



# Rocky Mountain Conservancy

---

CONSERVATION CORPS

**2016 End-of-Season Portfolio**





# Rocky Mountain Conservancy

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

Currently, Rocky Mountain Conservancy contains five departments:

- **Retail** – manages 42 nature stores throughout Colorado and Wyoming to provide visitors with educational materials to enhance their experience.
- **Publications** – produces nature guides, children’s literature, natural and cultural history books, and more.
- **Membership** – connects people to Rocky Mountain National Park in support for the Conservancy and through newsletters updating constituents on upcoming projects.
- **Development** – raises funds for RMNP and Conservancy programs through donor outreach, grant proposals, and community engagement. Funds are used for specific projects including land acquisition, historical preservation, trail maintenance, building construction, and education.
- **Education** – provides field classes, internships, nature-based activities, and fellowships for people of all ages to further understand and connect with public lands.

## Conservation Corps Program Outline

The Rocky Mountain Conservancy created the Conservation Corps program in 2003. Initially, the program supported seven interns on one crew in Rocky Mountain National Park. Since 2003, the program has grown to provide thirty-six youth with a summer long internship opportunity across six different crews. Crews locations are as follows (listed in chronological order: Rocky Mountain National Park - Estes (2003), Rawah Wilderness (2005), Shadow Mountain (2006), Red Feather Lakes (2009, Boulder (2014), and Rocky Mountain National Park (2015). Crews are made up of six people (one leader and five crew members).

### Program Goals:

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

The season spans eleven weeks between late-May and early-August. For eight weeks the crews work directly alongside the National Park Service and USDA Forest Service completing conservation project you will find summarized in the pages following. The other three weeks of the season focuses on leadership training, educational programming, and career development.

To see more details about the program and season, please visit [www.rmconservancyconservationcorps.wordpress.com](http://www.rmconservancyconservationcorps.wordpress.com)!



## Estes Crew



The Estes Crew spent their summer living in Estes Park and working in Rocky Mountain National Park. In Rocky, they worked with the Trails and Resource Stewardship crew to help ensure sustainable recreation in RMNP while protecting the natural landscapes and ecosystems. In 2016, this included completing maintenance on over 100 miles of trail on the east side, including popular trails leaving from the Bear Lake, Glacier Gorge, Fern Lake, Wild Basin and Deer Mountain Trailheads. These maintenance runs require the crew to repair drainage structures to mitigate erosional forces on trail, clear trees to allow for safe passage along the trail, and brush back encroaching vegetation to clarify trail corridor and reduce braiding. This is essential preventative maintenance work helping to limit the impact trail systems have on the surrounding resources.

In addition to completing maintenance runs, the Estes Crew also worked on two major projects involving check steps. Check steps are a structure built into steeper sections of trail to prevent erosional forces from washing out the trail. Many of us would recognize these structures as the large log or rock steps. To build these steps, you must carefully measure out the length and the elevation gained on a section of trail to insure the steps do not exceed the standard height and length for the pad. Once measured the number of steps in a section is calculated and each log or rock step is carefully set to the predetermined distances and corresponding rises from the previous step. It is not uncommon for a whole day to go by and only have a few steps set due to the tedious and exacting nature of this work. Over the course of the 2016 season, the Estes Crew constructed a total of 26 check steps on two different trails: Sandbeach Lake and Tuxedo Park. Both of these are very high traffic trails experiencing erosional forces naturally through rain and snowmelt and manmade through human and horse traffic.

Outside of trails, the crew worked with the Resource Stewardship division of RMNP helping to manage exotic species and restore native plants to disturbed landscapes. This included using backpack sprayers to eliminate musk thistle, hounds tongue, and hoary alyssum in high visitation areas. After working through Moraine Park, Horseshoe Park, and the Alluvial Fan, they focused their efforts on revegetating an area affected by a water main project in Glacier Basin Campground. Over the course of four days, the crew planted over 8600 native plants alongside the National Park Service and several Conservancy members.



**Name: Miranda Thompson** (Crew Leader)

Hometown: Louisville, KY

School/Major (Area of Study): Murray State University Wildlife and Conservation Biology

Career Goals: Biologist for an environmental NGO

Likes/Hobbies: I like friends, hiking, hiking with friends, bird watching, and learning new things.

“This program has helped me in so many positive ways and allowed me to begin growing into the best version of myself. When I first began working for this program, I knew very little about stewardship and conservation. Of course I knew the definitions, but I can say that I have an understanding and a strong personal connection to what they mean to me. I’ve always felt connected to the outdoors and been interested in protecting them, but this program has helped that interest grow into a passion.”



**Name: Hunter Kleinschmidt**

Hometown: Geneva, NE

School/Major (Area of Study): Doane College - Environmental Science with Biology emphasis

Career Goals: Something involving Ecology - Narrowing down my options

Likes/Hobbies: Hiking/Camping and Baseball

“This experience has blown my mind. This program and the natural environment it works in has changed my perspective on things positively, more than I thought possible.”



**Name: Jesse Lundervold**

Hometown: Marshall, MO

School/Major (Area of Study): Junior at William Jewell College, studying chemistry and studio art

Career Goals: I would love to use my chemistry background for conservation work while also being able to create really cool art.

Likes/Hobbies: I like exploring, reading, creating pottery, The X-Files, exercising, all animals, baking, and making to-do lists.

“To be honest, I did not know what I was getting myself into when I agreed to become part of the Conservation Corps. I had never hiked before and definitely had no idea what trail work was, but the idea of working in Rocky Mountain National Park sounded absolutely great. Even though I found my work difficult, the places that I had the opportunity of seeing far outweighed the physical taxation. I have met so many great people through this program that I know are going to do such great things when they leave Colorado. It is so exciting to be around such a talented and diverse group of students. Overall, this was the best summer I’ve ever experienced.



**Name: Benjamin Markow**

Hometown: Loveland, Colorado

School/Major (Area of Study): Colorado State University / Civil Engineering

Career Goals: To eventually own a construction / land development company

Likes/Hobbies: Soccer, computers, hiking, science, math, cars, electronics, technology, thrift stores, Game of Thrones, board games

“This internship has been one of the most memorable experiences of life. I have had an amazing experience. From the beginning week to the mid-week to our last day, I have enjoyed it all.”



**Name: Yuritz Gonzalez-Trujillo**

Hometown: Aurora, CO

School/Major (Area of Study): University of Colorado Boulder/ Environmental Engineering

Career Goal: Design innovative technology to reduce our carbon footprint.

Likes/Hobbies: I like to dance, go to the gym, run, play soccer, I enjoy making crafts and drawing, I love to play Chess, I enjoy cooking shows a lot, and I like to cook.

“Change is hard at first, messy in the middle, and gorgeous at the end.”

“Over the course of this journey I have become one with nature. I was an indoor person, being outside was never my first choice. Now that I’ve gone through this experience I can say that I will never get enough of the wilderness and I can’t wait to explore other places in the world.”



**Name: Jessa Solis**

Hometown: Fairfax, Virginia

School/Major (Area of Study): Bowdoin College/ Earth and Oceanographic Sciences

Career Goals: Geological research

Likes/Hobbies: I like baking, climbing anything that can be climbed, and attempting art.



## Rawah Wilderness Crew



The Rawah Wilderness is a wilderness area just North of Rocky Mountain National Park and just east of Cameron Pass at the far west end of the Cache le Poudre Canyon. This much more remote area sees many less visitors than Rocky or the other trailheads and protected areas along the Front Range making it one of the more desirable destinations for people looking to get away. The crew often came back with the motto “more moose than people.” In this area the Canyon Lakes District of the USDA Forest Service relies almost completely on the Conservancy’s crew and another non-profit volunteer group, the Poudre Wilderness Volunteers, for all maintenance and conservation needs. With more than 75 miles of trail to protect, many of which are more than 6 or 7 miles from the road, the crew has their work made out for them. This year, the crew was able to maintain over half of the designated trail system cutting out over 70 downed trees and constructing upwards of 800 drainages.

In addition to this standard maintenance, the Rawah Crew is often faced with making important conservation decisions in the backcountry with limited guidance from the USFS. This requires them to be creative and flexible when heading out for weeklong hitches unsure of what they may encounter. This year they removed 12 illegal campsites either too close to water or the trail or within designated closure zones. This removal helps preserve the wilderness experience for others while protecting the sensitive areas surrounding trail corridors and watersheds.

Beyond the Rawah Wilderness, this crew also contributed efforts to reopening the Youngs Gulch Trail along the Cache le Poudre River. This trail tells the story of the last five years in Colorado after having been closed by the High Park Fire in 2012 and then the floods of 2013. Differing significantly from trail maintenance, this construction consisted of creating a brand new trail by cutting corridor, establishing tread, constructing retaining walls, measuring outslope to ensure drainage, and much more.



**Name: Desiree Otis** (Crew Leader)

Hometown: New Paltz, NY

School/Major (Area of Study): SUNY Oswego/ History & Political Science

Career Goals: Environmental/Land Management Policy

Likes/Hobbies: Backpacking, Horseback Riding, Climbing

“Working as a crew leader in the Rawahs has been one of the most rewarding experiences of my life. While the work can be challenging, watching my crew learn and develop a passion for stewardship pushes me to grow as a leader and continue my love of public lands stewardship.”



**Name: Gustaf Anderson**

Hometown: Wausau, Wisconsin

School/Major (Area of Study): University of Minnesota, Twin Cities/ History

Career Goals: High school history teacher

Likes/Hobbies: Climbing, backpacking, paddling, biking, and slacklining.

“This summer working as a member of the Rocky Mountain Conservancy Conservation Corps, has been one of the most rewarding and worthwhile summers of my life. I have learned invaluable skills that I can transfer towards my future career path, and have forged strong friendships with my fellow crew members.”



**Name: Garret Fox**

Hometown: Saint Louis, MO

School/Major (Area of Study): Creighton University – Environmental Science and Sustainability with minors in Philosophy and Peace and Justice Studies

Career Goals: I would either like to work as a ranger in a National or State park or work in Washington D.C. lobbying for environmental legislation. I haven't decided yet.

Likes/Hobbies: I like writing, watching good movies, going metal detecting, exploring old buildings and, of course, immersing myself in wilderness.

“I could never have imagined how much this summer has changed me. It has taught me the satisfaction of hard work, the value of lasting friendships, and the joy of a long-awaited shower. I will never forget my time as part of the RMC-CC”



**Name: Kyrie McCullough**

Hometown: Helena, Montana

School/Major (Area of Study): Wildlife Biology

Career Goals: To protect our wilderness around the world

Likes/Hobbies: Hiking, Skiing, Backpacking

“Through Rocky Mountain Conservancy I have learned about the preservation and conservation of trails and how this ultimately protects the surrounding forest.”





**Name: Sam Ruhala**

Hometown: Lucas, TX

School/Major (Area of Study): Geography and Environmental Studies at the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs

Career Goals: For the longest time, my goal was to find a direction westward and pursue environmental studies. Now I'm here and am in the process of specifying just how I can contribute to the conservation efforts within our forests, grasslands, and open spaces. An ideal career would consist of remaining engaged, seeing results first-handedly, and working alongside a team with the same ideals. Eventually, I'd like to achieve a PhD within my scope of study and lead field work as a University Professor.

Likes/Hobbies: Growing up in Texas, I focused on competitive cross country and was planning to run collegiately. That is, until I hit the trails. Trail running is my focused leisure now, and I've established a presence within Colorado's ultra-running community. My favorite race was at the Desert RATS Trail Running Festival in Fruita, CO. I ran the 50k single-track course with a smile on my face throughout the entire four and a half hours – definitely attending this festival again! Aside from running, I enjoy all sorts of fishing, fly tying, 14ers, skiing, writing, woodworking, gardening, geology and good people. Another newfound hobby of mine is rock climbing. Since moving to Colorado, I've befriended some obsessive climbers, and they've taught me all about rocks and ropes.

"RMC-CC has provided the skill sets and motivation for me to pursue a lifetime of stewardship."

"RMC is entirely non-profit, and it's because of this that I've discovered a newfound hope for human interactions with their environments. Out of their passion for the outdoors and empowering the youth with conservation ethics, our donors allow this seasonal experience to happen. Seeing this will indefinitely encourage me to do the same later on in my life. Our environment relies on the hand-me-down of such ethics for its conservation, so I'll make certain the pattern continues."



**Name: Eeland Thomas Stribling**

Hometown: Denver, Colorado

School/Major (Area of Study): Colorado State University. Wildlife Biology

Career Goals: 1) Steve Irwin- teach people about animals and nature

2) Work at a fish hatchery

3) At least work outside, with my hands and teach children and teach children and their families about nature and their environment

4) Photographer for National Geographic

Likes/Hobbies: I am addicted to fly-fishing. I spent way too much time fishing, or doing fishing related activities. I also really enjoy going on hikes and capturing moments of birds, insects, trees and landscapes. I listened to a lot of different types of music, and enjoy listening to other people's favorite music.

"Before this summer conservation meant people chained to trees and donating money to organizations. After this summer, I have learned and realized that conservation is more about "doing." By doing trail work and creating areas that we make so people can use, we reduce the effects on the surrounding environment. Also by allowing people to enjoy a hike on a trail they will feel more connected and become bigger activist for conservation and the environment."



## Shadow Mountain Crew



The Shadow Mountain Crew hit the ground running in 2016 on the coattails of the success from the 2015 season. Most notably this meant following up on some of the larger projects completed year, including the tree clearing and trail clarification along the Knight Ridge section of the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail in Grand County. This area has been closed for several years due to mountain pine beetle decimating the tree population in the area followed by significant wind events blowing down thousands of trees along the trails. On account of this, a heavy focus of the crew for the 2016 season was tree clearing using the traditional cross-cut saw. During the early part of the season, the crew hit the Knight Ridge Trail, along with many others under similar circumstances, to clear downed trees from the trail corridor. This not only improves access and visitor safety in these areas, but it also protects the ecosystems surrounding the trail corridor which become susceptible to trail braiding and resource damage when an obstruction is found on trail. In addition to clearing trees, the crew also worked to improve water drainage on trails to protect them from erosion.

Beyond their early season work, the Shadow Mountain Crew also tackled several large-scale projects in the Sulphur Ranger District of the Arapaho National Forest based out of Granby, CO. These projects included construction of three turnpikes, restoration of areas affected by trail braiding, and two back-country hitches tackling projects in the Williams Fork area. The turnpikes were constructed along the Columbine Lake, High Lonesome, and East Shore Trails. Each of these turnpikes clarified trail corridor, restored a sustainable trail surface, and worked to protect the surrounding wetland areas. This was most notable on the Columbine Lake project, where the absence of a turnpike allowed for significant trail braiding expanding visitor impact from a narrow three foot trail corridor to a broad swath dozens of yards across.

As mentioned above the crew also completed two hitches covering over 40 miles of trail in the Williams Fork area. These hitches required to crew to move quickly through many miles of trail clearing trees and constructing drainages to protect the wilderness areas within the Sulphur Ranger District. Much of this work was aided by the welcome support of the Sulphur Ranger District's llamas, Jed, Lucinda, and Loretta.



**Name: Amy Sullivan** (Crew Leader)

Hometown: Minneapolis, MN

School/Major: University of Minnesota - Twin Cities, Earth Sciences

Career Goals: I plan to work as a geologist/hydrogeologist in environmental consulting, with the goal of attending graduate school after a few years of experience. I would love to someday serve as a geologic researcher and/or educator with the National Park Service or U.S.

Geological Survey!

Likes/Hobbies: Admiring neat rocks, laughing, cooking and eating, cheering on Minnesota Golden Gopher sports, playing and listening to music, giving belly scratches to dogs, picking berries, hydrating.

“This program has not only made me a better worker, leader, and friend, but also has given me a new place to call home in the Rocky Mountains. Thank you RMC!”



**Name: Abigail Bearce**

Hometown: Woodland Park, Colorado

School/Major (Area of Study): I study Fish, Wildlife, and Conservation Biology with a minor in Global Environmental Sustainability and Colorado State University.

Career Goals: I will work with endangered species to help protect them and their habitat. I will impede the rate of extinction by spreading education and inspiring others to care.

Likes/Hobbies: I love being outdoors, volunteering, painting, and taking care of animals.

“This summer I learned the work we do is important to the conservation of these fragile ecosystems, but the most important part of conservation is to sharing passion and inspiring others to also want to care for the environment. I look forward to further sharing and exploring my passion for protecting the wilderness and surrounding lands.”



**Name: Ashley Fox**

Hometown: New Philadelphia, Ohio

School/Major (Area of Study): The Ohio State University/ Environmental Science-Ecosystem Restoration

Career Goals: Hopefully start up an Adventure Trip/ Environmental Service Company that allows underprivileged people experience and connect to nature and also help clean up campsites, trails, crags, etc.

Likes/Hobbies: Outdoor sports: rock climbing, slacklining, high lining, kayaking, hammocking  
Other activities: drawing/painting, reading, euchre

“I am so extremely lucky to have been chosen to participate in this program, and I would highly recommend it to anyone looking to get a taste of what working with the Park Service or Forest Service is like. It has given me direction and guidance into what I want to do for my future after attaining my degree and that is priceless. Among everything else, I have met some of the most amazing, inspirational people though this program whose friendship I will carry with for the rest of my life.”



**Name: John Kurtz**

Hometown: Mankato, MN

School/Major (Area of Study): University of Denver/ Environmental Science and Spanish

Career Goals: Help enable under privileged youth get into the outdoors and also be actively involved in conservation.

Likes/Hobbies: Rock climbing, backpacking, and underwater basket weaving.

“The work completed this summer was always a win-win situation. Not only was it fun to do, we were also making a positive and lasting experience for others to enjoy when they could finally walk down a trail and not have to scramble over 100’s of trees.”





**Name: Izzy Owen**

Hometown: Portland, OR

School/Major (Area of Study): Smith College – Psychology, Study of Women & Gender

Career Goals: Undecided

Likes/Hobbies: Ultimate Frisbee, hiking, biking, cooking, dogs, ice cream

“Working for the RMC has been one of the best summers of my life. I feel satisfied at the end of each day, both physically and emotionally. This experience has been a great adventure.”



**Name: Toby Martin**

Hometown: Seattle

School/Major (Area of Study): Environmental Studies

Career Goals: Work at NGO, have my own company, make music

Likes/Hobbies: Playing Music, hiking, basketball, bad puns

“This program has helped me achieve my goals of getting involved and connected with conservation work, and becoming a healthier, fit, and naturally acquainted individual.”

## Red Feather Lakes Crew



The Red Feather Lakes area is a frequent destination for outdoor recreationists of all sorts. It offers great camping, fishing, hiking, and motorized trail use. In addition, it is still home to some ranches with grazing rights surrounding public lands. With this, it is an area that poses its own unique challenges when it comes to protecting trail systems and the surrounding ecosystems. Much of this work surrounds the way in which water and use affect the trail. On account of this, the Red Feather Lakes Crew spent a significant portion of their time working to maintain drainage structures, repair tread, and restore braided trails. This work took them to the Lady Moon, Mt. Margaret, Killpecker, and North Lone Pine Trails.

Outside of the Red Feather Lakes region, the Canyon Lakes District utilized their extra man- and womanpower to push forward on significant flood recovery projects. This included Youngs Gulch Trail in the Poudre Canyon and Lion Gulch Trail along Highway 36. Both trails have been closed to the public since the significant flood event in 2013. The Red Feather Crew spent two weeks on Youngs Gulch working with the Rawah Wilderness Crew and Wildland Restoration Volunteers staff to completely reconstruct the trail in an area less susceptible to flooding. In two weeks these crews progressed through 24 construction sections, many of which involved cutting new trail through brush and trees or constructing a trail surface along steeper banks or near river crossings.

At Lion Gulch there was less new trail construction and more rebuilding of trail structures and adding additional protection measures. This primarily included installing check steps and rock walls to retain trail surface and tread material. That being said there were significant sections requiring corridor clearing and tread construction.

On top of all of this, the Red Feather Crew also managed to join the Rawah Wilderness crew for a backcountry hitch in the Comanche Peaks Wilderness, bordering Rocky Mountain National Park. In just four days, the crew completed nearly twenty miles of trail maintenance installing or maintaining over 150 drainage structures and repairing stream crossings.





**Name: Grant Crist** (Crew Leader)

Hometown: Downers Grove, IL

School/Major (Area of Study): Environmental Engineering B.S., Geology B.S., Engineering Management Certificate-Concentrations in Energy, Remediation, and Ecology. Plans for Masters Studies as of Fall 2017.

Career Goals: Gain Full-Time Employment with attractive salary and benefits, in Colorado by Fall 2016

Likes/Hobbies: Elite Triathlete, climbing 14ers, camping, eating good and unique foods, experiencing the local vibes and learning/seeing what makes different locations 'tick'

For more information, including photographs, please visit my LinkedIn page:

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/grantcrist>

"I really liked working with a Non-profit, and plan to invest some of my free time in doing so in the future with an organization that suits what I can offer to them best. In that sense, I would like to say thank you to RMC-CC for allowing me the experience to explore this warm realization for my future!"



**Name: Daina Daniels**

Hometown: Centennial, Colorado

School/Major (Area of Study): Civil and Environmental Engineering

Career Goals: I hope to finish my schooling and further my education in environmental engineering working to improve the natural environment by energy preservation, water treatment systems, and waste control.

Likes/Hobbies: I love being outdoors doing anything from hiking, backpacking, climbing, and running. I enjoy cooking for my family and friends especially vegetarian and vegan meals. Although it doesn't sound like much fun to others, I also enjoy doing math.

"The love and dedication that people have for Rocky has inspired me to want to work and help preserve the park."



**Name: Sabrina Farmer**

Hometown: Burlington, Vermont

School/Major (Area of Study): Colgate University, Biology Major, Women's Studies Minor

Career Goals: Biology research, conservation work, outdoor recreation

Likes/Hobbies: Running, climbing, slack lining, reading, writing poetry, journaling

*"The idea of wilderness needs no defense, it only needs more defenders" ~Edward Abbey*  
I think in my summer work I contributed to Edward Abbey's goal and I fully intend to throughout my life, regardless of career."



**Name: James Fisher**

Hometown: *Denver, CO*

School/Major (Area of Study): *Conservation Biology / Ecology*

Career Goals: *Take global action, through institutional means and otherwise, against motivations adverse to the health and support of natural environments and the peoples therein. As well as reintegrate an immediate awareness of the environment into common practice through teaching, urbanism, and infrastructure.*

Likes/Hobbies: *Opposing opinions, Subversive behavior, Film, Illustration, Movement, Bikes, Deep Ecology*

“As a whole, my experience this summer has been entirely transformative and enlightening in countless respects. Career opportunities, people, hobbies & activities, an honest work ethic, and a deeper relationship with the natural world are all aspects of my life that have been strengthened.”



**Name: Arin Leopold**

Hometown: *Des Moines, Iowa*

School/Major (Area of Study): *Environmental Science, Journalism, Sustainability at Iowa State University*

Career Goals: *I am hoping to work within the field of hydrology or conservation. If that doesn't work out then I would like to move to the mountains and raise alpaca.*

Likes/Hobbies: *I spend most of my free time cycling, climbing, backpacking and reading. I enjoy coffee and playing outside.*

“RMC has opened my eyes to careers within the Park Service and Forest Service. It has helped me gain an appreciation for the natural work and environmental stewardship.”



**Name: Wyatt Johnson**

Hometown: *Drake, CO*

School/Major (Area of Study): *Estes Park High School*

Career Goals: *Expand Work Experience*

Likes/Hobbies: *Hunting, Fishing, Football*

“Overall I am very grateful for the opportunity to have experienced this program, it was everything I expected it to be and more, and over all a very good and positive experience. The things I have learned this summer are definitely going to stick with me for years to come, and the memories I've made will last a lifetime.”



## Boulder Crew



The 2016 Boulder Crew continues to help the USFS accomplish priority projects in the Boulder Ranger District. With only two committed USFS recreation staff to complete trail work, the district welcomes the support of Rocky Mountain Conservancy – Conservation Corps six-person crew during the summer months.

As most of the crews, the early season for Boulder was largely committed to maintenance runs on popular trails at lower elevations in the district. This includes Buchanan Pass, Sourdough, Ceran St. Vrain, Forsythe Canyon, and several others. However, these maintenance runs were intermixed with a variety of larger project, as well. In their first week, they constructed a ramp to allow horse travel and hikers to more easily cross a bridge on the Buchanan Pass Trail. In addition, they spent one of their early season weeks helping to mitigate trail braiding in popular trails leading out from the Brainard Lake Recreation Area during snow melt. This is primarily done by clarifying trail corridor through snow fields and drifts to ensue people are following the designated route as the snow melts. During this transition period, the wet and muddy areas surrounding trail corridors are at their most vulnerable stage; the ground is soft, the plants have not begun to grow seeds, and the trail is sometimes hard to find or flooded causing people to walk alongside it or find a different route. By clarifying the corridor, the crew helps protect these areas by keeping people on trail.

During the second half of their season, the crew took on several larger projects. This included construction of a turnpike on the South Boulder Creek Trail leading up to Rollins Pass, a bridge on the Buchanan Pass Trail, a large retaining wall on the Ceran St. Vrain Trail, and a connector trail in Brainard Lake. The turnpike and retaining wall focused on mitigating erosional forces and flooding of trails following wetlands. The turnpike was nearly 20 feet long and four feet wide to help retain trail surface by raising it and allowing water to drain below. The retaining wall, as the name indicates, works to retain trail surface from eroding off the downhill side. The wall was over 15 long and 6 feet tall. The other two projects provided benefits to the hikers and visitors to the area. At Brainard Lake the construction of the Long Lake Connector Trail focused on establish a new trail to move hikers from the roadway to a non-motorized trail. This eliminated potential accidents and helps provide hikers with a more enjoyable approach to the trailhead. The bridge construction on the Buchanan Pass Trail helps to both improve visitor experience by establishing an improved stream crossing, while also eliminating nonpoint source pollution and mitigating streamside erosion caused by trail braiding.



**Name: Tom Enright** (Crew Leader)

Hometown: Brookfield, WI

School/Major (Area of Study): University of Wisconsin-Madison, Majors: Biology and Spanish

Career Goals: Physician

Likes/Hobbies: Running, fly fishing, drawing, hiking, ice skating, and learning more about the human body and the natural world!

“Serving as a crew member and leader with RMC-CC for the past two summers has provided me with two of the best summers of my life. I have met great people and made life-long friends while connecting to the Rocky Mountain region in an intimate way. I will always cherish my memories of my time with the RMC-CC as I carry with me the skills I have learned to new challenges and opportunities.”



**Name: Gustavo Balderas**

Hometown: Greeley, Colorado

School/Major (Area of Study): University of Northern Colorado/Majoring on Environmental studies/Sustainability

Career Goals: My career goal is not confirmed. I still have many areas I'd like to seek and get a better grasp of my interests. However, I would love to dedicate my work in providing sufficient amounts of energy for today's world without undermining environmental integrity or draining resources. For example, focusing on helping organizations and companies run more efficiently, increase profits, creating a sense of well-being among communities.

Likes: Positive vibes, diversity, open mindedness, creativity and learning

Hobbies: listening to music, reading, hanging out with friends and family, and playing soccer

“My experience couldn't have been any better. I was nervous at the beginning of the season to step out of my comfort zone and participate in something new, but my comfort zone changed throughout the program in ways that I thought weren't possible. I felt like I matured stronger and have a better vision of what I would desire out of my career.”



**Name: Hailey Frost**

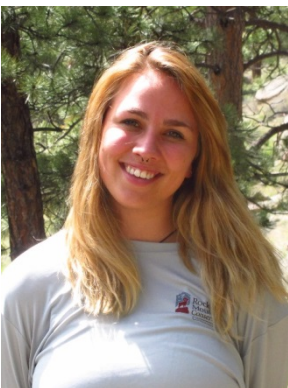
Hometown: Las Cruces, New Mexico

School/Major (Area of Study): New Mexico State University/ Fish, Wildlife and Conservation Ecology

Career Goals: Anything that gets me outdoors

Likes/Hobbies: Longboarding, Hiking, Camping, Snowboarding, and Ceramics

“My experience of the program was overall great. I had an amazing time learning new things and meeting new people.”



**Name: Milda Kristupatis**

Hometown: Minneapolis, MN

School/Major (Area of Study): St. Olaf College, Environmental Studies

Career Goals: Research work in environmental chemistry or working for the EPA

Likes/Hobbies: Anything outdoors basically. I love hiking, snowboarding, skiing, swimming, camping, art, photography, and spending time with friends.

“This program greatly expanded my knowledge and understanding of conservation of public lands and has been my first experience that has given me insight to my potential as a leader, my understanding of personal agency within nature and my ability to impact conservation work. What a wonderful experience.”





**Name: Dalton Moore**

Hometown: Northfield, MN

School/Major (Area of Study): North Dakota State/Natural Resources Management

Career Goals: I am still trying to dial this in but I would be excited about anything from working at a consulting firm in the urban world to working to improve land use ethics in more rural areas with any federal or state agency.

Likes/Hobbies: I really like biking around Fargo, playing foosball in my basement, and climbing.

“Non-profits are essential for government agencies to take action quicker and more efficiently. I would like to use what I have learned to eventually become a decision maker with land use allocation and be better informed in my future schooling. It has greatly influenced my future. I would like to begin a career in conservation after this summer.”



**Name: Ashley Munoz**

Hometown: Greeley, CO

School/Major (Area of Study): Psychology

Career Goals: Psychiatrist, Family practice physician

Likes/Hobbies: Swimming, Skiing, hiking, and running

“The program, as a whole, changed my view on stewardship and conservation. Things that seemed small to me before seem so significant now. Jobs that I had never thought about are now very important to me as well. Such as trail work, I never thought about how trails were maintained after they were built. Now it seems huge keeping these trails up kept so that hikers can enjoy them without creating a big impact on trails. This work helped me see and appreciate all the small pieces of conservation and how they all work to steward public lands.”

## Kawuneeche Crew



The Kawuneeche Crew is by far the Conservancy's most unique crew, as their work focuses primarily on the cultural resources in Rocky Mountain National Park. Working alongside the special projects division, their primary task is historic preservation of Rocky's culturally significant structures. This year the crew's focus was on two structures in the Kawuneeche Valley on the west side of Rocky Mountain National Park. The first was a comfort station at Timber Creek Campground. This restroom carries historical significance as it was built during Mission 66, a 10-year program initiated by the National Park Service in 1956 to dramatically enhance visitor services by 1966. Many of the buildings throughout Rocky were built through the Mission 66 program, including three of our visitor centers.

The crew's work on this building was twofold. First and foremost, they were going to restore the historical character of the exterior of the building by replacing the cedar shingles, restoring windows, and repainting the building's exterior. In addition, they were going to help with making the building more accessible and efficient to improve the visitor experience of people camping at Timber Creek.

The second building was the mess hall at Lake Irene. This structure was used by workers as a gathering place and communal eating area while they built Trail Ridge Road in the early years of the Park. Last year, the Kawuneeche Crew completed much of the exterior restoration, and this year's crew got in on the action completing the exterior work by chinking the logs to seal the structure.

In addition to these primary projects the Kawuneeche Crew go their hands on several other projects throughout the Park due to outworking the NPS staff's expectations. These other projects included replacing cedar shingles on another Mission 66 building at the Fall River Entrance Stations, painting the exterior of the Continental Divide Research Learning Center and cabins at McGraw Ranch, replacing windows at the historic Little Buckaroo Barn, and constructing an ADA accessible picnic site at Wild Basin. All of these projects contributed to the preservation of historical buildings in RMNP and the improvement of visitor experiences.





**Name: Dominic Rickicki** (Crew Leader)

Hometown: Bolivar, NY

School/Major (Area of Study): Paul Smith's College/ Environmental Studies

Career Goals: Masters in Journalism and a Freelance Writing Career

Likes/Hobbies: Rock/Ice Climbing, Running, Fly Fishing, Cooking, Car Camping

"This second season with the conservation corps has been incredibly rewarding. I was so excited to see my crew was inspired by the work we were doing and that they stayed focused throughout the season."



**Name: Dax DeShazo**

Hometown: Fayetteville, AR

School/Major (Area of Study): University of Arkansas/ Agricultural Business: Environmental Law

Career Goals: Lobbyist for EPA, or Government Program

Likes/Hobbies: Snow Skiing, backpacking, fishing, hunting, brewmaster.

"Through the RMC-CC, I have fallen in love with Rocky even more. The work we do creates a bond between us and the Park that will last forever. With hard work, dedication, and stewardship we can preserve the Park for generations to come."



**Name: Rachel Eckert**

Hometown: Flagstaff, AZ

School/Major (Area of Study): I attend St. Olaf College in Northfield, MN and am completing a major in environmental studies with an emphasis in the arts and humanities and a concentration in education.

Career Goals: I am very interested in environmental education because I love sharing my love for nature with people of all ages and believe that through sharing this love, I can motivate people to protect and care for the natural world. I hope to one day work as either a naturalist, park ranger, or environmental educator.

Likes/Hobbies: I love hiking, reading, writing, sitting around campfires, wildflowers, baking, and being in the mountains.

"Over the course of my summer with RMC-CC, I have not only learned a great deal about the field of conservation, but I have been given many life lessons. I have learned values of community and teamwork; I have come to appreciate beauty and wonder; and I have learned the importance of standing up for what you believe in and pursuing relentlessly what makes your heart sing."

"Being a part of the RMC-CC has made me appreciate not only the importance of conservation work, but has also made me realize the part I can play in ensuring that our wild and beautiful spaces are conserved for future enjoyment."



**Name: Will Fazio**

Hometown: Torrance California

School/Major (Area of Study): Natural Resource Management major, Geospatial Information Management minor.

Career Goals: Be able to work in a field related to NRM where my everyday actions have a positive impact on the world and people around me

Likes/Hobbies: Mountain biking, rock climbing, hiking, backpacking, snowboarding, working with my hands, exploring new things, Frisbee golf, golf, hockey, politics, environmental policy, and enjoying the outdoors.

“Never in my life have I had a summer what I got to learn as much, meet the incredible people I have, and share some many new experiences with new friends.”



**Name: Tatyana Mosley**

Hometown: Hammond, Indiana

School/Major (Area of Study): Psychology of Arts

Career Goals: Becoming a Therapist or Counselor

Likes/Hobbies: I like to draw, play Ukulele, bake, write, be active, and play video games

“Spending time here was way better than I expected. My knowledge of the natural and history of the area increased exponentially. The stewardship activities help build teamwork and allowed everyone to have a chance to be a leader in these groups. I know so much about historical sites, natural skills, and just plain skills you can use to survive in the wild. My knowledge of the conservation has grown as well... I plan to get more people involved with such activities because I found out that a lot of students aren’t aware of organizations such as this one.”



**Name: Adam Nguyen**

Hometown: Northglenn, Colorado

School/Major (Area of Study): Architecture and Architectural Engineering at University of Colorado - Boulder.

Career Goals: Be able to travel abroad to work with culturally different designs in buildings as well as be part of large construction projects is one of the goals that I am aiming for. I would like to focus mostly on LEED, to be part of the progress in becoming more environmentally friendly.

Likes/Hobbies: I like to listen and go to jazz festivals. In my free time, most of my time is used in painting, drawing or crafts. When I do get the chance to, I enjoy going fishing, hiking, and taking photographs. Other activities I have fun in are track and field as well as volleyball.

“The work that I have had the opportunity to accomplish, even though some of it was tedious, was all worth the time and effort because of the love and experience I had with the Park.”