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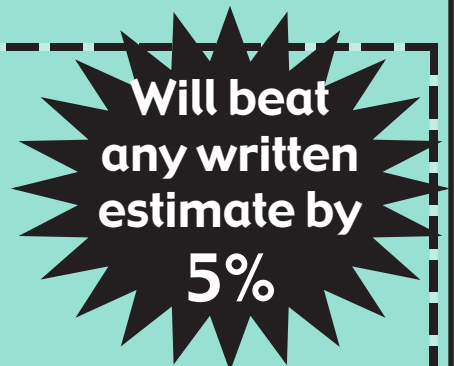
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**About the Cover:
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Keep Bears Wild - Do Your Part

Studies show that a big meal of tasty, nutritious seeds is a natural food for bears and is often the first reward a bear gets for exploring human places. Letting your bird feeders turn into bear feeders teaches bears that it's safe to come close to people and homes looking for food. And for bears that can be a deadly lesson. It is recommended to not feed birds during the months when bears are active. Instead, use water features for the birds and be bear-responsible. If a bear comes near your home, do your best to chase it away. Yell, blow a whistle, clap your hands and make other loud noises or buy a Bear Horn from your local hardware store. But never approach or corner a bear.

Use bird feeders only when bears are hibernating. If you don't want to stop feeding birds, you need to hang your feeders at least 10 feet off the ground and 10 feet away from anything bears can climb. Keep the area underneath feeders clean and free of birdseed and hulls, or switch to a hulled birdseed with no waste. Never store birdseed outside, under your deck, or in a garage or shed a bear could break into. A 50-pound bag of birdseed has over 87,000 calories.

Colorado is Bear Country

Black bears have lived in the foothills and forests of Colorado since long before the pioneers arrived. Today 8,000 to 12,000 black bears are trying to share space with an ever-growing human population. With many more people living and playing in bear country, human/bear encounters are on the rise.

Colorado Bears Have People Problems

Every year, bears attracted to human food sources damage property, vehicles and even homes.

Bears don't know they're doing anything wrong. They're just following their super-sensitive noses to the most calories they can find. Bears that find food around homes, campgrounds and communities often lose their natural wariness of people. Even though black bears are not naturally aggressive and seldom attack or injure people, they are still strong, powerful animals. A bear intent on getting a meal could injure someone who gets in its way. Every year bears that have become too comfortable around people have to be destroyed. If residents in the mountains or near the foothills don't take care to keep bears from trashcans counties will force everyone to have bear proof containers and that can be very expensive. Every spring folks have a

hard time remembering to put their trash in air tight trash cans and often just put trash out on trash day in plastic bags. This practice is sure to attract hungry bears just out of their dens and with young. Conditioning a bear to only eat from trash cans almost ensures that bear will have to be put down when it fails to forage for food from natural sources, especially early spring when foodstuffs for them are scarce. It is up to humans to be cautious with their trash and keep bears wild and keep subdivisions safe from being forced to buy expensive bear proof trash containers.

Bears Need Your Help

Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) is charged with protecting and preserving the state's wildlife. Every time we must destroy a bear, it's not just the bear that loses. We all lose a little piece of the wildness that makes Colorado. So please, learn to protect bears by being "Bear Aware," and share this information with your friends, neighbors, and community. We're here to help!

It is illegal and dangerous to purposely feed bears: please report anyone putting out food for bears to Colorado Parks & Wildlife at 303.291.7125. You will be helping bears stay wild and protecting neighbors; kids playing in their yards or riding their bikes on dirt roads and even pets being walked by their owners.

Unfortunately people leave out bird food or put out bits of food to take photos or just watch the local bears, but this is deadly for the bears as it is conditioning them to see people as a food source and they will end up paying the price with their lives. Might not be at that house, but eventually their reliance on human food or bird food will make them less afraid of people, *(Continued on next page.)*

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homes and even vehicles. It is not uncommon for a conditioned bear to break into doors and windows of homes and become a nuisance animal that must be killed by Parks & Wildlife. Please do your part and never feed a bear, even by mistake or due to your negligence.

Black Bears at a Glance

Black is a species, not a color. In Colorado, many black bears are blonde, cinnamon, or brown. With their bulky fur coats, bears can look bigger than they are. Males average 275 lbs.; females average 175 lbs. Over 90% of a bear's natural diet is grasses, berries, fruits, nuts and plants. The rest is primarily insects and scavenged carcasses. Black bears are very wary of people and other unfamiliar things. Their normal response to any perceived danger is to run away or climb a tree. Most Colorado bears are active from mid-March through early November. When food sources dwindle they head for winter dens. With a nose that's 100 times more sensitive than ours, a bear can literally smell food five miles away. Bears are very smart, and have great memories - once they find food, they come back for more. During late summer and early fall bears need 20,000 calories a day to gain enough fat to survive the winter without eating or drinking. Bears are not naturally nocturnal, but sometimes travel at night in hopes of avoiding humans. **Bear Aware Volunteer Program**

Bear Aware is a network of trained Colorado Parks and Wildlife volunteers throughout the state who help their neighbors and communities prevent problems for themselves and for bears. Bear Aware volunteers can answer questions, offer practical advice and even make house calls. They also do educational programs and staff informational booths at events.



Statewide, there are over 220 volunteers dedicated to helping people coexist with bears. To find a Bear Aware volunteer in your area or join or to form a Bear Aware team, call your local CPW office. The application program for Bear Aware volunteers' is generally in the spring. Colorado Parks and Wildlife Offices are open Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. For after-hours emergencies, call 911 to contact the Colorado State Patrol or your local Sheriff's Department.

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Decision Making

Some people don't get the COVID vaccine, and that's a problem. They'll give you their reasons. But what's really going on?

Dr. Kabiri is a decision scientist who has spent more than two decades studying how people make choices in different contexts, from businesses to politics to personal relationships – and how those choices go wrong. She can share insights on why people make poor choices again and again, even when those choices work against their best interests.

Dr. Kabiri draws on a variety of disciplines, including behavioral economics, psychology, sociology, anthropology, and even physiology to help people get real about their decisions and minimize regret. Her decision science approach can explain how people make choices in all aspects of life, from how innocently-made choices can cause a business to fail, to why it's hard to find a good friend, to why we experience shopper's remorse - and more.

Dr. Kabiri addresses why not getting the COVID vaccine could be bad decision-making:

- Data is boring, so people don't pay attention. What draws people in are captivating, human stories. So, when data is paraded on the news about the vaccine's effective or benefits, it doesn't necessarily stick. What sticks are compelling personal accounts of a vaccine experience gone wrong, or of people who haven't gotten vaccinated and been totally fine. Stories can be examples of isolated incidents and sometimes attributable to coincidence, compared to data, which describes the millions of people that vaccines have helped.

- When people face hard decisions, it's natural to look for an easy way out. One way to do this is to substitute the hard question for an easier one: rather than try to figure out if the vaccine is really effective, they'll ask themselves "do I like and trust the person who's giving me this information?" If they trust and like a person who doesn't follow the data, then they won't follow the data either. The decision-making is easier, but the actual decision could be a bad one.

- People are prone to do what others in their social groups do. It's more than just peer (Continued on next page.)

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pressure: social belonging is powerful and necessary. We're social creatures after all. To make sure we belong, we go along – sometimes without even knowing that we're doing it. So, if people we're close to are rejecting social distancing, masks, and the vaccine, chances are we will, too.

There are many reasons why people ignore science and statistics and make choices that hurt them. Most of these reasons are part of human nature, but they're harmful to humans, nonetheless. But there's a better way. We can fear the virus, but we shouldn't fear the hard facts. Avoiding what's hard to think about gets us into our messes. Respecting data can get us out.

Dr. Kabiri believes that we could all be in a better place if we pay more attention to the pitfalls in human decision-making – whether we're getting through COVID, dealing with conspiracy theories, or just trying to get through the day. She wants to help people consider the many factors that lead to bad decisions, so we can all be more secure, minimize regret, and get real about everything that's possible.

Nika Kabiri is a decision science professional who helps people get real, move forward, and minimize regret. She has spent over two decades studying how people make decisions in a variety of contexts, from business to politics to relationships. She teaches decision science at the University of Washington and is founder and owner of

Kabiri Consulting, where she uses decision science principles to help her clients make the right choices. She's also a co-author of the bestselling book *Money Off the Table: Decision Science and the Secret to Smarter Investing* and is the founder of YourNextDecision.com.

Kabiri is a former law and society instructor at the University of Washington and worked in the legal profession for several years. She has studied and seen first-hand how decisions made by policy-makers, lawyers, administrators, judges, and average people can lead to inequity and injustice. As an academic, Kabiri specialized in applying choice theory to understand a variety of social and political issues across the globe, from the study of "political culture wars" and immigration trends in the United States to an in-depth examination of social and political order in Iraq, Turkey, and Afghanistan.

Kabiri has a PhD in Sociology from the University of Washington, where her academic focus was on choice theory and decision-making within constraints. She also has a JD from the University of Texas.

Editor's Note: There are rumors our local CCCIA may hold a vaccine clinic at the Hall in Coal Creek Canyon, but at this deadline no date has been determined. We will print information about such an event if it can be done, stay alert and while personal health decisions are personal - there are folks that like to travel abroad and get vaccines to do so and this should not be any different.

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Chocolate lovers have discovered the perfect way to satisfy their chocolatey cravings without regret.

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So how do they do it? Most of the sweetness you experience when indulging in RED is from the cocoa bean itself. However, the RED secret is out—they are the first in the world to use the natural sugar from fruits such as melons to lightly sweeten their no-sugar-added chocolate recipe. Five flavors are available in full bars sizes, four flavors in the grab-n-go size, and two amazingly decadent (and widely popular as they simply can't keep these in stock!) flavors are available in diamond stuffed pralines, mom will indeed be happy this May.

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- Up to 50 percent fewer calories than other dark chocolate brands
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- Made with cocoa from the Ivory Coast of Africa, whose farmers select, roast, and grind the cocoa beans to perfection
- One-third of the dark chocolate bar has the same amount of calories as an apple slice

The last year has been tough, and although chocolate doesn't solve our worries, it sure makes for a deserving treat that will put a smile on our faces.

Ethically sourced and produced in a custom-designed green facility, RED Chocolate is one of the fastest-growing confectionaries (impressive during a pandemic nonetheless) in the industry. Also noteworthy is that they were selected to be one of HSN premium chocolates sold.

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What CO Needs To Do About Forest Health

The Colorado State Forest Service (CSFS) published its annual forest health report recently, highlighting the conditions of forests across Colorado and how the agency is improving the health of the state’s forests in the wake of historic wildfires.

After a devastating wildfire season, the report highlights the growing need to increase forest management across the state. It also takes a regional look at forest health, offering statistics, insect and disease trends, and successes in forest management specific to four quadrants of the state. As always, the report also offers a statewide outlook on trends in insect and disease activity in Colorado’s forests, as well as a look at the carbon storage problem in our state’s forests.

“Last year reminded us how important our forests are, as Coloradans escaped to forested areas in their communities and wildlands for tranquility, peace and a place to recreate and exercise,” said Mike Lester, state forester and director of the CSFS. “Colorado’s forests are experiencing many challenges, from longer fire seasons to ongoing drought to more people living in the wildland-urban interface. In this report, we take a look at what is needed to protect the many benefits our forests provide in the face of these challenges

– and what the Colorado State Forest Service is doing to address them.”

2020 Key Forest Takeaways

The 2020 Report on the Health of Colorado’s Forests focuses on “Protecting Our Future After a Historic Wildfire Year.” Key takeaways from the report include:

Living with Wildfire: The forest management needed to reduce wildfire risk to residents, lands, water supplies and economies is not happening fast enough. Colorado is primed to face the same types of uncharacteristic wildfires as last year unless an increase in the pace and scale of forest management is made a statewide priority, work is done more quickly and the buildup of beetle-killed and living fuels is addressed across the landscape in areas that can be accessed.

Carbon and Climate: Despite encompassing over 24 million acres, Colorado’s forests emit more carbon than they store. Our state is one of the five worst Lower 48 states in forest carbon emissions by some estimates. Colorado is contributing to a global problem, partly because our trees are not as healthy as they could be. Colorado’s forests need to be healthy in order to store carbon and mitigate climate change.

Insects and Disease: The spruce beetle remains the most damaging forest pest in Colorado. The report details the state’s top forest insects and diseases – and how bark beetles may affect wildfire behavior. The report also contains a map of where forests affected by spruce and mountain pine beetles overlap with the burn perimeters of last year’s wildfires.

FRWRM Grants: The Forest Restoration and Wildfire Risk Mitigation Grant Program continues to be a critical source of funding to address forest health issues on a local level. The report offers an example of how a state grant helped a community in Colorado Springs successfully mitigate its wildfire risk prior to the Bear Creek Fire in November.



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Regional Project Highlights

Northeast Area: The CSFS is working to keep in check a hyperactive invasive species that is pushing out native vegetation, degrading wildlife habitat and draining water at Jackson Lake State Park and the nearby Andrick Ponds and Jackson Lake state wildlife areas. The CSFS is removing about half of the Russian olives that line picnic areas, campsites and hunting spots.

Southeast Area: Last year at Lake Pueblo State Park – one of the most popular state parks in Colorado with annual visitors exceeding 2.4 million – CSFS foresters assessed 191 trees over 200 acres of land to help keep park visitors safer. They focused on trees along trails and in campground areas, tagging those that posed safety concerns for mitigation by Colorado Parks & Wildlife.

Southwest Area: While time seemed to slow down for many last year with stay-at-home orders due to COVID-19, foresters in Gunnison County were in a rush to contain an outbreak of another kind - the mountain pine beetle in the Taylor Canyon area. Had the beetle continued to increase populations at a rapid pace within lodgepole pine tree stands in this area, the risk of a catastrophic wildfire in the forest would greatly increase.

Northwest Area: In the southeast corner of Jackson County, the CSFS is improving the forest landscape at Owl Mountain while at the same time bolstering revenue for the timber industry. Despite a declining wood products industry in the state, the CSFS is helping sustain this local economy in northwest Colorado through a 376-acre project that is creating jobs for loggers and timber mills and generating revenue for state and federal agencies through a timber sale.

Each year, the forest health report provides information to the Colorado General Assembly and residents of Colorado about the health and condition of forests across the state. Information for the report is derived from an annual aerial forest health survey by the CSFS and U.S. Forest Service, Rocky Mountain Region, as well as field inspections, CSFS contacts with forest landowners and special surveys. Copies of the 2020 report are available at all CSFS field offices. A PDF of the report and interactive maps of insect and disease activity are available at bit.ly/ForestHealthReport.



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Wildfire Smoke Effects On The Air We Breathe

Researchers see need for better warnings for Colorado residents about health impacts of long-range wildfire smoke

Smoke from local wildfires can affect the health of Colorado residents, in addition to smoke from fires in forests as far away as California and the Pacific Northwest. Researchers at Colorado State University, curious about the health effects from smoke from large wildfires across the Western United States, analyzed six years of hospitalization data and death records for the cities along the Front Range, which reaches deep into central Colorado from southern Wyoming.

They found that wildfire smoke was associated with increased hospitalizations for asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and some cardiovascular health outcomes. They also discovered that wildfire smoke was associated with deaths from asthma and cardiovascular disease, but that there was a difference in the effects of smoke from local fires and that from distant ones.

Long-range smoke was associated with expected increases in hospitalizations and increased risk of death from cardiovascular outcomes.

But when the research team separated out health effects of smoke from local wildfires in early summer 2012 from long-range smoke from late summer 2012 and summer 2015, they found that local wildfires were associated with meaningful decreases in hospitalizations, especially for asthma.

The study, "Differential Cardiopulmonary Health Impacts of Local and Long-Range Transport of Wildfire Smoke," was recently published in *GeoHealth*, a journal from the American Geophysical Union.

Residents protect themselves from local fires

Sheryl Magzamen, lead author of the study and an associate professor in the Department of Environmental and Radiological Health Sciences at CSU, said the team believes that evacuation efforts and related media coverage of local wildfires may have helped protect residents from adverse health effects of smoke exposure as well as direct impacts of the fires.

"There's a lack of communication about smoke from distant wildfires," said Magzamen. "Generally when there are local fires, there are advisories in the news that are associated with evacuations and local fire conditions. Due to the presence of the fire, people take measures to protect themselves. This could be why we see this lower risk of health effects from smoke associated with local fires." Researchers described the long-range wildfire smoke as resembling fog, which is what Magzamen said she noticed in Fort Collins in August 2015. At the time, she was collaborating on a project with Jeff Pierce, associate professor in the Department of Atmospheric Science.

"I thought it was weird to see fog on that day," she explained. "Jeff said, 'That's actually smoke.' We all took a step back."

Smoke changes with age

Pierce, a co-author on this study, said researchers don't really know how harmful smoke is as it gets older, or becomes long-range smoke.

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“In Fort Collins, about half the time we had smoke in late August or September 2020, this was smoke from the Cameron Peak Fire,” he explained. “This smoke was only a couple hours old when it got here. At other times, we were getting smoke from California, and the smoke from the Cameron Peak Fire was either going over our heads or further south.”

The Cameron Peak Fire was reported on Aug. 13, 2020, and burned into October, consuming 208,913 acres on the Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forests in Larimer and Jackson Counties and Rocky Mountain National Park. It was the first wildfire in Colorado history to burn more than 200,000 acres.

The average person would not notice a difference in wildfire smoke, Pierce said.

“If the smoke is even two days old, things happen chemically, which changes the smoke a lot,” he explained. “If it didn’t smell like wood burning, it was long-range smoke from California.”

Magzamen said that the team is working to better understand these chemical changes.

“As the small particles found in wildfire smoke age, they can cause more oxidative stress and more respiratory health effects,” she said. “But wildfire smoke itself is a mixture of particles and gases. Teasing apart the effects of all the components of smoke and what happens to the mixture across space and time – and how those changes impact health – is an enormous scientific challenge.”

Better air quality monitoring

Magzamen said the gap in understanding the source of wildfire smoke is because it historically has been measured by land-based sensors, which are primarily located in large urban areas and sparsely located in other regions, even along the Front Range.

“Even over the last five years, our air quality monitoring networks have been enhanced with new technologies and better measurements of real-time smoke effects,” she said. CSU researchers are now collaborating with local government officials on messaging related to the different

types of wildfire smoke, with a specific aim to reach the most vulnerable populations. This includes caretakers of young children, people experiencing homelessness and others who can’t shelter safely in place during wildfire season. “We want people to be smoke-aware,” she said. “On the Front Range, we have wildfire smoke every summer. We may not get Cameron Peak-size type of fires every year, but we are downwind for pretty much the entire Western United States,” she said. “It’s critical that we keep people healthy and safe.”

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2nd Graders Learn Ecology & Apply Knowledge

By Paige Blankenbuehler 3-16-2021 High Country News

Image credit: Daniel J. Cox / Minden Pictures

Second-graders take on Colorado’s wolf reintroduction ‘Wolves are AMAAAAZING! Because they help the ecosystem and are amazing.’

As happens so frequently these days, a Zoom room on a recent morning in March filled with participants. Faceless black blocks assembled, while four 8-year-olds, Rhyker, Zach, Karma, Amelia — or, as they would be called that morning, the “Wolfteam Friends” — jittered in front of a camera from their classroom in Northglenn, a Denver-area suburb.

“Thank you for being here,” a boy wearing a light-blue button-down with a tie said carefully into a black microphone. Amelia took the floor, her pink bow bobbing. “Our idea is to help people learn to live with wolves!”

Three groups of second-graders planned to speak that day (two of them in person) to a crowd of some 30 far-flung onlookers, mostly comprising educators, conservationists and parents.

“We are going to be teaching ranchers that the cattle —” Amelia’s voice became hushed “ — has to remain still.” Their poster presentation, with slides shared over Zoom, detailed their plans to advertise their ideas at feed stores and markets. The hope is that well-trained herding dogs and some fine-tuned techniques can help ranchers train livestock to keep calm rather than scatter in the presence of a predator.

The Wolfteam Friends occasionally got distracted:

“Wolves are not a threat!” they all whooped. They took turns describing some of their slides. One showed a wolf with its neck stretched out and snout pointing upward: “And, and ... um this is how wolves communicate when they’re lost: howwwwllll!!!” All in unison: “Owwwwww!”

Gray Wolf (Canis lupus) laying down in the snow in



Alaska. Mark Newman / FLPA / Minden Pictures

“Do you know why they don’t care?” Amelia asked, referring to the calm, unruffled cattle, getting back to the crux of their presentation. “Because wolves like hunting running animals, not ones that are bored like bison.” Her voice dropped low and then leapt (!) in pitch. “OMG you



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should loves wolves and you actually should because wolves are awesome. ... Wolves are AMAAAAZING! Because they help the ecosystem and are amazing,” she said, tugging at her hot pink face-covering. They concluded their presentation by howling.

In dresses, blazers, large pink bows, some sporting fluffy wolf ears, the group of a dozen second-graders from the STEM Lab, a K-8 elementary school with a “problem-based learning” approach, presented their proposals, sourced from months of research, about how to prepare the public for wolf reintroduction. They had a range of suggestions “to help people overcome fear.”

Last November, for the first time, voters undertook a groundbreaking conservation experiment when they opted to reintroduce gray wolves to the state. Colorado Parks and Wildlife is tasked with the reintroduction — and now, these students are taking a whack at it, too.

Back in the classroom, the “Wolves Explorers” were up. A boy with a blond mohawk introduced their idea. “In order to protect humans, our project is lasers and alarms in campgrounds,” he said. “Our stakeholders are campers,” he said as the next slide appeared: “And here’s the sound going off.”

“Humans are the biggest threat to wolves,” one of the girls in the group said. “Scaring wolves away from humans protects the humans and the wolf. The red laser does not hurt wolves. Sounds don’t hurt, they only scare them.” “What a fabulous idea you have there!” said Kevin Crooks, the director of Colorado State University’s Center for Human-Carnivore Coexistence, from his very own Zoom block. “I actually think that could work.”

EACH YEAR, students at the STEM Lab research and present proposals and solutions for a real-world problem. This year’s project — reducing conflict around Colorado’s contentious wolf reintroduction — began in January after parents, teachers and STEM Lab leaders chose the topic. “Last year, students had been working on whether or not we even should introduce wolves,” said Andrea Overton, the STEM Lab coordinator. Now it was time for the next steps in the reintroduction, and educators thought the topic posed enough perplexing problems to keep the students

busy. “With such a narrow margin in the legislation passing,” Overton said, “it was clear there were issues around this. You know, clearly not everyone here agrees.” Wolf reintroduction has been notoriously inflammatory, not just in Colorado, but also in other Western states that have brought back populations of *Canis lupus*. The issue is a thorny one, involving conflicts between property owners, conservationists and communities. There are few neat solutions to the question of exactly where wolves belong, especially when wilderness overlaps with livestock, hikers, pets and neighborhoods.

In the months before the presentations, the three second-grade classes at STEM Lab met with experts from Colorado Parks and Wildlife, land managers and activists from the environmental organization Defenders of Wildlife. They watched countless videos and read articles as they researched the topic. They didn’t meet in person with ranchers or agricultural workers — as suburban students, they lack proximity to those perspectives — but they watched videos from groups opposed to reintroduction. “We made sure that students explored all sides of the issue,” Overton said. “We wanted them to approach this from the lens: How can this be successful for humans and wolves? How can we minimize negative impacts from humans and wolves living together again?”

Besides presenting proposals for keeping cattle calm and using lasers and sounds to scare away wolves, the students urged people to be smart around wolves: “Put your hands over your head or put your jacket over your head and make yourself big, so that the animal knows you are too big to mess with. LEAVE ME ALONE!” said Saanvi, who was wearing wolf ears. She was one of the students presenting in the group that opted to stay fully remote for the school year. “And don’t forget BEEEEEE SMART!”

Crooks, who is with CSU’s Center for Human-Carnivore Coexistence, sat on the expert panel judging an earlier presentation; he is also a professor at the university’s Department of Fish, Wildlife and Conservation Biology. He was struck by the enthusiasm and optimism of the young presenters. “Wolves are symbols of much deeper issues, conflict and unresolved societal debates. Some of those

(Continued on page 17.)



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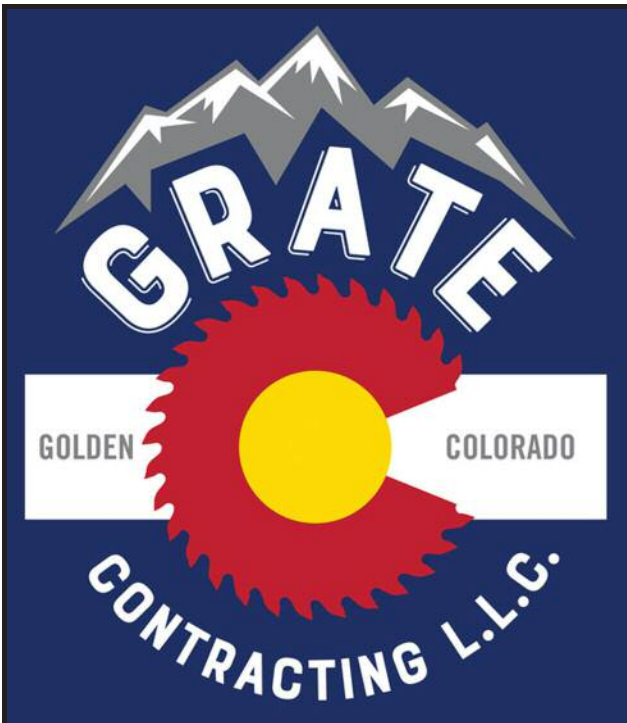
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attitudes and values are formed early in age,” Crooks told me by phone after the presentations. “It’s really important to start to engage young people at early ages to start to educate them about these kind of conservation issues — but also to hear from them about their ideas.

“To hear children offering those suggestions in a very positive manner,” he said, “it’s just encouraging. It gives you hope about the future.”

The STEM Lab is a suburban school, located in a suburban county, accustomed to non-rural issues; in several interviews after the presentation, teachers, parents and organizers told me they hadn’t heard any criticism of the project from parents or the community. When Proposition 114, the ballot measure on wolf reintroduction, was finally called weeks after the November election, voters opted by a razor-thin margin to say yes, indeed, bring wolves back to the state. The win, with urban and suburban counties largely carrying the victory, illuminated the rural-urban divide (though there were tipping-point rural counties containing towns such as Aspen, Durango and Telluride that were more widely in favor of reintroduction). Adams, an urban county spanning parts of Denver, the city of Aurora, Thornton and Northglenn — home to the STEM Lab — voted for Prop 114 by more than 8,500 votes. “It would be interesting and useful to have those same kinds of discussions with kids in rural communities where you have more of their parents or families or communities dealing with conflict with predators — not just wolves but predators in general,” Crooks said. “Those whose livelihoods might be more tied to agriculture or hunting.”

After the presentation, I connected with JP Robb, whose daughter, Caitlin, was in the third group and whose dog, Frank, a 45-pound shepherd-collie mix, “sleeps on the couch and lives a very nice life.” A few months ago, Caitlin discovered her own “wolf passion.” Back in October, when



Gray Wolf (Canis lupus) pack on ridge in winter, Lamar Valley, Yellowstone National Park, Wyoming. Daniel J. Cox / Minden Pictures

Robb and his wife were weighing whether to vote “yes” or “no” on Prop 114, Caitlin chimed in an emphatic “yes!” “We were like ‘What?’ She was 7 years old at the time,” Robb told me. “We just asked her, ‘Why do you think wolves are great?’ and she said something like they keep the ecosystem in Yellowstone in balance — maybe she said ‘nature’ — but in any case, I was really surprised by that. And she was just like ‘Yeah! When there are no wolves there are too many elk and they eat too many plants and there are no places for the birds to go.’ I remember thinking, wow, what are you doing in school? This is awesome.”

Caitlin will be 10 by the time wolves are officially back on the landscape in 2023.

“These days, she’s reading a lot and her latest thing is that she really wants to see one,” Robb said. “We backpack and hike a lot as a family, and she asked me recently: ‘Do you think they’re bigger than Frank?’

“‘Oh, yes,’” he told her, “‘I think they’re bigger than Frank.’”

Paige Blankenbuehler is an associate editor for High Country News. She oversees coverage of the Southwest, Great Basin and the Borderlands from her home in Durango, Colorado.

Editor’s Note: The best way to see a wild wolf is at MissionWolf.org a 501(c)(3) non profit educational wolf sanctuary in the remote Colorado Mountains. Go to their website to see their Covid restrictions and to plan your visit at the best time to see the wolves. Since 1984 Kent Weber has operated this sanctuary and has given homes to wolves.

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Animals & Their Companions



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Animals & Their Companions



Previous page top left: *Duke from Dennis.*

Top right: *From Christine Berney.*

Middle left: *Bugs the cat from Dennis.*

Bottom Right: *Josie from Lisa.*

Bottom Left: *Calico Cat.*

This page Top left: *Libby's Dog.*

Middle: *Cat on woman's back.*

Bottom left: *The Golden.*

Bottom right: *Pony jumper.*



Power Failure Preparations & Cautions

From Jim Plane - State Farm Insurance

Whether or not you know it's coming, a power outage can be a major disturbance. It never hurts to be prepared and to know what to do once the lights go out.

Before a power outage

Power outages can happen at any time and are unavoidable, but the costs and inconvenience associated with them can be lessened by installing a home backup generator at a home or business. Have a place in your home where flashlights, a battery-powered radio and extra batteries can be easily found. If you know the outage is coming, set aside extra water and buy or make extra ice. You can use the ice to keep perishable items cool. Make sure the battery in your smoke detector is fresh. Test the smoke detector on a monthly basis to make sure it's working. Keep an appliance thermometer in the freezer. If the freezer is 40 Fahrenheit or colder when the power returns, all the food is safe. Keep a fully charged cell phone on hand. During power outages, you may lose phone service, and your cordless phone may also lose power. If you have a portable charger, make sure it's charged & ready.

During a power outage

If possible, use flashlights instead of candles for emergency lighting. Candles used in unfamiliar settings can be dangerous fire hazards.

Turn off, unplug or disconnect any appliances, equipment or electronics that were on when the power went out. When power comes back on, it may come back with momentary "surges" or "spikes" that can damage equipment such as computers and motors in appliances like the air conditioner, refrigerator, washer or furnace.

Leave one light on so you know when the power returns. Avoid opening the refrigerator and freezer. It helps keep the food cool. Before eating food items, check them for spoilage. Use generators safely. If you have a portable generator, only run it outdoors with adequate ventilation. Never use a generator indoors or in attached garages. The exhaust fumes contain carbon monoxide, which can be deadly if inhaled. Listen to a battery powered radio for updates.

After a power outage

Dispose of refrigerated food that's been exposed to temperatures 40 or higher for two hours or more, or that has an unusual odor, color or texture. When in doubt, throw it out! Discard any medication that's refrigerated if the power is out for more than a day, unless the drug's label says otherwise. If a life depends on the refrigerated medication consult a doctor or pharmacist to see if the medicine can be used until a new supply is available.

Loss of food or appliance damage

If you do have a loss of food or appliance damage, check your home insurance policy or small business policy to see if the loss may be covered. **Pay attention to straight line winds.** How to stay safe from these winds that can severely damage homes, landscapes and people. Severe thunderstorms can create straight line winds in excess of 58 mph. These winds can pack a major punch, uprooting trees and knocking down power lines. Straight line winds can come in many forms. Two common types are: Downburst: A strong downward current that bursts outward on or near the ground. Wind speeds can exceed 165 mph. Derecho: A system of merged thunderstorms up to 65 miles wide that travels in a straight line, causing wind damage across an

area of at least 240 miles. Wind speeds can top 100 mph. Straight line winds can cause the same level of damage as tornadoes, but they lack the atmospheric rotation to form a funnel. The aftermath will show the difference: If downed trees and other kinds of debris are in parallel rows, that signifies straight line winds. Tornado damage is more sporadic. Straight line wind safety resembles tornado safety. Keep these tips in mind the next time your area has a severe thunderstorm warning: Find shelter immediately — or crouch down in the lowest spot you can find. Bring in or secure anything that's loose outside, such as lawn furniture, toys and bicycles. Stay away from trees and power lines. Go to the lowest level of your home.

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Who Should Pay For Conservation?

By Carl Segerstrom March 9, 2021 High Country News

Traditional sources of funding are dwindling, and some believe park visitors should step up.

Marcia Brownlee took up hunting in her 30s after years of hiking and camping on public lands. Stalking prey opened her eyes to the convoluted patchwork of private and public lands that humans and animals navigate in the Western U.S. It also gave her a greater financial stake in wildlife conservation. Brownlee heads the National Wildlife Federation’s Artemis Initiative, which encourages women to hunt and fish. These days, she spends a couple hundred dollars a year on license fees.

In 2018, Brownlee found herself at a crossroads of conservation funding during a trip to Montana’s Tenderfoot Creek, a tributary to the Smith River east of the Rocky Mountains, about halfway between Yellowstone and Glacier national parks. Access to the land she was hunting on was purchased from private owners with Land and Water Conservation Fund money from oil and gas royalties. Meanwhile, the money hunters like Brownlee spend on licenses and equipment funded more than half of the annual budgets of state wildlife agencies, according to a 2014-2015 survey.

Conservation funding in the U.S. depends on money from hunting, fishing and fossil fuels to pay for projects like wetland restoration and land purchases that improve public access. Now, however, that funding is becoming unreliable. Oil and gas development faces an uncertain future as the Biden administration halts federal leasing and mulls deeper reforms. Hunting participation has been on a downward slide for decades — a slide that briefly reversed in 2020 with the pandemic boosting hunting license sales and election year angst turbocharging firearms purchases. The fragility of the current funding model has Western states and conservationists seeking new revenue sources.

Wildlife biologist and conservationist Arthur Middleton, who studies large mammal migrations in the Greater Yellowstone ecosystem, is concerned about the future of far-ranging species like elk and mule deer. Once they leave Yellowstone National Park, they run a gauntlet of private landowners, whose fences, herds and houses interrupt habitat corridors. To help clear the way for migration, the University of California Berkeley professor is searching for innovative ways to fund state and private conservation programs. “Maybe it’s just a midlife crisis, but I’m just like, ‘Let’s get some new ideas up in here,’” Middleton said. Middleton’s search led him to Wyoming rancher and legislator Albert Sommers. In 2018, Sommers introduced a successful state resolution calling on the federal

government to charge wildlife conservation fees at Yellowstone and Grand Teton national parks, to help fund state wildlife agencies and pay private landowners for livestock predation, damage caused by wildlife and projects like fence removal. Yellowstone visitor surveys show that tourists are willing to pay to offset the costs of wolves killing cattle outside of the park. A similar measure proposed in the Montana Legislature this session to share funding from extra fees at Yellowstone and Glacier with the Blackfeet Nation and the state wildlife agencies is currently stalled in committee.

Inspired by Sommers’ resolution, Middleton and a group of colleagues wrote a research paper exploring different ways to get park visitors to pay for wildlife conservation outside of national parks. Suggestions range from adding a \$10 fee at park entrances to local sales and lodging taxes. Local taxes may be a more plausible approach because they don’t require federal participation. They also wouldn’t affect locals in tax-averse states like Wyoming, because they would target the more than 7 million tourists who visit Wyoming national parks each year.

The federal delisting of gray wolves, which went into effect in January, gives state *(Continued next page.)*



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wildlife agencies greater leeway to manage hunting of the iconic carnivores. In states where wolves recently lost federal protection — like Oregon and Washington — the delisting ups the stakes for non-hunters interested in shaping state wildlife policy. Wildlife watchers could have more sway in decision-making if they helped fund state agencies, Middleton said. “If you want a seat at the table, then you should have some skin in the game.” But increasing funding through national parks may not be entirely feasible: Parks, which have billions of dollars in overdue maintenance projects, are already facing their own financial woes.

Margaret Walls, a senior fellow at Resources for the Future, a Washington, D.C., think tank, said relying on park fees for state and private conservation revenue is “a non-starter, politically and practically.” “Money cannot and should not be a barrier to accessing public lands.”

Walls’ recent research focuses on another often-proposed — but hard to pass — funding model for conservation: taxing outdoor gear purchases. Unlike park fees, which



Visitors observe wildlife at Pilgrim Flats in Grand Teton National Park, Wyoming. Lawmakers are looking at ways to increase conservation revenue from the more than 7 million tourists who visit Wyoming national parks each year. Ryan Dorgan

affect everyone equally and can be a deterrent to low-income visitors, a “backpack tax” means that the people who buy more expensive gear end up contributing more, Walls said. But such fees face a staunch and well-heeled opponent in the outdoor gear industry. The industry trade association argues that it already pays ample taxes and that additional taxes would create barriers to outdoor access. Increasing the cost to visit parks disproportionately impacts low-income communities and people of color, who already face economic and cultural barriers when visiting parks. As conservation seeks new funding sources, it’s important to realize there’s a difference between making the choice to buy hunting tags and forcing people to pay more to explore national parks, Brownlee said. “Money cannot and should not be a barrier to accessing public lands.”

Carl Segerstrom is an assistant editor at High Country News, covering Alaska, the Pacific Northwest and the Northern Rockies from Spokane, Washington.

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Indian Peaks Permits ~ Infrastructure Projects

Starting March 16, 2021, Indian Peaks Wilderness backcountry permits will be available for purchase at Recreation.gov. Through the new system, customers will be able to view permit availability, book a reservation, pay online, print permits, and manage reservations. Permits are required for all overnight camping in Indian Peaks Wilderness Area from June 1 to Sept. 15 and are always required for groups of 8-12 people. The Recreation.gov site, which is currently visible to the public, will allow visitors to view permit availability ahead of time, making it easier for them to plan their itineraries. It will add convenience, providing the opportunity to purchase permits on weekends and evenings, even when the district offices are closed. Permits will no longer be issued by mail, phone or in person.

Anyone considering a visit to Indian Peaks Wilderness Area should first do extensive research. Most of the wilderness area is in the high alpine zone where snowpack lasts into July and severe weather conditions can be expected year-round. Many of the routes involve strenuous and technical hiking. Hikers and campers should be well equipped with the appropriate footwear, clothing and safety gear and should be experienced in backcountry camping techniques, including **Leave No Trace** principles. Food

storage containers are strongly encouraged.

The Recreation.gov page includes important links to detailed information about Indian Peaks Wilderness Area, including camping regulations, trail descriptions and maps. Once on the website, search “Indian Peaks Wilderness” to book small groups (1-7 people) and large groups (8-12 people). Be sure to review the Indian Peaks Wilderness backcountry zone map, to determine what zones to book and read through all the available information about Wilderness regulations and trail descriptions.

A portion of permits (25%) will be made available on a rolling basis starting at 8 a.m. three days in advance. Permits cost \$11 (The backcountry permit costs \$5 per party per trip. Recreation.gov charges a \$6 reservation fee per trip.) Visitors will be able to make modifications to an existing permit if circumstances change. Once a permit has been printed, modifications will no longer be allowed. While modifications are free, no refunds are provided for cancellations or changing trip start dates.

Indian Peaks Wilderness Area is a popular destination for recreation opportunities in the Front Range. The area’s proximity to the Denver Metro area makes it one of the most visited Wilderness areas in the country. To preserve the area’s wilderness character, a *(Continued next page.)*

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permit system has been in place for overnight camping since 1985.

USDA Forest Service Rocky Mountain Region Invests in Infrastructure Improvements on National Forests in Colorado, Kansas, Nebraska, South Dakota, and Wyoming DENVER, Colo., March 9, 2021 - The USDA Forest Service announced the investment of \$285 million to fund Great American Outdoors Act projects in 2021. Of this amount, approximately \$31.5M will go to the Rocky Mountain Region to fund ninety projects. This is a five-year program and similar dollar amounts are expected over the next five years. This significant influx of funding will be used to address infrastructure and deferred maintenance needs, enhance economic benefits, and improve recreation and public access on national forests by leveraging National Parks and Public Land Legacy Restoration Funds provided by Congress.

Specifically, the funds will be used to modernize recreation facilities, improve roadways, upgrade campgrounds, design and build new trails or rehabilitate existing trails, repair water systems and update toilets, to name just a few of the wide range of projects slated for the Rocky Mountain Region.

“The Legacy Restoration Funds will allow us to address a backlog of maintenance projects across the region,” said Tammy Angel, Acting Regional Forester. “We are thrilled

to be moving forward with much needed improvements to transportation infrastructure and recreation facilities and we are committed to accomplishing all of the funded projects,” she added.

This year’s \$31.5 million investment is made possible by the newly created National Parks and Public Land Legacy Restoration Fund, established in 2020 by the Great American Outdoors Act. These funds will allow the Forest Service’s Rocky Mountain Region to implement more than ninety infrastructure improvement projects essential to the continued use and enjoyment of national forests lands.

The projects will also serve as a catalyst for economic development and employment opportunities in rural communities. These new investments will strengthen shared stewardship of national forests and grasslands by expanding the Forest Service work with public and private partners.

Projects funded by the Legacy Restoration Fund will contribute to efforts to develop more sustainable infrastructure resilient to climate change impacts. Projects may also address Administration objectives to provide improved recreational opportunities and access to underserved communities.

For more information on these projects in the Rocky Mountain Region, visit the Rocky Mountain Region GAOA website.

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Why Smells Trigger Memories

Original story from Northwestern University

Odors evoke powerful memories, an experience enshrined in literature by Marcel Proust and his beloved Madeleine. A new Northwestern Medicine paper is the first to identify a neural basis for how the brain enables odors to so powerfully elicit those memories. The paper shows unique connectivity between the hippocampus—the seat of memory in the brain—and olfactory areas in humans.

This new research suggests a neurobiological basis for privileged access by olfaction to memory areas in the brain. The study compares connections between primary sensory areas—including visual, auditory, touch and smell—and the hippocampus. It found olfaction has the strongest connectivity. It's like a superhighway from smell to the hippocampus.

“During evolution, humans experienced a profound expansion of the neocortex that re-organized access to memory networks,” said lead investigator Christina Zelano, assistant professor of neurology at Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine. “Vision, hearing and touch all re-routed in the brain as the neocortex expanded, connecting with the hippocampus through an intermediary—association cortex—rather than directly. Our data suggests olfaction did not undergo this re-routing, and instead retained direct access to the hippocampus.”

The paper, “Human hippocampal connectivity is stronger in olfaction than other sensory systems” was published March 4 in the journal *Progress in Neurobiology*.

Epidemic loss of smell in COVID-19 makes research more urgent. In COVID-19, smell loss has become epidemic, and understanding the way odors affect our brains—memories, cognition and more—is more important than ever, Zelano noted.

“There is an urgent need to better understand the olfactory system in order to better understand the reason for COVID-related smell loss, diagnose the severity of the loss and to develop treatments,” said first author Guangyu Zhou, research assistant professor of neurology at Northwestern. “Our study is an example of the basic research science that our understanding of smell, smell loss and future treatments is built on.”

Q & A with Zelano about the importance of the sense of smell, olfactory research and the link to COVID-19. Why do smells evoke such vivid memories?

“This has been an enduring mystery of human experience. Nearly everyone has been transported by a whiff of an odor to another time and place, an experience that sights or sounds rarely evoke. Yet, we haven't known why. The study found the olfactory parts of the brain connect more strongly to the memory parts than other senses. This is a major piece of the puzzle, a striking finding in humans. We believe our results will help future research solve this mystery.”

How does smell research relate to COVID-19? “The COVID-19 epidemic has brought a renewed focus and urgency to olfactory research. While our study doesn't address COVID smell loss directly, it does speak to an important aspect of why olfaction is important to our lives: smells are a profound part of memory, and odors connect us to especially important memories in our lives, often connected to loved ones. The smell of fresh chopped parsley may evoke a grandmother's cooking, or a whiff of a cigar may evoke a grandfather's presence. Odors connect us to important memories that transport us back to the presence of those people.” Loss of smell linked to depression and poor quality of life “Loss of the sense of smell is underestimated in its impact. It has profound negative effects of quality of life, and many people underestimate that until they experience it. Smell loss is highly correlated with depression and poor quality of life.

“Most people who lose their smell to COVID regain it, but the time frame varies widely, and some have had what appears to be permanent loss. Understanding smell loss, in turn, requires research into the basic neural operations of this under-studied sensory system.



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Update: BuffaloFieldCampaign.org

What single most important action will save the wild buffalo?

Repealing Montana Code Annotated § 81-2-120 (MCA 81-2-120). Because without MCA 81-2-120 on the books: The spigot of taxpayer dollars would stop flowing to Dept. of Livestock operations removing wild buffalo in Montana.

Yellowstone National Park would lose its' public justification for trapping wild buffalo for slaughter inside the park.

New born buffalo calves and their mothers would no longer be harassed by government agents from spring calving grounds.

Wild buffalo would roam millions of acres of National Forest habitat surrounding Yellowstone National Park.

The opportunity for naturally recovering buffalo in the wild would have a chance of succeeding.

We don't know yet if a bill will be introduced in the Montana legislature to REPEAL MCA 81-2-120.

We do know bills affecting wild buffalo will be heard – for good or bad! If a bill is introduced affecting wild buffalo, it provides an opportunity to advance our message to Montana's elected officials:

REPEAL MCA 81-2-120

The 2021 Montana legislative session provides all Montanans and the public at large an opportunity to educate elected officials. Our idea – REPEAL MCA 81-2-120 – must become their idea.

Our Legislator Educator Initiative page is about providing you the information and tools to begin the hard work of persuading Montana's elected officials MCA 81-2-120 has gotta go.

Never lose sight of what needs to be done: REPEAL MCA 81-2-120. Keep repeating the message to elected officials, REPEAL MCA 81-2-120, every chance you get.

If you go to our Website- you can just click on the ACTION button to tell Montana elected officials you believe Wild Buffalo should be left wild and not managed like cattle or other livestock. Do it now, before they leave session.

The Montana Legislature is in session to May 1, 2021.

Winter, who barely made an appearance this year, is already beginning to leave us. Before giving way to spring,



however, he brought through some refreshingly cold morning temperatures that nipped our noses, froze our eyelashes, and donned the buffalo in mantles of frosty crystals. Due to an uptick in covid cases in Montana and other states, BFC is temporarily suspending our winter volunteer opportunities while we develop our protocol, have it assessed by medical professionals, and streamline it for field operations. You are still welcome to apply for volunteer opportunities during our Summer & Field Season of 2021. You can still support BFC from home.

Planting Tips For Growing Success

By Melinda Myers

Increase your growing success by giving your transplants a good start with a few simple planting techniques.

Preparing them for the transition outdoors and planting properly will help you grow your best garden yet.

Transplants started indoors from seed or purchased at a local garden center or greenhouse need time to prepare for their outdoor home. Gradually toughen them up with a procedure called hardening off. This process helps them adjust to the outdoor growing conditions, so plants will suffer less transplant shock and establish more quickly.

Start by moving the plants outdoors to a sheltered shady location about one to two weeks before the recommended planting date. Stop fertilizing and water thoroughly when the planting mix is starting to dry. Move plants into an hour of direct sunlight the first day, increasing the time by an hour each day. Make this easier by placing transplants in a wagon, old saucer sled or Gardener's Supply Garden Cart ([gardeners.com](http://www.gardeners.com)). Keep frost protection handy or move plants indoors when frost is in the forecast.

Once the plants are hardened off, move them into the garden. Water the planting mix thoroughly the night before planting. If possible, plant in the morning or on a cloudy day to reduce moisture loss and stress on the plants.

Follow spacing recommendations on the plant tags to save money and time. You will need fewer plants to fill the space and allow each plant to reach its full potential. Press on the sides of the pot to loosen the roots and carefully slide the plant out of the container. Do not pull the plant out by the stem or you may end up with all stem and no attached roots.

Gently loosen any encircling and tightly bound roots. This encourages the roots to explore the surrounding soil and establish a strong root system. Use fingers to tease apart the roots or a sharp knife to slice through the surface roots in a few places.

Plant tomato transplants several inches deeper or set long leggy plants in a trench. This encourages roots to form along the buried stem. Remove

the lowest leaves that will be covered by the soil and loosen the roots on the hardened-off transplant.

Dig a shallow trench two to three inches deep. Lay the leggy tomato in the trench and carefully bend the stem so the upper portion remains above ground. Cover the stem with soil and water. Set stakes and towers in place at the time of planting to reduce the risk of damaging roots and stems when trying to secure tall plants. Make sure the support is strong and tall enough for the plants. Remove any flowers and fruit on the transplants at the time of planting so plants can direct energy into forming roots, resulting in more flowers and fruit over time. If you cannot bring yourself to do



this, try removing flowers on every other plant or row at planting. Do the same to the remaining flowers the following week. Water new transplants often enough to keep the soil moist, but not soggy wet. Water thoroughly and gradually extend the amount of time between watering to encourage deep, more drought-tolerant roots. Adding a layer of shredded leaves, evergreen needles or other organic mulch will help conserve moisture, suppress weeds, and improve the soil as it decomposes.

*Melinda Myers is the author of more than 20 gardening books, including **Small Space Gardening**. Her web site is www.MelindaMyers.com.*

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Universal Basic Income: What Is It?

By Valerie Wedel

A day in life... coffee first thing on the morning, then off to work... Perhaps an 8-hour day as a clerk or store worker, then home again. Do you have health benefits? Enough money for food, rent, clothing, and some fine things to enjoy? Forget international travel... if your car breaks down or you have a medical condition; can you afford to repair the car or your health? When your child needs supplies for school, can you afford to buy them?

Imagine working as hard as you can – at a minimum wage job. Here in Colorado, one earns \$12.32 /hour. With a 40-hour workweek, that equals \$492.80, or \$1971.20 per month, or \$23,654.40 per year. Minus taxes... This is in Colorado! The federal minimum wage is still set at a measly \$7.25 / hour, which equals \$290/week, \$1,160/month, and \$13,920 per year. (1) Could you live on that? Could anyone?

Even earning the Colorado minimum wage, one would be living below the poverty line. The federal poverty line from 2018 equals \$16,147/year for a single person and \$33,383 for a family of four. In Colorado our living costs are higher. In Denver the poverty line is set the same as the federal level, per Connect for Health Colorado. Yet, an apartment with one bedroom would run at least \$1,000/ mo.

These numbers look terrible for someone who is an essential worker and has a family to support, or even just your own self to support.

If you are fortunate to be more affluent, it can really be hard to imagine living on the edge. Yet many, many of us have no savings, and literally live from one tiny paycheck to the next, juggling bills, buying necessities as cheaply as possible, or going without.

Now let's peek at CEO's of successful businesses. A CEO's picture is so much brighter. According to an article released by the *Economic Policy Institute* in 2019 (2), the average wages of a CEO have grown since 1978 by a whopping 940%! By massive contrast, typical worker salaries since 1978 have risen by a tiny fraction – no more than 12%.

Make it real: Say a CEO in 1978 made \$100,000 per year, and their lowest paid worker made \$12,000 per year. Today that same CEO would make \$9,400,000 per year, and their lowest paid worker would make \$13,440. Does this seem fair?

So, what is a Basic Universal Income? Put simply, each one of us deserves a decent way to live. Each one of us deserves a roof, food, clothing, and some security. Welfare was meant to be part of creating that, but as we all know, it has many failings. Basic Universal Income is something rather different. It also comes with no strings attached.

Way back in 1776, Thomas Paine wrote a pamphlet called *Common Sense* (3). Today, Paine would be called a "Social Influencer." He might have a podcast. He would probably be a "vlogger," and about as popular as Oprah. His pamphlet, and his other writings in the 1700's, fanned the flames of rebellion. Our Revolution happened.

There were terrible income inequities in Paine's day, as there are now. Paine believed that if we kicked the English government out of our country and governed ourselves, we could do better. One of his key points was what we call today a Basic Guaranteed Income. Paine believed that this would be massively helpful to young people starting out, older people and the under-employed and unemployed, and everyone in between. What he perhaps failed to account for is the greed and power grabbing that happened in our brand new country, and so this vision was never realized.

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From the earliest days of our country's founding, there has been a thread of power and greed running through us all that says: if you are poor, it is your own fault. But is this true? Or is it a handy salve for a guilty (and rich) conscience?

Fast-forward about 200 years, to the 1960's. Martin Luther King Jr. rocked our world with his peaceful demonstrations. The power of his peacefully delivered message was so great that another man murdered him, to shut him up. Yet, as with many great messages, his words live on and inspire action! Shortly before King was murdered, he wrote his last book. The message in this book was socio-economic justice (4). He went beyond saying black lives matter. King wrote that poverty is the greatest destroyer, and that is what we, as a society must solve. He was planning demonstrations and marches in Washington to rally all Americans, of every race, against poverty... when a bullet from a gun killed him.

Fast-forward another 60+ years: Income inequality is worse than ever. People of every race are being evicted from their homes, or hanging on by a thread, here in the United States. And yet - we all long to do meaningful work. Each and every one of us is really hardwired to make a good difference in our world. No one really wants to sit at home doing nothing. We all are here on this planet to create, to do. And yet, the rich get richer and the poor grow in number and get poorer – and this too is hardwired, now, into our government and social structure.

Here, in the United States, 260 years later, a Guaranteed Basic Income was finally tested in Stockton, California (5). This city actually declared bankruptcy in the early 2000's. After 10 years of economic devastation, our country's youngest mayor ever (and Stockton's first black mayor), Michael Tubbs, was elected. Tubbs was only 26 years old when he was elected mayor in 2016. His platform – and what he actually did do – was to set off a beautiful social experiment. Tubbs took \$1,000,000 and invested it in Stockton's citizens. He created a Universal Basic Income. In February of 2019, 125 residents living in census tracts at or below the city's median income of \$46,033 began receiving a monthly income of \$500.

No strings attached! People receiving this income in Stockton, CA, could literally spend it any way they chose, for any purpose. The income continued for two years. Are you wondering what happened?

A study (5) recently completed shows... this worked! People receiving \$500 per month were more likely to find full time work, and to keep working! AND, they were more likely to be happy and to stay healthy! It worked!!

In an interview (5), Tubbs talked about how the moneys were spent. As he put it, each family used the money in ways that made sense to them. Each of the reasons was good. Most uses did not fall under the umbrella of what could have been achieved through social services. In Tubb's opinion, this ability for each individual recipient to choose how to use that money was vastly more efficient than a welfare agency trying to dictate how to use the funds. It worked better. The recipients lived better. They worked better. They became more successful by their own

efforts at work, and also happier and healthier.

There is now a national movement among city mayors to look at Guaranteed Basic Income in their cities (6). They have a website: <https://www.mayorsforagi.org/faqs>. This group includes world class cities like Chicago and Seattle, as well as many other smaller cities scattered throughout the United States.

Should we try it here in Colorado? Would this help you and your family? One thing is sure – a Universal Basic Income is woven into the DNA of our country, as surely as capitalism is. It is an idea and vision that will continue... What do you think?

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Put Unemployed Back To Work In Restoration

By Jonathan Thompson Feb. 23, 2021 High Country News

Farmington, a city of 45,000 in the northwestern corner of New Mexico, has run on a fossil fuel economy for a century. It is one of the only places on the planet where a 26-kiloton nuclear device was detonated underground to free up natural gas from the rock.

The city's baseball team was called the Frackers, and a home run hit out of their practice park was likely to land next to a pack of gas wells. The community's economy and identity are so tied up with fossil fuels that the place should probably try a new name like Carbondon, Methanedale or Drillsville.

Over the last decade, however, the oil and gas rollercoaster here has shuttered nearly to a halt, and one of two giant coal-fired power plants is about to shut down. The carbon corporations that have been exploiting the local labor and landscape for decades are fleeing, taking

thousands of jobs with them. Left behind are gaping coal-mine wounds, rotting infrastructure and well-pad scars oozing methane.


The pattern of abandonment is mirrored in communities from Wyoming to Utah to Western Colorado to the Navajo Nation. Community leaders scramble to find solutions. Some cling to what they know, throwing their weight behind schemes to keep coal viable, such as carbon capture, while others bank on outdoor recreation, tourism and cottage industries.

Yet one solution to the woes rarely comes up in these conversations: Restoration as economic development. Why not put unemployed miners and drillers back to work reclaiming closed coal mines and plugging up idled or low-producing oil and gas wells?

The EPA estimates that there are some 2 million unplugged abandoned wells nationwide, many of them leaking methane, the greenhouse gas with 86 times the warming potential of carbon dioxide, along with health-harming volatile organic compounds and even deadly hydrogen sulfide.

Hundreds of thousands of additional wells are still active, yet have been idled or are marginal producers, and they will also need plugging and reclaiming.

Oilfield service companies and their employees have the skills and equipment needed and could go back to work immediately. A 2020 report from the Columbia Center on Global Energy Policy found that a nationwide well-plugging program could employ more than 100,000 high-wage workers.



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Massive coal mines are also shutting down and will need to be reclaimed. Northern Arizona's Kayenta Mine, owned by coal-giant Peabody, shut down in late 2019, along with the Navajo Generating Station, resulting in the loss of nearly 300 jobs. The Western Organization of Resource Councils estimated that proper reclamation of the mine could keep most of those miners employed for an additional two to three years.

Peabody, however, still has not begun to meet its reclamation obligations. This is a failure not only on Peabody's part but also of the federal mining regulators who should be holding the company's feet to the fire.

Who will pay for all of this? Mining and drilling companies are required to put up financial bonds in order to get development permits, and they're forfeited if the companies fail to properly reclaim the well or mine. Unfortunately, these bonds are almost always inadequate. A Government Accountability Office report found that the Bureau of Land Management held about \$2,000 in bonds, on average, for each well on federal land. Yet the cost to plug and reclaim each well ranges from \$20,000 to \$145,000. An example: In New Mexico, a company can put up as little as \$2,500 per well that costs at least \$35,000 to plug.

Colorado Democratic Sen. Michael Bennet tried to remedy this last year by crafting a bill that would increase bonds and create a fund for plugging abandoned wells. Republicans kept the bill from progressing, but with an administration that touted reclamation of mines and abandoned wells in a climate-related executive order, and a new Senate in place, the bill stands a good chance of going forward.

Economic development focusing on restoring the land

once miners leave is a natural fit for beleaguered towns suffering the latest bust. Plus, by patching up the torn landscape these communities will help clear the path for other types of economic development, such as tourism or recreation.



"Restoration work is not fixing beautiful machinery ... It is accepting an abandoned responsibility," wrote Barry Lopez, the renowned nature writer who died recently. "It is a humble and often joyful mending of biological ties, with a hope clearly recognized that working from this foundation we might, too, begin to mend human society."

The Decker coal mine in Montana closed down Feb. 5, laying off 76 workers. WildEarth Guardians/CC via Flickr
Jonathan Thompson is a contributor to Writers on the Range, writersontherange.org, a nonprofit dedicated to spurring lively conversation about the West. He is a veteran reporter specializing in economic and environmental issues.

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Paul Forbes

Your Destiny Sings

By Frosty Wooldridge

Each time I stand up in front of an audience, I invite every person in the room to accept himself or herself unconditionally.

“You are a one-time miracle of the universe,” I boldly state. “Accept your height, weight, build, looks, hair, personality, mind, spirit and, well, everything about you. That’s the first step.”

In this current, high-speed world, loaded with cell phones, glitz and glamour movie stars, along with obnoxious amounts of wealth—it’s easy to look at your own life in comparison. Hint: delete the word “comparison” from your vocabulary.

You manifest a one-time-only combination of DNA never before seen in the universe and never again to be repeated. Pretty astounding stuff, don’t you think?

Let’s take it a step further. No other creature on this planet can do what you do: think, create, choose and manifest anything your mind conceives.

For example, Leonardo de Vinci painted the Mona Lisa. A one time expression by the only man in the universe who could conceive of and paint such a work of art! Picasso’s

whacky mind created some of the wildest and weirdest paintings on the planet. The Wright Brothers disobeyed all the pundits to construct a flying machine guaranteed not to fly. But it flew into the wild blue yonder. Eventually, that first flight found humanity flying to the moon.

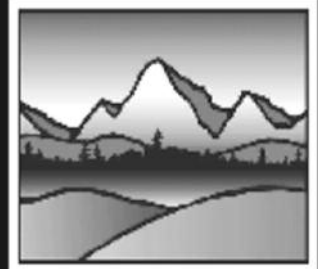
Walt Disney created Disneyland, Epcot and Disneyworld. Susan B. Anthony created the suffragettes. Jane Goodall studied the gorillas. Ernest Shackleton attempted to walk to the South Pole in 1914 with no radio assistance or emergency aid.

What’s the one item they all enjoy in the history books? Answer: they pursued something that burned inside them. They chased a dream until it became their reality.

Hint: a dream takes hours of practice before it becomes reality. Some books say that anyone who wants to master a certain dream must spend 10,000 hours practicing their craft. A guitarist must practice daily. A writer must write seven days a week. An artist must stroke his or her brush on the canvas for 10,000 hours. A jewelry maker must spend countless hours playing with creative ideas—before coming into the realm of expert or designer.

True story: once a farm boy decided to go to college.

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While attending classes, he studied to become a teacher. All the while, he kept writing in his diary. He loved to write. Once he became a teacher, they paid him so poorly that he learned to drive a long haul furniture truck in the summers to make ends meet. He recorded his travels. In reality, he wanted to be a writer.

Many of his customers said, "You don't seem to fit the truck driver mold. What are you actually trying to do with your life?" "In reality, I am a writer temporarily driving a truck to chase my dreams of becoming an author of adventure books," he said. "I work 70 plus hours a week loading furniture and driving so I can earn enough to get to my real life." "That's not surprising," his customers said.

During the years that followed, he traveled extensively around the world. He racked up 10,000 hours of travel. He jotted down notes of his world meanderings. He snapped pictures. He refined his craft.

When his first travel book published, he broke down in tears of joy. He laughed. He celebrated. He yelled. He fulfilled his self-created destiny. Hints for you to live into your chosen destiny:

Realize that what you do in your spare time usually gives you a hint to what you really like to do in life.

Whatever your dream, chase it with daily mental, emotional and physical energy.

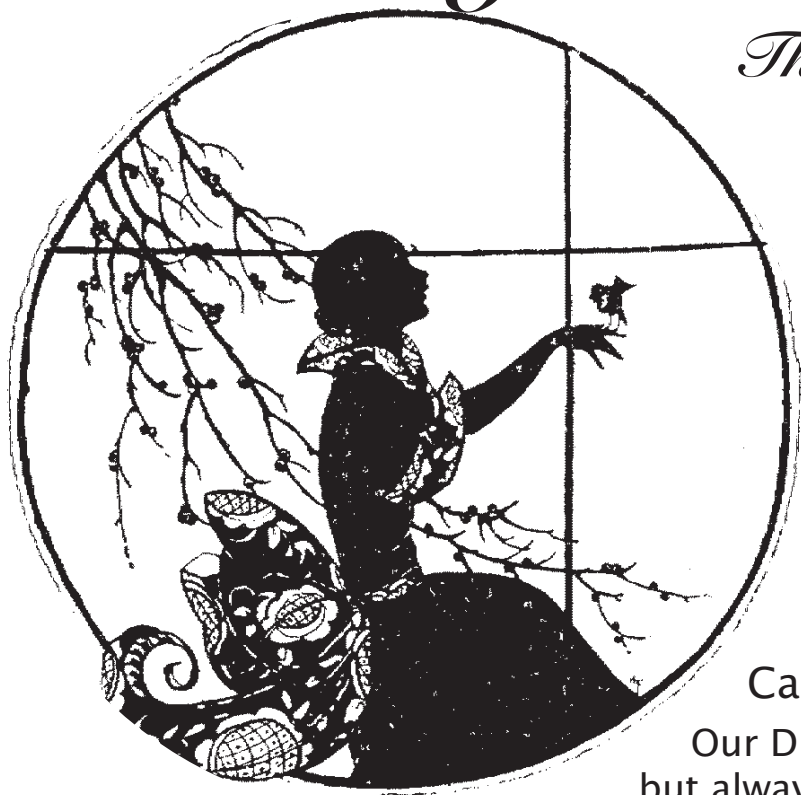
Put in your 10,000 hours with a sense of gusto, passion and flair.

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(Spirit of St. Louis what Charles Lindbergh flew over the Atlantic Ocean to fulfill a dream. What dream has your name on it?) Photography by Frosty Wooldridge

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Hands, Hoofs & Paws pg 20 303.503.6068
Clarity Water Services pg 28 303.717.9110

HOME IMPROVEMENT

ACE Indian Peaks Hardware pg 13 303.258.3132
B & H Asphalt Paving ins cov 303.810.0531
Benchmark Land Care pg 12 303.485.1001
Caribou Painting pg 5 303.641.7964
Grate Contracting pg 16 303.579.9519
Meyer Hardware pg 3 303.279.3393
Pruins Pruning/Tree Care pg 27 303.653.7967
Redpoint Construction pg 12 303.642.3691
Rock Creek Civil, LLC pg 6 720.583.4555

HORSE BOARDING

Rudolph Ranch, Inc. pg 9 303.582.5230

HORSE TRAINING

Timberline Sporthorses pg 25 720.999.7235

INSURANCE

Jim Plane-State Farm- pg 21 720.890.5916

LIQUOR

Foss Company pg 23 303.963.5693
Mid-County Liquors pg 6 303.642.7686
Underground Liquor pg 14 303.582.6034

MUSIC LESSONS

Piano & Harp in CCC pg 30 303.642.8423

PROPANE

Carl's Corner pg 13 303.642.7144

REAL ESTATE

Byers-Sellers Mtn Properties pg 8 303.642.7951
Mock Realty-Kathy Keating -Back cov 303.642.1133

RETAIL

ACE Indian Peaks Hardware pg 13 303.258.3132
B & F Mountain Market pg 24 303.258.3105
Meyer Hardware pg 3 303.279.3393
The Silver Horse - pg 29 303.279.6313
The Rustic Moose - pg 29 303.258.3225

REVERSE MORTGAGES

Universal Lending Corp. pg 10 303.791.4786

ROOFING

Independence Roofing pg 3 720.399.0355

STEEL STRUCTURES

Steel Structures America ins cov 970.420.7100

TAXES

Karen Schwimmer, CPA pg 10 303.642.0628

WATER & WELL

Arrow Drilling pg 11 303.421.8766
Clarity Water Services pg 28 303.717.9110

Power Update

April
2021

Electrical Safety this Spring

With snow still covering the ground in some parts of our mountain territory and more in the forecast, it may be hard to believe spring is just around the corner. The arrival of spring means a host of returning electrical safety precautions when working or playing outside.

Here are few quick spring electrical safety tips from Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S):

- Always keep power cords and electrical equipment away from water or other wet areas. Water and electricity don't mix, and can cause serious injury if not careful. It's important to check wiring that could have become exposed during the winter, especially when it's near a water source.
- Look up and look out for power lines. Make sure you're aware of nearby power cords when working outside. As a general rule, keep your body and all tools and materials at least 15 feet from any overhead power lines at all times. Don't let kids play near power lines, especially with kites or drones.
- Call before you dig. Perhaps this is the summer you're finally putting up the new fence around your yard or property. Calling 8-1-1 before you dig can save you from digging into underground utility lines.

- As trees bud, they can grow into power lines. Keep your trees trimmed to avoid contact with power lines. If you are unsure of how and when to remove tree limbs or if you need to report a tree limb in contact with a power line, call United Power at 303-637-1300.
- Before every use, inspect power tools and electric lawn equipment for frayed power cords, broken plugs and weathered or damaged housings. Don't use damaged equipment until it has been repaired properly. Keep tools unplugged and stored in a dry area when not in use.

Spring is also a good time to have an electrical inspection done on your home. In the winter, homeowners are more likely to overload circuits. An overloaded circuit occurs when there are too many devices plugged into a particular circuit, exceeding its safety rating. When using space heaters, for example, nothing else should be plugged into the circuit because they alone draw the recommended safety rating.

Overloaded circuits can cause damage to wiring, especially in older homes with electrical systems that weren't designed to handle today's typical load, creating a potential fire hazard.



Electronic Newsletter Coming Soon

United Power has been investing more resources in electronic communication options over the past year in an effort to get members important information in a more timely and efficient manner. In 2021, the cooperative will begin offering members an electronic newsletter containing relevant information about the cooperative, electrical safety, energy efficiency tips and more.

To ensure you are receiving electronic communications from the cooperative, including the upcoming digital newsletter, make sure your contact information is up to date. You can check your contact information and make necessary changes using the free online payment portal, SmartHub, or through the United Power mobile app.

You can also submit an email update request on our website at unitedpower.com/account-updates or by calling our Member Services team directly at 303-637-1300.

2021 Annual Meeting & Director Election

Wednesday, April 14, 2021 | 6:30 p.m.

REGISTER FOR THE MEETING

All members are invited to attend the Annual Meeting to hear from United Power leadership about the exciting ways the cooperative has continued to serve you over the past year.

Members will be able to participate over the phone or watch the livestream online. Members who register will receive a phone call from the cooperative on Wednesday, April 14 at 6:30 p.m. To register for the Annual Meeting, go to www.unitedpower.com/annual-meeting.

VOTING YOUR BALLOT

Four positions on United Power's board are up for election, one in each director district (South, East, West and Mountain). **Balloting in the 2021 Director Election will be via mail-in vote only.** There will be no ballot drop boxes and no in-person balloting this year. Please return your ballots in the postage-paid envelope. **Ballots must arrive at the P.O. Box by 12 p.m. on April 14, 2021.**

Find more information at www.unitedpower.com.

**UNITED
POWER**

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

Member Services: 303-637-1300

Coal Creek Office: 303-642-7921

www.unitedpower.com

Pilates Class with Cloe Vanmalderen

Mondays 6pm - 7pm

CCCIA Hall 31528 Hwy 72



29319 Spruce Canyon Drive

Amazing Mountain Home
3 BD/ 3 BA 2,744 sq.ft. 1.55 Acres



Coal Creek Canyon

Gorgeous Updated Log Home - 1.82 Acres
4 BD/ 4 BA 3,817 sq.ft. **\$1,100,000**



Lower Coal Creek

Private Mtn Home w/Walk-out 8+ Acres
3 BD/ 2 BA 2,496 sq.ft. **\$679,000**



723 Boxwood, Longmont

Light and Bright
3 BD/ 2 BA 1,508 sq.ft.. **\$419,000**



20193 Goins

Wonderful Log Home - 5.17 Acres
2 BD/ 2 BA 1,907 sq.ft. **\$595,000**



Coal Creek Canyon

Fabulous Luxury Home, Views
4 BD/ 4 BA 4,697 sq.ft. **\$950,000**



A Must See

Pinecliffe Subdivision

3497 Coal Creek Canyon #18

Adorable Summer Cabin
3 BD/ 1 BA 1,184 sq.ft. **\$249,000**



11470 Ranch Elsie Road

Horse Property! 3.8 Acres
2 BD/ 1 BA 1,948 sq.ft. **\$455,000**



11851 Spruce Canyon Circle

Amazingly Remodeled Log Home
4 BD/ 3 BA 2,616 sq.ft. 2.8 Acres



Under Contract

Vacant Land

TBD Pine Road

Excellent 1.2 Acres next to conservation easement. **\$99,000**



SOLD!

Vacant Land

1257 / 1316 Chute Road

Secluded 5+ acres, Divide, City, and Gross Dam Views **\$139,000**



SOLD!

11440 Inspiration Road

Amazing Views at Road's End
3 BD/2 BA 2,341 sq.ft. 1.5 Ac. **\$540,000**



Coal Creek Canyon

Luxury Mountain Living 59.4 Acres
4 BD/ 5 BA 3,661 sq.ft. **\$1,744,750**



Coal Creek Canyon

Custom Log Home - 4.2 Acres
3 BD/ 4 BA 3,300 sq.ft. **\$900,000**



SOLD!

85 Valley View Drive

Breathtaking Divide & Lake Views
4 BD/ 4 BA 3623 sq.ft. 1+Ac. **\$775,000**

Compass is a licensed real estate broker in Colorado and abides by Equal Housing Opportunity laws. All material presented herein is intended for informational purposes only. Information is compiled from sources deemed reliable but is subject to errors, omissions, changes in price, condition, sale, or withdrawal without notice. No statement is made as to accuracy of any description. All measurements and square footages are approximate. This is not intended to solicit property already listed. Nothing herein shall be construed as legal, accounting or other professional advice outside the realm of real estate brokerage.



Kathy Keating
CRS, ABR, GRI
EcoBroker
Broker Associate
303.642.1133



Janet Ingvaldsen
Broker Associate
Realtor
720.600.9006

