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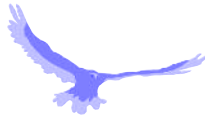
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# In Light & Dark: Your Horse's Vision

By Terry Golson

Horses are animals that evolved in open grasslands. They're designed to be awake and graze most of the day and night. Because of this they have excellent vision in "scotopic" (low-light) conditions. It's hard for us to imagine because we have opposite needs - to see with acuity and color in the daytime. To have good scotopic vision, the anatomy of a horse's eye is different than ours. This affects their behavior in basic ways.

Sometimes your horse's pupil looks bluish-grey. What you're seeing is the tapetum lucidum, a structure that reflects light back through the photoreceptor layer of the eye so that the horse has a high sensitivity to light, especially light reflecting off of the ground. For an animal that needs to graze at night, and also to see predators, and then move quickly away from them, over uneven terrain, without stumbling, this is a useful adaptation. But there's a trade-off. We humans don't have a tapetum lucidum and our night vision is poor. However, we have the ability to adjust our eyes quickly from bright light to dark. Horses do not. It takes horses much longer to see in scotopic conditions, but once they do, they see far more than us.

Walk from sunlight to the interior of a barn. In five minutes, your eyes have adjusted. What your horse sees is dark.

No wonder there are behavior "issues" going into enclosed spaces, or why your horse trips over a lead rope on the aisle's floor and panics. And why you should always put those saddle racks down when not in use, and why door latches should be smoothly tucked out of the way. The horse can't see them! However, in twenty minutes, what your horse sees - it's brighter and in more detail than you can ever perceive.

Which is why you won't notice a sudden movement at the far end of the barn, but your horse will. Horses need to flee from danger, and so have an innate fear of small, enclosed, dark spaces. Remember that they see in panorama, so there are wide open spaces on both sides of your horse trailer door. This doesn't mean that loading your horse into the trailer has to be fraught with conflict and pressure. The first thing to do is make it brighter inside. If your trailer has them, open the front doors. Many trailers have interior lights. Make use of those also.

A horse who is an experienced show horse and usually loads easily can however, give pause if she's never

seen a new trailer. Note how her body language can be tense, or stopped at the ramp, and is lowering her head to try to get as much light as possible reflecting off of her tapetum lucidum, and also to get the floor of the trailer into focus using her line of acuity. Walk her away, opened the doors at the front of the trailer, and have her approach again.

Of course, thoughtful, reward-based training should be part of the picture, too. When going from shade to sun, a human's pupil constricts in diameter to let less light in. A horse evolved in wide open spaces, where brightness remains rather constant over stretches of time. They didn't need to adjust quickly from light to dark, so the horse's pupil can constrict only a tad. Instead they have 'corpora nigra' that's the raggedy part of the iris that hangs into the pupil and is particularly effective at shading out sunlight from above.

This design is perfect for a grazing animal whose head is usually on the ground and whose eyes are scanning low across the horizon. The corpora nigra acts as an awning! When a horse's head is up and in very bright light, the pupil constricts and the corpora nigra partially covers the iris to protect it from being harmed by the sun. It's like when we try to see through squinted eyes - you see only enough to fumble your way around.

The takeaway from this is that you might want to try a moonlit ride on your horse. You won't be able to see where you're going, but your horse will. On the other end of the (literal) spectrum, when riding out on a wonderfully sunny day, if you head into the shade of the woods, slow down and take your time. Your horse's eyes can't be rushed.

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# Halotherapy: Healing Breath

By Valerie Wedel

Are you dodging the creeping crud circulating our front range? Hiding out from friends and scrubbing doorknobs, afraid of getting sick? Already fighting cold, flu, cough, or worse?

Welcome to an ancient healing therapy - Halotherapy - from the Greek meaning “salt,” plus “healing.” Salt as a healing agent has been known since ancient times. It was then apparently forgotten for a couple millennia. Modern halotherapy has returned to us from Eastern Europe.

From the use in the ancient world, to rediscovery in modern times, halotherapy has had a fascinating journey. According to the Salt Therapy Association, in the early 1800’s, Dr. Feliks Boczkowski noticed that salt miners in Eastern Europe looked surprisingly young, and surprisingly healthy. In those pre-antibiotic days, mining was usually a very dangerous occupation, yet salt miners seemed to be healthier than the general population. In fact, salt miners were the only population that had no documented tuberculosis, according to Allen Tawa, co-owner of **The Salt Spa** in Louisville, Colorado. Even when miners went into their salt mines sick, they appeared to improve and emerge again healthy. After studying these phenomena, in 1839 Dr. Boczkowski opened the first modern salt spa health resort, at the Wieliczka salt mine in Poland.

In the 1900’s, again in Eastern Europe, salt mines and caves were used as bomb shelters during World War II. People too sick to run away from enemy troops hid in ancient salt mines and caves – in some cases for weeks at a time. Many entered with diseases fatal in those days – pneumonia, even tuberculosis, yet survived and healed.

After the war, Eastern European doctors took a long look at this. The result was a series of underground salt spas, located in naturally occurring salt caves and old salt mines in Eastern Europe.

Underground salt mines and caves are apparently quite rare in most parts of the world. In Russia, during the 1960’s, the first halogenerator was built to mimic atmosphere in underground salt caves. This generator pulverized salt into tiny particles, on the level of 1–10 microns each, to create salt air in “caves” above ground. After the fall of the Soviet Union in the late 1980’s, this technology began to migrate into Western Europe and eventually the rest of the world. And eventually, here to Colorado!

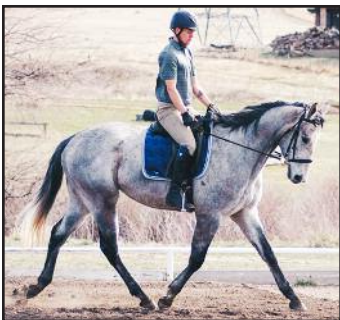
In 2010, Boulder-based partners Nita Desai, M.D., and Allen Tawa were searching for a non-toxic remedy for asthma and bronchitis. They came across halotherapy, and believed it might offer an answer. At that time there were only two salt spas in all of the United States. So, Desai and Tawa traveled to Toronto, Canada, and spent time in four of eight salt spas located there. They also met there with two different companies that build salt spas.

One of those companies, the Iris Salt Cave Co., was hired to build a salt spa here in Colorado. This firm was founded by Richard Zagroelny, an Eastern European native living in Toronto. His company, then and now, builds salt spas all over the world.

With the help of Zagroelny, Desai and Tawa built a room with two tons of Himalayan salt covering the walls, floor and ceiling. They installed a special halogenerator to pulverize salt crystals down to that 1-10 angstrom size, and circulate them through the room. While at that time there were only two other salt spas in our entire country, according to Tawa, as of this article that number has grown to over 200.

In a salt spa one simply sits in a peaceful room and inhales a very specific concentration of salt in carefully conditioned air. Salt is antimicrobial, antiviral, antifungal, anti-inflammatory. While it has been known and written of since ancient times as a healing agent that prevents and cures infection, today we also know salt air creates a negative ion environment. This is very deeply relaxing to one’s nervous system. This is also part of why people love being by the ocean!

Salt from halogenerators also thins mucus secretions, making it easier for



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our bodies to flush toxins and irritants out of one's lungs, bronchials and sinuses. Some people have also observed halotherapy to cure or very greatly improve skin conditions such as eczema. The key seems to be the halogenerators pulverizing salt down to 1-10 microns. These tiny particles can enter deep into the lungs to help the body clear out toxins. The halogenerators used by Desai and Tawa in Louisville Salt Spa are built in Estonia, by an experienced company. As Tawa put it, halogenerators are much more than just recycled coffee grinders!

There are many amazing anecdotal stories of healing from salt spas. One comes from a person with asthma who actually threw away his inhalers and climbed mountains – literally – after regular sessions in a salt spa. Stacey Colino published an article in *US News* on halotherapy (Colino, 2017), surveying results in scientific literature. According to her article, studies published in *Pediatric Pulmonology* in 2017, and the *Journal of Medicine and Life* in 2014, both found significant healing benefits to regular halotherapy for patients with chronic lung and bronchial disease, as well as otherwise-healthy people suffering from colds and flus.

But, you ask, are there risks? In her article for *Healthline*, “Does Halotherapy Really Work?” Annette McDermott explores pros and cons (McDermott, 2017). The main concern among United States medical professionals seems to be a lack of scientific studies in American medical literature. Halotherapy is a relatively unknown quantity to many American doctors and conventional medical professionals, despite centuries of success in Europe. And yet, despite this concern, there seem to be no documented adverse reactions, with one single exception. People with chronic conditions such as asthma, being actively managed with inhalers, are advised to go slowly for short sessions, until their body acclimatizes. Sucking in too much salt on top of a chronic condition, too quickly, can sometimes cause a violent purge from the bronchials. Better to go slowly at first.

Professor Alina Chervinskaya, M.D., Ph.D., a researcher in St. Petersburg, Russia, is recognized as a world expert on halotherapy. Since 1995 she has published research in Polish, Russian and English, detailing European studies of

halotherapy. Her website lists a lengthy bibliography of studies, published in European literature.

My journey with salt spas began several years ago with pneumonia and pertussis. That was my lost winter – despite antibiotics, I experienced months of debilitating exhaustion and violent coughing. This did some damage to my lungs and bronchials, and I sounded like a serious asthma case. Eventually, one of my doctors sent me to the salt spa, and then I healed!

Now with the advent of flu season, I usually drop in once or twice to breathe and relax. My experience has been that if I can get to a salt spa when I feel a bug beginning to take hold, I can stop it in its tracks and don't get sick. If I miss that early window and am already sick, I can usually shorten the duration and lessen the severity. Apparently a fair number of other local folk do the same. Some just go there to take a nap, if they start feeling run down. That negative ion environment is deeply relaxing, and tends to send one into deep, restful sleep. Welcome to a secret weapon for flu season! *References: https://health.usnews.com/wellness/mind/articles/2017-09-13/the-sweet-and-therapeutic-truth-about-salt-caves Article in US News, by Stacey Colino. Analysis of benefits of halotherapy, including several medical studies. See online article for additional references. https://saltspacolorado.com/ See Homepage for introduction to halotherapy by Dr. Desai, M.D. https://chervinskaya.com/featured-publications.html Publications list regarding halotherapy, from Prof. Chervinskaya, M.D., Ph.D. https://www.healthline.com/health/halotherapy Article exploring pros and cons of halotherapy. //www.salttherapyassociation.org/history-background*

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# To Purge, Protect & Propagate

Article & photo by Diane Bergstrom

Finally, January and February are over! Those months seem hard on many people for many reasons. I don't resonate with the Gregorian calendar of fresh starts and new beginnings associated with January 1st. I consider new beginnings at my birthday. I believe everyone's birthday is their personal new year and the time for individualized fresh starts, whether they include personal inventories, conceptualizations, dreams, or hard core goals adhering to the acronym SMART—specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and timely/trackable. A friend who reserves her birthday to be alone journals her reflections of the past year: what she learned, what she gained, what she wants to release. She then outlines her intent for the year ahead. It's the perfect time to evaluate what you'd like to purge or let go of, what is worth saving and protecting, and what you would like to develop and propagate. Of course, any time of year or any stage of life is a good time to exercise the three P's.

"I hate reporters!" Bev quipped at me, when I thought it would be a good idea to interview this very sharp elder. She then told me about how she once batted a camera out of a photographer's hands. Never mind the interview. I rarely feel endangered by writing for The Highlander Monthly and didn't feel the need to push that edge with a high spirited 95 year old with a mean left hook. She explained why they had it coming. She was driving her son and a group of young boys to a day camp when a truck hit her car, thankfully without injuries. It was a slow news day for the Chicago Tribune, so they made the front page. While Bev was use to being in the public eye as a professional singer, and being a familiar of Frank Sinatra's, this was publicity she did not want. So we just talked. I kept a safe distance and listened between the lines.

She doesn't suffer fools gladly so that's one thing purged, and she has a very interesting history so she's hanging on to those memories, and what is she propagating? She's off to the opera, dinner, and happy hours with friends, which will

include fast-paced witty conversation without "old age" complaints. I noticed her plaques reading, "Jesus loves you, but I'm his favorite," and "If you can't say anything nice, come sit by me." She summarizes, "That's what I want 'til the end, my sense of humor!"

Being a fan of our elders, or a glutton for punishment, I decided to tell Ernestine about my topic. She turned 100 last year and had the party to remember. Relatives and friends flew in from all over the county, some just for the day, to celebrate her. Her response to my title query was, "I could lie down and go right now," and said with a blissful smile on her face. Mic drop on that interview too, I thought. I need to interview younger folks. But her response speaks to her sense of a finished, satisfying life. So again, we just talked. She is hanging on to her good memories of the party where she was amazed that everyone got along for the day, and of her time in the military as an Army nurse. She continued her education at a time when women were not supported to do so, obtained her masters degree, and pursued a career in public health. Her happy eyes sparkled even more as she told of other WWII vets, men, who've joined her for the weekly local church dinner. The gal still has it, and that will continue to propagate. It was obvious that she enjoys something about every day, as she abruptly ended our chat. Michigan was playing Purdue and she doesn't miss a game.

While Catherine and I met over nachos and wine, I casually asked her if she wanted to purge, protect or propagate anything this year. Without hesitation, she replied, "Love, love, love, like the Beatles' song." She explained she wants to purge the aspects of love that no longer bring her joy, protect the love that propels her to attract people and places she wants to associate with, and open her heart to receive and give more love, which she understands the resulting ripple effect that could create a better world. While Kay herded and engaged a busy three year old, I asked her if she had any ideas. Multitasking, she answered quickly, "I want to purge ugly emotional connection stuff. (She has done her work and extends that outward.) I want to protect children in a way more than I do now. (And she does a lot now!) And I want more men." (She deserves a good one!) After Lael and Mark brought their juvenile Golden Retriever, Ollie, to see their aunt in the hospital, Lael reflected, "I don't want to hang onto anything that's heavy or complicated. I want everything to be light. I just can't be weighed down with everything. I'm going to propagate more situations that produce the look on Elaine's face when she first saw Ollie. Less detailing, more smiling!" (Ollie trotted into the room, jumped up on the bed and sat on her aunt. Could there be better medicine?) Mark, Ollie's dog dad, added, "I want to purge primarily physical stuff that I don't touch, and I really want to be

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more in tune with Ollie.” He explained how happy she is when she gets what she wants and needs, and how that in turn helps her and it helps him. In my next life, I’m coming back as their dog.

I recently tuned in to TV one night and there was Joel Osteen sermonizing, “Don’t bring bitterness into the new year.” He went on to advise that you can’t embrace the new while hanging on to the old, and when things and people don’t work out, kiss them goodbye and move forward. “Don’t bring a failure from yesterday into today. If a dream died, dream a new dream. Don’t get stuck in disappointment. God has to come up with Plan B. Stay in

faith,” he said. Later, I read a poem, “Have Faith” by Beth Fagan Quinn, and it began with, “Faith begins by believing in your heart that what is right has a chance.” What relief, especially in these times. Determining my own P’s, in my birthday month, it’s clear what I want to purge: resentments, failings, harshness towards self, pain of various kinds, and unkind people who must control narratives—both in private relationships and on the public arena. I want to save and protect the relationships with loving, supportive people around me, the nature I cherish, great interactions with people, places and animals, and better self care. What will I grow?

Hopefully good memories in the making, peace, connection, offering more support, love and protection to the people and causes near to my heart. I like the guidelines of what I make important, gets done, and who I make important, gets seen. When this mindset is embraced, excuses become irrelevant and ownership of choices is solidified. The result is a rock bed of empowerment. Where you put your time, focus and resources reflects your current values. I know if mine don’t match, I need to tweak my attention. Don’t we all want our choices and actions to reflect our values, to make time count, to make issues important, to make people matter? I wish that for you as you purge, protect and propagate your way to a fulfilling and meaningful year ahead.




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# Risa's Story

My name is Risa and I have Acromegaly.

Not too long ago, I was an endurance athlete, 14er climbing, outdoor enthusiast. I was a sharp, detail-oriented, highly motivated Executive Assistant. The part of me that remains is still a wife, a dog mom, baking hobbyist, lover of travel, and has an endless desire for personal growth. In October 2018, my life was turned on its side. I was diagnosed with a golf ball-sized tumor on my Pituitary Gland. Furthermore, it was causing a rare disease that I had never even heard of. Three months later, I underwent a 6 1/2 hour brain surgery and spent 9 days in the ICU and 12 days in the hospital.

In the months following my surgery, I was certain I'd be back to "normal" in no time, back to my passion of road cycling, spending time in nature, and enjoying laughter with friends. This was not the case. I soon learned that a portion of the tumor remained wrapped around my carotid artery and it was inoperable....it is inoperable, and it continues to wreak havoc on my body.

I spent 2019 recovering from not only the physical impacts, but also the mental trauma of a life-altering diagnosis. I am still recovering, and I continue to work with my Endocrinologist to get my hormone-related disease under control. This experience has taken a toll on my body, mind, and spirit.



In my efforts to heal and move forward, I am doing what I can to spread awareness around rare Pituitary diseases /disorders. Acromegaly is a hormone disorder caused by a tumor on the Pituitary Gland. The tumor causes the Pituitary to dump excessive amounts of growth hormone into the body causing a multitude of symptoms and possible death if left untreated. Often, the symptoms can be easily explained away and these tumors go undiagnosed or are misdiagnosed for decades, by then, much damage has already been done.

So what next? I know I have to heal more than just my body. I have to heal my heart and my soul. I will spend this year training and by Fall of 2020, I will be ready to ride my bike (solo) from Canada to Mexico down the Pacific Coast. Along the way, I plan to talk with the public, newspapers, local news stations, and anyone who will listen, in order to spread information about Pituitary diseases. Additionally, I have become a Certified Gestalt Practitioner so that I might

help others going through life-changing health diagnosis; not only do diagnoses like these cause physical ailments, they can have a major emotional and mental impact.

It has been 482 days since my diagnosis. For the past one year, three months, and 25 days I have been focused on learning about my disease and coming to terms with my new reality. Looking ahead, my life is different. I have a long road ahead and a very uncertain future. Not only are my efforts healing for me, my hope is that I will also save lives.

**Risa August Heidt** Gestalt Practitioner - Feather and Sage Coaching [www.featherandsagecoaching.com](http://www.featherandsagecoaching.com)

To read more about my story, struggles, and efforts go to: <https://www.pituitaryworldnews.org/risas-story/>

A special thank you to Pituitary World News, Touched By A Horse, and Waite Endurance for support in Health, Fitness, and getting back to life.



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# Gross Dam Expansion Update

On February 7th Denver Water filed an appeal to the December district court ruling mandating they must apply for the 1041 permit and go through Boulder County's review process. It is not surprising to those of us that have been fighting this proposed expansion in Coal Creek Canyon since 2003. An appeal raises several issues for the higher court: Did Boulder District Court Judge Andrew Macdonald err in his December decision to uphold that Boulder County has the law on their side to determine it has regulatory control over the proposed project or exceeded its jurisdiction and abused or misapplied said law by imposing the 1041 Rule on Denver Water's attempts to push through this ill conceived and environmentally destructive massive construction project?

Details of the application for a 1041 permit were partially printed in last month's Highlander and all of the issues listed are exactly the ones we opposed to the proposed project have been stating every chance we have had: Draft Environmental Impact Statement, Final Environmental Impact Statement, public hearing to oppose an Intergovernmental Agreement and all public hearings in front of the Boulder County Commissioners.

Any statements that say the Gross Reservoir Expansion is needed are false and even Denver Water bylaws say the utility is not responsible to provide water to suburban developments in Arvada or Broomfield – which is where they want to sell additionally stored water in an expanded Gross Reservoir. Denver Water has sold a bill of goods to counties in the Middle Park Basin with promises of improved fly-fishing destinations that will never happen according to their plans and will further deplete the

endangered Colorado River.

Even while fighting in court to not have to apply for the 1041, Denver Water tried to start the application process and was denied by Boulder County until the case against them was determined. Now that the court ruled they have to get this 1041 permit – Denver Water is appealing the ruling. This corrupt utility has an uphill battle: with the 1041 application and fighting to keep their U. S. Army Corps of Engineers permit, which is in the courts right now. The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission also has advised them that they must get all local permits i.e. the 1041 before FERC will amend the hydroelectric permit.

Luckily several non-profits are busy fighting this proposed project too and promise to keep at it for as long as it takes. History shows that for-profit utilities such as Denver Water try to keep these fights in the courts until they wear down the opposition, which means it may be years yet before the residents of Coal Creek Canyon and Boulder County can rest easy again. The gang of organizations in the Middle Park Basin that all signed up to not oppose this stealing of Colorado River water in the hopes Denver Water would mitigate the further drain on their local rivers such as the Faser, just need to find other ways to fight climate change and a greedy pro-developer utility such as Denver Water. Destroying bedroom communities such as Coal Creek Canyon and the Northshore is not in the interest of anyone but the utility.

Stay tuned here for future updates and be ready to attend public hearings or to give donations to the non-profits to help in their legal expenses to fight for this cause.

*By A.M. Wilks*

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# Interior Dept. Plans Industry In Utah Monuments

By Chris D'Angelo Feb. 7, 2020 High Country News

*This story was originally published by HuffPost and is reproduced here as part of the Climate Desk collaboration.*

The Interior Department recently adopted final management plans that allow for mining, drilling and other development on lands that the administration recently removed from Bears Ears and Grand Staircase-Escalante national monuments in Utah.

The move comes a little more than two years after our current President signed a pair of proclamations to carve more than 2 million acres from the two protected Utah sites - the largest rollback of national monuments in U.S. history — opening up vast swaths of previously protected federal land to extractive industries.

The resource management plans “mark an important moment in Utah’s history by providing certainty to local communities, business owners, permittees and the recreating public,” Casey Hammond, Interior’s acting assistant secretary for land and minerals management, said in a call with reporters. “We are advancing our goal to

restore trust and be a good neighbor,” he said.

The current administration has said that shrinking the monuments was about reversing federal overreach and not aimed at boosting energy and mineral development, but reporting by The New York Times and other outlets found otherwise. The boundary of Bears Ears National Monument, a 1.35 million-acre landscape named after a pair of buttes and home to thousands of Native American archeological and cultural sites, was shrunk roughly 85%. The 1.87 million-acre Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, the largest land national monument in the country, was cut roughly in half.

Interior Department officials stressed that the administration remains opposed to selling and transferring public lands and that areas removed from monument protection remain safeguarded by multiple federal laws. “Any suggestion that these lands and resources will be adversely impacted by the mere act of being excluded from the monuments is simply not true,” Hammond said, adding there’s been “very little real interest in mineral development” on those lands.

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*“It’s the height of arrogance for this Administration to rush through final decisions on what’s left of Bears Ears and Grand Staircase Escalante while we’re fighting his illegal evisceration of these national monuments in court,” Randi Spivak, public lands director at the Center for Biological Diversity, said in a statement. Mobilus in Mobili / Flickr*

Investors representing nearly \$113 billion in assets warned dozens of drilling and mining companies not to move into public lands that this administration has opened for extraction, including Bears Ears and Grand Staircase-Escalante.

Conservation groups, including those currently suing the administration over the monument rollbacks, slammed the recent announcement. Randi Spivak also said, “This President is eroding vital protections for these


spectacular landscapes. We won’t rest until all of these public lands are safeguarded for future generations.”

Asked recently why the Interior Department didn’t wait to finalize management plans until its legal challenges were settled, Hammond said, “If we stopped and waited for every piece of litigation to be resolved, we would never be able to do much of anything around here.”


*Chris D’Angelo is an environment reporter for HuffPost.*


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# Feeling The Heat Of Climate Change

By Justin Franz Feb. 11, 2020 High Country News

**Winter traditions are feeling the heat of climate change  
Warm temperatures cancel local events like skijoring —  
resulting in economic and cultural impacts.**

*This article was originally published by Atlas Obscura and is reproduced here through the Climate Desk partnership.*

ON JANUARY 20, 2020, Ted Valentiner and the other organizers of the annual World Invitational Skijoring Championship in Whitefish, Montana, stood in a snow-covered field just outside of town. They had gathered to make a fateful decision about the upcoming event, scheduled to take place a few days later—a decision they hoped they would never have to make. They were thinking about canceling the whole thing.

“We agonized over the decision for hours and when you finally do decide to cancel, you always second guess yourself,” says Valentiner, a Whitefish resident who is on the event’s volunteer board. “It’s a big disappointment.” Skijoring combines skiing with horseback riding. In its simplest form, the sport features a horse dragging a skier, and this event puts them together on an obstacle course of jumps, gates, and hanging rings that the skiers are supposed to grab as they speed by. Each run through the course is

timed and, if a skier misses a jump or a ring, a few seconds are added on.

Skijoring, which means “ski driving” in Norwegian, dates back centuries and originated—like a number of winter sports—as a way to get from one place to another. In the early 20th century, competitive skijoring spread across Europe and North America; it was even included as an exhibition sport at the 1928 Winter Olympic Games in St. Moritz, Switzerland.

IT’S UNLIKELY THE JOY of the backyard rink or the spectacle of skijoring will go extinct soon, but it’s easy to see how warming winters are going to be an obstacle to these and other winter sports and pastimes in the near future. Enough days without good ice, and it might not be worth it to set up that rink. Enough canceled community winter sports events, and cities and towns may decide to do something else entirely.

Since the 1960s, skijoring has been the marquee event of Whitefish’s annual Winter Carnival celebration. In the early years, it was held downtown, but the carnival’s insurance provider put the kibosh on that in the 1970s after one of the competitors nearly skijored through a plate glass window. About 20 years ago, a group of riders and skiers got together to revive the event—at the edge of town, where Valentiner and the others had gathered. In 2020, more than 80 teams—a horse, rider, and skier—were signed up to compete.

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There was plenty of snow in the field on January 20, but everyone was worried about an incoming warm front.

Skijoring requires a lot of deep, fresh powder. It had never been a problem before, not in a place that can get more than 65 inches every winter and four times as much on the mountain that looms over the town. In the end, that warm front did what even insurance reps couldn't do—put an end to the skijoring championship, at least this year. It was a hard decision, but the right one, since much of the snow melted a few days later.

Unfortunately, the Whitefish event isn't the only skijoring competition that had to be canceled this winter. A mild season led to the cancellation of a half-dozen more in Montana, Wyoming, and Colorado over the last few weeks.

Warm winters can disrupt everything from water supplies to fruit crops, and they have a negative impact on cold-season sports, and the economies and communities that rely on them. According to a 2019 report from Climate Central,

a nonprofit science and communications organization that focuses on climate change, nearly 24 million Americans participate in winter sports, contributing roughly \$11.3 billion to the economy. The report goes on to state that if climate continues to change as it is projected to, winters will get shorter and drier. In Colorado, where snow sports support more than 43,000 jobs, there was an average of 170 days with below-freezing temperatures every year between 1981 and 2010. If warming trends continue, that could drop to just 144 days per year between 2040 and 2059—a major blow to one of the state's key industries.

THE IMPACT IS BEING noticed on ice, too. In 2012, two geographers at Ontario's Wilfrid Laurier University, Colin Robertson and Robert McLeman, decided to start tracking the number of days it was cold enough to skate on outdoor ice rinks in their area, (Continued on next page.)



*Skijoring occurs throughout the Western U.S., from Leadville, Colorado, to Whitefish, Montana. But it can't go on during warmer winters. Kaila Angello*

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## Highlander Traditions

including both homemade, backyard rinks and municipal ones. The scientists set up a website called **Rink**

**Watch** with the hope that a few people might be able to help them out with data. Eight years later, they've received reports from more than 1,500 users from across North America. "We initially hoped that a few people would participate and it grew a lot faster than we ever anticipated," Robertson says. "The classic image of climate change is the polar bear standing on a melting iceberg, but most people can't relate to that. But they can relate to skating on an outdoor ice rink."

On the site, citizen participants can log if they can skate on their rinks and the quality of the ice: hard and fast or soft and slow. In 2015, using the data that they had gathered, the **Rink Watch** crew released a report that suggested the number of days cold enough for skating in Quebec and Ontario would drop by 34% this century. Robertson says while it may still be possible to set up a backyard rink—usually by laying out a plastic liner, flooding it, and hoping it freezes overnight before adding another layer—in the coming decades, the ability to actually use it will become much more unpredictable. The biggest enemy of the rink, backyard or public, he says, is just like the one that claimed

the skijoring events hundreds of miles away: the sudden warm spell.



*Forms of skijoring have occurred for hundreds of years, and it's been a longstanding tradition in Scandinavian countries. (Whitefish, Montana, has had skijoring at their Winter Carnival since the 1960s.) National Archive*

"Ice rinks are important to cities and small towns, it's part of Canada's cultural fabric," Robertson says, adding that he hopes he can soon teach his three-year-old daughter how to skate. He adds that what he likes most about the **Rink Watch** project is that it helps show the general public how the climate is changing—and how that change will affect their lives and culture.

Despite the challenges, however, Valentiner isn't throwing in the towel. He says it takes months to

organize the skijoring competition in Whitefish, including lining up sponsors and vendors. One day last year, he put more than 300 miles on his truck driving around northwest Montana trying to get people to sponsor the event. It will take more than a few warm, dry, frustrating winters to derail his love for the sport and the community that turns out for it. "The weather is constantly a concern, it's always in the back of your mind when you start planning," he says. "But when you do get that good snow year, it's just a joy to put the event on."

*Justin Franz is a writer based in Whitefish, Montana.*



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I have been active in community events, meetings, and new developments that UP has initiated to better serve all the members in the UP territories. During this time UP has welcomed 2400 new members in Frederick, opened the Carbon Valley Service Center, implemented the Fire Mitigation Policy, exceeded \$500 million in assets for the first time and reached 843 consecutive days without loss of time injuries. Also, during this time frame UP built the largest storage battery system in the state and quickly restored power outages during the bomb cyclone winter storm.

These are just a few of the major accomplishments and I know the importance of providing, affordable, reliable, safe, environmentally friendly electrical service to all the residential, agricultural and business members. I will continue to work hard for you as we negotiate with Tri-State to reduce energy rates and provide more flexibility in member choice. In my continued efforts to serve you I look forward visiting all the communities in the UP territories to meet and listen to UP members' energy needs.

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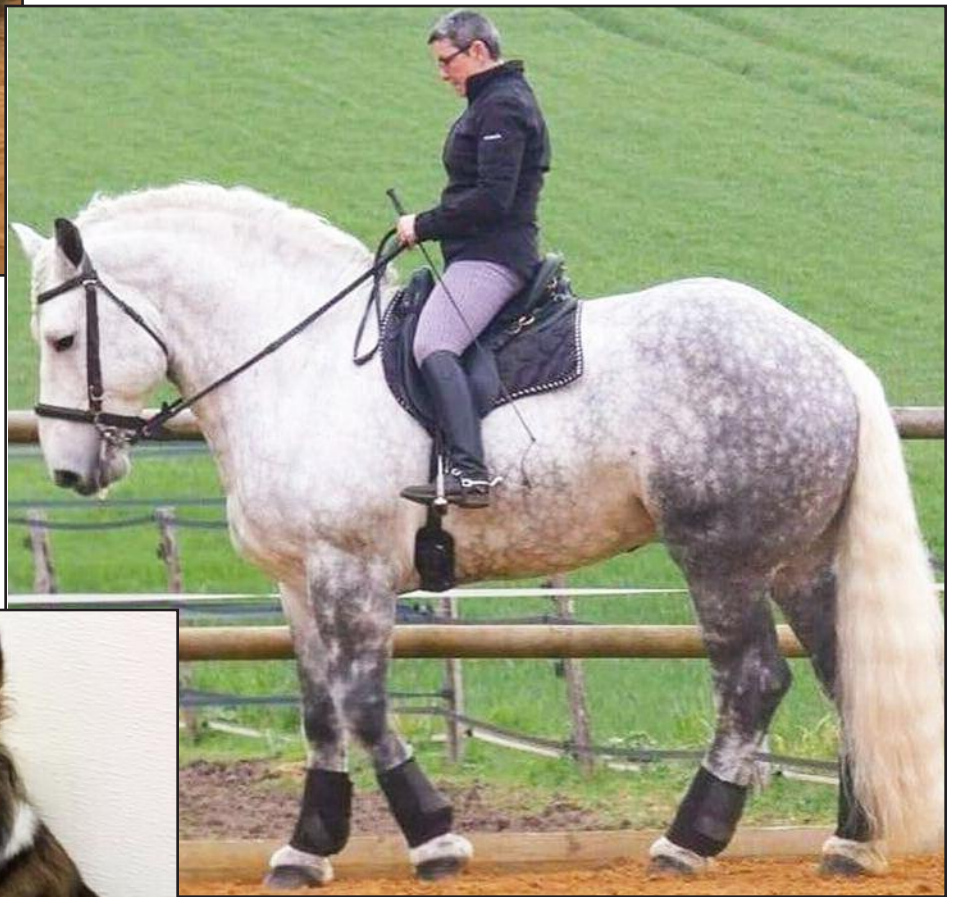
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Thank you for your support in the past and **I would appreciate your vote** when you receive your ballots in March so I can continue to represent you and your energy needs.

**Dave Rose, United Power Board of Directors [drosehd56@gmail.com](mailto:drosehd56@gmail.com)**





Send in Your photos to  
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*This page: top left Beautiful World puppy.  
Top right: Donkeys at fence. Bottom: Shelties.  
Middle: Percheron horse with rider.  
Next Page Top Left: Beautiful Cat.  
Top right: New Mare from Lisa.  
Middle right: English Shorthair Cats.  
Bottom left: Cover Mini Horse, Rudy.*







## Pothole Hazards & Winter Car Care

From Jim Plane-State Farm Insurance

### A close encounter with a pothole can lead to wrecked tires, wheels, and suspension components.

Winter brings a number of driving hazards, but one tends to rear its ugly head after the snow is melted and signs of spring return — the dreaded pothole. A close encounter with a crater can lead to wrecked tires, wheels, and suspension components.

Potholes, chuckholes, chasms, or whatever you call them in your region can occur in any climate. But they're especially prominent this time of year in areas known for ice, snow, and below-freezing temperatures. The freezing and thawing cycles allow moisture to seep into the road surface, which causes the road to crumble.

Not much can be done to prevent the deterioration of driving surfaces, but there are five things you can do to protect yourself and your vehicle:

Try to take roads you know well. Your familiarity will help you avoid potholes. When driving at night, travel on well-lit roads whenever possible so you can see the surface.

Slow down. Give yourself a chance to see the pothole and avoid it before you're in it.

If you hit a pothole, carefully inspect your tires and wheels for possible damage. Note how your car handles afterwards. If it "pulls" one way or the other or the steering feels wobbly, you may want to have your car checked by a professional.

If you can't avoid a pothole, do your braking before impact. There's less damage when a tire is rolling than skidding over a hole during braking.

Potholes can create even larger issues for motorcyclists. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration recommends riders go around such hazards, and to do so safely, you must be able to spot a pothole from a distance. Slow down before reaching the obstacle, and make sure you have enough room before changing direction.

### Important Winter Car Care Tips

Keep your car running smoothly in the winter months. From low tire pressure to frozen fuel lines to road salt damage, winter can take its toll on your vehicle. Here are car care tips to prevent long-term damage:

Check tire pressure weekly. Driving on underinflated tires can cause them to wear down prematurely and lose traction on icy or slippery surfaces. Your tires lose a pound of pressure with every 10-degree drop in temperature.

Keep your fuel tank half full. During winter weather, it's a good idea to keep at least half a tank of fuel in the vehicle in the event of an emergency or if you get stuck in the snow and need to wait for rescue. For longer road trips, plan stops for gas in advance.

Add a protective layer. A coat of polymer wax can create a barrier against road salt, grime, snow, sleet and more. Couple that with high-pressure car washes after winter storms to rinse away buildup in hard-to-reach areas such as wheels, wheel wells and underbody.

Protect your windshield wipers. If you park outdoors, leave the wipers in the raised position to prevent them from freezing to the windshield. Never use your wiper blades to remove ice, snow or frost from the windshield; use an ice scraper instead.

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# Who Needs Wildlife?

By Ingrid Winter

*Other wildlife,  
for starters  
The carnivores  
among them  
Hunters, for sure  
And anglers,  
of course*

*Anyone who  
eats venison*

*People who like to wear fur  
People who run  
Whale watching boats  
Or Safari's  
People who make a living  
Photographing wildlife  
Or managing it  
Poachers, sad but true.....*

*But then*

*There are People  
Who don't fall  
Into any of these groups  
People who feel  
Their lives would be diminished  
Without wild animals  
Who feel  
A deep connection  
And respect  
Because we know*

*That the more we humans  
Inhabit an artificial  
Man-made world  
The more  
We lose our wildness  
And live in our heads*

*The more  
We destroy  
The wild places  
In the world  
To make room for more of us  
The more we need  
Beings other than human  
Who are  
Innocent and whole*



*Who have  
No ego and no self image  
Who live and die  
In a state of grace  
And who remind us  
Of our common source  
It is animals who make us human!*

*Photo by A.M. Wilks. Greenwood Wildlife Rehabilitation Center is a non-profit organization whose mission is to rehabilitate orphaned, sick, & injured wildlife for release into appropriate habitats. 303.823.8455*



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# The Incredible Complexity Of Nature

By Jennifer Campbell-Smith—High Country News Feb. 14

## A behavioral ecologist breaks down the importance of an adorable wildlife clip.

Somewhere in the Southern Santa Cruz Mountains of California, a coyote playfully bows to an American badger just before both duck into a culvert under a highway, the coyote casually trotting along with the badger waddling close behind. When the Peninsula Open Space Trust and Pathways For Wildlife shared a remote video of the crossing online in early February, it went viral. The video is part of a project to help wild animals move around safely in

together. But the more the general public sees the playful, social side of two extremely persecuted carnivores, the better. I will never stop sharing videos of coyotes playing with dog toys or domestic animal companions, or scaling crab-apple trees for a snack.

The second thing that excites me is what the video means for animal research, management and behavioral ecology. There isn't a consistent "natural rule" that coyotes and badgers get along; in fact, the two species sometimes kill and eat one another. This demonstrates the flexibility in natural processes. Humans (many scientists included) are often guilty of thinking animal behavior must follow hard



high-traffic, dangerous areas, something critical to maintaining populations' genetic health. I greatly admire this work. However, what makes this particular crossing exceptional, to me, as a behavioral ecologist, are the deeper implications of the video itself.

The first thing that excites me is that it allows the charisma of this partnership to reach a broad audience. Scientists have observed coyotes and badgers working together before; one study even demonstrated that both species have an easier time catching prey when they hunt

and fast "rules": Stimulus A elicits Behavior B, always. I see this a lot when people ask me about canine behavior or crow calls; a wagging tail doesn't always indicate a happy dog, for instance, and certain crow calls mean very different things in different circumstances, much the way the intention behind a human's use of the word "hey" varies with tone, inflection and context.

*Above a badger and coyote hunt prairie dogs together at Wind Cave National Park, South Dakota.*

*Charlie Summers*



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Experiments and “rules” that eliminate context often end up framing animal behavior and ecological associations as coded, robotic and inflexible. People tend to think of animal actions as simply instinct, denying the role of thinking, plasticity and decision-making in other creature’s lives.

Scientifically, we are finally emerging from a dark period of studying nature simply as a stimulus-and-instinct-driven movie that humans can observe — the kind of thinking used to justify government-funded culls and mass indiscriminate killing of native species. Recent research demonstrates the cognitive and cultural capabilities of non-human animals, as well as the importance of their proclivities and personalities, and more data keep piling up. Some individual animals, for example, have the right combination of bold, exploratory traits to do well in human-dominated landscapes, while more cautious ones may flourish in relatively rural and wild landscapes. In fact, researchers have observed population-level genetic changes in city-dwellers compared to their country cousins of the same species, in everything from coyotes to anoles and black widow spiders.

Different animals also hold different social statuses within an ecosystem. Much like what can happen within a human community, the death of a specific individual may have a large impact on social structure. I’ve watched whole regions of crows restructure their social dynamics and movements due to the death of a single key individual, and I’ve seen how age and experience shape individuals and the behavior they pass on to others. Wildlife managers must take all of this into account rather than relying on the traditional, numbers-only management style that treats all

individuals of a species as if they have equal weight in an ecosystem.

In the viral video, I see an elegant demonstration of how complex and flexible nature is. How intelligent these two animals are — not simply two animal-robots reacting solely to stimuli. How the body language and ease between them suggests that they know each other as individuals, and that those individuals matter.

While it’s scientifically prudent to acknowledge only the data that exist in peer-reviewed studies, we humans must broaden our lens and see the metaphorical forest before we get lost in the trees. We must hold each other, management agencies and policymakers accountable for the broader picture that the evidence is highlighting and use it to better relate to the world we live in, and the organisms that exist alongside us.

The key struggle is getting these ideas into the zeitgeist of modern human culture, a mission that social media has greatly enhanced. So here I am, a behavioral ecologist who is grateful that a single 12-second viral video of a coyote and badger sauntering through a culvert together can help more people observe and consider what I and many in my scientific generation see: A thinking, complex, dynamic, individual nature that demands our respect and mindfulness as we move through this world.

*Jennifer Campbell-Smith has a Ph.D. in behavioral ecology from Binghamton University. She currently resides in Denver, Colorado, where she is working to get high school students involved in urban wildlife research.*

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## **Wildlife = Social Justice**

*By Jessica Kutz Jan. 16, 2020 High Country News*

Wildlife biologist Sergio Avila spent decades working on conservation projects in the U.S.-Mexico Borderlands. Originally from the ecologically diverse desert landscape of Zacatecas, Mexico, he's led binational projects that brought together conservation scientists and biologists to preserve habitat and allow animals like the jaguar to move freely through the Sonoran Desert and across an international border.

Two years ago, Avila left conservation science for advocacy and joined the Sierra Club as its regional Southwest outdoor coordinator. As a person of color, he often felt uncomfortable within a conservation world that continues to tout the greatness of Sierra Club founder John Muir and Edward Abbey, both of whom propagated racism within the environmental movement. Now, he's challenging the narrative of the outdoors being a place for only a certain type of person — championing the idea that a diversity of connections to nature should be honored and cultivated.

Avila sat down with HCN in Tucson, where he lives, to talk about equity and representation in the mainstream conservation movement. Without it, he says, our stewardship of the planet is in jeopardy.

**High Country News:** Would you talk about your past work in conservation?

**Sergio Avila:** For 20 years, I researched endangered species, like jaguars, ocelots, pygmy owls and monarch butterflies. The idea of working with those species has been to understand their movements in this binational region. I have always focused on wildlife moving across the boundaries to show that there needs to be connectivity. To show that migration is a natural phenomenon, and to show that in this region, two countries are working on conservation.

I say this because, at least from the United States' side, it's very clear that as much as people know about conservation, national parks and endangered species, they think that all that ends at the border. There are many groups that don't know there are national parks south of the border or that there are agencies working on conservation. They don't know that in Mexico there is a biodiversity commission, that in Mexico they collect information not only about the biodiversity, but also about the cultural values for those plants and animals.

**HCN:** Why did you leave that work?

**SA:** I left conservation science and conservation biology because I felt isolated. For many years, I had skills and field experience, especially with jaguars. That was very useful, but I started to feel very alone. I thought: I can't be the only person of color working with jaguar conservation.



I can't be the only Latinx person who comes to the states to work on this. I started seeing the inequities in the conservation world.

My first job was about wilderness campaigns, and I learned about these concepts of a wilderness untrammelled by man, you know, these pristine places, these "Yosemites" and "Yellowstones." And by learning history and meeting other people, I realized that that was made up — that pristine wilderness is a lie. And the traditional Western conservation model only cares about places and nature without people. And the only people that do count in those places are white people.

And that's where recreation comes in, right? Because white people like to talk about their connection to the land, but yet they don't have ancestors to that land, they don't know what to eat, they don't have names for those mountains. So, connection to land is different. I felt really isolated. And I felt like I needed to leave to represent my people in a different way and to be visible for people of color who want to work in conservation, but don't know that they belong in conservation.

**HCN:** Why did you move into this new position at the Sierra Club?

**SA:** From the time I saw the job description, it was very clear that the Sierra Club was trying to break that paradigm,

that Sierra was trying to address the inequities by, one, hiring people of color with that expertise and two, training and empowering people of color to speak about this history. Sierra Club is revising its own history. It is an organization that was founded by John Muir, who was pretty much the beginning of the problem.

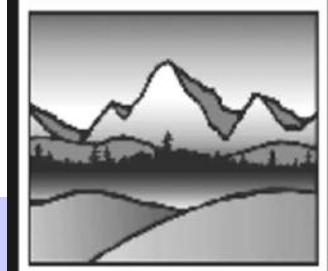
**HCN:** What's lost when these spaces don't include people of color and those from under-represented communities?

**SA:** One thing that's lost is stories and the loss of different values. I feel like in the white conservation movement, either it's about the recreation — just having fun — or the science. Those are two very important values. They're important. They matter. I use them, but they're not the only two values. I also want values about people relating to food, people relating to their own places of origin, people relating to their family several generations back.

If there's a dominating culture that doesn't value those stories, that doesn't value that richness, then it's not only lost, but its existence is also erased. I feel like — for a lot of Indigenous communities — that is where they are. They have to explain where they come from. They have to explain their origin stories, they have to explain their values, because white people have erased all that so much that they think Indigenous people don't exist.

**HCN:** Why do you advocate for (Continued on next page.)

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## Highlander Conservation

merging the social justice with the conservation movement?

**SA:** It's very difficult to address things like climate change and think that technology or only Western science are going to give us the answers, if we don't include traditional ecological knowledge of people who have lived in a place for centuries, and know how to locally address some of those challenges. When we don't include other people and other knowledge, we limit ourselves, especially in the conservation world.

**HCN:** You've been outspoken about the lack of diversity in the environmental movement. What missteps do you see as it aims to become more inclusive?

**SA:** I've seen so many missteps. One thing is generalizing, and thinking that when you meet one person of a certain identity, that one person represents everybody. Thinking that because I'm from Mexico, I know everybody, and I have the answer on how to get Latinx people to our events or parties or outings, as if the same formula works everywhere.

The other one is thinking that just translating things, at least in my case, in Spanish, means that everybody will understand what the hell we're talking about. When I worked on a wilderness campaign, I first had to learn what the word "wilderness" means. The word "wilderness" does not exist in Spanish. We say nature we can say "natural area" — but in Spanish there is not the concept of wilderness. So even if I found a way to translate it, the concept is not translated. And so people think that just because we're going to have brochures that are in English translated in Spanish, that will help reach other populations. It's not.

Another mistake I see very often is that organizations and directors think that the goal is diversity. Diversity is not the goal. It's not just having a board meeting with people from all over the place that can speak different languages.

Diversity is a product of equity. Diversity is a product of a system that allows people to feel comfortable at that table. The idea that everybody's narrative matters, that everybody's stories take a precedent and have the same weight.

**HCN:** How do you advocate for making the outdoors more welcoming to different groups of people?

**SA:** Being welcoming and meeting people where they are. There's no embarrassment, there's no shaming. We're here to enjoy the leaves in the trees and the birds.

I don't use gear. I don't have a special backpack. I don't bring special pants. I dress very normal, so that other people can relate. I don't bring granola bars anymore; I bring oranges and bananas and some peanut butter sandwiches. People relate with what they see, so, like, I can bring some pupusas, or I can bring quesadillas.

Because white people make it seem that in order to go hiking, you have to have the Clif Bar and the Luna Bar and a specific drink. So basically, what I'm doing is breaking all sorts of stereotypes that people have about hiking.

Also, offering outings in a way that people don't feel constrained — something with the least amount of barriers. If they don't have transportation, I try to provide the transportation. If they don't have the pass for the national park, I have a pass for the national park. Just trying to accommodate all my audiences on their level, for them to have a good time, for them to want to do it again.

*Jessica Kutz is an assistant editor for High Country News.*

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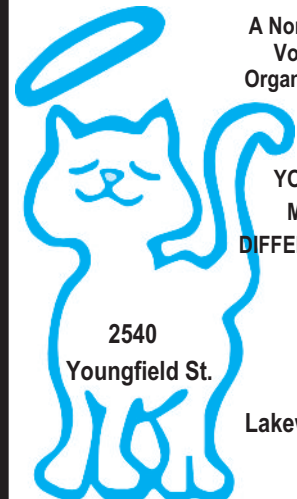
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# Update: BuffaloFieldCampaign.org

Hello Buffalo Supporters!

It is with great enthusiasm that I write this first update of On the Buffalo Trail, from the desk of the Executive Director. On the Buffalo Trail is a monthly update that I will keep you, our wonderful supporters, up to date on my activities for the buffalo. I look forward to updating you on the progress I make on your behalf.

My family and I just returned home from attending the 3rd annual Rosalie Little Thunder Memorial Walk. The walk was attended by over 40 folks, anchored by honored relatives of Rosalie. The 11-mile walk was full of prayer, song, and sharing. It was empowering to walk in solidarity, and stand in prayer, with all of the attendees. Many stories were shared of the impact our co-founder had on the lives of so many. As we walked captive buffalo, horses, eagles, and many other animals came to bear witness. Our sacred steps were strengthened by their presence. We ended the day with a powerful prayer circle at Beattie Gulch, and shared a meal at facilities hosted by our Advisory Board member Nathan Varley. During the walk I made great connections with indigenous leaders dedicated to improving the life of the people and speaking for Mother Earth. I look forward to furthering important discussions that were initiated during the walk. So much more can and will be done to speak for Brother Buffalo.

A few of the big issues I am addressing at the moment are: engaging with tribal leadership from across the country and Canada seeking to increase the awareness of the plight of wild, Yellowstone buffalo. I am also strengthening our relationships with tribes. As a supporter of tribal governments, it is important for Buffalo Field Campaign to collaborate with tribes on common ground and establish mutual respect. I seek to gain tribal support in amending Yellowstone bison management to be consistent with American values, wildlife prioritization, honor treaty rights,



and to improve on-reservation wellness. Also, I am finalizing the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) legal complaint Buffalo Field Campaign, Western Watersheds Partnership, and Defenders of Animals have against the National Park Service. With the release of those important documents, we will continue to pursue justice for the buffalo. Next, I am monitoring federal legislation that impacts Yellowstone buffalo. Supporting good buffalo legislation and addressing the shortfalls in others, allows us to address our concerns at all levels of governance.

As Buffalo Field Campaign continues to advocate for Yellowstone buffalo, please consider volunteering for us at camp. We would love to host you as we stand with the buffalo during the busy field season. If you can't make it to camp, please consider donating to Buffalo Field Campaign. Your donations are the foundation by which all of our good work flows. I thank you for all of your support. Until next month, qeciyewyew (thank you) and have a wonderful day!

For the Buffalo,

James L. Holt Sr., ED



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## Choosing High Self-Esteem

By Frosty Wooldridge

Millions of Americans live their lives with low self-esteem. Teenagers learn it from one or both parents. Others choose it by comparing themselves with movie stars. Many young women mutter to themselves, "I'm not good enough, I'm not as pretty as Becky the captain of the cheerleading squad...I'm not smart enough to pull top grades."

Often, young men drink booze to numb their frustrations from not being handsome, athletic or academically successful. They hang with the wrong crowd or stay home where they find solitude. Too often, teenagers of both sexes compare themselves to others. Low self-esteem may be one of the greatest detriments to personal success socially, mentally and/or economically. But, since it's a learned behavior, it can be unlearned and changed.

Recently, one of my lifelong friends, the successful author of three published books, visited me in Golden, Colorado. That night, after dinner on our deck, he and I reminisced about our college days together. We both became teachers. During the conversation, I asked him about his fourth book. "I can't seem to motivate myself to finish the book," he said. "I'm dealing with low self-esteem."

Mind you, this man earned a world record in one category of weight lifting. He earned a Master's degree in advanced education. He reared four highly successful children. His wife elevated herself to a world-class artist through his encouragement. "So, Paul, are you going to coast your way to the doorstep of death?" I asked. "Are you going to waste your literary gifts because of low self-esteem? What's the value in that choice? Why would you squander your gifts because somewhere along the line, you bought into the 'low self-esteem' train, and you're still riding it?" "I'm not sure how to figure it out and how to get off the train," he replied. "It's amazing," I said. "All my life, I've been accused of being too over-confident and self-assured. Some call me brash. I never thought of myself as inferior to anyone or anything. Plus, I never compared myself to anyone. In my youth, my dad put his arm around my shoulder when I faced difficult challenges. He said,

'You can do that son.' That became my truth. Maybe you could borrow that 'truth' and incorporate it into your own life. It's more fun to live a life of high self-esteem. It creates a higher vibrational frequency in your daily life. It makes you happy. It makes you creative. It allows you to laugh often. It allows you to move toward your highest and best." "I never thought about it that way," said Paul.

How do you escape low self-esteem? First, change your view of yourself. Are you a victim or a product or a tragedy? You decide. You choose your relationship with any of your challenges or situations. In the end, the universe doesn't bequeath you a positive or negative thought pattern. You choose it and you live it. Either way, you evolve your life by your choices. If you run from something, it consumes you. When you face it, you devour it.

Second, choose by daily habit to up-level your intentions for your world. Choose to value every problem, disaster and defeat. Use the gifts of defeat to grow your life. At your funeral, would you feel good when your best friend spoke about you in the eulogy, "Paul lived a so-so life because he chose low-self esteem, which buried any chance of living a truly remarkable life. He wasted so many of his incredible talents."

Third, no matter how tough the problem, you choose the solutions and engage the intention to grow. Remember that an answer exists for every challenge in your life.

Fourth, unbridle your dreams. Henry David Thoreau said it best, "If you advance confidently toward your dreams, and endeavor to live the life which you have imagined, you will meet with success unexpected in common hours. You will pass through invisible boundaries. You will engage new and liberal laws. And you will live with the license of a higher order of beings."

Fifth, consciously open to the joy, happiness and creative energy of your life by shedding the 'low self-esteem' skin to engage a 'high self-esteem' energy field around your heart, mind and body. Finally, you write the next chapter of your life by your hand and by your choices. Engage the power of brave thoughts.



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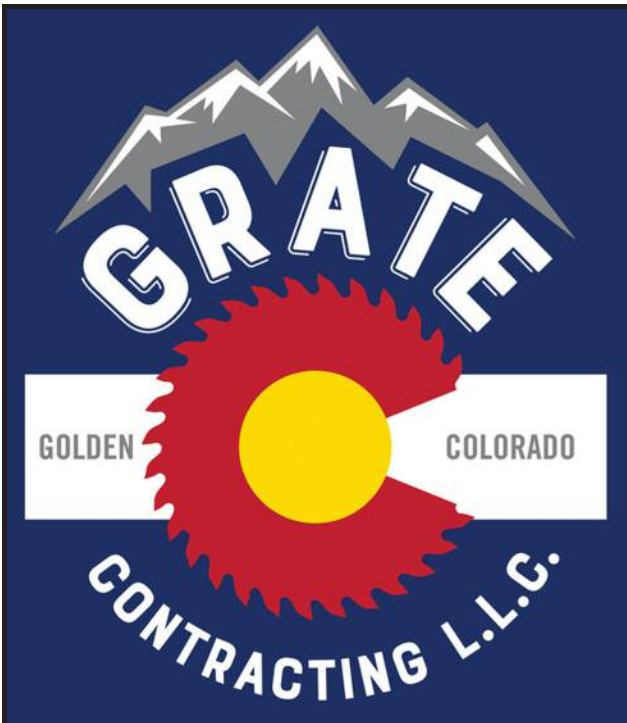
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# The Best Probiotics

By James Hamblin, M.D. - *The Atlantic*

An apple contains about 100 million bacteria—a more diverse range than any dietary supplement. Researchers at Tufts University posed a nutrition riddle. They compared people who took vitamin pills with people who got the same nutrients the old-fashioned way, by eating food. Tracking intake of vitamins A and K, magnesium, and zinc, the scientists found that people were less likely to die of heart attacks and other diseases when these nutrients occurred in their diets. As the Tufts researcher Fang Fang Zhang said at the time, “There are beneficial associations with nutrients from foods that aren’t seen with supplements.”

Many vitamin supplements are synthesized to be exact replicas of the compounds you’d get from eating an apple or an orange. The chemistry should have the same effects on the body. Unless, of course, something was missing from the equation.

In a similar puzzle, recent studies have illuminated harms associated with highly processed foods—even though many of these foods are packed with added vitamins. White pastas and breakfast cereals, for example, may contain an entire day’s worth of some vitamins

(synthesized and added, sometimes by law). As long as we’re getting the nutrients, why should it matter whether food is “processed”? Is processing simply bad?

One explanation for the benefits of eating minimally processed foods is probably fiber, which processing often strips away. Fiber slows the absorption of sugars, so they don’t hit our blood as quickly and cause insulin to spike (as with eating an apple versus drinking apple juice). Fiber also feeds our microbes. People with low-fiber diets have less diverse gut microbes—the trillions of microorganisms that populate our bowels and are vital to our digestion, metabolic health, and the functioning of our immune systems. The best known indicator of a healthy biome is diversity.

But fresh produce and grains also give us more than fiber. An exciting, emerging idea is that fruits and vegetables are healthier than the sum of their parts, not just because of nutrients and fibrous skeletons, but because they contain microbes themselves.

That might seem like a bad thing. But it actually builds on a story I wrote recently about how the immune system, gut microbes, and the food we eat all work in harmony to influence weight gain and loss. The closest thing to practical advice from scientists was to maintain a “diverse biome.” But how do people actually do that? Many readers wrote to ask for more concrete advice. (“Sounds like you still want us to take probiotics every day?”; “What’s the best probiotic?”; “Can I buy your microbiome?”)

Doctors have insisted for decades that unnecessary antibiotics should be avoided, to prevent the evolution of antibiotic-resistant superbugs. Upsetting one’s own personal microbial diversity adds yet another reason. Fermented foods of course contain bacteria, and their consumption has been linked to some health benefits. Beyond that, many people believe it’s necessary to turn to supplements. Even Harvard Medical School’s website tells patients as much, advising that “there are two ways to get more good bacteria into your gut: fermented foods and dietary supplements.”

But supplements are an enormous and barely regulated industry. Even the best clinical trials are limited and short-term. Taking a probiotic supplement of *Akkermansia* was found to have some metabolic benefits—but the same bacteria are also associated with multiple sclerosis. Such things are not to be wantonly introduced into everyone’s guts, but used strategically in specific populations with specific needs—more like a drug than a food.

For all of human history, the gut microbiome has gone without bacterial pills. Fermented foods have been part of many cuisines around the world, but our ancestors didn’t live on kombucha. There had to be another source. And, it turns out, there is: fresh produce.

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In a study in *Frontiers in Microbiology*, researchers found that the average apple contains about 100 million bacteria. Most are inside, not on the skin. They came from many different taxa—as opposed to the probiotic-supplement pills, which tend to be only one type of bacteria. Of the millions of bacteria in any given apple, very rarely are any the sort that cause diseases; most are innocuous or even beneficial.

The idea, the apple researchers explain, is that these bacteria join and interact with the trillions of microbes that are in our guts already—which are vital to our digestion and metabolic health, and the functioning of our immune systems. Food is the main way that our gut biomes are populated throughout our lives, and microbe-rich foods seem to be important to maintaining diversity. The researchers suggest that microbial profiles could eventually become standard information on nutrition labels (currently limited to fats, proteins, carbohydrates, vitamins, and minerals).

When it comes to apples, most of the microbes turn out to be in the core, central part, which most people don't eat, because it is fibrous—full of fiber and microbes. If you eat only the flesh and skin, you miss out on 90% of the bacteria, some of which are the same species sold in expensive pills at Whole Foods. As I've argued in the past, if you eat the apple from bottom to top, the fibrous "core" is barely noticeable. The seeds of the apples had the most microbes of any part. They do contain trace amounts of cyanide, but adults should have no problem with a single daily core.

At Rutgers University, Donald Schaffner, a food-science professor, does not eat apple cores. But he is intrigued by the idea—and by the apple bacterial counts. His team has been counting microbes in food for years.

Its main concern has been looking for disease-causing bacteria. The diversity of microbes in an apple comes as news even to him—and the numbers would have seemed impossible to him not long ago.

"This microbiome research is blowing things wide open in terms of complexity," he told me. When the Rutgers lab started studying foods, the only way to look for microbes was to culture bacteria. It turns out that this was detecting only a small percentage of microbes, because not all of them grow on agar. Newer technology allows scientists to test for DNA, and this has revealed orders of magnitude more microbes on and in our food than previously imagined.

"We've known for a long time that

there are organisms in fermented foods that have benefits," said Schaffner, who had just eaten yogurt, "but there is a lot more to it than that." Each week his research team samples foods in the dining hall at Rutgers. Team members bring, for example, an egg back to the lab and mix it in with some dilution and put it into a "stomacher," a sort of glorified sack that churns and shakes to simulate the action of the food being partly digested in the stomach. Then the team tests the slurry for bacteria—what's there that would make it through the acidic barrier of the stomach. Produce consistently has more organisms than other foods. "As long as it's not spoiled, that may not be a bad thing," Schaffner said. "You always want to limit human pathogens, but you also want to look at the overall microbiota."

If the stomach-machine test found lots of microbes in a salad, that would be expected; it would only be a problem if a disease-causing species like *E. coli* appeared. By contrast, even a small number of bacteria on a hard-boiled egg suggests something is awry. "One of the foods I passed up on the breakfast buffet this morning is hard-boiled eggs," he said. These should be relatively microbe-free, but this is often not the case. They represent "an excellent environment for growing bacteria."

Short of food poisoning, the idea that foods with naturally higher bacterial counts could be good for human health is promising. It also offers a plausible explanation for why what we already knew to be true is indeed true. If fresh produce can be considered a probiotic food, that would only be cause to double down on the old nutritional wisdom: Eat a "balanced" diet, full of fresh fruits and vegetables, nuts and seeds, et cetera. If you do all that, except for specific cases, the average person shouldn't need supplemental microbes.

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By Carl Segerstrom High Country News Feb. 10, 2020  
*Billionaire Wilderness: The Ultra-Wealthy and the Remaking of the American West* By Justin Farrell 392 pages; hardcover, \$27.95 Princeton University Press, 2020.

Jutting more than 7,000 feet from the valley floor, the Teton Range offers some of the United States' most dramatic vistas. But the jagged peaks are mirrored by equally sharp economic divides in the communities below. Lured by both natural beauty and favorable tax codes, the ultra-wealthy have flocked to Teton County, Wyoming, making it home to the highest level of wealth inequality in the country.

For Justin Farrell, a sociologist at Yale University who was born in Wyoming, Teton County provided the perfect location to interrogate income disparity's impacts on both natural and human communities. His new book, is the result of hundreds of interviews with both the area's haves

and its have-nots — reads like a blend between an extended case study and investigative journalism.

As Farrell introduces readers to the thinking of millionaires and billionaires on issues like environmental conservation and rural authenticity, he toggles between documenting the unvarnished opinions of the über-rich and his own critical deconstruction of the myths that mold this elite class. This interview sheds light on the book.

**High Country News:** Why are the ultra-wealthy so attracted to the West?

**Justin Farrell:** In some ways, there's always just been this magnetic pull from this region. Culturally, it has to do with this rat race that a lot of these folks have been running for several years. They need to downshift, they need to find a place where they can relax, and they need to find a place where they can "connect with nature." The other reason is economic: Wyoming is a tax haven, and it's lucrative to move to Wyoming.

**HCN:** Part of what shapes Teton County and the attitudes of its ultra-wealthy residents is something you call the "environmental veneer." What is the environmental veneer?


**JF:** The environmental veneer is the sense that conservation or environmentalism is always this vague, altruistic good — that saving and protecting nature is a public good, it's for the common good, it can't benefit you economically, it doesn't benefit you socially, and that it doesn't benefit your lifestyle. So it creates this candy-coated veneer that masks other environmental problems like climate change, ocean acidification, the burning of fossil fuels. It just allows folks to escape or downplay or even not enter into those ideas in their mind.

I'm all for conservation, but we need to be real about the history of conservation, which is still not well understood by most people. The removal of Indigenous people to create national parks is part of this veneer, and people don't want to hear that. And they don't want to hear that you can use environmental work to achieve social status, to sustain your own societal advantages, to reinforce social and environmental problems.

**HCN:** Why are the ultra-wealthy in Teton County so much more willing to invest in environmental causes or donate to a land trust than, say, support organizations dealing with issues like homelessness and hunger?

**JF:** When you're moving to this paradise, the last thing you want to hear about is eviction and that you're

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causing home values to go through the roof, and there is homelessness in the grade school. So part of it was not wanting to acknowledge that this is a real community and that the West is populated by actual people. To acknowledge all that is to admit there are holes in this myth, and paradise isn't what it's cracked up to be.

It's pretty astounding how much money has flowed into this area and how little social services groups has received.

**HCN:** You set out to observe and study the ultra-wealthy, but in the book, you're not shy about calling out their hypocrisy and questionable environmental ethics. How did you balance your roles as both an observer and a critic?

**JF:** It's very difficult. I did it through going back and talking with people to clarify their positions, and then having the courage to report what I think is happening, and report the struggles that the working poor are enduring and tell it like it is. As a sociologist, I pin blame on us as a society. I pin the blame on lawmakers who won't enact policies that can help certain groups. I'm not sure if I would do anything different if I were ultra-wealthy. I hope I would, but they're playing within the rules of the game for the most part. So I could tell the truth, because I knew that I wasn't attacking one or two individuals unfairly.

**HCN:** You focus a lot on the wealthy, but you also found differences within the working class on how they view wealthy people. What did you observe in interviewing those on the other side of the inequality that defines Teton County?

**JF:** One group recently immigrated from a small town in Mexico, and their quality of life is, they would tell me, definitely improved. Largely, this group (of newly arrived immigrants working multiple jobs) is so strapped for time and so tired they just say, "We're thankful for our jobs," and "The ultra-wealthy people I work for treat me fine," and "I'm just trying to get by, trying to survive." Then there's a group of folks who are starting to organize a little bit. They're understanding what's going on, and they're understanding the levers that they can pull within the political system to try to effect some change — for example, to protect them from being evicted without notice and perhaps encourage affordable housing. One person said, "Enough is enough, we need to do something." They



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are on their feet a little bit more, and they're able to confront this veneer of community that exists — that we're a small-town community, small-town character, and we all get along.

**HCN:** How do the lessons and insights from your research in Teton County extend around the West?

**JF:** This isn't just about Teton County. Teton County was a perfect case study because everything's in sharp relief there that is happening elsewhere. Places like Spokane, places like Boise, Reno, you could name 10 or 15. You have growing wealth disparity, affordable housing problems, evictions and an influx of new immigrant communities. We need to look, especially in Wyoming, at economic policies. I'm not an economist, so I tread lightly there, but it's obvious that these income tax havens, corporate tax havens and loose oversight of what counts as being a resident need to be looked at more closely by lawmakers. I advocate for requiring more from those who have more money than anybody can spend in 100 lifetimes. That's more of a moral claim for me, but there are economic consequences. Employees in Teton County can't live there anymore.

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

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# Power Update

March  
2020

## 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.



## 2020 Annual Meeting & Director Election

**Wednesday, April 15, 2020**

Riverdale Regional Park  
(Adams County Fairgrounds)  
9755 Henderson Road  
Brighton CO 80601

The Annual Meeting & Director Election is a special opportunity for members to celebrate United Power's successes over the past year with one another and cooperative leadership.

### Event Schedule:

**4:30 p.m.** | Registration, Dinner & Entertainment

**6:30 p.m.** | Meeting, Election Results, Prizes

*More information available at  
[www.unitedpower.com](http://www.unitedpower.com).*

## Candidate Forums



United Power will host the following Meet the Candidate Forums where members can learn more about each of the candidates vying to serve on the Board of Directors. The following events are free to members. Light refreshments will be served. RSVPs are not required.

### **THURSDAY, MARCH 19, 2020 | 6:30 p.m.**

Carbon Valley Service Center  
9586 E I-25 Frontage Road  
Longmont, CO 80504

### **FRIDAY, MARCH 20, 2020 | 7:30 a.m.**

Coal Creek Canyon Community Center  
3158 Highway 72  
Golden, CO 80403

### **MONDAY, MARCH 23, 2020 | 6:30 p.m.**

Riverdale Regional Park – Waymire Dome  
9755 Henderson Road  
Brighton, CO 80601

### **TUESDAY, MARCH 24, 2020 | 7:30 a.m.**

Fort Lupton Recreation Center  
203 S. Harrison Avenue  
Ft. Lupton, CO 80621

*\*Dates and locations may be subject to change.*



Member Services: 303-637-1300

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# St. Patrick's Day Celebration

Saturday, March 21st 5:00PM - 8:00PM

CCCIA Hall 31528 Hwy 72



**6 Car Garage**

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



**New Listing**

**447 Crescent Lake Road**  
Story Book Charm on 1.4 Acres  
3 BD/ 3 BA 3,089 sq.ft. **\$599,000**



**Horse Property**

**31448 Coal Creek Canyon**  
Slice of Heaven - Barn & Corral  
3 BD/ 1 BA 11+ Acres **\$600,000**



**269 Olde Carter Lake Road**  
Snowcapped VIEWS! 1.87 Acres  
3 BD/ 2 BA 2,475 sq.ft. **\$515,000**



**New Listing**

**5 Ronnie Road**  
Fantastic Home - Dream Garage  
4 BD/ 3 BA 3,358 sq.ft. **\$650,000**



**500 Chute Road**  
Complete Remodel - VIEWS 4.45 Acres  
3 BD/ 3 BA 2,183 sq.ft. 4.45 Ac. **\$529,000**



**Extraordinary**

**Coal Creek Canyon**  
Fabulous Luxury Home VIEWS  
4 BD/ 4 BA 4,697 sq.ft. 1.5 Ac. **\$929,900**



**9321 Nile Ct. Arvada**  
Designer Home  
3 BD/ 4 BA 5,362 sq.ft. **\$695,000**



**44 Linn Lane**  
Elegant Remodel / Timber Frame-Views  
3 BD/ 4 BA 2,243 sq.ft. **\$575,000**



**900 Camp Eden Road**  
Amazing Custom Remodel  
3 BD/ 2 BA 2,358 sq.ft.



**11150 Circle Drive**  
Secluded Back Deck with Hot Tub  
3 BD/ 3 BA 2,048 sq.ft. 1.5 Ac. **\$480,000**



**180 Rudi Lane West**  
Log Home Full Divide Views  
2 BD/ 2 BA 2,685 sq.ft. 2.5 Ac. **\$530,000**



**1011 Rudi Lane**  
Custom Log Home 1.47 Acres  
3 BD/ 2 BA 2,236 sq.ft. **\$465,000**



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



**85 Valley View Drive**  
Breathtaking Divide & Lake Views  
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