

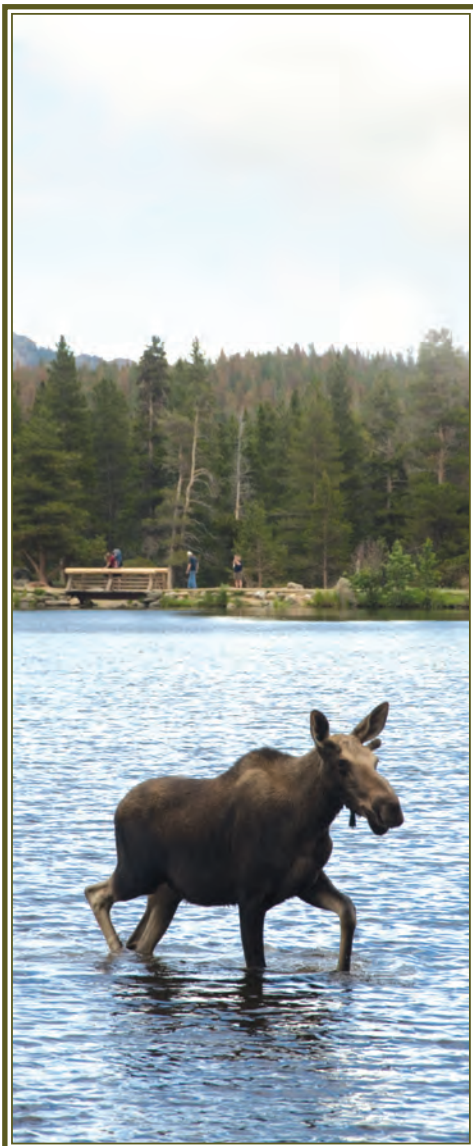


ROCKY MOUNTAIN NATURE ASSOCIATION

Autumn 2011

\$2.00

QUARTERLY



WALKING IT OFF

by C.W. Buchholtz

Years ago when I played college football I had a coach who didn't believe pain existed. When a player limped to the sidelines with an injury, all he would say is "walk it off" and turn his attention back to the game in progress. If a player kept limping, even after the game was over, his way of expressing sympathy was to give that player (me) the evil eye. Pain was for sissies.

Away I limped. It was not until I was dressing for practice the following Monday that an ex-Marine assistant coach noticed that my knee was badly swollen. "I think you're out of the lineup for this week's game," he muttered. I was out for the season.

As I finished an 11-mile walk the other day, I felt a familiar, now 46-year-old twinge in that once-truly-injured knee. Pain is for sissies, I reminded myself.

I'm pretty certain that most people feel twinges of pain on occasion. But after all these years (and literally thousands of miles of hiking), my old knee is doing pretty well and never had surgery. Maybe

those coaches were right. "Just walk it off," I grinned.

Walking in the mountains can be hard on the knees, but it's certainly good for the spirit. How often have I started a hike thinking about problems at work or burdened by worries about life in general, yet finished a hike feeling like my problems were put in proper perspective and my worries diminished? Yes, my knee may ache, but the headaches of life were well treated. Maybe "walking it off" in the wilderness should be a doctor's prescription for good health.

Someday I'd like to hire a scientist to study the positive impact of walking in the wilds of Rocky Mountain National Park. Does hiking make people happier? We assume people are more physically fit after such walks, but beyond the benefits of exercise, what is the psychological effect of a trek to Sky Pond? How does that experience impact one's spirit?

Perhaps a social scientist could study the variables between those who hike alone and those hiking in groups. Are there greater therapeutic benefits to be gained while chatting with friends amid magnificent scenery? Or do

(Walking, continued on page 2)



Photo: Jilite Klett

(Walking, continued)

hikers reap greater soul searching rewards as they ponder the peaks alone?

Rather than trouble scientists with such subjects as souls or spirit, I'd assign a journalist to this task. I envision journalists being loaded with questions (and producing lists of healthful reasons to saunter to the summit of Deer Mountain). I'd have a newspaper reporter standing at the trailhead as hikers emerge from the wilds, asking, "So, tell us what happened? Did you overcome some angst, perhaps some personal problems, heal business relationships, or work through some family issues? Tell us what you talked about? Did you confront any problems while gazing at Mills Lake? Do you feel better now? Are you mentally refreshed? (Or should you have just stayed home?) Was Rocky Mountain National Park the right place for what ails you?"

Most hikers will reply with "no comment," avoiding this intrusion into private matters. Instead, they will volunteer lots of details about the moose they saw grazing near Cub Lake, a marmot sitting near The Pool, or a bear seen anywhere (even if it was last year, in Idaho). They will dwell on the thunderstorm that caught them off guard, flowers blooming along the Ute Trail, or something as mundane (or amazing) as a sunset. Such anecdotes would fail to impress most journalists, to say nothing of scientists or accountants.

Trained as an historian, I'll speak for my former profession and suggest that historical researchers would delight in such tales, provided they

were pithy and quotable. How people use wilderness today is always worth comparing and contrasting with times past. For example, a hundred years ago people entering the wilds might say, "I came here to hunt elk. I hear they are delicious." The more romantically inclined visitors might have confessed, "I was born a generation too late. I missed the frontier experience. I came here to ride horses and recall the Old West." Historians, in contrast to reporters, must exercise their imaginations and even wait decades--actually until their subjects are dead--before they can tell us what those people thought as they communed with the wilds.

Facing this paucity of research, we may turn to specialists who focus on the human spirit, such as philosophers, psychologists and theologians. I'll let my readers decide which they'd prefer, since studying the impact of nature upon the modern mind is no trivial pursuit. And no fair quoting the likes of St. Francis, Rousseau, Teddy Roosevelt or John Denver. Those thinkers are history. Now it's our turn to reflect on the importance of wild lands in our lives.

Just for the historical record and for this hypothetical team of know-it-alls, I wish to record my own personal (perhaps flippant) observations about the impact of these Rocky Mountains upon the health of my spirit.

When I put on my backpack, my mind always does a double-check: Water. Check. Camera. Check. Snacks. Check. Raincoat. Check. Etcetera. Whether I know it or not, I am also carting along some baggage

not weighing on my shoulder straps, but rather on my mind. Problem #1. Check. Problem #2. Check. Problem #3. Check. Etcetera.

As I start tramping up the trail my mind is immediately engaged by the splendid scenery. Not long into this journey, a bothersome nag called thirst interrupts my meditations on nature. I drink some water. Check. The trail grows steep and my mind wanders to what's bothering me most--Problem #1. Check. I spot a coyote stalking a ground squirrel. So I grab my camera. Check. I wander along, now pondering Problem #2. Check. And so the miles pass. The food and water disappear and so, strangely enough, does the immediacy of those problems.

By the time the hike is over, I'm tired and rubbing my aging knee. Yet somehow I feel refreshed. Nature presents its invitation like that gruff old coach spouting some snarly advice, "Got a problem? Stop feeling sorry for yourself. Got some pain? No big deal. Sometimes life hurts. Want some help? Get to the mountains. Find a trail. Try walking it off."

The act of walking commands our attention. Problems will wait. Nature takes charge. As time passes, it sends weather our way. It entertains us with wildflowers or wildlife. The trail, whether smooth or rocky, warrants watching. In the end, the wonders of wilderness dominate—clearly more immediate, more significant to our thinking than any issue rolling around in the attics of our minds. The human spirit will mend as nature prevails.

Curt Buchholtz is the Executive Director of the Rocky Mountain Nature Association.

A CHANCE TO DOUBLE YOUR DONATION FOR THE ALBERTA FALLS - LAKE HAIYAHA TRAIL REHABILITATION PROJECT

Great news! The Gates Family Foundation has awarded the Rocky Mountain National Park Fund a generous \$60,000 challenge grant for the Alberta Falls - Lake Haiyaha Trail Project.

Our goal: to raise the remaining \$66,000 by June 1, 2012! If you have been considering donating to a trail project, this is a perfect opportunity to double your donation and help finish this 4-year trail project in 2012.

Contact RMNA Development Associate Julie Klett at julie.klett@rmna.org for more information, or to make a contribution. You can also make a donation at www.rmna.org or call 970-586-0108 x11.



Cover photo credits

Cover photos (clockwise from lower left to upper right): "Sprague Lake Moose," by Jim Ecklund, Omaha, NE; "Curious Hummingbird," by RMNA Member Dick Orleans, Estes Park, CO; "Bear Lake Autumn" by RMNA Member Cynthia McKee Brady, Oklahoma City, OK. Please send photos or high resolution scans to nancy.wilson@rmna.org by December 1 for publication in the 2012 Winter *Quarterly*.

Photos are always appreciated! Scenery, wildlife and wildflowers greatly enhance this publication so take a hike and carry your camera with you! Think simple and high contrast for best reproduction results. Thank you!

Ask Nancy

[RMNA Quarterly Editor Nancy Wilson will attempt to unearth answers to any questions asked by RMNA members and park visitors. If you are curious about something in or about the park, write: Nancy Wilson, RMNA, PO Box 3100, Estes Park, CO 80517. Or email her at nancy.wilson@rmna.org]

Elk get all the attention this time of year, but when is the moose rut?

The moose rut takes place about the same time as the elk rut in late September/early October. Only the elk have the spectacular rut display. Bull moose are polygamous and will mate with females dispersed in their territory. Bulls may grunt during the rut, and they may fight (sparring with their antlers) over the right to mate with a female. Gestation is about 8 months and female moose give birth, often to twins, in late May/early June.—*RMNP Interpretive Ranger Leanne Benton.*

What is the effect that sapsuckers are having on willow health, and how much damage to willows is caused by elk versus sapsuckers?

First, a little background. Rocky Mountain National Park biologists have known for about five years that park willows in some locations were doing poorly independent of the level of ungulate browsing. (Willows inside some research exclosures that were not being browsed also were doing poorly.) In particular, the tops of some previously tall, robust willows now appeared as clumps of dead sticks. Dr. David Cooper, a long-time park partner at Colorado State University, and a specialist in wetlands, also noted that the willows with the dead branches appeared to be affected by a fungus of the genus *Cytospora*. Observations of willows indicated that sapsuckers were tapping into the willow stems which could be one way the fungus was introduced to the willow. Both the fungus and the sapsuckers are native to the area, so the question became: has something changed in the environment that resulted in an outbreak of the fungus? Because the willow die-off seemed to occur during the turn of the century drought that affected the park (1999-2003), drought seemed like a possible link. That is, drought conditions might have made the willow less resistant to the fungus. Dr. Cooper's graduate student, Kristen Kaczynski, has been working to examine that hypothesis using a couple of different strategies. She will be providing a final report in 2012. Although it is fair to say that over-browsing by large concentrations of ungulates can cause more readily apparent damage to willows than sapsuckers do, a link between a warmer, drier climate and/or changes in riparian hydrology to willow health are causes for concern. If other factors besides ungulate browsing are interfering with willow recovery, hopefully our current and future research will help us to better understand these complex and interdependent systems. — *RMNP Resources Management Specialist Judy Visty.*

Each fall when I visit the Bear Lake area I notice more and more small dark blotches on the yellow leaves of the aspen. What causes these spots?

The most common leaf blight is Marssonina leaf blight caused by two fungus *Marssonina brunnea* or *Marssonina populi*, commonly referred to as black leaf spot. Symptoms intensify through the summer and progress upward into the crown as the season advances. From a distance the canopies of heavily infested stands can often have a bronze or brown hue. Disease incidence is closely associated with warm, wet conditions, but usually the fungus does not kill a tree. Another blight is called Inkspot which is characterized by dark raised blotches or shotholes. It is caused by the fungus *Ciborinia whetzelii*. Yet another canker is caused by the fungus *Mycosphaerella*. This fungus is commonly found on windbreak or planted aspen or cottonwood. Additional causes include *Melampsora* leaf rusts, a leaf miner insect and *Septoria* leaf spot. It's a vast list of possibilities, but black leaf spot is probably a good bet.—*RMNP Resources Management Specialist Jeff Connor.*

RESULTS OF THE RMNP SUMMER 2010 VISITOR STUDY

by Information
Office Manager
Katy Sykes

NPS Photos by
John Marino

Who comes to Rocky Mountain National Park? Why do they come here? A Visitor Study was conducted in the park July 18 – 24, 2010, by the University of Idaho Park Studies Unit, which also conducts Visitor Surveys for other National Park Service areas. Questionnaires were developed jointly between park and university staff, and approved, as government surveys must be, by the Office of Management and Budget. Of the 1099 questionnaires distributed, 755 were returned, representing a 69% response rate. The results of the survey were recently presented to park staff.



NPS Photo

Who are our park visitors?

Visitor groups

- 41% of visitor groups had two people
- 22% of visitor groups had five or more people
- The average group size was 3.6 people

Visitor group type (visitors not in tours or organized groups)

- 76% of visitors were here with family members
- 10% were here with friends

- 10% were here with family and friends
- 39% of the visitors were here for the first time
- 32% had visited here five or more times
- Visitors ranged from age one to 97 years
- 44% of visitors were 41 to 65 years old
- 20% were age 15 and younger
- 56% were female
- 95% were White
- 10% of the visitor groups had members with physical limitations
- 97% preferred English for reading
- 37% had graduate degrees, 34% had bachelor degrees

From where do park visitors come?

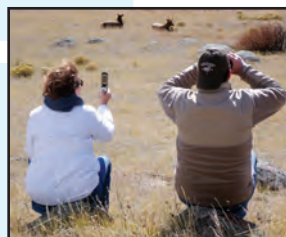
- 96% of the visitors were from the United States
- 40% were from Colorado and adjacent states (Nebraska, Arizona, Kansas, Oklahoma, Wyoming)
- 24% of the visitors were from Colorado
- The states with the most visitors after Colorado were Texas, Illinois, Missouri, Nebraska, Iowa, and Kansas
- 4% of the visitors were from 17 foreign countries: Germany, Denmark, Canada, China, Norway, Belgium, Saudi Arabia, United Kingdom, Ireland, Israel, Mexico, Austria, Brazil, Netherlands, France, Czech Republic and Russia

When they got here...

The average length of stay for visitors who spent less than 24 hours in the Rocky Mountain National Park area (within 20 miles of the park) was 6.7 hours. The average length of stay for visitors who spent 24 hours or more in the area was 5.2 days

- 64% stayed overnight outside the park;
- 36% stayed two or three nights, 33% stayed five or more nights
- 41% stayed four or more nights inside the park, mostly in campgrounds

84% used support services in nearby communities during their visit to the area. Of these, 98% were able to obtain the services they needed. Services needed and not met included meals at off-times, organic groceries, stores with electronic equipment, spotty cell phone service, and parking lots so crowded they couldn't park



Activities participated in included

- 93% viewing scenery
- 75% driving Trail Ridge Road
- 73% wildlife viewing/bird watching
- 57% day hiking



Sites visited included

- 71% Trail Ridge Road
- 60% Alpine Visitor Center
- 47% Bear Lake

In the park and surrounding area (within 20 miles of any park entrance point)

- 36% of visitors spent between \$1-\$200
- 23% spent \$1,001 or more
- Of these expenditures, 43% was for lodging, 14% for restaurants and bars, and 10% for all other purchases

The complete survey results include a wealth of information about park programs and services that park staff can utilize for strategic planning. To see the Executive Summary and detailed report, visit the University's website, www.psu.uidaho.edu/vsp.reports.htm

Visitors rated the quality of facilities, services and recreational opportunities at Rocky Mountain National Park during their visit as "very good" (58%) or "good" (37%). Less than 1% of visitors rated the quality of their experience as "very poor" to "poor."

RMNA Outreach Seminars: Making Community Connections

This was a wildly successful year for the RMNA Field Seminars Program. Participation more than doubled from last season, more than 123 custom and regularly scheduled classes were held, and nearly half of these courses were full with a wait list. The season is not yet over and we have already met our goal to increase participation and spread the word about how we support Rocky Mountain National Park through our top notch educational programming.

Most importantly, Rocky Mountain Field Seminars has reached out to the community and to Estes Park visitors with a host of free programs for youth, family and for culturally diverse organizations. It is our hope that these future leaders will make a lasting connection to Rocky Mountain National Park through a field seminar and bring that experience to bear within their

community for the good of the environment.

One of our most exciting and well-received classes offered this summer was *Campfire Ghost Stories: Living History Tales of the West*, held at the YMCA of the Rockies. The success of this program made it possible for us to forge a partnership with the Salvation Army High Peaks Camp to engage one of our living history characters from this program to present to nearly 200 kids from inner-city communities in the Denver area. The instructor, Jan Manning, wowed children as he portrayed Iron Thumb, a Colorado fur trapper in the mid 1800s, telling stories of bravery, survival, and everyday life in the mountains. His performance enabled kids to connect to the past while examining their future, how their lives are so different than what they would

have experienced 100 years ago and how much more different they will be many years from now.

Another fun offering this fall was a free library series highlighting geocaching and nature writing to draw in curious kids from the Estes Park area. These classes were offered through the Estes Park Library for preschool and elementary age children and their families. Other outreach programs scheduled by the Field Seminars Program have included Greeley library talks, Front Range Meet-Up presentations, science fair booths, and several classes given to school children from the surrounding communities.

Outreach education has been a great way to showcase the Field Seminars program while giving back to the folks that support the Rocky Mountain Nature Association. For more information about other outreach programs or any other Field Seminars course, call 970-586-3262, or visit our website at www.rmna.org and click on the seminars/calendar tab.



Rocky Mountain Nature Association Schedules Elk Expeditions with New Bus

by Charlotte Boney (Olson Fellow)

The Rocky Mountain Nature Association is pleased to announce the purchase of a 14-passenger bus for its Rocky Mountain Field Seminars program. The bus was acquired through the generous contributions of friends and donors of RMNA.

To kick off this new venture, the Field Seminars program is hosting Elk Expeditions in Rocky Mountain National Park Friday and Saturday evenings, September 16-October 22, from 5:30 p.m. – dusk (7:30 p.m.). These 2-hour excursions will be led by experienced naturalists who will explain elk ecology and behavior and be available to answer participant questions. Each session will depart from the Field Seminars Center at 1895 Fall River Rd.

This is the first of a series of Bus Adventures the Field Seminars program will be offering. The vehicle will be used in

conjunction with regularly scheduled seminars and other RMNA activities throughout the year.

Aaron Petrie of Unink Printworks of Estes Park generously contributed his abilities to create the design on the vehicle which now sports colorful decals of moose, bighorn sheep and local flora and fauna, as well as information about RMNA on its sides and back. The bus will enable Field Seminars participants to travel to various destinations throughout the park, as a group, and in comfort.

The Rocky Mountain Nature Association is the official nonprofit partner of Rocky Mountain National Park and other public lands. To register for the Elk Expeditions by Bus, or for more information on the Field Seminars program, call the Rocky Mountain Field Seminars Center at 970-586-3262, or visit the website at www.rmna.org.



RMNA Members
Never Cease to Amaze...

Gene Putney: Nature Photographer Extraordinaire

by Suzanne Silverthorn

It was a chance encounter. He was hiking in a remote area of Rocky Mountain National Park when he came across a

newborn elk lying on the ground. He kept a respectful distance and carefully observed the calf while watching for the mother. Then he slowly pulled out his gear and started collecting images of this amazing event. The calf, only hours old, suddenly stood up and started wobbling toward him. The mother was nowhere in sight. He circled around the newborn in an attempt to keep his distance, but by this time the calf was getting steadier as it was learning how to walk. The photographer then stood still as the calf came up to him and licked his hand. His immediate thought was, "Welcome to the world."

Gene Putney is a professional nature photographer. He lives in Longmont, Colorado, with Rocky Mountain National Park his backyard studio and the setting for many memorable stories. His images have been featured in RMNA publications, including the annual Field Seminars catalog and the *Quarterly* newsletter. He's been donating his talents and services to RMNA for more than 10 years, while his work is featured in galleries throughout Colorado and in a variety of national nature publications.

Gene's respect for nature and his knowledge of animal behavior are evident in all that he does. In relating the story about his elk encounter, Gene is quick to point out that he would have preferred to have been a bystander than to have made contact with the newborn. Keeping a respectful distance is paramount. "As long as we respect nature, it exists for us to enjoy, admire and learn from," he said.

By knowing his subjects, unique photography moments have occurred more frequently for Gene. He hikes to remote areas of the park to find wildlife in their natural and relaxed settings, free of roadside crowds. A long lens provides an additional comfort zone. "Here, in RMNP,

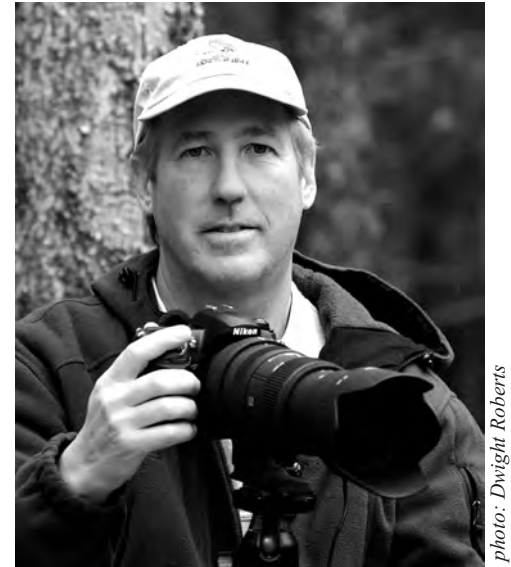


photo: Dwight Roberts

you can capture fantastic images of an animal one on one," he says. "They're calm, but they know you're there." His wife, Debbie, refers to him as the animal whisperer.

Gene considers it a privilege to observe and photograph the special moments nature provides. His favorites involve observing baby animals as they interact with one another. He also enjoys photographing large mammals, such as moose and smaller mammals, including the American pika, an endangered species. "They're the cutest little critters you could ever imagine," Gene commented. His favorite time of year for a photo shoot? Winter. During snowstorms in which the falling snow creates a magical backdrop for his wildlife subjects.

While Gene has captured thousands of rewarding wildlife and landscape images during his 16-year career, he never tires of heading out again and again to find the next great shot. It's not unusual for him to be out in the field for long hours, setting up before dawn and heading home after sunset.

Repetition is the key where nature and photography are concerned. "When you go out, there is no guarantee what you'll see," he said. "The more you're out there, the greater the chance of coming across that perfect moment." His advice for amateur nature photographers is similar: always bring your camera and be ready for that chance encounter.

Additional images from Gene's collection that are sold as fine art limited edition prints can be found at his website, www.putneynatureimages.com.



Autumn Member Hikes!

Join Membership Manager Curtis Carman for RMNA Member hikes in Rocky Mountain National Park throughout the year!

Outings explore a different site in the park each month and participants discuss current RMNA projects, park management issues and park natural history. This free hiking series is limited to 15 people per hike.

Fall Schedule

October 14 - Bierstadt Lake
 November 18 - MacGregor Falls
 December 16- Mills Lake

To sign up for a hike, call Curtis Carman at (970) 586-0108 or email him at curtis.carman@rmna.org.

Thanks From Membership Manager Curtis Carman



As Membership Manager, I would like to extend my personal thanks to Curt Buchholtz for his leadership and vision as Executive Director during the past 26 years. He has been a true friend of Rocky Mountain National Park and I wish him the best in his new ventures.

I would also like to extend my thanks to each of you for your unwavering support and continued commitment to the Rocky Mountain Nature Association in this time of transition. Your dedication to protecting public lands is unmatched. The future is bright for RMNA and I look forward to serving you and Rocky Mountain National Park in the future.

Park Puzzler

by RMNA Member Joel Kaplow

ACROSS

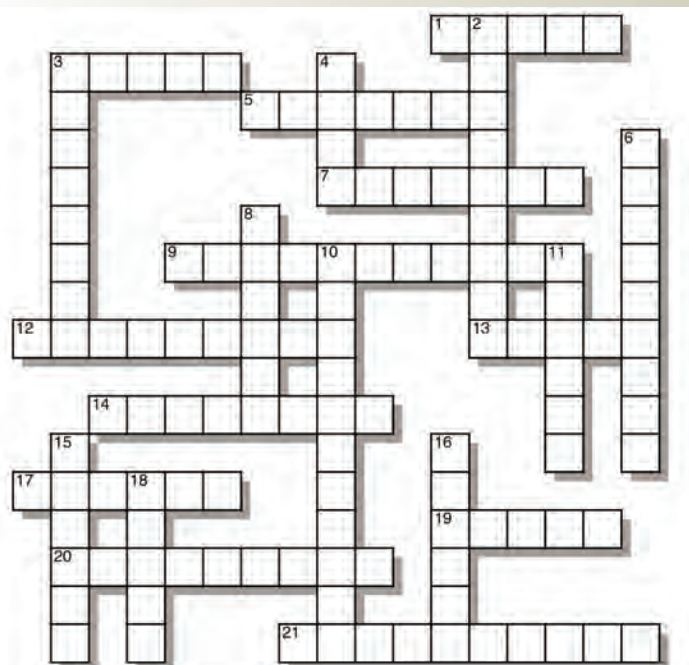
- North Inlet and East Inlet arise in RMNP west of the Divide and flow into ___ Lake, Colorado's largest natural body of water.
- The Park's only large mammal that can be found above treeline in the winter is the bighorn ___.
- What national forest borders RMNP to the southwest and west?
- These plants flourish all over the Park in a variety of shapes and colors, above and below treeline, living on rocks and logs. They are a collaboration of algae and fungi living symbiotically. What are they?
- Glaciers retreated up valleys in the Park area at the end of the ___ Epoch, about 13,000 years ago, leaving just a few remnants today.
- Name the falls in Wild Basin that is named for a plant genus that is named for the German botanist Franz Mertense. The genus includes bluebells and chiming bells.
- There is only one salamander that calls RMNP home; the ___ salamander.
- The ___ Visitor Center on Highway 7 was closed indefinitely in 2004 due to budgetary constraints. (2 wds.)
- Alpine tundra plants survive the harsh conditions by being short; there is less wind at ground level where it can be 30 degrees ___ than a little higher up.
- What national forest borders RMNP on the northwest?
- The USGS ___ Peak topo map reveals why this Park peak is called such; there are absolutely no roads appearing anywhere on the whole quadrangle!
- What's Curt Buchholtz's answer when folks ask him which historic preservation project he likes the most? (3 wds.)

DOWN

- What national forest borders RMNP on the north, east and southeast?
- The Toll Memorial is located off Trail Ridge Road just west of ___ Mountain's summit.
- If you're not sure you're looking at a bobcat or a lynx, just grab it and check out the tip if its ___. If it's black on top and light on the bottom, it's a bobcat. If it's black on both sides, you're holding a lynx!
- At last count it was confirmed that there were members of 139 different ___ species flitting about the Park, such as the Rocky Mountain blue and anise swallowtail.
- This is the only carnivore in the Park found on the tundra in winter. Its coat

turns white so it can "disappear" in the snow.

- Surprisingly, The ___, the sharp-looking spire jutting up south of Otis Peak, is actually flat on top.
- Though the Park has grown from 358.5 square miles in 1915 to its present 416 square miles, fractionally, RMNP is only one-___ the size of Yellowstone!
- The ideal size for the Park's elk herd in winter has been determined to be between 600 and 800. What is another name for "elk," which is a Shawnee term meaning "white rump"?
- This French word meaning "amphitheater" or "circus" is a glacial feature left from past ice ages that can be found in the RMNP's high country. What is it?
- These herbivores spread out after they were introduced in the North Park area in the late '70s, and are now full-time residents on both sides of RMNP. What are they?



Shop with RMNA This Holiday Season

and Support Rocky Mountain National Park and our Public Lands Partners!

Members receive a 15% discount. Our thanks to you!

RMNA profits support programs in RMNP!



Bugs!
Storybook * 10 Toys * Fun Facts
 When a bee wanders a little too far from the backyard, will it find its way back to the hive? Kids will love reading this fun story and learning all about spiders, grasshoppers, fireflies, and more along the way. A colorful board book, ten toys, fun facts, and interesting photographs make this book a

first-pick for kids who like bugs!, Sturdy, foam-lined pages and chunky toys make these perfect for hours of imaginative play! Board book, 8 pages. Reading level: Ages 4-8.

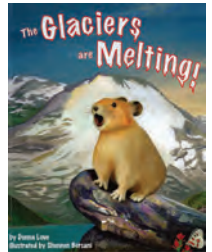
Item #8277.....Price:\$12.99 (RMNA Member price: \$11.04)

The Glaciers are Melting!

by Donna Love

Illustrated by Shennen Bersani

Peter Pika is sure the glaciers are melting and is off to talk to the Mountain Monarch about it. Joined along the way by friends Tammy Ptarmigan, Sally Squirrel, Mandy Marmot, and Harry Hare, they all wonder what will happen to them if the glaciers melt. When Wiley Wolverine tries to trick them, can the Mountain Monarch save them? This book is not only fun to read, it also includes six pages of fun learning activities to stimulate learning and ongoing discussion about the impact of climate change. Soft cover. 13 pp. Ages 4-10.



Item #8128.....Price:\$9.95

(RMNA Member price: \$8.46)

The Adventures of Two Raindrops Running Wild

by John Gunn

Illustrated by Ben Brown

RMNA's newest publication for kids, this charming book invites kids along on the adventures of two raindrops that land on the Continental Divide in Rocky Mountain National Park. Beautifully illustrated by Allenspark, Colo., artist Ben Brown, the full-color book takes the raindrops on a series of adventures as

they travel toward the Pacific and Atlantic oceans down the Colorado, Cache la Poudre, Platte, Missouri and Mississippi rivers. Softcover, 36 pp. Ages 3-12.

Item #7663.....\$9.95 (RMNA Member price: \$8.46)



An RMNA Publication!

Wild Republic Plush Elk with Real Sound!

Just squeeze this soft stuffed elk and it makes the haunting bugling call that a real elk makes in the wild during the autumn rut. Approx. 7" long.

Item #2203.....\$7.95

(RMNA Member price: \$6.78)



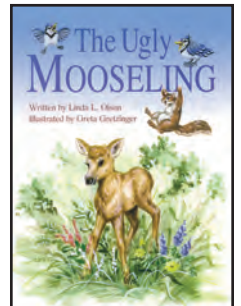
The Ugly Mooseling

by Linda Olson

Illustrated by Greta Gretzinger

This enchanting children's book, is a classic wildlife story. Willow is an unhappy moose calf. She feels clumsy and awkward, and other kids in the forest and meadows make fun of her. Her mother tells her to "wait and see." and assures her that everything will be okay. Willow doesn't believe her, but as winter approaches, something magical happens...! Hardcover, 32 pp. Ages 4-10.

Item #7767.....\$16.95 (RMNA Member price: \$14.41)

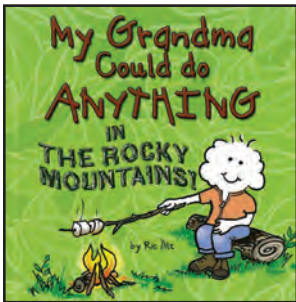


My Grandma Could Do Anything in the Rocky Mountains!

by Ric Dilz

The book is a delightful series of colorful illustrations which put Grandma in fun and unconventional situations in the great outdoors, from rock climbing, skiing black diamonds, to flying a helicopter and singing a campfire song, to name a few. A very warm sentiment ends this whimsical book. Softcover, 32 pp. Ages 2-7. Item #5917.....\$7.95

(RMNA Member price: \$6.76)



The Charley Harper Rocky Mountains Poster Jigsaw Puzzle

Design by Charley Harper

Charley Harper's whimsical paintings have delighted art and nature lovers for more than sixty years. Harper (1922-2007) developed his unique style while a student at the Art Academy of Cincinnati and the Art Students League in New York City. His distinctive use of simple geometric shapes, patterns, and vivid colors-a style he defined as "minimal realism"-succinctly captured the essence of each creature he portrayed. 1000 interlocking pieces, 20" x 29"

Item #8286.....\$17.95

(RMNA Member price: \$15.26)



America's National Parks, Monuments & Memorials Jigsaw Puzzle

This amazing puzzle features a collage of 45 different national parks, monuments and memorials with a free reference poster that will help you identify the sites It's sure to provide hours of entertainment while learning

about some of our nation's greatest treasures! 500 pieces 18" x 24"

Item #3954.....\$14.95 (RMNA Member price: \$12.71)





An RMNA Publication!

Wildlife Viewing Combo Pack

A great combination for casual and serious wildlife viewers alike and a perfect introduction to wildlife viewing for kids! Exquisite illustrations and expert information provided in this field guide by park wildlife specialists make this 40-page guide essential to wildlife watchers. Completed with a set of lightweight and packable 10x25 Magnacraft binoculars with its own carrying case, just right for a pocket or backpack.

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A collectors' item for anyone who has climbed this iconic peak or anyone who wants to! Boldly depicting the USGS summit marker front center, with Longs Peak running down the left sleeve on long sleeved T's only. Ash gray. Available in S, M, L, XL and 2XL. (Please indicate preferred size.)

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**Trains of Discovery:
Railroads and the Legacy of Our
National Parks 5th Edition**

by Alfred Runte

Thoroughly revised and expanded, this new edition now includes protected landscapes and historical sites east of the Mississippi made possible or influenced by railroads: the Hudson River Valley; Delaware Water Gap; Harpers Ferry; Indiana Dunes; Gettysburg; Steamtown; and the

Shenandoah, Great Smoky Mountains and Acadia National Parks. Illustrated with paintings, posters, photographs, and artifacts from major libraries and public archives, as well as America's railroads and the author's private collection, this book is a wonderful, nostalgic armchair read. Softcover, 176 pp.
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**Alpine Snowmelt
Fine Art Print**

by Jeffrey Svoboda

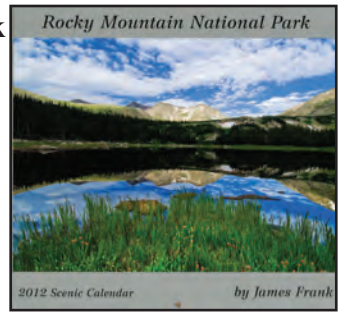
The Never Summer Mountains were so named by the Arapaho Indians because of the snowdrifts that usually linger through the summer. Spring snowmelt in the high country creates pools on the tundra, reflecting a colorful mountain sunrise. Image size: 4.75" x 5.75" Image with matt size: 14"x11"
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**Rocky Mountain National Park
2012 Scenic Calendar**

Twelve stunning scenic images of Rocky Mountain National Park in every season grace the months of the year by renowned local photographer James Frank. Each month will take your breath away.

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2012 Moose Calendar

by Willow Creek Press

Amazing photographs of an amazing animal featured on every page, every month. For those of you that can't get enough of moose - this one's for you!

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**Following Isabella
Travels in Colorado Then and Now**

by Robert Root

A world traveler, Isabella Bird recorded her 1873 visit to Colorado Territory in her classic travel narrative, A Lady's Life in the Rocky Mountains. This work inspired Robert Root's own discovery of Colorado's Front Range following his move from the flatlands of Michigan. In this elegantly written book, Root retraces Bird's three-month journey, seeking to understand what Colorado meant to her—and what it would come to mean for him. Softcover, 322 pp. Item #852.....\$19.95
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Tales of the Mountain Men

Edited by Lamar Underwood



The mountain men were the trappers of the Rocky Mountain fur trade in the years following Lewis and Clark's Expedition of 1804-1806. With their bold journeys they were the first white men to enter the vast wilderness reaches of the Rockies in search of beaver skins. They feasted on abundant buffalo, elk, and other game while living the ultimate free-spirited wilderness life—and they often paid the ultimate price for their ventures. *Tales of the Mountain Men* gathers our nation's finest mountain man writing into one riveting volume. Whether you're an adventure junkie or a history buff, you're going to love—and learn from—this amazing collection of long-forgotten lore. Softcover, 318 pp. Item #5150.....\$18.95
(RMNA Member price: \$16.11)



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www.rmna.org

Important Announcement from the RMNA Board President

Dear RMNA Members and Friends,

As a valued supporter of the Rocky Mountain Nature Association, and an important member of our team, the Board of Directors wants to keep you informed about a change of leadership here at the Rocky Mountain Nature Association. At the Annual Members' Picnic on July 30th, Executive Director Curt Buchholtz announced that he would be leaving the organization effective October 1, 2011. As you know, we have experienced many successes and completed many significant projects under Curt's skilled leadership. We are very grateful for his numerous valuable contributions and vision throughout the last 26 years and wish him well in his new ventures.

A Search Committee has been appointed and has begun the process of identifying which individual will lead our organization into the future. It will take some time to find the right fit for RMNA, and we don't anticipate making any announcement for several months. In the meantime, Dave Mohr, RMNA's General Manager from 2002 to 2008 has been appointed as Interim Executive Director effective October 2, 2011 and will serve in that position until the permanent Executive Director is hired. Watch for updates in our newsletter, The Quarterly, and on our website: www.rmna.org.

Curt is leaving RMNA in excellent shape and we are confident that, with your help, we will do more good things

for Rocky Mountain National Park in the future. Your involvement has been critical to our past successes, and we hope we can count on your continued friendship as we move into a new era.

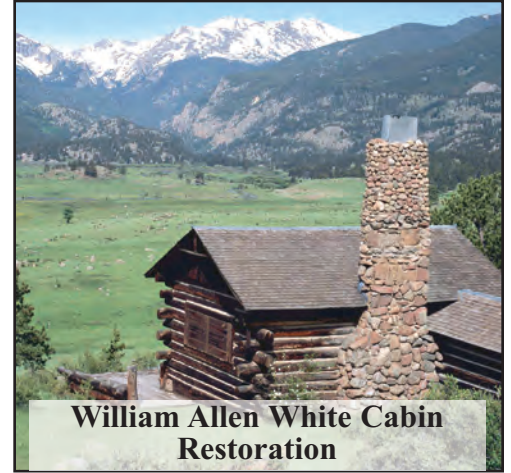
If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Board President Frank Kugeler (information below). Again, we thank you for your ongoing support of the Rocky Mountain Nature Association and Rocky Mountain National Park.

Respectfully,



Frank Kugeler, President
Board of Directors
F.Kugeler@me.com
303-722-3535

A Sampling of Project Highlights Under Curt's Tenure





For those of you who missed my announcement at the annual picnic in July, allow me to inform you that I will be leaving my position as the executive director of the Rocky Mountain Nature Association, effective October 1, 2011.

It has been an honor and a privilege to serve in this capacity since 1985. I hasten to express my sincere appreciation to you as a member or donor for your generosity, support, and dedication to the mission of the Rocky Mountain Nature Association.

Thank you for your help in informing and educating visitors to Rocky Mountain National Park and our allied public lands—as far afield as Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument and our national forests and state parks across Colorado and Wyoming.

Thank you for supporting our efforts to improve visitor centers, from our first project, the Kawuneeche Visitor Center (1989), to fixing up the Moraine Park Museum (1993), acquiring the Lily Lake Visitor Center (1993), and creating the Fall River Visitor Center (2000).

Thank you for helping purchase significant parcels of land, both within and near Rocky Mountain National Park. Almost annually we have campaigned successfully for dozens of properties ranging from the Jennings Tract (1985) to the most recent McGowan and Crane Trust tracts (2009), to preserve land for wildlife and public use.

Thank you for saving numerous historical structures, ranging from Shadow Mountain Lookout (1996) to the more recent Wigwam Tea Room and cabins (2007).

Thank you for creating special places where people using wheelchairs can enjoy the national park, from the Beaver Ponds Boardwalk (1985), to Coyote Valley

SPECIAL MESSAGE TO RMNA MEMBERS AND DONORS FROM CURT BUCHHOLTZ

(1994), around Lily Lake (1997), and, certainly the most popular, the trail around Bear Lake (2000).

Thank you for a myriad of park improvements most visitors will never notice, like the Park Greenhouse (1995), the Adams Falls Overlook (2001), a host of Automatic External Defibrillators (2006), and even a wheelchair accessible restroom at Lily Lake (2004)

Thank you for creating or fixing a handful of Rocky Mountain National Park's famous backcountry trails, starting with the pathway from Lily Lake to Storm Pass (2001), Mills to Black Lake (2002), Loch to Sky Pond (2006) and continuing today with the work on the Alberta Falls-Haiyaha project.

Thank you for helping create the American Conservation Corps (2003), one of the best programs for youth in the entire National Park System. Thanks for your support for the Next Generation Fund and helping grow its endowment toward its \$10 million goal. Thank you for making these programs financially sustainable long into the future.

As I leave the Rocky Mountain Nature Association, it pleases me to report that we have amazing and dedicated staff members, among the best and brightest, helping answer visitors' questions, offering outstanding Field Seminar programs, recruiting new members and donors, and ensuring that publications and products are the best in the National Park System.

I am proud to say that, as I leave, the Rocky Mountain Nature Association is financially healthy, with net assets and special endowments nearing \$9 million. Together, our donors, members and staff have completed projects in Rocky Mountain National Park and our nearby national forests and state parks valued in excess of \$20 million.

To add a personal note, my position with the Association has enabled me to become acquainted with a host of dedicated, public-spirited people all across America who I can honestly call my friends. Affection for our national parks and forests brought us together. A vision

to tackle tough projects strengthened our resolve and our partnerships. Together, over the years, we produced some positive changes in our parks and forests. Those days of friendship, stewardship and philanthropy will be our legacy.



Curt with former Board Members Bob Dern and Jim Nissen.



Curt teaching a seminar to ACC kids.



Curt with former RMNA staff members on a fall hike.

Thank you for your trust and support over the past 26 years. My best wishes to the Rocky Mountain Nature Association for its continued success.

Most sincerely,
Curt Buchholtz

The End of an Era RMNA Bids Farewell to Heidi Buchholtz After 21 Years!



Curt and Heidi playfully demonstrate Heidi's departure in July of this last summer.

It is with a collective heavy heart that we bid sayonara and best wishes to Heidi Buchholtz, administrative assistant (among other things), this summer.

Heidi began her career with RMNA in 1990 as the Forest Service coordinator and assistant accountant. At that time in the life of the organization, with only 5 permanent employees, the climate was one of "here are the needs, who can do

what?" Hence the variety of tasks that were assigned.

It will come as no surprise that this trend continued, as is common for almost every small nonprofit organization. In 1993, Heidi took on the title of assistant director of RMNA, a position which came to encompass general business and sales clerk management, fundraising, grant writing and budgeting.

It wasn't until 2003, after 13 years of service, that Heidi decided to work part time. She became the administrative assistant responsible for managing custodial funds as well as the point person for the entire database of the organization. She continued to be involved in accounting as well as fundraising efforts for the next 8 years.

Again, like most nonprofits, the countless "additional responsibilities" to which Heidi contributed would make a never-ending list. Suffice it to say that she was an integral part of special events, such as the annual Membership Picnic and donor and staff appreciation events, an invaluable organizational reference resource, and our resident quilt creator and donor.

"It has been an exciting twenty-one years as I've watched the Rocky Mountain Nature Association grow from an organization just spreading its wings into one that is nationally respected and even emulated," said Heidi, in retrospect. "The creativity, integrity, hard work and camaraderie shared with many special coworkers and agency associates over the years will be missed as I bid goodbye and begin a new adventure."

Heidi's new adventures have already begun with the investment in a new long-armed quilting machine which will enable her to offer her quilting services to others who are working by hand or with smaller sewing machines. For information about her quilting services or how to reach her, give us a call and we'll give you more information.

Thank you, Heidi, for your unflagging commitment to the Rocky Mountain Nature Association, and for the many talents and gifts you shared with us along the way. Skål to an amazing person and to a new era!

RMNP FUND PROJECTS UPDATE

Regardless of a tough winter, dumping piles more snow, the **American Conservation Corps** faced drifts as they opened trails in Rocky Mountain National Park and the adjacent Arapaho-Roosevelt National Forest.

In its ninth year, the Corps cleared miles of trail and helped our agency partners with natural resource preservation work. Several of the crew members stayed after the season to help on the Alberta Falls-Haiyaha Trail project before heading back to college. Next year we'll celebrate ten summers of this highly regarded youth program.

As we write this, work continues on the **Alberta Falls-Haiyaha project**. About seventy percent of this project focuses on the Haiyaha spur trail simply because of its rustic nature and informal origins. Work on the main trail had to wait until the heavy traffic of summer hikers waned. It is expected that work will continue into late October, weather permitting.

All of the **Next Generation Fund** programs for youth will be continued in 2012 and remains our highest fundraising priority. Next summer will be the push to complete the Alberta Falls-Lake Haiyaha Trail project. Lasting four summers, this particular trail project has taken the most time and energy because of its complexity—and also because we promised to keep the trail "natural," while ensuring that it's safer to travel.

Land acquisition and protection always requires us to be prepared for potential projects. At this writing, there are several possibilities for 2012, so the Land Protection Fund needs to be prepared. Similarly, the Legacy Endowment Fund supports the general purposes and work of the Rocky Mountain Nature Association for the future. We are now half way to our goal for a \$2 million endowment fund.



24 Hours to Give Where You Live...

Support RMNA on Colorado Gives Day, December 6!

Once again, on December 6, 2011, Colorado citizens will come together to raise millions of dollars for nonprofits like RMNA. Last year, the first event raised \$8.7 million for local charities, well over the hoped-for \$1 million. This will be RMNA's first year participating. Join us and other members in helping to raise at least \$5,000 (and maybe more!) for the Alberta Falls - Lake Haiyaha Trail Project in Rocky Mountain National Park.

Presented by Community First Foundation and FirstBank, Colorado Gives Day encourages everyone to learn about and give to local charities (may we humbly suggest RMNA?) through the website GivingFirst.org, an online giving resource that features participating nonprofits. On this website we'll share our goals, accomplishments and much more to keep you informed. It's another fun and easy way to support us and your favorite place—Rocky Mountain National Park.

Good things to know:

- ♥ 100% of your donation will come to RMNA when you give through GivingFirst.org.
- ♥ When you give online on December 6, the value of your donation will be boosted by the FirstBank Incentive Fund.
- ♥ As part of our ongoing Million Dollar Challenge, your gift will also be matched by a very generous donor! Every dollar given will be worth at least two!
- ♥ Help us win cash prizes! We have a chance to win \$1,000 Bonus Bucks and \$5,000 High Five cash prizes when you remember us on Colorado Gives Day.
- ♥ It's easy! We'll put a convenient link on our home page at www.rmna.org which will take you to the GivingFirst website to make a contribution.
- ♥ Away from your computer or out of town that day? No worries, you can set up a donation ahead of time to post on December 6.

Donate online at GivingFirst.org (the link to this site will be available at www.rmna.org by November 15) any time over the 24-hour period of December 6 to Give where you live!

Another Season of Hard Work, Learning and Comraderie for the American Conservation Corps

by Steve Coles, American Conservation Corps manager

In 2003, the American Conservation Corps was created to introduce financially challenged and other college-aged students to the wonders of Rocky Mountain National Park. A donation of \$50,000 from the Daniels Fund supported the first crew of seven students. Today, the Rocky Mountain Nature Association finances 4 crews totaling 24 young adults. Since 2003, RMNA has hired over 125 crew members and hopes to give many more young adults the opportunity to work hard and develop a connection to our beautiful public lands.

In May, as 2011's ACC season loomed, all was set for a successful ninth season of heavy-duty trail work, life-changing experiences, and career-building for twenty four competitively chosen college students. Despite this, trail work had to wait. The Estes Crew was called upon to help dig out the Alpine Visitor Center so that it could finally open one week late. Because of the snowpack, the Rawah Crew couldn't reach its alpine assignments for five weeks and had to work low, supporting the Red Feather Crew. And the Shadow Mountain Crews' Forest

"I never gave the history of our land too much thought, but if those in the past had not respected the land, we wouldn't be having these incredible experiences. It is so important to pay attention to our lands and to do what we can to protect them so future generations can come to enjoy what we have today and what was here hundreds of years ago." Christine Bauer



The Estes Crew began its season by digging Alpine Visitor Center out of many feet of snow, enabling the center to open only one week late.

Service training included something new – chain saw certification to enable the crew to remove hazard trees that would otherwise have required trail closures.



The 2011 American Conservation Corps crews. Not all was fun and games this summer, that's for sure - these kids worked HARD!

"In all, my summer with the American Conservation Corps has been a summer I will never forget. I learned more than I could have ever imagined. This summer pushed my boundaries and called me to reflect on many parts of my life. I am already looking forward to my next trip to the Rawah Wilderness as it is a place that will always hold wonderful memories for me." Anna Murray



The Red Feather crew sets posts on the new Molly Moon trail.

Each of these occurrences was a first for the ACC, but by the end of June, each of these problems was a distant memory, thanks to these resilient, adaptable kids and our dedicated public lands partners. All scheduled trail work was completed. Not even the largest wildfire in New Mexico history could dampen the enthusiasm of the Bandelier Conservation Corps' 10 high school students for their trail building experience on Rocky's Alberta-Haiyaha trail restoration project. Rawah's trip to Aspen helped replace worn boardwalks with new accessible trail surfaces and Shadow Mountain's detail to Grand Mesa

created four miles of new trail. All twenty-four made the trek up Longs Peak, one group slept on the summit, arriving by four AM.

Work completed by the four crews in 2011 was impressive! The four crews inspected, repaired, or built 124 miles of hiking trails, 212 drains, 1007 water bars, 168 rock check dams, and 3 rock cairns. They removed 1,101 trees using cross cut and chain saws. Crews removed invasive plants such as Musk Thistle, limbed trees, restored campsites, and rerouted 1.57 miles of trail. 900 feet of deteriorated boardwalk was replaced with handicap-accessible trail surface.



Work continued with the Bandelier Conservation Corps in Bandelier National Monument, NM.

BCC worked with the Estes Park crew to install drains, clean rock checks, build water bars, and rehab the Alberta Falls unimproved trail. The Estes Park crew also spent time at Bandelier National Monument working to create and repair check dams, log checks and water bars. The Rawah Crew worked on

"The lessons I will take away from my summer internship are numerous and valuable. From leadership to stewardship the opportunity stimulated growth in areas of my life that would have otherwise lain dormant. The positive experience that I had in the wilderness this summer will be reflected heavily in the decisions that I make for the rest of my life." "Honcho" Wilkerson

special assignment in the White River National Forest in Ashcroft Ghost Town deconstructing deteriorated pedestrian walkways. The Shadow Mountain Crew built four miles of new trail while assigned to Grand Mesa in the Grand Valley District of Gunnison – Uncompagne National Forest.

It's hard to believe it's over...until next year!



The Rocky Mountain National Park Fund

expresses special thanks to the following people for their donations to RMNP projects:

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In Honor of Curt Buchholtz

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 Susan Storm, Kansas City, MO
 The Childre's Mercy Hospital,
 Kansas City, MO
 Linda Lee Thompson, Sioux City, IA
 Sharon Vanleave, Weatherby Lake, MO
 Shelby, Erik & Sam Vogetley, Oak Ridge, TN
 Myra and Richard Winans, Kansas City, MO
 Paula and Richard Yates, Parkville, MO
 Sandi Zellmer, Lincoln, NE
 Christine Zellmer-Zant, Bronson, IA
 Amanda McClenny, Chesterfield, MO
 (from GNH Services)
 Julie Seifried, Dardenne Prairie, MO
 (from the Granger Crew—Aaron, Dave,
 Derek, Mary, Nick & Julie)
 Trudy Dragovich, Kansas City, MO
 (from the NKC Arkema
 Coating Resins Group)
 Rodney Henery, Dakota Dunes, SD:
In Memory of His Friend

All in Memory of
Mary Ann O'Donnell Griffin
 Sarah Bole, Brighton, CO
 Mrs. Bryant O'Donnell, Denver, CO
 Cathy Ramey, Centennial, CO
 Cletus and Elizabeth Byrne, Denver, CO

**ALBERTA FALLS-LAKE
 HAIYAHA TRAIL PROJECT**

Dr. Jerome Sutherland, Denver, CO
 Judith Case, Alpena, MI:
**In Honor of the Marriage of Lindsay
 Springer & Griffin Colegrove**
 David Chambers, Estes Park, CO
 Robert and Ellen Dern, Fort Collins, CO

John and Dolores Dolan, Mahwah, NJ
 Harvey Gardiner, Niwot, CO
 Beverly Henderson, Estes Park, CO
 Richard E. Hoffman, M.D., Denver, CO:
**In Honor the Work & Leadership
 of Curt Buchholtz**
 Robert and Billie Ives, Jr., Houston, TX
 James and Tricia Medlock, Fort Collins, CO
 Kurt and Alexis Preston, Gladstone, MO
 State Trails Program, Littleton, CO
 Michelle and Scott Shonbeck, Bellaire, TX
 Matthew and Barb Teply, Cedar Rapids, IA
 James and Christine Glenski,
 Shawnee Mission, KS:
In Memory of John A. Morgan
 William and Evelyn Compton,
 Clarkson, NE:
**In Memory of Their Daughter
 Pamela Joy Compton**
 Tami Boday, Fort Collins, CO:
In Memory of Grandma Grace McQueen
 Karen Scheid, Cheyenne, WY:
In Memory of Vera and A.T. Pedigo

LAND PROTECTION FUND

Julie Guzzetta, Arvada, CO
 Irene Healy, Albuquerque, NM
 Robert & Marilyn Krisinger,
 Pleasant Hill, IA
 Susan Ward, Asheville, NC:
A Gift to Chris Anderson
 Nancy Wilson & Dean Martinson,
 Estes Park, CO

LEGACY ENDOWMENT FUND

Jean Rodeck, Woodland Park, CO:
In Memory of Ted Stuart

**SPECIAL PROJECTS &
 SUPPORT**

Annual Membership Picnic
 Ben & Jerry's, South Burlington, VT

Search and Rescue
 Carol Stewart, Crawfordville, IN:
In Honor of Jess Osmussen
 Carol Stewart, Crawfordville, IN:
In Honor of Andy Anderson
 Carol Stewart, Crawfordville, IN:
In Honor of Craig Brouwer

Field Seminars Bus
 Sarah and Richard Amos, Minneapolis, MN
 Richard and Janet Coe, Estes Park, CO
 Paul and Rosemary Eide, Ft Collins, CO
 Gary and Kathleen Falk, Estes Park, CO
 Helga Gaffron, Longmont, CO
 Maxine E. Johnson, Denver, CO

**Grand Ditch Breach
 Restoration
 Environmental Impact
 Statement —
 Fall 2011 Update**



by *RMNP Ecologist Paul McLaughlin*

Rocky Mountain National Park is continuing work to develop the Grand Ditch Breach Restoration Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The purpose of this project is to restore the hydrological processes, ecological services, and wilderness character of the Upper Kawuneeche Valley impacted by the 2003 Grand Ditch Breach. We have developed and analyzed a set of draft alternatives to accomplish these project purposes.

We anticipate that the draft EIS will be completed and ready for public comment in early 2012. We invite you to attend our public meetings, review the EIS, and provide your comments and suggestions.

For regular updates on the process, public meeting announcements, maps to public meeting locations, copies of newsletters, and planning documents, please visit <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/romo>. If you would like to be added to our notification mailing list, send an email to Scott_Esser@nps.gov.

Project Background

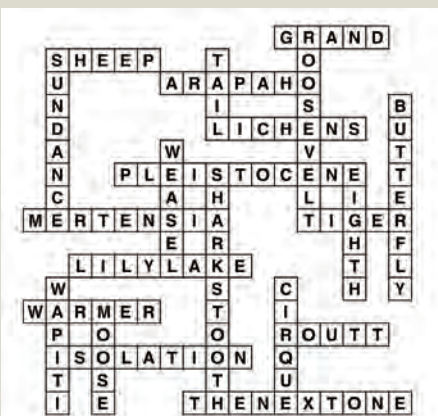
On May 30, 2003, the Grand Ditch, a trans-basin, water diversion canal constructed in the late 1800s and early 1900s and located in the northwest corner of Rocky Mountain National Park, breached its bank. The breach saturated an adjacent hillslope which gave way, creating a debris flow that sent an estimated 47,600 cubic yards of mud, rocks, and trees cascading down into Lulu Creek and the headwaters of the Colorado River. The damaged areas include upland, stream, riparian, and wetland habitats within an approximate 22-acre area, 1.5 miles in length.

In 2006, the U.S. Department of Justice, on behalf of the National Park Service, filed a civil lawsuit against the Water Storage and Supply Company, owners of the Grand Ditch, under the authority of the Park Systems Resource Protection Act which provides for the payment of compensation by private parties for damages to park resources. A settlement was reached in 2008.

Since the 2008 settlement, the National Park Service, Colorado State University and other cooperating researchers have conducted additional assessment work to refine our understanding of the area's current vegetation, subsurface geology, and hydrology, with the latter including stream flows, sediment transport, surface water – groundwater interactions, and groundwater elevations. These processes are being compared with those of nearby reference areas to better understand the desired future conditions for the impacted area.

High flows in the breach impacted area in 2009, 2010 and particularly in 2011 have redistributed the debris from the 2003 breach downstream adding complexity to the restoration project.

PARK PUZZLE ANSWERS





A Great blue heron observed on the Colorado River in the Kawuneechee Valley in early August.

*Photo by RMNA Members
Helen Anderson and Roger Walton*



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Nature Association Notes...

Following multiple days of low clouds and almost constant misting rain, the clouds have lifted to reveal the first powdered sugar dusting of snow on the high peaks of the Continental Divide.....Wyoming ground squirrels have hibernated and neotropical birds that breed in the park have left for their wintering grounds down south leaving the forests in the park bereft of their joyful song....Former Northern Bureau Chief for Channel 9 in Denver **Roger Wolfe** was the RMNP Artist-in-Residence the first two weeks of September this year. He was out hiking at Cub Lake where he saw four moose, a cow, twin calves and a young bull, along the shoreline and in the water, munching lily pads. Suddenly, the bull startled at something and bolted into the water. The other moose followed suit, splashing most impressively and swimming down to the west end of the lake.....Park Interpreter **Leanne Benton** was returning from Elk Bugle Corps one evening when she and her volunteer crew encountered three coyote teenagers chasing insects in the roadway near the 3M Curve (the name given to the wayside exhibit interpreting the mountains, meadows and moraines) on Trail Ridge Road. Amazingly, they were completely focused on the insects and oblivious to the large looming park vehicle.....as a park ranger, Leanne has a plethora of opportunities to observe wildlife, but the most interesting thing Leanne had seen recently was a badger madly digging a hole right next to the road near her home in Estes Park. It was the middle of the day, and the badger was digging furiously, with dirt flying between its hind legs. It would then jump and change direction, digging the hole from another angle. It spotted her at one point and shimmied backward into its hole with just its face looking out at her until a passing car scared it into a nearby culvert....the White-lined sphinx moths (a.k.a. Hummingbird moths) have been out in the evening lately - they seem especially fond of foraging in petunias and were even spotted hovering near bright lights during a misty rainstorm.....Resources Management Specialist **Judy Visty** was delighted by the sight of a tundra landscape covered in Dryas pods that look like cotton balls across the ground. The name originates from Dryads, female Greek tree nymphs, specifically of oak trees. The alpine variety of this flower has leaves that are somewhat oak leaf-like, hence the



RMNA and RMNP Volunteers Cheryl Wagner and Stan Wehrli were alerted by the sounds of a wildlife ruckus to a backyard feud between two bobcats that were duking it out at their home in Estes Park in early June. One of the cats was chased up a big tree by the other, hissing and snarling at each other while the larger of the two prevented the other from descending from the pine tree. A thunder-storm was brewing,

and the cat in the tree was nervously gripping the branches that were swaying in the winds. Finally, the lower one gave up, but the treed bobcat stayed put for quite a while before making its way to the ground. Later in the day, one of the bobcats came back and enjoyed a Wyoming ground squirrel snack under the same tree, perhaps to commemorate the event.

name. These flowers occur throughout the world in alpine areas, connecting Rocky to arctic areas around the northern hemisphere.....RMNA Member **Renate Fernandez** reported a mystifying sign at the south end of Lily Lake in early August - Raptor Warning: Aggressive Raptor on Trail. According to Resources Management Specialist **Jeff Connor**, in early summer there was a pair of hawks that were nesting along a trail near there. Raptors are extremely protective of their young and the sign was warranted at the time but was probably overlooked when other nesting signs were removed.....Jeff also noted that when arriving in Estes Park one morning he watched a black bear cross the road near the Donut shop and the Giant Slide, heading towards main street. Sad to say, the future looks grim for this dumpster diving bear.....An Estes Park vacationer returned to his rental cabin to find a bear rifling through his refrigerator. As reported in the *Denver Post*, according to the man, the bear had climbed in through a window, and when it was confronted, became aggressive. The man felt threatened and shot the bear 3 or 4 times in self-defense.....**Jeff Connor** observed a variety of raptors, including Swanson's hawks, merlin, Northern harrier, peregrine falcon and red-tailed hawks, migrating south through Forest Canyon in mid-August. On another exceptional day he observed about 20 raptors an hour passing through the park, including (besides the ones noted above), kestrel, prairie falcons, osprey, golden and bald eagles and the three accipiters. He wanted to note that this is not common on Trail Ridge Road, but if one has the time to sit and watch at Forest Canyon Overlook, Rock Cut or Gorge Range Overlook, there's a good chance of seeing something pass by (besides tourists!).....Jeff also spotted beaver sign in the Fan Lake enclosure last week. This is a first he's aware of since the 31-acre enclosure was built to protect the willows in 2007. Jeff is amazed how quickly the landscape is changing within these enclosures. The songbirds are loving it!.....Happy trails to **Curt** and **Heidi Buchholtz**, and to General Manager **Alan Fraundorf**, who is also leaving RMNA. It's a new era for this Cooperating Association and we're taking a collective deep breath.... CRD Systems Specialist **Debbie Mason** reported that moosejams near the Kawuneechee Visitor Center had become a near daily occurrence this summer. A mama moose and her twins were hanging around near the visitor center, and, for a few hours, causing a fair amount of hoopla with the avid human fans inside. The twin calves looked like calves-of-the-year and browsed between the parking lot, the visitor center and the park offices. Sometimes the twins would lie down for a quick rest, and a couple of times Debbie observed one trying to nurse only to be "grunted off"...a definite perk of working on the western "wild" side of the park....Estes Park resident **Louise Smith** startled on the trail near Lily Mountain when a two plus-foot garter snake that was sunning itself on the trail slithered out of her way in mid-September.....Experience an elk expedition this autumn with RMNA on the new bus — it's a hassle-free way to view elk in the park during this beautiful time of year!



Bryce Lloyd, RMNP Landscape Architect, took this picture of a wolf spider with an egg sac in July on the Huffer Hill trail above the Alpine Visitor Center. The spider is about 3/4" long. Once the young spiderlings emerge from the sac, they will climb onto the mother's abdomen and ride around with her until they are partially grown.