

**COLORADO
FOURTEENERS
INITIATIVE**

ANNUAL REPORT 2014



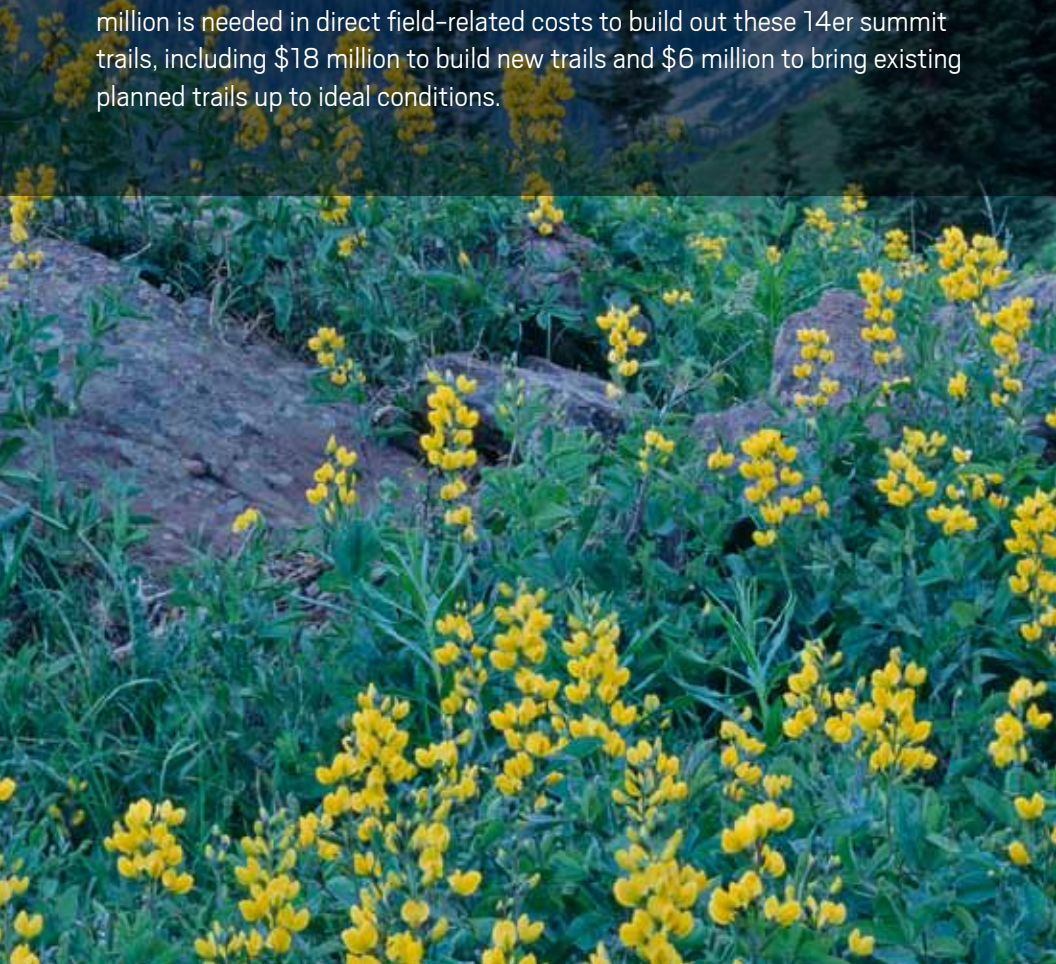
Colorado Fourteeners Initiative
A Partnership for Preservation





\$24 million

CFI's Sustainable Trails Program's 42 baseline inventories noted that \$24 million is needed in direct field-related costs to build out these 14er summit trails, including \$18 million to build new trails and \$6 million to bring existing planned trails up to ideal conditions.



29 Routes

In its first 20 years CFI built 29 sustainably designed, durably constructed 14er summit trails on 26 peaks.



48,510 miles

CFI's four field crews and core staff members drove almost 50,000 miles over the brief, four-month-long summer field season, much of it on rugged four-wheel-drive roads, to reach remote project sites.



Cover Photo Caption: The Milky Way over gathering clouds and the Collegiate Peaks taken from the summit ridge of Mount Belford.

Inside Front Cover Caption (Left to Right): Golden pea and Capital Peak at sunset, Lenticular clouds over Grays Peak from knoll above Loveland Pass, and Waterfall above Blue Lake near Mount Sneffels. All photos by Glenn Randall, www.glennrandall.com.

Dear Friends,

Last year was an important one for Colorado Fourteeners Initiative as we marked the 20th anniversary of the organization's founding. A major anniversary provides an opportunity to pause and reflect on how far we have come, as well as to assess how far we still have to go to reach this organization's goals.

Back in 1994, the Forest Service and several outdoor recreation groups joined together to brainstorm ways of taming growing resource impacts showing up on the 14ers. Colorado's population was expanding at a blistering pace. Many of the new residents and out-of-state tourists streaming into the state were active, outdoor enthusiasts who sought out signature recreational destinations like the 14ers. Without effective action the priceless natural resources found on the 14ers could be lost forever. Out of this collaborative effort CFI was formed as a stand-alone nonprofit.

Twenty years later, CFI is the leading national organization doing technical trail building, alpine tundra revegetation and hiker education in high-alpine terrain. About half of Colorado's 14ers have planned, sustainably designed summit routes. CFI has optimized working in the world above timberline, with its brief, four-month-long weather window. The organization has built a robust volunteer stewardship program and has multi-channel hiker education efforts. After several years of rebuilding, CFI is in its best financial shape, with a growing base of individual donors from across the country, an expanded network of institutional funders, numerous large grant pledges for future projects and the largest cash reserves ever. Our core staff is stronger than ever, with record numbers of returning seasonal crew leaders and enduring relationships with youth corps partners, all of which fosters continuity and productivity in the field.

Yet, 20 years after the organization's founding, much work remains to be done to fully realize Colorado Fourteeners Initiative's mission. The recent Sustainable Trails inventory documented the need for \$24 million in future trail reconstruction and maintenance work on 42 summit routes. This includes \$18 million to build 16 new summit routes and \$6 million to bring 26 existing routes up to sustainable conditions. Baseline inventories still need to be conducted on a few peaks not included in the first round. In addition, though our first season using trail counters proved successful, it remains a guess how much hiking use occurs on the 14ers and how quickly use is increasing. CFI must redouble its efforts to engage more volunteers, form collaborative relationships to scale up our work and increase awareness of Leave No Trace practices so that the 14er trail network and surrounding ecosystems remain protected for decades to come.

Fourteener trail stewardship work is physically demanding, technical work performed by hand in some of the most remote and rugged areas in the country. Our crew leaders are the elite "special forces" of the trail world. Working in these remote locations poses costly and logistically complicated challenges that would not be possible without the generous support of many people and organizations nationwide. Thank you for helping make 2014 another year of record success protecting the 14ers. We know the challenge ahead is daunting, but with teamwork and reliable partners, we can make CFI's next 20 years even more successful than the first.



Regards,
Lloyd F. Athearn, Executive Director



LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



TRAIL RECONSTRUCTION

The biggest impact CFI makes on the 14ers is through the construction of sustainably designed, durably constructed summit routes. These routes allow hikers to travel from trailhead to summit (or to the start of more involved terrain on harder peaks) without impacting the rare and fragile alpine tundra ecosystems through which they pass. Even unplanned, user-created routes that receive little use are often steep, heavily eroded and damaging to native soils and vegetation. To date CFI has completed 29 sustainable routes on 26 peaks.

CFI's trail reconstruction efforts in 2014 involved working on both ends of the 14er-use spectrum—from Mount Bierstadt's heavily impacted summit trail, the busiest in the state, to El Diente Peak's remote and pristine Kilpacker Basin trail. Both routes experienced the first of two planned seasons of major trail reconstruction work. In a twist on CFI's usual methods, much of the work completed last season involved construction using felled logs.

Mount Bierstadt: Upwards of 40,000 people climb Mount Bierstadt annually, making it the most-climbed 14er in the state. This high use, coupled with soft, vegetated slopes, leads to excessive impact as hikers widen and braid the main climbing route in search of dry, stable tread. Several volunteer projects helped construct wooden steps and sections of elevated causeway through the flat, wet areas on the opening mile of the trail to confine use and limit trampling of vegetation. A seven-person Rocky Mountain Youth Corps crew under the direction of two CFI leaders used native rocks to construct staircases and retaining walls near the summit ridge to more clearly define a quarter-mile of trail. The project also experimented with using raised log barriers to confine the trail where rock source is insufficient to do so. Work will continue this summer to address the backlog of reconstruction required to bring this route up to desired conditions.



Rocks and raised wooden barriers help narrow the Bierstadt summit route and prevent trampling of sensitive alpine tundra vegetation.

El Diente Peak: Two of CFI's most experienced leaders directed the construction of a 1.2-mile-long approach trail along the southeast-facing side of Kilpacker Basin. An eight-member youth corps crew from Southwest Conservation Corps and 18 volunteers helped in constructing 93 new drainage structures—most out of felled logs—to prevent the trail from eroding in this wet alpine valley. This leadership team will return in 2015 to open the new trail, complete more than a mile of stabilization and restore the old, user-created route that travels through sensitive riparian areas along Kilpacker Creek. New backcountry camping areas will be opened, while sites close to the creek will be closed and restored.

Mount of the Holy Cross: For the second consecutive season CFI had a two-person crew operating out of East Cross Creek. This team continued to build out the Halfmoon summit route, address maintenance priorities on the Notch Mountain and other nearby trails, and continue restoration efforts in sensitive areas around lakes and streams. After work staff would walk through the designated camping area educating hikers about Leave No Trace and ensuring that nobody was camping in previously closed restoration sites.

El Diente Peak towers over this section of newly constructed trail.



"I've been up Mt. of the Holy Cross and North Maroon Peak in the past month. CFI did a fantastic job improving and managing sections of the trail on both mountains. That was a lot of hard work! Congratulations and thank you. I am glad to have contributed to CFI."

— Richard Hoffman (Denver, Colo.)



24+ tons

CFI crews cut, cleaned and carried 48,250 pounds of dead timber—more than 24.1 tons—to build retaining walls, check steps and barriers on the El Diente Peak and Mount Bierstadt trail reconstruction projects. These were the first projects where CFI has done much log-related construction.



^ Before & After v

This photo sequence shows the construction of an armored rock staircase high on Mount Bierstadt to keep hikers on the trail. The high volume of hikers on the trail made construction more difficult and time consuming due to the frequent interruptions of passing hikers.



TRAIL MAINTENANCE

Last year was another exceptionally strong year for CFI in terms of volunteer-based trail maintenance work on the 14ers. The Adopt-a-Peak team that works principally to facilitate volunteers expanded from two to four people, though they usually worked as two independent teams of two members each. These crews and our fixed site projects organized 51 service projects on 21 peaks that engaged 556 volunteers in performing 1,114 days of trail stewardship—CFI's second-best year ever. This volunteer work provided an in-kind value of \$223,691.

The lone disappointment with last year's performance was timing. Coming after the organization's all-time biggest year for volunteer work, 2014's total represented a drop of 16 percent compared to the high water mark of 1,330 volunteer days. Over the past four years volunteer stewardship has averaged 1,125 days per year, the most productive period in the program's 14-year history.

Bold Earth Teen Adventures was CFI's Adopt-a-Peak partner of the year. The youth summer camp scheduled four trail stewardship projects with CFI last year, and has been a consistent partner over the past four seasons. The fact that volunteers are youth presents a tremendous opportunity for CFI to educate them about the importance of public lands stewardship and foster the next generation of conservation stewards.

Last year's pledge of almost \$200,000 from Colorado's State Trails Program positions CFI's trail maintenance efforts well for the next two years. CFI believes it can double the size of the Adopt-a-Peak crew in 2015 and 2016 such that there will be two separate four-person teams. This will allow for continued expansion of opportunities for volunteers to give back to the peaks they love so much.



Kimberly Appelson Outdoor Leadership Intern Trish Franco (left) works with volunteers to position a rock on the Capitol Peak trail.

Volunteers from Colorado College haul a rock to the work site on the trail to Mounts Belford and Oxford.



"This experience ranks at the top of my life. I learned so much about the Wilderness Act and about trail construction, and about myself. It was the hardest thing I have ever done in the mountains. I will never look at a rock—perfectly placed, probably rotated multiple times—the same again. For the past few years I have donated money. This year I donated my time. I hope I was able to give back a fraction of what the mountains have given me."

— Jesse Maurer (Colorado Springs, Colo.)

1,125

Over the past four field seasons CFI has mobilized an average of 1,125 volunteer days of trail stewardship work annually—the most productive four-year period in the organization's history.



A volunteer from the Jaywalker program helps build a retaining wall on the North Maroon Peak approach trail as it climbs steeply out of Minnehaha Creek.

^ Before & After v

Adopt-a-Peak volunteers construct a backwall on Mount Massive to prevent soil from falling onto the summit trail.



SUSTAINABLE TRAILS

2014 was a pivotal year for CFI's Sustainable Trails program. Analysis was completed on three seasons of collected trail inventories that showed the need for \$24 million in on-the-ground trail investments. A pilot test was also begun using compact infrared trail counters to track hiking use on five 14er summit routes. Though only a small part of CFI's annual budget, the Sustainable Trails work is proving vital in understanding hiking use and physical resource impact trends on the 14ers. The program is showing where CFI can make the most strategic investments in future work to build out and protect the 14er trail network.

The Phase I analysis of foot-by-foot, GPS-based trail inventories on 42 summit routes collected during 2011-13 was completed last year. This analysis showed that \$18 million in new trail reconstruction is needed to build 16 sustainably designed trails where only user-created routes currently exist. Meanwhile, an additional \$6 million is needed to repair 26 planned routes that have deteriorated since construction or have never been fully hardened. The findings of this effort are being released to land managers, 14er enthusiasts and funders through a series of methods, including "report cards" for every inventoried route and more detailed information, including Google Earth data, posted on CFI's website.

The Phase II pilot test involved placement of five TRAFx infrared counters in custom-designed metal housings along five summit trails accessing seven 14er peaks: Quandary, Grays/Torreys, Handies (American Basin), Redcloud/Sunshine and Castle Peaks. The counter sensor notes the change in heat of a passing hiker, which allows traffic to be tabulated hourly 24/7 while in the field. Counter boxes were placed in constructed rock cairns in June/July and retrieved in October/November, with data downloaded monthly over the summer. Though some glitches were encountered during the pilot program—some cairns were dismantled, while hikers inadvertently blocked other sensors by placing additional rocks on the cairns—the units provided much more robust detail about hiking use than could ever be compiled by crews and volunteers alone. Plans are under way to purchase five additional counters for deployment in 2015 so that use can be tracked at 10 locations on nine 14ers.

Morgan Childs makes final adjustments to the Castle Peak trail counter before completing the cairn.

Climbers on Redcloud Peak's false summit. Photo by Glenn Randall. www.glennrandall.com

20,370

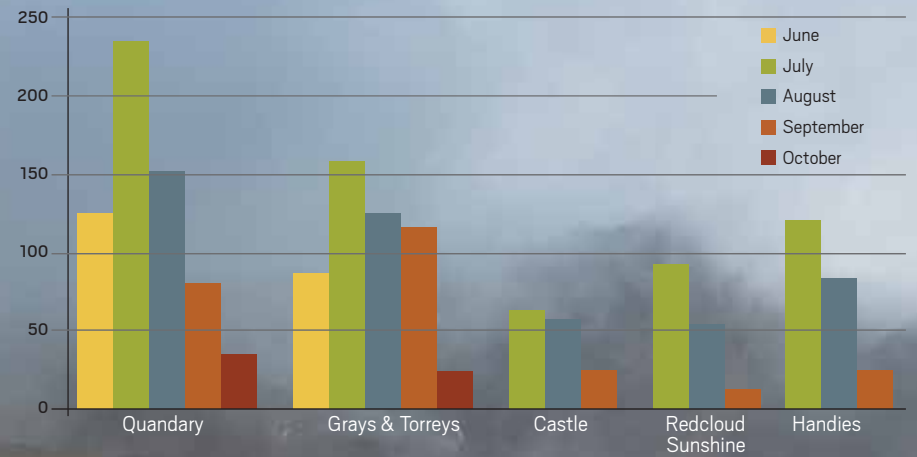
Between 2011 and 2013, CFI staff conducted detailed, foot-by-foot, GPS-based trail condition inventories documenting every constructed or needed trail feature. This database contains 20,370 points of data on the 42 inventoried summit routes.

100,000

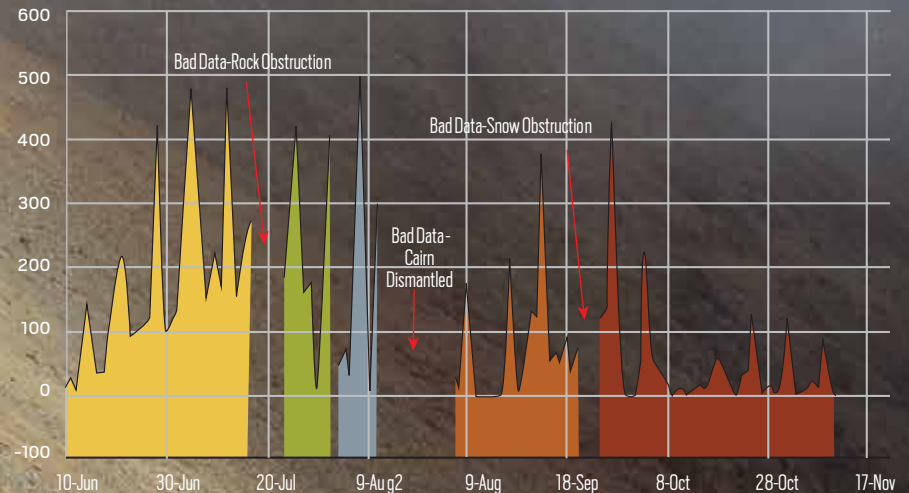
Infrared trail counters and a prior agency study suggest that about 100,000 hiker use days occur annually on the five 14ers located closest to Denver: Grays, Torreys and Quandary Peaks, as well as Mounts Evans and Bierstadt.



Average Daily Hiker Counts by Month



Daily Hiker Counts - Quandary



TRAIL RESTORATION



"Hiked San Luis Peak yesterday. The trail to the summit on the south ridge is OUTSTANDING. Did your group do these improvements? If not, do you know who did? I'd like to make a donation."

— Mely Whiting (Pagosa Springs, Colo.)

Some of the 292 willow plugs during the transplantation process adjacent to the Mount Bierstadt trail.

Returning trampled, braided and denuded user-created routes to their natural condition is a significant part of protecting 14er alpine ecosystems. Without stabilization and restoration, these old, user-created trails will continue to erode valuable alpine soils into streams, smother vulnerable plants and threaten the stability of alpine tundra beds.

CFI's signature restoration project in 2014 involved transplanting vegetation along the opening mile of the newly delineated Mount Bierstadt summit trail. The elevated causeway built through this flat, wet and muddy section should provide a much more conducive tread for hikers. Many vegetation transplantation efforts were tried in this area over the years, but lack of a dry, suitable path through the mud resulted in continual trampling of vegetation—even restoration efforts designed to close off trail braids—as hikers sought a drier, more stable path. CFI will continue to restore areas adjacent to the Bierstadt trail during the 2015 season as the trail is improved.

Staff revisited the Mount Yale restoration site over the summer to see how the area is recovering and to re-photograph earlier documentation points. As the accompanying before/after photos show, sections of the old, user-created route that CFI closed, stabilized and restored in 2011 are recovering nicely, if slowly. Experts say that regrowth of alpine plants can take 10 to 1,000-times longer to occur than plants located in lower altitude, subalpine forests.

Researchers at Regis University in Denver have been studying the Mount Yale restoration site since 2012 to learn new things about alpine revegetation techniques. Visits to the restoration site in 2012 and 2014 are already yielding interesting findings. Data collected from both years note that vegetation plugs transplanted at higher elevations have survived at greater rates than plugs planted at lower elevations. Vegetation plugs that contain both grasses and forbs have survived at greater rates than plugs containing only grasses. The most surprising finding, however, has been the survival rate of transplanted cushion plants. These plants previously were thought to be an unlikely candidate species for transplantation due to their large taproot. However, cushion plants have been surviving transplantation over a three-year period on Mount Yale. Cushion plants also have an advantage in that they contain a diverse mix of additional plant species within their canopies, so are able to more quickly bring biological diversity back into the restoration area.

We look forward to sharing further findings from the Regis University research when they become available. Learn more about cushion plants and other alpine tundra vegetation in the alpine ecology video series on CFI's YouTube channel:

 <https://www.youtube.com/user/CO14ersInitiative>.

7 feet deep

Enough soil has eroded off the Mount Bierstadt summit trail to cover a football field 7 feet deep.



^ Before & After v

Mount Bierstadt: The newly installed sections of elevated causeway on the opening mile will keep the trail dry, confine hikers to the summit trail corridor and prevent the trampling of vegetation as people cut through the brush to avoid thick mud. Transplantation of native willows will eventually return these denuded areas to their natural state. *Photos by Eli Allan, www.eliswindow.net.*



^ Before & After v

Mount Yale: Though recovery of an old, user-created 14er route takes time, eventually the area will return to its natural appearance. Before: Hikers traveling the excessively wide, barren Mount Yale route in 2009. After: The restored areas in July 2014, three years after stabilization and restoration occurred.





HIKER EDUCATION & OUTREACH



CFI continues to utilize a multi-faceted approach to educating hikers about the rare and fragile alpine tundra ecosystems through which 14er summit trails pass and the Leave No Trace minimum-impact practices that can minimize hiking-caused damage.

On-mountain hiker education had its biggest year ever in 2014 through the combined efforts of Peak Steward volunteers and CFI crews. The Peak Steward program enjoyed a renewed burst of activity thanks to the efforts of Len Shipman, a long-time participant who volunteered to coordinate the program. Two trainings were held—one in Denver, one in Silverthorne—to educate newly recruited volunteers. A core of 26 volunteers spent 79 days on the mountains contacting 3,530 hikers. CFI field crews posted their fourth consecutive year of record activity by contacting 13,648 hikers and backpackers. The combined hiker contacts of crews and volunteers last year was 55 percent higher than in 2013.

Efforts to reach 14er hikers before they ever leave home also increased dramatically last year. An early season promotional effort by 14ers.com doubled total views on CFI's YouTube channel in two months—an increase of about 11,000 views. Five new Leave No Trace-related videos were posted to raise awareness about utilizing minimum-impact practices for human waste removal and hiking with your dog. A video about Peak Stewards was created to help recruit volunteers.

New educational kiosks were produced for Mount of the Holy Cross, the camping area in East Cross Creek, Mount Bierstadt and Mount Yale. Special thanks go out to our friends at National Geographic Maps for making custom maps of the CFI-recommended routes on these peaks.

CFI also helped promote itself last year through wrapping three of our field trucks and a new cargo trailer. These high-visibility graphic wraps show scenes of 14ers, their wildlife and CFI crews at work building and maintaining hiking trails. Look for our more visible vehicles as you are out on the peaks this summer.

Hikers on Mount Bierstadt pass lush wildflowers en route to the summit.





80,648

CFI began making on-mountain hiker education contacts in 2002, and has contacted almost 81,000 people since then through volunteer Peak Stewards and trail maintenance crews.



The newly installed trailhead kiosk for Mount Yale.



New and returning Peak Stewards at Silverthorne training in May.



One of CFI's graphically wrapped trucks fords Castle Creek.





LOOKING AHEAD

Colorado Fourteeners Initiative continues to work with the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management to ensure that every 14er has at least one sustainably located, durably constructed summit route providing hiking access through rare and fragile alpine tundra ecosystems with minimal human-caused impacts. The Sustainable Trails inventory estimated that it will cost roughly \$18 million in direct field-related costs to build out the 14er trail network over the coming years.

Since most of the ecological benefits accrue through replacing unplanned, impactful, user-created routes that are literally trampled into the tundra and prone to erosion with planned, sustainably designed and durably constructed trails, CFI sought to boost the pace of its reconstruction efforts during the 2012 and 2013 field seasons. Three major reconstruction projects were operating simultaneously compared to two in prior years. These projects are exceedingly expensive to run (about \$150,000 each per season) and require extensive planning and environmental review. This surge quickly strapped CFI's project management staff and outpaced the Forest Service's ability to plan and complete environmental permitting. As a result, CFI has scaled back to a more sustainable pace of two major trail reconstruction projects and one minor project per season.

Beyond the El Diente Peak and Mount Bierstadt projects that will be under way again in 2015, CFI plans to continue building out the 14er trail network with work on the following peaks in future years. Work is shifting to more problematic peaks in harder to reach locations, some of which also have private land-related issues to resolve before work can commence.

Mount Eolus: CFI will finish up the second and final year of major trail reconstruction work in 2016. Eolus is the last peak in Chicago Basin needing completion of a sustainable approach route to its summit. The major focus of work will be a 0.49-mile-long sustainably located trail reroute that will occur in the cirque directly east of the summit block, and closure, stabilization and restoration of a 0.46-mile-long section of the existing climber-created trail. CFI project leaders will oversee a 10-member youth crew from Southwest Conservation Corps. This will be CFI's 31st route on 28 peaks when complete.

Mount Columbia: A \$200,000 grant commitment from the Colorado State Trails program and Great Outdoors Colorado will allow CFI to begin the first phase of major trail reconstruction work during the 2016 summer field season. This project is projected to be CFI's biggest-ever due to the loose, unstable nature of the peak and the need to transport rocks of sufficient size to harden the route by use of a griphoist, a slow and tedious process. The project is projected to take four years to construct and a fifth year to stabilize and restore the multiple, user-created routes trampled into the tundra by hikers over the years.

Mount Elbert: The state high point has three major summit routes, two of which require extensive reconstruction work. The Forest Service is planning a new route for the east-side approach from the South Elbert trailhead, which is the second-worst unplanned route inventoried. A major overhaul of the north ridge route that CFI constructed as its first project back in 1994 is also planned. Both routes receive significant hiking use and are seeing increasing on-the-ground impacts. The less frequently used Black Cloud route that comes in from the south will not require as extensive treatment as the north and east routes. CFI hopes to begin fundraising for these combined projects in 2016 and see work commencing in 2017 or 2018.

Snowmass Mountain: Planning has begun to assess how best to tackle this peak, which the Sustainable Trails inventory found to be most in need of reconstruction. Beyond work on the climbing route, lessening camping-related impacts at Snowmass Lake will be vital to protecting this sensitive area.

*Snowmass Mountain and Capitol Peak from Buckskin Pass.
Photo by Glenn Randall, www.glennrandall.com.*



The trail braiding and widening is so extensive on the upper reaches of Elbert's north ridge route that only a panorama shot could capture it all.

528 tons

Crews working on the Mount Columbia trail reconstruction project will have to quarry by hand and use a griphoist to transport to the worksite an estimated 1,056,360 pounds of rock. 528 tons of rock is equivalent to 38 very large dump trucks full of rocks.

"More swear words have been uttered by hikers climbing Mount Columbia than any other Colorado 14er. This mountain twists ankles, skins knees, and shreds bottoms of pants."

—Mark Obmascik
Author, *Halfway to Heaven*, Winner of the 2009 National Outdoor Book Award for Outdoor Literature



Sections of the existing, user-created route up Mount Columbia's southwest shoulder show trampling of vegetation exceeding 20-30 feet in areas, with little nearby rock source to narrow and stabilize the route.

Volunteers from Bold Earth Teen Adventures strip logs for the Mount Bierstadt project.



ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW



2014 Core Staff



Lloyd Athearn, Executive Director



Ben Hanus, Field Programs Manager



Brian Sargeant, Patagonia Environmental Intern (August/September)



Morgan Childs, CLIMB Intern (May-July)/Development and Programs Coordinator



Jerry Mack, Controller

2014 Board of Directors

CFI Directors on a July site visit to the Mount Bierstadt project.

Front Row (L to R): Lisa Mattis, Barry Danielsen, Wendy Boutin, Guest, Executive Director Lloyd Athearn.

Second Row (L to R): Mandy Hughes, John Mill, Hunt Walker, Nate Palmer, Jim Schoettler, Tim Rampe.

Back Row (L to R): Field Programs Manager Ben Hanus.

Not Pictured: Tom Barney, Charles Cavness, Richard Heppe, Brad McQueen, Laura Tomlinson, Marty Zeller.



2014 Seasonal Staff

CFI's seasonal staff at Twin Lakes during pre-season training.

Back Row (L to R): Tom Cronin, Miriam Venman-Clay, Chris Houde, Rob Duddy, Trish Franco, Eric Haggstrom.

Front Row (L to R): Steena Cultrara, Eli Allan, Rebecca Egan, Dana Young, Dylan Barbash.

2014 Project Managers

El Diente Peak Crew

Tom Cronin, Co-Leader
Miriam Venman-Clay, Co-Leader

Mount Bierstadt Crew

Eli Allan, Co-Leader
Eric Haggstrom, Co-Leader

Mount of the Holy Cross Crew

Steena Cultrara, Co-Leader
Rob Duddy, Co-Leader

Adopt-a-Peak Crew

Dylan Barbash, Leader
Rebecca Egan, Member
Chris Houde, Member
Trish Franco, Kimberly Appelson Memorial
Outdoor Leadership Intern

14er Project Planning

Loretta McElhiney, USFS 14er Peak Manager
Dana Young, Design Assistant



2014 Award Recipients

Outstanding Agency Partner:

Jim Bedwell
Chris Bouton

Out-of-State Ambassador Award:

Peter I. Mason

Corporate Partner of the Year:

Patagonia

Foundation Partner of the Year:

Aspen Skiing Company Environment
Foundation

Special Recognition for Outstanding Service:

John W. Mill

Adopt-a-Peak Partner of the Year:

Bold Earth Teen Adventure

Adopt-a-Peak Special Recognition:

Richard Hasbrouck
Kristen Cortazzo
Christopher Carstensen

Peak Steward of the Year:

Scott Goldberg

Peak Steward Outstanding Service:

Dave Olmstead

Peak Steward Special Recognition:

Scott Barrett
Kathleen Brennan
Warren Buettner
Teresa Cierco-Lopez
Rick Hoffman
Byron Rodenburg

2014 Volunteer of the Year:

Len Shipman

Len Shipman (*upper right*) spends time last June training new Peak Steward recruit Kendall Kunitake at the Kite Lake trailhead for Mounts Lincoln, Democrat and Bross.



Len Shipman, a retired community college Political Science instructor and son of a forest ranger, was named as CFI's 2014 Volunteer of the Year for his role rebuilding the Peak Steward program. After teaching for 30 years in California, Len sold the house and traveled with his wife and two Golden Retrievers for 10 months in a 24-foot travel trailer throughout the western states looking for the perfect place with a slower, more satisfying pace of life. He found it in Summit County. Len began climbing 14ers when he was 60 and has now summited 43 peaks. He began volunteering as a Peak Steward in 2009 and regularly spends 6-8 days every year contacting hikers about Leave No Trace practices on the 14ers, most of them on nearby Quandary Peak. Last year he volunteered to resuscitate the Peak Steward program by recruiting, training and managing an

expanded program involving 26 volunteers who put in 79 days educating more than 3,500 hikers on the peaks, as well as 7 evenings talking to attendees at "How to Hike a 14er" clinics at Denver-area REI stores.



Mountain goat by a waterfall in
Chicago Basin. Photo by Glenn Randall,
www.glennrandall.com

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

Colorado Fourteeners Initiative enjoyed another impressive year financially in 2014, ending the year with a strong net surplus of \$158,002. Revenues and expenses were both down compared to 2013's record year. Several multi-year grants expired at the end of 2013, but the timing of new multi-year commitments made them unavailable to spend until 2015. While 2014 might be considered a year in which CFI caught its breath after a four-year burst of rapid programmatic growth, it positioned the organization for continued success in the years ahead.

CFI's enhanced financial strength is best seen through the continued increase in total net assets which reached \$653,568 at year end, an increase of 425 percent since 2008, including a jump of 54 percent over the past year alone. Included is a \$110,007 cash reserve fund dedicated to smoothing seasonal cash flows that was established through a 2013 bequest gift, as well as the \$55,189 Kimberly Appelson Memorial Endowed Fund that supports the Adopt-a-Peak crew's intern position. In addition, CFI obtained funding commitments totaling roughly \$334,000 for future trail reconstruction and maintenance projects that accounting rules do not allow to be included in this total. These grants will be available to fund field work through 2017.

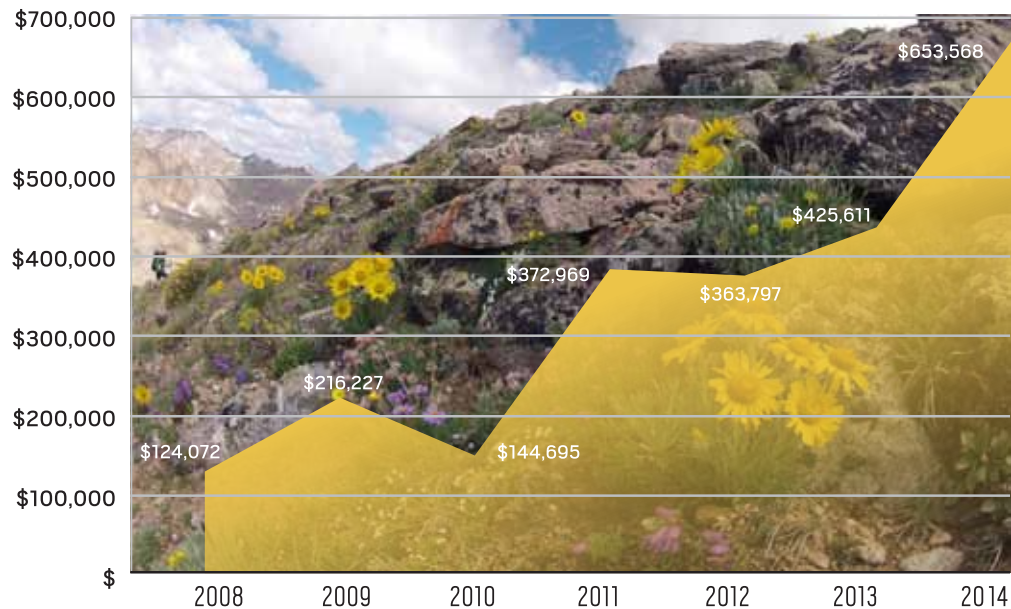
Operating Revenues

CFI's operating revenues in 2014 were \$882,686, a 10 percent decline from 2013's high water mark of \$977,016. Foundation grants represented the largest share of revenues at 36 percent. This was more than double the 15 percent share foundation grants represented in 2013. The dramatic increase stemmed from the receipt of a three-year, \$150,000 grant from the Gates Family Foundation to support CFI's trail reconstruction and volunteer stewardship work between 2015 and 2017. Nonprofit accounting rules require that all revenue from multi-year grants post in the year the grant is received even though no expenses occurred last year. The share of revenues from individual donor support fell slightly, from 40 percent in 2013 to 32 percent in 2014. When the effects of planned gifts are removed from both years, the \$283,168 donated in 2014 was the sixth consecutive year of all-time record giving by individuals. Government grants declined from 38 percent in 2013 to 24 percent in 2014. The decline was largely attributable to a delay in the signing of a Colorado State Trails grant that made the funds unavailable for expenditure last year. Support from local government grant programs in several Colorado communities totaled \$16,400. Corporate donations remained unchanged at 7 percent. The value of volunteer labor performed throughout the year totaled 10,068 hours, which contributed an additional \$252,707 in benefit to 14er preservation that is not included in the financial audit.

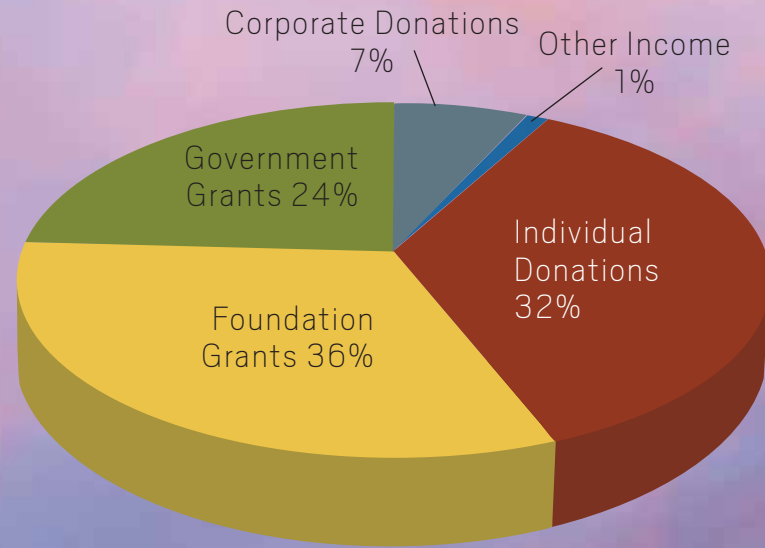
Operating Expenses

Overall operating expenses in 2014 fell 21% from \$915,202 in 2013 to \$724,684 last year. The decline stemmed from reducing the number of large, fixed-site trail reconstruction projects from three to two and the resulting elimination of a full-time core staff position. Trail restoration expenses of \$448,468 represented the largest share of CFI's budget at 62%. This category includes the two large trail reconstruction projects (El Diente and Bierstadt), the mini crew on Holy Cross and two mobile Adopt-a-Peak crews. Fundraising costs grew by only \$8,200 between 2013 and 2014, but the reduced budget caused the share of total expenses to increase from 10 percent to 13 percent. General administrative expenses were actually lower by \$4,652 last year, but increased as a share of the budget from 10 percent in 2013 to 12 percent in 2014. Education and outreach-related expenses remained

CFI's Total Net Assets



2014 TOTAL OPERATING REVENUES: \$882,686

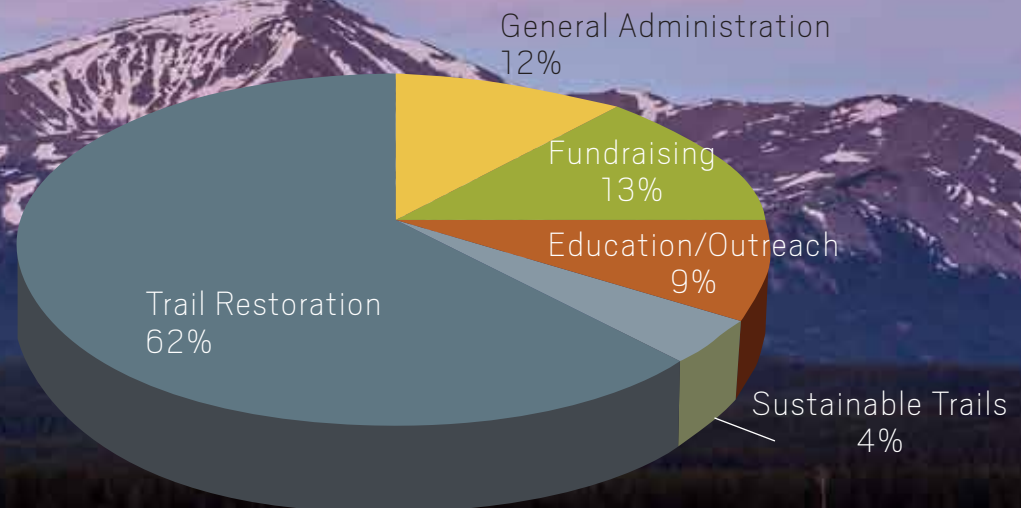


unchanged as a share of the budget at 9 percent. Expenses were for production of five educational videos, new educational panels for the Bierstadt, Holy Cross and Yale trailhead kiosks, and installing graphic wraps on three trucks and a new cargo trailer. Expenses related to the Sustainable Trails program were \$26,567 and represented only 4 percent of the budget. These costs related to wrapping up analysis on the GPS-based trail inventories conducted between 2011 and 2013, as well as deploying the five trail counters during the 2014 field season.

6 Years

CFI received a clean, GAAP-based audit from JDS Professional Group for its 2014 financial statements, the sixth consecutive year

2014 TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES: \$724,684



Mount Elbert at sunrise taken from Highway 24 south of Leadville. Photo by Glenn Randall, www.glennrandall.com

COLORADO FOURTEENERS INITIATIVE



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Colorado Fourteeners Initiative
A Partnership for Preservation

*Lenticular clouds over Grays and Torreys Peaks
from a knoll above Loveland Pass. Photo by
Glenn Randall, www.glennrandall.com*



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