

Together, saving the lands you call home



WETLAND FUNCTION, PROTECT HABITAT

YOU DID IT! MARBLE BASECAMP TO **REMAIN OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**

+ 2015 BY THE NUMBERS: WHAT AN **INCREDIBLE YEAR!**





As denizens of Crested Butte since the early 70's, before the paving of Elk Avenue, we have watched our town grow and mature. While change can be demanding, our intrinsic mountain splendor attracts many who seek adventure, renewal and challenges. Fortunately, the Land Trust maps the way, preserving our valley and our way of life.

- Barbara Kauffman



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COVER PHOTO

Jerry Clark

"

Our mission: to forever protect and steward open lands for vistas, recreation, wildlife and ranching, thus contributing to Gunnison County's unique heritage and quality of life.



life was changed for the better

after spending four days living

amongst those Aspen trees."

You did it! 47 acres of pristine forest are protected

"One of my most memorable experiences was something that I forgot about until my high school graduation," said Dane Christensen, a 2006 participant in outdoor education at the Marble Basecamp. "During the 24-hour solo period, just before we entered Marble Basecamp, we wrote

letters to ourselves that were kept and "I can say definitively that my given to us with our diplomas. The most exciting part was that I remembered writing the

letter, but nothing of its contents. Overall, this trip was one of the fondest of my childhood."

The Crested Butte Land Trust partnered with the Aspen Valley Land Trust to ensure that future generations of middle-schoolers will benefit from the same outdoor education

program. We asked for your support, and you delivered.

We are thrilled to announce that we did it; the forests and trails around Marble Basecamp will remain protected forever, and public school children like Dane will continue to

unplug from the modern world and learn to backpack, camp, and appreciate the natural world.

What's more, thanks to your involvement in the project, public school children in Gunnison County will now be able to attend the outdoor education program at the Marble Basecamp.

Dane and his classmates took a three-day trek from Snowmass Village to reach the basecamp, where they participated in teambuilding activities, as thousands of students before them had.

"My favorite activities at the basecamp included the Trust Fall (everyone would stand up on a ladder and then fall backwards and be caught by their peers), and Superman (leaning out over a cliff at a more than 45 degree angle to simulate a feeling of flying). This and many more activities were designed to foster leadership and teamwork," he said.

"I'll spare the details of everything I learned or was exposed to at the Marble Basecamp because the list would be far too long, but I can say definitively that my life was changed for the better after spending four days living amongst those Aspen trees," said Dane.



DONOR SPOTLIGHT: FRED KOVAL



"Even when I'm not in the Butte, I'm constantly thinking about how much I love it," said Fred, who returns to CB every summer from his primary home in Maryland.

Fred, his wife Robin, and their two teenage sons are passionate about tennis, mountain biking, great views, and

the people who make Crested Butte so special. To maintain their connection year-round, they decided to give to the Land Trust every month. "We think of CB so often, and we wanted our giving to reflect that frequency," Fred said.

Plus, they know that the Land Trust needs financial support 365 days a year, to ensure we are able to jump on opportunities, like Snodgrass or Peanut Lake, when they arise. "I also believe that by giving monthly, our contributions to the Land Trust can be more effective as the Trust will have a more consistent revenue stream," Fred said.

Fred and Robin also get satisfaction from the efficiency of monthly giving. "The monthly process has been very easy and seamless. What I like the most about it is that it gives me the satisfaction of giving 12 times a year without having to think about it. When I can afford to give more, all I have to do is write a check."

For information about how you can make the switch and become a sustaining member, please visit: cblandtrust. org/monthly-giving/ or give us a call at 970.349.1206.

What's up next. HINISIGHT BRIDGE

The numbers are in! Over 40,000 people used the Lower Loop trail system last summer, making it the most popular trail in the valley. With your support, we've been able to restore the area from damage caused by mining and other human-related degradation. Just down stream, you saved

Peanut Lake from ing the Gunsight Bridge is the next need your help.

breaching. Replac- "The original engineering of the Gunisght Bridge does not step, and again, we work well with the dynamics of the river."

Gunsight Bridge is an important part of the Lower Loop trail network, as it is the only connection between the Slate River Valley and Crested Butte. The bridge's structure has not been updated since it was first built, in the 1880s. Back then, the bridge allowed miners to transport coal from the Smith Hill Mine on the railroad.

Unfortunately, the ecology and hydrology of the Slate River were not well understood by the late 1800s, and the original engineering of Gunsight Bridge does not work with the dynamics of the river. Erosion is exacerbated, wetlands are dried out, and habitat for beaver, elk, great blue heron, and

a variety of other avian species is in jeopardy.

The Land Trust purchased the Gunsight Bridge Parcel

in 2003, for the enjoyment of the public. Since then, we have removed more than 700 truckloads of coal that were left behind from the mining days. This helped the surrounding wetlands spring back to life.

The next step to ensure clean water and a healthy river is to replace the

Gunsight Bridge. We have spent years collaborating with ecologists and engineers discussing an efficient solution. The current bridge abutments are extremely narrow; they squeeze the river, restricting it from flowing naturally. Logs and debris then get caught in the bridge, creating a dangerous, unnatural dam.

Without natural water flow, the wetlands below Gunsight Bridge are compromised, and with them go their ability to protect against floods, purify water, and provide valuable habitat.

Improving Gunsight Bridge is a huge win for the natural environment, as well as the many hikers, bikers, skiers, and snowshoers who enjoy the bridge year round. You can help make this a reality by visiting cblandtrust.org/donate.





Crested Butte is known for being the wildflower capital of Colorado, and each year, the fields around Gunnison Valley explode in purples, yellows, and reds – many of them in fields you've helped the Land Trust protect. In the coming decades, earlier snowmelt, lower snowpack, and hotter temperatures during the growing season are all changes that we might expect to see in the Gunnison Valley. And these changes could affect everything from our ski season to our wildflower displays.

Dr. Jill Anderson is studying how a changing climate might impact one native wildflower in particular – Drummond's rockcress. Dr. Anderson is an evolutionary ecologist. She does her summer research at the Rocky Mountain Biological Laboratory (RMBL), and, thanks to the strong partnership we maintain with RMBL, several of her study plots are on land protected by the Land Trust.

Drummond's rockcress can grow at elevations as low as 5,000 feet, all the way up to over 12,000 feet on the higher peaks around Crested Butte. Scientists call this





phenotypic plasticity – individual plants can adjust things like their flower and leaf size to be better suited for current conditions. You might think of phenotypic plasticity in yourself as you acclimatize to Crested Butte. Your red blood cell count increases to carry more oxygen, making you better suited for the high elevation conditions.

One of the ways that Drummond's rockcress is able to adjust to its environment is flowering time. Thanks to Dr. Anderson's research, as well as Dr. David Inouye's long-term record, we know that Drummond's rockcress flowers about 13 days earlier now than it did in the mid-1970s – a result of earlier snowmelt.

But, just as there is a limit to the elevation at which humans can survive, there is also a limit to how well our valley's wildflowers will be able to adapt to climate change.

Dr. Anderson says that she is not yet sure if Drummond's rockcress will be able to adjust quickly enough to keep pace with climate change. "Ultimately, I do believe that Drummond's rockcress will be among our wildflower fields in 50-100 years, although it may not be as abundant as it is now."

Drummond's rockcress is especially good at adjusting to changing conditions. Other wildflowers might not fare as well. "Most of the plants in the Gunnison Valley are perennial, which gives them fewer opportunities to adapt. That said, some species will clearly thrive, such as sagebrush. Plants from hot and dry habitats (like sagebrush) will likely have an advantage as the climate gets hotter and drier." Dr. Anderson said.

SUMMER 2016 EVENTS

July

The Caddis Cup Kick-off Dinner and Fly Fishing Tournament is our biggest event of the year! Whether you prefer to wine and dine at a secluded ranch or the chance to put your cast to the test, we have something to offer everyone.

July

Join this wildflower hike to the ridge of Napoleon Mountain to explore the alpine tundra. Botanist Vinnie Rossingnol and local artist Lian Canty will guide us through the alpine wildflowers.

July

On this guided wildflower tour, we'll learn how the Irwin Townsite went from pristine wilderness, to a bustling coal mining town, to its present landscape - inhabited by only the burliest locals and conserved by the Land Trust. July

Come explore the Land Trust's beautiful parcel of preserved open space in Washington Gulch. We'll hunt the elusive orchid, enchanting twisted stalk, Bishop's cup, monkey flower and more.

July

Celebrate the Land Trust's recent protection of the Snodgrass Trail and its surrounding meadows and unmatched vistas on a wildflower hike guided by seasoned naturalist Gary Rainwater.

August

Nestled high in the alpine, surrounded by cascading waterfalls, the North Pole Basin offers a stunning backdrop for wildflowers. Join this hike to learn about our collaboration with RMBL to protect the area.

For full details and registration, please visit **cblandtrust.org/events**. We hope to see you this summer!

CONNECT WITH US



"Like" us on Facebook and follow the action this summer! We will be posting updates on our kids' activities, trail openings and closures, and where to find the best wildflowers.



Are you on our Mountain Memo reader list yet? Our new monthly update is the quickest way to get information about upcoming projects, event details, and local news. Sign up today at **cblandtrust.org**.

Crested Butte Land Trust 2017 Calendar Pre-Order Form



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Name as it appears on cred	lit card:
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I would like to make an add	ditional donation of \$
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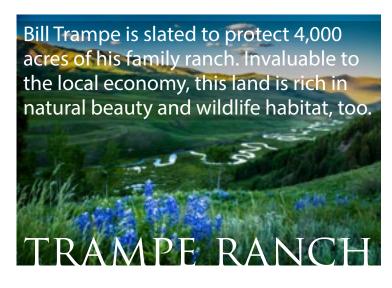


years the Crested Butte
Land Trust has been part of
our community, protecting
public trails, working family
ranches, scenic views, and
important habitat



2015: OUR YEAR IN NUMBERS

SIT CBLANDTRUST.ORG FOR LOCAL UPDATES



Last fall, you helped us remove a manmade berm that threatened to drain Peanut Lake. After spring run-off, we'll start planting native willows.

PFANILIT LAKE





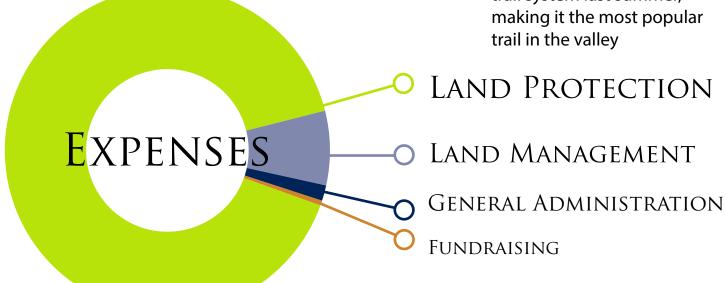
sustaining members ensured we were able to jump on new conservation opportunities to save more land

organizations
with whom we accredited land trust
partnered, in order to have the
biggest impact

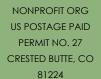
in Gunnison County

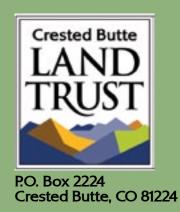
ted land trust hikers, bikers, and horseback

hikers, bikers, and horseback riders used the Lower Loop trail system last summer, making it the most popular trail in the valley

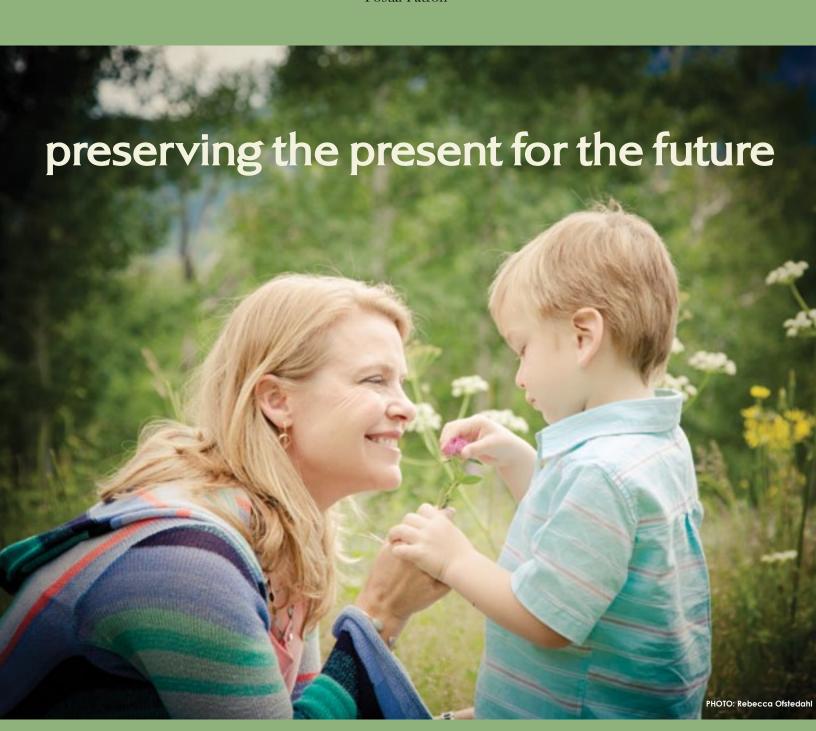


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