

THE ANNUAL REPORT EDITION OF THE DONOR NEWSLETTER OF WILDLANDS RESTORATION VOLUNTEERS

Gaining Ground

Summer 2025

Heal the land. Build community.

You supported volunteers to install 152 in-stream structures to slow the flow and restore habitat!

INSIDE

Abra Cadabra! Fish reappear in northern Colorado creek - thanks to you

You're bringing nature closer for folks who use mobility assistance



wrv.org

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ON THE COVER

Thanks to you, 407 volunteers rolled up their sleeves at 13 river restoration events across Colorado in 2024. Together, they:

- **Removed trash and invasive plants and planted native species**
- **Built 152 habitat-boosting structures, including**
 - **Post-Assisted Log Structures**
 - **Beaver Dam Analogs**
 - **Large woody debris installations**

These simple, cost-effective solutions transform degraded streams into thriving habitats. And, they're great for volunteers who like to jump in with both feet!

This page: Thanks to your support, WRV volunteers:

- Learned from Indigenous food expert, Narissa Ribera of Ch'il Indigenous Foods (above) about conserving culturally vital native plants for traditional food heritage
- Cooked over 1,610 meals for field projects in 2024
- Gathered in WRV's pro-level kitchen for family cooking events.

30 SECONDS CAN BE TRANSFORMATIONAL

“WRV’s Work is Unquestionably Beneficial to the Planet”

When James Kirby’s 401(k) administrator prompted him to name beneficiaries to his accounts, the software developer included family members first, and then he decided that for the ‘entities’ category, “WRV is the one! I respect the mission, and the people involved.”

Including WRV as a beneficiary on a retirement account took James just 30 seconds. “The changes were visible. I got the confirmation email immediately. It was secure to do online.”

“It felt good listing WRV alongside family members. Also, it’s easy to do a percentage split between any number of beneficiaries, so if, somewhere down the line, I feel family needs more, I could easily change it.”

Family was one of the reasons James started volunteering nearly ten years ago. “I’ve had nature in my blood since before I could read because of my bird-loving grandma.” James’ grandmother read favorite bedtime stories to him from a Reader’s Digest book about nature. When he decided to get involved in the community as an adult, WRV was a good fit. Other volunteers may recognize him as New Volunteer of the Year from 2016.



James levels the ground for a boardwalk on Masontown Trail near Frisco with WRV in 2018

“WRV is the one! I respect the mission, and the people involved.”

James encourages anyone considering a similar designation. “Chances are that it’s an intuitive, self-guided process of filling out a few fields and clicking ‘save.’ It’s an easy way to create a legacy for yourself.”

When James is bothered by the news, he looks to WRV. “Focusing on something beneficial – and WRV’s work is unquestionably beneficial to the planet – is meaningful. Knowing that there are groups and communities like WRV, promoting positive change, gives me hope.”

James looks forward to volunteering at Summit Lake near Mount Blue Sky this summer.

Thank you, James!

Inspired by James to list WRV as a beneficiary to an account, will or trust? Please contact WRV Director of Development Sarah Egolf-Tarr at sarah@wrv.org or 303-543-1411, ext. 108.

WRV’s Tax ID or EIN is 46-0505155.



James enjoys a well-earned burrito after volunteering to repair trails up to Grays & Torrey’s (two 14,000 ft peaks) with WRV in 2019.

Breaking Barriers: Your Gifts Build Forest Service Accessible Wetland Trail

NEW TRAIL DESIGN ENSURES FUTURE RELIABILITY FOR THOSE WHO USE WHEELCHAIRS

Imagine gliding through wildflower meadows on a trail that stays perfectly smooth, even when the wetlands below are soggy. You've helped WRV begin to build that trail! Lady Moon Trail is the Canyon Lakes Ranger District's first-ever Forest Service Trail Accessibility Guidelines (FSTAG) compliant pathway. Trails like this are rare in Colorado and nationwide.

Why This Matters

FSTAG trails are designed to be easily navigated by people using a variety of mobility devices. Spanning seasonal wet meadows filled with birdsong, Lady Moon's series of walkways provides a lasting way to include a broader community, thanks to a new approach. When completed, concrete and helical piles (giant screws) will keep the trail stable and smooth, even in wet conditions.



An engineering volunteer from Wiss, Janney, Elstner Associates (WJE) uses a specialized leveling tool to mark where cuts will go. Dale Statler, WRV 2024 Volunteer of the Year, works for WJE engineering and designed the boardwalk pro bono.



Project Manager Kaleigh Keohane uses an excavator with blue auger attachment and level to drill helical piles (huge screws that provide the foundation for the concrete path).



Volunteers mixed and poured about 1,300 pounds of grout into 40 sills (horizontal beams that support the boardwalk).



Kaleigh uses an excavator to lift and place concrete boardwalks with assistance from Dale. All 34 20-ft sections took two weeks to set, adding up to 680 ft of concrete boardwalk.

The WRV Difference

After decades of partnership, Forest Service staff knew that **WRV, with your help, could get this job done**. So, they approached WRV Program Director Nate Boschmann. Nate enthusiastically collaborated to design the trail with the Forest Service.

Engineering Wonders

Despite WRV volunteers' expertise, the components this trail requires can't be made on-site or in a WRV tool yard. Professionals are needed for the molding of large specialty concrete sections.

Enter WRV superstar volunteer and engineer, Dale Statler. Dale has been volunteering for years with WRV and often discusses trail construction with Nate.

"I love the mental gymnastics of design challenges," says Dale. He and his employer WJE manufactured the concrete pieces to assemble on site. WJE staff also volunteered time on site, on the

After decades of partnership, Forest Service staff knew that WRV, with your help, could get this job done.

project led by WRV Trails Project Manager Kaleigh Keohane. Each steel helical pile is set precisely to keep the concrete pathway flat. It's an exacting process using optical survey equipment and heavy machinery.

What's Next

Work will continue into 2026 to complete a two-mile loop trail.

Your generosity isn't just building a trail — it's building belonging for people with mobility challenges.



Dale stands on a completed stretch of the concrete walkway.



Your support helped replace missing habitat in Campbell Valley waterways using “induced meander” structures developed by Bill Zeedyk - see back cover to learn about Bill’s recent visit to WRV.

You Brought Campbell Valley Back to Life - See the Transformation!

PROOF THAT YOUR SUPPORT MAKES A DIFFERENCE

Do you want proof that your donation to WRV’s habitat restoration is making a difference? You need look no further than Campbell Valley, between Fort Collins and Laramie.

Picture this: an eagle soars over newly meandering streams in Campbell Valley, where just decades ago, 40-foot deep erosion gullies bled sediment into the watershed. Thanks to you and WRV volunteers, what was once a disappearing habitat is now thriving, complete with returning fish and moose sightings.

The threat and the turning point

In the 1980s, several groups joined to preserve the land. They named it the Laramie Foothills Mountains-to-Plains Project. State experts agree: This is a critical conservation area.

Species migration threatened by development

The Campbell Creek area, situated between mountains and plains, is a transition zone. While many other such areas became housing and shopping centers, Campbell Valley became a conservation priority.

A history of degradation

In the early 1900s, an irrigation company diverted too much water through Campbell Creek. The raging torrent washed away the entire ecosystem. The resulting 40+ foot deep, unstable, bare dirt canyon did not nurture flora or fauna. Water carried away five million tons of sediment in the first decade. Two thousand tons of sediment have eroded each year



A volunteer-built “Zuni Bowl” rock feature prevents stream “head cutting” (a type of erosion). The bowl structure is so named because it has been used by the Zuni Pueblo people since ancient times; 2018 photo.

Last year, for the first time in living memory, Campbell Creek supported fish.

since then, enough to fill 200 dump trucks! The results were **polluted water**, degraded irrigation infrastructure, and **lost fish and insects**.

Simple tools to rebuild habitat

Beginning in 2010, WRV volunteers **reintroduced meanders** into streams and gullies. They used cutting-edge techniques developed by Bill Zeedyk to “let the water do the work.” [See back cover to read about a WRV event honoring Zeedyk.] Then, volunteers replanted streamside plants and **built new wetlands** out of sedimented reservoirs.



Volunteers hammer posts into a Campbell Valley waterway to build a “beaver dam analog,” a structure that will capture sediment, slow the flow, and reconnect the creek to the floodplain. The posts were cut by WRV sawyer volunteers thinning stands of forest to reduce fire risk.



Species of Conservation Concern your support of WRV may have helped due to their historic presence at Campbell Valley include, left-right, top-bottom: bald eagle, golden eagle, burrowing owl, ferruginous hawk, Preble's Meadow jumping mouse, Tonwsend's big-eared bat, fringed myotis bat, northern leopard frog.

Photographers in order: Jerry McFarland, Hal Trachtenberg, Colorado Parks & Wildlife, Jan Arendtsz, sciencesource.com, Thomas A. Benson, BLM Utah, and Andrew Kraemer.

Why this matters

The new meanders **stabilized acres of habitat**. Meanders captured sediment in the creek, reducing it by 30%. The new vegetation rebuilds soil, cover, and forage for native creatures. Ninety percent of Colorado wildlife depends on streams and streamside habitat. The wetland creation **boosted water quality**. New meanders make the valley **more resilient to climate change by recharging groundwater**.

WRV's Campbell Valley work is now a case study in Colorado State University's watershed restoration research, thanks to Dr. Ellen Wohl, a world-renowned scientist.

Your impact in action

You have helped us begin to reverse the harm caused to Campbell Valley. **Last year, for the first time in living memory, Campbell Creek supported fish.** Someday soon, it might even support the most expert restorationists of all - beaver.

With gratitude to volunteers, donors, all partners in the Laramie Foothills Mountains to Plains Project, and Roberts Ranch.

YOUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS!

OFFICIAL 2024 RESULTS



211 PROJECTS
and **TRAININGS** held



25.5 MILES OF TRAIL maintenance,
reconstruction, or enhancement



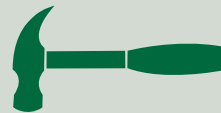
10,401 native plants, shrubs,
trees, and willows **PLANTED**



774 YOUTH under 18 **ENGAGED**



3,719 VOLUNTEER attendances



931 FEET of boardwalk,
bridge, puncheon, deck or turnpike **BUILT**

563 VOLUNTEERS
engaged using **SPANISH**

iHola!

3.2 MILES of **STREAM**
riparian weeds surveyed and **REMOVED**



\$977,286 VALUE of labor
and expertise contributed to Colorado's
NATURAL HERITAGE

152 IN-STREAM STRUCTURES
built to slow the flow and **RESTORE HABITAT**



10.1 ACRES of **STREAMSIDE** area **RESTORED**

12 ACRES of **FOREST** thinned
to restore forest or grassland health



35 ACRES PLANTED
with potted or sod materials



2.3 MILES of fencing built, repaired,
or removed to **BENEFIT WILDLIFE**

Because of you, 2024 was transformative for WRV!

Your generosity made it possible to:

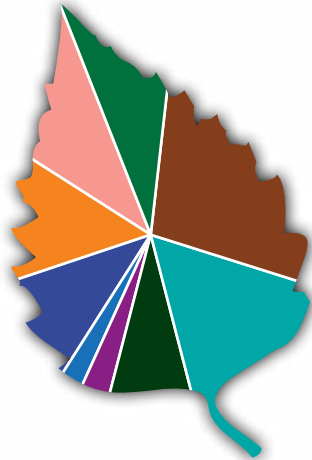
- Complete 188 volunteer restoration projects and 23 training courses across 13 Colorado counties
- Train 300 new volunteer leaders and build eight new partnerships with land management agencies, schools, municipalities, private landowners, etc.
- Turn every \$1 donated into \$7.35 of volunteer-powered restoration and community building

You also helped WRV strengthen its foundation—literally and figuratively:

- You supported the hiring of our new Executive Director, Dave Elmore, previously of Paradox Sports
- While WRV incurred a small operating deficit; when capital contributions received for long-term investments are included, we ended the year with an overall surplus
- With your support, we launched the Katherine Postelli Legacy Campaign to:
 - Pay off our Longmont headquarters
 - Cover the expenses of building ownership for 10 years
 - Create signage and a garden as a memorial
 - Honor our late Executive Director’s memory (Contributions to this campaign are still welcome!)

Thank you for investing in WRV’s future. Your support grows more than landscapes; it grows community.

Operational Expenses	Percent
Natural Habitats	8%
Sustainable Trails	28%
Youth & Families	16%
Healthy Forests	8%
Plants & Pollinators	3%
Vital Rivers	2%
Training & Community Building	11%
General Admin	14%
Fundraising	10%



Operational Revenue	Percent
Individuals	22%
Federal	38%
State	6%
County	4%
Municipal	6%
Foundation Grants	7%
Corporations	6%
Community Partners	11%
Other & In-Kind	1%



- Thanks to your support, WRV volunteers:
- Led pack llamas (each carrying up to 80 lbs of gear) deep into Quartz Ridge Trail
 - Cleared fallen trees using traditional crosscut saws—keeping wilderness trails accessible
 - Preserved the wild character of Pagosa Springs’ backcountry

THANK YOU, SPONSORS, PARTNERS, AND DONORS! Mar 1, 2024 - Feb 28, 2025

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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Wild Ones



*Renea Roberts (left) regales an audience at the Odd Fellows Lodge in Boulder about the making of her docuseries, **Thinking Like Water**, about the work of restoration legend Bill Zeedyk (seated, front, second from right).*

WRV HONORS A RESTORATION LEGEND AND THE STORY-TELLER WHO CAPTURED HIS VISION

Thinking Like Water - an Evening of Wisdom and Watershed Healing

Bill Zeedyk and Renea Roberts speak about hand-built structures in habitat restoration

WRV showcased Bill Zeedyk's revolutionary wetland work through a film screening and live Q&A with filmmaker Renea Roberts this April.

Bill's Work Changed Things

Bill's hand-built restoration structures (used by WRV teams) have revived crucial habitat for sage grouse and streams. The film reveals how "thinking like water" transforms degraded landscapes into thriving natural systems. [See page 4 for proof: the methods' stunning success in Campbell Valley].

An Unforgettable Afternoon

Heart and Soil Circle donors enjoyed an **exclusive pre-film reception** with Bill and Renea. One attendee shared:

"The movie was great, and we loved meeting Bill. It really helped solidify why we support WRV."

You can rent the inspiring docuseries:
<https://vimeo.com/ondemand/thinkinglikewater>
or use this QR code



With gratitude to our sponsors:
Cool Boulder and IOOF Boulder Lodge #9.



Left to right, Renea Roberts, filmmaker, Chris Vaughan and Bill Zeedyk joined the Heart and Soil Circle reception before the film screening.

WRV'S HEART AND SOIL CIRCLE

WRV's Heart and Soil Circle honors visionary donors who make a lasting impact through either:

- **Major Gifts:** \$1,000+ in a single year
- **Legacy Giving:** Planned future gifts via wills, trusts, retirement plans, life insurance, or other accounts

Together, these investments will help sustain WRV's mission for generations.

Heart and Soil Circle members enjoy:

- Exclusive event invitations
- Recognition in our Annual Report (unless you tell us you prefer to give anonymously)

We love celebrating your generosity!

Questions? Please contact WRV Director of Development Sarah Egolf-Tarr at sarah@wrv.org or 303-543-1411, ext. 108.

Gaining Ground

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