



Shawn Whitney | Snow at Bear Lake

20

23

Annual Report



Rocky
Mountain
Conservancy



Sid Roberts | Clear view of the Milkyway

A Message From Our Executive Director

Dear Friends,

In 2018, the Conservancy board and staff set forth an incredibly ambitious strategic plan for the next 5 years; what we didn't have was a crystal ball to foreshadow the global pandemic and two largest wildfires in the history of the state raging simultaneously in the park, and the unforetold impacts those events would have on the best laid plans. In the strategic plan, we identified that we needed to enter new terrain for our organization and move the needle on some of the workforce housing needs for the park and Conservancy employees, if we were going to be able to continue to recruit the best and brightest stewards of the park and wild places that we are tasked with protecting. Just when we thought the housing crunch couldn't get any worse in gateway communities, the park lost nearly all their employee housing on the west side to wildfire, and median home prices peaked across the Front Range. Yet, we stayed the course on our bold new ambitious ideas, in addition to the core mission work that we'd been doing for decades. As our 2018-2023 plan sunsets, I'm proud that we've been able to achieve so many of the goals we'd sketched out years ago. Today, our Rocky Terraces workforce housing project is well underway, with the support of a lead gift by some of our longest-running friends and supporters, and we expect it to be filled with researchers, interns,

Corps staff, Search and Rescue and Education Rangers by May of 2024.

We've undertaken ambitious land protection projects, stabilized the park's educational programming and staffing through challenging budget years, grown our youth Conservation Corps, increased our fundraising dollars, stabilized historic structures and re-introduced endangered toad species to the park. As we close out the year and reflect on our vision for our organization and Rocky Mountain National Park, we still have a great deal of work to do. We are after all tasked with stewarding this national treasure for countless generations to come, but we are well primed to start envisioning an ever more ambitious future ahead as we begin to draft our 2024-2029 strategic plan. Trails to build, Junior Rangers to be sworn in, wildlife habitats to be restored; thank you for support for our work and onward to continuing to aspire to and build a resilient and stable future for this land that we all love.

Best,



Estee Rivera Murdock

Estee Rivera Murdock
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



The newly constructed boardwalk provides better accessibility for those seeking to enjoy the beauty of Sprague Lake.

NPS Photo

By the Numbers

\$2.4 Million



provided in philanthropic support to Rocky Mountain National Park

\$190,000



spent on restoring the Kawuneeche Valley

\$146,000



invested in digitizing Rocky's Museum Archives

Projects

Replaced 230 feet



of boardwalk at Sprague Lake

Purchased Four Horses



for backcountry maintenance work and Search and Rescue support

Funded Over \$30,000



on boreal toad monitoring and re-establishment

Spent over \$25,000



to determine beaver occupancy in Kawuneeche Valley

\$97,000 invested



in Rocky's Indigenous Connections Project

Environmental Education

9,940 Students



visited the park with Rocky's Environmental Education Team

4,700 Title 1 Students



provided with school field trip transportation

286 Field Trips



and pre-field trip programs

262 Virtual Programs



delivered across 22 states and six countries reaching 7,815 learners

Partnership & Intern Engagement

47 Professional Development



opportunities provided through internships

7 Community



partnerships established

2,426 Event



participants

Rocky Terraces

Workforce Housing



Broke ground in 2022 and will open in 2024

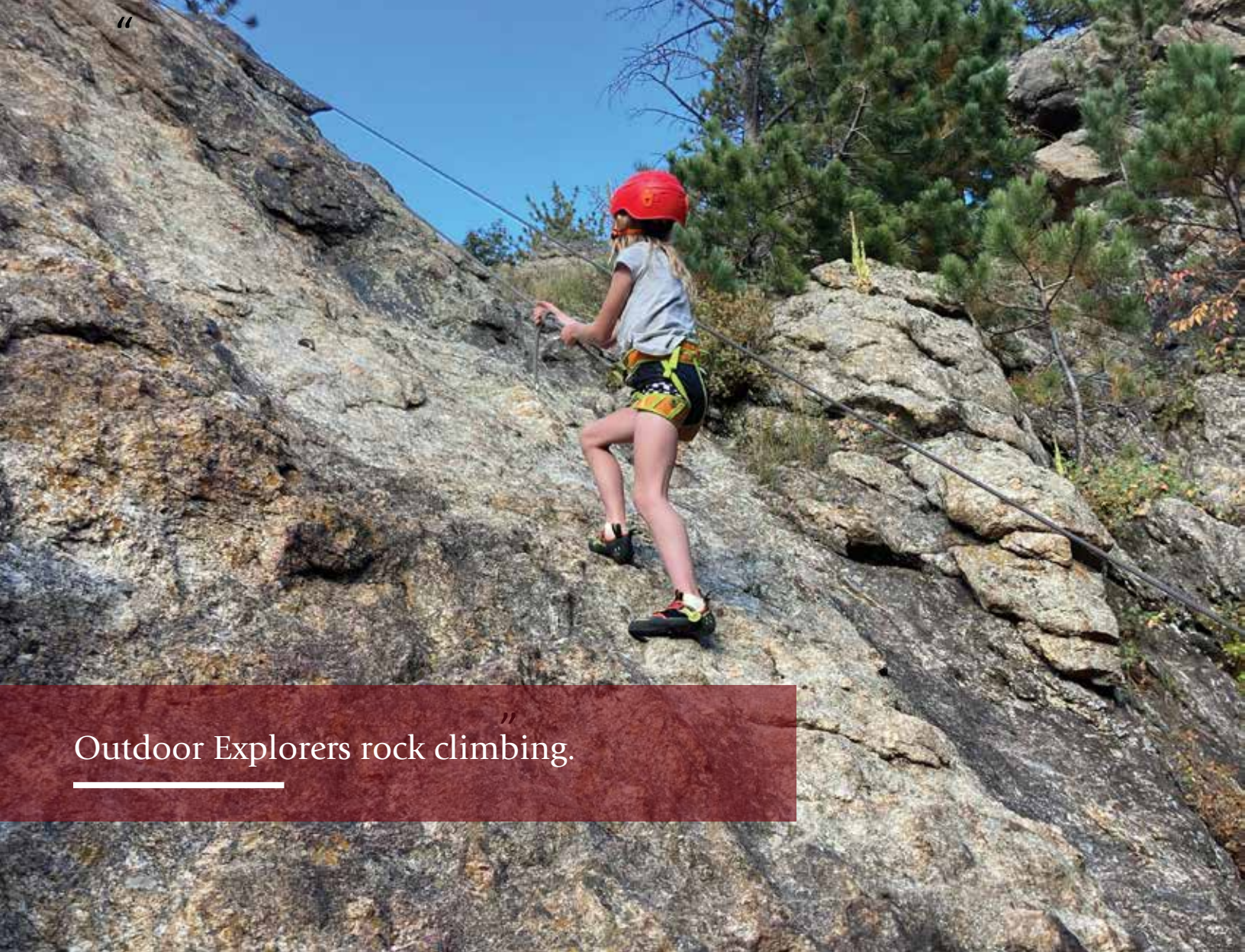
Increased affordable housing options for Rocky and Conservancy education fellows, interns, instructors, and staff.

In-kind donations valued at more than \$30,000 received:

- flooring
- bathroom & kitchen fixtures
- discount on appliances



NPS Photo



Outdoor Explorers rock climbing.

Field Institute

Outdoor Explorers Club

“Outdoor play and positive experiences in nature help develop the next generation of stewards in national parks like Rocky and similar public lands.”

—Fran Mainella, former National Park Service Director and advocate for getting kids outdoors so they can develop skills for success.

The club, a six-week, free, after-school program, is offered to children in kindergarten through third grade in Estes Park Elementary School or home-schooled in the Estes Valley region.

Over 20 students participated in outdoor, educational adventures throughout Rocky Mountain National Park and surrounding public lands, with grant support from the Community Foundation of Northern Colorado (CFNC) and the generosity of Conservancy donors.

Students undertook scavenger hunts, studied trees and wildflowers, explored animal tracks, and participated in rock climbing. A participant described it best as “We’re outdoors and we’re exploring!”

In 2024, the program is expected to expand to include fourth and fifth graders with the continued support of CFNC.

Courses and Tours

“What an outstanding course and experience!”

The most popular Field Institute courses in 2023 include:

- Native Orchids of RMNP
- Early Wildflowers of RMNP
- Geology of Trail Ridge Road
- Night Sky Landscape Photography
- Sketchbook Journaling: RMNP in Watercolor

These courses are also offered in 2024.

Bus tours were also popular, with Elk Ecology and Women of Rocky History tours being well-attended and appreciated.

Field Institute staff also provided five private bus tours to share Rocky’s diverse landscapes and history.



Northern Cheyenne singer and songwriter Shelly Morningsong and Zuni/Omaha dancer Fabian Fontenelle perform in hand-crafted regalia.

Next Generation Fund

Through the Next Generation Fund, the Rocky Mountain Conservancy seeks to inspire future environmental champions and stewards by supporting educational programs in Rocky Mountain National Park and surrounding public lands.

Programs funded in 2023 include:

- High School Leadership Corps
- Rocky's Junior Ranger Program
- Distance Learning Programs
- Education Field Trips
- Conservation Corps
- Outdoor Explorers Club
- Tribal Consultations and Indigenous Connections Programs

Volunteer Program

The volunteer program is run through the Conservancy's stewardship program.

By the Numbers

- Nearly 365 lbs. of food donated to the Allenspark food bank on Martin Luther King Jr. Day by park and Conservancy staff.
- 744 service hours completed by 173 volunteers
- Over 355 lbs. of trash removed
- Over 150 gallons of invasive thistle seedheads removed from Horseshoe Park

Projects

- Litter cleanups at Hidden Valley, Holzwarth Historic Site, and Bear Lake
- Invasive species removal at Horseshoe Park
- Trail building on Longs Peak



Conservation crew members remove logs from a trail.

Conservation Corps & Stewardship

Considered the “crown jewel” of the stewardship program, the Conservation Corps celebrated twenty years of service to Rocky and the Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forests in 2023. All participants are AmeriCorps volunteers who receive a living stipend and educational credit/certificate through AmeriCorps upon completion of their time with the program.

In 2023 the Corps had its largest number of participants in history with 55 members and 11 crews. A new crew of six members supported Rocky’s Exotic Plant Management, which focuses on plant restoration—the growth and regrowth of native species—and the management of invasive species. The plan allows the park to mitigate invasive plant infestations and calls for removal of these species manually, mechanically, and through herbicide applications. The crew learned plant identification skills, proper herbicide uses and safety, and techniques for manual removal of invasive species. Five Crews worked on park trail reconstruction and historic preservation maintenance at Holzwarth Ranch, and six crews worked on projects in the Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forests.

Accomplishments

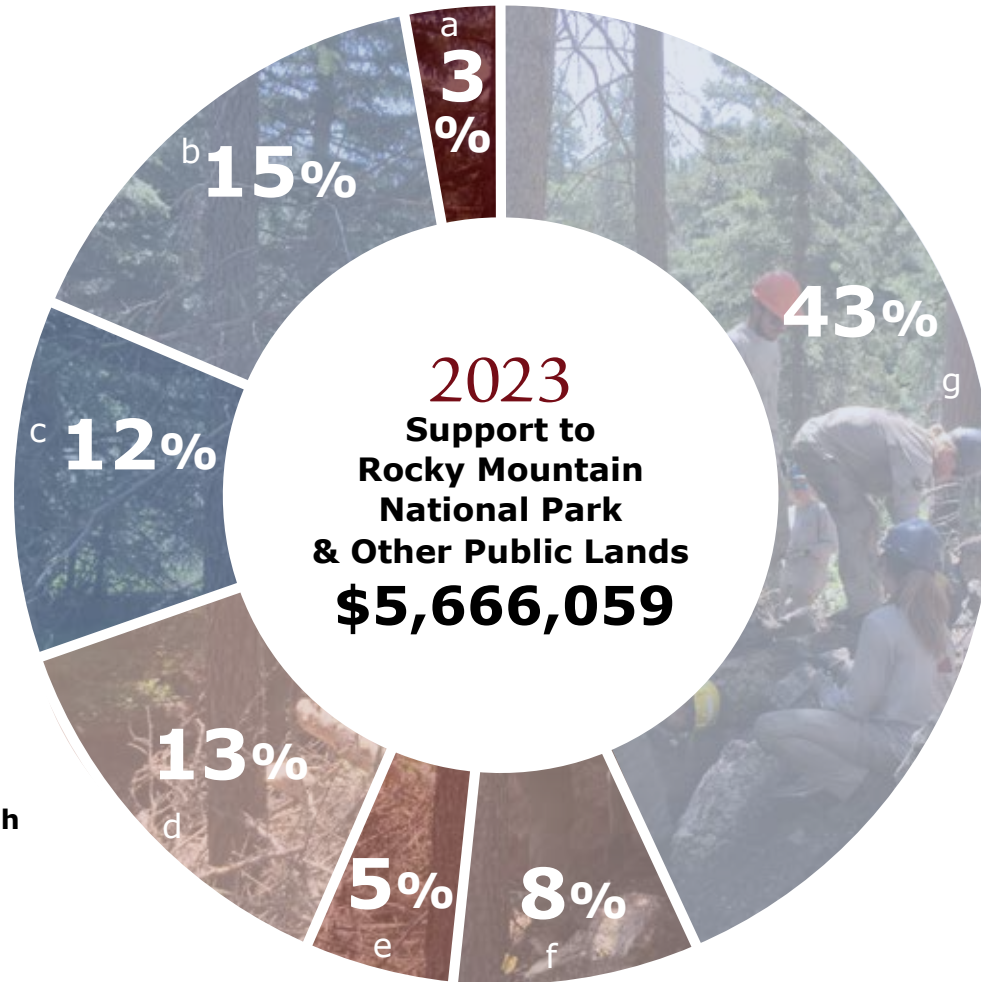
22,207
Service Hours
 spent on stewardship of Rocky and adjacent forests

160 Acres of invasive plant removal	12 illegal campsites closed
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657 Fallen Trees cleared from trails	Built 640 feet of new trail
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\$50,000
 invested in Longs Peak trail work

By the Numbers



a Land Protection

b Park Improvement Projects

c Rocky Mountain Conservancy Conservation Corps

d Youth, Education, and Outreach

e Other Public Lands

f Constituency Building

g Visitor Services

Assets & Liabilities

As of December 31, 2023

2023

2022

	2023	2022
ASSETS		
Cash and Equivalents	\$ 8,608,570	\$ 9,953,884
Investments	14,051,518	10,798,901
Accounts Receivable	-	69,525
Contributions Receivable	474,055	431,659
Prepaid Expenses	116,659	105,064
Inventory	1,061,448	1,425,304
Property and Equipment	3,320,243	1,193,591
TOTAL ASSETS	27,632,493	23,977,928
LIABILITIES		
Accounts Payable	412,281	401,780
Accrued Aid Payable	678,718	599,058
Accrued Expenses Payable	230,646	220,497
Custodial Funds	7,928	7,928
TOTAL LIABILITIES	1,329,573	1,229,263
NET ASSETS		
Unrestricted:		
Operating	7,932,693	4,331,705
Designated:		
Operating Reserves	600,000	600,000
Rocky Terraces	791,516	3,008,138
Quasi-Endowments	9,506,169	8,416,345
RMNP Funds	3,288,404	3,409,997
Temporarily Restricted	3,825,732	2,624,074
Permanently Restricted	358,406	358,406
TOTAL NET ASSETS	26,302,920	22,748,665
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	27,632,493	23,977,928



© Natasha Miller | Black-billed Magpie

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NPS Photo | Sprague Lake Boardwalk ribbon cutting

Who We Are

Founded in 1931, the Rocky Mountain Conservancy is a vibrant, growing organization with an active core membership community and more than 16,000 contributors, including individuals, corporations, local businesses, and foundations. The Conservancy's primary mission is to protect and conserve Rocky Mountain National Park through education programs, the Next Generation Fund, Search and Rescue support, historic preservation, funding critical research and habitat restoration, and more. Through unique hands-on learning experience, the Conservancy provides children's and youth programming in Rocky to create the next generation of park stewards and public lands advocates. We also work with the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management partner agencies to provide educational services and support through onsite education retail sales. With support from thousands of members and donors, the Conservancy gives millions of dollars each year to support public lands.

Our Mission

The Rocky Mountain Conservancy promotes stewardship of Rocky Mountain National Park and similar lands through education and philanthropy.



Rocky
Mountain
Conservancy

Nature. Pass it on.