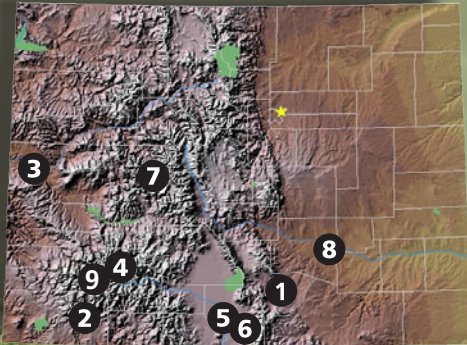




# Colorado News



■ NPS Unit  
★ State Capital

## PROJECTS AND PARTNERS 2011

### CURRENT PROJECTS

1. Huerfano County Trails  
Huerfano County Board of Commissioners
2. Lake Nighthorse Recreation  
Animas-La Plata Water Conservancy District
3. Mesa County Sister Trails: Old Spanish National Historic Trail and Gunnison River Bluffs Trails  
Mesa County, City of Grand Junction
4. Lake Fork River Enhancement  
Lake Fork Valley Conservancy
5. Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area  
Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area
6. Costilla County Trails, Recreation, and Open Space  
Costilla County
7. Crested Butte Perimeter Trail  
Town of Crested Butte Parks and Recreation Department
8. Fowler River Trail  
Town of Fowler
9. Silverton-Animas River Revitalization  
Town of Silverton, San Juan County Mountain Studies Institute

Find out more about each project starting on page 3.

### ABOUT US

The Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) Program is the community assistance arm of the National Park Service. RTCA staff provides technical assistance to community groups and local, state, and federal government agencies working to protect natural areas and water resources and enhance close-to-home outdoor recreation opportunities. We help communities plan, organize partnerships, and achieve on-the-ground success on projects they initiate.



Groundwork Denver Green Team at Great Sand Dunes National Park & Preserve during the 2010 Summer of Service

## Recent Successes

### Summer of Service employs youth across the state in National Park recreation & conservation projects

Through a grant from the NPS Youth Partnership Program, RTCA, Groundwork Denver, the Colorado Youth Corps Association (CYCA), and AmeriCorps National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC) employed 80 youth & young adults from across the state in the 2010 Colorado NPS Summer of Service (SoS), a series of service-learning and recreation experiences in national parks.

Youth corps members ages 14-24 visited at least 1 of 4 National Park units in Colorado: Rocky Mountain National Park, Colorado National Monument, Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument, and Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve. As a strategic goal for the RTCA program, meaningful engagement of youth in recreation and conservation projects was a top priority for the SoS program. Each project included a stewardship, recreation, education, mentorship, and career development component. Over the eight-week project period, youth and young adult participants constructed more than one mile of trail, installed trail structures, and removed invasive weeds while learning from park rangers on interpretive hikes, exploring the parks' natural resources, and learning about career paths and opportunities in the conservation field.

The experience was illuminating and at times life-changing for participants. One youth participant expressed that "working in

## We're Here For You.

Could your project benefit from RTCA Staff Assistance? Contact us to find out.

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## 2010 Nationwide Partnership Success

1,251 Miles of Trail Developed

1,694 Miles of River Conserved

25,370 Acres of Open Space and Parkland Protected

94% Percentage of Community Partners Satisfied

Find more information online at

[www.nps.gov/rtca](http://www.nps.gov/rtca)



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## Recent Successes cont.

national parks under Groundwork Denver, I had two of the most memorable experiences of my summer if not some I'll remember for my life...working in the national parks to improve the environment felt like we were keeping them in place for years to come." After their SoS experience most participants reported that they were likely to pursue career opportunities in national parks as well as the conservation field at large. This is one of several promising RTCA initiatives that aim not only to engage youth but also to cultivate the next generation of conservation stewards.

### Clear Creek County Keeps Rolling on the Greenway

Clear Creek County, just west of the Denver metropolitan area, continues to build sections of the Clear Creek Greenway. RTCA assisted with the plan for the Greenway as well as detailed trail alignments in one particular section. The overall goal of the project is to help create a non-motorized trail that continues uninterrupted from the Continental Divide at Loveland Pass to the South Platte River in Denver. The County has wasted little time in getting new components of the Greenway on the ground.

As part of these improvements, the County has obtained numerous land parcels that are critical to the completion of the Greenway. They have built a whitewater park that provides a kayak play area and an access point for local rafters and outfitters. Clear Creek County has built new trail along Alvarado Road near the Easter Seals Handi-Camp and has acquired the old Philadelphia Mill, which will become a creek-side park.

The County has leveraged funds from numerous sources to help finance these accomplishments. More than \$1.3 million has been raised from Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO), the Colorado Department of Transportation, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), and other sources to supplement the work and money that Clear Creek County contributed.



The Clear Creek Greenway

# Current Projects

## 1. Huerfano County Trails

Project Partner: Huerfano County Board of Commissioners  
RTCA Contact: Joy Lujan, Le'alani Schaumburg  
Location: Huerfano County

### Project Goal

A community-supported trails master plan for an interconnected system of parks and trails in Huerfano County that contributes to the sustainability of environmental, cultural, historical, recreational, and tourism assets for residents and visitors.

### RTCA Role

Convene multiple community organizations to develop alternative trail alignments that accomplish county-wide recreational goals; facilitate the development of the Huerfano County Trails Master Plan.

## 2. Lake Nighthorse Recreation

Project Partner: Animas - La Plata Water Conservancy District  
RTCA Contact: Joy Lujan  
Location: Durango

### Project Goal

Create a community-supported recreation plan for a new reservoir 2 miles outside of Durango.

### RTCA Role

Design, coordinate, and conduct the process for gathering public input which will shape the conceptual recreation plan for the area surrounding Lake Nighthorse.

## 3. Mesa County Sister Trails: Old Spanish NHT and Gunnison River Bluffs Trails

Project Partner: Mesa County, City of Grand Junction  
RTCA Contact: Kay Salazar, Le'alani Schaumburg  
Location: Grand Junction



Huerfano County community members and partners at a trail alignment workshop at Lathrop State Park.

### Project Goal

Conserve and improve 10 miles of trail and create new trail loops and interpretative signage along the Old Spanish Trail and Gunnison River Bluffs Trail to enhance outdoor recreation, education, and heritage connections for the local community.

### RTCA Role

Assist partners with public outreach and partnership building, provide technical assistance with trail design, interpretive signage, and preservation strategies, and help with identifying funding and technical resources.

## 4. Lake Fork River Enhancement

Project Partner: Lake Fork Valley Conservancy  
RTCA Contact: Kay Salazar  
Location: Lake Fork of the Gunnison River and Henson Creek, Lake City

### Project Goal

Enhance and protect the ecological health and recreational quality of the Lake Fork of the Gunnison River and Henson Creek to improve fisheries, riparian areas, river hydrology, recreation, and river access in the Lake City region.



Left: Current conditions of the Lake Fork of the Gunnison River; Right: an enhanced image of proposed instream improvements.

# Current Projects cont.

## RTCA Role

Help the Lake Fork Valley Conservancy develop a collaborative plan to guide project partners in improving the ecological function of the river and enhance recreation opportunities. Conduct community involvement in cooperation with project partners and target outreach to landowners, boating, fishing, and environmental interests and other stakeholders.

## 5. Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area

Project Partner: Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area  
RTCA Contact: Alan Ragins  
Location: Designated National Heritage Area includes Alamosa, Costilla, and Conejos counties

### Project Goal

Protect and revitalize heritage resources in the three-county national heritage area. Foster heritage-based education, recreation, and economic development.

### RTCA Role

Support for National Heritage Area management planning, organizational development, and implementation of early action projects in targeted communities.

## 6. Costilla County Trails, Recreation and Open Space

Project Partner: Costilla County  
RTCA Contact: Kay Salazar, Le'alani Schaumburg  
Location: Costilla County

### Project Goal

Develop the first master plan for trails, recreation, and open space in Costilla County that identifies community resources, needs, and priorities for recreation and conservation projects.



The Sangre de Cristo Mountains, a cultural landscape in the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area and scenic icon for Costilla County Trails. Photo credit: Mary Hoffman

### RTCA Role

Facilitate development of a publicly supported plan, plan and implement an outreach process to develop community support, assist partners in collecting recreational and natural resource information, and help with implementation strategies.

## 7. Crested Butte Perimeter Trail

Project Partner: Town of Crested Butte Parks and Recreation Department  
RTCA Contact: Hugh Osborne  
Location: Crested Butte

### Project Goal & RTCA Role

Provide technical assistance to improve existing trail and complete the Perimeter Trail surrounding Crested Butte.

## 8. Fowler River Trail

Project Partner: Town of Fowler  
RTCA Contact: Hugh Osborne  
Location: Fowler

### Project Goal & RTCA Role

Provide planning and design assistance for 2 miles of trail around Fowler, providing access to the Arkansas River.

## 9. Silverton - Animas River Revitalization

Project Partner: Town of Silverton, San Juan County, Mountain Studies Institute  
RTCA Contact: Hugh Osborne  
Location: Silverton

### Project Goal

New trail mileage in and around Silverton that will include adaptive re-use of abandoned lands to create an attractive park and enhancement of up to 7 miles of the Animas River corridor.

### RTCA Role

Train local residents in trail construction and maintenance. Plan and design a trail across a wetlands area that will provide a better experience for the users while protecting the sensitive landscape.



Volunteer crew after a long day of improving trails in Silverton. Photo credit: Jeremy Yanko