

OUR BACKYARD

The Newsletter of Roaring Fork Outdoor Volunteers

Winter 2011



Volunteers from Waldorf School and Aspen Meadows Resort adopted Perham Creek, Rocky Fork Trails

2011 BRINGS EXCITING NEW OPPORTUNITIES

New field coordinator will expand capacity for group trail-work days

More and more business, school, church and outdoor-oriented groups are approaching **RFOV**

asking how they can get involved with their own group work days.

To keep up with this trend for organized entities to hold formal trail work days, **RFOV** is expanding its capacity this year to be ready with the tools and organizational expertise so that established groups can conduct trail maintenance. Additionally, **RFOV** will hire a seasonal field coordinator

to work 25 to 30 hours a week from late April to early October in 2011 (see *Meeting the Challenge*, page 4.)

“We encourage organizations, businesses, schools and other groups to consider working with us to add trail work days to their employee volunteer service programs.”

—David Hamilton
Executive Director of RFOV

“These work days and the Adopt-A-Trail efforts help us to involve more volunteers and improve even more miles of trails, while also meeting the interests and volunteer needs of local groups,” said **RFOV** Executive Director David Hamilton. “We encourage organizations, businesses, schools and other groups to consider working with us to add trail work days to their employee volunteer service programs.”

There is never a shortage of trail work to keep volunteer groups busy, he added. Last season 10 groups coordinated with **RFOV** to work various weekdays from May to October on trails from Aspen to Glenwood Springs. The volunteers ranged

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WE DO TRAILS-
together!

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OUR MISSION

To promote stewardship of our public lands by creating volunteer opportunities for trail work and conservation projects

COLLABORATION CREATES EXPONENTIAL RESULTS

Like many of my neighbors in this part of the state, I live here largely because of the outdoor recreational opportunities. And I admit, I want more well-designed, sustainable trails out the back door in my hometown of Glenwood Springs; but I cannot build them on my own.

That is why I've been volunteering with **RFOV** since 2007 and have recently helped form Two Rivers Trails in Glenwood Springs. We need to harness the existing resources of like-minded individuals and organizations to make progress. When we collaborate, the impact is exponential—together, we can provide more miles of trail for outdoor enthusiasts than if we work alone. (Plus, it's just more fun when your friends and neighbors join you in working toward a common goal.)

The same applies to larger groups like **RFOV** striving to carry out a vision or achieve a goal.

In addition to the dozen or so regularly scheduled projects each year, **RFOV** is partnering with groups and nonprofits with symbiotic goals by lending tools, providing consulting, and helping with volunteer recruitment and publicity. **RFOV** further encourages groups to take ownership of their areas and provides technical and logistical support to get them off the ground.

Take Two River Trails, for example. After the City of Glenwood Springs received 198 acres of open space as part of the Glenwood Meadows Mall development approval, interested Glenwood residents assisted the city with creating a master plan



A note from JIM NEU

RFOV is partnering with groups and nonprofits with symbiotic goals by lending tools, providing consulting, and helping with volunteer recruitment and publicity.

already committed to this trail network. They formed Two Rivers Trails (TRT), which is dedicated to planning, building and maintaining unpaved trails for bicycling and hiking in the Glenwood Springs area.

RFOV has assisted TRT with its

organizational documents, advertising its inaugural trail work day, offering to be an umbrella organization for donations, guiding the purchase of tools, and collaborating on evening projects again in May 2011. TRT plans to continue these evening projects on its own throughout the summer.

We are fortunate to have access to so much public land. It's up to

each of us to take part in the planning and stewardship of that land. The best part is that we don't have to reinvent the wheel; **RFOV** has established the expertise, the organizational structure and the tools (both literally and figuratively) to support such efforts.

If your group, business, or nonprofit is ready to organize to maintain your favorite stretch of public land, **RFOV** is ready and willing to help!

SNEAK PEAK: 2011 PROJECTS

Our 2011 season is highlighted with a balanced slate of projects, including traditional trail work on some of the valley's well-loved trails, a new extension to an Aspen-area gem, the continuation of work evenings, and conservation/restoration projects to improve the overall health of our public lands. Check our website for the final schedule or look for our project announcement brochure to arrive in early spring.

Tamarisk & Russian-Olive Removal Rifle • April or October

We'll continue eradicating these invasive species on several riverfront parcels in and around the Rifle Rest Area.

Wulfsohn, Upper Loop Trail Glenwood Springs • Evenings in May

Our work with Two Rivers Trails and the city of Glenwood Springs continues, building the new Upper Loop Trail at the Wulfsohn Open Space every Thursday night in May.

Arbaney Kittle Trail

Basalt • June 4 — National Trails Day

We'll focus on constructing drainage structures and defining the route starting about 1.5 miles from the west trailhead in Holland Hills.

Hunter Creek Extension Trail

Aspen • Evenings in June/July

We'll build a significant new trail connection in the heart of Aspen, connecting the Hunter Creek Trail to Rio Grande Trail west of the Mill Street bridge.

Capitol Creek Trail

Snowmass • June

Increased beaver activity on the Capitol Creek valley floor has forced the Forest Service to reroute this popular trail. Volunteers will build a section of trail to connect with a newly installed bridge.

Moore Open Space Invasive Species Removal

Aspen • Summer

We'll work a half day to remove invasive species from this important open space near the Aspen Recreation Center.

Tootsie Roll Trail, Smuggler Mountain

Aspen • Mid-summer

We'll add another half-mile of new trail by extending the Tootsie Roll Trail down to the main trail near the Robbie Wade Platform.

Pyramid Peak Trail

Aspen • Mid-summer

Once again, we'll team up with the Colorado Fourteeners Initiative for a weekend of backcountry work to improve the route up Pyramid Peak.

Weller Trail

Independence Pass • July or August

We'll build a new trail on Forest Service land near the Weller Campground.

Hanging Lake Trail, Phase II

Glenwood Springs • Sept. 24 & 25

We'll collaborate with Volunteers for Outdoor Colorado, reconstructing rock walls and stone steps on this popular tourist route in Glenwood Canyon.

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Are you a member of RFOV?

Your membership is important in two ways: Your contribution enables us to help maintain and enhance our trail system, and your contribution is a powerful demonstration of our community's support for RFOV. Both show a commitment to the preservation of recreational opportunities on our public lands.

If you use our valley's trails we believe you have a responsibility to help maintain them. You can do that by volunteering and/or contributing to RFOV. Please use the enclosed envelope or contribute online at www.rfov.org today! And if you're already a member, thank you!

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MEETING THE CHALLENGE IN 2011

A great opportunity to help us reach an exciting goal!

Survey after survey confirms that trails, the recreational opportunities they create, and our spectacular surroundings are principal reasons people choose to live in and visit the Roaring Fork Valley. To help further RFOV's mission of involving local citizens in caring for those trails and landscapes, a long-time volunteer and member of RFOV just made us a \$12,500 challenge: If RFOV can raise \$12,500 in the coming months, the donor will match that amount, dollar for dollar, for a total sum raised of \$25,000. The objective is to raise enough money to fund our new seasonal field coordinator for the upcoming 2011 project season. (See Suzie Romig's article on page 1.)

Having a field coordinator on board will allow RFOV to meet two of the primary objectives identified by the Board of Directors in its 2011 Operating Plan. First, it will enable RFOV to recruit and coordinate more group and Adopt-a-Trail work days, which will allow us to involve more local citizens and take care of more places you treasure—places like Capitol Lake and the Arbaney-Kittle Trail.

Second, increasing our capacity to support more work days will allow RFOV to develop and implement a

comprehensive youth program, which will get hundreds of kids from the greater Roaring Fork Valley involved in outdoor service projects. RFOV has been able to involve older youth in its regular Saturday trail and conservation project days and has worked with Adopt-a-Trail groups like the Waldorf School's seventh- and eighth-grade classes on the Perham Creek Trail in Carbondale and Crystal River Elementary

School in constructing the White Hill Nature Trail. However, RFOV's ability to accommodate youth has been limited by staff size; David can't be everywhere all the time!

Our youth are the future stewards of our public lands—getting them involved early and often will pay huge dividends both for the health of our landscapes and for the youth who will gain immense satisfaction of seeing their hard work translate into great trails that they and their families can enjoy for years to come.

If you agree, help us meet the challenge. Donate now and

every dollar you give will be doubled! Thank you for helping us take care of this magnificent place—we couldn't do it without you.



Having a field coordinator on board will allow RFOV to involve more local citizens and take care of more places you treasure.

► Karin Teague

RFOV STAFF PROFILE

In the office and on the trail, Trina Ortega keeps things humming

Although Trina Ortega's title with **RFOV** is Administrative and Program Assistant, her belief in the mission of **RFOV** goes much further than answering phones, handling the marketing efforts and organizing volunteers.

Born and raised in the tame urban jungle of Denver, Trina spent a lot of time in the mountains, summer car camping with her family. "Because of those camping trips, I learned to appreciate public lands and the wildness of the outdoors," she says.

Her love for the Rocky Mountains led her to pursue work as an outdoor educator (teaching rock climbing to her peers in college and working with teenagers as an instructor for Colorado Outward Bound School), before settling into a journalism career that involved working in media relations for the Colorado Division of Wildlife and the Department of Natural Resources.

On the volunteer front, Trina began her "career" early (in middle school) with the Denver Tourism Bureau. As a teenager, she regularly volunteered weekends greeting travelers at the Denver bus station and the old Stapleton airport.

An avid hiker and mountain biker, Trina first volunteered on public lands in the Denver area, where she helped improve trails with Jefferson County Open Space and Volunteers for Outdoor Colorado.

After moving to the Roaring Fork Valley in 1999, she learned about **RFOV** and volunteered the following summer on the Scout Trail in Glenwood Springs. "I use the trails for my own well-being and happiness and feel that helping to maintain trails is the best way to 'give back.'"

Prior to becoming a staff member, Trina volunteered in many capacities for

RFOV: taking photos during the Town to Town Tour, participating on trail work days, and serving on the Marketing and Publications Committee.

Whether it involves installing signs at **RFOV** work sites, organizing projects and committees, or answering phones and signing up volunteers, Trina enjoys her work with **RFOV** because "...all of the tasks are rooted in a mission that I believe in. I

feel that conservation and trail work are so important, and I love working with people in the community."

Hamilton says that Trina has been a "wonderful addition" to the team. "Her contributions are many, but in addition to taking care of the admin basics, Trina's writing and computer graphic skills have enabled

RFOV to dramatically increase our output of marketing and recruiting materials. And what I find most refreshing about working with Trina is she truly enjoys the work due to her belief in **RFOV**'s mission and our value to our community."

Those values don't end with Trina, either. Her husband, Marty Treadway, also volunteers for **RFOV** and became a crew leader last season, and their 9-year-old has been on trail projects with his parents. "He knows how to hold a tool; he knows what it's all about," Trina says.

Aside from being a part-time employee with **RFOV**, Trina is a freelance journalist and serves as the managing editor of Mountain Flyer Magazine. She volunteers with other nonprofits in the valley, including The Sopris Sun, Carbondale Council on Arts & Humanities, and Crystal River Elementary School.



Trina works with fellow volunteers Holly and Brian Magee on the White Hill Trail

► *Kate Campise*

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EXCITING OPPORTUNITIES . . . from page 1

from Yale alumni to church members to Aspen Middle School students, with the groups working half or full days.

John Rowley, director of human resources at the Aspen Meadows Resort, said Saturdays are busy for the business, so weekdays are better for scheduling what the company designates as “employee wellness” and “volunteer” days. In September, a group of Aspen Meadows employees completed much-needed maintenance on the first few miles of the Rocky Fork Trail north of Ruedi Reservoir.

“It turned into a great team-building exercise, and we could give back to the community,” Rowley said, adding that the employees hope to do two work days next season.

“I would highly recommend it to other organizations and businesses,” Rowley noted. “It was truly a win-win for our employees from a team-building standpoint, for the trail users and for the environment.”

Zach Meyers, director of operations at the Hotel Jerome, said their employees also hope to do two work days next summer after a positive experience on a weekday work day in June. The employees worked

on the Sunnyside Trail, which is used by hotel guests.

“It’s just a great opportunity for us to go out and give something back, and everyone really enjoys doing it,” Meyers said. “Just to get out and work together on something that our guests can enjoy later is a great way for us to strengthen within our team.”

Hamilton said the group work days, in addition to Thursday evening projects, pushed the number of times that volunteers worked in the field last season

to a record 35 days, up from 23 days in 2009.

He noted that scheduling more than the current 10 to 12 Saturday work days each season is not the best approach because other fun events and activities in the valley compete for volunteer attention.

“We have more than 1,000 miles of public trail in our area that needs maintenance on a regular basis,” Hamilton said.

“There is a never-ending amount of work to keep our trails open, more enjoyable and sustainable.”

Groups interested in scheduling a work day can contact **RFOV** at 927-8241 or rfov@sopris.net.

“ I would highly recommend it ... truly a win-win for our employees from a team-building standpoint, for the trail users, and for the environment ”

—John Rowley
 Aspen Meadows Resort

► Suzie Romig



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Claudia Winkler
Jeff & Gay Wisch
Dottie Wolcott
Fred Wooden
Jo Ann Yacko
John Young & Linda Vieira

2010 AWARD WINNERS

Volunteers who go the extra mile



Left to right: Michael Hutton, Gail Mason, Jamin Heady-Smith, David Guinee, and Charlie Eckart

Michael Hutton, Pulaski Award for most **RFOV** projects in a season (11). A crew leader since **RFOV**'s inception, Michael also volunteered as an instructor at both crew leader trainings and at the Stone Steps Skills Seminar at Hanging Lake. He currently serves on the Crew Leader Development Committee.

Michael is also the recipient of a special 15th Anniversary service award. One of **RFOV**'s founders in 1995, Michael joined the Board of Directors as secretary, he trained to be a crew leader and helped organize **RFOV**'s first projects. He has chaired the Project Selection Committee and served on committees responsible for managing the Adopt-A-Trail Program and organizing crew leader trainings.

Gail Mason, New Crew Leader of the Year. Building on a strong foundation of **RFOV** trail work experience that began in 2007 through the Aspen Cycling Club, Gail began her crew leader training in 2008. She consistently volunteered as an assistant crew leader through 2009. With many hours of on-the-ground-training, she began leading her own crews last season, heading up volunteers on six projects.

Jamin Heady-Smith, Crew Leader of the Year. Since he first volunteered in 2006 for National Trails Day, Jamin has gotten more involved with **RFOV**, becoming a crew leader in 2007 and technical advisor to help with project design and management in 2009. In 2010, Jamin led crews on three projects, served as a T.A. for one project, and instructed at Crew Leader Training and at the Stone Steps Skills Seminar. Off the trail, Jamin chairs the Crew Leader Development Committee.

Jon Thompson, U.S. Forest Service, Agency Partner of the Year. Jon was central in planning four trail projects on Forest Service land in 2010. Year to year, he has helped ensure the success of many of **RFOV**'s projects. What really made Jon stand out in 2010 was his personal support. When a long-time volunteer fell ill on a project, Jon personally drove the volunteer from the American Lake Trailhead to the hospital in Glenwood Springs, then followed up with a phone call while on vacation to inquire about the volunteer's health.

David Guinee, Trail Steward. This award recognizes volunteers who have made a contribution over many years. Dave began volunteering with **RFOV** in 2003 when he lived in the valley, and didn't stop when he moved 100 miles west to Grand Junction! Dave continues to provide guidance as a crew leader, and volunteered on six projects as well as the Stone Steps Skills Seminar at Hanging Lake in 2010. He typically works at least four projects per season.

Charlie Eckart, Volunteer of the Year. With nearly 40 completed trail projects over the years, Charlie remains very active as a crew leader, and serves on the Town to Town Tour Committee and as chair of the Project Selection Committee. He has been with **RFOV** since 1996. Including the evening projects, Charlie led crews on nine projects in 2010.

To all of these outstanding volunteers, congratulations, and thank you. We look forward to your continued involvement in 2011 and beyond!



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