

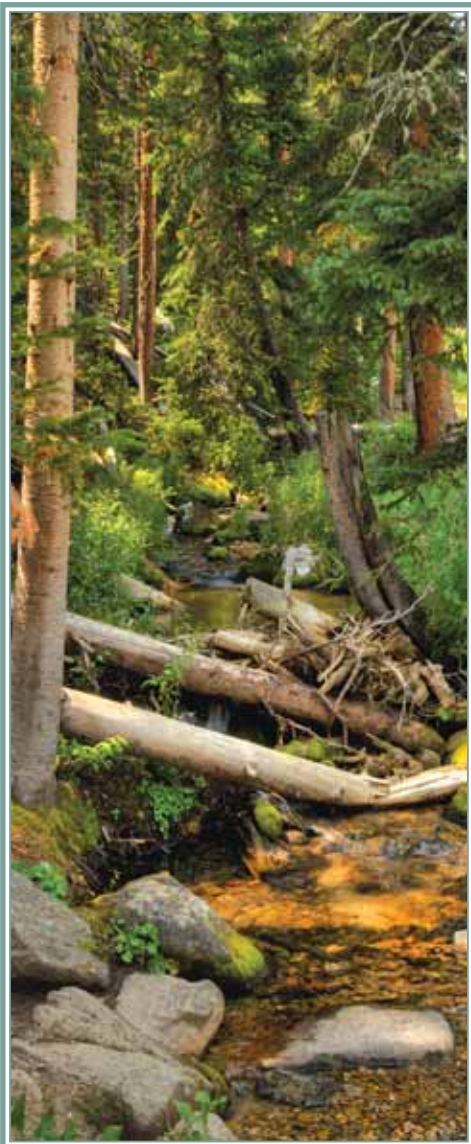


## ROCKY MOUNTAIN NATURE ASSOCIATION

*Summer 2013*

*\$4.00*

# QUARTERLY



### LONGS PEAK SUMMIT SUNRISE

by Glenn Randall

Summits are magical places. Reaching the summit of a high peak gives me the exhilarating, humbling and awe-inspiring experience of being a tiny speck on top of the world. To me, mountaineering is a metaphor for the human condition. It embodies in concrete form the way we reach for the sky, yet can only climb so high. In the spring of 2006, I began working on a series of images I hoped would capture these complex emotions. Most photographs I'd seen that were taken on summits were, to be frank, rather boring. How could that be, I thought, when the emotional experience of reaching the summit is so enthralling? Then I thought about when those photos were taken: at noon, in midsummer, when the sun is as high in the sky as it will be the entire year. Most summit photos taken at that time of day show distant, hazy peaks almost lost in the white glare of the midday sun. In an attempt to give my images an impact that matched my emotional experience, I decided to start shooting sunrise from the summits of Colorado's 14,000-foot peaks.

I started with Mt. Elbert in the

spring of 2006. Then, in August I photographed sunrise from the summit of Longs Peak using a heavy, bulky 4x5 field camera. The experience taught me (again) the folly of a 136-pound guy carrying a 75-pound pack. It also taught me that August is not the ideal time of year. With no snow left on the peaks, the blue-gray shadowed rock of one mountain blends in almost perfectly with the blue-gray rock of the next, so there's very little separation of tones. It's like the peaks are wearing camouflage.

A better time to shoot, I decided, was early June, when the lingering remnants of the winter snowpack would define the gullies and ridges of the dramatic peaks to the west of Longs. As photogenic as I expected it to be, the snow introduced a new problem: finding my way up the snow-covered Class 3 rock of the Keyhole Route in the dark. In August, the entire route had been a frolic up dry rock; in early June, it would be a different climb entirely. A ranger at the Longs Peak Ranger Station who'd climbed the peak just a few days before told me he'd put on his crampons at the Keyhole, where the scrambling begins, and wore them all the way to the summit.

The climb itself posed a significant challenge; the weather complicated

*(Summit Sunrise, continued on page 2)*



*(Summit Sunrise, continued)*

matters still further. Powerful storms and high winds frequently rake Longs Peak in early June. I had switched to digital camera gear in 2008, which lightened my pack considerably, but it still wasn't feasible for me to blitz the peak in a day from Boulder. I decided to camp in the Boulderfield, a rocky valley at 12,600 feet that is far above timberline on a notoriously windy mountain. I'd already had one tent destroyed by wind in the middle of the night in the Boulderfield many years before, and I wasn't eager to repeat the experience.

I packed for an overnight shoot and started watching the weather carefully. On Friday evening, June 4, the forecast for the following two days called for partly cloudy skies with winds gusting to 22 mph – breezy, but hardly tent-threatening. On Saturday morning I started driving to the

Longs Peak Ranger Station. As I topped the hill just east of Allenspark, powerful gusts began buffeting my 4Runner. Swirling plumes of sand snaked across the road ahead. At the ranger station I got an updated forecast. A glance told the tale: gusts to 65 mph were now forecast for 13,000 feet. Berating myself for not checking the forecast one last time before leaving home, I drove back to Boulder to wait.

The next opportunity came just 24 hours later, with gusts to 30 mph predicted for Sunday and Sunday night, climbing to 46 mph Monday afternoon – unpleasant but survivable.

After five hours of strenuous, windy hiking, I reached the Boulderfield and camped. The twin alarms inside my ski hat sounded their clarion call at 12:30 am. In less than an hour, I was climbing toward the summit. I lost the route briefly just

past the Keyhole, then found it again. Fortunately, there had been enough traffic on the route that I could follow tracks in the snow in many places. Before the trip, I had been intimidated by the short but steep granite dihedral at the top of the Trough that leads to the beginning of the Narrows. It had been years since I'd climbed rock in crampons. But as so often happens, the fears that beset me when I'm lying awake at midnight proved to be exaggerated. My front points gripped securely on the small but solid holds, and the dihedral turned out to be easy.

As I began traversing the Narrows at about 4 am, a flash of light glinted off my glasses. Lightning!?! At this ungodly hour? And where was it? To the west, where storms usually arise? I turned and scanned the western horizon. No dark

*(Summit Sunrise, continued on page 5 )*



*Long distance views from the top of Longs Peak*

ANNOUNCING THE ANNUAL

ROCKY MOUNTAIN NATURE ASSOCIATION

# Membership Picnic

*Join Us in the Park!***August 3, 2013****11:00 AM to 2:00 PM****at Glacier Basin Campground in RMNP!****Members \$15.00; Guests \$20.00****Kids 6-12 \$5; Kids 5 and under free!**

11:00 - 12:00 Meet, greet and shop

12:00 - 12:45 Picnic BBQ lunch

12:45 - 2:00 Program

Catch up with old friends and meet new ones amidst the stunning scenery of Rocky Mountain National Park! On musical tap this year are the *Stanleytones* performing original songs as well as bluegrass favorites in the original Ralph Stanley style. Enjoy free nature walks offered by RMNA Field Seminar instructors, and get ready for this year's live auction! The RMNA store will be on-site and open for business with a 20% discount for RMNA Members.

**Please Note: This amazing opportunity to hold the RMNA picnic in the park will require some unique shuttling logistics for attendees.**

Shuttle service into the park campground will be available from the Estes Park Fairgrounds beginning at 10:30 a.m. To offset our costs, **please bring your park pass if you have one!**

*(More important details on page15)*

**~ RSVP by July 26 if you plan to attend ~**

Make your reservation by calling 970-586-0108, or by visiting our website at [www.rmna.org](http://www.rmna.org)

**Advance payment required!**

*If you need to cancel your reservation, please let us know.*

*We hope to see you there!*

## Cover photo credits

*Cover photos (clockwise from lower left to upper right):*

“Hidden Valley Creek,” by RMNA Member Walt Kaesler, Estes Park, CO; “Portrait of a Local Resident,” by RMNA Member Gary Quay, Ocala, FL; “Big Meadows Burnout” courtesy of the NPS. Please send photos or high resolution scans to [nancy.wilson@rmna.org](mailto:nancy.wilson@rmna.org) by September 1 for publication in the 2013 Autumn *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](mailto:nancy.wilson@rmna.org) ]*

**Where do chorus frogs go when the ponds dry up?** Adult and sub-adult frogs can travel well on terrestrial landscapes and find other water sources if their breeding ponds dry up. Unfortunately for developing frogs and toads, if a pond dries up before individuals metamorphose and leave the water they desiccate and die. We documented this event at a boreal toad breeding site in 2012. Six egg masses were deposited with good hatching and many thousands of tadpoles; however, with our early runoff the pond dried up before the summer monsoon rains could refill it and approximately 10,000 tadpoles were lost. From our boreal toad monitoring program we know that this type of event is unusual but it certainly does happen in drought years.— *RMNP Biologist Mary Kay Watry*

**What are the variables that go into the park's decisions about fishing in park lakes?** In general, RMNP fishing regulations mirror those of the State of Colorado unless there is a specific reason for changing them. This reduces confusion across the park boundary as many visitors don't clearly recognize changing jurisdictions. Regulations are often based on the species present. For instance, the greenback cutthroat trout is a federally listed threatened species and is catch-and-release only. Greenback cutthroat are found in Lily and Dream lakes, among others. Brook trout are non-native to the park and therefore can be caught and kept at the quantities and sizes listed in the park fishing brochure. In some areas there are temporary or permanent closures. Temporary closures protect fish during their sensitive spawning time period, or, in the case of permanent closures, protect populations that are significant as broodstock sources for cutthroat reintroduction throughout Colorado. Lake Nanita is the best example of a broodstock lake. *Special note:* To protect Rocky's fish and other aquatic species from deadly diseases, pathogens and invasive species, we strongly encourage anglers to follow disinfection guidelines before fishing in the park or moving between waters. See the fishing page on the park website for specific information and to download the fishing brochure, [www.nps.gov/romo/planyourvisit/fishing.htm](http://www.nps.gov/romo/planyourvisit/fishing.htm). — *RMNP Biologist Mary Kay Watry*

**How are Bettie Willard's historic plots on the alpine tundra being used or preserved?** Bettie Willard's alpine tundra plots are held in high esteem by both the scientific community and the National Park Service due to their (and Dr. Willard's) contribution to the science of alpine plant ecology. While the plots are not currently being used for data collection, they have been placed on the National Register of Historic Places and in the park research plot location database to preserve their location, protect them from damage, and make them available for future follow up research projects. — *RMNP Ecologist Paul McLaughlin*

**Does the park have exclusive rights to the water run-off from the park? Are there any water rights issues the park deals with?**

RMNP does not have exclusive rights to the water run-off from the park. The park follows the same western water law as other water users in the state of Colorado. Typically referred to as “first in time, first in right” western water law essentially gives priority for use of water to the entity that first put it to beneficial use. This may mean that “park water” is reserved for someone 30 miles downstream. Fortunately, RMNP sits at the top of the watershed with few in-park diversions, therefore, our plants and wildlife benefit from use of the water as it flows through the park. Most of the parks water rights are called “reserved water rights” and date back to the formation of the park in 1915. — *RMNP Biologist Mary Kay Watry*

## High Country Science: Winds of Change Bring Nitrogen into the Park



(Field crew installing temperature probes in The Loch, June, 2012. Photo: Jared Heath)

by Mary Ann Franke

If your family has been going to the same physician for years, you know that during an exam your doctor is more likely to notice if something doesn't seem right. Monitoring the condition of a national park is something like that; long-term records are of utmost value in detecting a problem.

As a research ecologist who's been taking the pulse of Rocky Mountain National Park for three decades, Dr. Jill Baron of the U.S.

Geological Survey in Fort Collins knows that some of the trends she's seeing are part of changes occurring on a global scale. The increased nitrogen found in the park's soil, plants and waters comes from fossil

fuel combustion, oil and gas production and agriculture, especially the use of synthetic fertilizers and animal feedlots.

While the sources of extra nitrogen are regional, trends in the park mirror those seen wherever transportation, industrial activity and agriculture increase the nitrogen present in ecosystems. Deposition rates in the park are higher east of the Continental Divide, which forms a natural barrier for

pollutants transported by upslope winds along the Front Range and beyond.

Atmospheric nitrogen deposition effects are especially severe at high elevations where vegetation adapted to short growing seasons and low-nitrogen conditions cannot absorb all of what falls from the sky. The excess nitrogen leaches into the soil and is washed into park lakes and streams. Up to a point, nitrogen fertilizes plants, soil microbes and lake algae, but the amount being

deposited in the park is more than enough to alter its ecology.

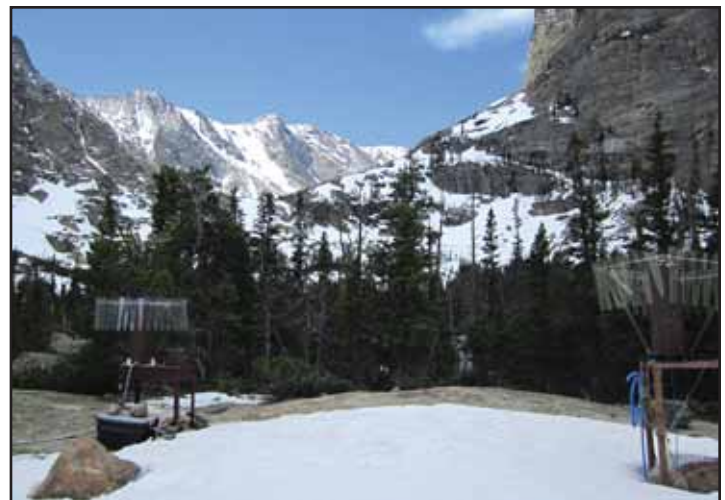
While Baron began a research and monitoring program in the Loch Vale watershed in 1981 to look for evidence of acid rain in Rocky Mountain National Park, she actually found stronger evidence of nitrogen fertilization, especially in alpine lakes.

Alpine lakes in the park are

famous for their clear waters because low nutrient levels keep the abundance of algae low. In the mid-twentieth century, however, algal assemblages became dominated by two previously rare species that thrive in nitrogen-rich water. While the

waters are still clear, these algae have replaced species that are more nutritious for zooplankton, the tiny animals that support trout. Reconstructions of a timeline and ecological changes from a 12-foot sediment core extracted from one lake indicated that the algal populations changed at a much faster rate in the mid-20th century than at any time since algae colonized the lake after the last glaciation 14,000 years ago.

This evidence, as well as other studies in the park showing the effect of elevated nitrogen levels, helped convince the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment and the Environmental Protection Agency to collaborate with the National Park Service on a nitrogen deposition reduction plan for the Front Range. When the plan was launched in 2007,



The Loch Vale rain gages in May, 2012

Photo: Jared Heath)

the estimated annual rate of wet nitrogen deposition on the east side of the park was about 3 kilograms per hectare per year. The agencies agreed on a goal of reducing it by 2032 to 1.5 kilograms per hectare per year, the estimated rate during the 1950s when nitrogen deposition began causing ecological changes in the park. To the extent possible, the goal is to be achieved through voluntary emission reductions and regulatory programs that were already underway in 2007.

But what if those winds from the east aren't the only source of excess nitrogen? While the deposition rate at Loch Vale remained roughly constant after 1991, nitrate concentrations in streams increased 50% from 1999 to 2006. Where was all that nitrogen coming from? Baron hypothesizes that the ice in glaciers and rock glaciers (angular boulders held together by ice), have been melting at a faster rate because of warmer summers and falls.

The nitrogen stored in glaciers and soil may be released when the glaciers melt or microbes may be stimulated to produce and release more nitrogen.

"While our 1991 to 2006 records are not definitive of climate change," Baron notes, "they exemplify what will happen as high elevations become warmer."

The role of climate will also complicate efforts to measure the success of efforts to reduce atmospheric deposition. It would be difficult to assess the effectiveness of an exercise regime to control your weight if you start eating more. But at least Dr. Baron and her team from the Colorado State University Natural Resource



(Jared Heath and Jill Baron collecting precipitation for chemical analysis in July, 2012. Photo: Sofia Jaramillo)

Ecology Laboratory will continue to collect the data needed to make an accurate diagnosis of the problem.

For the last 17 summers, Mary Ann Franke has been an NPS writer-editor at Yellowstone National Park. This winter through April she served as a volunteer at the McGraw Ranch Research Center.

### *(Summit Sunrise, continued)*

clouds were visible against the stars, and I heard no thunder. I continued upward, nervously. Several more flashes sparked more fear, but still I heard no thunder. I summited at 4:30 am and for the first time was able to look east. An enormous thunderhead over the plains was spitting cloud-to-ground lightning. I shed my crampons, set up the tripod and grabbed a few 20-second exposures of the dark cloud silhouetted against the dawn glow. Then I walked over to the extreme southwestern corner of the summit plateau. This was the image I'd really come for: a 200-degree panorama of the Continental Divide, from the Indian Peaks to the south to the Mummy Range to the north. Like Humboldt Peak, Longs Peak sits just east of the main crest of its range, making it an ideal vantage point for a big panorama.

As I knew it would be, the wind was screaming up the western flank of Longs and blasting over the edge of the summit plateau. I set up atop a precarious granite rib projecting out over the void in the full strength of the wind. On the hike to the Boulderfield, I'd cursed the weight of my

big carbon-fiber Gitzo tripod, Arca-Swiss B1 ballhead and Really Right Stuff pano-head. Now I was thankful I'd brought such a rock-solid combination. Although murky skies to the east blocked any colorful light at the moment of sunrise, I was blessed with interesting cirrus clouds to the west. When the sun found a thin spot in the clouds a few minutes after sunrise, the soft, warm beam put texturing light on the peaks north and south of Longs' shadow without generating excessive contrast.

After shooting five panorama sequences I headed down, reminding myself that tripping over my crampons could easily be a fatal mistake. Two hours later, I reached my campsite and was relieved to find my tent still standing. After some freeze-dried eggs and a quick siesta, I packed up and



Randall "at home" in the Boulderfield of Longs Peak.

headed home, eager to escape the Boulderfield before the wind began gusting even harder. Longs Peak had tolerated my presence only grudgingly, and I didn't want to try its patience.

You can see more of Glenn Randall's work, sign up for his monthly newsletter, read his blog and learn about upcoming workshops at his website, [www.glennrandall.com](http://www.glennrandall.com).

# ROCKY MOUNTAIN FIELD SEMINARS

## YOUR GATEWAY TO EDUCATIONAL ADVENTURES IN THE PARK!

Enhancing and complementing visitors' experiences of the park, the Rocky Mountain Nature Association Field Seminars program offers quality educational opportunities for everyone!

### Field Seminars Offers Lodging in Partnership with Historic Baldpate Inn

Efforts to expand RMNA's reach into the local community have taken the form of a vibrant partnership between the Baldpate Inn and the Field Seminars program through the packaging of rooms with field classes offered through RMNA.

The Baldpate Inn currently offers four distinctive packages in conjunction with the Field Seminars program which include meals, a room and a *Journey to the Top* bus tour, plant and wildflower identification class, Lily Lake geocache, or Twin Sisters/Long's Peak guided hike.



Each package is individually crafted to the participants needs and can be custom tailored depending on date and size of group. More information on these packages can be found by visiting the Baldpate Inn's website at [www.baldpateinn.com](http://www.baldpateinn.com).



### New Transportation Option for Field Seminars

members. A total of seventy vehicle tours have been scheduled for the summer and fall including Elk Expeditions, Grand Lake Safari and Journey to the Top adventures.

The addition of a new seminar van now provides transportation for many of the field classes that previously relied on carpooling. This 12-passenger van can accommodate smaller seminar groups or custom classes including *Trail Ridge Road tours* and will be used as often as possible to limit the need for extra vehicles. This 2012 van was made possible through the generous donations of RMNA friends and board



### New Seminars for 2013

**Plant & Wildflower Identification with a Naturalist** - Longtime RMNA instructor Kevin Cook will be leading half-day plant and wildflower classes each week on Wednesdays starting June 26 through the middle of August. Each class will focus on a different flower family and provide participants with easy identification tips and valuable information about each plant.

**Longs Peak Up-close** on September 7 will be led by esteemed author and former mountaineer Walt Borneman. This class will explore the varied and dramatic history of Long's Peak explorers, climbers and admirers while focusing on the unique flora and fauna of the area as participants hike part-way up this majestic mountain peak.

### Exclusive Field Seminars T-shirts



Available only at the Field Seminars Center!

These 100% cotton t-shirts proudly feature the handsome Field Seminars program logo. Choose from blue or khaki.

RMNA Member Price: \$14.75  
All proceeds support the Field Seminars Program.

Get yours while supplies last!

# SUMMER MEMBER HIKES IN THE PARK

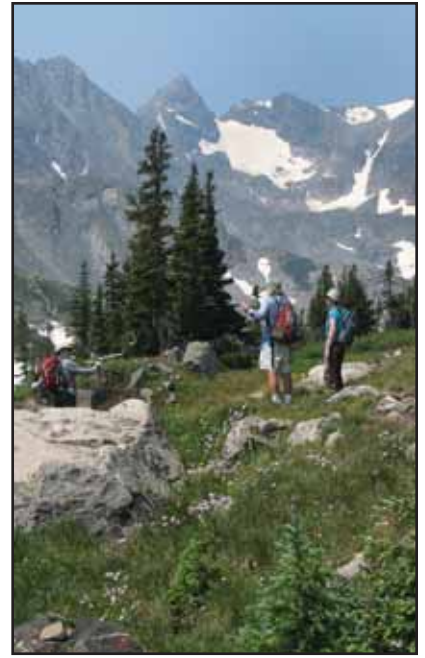
Remember that sweet smell of the mountain air as you step onto the trail in the high country? Remember the deep, cool shadows of the trees in the morning, and the intense colors of the paintbrush, columbine and golden banner? All these things and much more await your discovery. Come hiking with us.

*Join Membership Manager Curtis Carman, and special park guests, for monthly hikes in Rocky Mountain National Park throughout the year!*

This free hiking series was designed to give RMNA Members the opportunity to hike to various sites in Rocky Mountain National Park with a group of like-minded individuals while learning more about RMNA, RMNP, and each other. Limited to 15 people per hike, outings explore a different area in Rocky Mountain National Park each month. Come with your questions about current RMNA projects, park management issues and natural history stories.

**Call Curtis Carman at (970) 586-0108. Or, email him at [curtis.carman@rmna.org](mailto:curtis.carman@rmna.org)**

*Summer Schedule:*      **July 19- Lake Isabelle (Indian Peaks)**  
    **August 30- Fern Falls**  
    **September 27- Elk Rut viewing**



*Indian Peaks Wilderness in all its glory.*

## Park Puzzler by RMNA Member Joel Kaplow

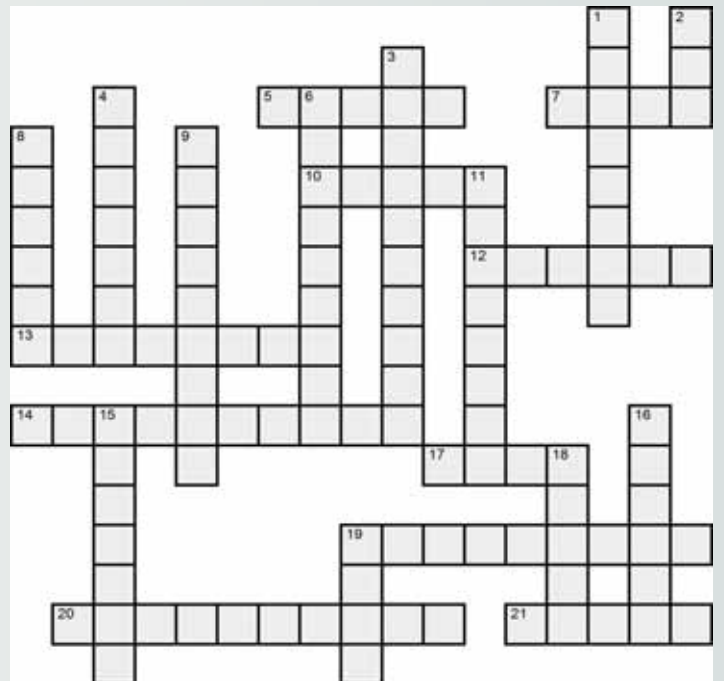
### ACROSS

- 5 It seems there is a "Green Mountain" on every map, and RMNP's map is no exception. The park's Green Mountain lies about two miles north of the town of \_\_\_ Lake.
- 7 Visitors need to beware of a wily RMNP denizen, *Perisoreus canadensis*. It has no conscience, and will devour anything it can grasp with its claws. So, when picnicking in the park, watch out for the gray jay, aka \_\_\_ robber!
- 10 \_\_\_ Mountain, named by Enos Mills, sits next to his beloved Longs Peak, while \_\_\_ Pass is located 1-1/2 miles west of his old cabin. (Similiar answer for both blanks)
- 12 \_\_\_ Peaks and the adjacent \_\_\_ Peaks Pass, are found on RMNP's northern border near Pingree Park. (Same answer for both blanks)
- 13 19-Across was commissioned to paint his famous "Estes Park" by the Fourth Earl of \_\_\_, for whom a mountain in the Mummy Range is named.
- 14 Last year, 102,000 hours were selflessly donated to RMNP in all manner of ways by 1,670 of these much-appreciated folks who received no paycheck.
- 17 Although there are hundreds of species of ticks, the park is home to only one; *Dermacentor andersoni*, more commonly known as the Rocky Mountain \_\_\_ tick.
- 19 German-born landscape artist Albert \_\_\_ completed his 5x8-foot "Estes Park" oil on canvas in 1877, which now hangs on the seventh floor of the Denver Art Museum.
- 20 Though fish may enjoy beaver ponds, the "eager" dam engineers aren't interested in eating them, as these rodents go strictly for plants. \_\_\_, such as beavers, don't consume other critters.
- 21 Rocky Mountain National Park would not exist as we know it today had Enos Mills not been allergic to \_\_\_. This is what prompted him to leave his Kansas home at age 14 and go westward.

### DOWN

- 1 In addition to global warming, air pollution in the form of forest fire ash, dirt from dust storms, etc., can speed the melting process of snowfields and \_\_\_, as the dark particles deposited on their white surfaces absorb and retain heat from the sun.
- 2 Oddly, a baby beaver can correctly be called a kitten or a \_\_\_. Who knew?
- 3 Sprinkled throughout the park are little "islands" of private property. These tracts, or \_\_\_, predate the park, and families have owned them for generations.
- 4 Enos Mill climbed Longs Peak 297 times in his life, mostly as a professional guide. How old was he when he made his first ascent?
- 6 RMNP's Artist-in-\_\_\_ program allows creative people to live in the park for two weeks, and in return they give two lectures and donate a work inspired by their stay.
- 8 The "Cloud Peaks" of the Never Summer Range, Mounts Cirrus, Cumulus, Nimbus and Stratus, are not quite in a continuous string, as somehow \_\_\_ Mountain snuck in there.
- 9 RMNP's moose, elk, bears, bighorn sheep and deer are relatively sizable, and are

- categorized as \_\_\_, which means "large animals."
- 11 \_\_\_ Creek in the Never Summer Range is named for a pesky flying parasite that can spoil an outing if you forget your insect spray!
- 15 Although rabbits and hares are similar in appearance, they are very distant cousins. A baby rabbit is born blind and helpless, but a hare can hop away from its mother only one hour after birth. What is the term for a hare's precocious offspring?
- 16 Elk usually like to munch on aspen bark and willows, but in the summer you can also find them sampling the \_\_\_ high above treeline.
- 18 Perhaps the longest flat hike you can take in the park is along the dirt service road paralleling the Grand \_\_\_. Although it appears as an ugly scar when viewed from the east, it is quite aesthetic when trod upon, and affords views of the Kawuneeche Valley below.
- 19 Beavers can chew through a whole tree trunk to fell it, but the part they prefer for dinner is the cambium layer, which lies just under the \_\_\_ of the tree.





# The Next Generation Fund ~ For the Generations to Come...

Nature provides experiences and teaches lessons that are impossible to learn in classrooms or on computers. Reading about stream ecology is one thing, but exploring a wild creek, watching live trout, hearing trilling birds, smelling the wildflowers, and trapping and examining “creepy crawlies” first-hand sparks a child’s innate sense of wonder and curiosity in a unique and gripping way. These experiences can have a life-long impact on lifestyle, career choices and even voting.

The future of our national parks lies in our young people. Their education and attachment will help ensure that valuable lands are protected in perpetuity for the benefit of all. Public lands stewardship is a task we’ve all inherited, but protection and preservation of these valuable and beloved places will only happen if we make a strong commitment to conservation education today. And through the Next Generation Fund, this is possible.

Since 1931, the Rocky Mountain Nature Association has supported Rocky Mountain National Park’s educational programs. Each year, with your help, we make sizable contributions (more than \$500,000 on average) to park initiatives

for young people, such as the beloved Junior Ranger program, special publications and exhibits, and environmental education.

RMNA also has its own youth-oriented programs. Since 2003, the American Conservation Corps program has helped to construct and repair miles of trails, remove thousands of hazard trees, and more, while exploring careers in resource management. The Rocky Mountain Field Seminars program provides a wide variety of childrens’ and family classes. In addition, RMNA also supports numerous research fellowships and work-related internships designed to enhance education and guide career paths.

These programs are administered in partnership with the National Park Service, augmenting dozens of excellent interpretive presentations of the park’s ranger-naturalists. But, for the foreseeable future, for a variety reasons, including shrinking school budgets, education for children and young adults will be limited both by lack of funds and by limited outreach to youth. Often, because of families’ lack of funds,

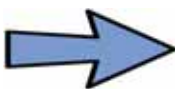
Often, because of families’ lack of funds, transportation or time, school excursions are the *only* way some children will be able to experience their park.

transportation or time, school excursions are the *only* way some children will be able to experience their park. It is hard to believe, and accept, that there are children living within just a few miles of Rocky Mountain National Park who have never visited it!

Perhaps the best reason to support education and natural places can be found in the book by Richard Louv, *Last Child in the Woods*. He argues that children today live in an increasingly urbanized and technology-based environment, filled with virtual reality, and spend less and less time in the natural world. The consequence is that they suffer a fundamental disconnect with nature which causes proven negative emotional, physical and mental health impacts.

Besides the negative impact to children’s health and well-being, what if future generations decide that national parks are no longer relevant, and not worthy of protection? Let’s not wait to see that happen! It is up to us to protect the future of stewardship by educating coming generations. Just as previous generations left us a legacy of protected lands, we have a responsibility to leave a legacy of education about those lands.

Find out more about Next Generation programs!





Largely funded by private donors like you, the Next Generation Fund has an annual cost of more than \$500,000 each year. Through seven educational programs, youth have the opportunity to participate in hands-on learning experiences that will help teach them the importance of public lands and environmental stewardship. Programs include:

## Junior Ranger:

Created in 1993, this ever-popular program allows children and their families to explore, experience and create a personal connection with national parks. In 2010, the program launched its headquarters at Hidden Valley, helping it serve nearly 20,000 children annually.



## Internships & Fellowships:

These programs allow up to fifteen students annually to prepare for environmental sciences and public service careers and to provide valuable scientific and historical research to the park.

## Environmental Education:

RMNP's award-winning, curriculum-based educational program serves over 10,400 pre-K-12 students annually in class outings and off-site outreach visits to classrooms and group gatherings. It also helps area teachers meet content standards for math, science and language arts.



Photo: Kimberly Anne Mauritz



## Publications:

Creating publications for children that help connect them to the park is a priority of this fund. In 2008, the Rocky Mountain Nature Association, in conjunction with the national park, developed an exciting new format and design for the Junior Ranger activity book, reaching a broader audience, including Spanish-speaking kids. Other titles include *The Adventures of Two Raindrops Running Wild*, *Bob Flame*, *Rocky Mountain Ranger* reprint and the upcoming book *Cimarron the Bighorn Sheep*.

## Field Seminars:

Started in 1962, Rocky Mountain Field Seminars provide hands-on learning experiences with recognized professionals in diverse environmental fields. In 2012, Rocky Mountain Field Seminars served 2,672 youth and adult participants.

## Exhibits & Facilities:

Since 1987, RMNA has invested over \$1-million to design, install, and maintain hands-on exhibits for children at the park. Exhibits and visitor centers deliver educational content and messages.

## American Conservation Corps:

The Corps cultivates conservation and stewardship values in 24 college student participants through a seasonal service learning work program conducted in Rocky Mountain National Park and adjoining National Forests.

Help us make a lifelong impact on the kids visiting the park this summer. Make a gift to the Next Generation Fund. We can't do it without you!

# ROCKY MOUNTAIN NATIONAL PARK EXPLORES MULTIUSE TRAIL POSSIBILITIES

RMNP completed a Multiuse Trail Feasibility Study in 2009, for the developed eastern portion of the park. This study confirmed the feasibility of a trail system that would extend approximately 15.5 miles from the Fall River Entrance to Sprague Lake, with potential connections to three visitor centers, three campgrounds, and numerous hiker shuttle stops. The National Park Service is continuing the planning process with the development of a Multiuse Trail Plan, which will examine the possible options for the multiuse trail alignments and analyze potential environmental impacts.

The purpose of this plan is to: develop alternatives for a multiuse trail system to connect with trails that are being developed in the Estes Valley; to reduce traffic congestion; and to evaluate multimodal options (including connections to the shuttle system) along the developed corridor of roads on the east side of the park. The trail, if constructed, would be located outside designated wilderness. Multiuse in a national park setting is defined as non-motorized, self-propelled transportation, which may include bicycle, foot, baby stroller, roller blade, snowshoe, and/or cross-country skiing.

## Why create a multiuse trail?

The park serves as a destination both for the population local to Colorado's Front Range as well as for visitors travelling from afar. The majority of Colorado residents regularly participate in walking, running, hiking, bicycling, horseback riding and other trail-based activities. Bicycling is a popular recreational activity for both residents and visitors in Colorado. The creation and maintenance of trail infrastructure is considered a top priority



on the Front Range of Colorado, and Colorado residents report that recreational trails are integral to their quality of life. Outdoor recreation is increasingly popular across the country, and current recreation planning emphasizes recreational activities that are healthy, safe and accessible to a diverse population. Therefore, the project is needed at this time to meet the projected increase in demand for access to recreational opportunities within the park. Bicycling, both road biking and mountain biking, is growing in popularity. Currently, bicycles are only permitted on paved and unpaved roadways within the park; bicycles are not permitted on trails within the park. Therefore, the project is needed at this time to better accommodate bicycles as part of an overall increase in multimodal access to the park.

The park currently experiences heavily concentrated use at popular activity areas and trailheads resulting in congestion at parking areas, heavy traffic to popular destinations and natural resource impacts. This congestion stems from the fact that, although many visitors choose to take advantage of the park's shuttle system, many visitors prefer to use their private vehicles as the primary method of travel within the park. Therefore, the project is needed at this time to provide additional alternative methods of transportation to access the park and for travel within the park.

## What does the park hope to accomplish with this plan?

Objectives for the proposed action include:

- Connecting to other recreational opportunities in the area such as campgrounds and other multiuse trails managed by the Town of Estes Park and the Estes Valley Recreation and Park District
- Expanding recreational opportunities for self-propelled transportation
- Providing an alternate means of transportation within the park's developed east side

- Providing connections to the park's shuttle bus system
- Reducing vehicular congestion
- Providing for temporal and spatial dispersal of visitors
- Providing for new visitor experiences within the park
- Minimizing adverse impacts on existing visitors
- Minimizing conflicts among visitors
- Providing a safe multiuse trail system

## Preliminary Options for the Multiuse Trail Alignment

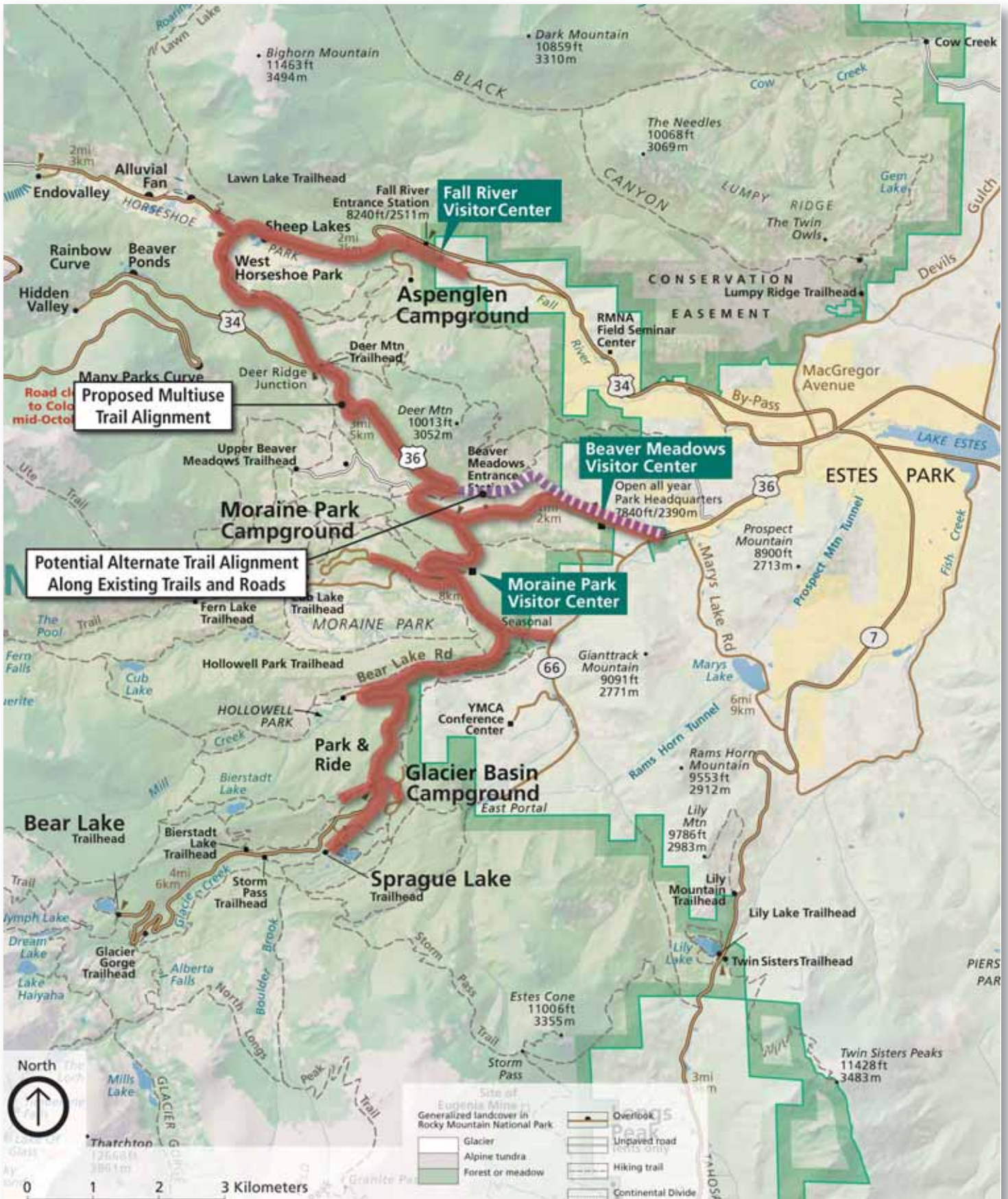
The 2009 feasibility study identified approximately 15.5 miles of potential trails that would generally follow the existing park roads. The trail may be attached to existing roads, may be separated slightly, or may extend away from the road. In addition to the alignment proposed in the feasibility study, the park is considering aligning the trail along High Drive instead of the heavily used Highway 36.

## Trail configuration options

Examples of potential configurations that could be used in different sections of the proposed multiuse trail, depending upon opportunities and constraints along the trail have been suggested in the 2009 feasibility study. In areas where the slopes are relatively gentle and there is room, a detached trail may follow the road alignment but be separated from the road. In other cases where conditions are not as favorable, the multiuse trail may need to be attached to the road. The recent realignment of 1 mile of Bear Lake Road provides an opportunity to use the abandoned section of road for a multiuse trail segment with a good deal of separation from the road.

A public scoping meeting was held on February 19, 2013, from where information was provided about the current status of this effort, with park staff available to answer questions. The public was invited to join the meeting to review materials and provide comments. The park invited public comments regarding potential issues and concerns that should be considered during the planning process. Comments were due by March 21, 2013. The park is using a contractor to help analyze the public response and will have more information about the outcome available this summer.

# Conceptual Map of Proposed Multiuse Alignment Corridor





# 2012 RMNA FINANCIAL HEALTH

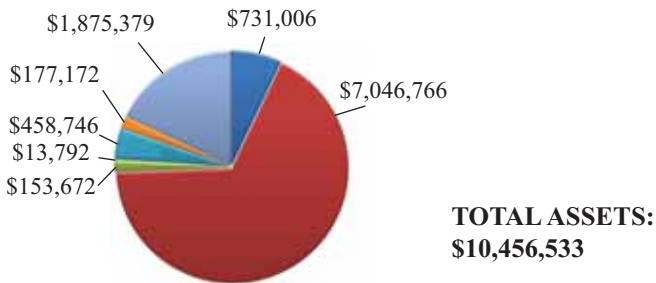
I am pleased to report to you on the continued strength of the Rocky Mountain Nature Association's financial status. As you are aware, our ability to support Rocky Mountain National Park and our other public land partners is largely predicated on how well we manage our financial assets. Healthy, productive endowments to sustain ongoing programs and maintain the improvements we've made; adequate cash reserves to see us through disruptions in our income streams; diversification of revenue sources; and a conservative approach to managing operational expenses, all contribute to an effective organization.

The charts below illustrate these principles with which RMNA functions, safeguarding your investment and belief in the organization and the future of the lands we support. Thank you for continuing to embrace the Rocky Mountain Nature Association as your way to ensure that our public land heritage is preserved and enjoyed.

*Charles H. Henry*  
Executive Director

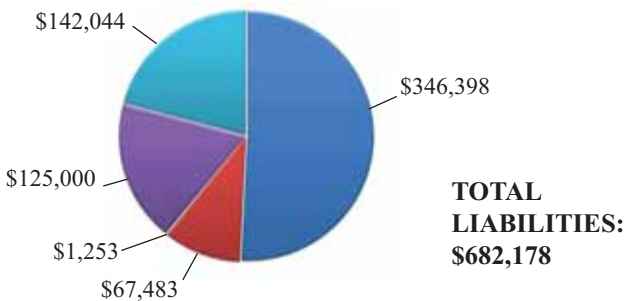
## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

### Assets



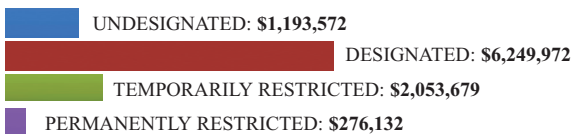
- CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS
- INVESTMENTS
- RECEIVABLES
- PREPAID EXPENSES/DEPOSITS
- INVENTORY
- CASH AND INVESTMENTS HELD FOR PARTNERS
- FIXED ASSETS

### Liabilities



- ACCOUNTS PAYABLE AND ACCRUED EXPENSES
- DEFERRED REVENUE
- ADVANCED DEPOSITS
- NOTE PAYABLE
- CUSTODIAL FUNDS HELD FOR PARTNERS

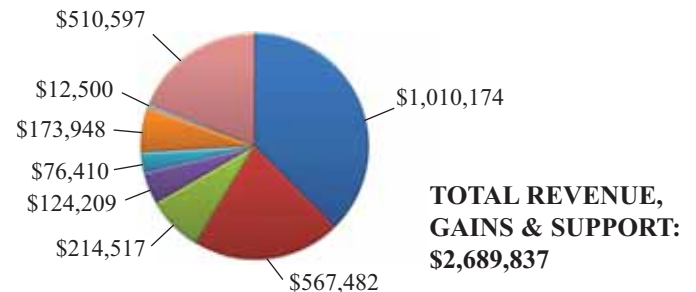
### Net Assets



**TOTAL NET ASSETS: \$9,773,355**

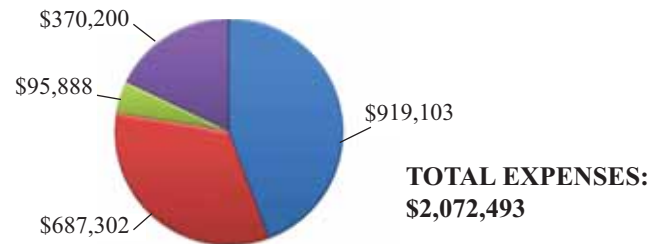
## STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

### Income



- SALES (NET)
- CONTRIBUTIONS
- IN-KIND DONATIONS
- MEMBERSHIPS
- EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS
- INTEREST AND DIVIDENDS
- OTHER REVENUE
- REALIZED/UNREALIZED GAIN

### Expenses



- PROGRAM SERVICES
- RMNP AND OTHER PUBLIC LANDS SUPPORT
- FUNDRAISING
- GENERAL ADMINISTRATIVE

Our thanks to our public lands partners!



## RMNA Publishes: Cimarron the Bighorn Sheep

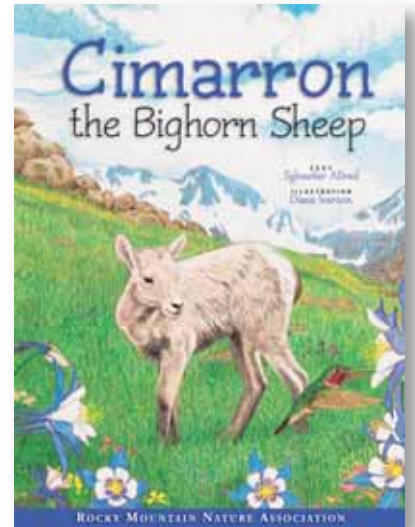
*It's spring in the Rocky Mountains, and Cimarron, the bighorn lamb, is experiencing the world around him for the very first time. Join Cimarron through the seasons of his first year as he comes face to face with Rocky Mountain wildlife – ptarmigan, beaver and a mountain lion! See how Cimarron learns to adapt and survive in this high mountain environment where every day is an adventure!*

RMNA is pleased to announce the publication of a new childrens' book, made possible through funds from the Next Generation Fund.

Author Sylvester Allred and illustrator Diane Iverson have teamed up in this delightful book depicting a year in the life of a bighorn lamb in Rocky Mountain National Park.

Written for children ages 5-12, this 32-page softcover book is full of fascinating natural history information about bighorn sheep and other Rocky Mountain wildlife. The stunning color illustrations will inspire you to visit the park as soon as you can!

**\$9.95 Available in RMNA stores in the park.**  
Or call 970-586-0121 x12 to order!



## RMNA WELCOMES NEW BOARD MEMBERS

### Katherine Dines



With her multi-faceted background in the arts and education, Katherine Dines brings a valuable skill set to the RMNA board. Her roots run deep in Colorado – her great-great grandfather, Benjamin Eaton, was the tenth territorial governor of Colorado – and her connections to Rocky are strong. She's got some pretty hefty boots to fill!

Growing up, she spent time on both the east and the west sides of the park, visiting one set of grandparents at their Estes cabin and the other at Lemmon Lodge in Grand Lake. Stead's Ranch was a family favorite, and Cheley Camp is where she back-packed, rode horses, hiked and first learned to love Rocky Mountain National Park. She hooked her first trout near the Kawuneeche visitor center – something she won't ever forget.

Katherine has worked as a natural history museum exhibit designer, figure skater, graphic artist and yoga instructor. Since 1992, Katherine has been a professional songwriter, recording and teaching artist for children. (Visit her Facebook page at [HunktabunktaMusic.](#))

Katherine lives in Denver, but her travels take her throughout the world. Despite this, Rocky remains one of her favorite places. She is proud to be serving as a Rocky Mountain Nature Association Board Member, and hopes to play a part in keeping RMNP and its lands thriving as a legacy that many generations will treasure.



*Katherine as a 7-year-old Steads Ranch rider*

### Howard (Howdy) Fry



Howdy Fry originally hailed from Wichita Falls, Texas, and he is a graduate of Southern Methodist University. Howdy's history with RMNP goes back 4 generations to the 1930s when his great-grandparents traveled with his mother from Wichita Falls to Estes Park for summer vacations. They spent several summers on the east side of the park before venturing over Trail Ridge Road to Grand Lake.

The family fell in love with Grand Lake and the surrounding area, and settled in for many summers of enjoying RMNP and Grand County. By his count, out of 55 summers of his life, it's safe to say that he has spent at least 53 summers in Grand Lake.

He began his professional career at Houston National Bank in 1979 and then moved to Colorado permanently in 1981 when he joined Colorado National Bank. Howdy currently works for Stifel Nicolaus & Co as Vice President/ Investments where he is a Certified Financial Planner. He lives in Castle Rock, is married and has two grown children.

Howdy is active with several organizations, including the Three Lakes Watershed Association in Grand County as a Board Director. He has great passion for Colorado and the Rocky Mountains. For him, the Colorado outdoors offers so much...cycling, sailing, snow skiing, snow shoeing and watching nature and wildlife. Participating with RMNA affords him the opportunity to give back to Rocky Mountain National Park after many years of enjoying its offerings to him and his family.



# The Rocky Mountain National Park Fund

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

March 6, 2013 - June 6, 2013

113 Gifts - Total Donations: \$26,254

### AMERICAN CONSERVATION CORP FUND

Carhartt, Inc., Dearborn, MI  
Bruce & Dorothy Dines,  
Denver, CO  
Jax Mercantile, Loveland, CO  
Robert Walters, Columbia, MO:  
**In Memory of Paul Walter**  
The Warming House,  
Estes Park, CO

### FALL RIVER VISITOR CENTER EXHIBITS FUND

Dr. & Mrs. John Christiano,  
Jupiter, FL:  
**In Memory of John P. Christiano**  
**and In Honor of Marilyn**  
**Hubbard's Birthday**

### LAND PROTECTION FUND

Elvira G. Aletta, Williamsville, NY  
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Dr. Robert Krear, Estes Park, CO  
Robert Krisinger, Pleasant Hill, IA  
Russell Mayer, Wheat Ridge, CO  
Lynda Price Bohager, Hanover, PA:  
**In Honor of Z.Q.P.,**  
**Forest Fire Tech**  
Carol and Wilson Pace, Denver, CO:  
**In Memory of Sarah L. Rector**

### LEGACY ENDOWMENT FUND

William and Rosemary Morris,  
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Mr. & Mrs. Mac Coker, Austin, TX:  
**In Memory of Naomi Perkins**

### LILY LAKE TRAIL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Ruth Minter, Loveland, CO:  
**In Memory of Judy Miller from**  
**the Ben Almond Family**

### LEGACY ENDOWMENT

Julie and Joseph Cunningham,  
Arvada, CO

### NEXT GENERATION FUND (RESTRICTED GIFTS)

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**In Memory of Mr. Don Neithercut**  
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**In Memory of Aulden Dunn on**  
**Behalf of Their Brothers**

**All in Memory of**  
**Beverly "Boo" Maltby:**  
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Chuck & Carolyn Goetz,  
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**All in Memory of Karen Yoder:**  
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**R. Michael Bastilla:**  
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Nancy McCaw, Highland, IL

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Boulder, CO  
Elisabeth Freed, Falls Church, VA:  
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**Jr. on His Birthday**  
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Marise and Bill Melson,  
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Mr. and Mrs. William Robertson,  
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The Guests of Rocky Mountain Park  
Inn, LLC, Estes Park, CO  
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**In Honor of**  
**Rebecca Morgan's Birthday**  
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Estes Park, CO  
Nancy and John Schneider,  
Glenwood Springs, CO  
Shell Oil Company Foundation  
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Stanley Black & Decker,  
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**In Memory of Eila Weisman**  
Ruth M. Woodward, Loveland, CO  
**All in Memory of Ann Adams:**  
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Nancy Berg-Audette, Greeley, CO  
Joseph and Delphine Casey,  
Estes Park, CO  
Paul & Rosemary Eide,  
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Michael Thomas,  
Oklahoma City, OK

### RMNP SEARCH & RESCUE FUND

Ty Hensley, Charlotte, NC

### TRAIL IMPROVEMENT FUND

A. Graig and Janet McHendrie,  
Palo Alto, CA  
Arnold Braasch, Rensselaer, IN  
Patrick Clifford, Boulder, CO  
David Ehrman, Denver, CO  
Bruce Friend, Centennial, CO:  
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James McVay, Lone Tree, CO  
Carol Mihm, Baltimore, MD  
Philip Straffin, Jr., Longmont, CO

**All in Memory of**  
**Dr. Noah M. Inbody:**  
Richard and Marjorie Hedlund,  
Rockford, IL  
Mary Ann Ezell,  
Buena Vista, CO  
Dale and Rhoda Sharpee,  
Land O'Lakes, WI

**Correction:** *Photo credits were erroneously omitted from the Spring Quarterly article Fungi: Friends or Foe? by Mary Ann Franke. RMNA extends our most sincere apologies to photographer Vera Evanson for this oversight. —NW*

# RMNA Membership Picnic Details

## Please Read!



Shuttle service to the campground is highly recommended and will be available from the Estes Park fairgrounds beginning at 10:30 am. If you choose to drive a personal vehicle,

you will be required to purchase a park pass and you must park at the Park-and-Ride lot across from Glacier Basin campground (a shuttle will be provided from the Park-and-Ride to the Glacier Basin picnic site). If you choose to shuttle to the picnic site from the Estes Park Fairgrounds, the park entrance fee will be waived for those without park passes. There will be **handicapped parking only** available at Glacier Basin Campground.



*A view of spring in Moraine Park, May, 2013. The Fern Lake Fire burned a large percentage of the meadow last October, but already, green grasses and wildflowers are reclaiming the site.  
Photo: RMNA Member Debbie Biddle*

### PARK PUZZLE ANSWERS



## Old Voices and Sacred Sites



*Lava Cliffs, one of the highest points on Trail Ridge may be a significant sacred landmark.*

**The Question: How can we learn more about the location of ancient sacred or religious sites and landscapes within the park and, at the same time, help reconnect living American Indians with their past?**

*Ute elders on Trail Ridge during consultation.*



The five-year Systemwide Archeological Inventory Program (SAIP) was the first comprehensive survey of archeological resources in Rocky Mountain National Park (RMNP). While many important prehistoric and historic sites were located and documented, the study revealed little about places sacred to American Indian tribes that once occupied the area. Archeologists and anthropologists from the University of Northern Colorado (UNC) saw a unique opportunity to reestablish cultural links between American Indian elders and their historic and traditional landscapes and belief systems, while learning more about how to protect places of tribal importance.

**The Project: Use modeling and consultation with American Indian elders to identify sacred sites and landscapes.**

With information from ongoing archeological investigations in RMNP and northern Colorado, UNC archeologists developed a Geographic Information System (GIS), or mapping software program, to test landscape models to locate religious or sacred sites and landscapes in the park. The effort is based on three levels of analysis: (1) cultural features (e.g., rock art), (2) sacred sites and landmarks (e.g., mountain peaks, ground sites), and (3) sacred landscapes, including a holistic view of all three levels of analysis. With this GIS, it is possible to model spatially-referenced layers of cultural and natural features on a digitized, three-dimensional physical landscape. Consultation with tribal elders helped identify features of sacred landscapes such as elevation, viewfields of known sacred landmarks, local relief, north-facing slopes, and nearness to known prehistoric and early-historic trails.

**The Results: Several sacred and religious archeological sites have been identified among over 1,000 archeological sites documented in RMNP.**

Further studies have documented a rich and fascinating ethnographic history relating to the park. One of the most important aspects of this cooperative effort between archeologists, anthropologists, and American Indian elders is that it has provided the elders with a chance to re-enfranchise themselves with their historic lands from which they were forcefully evicted over one hundred years ago. The GIS modeling effort is still in progress and archeologists continue to refine and improve the models. Consultation with Ute elders suggested that Longs Peak, Specimen Mountain, Grand Lake, and Lava Cliffs might be important sacred landmarks to include in models and in 2006, archeologists found several promising spatial correlations of sacred sites and sacred landmarks throughout the park. Line-of-sight to religiously significant peaks and mountains was a key factor in the predictive capabilities of the model.

For more information on the park's research program, see [www.nps.gov/romo](http://www.nps.gov/romo)

*Written by: Bert Cushing 03/20/2008. Photo credits: NPS-RMNP, R. Brunswig.*



**For comments or questions contact:**  
**Charles Money, Executive Director**  
**Nancy Wilson, Quarterly Editor**  
**Rocky Mountain Nature Association**  
**PO Box 3100**  
**Estes Park, Colorado 80517**  
**(970) 586-0108**  
**www.rmna.org**

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RMNA Membership Picnic - August 3, 2013  
 Glacier Basin Campground!  
*(See important details on pages 3 and 15)*

*Broadtail hummingbird incognito*  
 Photo by RMNA Member Charles Kettlewell

## NATURE ASSOCIATION NOTES...

It's that time of year again, when the trees just can't hold it together anymore. The slightest provocation and clouds of pollen are released to mingle their genetic material with other receptive trees. A butter-yellow coating of pollen covers every surface, congregates in every seam and infiltrates every crack.....RMNA Accounting Manager **Sarah Rhode** and her family and some friends were enjoying the early days of summer in Estes Park in late May when, suddenly, a group of elk startled and thundered through the yard, scattering all of the kids that were playing outside. The kids resumed their games until a neighbor drove by to alert them to a mountain lion that had just been spotted in the vicinity..... RMNA Executive Director **Charley Money** spotted what looked like an otter under the handicapped fishing pier on Lake Estes. It was bigger than a muskrat, and he watched it swim out from under the pier toward the middle of the lake. While beaver occasionally are seen closer to the river at Lake Estes, Resources Management Specialist **Jeff Connor** noted that it is possible that it was, in fact, an otter, as they have been known to frequent the area in the past.....RMNA Members **LaRoy** and **Mary Seaver** were delighted in mid-April to watch ten Yellow-headed blackbirds feed on spilled sunflower seeds at their home in Estes Park during one of the big spring snowstorms. This also was where, just a

month earlier, they spotted an ermine seeking shelter during a morning snowstorm in March.....Colorado River District Systems Specialist **Debbie Mason** may have unwittingly picked up a hitchhiker one morning on her way to work. A small deer mouse skittered from under the shelter of her car into the golden banner alongside the parking lot. It seemed a little slow, perhaps disoriented, a bit stressed....RMNA Member **Gene Puntney** spotted a den of coyote pups near Upper Beaver Meadows in late



*RMNA Member Dick Coe caught this image as a pair of osprey were attempting to build a nest on top of a power line pole. The male was bringing in the nesting material to the female, seated on the right.*

May. Upon closer examination, he noticed 8 pups and two adults hanging out in the area. At first, the adults would move about 50-60 yards away and start howling to call the pups out. They'd emerge yipping and yapping. Two weeks later, the pups, now fewer in number, were getting more adventurous, wandering out with the adults, or even some on their own.....An Estes Park visitor reported watching a great-horned owl that was perched about 60 feet up on a rock cliff. Suddenly, the owl lost its footing and fell, but, as it fell, it grabbed the rock face with its talons and furiously flapped its wings to slow its fall. All its efforts must have paid off, because it landed safely and hopped up on a rock to survey the view.....RMNA Seminar Instructor and Naturalist **Kevin J. Cook** noted that bluebirds experienced a rough transition to the high country this winter. Reports of dead bluebirds on the Front Range caused consternation about the cold temperatures, relatively deep snow and limited food sources that were creating a higher-than-average bluebird die-off during migration this spring. Notably fewer flashes of brilliant blue are gracing the meadows around the park this spring.....As of June 19, the 605-acre **Big Meadows Fire** on the west side of the park was 95% contained. Ignited by lightning on June 10, the fire grew to about 400 acres due to high winds within a couple of days. On the afternoon of June 14, to prevent the fire from moving to the south, firefighters used an existing avalanche chute as a natural barrier to perform a burnout operation (*see cover photo*). Although the park prefers to allow naturally occurring fires to burn for the benefit of the resource and future fire breaks, park managers decided to suppress the Big Meadows fire when it was safe to do so because of extended drought conditions and reduced interagency resources.....In mid-June, a 36-year-old climber fell about 40 feet on Sundance Buttress, a climbing feature in the Lumpy Ridge area on the east side of the park. At the time of the fall he was about 350 feet up the route. A guide for the Colorado Mountain School witnessed the fall and was able to lower the injured man to the base of the route where park rangers utilized the Grand Canyon Helitak Crew from the Big Meadows Fire to conduct a short-haul rescue of the man.....Be safe this summer — and have fun!

Trail Ridge Road Opening  
 Day, May 24, 2013



Trail Ridge Road Closed  
 May 30, 2013



*Upper Left: Opening day! hardly a cloud in the sky, dry road, nothing to worry about. Right: A bird's-eye view of Trail Ridge road conditions from plow operator Ron Schneider at 11,500 feet, just six days later. Hopefully, this helps answer the question: Why is Trail Ridge Road closed?*

Alpine Visitor Center, May 16, 2013