
Photo: Fall River Productions

Rocky Mountain Conservancy

Founded in 1931, the Rocky Mountain Conservancy is the nonprofit partner of Rocky Mountain National Park. Our primary mission is to provide philanthropic and programmatic support to Rocky Mountain National Park, including funding for youth education through our Next Generation Fund. We also work with our State Park, Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) partner agencies to provide educational services and support.

In addition to its educational and visitor services programs, the Rocky Mountain Conservancy engages in special fundraising projects to benefit Rocky. The first project, in 1985, was the acquisition of the Jennings Tract, a private landholding located in the Kawuneeche Valley, which was transferred to the park for permanent protection.

Since then, with the support of thousands of members and donors, the Conservancy has raised more than $22 million and completed more than 50 significant projects, such as the construction of handicapped-accessible trails around Lily Lake and Sprague Lake, trail improvement at Lake Haiyaha, land protection on the park’s west side and the design and construction of the spectacular Fall River Visitor Center.

"Rocky Mountain National Park has had such a profound, positive effect on my life that I want to help it have a similar effect on others. Supporting the Conservancy is the most effective way to accomplish this." — Janet Robertson
The Rocky Mountain Conservancy

Who we are:
The Rocky Mountain Conservancy is a vibrant, growing organization with an active core membership of nearly 4,000 individuals and families. Additionally, we have more than 14,000 contributors, including individuals, corporations, local businesses and foundations.

How we work:
The Conservancy operates Nature Stores within Rocky Mountain National Park and other public lands in Colorado and Wyoming. In addition to providing visitor services, educational publications and mementos, these stores provide funds that support the interpretive programs at the sites where they are located. Profits from these earned income activities also underwrite Conservancy operations and mission-driven programs ensuring that a greater share of philanthropic donations directly fund projects in and around Rocky Mountain National Park.

Signature programs and projects:
- Land Protection
- Historic Preservation
- Trail Improvement
- The Next Generation Fund
- The Conservancy’s Conservation Corps
- The Conservancy’s Field Institute
- Publications
- Membership

“Without the Conservancy, many critical projects would not be completed in Rocky. I am proud to be a member of this organization that has such a fabulous impact on my favorite national park.” — Bert Corwin
Land Protection

Protecting our nation’s valuable lands
Since the early 1980s, the Rocky Mountain Conservancy has assumed a leadership role in acquiring many important parcels of land, both in Rocky Mountain National Park and in the adjacent Arapaho-Roosevelt National Forest, and transferring the land to these federal agencies for permanent protection.

In order to quickly respond to acquisition opportunities from willing sellers, the Conservancy seeks to maintain a viable land protection fund. Only lands that are significant to the long-term benefit of the park or nearby forest are considered.

Land Protection Project Highlights
- Jennings Tract, $78,000 (1985)
- Baldpate, $20,000 (1990)
- Roessler Tract, $415,000 (1998)
- Adams Tract, $280,000 (1999)
- Lily Lake Water Rights, $60,000 (2000)
- Miller Tract, $1.02 M (2002)
- Fahy Tract, $846,000 (2005)
- Kueker Tract, $600,000 (2007)
- Owen-McMahon Tract, $300,000 (2008)
- McGowan Tract, $18,100 (2009)
- Crane Trust Tract (2009)
- Johnson Property, $400,000 (2013)

“Without the support of its members like me, all the things I hold dear about the park and its adjacent lands, including programming, land acquisition, protection and preservation, would eventually be plundered and lost forever.” — Katherine Dines
Trail Restoration

**Maintaining access to park trails**
For many, hiking the more than 350 miles of scenic trails in Rocky Mountain National Park is the ultimate wilderness experience. For others, strolling the crushed gravel handicapped-accessible walkways is the best way to share the scenic wonders of the park with family and friends. Whether a gentle stroll or a rigorous climb, trails in the park are valued for the access they provide to some of the most magnificent places in Colorado.

Due to the wear and tear of high visitation, trail repairs and improvements are in constant demand in this park. Our much-loved trails require on-going attention to keep them safe and in good condition to protect park resources and ensure visitor safety.

The Rocky Mountain Conservancy continually raises funds for numerous trail improvement projects to help the park with its priority projects, making trails more easily located, safer and beautifully crafted to protect the resource for years to come.

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**Trail Improvement Project Highlights**

- Beaver Ponds Boardwalk, $35,000 (1985)
- Coyote Valley, $109,764 (1994)
- Lily Lake, $225,507 (1997)
- Sprague Lake, $249,280 (2000)
- Bear Lake, $234,290 (2000)
- Lily/Storm Pass, $136,000 (2001)
- Mills/Black Lake, $205,000 (2002)
- Lake Irene, $122,000 (2006)
- Alberta Falls – Lake Haiyaha Loop Trails Rehabilitation, $420,000 (2009-2012)

“My yearly contributions are a way that I can help make sure that this wonderland is available to my daughter and the generations to come so that they can see the beauty and grandeur of the natural world. There is no other place like Rocky and never will be. It needs our support.” — Jim Kubichek
Historic Preservation

Preserving the park’s heritage
Dozens of historic buildings dot Rocky Mountain National Park. Even more can be found in neighboring communities and adjacent national forests. This is where our historical heritage comes to life. These are reminders of generations past.

As stewards of history, the Rocky Mountain Conservancy already has restored many significant buildings.

The Conservancy and the park regularly select special structures in need of help. Only through the hands-on strategies of repair, restoration and adaptive use will these buildings be saved and their important history conveyed to coming generations.

Historic Preservation Project Highlights
- Shadow Mountain Lookout, $43,814 (1996)
- William Allen White cabins, $140,884 (1998)
- Quarters 48, $160,000 (1997)
- Never Summer Ranch cabins, $86,000 (1999)
- Wigwam Tea Room, $58,000 (2005)
- Wigwam outbuildings, $59,000 (2007)

“It is gratifying to be a member of an organization that is continually making valuable contributions to an entity that is truly larger than life — Rocky Mountain National Park.”— Ruth Hess
The Next Generation Fund

Passing the stewardship of Rocky Mountain National Park on to our children is a task as big as our signature mountains. With the support of our donors and members, our goal is to build and maintain a connection between children, nature and the park.

Through the Next Generation Fund, the Rocky Mountain Conservancy captures the hearts, minds and funding necessary to secure the future of the educational programs at Rocky Mountain National Park.

To meet these challenges, there are two parts to the Next Generation Fund: a “working” fund, which provides more than $500,000 in donations annually for program support; and building an endowment fund that will eventually support these programs in perpetuity.

Programs supported by the Next Generation Fund:

- The Conservancy’s Conservation Corps
- Rocky’s Junior Ranger Program
- RMNP’s Heart of the Rockies Environmental Education program
- Youth and family-oriented publications and exhibits
- Park internships and fellowships
- Conservancy internships and fellowships
- Youth and family programs through the Conservancy’s Field Institute

“For purely selfish reasons, we designate our dollars to go to the Next Generation Fund. We want to instill a love for the park in young hearts so that long after we are gone, someone will still be taking care of ‘our’ park.” — Larry and Linda
Junior Ranger Program

Engaging kids as future park stewards
This program helps children and their families to explore and experience Rocky Mountain National Park up close. Through engaging activities and books, Junior Rangers become familiar with the flora and fauna of Rocky to help them develop a love for nature, nurturing a sense of commitment to the future of parks and protected areas.

The Next Generation Fund supports the program through the development and publication of innovative activity booklets, games and Junior Ranger items.

Dynamic Program Success!
- The Junior Ranger Program presents thousands of Junior Ranger badges to enthusiastic young rangers every year.
- Each year hundreds of Junior Ranger programs are offered multiple times per day covering a variety of natural history topics.
- The Junior Firefighter program engages more than a thousand summer visitors participating in 32 programs.

“My wife and I contribute to the Next Generation Fund because they are who will need to preserve the future, to the Trails Funds because we love to use them and to land protection to help grow and protect this true national treasure.” — Steve Watson
Connecting kids to the natural world

The Heart of the Rockies Education and Outreach program is a partnership between the Rocky Mountain Conservancy and Rocky Mountain National Park. The program reflects both organizations’ commitment to provide more than 12,000 K-12 students each year with the opportunity to learn about the sciences in the natural outdoor classroom of Rocky Mountain National Park.

The program focuses on bringing children from the park’s gateway communities, and underserved students and youth who otherwise would not have the opportunity to visit, closer to nature.

The Next Generation Fund provides support to the program through the annual funding of a National Park Service Education Specialist and several education interns.

The Fund also addresses the budget challenges many schools face by providing $10,000 annually to subsidize bus transportation from Front Range schools to Rocky Mountain National Park. For many, this alone makes getting out of the classroom and into the park a feasible option.

Success!

- Since its inception, the Heart of the Rockies program has reached more than 160,000 students and youth from throughout Colorado.
- Every year the Heart of the Rockies environmental education program provides hundreds of programs for as many as 10,000 students, youth and families.
- Each year, eight to ten different schools receive NGF funding for transportation to the park on multiple occasions through the year.

“The Conservancy’s support of the park has grown over the decades from a collection of excellent improvement projects to vital physical and educational funding available nowhere else!” — Allan C. Northcutt

Next Generation Fund Program Highlight:

Environmental Education
The Conservation Corps provides a unique service-learning experience for college students interested in natural resource conservation. For eleven weeks, crews work side by side with park and forest service professionals in Rocky Mountain National Park and national forests building and maintaining trails, restoring native habitat and learning from expert researchers and staff.

Originally established through a grant from the Daniels Fund, the Conservancy places six trail crews of six students each in field sites under the supervision of Rocky Mountain National Park and Forest Service staff. Student crew leaders and assistants gain knowledge and the responsibility needed to develop critical leadership skills. Crew members are challenged to learn new skills, find creative solutions, broaden their perspectives and achieve goals they never thought possible. Throughout the summer, they are exposed to career opportunities while protecting and preserving our natural and cultural heritage.

“Our dollars help grow and sustain the park and enhance the experience for our grandchildren and their grandchildren.” — Tim and Wendy Haight
“The Conservation Corps is an excellent growing experience. In one summer I had the completely unique experience of working and bonding with the crews and developing communication and leadership skills, while learning about and conserving the beautiful land of RMNP and surrounding National Forests.” — Connor Enright, Shadow Mountain Crew, Leader

“Before this internship with the Rocky Mountain Conservancy, I had no idea what stewardship of public lands was or why it was important. Now, I’m going to graduate school to learn how to manage public lands for future generations. Not only was this the best summer of my life, but it helped me realize a great career path I’m excited to start.” — Emily Wilkins, Estes Crew, Assistant Leader

**Work accomplished in one season alone:**
- 11,808 labor hours
- 735 trees cleared from trails
- 270 water bars constructed or repaired
- 306 miles of trail maintained
- Flood recovery work
- Campgrounds restored
- 85 log checks installed
- Invasive plant removal
- 36 youth nurtured as public lands stewards

“Some (of our) donations have been to the Conservation Corps. We could not help but be impressed when coming upon trail restoration work when hiking in the park. The spirit of the groups and the work they were doing were remarkable.” — Carlen Schenk
Connecting young people to the natural world

Integrated into the goals of the Next Generation Fund are programs offered for young people through the Rocky Mountain Conservancy’s Field Institute. Education-based programs provide hands-on learning experiences with Rocky Mountain National Park as a classroom.

Classes are geared to engage kids at the appropriate learning level, and designed to increase awareness of natural and cultural history with attention to the education curriculum in the schools.

Field programs also provide opportunities for children and adolescents who may be at risk, or disadvantaged, to develop a connection to the park and the natural world. Intergenerational programs bring together family members to explore the wonders of Rocky.

We also fund the development of fun, educational books for kids

- **Mountain Valley Journals** explores the cultural history of Moraine Park and Estes Park from 12,000 years ago to the present.
- **Cimarron the Bighorn Sheep** tells the story of the first year of adventures for a bighorn lamb in the Rocky Mountains.
- **Running Wild** takes readers on incredible journeys down both sides of the Continental Divide to where the waters travel.

“Where else can you find an evening class to observe owls with Colorado’s expert, take an outdoor-oriented watercolor class for beginners and learn about hummingbirds - all of which I totally enjoyed!” — Barb Hamman
Student Internship Opportunities

Developing interpretive and education skills
Students needing an internship for college graduation or graduates seeking field experience or a career change often satisfy these needs working in Rocky Mountain National Park.

Each year, students work full-time during various seasons to assist with education and outreach in the park; conducting interpretive programs; providing informal, roving interpretation along trails and at overlooks; and providing park information and answering questions at visitor centers. They work alongside professional ranger-naturalists and educators to learn the art and craft of conducting education programs in the field.

The Next Generation Fund provides more than $85,000 annually to give these students life-long experiences in the park — an investment in future generations that can grow exponentially.

Internship Program Successes

- Interns interact with and assist the visiting public, answering questions at a variety of visitor centers, Sheep Lakes Information Station and during roving assignments.
- Interns research and prepare interpretive educational programs following the park’s Interpretive Development Plan and receive coaching feedback on throughout their seasons.
- Colorado River District interns assist with Environmental Educational programs for Grand County schools.
- Interns participate in career days to learn about and interact with other park services to expand their park experience.

“The Conservancy cares about the needs of the park as well as the generosity of their members and donors; as such, every dollar is stretched as far as it can be to achieve as much good as possible.” — Karen Waller
Field Institute Programs

**Education as a tool for stewardship**
It all started in 1962, an auspicious year for the Conservancy’s Field Institute program. Dr. Beatrice Willard, a local ecologist and tundra specialist, was deeply inspired by the potential of field-based educational experiences in the national parks. In Rocky, she initiated the first educational program of its kind in a national park.

More than 50 years later, this innovative and energetic program continues, expanded from the original few classes about plants, wildlife and native peoples, to hundreds of day-long and multi-day adventures in Rocky Mountain National Park.

Today, participants discover and explore a wide range of topics through custom, youth and family programs, and outdoor educational adventures and tours, including hiking and skill-building, photography, art, natural history and cultural history.

**Educational Tours by Bus**
From the comfort of a 14-passenger bus or an 11-passenger van, the Conservancy’s Field Institute also offers guided bus tours throughout Rocky Mountain National Park. These educational adventures provide visitors with a unique experience to explore the park in greater depth with a professional naturalist.

“We are members because we see and have seen the many good projects undertaken by the Conservancy. We continue to donate because we love Rocky and know that our donation will be used for its benefit.” — Randall and Janet Maharry
Membership

Creating a strong foundation of support for Rocky
Memberships provide the Rocky Mountain Conservancy with crucial financial support and build an active constituency for Rocky Mountain National Park and other public lands.

Conservancy members form a stable foundation for the organization’s operations, often additionally choosing to support projects directly, including building and repairing trails, protecting land for the park, educating the next generation of public lands stewards and so much more. Members also become a helpful resource for volunteer activities when needed.

Member benefits
- A 15% discount on items sold at Rocky Mountain Conservancy Nature Stores in the park and through our online store, including reciprocal discounts at most national park stores throughout the country
- Discounts on the Conservancy’s Field Institute programs
- Invitations to special events such as the annual membership picnic, member programs and volunteering opportunities
- A subscription to the Rocky Mountain Conservancy Quarterly newsletter

“I have joined several worthy service organizations through the years, but the Conservancy is the only one to make me feel like a ‘real’ member and not just a name on a donor list.” — Karen Waller
Visitor Services

**Enriching the visitor experience**
In the tradition of national park partner agencies nationwide, the Rocky Mountain Conservancy operates Nature Stores in five visitor centers in Rocky Mountain National Park. These sites provide educational items to the public that inform, but also invite deeper exploration and understanding of Rocky Mountain National Park’s natural history and recreational options.

Informational products include photography, and natural history books and fun books for kids, Junior Ranger items, maps, momentos, games, apparel and much more. All products are reviewed and approved by national park staff, with net proceeds given to the park to support significant educational programs.

The Conservancy also operates Nature Stores in State Park, Forest Service and BLM areas in Colorado and Wyoming to provide educational materials to visitors at these sites. Proceeds support special events, exhibit development and renovation, and supplies to these natural areas.

**Trusted park information**
Many of the publications created by the Rocky Mountain Conservancy have provided trusted park information for years. To name a few:

- Geology Along Trail Ridge Road
- Rocky Mountain National Park: Natural History Handbook
- Guide to Trail Ridge Road
- Arapaho Names and Trails
- Field Guide to Wildlife Viewing
- High Country Names
- Mammals: Wild & Watchable

“I want this park to continue as accessible and beautiful as it is now, for my children, their children, and THEIR children, just as my parents enjoyed it before me.” — Joan Weinstein
Supporting Rocky’s programs through visitor services

In addition to supporting the operations of the Rocky Mountain Conservancy, funds generated through the sale of educational products help the park in two ways: by providing educational materials to expand the visitor experience; and by supporting educational programs and projects of the national park. Annual programs supported include:

**Publications:**
- Park Newspaper
- Informational Site Bulletins
- RMNP Trip Planner

**Staff Services:**
- Visitor Service Park Guide
- Park staff training
- Park Discretionary Fund

**Programs:**
- Park Volunteer Program
- Native American Cultural Awareness Program
- Park museum/archiving program
- Visitor Center insurance
- Research Conferences
- Special events (i.e. Park Centennial)

Learn more about us at RMConservancy.org

Discover how the Conservancy works to enhance Rocky and other public lands

Shop our Nature Stores for a great selection of Rocky Mountain National Park products

Enroll in award-winning Field Institute programs, including bus tour adventures!

Become a member and receive discounts in the Nature Stores, on classes and at partner public lands in Colorado

Donate to support your favorite program or improvement project in the park

“I support the Conservancy because it offers excellent learning opportunities for all ages — they are the growing ambassadors to keep the park alive for future generations.” — Terri Morrow
Be a Best Friend to Rocky:
Give a Gift to Rocky Mountain National Park

Working to Protect and Preserve a National Treasure
From the trails you hike to the wildlife you encounter, our work in Rocky Mountain National Park helps protect and preserve the beauty of one of America’s favorite national parks.

Next Generation Fund — a critical endowment fund created in 2006 to meet the challenges of connecting the next generation of youth with nature.

The Rocky Mountain Conservancy - Conservation Corps — providing a unique service-learning experience for college students interested in natural resource conservation.

Trail Improvement — raising millions of dollars for numerous accessible trails, trail construction and improvement projects in the park since 1985.

Land Protection — protecting land within and around the park and national forests requires preparation. Help us be ready to step forward when a willing seller places property on the market.

Historic Preservation — preserving and restoring dozens of historic buildings that dot Rocky Mountain National Park.

Legacy Endowment — supporting projects and programs of long-term significance in perpetuity for Rocky Mountain National Park.

Help make the park the best it can be.

RMConservancy.org
Love Rocky Mountain National Park? Become a member today!

If you have walked the Lily Lake Trail, attended a Field Institute program, or introduced a child to nature through the park’s Junior Ranger program, you know our work. We are thousands of dedicated members and donors working to fill the unmet needs of Rocky Mountain National Park and our other public lands partners.

Like you, our members treasure Rocky Mountain National Park. We keep our members informed about park issues and park events and provide ways for you to stay connected to this beautiful place.

Membership Benefits:

- A 15% discount at Conservancy Nature Stores in park visitor centers and at the Conservancy’s online store; discounts at stores in most U.S. national parks
- A welcome packet, including a subscription to the Conservancy’s Quarterly newsletter and the corresponding membership level gift
- Invitations to Member events, including the annual picnic
- Discounts on Field Institute programs

Enjoy a 15% discount at all Conservancy Nature Stores in the park!

Sign up online or call us at 970-586-0108

RMConservancy.org