

Red Hill trailwork in August



Two-and-a-half decades of shared success is a testament to both the adaptability of Roaring Fork Outdoor Volunteers and the stability of our community. Starting from our very first project, the impact of RFOV has multiplied and expanded through the combined efforts of government, business, civic groups, and individuals like yourself.

As we celebrate our silver anniversary, RFOV is more motivated than ever to go for the gold! In our 25th anniversary year, we have prepared ourselves to face the challenges of the future by reaffirming the identity of public lands stewards: everyone is welcome to join together and work together, to come together and sweat together, to build together and – quite simply – be together.

It's community stewardship, after all, that distinguishes RFOV. We're proud that we could return to the site of our founding project in 1995 (the Scout Trail) for our first trailwork this May, still working hand-in-hand with the City of Glenwood Springs. Amidst our many enduring relationships, RFOV enjoys adding new partners, to ensure that our shared outdoor spaces are truly shared equally. From the top of Independence Pass to the banks of the Colorado River, we put stewardship into action this summer. We re-built trails (like Light Hill, in Basalt), we strengthened partnerships (with the Town of Marble, for instance), and we committed to the long-term healing of community and landscape in the aftermath of the Grizzly Creek Fire. This spirit of togetherness is the reason I love living here. We live in a special place, but it's the people that make it truly unique.

With your help and support, RFOV has overcome the difficulties of 2020 and created a year – and an anniversary! – truly worth celebrating. The outdoors are important to the identity of our region, and it's your passion for stewardship that is motivating: I'm inspired for 2021, and I believe that as you read the story of our 2020 accomplishments, you'll be excited too!

Sincerely, Ron Rash Executive Director



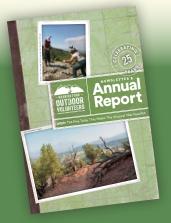
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#### BOARD

Ryan Vugteveen Chair Randy Gold Vice Chair Chris Geiger Secretary James Heelan Treasurer Katie Ertl Jonathan Feldman Rob Leavitt Rebecca Polan Christina Provenzano Tory Thomas Erin Zalinski **For 25 years,** RFOV has harnessed the power of community members like yourself to build and maintain our local trails and restore our local habitats. WHY? We believe in the power of stewardship, which is caring for the things you care about. SINCE 1995, we've inspired generations of public lands stewards to





### A NOTE ABOUT OUR 2020 Annual Report

To every journey, there's a beginning, a middle, and an end. This autumn — with our 2020 Annual Report — RFOV is sharing with you the journey of our 2020 project season: it starts with the observations that

allow us to plan, collaborate, and take action! Join us for a hike, and if you're an adult, you can journal too! This was an unusual year, and so we're proud to present you with the story of our summer by celebrating the five tools that made it possible!

# **1. OBSERVATION**

Wherever you go outdoors you can't help but take notice of nature! Our local landscapes are ever-changing; our forests and rivers are dynamic. So RFOV makes a habit of making observations. We give each student whom we bring outdoors a **field journal** to write and sketch and practice the skill of **observation**. Join us for a hike, and if you're an adult, you can draw too! It's incredible how a simple field



journal becomes a record of experiences, which then transforms into a source of inspiration for future stewardship.



That's because it's not just notes in a dusty notebook. Nope. Each field journal builds a personal history of a place. Over time, RFOV's observations spark questions. And though it's not every "Why?" that can be answered with an "I know!", the ideas we glean from field observations serve as the basis of holistic conversations with our land management partners regarding trail use and habitat concerns.

The work of RFOV is built from months – or years – of observation. Stewardship, too, not only lasts the test of time, but grows exponentially when individual actions become community efforts. RFOV creates public lands stewards through those very same efforts. We unify the community in stewardship: our starting point is the observation that you are integral to the success of our shared outdoors.

# 2. COLLABORATION + PLANNING

With so many outdoor spaces in our region, we often are asked, "How do you know where to focus?" The answer: collaboration!



Beginning every September, an RFOV committee sorts through an enormous list of potential projects. Although the initial list is long (stretching to 50 projects!), the committee ensures that RFOV provides volunteer opportunities with a variety of locations, times, and types of work so that we can include as many community members as possible. Staff then talk with partners at 14 different land management agencies to bring those ideas to fruition. The clearest sign of RFOV's participatory

planning process is the small flags you might glimpse dotting your

favorite outdoor space.

Every part of project planning is collaborative because every **RFOV** project benefits the community - that includes you! With that goal in mind, we mark out projects on the ground (in trail-talk, we "flag" them) so that we can be sure we've chosen, for example, the hiking route that maximizes views and minimizes slope erosion.

continued >



### **COLLABORATION + PLANNING** continued

So what happens when, after months of project planning, site visits, and partner consultations, a change occurs? We pluck that little flag from the hillside and set it down in the next best location. Stewardship planning, after all, is both science and art: we need a smidgen of math, a bit of biology, a taste for beauty, and good vibes! Stewardship, in other words, is collaborative at its core.







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# 3. ACTION!

This year, as we have for 25 years now, RFOV made things happen. **Action**. Effort. Tangible impact.

Our work depends on volunteers and donors like you, and the success of your trailwork depends on the tool in your hand. This summer we returned again and again to one very versatile tool: the **McLeod** (pronounced "mih-CLOUD"). A frankenstein hoe-and-rake combination invented for use in



wildland firefighting, the McLeod is our first choice for grading and tampingdown a trail. And while those actions are part of trail-maintenance, they're also fundamental to trail-building, and this summer we built miles of trail!

The thrill of the McLeod (and yes, there is a visceral excitement!) is in making an idea a reality. The value of volunteer stewardship can be found in the clarity that community action brings to shared ideas. The results of stewardship are,

at their heart, the physical proof of our regional health. When we take a McLeod in hand, we challenge mind and muscle, we coordinate our individual actions, and we relax afterwards as a satisfied team.

There's nothing like a hard day's work to make a pizza disappear, but **the confidence we build** 



together is fuel for the next project! You **get confidence** in the ability to make a tangible impact on your community. And you **give confidence to others** by sharing an outdoor experience.

## 4. SHARING

Three green squares, bundled-up together – not so special it would seem! But unfurl an RFOV **tablecloth** and curiosity grows. Hikers and bikers gather round. Volunteers step forward. And for a brief period of time, our little green tablecloth opens up an entire world of learning, of **sharing**, and of stewardship community.

For RFOV, it's no exaggeration that by unfolding our tablecloth we begin a conversation that's foundational to our collective identity: people approach an RFOV table as trail **users** but leave as trail **participants**. Public lands stewards play an active role in our landscape.



Any age, ability, or background we like to say: an **RFOV** tablecloth makes that inclusive identity possible. In May, it offered a place for residents to discuss a surge in traffic up Red Mountain; in June, a spot to gather before a Tour the Trails hike; in July, a focal point for Aspen tourists; in August, the place for snacks and drinks after a hard day's work at Thomas Lakes; in September, a starting location for students on their trail days; in October, an introduction to RFOV's 25th anniversary celebrations.

RFOV's continued success as a community organization is



built on creating and sustaining the kind of vital relationships that make our region a vibrant place to live. In a summer of disruption – pandemic and

wildfire – our trailhead tables provided a clear demonstration that RFOV's commitment to stewardship is enduring. We care about our community because we care about you.



Lake Christine to Grizzly Creek: Now for the Future



Glenwood Canyon Restoration Alliance Launches



Art Initiative Prompts Students to Share Their View of Nature

### Aspen Daily News



Light Hill Trail rerouting to provide another way of enjoying mountain peaks

### THEASPENTIMES



25 Years of Roaring Fork Outdoor Volunteers



RFOV Promotes Art Through Your Window

### POSTINDEPENDENT



Scout Trail Clean-up Model for Future Projects

# **5. ADAPTATION**

Least eye-catching of our equipment is the brewer's blanket. With its webbing handles and recycled fabric, this tool ain't attractive, that's for sure!

Not glamorous, but useful – the brewer's blanket is a critical tool for RFOV because it can be used in a variety of situations by volunteers of any skill. In the same way, RFOV takes pride in our adaptability as an organization, all the more necessary



Filling baggies with seed was a new volunteer job for a new type of community outreach, all in response to the viral pandemic.

given the sudden changes of 2020. Much as everyone has adapted their lives individually, so too has RFOV responded collectively. We strive to



meet the needs of the community, even – or especially – as those needs evolve. **Stewardship is important everyday,** everywhere, for everyone.

So when schools closed this spring, RFOV took inspiration from our brewer's blankets, to figuratively and literally carry our message of stewardship to newly isolated schoolchildren. Staff and volunteers worked tirelessly to assemble more than

1,700 baggies of wildflower seeds for students to grow at home. And with (slightly larger) bags, RFOV volunteers returned to Lake Christine, collecting a truckload of invasive thistle. Our restoration work in Basalt's burn area is a prelude to much larger projects next year, planned for the Grizzly Creek Fire area.

RFOV, with the efforts of you and of your neighbors, has **adapted to the evolving needs of our community**. Just as a brewer's blanket can't be used by any one individual alone, we encourage everyone to take charge of our outdoors, so we can share in the weight and in the legacy of stewardship together.



Bags of invasive thistle the Lake Christine Bur

# GET INVOLVED

### WE'RE OVERACHIEVERS!

RFOV is a small staff dedicated to a very large region. And across this Rocky Mountain wonderland we're united by the greatest resource we share together – the outdoors.





### Donate rfov.org/donate

### **EVERYONE AGREES:**

RFOV is essential to our shared outdoors, and you are essential to RFOV. We're grateful for your financial support at any level. Your donation to RFOV enables us to

### MAKE COMMUNITY WITH OUR OWN HANDS.

# Volunteer

### THE V IN RFOV = VOLUNTEER

Any age, any ability, any background. If you want to keep our community healthy, volunteer with RFOV. You don't need to swing a pick-ax (unless you want to!) because we offer many volunteer opportunities that are non-physical. ALL YOU NEED IS A DESIRE TO GET DIRTY!



s removed from n Area

### THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS, SUPPORTERS + PARTNERS

### Presenting Sponsor (\$10,000)



Community Builder (\$5,000 - \$9,999)



### Bridge Builder (\$2,500 - \$4,499)















#### **Realtors for Stewardship**









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Outdoor Volunteers and all that they do. Without them some of our most

ionic trails would fall

volunteers represent what it truly means

to give back to your

something we stand firmly behind.

local community,

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into disarray. The organization and its

#### SUPPORTING PARTNERS AND BUSINESSES

We've made every effort to ensure all of our donors are acknowledged in this report. Please let us know if we've made an error. We appreciate your support and understanding.

ACES

Ascendigo Autism Services Aspen Country Day School Aspen Cycling Club Aspen Ski Company Aspen Valley Land Trust **Basalt Regional Library Berthod Motors** The Buddy Program Bureau of Land Management Challenge Aspen City of Aspen Parks and Recreation City of Rifle Colorado Parks and Wildlife Dos Gringos Fat City Farmers FirstBank Garfield County Garfield County Public Library District Glenwood Hot Springs Great Outdoors Colorado High Mountain Institute **Highwater Farm** Hotel Colorado

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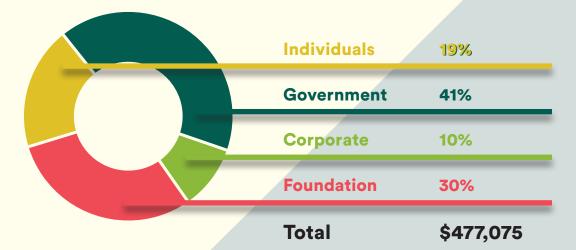
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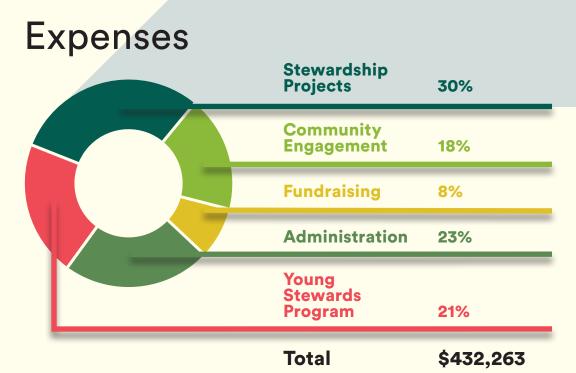
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# 2020 FINANCIALS

# Income





### 2020 Stewardship Impact\*

For every \$1 devoted to stewardship projects in 2020, RFOV created \$4 in stewardship value - that's over \$400,000! Our work with federal and state land managers created \$160,001 in value across all 4 counties in which RFOV works.



CPW \$9.297





\$116,756

USFS \$126.399

### GARFIELD

Scout Trail / Forest Hollow Trail /Colorado Mountain College Spring Valley / Valley Trails / Wulfsohn Trail / Silt River Preserve / Rifle Gap State Park / Rifle Falls State Park / Mitchell Creek / Highwater Farms / Red Hill Trail Network / Red Mountain GARFIELD Trail Network / Rifle Mountain Park / Colorado Mountain College Rifle / **Rio Grande Trail** value of 2020 RFOV stewardship work

EAGLE Willits Lane Parklet / Roaring Fork River / Crown Mountain River Trail / Undie Trail / The Crown Trail Network / Prince Creek Trail Network / Lake Christine Burn Area / Basalt Mountain Trail Network

PITKIN Light Hill Trail / Sunnyside Trail / Avalanche Creek Trail / Cozyline Trail / Airline Trail / East Maroon Creek Trail / West Maroon Creek Trail / Tom Blake Trail / Independence Ghost Town / Thomas Lakes Trail / Climbing Crag Trail / Upper Lost Man Trail / Lower Lost Man Trail / Linkins Lake Trail / Government Trail / Hay Park Trails / Placita Trail / Hunter Creek Trail / The Grottos / Zoom Trail

### GUNNISON

Yule Creek Trail / Historic Marble Mill

How did we calculate stewardship impact? Our website explains the process in detail. www.rfov.org/impact



### 2020-2021 WINTER EVENTS While it's snowing...

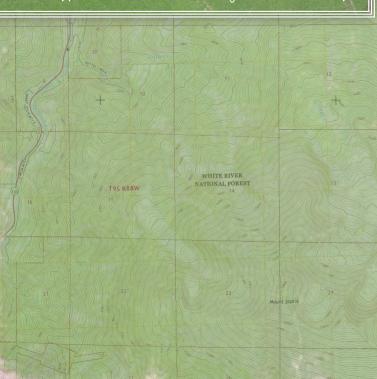
RFOV will prepare for next summer, but we're also hosting a variety of events just for you this winter season:

- DEC Snowshoeing and skiing
- JAN Bookclub selection for Garfield County Public Libraries
- FEB Aspen Chapel Gallery art show
- MAR 5Point film screening

**rfov.org** Post Office Box 1341 214 Midland Avenue Basalt, Colorado 81621



Please support our mission of Community Powered Stewardship!



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