, New York

**School/Area of Study:** At the University at Albany, I am a Cybersecurity major.

**Career Goals:** I am very aware of the current impact of climate change and want to help combat it through my work, regardless of what it may be. I am majoring in Cybersecurity and am interested in emerging technologies that have the potential to be used in a way that benefits the planet. I hope to combine my technology background with my interest in conservation work.

**Testimonial/Quote:** *"I have learned that it is never too late to try something new."*



**Name:** Evan Jacobs

**Hometown:** Pleasant Hill, Missouri

**School/Area of Study:** University of Missouri, majoring in Natural Resource Management with an emphasis in Fisheries and Wildlife Management.

**Career Goals:** A career goal of mine is to become a wildland firefighter. After working with the Boulder crew this summer, I was able to find out what career paths I want to take in the future.

**Testimonial/Quote:** *"I learned what goals to set for myself for a future career this season.*

*After working over the summer and seeing the effects of the western wildfires, I would like to become a firefighter. I also learned many valuable skills in the field such as communication and what makes a great team leader!"*



**Name:** Eva Happy

**Hometown:** Eugene, Oregon

**School/Area of Study:** Montana State University, Honors degree in Liberal Studies

**Career Goals:** I hope to continue to work in the outdoor industry/conservation for the foreseeable future. I would love to get involved with the National Park Service or the Forest Service. Further down the line I plan to obtain a master's in social work and work as a social worker in some capacity, ideally combining my love for the outdoors with my desire to connect meaningfully with people. We shall see how that unfolds!

**Testimonial/Quote:** *"I have improved my ability to work cohesively with a group and have practiced voicing my opinions and concerns openly with others. In my free time, I have picked*

*up an interest in wildflower identification, and have learned quite a bit about the seasonal plants native to this area."*



**Name:** Brayden Gardner

**Hometown:** Chandler, Arizona

**School/Area of Study:** Arizona State University, 2020 graduate with BS in Supply Chain Management and BA in Business Sustainability

**Career Goals:** Working on conservation and sustainability ventures to make our Earth a better place for current and future generations!

**Testimonial/Quote:** *"Seeing and participating in the work that goes on behind the scenes to make these areas safe and accessible made me appreciate the outdoor activities that can be taken for granted. I've always had an appreciation for the outdoors but being fully immersed this summer turned that appreciation into a love."*

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**Name:** Gracie MacDonald

**Hometown:** Taylor, Arkansas

**School/Area of Study:** Southern Arkansas University, major in Wildlife Biology and Conservation

**Career Goals:** My career goals are graduating and landing a field job as a wildlife biologist. Being a wildlife biologist can be a competitive career, so I plan on applying for some seasonal outdoor jobs while I'm searching for a wildlife position. I have always been connected to the outdoors and I think seasonal jobs are something I would enjoy.

**Testimonial/Quote:** *"The greatest lesson I've learned this summer was that your confidence should outweigh your fear. Before I arrived at Kelly Dahl campground that first day, I was incredibly anxious. I never imagined I would have the opportunity to live in CO for the summer. Initially, I thought I would not fit in, and I was scared that I had made a mistake by driving 16 hours to somewhere I've never been to live with people I have never met, but looking back, I know that I would have missed so much if I had not signed up for RMC. I will forever be grateful that I did not give in to the fear and back out of this incredible opportunity."*

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**Name:** Ben Smith

**Hometown:** Newark, OH

**School/Area of Study:** Capital University | Major: Biology on the Pre-Med track

**Career Goals:** My career ambitions are to work with the environment and really serve our land. My goals are to be either a parks director or work with the Department of Natural Resources at a local or state level. I would like to work to preserve and protect our natural world because I feel like my career would have purpose and I would have a sense of fulfillment knowing that what I would do every day would have meaning.

**Testimonial/Quote:** *"The trail work is almost like a puzzle, or a game, and I really enjoy that aspect of it. Each section of the trail is like a different game requiring different pieces and techniques, and every day is something new."*



## 2021 Work Highlights

The Boulder Crew began their season at lower elevations with work on more “front-country” trails due to the significant snowpack on higher elevation trails. Along the Bright Trail, the Boulder Crew helped to improve trail conditions and construct various rock structures, such as retaining walls, check steps, and water bars. This work helps clarify the trail corridor and fortifies the trail surface to prevent erosional impacts from high use and weather. On the Rainbow Lakes trail, the crew dismantled illegal fire rings and rehabilitated 47 dispersed campsites.



The Boulder Crew spent the final weeks of their season on three backcountry hitches at the Isabelle Glacier Trail in the Brainard Lake Recreation Area. This project focused on construction of a large rock staircase in a vast talus field of boulders, far above tree line. The crew teamed up with the Boulder Climbing Community’s Front Range Climbing Stewards (FRCS), a professional trail crew with admirable technical prowess to complete this project. The work was hard, and the conditions exhausting, but the views and memories (and the trail!) will last a lifetime.





Moraine Crew







**Name:** Adison Thorp (Crew Leader)

**Hometown:** Loveland, Colorado

**School/Area of Study:** University of Montana | Major: Environmental Science and Sustainability with a minor in Climate Change Studies.

**Career Goals:** My career goals are to work for either the Park Service or a non-profit group doing work that looks at the relationship between humans and nature/wildlife. I want to explore the ways in which there is conflict in this area and what can be done to collaborate with people to make the natural world more of a priority. I would also like to address climate change in my work.

**Testimonial/Quote:** *"I've learned a lot this season! In terms of leadership, I have been able to delve more into patience and collaboration. I have learned all about trail work and the reality of what goes into making our National Parks stay beautiful. I now have an eye for what a trail should look like or should not look like and what it means to have a "good trail" with proper drainage, bridges, stairs, etc. I have learned tons from both the park service employees and my crew members! Both groups have brought so much to the table in terms of leadership and life skills!"*

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**Name:** Anton Popov

**Hometown:** Metuchen, New Jersey

**School/Area of Study:** Ithaca College, graduated with a BA Anthropology and a minor in Religious Studies

**Career Goals:** I would eventually like to return to grad school and pursue an anthropology PhD. I would also like to work as a civil servant within the fields of education, natural resource management, or community development.

**Testimonial/Quote:** *"I learned how strong I can be, and how to succeed in a team."*

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**Name:** Ali Goodrich

**Hometown:** Louisville, Colorado

**School/Area of Study:** Colorado State University, studying biology

**Career Goals:** I am passionate about understanding the smallest microbes in the largest ecosystems. After obtaining a Bachelor's, my goal is to conduct ethical research in graduate school, strengthening public trust in science and creating opportunities for women in biology.

**Testimonial/Quote:** *"The RMC Conservation Corps provided a hands-on experience in ecological conservation. Living and working in Rocky Mountain National Park ignited my commitment to protect the natural world and promoted my enthusiasm for conservation."*

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**Name:** Nicole Cohen

**Hometown:** Woodbridge, Connecticut

**School/Area of Study:** University of Vermont, studying

**Career Goals:** My career goal is to work somewhere within environmental studies. I'm excited to see if this will be in urban greenery, regenerative agriculture, or wilderness conservation.

**Testimonial/Quote:** *"What I loved most was the crew dynamic- we always had a lot of fun together. Even when the days were hard or we were doing something crazy like Long's Peak, we always laughed and joked through the whole day. Scubbies forever!"*





**Name:** Daniel Paulson-Luna

**Hometown:** Minneapolis, MN

**School/Area of Study:** University of Utah studying quantitative analysis of markets and organizations

**Career Goals:** I wish to pursue a career in business strategy with an emphasis in environmental work. I find I am extremely unsatisfied and angry with the current outlook many companies have on environmental issues and I would like to work at a company or nonprofit that aligns with my values. I hope to use my expertise and knowledge to improve the world around me while still being in a business centered career

**Testimonial/Quote:** *"While most of my peers had summer internships at consulting firms or banks, I wanted to branch out and do something different. This experience has made me a more well-rounded individual and deepened my appreciation of the outdoors."*

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**Name:** Zahra Taxson

**Hometown:** Jacksonville, Florida

**School/Area of Study:** University of North Florida, studying environmental studies with a minor in food systems and sustainability

**Career Goals:** After this summer with RMC, I really want to come back and work for the National Park Service either here or in another state. I really enjoyed working with NPS and I could definitely see myself in a career in this field.

**Testimonial/Quote:** *"Some of my favorite memories are simply sitting around the campfire with my crew members/friends and listening to someone play the guitar and all of us singing along to a song. Other favorite memories are when we hiked beautiful trails for work and ate lunch at the top. There's something so satisfying and amazing about working for several miles and getting to a beautiful lake to eat your lunch."*

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**Name:** Kelly Mohnkern

**Hometown:** Petersburg, Pennsylvania

**School/Area of Study:** Houghton College, double majoring in Biology with an Environmental Science emphasis and Intercultural Studies with a Missions concentration.

**Career Goals:** I am still somewhat undecided, but for at least the next several years I would like to have a career in trail maintenance work in the national parks. Eventually, I would love to travel around the world, teaching, learning, and working alongside those of varying cultures about sustainable farming and/or forest management and conservation. However, I love jobs that involve physical labor, working with people, and working with/in the natural world, so almost any job that involves such is appealing to me.

**Testimonial/Quote:** *"This summer, I learned a lot about simplicity. This is particularly true as my team and I lived in tents, a feat I have never experienced for an entire summer prior to working with the Rocky Mountain Conservancy. I learned that I really do not need to take a shower every day like I used to. And I began to develop a love for the absence of distractions. I learned to become more intentionally aware of the sights, sounds, and smells I was surrounded by in the forests because my attention was not constantly diverted towards social media and other distractions. Through living simply this summer, I learned how to become humbled and be the person I was created to be."*



## 2019 Work Highlights

The Moraine crew lived in their namesake geological formation, Rocky Mountain National Park's Moraine Park – a massive glacially sculpted valley remaining from the last glacial maximum approximately 25,000 years ago. Their home was Rocky's Moraine Park Campground, overlooking a beautiful riverine meadow.



Comprised of seven members hailing from across the country, the crew worked alongside Rocky Mountain National Park's trail crew. The group spent the first half of their season doing maintenance runs throughout Rocky National Park – hiking several miles daily while clearing drains to ensure minimal soil erosion and witnessing the Park's natural beauty. The second half of Moraine Crew's summer was spent working right in their backyard, on the Fern Lake trail, in order to combat the effects of the East Troublesome Fire. There, they installed nearly 40 log check steps and multiple rock walls to improve trail stability and accessibility.



Through the trials of working and living together, the Moraine Crew learned the value of both simple living and teamwork. Upon reflection, one crew member stated, "I have developed a greater understanding and respect for others as different yet unique and beautiful individuals."



## Extended Season Trail Crew



**Name:** Erin Tansimore (Crew Leader)

**Hometown:** New Kensington, Pennsylvania

**School/Area of Study:** Juniata College, graduated May 2020, BA in Environmental & Gender Studies

**Career Goals:** I'm planning to attend graduate school starting next fall to get a master's degree in Environmental Humanities. After that, I will most likely work in the environmental nonprofit and/or research sectors.

**Testimonial/Quote:** *"Getting to live and work with nine of the best people I've ever met 24/7 for ten weeks straight has been one of the best experiences of my life. I'm so grateful for every second I've been lucky enough to work, hike, eat, goof around, and laugh with these lovely humans that RMC brought into my life."*



**Name:** Tyler Drake

**Hometown:** Fred, TX

**School/Area of Study:** I am not currently enrolled in college, but I plan to use my education award towards re-enrolling and pursuing a degree in archaeology & anthropology.

**Career Goals:** I'm not sure yet, but until I find out, more trail work!

**Testimonial/Quote:** *"Going into this job, I was mostly expecting a new and interesting working experience. What I found instead was an extended family of ten extraordinary people, a sense of purpose, and a new career path that feels rewarding. It's an amazing feeling to be making a positive difference alongside people that mean so much to you."*

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**Name:** Jillian Gehman

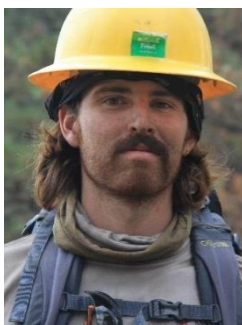
**Hometown:** Allentown, Pennsylvania

**School/Area of Study:** Lehigh Carbon Community College, Associates Degree 2019

**Career Goals:** My current plan is to travel and work seasonal jobs. The RMC has piqued my interest in crosscut and red card certifications, so I hope to acquire those within the next year. I've thoroughly enjoyed my time with the RMC, and I hope to find a career in this environment.

**Testimonial/Quote:** *"The most memorable moment of this summer had to have been our 35-mile hike. It was a gratifying moment realizing not only what we could handle as a team, but what one can handle as an individual. The fact that our team had the determination to trudge through the Rawah Wilderness for approximately 20 hours on our day off is impressive. I will never forget the memory, nor my ability to do it."*

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**Name:** Nate Hendley

**Hometown:** Charlotte, North Carolina

**School/Area of Study:** Graduate of the University of Chicago with a Bachelor of Arts in Biological Sciences (Specialization in Endocrinology)

**Career Goals:** After I do a bit of traveling and seasonal work, I plan on applying to medical school.

**Testimonial/Quote:** *This summer with the Rocky Mountain Conservancy (RMC) was one of the best of my life. While my ten weeks in the Rawah Wilderness provided me with new experiences, it reinforced many things that life has already taught me: to not be afraid to take a road less traveled, the power of a good group of friends, and how vital it is to have a vocation that you find purpose in. I am grateful to have had this opportunity and cannot justly articulate how profound and healing this time was. Thank you so much!*

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**Name:** Randie Evans

**Hometown:** Centerville, Texas

**School/Area of Study:** Blinn College, graduated with Associate of Science 2017

**Career Goals:** I am undecided on my main career goals. I've thought about doing work in a wildlife rehabilitation center. I have always wanted to work with animals in some capacity, but I also enjoy working with elderly people in living centers and home health, so I've always been torn as to where I needed to be.

**Testimonial/Quote:** *"I learned how to live in a group environment and become a cohesive crew. I would have never imagined myself being able to live and be so close with a group of ten strangers. I can genuinely say I've never made such good friends within two weeks. The level of bonding and mutual respect is unreal."*



## 2021 Work Highlights

While most of the RMC Conservation Corps returns to home or school in mid-August, those who are willing and able to continue their season of environmental stewardship may join the Extended Season Trail Crew from mid-August to mid-October. While this opportunity is open and available to any RMC Corps member from any crew, the 2021 Extended Crew was (coincidentally) made up of entirely Canyon Lakes crew members.



This season's project was located right in the heart of Estes Park. On the south side of Prospect Mountain lies two notable rock formations, known as the Needle and the Thumb. On these towering granite pillars lie dozens of bolted rock-climbing routes, ranging from beginner to expert difficulties. Professional rock climbers and mountaineers like Tommy Caldwell and Tom Hornbein have cited this crag as a crucial training ground that helped launch their careers.



Historically located on privately owned property, the town of Estes Park (with substantial assistance from the Rocky Mountain Conservancy and several other non-profit organizations) purchased 65 acres of land to preserve and maintain access to these climbing areas. Now known as the "Thumb Open Space," the extended crew's project was to rebuild the existing trail, but not in the same way as may other hiking trails are built.

The Thumb trail will be one of the first of its kind- a hiking trail that is accessible and usable for travel by handcycle and other mobility devices used by adaptive athletes. The multi-use trail will allow users of all abilities to access and utilize a climbing area with plentiful views and a fascinating history of interagency partnerships and collaboration.