



# Gaining Ground

Healing the land. Building community.



SPRING 2018

wlr.v.org

Volunteers collecting seeds for yellow coneflower and little bluestem with Boulder Open Space & Mountain Parks

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## Coming Together to Restore our Rivers

By William Vieth

A dull thud resonates through the area. Ryan, a CSU student, is volunteering his time over the weekend to pound stakes into the ground with a sledgehammer. He's not alone, either. The scene looks like something straight out of *Cool Hand Luke*, dozens of people lined up, swinging away.

This is the Apple Valley Stream Restoration project, just northwest of Lyons, Colorado. WRV volunteers and staff have spent nearly 4 months getting to this point. Nearly two miles of streambank has been treated with seed, soil amendments, mulch, erosion control blanket, wetland plugs, and other native trees and shrubs. However, the most impressive part of all this is just how many people have partnered together to make this project happen.

**Our rivers are stronger, our ability to address future disasters is better, and the community that has rallied around these efforts is closer than ever.**

In 2013, the Front Range of Colorado saw as much rainfall in two days as it usually sees in a year, causing the worst flooding we've seen for nearly 50 years. Now, 5 years later, we're all coming together to create a long-term restoration of our rivers to prevent such large-scale damage from occurring again. Apple Valley is one of many such projects that have been occurring through the region. The project is funded on the federal level by the Natural Resources Conservation Service through their Emergency Watershed Protection program. The funding is administered by the Saint Vrain Creek Coalition, who has brought together dozens of landowners, four design firms, two construction

companies, and WRV to make this project happen. And, through our ongoing volunteer projects, several hundred people from around Colorado have come out to build a healthier, more resilient world.

One more swing of a sledgehammer, and one more stake goes into the ground. One stake that represents the time, effort, and care of literally thousands of people throughout Colorado and the country. Natural disasters will never stop occurring. But even as the Apple Valley project ends, the coalitions and partnerships it helped to create will persist. Our rivers are stronger, our ability to address future disasters is better, and the community that has rallied around these efforts is closer than ever. These partnerships are the future of restoration in Colorado and the country. Next time we'll be ready.

Ryan wipes his brow and reaches for another stake. With a grin, he yells out "Lay a stake, there boss?"

Yeah, lay a stake there, Ryan.



# E.D. Corner

by Ed Self, Executive Director

WRV's exciting 20th project season is already under way. Through April, we've already engaged hundreds of volunteers in 19 volunteer events. Time flies when you're having fun... and restoring miles of river!

What an amazing journey WRV's 20 years have been! Imagine the power of 40,000 WRV volunteers who have given \$10 million of their time to complete over 1,000 land restoration and trail projects. WRV has engaged thousands of youth, including my 12-year-old son, Elias, who grew up in this organization. Seeing their passion inspires me. The research has shown that early experiences of deep connection and service in nature can have a powerful transformative effect on a young person – on health, personal values, and life-long behaviors.

I've long felt that WRV is a magnet for goodness, attracting smart, generous, roll-up-your-sleeves-and-help types of people. So many generous smart people acting together has increased my personal hope and optimism for our future. With government resources ever shrinking, volunteer power is more important than ever!

FARE THEE WELL...



WRV got its start at Pella Crossing Open Space near Hygiene, where we are returning on June 9!

As I'm stepping down soon as WRV's Executive Director, this will be my final "E.D. Corner." Initiating and serving within this community has been one of the greatest privileges of my life, and I am deeply grateful. I love our mission, staff, volunteers more than ever AND believe in the value of change. Continuing success in changing times requires a periodic influx of new perspectives, ideas, skills, energy, and passion.

We've been preparing for the transition for almost a year now. WRV is strong! Our Board and staff are amazing, and I'm confident in a bright future for WRV, with its best years ahead!

Hope to see you out on a WRV project! I'll be wearing my volunteer hat.

Ed

## Introducing WRV's Community Vitality Initiative | by Morgan Crowley

Founder Ed Self envisioned Wildlands Restoration Volunteers built around a two-fold mission: Restoring the Land & Building Community. Throughout the years, the tangible evidence of our restoration efforts has continued to grow with now more than 1000 projects completed. While not as visible, the evidence of our success in building a community lies in our continued ability to take on those very projects. WRV's community consists of our volunteers, leaders, donors, agency partners, funders, staff and supporters of all types. Each has a role to play in all our successes and the vitality of this community is of utmost importance, now more than ever.

This spring, WRV staff and volunteer leaders are working behind the scenes on a Community Vitality Initiative. Our goal is to build and support a robust restoration community of volunteers and leaders that promotes individual growth and organizational sustainability. The initiative

is focused on connecting the dots between the stages of volunteerism and building a cohesive and strategic plan for supporting and empowering our community. We envision a three-part cycle of volunteer engagement that builds connections between WRV and volunteers, volunteers and leaders, and empowers leaders to become advocates for WRV within our broader communities. While community building is a part of everyone's role at WRV, in order to jumpstart this initiative, we've empowered a team of staff members with new responsibilities and the resources to excel.

It all begins with a new volunteer. How people find WRV and make the first step to becoming a member of our community through volunteering or donating varies from person to person. Longtime staff member Amy Ansari is taking the lead on Volunteer Engagement working closely with our outreach staff. Whether through creating social opportunities, representing WRV to

potential supporters or finding new avenues to engage with volunteers, the aim of volunteer engagement is the same: Get them in the door and give them a reason to stay.

That next step is Rachel Brett with her focus on the Trainings and Education stage of the cycle. Coming from a solid background in education, Rachel is helping to assess, redevelop and align our leadership trainings so we're setting new leaders up for success. She will be engaging volunteer leaders and instructors to ensure that WRV offers consistent, meaningful opportunities for volunteers to build leadership capacity, scientific knowledge, and technical skills.

Finally, the cycle both concludes and continues with our existing leadership base. Led by Morgan Crowley, the Leadership Development module aims to create programming to engage and further develop volunteer leaders, while also utilizing their wisdom and experience to help guide WRV's efforts. We recognize that it is our volunteer

Continued on page 7

# Young Leaders Making a Difference | By Rachel Brett

Sarah Huang, Kalei Gopar-Martinez, and Taylor VanDyke aren't your typical WRV volunteer leaders. For one thing, none of them had even heard of WRV a year ago; for another, they're all still in high school. Taylor plays violin and is about to graduate and study political science; Kalei plans to be an environmental engineer; and Sarah has hiked 10 Colorado 14ers and is passionate about fighting climate change.

They all go to different schools in Boulder County and have different reasons for caring about WRV and stewardship, but if you stop by WRV's Boulder office on a Friday afternoon, you might find the



WRV's growing youth programs are introducing more and more young men and women to the importance of stewardship for our public lands.

boardroom quietly taken over by this small band of teenagers who have served as WRV's Youth Advisory Board for the last nine months. Armed with mini tootsie pops, big ideas, and lots of energy, the group feels a lot larger—and has gotten a lot more done—than a typical trio.

Over the past few months, they've taken a vague idea and turned it into a complex program, based on research and complete with a detailed schedule, application process, and Instagram account. They regularly come in on Friday afternoons to write up notes for their presentation to the Board of Directors or to finish creating a marketing flier. They've diplomatically insisted on taking charge of social media outreach. They kicked off their spring break with a site visit to prepare for an upcoming project they're helping lead and organize.

The program itself, called the WYLD (WRV Youth Leadership Development) Program, will launch this coming fall for teenagers aged 14-18. The program will meet about once a month during the school year, with optional workshops and activities during the summer and the opportunity to continue in a leadership role into the following year.

WYLD Program leaders will participate in restoration projects; access mentoring opportunities in areas ranging from career development to resume writing to plant identification; become OSI-certified Crew Leaders; and coordinate and lead their own project for family and friends. They'll explore and enjoy Colorado's iconic landscapes and have the opportunity to attend a regional youth stewardship conference with other young leaders from across the Front Range. They'll meet other youth who also care about making an impact on their community.

Sarah, Taylor, and Kalei will be recruiting their peers and classmates this spring and summer and helping to screen applicants and lead projects and workshops once the WYLD program kicks off in September. They say they're tired of the idea that young people are "tomorrow's leaders;" they don't see the point in waiting. Their goal is to create a program and a community where youth can be authentic leaders: where they can have the chance to make decisions, take risks, and implement real changes that they develop and care about.

If you know anyone who sounds like a good fit—who loves being outside, whose potential for strong leadership is fully fledged or just emerging, who enjoys eating tootsie pops and making a difference—send them our way, because these teen leaders are just getting started.

For more information or to get involved, visit [wlr.org/youth-and-family](http://wlr.org/youth-and-family)

## Gaining Ground

Editor: Kevin Shuck


Design: Nicole Bizarro Designs | Calendar: Morgan Crowley

Offices: 3012 Sterling Cir., Suite 201, Boulder CO 80301  
2926 E. Mulberry, Fort Collins, CO 80524

Phone: 303-543-1411 (Boulder) | 970-493-2075 (Fort Collins)

[wlr.org](http://wlr.org) | [info@wlr.org](mailto:info@wlr.org)

We welcome content and images for future editions of the newsletter. Please submit materials to [info@wlr.org](mailto:info@wlr.org).

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# 2018 PROJECTS

- Easiest
- Intermediate
- ◆ Difficult
- ◆ Very Difficult
- ▲ Overnight
- ▲ High Elevation

## Mediterranean Sage Removal I & II

Come take a prairie stroll with us while we hunt and destroy the last remaining Med sage plants!

## Young Gulch Trail Construction I, II, III & IV

Join the ongoing effort to rebuild this popular trail in the Poudre watershed, damaged by fire and flood.

## Beaver Brook Trail Maintenance

Celebrate National Trails Day by helping to restore this historic and popular trail near Golden.

## Pella Crossing Wetland Restoration

Visit WRV's roots near Hygiene as we help restore these Boulder County ponds from flood damage.

## Lory State Park - Climbers Access Trail

Do you climb? Then you know how important a good access trail is. Let's give this one a little TLC! Rock on.

## Rocky Mountain Nat'l Park Restoration I & II

Two weekend campouts to plant more than 7,000 wetland plants in disturbed areas in the park.

## Elkhorn Wildfire Risk Reduction

Help improve forest health near Red Feather Lakes; July dates are for trained volunteer sawyers only.

## Coal Creek Youth & Family Stewardship Project

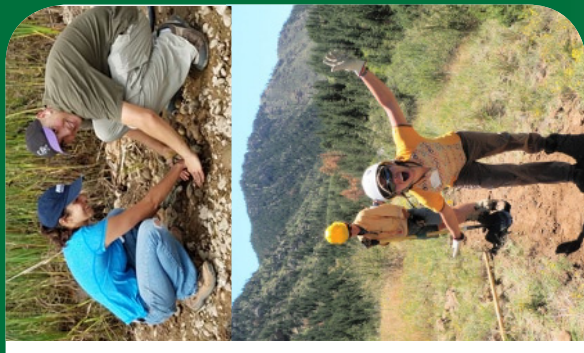
Team up with other families in Lafayette as we restore the Coal Creek Trail by removing invasive species.

## Native Seed Collections

WRV's seed collection community is one of the loveliest groups of humanity, join them picking seeds!

## Mt. Elbert Trail Restoration I & II

Join this collaborative effort to engage volunteers as stewards of Colorado's heavily used 14ers!





### **Mt. Evans Restoration - Summit & Echo Lakes**

Drive up the highest road in America for this popular, ongoing project around beautiful alpine lakes.

### **Indian Peaks Wilderness Trail Restoration I & II**

Join one of WRV's 3-day backcountry trail restoration projects in the popular Brainard Lake Area.

### **South Park Alpine Restoration I & II**

Spectacular views await on these high alpine road closure projects near Fairplay.

### **Masontown Trail Maintenance I & II**

Escape to Summit County to build bridges and boardwalks to protect sensitive streams near Frisco.

### **Uncompahgre Plateau Sage Grouse Habitat**

Head out west and help us restore habitat for the rare and threatened Gunnison sage grouse!

### **Dolores River Tamarisk Removal**

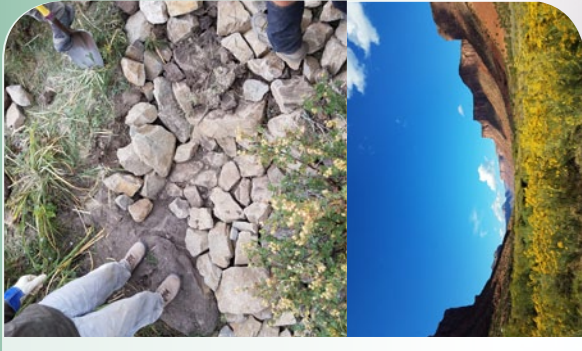
Take a roadtrip into Colorado's Canyon Country to join the fight against invasive, water-hungry tamarisk.

### **St. Vrain Tamarisk Removal I, II & III**

Help us catch this invasive plant before it spreads near Sandstone Ranch Park east of Longmont.

### **Filius Park Trail Restoration**

Celebrate National Public Lands Day by volunteering to help with trail stewardship near Evergreen.



**For even more projects and the most up-to-date list, visit [WLRV.org](http://WLRV.org)**

# Thank you, donors, funders, sponsors and partners!

## Your generosity allows us to empower volunteers to restore the land!

WRV brings people together to learn about and care for our natural environment thanks to members, donors, businesses, foundations, community groups and government agencies. We are so grateful to those who made contributions or pledges from April 1, 2017 through April 21, 2018.

### Individuals

#### 1K Circle Members

Anonymous (8)  
Steve Archambault  
William F. & Susan E. Brock  
Alan Carpenter  
Alan Cogen  
Melinda Courtman  
Mark Flower  
Jean-Pierre Georges  
Linda Hamilton  
Dave & Elaine Hill  
Connie Holsinger  
Scott James  
Tony Lavender & Linda Kuhn  
Paul Liscom & Kim Pierpoint  
Brandi & Dave Mason  
Will McMullan  
Sarah Peacock  
John Peterson  
Taylor Schollmaier  
Sandy Wilson

#### \$500 and Above

Anonymous (3)  
Karen Borstad  
Kevin & Becca Bracy Knight  
Maya Burlingame  
Jean Campbell & Pat Morriss  
Grover Cleveland  
Dan & Sharyn Corson  
Bayard Ewing  
Don Deane & Ellen Flannely  
Cathy Foley  
Larry Glassburn  
Elizabeth Hoops  
Pat Japenga  
Liz Kellogg  
R.A. Linden Services  
Nancy Martin  
Andrew Muller  
Shay Murphy  
Lawrence H. Robins  
Ed Self & Amy Sebesta  
Sheila Sereshteh  
Frank Shafer  
Toby Stauffer  
Ray & Deneen Wentz

#### \$250 and Above

Anonymous (9)  
Neal Anderson  
Barb Becker  
Alan Brown  
Joni Crist  
Morgan Crowley  
Kim Dufty  
Carolann Gerhard  
Edward Hall  
Kate Hamilton  
Allison Hamm  
Elizabeth Harris  
John Heitinger  
Peter & Mary Pat Judkins  
Kimberly Keen  
Duane Kline  
Sandra Laursen  
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Dee Marlin  
Sara Michl  
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Grant Stump  
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John & Molly Tayer  
Sarah Thomas  
Vivian L. Wilson  
Allan Wolpowitz  
India Wood

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Stephen Austin  
John & Sandy Baggenstos  
Austin Bailey  
Reed Bailey  
Maurice Barancik  
Linda Baum  
Jeff Berlin  
Pete & Suzanne Birkeland  
Bernard Birnbaum & Rachel Feldman  
Bill Bloomquist  
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Folsom Funny Farm  
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Susan Donaldson  
Melinda Driscoll  
Carol Dwyer  
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Sarah & Andrew Egolf-Tarr  
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David Fairbank  
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Dave Foss  
Frank Fransioli  
Ann Frazier  
Carter Freeman & Leanne Gregs  
Karl Friedman  
Amy Gage  
Susi Gardner & Dan Lubar  
Kendall Helmstetter Gelner  
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*We also thank the 247 households who made gifts under \$100 this past year.*

### Funders, Sponsors and Partners

#### \$250,000 and Above

Iron Woman Construction and Environmental Services, LLC / U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development (Flood Recovery)

#### \$100,000 and Above

Colorado Dept. of Public Health & Environment  
Colorado Parks & Wildlife - Recreational Trails Program

#### \$50,000 and Above

Arapaho Roosevelt National Forest  
Boulder County Parks and Open Space  
City of Longmont  
Coalition for the Poudre River Watershed  
Denver Mountain Parks  
Land & Water Trust Fund of Park County  
National Forest Foundation  
Terra Foundation

#### \$25,000 and Above

City of Boulder Open Space and Mountain Parks  
Colorado Department of Agriculture  
Colorado Parks and Wildlife  
Colorado State Forest Service  
Colorado Water Conservation Board  
Environmental Quality Resources

#### \$10,000 and Above

AEC Trust  
Audubon Rockies  
Blue Federal Credit Union  
Bureau of Land Management  
Great Outdoors Colorado  
Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre & Gunnison National Forest, Gunnison Ranger District  
John S. Scurci Family Foundation  
Medicine Bow Routt National Forest  
Odell Brewing Company  
Patagonia, Boulder  
Pike San Isabel National Forest  
The Nature Conservancy  
REI  
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Steamboat Springs  
Accommodations Tax Trails Fund  
Tamarisk Coalition  
Thorne Nature Experience  
Town of Frisco  
Vivax Pros  
White River National Forest, Dillon Ranger District  
Xcel Energy

#### \$5,000 and Above

Aloterra  
Beeman Irrigating Company  
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City of Boulder Youth

Opportunities Program  
Climax Molybdenum, a Freeport-McMoRan Company  
Exxel Outdoors  
Fort Collins Stormwater & Utilities  
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Mosquito Range Heritage Initiative  
Mountain States Toyota  
Southwest Conservation Corps  
The Summit Foundation  
Western Digital Foundation  
Wild Connections

#### \$2,500 and Above

Broomfield Open Space  
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Windhover Ranch

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Bohemian Foundation  
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Cocktail Caravan  
Community Shares of Colorado  
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Harmon Brown Family Foundation  
Honey Stinger, EN-R-G Foods  
Hospira Boulder, a Pfizer company  
IBM  
Indevisual  
Jefferson County Nature Association  
Lone Hawk Farm  
Medtronic  
Mountain Pine Manufacturing, Inc.  
Rocky Mountain National Park  
The April Fund  
Unitarian Universalist Church of Boulder  
Webroot Software, Inc.

#### \$500 and Above

8z Real Estate  
Americorps-Mile High Youth Corps  
Botanical Interests  
Books of Discovery  
Boulder Nordic Sport  
Flywater  
Friends' School  
Green Machines of Boulder ATMs  
Guayaki  
IBM  
Natural Habitat Adventures  
Ron's Printing  
Sherpa's  
St. John's Episcopal Church

*We also thank the 35 groups who made gifts under \$500 this past year.*

Continued from page 2...

leaders more than anyone else who engage other volunteers on projects. It is the Crew Leaders and Cooks, Project Leaders, Tool Managers and Technical Advisors that new volunteers remember more than staff. Because of this they know better than anyone the pulse of our community. Morgan's job is to engage them and listen. Beyond filling leadership roles on our projects, there are many opportunities for these leaders to get involved behind the scenes with working groups – like the Leadership Development Team which planned and executed an amazing Leadership Summit in February of this year. Such groups inform the staff and help to empower our whole base – volunteers and leaders – to support and encourage one another as they progress through the cycle from their first project to becoming prominent leaders in the WRV community.

**Our goal is to build and support a robust restoration community of volunteers and leaders that promotes individual growth and organizational sustainability.**

All three of these focus areas: Volunteer Engagement, Trainings and Education, and Leadership Development are guided by the core values of the organization as well as a renewed goal of building a more diverse and inclusive community. Just as the ecosystems we work to restore need biodiversity to be resilient to change, so too does our community need diversity to weather the changes our world faces right now.



## Introducing New Executive Director Katherine Thompson

By Chris MacDermaid, Board Chair



The Board of Directors of Wildlands Restoration Volunteers is pleased to introduce Katherine Thompson as our new Executive Director, effective July 26, 2018. This selection is the culmination of a process which began last May, when WRV's founder Ed Self shared his intention to transition out of his role as Executive Director. Since then, the Board of Directors and WRV staff have gone through a thoughtful and thorough process to ensure that our next leader is the right person to lead WRV forward. We are very excited to have found just the right fit with Katherine.

Since 2006, Katherine has led The Nature Conservancy's community-based conservation work, first on Hawaii Island and, more recently, in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem. Her work has involved bringing diverse partners together to implement shared solutions to conserve big game migration corridors, improve water quality, and enhance habitat for native birds, among other things. She holds a master's degree in Botany from the University of Hawaii and previously worked with the U.S. Geological Survey in science communications. Katherine and her husband are raising two daughters, ages 6 and 11, and enjoy river

sports, skiing, playing music, riding bikes, and reading.

"I am incredibly honored to have the opportunity to advance WRV's mission to care for the land while strengthening our communities. I am deeply passionate about the mission and thrilled by WRV's potential to achieve it. I look forward to engaging the community in WRV's next chapter," says Katherine.

WRV's outgoing Executive Director, Ed, adds: "This whole process has been very inspiring and has brought out the best in our entire team. Katherine brings a wealth of very impressive and relevant experience from her prior role as Regional Program Director for The Nature Conservancy in Northwest Wyoming. I will continue to be fully engaged as Executive Director until Katherine arrives, pursuing a variety of important initiatives. Once Katherine officially becomes our Executive Director in late July, I will continue to transfer knowledge and support her as she comes up to speed, to ensure a smooth culmination of the transition process. I have no doubt that WRV has a bright and strong future, with our best years to come."

We are grateful for Ed's longtime leadership, which has positioned us for such success, and we are excited for what comes next for WRV. We feel fully confident that WRV is entering an exciting and promising new moment, and we appreciate the continued support and investment from our community.



3012 Sterling Circle, Suite 201  
Boulder, CO 80301

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



Join Us for our 3rd Annual Fundraiser

# Heart & Soil

Thursday, June 21, 5-9 PM | Lone Hawk Farm, Longmont

To Learn More & Purchase Tickets  
go to [Heartandsoil2018.eventbrite.com](http://Heartandsoil2018.eventbrite.com)

## Staff Profile | Kelly McVerry, Controller



Kelly's work history has always been deeply rooted in nonprofits. After graduating from the University of Pittsburgh with a degree in Finance, she headed west as an Americorps VISTA on the White Mesa Ute Reservation. Prior to joining WRV, Kelly was the Senior Accountant for the National Sports Center for the Disabled as well as Highland Apartment Homes, a low-income senior apartment building. Kelly has been managing WRV's finances since 2010 as the Controller. She has watched it grow from a small nonprofit with a half a million in assets to a million in assets at the end of 2017. Kelly is passionate about WRV's mission of engaging volunteers to heal the earth and enjoys working with the team behind the scenes to ensure that WRV can fulfill its mission. When not at work, she enjoys camping, yoga, and riding her mountain bike.



Volunteers from Conscience Bay Company help out on the Apple Valley stream restoration project

## Workplace Giving Helps WRV Heal the Land

Did you know you can donate to WRV through payroll? And that some companies will even match those contributions? It's true! WRV is a registered beneficiary of Colorado Combined Campaign and Community Shares. Please use Community Shares code 5212 or Colorado Combined Campaign code 5216, or write Wildlands Restoration Volunteers in for a different workplace giving campaign (such as United Way). If your workplace does not offer a giving campaign, contact Community Shares of Colorado to bring one to your company. And, if you have a company giving fair, we'd love to attend – please call Sarah Egolf-Tarr at 303-543-1411, ext. 108, or email [sarah@wlr.org](mailto:sarah@wlr.org). Thank you!