

TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY ANNUAL REPORT EDITION OF THE WRV DONOR NEWSLETTER

Gaining Ground

Summer 2024

Heal the land. Build community.

Your Giving Enabled Volunteers to Accomplish 150 Miles of Trail Work Since 2019

INSIDE

See how you help WRV
learn from natural disasters

Your influence -
25 years of restoration



wrv.org



ON THE COVER

Your support enabled WRV to begin a crosscut saw volunteer corps in 2019. These intrepid volunteers hike deep into designated wilderness areas, where chainsaws are forbidden, to remove fallen trees from trails. Before this type of training was offered volunteers accomplished an average of five miles of trail work yearly. The average is now up to 38 miles, as volunteers assist many Ranger Districts across Colorado with significant treefall from beetle kills, blowdowns, and fire. 2023 photo.

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This page: Thanks to you, the view is great and the future is bright for WRV's next 25 years! Here, WRV volunteers paddle home across Monarch Lake after rebuilding a bridge with primitive tools in the Indian Peaks Wilderness in 2023.

MEET VOLUNTEER AND LEGACY GIVER, INDIA WOOD:

“WRV Gives People Hope”

“WRV gives people hope and agency to make a difference,” says writer and naturalist India Wood. “WRV sees humans as part of nature and that we can make things better for humans and nature.”

That sense of hope led India to leave a gift to WRV in her will. “WRV’s focus on nature, community, and inclusion, is central to me.” She shares how easy it was to include WRV. “I wrote my will, healthcare directive and power of attorney using trustandwill.com. You never know when you’re gonna go, and my wishes are written down.”

India, who discovered allosaurus dinosaur bones at age 12, and whose home is decorated with seashells and animal skulls, books and exquisite photographs taken by her parents, first participated in a 2015 WRV post-flood project at Apple Valley near Lyons. “Half my very good friends are people



India Wood weeds myrtle spurge - a noxious weed - as a volunteer. 2024 photo.



India Wood (second from right) and fellow volunteers next to an in-stream structure they built in Sandman Creek, 2023.

**“WRV sees humans as part of nature
and that we can make things better
for humans and nature”**

I met through WRV. I served on the board from 2016 to 2020. I helped rewrite the bylaws, and chaired the Endowment Committee and the committee to hire Ed Self’s successor as executive director, Katherine Postelli.”

India is finishing two books on her solo diagonal crossings from northwest to southeast and then from northeast to southwest in Colorado. Future plans include hiking lightly-travelled trails such as the Denver Basin and the Flat Tops between Glenwood Springs and Steamboat Springs.

If you’re considering including WRV in your will, trust, life insurance, retirement plan or other account, or already have done so, please contact Sarah Egolf-Tarr at (303) 543-1411 ext. 108 or sarah@wrv.org.



Volunteers lay down a biodegradable mat to control erosion and allow native seeds time to grow after the flood damaged Eldorado Canyon, 2014. Gifts like yours help WRV spring into action long before emergency funding becomes available. 2014 photo.

**AFTER DISASTERS, WRV RESTORES -
THANKS TO YOU:**

A Look Back at WRV's First 25 Years

Imagine trying to restore a riverbank eroded down to cobblestone by a flood. Or restoring a scorched hillside and preventing rains from flooding communities below. These are skills volunteers didn't have when WRV was founded 25 years ago.

Thanks to you, WRV gained these skills and more—and shared them with many others.

“There’s just so much work to do after natural disasters,” says WRV Program Director Nate Boschmann, recalling 2012’s High Park fire west of Fort Collins. “Many public agencies tasked with recovery were stand-offish at first. You can do ineffective work with volunteers, but we proved ourselves with innovative work, like hand-spreading seeds and raking them into the ground. That was more successful than aerial seeding.”

Your support empowers people who want to do good, even after disasters—something founder and former Executive Director Ed Self witnessed. “When 9/11 occurred, we wondered whether to cancel a volunteer project planned for that coming weekend.”



WRV founder and former Executive Director, Ed Self recalls his son first joining projects as a three-year-old. “My son grew up in WRV—a magnet for goodness. I’m glad he got to experience that.” 2011 photo.

“...people shared that they wanted to come together in community and do something positive in a time of tragedy.”



Some forested areas haven't recovered due to abnormally large and high-intensity fires. Your gift amplifies volunteer efforts to replant. 2023 photo.

As the nation mourned the thousands killed and injured in New York City, Washington D.C. and Pennsylvania after terrorists seized control of passenger planes, Ed decided to proceed with the project—obliterating a road in Boulder County. “We had 100 percent attendance. Over lunch, people shared that they wanted to come together in community and do something positive in a time of tragedy.”

Nate agrees. “After the High Park fire, people were waiting for insurance payments to come through and to work on their homes. WRV was offering tangible things to do, so we ended up organizing a lot of restoration projects.”

Your support is critical to restoring the land after disasters, dating back to the Fourmile Canyon Fire in 2010 to the 2013 floods and the 2020 catastrophic wildfires in Cameron Peak, East Troublesome, and Cal Wood.

“Disaster forced us to do things outside our normal expertise, and to buy tools we didn't have before the 2013 floods,” says Nate. “These disasters were tragedies. And, in responding, we grew.”



Volunteers cast native seeds and plant willow poles on an eroded floodplain along the St. Vrain River in Apple Valley and cover them with mulch to stabilize the stream banks for future rains and runoff. 2015 Photo.



Your gift helped WRV volunteers experiment and solve problems. Here, a volunteer uses a rotary hammer drill (right) to create a hole in rocky soil to plant trees where a willow probe (left) won't do. 2017 photo.



People like you came to the rescue by donating after the High Park Fire in 2012, supplying volunteers with tools and materials to treat the burn scar before runoff had a chance to cause mudslides. Here, a volunteer loads a bale of straw on a frame pack to carry up a steep slope and mulch hand-strewn native seeds. 2013 photo.

Your support has helped WRV gain that expertise from hands-on experience, and training from both paid and volunteer experts throughout its history. “If I wanted to know what to put in a native seed mix, I’d go to [long-time volunteer and ecologist] Alan Carpenter,” recalls Ed. The improvements paid off.

“Agencies trust us more,” says Nate of WRV’s bigger role today in restoration projects. “They turn over things to us that they didn’t used to, like designing trail restoration.”

In turn, WRV shares that expertise with others.



Angie Busby, Natural Resources Manager at WRV partner organization Cal-Wood Education Center takes a break to pose during a rainy restoration event on the Cal Wood burn scar with WRV volunteers, 2023.



A volunteer carries wooden stakes up a slope to hammer into the ground, 2023. These will hold straw wattles in place in the Cal Wood burn scar. Straw wattles slow runoff and capture debris to prevent post-fire mudslides and flooding.

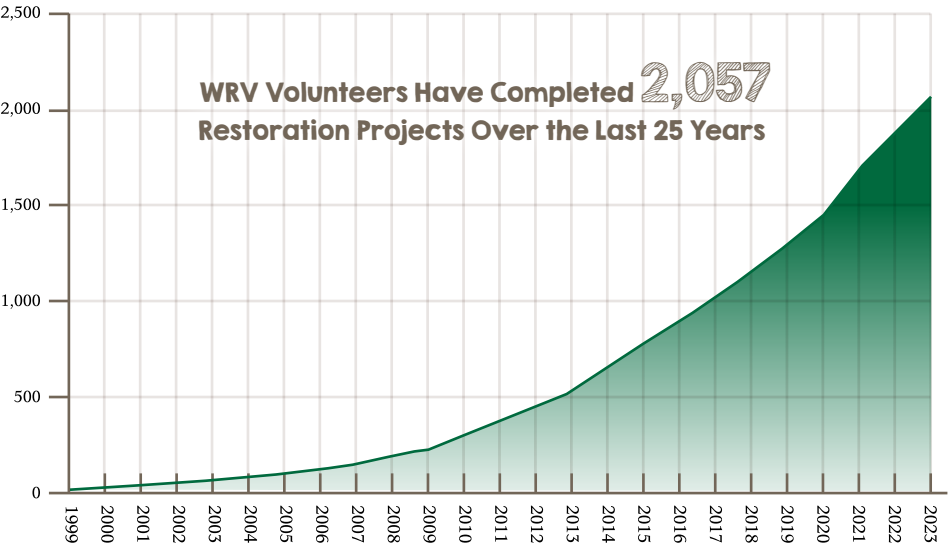
Angie Busby, Natural Resources Manager at Cal-Wood Education Center, where WRV has done multiple projects such as after the 2013 floods and 2020 wildfire, credits WRV with her training. “I learned about using straw wattles [long tubes of straw], mulching, invasive weed control, harvesting willows, and restoring stream-side zones, thanks to WRV.”

Your support helped WRV be flexible, learn, and share throughout our history. No one can say what natural disasters will come next, but thanks to you, we'll be there when the community needs us next.

QUANTIFYING YOUR IMPACT:

WRV's First 25 Years by the Numbers

Habitat and Trail Restoration Projects Completed by WRV Volunteers Over Time

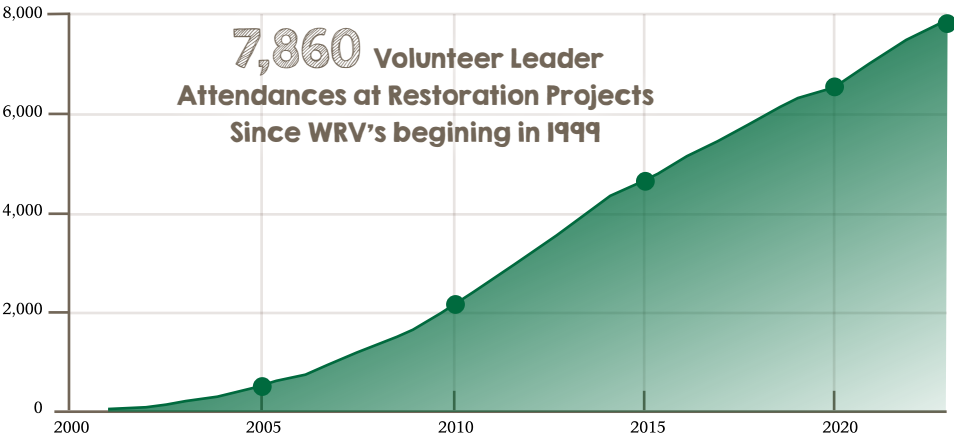


Volunteer leaders help WRV's small paid staff engage thousands of other volunteers. At left, the late Nancy Martin was a volunteer leader who participated in projects more than 200 times. Nancy passed away in 2024 and will always be a part of WRV's story—she is dearly missed. 2011 photo.



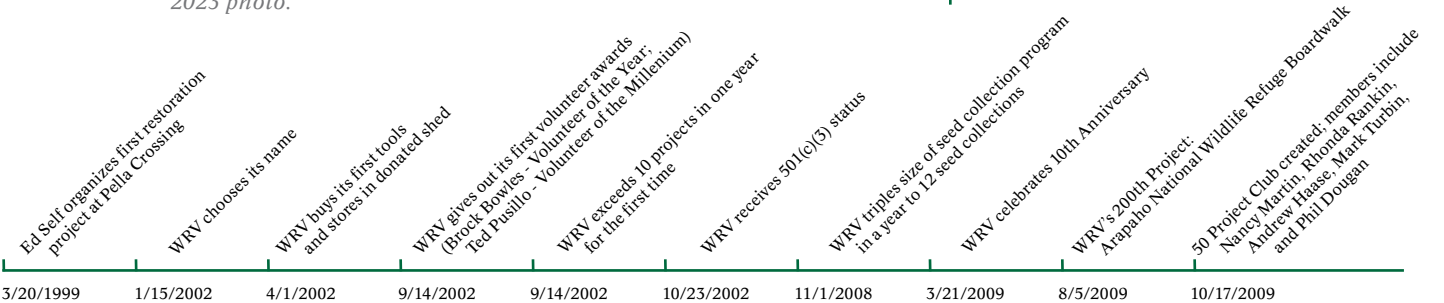
You make a difference for habitat in Longmont with your gift to WRV. Here, two volunteers brush sand-filled paint on native tree trunks to deter beavers from gnawing them down, therefore encouraging beavers to weed out the non-native tree species. 2023 photo.

Volunteer Leader Attendances at WRV Projects Over Time

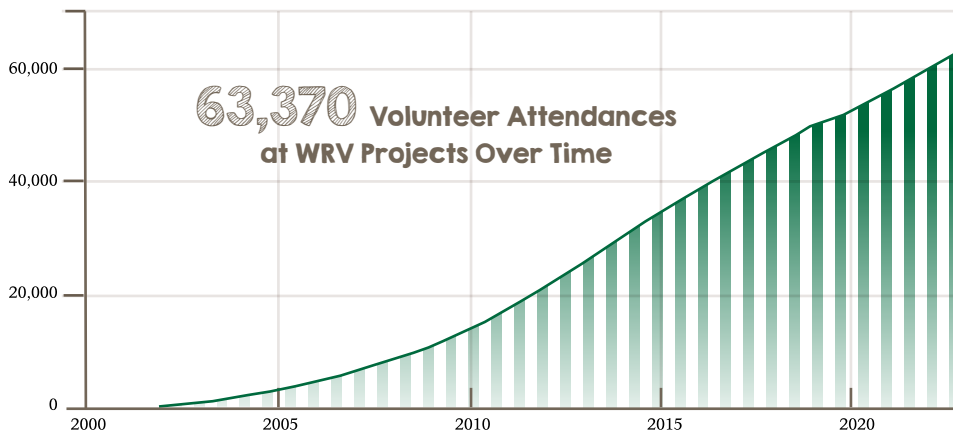


680
Individuals in the 10 Project Club

7
Individuals in the 200 Project Club



Volunteer Attendances at WRV Projects Over Time



675,051
Cumulative Volunteer Hours

353
WRV Training Classes Taught

\$15,536,973

Value of Volunteer Hours



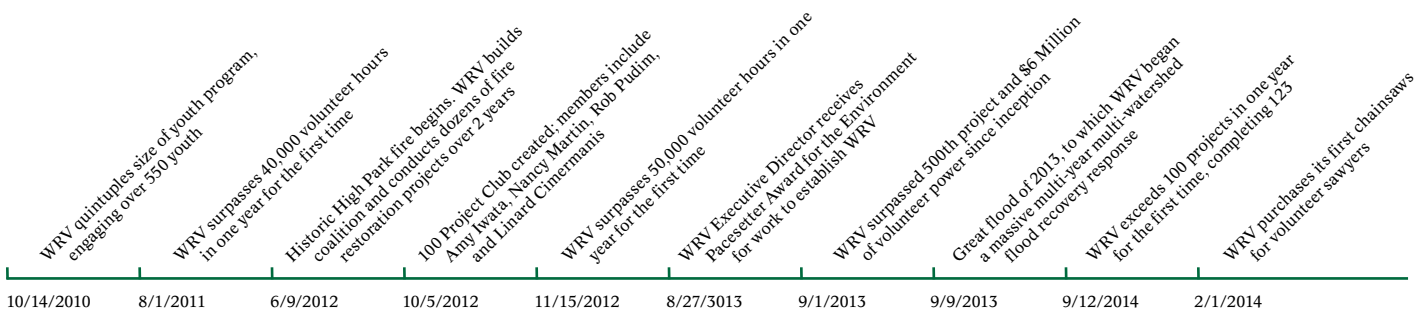
You make it possible for WRV to partner with Barr Lake State Park. Here, a young volunteer takes a break from planting and weeding to wonder at a frog in 2023. Service learning and play are equally important parts of developing a relationship with nature.



Your gifts help volunteers restore beaver habitat. Here, volunteers pose next to their hand-built "Post-Assisted Log Structure," which slows the water and gathers sediment near the border between Colorado and Wyoming in 2023.



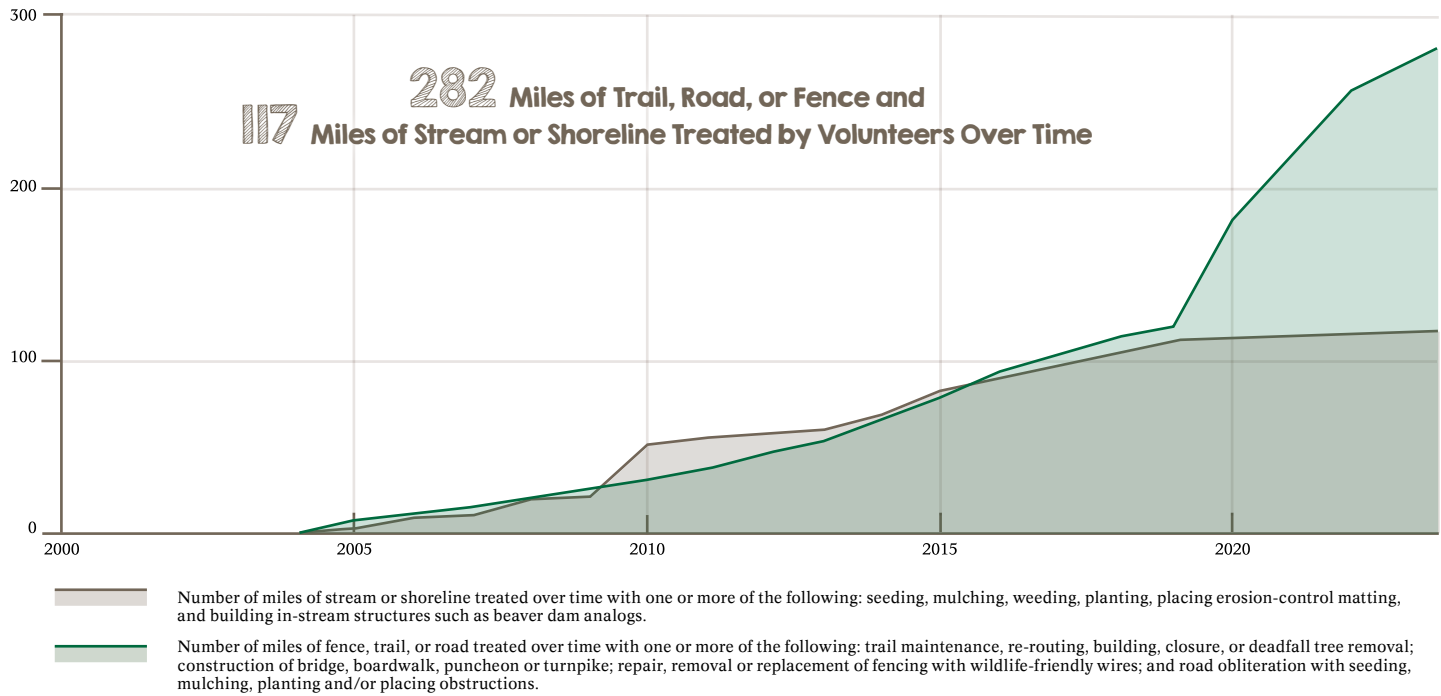
Donor support allows volunteers to address challenges posed along popular urban trails, such as streamside trampling along Coal Creek. Here, a young volunteer plants native plants to show where human visitors are and aren't encouraged to walk in 2023. WRV partners here include Thorne Nature Experience and the City of Lafayette.



QUANTIFYING YOUR IMPACT:

WRV's First 25 Years by the Numbers

Miles Treated Over Time



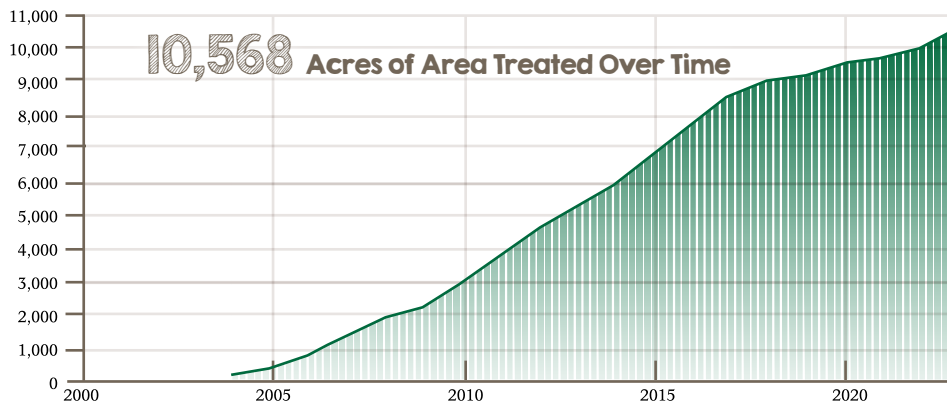
Here, plants grown out from seeds hand-collected by volunteers are prepared for transplanting back to the unique landscape from which they came: Summit Lake Park, in the shadow of Mount Blue Sky, Colorado. 2023 photo.



Your help allows WRV to offer sawyer trainings like the one depicted here. Since 2019, WRV volunteers have trained with experts to safely buck and fell trees using crosscut saws. This has enabled a large increase in the miles of trail treated by WRV per year. 2019 photo.



Acres Treated Over Time



Number of acres treated over time with one or more of the following: planting, mulching, placing erosion control matting, weeding, seeding, building erosion control structures, building meadow re-wetting structures, forest thinning, and building burn piles.



Your support allows volunteers to steward Denver Mountain Parks properties. Here, a volunteer de-compacts the soil in a trampled area of Daniels Park, south of Denver. Later, native seeds are hand-spread and mulched. 2023 photo.



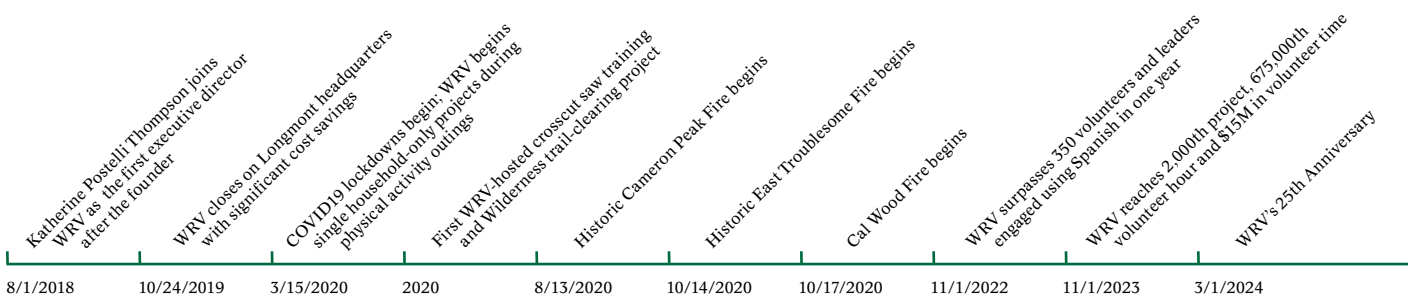
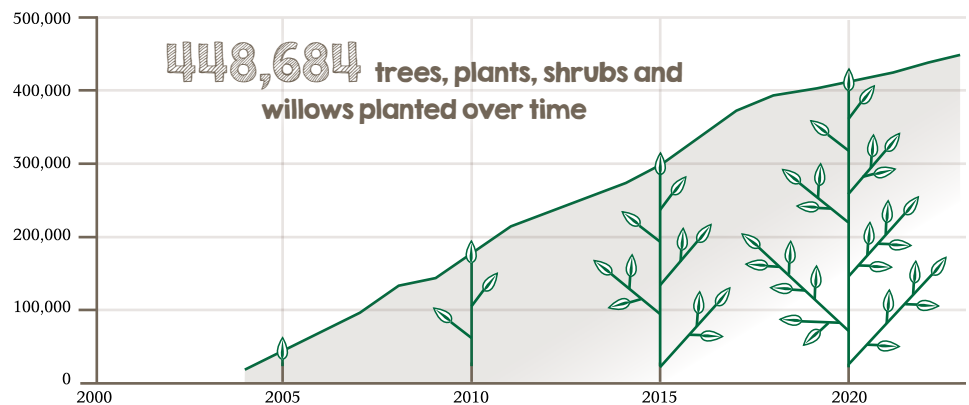
45,806 Person-Hours
of Native Seed Collection

18,704 Person-Hours
of Chainsaw Work

\$15,536,973
Value of Volunteer Hours

Your help allows WRV to offer youth restoration programming since 2004. Here, a young volunteer with partner organization Cultiva plants a tree to restore a segment of trail that had been rerouted to avoid a wetland in the Indian Peaks Wilderness in 2005.

Trees, Shrubs and Plants Planted Over Time



THANK YOU, SPONSORS, PARTNERS, AND DONORS! Mar 1, 2023 - Feb 29, 2024

Your Generosity Allows Us to Build Community and Heal the Land!

We are deeply grateful to all supporters – you are vital to WRV's success! We pore over these details to get everything right, but if you notice an error, please let us know by calling 303-543-1411, x108. Thank you!

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\$50,000-\$99,999

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Watershed Coalition
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One Hope
OtterCares Foundation
PagerDuty
Pinnacle Assurance
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Taylor, Roth and Company
TBK Bank
United Healthcare Group
Voya Financial
Wild Ones Natural Landscapers
WorkDay
Xentify Corp



Your support allows WRV to engage youth in restoration service learning. Here, Boulder youth pose behind the in-stream structure they built to slow water and increase beaver habitat in Boulder County, 2023.

IN LOVING MEMORY OF A WRV LEADER:

Katherine Postelli

Katherine Postelli joined Wildlands Restoration Volunteers as Executive Director in 2018. Under her leadership, WRV healed the land and built community on a scale we hadn't imagined.

One of Katherine's most enduring legacies is the permanent home she secured for WRV in Longmont. Her vision and your support mean that WRV now has a community hub for volunteer trainings, gatherings for supporters, board and staff meetings, and a professional-grade kitchen for preparing meals in advance for projects, and more.

Katherine was the leader WRV needed through a period of immense change. She inspired, empowered, and prioritized the development of staff, volunteers, donors, and partners such that our community is stronger than ever. Thanks to her leadership, we are weathering this leadership transition as well.

Katherine's resilience was remarkable. After taking medical leave in April 2022, she returned part-time to WRV in January



Katherine Postelli, Owen Emerson photo, 2019.

2023 and resumed her duties as Executive Director in July. Her commitment to WRV epitomized her grit in the face of adversity. We pledge to continue her legacy. WRV's board of directors has hired a search firm to find our next executive director.

To see and share any photos and thoughts about Katherine, please visit wrv.org/about-us/staff-and-jobs/ and click "In Memoriam."

Thank you, Katherine. We miss you.

Katherine was the leader WRV needed through a period of immense change



Katherine Postelli, Kelly McVerry, and Lisa Kallman Carter cook at the Masontown Women's Trail Project. 2019 photo.

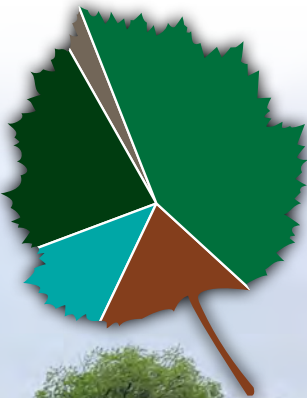
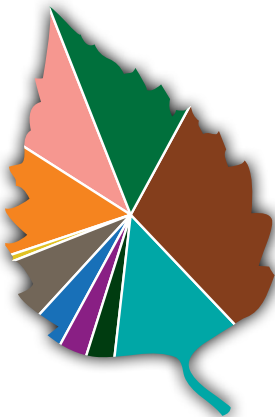
MARCH 1, 2023 - FEBRUARY 29, 2024

WRV's Financial Story

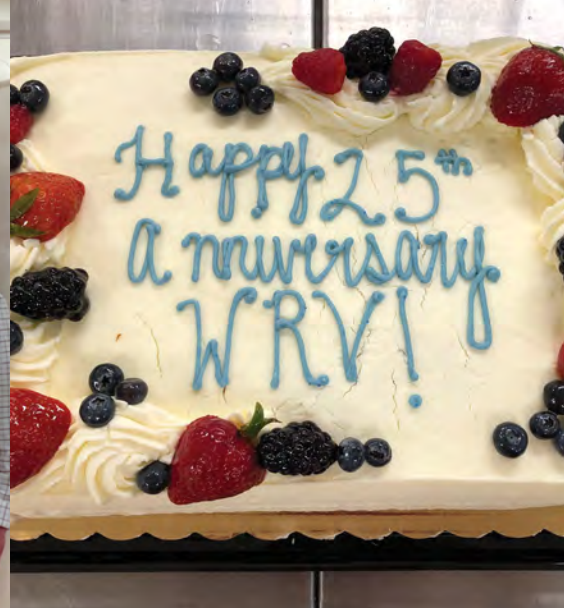
Thanks to your gifts, WRV completed 219 restoration projects and training events in 2023, including the 2,000th project in our 25-year history! Support from people like you is crucial to recruit volunteers, build partnerships, train volunteer leaders, and turn every \$1 donated by an individual into \$7.12 worth of restoration and community building. Thank you for making this all possible! Your support helped WRV weather a challenging year due to the death of our Executive Director, Katherine Postelli, after her extended medical leave. While WRV's board approved a small operating deficit in 2023, you helped us overcome it by the end of the year, with some to cover projects planned in future years – thank you!

Operational Expenses	Percent
Natural Habitats	14%
Sustainable Trails	30%
Youth & Families	14%
Healthy Forests	3%
Native Seeds	3%
Vital Rivers	4%
Training & Community Building	7%
Invasive Weeds	1%
General Admin	14%
Fundraising	10%

Operational Revenue	Percent
Individuals	21%
Foundations	10%
Corporations	6%
Nonprofits	11%
Other	1%



Gifts from people like you enable the restoration of natural areas near the metro Denver area. Here, mother and son work to remove invasive weeds before planting native species near First Creek in Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge on a rainy June day in 2023.



WRV THANKS OUR HEART AND SOIL CIRCLE DONORS

A guest at the April 2024 Heart and Soil Circle Annual Luncheon writes:

"This year's event was very special! The information about carbon sequestration was wonderfully presented by two passionate scientists."

WRV's Heart and Soil Circle recognizes donors who make a significant investment in our mission. These include gifts totaling \$1,000 or more in a year, or a legacy gift left in a will, trust, retirement plan, life insurance policy or other account. Circle donors receive invitations to the Annual Luncheon and other events, and recognition (unless anonymity is requested) in our Annual Report. Questions? Please contact WRV Director of Development Sarah Egolf-Tarr at 303-543-1411 ext. 108 or sarah@wrv.org.

Photos shown from Heart and Soil Circle Annual Luncheon; 2024.

Gaining Ground

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We welcome content and images for future editions of the newsletter. Please submit materials to info@wrv.org.

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