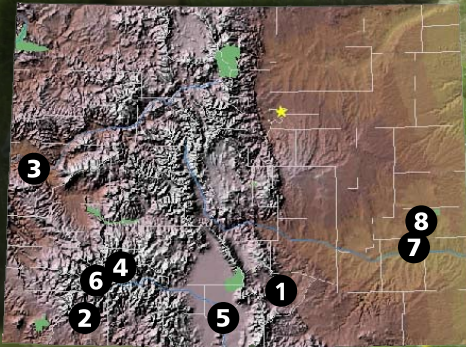




Colorado News



■ NPS Unit
★ State Capital



AmeriCorps NCCC crew in Pike National Forest

PROJECTS AND PARTNERS 2010

CURRENT PROJECTS

- 1. Huerfano County Trails**
Huerfano County Board of Commissioners
- 2. Lake Nighthorse Recreation**
Animas - La Plata Water Conservancy District
- 3. Mesa County Old Spanish National Historic Trail and Gunnison Bluff 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. Silverton - Animas River Revitalization**
Town of Silverton, San Juan County, Mountain Studies Institute
- 7. Heritage Education at Bent's New Fort**
Semmens Family, Colorado Historical Society, Bent's Old Fort National Historic Site
- 8. Kiowa County Heritage Trails**
Kiowa County Historic Preservation Commission

Find out more about each project starting on page 2.

ABOUT US

The Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) Program is the community assistance arm of the National Park Service. RTCA staff provide 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.

Recent Successes

Summer of Service Story

110 teenage youth from urban Denver participated in summer conservation programs through AmeriCorps NCCC (National Civilian Community Corps) and Groundwork Denver in 2009. The summer experience culminated in groups of 10 youth, with crew leaders, being dispatched to multi-day camping trips in national and state parks and wilderness areas. Each team's experience included on-the-ground conservation work, natural resource education, and opportunities for recreation. In one case, AmeriCorps NCCC crews, in cooperation with the National Park Service, the USDA Forest Service, and the Mosquito Range Heritage Initiative, built six drainage dips, two rock walls, and installed a trailhead kiosk in Pike National Forest.

continued on page 4



Groundwork Denver youth having fun at Great Sand Dunes National Park

Current Projects

1. Huerfano County Trails

Project Partner: Huerfano County Board of Commissioners
RTCA Contact: Joy Lujan
Location: Huerfano County

Project Goal

An interconnected system of trails, open space, and parks in Huerfano County.

RTCA Role

Coordinate between multiple organizations to compile existing information regarding regional conservation priorities and develop alternative trail alignments that accomplish county-wide recreational goals.



Improvement of the Cucharas River corridor will allow families to experience close-to-home natural resources and recreational opportunities

2. Lake Nighthorse Recreation

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

Project Goal

Ten miles of trail connecting to the City of Durango's River Trail System, recreational access to 1,500 acres of water, and 5,444 acres of land preserved or enhanced for recreational use.

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 Old Spanish NHT and Gunnison Bluff Trails

Project Partner: Mesa County, City of Grand Junction
RTCA Contact: Kay Salazar
Location: Grand Junction

Project Goal

Conserve and improve ten miles of trail and create new trail loops with

interpretative signage along the Old Spanish Trail and Gunnison Bluffs Trail to enhance outdoor recreation and to connect people with their natural and cultural heritage.

RTCA Role

Organize a local project team to guide a trail planning process; assist partners with public outreach; 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.

RTCA Role

Help the Lake Fork Valley Conservancy develop a collaborative plan to guide project partners in reaching their goal to improve the ecological function 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.



Fly fishing on the Lake Fork of the Gunnison River

Current Projects

5. Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area

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

Project Goal

Potential for open space, conservation, and trail development related to the Alamosa Ranch, San Luis communal open space and acequias, Rio Grande River and other areas.

RTCA Role

Help identify and support on the ground action priorities and help develop implementation partnerships. Assist with organizational development and facilitate strategic public engagement.

6. 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 seven miles of the Animas River corridor.

RTCA Role

RTCA staff has trained local residents in the maintenance of existing trails and how to build new trail. Staff planned and designed trails that are located on lands owned by the Durango Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad, a major tourist attraction in the area. RTCA staff also developed a trail across a wetlands area that will provide a better experience for the users and better protect the sensitive landscape.

“The help provided by RTCA has really kept this project moving forward. What we’ve learned will make it possible for new trail opportunities in the future.”

-Jeremy Yanko, Mountain Studies Institute

7. Heritage Education at Bents New Fort

Project Partner: Semmens Family, Colorado Historical Society, Bent’s Old Fort National Historic Site
RTCA Contact: Hugh Osborne
Location: Bent’s New Fort Historic Site

Project Goal

Rivers and Trails staff is creating a conceptual management strategy for this historically significant site located on the Santa Fe National Historic Trail in southeastern Colorado. Working cooperatively with the site owners, nearby National Park units, and several other groups interested in preserving the history of Colorado, the strategies include options for site development, interpretation, and the protection of the cultural resources found on this site.

RTCA Role

RTCA staff will help collaborate these activities over the course of involvement.

8. Kiowa County Heritage Trails

Project Partner: Kiowa County Historic Preservation Commission
RTCA Contact: Joy Lujan
Location: Kiowa County

Project Goal

A county-wide system of recreational trails linking cultural and natural resources that provide recreational and interpretive opportunities for county residents and visitors.

RTCA Role

Work with partners to identify which community-identified heritage resources will be connected via recreational trails and driving routes and develop trail alignment alternatives based on community-defined criteria. Identify and engage other resource experts for interpretation and preservation needs.



Community members help identify historic resources in Kiowa County

We're Here For You.

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

Joy Lujan

303.969.2853
joy_lujan@nps.gov

Hugh Osborne

303.969.2781
hugh_osborne@nps.gov

Alan Ragins

303.969.2855
alan_ragins@nps.gov

Kay Salazar

303.969.2857
kay_salazar@nps.gov

2009 Nationwide Partnership Success

3,441 Miles of Trail Developed

2,664 Miles of River Conserved

87,385 Acres of Open Space and Parkland Protected

97% Percentage of Community Partners Satisfied

Find more information online at
www.nps.gov/rtca



EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA™

Recent Successes cont.

After weeks of outdoor stewardship work in Denver, the young members of the Groundwork Denver Green Team ventured to Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve to remove invasive plant species and enjoy the park's natural beauty. At the summit of High Dune, an 8,691-foot sand peak, one inspired young participant exclaimed, "If I can do this, I can do anything!" The summer conservation experience connected young people to the outdoor world, inspired a conservation ethic, and helped young participants understand their ability to care for the natural world.

Bent's New Fort Awarded Grant

The Bent's New Fort site was awarded a grant from the Colorado Historic Fund to conduct a professional archeological assessment of the area. This assessment, in conjunction with the local designation of historical significance, will lead to a nomination of the site for the National Register of Historic Places.



Bent's New Fort plaque

Walsenburg Youth Clear the Way for the Cucharas Riverwalk

In late April more than 80 local youth joined Huerfano County, youth sports groups, the Department of Social Services, Parks & Trails Advisory Group, and the National Park Service to complete the first of many steps toward a transformed Cucharas River experience in Walsenburg. Youth and crew leaders leveled out more than 1000 feet of trail, built a rock wall to prevent trail erosion, cleaned up trash in Fiesta Park, and eradicated the Russian Olive and Tamarisk invasive species near the river. The Cucharas Riverwalk is envisioned to offer Huerfano County residents and visitors a pleasant walk through picnic areas, amphitheater entertainment, and natural beauty. The trail will run just east of Fiesta Park along the Cucharas River to Bear Creek Road.



Walsenburg youth relaxing on the rockwall they built for the Cucharas Riverwalk