## ANNUAL REPORT PROTECT • RESTORE • EDUCATE



Colorado Fourteeners Initiative A Partnership for Preservation

#### LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Anyone who has hiked through sand or scree knows the phrase: "Two steps forward, one step back." That summed up 2021 at CFI. We were beyond the chaos and uncertainty of 2020. Things were better. Yet, we were not back to "normal."

In the spring my colleagues were able to return to the office; I had been the sole occupant over the winter. The band was back together again! The Colorado Labor Department, however, said two of our core staff had filed for unemployment—me included. Impersonation fraud had hit home at CFI.

Summer brought the return of volunteer projects, but with unexpected twists. We knew we could run trail projects while keeping both staff and volunteers safe. And we did. We had only one project cancelled due to sickness (non-COVID). What we were unprepared for were the last-minute cancellations and no shows. Though unfilled volunteer slots lowered project productivity, CFI ended the season with 1191 volunteer days of trail stewardship, a respectable tally.

With other, safe recreational options available, 14er crowds were lower in 2021. Local governments and private landowners, however, slammed by the prior season's torrent of visitors, took action to manage the feared influx. Parking was restricted (or required a paid reservation). Access to several peaks was closed for much of the summer. Suddenly, CFI was engaged in many areas trying to ensure sensible access policies prevailed.

In terms of CFI's core trail stewardship work, projects proceeded more smoothly. We started a new project (Mount Wilson) and wrapped up a three-year project (Lake City 14ers) in the San Juans. We shifted routes on Mount Elbert and continued addressing needed improvements on Grays and Torreys Peaks. Peak Stewards and CFI trail crews educated thousands of hikers, while new videos reached viewers worldwide. It was an incredibly productive summer.

There was exciting news about project funding, too. The Forest Service announced a \$1.09 million commitment for four CFI trail projects through the Great American Outdoors Act. A private foundation committed \$500,000 to the multi-year Mount Shavano project, set to begin in 2022. Individual donations boosted significantly in 2020 by pandemic giving remained constant at more than \$680,000. The muchfeared potential falloff in giving never materialized.

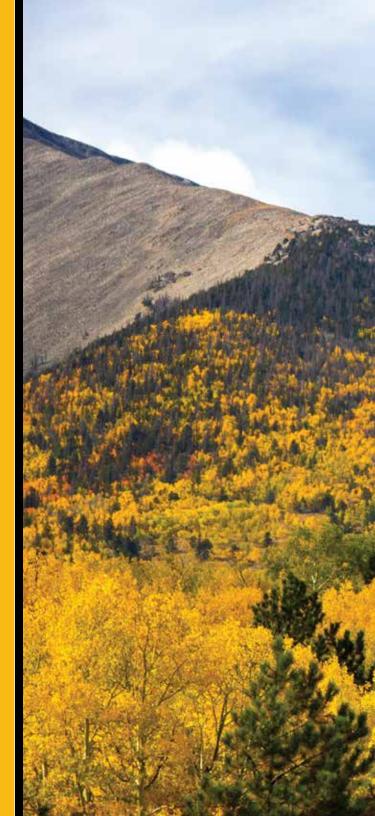
Finally, the end of the year brought significant acknowledgments for years of top-notch performance. The Colorado Lottery selected CFI's Mount Columbia Trail Reconstruction Project for a "Starburst Award," presented annually to the most innovative Lottery-funded projects. Then in November, the national Coalition for Recreational Trails honored CFI's Adopt-a-Peak program with a "Tom Petri Annual Achievement Award" as the country's top trail maintenance program.

Looking back, last year reminded me of climbing scree-covered Oregon volcanoes as a kid. At times it was demoralizing, seemingly slipping back every step I took up the mountain. But after the long slog, the view from the top was breathtaking!

Regards,

Fleyd G. athean

Lloyd F. Athearn Executive Director



## ANNUAL REPORT WELCOME

Fall foliage explodes in color on the lower slopes of Mount Shavano where preliminary work on the new trail began in 2021

## NEW TRAIL CONSTRUCTION PROTECT

After several seasons working largely on the same peaks, the 2021 field season brought exciting new locations where CFI worked on major trail reconstruction projects. A large crew began work on the remote Navajo Basin approach to Mount Wilson, while work on Mount Elbert moved to the Northeast Ridge route. Work continued on Grays and Torreys and the five 14ers near Lake City. The fifth year of the National Forest Foundation's "Find Your Fourteener" campaign continued to provide significant funding and enhanced coordination with other partners.



 CFI crew members use rock bars to lower a massive rock into the retaining wall near Navajo Lake
 A log and rock structure takes shape that facilitates the new trail while closing off a restored section of the old trail by Navajo Lake



Forest Service and CFI staff descend a new section of the trail reroute through a more resilient talus field The highest section of a massive backwall that helps delineate the trail and keep falling rocks off of the trail

#### MOUNT WILSON

CFI embarked on the first of two seasons reconstructing the approach trail to Mount Wilson in the San Juans. Work was performed by an eightperson CFI team assisted by a four-member crew from the Ancestral Lands Conservation Corps and four members of the Adopt-a-Peak crew. Work focused on three areas of the mountain.

The Navajo Lakes Trail was moved out of sensitive riparian areas along the north side of the lake and in two places up the valley where it ran adjacent to the Dolores River. A tall, undulating rock wall was constructed near the lake to prevent rocks from avalanche chutes inundating the trail. Farther up the valley the crew cut 0.82 miles of new trail and constructed five navigational cairns to aid in routefinding when snow covers the trail. On the lower reaches of Wilson's north ridge, crews began constructing rock steps and staircases on the approach route. Together the crews built 2314 square feet of walls, installed 53 cribbed rock steps and spent 2083 hours quarrying rocks for the project.

By season's end the two lower bypasses were both opened, allowing restoration work to occur on the closed trail through the riparian areas. Trail features will be installed during the 2022 season to harden the long trail bypass. Work will also continue hardening the approach trail up the north ridge.

MAJOR FUNDERS: Colorado State Trails, Telluray Foundation, National Forest Foundation, Richard Hoffman, CPW Partners in the Outdoors Conference, Telluride Foundation

#### MOUNT ELBERT

After four years working on the new East Elbert trail, last year CFI shifted focus to the Northeast Elbert route. This was the first 14er-specific route CFI worked on back in 1994. Four CFI leaders worked with a nine-person RMYC crew at two sites on the mountain. Near timberline the project utilized timber features to reconstruct 2500 linear feet of trail, including felling 27 trees, stripping 125 timber checks and hauling 61 logs to the project site. Timber staircases and box steps were installed. Higher up on the peak around 13,500 feet, 897 linear feet of new bypass trail were cut and rocks were hauled to the site to construct walls, staircases and other trail features. The location of the rock quarry site entailed using a griphoist to carefully haul rocks-some up to 500 pounds-uphill roughly 200 vertical feet, then 300 feet laterally across the slope to the construction site to be installed. The team installed 41 cribbed rock steps and built 1380 square feet of various retaining walls at the upper site.

Keeping the Elbert crew healthy over the fourmonth-long season was a formidable challenge. Reaching the upper worksite involved six miles and 3000 vertical feet roundtrip—a huge impact on the knees. And that is just to reach the worksite where the real work begins. Over the course of an eightday hitch, the crew worked two days on the lower site and six days on the upper site. The Adopt-a-Peak crew worked 24 days on this route engaging 238 days of volunteer stewardship and continuing progress when the fixed-site crew was off the project.

MAJOR FUNDERS: Colorado State Trails, Great Outdoors Colorado, National Forest Foundation, Chrest Foundation  ▷ BEFORE/AFTER: CFI's signature timber "Lincoln Ladders" were turned into box steps that snaked through a steep, heavily eroded section of trail near treeline ▷ Parker Smedley works rock and soil to fill in one of the box steps ▷ The crew uses a griphoist to raise a massive rock to the upper worksite





## NEW TRAIL CONSTRUCTION **PROTECT**

The upper worksite had spectacular views, but took a lot of effort to reach

### NEW TRAIL CONSTRUCTION **PROTECT**



⊲ Not quite visible from space, but the "Great Wall of Grays" will help keep hikers off of the fragile tundra

 ► Two Grays Peak locals survey the constructed wall
 ► A Volunteers for Outdoor Colorado project helps fill a layer of gabion wall
 ► Taylor Radigan works the hog nose ring gun to close a gabion
 ► Field Programs Manager Tom Cronin uses a double-jack hammer to crush rock behind a gabion layer

#### **GRAYS & TORREYS PEAKS**

The third season of intensive work on this heavily climbed duo of 14ers saw continued progress made very high on both peaks. The two-person CFI crew was augmented by six weeks of a nine-member RMYC crew, the Adopt-a-Peak crew and 109 days of volunteer stewardship. Together they installed and filled 65 gabion baskets with smaller rocks near the Y-junction. Each gabion weighed roughly 3000 pounds. Combined they formed 10,200 cubic feet of barrier walls. The crew also built a serpentine wall from the summit of Grays down to the saddle with Torreys Peak. The wall is designed to keep climbers on the trail and to prevent them from cutting down prematurely, which would result in a proliferation of social trails on the mountain.

Despite 2021's accomplishments, significant work remains for the project's fourth and final season. Log check steps are needed below the gabion walls to prevent continued loss of soil whenever the trail floods due to spring snowmelt or summer thunderstorms. Lacking this stabilization, continued erosion of the trail will undercut the wall and threaten collapse. Efforts over many seasons to enlist the support of the National Guard's heavy-lift helicopters to transport logs have thus far failed.

MAJOR FUNDERS: National Forest Foundation, Colorado State Trails, REI, The Summit Foundation

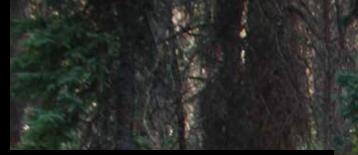
#### LAKE CITY 14ERS

The third and last year of a dedicated crew working on these five San Juan summit trails saw continued progress. Efforts of the two-person CFI team and multiple weeks of youth corps crews from Western Conservation Corps and Southwest Conservation Corps focused primarily on the Grizzly Gulch trail to Handies Peak and the Uncompahgre Peak trail. Volunteers and the Adopt-a-Peak crew performed projects on Handies, Uncompahgre and Wetterhorn Peaks.

Installation of timber features again was the dominant form of construction. With widespread beetle-killed trees in the region, there was ample source material for all the 251 log check steps installed. On Handies, 15 cribbed rock steps and 14 rock check steps were installed high above treeline. The crew also installed 22 linear feet of new trail drains and rebenched 30 feet of trail on the Redcloud/Sunshine trail that had been obliterated by an avalanche chute.

The three seasons of work will be inventoried over the 2022 season to see how this infusion of reconstruction work has improved trail conditions. Most of the routes had "C" or "C-" grades, so the hope is that all this work will see them exceed CFI's "B" average trail condition goal.

MAJOR FUNDERS: Chrest Foundation, Colorado State Trails, National Forest Foundation, Telluray Foundation, Gateway II Fund  ► Taking a breather while hauling timber checks up Wetterhorn Peak ► BEFORE/AFTER: Rock steps installed high in Grizzly Gulch will help control erosion
 ► Crew leaders Zach Strickland (R) and David Precour use a crosscut saw to fell one of the 24 trees used on the project ► An early snowstorm does not stop volunteers from working on Uncompanding Peak





# NEW TRAIL CONSTRUCTION PROTECT

100

1 1 19 Bear

△ Timber check steps meander up the Grizzly Gulch slope for as far as the eye can see

### SUSTAINABLE TRAILS PROTECT

Tracking hiking use levels and understanding how they contribute to the changing conditions of 14er summit trails are vital to CFI's long-term work. Efforts proceeded in both areas last year.

Over the winter Tom Cronin and Ben Hanus crunched the data collected at the end of the 2020 season on the new Mount Columbia and Mount Elbert (East Ridge) trails. Both routes were rated "F" prior to undergoing significant reroutes and reconstruction. The unplanned, hiker-trampled routes were steep, severely eroded and unpleasant to climb. Following the new inventories, the Elbert route had increased in grade to a "B" after four seasons or work, while the Columbia route had increased to a "C+" after five seasons.

 ${\scriptstyle \Delta}$  CLIMB intern Farah Stack prepares the Grays and Torreys trail counter for the season



The increase in condition grades shows the doubleedged sword of CFI's work. Though reroutes and intensive reconstruction projects are expensive, they always result in significant improvement to trail conditions. Nevertheless, it is incredibly hard to create an "A" trail. Five seasons of reconstruction on Columbia by CFI's most advanced crews did not even reach a "B" grade due to the need for significant remaining work on the upper mountain. CFI plans to release a new 14er Report Card in 2023 following re-inventories of the Lake City 14ers and Grays and Torreys routes at the end of the 2022 field season.

#### Estimated Hiking Use on Colorado's 14ers Total Hiker Use Days: 415,000 (2020 Data)

Front Range	Best Est: 113,500
Longs Peak	15,000-20,000^
Pikes Peak	15,000-20,000*
Torreys Peak	30,000-35,000*
Grays Peak	
Mount Evans	7,000-10,000
Mount Bierstadt	35,000-40,000*

Tenmile Range	Best Est: 49,000
Quandary Peak	45,000-50,000*

Sawatch Range	Best Est: 110,000
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	7,000-10,000
Tabegauche Peak	
Mount Belford	7,000-10,000
Mount Oxford	
Mount Princeton	7,000-10,000*
Mount Yale	7,000-10,000
Mount Columbia	3,000-5,000
Missouri Mountain	5,000-7,000
Mt. of the Holy Cross	5,000-7,000
Huron Peak	10,000-15,000*

San Juan Mountains	Best Est: 69,000
Uncompahgre Peak	7,000-10,000
Mount Wilson	3,000-5,000
El Diente Peak	1,000-3,000
Mount Eolus	1,000-3,000
Windom Peak	3,000-5,000
Sunlight Peak	3,000-5,000
Handies Peak	10,000-15,000*
Mount Sneffels	7,000-10,000*
Redcloud Peak	7,000-10,000*
Sunshine Peak	
Wilson Peak	3,000-5,000*
Wetterhorn Peak	5,000-7,000
San Luis Peak	5,000-7,000

Mosquito Range	Best Est: 49,000
Mount Lincoln	25,000-30,000*
Mount Bross	
Mount Democrat	
Mount Sherman	15,000-20,000*

Elk Mountains	Best Est: 11,500
Castle Peak	3,000-5,000*
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*
Ellingwood Point	
Crestone Peak	1,000-3,000
Crestone Needle	1,000-3,000
Kit Carson Peak	1,000-3,000
Challenger Point	
Humboldt Peak	1,000-3,000
Culebra Peak	<1,000
Mount Lindsey	1,000-3,000*
Little Bear Peak	1,000-3,000

#### Approximation Notes

\*Indicates data drawn from CFITRAFx 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.

Andicates National Park Service trailhead counter data adjusted for summit success rate based on prior studies.

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

By early summer the 2020 hiking use report was released. It confirmed what everyone thought during the prior pandemic summer—seemingly everyone in the country came to Colorado to climb a 14er. All hyperbole aside, the estimated 415,000 people climbing 14ers in 2020 was a 44 percent increase compared to the snow-affected 2019 season. It was an 18 percent increase relative to 2018, the prior high-use season. While 14er routes are expensive to build and maintain, the hiking use in 2020 contributed to more than \$112 million in statewide economic impact.

> Hiking use was up on almost every 14er. Quandary was the most-climbed 14er in the state with 49,000 hiker days over the season. The San Juans saw more than a doubling in use across the range. The Sangres and Elks continued to be the ranges with the most solitude. Only one peak saw fewer hikers: Mount Evans. This stemmed from the closure of the Mount Evans Road, which is the means of access for most climbers.

In 2021 staff at the Rocky Mountain Field Institute took over monitoring the two Pikes Peak trail counters. RMFI is based in Colorado Springs and has trail projects on both major routes, so can more efficiently maintain the counters. CFI staff continue to maintain the other 21 counters, as well as perform the modeling and analysis work generating the hiking use reports.

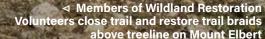
# STABLIZING & RESTORING RESTORE

Protecting alpine tundra vegetation is CFI's principal reason for existence. While the amazing summit trails we build benefit 14er hikers, the tundra that blankets Colorado's highest peaks includes plants that are extremely fragile and, in some cases, exceedingly rare. Sometimes plants found on the 14ers may be unique to these high peaks.

Damage to alpine tundra occurs quickly and takes a very long time to recover. Alpine plants can be killed by as few as 5-10 footsteps. Left to natural processes, the impacts of hiker-caused damage can take decades to recover. Once trampled, alpine plants are 10 to 1000-times slower to regrow than plants living in the sub-alpine forests.

CFI's revegetation work speeds up this recovery process significantly. Volunteers play a central role in this restoration work. Last year volunteers restored 10,580 square feet of tundra vegetation on peaks across Colorado, including transplanting almost 500 plugs of native plants. CFI's project teams and youth corps crews also performed significant revegetation work on peaks where they are constructing new bypass routes.

Two fixed-site projects were responsible for more than half of the restoration work performed statewide. The Mount Elbert crew restored 4315 square feet of native plants, mostly in sections of the trail above timberline. Meanwhile, the Mount Wilson crew completed 1195 square feet of revegetation.





**Bross restoration project** 





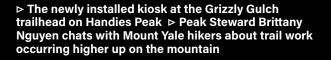


### VITAL CONTACT POINTS EDUCATE



People come from throughout the world to climb Colorado's 14ers. That means CFI must utilize many different methods of reaching hikers to share information about what makes the 14ers so special, as well as how to protect these fragile peaks. Ideally information reaches hikers before they leave home so that they are properly informed—and equipped for their climbs. But if that fails, the trailhead is another vital contact point.

> ▷ CFI captured stunning sunrise drone video footage flying from the summit area on Mount Shavano for a project preview video







▷ CSU Biology Professor Greg Florant baits a marmot trap near Loveland Pass as part of a research effort. Florant proudly discusses how he used bacon to advance marmot research in one of the CFI videos Last year CFI released 10 new educational videos to the YouTube channel, including an eight-video series focused on Colorado's marmots featuring Colorado State University biology professor Greg Florant. The videos cover numerous subjects, including what marmot whistles mean, how marmots use hibernation to survive Colorado's long, cold winters and how scientific research on marmots might help manage human health problems such as diabetes. Marmot videos were watched 2360 times, while the channel had 76,313 total video views in 2021.

Volunteer Peak Stewards put in 133 days making 7452 hiker education contacts—usually at popular Front Range trailheads. Peak Stewards focus on quickly educating hikers about Leave No Trace practices and hiker safety, also serving as a reference for people with questions. Peak Stewards play an especially vital role on busy peaks with active trail projects, helping hikers understand that work is occurring and explaining how this helps protect the 14ers.

In-person educational activities were curtailed again in 2021, but CFI staff put on a "How to Climb a 14er" talk at the Buena Vista Public Library and partnered with the Walking Mountains Science Center on a training on Quandary Peak.

CFI was frequently in the news as a reliable source about all things 14ers. The Colorado Sun did a lengthy feature story on CFI's Mount Elbert trail reconstruction project, the Summit Daily profiled the Peak Stewards program and the closure of 14ers due to landowner liability concerns spurred much media coverage.

CFI worked with the Bureau of Land Management to design and produce new trailhead kiosks for the trailheads to Handies, Redcloud and Sunshine Peaks near Lake City. These were installed following a major reconstruction push over three seasons. CFI focuses principally on ensuring every 14er has a well-maintained, sustainably designed summit route. The deluge of hikers in 2020, however, accelerated community efforts to manage high use trailheads, while some landowners closed access due to liability concerns. Tapping new funding sources and directly acquiring private lands may help address some of these issues in the years ahead.

#### TRAILHEAD ACCESS

Tens of thousands of hikers descending every year on the most popular trailheads caused some communities to take action in 2021. Summit County, which began Quandary trailhead stakeholder meetings in 2019, took action mid-summer by imposing a parking reservation fee (\$50 per day, \$20 per half day) or requiring hikers to use a free shuttle bus from town. Clear Creek County posted "no parking" signs along the Stevens Gulch Road to Grays and Torreys Peaks, issued tickets and towed violators. CFI is working with multiple local planning efforts to encourage thoughtful, data-driven approaches to managing problems.

#### PRIVATE LANDS CAMPAIGN

Nine 14er summits are either located on or accessed through private lands. Most are patented mining claims, which are not always mapped accurately and their title histories potentially murky. More than half are found in the Mosquito Range—Mounts Sherman, Democrat, Lincoln, Cameron and Bross. CFI joined forces with The Conservation Fund and Mosquito Range Heritage Initiative to try to buy lands from willing sellers and eventually sell them to the federal government. Grants from the Park County Land and Water Fund, Morrough O'Brien Trust, Hunt Walker and Meta Alice Keith Bratten Foundation have helped fund pre-acquisition costs including land appraisals. Resolution may take several years. ▷ Land closure sign posted on Mount Lindsey with Blanca Peak in the distance ▷ Climbers ascend Mount Lindsey in July before the private land was posted as closed ▷ 'No Parking' signs posted along the Stevens Gulch Road, which significantly limited parking for Grays and Torreys hikers ▷ Signs posted near the bottom of the Stevens Gulch Road to Grays and Torreys warning motorists their vehicles may be towed

ing PRIVATE Lands

that are protected

by a Conservation Easement



# **OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES**

The view north from Mount Sherman's summit to the Decalibron Loop. Much of the land in view is privately owned and is being pursued for purchase from willing sellers

#### RECREATIONAL USE LAW

Liability concerns stemming from a \$7.3 million payout to a trail user seriously injured on an unauthorized Air Force Academy bike path caused two landowners to close access to several 14ers in 2021. The Decalibron Loop peaks were closed from May through mid-August, while Mount Lindsey was closed in September (and remains closed). CFI is working with landowners, other recreation groups and key parties to see whether the Colorado Recreational Use Statute can be amended to provide greater landowner protections for those allowing free recreational access to their private lands.

#### GREAT AMERICAN OUTDOORS ACT FUNDING

CFI received a four-year Forest Service pledge of \$1.09 million from the Great American Outdoors Act to fund trail projects in 2022-25. Projects are on Mount Elbert (Northeast Ridge and Black Cloud routes), Mount Shavano and Grays and Torreys Peaks.

#### GOCO CENTENNIAL GRANT VISIONING

CFI and the National Forest Foundation submitted a joint proposal requested by Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) for a Colorado 14ers statewide "visioning effort." The 12- to 18-month process will flesh out a statewide plan for sustainable recreational opportunities and equitable access on Colorado's 14ers. The visioning effort may, if successful, lead to a GOCO "Centennial Grant" of up to \$10 million to invest in the Centennial State's signature natural landscapes and destinations.

#### **CORE STAFF**















#### SEASONAL STAFF

- Front Row (L to R): Halie McGee, Carlie Harrison, Tony Ondrus, Sarah Barringer, Jo DeVilbiss
- ▷ Middle Row (L to R): Jason Neuhalfen, Tanner Hunt, Sam Keiler, Paul Timm, Addrie Moncayo, John Donahue, Jenny Greene, Parker Smedley, Andrea Zelinski, Taylor Radigan

▷ Back Row (L to R): Sean Prior, Zach Strickland, Parker Grimes, David Precour, Frank Olivieri-Barton, Evan Ross, Mac Gibson, Scott Vlasak

### **CORE STAFF**

Lloyd Athearn, **Executive Director** Hannah Clark, **Operations Manager** Tom Cronin, **Field Programs Manager** Ben Hanus, **Field Programs Director** Jerry Mack, Controller Brian Sargeant, Development and

**Communications Manager** Farah Stack, CLIMB Intern Miriam Venman-Clay, Field Programs Manager

#### **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Tom Barney, Chair Adelaide Leavens, Vice-Chair Daniel P. Harris, Treasurer Stephanie Welsh, Secretary **Chris Bouck** Priscilla Clavton Alex Haves Rebecca Jewett David Kennedy Morgan Mahoney Garett Mariano Brad McQueen Glen Mizenko Tim Rampe Heidi Ruckriegle Stephen Ruyle, MD Wagner Schorr-Ratzlaff, MD Hunt Walker

the spinster

Special Recognition/ **Outstanding Service Award:** Jim Skelding ▷ Tom Barney atop El Diente Peak ▶ Llovd Athearn with Colorado Rapids staff and mascot, RapidMan ▷ Corporate Partner of the Year: Colorado Rapids ⊳2021 Seasonal Staff











#### 2021 PROJECT TEAMS

▶ MOUNT WILSON CREW

Mac Gibson, Project Manager Sean Prior, Project Manager Addrie Moncayo, Trails Technician Tom Chesson, Crew Member Jo DeVilbiss, Crew Member John Donahue, Crew Member Paul Timm, Crew Member

### MOUNT ELBERT CREW Parker Grimes, Project Manager Tony Ondrus, Project Manager Jenny Greene, Crew Member Parker Smedley, Crew Member

- GRAYS AND TORREYS PEAKS CREW
   Taylor Radigan, Trails Technician
   Frank Olivieri-Barton, Trails Technician
- LAKE CITY 14ERS CREW
   Zach Strickland, Trails Technician
   David Precour, Trails Technician
- ADOPT-A-PEAK MAINTENANCE CREW Scott Vlasak, Crew Leader
  - Tanner Hunt, Crew Leader Sarah Barringer, Crew Member Carlie Harrison, Crew Member Cassi Mason, Crew Member Evan Ross, Crew Member
  - Halie McGee, Appelson Leadership Intern Jason Neuhalfen, Appelson Leadership Intern







#### 2021 AWARD RECIPIENTS

- ADOPT-A-PEAK VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR Karl Zipf (Denver, Colorado)
- ► ADOPT-A-PEAK PARTNER OF THE YEAR Emerson Automation Solutions
- ADOPT-A-PEAK ROOKIE OF THE YEAR
   Brad Hodge (Lakewood, Colorado)
- PEAK STEWARD OF THE YEAR
   Von Campbell (Colorado Springs, Colorado)
- SPECIAL RECOGNITION/OUTSTANDING SERVICE AWARD Joav Kohn (Salida, Colorado)

Jim Skelding (Austin, Texas)

- CORPORATE PARTNER OF THE YEAR
   Colorado Rapids (Centennial, Colorado)
- FOUNDATION PARTNER OF THE YEAR Harlan and Lois Anderson Family Foundation (Eagle, Colorado)
- OUTSTANDING AGENCY PARTNER
   Pam O'Malley, Colorado State Trails Program (Littleton, Colorado)

▷ Tom Barney uses a mini pick to excavate space for a rock wall during a CFI Board work project on Quandary
 Peak ▷ Adopt-a-Peak Volunteer of the Year: Karl Zipf ▷ Adopt-a-Peak Partner of the Year: Emerson Automation
 Solutions ▷ Adopt-a-Peak Rookie of the Year: Brad Hodge ▷ Peak Steward of the Year: Von Campbell



### 2021 VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

TOM BARNEY Long-time Colorado Fourteeners Initiative board member and officer Tom Barney was named the recipient of the organization's 2021 Volunteer of the Year Award in recognition of his tremendous contributions over almost a decade. Barney presided as board chair in 2020-21 after previously serving as treasurer (2018-19) and vice chair (2016-17). He also spurred two multi-year cycles of strategic planning efforts designed to focus the organization's attention on issues most critical to long-term success.

Not one to just participate in meetings and make generous donations, Tom has participated in most annual board work projects, bringing his infectious energy and relentless drive to hauling logs, carrying rocks and making a tangible difference on the 14er trails. Tom also has been working on his 14er list, climbing to date 31 of Colorado's 14ers, often times with family and friends.

Barney, a resident of Durango, Colorado, has held top positions at several outdoor industry companies, including as CEO of Royal Robbins and Cortez-based Osprey Packs, one of CFI's longest tenured corporate sponsors.

### ▷ Tom Barney pictured with Mount of the Holy Cross after descending Halfmoon Pass

Despite the financial uncertainties surrounding the on-going COVID-19 pandemic, 2021 was another record year for Colorado Fourteeners Initiative. Continued strong individual giving combined with receiving full forgiveness for the Payroll Protection Program (PPP) loan resulted in record revenues of more than \$1.8 million. CFI's \$1.5 million in expenses invested in improving the 14ers also topped all prior years. The solid \$308,375 year-end surplus allowed total net assets to reach another record high mark of \$1.8 million.

### FISCAL 2021 FINANCES



\$1,800,000

\$1,600,000

\$1,000.00

\$800.000

\$600,000

\$400,000

\$583,613 <sup>∆</sup> \$425.611 \$372,696 \$363,797 \$216.227 \$200,000 \$180,635 \$171,849 \$124,072 \$145.866 \$144,695 \$72,004 \$0 2008 2009 2010 2011 2019 2004 2005 2006 2007 2012 2013 2014 2015 2016 2017 2018 2020 2021

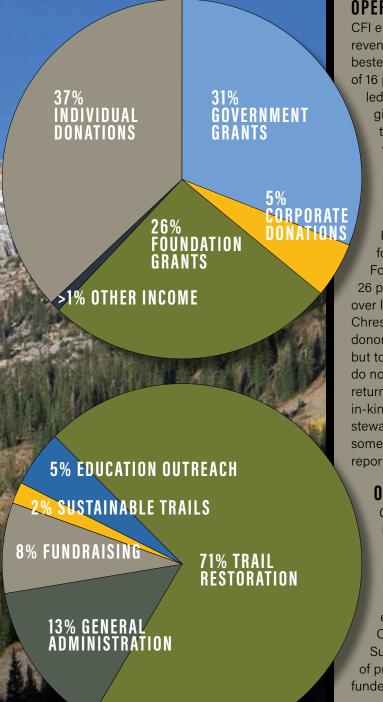
\$1,775,505

\$1,467,130

\$1,317,825

\$846.313

\$706.187



#### **OPERATING REVENUES**

CFI ended 2021 with \$1,833,573 in operating revenues. This set a new record for revenues and bested 2020's prior record by \$258,525, an increase of 16 percent. The \$683,871 in individual donations led all revenue categories (37%). Individual giving fell a mere \$2416 below 2020's record, though this was the second-straight year in which individual gifts topped \$600,000. The \$557,109 in grants from governmental agencies represented 31 percent of total revenues and a 117 percent increase over last year. Multiple grants from the CPW Colorado State Trails Program and the forgiven PPP loan (\$167,600) formed the bulk of government support.

Foundation grants totaled \$483,147, representing 26 percent of all revenues, a drop of 16 percent over last year. The National Forest Foundation and Chrest Foundation were the largest foundation donors. Corporate donations rebounded slightly, but totaled only 5 percent of revenues. (Totals do not reach 100 percent due to rounding). The return of volunteer projects resulted in \$288,794 in in-kind support from 9538 hours of donated trail stewardship. While this in-kind support can match some grants, accounting rules prevent it from being reported in operating revenues.

#### **OPERATING EXPENSES**

CFI continued to expand programmatic work in 2021, which resulted in record operating expenditures devoted to preserving and protecting Colorado's 14ers. The \$1,525,198 spent last year was up \$99,455 (7%) compared to 2020. Fully 78 percent of total expenditures in 2021 (\$1,197,011) was spent on CFI's trail stewardship, hiker education and Sustainable Trails programs. The largest share of programmatic expenses—71 percent last year funded the hiring of fixed-site and mobile trail crews

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that build, maintain and restore 14er trails. Education and outreach efforts, which range from producing educational videos to supporting the Peak Stewards program, represented 5 percent of expenditures (\$77,278). Sustainable Trails trail condition data collection, maintaining 23 thermal trail counters and producing reports represented 2 percent of total expenses (\$32,736). General administration expenses (\$203,972) increased to 13 percent, while fundraising expenses (\$124,215) dropped to 8 percent. The total AFR rate (Administration and Fundraising) remained constant at 21% of all expenses. (Totals do not reach 100 percent due to rounding).

#### **ENDOWMENT AND RESERVE FUNDS**

Ensuring that CFI has financial stability to withstand economic downturns while maintaining programmatic activity is the goal of CFI's general endowment and cash reserve fund. The general endowment, which can distribute up to 5 percent of assets annually, ended the year with \$112,358. The 2021 endowment draw was \$3104. The CFI Board transferred \$20,000 in 2021 to the Mathews Reserve Fund, which ended the year with \$157,148. The Board's goal is to have four months of average expenditures in reserve, which, depending upon the year, is roughly \$500,000. The Kimberly Appelson Endowed Fund, which helps support the Adopt-a-Peak interns, maintained a balance of \$62,183 at yearend.

#### AUDIT

CFI received a clean, GAAP-based audit from JDS Professional Group for its 2021 financial statements. This marks the 13th consecutive clean audit for CFI.



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 COVER PHOTO: Mount Democrat summit sunrise. Photo by Hayden Boyle. www.haydenboyle.com
 BACK COVER: A marmot keeps a watchful eye out on Grays and Torreys Peaks
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