

ANNUAL REPORT

PROTECT RESTORE EDUCATE



Colorado Fourteeners Initiative
A Partnership for Preservation



ANNUAL REPORT

WELCOME

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

W

orking on the 14ers means Colorado Fourteeners Initiative's field staff are always confronted with the quirks of Mother Nature. Every season is a rush to pack in four months of high-altitude field work despite what natural obstacles are placed in our way.

Even in the best of times the season is bookended by snow. It can be tough to endure weeks of daily summer monsoon thunderstorms turning basecamps into mud pits and leaving everything damp. But, of late, it has been a question of picking our poison: wildfires or excessive snowpack?

During the 2018 season it was drought and wildfire. In June the "416" and "Burro" fires closed the bone-dry San Juan National Forest for more than a week. This was the first time the Forest had been closed to visitors in its 113-year history. Smoke from

the fires put at risk a scheduled mountain safety video shoot on Mount Sneffels, just outside the Forest boundary. Shortly thereafter the "Weston Pass" fire erupted across the valley from our Mount Elbert crew. It burned up cell towers that compromised communication all summer and threatened a season-long trail construction project.

Last year the concern was a massive spring snowpack that lingered into late July. When our seasonal staff assembled for field training in late May, the statewide snowpack was more than 400 percent of average. Packing in gear and setting up backcountry basecamps required extensive digging of snow. Many project sites resembled winter conditions for weeks. On June 21, the first day of summer and the date CFI and the National Forest Foundation scheduled a celebratory climb of Quandary Peak to show donors all the great work, we climbed in snow and received measurable snowfall that night.



To complicate things further, the state experienced almost 5,000 avalanches over the 2018-19 winter. More than 80 were of the most severe categories that can destroy buildings and cause damage to a large swath of a forest. Many access roads and trails—especially in the hard-hit San Juan Mountains—required extensive efforts to clear debris that was in some places 20–30 feet deep. Avalanche researchers determined that some avalanche paths ran bigger than they ever had in recorded history.

With no ability to change these larger natural factors, CFI drums into our employees the need to be resilient and adaptable. Our guiding inspiration is MacGyver, the late-80s action hero who could get out of the most impossible jam with ingenuity and found objects. Being flexible and creative, CFI's employees always figure out a way to succeed. That is who we are.

In this year's annual report, we explain how CFI's teams made the most of the 2019 field season despite serious obstacles. It proved to be remarkably productive despite the chaotic start. What we face next year remains to be seen. Maybe a new and unprecedented challenge like a global pandemic? That certainly would test our adaptability.

Regards,

Lloyd F. Athearn
Executive Director

A person wearing a tan hooded jacket, a black balaclava, and black gloves is working on a rocky mountain trail. They are using a long metal pole with a blue griphoist at the bottom to move a rock. The background is a steep, rocky slope with some green moss or lichen.

NEW TRAIL CONSTRUCTION

PROTECT

FIND YOUR FOURTEENER

The third year of the “Find Your Fourteener” collaborative campaign, spurred by the National Forest Foundation, again saw CFI conducting major new route delineation work on two peaks (Mounts Columbia and Elbert) and intensive reconstruction work on six peaks (Grays and Torreys, and the Lake City group of Handies, Redcloud, Wetterhorn and Uncompahgre Peaks). The concerted effort of CFI and our partners has accelerated the pace toward realizing the goal of every 14er having at least one sustainable trail. This gets progressively harder as CFI addresses more complex and remote peaks needing work.

Crewmember Addrie Moncayo works the griphoist to safely position a rock in place.



Tired crew members take a break after digging out a space for the basecamp cook tent.

MOUNT COLUMBIA

Work continued for a fourth season on this highly technical route by a five-person CFI leadership team augmented by youth corps crews from Southwest Conservation Corps and Rocky Mountain Youth Corps. Winter-like conditions welcomed the crew in June, which required them to shovel 2,380 cubic feet of snow (roughly the capacity of five dump trucks) just to set up camp. Once the snow cleared, however, the Columbia crew built 2,147 linear feet of various forms of soil retention walls, which are vital on the extremely steep cross-slope of this route. The crew also installed 170 rock crib steps to stabilize the trail and cut 830 linear feet of new tread.

While slow and complex to build, Columbia has become CFI's showcase summit route. When opened to downhill hikers near the end of summer, the feedback was tremendous. One long-time donor emailed the office after hiking the trail, "I had the chance to hike Columbia yesterday and see firsthand the trail building work. Wow! Really great looking results. I can't imagine how hard the large stones were to move."

MAJOR FUNDERS: *Colorado State Trails, REI, Richard Hoffman, Chrest Foundation, Meta Alice Keith Bratten Foundation, Gates Family Foundation, Harlan and Lois Anderson Family Foundation.*

Crew members add rubble walls to confine hikers to this multi-step staircase.



A hiker descends a switchback staircase near the top of CFI's trail.



A photograph of a forest trail winding through a dense stand of birch trees. The ground is covered in brown leaves and moss. A series of log check steps, made of cut logs with a cross-hatch pattern, are installed along the trail. The text 'TRAIL CONSTRUCTION' is at the top, 'PROTECT' is in large letters in the center, and 'MOUNT ELBERT' is below it. A caption in the bottom right explains the log check steps.

TRAIL CONSTRUCTION

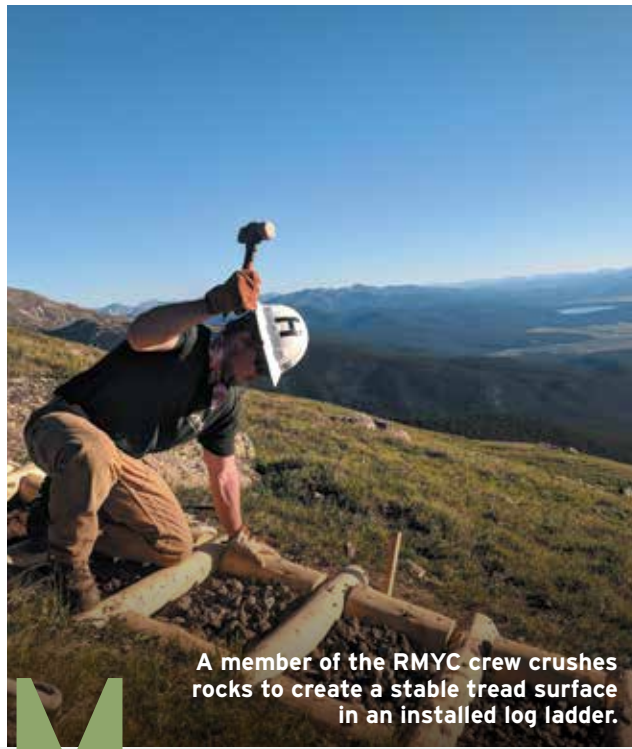
PROTECT

MOUNT ELBERT

Volunteers installed log check steps
on the lower portion of the route.



Felled logs are turned into one of CFI's log ladders.



A member of the RMYC crew crushes rocks to create a stable tread surface in an installed log ladder.



A completed log ladder section of the East Ridge trail.



MOUNT ELBERT

The third season of work properly delineating the East Ridge route on Mount Elbert saw construction push farther up the mountain. The crew cut 0.34 miles of new tread and installed numerous wall and step features. The work was performed by a four-person CFI leadership team overseeing a Peak Apprentice and crew from Rocky Mountain Youth Corps. The Adopt-a-Peak crew ran 9 projects, put in a further 68 staff day and worked with 335 days of volunteer labor on the route, 20 percent of all volunteer work statewide.

Timber construction continued to play a major role in CFI's work due to the need to stabilize the trail in areas lacking rocks of sufficient size and number to build structures. The crew felled 23 trees that were stripped and used for 177 logs checks. Logs were also used to build log ladders, a unique CFI trail feature, that help stabilize crush-filled rocks in all directions. Where rock source was adequate, crews installed 54 rock steps and 167 cribbed rock steps. More than 1,250 linear feet of various rock retaining walls were installed to stabilize the slope and trail.

MAJOR FUNDERS: *National Forest Foundation, Colorado State Trails, Great Outdoors Colorado.*

Llamas help pack in the Elbert basecamp in snowy June.

TRAIL CONSTRUCTION

PROTECT

GRAYS & TORREYS PEAKS

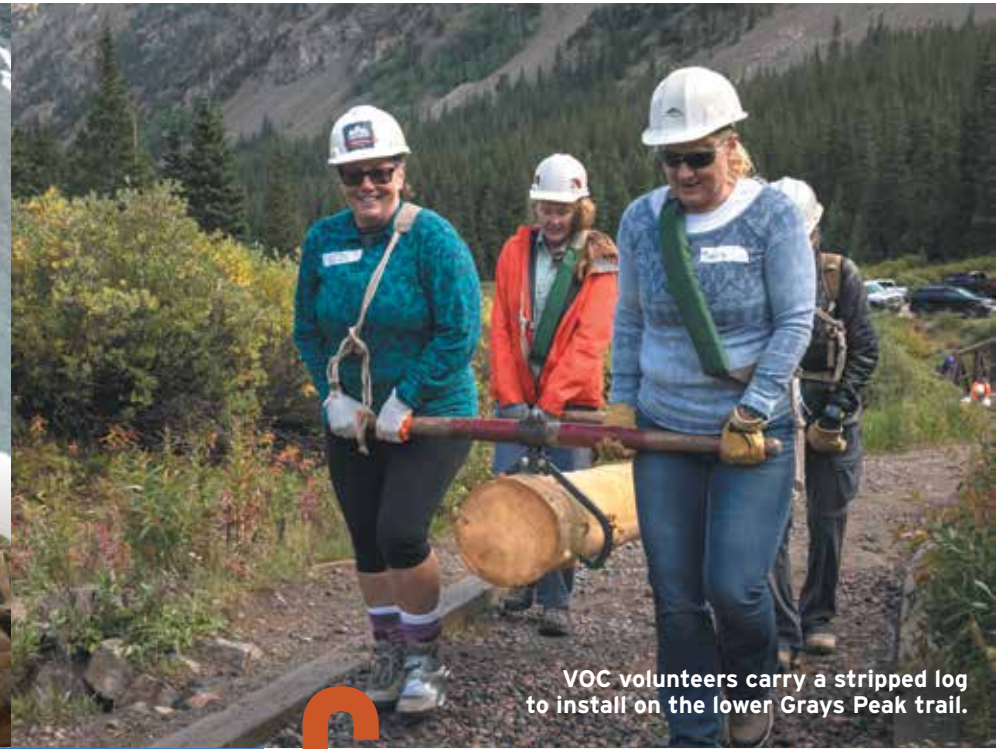


After a successful three-season improvement of the Quandary Peak summit trail ended in 2018, CFI moved a two-person crew over to Grays and Torreys Peaks to see if they could perform similar magic on this heavily used route. While maintenance occurred at all elevations, a major priority area was near and above the junction between the Grays and Torreys trails. This area has seen a proliferation of social trails with commensurate trail widening, soil erosion and loss of tundra vegetation. The site is high enough that many volunteer groups cannot effectively reach and perform work there.

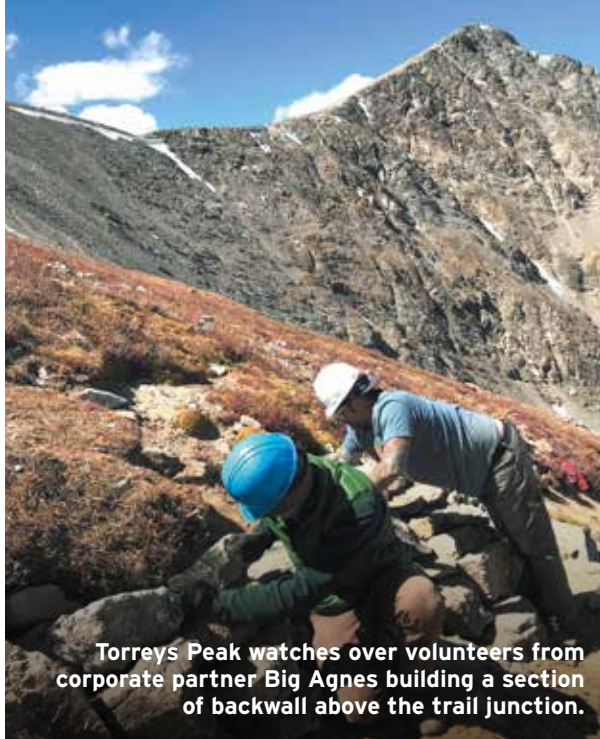
WRV volunteers erect cedar plank retaining walls to stabilize a heavily eroded slope near the trailhead.



Zach Strickland (L) and Hannah Clark use rockbars to position a large rock as a foundation for backwall.



VOC volunteers carry a stripped log to install on the lower Grays Peak trail.



Torreys Peak watches over volunteers from corporate partner Big Agnes building a section of backwall above the trail junction.



AFTER

G GRAYS & TORREYS PEAKS

The dedicated two-person crew worked principally with a Rocky Mountain Youth Corps crew high on the mountain. The Adopt crew also ran 25 projects on the mountain, in the process engaging 456 days of volunteer trail maintenance, 27 percent of all volunteer work statewide. Together the crews built 1,219 linear feet of walls, installed 161 rock steps and built 226 linear feet of cedar plank retaining wall in a heavily eroded area near the trailhead. Numerous trees were felled and stripped, which allowed 96 log check steps to be installed. Overall, the crew delineated 0.74 miles of trail, maintained almost 2 miles of trail and cleared 1.2 miles of the access road of avalanche debris to help facilitate access to the trailhead.

MAJOR FUNDERS: *National Forest Foundation, REI, The Summit Foundation.*

TRAIL CONSTRUCTION

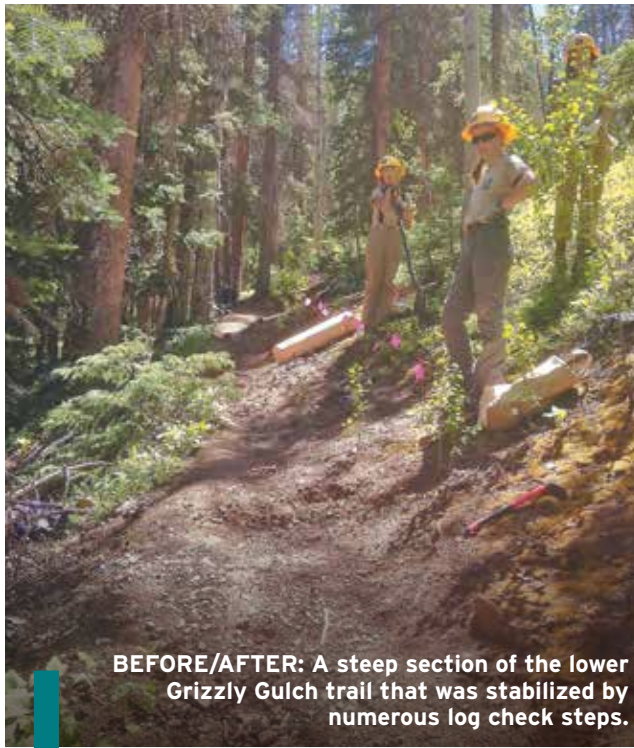
PROTECT

LAKE CITY 14ERS

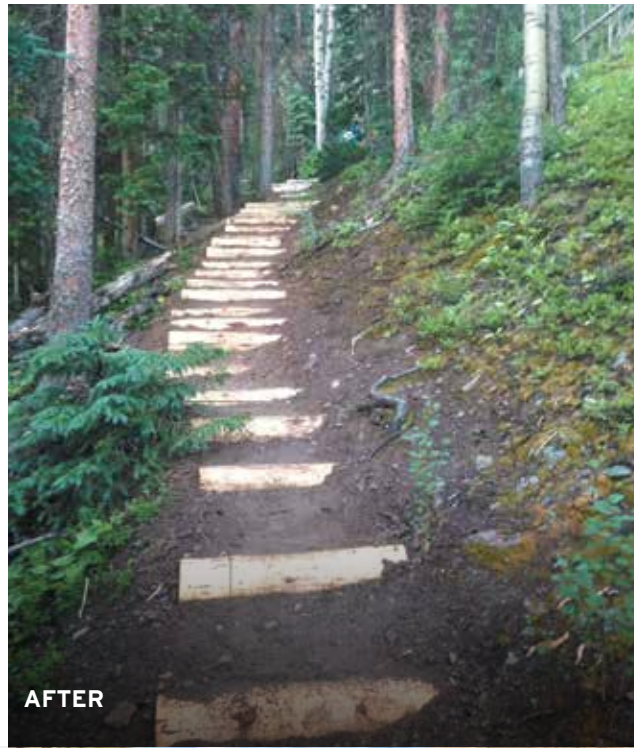
Avalanche activity created immense headaches for CFI's work in the hard-hit San Juans, but also provided abundant building material for log construction during the first season of focused reconstruction on the five 14ers near Lake City. (Sometimes it's important to turn those lemons into lemonade!) More than 200 logs were used to create 596 log check steps that were installed, as well as 46 linear feet of log retaining walls. Since all peaks are under wilderness rules, all sawing and timber work was done using hand saws and chisels, a time-consuming and labor-intensive process.

Volunteers install a rock check step in the Wetterhorn Peak summit trail.

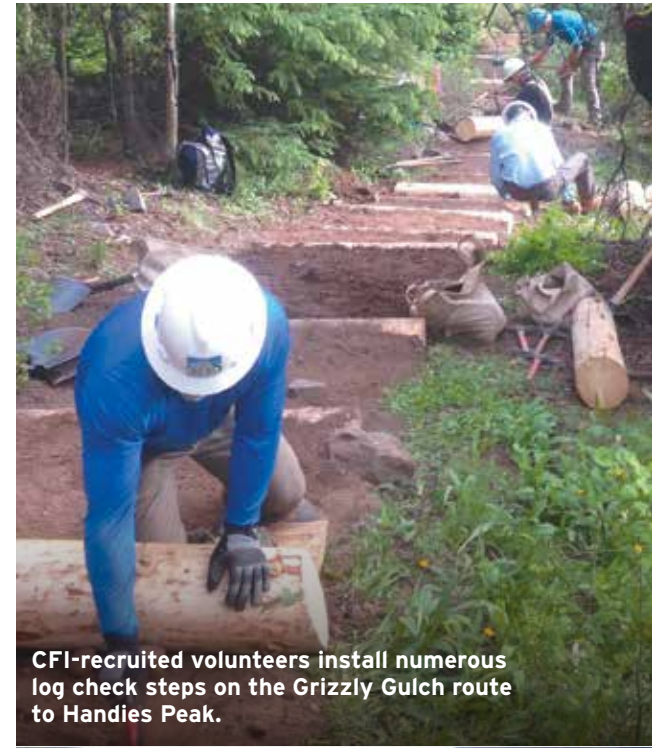




BEFORE/AFTER: A steep section of the lower Grizzly Gulch trail that was stabilized by numerous log check steps.



AFTER



CFI-recruited volunteers install numerous log check steps on the Grizzly Gulch route to Handies Peak.

LAKE CITY 14ERS

Work was performed by CFI's two-person Lake City crew, five projects that engaged 214 days of volunteer stewardship run by the Adopt-a-Peak crew, and a half-season-long Southwest Conservation Corps youth corps crew. Despite the driving distance, the Lake City project generated 13 percent of the volunteer days statewide. Where adequate rock source was available, 37 check steps and 79 cribbed rock steps were installed to stabilize the trail. In total 2.12 miles of trail was delineated, most of it on the Grizzly Gulch route on Handies and the Wetterhorn Peak trail.

MAJOR FUNDERS: *Chrest Foundation, National Forest Foundation, Gates Family Foundation.*



BEFORE/AFTER: A rock staircase replaces a fall-line erosion trough high on Wetterhorn Peak.



AFTER



SUSTAINABLE TRAILS

PROTECT

**Lilliputian climbers ascend Torreys Peak,
one of the most popular 14ers.**

For close to a decade CFI has studied 14er trail conditions and hiking use patterns to best protect our high peaks. The Sustainable Trails Program made strides in both areas last year.

After two prior seasons hiking close to 450 miles and completing 38 foot-by-foot, GPS-based route condition inventories, Sustainable Trails Coordinator Tom Cronin produced an updated “14er Report Card.” The 2019 report provided trail grades for all 56 main summit and approach routes, as well as cost estimates to bring all to long-term maintainable status. Included were 17 routes previously inventoried in 2011-13 that received a secondary assessment to show updated conditions.

The good news: Where crew and volunteer resources were devoted, route grades generally increased—in some cases by almost two letter grades. Of 15 routes receiving low-to-high investment, route grades went up for 11 routes, stayed the same for 1 and went down for 3. Grades for the two routes receiving no investment both declined. In general, the more money and time invested, the greater the condition improvement. The bad news: There remains \$18.4 million in needed investments to bring the 14er trail network up to desired conditions.

In 2019 CFI also released its fourth—and most accurate—hiking use report. This estimated that 353,000 hikers climbed 14ers the prior year. Refinement in counter locations helped hone estimates and also led to a new discovery. Quandary Peak

2019 Statewide 14er Report Card

Planned, Built 14er Summit Routes (Year Built) / Inventoried	Grade	Cost
*Blanca Peak & Ellingwood Point - Lake Como (2011-12) / 2013	A	\$
*Crestone Peak & Needle - South Colony (2001-05) / 2013	A	\$
Mount Evans - Chicago Lakes (2005-06) / 2018	A	\$
North Maroon Peak - Northeast Ridge (2012) / 2013	A	\$\$
Mount Bross - Kite Lake Loop (2008) / 2017	A-	\$
*Humboldt Peak - South Colony (1997-98) / 2012	A-	\$
Mount Harvard - North Hornfork Basin (1999-2002) / 2012	A-	\$
Mount Massive - East Slopes (2006-09) / 2017	A-	\$
Quandary Peak - East Slopes (2001-02) / 2018	A-	\$\$
Windom & Sunlight Peaks (2007, 2009-10) / 2013	B+	\$
Pyramid Peak - Northeast Ridge (2005-06) / 2018	B+	\$
Mounts Lincoln & Cameron, Kite Lake Loop (2008) / 2017	B+	\$
Tabeguache Peak - Jennings - "CLOSED" (2002) / 2013	B	\$
Missouri Mountain - Missouri Gulch (2000-01) / 2017	B	\$
El Diente Peak - Kilpacker Basin (2014-15) / 2017	B	\$
Wilson Peak - Rock of Ages (2013) / 2018	B	\$\$
Mount Eolus - Chicago Basin (2013, 16) / 2017	B	\$\$
Mount Yale - Denny Creek (2008-09, 2011-12) / 2013	B	\$\$\$
Mount of the Holy Cross - Halfmoon Pass (2011-12) / 2017	B	\$\$\$
Huron Peak - Clear Creek (1998, 2002) / 2013	B	\$\$\$
Mount Massive - North Halfmoon (2003-05) / 2018	B-	\$\$
Uncompahgre Peak - Nellie Creek (2008) / 2017	B-	\$\$\$
Mount Bierstadt - Guanella Pass (1999-2002, 2014-15) / 2017	B-	\$\$\$\$
Capitol Peak - Capitol Lake (2002) / 2012	C+	\$
Mount Democrat - Kite Lake Loop (2008) / 2017	C+	\$\$
San Luis Peak - Stewart Creek (2012-13) / 2018	C+	\$\$
Maroon Peak - South Ridge (2013) / 2017	C+	\$\$
La Plata Peak - Northwest Ridge (1995) / 2017	C+	\$\$\$\$
*Challenger Pt. & Kit Carson Peak - North Slope (2014-20) / 2017	C	\$\$\$\$
**Pikes Peak - Barr Trail (1914-18) / 2018	C	\$\$\$\$
San Luis Peak - Cochetopa Creek (2013) / 2018	C-	\$
Wetterhorn Peak - Matterhorn Creek (2004-05) / 2012	C-	\$\$\$
Mounts Belford & Oxford - Missouri Gulch (1995-96) / 2013	C-	\$\$\$
Mount Sneffels - Yankee Boy Basin (2003-04) / 2012	C-	\$\$\$\$
Grays & Torreys Peaks - Stevens Gulch (2000-02) / 2017	F	\$\$\$\$
Total Estimated Cost:		\$5.6 million

Unplanned 14er Summit Routes / Year Inventoried	Grade	Cost
Mount of the Holy Cross - Notch Mountain † / 2018	B-	\$
Handies Peak - American Basin † / 2012	C	\$\$\$
Mount Elbert - Black Cloud † / 2013	C	\$\$\$\$
Mount Princeton - Radio Towers † / 2012	C	\$\$\$\$\$\$
Pikes Peak - Devil's Playground Trail / 2018	C	\$\$\$\$\$\$
Quandary Peak - Blue Lakes / 2013	C-	\$\$
Snowmass Mountain - Snowmass Creek / 2013	C-	\$\$\$\$
Handies Peak - Grizzly Gulch † / 2013	C-	\$\$\$\$
Redcloud Peak - Silver Creek † / 2018	C-	\$\$\$\$
Mount Wilson - Navajo Lake / 2018	C-	\$\$\$\$
Mount Antero - Baldwin Gulch / 2013	D+	\$
Mount Evans - Guanella Pass / 2013	D	\$\$\$
Mount Elbert - North † / 2012	D-	\$\$\$\$
Mount Sherman - Four Mile Creek / 2018	F	\$
Castle & Conundrum Peaks - Castle Creek / 2017	F	\$\$
Mount Columbia - North Hornfork Basin / 2013	F	\$\$\$\$
Mount Sherman - Iowa Gulch / 2018	F	\$\$\$\$
La Plata Peak - Winfield - SW Ridge / 2017	F	\$\$\$\$
Mount Lindsey - Lily Lake / 2018	F	\$\$\$\$
Mount Shavano & Tabeguache Pk. - Blanks Gulch / 2012	F	\$\$\$\$
Mount Elbert - East Slopes † / 2011	F	\$\$\$\$
Total Estimated Cost:		\$12.8 million

Peaks/Routes That Will Not be Inventoried
Culebra Peak - Entirely on Private Land
Little Bear Peak - Too Hazardous to Maintain
Longs Peak - Maintained by National Park Service

Cost Notes: (Legend on Back)
Cost to reach ideal, sustainable condition, excluding on-going maintenance
\$ = < \$75,000
\$\$ = \$75,000 to \$149,000
\$\$\$ = \$150,000 to \$249,999
\$\$\$\$ = \$250,000 to \$499,999
\$\$\$\$\$ = \$500,000 to \$999,999
\$\$\$\$\$\$ = \$1,000,000 and up



Intern Jackson Burton digs out the American Basin cairn from epic snowpack in late June.



Brian Sargeant places the Mount Democrat counter at the start of the season.

narrowly eclipsed Mount Bierstadt as the most-climbed 14er with both peaks near 38,000 hiking use days during the summer/fall season. Melding the two reports shows that the volume of hiking use is not the primary driver of trail condition. At the same time Quandary was rocketing to #1 in hiking use, investment in staff and volunteer time brought up the route grade from C+ in 2011 to A- in 2018. Meanwhile, Mount Lindsey's user-trampled summit trail, which sees between 1,000 to 3,000 hiker days, fell from a D- to F, largely because it has never been properly designed, nor seen any trail maintenance work.

STABLIZING & RESTORING

RESTORE

A VITAL PART OF STEWARDSHIP



A Wildlands Restoration Volunteers team
pushes work farther up the Elbert Cat's Claw.
Photo by Bobby Burch Photography.



BEFORE/AFTER. The difference a weekend restoration project can make. Photos by Bobby Burch Photography.

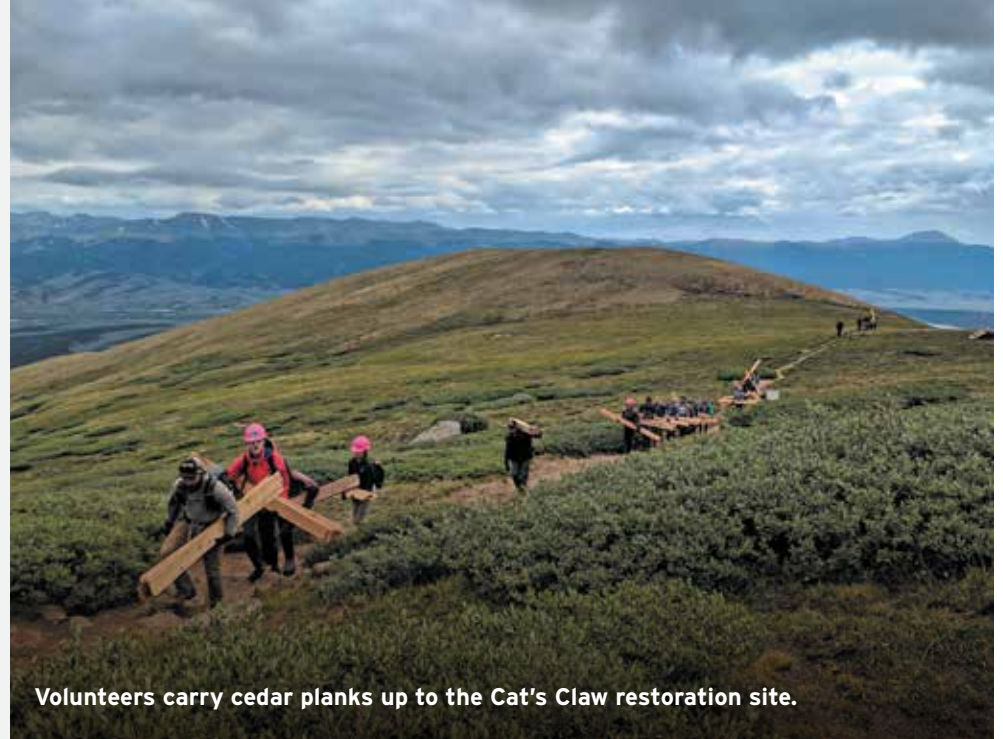


AFTER

Closing, stabilizing and restoring old user-trampled social trails is a vital part of CFI's stewardship of the 14ers. While uniquely adapted to the high-mountain environment, alpine tundra plants are incredibly slow growers. Experts believe alpine plants are 10 to 1,000-times slower to regenerate than plants located in the sub-alpine forests, in some cases just a few hundred vertical feet lower. Giving them a helping hand speeds the recovery process.

The bulk of CFI's restoration work in 2019 again occurred on Mount Elbert's East Ridge. Restoration efforts on the "Cat's Claw," initially begun in 2018, continued farther up the hill. Together, the Elbert crew and Adopt-a-Peak volunteer projects restored 20,000 square feet of tundra, including backfilling 10,632 cubic feet of eroded soil. To stabilize the slope, 71 cedar planks and 233 straw waddles were installed.

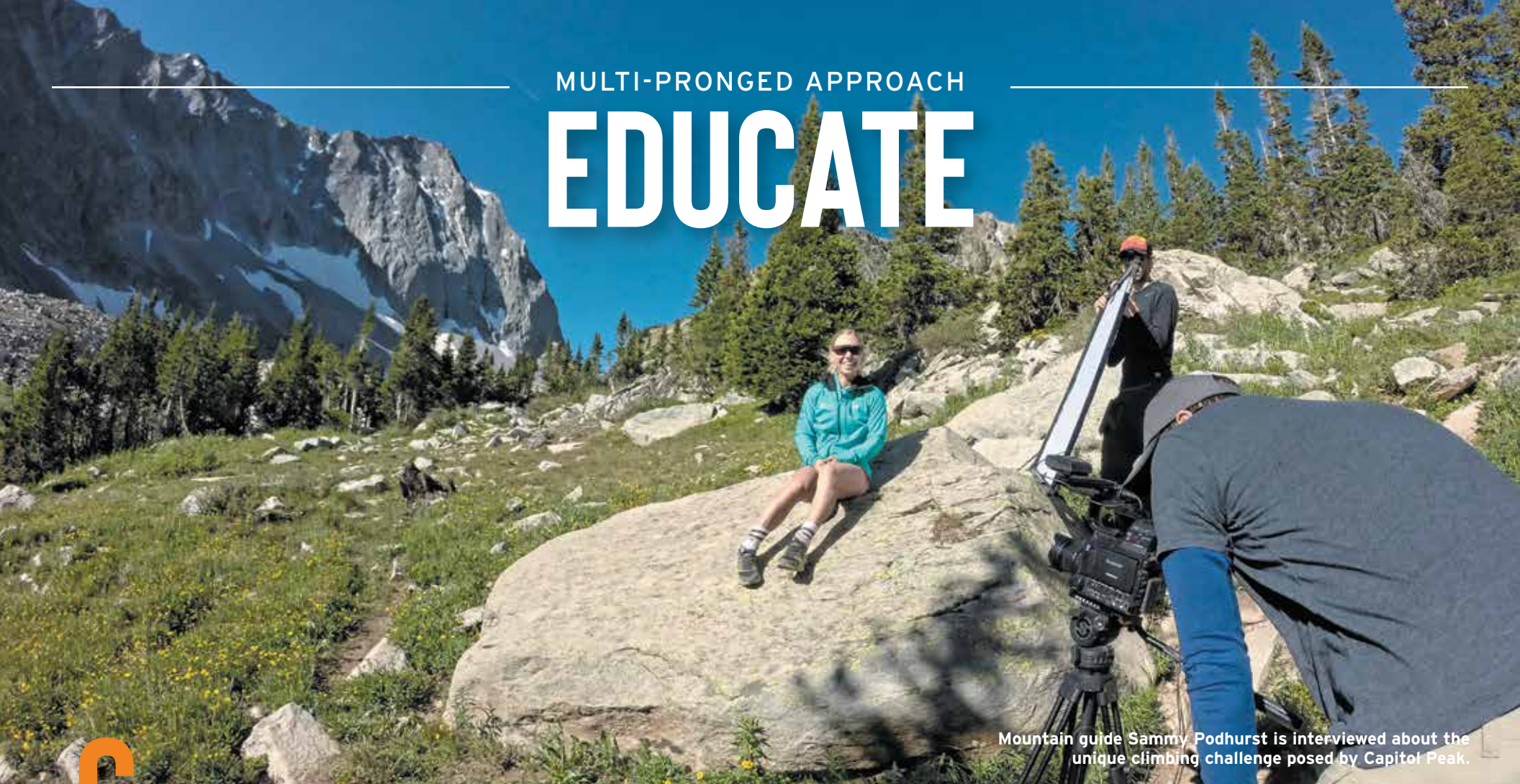
Smaller-scale restoration efforts restored a combined 1,946 square feet of denuded areas on Capitol, Grays, Handies, Huron, and Uncompahgre Peaks by the Adopt-a-Peak team and volunteers. More than 140 plugs of alpine plants known for fast rejuvenation were transplanted, usually in closed off trail braids.



Volunteers carry cedar planks up to the Cat's Claw restoration site.

MULTI-PRONGED APPROACH

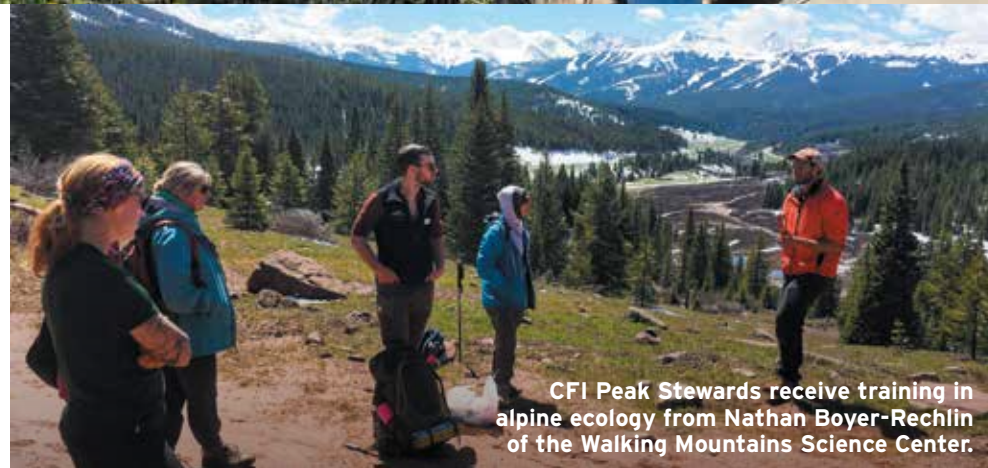
EDUCATE



Mountain guide Sammy Podhurst is interviewed about the unique climbing challenge posed by Capitol Peak.

CFI's multi-pronged educational approach reached tens of thousands of 14er hikers to educate them about mountain safety and how to responsibly recreate in the fragile alpine ecosystems found on the 14ers.

Utilizing video footage from 10 interviews conducted with climbing guides, mountain rescue leaders and experienced athletes, CFI released seven mountain safety videos starting last June. Focusing principally on the inherent hazards found on the Elk Mountains 14ers, this batch of videos quickly rocketed to 31,779 views by year end—the most successful video campaign in CFI's history. The 2017 spike in fatalities on the Elks subsided, hopefully helped in part by CFI's educational efforts.



CFI Peak Stewards receive training in alpine ecology from Nathan Boyer-Rechlin of the Walking Mountains Science Center.

Volunteer Coordinator Hannah Clark helped recruit and manage Peak Stewards to maintain an educational presence on the 14ers and at public presentations. Almost 590 people attended presentations, usually “How to Climb a 14er” clinics put on by Front Range REI stores. Peak Stewards also had a presence at the GoPro Games, Patagonia Nonprofit Fair, REI Shindig, REI Backpackingpalooza, and did outreach at the Breckenridge Helly Hansen store.

Peak Steward on mountain days and hiker contacts both more than doubled last year compared with 2018, to 110 and 5,223 respectively. CFI crews contacted a further 6,952 hikers as people passed their work sites. The 12,175 hikers contacted was 15 percent below the prior year totals, largely due to having a CFI crew in 2018 on Quandary Peak, the most-climbed 14er.



Peak Steward Terry Mattison waits to talk to a climber descending Mount Bierstadt.



CFI'S ROLE AS INTERMEDIARY LOOKING AHEAD

Looking up at the section of the Mount Lindsey climb that occurs on the Blanca Ranch property, including the summit block.

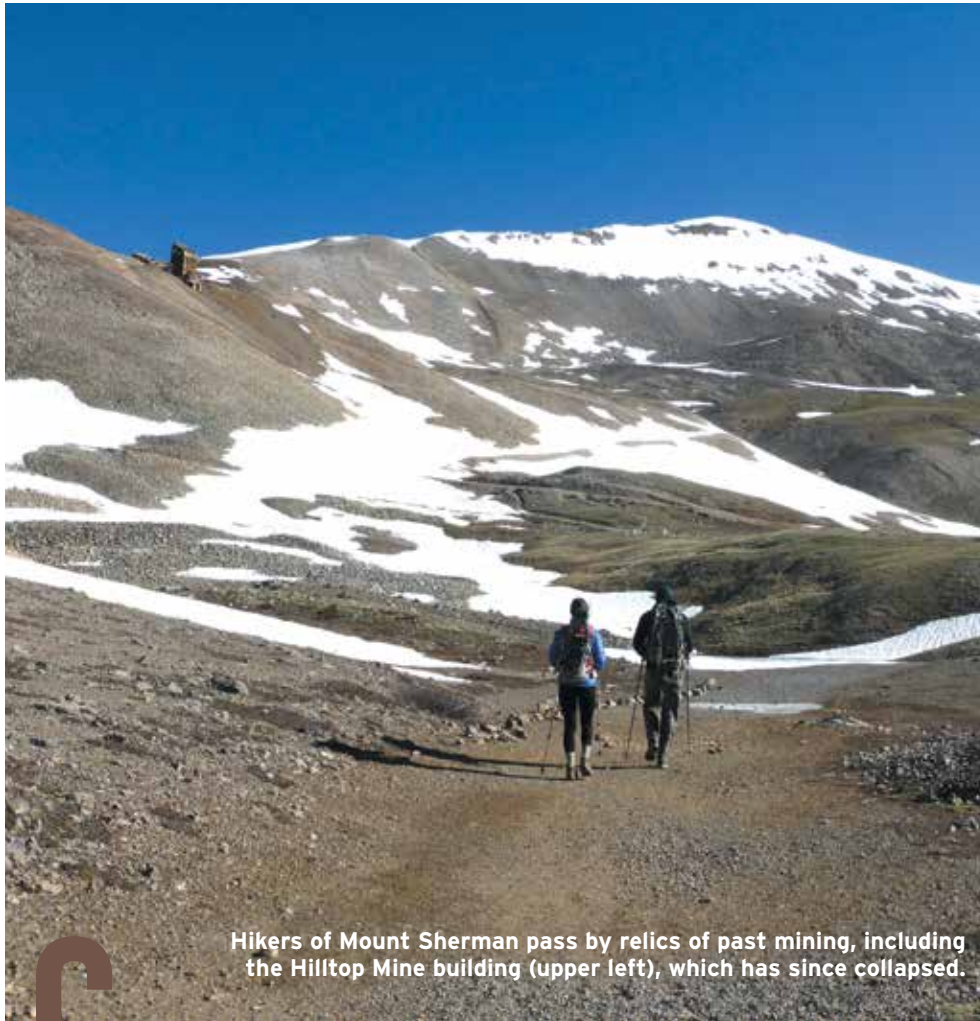
When CFI acquired the summit mining claims atop Mount Shavano a few years back, we expected that to be the extent of the organization's involvement in resolving private lands access issues. Very few of the 14ers are on private land. Those that are present significantly more complex issues. However, CFI's role as an intermediary between private landowners and the federal government creates opportunities that may prove helpful to resolving issues on at least two peaks.

MOUNT LINDSEY

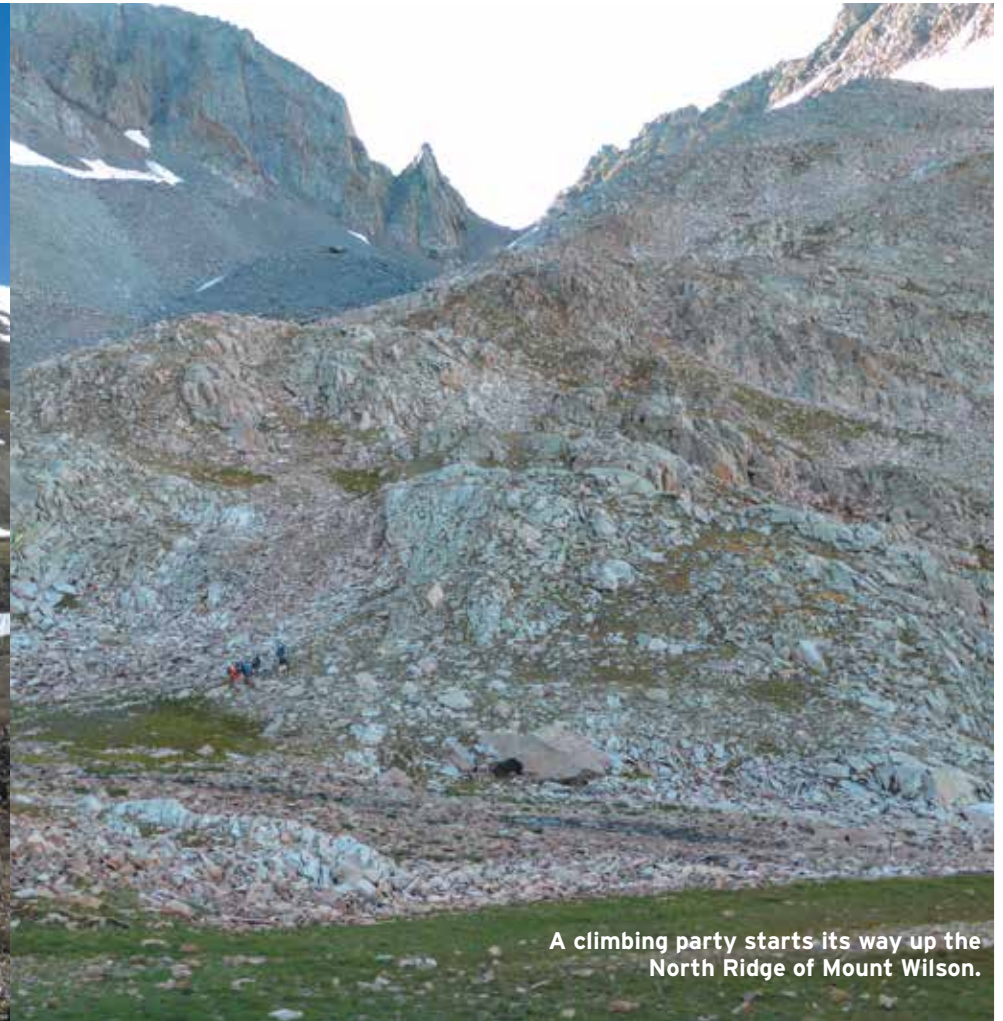
Former CFI Director Marty Zeller, a land conservation professional, opened dialog in early 2019 between CFI staff and the Trinchera Blanca Ranch, which owns the summit block of Mount Lindsey. The Ranch has allowed CFI to place a trail counter on the peak since 2018 and has also expressed a receptivity to exploring a term agreement with a public agency to provide legal climbing access. While the approach route on Forest Service land is in horrible shape (F grade in 2019 Report Card), route delineation and construction cannot begin until public access is assured for the summit area.

MOUNT SHERMAN

Virtually all of the route commonly used to climb Mount Sherman, one of the most popular entry-level 14ers, occurs on private land owned by the Leadville Corp, a bankrupt mining company. CFI Director Hunt Walker, an oil and gas landman, has approached the owners about their willingness to provide legal access through an access easement or land acquisition. The scale of this project far exceeds that of Mount Shavano, but CFI is exploring what options may be available and the partners that could help tackle a larger project like this.



Hikers of Mount Sherman pass by relics of past mining, including the Hilltop Mine building (upper left), which has since collapsed.



A climbing party starts its way up the North Ridge of Mount Wilson.

CFI staff aided the Forest Service in planning two much-needed future summit trail construction projects: Mount Wilson and Mount Shavano.

MOUNT WILSON PROJECT

CFI will begin delineating and constructing a new approach trail up the North Ridge of Mount Wilson in the 2021 field season after receiving a multi-year grant from the Colorado State Trails Program. Despite light climbing use (1,000-3,000 days annually), the lack of a defined route through this loose, decomposed rock soil is causing significant impacts. Work will also focus on moving the trail from riparian areas near Navajo Lake and a stream crossing higher up in the valley. Project work will run through at least 2022.

MOUNT SHAVANO

CFI staff have been helping plan the new summit route, which is anticipated to be one of CFI's biggest projects ever. Two long reroutes have been planned near the junction off of the Colorado Trail and near the summit. The scope of restoration work needed is truly staggering. If funding can be obtained, CFI hopes to begin the first phase of work in 2022.



Lloyd Athearn,
Executive Director

STELLAR TEAM

ORGANIZATION

2019 CORE STAFF



Brian Sargeant,
Development &
Communications Coordinator



Hannah Clark,
Volunteer Coordinator



Jackson Burton,
CLIMB Intern



Ben Hanus,
Field Programs Manager



Jerry Mack,
Controller



Tom Cronin,
Skills Trainer & Trail Planner



Miriam Venman-Clay,
Field Projects Coordinator



Members of CFI's board at their summer meeting in Idaho Springs. (L to R): Brad McQueen, Andrew Mahoney, Stephanie Welsh, Jim Wason, Len Zanni, Dan Harris, Adelaide Leavens, Richard Heppe, David Kennedy.
Photo by David Kennedy.

2019 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Brad McQueen, Chair
Richard Heppe, MD, Vice-Chair
Tom Barney, Treasurer
Tim Rampe, Secretary
Priscilla Clayton, RN
Daniel P. Harris
Rebecca Jewett
David Kennedy
Ben Krasnow
Adelaide Leavens
Andrew Mahoney
Laura Schafer
Wagner Schorr-Ratzlaff, MD
Hunt Walker
Jim Wason
Stephanie Welsh
Peter Whitcomb
Len Zanni



Executive Director Lloyd Athearn receives a volunteer and stewardship recognition award on behalf of CFI from Forest Service Region 2 Acting Regional Forester Jennifer Eberlien.

2019 SEASONAL STAFF

Members of CFI's 2019 seasonal staff at Cabin Cove for pre-season training.

Back Row (L to R): Wes Chitwood, Albert Cload, Jordan Devalois, Leo Katz, Aaron Steck, Eli Allan. Middle Row (L to R): Eric McSwan, Justin Towers, Margaret McQuiston, Nate Ventura, Cassi Mason, Zach Strickland, Jenni Russell, Addrie Moncayo, Jacob Mainor, Nicole Decker. Front Row (L to R): John Knudsen, Christopher Pruden, Kate Klitgaard, Sara Duft, Alex Miller, Eve Monaghan, Anthony Ondrus, Andrea Zelinski.



2019 PROJECT TEAMS

MOUNT COLUMBIA CREW

Eli Allan, Lead Project Manager
Eric McSwan, Project Manager
Jordan Devalois, Crew Member
Addrie Moncayo, Crew Member
Jenni Russell, Crew Member
Nate Ventura, Crew Member

MOUNT EVANS CREW

Justin Towers, Lead Project Manager
Aaron Steck, Project Manager
Jacob Mainor, Crew Member
Leo Katz, Crew Member
Sara Duft, RMYC Peak Apprentice

GRAYS AND TORREYS PEAKS CREW

John Knudsen, Crew Lead
Albert Cload, Assistant Lead

LAKE CITY 14ERS CREW

Margaret McQuiston, Crew Lead
Christopher Pruden, Assistant Lead

ADOPT-A-PEAK MAINTENANCE CREW

Wes Chitwood, Crew A Lead
Michaela Brophy, Crew A Member
Cassie Mason, Crew A Member
Eve Monaghan, Crew A Appelson Leadership Intern
Anthony Ondrus, Crew B Lead
Alex Miller, Crew B Member
Zach Strickland, Crew B Member
Andrea Zelinski, Crew B Appelson Leadership Intern

TRAIL PLANNING

Kate Klitgaard, Forest Service Design Intern



Peyton Millinor

Karen Schroyer



2019 AWARD RECIPIENTS

ADOPT-A-PEAK VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR:
Peyton Millinor (Dallas, Texas)

ADOPT-A-PEAK PARTNER OF THE YEAR:
High Lonesome 100 (Golden, Colorado)

PEAK STEWARD OF THE YEAR:
Mary O'Malley (Broomfield, Colorado)

OUTSTANDING AGENCY PARTNER:
Karen Schroyer, Aspen-Sopris District Ranger (Aspen, Colorado)

CORPORATE PARTNER OF THE YEAR:
Plante Moran (Denver, Colorado)

FOUNDATION PARTNER OF THE YEAR:
Chrest Foundation (Irvine, Texas)

OUT OF STATE AMBASSADOR:
Scott Skinger (Barrington, Illinois)

YOUTH AMBASSADOR:
Forrest Athearn (Golden, Colorado)

SPECIAL RECOGNITION/OUTSTANDING SERVICE:
Japanese Auto Service (Wheat Ridge, Colorado)
Rob Duddy (Steamboat Springs, Colorado)

2019 VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR: BRAD MCQUEEN

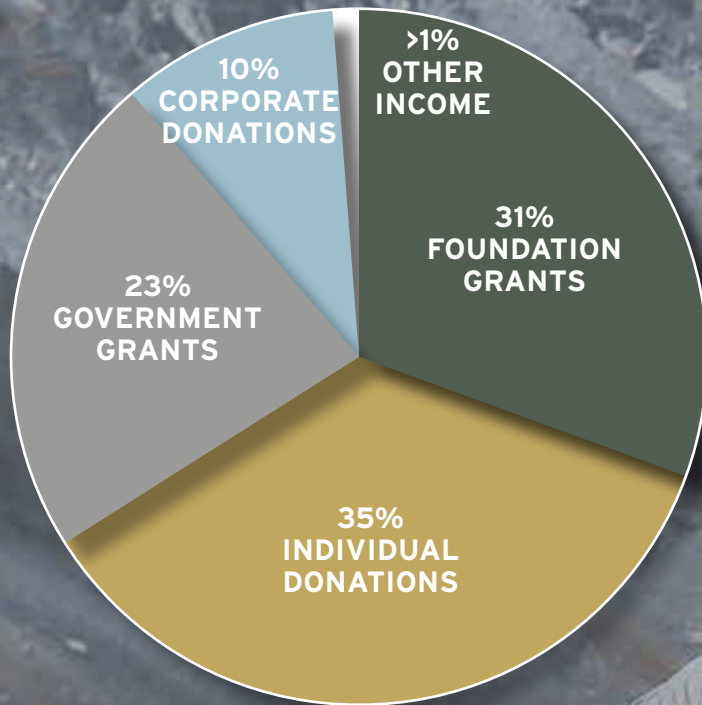
Brad McQueen was acknowledged for his many years of tremendous contributions to the organization as Colorado Fourteener Initiative's 2019 Volunteer of the Year. Brad has been an active and engaged member of CFI's Board since 2014, during that period serving as Board Chair, Treasurer and member of several committees. He can always be counted on to swing tools and do the heaving lifting on CFI work projects with the Board and the Plante Moran audit firm where he works as Audit Partner.

With an encyclopedic knowledge of the 14ers gained through summiting the peaks more than 500 times, Brad knows the peaks in all season and conditions. When CFI embarked on a series of mountain safety videos, Brad was a great resource, spending time sharing wisdom gained from experiences as varied as having climbed the Kelso Ridge on Torreys Peak more than 50 times (and in every month of the year) and getting caught overnight in a freak spring blizzard on Mount Evans.

ANOTHER RECORD YEAR

FINANCES

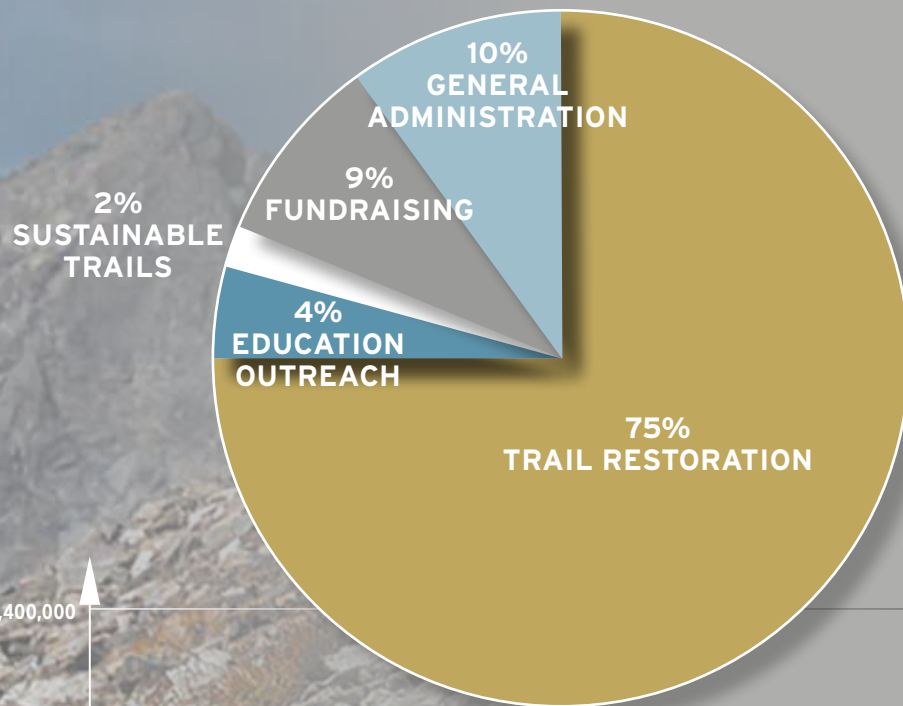
Colorado Fourteeners Initiative notched another record year of financial performance during 2019. It was a year that saw a record \$1.4 million in expenditures to benefit the 14ers, another all-time high for individual donations and a 12 percent growth in net assets.



OPERATING REVENUE \$1,546,522

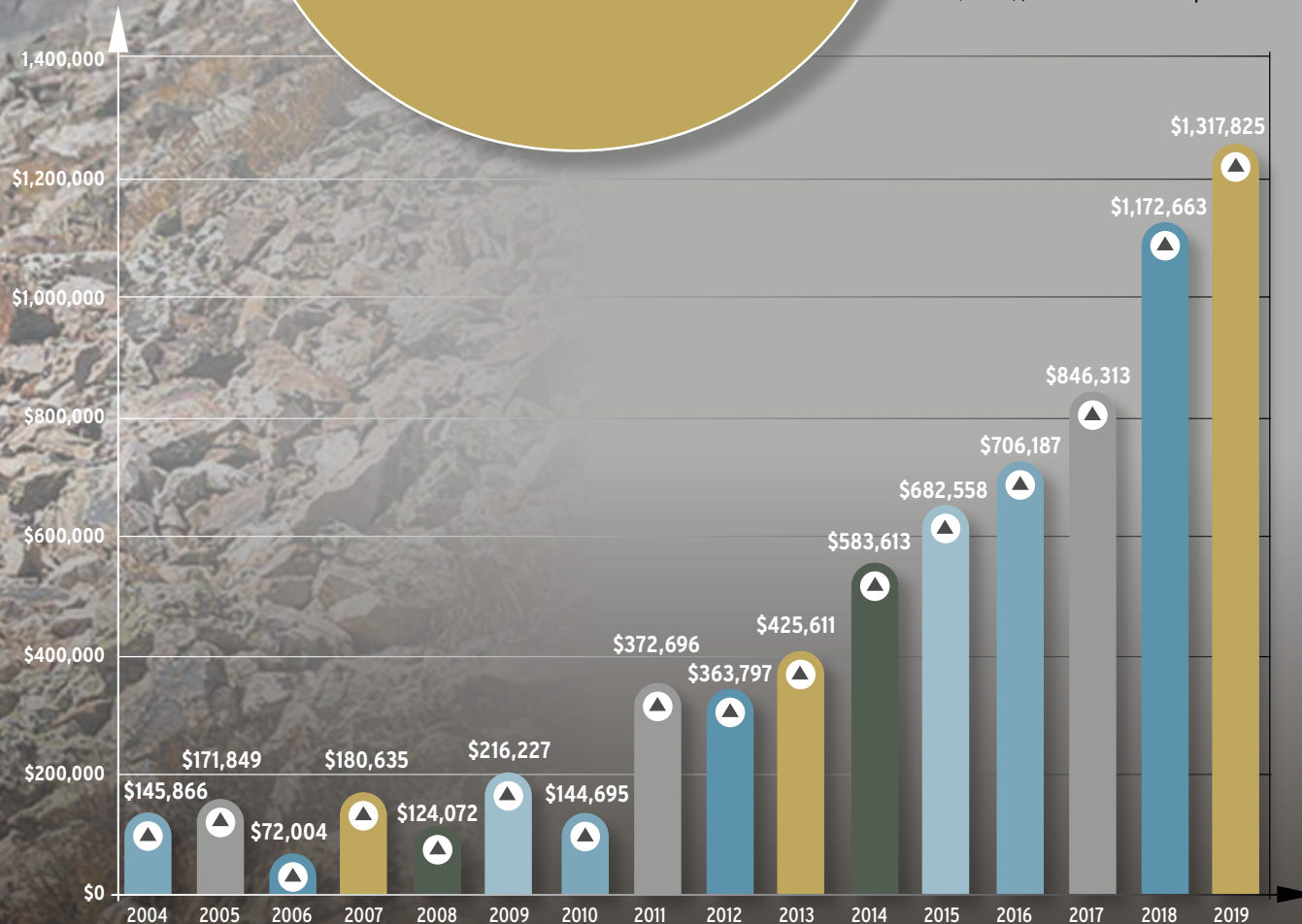
Total operating revenues in 2019 were a robust \$1,546,522, exceeding \$1 million for the fourth consecutive year. This was a decrease of \$72,403 from 2018's record year. Individual donations again led all revenue sources at \$546,368 (35 percent). The \$47,377 in gifts to the "25 for 25" general endowment campaign pushed individual gifts above \$500,000 for the third year in a row. Foundation gifts slipped by more than 10 percent to \$474,604. Government grants fell by 26 percent to \$348,939 due to an expiring State Trails grant and lower funding from the Forest Service. Boosted by Patagonia's yearend "Gift of Giving" matching campaign and REI's "Loving the Local Outdoors" contest, corporate donations surged 45 percent to \$155,204. While not included in revenues for accounting purposes, CFI engaged 13,648 volunteer hours of service that translated into a further \$382,417 in in-kind benefit to the 14ers.





OPERATING EXPENSES \$1,401,360

Total operating expenses grew by 8 percent to reach an all-time high of \$1,401,360. This marked the fourth year in which investments in the 14ers topped \$1 million and the first in which funds spent directly on maintaining trails exceeded that threshold. More than 81 percent of every dollar CFI spends is devoted to programs. By far the largest share of CFI's program expenditures goes to trail reconstruction, maintenance and restoration, which accounted for \$1,050,700 (75 percent of overall expenses). Outreach and hiker education represented 4 percent (\$59,044), while Sustainable Trails accounted for 2 percent (\$29,909) of overall expenses. Fundraising (\$123,121) and general administration (\$138,586) expenses both grew slightly compared to 2018, though their share of the budget remained constant. Together CFI's administration and fundraising expense ratio (AFR), fell from 19.2 percent to 18.7 percent.



NET ASSETS \$1,317,825

CFI's net assets grew \$145,162 last year to a record \$1,317,825. Over the past 16 years net assets have surged more than 900 percent, reflecting the organization's priority for building cash reserves, establishing endowments to support long-term operations (including the \$60,000 Appelton Endowed Fund for the Adopt crew interns) and saving for a rainy day we know will eventually come.

AUDIT

CFI received a clean, GAAP-based audit from JDS Professional Group for its 2019 financial statements. This is the 11th consecutive clean audit for CFI's books.



Colorado Fourteeners Initiative
A Partnership for Preservation

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Uncompahgre Peak at sunrise
from Wetterhorn Peak. Photo by
Matt Payne Photography.

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