



PROTECT RESTORE EDUCATE

ANNUAL REPORT



Colorado Fourteeners Initiative
A Partnership for Preservation

WELCOME

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

*“To finish the moment, to find the journey’s end in every step of the road,
to live the greatest number of good hours, is wisdom.” --Ralph Waldo Emerson*

Climbing 14ers is, without question, a destination-focused pursuit. People passionately argue over whether there are 53, 54 or 58 14ers in Colorado. Most of the people I talk to quickly share how many of the 14ers they have climbed.

Checking peaks off “the list” can become a bit obsessive. Many have climbed all the peaks in summer; a much smaller number in winter. A few begin plugging away at “the grid”—climbing all the 14ers in every season or, for the truly compulsive, in every month.

Along the way to these many summit destinations, there is the journey. As Volunteer of the Year Hunt Walker notes, he spread out his list. (Hunt’s a 54 peaks person, by the way.) Every peak had unique experiences—the people he was with, the memorable happenings, those tricky situations encountered along the way.

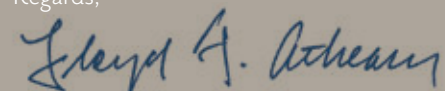
I have been thinking a lot about destinations and journeys lately. The 2018 field season was my 10th with Colorado Fourteeners Initiative. In preparing to write this letter I re-read all my Executive Director letters from past annual reports. There were so many destinations: Goals set, goals achieved—sometimes best-ever accomplishments. All were noteworthy destinations.

My time in the field almost never has reaching the summit as a destination. Occasionally the itinerary allows a summit climb. More commonly, a day on the 14ers might involve working with volunteers on a project, scouting a new trail, hiking to several trail counters to download data or interviewing experts for an educational video. The same holds true for the rest of our staff.

I am humbled to have had so many days spent on these peaks that mean so much to so many. Yes, there are destinations still on my list. For the curious, I’m up to 40 on the list of 53 (44 of 58) and 79 summits including repeats. There are also many programmatic “destinations” for CFI to accomplish. However, without question I am most thankful for the many “good hours” spent with hard-working colleagues, committed directors, enthusiastic volunteers and generous donors, all committed to protecting the 14ers for the future. Destinations come and go, but the spending the journey with people you like and respect is even more rewarding.

Thank you so very much for your generous support of CFI that helped make these 2018 accomplishments possible. I look forward to the journey with you in the years to come.

Regards,



Lloyd F. Ahearn, Executive Director

Volunteer Coordinator Hannah Clark descends from Wilson Peak. The vegetated prow leading to Mount Wilson (left) will be the focus of a future CFI trail construction project.



PROTECT

TRAIL CONSTRUCTION

The summit trails on Colorado's 14ers are steep, complex and time-consuming to build. Work usually occurs in remote wilderness areas using hand tools and hard, physical labor. These factors and more make them among the most expensive trails in the country on a cost-per-foot basis.

CFI's project lineup for 2018 was remarkably similar to that from the two prior years. It was the third season on Mount Columbia and Quandary Peak, as well as the second on Mount Elbert's East Ridge. Last-minute funding from the Forest Service added a season-long crew on Mount Evans to tackle needed work there. Funding from the National Forest Foundation's "Find Your Fourteener" campaign played a major role in the work that occurred on Elbert and Quandary.

The Elbert crew lowering a large rock into position using a webbing sling.



Justin Towers chisels out logs to be used in log staircases on Elbert.



Addie Moncayo uses a McLeod to fine tune the lower Elbert reroute.

CFI created 'Lincoln Ladders' to stabilize trail tread and gain elevation in areas where there is insufficient rock source to build usual structures.

A rock staircase on the second major reroute of the East Elbert route.

TRAIL CONSTRUCTION

MOUNT ELBERT

As CFI's trail projects either exhaust available natural rock source or occur in areas devoid of suitable rocks, use of timber structures has taken its place. The Elbert CFI crew developed log ladders—referred to by some as "Lincoln Ladders" due to their resemblance to the iconic Lincoln Logs—to help stabilize soil and gain elevation in the second bypass section. The crew built 116 timber steps, 17 linear feet of timber turnpike and 112 square feet of timber retaining wall. Enough rock was available to build 41 rock steps and 617 square feet of various soil retention walls. The project also cut 3,900 feet of new tread. CFI's Adopt-a-Peak crew spent 255 staff days on the peak running 15 volunteer projects.



PROTECT

TRAIL CONSTRUCTION MOUNT COLUMBIA

The third season of the Columbia project, CFI's most technical to date, saw the route pushed into steeper, more challenging terrain. Structures had to be more robust to deal with the steepness of the trail grade and the tremendous cross slope, which was almost double that faced in earlier work. Most rocks quarried had to be moved using a griphoist-and-anchor system to avoid accidentally trundling them down the hillside. The crew cut 680 linear feet of new trail, built an additional 320 linear feet of trail through the talus, constructed 146 rock steps, and built 2,443 cubic feet of various types of walls. More than 9,400 cubic feet of rocks and soil were moved an average of 140 feet. Hiking to the project site averaged 50 minutes, double the time required in 2017.

Brent Killingbeck and Eric McSwan savor the fruits of their hard labor. This is probably the largest single structure built by CFI, involving 1,137 cubic feet of rock and soil. Photo by Eli Allan, www.eliswindow.net.



TRAIL CONSTRUCTION MOUNT EVANS

A two-person CFI crew worked with youth corps and volunteers on two distinct project sites on the mountain. The bulk of work occurred above Summit Lake more clearly delineating the trail as it ascends over and down the back side of Mount Spalding. Work here involved building stairs, walls and navigational cairns to channel traffic in an area prone to multiple social trails due to bedrock that inhibits construction of secure features. Below Summit Lake work focused on delineating the trail and building new features in the mudslide debris that obliterated a portion of the existing trail during the severe fall 2013 storms.



Positioning a large rock near where a navigational cairn helps keep climbers on the trail.

TOP, MIDDLE, BOTTOM LEFT:

CFI and RMYC crew members delineate a route on the Evans mudslide.

A more clearly delineated section of the Evans route as it descends from the summit of Mt. Spalding.

Using the griphoist to raise a large rock up the slope.



Jenni Russell stops work to tell funders how she is building a complex switchback staircase.



Project manager Eli Allan explains a drainage system installed to improve a muddy section of the approach trail to Columbia.



Major individual, foundation and government funders inspect the lower Columbia route on a site visit.



PROTECT

TRAIL CONSTRUCTION

QUANDARY PEAK

The third and final year of major trail reconstruction work on Quandary saw marked improvement to 1.75 miles of trail that extended from the trailhead up to 13,870 feet. As with Elbert, use of timber material proved vital on portions of the peak lacking sufficient rock source. CFI experimented with use of dimensional lumber in some locations where the rise over run exceeded the size of available logs. In total 23 dimensional lumber steps, 18 timber checks, and 104 square feet of timber retaining walls were built. Seemingly endless back walls were built along the angling ridge to prevent tundra slopes from eroding down onto the trail. The Quandary project benefitted from 21 volunteer projects run by the Adopt-a-Peak crew.

Delineating and stabilizing a switchback through talus on Quandary. Photo by Liz Brown.



Six people move a large log into place to stabilize the critical edge of the trail.

Volunteers on the NFF-sponsored project install a dimensional timber structure. Photo by Cameron Miller Photography.



Adopt leader Christopher Kucich pushes a rock with volunteers.



Volunteers haul rocks to build a backwall to control erosion.



Sometimes it's all about perspective. Photo by Eli Allan, www.eliswindow.net.

TRAIL MAINTENANCE

Bringing on a new volunteer coordinator last year paid dividends for CFI as volunteer trail stewardship had a record year. CFI ran 79 volunteer projects that worked on 22 separate 14ers performing more than 15 miles of trail maintenance. The Adopt-a-Peak crew also worked independently on six other peaks.

Through these projects CFI engaged 1,012 individual volunteers who put in a combined 2,150 days of trail stewardship. This work generated an in-kind value of \$460,562. All three were all-time records for the organization. Total volunteer stewardship was up 10 percent compared to 2017's prior record.

Recent dramatic growth in volunteer participation—an average of 1,800 days over the past four years compared to 1,000 days in the prior eight years—has generated discussion about the optimal level of volunteer engagement. Work increasingly is needed at very high altitudes and far from trailheads. These are places most volunteers have difficulty reaching. Shuttling the Adopt crew from peak to peak also can lead to crew burnout and a frustration at rarely seeing progress over a summer of hard work. CFI staff and board discussed these issues last fall and plan to tweak the volunteer program a bit in 2019.



Occasionally volunteer work involves something other than working with rocks and logs. A volunteer prunes willows along the Stewart Creek route to San Luis Peak.



BEFORE & AFTER: The results of a youth project with the Sanborn Western Camps on the approach to Mount Belford.

Volunteer Priscilla Clayton helps position a rock in a retaining wall along the popular Grays and Torreys route.



BEFORE, DURING, AFTER: A Volunteers for Outdoor Colorado team stabilizes the critical edge of the Redcloud/Sunshine trail, which is particularly subject to collapse due to the steep cross slope.



PROTECT

SUSTAINABLE TRAILS

CFI's efforts to document on-the-ground conditions of 14er trails and the level of hiking use they are receiving expanded in 2018. The second season of comprehensive trail assessment wrapped up in late September. Over the season CFI deployed two more trail counters, bringing to 22 the number of monitoring sites statewide.

Sustainable Trails Coordinator Tom Cronin hiked almost 200 miles as he completed foot-by-foot, GPS-based inventories of 17 14er summit routes. Nine were baseline trail inventories, while eight were secondary inventories on routes previously assessed. These inventories generated 4,218 new data points, which will feed into assessment data from 2017 and the first-round of data collection from 2011-13. Over the winter Tom will crunch the data to provide a new "14er Report Card" that reports on the condition of all 56 major summit routes, as well as how trail conditions have changed on the re-inventoried routes.

The Sherman counter found atop some rocks after the cairn had been knocked over.



Lloyd Athearn prepares to launch the new counter placed on Lindsey.

Estimated Hiking Use on Colorado's 14ers		
Total Hiker Use Days: 334,000 (2017 Data)		
Front Range	Best Est: 110,000	
Longs Peak	15,000-20,000	
Pikes Peak	15,000-20,000	
Torrey's Peak	25,000-30,000*	
Grays Peak		
Mount Evans	15,000-20,000	
Mount Bierstadt	35,000-40,000#	
Tenmile Range	Best Est: 24,000	
Quandary Peak	20,000-25,000*	
Sawatch Range	Best Est: 89,000	
Mount Elbert	20,000-25,000*	
Mount Massive	7,000-10,000*	
Mount Harvard	5,000-7,000*	
La Plata Peak	5,000-7,000*	
Mount Antero	3,000-5,000	
Mount Shavano	5,000-7,000*	
Tabeguache Peak		
Mount Belford	5,000-7,000*	
Mount Oxford		
Mount Princeton	5,000-7,000*	
Mount Yale	5,000-7,000	
Mount Columbia	3,000-5,000*	
Missouri Mountain	3,000-5,000*	
Mt. of the Holy Cross	3,000-5,000	
Huron Peak	5,000-7,000*	
San Juan Mountains	Best Est: 48,000	
Uncompahgre Peak	3,000-5,000	
Mount Wilson	3,000-5,000	
El Diente Peak	3,000-5,000	
Mount Eolus	3,000-5,000	
Wilsons Peak	3,000-5,000	
Sunlight Peak		
Harpers Peak	5,000-7,000*	
Mount Sneffels	3,000-5,000*	
Redcloud Peak	3,000-5,000*	
Sunshine Peak		
Wilson Peak	3,000-5,000*	
Wetterhorn Peak	3,000-5,000	
San Luis Peak	3,000-5,000	
Mosquito Range	Best Est: 41,000	
Mount Lincoln	15,000-20,000*	
Mount Bross		
Mount Democrat		
Mount Sherman	20,000-25,000*	
Elk Mountains	Best Est: 9,000	
Castle Peak	1,000-2,000*	
Maroon Peak	1,000-3,000	
Capitol Peak	1,000-3,000	
Snowmass Mountain	1,000-3,000	
Pyramid Peak	1,000-3,000	
Sangre de Cristo Range	Best Est: 13,000	
Blanca Peak	1,000-3,000*	
Filingwood Point		
Crestone Peak	1,000-3,000	
Crestone Needle	1,000-3,000	
Kir Carson Peak	1,000-3,000*	
Challenger Point		
Humboldt Peak	1,000-3,000	
Culebra Peak	1,000-3,000	
Mount Lindsey	1,000-3,000	
Little Bear Peak	1,000-3,000	

Approximation Notes

*Indicates data drawn from CFI TRAFx recorders, with data gap and early/late season infills from either previous years or nearby peak data. All other estimates are interpolated from a correlation between TRAFx data and reported 14ers.com peak use statistics.

#Indicates US Forest Service counter at trailhead to provide upper bound on hiking use for 14ers accessed by the trailhead.

#Indicates US Forest Service counter and trailhead register analysis.

Range and overall totals are adjusted to account for the frequent practice of summiting multiple peaks in one day.

2017 Colorado 14er Hiker Use Days Estimate.

Hikers make their way up Quandary's East Slopes, one of the most popular 14er routes in the state.

SUSTAINABLE TRAILS

Lack of early season snowpack due to the drought allowed CFI to get out the trail counters earlier than normal. Two new thermal counters were acquired and placed on Pikes Peak—one each on the Barr Trail and the Devil's Playground routes. CFI also obtained permission from the Blanca Ranch to place a counter high on Mount Lindsey, a third new monitoring location. Staff continued to refine counter placements to lessen the possibility of tampering and to increase the accuracy of data collected. In August CFI released the hiking use report for 2017, which estimated 334,000 hiker days, a 7 percent increase in hiking use from 2016, and a statewide economic impact of roughly \$90 million.



Tom Cronin entering trail condition data into his GPS unit during one of his many trail inventories.



Experts believe that plants in the alpine zones are between 10 and 1,000 times slower to regrow than plants located a few hundred feet lower in the subalpine forests. That means social trails trampled into the alpine tundra will take years, possibly decades, to repair if not helped by CFI's restoration efforts.

RESTORE



Youth from the Overland Summers program haul some of the 100 straw wattles installed on Elbert to control erosion.



Students from the Renaissance School haul logs up Elbert.



A social braid to the right of the Uncompahgre trail is closed and restored.

RESTORE

Last year CFI crews and volunteers restored 11,491 square feet of damaged tundra and transplanted 738 vegetation plugs on peaks statewide to assist with the naturalization process. Most of this work occurred on Mount Elbert's East Ridge route where hikers had trampled many trail braids along the ridge, each a steep erosion gully.

Volunteers hauled 275 logs, wooden planks and straw wattles that were installed on Elbert to slow runoff and lessen erosion of thin alpine soils. A weekend project with Wildland Restoration Volunteers resulted in the installation of cedar plank retaining walls to stabilize the slope and begin the process of recontouring the terrain.

Restoration work on other 14ers was much smaller in scale. Restoration usually focuses on closing off a trail braid, installing rocks to deter continued hiking, and transplanting plants known to establish easily.



WRV volunteers install cedar planks to control erosion on the Elbert "cat's claw."

Volunteers haul soil to backfill the cedar plank retention walls to fill up the deep erosion scars.



EDUCATE

The surge in hiker fatalities in 2017, especially in the dangerous Elk Mountains, was the impetus for Colorado Fourteeners Initiative embarking on a mountain safety educational push last year.

With funding from the Colorado Tourism Office and the Aspen Skiing Environment Foundation, CFI conducted 10 video shoots with a broad array of experts in the mountain world, including mountain rescue professionals, climbing guides, a physician and people affected by 14er accidents. The first 10 completed videos were turned around by mid-summer covering needed equipment for climbing 14ers and the health risks of altitude illness. These videos were viewed 2,813 times. Additional videos will be produced in future years utilizing content shot last summer.

CFI continued to have an educational presence on the 14ers through crews and volunteer Peak Stewards. Together more than 14,300 people were educated on the peaks about Leave No Trace minimum-impact practices and mountain safety. The Quandary crew alone contacted 6,838 hikers. Volunteer Terry Mattison continued to recruit, train and motivate Peak Stewards to put in time on the peaks and participate in “How to Climb a 14er” clinics at REI stores.

Educational outreach to the general public about the 14ers got a big boost through the “Bike & Climb Colorado” exhibit in the walkway to the A Concourse skybridge at Denver International Airport. CFI was able to fill four display cases that described the 14ers, showcased alpine plants and animals, and featured some of the tools used by CFI crews to work on 14er trails.

A pika surveys the Huron Peak summit area at sunrise.



Some of CFI's educational display cases at Denver International Airport.

TOP, RIGHT, BOTTOM:

Board Chair Brad McQueen and his wife, Melissa, describe their harrowing ordeal on Mount Evans in a spring storm that led to Melissa losing eight toes to frostbite.

REI Denver Flagship store gear expert Justin Borak describes layering systems in a video shoot.

Terry Mattison educates Peak Steward volunteers near Mount Bierstadt.



LOOKING AHEAD

The longer CFI is in the business of preserving and protecting the 14ers, the more certain we are that this is a job that will never be finished. Thus, we are constantly looking to best position the organization to continue working on the 14ers, as well as how we can better help our federal land management partners.

LAKE CITY 14ERS

CFI's principal agency partner historically has been the Forest Service. However, the Bureau of Land Management oversees three 14ers near Lake City—Handies, Redcloud and Sunshine Peaks. CFI has been building a relationship with the BLM to address these peaks. With funding from the Chrest, Gates Family and National Forest Foundations, a CFI mini crew will begin working with youth corps and volunteers in 2019 to perform what we hope is the first of three seasons of intensive trail reconstruction work on all five peaks.

A rainbow over Twin Lakes and the Cabin Cove site where CFI has its summer operating base.

MANAGING GROWING 14ER USE IMPACTS

More people are climbing the 14ers every year. On a July Saturday close to 1,000 hikers climb the most popular peaks near Denver. Land managers and local governments have become increasingly concerned about resulting impacts, including crowded trailheads, blocked access roads and improper disposal of human waste and trash. Agencies and academics are looking at ways to manage these concerns, which may include restricting parking, developing trailhead shuttles, capping use and requiring permits. CFI is engaged in several forums and hopes to serve as a source of information and perspective about the condition of the peaks and the workability of potential management approaches.

CFI BASE FACILITY

Discussions continue between CFI and the Forest Service regarding obtaining a long-term lease for the Cabin Cove site where CFI has had its operating base for many seasons. Though the Forest Service allows CFI's seasonal staff to stay at the facility, use is approved annually. There is nothing preventing the Forest Service from bumping CFI out in favor of another entity at some point in the future. The goal is to sign a long-term lease (ideally 20-30 years) that will allow CFI exclusive use of the facility. In return, CFI will perform needed building maintenance and upgrades in lieu of making annual lease payments.

TOP, BOTTOM RIGHT, BOTTOM LEFT:

A climber descends through a part of Mount Wilson's North Ridge route with numerous social trail braids and growing erosion. CFI hopes to begin work on Wilson in 2021.

A long-term lease of the Cabin Cove facility will allow CFI to further customize the operations base.

Parking at Guanella Pass is challenging, with upwards of 1,000 people hiking on July Saturdays.



ORGANIZATION



Lloyd Athearn,
Executive Director



Hannah Clark,
Volunteer Coordinator



Ben Hanus,
Field Programs Manager



Brian Sargeant,
Development &
Communications Coordinator



Nick Dahl,
CLIMB Intern



Jerry Mack,
Controller



Miriam Venman-Clay,
Field Projects Coordinator

2018 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Brad McQueen, Chair
Richard Heppe, Vice Chair
Tom Barney, Treasurer
Tim Rampe, Secretary
Chris Bouck
Wendy Boutin
Lynn Guissinger
Rebecca Jewett
Ben Krasnow
Craig Mackey
Andrew Mahoney
Nate Palmer
Laura Schafer
Hunt Walker
Jim Wason
Stephanie Welsh
Peter Whitcomb
Len Zanni

2017 SEASONAL PROJECT MANAGERS

Members of CFI's 2018 seasonal staff at pre-season training near Twin Lakes.
Front Row (L to R): bby Mortimer, Marisa East, Sophia Rivas, Jenni Russell, Kirsty Frederick, Miriam Venman-Clay, Eric McSwan, Seana Carrigan*.
Middle Row (L to R): Bobbi Kok, Isaac Miller, Jake Mainor, Justin Towers, Christine Lusi*, Roslyn Peters, Caitlyn Rice*, Margaret McQuiston. *Back Row (L to R):* Riley Nicolay, Wesley Chitwood, Brent Killingbeck, Eli Allan, Taylor Beeson, Addie Moncayo, Tom Cronin.
* RMYC Peak Apprentices



Members of CFI's Board of Directors at their February 2018 retreat. *Front Row (L to R):* Tom Barney, Wendy Boutin, Lynn Guissinger, Rebecca Jewett, Jim Wason, Ben Krasnow, Len Zanni. *Back Row (L to R):* Hunt Walker, Craig Mackey, Brad McQueen, Stephanie Welsh, Laura Schafer, Richard Heppe, Tim Rampe, Peter Whitcomb.



2018 PROJECT TEAMS

MOUNT COLUMBIA CREW

Eli Allan, Project Manager
Brent Killingbeck, Assistant Manager
Eric McSwan, Crew Member
Jenni Russell, Crew Member

MOUNT ELBERT CREW

Taylor Beeson, Project Manager
Roslyn Peters, Assistant Manager
Justin Towers, Crew Member
Jacob Mainor, Crew Member
Seana Carrigan, RMYC Peak Apprentice
Caitlyn Rice, RMYC Peak Apprentice

MOUNT EVANS CREW

Abby Mortimer, Project Manager
Isaac Miller, Assistant Manager

QUANDARY PEAK CREW

Margaret McQuiston, Project Manager
Christopher Kucich, Assistant Manager
Christine Lusi, RMYC Peak Apprentice

ADOPT-A-PEAK CREW

Wesley Chitwood, Adopt Lead
Marisa East, Adopt Lead
Robin Kok, Crew Member
Addie Moncayo, Crew Member
Riley Nicolay, Crew Member
Sophia Rivas, Crew Member
Patricia Derner, Appelton Outdoor Leadership Intern
Kristy Frederick, Appelton Outdoor Leadership Intern

SUSTAINABLE TRAILS

Tom Cronin, Sustainable Trails Coordinator

TRAIL PLANNING

Dana Young, CFI-USFS Design Assistant



People who volunteered for CFI in 2018 attend a recognition event at the 14er Brewing Beer Garden in RiNo.

2018 AWARD RECIPIENTS

ADOPT-A-PEAK VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR:

Emily Hines (Steamboat Springs, Colorado)

ADOPT-A-PEAK ROOKIES OF THE YEAR:

Matthias Amyotte and Mia D'Andrea (Aurora, Colorado)

ADOPT-A-PEAK PARTNER OF THE YEAR:

Wildlands Restoration Volunteers (Boulder, Colorado)

PEAK STEWARD OF THE YEAR:

Sarah Seibold (Arvada, Colorado)

OUTSTANDING AGENCY PARTNER:

Doy Childs, Forest Service, Clear Creek Ranger District (Idaho Springs, Colorado)

CORPORATE PARTNER OF THE YEAR:

Boa Fit Systems (Denver, Colorado)

FOUNDATION PARTNER OF THE YEAR:

Meta Alice Keith Bratten Foundation (Fort Worth, Texas)

SPECIAL RECOGNITION FOR

OUTSTANDING SERVICE:

Wendy and Fred Boutin (Greenwood Village, Colorado)
Scott Goldberg (Denver, Colorado)
Blair and Lauri Hamil (Littleton, Colorado)



Hunt Walker and his daughter, Hilary, on a recent climb of Snowmass Mountain.

2018 VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR: HUNT WALKER

(Denver, Colorado)

Hunt Walker was honored as Colorado Fourteeners Initiative's 2018 Volunteer of the Year for his many years of engaged leadership on the Board of Directors and his generous support of the organization. Walker has served on the Board since 2013, during which time he has served two-year terms as Chair and Vice-Chair. He has also been actively engaged in fundraising, recruitment of new directors, overseeing the annual audit, and trying to resolve private land inholdings on Mounts Shavano and Sherman.

Hunt's passion for the 14ers began in 1970 when he climbed the Lincoln, Democrat and Bross group with his uncle, Dick Walker, a member of the Colorado Mountain Club. Growing up in Colorado Springs, the 14ers were never far away. In high school he and friends spent weekends exploring the Sawatch Peaks. After moving to Denver to pursue a career as an old and gas "landman" Walker usually climbed several peaks every summer—often with childhood friend Charley LeCompte. He completed the list of 54 peaks with North Maroon Peak in 2007. Of late he's re-climbing the 14ers with Charley and his three children, Hilary, Thad and Whit.

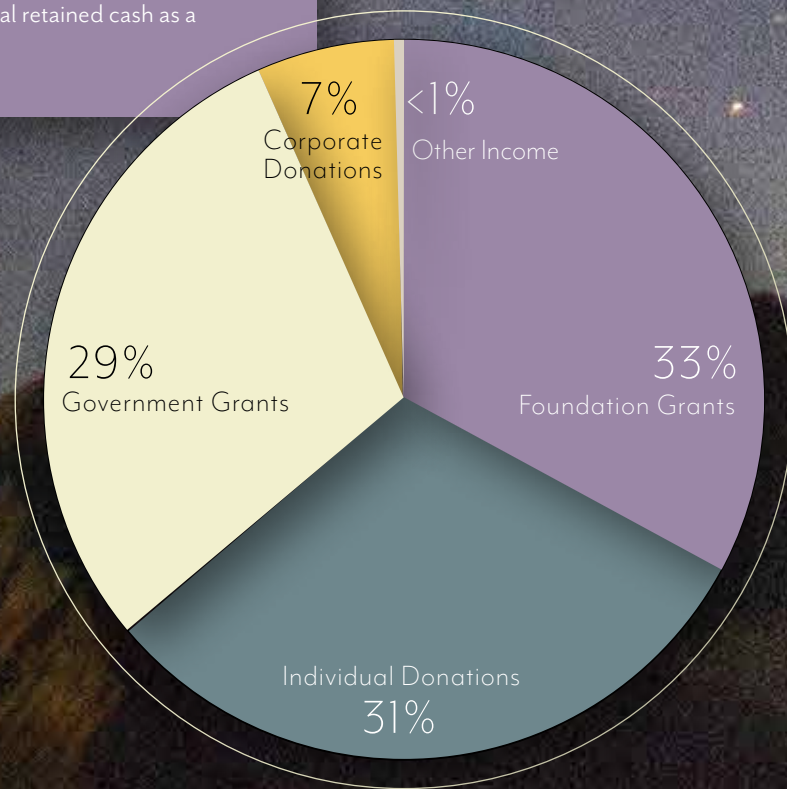
When asked about his connection to the 14ers, Walker responds, "I have had my best times and memories over the years when climbing the peaks with friends and family. I savored the peaks by spreading them out over many years. As a result, I can remember almost every peak, who I climbed it with, and some funny, tricky or memorable incident that took place that day. I am happy to give back to the peaks through my work with CFI because they have given me so much joy over the years."

FINANCES

Colorado Fourteeners Initiative set a 10th year of record financial performance in 2018. Total revenues increased 27 percent compared to 2017, while total expenses were up 14 percent. This was the third consecutive year in which both revenues and expenses surpassed \$1 million. The year-end surplus of \$326,350 in 2018 was 133 percent greater than the 2017 surplus.

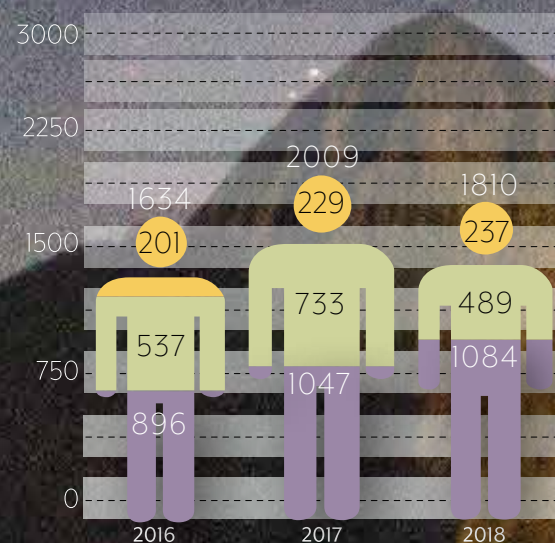
Net assets for the organization surged by almost 39 percent to an all-time high of \$1,172,663. This was the first time in the organization's 24 years that net assets exceeded \$1 million. Included was \$387,379 in grants obtained for work in future years, \$113,528 in a board-designated reserve fund, \$107,773 in property and equipment, \$46,014 in land owned on the summit of Mount Shavano, and additional retained cash as a contingency fund.

OPERATING
REVENUE
\$1,618,925



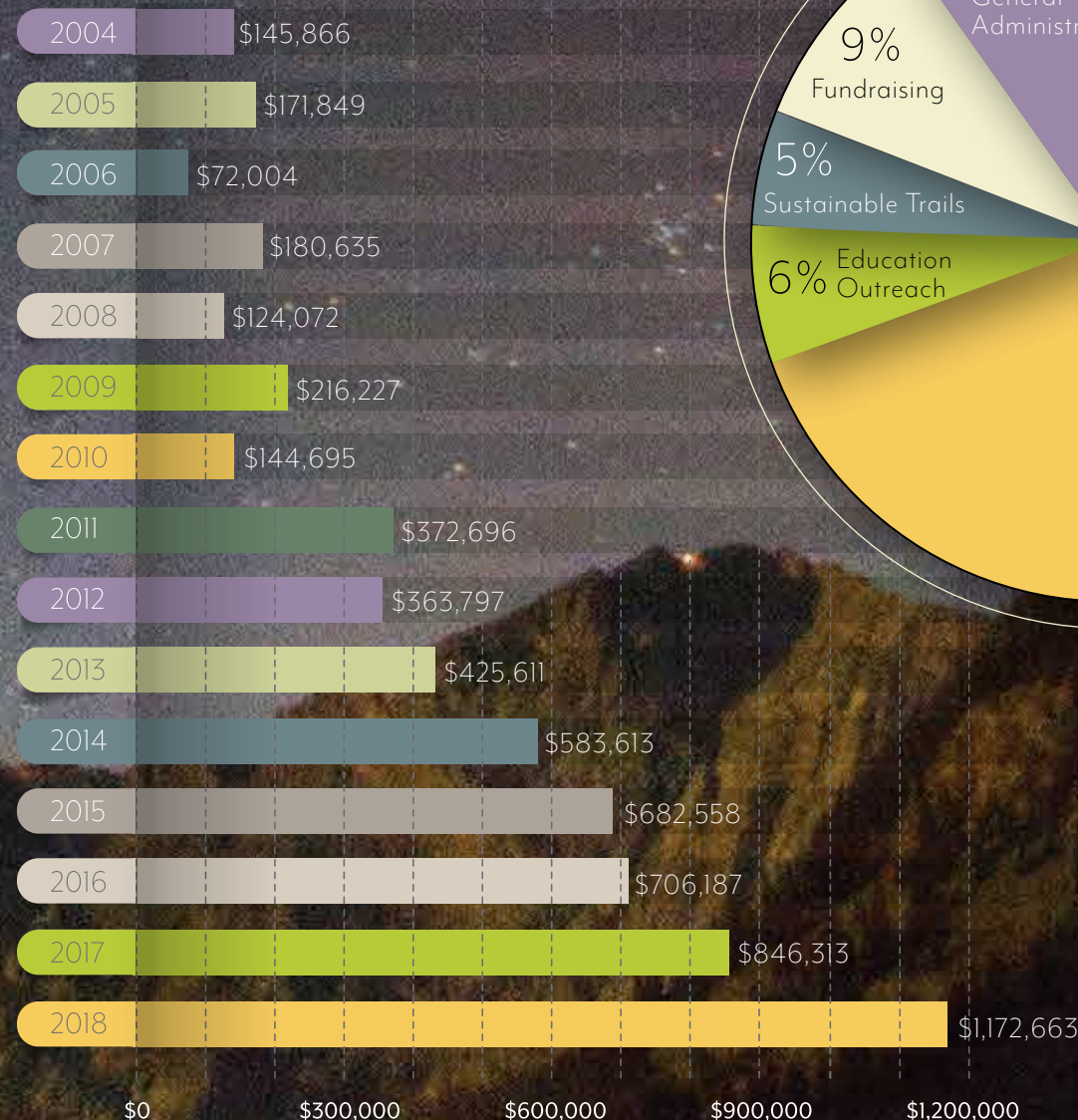
OPERATING REVENUES

Total operating revenues were an all-time high \$1,618,925. This was a 27 percent increase over 2017's prior record. Foundation grants surged by 75 percent to \$531,377 to lead all categories. Multi-year grants from the Gates Family Foundation, continued strong support from the National Forest Foundation's "Find Your Fourteener" campaign and a very generous first-time grant from the Chrest Foundation were major contributors. Individual donations again surpassed \$500,000 for the second year in a row, though lagged prior year totals by \$1,061. This ended a 10-year stretch of annual increases in individual giving. Local, state and federal government grants increased by 26 percent, while corporate donations grew 23 percent. The in-kind value of volunteer labor working on 14er trails and educating hikers totaled \$460,562, which also was an all-time record. Accounting rules prevent this total from being included in total revenues, though the value can serve as match for several of CFI's larger grants.

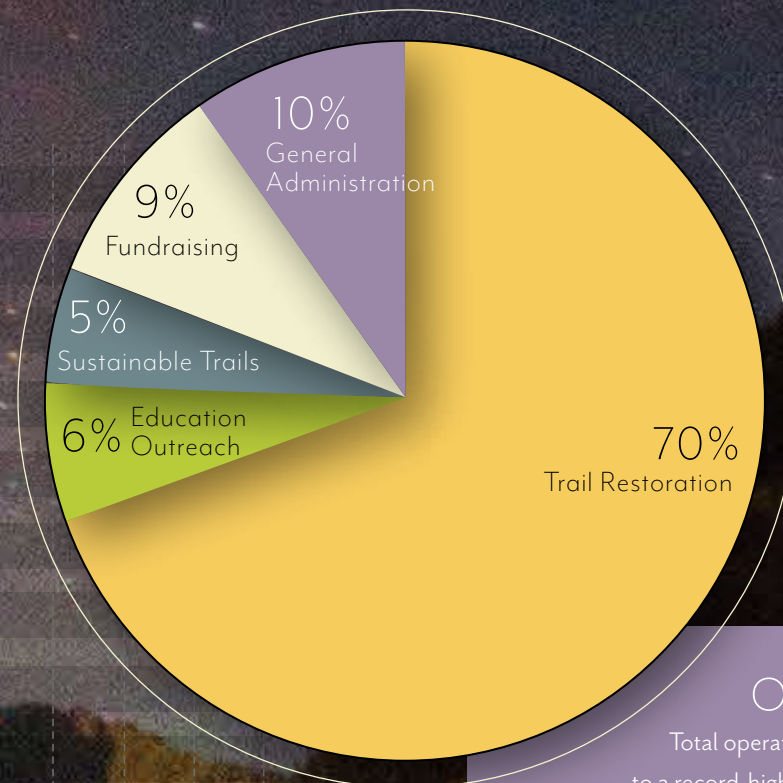


INDIVIDUAL DONOR ENGAGEMENT TRENDS

RETAINED DONORS ●
NEW DONORS ●
REACTIVATED DONORS ●



GROWTH IN NET ASSETS



OPERATING
EXPENSES
\$1,292,575

OPERATING EXPENSES

Total operating expenses grew by \$160,966 (14 percent) to a record-high \$1,292,575. This was the third year in which expenses exceeded \$1 million, reflecting CFI's increased investments in 14er projects. Programs represented 81 percent of total expenditures (\$1,044,798), while administration represented 10 percent (\$127,827) and fundraising 9 percent (\$119,950). Breaking apart program-related expenditures further, funds devoted to trail construction, trail maintenance and vegetation restoration represented 70 percent of overall expenses, funds devoted to hiker education and outreach represented 6 percent, and funds allocated to the Sustainable Trails Program represented 5 percent. CFI's administrative and fundraising expense ratio (AFR) was 19.2 percent, up slightly from 2017. CFI's short field season, when most programmatic activity occurs, is only one-third of the year, while administrative and fundraising activity occurs year-round. This leads to a higher AFR rate for CFI than many other nonprofits that do programmatic work year-round.

CFI received a clean, GAAP-based audit from JDS Professional Group for its 2018 financial statements. This marks the 10th consecutive clean audit for the organization's financial reporting.



Colorado Fourteeners Initiative
A Partnership for Preservation

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BACK COVER Photo: A ptarmigan blends in almost too well with the rocks near the west ridge of Quandary Peak
COVER Photo: Mount Yale appears to float on a sea of clouds while tools await another day's work on the Mount Columbia project.
Photo by Eli Allan, www.eliswindow.net

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