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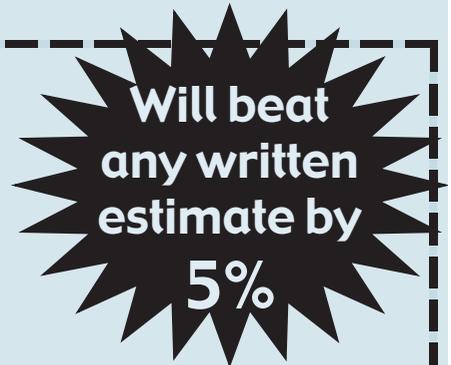
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Ring-Tailed Cat

Scientific Name: *Bassariscus astutus*

Description: Although sometimes called “ring-tailed cat,” this beautiful and seldom-seen mammal actually is a relative of the raccoon, a kinship hinted by the bushy, ringed tail. Ringtails are yellowish gray above, gray below, with a prominent white eye ring. The tail is tipped with black. The animals are about 28 inches long, of which half is tail; weight is about two pounds. Ringtails are remarkably agile climbers. The spectacular tail helps them balance. Their ankles can rotate to let them go headfirst down a cliff or tree.

Range: Ringtails are mammals of the Desert Southwest and mostly occur in southern Colorado, although they have been seen along the foothills of the Front Range and along the major canyons of the Western Slope.

Habitat: Typical habitat is canyon and mesa country, and most sightings are near water. In fact, the first reports of ringtails in an area often are of animals caught in traps set for mink.

Diet: They forage exclusively at night, feeding on mice, birds and insects. They are slim enough to hunt woodrats in their dens. Frequently they hunt in pairs and in autumn forage as family groups. Ringtails have efficient kidneys and may not need to drink, thriving instead on the moisture in their prey.

Reproduction: Three or four blind, nearly naked young are born in May or June. Development is rapid, however, and the young are weaned at about five weeks of age.

*Credit: By David M. Armstrong
Department of Ecology &
Evolutionary Biology Environmental
Studies Program, University Museum
of Natural History University of
Colorado-Boulder*

In areas with a bountiful source of water, as many as 50 ringtails/sq. mile (20/km²) have been found. Ranging from 50 to 100 acres (20 to 40 ha), the territories of male ringtails occasionally intersect with several females. It has been suggested that ringtails use feces as a way to mark territory. In 2003, a study done in

Mexico City found that ringtails tended to defecate in similar areas in a seemingly nonrandom pattern, mimicking that of other carnivores that utilized excretions to mark territories.



Ringtails prefer a solitary existence but may share a den or be found mutually grooming one another. They exhibit limited interaction except during the breeding season, which occurs in the early spring. Ringtails can survive for long periods on water derived from food alone, and have urine which is more concentrated than any other mammal studied, an adaptation that allows for maximum water retention.

Foxes, coyotes, raccoons, bobcats, hawks, and owls will opportunistically prey upon ringtails of all ages, though predominantly on younger, more vulnerable specimens. Also occasional prey to coatis, lynxes, and mountain lions, the ringtail is rather adept at avoiding predators. The ringtail's success in deterring potential predators is largely attributed to its ability to excrete musk when startled or threatened. The main predators of the ringtail are the Great Horned Owl and the Red-tailed Hawk. *Wikipedia*
(Photo here and cover courtesy Steve “Grizz” Adams.)

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Census Bureau Provides New Information

From The Brennan Center for Justice

On August 12th, the Census Bureau will have sent states the data they will use to draw legislative maps to be used for the next decade. It will be the first redistricting round since a 2019 Supreme Court ruling that partisan gerrymandering cannot be challenged in federal court. And it is the first redistricting since the Shelby County decision gutted the Voting Rights Act.

As a result, the stage is set for rampant partisan gerrymandering to skew many of those maps in favor of politicians' preferences over the public's.

This undemocratic process has a real impact on the balance of power in Congress and many state legislatures. We saw it at the federal level in the 2010s, when extreme partisan bias in congressional maps gave Republicans a net advantage of some 16 seats in the House. The same has happened on the state level. For example, in 2018 Wisconsin Democrats won the majority of the statewide vote but only 36 of 99 state assembly seats.

Although partisan gerrymandering hurts everyone, often communities of color bear the brunt. Racially polarized voting patterns and residential segregation mean that

targeting communities of color can be an effective tool for creating advantages for the party that controls redistricting — whether that party is the Democrats or Republicans.

Federal legislation is clearly needed to help stop partisan gerrymandering, and time is of the essence. As we detail about this crucial census release, the pandemic meant that the government needed more time for collecting and processing the data. In order to get it out as soon as possible, the bureau is initially releasing the information in an older, less user-friendly format. (It will come out in a more accessible form by the end of September.) That may slow down the mapmakers with some additional work up-front, but not by much.

In most cases, the states will be able to begin using the data in a couple of weeks, and many of them are expected to start and potentially even complete their map-drawing processes within a few months.

Rather than voters choosing their representatives, gerrymandering empowers politicians to choose their voters. It's time to put an end to it, before it's too late. Notify your state and federal elected officials.



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Chasing The Light From Milky Seas

CSU researchers light a path toward unraveling mysteries of the ocean from space

Using nearly a decade of satellite data, researchers at Colorado State University have uncovered “milky seas” in a way they’ve never been seen before – a rare and fascinating oceanic bioluminescent phenomenon detected by a highly sensitive spaceborne low-light sensor. The watershed study appears in the world’s largest scientific journal, **Scientific Reports**, published by **Nature Research**.

Milky seas are a rare display of bioluminescence in the Earth’s ocean, and the largest known form on our planet. Distinct from turbulent froth created by wakes of ships, milky seas achieve a long-lived, widespread, and uniform glow in the ocean’s surface that can persist for several nights, and span more than 100,000 square kilometers (almost 39,000 square miles) – about the size of the state of Kentucky.

Mariners experience these extraordinary conditions only in certain remote areas of the world—mainly in the northwest Indian Ocean offshore of the Horn of Africa, and in the waters surrounding Indonesia. Predicting when, where, and why milky seas form remains a modern-day scientific mystery.

The mysterious glow

Surreal descriptions of the fabled “milky sea,” which eyewitnesses say glows as bright as a snow field or a bed of clouds, has been shared among mariners throughout history, said Steve Miller, CIRA’s incoming director and lead author on the Scientific Reports paper. These stories found their way into seafaring adventure novels like *Moby-Dick* and *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Seas*, taking their place in folklore, but not so much in scientific observation.

In more than 200 recorded sightings dating back to the 19th century, only once, in 1985, did a research vessel sail through a milky sea. The water sample collected at the time suggested a strain of luminous bacteria, colonizing a bloom of algae at the water’s surface, created the glow. Some of the features of milky seas, however, are not adequately explained by this hypothesis – especially in the face of eyewitness accounts.

Bolstered by new observations from space, researchers are now positioned to understand much more about the circumstances of this fascinating phenomenon. From far above the world’s oceans, the Suomi NPP and NOAA-20 satellites collect imagery using a sophisticated suite of sensors, including the **Day/Night Band** instrument. The **Day/Night Band** detects very faint amounts of visible light

(Continued on next page.)

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Highlander Mystery

at night, and peers through the darkness to reveal the glow of city lights, the flames of forest fires, and much more – including, now, milky seas.

At CSU's Cooperative Institute for Research in the Atmosphere (CIRA), researchers are constantly analyzing satellite data, including observations from the **Day/Night Band**. CIRA research using this instrument targeted changing city lights to demonstrate how the COVID-19 pandemic impacted human activity. Researchers have also used it to discover a new phenomenon of nighttime glowing in the Earth's atmosphere.

"**The Day/Night Band** continues to amaze me with its ability to reveal light features of the night. Like Captain Ahab of Moby-Dick, the pursuit of these bioluminescent milky seas has been my personal 'white whale' of sorts for many years," Miller said.

Catching the light

By carefully analyzing **Day/Night Band** observations from three locations where milky seas are often reported, Miller and his team located 12 occurrences of this elusive phenomenon between 2012 and 2021.

Catching the light created by milky seas requires patience – and the right conditions. Even faint moonlight reflecting off the ocean's surface can mask the signal. Light emitted by the glowing upper atmosphere, both directly upward and as reflected by the clouds, can likewise contaminate

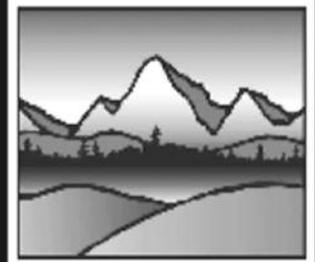
observations. Researchers carefully analyzed signals in the satellite data to rule out other sources of light emission, and used sophisticated techniques to find the persistent bioluminescent structures emitting light beyond the background noise.

Appearing as a persistent glowing patch on the ocean at night, these glowing bodies of water move with ocean currents. Disappearing from view during the day – due to the overwhelming amount of light from the Sun compared to the faint glow from the ocean – these patches become visible again to the satellite at night.

Coupling the satellite observations with measures of sea surface temperature, marine biomass, and the analyzed sea surface currents have led the authors to pose new hypotheses for the unique conditions surrounding milky sea formation.

"Milky seas are simply marvelous expressions of our biosphere whose significance in nature we have not yet fathomed," Miller said. "Their very being spins an unlikely and compelling tale that ties the surface to the skies, the microscopic to the global scales, and the human experience and technology across the ages; from merchant ships of the 18th century to spaceships of the modern day. The **Day/Night Band** has lit yet another pathway to scientific discovery."

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CSU Study Finds Families Live Together

Study finds more Colorado families live together than ever before

Denver, Colo. – The Colorado Futures Center, a think tank of the Colorado State University System, recently released an updated study that found that the number of homes where more than one family resides – also known as “doubling up” – is on the rise in Colorado. The 2019 data-set found that more than 3/10 homes statewide are doubled up, compared to 1/5 homes in a 2017 study.

“We’re seeing more and more families doubling up due to economic circumstances,” said Phyllis Resnick, executive director of the Colorado Futures Center. “We saw these numbers increase in our 2019 dataset, even before the effects of COVID and we imagine that the current reality, due to COVID, is an even greater increase. The current data strongly suggest that doubling up is serving as a hidden form of affordable housing.”

Major findings in the 2019 study include:

Doubling-up is increasing in Colorado. According to the latest data available (2019), 680,000 households, three out of every ten statewide, are doubled up. This is an increase from one in five households doubled-up in 2006.

While the size of non-doubled up households has been declining statewide, doubled-up households are increasing in size. The average household size of doubled-up households increased from 3.2 in 2006 to 3.83 in 2019.

One in five children under the age of six and one in four under the age of 19 lives in a doubled-up household.

In 2019, there are fewer children under the age of six living in non-doubled up households than there were in 2006. In doubled-up households, there are 20% more children than there were in 2006. All the growth in Colorado’s youngest is occurring in doubled-up households.

Doubled-up households can be simulated into the core and spinoff households. Household income data demonstrate that the majority of the income is contributed by the core household. This suggests that doubling-up is a hidden form of affordable housing. However, an additional 26,800 Colorado households would be cost-burdened (spending more than 30% of income on housing) without the contribution from doubling-up.

Outside of the large university communities in Boulder and Fort Collins (in which students are doubling-up), the highest populations

of doubled-up households are in the Denver Metro region, North Pueblo County and Grand Junction.

The research study was partially supported by CHFA and Housing Colorado, as an update to a 2017 study and expands the research that explores the economic circumstances of doubled-up households.

About the Colorado Futures Center

The Colorado Futures Center is a 501c3 organization dedicated to informing about economic, fiscal and public policy issues impacting community economic health and quality of life. CFC is affiliated with the Colorado State University System.

Editor’s Note: And then there are planning codes in some counties where only people that are related by blood or marriage may live in one house. Some of the codes are dictated by septic and leach field loads but some are like HOA regulations and subdivision rules such as not having retail businesses in bedroom communities.

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Information About Solar Panels

By Karyn Winrich

Not too long ago, seeing homes with solar panels was a rarity. But now that solar panels have become more affordable than ever, many homeowners are choosing to install them. Aside from the drop in cost, there are plenty of other reasons why solar panels are gaining popularity.

Relatively speaking, however, solar panels are still a new technology, and adding them to your home is a big investment. What's more, it can be difficult to find straightforward information out there to help you determine whether or not installing solar panels is the right decision for you. That's why the team at Highlander Monthly prepared the practical information here, including the benefits of solar panels, the types of roofs they work best on, how to prepare for installation and more.

Reasons to Consider Solar Panels

Perhaps the greatest advantage of adding solar panels to your home is the savings in energy costs. Not only do you use less energy with the solar panels alone, but you may

qualify for energy credits to offset future energy costs. Then there's the rising cost of energy, which solar power protects you from. And of course, having solar panels installed is less expensive than it has ever been, which is a significant advantage.

Another great benefit of solar panels is how they help to protect the environment. Not only is solar power renewable energy, but it also doesn't produce any greenhouse gas emissions.

Moreover, many people are opting to live off the grid these days. After all, it not only benefits the environment, but it can also provide you with more exposure to nature and save you money. If you're living off the grid, solar power is ideal for generating electricity, and it allows you to be more energy independent.

The Energy Efficient Mortgage Program

If you're like most other people, your interest in installing solar panels is only outdone by the fact that it's a significant upfront investment. If you're balking at the cost, one thing to consider is applying for the FHA's Energy Efficient Mortgage program. If you qualify, the program will include the cost of various eco-friendly home modifications in your mortgage payment, which is a way of providing financing for the improvements.

What Kind of Roof Do You Have?

The type of roof on your home will make a big difference in the difficulty and cost involved with installing solar panels. The best roof for solar panels is a metal roof with standing seams because it's the easiest for attaching panels, and there's no need to drill holes into the roof. The most popular type of roofing is composite, and it's also great for

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installing solar panels. While they can accommodate solar panels quite well, tile roofs often require a little more labor during installation, which can increase the price a bit.

How Can You Prepare for Installation?

When it comes to getting ready for solar panel installation, start with finding a trusted solar contractor. To determine the appropriate panel size, your contractor will probably need to know how much energy your home typically uses, so gather a year’s worth of electric bills and have them ready. And it’s also a good idea to have your roof inspected before moving forward with an installation. This way, you can ensure that you won’t have to replace your roof two or three years after solar panel installation.

What if I Can’t Install Solar Panels on My Roof?

There are many reasons people may be unable to install solar panels on their own roofs. Cost can certainly be a barrier, and those living in rental properties, homes that are overshadowed by large buildings or trees, or homes with old or damaged roofs often can’t get panels. There’s good news for these folks, though: thanks to community solar, you can still participate in this clean energy initiative.

Community solar is a program done at the local level, where residents “share” panels in their area. These panels power the community at large, and the financial savings are given to subscribers. This way, you don’t have to pay any upfront costs or make changes to your roof, but you’ll still receive a discount on your utility bill each month. Community solar is a win-win-win for individuals, local communities, and the planet!

Installing solar panels is much cheaper than it used to be, and there are plenty of other benefits that make it a sound investment for the average home. Be sure to look into



financing options like the Energy Efficient Mortgage program, consider the type of roof you have before you place your order for panels, and remember to take any steps necessary to prepare for installation. If you can’t get panels for your home, look into community solar opportunities in your area. Thanks to these programs, more people than ever are able to reap the environmental and financial benefits of clean energy.

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Averting Global Climate Change

By Sarah Sax Aug. 13, 2021 High Country News

Researcher Amy Snover explains why the IPCC report matters, what it says about climate change in the Northwest, and how communities can prepare.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change sounded its most dire warning recently, asserting that humans' relentless dependence on fossil fuels is unequivocally altering all of earth's systems. The impacts are being felt everywhere, but in the Northwest United States, this summer has offered a frightening preview of a hotter future: An unprecedented heat dome broke temperature records, killing hundreds of people, scorching crops — even baking clams and mussels alive in their shells. Mount Rainier, Washington's iconic peak, lost almost a third of its snowpack in just one heat event. Hotter, shallower rivers are killing salmon and raising tensions between farmers, fishermen, and tribes. And dozens of wildfires, some large enough to be visible from space, blanketed the continent in smoke before peak fire season even started.

Most researchers consider the IPCC's assessment the most authoritative report on the state of climate science today. Some 200 scientists from 66 countries summarized more than 14,000 individual research papers to create the report — the first section of what's called the Sixth Assessment Report. This section is focused only on the

physical science of climate change — additional sections, focused on impacts and mitigation, will be published next year.

Climate science has improved significantly since the fifth report was published in 2013. This means that the new report contains for the first time more detailed information on things like regional climate change differences, and also provides a greater degree of certainty on, for example, the projected frequency and intensity of future extreme weather events. For scientists who study how climate change will affect specific regions — like Amy Snover, director of the Climate Impacts Group at the University of Washington — the weather extremes seen in the Northwest are not surprising. Snover has spent the last two decades working to help governments and communities identify and prepare for climate vulnerability. She recently spoke with HCN about how the newest IPCC report ties into efforts to understand the impacts of climate change and help those on the frontlines in the Northwest.

This conversation has been edited for length and clarity.

High Country News: Why is it important to publish a report that tells us something we've known for decades — that humans are causing climate change and that more extreme weather is happening as a result — but adds greater scientific precision and certainty?

Amy Snover: Early reports were very global in nature, about global changes, and each successive report has provided more and more detail about more local changes. I would liken it to, if you see something far away on the

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horizon, a city, you can see it with your naked eyes. But when you put binoculars up, you can see it even better, and you have more detail and more useful information. When you get closer or use a stronger telescope, you get more and more detail. It's still a city, but you're learning more and more about it.

It's much clearer and an increasingly useful picture about the future in terms of understanding some of the impacts that are now unavoidable, what we can do to prepare for them, and the size of the impacts that could happen in the future. And maybe (it will) give us more motivation to avoid them.

HCN: I'd love to home in on the Northwest, which is where you've done a lot of research. What are the biggest climate risks in this region?

AS: There are lots of ways that climate change will affect the Northwest. The big three that have been identified are changes to the water system — more floods and droughts, more water when we don't need it, and less water when we do need it. That means less snowpack, less or no streamflow, many drier ecosystems. Another big one is impacts on forest ecosystems, (such as) the increased risk of wildfire: More frequent, larger wildfires and everything that comes with that. The third one is the coastal issues: the

convergence of sea-level rise, coastal flooding (and) coastal erosion impacts.

(I've mentioned) all these different impacts in isolation. But one of the things the report points out is that we're increasing our risk of having lots of "compounding events" — lots of bad things happening at once. It's just increasingly urgent to deal with it.

HCN: How are the risks of climate change unequally distributed in the Northwest, and how much do we know about who is most at risk?

AS: We have a nice summary of this on a report that's on our website called *Unfair Share*. It's about the equity considerations of climate change that point out how people of color, Indigenous peoples and people with lower incomes will likely face greater risks from climate change. ... Risks are higher depending on where people live. Coasts and rivers — many places in flood zones are low-income. (The) wildland-urban interface and rural communities, many threatened by wildfires, are (often) low-income.

But I would also say that there hasn't been a ton of research yet in our region of how unevenly distributed (risk) is. There's lots of information, and there's lots of "who's living where," but not so *(Continued on next page.)*

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much a good look at relative levels of vulnerability. A lot of the tribes have done a lot of work to show how their vulnerability is related to the fact that they are rooted in place. Tribal boundaries, reservation boundaries aren't going to move when the climate changes, and they aren't going to move when the fish and wildlife they're used to living with or using as a resource move because of climate change.

HCN: Do you see any change in the ways that governments are considering the uneven distribution of climate risk?

AS: There is increasing attention to that. Realizing that climate change will not affect everyone the same way — that many folks are more vulnerable to climate impacts because of a combination of where they work, where they live and social determinants of vulnerability. We work with a lot of local governments and state agencies on helping them develop their climate change response plans, and more and more are paying attention to this unequal distribution of impacts

(For example,) King County's chief executive, Dow Constantine, named climate equity a priority for his government. They have a really detailed report and plan for how to address that. The state of Washington has some

tools for looking at environmental health disparities and different vulnerabilities, and policies that require the state government to use that information in some of their policymaking and investments. *(Editor's note: For example, the recently passed Climate Commitment Act requires that at least 35% of revenues raised from limiting CO2 go to projects benefitting communities currently burdened by pollution and other adverse environmental harms, and 10% go to projects formally supported by tribal nations.)*

HCN: What are the things we need to still be doing to build a climate future that is both liveable and just?

AS: We need to be drastically reducing greenhouse gas emissions and (get) on a path toward net zero (emissions) by 2050, which I think our policies are setting us toward. But the actual work to achieve that still needs to be done. We need to be embedding climate change information into all of our long-range plans and decision-making when we do building, when we build roads, when we invest. And then there's a lot around community resilience — what communities need to (do to) prepare for these changes, whether there are increased heat events for outdoor workers or increased smoke events. There's a lot to do.

We've talked about how governments are beginning to

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respond, or in some cases have been responding for a while, to address those risks. But we haven't talked about the importance of peoples' voices in calling out these risks and asking their government to be preparing for them.

HCN: What do you hope is the main takeaway for people from the report? Is there anything people can hold onto for the future?

AS: What it boils down to is that we really have and are continuing to change the climate in ways that already matter to people all around the world, including right here in the Northwest.

This will just keep getting worse until we stop it. ... The science is really clear that every bit, every part of a degree of additional warming makes the future worse, which means that every part of a degree of warming that we can avert will make the future better. I do this work because the future isn't written yet. We're actually writing it every day



*Daniel J. Cox/NaturalExposures.com
PolarBearsInternational.org*

we live, and I want to be part of making the future better.

Sarah Sax is the climate justice fellow at High Country News currently living in rural Washington.

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Gross Expansion Update

**Boulder County places Gross Reservoir
Expansion proposal on hold
Public hearings set for September
are canceled**

Boulder County, Colo. – Last September (2020), Denver Water submitted an Areas and Activities of State Interest (1041) application to Boulder County Community Planning & Permitting (CPP) for its Gross Reservoir Expansion project.

Since that time, CPP requested additional information from Denver Water. On June 29, 2021, the CPP Director acknowledged Denver Water’s intent to not provide additional requested information, and determined the 1041 review will move to public hearings.

Denver Water filed a lawsuit against the county in July 2021. The lawsuit alleges that the county does not have the authority to regulate the project because the project requires a permit from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. Because of the lawsuit, on July 26, Denver Water’s attorney requested that the CPP Director place the 1041 application on hold, and CPP Director Dale Case granted the request the next day, July 27.

Consequently, public hearings that were set for August and September have been canceled.

“It makes sense to have the court resolve the legal issues about whether Boulder County can proceed before conducting hearings on the 1041 review,” said Case. “We have already devoted significant time and resources to processing Denver Water’s application, and it would take even more county resources to proceed with public hearings.”

The Areas and Activities of State Interest (1041) application for the expansion of Gross Reservoir is a request to store an additional 77,000 acre-feet total of water, which includes increasing the dam height by approximately 131 feet, the dam length by approximately 790 feet, and the spillway elevation by approximately 126 feet; quarry operations to obtain aggregate needed for construction; construction of a temporary concrete batch/production plant and an aggregate processing plant; permanent road improvements to Gross Dam Road from State Highway 72 to Gross Reservoir; temporary road improvements to FS359 (Winiger Ridge Road) and FS97 (Lazy Z Road); and the relocation of the Miramonte Multi-Use Trail.

View the application materials on the Docket SI-20-0003: Gross Reservoir & Dam Expansion webpage.

Boulder County Asks Court to Dismiss Gross Reservoir Expansion Lawsuit
Boulder County says its previous win in state court is controlling

Boulder County, Colo. – In July of 2021, Denver Water filed a lawsuit in federal court seeking to stop Boulder County from reviewing Denver Water’s planned expansion of the Gross Dam & Reservoir. The lawsuit alleges that the county does not have the authority to regulate the project because the project requires a permit from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.

In an August 10 motion, Boulder County asks the court to dismiss the lawsuit because Denver Water lost a state court case seeking to stop county review of the project. A Boulder District Court judge ruled in 2019 that the reservoir expansion “is subject to Boulder County’s permitting authority and regulation process.” Denver Water appealed the ruling, but later dropped the appeal. According to the county’s motion, “Denver lost its state court lawsuit, and it is not entitled to a rematch.”

Background

In September of 2020, Denver Water submitted an Areas and Activities of State Interest (1041) application to Boulder County Community Planning & Permitting (CPP). On June 29, 2021 the CPP Director determined the 1041 review would move to public hearings. After filing its federal court lawsuit, Denver Water’s attorney requested the CPP Director place the application on hold, and CPP Director Dale Case granted the request.

The Areas and Activities of State Interest (1041) application for the expansion of Gross Dam and Reservoir is a request to store an additional 77,000 acre-feet total of water, which includes increasing the dam height by approximately 131 feet, the dam length by approximately 790 feet, and the spillway elevation by approximately 126 feet; quarry operations to obtain aggregate required for construction; construction of a temporary concrete batch/production plant and an aggregate processing plant; permanent road improvements to Gross Dam Road from



State Highway 72 to the Gross Reservoir; temporary road improvements to FS359 (Winiger Ridge Road) and FS97 (Lazy Z Road); and the relocation of the Miramonte Multi-Use Trail. View more information on the Docket SI-20-0003: Gross Reservoir & Dam Expansion webpage.

(Photo of reservoir courtesy Shelly Peters-Schaller.)

Editor’s Note: Last month’s Highlander update revealed the illegal FERC permits for a water storage facility: as that is all Gross Reservoir and Dam are – not a hydroelectric generating facility. This should allow the current judicial proceedings to prove no ‘pre-emption’ is viable, legal or binding. Opponents and I’m sure BoCo Commissioners and Planning Dept’s are sick of the legal machinations by Denver Water’s attorneys. Stop this madness now.



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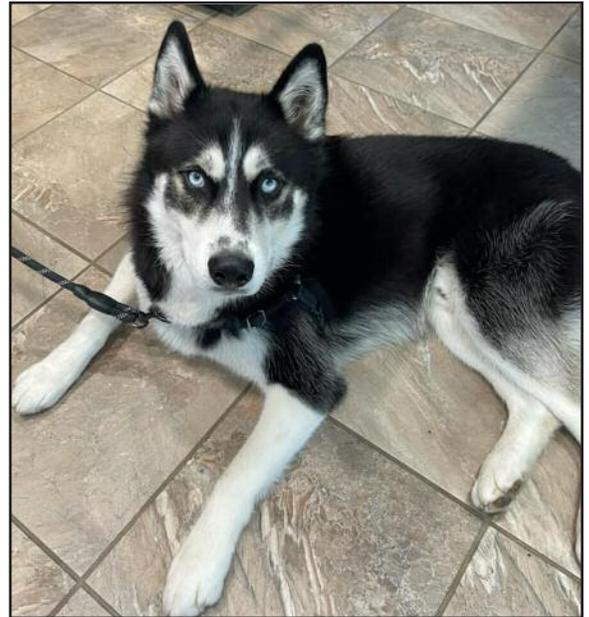
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Previous page top left: *3 cats sharing cat tree.*

Top right: *Sage and Chino.*

Bottom left: *Emma out with her whole crew.*

Bottom right: *Tuxedo Catio Cat.*

This page top left: *Two cats from Amy.*

Top right: *Walter the Husky.*

Middle right: *Girl with pony from Cindy Bruce.*

Middle left: *Silver Akhal Teke's.*

Bottom left: *Catio Cat.*

Defensive & Teen Driving

From Jim Plane - State Farm Insurance

What are some defensive driving techniques to help you stay safe on the road?

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, there were 36,096 vehicle fatalities in 2019. Speeding and offensive driving are major problems which contribute to fatal car crashes throughout the United States. These defensive driving tips can help you or a loved one take on the road safely.

Before you drive

Get periodic vision and hearing tests, especially if you drive at night. When you consider that 90% of a driver's reaction depends on vision, and vision is limited at night, it is no surprise that the night driving crash rate is roughly three times that of daylight driving.

Keep your windshield, headlights, and mirror clean to improve visibility.

Keep windshield wiper blades in proper working condition.

Take a defensive driving course. Some insurance may offer price discounts when individuals take these courses.

Carefully read medication labels to see if they may impair driving skills. Don't drive if you're feeling tired, lightheaded or stressed.

Behind the wheel

Always wear your seat belt.

Set rear view and side mirrors appropriately, to eliminate blind spots around your vehicle.

Raise your seat high enough so you have a clear view of the road. Sit on a small pillow if necessary.

Limit distractions inside the vehicle. This includes the radio, conversations with passengers & use of cell phones.

Driving in adverse conditions

Avoid driving during periods of high traffic, typically during morning, lunch and evening commute times.

Slow down after the sun goes down. Close to two-thirds of fatal crashes that happen at night are speed related.

Avoid driving during inclement weather.

Be aware of road warning signs for hills, curves, animals and other obstacles.

Be especially alert at intersections, for proper signage/signals, and crossing traffic.

Drive smart

Watch for flashing lights & listen for emergency vehicles.

Keep a safe distance between you and the car ahead so you have ample time to brake safely if necessary. In normal driving conditions, the general rule is one car length for each ten mph. 40 mph = Four Car Lengths.

Increase following distance when visibility is poor or you're in traffic.

Use other transportation services such as taxis, rideshare services, and buses if you're unsure of your ability to drive safely.

Obey the posted speed limit. Speeding puts lives and licenses on the line. It may also be expensive, and pricey tickets could increase insurance rates.

Share the road. Bicyclists must adhere to the same rules of the roads as motorists yet are more vulnerable to injury. Always give ample space to other vehicles to maneuver

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safely, from bikes and motorcycles to large trucks and especially pedestrians and equestrians.

Check mirrors frequently while driving, including lane changes, to be more aware of your surroundings.

Ways to help with teen driving safety

According to the Governors Highway Safety Administration (GHSA), inexperience and immaturity are often to blame for risky teen driving behavior. This may explain why motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of teen fatalities in the U.S.

Safe driving tips for teens

Restrict night driving. Close to two-thirds of fatal crashes that happen at night are speed related and involve 16-year-old drivers.

Keep a safe following distance. In normal driving conditions, the general rule is “one car length per every ten miles per hour” which equals **Four car lengths at 40 mph**. Increase following distance when visibility is poor or you’re in traffic or inclement weather, i.e. snow or rain.

Enforce graduated driver licensing (GDL) laws. Many states have rules that prevent teens from driving at night or

with other teens. Know the laws in your state and possibly set stricter standards.

Limit teen passengers. Research has shown significant reductions in deaths were associated with graduated driving laws, including a restriction on carrying passengers or the number and age of passengers carried. Make sure your teen knows how to keep passengers safe.

Share the car to prevent speeding. Parents can also set a good example by practicing safe driving themselves.

Discuss consequences. Teenage speeding puts lives and licenses on the line. It can also be expensive, and pricey tickets can increase insurance rates.

Be involved. Frequently ride with your teens to be sure they’re being safe. And when you’re driving, be a good role model. Always travel at a speed appropriate for the road conditions and brush up on what may have changed since you started driving. If you tailgate regularly, you’re creating another tailgater and putting all in danger.

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Big Oil's Empty Words Prevent Climate Action

Bloomberg: "Most oil, gas and coal producers, and the power companies that burn the fuels, have remained silent. Responses from those choosing to raise their head above the parapet range from the defensive to calling on governments to take the lead on a transition to a future of cleaner energy"

Accountable.US: "Big Oil might publicly claim to support climate action, but the industry's refusal to make any meaningful changes demonstrates otherwise. It's all empty rhetoric and false promises"

August 11, 2021 Washington, D.C. — the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) released its report outlining the small window that remains to address climate change before it is too late. As expected, Big Oil has downplayed its role in perpetuating the climate crisis following the report, with reactions ranging from silence to denial to going on the defensive, Bloomberg reports.

"Big Oil might publicly claim to support climate action, but the industry's refusal to make any meaningful changes demonstrates otherwise. It's all empty rhetoric and false promises," said Kyle Herrig, president of Accountable.US. "The truth is that Big Oil CEOs care more about their 8-figure salaries and their influence in Washington than they do about a livable planet for future generations. We cannot allow the greed of a handful of CEOs stand in the way of taking the bold and necessary steps to address climate change."

In classic Big Oil fashion, the industry deflected any responsibility for its role in creating and speeding up the

climate crisis in an argument Bloomberg describes as "well-rehearsed" and lacking in urgency. Big Oil's response instead patted itself on the back for the work that has been done to reduce carbon emissions and improving air quality, emphasizing the need for "carbon-capture" to "rein in emissions," although the industry's actual support of that concept is vague and lacks scientific evidence.

Instead of working with the Biden administration on implementing a mainstream, commonsense approach to address the climate crisis, Big Oil has both fear mongered and downplayed the impact of his plans. The American Enterprise Institute, a Big Oil-backed far-right think tank, has been one of the biggest opponents to Biden's 30 by 30 plan, a policy that aims to protect 30% of public lands and waters by 2030, calling it a "rhyming fiat," and pushing for renewables to be developed "gradually." Further, instead of working with the Biden administration's qualified scientists and climate experts, Big Oil has been proposing its own 'solutions' that still rely on fossil fuels, ignoring the associated health and environmental risks.

Oil giants have spent decades pushing climate disinformation in an attempt to make climate change a "non-issue," from funding studies, running campaigns, and even testifying before Congress to sow doubts about the link between fossil fuels and climate change, which has been debunked time and again. In fact, Exxon, BP, Chevron, Shell, The American Petroleum Institute, & other oil giants have been sued in five states and over a dozen municipalities for intentionally misleading the public on climate change, an act that the IPCC report determined to have "delayed necessary action to fight climate change."

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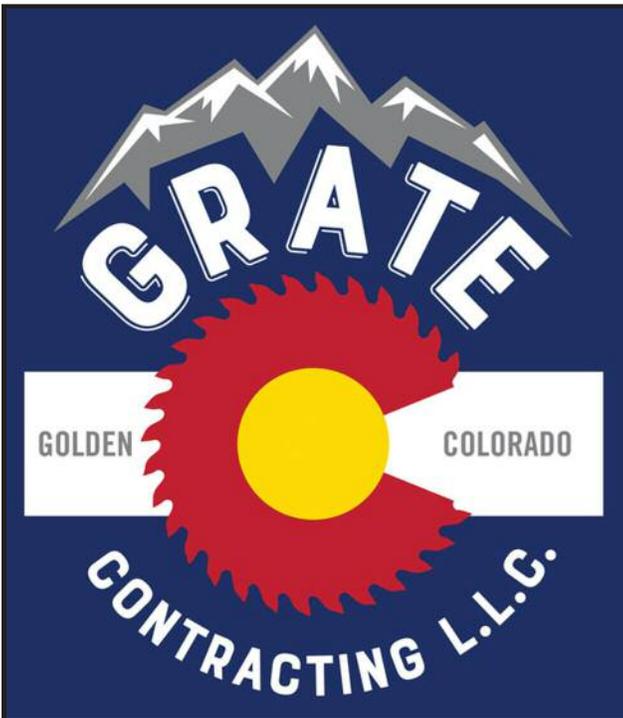


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Volunteering Helps Planet ~ Home Tips

By Jane Marsh - EarthTalk

Volunteering is a great way to give back. It helps someone in need and can make you feel good! It can also have a positive impact on the environment. Here are seven volunteer ideas to get you started.

1. Contribute to a Community Garden - A community garden is a great way to grow nutritious food and diversify plant life. They also reduce gas emissions from food transportation. When you plant new flowers, it can also help improve the air and soil quality. Gardening is a good way to bond with other members of your community, even a small greenhouse. It can also provide you with additional health benefits, such as: Helping to fight disease - Building your strength - Improving your memory - Boosting your mood - Reducing stress levels.

2. Plant a Tree - Trees are essential in producing oxygen, giving homes up to 80% more wildlife, helping to conserve water and preventing soil erosion. They can also help filter out dust and pollutants from the air. Trees roots can reduce the amount of runoff water to help with water pollution or flooding.

Consider looking for organizations within your area that aid in tree restoration, such as OneTree Planted. You could also join the annual Arbor Day tradition of planting trees. Trees can also have communal benefits such as blocking unwanted views or complementing building designs.

3. Join a Clean-Up Effort - This is a good way to pick up litter from larger areas. By volunteering a few hours of your time, you can help remove waste. The trash left on the ground can be washed away by rainstorms or carried by the

wind and pollute the oceans, rivers and soil. To help be part of the clean-up, you can join a local organizational effort event or at your community center.

4. Participate in a River Clean up - When it comes to clean-up efforts, rivers can often be a low priority, especially during the winter. Taking out waste from the rivers helps protect wildlife from accidentally consuming it. Water pollution can also increase algae growth, reduce the oxygen levels in the water, and impact aquatic animals. This activity is the perfect excuse to get out of the house and do some physical activity. Volunteering also reduces stress levels.

5. Help Out at an Urban Farm - This is a great way to enjoy nature while helping out the local community and the environment. Some of the activities you may do include planting, weeding, or pruning. You may also greet visitors or sell fresh produce. Community farms often focus on education and aim to inform people about nutritious diets and sustainable farming techniques.

Urban farms are also a great way to expand biodiversity, since they are home to pollinators, like birds and bees. They can also boost the local food supply and reduce the energy costs of food production. Tree coverage can help during hotter weather by providing shade.

6. Work With Advocacy Organizations - These organizations create and lobby for environmental laws and policies at federal, state and local levels. Policies such as The Clean Water Act and Endangered Species Act have had a positive impact on the earth.

The Clean Water Act helped to establish the structure for

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regulating pollutants discharged into the water. It also made it unlawful for people to dump pollutants into navigable water without a permit. When you volunteer for the group, you may be canvassing on the street, organizing events, helping to draft policy, writing letters to editors, promoting the organization on your social media or working on their website. Here are some organization to consider joining: Sierra Club, National Audubon Society, Green Piece USA, The Nature Conservatory.

7. Become a Volunteer Trekking Guide - This is perfect for anyone who likes nature and adventures. As a guide, you will showcase beautiful landscapes. Trekking expeditions help people learn more about nature and be inspired to protect the planet. Also, many eco-tourists organizations raise money to pay for environmental education programs and advocacy for land restoration within the community.

Give Back and Save the Planet All at the Same Time

Volunteering makes you feel good and helps protect the environment. Consider these activities to get involved in your local community and use your green thumb!

Dear EarthTalk: What are some quick and easy ways to make my home more comfortable and climate-friendly?

—Jane B., Tampa, FL

While the coronavirus pandemic has been a serious blight on the world, we’ve all learned valuable lessons about resource consumption by running around so much less. The lack of commuting has practically emptied the roads, helping temporarily reduce carbon emissions. But all the lockdown time has also made us painfully aware of the shortcomings of our homes. Now may well be an excellent time to make improvements that will benefit not only the environment but also your residential bottom line.

One key place to start is weatherizing. If your home is drafty, you may be consuming as much as 20% more energy than you need to keep the inside temperature to your liking.

“One simple way to hunt for indoor leaks is to slowly move an incense stick along floors, windows, doors, vents, and walls, and look for places where the smoke changes direction rather than rising straight up,” says Daisy Simmons of Yale Climate Connections. “Jot down the trouble spots, then address them...with either weatherstripping or caulking, depending on the location.” Outlets and switches, she adds, are often draft culprits, but can be sealed easily with cheap foam gaskets from the hardware store.

Beyond remediating individual drafts, adding insulation in general (to the walls, floors, ceilings, basements and crawl spaces) can boost household energy efficiency by some 10% on average according to the federal government’s EnergySTAR program to promote efficient appliances and building systems. Indeed, 90% of homes in the U.S. are under-insulated, leaving residents vulnerable to temperature swings (cold snaps, heat waves) not to mention noise,

humidity and other external negatives.

Another way to reduce your impact and carbon footprint is to cut back on the amount of garbage your household generates. Zero waste home guru and author Bea Johnson says cutting out landfill-bound trash is all about the discipline to follow five simple rules: Refuse what you don’t need (like freebies and junk mail), let go of what you don’t use or need in your home (boosting the all-important waste-busting “second-hand market”), reuse, recycle and compost. Her family has been able to reduce their annual landfill-bound waste to a few pieces of plastic and other debris that can fit into a small jar, and saves lots of money along the way. Johnson reports shaving about 40% off her overall family budget thanks to going zero waste.

There are tons of other ways to reduce your carbon footprint and overall environmental impact at home. Switch to cold water in the clothes washer and avoid the dryer as much as possible in favor of line-drying. Swap incandescent and even CFL light-bulbs for more efficient LEDs. Get a programmable thermostat that you can set to turn down overnight or when you’re not home. Upgrade curtains and blinds to help insulate and keep your home comfortable no matter the weather outside. With so many ways to green up your household and residential lifestyle, the hardest part might just be deciding where to start.



Wild

By Ingrid Winter

Wildlife – Tell me quickly what
 comes to mind immediately?
 Probably images of
 Elephants, Tigers, Whales,
 Wolves... the “Charismatic
 Megafauna”
 That we hear or read about, any that
 is threatened by extinction.
 Like Polar Bears, the Poster Children
 for the devastation of Climate
 Change.
 I won’t deny it – meeting a big wild
 animal that could kill you
 Is thrilling beyond words –
 in an instant it takes us out of our
 Ordinary lives and reminds
 us of something we seem to have lost
 Our own Wild Nature.



However – What really is a wild animal?
 Isn’t the squirrel in our suburban yard just as wild as a
 Tiger in the jungle?
 Or the pigeon on a city street?
 Or the sparrow at the bird feeder?
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 after months of care release them.

They are nothing special one might say – very common
 not endangered by any means and
 seeing one
 probably doesn’t
 knock your socks off or make you
 run for your life or your camera.
 So, why spend so much time and
 energy to save their lives?

Here is my answer:
 Today I released four squirrels in my
 backyard
 four animals I helped
 raise and care for
 for many weeks
 and when they left their
 box to explore their new
 home
 finding the nuts I had put out.

Running up and down on trees
 Seeing the sky for the first time
 Chasing each other, jumping from branch to branch
 Or just sitting under a tree in the sunshine, their
 tails twitching
 with excitement,
 their fur gleaming with health
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 I myself felt wild with joy and happiness watching four
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And I know in my heart that these
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Photo by Alexa Boyes.

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Update: BuffaloFieldCampaign.org



year-round protection for bison and the ecosystem they depend on—including respect for the migratory needs of this long-exploited and clearly endangered species.

The time has come to assemble a team for one of the most important (and fun) volunteer events of the year for BFC. **Woodcut Weekend** is an annual BFC tradition, and it is the final push to gather firewood for the long Yellowstone winters spent standing with the buffalo. **Woodcut Weekend is September 10-12.** Food, lodging, and good company is provided to all who attend. Bring a chainsaw (not required for attendance), gloves and a strong back.

Buffalo Field Campaign (BFC) is the only group working both in the field and in the policy arenas to stop the harassment and slaughter of America's last wild buffalo. Formalized as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit in 1997, we also protect the natural habitat of wild free-roaming bison and other native wildlife, and stand with First Nations to honor the sacredness of wild buffalo.

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Yellowstone Country

Wild Bison 2022



If you plan to come or have any questions, RSVP with Mike via email at mease@wildrockies.org.

BFC's 2022 calendars are in stock and ready to order! Our wild bison of Yellowstone country calendars display 12 beautiful pictures that capture the life of the buffalo through the changing seasons, and also feature fascinating buffalo facts. These calendars are wonderful additions to the home, office, or school, and are a great way to share the beauty of wild buffalo with those around you and as holiday gifts.

Apache Mt. Graham Under Attack

By Brian Oaster –
High Country News
Aug. 10, 2021

The Apache community running to rescue its holy mountain Indigenous spiritual leaders say the Vatican’s observatory is searching for something it doesn’t understand.

Dzi? Nchaa Si’an in present-day Arizona is a mountain where the deities live. That means it must be approached through the proper corridors, geographically and mentally. Elders teach younger generations to approach prayerfully, through



suffering, remembering the ancestors. Wendsler Nosie Sr., who is Chiricahua Apache and enrolled in the San Carlos Apache Tribe, says the mountain is a fixture in Apache religion. “If we were to write the Bible,” he said, “this would be in there.”

Mount Graham, the colonial name for Dzi? Nchaa Si’an, was part of the San Carlos Apache Reservation until 1873, when the federal government seized it by presidential executive order, deeming it public lands and subsequently placing it under the management of the U.S. Forest Service. Access to the mountain, however, fell under the control of the University of Arizona. In 1990, George Coyne, director of the Vatican Observatory in Italy, who was at the time



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also a professor at the university, broke ground for a new observatory on Mount Graham. Neither the Vatican, the Forest Service, the university, nor any of the observatory's other collaborators ever sought the Apache people's approval. Coyne himself was dismissive of the objections that were made.

"After extensive, thorough investigations by Indian and non-Indian experts," Coyne wrote in a statement, "there is to the best of our knowledge no religious or cultural significance to the specific observatory site."

In response, starting in 1991, Nosie and about a dozen others, including his daughter, Vanessa Nosie, ran to Dzi? Nchaa Si'an from the San Carlos Reservation — a distance of more than 100 miles. The runners took turns, relaying the distance, to protest the desecration of the holy mountain. They've been running every year since. Nosie Sr. says the Vatican won't leave because it has tapped into something. "They found something spiritual there that they don't quite understand yet," he said. "We Apaches already know what it is."

This July was the 30th anniversary of the original Dzi? Nchaa Si'an run. It was also the first year Vanessa led the event, under her father's guidance. Starting before dawn, the runners completed one-mile stretches, followed by a truck carrying water and the relief runners. After nine hours, the team reached Dzi? Nchaa Si'an. There, they rested, prayed and drank the holy spring water, which Nosie Sr. likens to "the breast of the mother."

They run along the highway rather than on trails for greater visibility. "In order to educate the people, we've got

to be seen," said Nosie Sr. "Physically, we are all captives of America," he added, speaking not just of the Apache community but of other Natives and non-Natives alike. "The one thing that we don't want to ever give them is our spirit."

The run is a way to heal, to teach the youth religion, and to tell the truth about what's happened. "All people need this," says Vanessa Nosie, who is carrying on the three-decade tradition for the children, including her 10-month-old daughter. "Will there be change in her favor?" she wondered. "Our future generations have a right to live and a right to pray."

– Brian Oaster is an editorial intern at High Country News and a member of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma.

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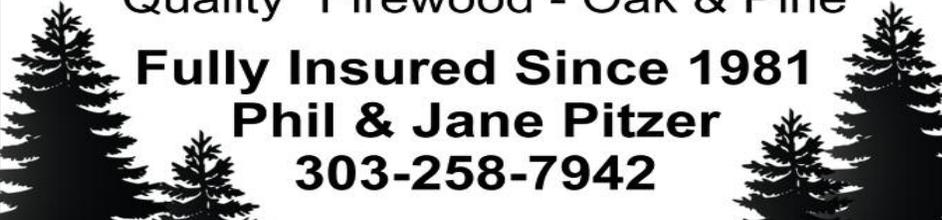
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Who Should Pay?

By Chris McGreal Aug. 3, 2021 High Country News

This story originally appeared in the Guardian and is republished here as part of Covering Climate Now, a global journalism collaboration strengthening coverage of the climate story.

More than a decade after the Fourmile Canyon blaze drove even the firefighters out of Gold Hill, blackened hillsides and scorched trees attest to the Colorado mountain town's close shave with destruction. "Because of the wind and the dryness, it took off," said Chris Finn, who volunteers as the town's fire chief when he's not running the local inn. "That day in 2010, I felt that my business and my house might not be here anymore."

Gold Hill's few hundred residents fled as the fire moved along the ridge above a town that began life as a mining camp during the 1859 gold rush. The firefighters followed when they could not stop the flames swallowing scores of homes.

By the time it was extinguished, the Fourmile blaze had destroyed 169 houses, the most by any wildfire in Colorado history. But that record was broken less than two years later, and then again within days, as the pace of fires picked up. Gold Hill was once again surrounded by flames last year, which saw a record number of wildfires in Colorado. Now, Finn is bracing for another season of record-breaking fires. "I've lived up here my whole life. You can see the change in the weather," said Finn. The 65-year-old fire chief pauses as he sits in the garden of his modest wooden house. "I hope that my grandson can be sitting here when he's my age," he said.

Finn's nagging fear that Gold Hill is living on borrowed time is replicated across Western states ravaged by some of

the most intense wildfires in modern American history. But angst about the immediate threat is accompanied by increasingly urgent questions for communities on the frontline of the climate crisis about the long-term financial cost of survival – who should foot the bill?

Gold Hill has received a state grant to thin out the forest around the town in the hope of slowing if not stopping future fires. But that is a fraction of the cost that the surrounding county says it will take to deal with the impact of global heating. Boulder county estimates it will cost taxpayers \$100 million over the next three decades just to adapt transport and drainage systems to the climate crisis, and reduce the risk from wildfires.

The county government says the bill should be paid by those who drove the crisis – the oil companies that spent decades covering up and misrepresenting the warnings from climate scientists. It is suing the U.S.'s largest oil firm, ExxonMobil, and Suncor, a Canadian company with its U.S. headquarters in Colorado, to require that they "use their vast profits to pay their fair share of what it will cost a community to deal with the problem the companies created."

"Communities in this country and around the world were essentially robbed of their options." Boulder county, alongside similar lawsuits by the city of Boulder and San Miguel county in the southwest of the state, accuse the companies of deceptive trade practices and consumer fraud because their own scientists warned them of the dangers of burning of fossil fuels but the firms suppressed evidence of a growing climate crisis. The lawsuits also claim that as the climate emergency escalated, companies funded front

groups to question the science in order to keep selling oil.

"It is far more difficult to change it now than it would have been if the companies had been honest about what they knew 30 or 50 years ago," said Marco Simons, general counsel for Earth Rights International, which is handling the lawsuit for the county. "That is probably the biggest tragedy here. Communities in this country and around the world were essentially robbed of their options."

BOULDER COUNTY'S LAWSUIT contends that annual temperatures in Colorado will rise between 3.5 and 6.5 Fahrenheit by 2050 and imperil the state's economy, including farming and the ski industry. Extremes of weather are already melting the mountain snowpack, causing increased

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evaporation and a shortfall in the amount of water flowing down the region's most important river, the Colorado, which supplies drinking water to the state's largest cities and irrigation all the way to California and Arizona.

Micah Parkin, founder of an environmental coalition, 350 Colorado, moved to Boulder from New Orleans after it was devastated by Hurricane Katrina. "We decided to move to higher ground knowing hurricanes are getting more intense, sea levels are rising," she said. Within two years, Parkin and her family were put on evacuation notice as the Fourmile Canyon fire threatened the city and she watched the flames from her house. Then in 2013, floods swamped Parkin's home, the very thing she'd fled New Orleans to escape, when Boulder recorded nearly a year's worth of rain in just eight days.

Flooding spread over 2,000 square miles, killing eight people, destroying more than 1,700 homes and causing more than \$3 billion of damage across 14 Colorado counties. "They were calling it a once in a thousand year event. I don't believe that. We've loaded the dice for more and more of these intense events happening," she said. "It's clear that Exxon and these other companies need to be held responsible."

"Their strategy is to say that these cases need to be in federal court because federal jurisdiction applies. Then they will turn around and argue that federal law provides no remedy," said Simons. "It is all about a route to

dismissing these cases."

"What is our own individual liability, since annual greenhouse gas emissions amount to almost 20 tons per person?" That criticism stings in climate-conscious Boulder and other high-income communities that are susceptible to charges of hypocrisy in part because areas of Colorado have some of the highest carbon footprints in the country from heating and cooling larger than average homes.

Max Boykoff, a professor in the environmental studies department at the University of Colorado Boulder, acknowledged the problem, alongside the popularity of high fuel consumption vehicles. But he said that should not be used by the oil companies to absolve themselves of responsibility for a crisis they have played a leading part in creating. Finn said there was no doubt that people moving into the mountains have contributed to the damage from wildfires in part by stopping the natural processes of thinning out the forest. But the Gold Hill fire chief said the climate crisis was "a big part" of the surging heat and number of fires, and that corporate campaigns to deny the warnings from scientists played an important role.

Chris McGreal writes for Guardian US and is a former Guardian correspondent in Washington, Johannesburg and Jerusalem. He is the author of American Overdose, The Opioid Tragedy in Three Acts.

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Happy

By Frosty Wooldridge - Global Cyclist

*"Climb the mountains and get their good tidings.
Nature's peace will flow into you as sunshine
flows into trees. The winds will blow their own
freshness into you, and the storms their energy,
while cares drop off like autumn leaves."* John Muir

Heading toward Glacier National Park in Montana, I camped out at Flathead Lake on Route 93 the night before I pedaled into Kalispell. It felt cool sleeping in late July. The day warmed up as I headed into the gateway to Glacier. I spent an hour in town picking up a new tube and chain oil. The past two weeks presented me with terrible flat tire luck. Every "goat-head thorn" in Montana decided to claim my rear tire as the perfect resting-place for its sharp personality. My spare tube suffered so many patches it resembled the suction cups on an octopus' tentacles.

After loading up on bananas and a watermelon, I readied myself for the 35-mile climb into Glacier Park. Before getting started, I gobbled four bananas. That made me hungry for the watermelon, so I cut it into sections and ate them. People walking past laughed as I hung the banana skins on top of my rear pack under a bungee cord. It looked like a fresh kill of bananas.

One couple with their teenage daughter asked a lot of questions as to how much I ate. I told them on a 100-mile day on the flats, I burned between 7,000 to 8,000 calories. But my average daily distance proved more like 60 to 70 miles. In the mountains, I average 50 miles per day, but still burn a lot of calories because of the foot-pounds exerted in the climbs.

The highest mountain I ever climbed: a pass in Bolivia at 15,500 feet on a gravel road. That burned a lot of calories

in the thin air. But the craziest day of my life: friends talked me into an insane 200-mile day in New Mexico and Texas. My friends and I calculated that we each burned a total of 15,500 calories in 17.5 hours of riding.

While I talked, the girl's spirit brightened and I could see a sparkle in her eyes. I may have inspired her to try world bicycle touring. As they walked away, she tugged on her mom for permission to go on a tour someday. I heard the

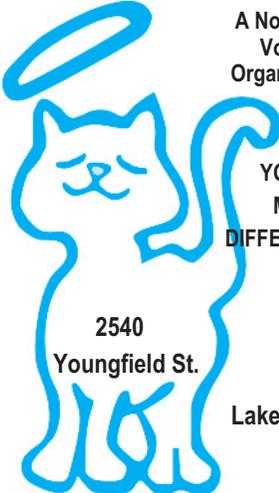
mother reply, "That's for people with wanderlust, not you dear." I wanted to catch them and correct the parent by telling her that I had met dozens of women bicycle touring in countries around the world. I wanted to say that everyone has that "wanderlust" and all they have to do is act on their dreams before they are convinced by their friends or parents to do what's "normal." What's normal usually means settling down and getting a job. My father said, "Do it while you're young, because once you settle down, you've got to take care of responsibilities."

My smart dad! I wish everyone could reserve their early 20's for world travel, to give them greater perspective about people and conditions around the globe. They would come home richer in spirit and understanding. They would enjoy a greater environmental appreciation for our fragile planet. Furthermore, anyone can ride a bicycle around the world if they choose to do it. However, long ago, I decided to keep quiet and let people make their own choices. I send a secret wish for that girl: "Follow your passions and live your dreams."

After gorging myself with watermelon, I looked four months pregnant. I waddled over to my bicycle. Moments later, sweat poured from me as I climbed a hill out of town. I might make Glacier by nightfall. Up ahead, right in the middle of a side road, I saw a man waving his cowboy hat at cars. As I drew closer, a red plaid shirt covered his thin features along with worn jeans, and pointed boots topped off with a ten gallon, black Stetson. "You," he yelled, waving his hat at me. "Come over here!" "What's the problem?" I asked, not wanting to be hassled. "Why in tarnation ain't you ridin' a horse, or drivin' a pickup, or anything besides that thar' bicycle?" he drawled, drunk as a skunk. "I like to go slow and I don't have to feed my bike or put gas into it," I said, stopping in front of him. "Well I'll be damned," he said, scratching his scruffy black beard, peppered with gray. "Ain't nothin' like it used to be. Well, I'll tell you what young fella'. I'm gonna' buy you a drink." "I don't drink, sir." "You don't drink?" "Nope!"

"Well, sir, would you set down at that bar over yonder and tell the Ugliest Man in Montana why you ride a bicycle instead of a horse? "Who is the ugliest man in Montana?" "You're lookin' at 'em and I'll prove it."

Even while drunk, he seemed interesting enough, so I walked my bike over to the bar he mentioned. We walked into a log cabin that featured stuffed animal heads on the walls, including grizzly bears, elk, moose, badgers, trout and geese. Traps, guns, bows and arrows rounded out the artillery that decorated the back of the bar. I wanted to sit down in one of the wooden booths, but he pulled me to the bar. I quickly understood why. Up over the cash register hung a large picture of a man with a rifle walking out of the woods dragging a bear. It was titled: "The Ugliest Man In



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Montana.” It looked exactly like my newfound friend. “That’s you isn’t it?” He cocked his head as he rubbed the hairs growing off the top of his nose, “Shore ‘nuff, it’s me, that bear was one of the toughest fights of my life.” “You fought a grizzly?”

“It weren’t but a few years back when I had to battle the meanest and hungriest bear in Montana. He was so big, that my ole friend Paul Bunyan wouldn’t even come to help me.” “No kidding,” I said, realizing that I was about to hear a story. “Yep,” he said. “I was cuttin’ timber one day, usin’ a ten pound ax, when this varmint comes into our camp and headed for the cook’s tent. Well sir, them lumberjacks scattered for fear of their mangy lives. Not me ‘cuz that bear made me mad.....by the way, do you want to buy me a beer? My mouth is awful dry.”

“Bartender, give us a beer and a sarsaparilla,” I said, ready to pay five bucks to hear this man’s story. Strangely, he appealed to me. Even in his drunken state, he showed spunk. “As I was sayin,’ that bear had me upset because he ate my chicken and dumplins which didn’t bother me none, but then that critter gulped down my blueberry pie. Now that got me all fired mad. Nobody eats my blueberry pie and gits away with it.” “I can’t blame you,” I said, chuckling to myself as this old coot relived his story by swinging his arms and raising the beer to his lips for a swallow. “There he was slurppin’ down my pie when I charged into camp. Soon as he saw me, he knowed he was in trouble ‘cuz he ceased slurppin.” “What’d you do?”

“Why, I done what any self- respectin’ lumberjack woulda’ done,” he said, sweeping the hair out of his face. “I ran over ta’ where he was standin’ and grabbed a-hold of his tail and bounced ‘em betweenst a couple of trees. I thrashed ‘em and I bashed ‘em and then I thrashed ‘em some more.” “What was the bear doing during this bashing?” I asked. “Whall, he was so ah’ scared for his life that he crawled out of his skin and ran off into the woods and nobody done ever heard of him agin.” “You must have been a bit sore after the fight weren’t you?” “Whall now, I had a few calluses on my hands, but nuthin’ to speak of....o’ course, there was another time when I was face to face with this killer...”

“That’s okay, Ugly,” I said, seeing his empty beer glass, which meant the next round was coming out of my pocket. “I’ve got to be getting down the road.” “I guess yore right sonny.” “By the way, what’s your real name?” “You can call me, Ugly,” he said. “It don’t matter what you do in this life, as long as you’re happy. I’m happy bein’ Ugly.”

A mile out of town, I still chuckled to myself over Ugly. I never could understand what makes an alcoholic, but in this case, he had brightened my day with his bravado. In my travels, I’ve seen rich people, poor people, regular people—and what Ugly said is true—the bottom line in life is being happy.

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Avoid Electrical Infrastructure when Planning Your Landscaping

Landscaping is a creative way to beautify our yards and make them our own. Property owners have the option to use trees, shrubs and flowers to bring their visions to life. However, when planning your home's landscaping, be sure to consider potentially hazardous situations that could occur from planting too close to electrical infrastructure.

Trees and shrubs are attractive, but plants located too close to power lines or utility equipment can create spark, fire, outage or shock hazards.

To avoid this, make sure to give trees and shrubs plenty of room to grow to full size without getting too close to utility equipment. To ensure the safety of you and your property, consider the following safety tips when planning your landscaping:

- Consider the size of the tree when fully grown to be sure they won't interfere with power lines.
- Consider the location of overhead lines and underground equipment when choosing where you plant.
- Don't plant right next to transformers or your meter and keep these areas clear. This is for your safety and so crews can quickly access equipment when needed.

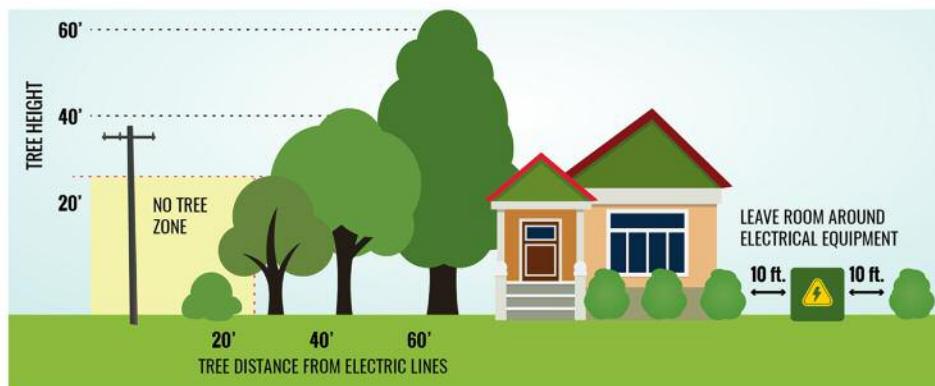
Utility lines are not always located above our heads. Thousands of miles of utility lines are buried below our feet. Before digging or planting, call 811 at least three days before you plant to have underground lines marked for safe digging.

Another fire mitigation strategy is to design your landscaping using "defensible space," which refers to buffers between structures on your property and surrounding vegetation. Defensible space can slow, or even stop, the spread of a wildfire.

Follow these safety tips, and you can create a yard to be proud of that is also safe for you and your family, as well as the community around you.

For more information about how to safely plant around electrical infrastructure, go to www.unitedpower.com/dig-plant-safe.

Additional information about defensible space around your home can be found at www.csfs.colostate.edu/wildfire-mitigation and search for Home Ignition Zones.



Report Outages With the United Power App

Experiencing an outage is inconvenient, but reporting it doesn't have to be. It's tempting to use social media to research the cause of an outage or send us a quick message. While we encourage our members to engage with us on social media, our pages are not monitored at all times.

There is a quicker and easier way to let United Power know when you've been impacted. Our easy-to-use mobile app provides members with many convenient features, including the ability to report an outage. Our on-site system operators monitor these notifications 24/7.

In addition to submitting outage reports, members may also:

- Make payments
- Store payment info
- View usage history
- Notify us of account issues
- And more

Download the free United Power app from the Apple or Google Play stores.



United Power Coal Creek Office
5 Gross Dam Road | Golden, CO 80403

Member Services: 303-637-1300
Coal Creek Office: 303-642-7921



Payment Kiosk Location



EV Charging Site (CHAdemo, CCS/SAE)



www.unitedpower.com

**UNITED
POWER**
Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

Pancake Breakfast & Flea Market

Sat. September 25th, 7am – 1pm

CCCIA HALL 31258 Coal Creek Canyon



New Price

24 Ronnie Road

Panoramic Divide & City Lights Views
3 BD/ 3 BA 2,432 sq.ft. .95 Ac. **\$699,900**



6 Car Garage

Coal Creek Canyon

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



SOLD!

29805 Highway 72

Private Mtn Home w/Walk-out 8+ Acres
3 BD/ 2 BA 2,496 sq.ft. **\$739,800**



2874 S. Beaver Creek Road

Updated & Furnished 2 BD/ 1 BA
+ sep 453 sq.ft. Bunk Hs. **\$380,000**



NEW LISTING

105 Ponderosa Way

Magical Storybook Home
2 BD/ 1 BA 1,103 sq.ft. **\$519,000**



Under Contract

1209 Camp Eden

Remodeled Kitchen-Oversized Garage
3 BD/ 3 BA 2,288 sq.ft. **\$595,000**



A Must See

Pinecliffe Subdivision

3497 Coal Creek Canyon #18

Adorable Summer Cabin
3 BD/ 1 BA 1,184 sq.ft. **\$229,000**



NEW LISTING

Under Contract

126 Signal Rock

Lovely Landscaping/Divide Views
2 BD/ 3 BA 2,024 sq.ft. **\$575,000**



2.73 Acres

2663 Lump Gulch Road

VIEWS & Backing to National Forest
4 BD/ 3 BA 3,749 sq.ft. **\$699,000**



NEW LISTING

213 Rudi Lane

Oversized 2 Car Garage + Shop
2 BD/ 2 BA 1.15 Acres **\$449,000**



SOLD!

Vacant Land

1257 / 1316 Chute Road

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



NEW LISTING

Vacant Land

TBD Crescent Lake Road

Flat Lot, Privacy & Possible Views
1.43 Acres **\$125,000**



SOLD!

Coal Creek Canyon

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



SOLD!

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.



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