



# QUARTERLY

Winter | 2021



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*A stunning quarter for donations — WOW!*

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## Fire in Rocky: Finding Perspective in a Changing Climate

by John Emerick

The year 2020 was challenging for Rocky Mountain National Park and nearby communities, not only because of the COVID-19 pandemic, but also because of the East Troublesome and Cameron Peak fires, the two largest in Colorado history. These two wildfires affected approximately 30,000 acres, or about 9 percent of the park, making 2020 one of the worst fire years since the park was established.

Rocky is no stranger to fires, and evidence of past fires can be found in most of the park's forested ecosystems. It is worth asking why last year's fires were so devastating and what might be the legacy of these burns on the park's plant communities and wildlife.

During the fall of 2020, 97 percent of Colorado was in severe to exceptional drought, and the year was the eighth warmest and second driest on record for the state. This was the continuation of a warming and drying trend that has been developing for decades, if not over the course of the last century. Summer monsoon flow typically carries moisture from the southwest to Colorado, but in 2020 the monsoon rains were practically nonexistent. The warmer and drier the climate, greater

is the demand by the atmosphere for evaporation, and the vegetation on the land becomes more flammable. These are some of the conditions that intensified the 2020 fire season.

A view of forest landscape that has been recently burned can be very disturbing. However, closer examination, especially over several seasons following the fire, can reveal some interesting patterns. In mountainous terrain, with ridges, valleys, networks of drainages, and often expanses of exposed bedrock, forest fires rarely burn uniformly. Burned areas can occur adjacent to relatively unscathed forest patches. In places where the fire is widespread, individual trees or groups of trees somehow survive.

Even where large expanses of vegetation have been consumed by the fire, there are often differences from place to place in fire intensity. Where the fire was hottest, organic material in the soil is consumed, the soil is effectively sterilized, and it could take years for revegetation to take place. In other areas, soils are left intact, along with viable root

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*"It's heartening to know that some of you have even volunteered with the Conservancy to work alongside park staff building burn piles to lessen fuel loads in the park."*



## A Message from our Executive Director



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Dear Friends,

Happy New Year! I have never been so happy to see a past year in the rearview mirror. 2020 was a year of terrible loss for our community, both from the pandemic and from the wildfires that ravaged the park and surrounding communities; looking forward is the name of the game.

Still, we do have things to celebrate from 2020 – YOUR love for RMNP has never been more apparent. During the last few months, Conservancy donors and members stepped up in remarkable ways to support the park, particularly through gifts to our newly established Fire Restoration Fund. This new fund is a critical effort that targeted to help the park recover from the historic devastation brought on by the recent wildfires.

And while the loss of historic structures, homes and buildings has been tremendous, we are grateful for the park's active fire mitigation program, and the hard work during the past few years that greatly reduced the fire's impact on Rocky's habitats and natural resources. It's heartening to know that Conservancy members and donors have also been volunteering in recent years to work alongside park staff to lessen fuel loads in the park.

Most notably, the impact of the fires on the gateway communities and ecosystems of the Kawuneeche Valley has been enormous, and the Conservancy pledges to continue its mission by helping to restore the environment and the area's recreational opportunities, and by boosting the economy of the west side as much as possible. To begin, the Conservancy is supporting a full re-vamp of the exhibits of the Kawuneeche Visitor Center, set to be installed in 2023. Already this spring, we've been working alongside our NPS partners to remodel the facility to meet the changing needs of visitors and locals alike. The Shadow Mountain Fire Lookout on the park's west side is also on the Conservancy's radar, and we supported early planning of the restoration of this historic structure last year. Perhaps one day visitors will again be able to stand on the deck and revel in the expansive views.

Come spring, I am most looking forward the wildflowers that will emerge from the ashes anew. I'm hoping that by the end of this year we will once again be able to gather in person and tell each other our stories of this past year, a time of great challenge and resilience.

Be well,



*Estee Rivera Murdock*

Estee Rivera Murdock

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Quarterly Editor Nancy Wilson attempts to unearth answers to any questions asked by Conservancy members and park visitors. If you are curious about something in or about the park, email [nancy.wilson@RMConservancy.org](mailto:nancy.wilson@RMConservancy.org) or write: Nancy Wilson, Rocky Mountain Conservancy, PO Box 3100, Estes Park, CO 80517.

## Shop Conservancy Nature Stores

For ALL Your RMNP Memorabilia

### Is the park planning a timed-entry permit system in 2021?

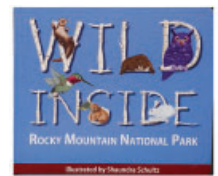
At this time, the park does not plan to implement the same type of timed-entry permit system as was used in 2020 but will continue restrictions when necessary and may implement other pilot visitor management techniques if congestion and crowding warrants. The timed-entry permit system at Rocky was a temporary solution to aid in reopening the park last summer due to COVID-19, with the goal of limiting the numbers of people to 60 percent of regular visitation. The timed-entry permit system enabled park staff to more safely manage the pace and flow of visitor use throughout the day, reduce crowding, and provide an improved visitor experience in alignment within the park's safe operational capacity during these extraordinary times. The park will incorporate lessons learned from this year as we move forward with our visitor-use management planning efforts. — *RMNP Information Officer Kyle Patterson*

**Why are bears not considered true hibernators?** Bears spend the winter months in a state known as torpor, somewhat different from true hibernation. That is, they periodically arouse, perhaps to give birth, in response to disturbance, or to simply emerge and walk around a bit. Physiologically, although their metabolic functions are reduced by about 50% and body temperature drops from a normal 100°F to about 88°F, these are much smaller reductions than are seen in true hibernators, such as ground squirrels, chipmunks and marmots, whose body temperatures may approach freezing. — *Retired RMNP Wildlife Biologist Gary Miller*

**Is the park planning any vegetation restoration projects in any of the areas burned by the East Troublesome Fire?** Fire is a natural forest process, especially in the lodgepole pine and spruce/fir forest communities that make up a large portion of Rocky Mountain National Park. These forest systems are well adapted to recover from fires like the ones Colorado experienced this fall. A hike through the forests of the 1978 Ouzel Fire is an example of how this recovery process could play out in the years to come. Two other vegetation types, wetlands and limber pine communities, have been stressed by other factors, such as past human use, previous natural disturbances, and seed dispersal, which may limit them from recovering naturally. Researchers learned from the Fern Lake Fire that willow communities in Moraine Park did not recover to their past extent. To expedite willow and wetland recovery, the park is currently planning on actively planting in the wetlands of Moraine Park and Upper Beaver Meadows. Limber pine recovery is heavily dependent on Clark's nutcrackers dispersing and caching seeds in the burned area. This seed dispersal requires mature live trees located adjacent to burned areas. Due to recent reductions in limber pine populations from mountain pine beetle, non-native fungal pathogen that causes white pine blister rust, limber pine dwarf mistletoe, and climate change, only small areas of the fire have adjacent live stands of limber pine. To assist in the recovery of limber pine, the park is planning on growing out seedlings and planting them in burned areas. — *Scott Esser, Director of the RMNP Continental Divide Research Learning Center*



**MINI BUILDING BLOCKS – BLACK BEAR**  
Kids will love creating a cool black bear figure with these mini-building blocks that are challenging to put together. Assembled size is 4 1/4 X 3 1/8 X 2 5/8. Ages 7 and up  
Price: \$9.95; **Member Price: \$8.46**



**WILD INSIDE RMNP BOARD BOOKS ENGLISH AND SPANISH EDITIONS**  
*Rocky Mountain Conservancy Illustrated by Shaundra Schultz*  
These colorful childrens' board books in both English and Spanish feature 14 beautifully and playfully rendered wild animals of Rocky Mountain National Park. Accompanying text makes it a perfect first book for parents (and grandparents!) to share with kids. Board book, 6" x 5", 16 pages. Price each: \$8.95;  
**Member Price: \$7.61**



**RMNP XPLORER MAP MUG**  
*This ceramic RMNP mug features an artistically illustrated map of Rocky. Dishwasher and microwave safe; made in the USA. Price: \$14.99;*  
**Member Price: \$12.74**

More memorabilia at  
[RMConservancy.org](http://RMConservancy.org)  
970-586-0121

Rocky Mountain National Park staff and partners constructing a simulated beaver structure.



All photos: Jeremy Sueltenfuss & Alex Brooks



by Jeremy Sueltenfuss and Alex Brooks, Colorado State University

## Simulated Beaver Structures May Help Restore Riparian Communities in Rocky

*Planting new willows and building fences to keep out hungry elk and moose has been an effective strategy to preserve and restore some of the willow communities within the park, but it's become clear that the historically shortened willows in some areas are not growing back to their previous height.*

*A willow tag marking a individual willow that will be monitored for changes in growth.*



The Rocky Mountains are known for their fast-moving rivers meandering down wide, open valleys. These valleys provide sweeping views of grassy meadows from the valley wall to the river's edge. Ironically, although this is an iconic image, some of these characteristics are actually signs of an unhealthy ecosystem. Historically, these mountain rivers were not meandering within a grassy meadow, but instead, lazily moving from one beaver pond down to the next within a mosaic of tall willows, ponds, multi-thread channels and wetlands. These tall willows, ponds and wetlands are the park's largest source of biodiversity and they are home to many fish, amphibians, mammals, birds and insects. Once one sees what these systems could look like, the existing bucolic scene loses much of its appeal. And more and more, an important missing link to this former diverse landscape is becoming clear: the beaver.

### Chicken or the Egg?

Beavers are integral to wetland and riparian ecosystems, as we've seen in Yellowstone's famous ecosystem recovery story, and once the beavers come back, the system quickly starts to recover. Rocky Mountain National

Park is not without beavers. They come into the park every summer, but they rarely set up camp and stay. The problem is a lack of willows, their primary food source. Beavers can't maintain sustainable populations without a large number of willows for food and to provide building supplies.

Willows are specially adapted for life with beavers. Beavers can chew off a stem, jam it into a dam or lodge, and that stem will grow roots. Soon, a new willow shrub will begin to develop. Willow seeds are made to germinate on wet, bare soil, just the type of soil that is exposed before beavers rebuild their dams after the spring runoff. Here's where the story gets complicated, because in Rocky, the large, hungry moose and elk that have no natural predators to mitigate their numbers, have kept willows from growing big and tall, limiting the willow's potential to serve as either food or building material.

If the beavers need the willows, and the willows need the beavers, what's a national park to do?

### Uncertainties about restoring RMNP Willow Floodplains

Planting new willows and building fences to keep out hungry elk and

moose has been an effective strategy to preserve and restore some of the willow communities within the park, but it's become clear that the historically shortened willows in some areas are not growing back to their previous height. And without that growth, there is too little food and building supplies for the beavers. Digging deeper, what is it, then, that is limiting willow growth? How can we help these systems to increase that growth, potentially leading to beavers in the future?

Based on previous studies of meadow soils in Rocky Mountain National Park, we know that beaver dams and ponds, prior to European settlement, kept meadow groundwater levels high, providing easily accessible water to willows throughout the summer. In many of these same areas today, the streambed is eroded by more than three feet below the riverbank, and groundwater is rarely observed near the ground surface, especially later in the summer when willows need water most. Is the lack of beaver dams causing low groundwater levels? Could this lack of high groundwater be limiting willow growth? Is it possible to mimic beaver dams?

### **Incorporating Science into Ecosystem Management**

Rocky Mountain National Park, the National Park Service Inventory and Monitoring Network, and Colorado State University, with support from the Rocky Mountain Conservancy, are all collaborating to answer these questions through a series of simulated beaver structures (SBS). Designed to test whether willows are limited by low water levels, the SBS act like beaver dams, raising the water within the channel, which should then raise the groundwater levels in the adjacent floodplain.

Prior to the installation of the SBS, the project team monitored water levels within the channel and underground in the floodplain, as well as water movement between the channel and the floodplain, plant species composition within the floodplain, and annual willow growth. These measurements will all continue to be collected for the years following the SBS installation to see if water levels and willow growth increase.

Five simulated beaver structures were built in 2019 and 2020. Building these structures took an incredible amount of coordination and teamwork, particularly with the challenges of COVID-19. The project team was ecstatic to see immediate increases in the water levels behind the structures and will continue collecting data on water and willows. Although we have seen preliminary evidence of success, we also know that beavers are much better at maintaining real beaver dams than are humans. With this in mind, our team's immediate goal is to figure out how we can restore a sustainable willow community to maintain a healthy population of beavers. The long-term goal is that the beavers will ultimately finish the restoration of Rocky's meadows to the magical mosaics that sustain a healthy riparian ecosystem.

The project team will continue to monitor groundwater levels, floodplain and channel interactions, plant species composition, and annual willow growth during the next two years to determine if these areas are restoring better than areas without simulated beaver structures. Look for future articles from the Rocky Mountain Conservancy about the progress of this research project.



*Completed simulated beaver structure along Fall River with water spilling over from the pond.*



*Water monitoring well and stream gauge that document changes in water levels near the simulated beaver structures.*

**Support Rocky's Science and Research efforts by donating to the Rocky Mountain Conservancy at [RMConservancy.org](https://RMConservancy.org), or call 970-586-0108**

*Cascade Cottage #1 had rooms to rent, a small kitchen, and an office. It is one of the buildings now listed in the National Register of Historic Places.*






Carl McWilliams/Cultural Resource Historians, LLC



by  
RMNP Planner  
Cheri Yost

## Cascade Cottages Listed in the National Register of Historic Places

### Cascade Cottages National Register Nomination Notes

-  The Cascade Dam and subsequent Cascade Lake was part of the Stanley Power Company's facilities. The infrastructure carried water from Cascade Lake through a wooden pipeline to the hydro plant. The original dam was destroyed by the Lawn Lake flood in 1982; the remains of a concrete diversion structure on the property date to 1988.
-  Mr. McWilliams spoke with the Davis family to learn that several foreign exchange students who stayed at Cascade Cottages in the 1950s helped build some of the cabins. These individuals, who became like family, hailed from Mexico, France, Pakistan, Chile and Nigeria.
-  The "hump" in the middle of the property is called Reindeer Hill.

On August 27, 2020, the Keeper of the National Register entered the Cascade Cottages Historic District in the National Register of Historic Places. The Rocky Mountain Conservancy provided funding for the nomination, which was prepared by Carl McWilliams, of Cultural Resource Historians, LLC. The property is located along Fall River Road, approximately 4 miles inside the Fall River Entrance on the south side of the road. In 2016, after nearly two years of negotiations, the property was initially sold to the Trust for Public Lands (TPL). Significant funds for this purchase were also provided by the Conservancy, the Larimer County Open Lands Program, the Estes Valley Land Trust, and the Town of Estes Park. In 2017, TPL conveyed the property to the National Park Service.

The use of the property as a resort started with the Cascade Lodge, which had around twenty sleeping rooms, a lobby, dining room, and kitchen. The lodge was completed in 1925 and burned to the ground on June 12, 1935. After the fire, owner Anna May Derby built nine summer cabins before her death in 1941. L. V. and Hazel Davis purchased the property in 1943. Between 1946 and 1960, they constructed seven additional cabins

and demolished two earlier cabins. Teachers by trade, L.V. and Hazel did much of the building and renovating themselves, with the help of friends and family. Two more generations of Davises helped run the summer business until 2016.

According to McWilliams, the property was the "longest-tenured inholding and privately-run tourist facility within Rocky Mountain National Park." McWilliams speculates that "a key to Cascade Cottages' longevity was that its owners succeeded in operating a trouble-free business and in cultivating a positive relationship with the park's administrators. Largely as a result, the cottages endured through periods when numerous other inholdings were purchased by the park with their buildings ultimately razed to return the land to a more natural setting. Although informal discussions occasionally took place, neither the Cascade Cottages' owners or park management seriously pursued an exchange of ownership until recent years. And so, Cascade Cottages endured, and thus represents the best possible positive relationship between public and private entities."

# Firmly Rooted in the Past: The Shadow Mountain Fire Lookout

by  
RMNP Planner  
Cheri Yost

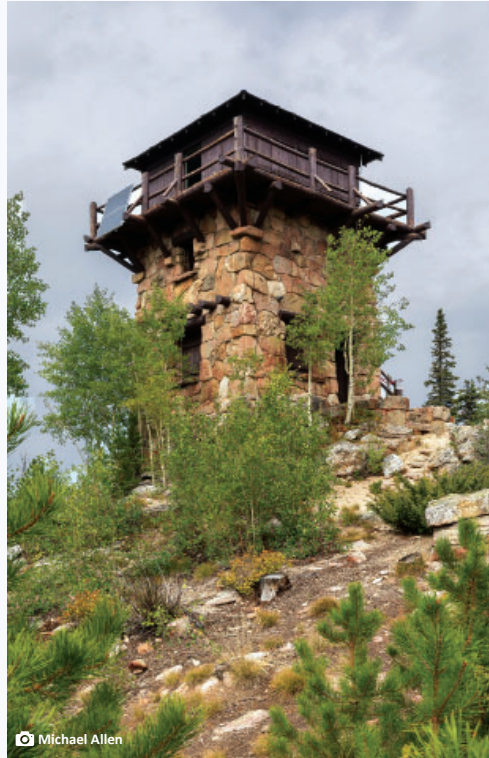


The Shadow Mountain Fire Lookout is located high above the shores of Grand Lake and at 9,923 feet in elevation. After the steep and five-mile long hike, hearty trekkers arriving at the building might be disappointed to find the third story balcony closed to access. The balcony is unsafe; its log supports rotting. The park is partnering with the Rocky Mountain Conservancy to develop a plan for repairs.

Arguably the park's most handsome rustic-style building, the Shadow Mountain Fire Lookout dates to the Civilian Conservation Corps era when builders procured materials on site and the building appears to grow from the rocks upon which it is built. The third story is a large wood frame with windows on all four sides, surrounded by an exterior balcony and topped with a pyramid roof. It was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1978.

To start the investigation into repairs, a team of park and Conservancy staff and board members decided on four equal project goals: safety, accessibility, sustainability and history (read the full "desired future conditions" in featured sidebar). Next, the Conservancy hired Anderson Hallas Architects, a Denver-based architectural and engineering firm, to conduct an Historic Structures Assessment (HSA). The HSA provides documentary, graphic and physical information about a property's history and existing condition.

Anderson Hallas visited the building twice in 2020 to conduct physical investigations. They determined the cause of the balcony's structural



failure, tested mortar and wood, and assessed the condition of every feature of the building from the roof to the foundation. Anderson Hallas also helped the park and Conservancy team develop a program for the re-use of the property, and created detailed measured drawings to inform future preservation work. When delivered in spring of 2021, the resulting Historic Structures Report will serve as an important guide for all changes made to a historic property during future projects, direct maintenance procedures, as well as recording the findings of the research and investigation.

The park will share the results of the HSA with Rocky Mountain Conservancy members in future *Quarterly* newsletters.

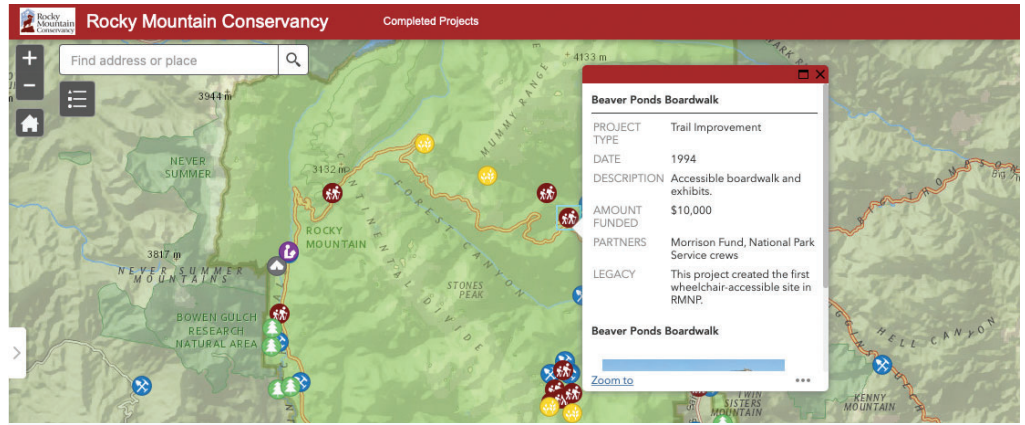
## Desired Future Condition of Shadow Mountain Fire Lookout

Designed and built by Rocky Mountain National Park in 1932–1933, Shadow Mountain Fire Lookout is an exemplary rustic-style building, “the happy results where a masonry structure can appear to grow out of a natural rock outcrop” (Albert Good, *Park and Recreation Structures*, 1938). The last remaining fire tower in the park, its strategic location is a destination for hikers who are rewarded with tree top views of Grand Lake below and the Grand Valley beyond.

The site resonates a sense of place and provides a unique visitor experience. The building itself is firmly rooted in the past — a one of a kind design built by skilled craftsmen — that sits in a landscape that has changed over time. It is a tangible link to the park's evolving fire management philosophy and the evolution of the forest itself.

Here we have the opportunity for stewardship, education and function to reconnect. We will maintain the multi-generational connections forged in this place, for park staff, visitors, and residents of Grand County. This project will provide a unique and rich visitor experience while still allowing the structure to be used for its original purpose in fire protection for the park and the greater Grand Lake community. We will marry safety, accessibility, sustainability, and history to assure this place remains a point of pride for future generations.

Shot of the Impact Map detail now featured on the Conservancy website.

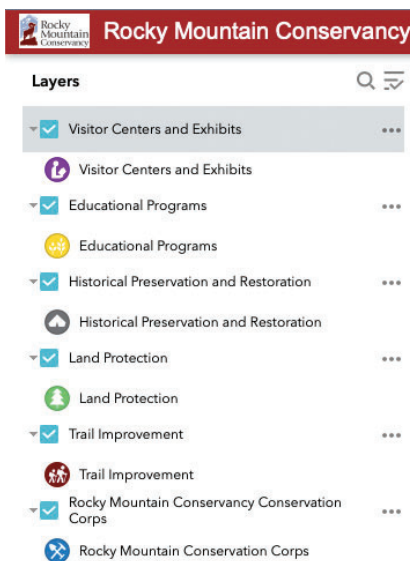


by  
Roberta Farrington  
and Kristen Brinkley

## Students Partner with Conservancy to Create Project Map for Website

*Passionate visitors, speaking out and donating, are responsible for more than half of the projects completed to date.*

*Close-up of layers of project types that can be toggled when viewing the map*



Perhaps you've had a chance to look at the Rocky Mountain Conservancy website of late? If so, you may have engaged with a newly featured interactive map now positioned on our philanthropy page.

Last summer, Roberta Farrington and Kristen Brinkley from Colorado State University's Master's of Conservation Leadership program partnered with the Rocky Mountain Conservancy for their summer capstone project. The goal was to increase community engagement through improved website design and communication.

Success was measured through three objectives:

- Educate Rocky Mountain Conservancy supporters of all 54 Conservancy projects since 1985 through a multi-layer, interactive map that features the title, date, photo, description, amount funded, partners, and legacy of the project on the RMC website.

**Outcome:** Using ArcGIS software, the final product is featured on the Conservancy website under the "Our Impact" tab of the "Our Projects" page ([www.rmconservancy.org/our-impact](http://www.rmconservancy.org/our-impact)).

- Engage visitors on the RMC website to see a 30% increase in time a user spends on the project page.

**Outcome:** Utilizing Google Analytics, the amount of time visitors spend on project-related pages and the number of page visits was tracked. Results showed a 60% increase in total page views and a 376% increase in average time spent on the page.

- Receive at least 20 popup survey responses and host at least 2 focus-groups to gather feedback on the impact and effectiveness of the interactive web-map feature.

**Outcome:** After receiving 32 survey responses, results showed that 85% of respondents felt more likely to donate to the RMC after exploring the interactive map. Feedback from two focus groups revealed strengths of the map and ways to improve in the future.

Their project furthers the Conservancy's mission to promote stewardship of Rocky Mountain National Park through education and philanthropy. Be sure to check out the map on the Conservancy website to see for yourself!





## Meet the Masterminds Behind the Map: Roberta & Kristen

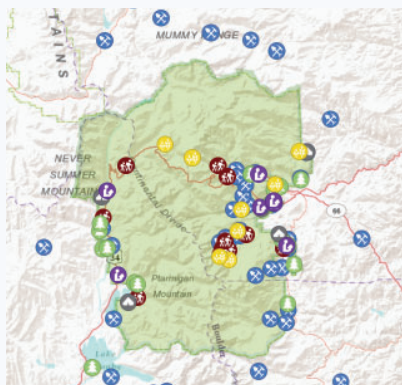
Roberta grew up between the beaches and mountains of California. She moved to Colorado to complete her bachelor's degree in geology at the University of Colorado and fell in love with the accessible and beautiful outdoors.

Roberta's curiosity about nature and love of sharing outdoor experiences with those around her fuels her passion for conservation. This year, she completed her Master of Conservation Leadership from Colorado State University where she collaborated with the Conservancy. Roberta enjoyed learning about the dynamics of a nonprofit, connecting people and nature, and exploring

Rocky Mountain National Park. Also a California native, Kristen entered this collaboration with a bachelor's degree in human dimensions of natural resources from Colorado State University and a background in federal land management.

Having worked throughout the western U.S. with conservation corps and various land management agencies, Kristen sought out this project to gain a better understanding of the role that communication tools play in collaborative public land management.

She enjoyed getting to know her project partner Roberta as well as the wonderful staff at the Rocky Mountain Conservancy. She also enjoyed learning more about the lasting impact that the Conservancy has had on the Rocky Mountain National Park region and is incredibly grateful to have had the opportunity to work with them!



## Impact Map Fun Facts

If you look closely, you will notice that the Conservancy completed its first park project in 1985 despite being founded in 1931.

During the first 54 years, the nonprofit focused solely on producing educational materials, interpretation programs, and research. It wasn't until the Conservancy hired its first executive director in 1985 that they expanded their mission to include philanthropy.

The Conservancy built its donor base from passionate park visitors who frequented Rocky Mountain National Park, witnessed places for improvement, voiced its ideas to the executive director, and was willing to fund the projects. Passionate visitors, speaking out and donating, are responsible for more than half of the projects completed to date.

Thanks to a growing group dedicated to RMNP, we are all able to continue to enjoy the beauty of the park in fun and educational ways. Don't underestimate the power of your experiences and your voice — this is, in fact, how the Conservancy has accomplished so much in Rocky and in surrounding Forest Service areas.

### In Memoriam William (Peter) W. Grant III May 9, 1932 – December 12, 2020

It is with sadness that we report that William W. Grant III, known to all as Peter, passed peacefully on December 12, 2020. Peter was a devoted philanthropist, advising a wide variety of organizations, and the Rocky Mountain Nature Association (now Rocky Mountain Conservancy) was one of his passions, with historical preservation in Rocky as one of his preferred philanthropic venues. He was an RMNA board member from 1999-2012, and an investment committee member through 2020. He was substantially involved in saving the historic buildings of McGraw Ranch, now the RMNP Continental Divide Research and Learning Center. An enthusiastic and gentle presence, he will be greatly missed.

More information about Peter's life and his societal contributions can be found here: <https://cutt.ly/zkoVVJr>.



# Rocky Mountain Conservancy Park Puzzler

## Across

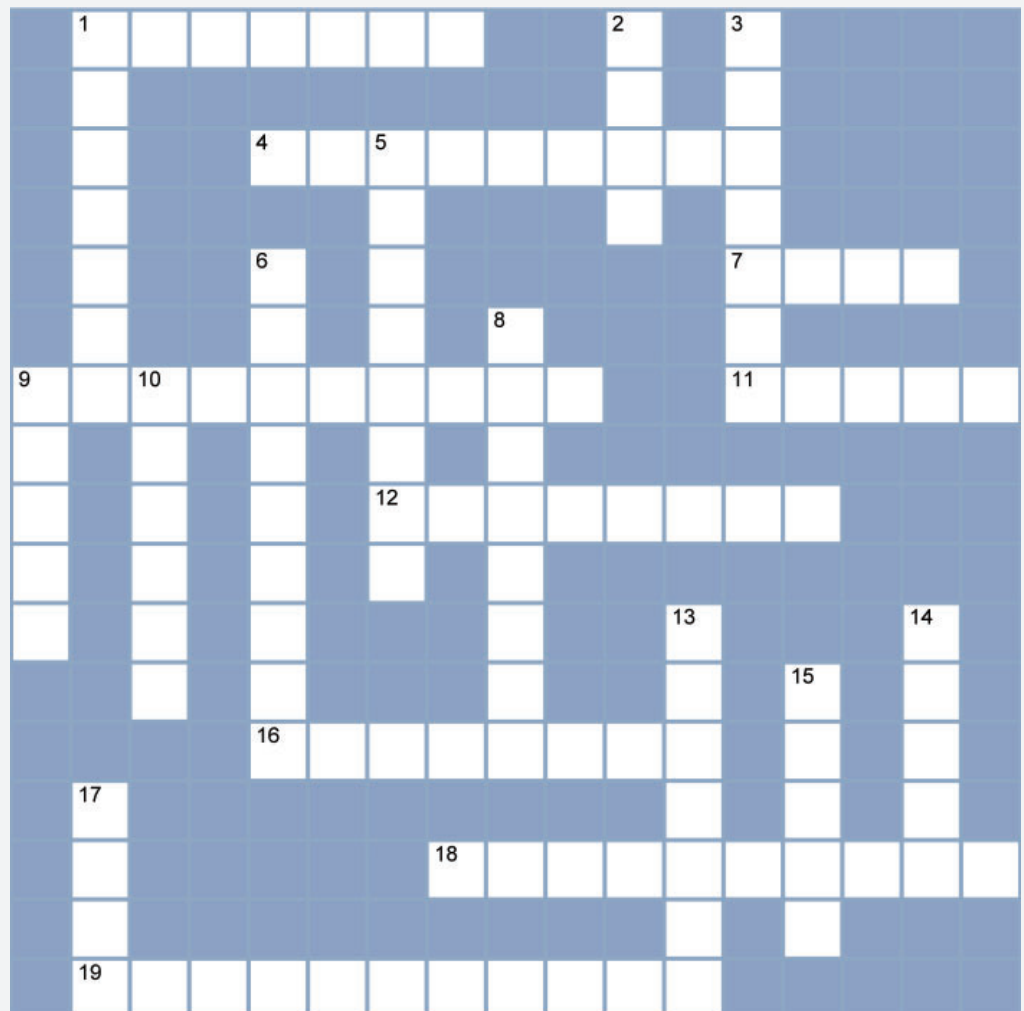
1. Miner Joe \_\_\_\_\_ occupied Lulu City long after the mining town died out.
4. Two unmarked childrens' graves are located in the \_\_\_\_\_ Campground in Rocky.
7. The social "Trail to Nowhere" led visitors along Trail Ridge Road to the \_\_\_\_\_ Memorial Trail at Rock Cut.
9. Alpine tundra is a type of \_\_\_\_\_ terrain.
11. \_\_\_\_\_ Falls is the only waterfall visible by car east of the Divide.
12. Two early populations of Rocky in historic times were the Ute and the \_\_\_\_\_.
16. Winter activities in the park include skiing, snowshoeing, hiking, and \_\_\_\_\_ at Hidden Valley.
18. A primary defining feature of the alpine tundra is \_\_\_\_\_.
19. The East \_\_\_\_\_ Fire started on the park's west side, climbed up to the Continental Divide, and blazed into Moraine Park this last fall.

## Down

1. This lake in Rocky was created as a recreational fishing haven for tourists.
2. Accessible \_\_\_\_\_ Lake was a unique project for the Conservancy that helped secure the water rights of this lake for the park.
3. The 1993 Revegetation Management Plan allows the park to preserve its \_\_\_\_\_ diversity of plants.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ is a very nutritious food made by Native Americans and was the calorie equivalent of the modern PowerBar.
6. During the winter, most park trails can be explored with \_\_\_\_\_, helpful deep-snow implements that

- take their design from snow-adapted wildlife, like snowshoe hares.
8. A couple miles past Gem Lake is a precarious-looking geologic oddity called \_\_\_\_\_ Rock, a granite formation caused by erosion.
9. Every year the Conservancy participates in a Colorado-based fundraising effort called Colorado \_\_\_\_\_ that has been increasingly effective as the years go on.
10. To survive in cold waters during the winter, the American dipper has a low metabolic rate, extra \_\_\_\_\_-carrying

- capacity in its blood, and a thick coat of feathers.
13. The adaptations and abilities of birds to \_\_\_\_\_ would likely have come later in the evolutionary scheme.
14. The \_\_\_\_\_ Tunnel funnels water from the western slope of the Colorado River drainage to the eastern Front Range of Colorado through RMNP.
15. The pygmy and the \_\_\_\_\_ shrews are the smallest of mammals in RMNP.
17. War Dance Falls is a lesser-known cascade on the park's \_\_\_\_\_ side.



*The Rocky Mountain Conservancy expresses special thanks to the following people for their donations supporting Rocky Mountain National Park: September 30, 2020 – January 12, 2021*

**Total gifts: 2,688 | Total donations: \$986,081**



## BEAR BOXES

Brooke Weldon, Wakefield, MA:  
**In honor of Marilee Yorchak**

## BEST USE

Beth Abbott, Conway, AR  
Nancy Abbott, Kremmling, CO  
Joe and Mary Liz Adair, Estes Park, CO  
Lawrence Adams, Longmont, CO  
The Adorjan Family Foundation, Saint Louis, MO  
Terri Adrian-Hardy and Rob Hardy, Carefree, AZ:

**In memory of Dwight Adrian**

Dale Agger, Fort Collins, CO  
Barbara Ahrens and Raymond Hauschel, Grand Lake, CO  
David and M. Elizabeth Aker, Aurora, CO  
David M. Alexander, Saint Louis, MO  
Mary and James Alfred, La Grange Park, IL  
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**In memory of Mary Jo Jacobs**  
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Donald Verhaeghe, Colorado Springs, CO  
Marilyn Vinson, Austin, TX:  
**In honor of Jack Vinson**  
Jodi and Mark Voyles, Luther, OK  
Candace Waddell, Estes Park, CO  
Barbara Wallace, Bowie, TX:  
**In honor of June Heard**  
Ed Walters, Twinsburg, OH  
Roger Walton and Helen Anderson, Lakewood, CO  
Dale Warner, Lake Placid, FL:  
**In honor of Jon and Amy Platt**  
Jennifer Warner, Greenwood, IN  
Steve and Dena Ann Weatherly, Loveland, CO  
Andrea Webster, Maineville, OH  
Carol Wernet, Louisville, CO  
Anja Whitaker, Fountain, CO  
Joan Whitbeck, Denver, CO:  
**In honor of Ellie Miller**

Steven White, Van Wert, OH  
Chad T. Williams, Omaha, NE  
J. M. Michael and Peggy Wilson, Whitefish Bay, WI:  
**In memory of Sally Virginia Pepper**  
Ryan Winter, Denver, CO:  
**In memory of William W. (Peter) Grant III**  
Francy Wolcott, Boulder, CO  
Harold and Andrea Wolf, Grand Lake, CO  
Thomas and Judith Wright, Berthoud, CO  
Susan Yancik, Boulder, CO:  
**In memory of Frank and Marion Yancik**  
Mike and Debbie Zeleznik, La Grange Park, IL:  
**In memory of Charlie Zeleznik**  
Jenny and Gary Zittergruen, Waverly, IA

## GENERAL OPERATIONS

The Community Foundation Boulder County/  
Thomas Hornbein, Estes Park, CO  
The Community Foundation Boulder County/  
Larry Arp, Boulder, CO  
Delaware County Foundation/  
Catherine Heberding, Lewis Center, OH  
Douglas County Community Foundation/  
Jane H. Imber, Lawrence, KS  
Elizabeth Elser Doolittle Charitable Trusts,  
Milwaukee, WI  
Greater Kansas City Community Foundation/  
Joyce and Mark Fleming, Cedar Rapids, IA  
Julie and Martin Harrington, Denver, CO  
Vanguard Charitable/Marlys Robertson, Boulder, CO  
Wander Project/Vacation Races, Washington, UT

## HISTORIC PRESERVATION

John and Connie Berry, Castle Rock, CO  
Mary Ann Binkowski, Syracuse, NY  
Monica Blaha, Humble, TX  
Ty and Linda Borman, Scottsdale, AZ:  
**In memory of Dr. Thomas C. Nilsson**  
Linda Bourgeois-Williams, Colorado Springs, CO:  
**In memory of Ron Duell**  
Jeffrey Braxton, Bellevue, NE:  
**In honor of Becky Feagan**  
Ted and Lynn Coons, Columbus, OH  
Joan and Robert Engelhardt, Broomfield, CO  
Laura and Hernan Erlig, Thousand Oaks, CA:  
**In honor of the Shipler Family**  
Vickie Ferguson, Farmington, AR:  
**In memory of John Denver**  
Carol Ann Frost, Hanover, NH  
Marianne Gaynor, Riverview, MI:  
**In honor of Kelly and Ryan Dick**  
Duane Girol, Pittsburgh, PA  
Joseph Hodges, Jr., Denver, CO:  
**In memory of William W. (Peter) Grant III**  
Dorothy Hughes, Broomfield, CO  
Nina and Scott Kunze, Fort Collins, CO:  
**In memory of The Wigwam Tea Room**  
William Mahoney, Louisville, CO  
Lynn McClure, Tulsa, OK:  
**In memory of Robert Lim**  
Heather McCreery, Estes Park, CO  
Deirdre and James Mercurio, Houston, TX:  
**In memory of William W. (Peter) Grant III**  
Pat Michael, Alma, MO:  
**In memory of Bruce Thornblad**  
Dusti Miller, Longmont, CO  
Marilyn Muniz, Hobart, IN  
Robin Nolan, Fort Collins, CO  
William O'Hara, Berthoud, CO  
Rebecca Pirtle, Kingston, WA:  
**In memory of Hal and Dorry Bush**  
Suzanne and Mark Silverthorn, Gypsum, CO  
Scott Silvi, Denver, CO  
Joan Strobel-McLean, Castle Rock, CO  
Edie Ungar-Shafron, Shaker Hts, OH:  
**In memory of Lenore "Lennie" Damrauer**  
Judy Wild, Emporia, KS:  
**In memory of Jeremy Wild**  
Emma Withers, Dade City, FL:  
**In memory of Robert Lim**

Cheri Yost, Estes Park, CO:  
**In honor of**  
**Doug Watry and the Fuels Treatment Program**

## KAWUNEECHE VISITOR CENTER EXHIBITS

Terry C. Bell, Norman, OK:  
**In memory of Louise Schaefer Carrel**  
Guy Bush, Kimball, NE  
Allen and Valerie Diehl, Greeley, CO  
Donna Dye, Muncie, IN:  
**In memory of Lee Dye**  
Olivia Edwards, Louisville, CO  
Robert and Trish Guse, El Dorado, KS  
Robert and Kathleen Means, Grand Lake, CO:  
**In honor of Barb King**  
Dana Miller, Greeley, CO:  
**In memory of Florence Miller**  
Joseph and Julie Ontiveros, Littleton, CO  
Shane Ring, Moab, UT  
Glenn and Barbara Shull, Fort Collins, CO  
Alexander Weiss and Susan Rowley, Evanston, IL

## LAND ACQUISITION

Amua Adu, Loveland, CO:  
**In honor of Cernunnos**  
Vaughn Baker, Estes Park, CO  
Emily Bateman, Chicago, IL:  
**In honor of Maryann Strain**  
Susan and Wayne Bichel, Monument, CO  
Lynda Price Bohager, Hanover, PA:  
**In honor of the Z.Q.P. Forestry Operations Specialist**  
Camille Campion, Macungie, PA:  
**In memory of Lily Waxman and Theresa Mayo**  
Bridgett Chandler, Seattle, WA:  
**In memory of William W. (Peter) Grant III**  
John Conner, Louisville, CO  
Nancy Cowen, Denver, CO:  
**In memory of Tim Fromelt**  
Emmanuel Ergas, Denver, CO  
Lauren Grainda, Westfield, IN:  
**In memory of Houston Swenson**  
Susan Hilberg, Denver, CO  
Carmen E. Irizarry, Elburn, IL  
Hilary Johnson, Topeka, KS:  
**In memory of Stuart and Kari Johnson**  
Kenneth and Linda Kovar, Fort Collins, CO:  
**In memory of Emmett T. Powers**  
Thomas and Kecia Lee, Malvern, PA:  
**In honor of Kecia Lee**  
Kelly Madigan, Castana, IA:  
**In honor of Thomas and Kerry Madigan**  
Madison and Jonathan O'Neill, Denver, CO  
Matt Rusch, Custer, SD  
Abigail Sperry, Longmont, CO:  
**In honor of Charles Sperry**  
Debra Squires, Boulder, CO:  
**In memory of Bonnie and Duane**  
Boulton Thomas, Fayetteville, AR  
US Bank, Estes Park, CO  
Caroline Waddell, Wellesley, MA:  
**In memory of William W. (Peter) Grant III**  
Bryan L. Wyberg, Saint Paul, MN

## LEGACY ENDOWMENT

Kenneth Gamauf, Boulder, CO

## LONGS PEAK TRAIL IMPROVEMENT

Joyce M. Feder, Stilwell, KS:  
**In memory of Albert Fincham**  
Richard E. Hoffman, M.D., Denver, CO  
Judie Schmachtenberge, Gowen, MI

## MEMORIAL BENCH

Julia Berst, Castle Rock, CO:  
**In memory of Bob Trewin**  
Kelly Rose, Parker, CO:  
**In memory of Bob Trewin**

## NEXT GENERATION

Tom and Renee Adams, Greeley, CO  
J.D. and Rose Marie Benisek, San Angelo, TX  
Kathryn Bolinsky, Loveland, CO  
Nancy and Edward Bridgen, Loveland, CO  
Russell Camp, Saint Cloud, MN  
Art Campfield, Fort Collins, CO  
Sandra Cardillo, Fort Collins, CO  
Claire Caudill, Houston, TX:  
**In memory of Anna Faye and Harry Peterson**  
Jerry Colclazier, Seminole, OK:  
**In honor of Logan Colclazier**  
Kevin J. Cook, Loveland, CO  
Joanie Crockett, Estes Park, CO:  
**In memory of Wesley C. Hawkins, Jr.**  
Janice K. Dame, Bolingbrook, IL  
Bruce and Lois Ellingwood, Estes Park, CO  
Dan Elliott and Mary Anne Maier, Laramie, WY:  
**In memory of John and Marian Elliott**  
Donna Evans and Bryan Land, Glen Haven, CO  
Rich and Sheri Fedorchak, Estes Park, CO  
Debbie and David Fosdick, Dallas, TX:  
**In honor of Alexandra Kittle and Christopher Mixon**  
Elisabeth Freed, Falls Church, VA:  
**In memory of William Carl Busch**  
Ginger Gould, Fairfax, VA:  
**In memory of Margaret Minnie Shuff**  
Elaine Hawley, Fairfax, VA:  
**In memory of Andrew Wells Barron**  
Gary Householter, Glen Haven, CO  
Jewish Colorado/Karen Silverman, Denver, CO  
Kay Linder, Fort Collins, CO:  
**In memory of William "Bill" Wilde**  
Liz Lucke, Loveland, CO  
Betty J. Luttkus, Aurora, CO:  
**In memory of George Luttkus**  
Becky Metcalf, Des Moines, IA:  
**In honor of Casey and Brandy Metcalf**  
George D. Miller, Punta Gorda, FL  
Carleton and Diane Moore, Mesa, AZ  
Carol Ann Olson, Boulder, CO  
William and Theresa Preston, Oregon, IL:  
**In memory of Samuel Coffey**  
Carol Redd, Katy, TX  
Norma Robinson, Colorado Springs, CO:  
**In memory of Mildred McCall Pitchford**  
Melvin and Leonora Rueppel, Estes Park, CO:  
**In memory of Patricia Volker**  
Darla Sidles and Mark Collins, Estes Park, CO  
Sheridan and Barbara Steele, Highlands Ranch, CO  
William and Shirley Sterling, Jr., Georgetown, TX  
Matthew Stone, Oak Ridge, TN:  
**In honor of Diane R. Kresley**  
Christopher Talmadge, Brookfield, WI  
Jazmin Tillman, Dallas, TX  
Lee and Richard Tillotson, Nederland, CO:  
**In memory of David Robertson**  
Richard Tusa, Fort Collins, CO:  
**In memory of Joanne Tusa**  
Caitlin White, Boulder, CO

## PARK HOUSING

Fred and Catherine Gaupp, Covington, LA

## SEARCH & RESCUE/ WILDERNESS EDUCATION

Bryce Allen, Englewood, CO  
Felicia Baldelli, New York, NY  
Richard Bryant, Cheyenne, WY  
R. Russ and Ann Buckley, Erie, CO  
James and Gail Cozette, Estes Park, CO:  
**In honor of Ranger Jay Grooters**  
Brian and Louise Desmond, Warrenton, VA  
Rasmus and Marian Erdal, Fort Collins, CO  
The Family Mayer Foundation/  
Kathryn Jenulis, Denver, CO  
Fidelity Charitable/  
Mr. and Mrs. Byron Prinzmatal, Estes Park, CO

Sophie Frankel, Estes park, CO  
Ken Gates, Loveland, CO  
Robert and Katherine Gould, Cambridge, WI  
Donna Govan, Loveland, CO:  
**In memory of Nina Embich**  
Sharon Harmer, Centerville, OH  
Dick and Mary Lou Kinney, Boise, ID  
Stephen Leafly, Grand Junction, CO  
John A. Mack, Estes Park, CO:  
**In honor of Tim Phillips and Kyle Patterson**  
Andrea Macrone, Warminster, PA  
Mountaineering Foundation of Chicago, Chicago, IL  
Margaret Nation, Waterford, ME  
Robin Nolan, Fort Collins, CO  
Jeanne and John Pitman, Wallingford, PA  
Fred W. Rainguet, Ph.D., Allenspark, CO  
Coleen Reedy, Wilmette, IL:  
**In memory of Peter Jeffris**  
Deborah Reithmeyer and Kenneth Burke,  
Port Ludlow, WA  
Nancy and Stanley Roberts, Longmont, CO:  
**In memory of Tim Fromelt**  
Monica Santa Maria, Lyons, CO  
Janice Shirey, Louisville, CO  
Leonard R. and Betty Todd, Lenexa, KS  
Kaci Yoh, Estes Park, CO

## SESSEL FAMILY FELLOWSHIP

Mark and Debbie Sessel, Denver, CO  
Maurice and Kelly Sessel, Farmington Hills, MI

## TRAIL IMPROVEMENT

Rick and Kate Adams, Danielsville, PA  
LaVerne Anderson, Longmont, CO  
Larry Armor, Blowing Rock, NC:  
**In memory of Robert Armor**  
Robin and William Bales, Berthoud, CO  
Sharon and Donald Barr, Loveland, CO  
William Bastian, Mount Prospect, IL:  
**In memory Esther L. Bastian**  
Mary Jo Beough, Estes Park, CO:  
**In honor of Howard Reese Pomranka**  
Debbie Becker, Humble, TX  
Robert Bell, Omaha, NE:  
**In honor of Rich and Karen Sandberg**  
Terry C. Bell, Norman, OK:  
**In memory of Louise Schaefer Carrel**  
Ron and Kathy Bell, Estes Park, CO  
Eleanor M. Blaha, Wheaton, IL:  
**In memory of Eli Blaha**  
Judith and Richard Bliley, Erie, PA:  
**In memory of Richard D. Bliley**  
David and Mary Ann Bliley, Erie, PA  
Paul and Gayle Bohrer, Greeley, CO  
Gerald and Darcy Boock, River Falls, WI  
Paula Brooks, Aurora, CO:  
**In memory of Mallie Reed, Jr.**  
Martha and Andrew Brown, Glade Park, CO:  
**In honor of Paul, Andrew, Matthew and Rebecca**  
Colleen Burner, Portland, OR:  
**In memory of Lee Burner**  
Jasper Butero, Trinidad, CO  
Flo Butler, Fort Collins, CO  
Judy Byrd, Atlanta, GA  
Mark Carpenter, Maple Grove, MN:  
**In memory of Pat Carpenter**  
Kristen and Robert Carr, Berthoud, CO:  
**In memory of Glenn Hedlund**  
Lee and Debi Carrick, Fort Collins, CO  
Laura Cataldo, Fort Worth, TX  
Claire Caudill, Houston, TX:  
**In memory of Anna Faye and Harry Peterson**  
Clement Chan, Longmont, CO  
Carole and Guy Cheatham, Fort Collins, CO  
Doug Clay, Greeley, CO  
Mallie Coker, Austin, TX:  
**In honor of Mary Lou Perkins**  
Marcus Cole, Costa Mesa, CA

Matt and Sarah Comstock, East Lansing, MI  
Joyce Condon, Englewood, CO  
Sarah Cooke, Deephaven, MN:  
**In memory of David Cooke**  
Ted and Lynn Coons, Columbus, OH  
Robert and Kimberly Cople, Manhattan, KS  
Roger Cousins, Marion, IA:  
**In memory of Jill Cousins**  
Charles and Trudy Cowman, Woodbury, MN  
Walt and Sandra Cox, Blue Grass, IA  
Julimarie Dagen, Norton Shores, MI:  
**In honor of Marc McCurry**  
Bridget Dalton and Lawrence Kennedy, Lafayette, CO  
Christopher and Patricia Daly, Bryn Mawr, PA  
Thomas and Eleanor Daly, Croton On Hudson, NY  
William and Kathy David, Aurora, CO  
Carroll and David Davis, Johnstown, CO:  
**In honor of Lori Radzikowski**  
James Davis, Somers Point, NJ  
Dan Delancey, Kansas City, MO  
Marian Dines and Joanne Christensen, Lafayette, CO  
Janet Draper, Noble, OK  
Jennifer Drayton, Fort Collins, CO  
Christopher Dugan, Denver, CO  
Robert Erickson, Nindota Heights, MN:  
**In honor of Susan Mathre**  
Barbara Ferguson, Deerfield, IL  
Fidelity Charitable/John Mize, Salina, KS  
Katy Flatau, Arvada, CO  
Karen and Alan Ford, Seattle, WA:  
**In memory of Jason**  
Mary E. Fox, Saint Louis, MO  
Tom and Ann Francese, Austin, TX:  
**In honor of Francese Family**  
Deborah Friedman, Denver, CO  
Eric Froehlich, Severn, MD  
Howard and Dana Fry, Castle Rock, CO  
Sandra Gabel, Claremont, CA:  
**In memory of Reagan Helm**  
Harvey Gardiner, Niwot, CO  
Marianne Gaynor, Riverview, MI:  
**In honor of Gene and Martha Stehman**  
Eric Gebauer, Loveland, CO  
Kathleen Geer, Columbia, CT  
Wanda Gentile, Colorado Springs, CO  
James and Yvonne Glendenning, Lake Stevens, WA:  
**In memory of Kevin Glendenning**  
John Go, Bellaire, TX: In memory of Steven Go  
Margarete Goett, Milo, ME:  
**In honor of Kristin and Mike Jenny**  
Linda Goff, Estes Park, CO: In honor of Steven Goff  
Greater Kansas City Community Foundation/James A. Glenski, Overland Park, KS:  
**In memory of Jack Morgan**  
Greater Kansas City Community Foundation/Mike Graft, Kansas City, MO  
Amy Groskopf, Davenport, IA  
Judy Gunkler and Bill Rawsky, Boulder, CO:  
**In memory of Hank McCutchen**  
Bruce Haefner, Denver, CO  
Carl and Nancy Hane, Fort Collins, CO  
David and Regina Haner, Loveland, CO  
Kay Harness, Spooner, WI:  
**In memory of Glenn Hedlund**  
Susan Harris, Estes Park, CO:  
**In memory of Ron Harris**  
Jo Ann Hasselmann, Monroe, IA  
Haut-Smith Associates, Concord, MA  
James and Christine Hazen, Boone, NC  
Walter and Ann Hecox, Colorado Springs, CO  
Margaret and John Henderson, Belton, TX:  
**In honor of Matthew Firth**  
Margaret and John Henderson, Belton, TX:  
**In honor of Michael Fratiani**  
Joan and Lou Henefeld, Golden, CO  
Richard and Diane Heppner, Claremont, CA  
Jobie Hereford, Saint Louis, MO

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David and Mary Herrick, Loveland, CO:  
**In memory of Glenn Hedlund**  
Matt and Patty Hesse, Wichita, KS:  
**In memory of Jean and Francis Hesse**  
Jesse and Joseph Hickman, Wheeling, WV:  
**In memory of Isaac Martin Hickman**  
Laura Hiebenthal, Greeley, CO:  
**In memory of Rodney Hiebenthal**  
Karen Hoewing, Medford, OR:  
**In honor of Jackie Sullivan**  
Jordan Hoffman, Denver, CO  
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Jim and Peggy Hudson, Waco, TX  
James Hueber, Arvada, CO  
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**In memory of John Hundley**  
Louis Hutchinson, Centennial, CO  
Jane and Bill Jackson, Fort Collins, CO  
Jeanene and J.P. Jansen, Burlington, WI  
Jean and Walter Jazun, Parker, CO  
Karen Johnson, Estes Park, CO  
Pamela Johnson, Westminster, CO  
Thomas Johnstone, Waite Park, MN:  
**In honor of Madeline Lou Kim**  
Steven and Annette Joliat, Evergreen, CO  
Scott Joy, Denver, CO  
Virginia and Raymon Kent, Estes Park, CO:  
**In honor of Mark Weston**  
Susan King, Livingston, TX  
Elizabeth Kirkland, Devon, PA:  
**In memory of Donald Kirkland**  
John and Diane Klarich, White Lake, MI  
Virginia Klenk, Mankato, MN  
Deborah Kodros, Morton Grove, IL:  
**In memory of my parents**  
M.L. and Christine Korphage, Wichita, KS  
Scott and Tricia Kostner-Nicholson, Broomfield, CO  
Frederick Krampetz, Lakewood, CO  
Robert Kretschman, Grand Junction, CO:  
**In memory of June Kretschman**  
Paul Krusa and Marie Curry, Longmont, CO  
John Kuzan and Patti Vocker, Tampa, FL  
Dave and Barb Langlois, Colorado Springs, CO  
Eric Lapham, Papillion, NE  
Lawrence and Diane LaPointe, Black Hawk, CO  
Karen and Don Lawson, Colorado Springs, CO  
Peter and Jane Lederer, Fort Collins, CO  
Margaret and Bruce Lemen, Council Bluffs, IA:  
**In honor of Sophia Lemen**  
Howard and Toni Levine, Wayne, IL  
Kay Linder, Fort Collins, CO:  
**In memory of William "Bill" Wilde**  
Shirley Lindley, Fort Collins, CO  
Dora Lorimer, Orange, TX  
Paula Luchetta, Arvada, CO  
Nicholas Luedtke, Chicago, IL:  
**In honor of Marci and Seth Lacy**  
Lee Machin, Estes Park, CO  
Gregory Malsam, Longmont, CO  
Kathy L. Marlow, West Des Moines, IA

Marilyn Maskell and Michael Pretz, Fort Collins, CO  
Stephen Massad and Laura Devitt, Houston, TX  
Edward and Patty McAuliffe, Westminster, CO  
Sue McGonigal, Omaha, NE:  
**In memory of Dr. Thomas C. Nilsson**  
William McIntyre and Laura Martin, Cheyenne, WY  
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James and Tricia Medlock, Fort Collins, CO  
Mark Medsker, Martinsville, IN  
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Liz Miller and Lindy Eakin, Lawrence, KS  
Gloria and Barry Miller, Boulder, CO  
Ronald Miller, Highlands Ranch, CO  
Frances and Albert R. Mitterer, Arvada, CO:  
**In memory of Amy Mitterer**  
Frances and Albert Mitterer, Arvada, CO:  
**In memory of Betty Hedlund**  
David and Joy Mohr, Estes Park, CO  
Gary and Gail Moon, Fishers, IN  
Dr. and Mrs. Robert Moore, Little Rock, AR:  
**In honor of Dr. Dean Kumpuris**  
Rebecca and Jack Morgan, Saint Petersburg, FL  
Andy Nelson, Savoy, IL: In honor of Doug Nelson  
Gary and Beverly Nelson, Aurora, CO:  
**In memory of Glenn Hedlund**  
Linda Nolan, Loveland, CO  
Robin Nolan, Fort Collins, CO  
Jon Odorico, Madison, WI:  
**In honor of Austin Van Wart and Claire Odorico**  
William O'Hara, Berthoud, CO  
Joseph Oliveri, Austin, TX  
Alysia Painter, South Pasadena, CA:  
**In memory of Joy Gonzales**  
Christopher and Linda Paris, Boulder, CO  
George and Theresa Parish, Amory, MS  
Gary Parker, Centennial, CO  
Ginny Passoth, Denver, CO  
Raymond and Emmy Peck, Dearborn Heights, MI  
Tammy Pelnik, Louisville, CO  
Carla Personette, Pearl City, IL:  
**In memory of Stephen Personette**  
Sheila Petteersen, Fort Myers Beach, FL  
Michael and Amy Phillips, Bennington, NE  
Rich Pickowitz, La Quinta, CA  
Rodger and Holly Poage, Montrose, CO  
Lisa Polazzi, Valparaiso, IN  
Mark and Ellen Precht, Colorado Springs, CO:  
**In memory of Adelaide Precht**  
Jim and Faye Pruet, Germantown, TN  
Marilyn Radmer, Shoreview, MN:  
**In memory of Glenn Hedlund**  
Diane Rammelsberg, Libertyville, IL  
Mayur Mukund Rao, Westminster, CO  
Ronald and Rebecca Reeve, Palatine, IL  
Lily Revere, Boulder, CO  
Sandra Richelmy, Denver, CO  
Pamela Riggs, Georgetown, TX  
William Riley and Norma Riley, Omaha, NE:  
**In memory of Brian Jay Riley**  
William Riley and Norma Riley, Omaha, NE  
Mr. and Mrs. William Robertson, Colorado Springs, CO

Patty Robinson, Bolingbrook, IL:  
**In memory of Richard and Ruth VanderMey**  
Allen Ross, Highlands Ranch, CO  
Jane Rutledge, Estes Park, CO  
Carlen Schenk and Barry Brezan, New Berlin, WI  
Karen Schuster, Denver, CO  
Dave and Jan Scott, Lake Charles, LA  
Jeannine Seagren, Wheat Ridge, CO  
Arthur Shanklin, Aurora, CO  
Jordan Shaw, Fort Lauderdale, FL:  
**In honor of Madelyn Jensen**  
Mary and Karl Shelley, Moorestown, NJ:  
**In memory of Jack and Peggy Conrad**  
Randy and Amy Shirbroun, Worthington, MN:  
**In memory of Larry Hammack**  
Alan Simms, Wildwood, MO  
Donna Singer, Broomfield, CO  
Matt C. Smith, Littleton, CO  
Jonella Snyder, Hazen, ND:  
**In memory of Joel L. Messmer**  
Ned Steele, Sunnyside, NY  
Don and Chris Steger, Tucson, AZ  
Mark and Joan Strobel, Saint Paul, MN  
David and Carla Stutts, Houston, TX  
Lisa and Steve Sullivan, Sparta, WI:  
**In honor of Jack Kemper**  
Barbara and Ralph Swanson, Phillips, WI  
Sandra L. Tarlton, Swannanoa, NC  
Lynn Taulbee, Santa Fe, NM:  
**In honor of Philip S. Taulbee**  
Paul and Nancy Thornblad, Omaha, NE:  
**In memory of Bruce Thornblad**  
Eli Tucker, Louisville, KY  
Sean Tucker, Loveland, CO  
Rob and Fran Wagner, Canton, MI:  
**In honor of all the fire fighters**  
Susan Walsh, Loveland, CO  
Thomas and Rachelle Washburn, Estes Park, CO  
Lisa L. Weisensel, Beaver Dam, WI  
Eric Weiss, Miami, FL:  
**In memory of Shelley L. Stern**  
Cara and Eric Welch, Brighton, CO  
Robert and Mary Whitman, Boulder, CO  
Russell and Vickie Whitney, Sacramento, CA  
Margaret Willemsen, Clinton, NY  
John Wilson and Mollie Mitchell, Castle Pines, CO  
Suzy Winchester, Boca Raton, FL  
Bill and Pamela Zarrella, Boca Raton, FL

## TRAIL RIVER RANCH

Jane Stotts, Blue Ash, OH

## WEST SIDE

Robbie Sonniksen, Salinas, CA

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Joan Eaton, Milliken, CO  
Steve Fleegal, Memphis, TN

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*The intense fires of 2020 in the park were a symptom of our changing climate, much as the mountain pine beetle outbreak was during the past couple of decades.*

## Fire in Rocky

*Continued from page 1*

systems and seed stores, and new shoots of vegetation might appear just weeks after the burn. In the case of the East Troublesome Fire, which expanded from 19,000 to 125,000 acres in just 12 hours, pushed by 60 mile-per-hour winds, there might be large areas of intact soils because the fire passed through so quickly.

Forest fires thus leave behind a mosaic of unburned areas and areas with a range of fire disturbance depending on burn intensity. This in turn leads to a patchwork of plant communities in various stages of ecological succession, a term that ecologists use to describe the progression or change of plant communities over time following a disturbance, such as fire, in an area. Therefore, forest fires typically produce a landscape with much greater plant community diversity than previously existed, especially if the previous landscape was unburned for a century or more. This means that there will be a higher diversity of plant as well as animal species. Thus, it is often said that fires rejuvenate a landscape.

A few decades ago, ecologists might have been speculating on how long the process of ecological succession would take to return burned ecosystems in places like Rocky Mountain National Park to their former composition. That sort of discussion has been turned on its head by our recognition that climate change is real and is having significant impact on our mountain ecosystems. We have no evidence that climate change will be slowing down anytime soon, and the records of 2020 are likely to be broken in

the coming years. As the climate changes, so do the conditions that favor the establishment of one plant species over another. Thus, we can expect that a changing climate will steer ecological succession in a different direction, favoring plant species that are more tolerant of drought conditions and warmer temperatures than previous species.

One of the concerns about wildfires revolves around the impact of the fire on wildlife. Both the Cameron Peak and East Troublesome fires occurred late in the season. The Cameron Peak fire started during late summer and the East Troublesome fire started in mid-October, and both burned through November. The timing of the fires put them well after the breeding season of most bird and wildlife species. Juveniles were able to disperse or at least achieve sufficient mobility to avoid most of the burning areas. While many animals were undoubtedly lost in the rapidly moving East Troublesome Fire, the main impact of the wildfires will be the loss of breeding habitat for birds, and loss of food and shelter for other wildlife species. Burned areas will likely be avoided by most wildlife until sufficient vegetative recovery takes place, though tender grass and forb shoots will be sought by herbivores during the recovery.

Burned areas often attract species that otherwise would not be in great abundance. For example, trees killed by fire but left standing are often invaded by bark beetles. The beetles

in turn provide food for woodpeckers and nuthatches. Recently burned areas are good places to look for American three-toed woodpeckers, which tend to concentrate in these areas for feeding. These woodpeckers breed in mature conifer forests but are typically uncommon.

The intense fires of 2020 in the park were a symptom of our changing climate, much as the mountain pine beetle outbreak was during the past couple of decades. But these fires and others likely to follow will not materially change Rocky. The mountains will still be there, and the signature forest types that are familiar to us will remain. But ecosystems are dynamic, and they respond to changes in climate. As winter conditions become shorter and warmer, and the summer growing season becomes longer and drier, subtle changes will occur. Drought intolerant plants will colonize higher elevations, or more north-facing exposures. Species that are part of existing plant communities might increase or decrease their relative proportion depending on their tolerance for warmer temperatures. Wildfires might accelerate this process in some ways, but the process will occur with or without wildfires. From a broader perspective, it can be helpful to appreciate the dynamic nature of our landscape, and that we are witnessing only a brief moment in its evolution.

*John Emerick, Ph.D., is an ecologist, and is on the emeritus faculty of the Department of Environmental Science and Engineering, Colorado School of Mines. Nowadays, he spends part of his summers conducting field surveys for the Colorado Natural Heritage Program, and works on various environmental projects in the Crystal River Valley where he lives in western Colorado.*



# Colorado Gives Day A Lively Boost for the Conservancy

## Spring is coming! Keep Bears Wild

Mountain areas CAN be great places for people, bears and other watchable wildlife. And a healthy bear population will ensure the continuation of these memorable wildlife experiences — from a safe distance!

Rocky Mountain National Park and Estes Park have had increasing bear activities and incidents after dark, primarily due to trash management. These close calls present a safety hazard for everyone.

Bears that get into continual trouble because of humans cannot be relocated — they are killed. Very sad. Your actions can save a bear's life.

- ▶ Always store trash in a secure place or bear-resistant container.
- ▶ Remember to put trash out on pick-up morning — NEVER the night before.
- ▶ Use flowers to attract birds — not feeders. If you can't let go of your feeders, bring them in at night.
- ▶ Store pet food inside.
- ▶ Close windows and lock doors on vehicles and buildings. Bears can open doors!
- ▶ Stop a bear from getting a food/trash reward — set off your car alarm, let loose with an air horn and yell.
- ▶ Be neighborly and let others know so that they can take action, too!

On Colorado Gives Day, December 8, the Conservancy capped off one the single biggest fundraising days in the Conservancy's history. In all, more than 500 online donors gave through ColoradoGives.org.

Colorado Gives Day is an annual giving holiday in Colorado that provides a matching incentive for donors to give to their favorite nonprofits. Thanks to Community First Foundation and FirstBank, Colorado Gives Day features a \$1 Million Incentive Fund, one of the largest gives-day incentive funds in the country.

Every donation on Colorado Gives Day receives a portion of the Incentive Fund, which increases the value of the gifts to the Rocky Mountain Conservancy.

The Conservancy Team would like to thank those who participated in Colorado Gives Day this year, as well as every one who engaged with our year-end annual campaign. Your support helps to protect and conserve Rocky, refurbish hiking trails, and support a variety of programs to improve the visitor experience.



Rocky Mountain Conservancy

## 2021 Member Tee Now Available!

The Rocky Mountain Conservancy has teamed up with Parks Project to bring you some cool new threads. Get yours today with a membership level of \$50 or more!



[RMConservancy.org/join](https://RMConservancy.org/join)

### Why Join?

Rocky is that place you visit for stunning views of wilderness, where you hike with friends, or join your family for picnics and outings. It's where the kids become Junior Rangers, and where you all go to watch wildlife. It's a special place that makes a difference in your life, and Rocky needs help. Your membership helps fund the Conservancy's work to preserve and protect the park and its many treasures and resources that we all enjoy. As a member of the Conservancy, we'll keep you informed about park issues and events, and provide exclusive ways for you to stay connected to this beautiful and inspiring place.

### Join Annually, or Monthly!

A small amount each month can add up to a big impact over time. Just choose a monthly amount that fits your budget and it will automatically be charged to your credit card each month. You can cancel your monthly commitment at any time, no questions asked. In appreciation of your support, you'll receive the same base benefits as a regular yearly member.

[RMConservancy.org](https://RMConservancy.org)

## Park Puzzler Solution



# Alluvial Fan Restoration Completed

by Rocky Mountain  
Conservancy  
Development Associate  
Andie Gibbons



If you miss visiting the Alluvial Fan, you're not alone. After several months of construction closures, the new-and-improved accessible trail opened on September 25, 2020!

The Alluvial Fan was formed in 1982 when an earthen dam located at Lawn Lake breached, causing a devastating flood. The sound of water roaring downhill was so intense a maintenance worker at the Rainbow Curve overlook on Trail Ridge Road thought a plane had crashed. Floodwaters stripped the vegetation from the landscape, leaving behind a boulder field and loads of sediment.

With beautiful water cascades and views of the Fall River Valley, the newly formed Alluvial Fan quickly gained popularity with park visitors. An asphalt trail and pedestrian bridge were built in 1985, which improved access to the area. However, in 2013 another flood destroyed this trail when between 12 and 14 inches of rain fell in 24 hours.

Park Service employees Doug Parker, trails program supervisor, and Jesse Miller, project manager, know the devastation caused by the 2013 flood better than most. "Doug and I were actually camping up at the Lawn Lake Cabin during the flood," said Miller, "and it was a scary experience. Hiking down, the best I can equate it to is it sounded like a bowling alley – just giant boulders crashing into each other, trees coming down, the trail was a river."

Once the chaos of the flood settled, the extent of the damage became clear. The trail was washed out entirely in some areas and broken to bits in others. The west side of the Alluvial Fan had become a boulder field. There was no trail, no bridge,

and no way this area could be considered accessible anymore.

"As a trail crew, we have 350 miles of trail to cover. We have priorities everywhere," said Parker, "but once we had a highly visited, popular, accessible trail get decimated in the flood – it totally reprioritized what we were doing."

The story of restoring this area began with an environmental assessment in 2013 to determine how best to realign the trail to improve access for all users. In 2017, the trail crew began researching accessibility standards, and an outside contractor, an expert in outdoor accessibility, designed a trail system that would universally benefit visitors.

In the spring of 2019, Rocky received final plans and began construction.

Each decision was made with ease-of-use and sustainability in mind. FilterPave was used to pave the nearly 2,000 feet of trail because the hardened tread surface is firm enough for wheelchair users but is also porous, allowing water to run through. This is the first trail in Rocky built with this material, which is an improvement over the commonly used crushed granite that struggles to handle heavy snow loads, wind and flooding. Even the placement of rocks along the trail is intentional, with some set higher to provide places to sit and rest while enjoying the view.

In the beginning, ten crew members worked at the site daily. This number rose to 25 during the final month of construction, as an eagerness to finish the project grew. Additionally, five Rocky Mountain Conservancy Conservation Corps members worked with the Park Service staff for three weeks. "It couldn't have been



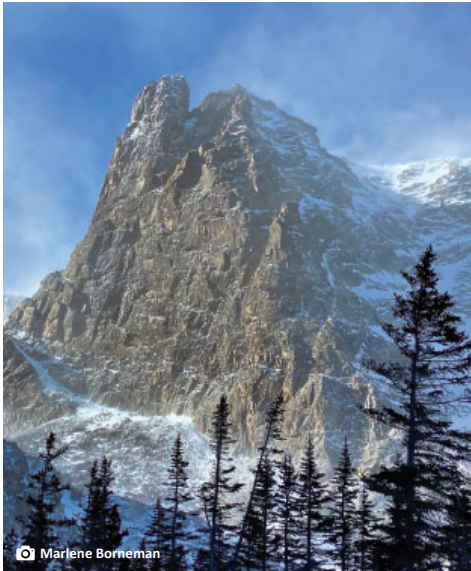
**Finished paved trail near the Alluvial Fan Bridge**

done without them," noted Miller. Parker agreed, "[the Conservancy's] involvement has been huge on this, from labor to funding."

Thoughtfully constructed, this trail allows all visitors to enjoy breathtaking views of the Mummy Range, Horseshoe Falls, and Endovalley. A fully accessible trail leaves the West Alluvial Fan parking and picnic area and meanders up to a 56-foot bridge that crosses the Roaring River. On the east side of the bridge, visitors can turn north to an overlook area with views of Horseshoe Falls or continue to the East Alluvial Fan parking area.

"My parents are coming into town from Ohio this weekend," said Parker. "I was so pumped. This has saved the annual quandary of 'Where do I take my parents?' They're going to love it."

Built sustainably, with flooding in mind, and accessible to all, this trail is here to stay. We think you'll love it, too.



# Rocky Mountain Conservancy

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*Notchtop on a blue-sky day in winter.*

Visit [RMConservancy.org](http://RMConservancy.org)  
or call 970-586-0108

## Nature Notes

### While the world is in chaos, we look to nature for grounding and renewal — and Rocky Mountain National Park has plenty to offer •

Conservancy Member **Steve Coles** relayed the story of some of his friends that live in the town of Raymond, Colorado, who were awakened at 2 AM to a ruckous occurring near their house. They peered outside and saw a mountain lion that had a grip on the throat of a mule deer right outside the windows on their patio. The lion was thrashing the deer around, but their appearance startled it and the lion took off — the deer wandered away, apparently not in grave standing • Conservancy member **Marlene Borneman** was struck by how just weeks after returning home from the fire evacuation she noticed an unusual number of large birds around their home, including ravens, Clark’s nutcrackers, stellars jays, hairy woodpeckers and yellow-shafted flickers — not the usual collection of small birds that frequent their feeders • On a trip to Grand Lake, **Marlene** and Conservancy member **Walt Borneman** found some bright spots in Rocky amidst the destruction the Troublesome Fire had wrought. The Timber Lake Trail was as beautiful as ever, especially in winter, with lovely sunrises and sunsets on the Never Summer Range, and snow on the ground that will water new plant growth • Additionally, while hiking along the Finch Lake Trail in November, **Marlene** spotted and followed delicate, tiny deer mouse tracks in the snow for about a mile — but she did not see the mouse • **Walt** also observed quite a few pikas early in December, all fluffed and furry, running around in the snow along the Flattop Trail, atop Hallett, and in the Boulderfield • Park Interpreter

**Kathy Brazelton** gets pretty excited about the word *subnivean* — below the snow is a fascinating world! She’s been finding a lot of vole tunnels of late and evidence of the complicated society that exists in the subnivean terrain. There are highways, kitchens, bedrooms and even toilets under the snow. Although appearing barren on the surface, life goes on in this sheltered environment, enabling voles, mice, the occasional grouse and the predatory weasel to survive the cold temperatures of winter • RMNP Woodcrafter **Cory Johnson** reported seeing a great-horned owl swoop down about 50’ in front of him on his walk to work in the park’s utility area one early morning in January. It skimmed a few feet above the ground across the meadow, perhaps in search of its next meal • In December, Cory was in Moraine Park after the East Troublesome Fire where he saw a healthy bobcat feeding on a very fresh deer carcass near the road. He thought it unlikely that the bobcat killed the deer, but then again, he’d never seen one feeding on a carcass before. The entire carcass was gone/scattered just a couple hours later when he passed by again • Conservancy member **David Kempkes** was driving through the park in early January in hopes of photographing one of the many animals that live in Rocky. After spending hours in the park with no luck, he headed home, but just past the Beaver Meadows Entrance he spotted a huge bird fighting among throngs of magpies and ravens. Lying in the grass was a deer carcass that most likely had been hit by a car, based on its proximity to the road. Over it was an intense flurry of hungry birds. Dave suspected the large bird was a golden eagle based on its impressive size, but



he’d never seen one this close. He was able to get some photos before it flew to a nearby tree, which allowed about 15 magpies to move in and resume their feast. Meanwhile, a wave of ravens moved in for their turn. Dave went back early the next morning and waited as a coyote took its turn on what was now a well-consumed carcass. At a return trip in the afternoon, the carcass was completely consumed • Conservancy members **Andy** and **Rachel Ames** were excited to see a bobcat making a scrape outside their home one evening in December. The next day, they spotted not one but four bobcats at the site — a mother with three kittens. It appeared a young deer had been killed and the bobcats were having a feast. Over the course of the day they watched as all four got fatter and fatter. When they paused to take a break, mama laid close to the kill to keep scavengers away • **Keep your eyes peeled when you next visit Rocky, and share your Nature Notes with us all!**  
Send to: [nancy.wilson@RMConservancy.org](mailto:nancy.wilson@RMConservancy.org)