



Learn about the power of everyday people in caring for Colorado's outdoors through contributions of time, talent, resources, and passion.

2018 YEAR-END REPORT www.voc.org

Dear Friends:

How often do we hear others, or catch ourselves, saying that someone else should do something about a problem? Several years ago, noted speaker and author John Izzo published his book *Stepping Up: How Taking Responsibility Changes Everything* in which he shared inspiration and practical advice on how ordinary people can step up and make a difference in work, family, community, or the world. As Izzo describes it, stepping up is when you see a need and decide you can, should, and will do something about it.

At VOC, stepping up has always been part of our nature! We witnessed it again this season as thousands of volunteers committed their weekends and evenings to give back to our great outdoors, stretching and stressing their muscles in new ways on our tallest peaks, remote wilderness trails, and urban parks and gardens. When these individual actions are aggregated, it's remarkable to see what a difference our VOC volunteers make! Who would have guessed that the many shovels of organic material removed from a trail, the hundreds of willows replanted by a river bank, and pounds of garden vegetables harvested by VOC volunteers would become miles of trail restored, critical watersheds protected, and fresh food for hundreds of our cities' homeless? Indeed, together we can accomplish amazing things.

VOC's launch of our Stepping Up Stewardship Toolkit this summer showcases another way in which we hope to create a ripple that grows across the state. By providing these resources to strengthen and support organizations in their community-based volunteer and stewardship efforts, we will realize even greater capacity for more organizations to be able to engage volunteers in effectively caring for Colorado.

We are pleased to share in this report a few stories of ordinary people who, through VOC, made an extraordinary difference in 2018. As you read, we think you will agree that there is something contagious about VOC's work: it offers opportunities for local businesses, schools, faith communities – indeed, all of us – to step up, give back, and care for the wondrous outdoor places that naturally unite us as Coloradans.

As 2018 comes to an end and we reflect on what's ahead, we thank you for your tremendous support and hope you take your next step with VOC – as a volunteer and as a donor. We ask that you consider a generous gift this year as we continue to step up to meet our state's greatest stewardship challenges. Your support provides important opportunities and critical financial resources to ensure that all of us can come together to responsibly care for Colorado's outdoors today and in the future.

Gratefully,

Ann Baker Easley
Executive Director

Ann Baker Earley

Jeff Trujillo

Jeff Trigillo

2018 Chair of the Board of Directors



But with more than 36,000 miles of trails in the state and an ever-growing demand for recreation, VOC can't take care of Colorado alone. To solve the long-term challenges facing our outdoors, we're looking beyond our own volunteer projects for ways in which we can elevate the efficacy of volunteers across the state. We are collaborating with nonprofits, community organizations, and land management agencies to raise awareness of individual responsibility and we're developing tools to help expand local groups' capacity to tackle community and regional needs.

Just this year, we shared decades of knowledge through events, workshops, and the launch of VOC's online Stepping Up Stewardship Toolkit. In partnership with the Colorado Outdoor Stewardship Coalition (COSC), we played a lead role in the development of the Colorado Outdoor Stewardship Best Practices Guide, and we've expanded hands-on training through our Outdoor Stewardship Institute (OSI).

Keep reading to learn more about the ways we're working to introduce more people to the joys of volunteering in, and for, the great outdoors. As we move into 2019 and the years ahead, we hope you join us in making caring for the outdoors part of our common culture; by working together, we can create a unified force capable of tackling Colorado's most pressing stewardship needs.



#FindYourPlace with VOC!

Sharing Knowledge, Expanding Stewardship in the San Luis Valley



It takes many different organizations, agencies, and groups to care for Colorado's diverse landscapes. VOC is working with communities and partners in the San Luis Valley to expand local access to, and stewardship of, public lands.

A rural area nestled between the San Juan and Sangre de Cristo mountains, "SLV" is home to small towns and larger-than-life landscapes.

To better meet the area's stewardship needs, VOC partnered with the Bureau of Land Management and the U.S. Forest Service to establish a field office in 2009, with an employee to live in, and work with, the local community.

Now, through workshops funded by the San Luis Valley Conservation & Connection Initiative (SLV CCI), we are working directly with local groups to provide tools that strengthen organizational capacities to secure funding and sustain programs that will expand outdoor recreation and preserve the area's watershed and agricultural heritage.

Sally Wier,
Volunteer &
Partnerships

"We're not just boosting our own organizations through these workshops," **Coordinator** explained Judy Lopez, Conservation Project Manager for Colorado Open Lands' satellite office in the San Luis Valley, which helps fund the SLV CCI, "We're also discovering new ways to work together as a community toward common goals."

Our new Stepping Up Stewardship Toolkit complements our efforts to expand stewardship capacity in the San Luis Valley and across Colorado and the U.S. Check it out at SteppingUpStewardship.org.

Grossman Scholarship Creates Lasting Legacy for Future Generations



When you donate to VOC, you do more than meet immediate stewardship needs. Rick and Susie Grossman took their support further, creating a scholarship for outdoor stewards.

The Grossmans' financial support of VOC started long before Rick served on our Board of Directors from 2006 – 2008 and has continued over the past decade.



esse wooten

Ella Douglas

Now, thanks to their generosity this year, VOC can reward those who care for the outdoors with two annual \$5,000 scholarships: one for a non-traditional student and one for a graduate of our Cairn Youth Program.

"We want to make educational dreams possible for those committed to outdoor stewardship," explained Rick and Susie, "By establishing a scholarship, we help secure the future of the outdoors beyond ourselves and VOC."

All scholarship recipients are pursuing a career related to natural resources, from our 2018 Cairn recipient, Ella Douglas, who started studying Environmental Sciences at the University of Colorado at Boulder this fall, and Jesse Wooten, who decided to turn his lifelong passion for nature into a career and is pursuing a Masters of Natural Resources Stewardship at Colorado State University.

The next round of applications will open in early 2019 at voc.org/scholarship.



Blazing Trails for Women, By Women

On a sunny July morning, nearly 100 women gathered at Floyd Hill Open Space to build a trail. By the end of the day, new friendships were forged and a VOC tradition was born.

The volunteers came from different walks of life: there were young and old, those new to Colorado as well as 'natives', avid outdoorists alongside those who had never lifted a Pulaski.

But they found one thing in common: a love for nature, and a desire to meet like-minded women across the state. With inspiring speakers from VOC and our partners at Clear Creek County Open Space, Mountain Area Land Trust (MALT), and SheJumps, staff and volunteers ended the day covered in dirt, with a sense of camaraderie and accomplishment that only volunteer stewardship can provide.

"It was the friendliest, most empowering volunteer event I've been to," said volunteer Grace Pedersen. "The day was extraordinary and will be imprinted on my mind forever," said another.

Others inspired by the experience are considering becoming volunteer Crew Leaders with VOC to help motivate other women to embrace their strength in the outdoors.





The women-only project was so successful that we're already planning for a similar one in 2019! Stay tuned to voc.org for details.

Businesses Step Up for Stewardship



Blake Calvert first volunteered with VOC in 1998. The experience stayed with him for years: now the President and CEO of CORE Consultants, his company is dedicated to supporting stewardship.





Nearly 20 years after his initial project in Golden Gate Canyon State Park, Blake joined thirteen CORE employees and their family members to help VOC restore the

Herman Gulch Trail.

After a \$10,000 year-end donation, CORE joined us again this summer to spend the weekend building a turnpike near Guanella Pass to prevent erosion on the South Park Trail.

"With VOC, we give CORE employees the opportunity to enjoy the places they love while making a meaningful difference," Blake said, "And it's great to see our employees working together and problem-solving in a new environment. Our

team comes back with a better understanding and respect for each other."

Colorado's outdoors are a huge draw for both employers and employees, and we need more companies

like CORE Consultants to do their part and give back. Their support demonstrates the value of corporate stewardship, not just for Colorado but for the businesses and people themselves.

Contact Anna at anna@voc.org to learn more about corporate giving or volunteer opportunities.

Thank you to the following companies for supporting VOC through a Corporate Stewardship with a Team (SWAT) volunteer project:

Alpine Bank

Anadarko

Apto

Bureau of Land Management

Brewers Association

Colorado State Bank and Trust

Eating Recovery Center

EKS&H, now part of Plante Moran

Great-West Financial

Lockheed Martin

Monarch Investment Group

Newmont Mining

Noble Energy

Otten Johnson

Prologis

Schneider Flectric

U.S. Forest Service

Xcel Energy

2018 by the numbers

Together, we made a big impact on Colorado



37% of projects were family-friendly

872
vouth volunteers

19 new volunteer leaders

38,996
hours volunteered

businesses
and 7 youth
organizations
volunteered through
stewardship
with a Team

a donated labor value of \$962,811





318 volunteers & agency of staff trained through VOC's Outdoor Stewardship Institute

- Restored **25.7 miles** of trail and built an additional **8** miles
- Closed and revegetated
 2.67 miles of user-created
 "social" trail
- Built and restored 344 steps to improve the trail experience and promote safety
- Constructed and restored
 404 feet of turnpike,
 puncheon, or elevated tread
- Constructed 10 climbing turns and 14 switchbacks
- Constructed and maintained **886 feet** of rock wall
- Installed 29 erosion control barriers and check dams and 1,400 square feet of erosion control blankets
- Installed and maintained
 514 water drainage and
 diversion structures
- Planted **988** plants, bushes, and trees
- Planted and harvested 10,450 square feet of urban vegetable gardens
- Planted 250 willows to restore and stabilize riverbanks
- Removed **21 acres** of invasive weeds
- Thinned and felled **4,017 trees** to improve forest
 health and mitigate fire risk
- Built **1,154 feet** of new fence to protect vegetation and removed another 10,319 feet of old to help improve wildlife corridors

2018 Financial Overview

Revenue



Expenses



recreation and wildlife viewing When you explore Colorado, December 4, by scheduling your contribution to VOC. opportunities. Give back this Colorado Gives Day, and abundant outdoor you get stunning views









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Thank you to our friends, partners, and supporters for a successful season of stewardship!

Your support makes our work possible.

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THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS

(from October 17, 2017 to October 16, 2018)

VISIONARIES (\$50,000+)

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683 individuals gave a Trailblazers level gift in 2018. Please accept our sincerest gratitude for your support of outdoor stewardship!

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We are grateful for the many donations given in honor of VOC leadership, volunteers, and supporters.

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\$99 AND LESS

Thank you to all of the companies who provided food and/or product donations for VOC's 2018 season! Your support is greatly appreciated by our volunteers, partners, and employees.

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Sierra Nevada Brewing Co.

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- South Platte Ranger District
- Sulphur Ranger District

Vail Valley Mountain Bike Association Western Mountain Youth Services Willow Creek Reclamation

Committee Town of Windsor Yampatika

2018 NEW VOLUNTEER LEADERS

Congratulations to our new volunteer leaders! Learn more about volunteer leadership at voc.org/vocleadership.

Alex Alma, Crew Leader Jason Friedman, Crew Leader Mark Hendrickson, Crew Leader Mark Hinchman, Crew Leader Steve Hulsberg, Crew Leader Eric Lucas, Crew Leader Desirae McCutchen, Crew Leader Danielle Piscatelli, Crew Leader Mike Scott, Crew Leader Paul Schreck, Crew Leader

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