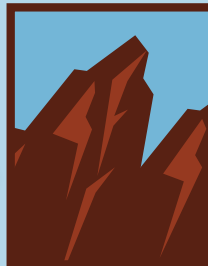


the **RED ROCK RAG**



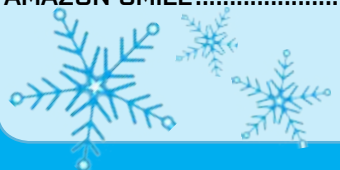
FRIENDS OF
RED ROCK CANYON

Volume 19,#2
Winter 2017

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HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

It's that time of year when we all soften a little and think about family and friends. Those of us that make up the board of Friends of Red Rock Canyon would like to thank all of our members and volunteers for their support of the open space that feels much like a beloved family member to many of us.

We will try our best to find ways to be an asset to the place we all love and value so greatly.

President's Report

I'm somewhat pleased to announce this will be my last President's Report! I'm proud of many of the projects we've been able to accomplish during these past 2 years especially getting our board of directors 100% crew-leader certified. This means any of us may lead dedicated volunteers on projects in need of attention in Red Rock Canyon Open Space (or you may also see us out and about helping all over the Pikes Peak region).

The geological/historical loop project has made steps forward and of course the city is working very hard implementing the various projects to complete the master plan. While I'm stepping down as president for now, I'll still be serving on the board and I'd like to invite you too to advocate for our beloved open space.

Specifically we are looking for a runner, biker, rock-climber, and hiker to represent the different interest of their user group on our Board of Directors. Our new board officer elections will be held at our March meeting but we invite you to come to our January 15th meeting so we can get to know each other .

We meet monthly except during the winter months to plot how we may best serve and protect the interests of Red Rock Canyon, decide on volunteer work projects, and advocate to the city how this is best done. If you are interested please email us a short letter of introduction to begin the process or call 321-5354. Have some happy holidays and I hope to see you all swinging some tools with me in 2018!

www.redrockcanyonopenspace.org

Education in Red Rock Canyon

Talk and Walks 2017

On Wednesday, July 12th, our first Talk and Walk covering History was cut short with rain approaching. **Don Ellis** presented on several historical topics including the projects planned by the Bock family living in Red Rock Canyon, some completed and others never started. One project, a future city with high rises and a golf course, happily never came about. Happily, because today Red Rock Canyon is not the envisioned private “city” by the Bocks, but it is now a public open space to be enjoyed by all. Some past projects which changed the land included; gravel pits, small houses and trailers, and an old landfill. Other historic activities, such as past gold mills and clay mining on the east side, were briefly described before the rain moved in cutting the session short. Don Ellis shared many personal stories about Red Rock Canyon as he has lived in the area since he was a small boy.

Amber Shanklin led a second Talk and Walk on Plants of Red Rock Canyon on Monday, July 31st. She discussed the ecology of the area with an emphasis on the local vegetation. Participants learned about the region’s native and non-native plants and what impacts they have in our open spaces.



Amber Shanklin looking to identify a plant in Red Rock Canyon

Our Talk and Walks reflect the same attitude by offering those attending not only the raw information, but the ability to see and hear about it all “first hand”.



Don Ellis telling the past

Many of those who came shared their own knowledge about the plants. This sharing helped to create a great learning environment under Amber’s direction, as we walked through the canyon identifying plants.

Amber is the Pikes Peak Region Conservation Director at Palmer Land Trust where she works to conserve public and private lands for future generations. She has a master’s degree in ecology from Colorado State University and loves discussing ecology, disturbance, fire, and restoration with anyone who is interested!

Our third Talk and Walk covered Cretaceous Geology was presented on August 15th by **Eric Billmeyer**, Senior Instructor with UCCS. He covered the geology and fossil records exposed along the eastern boundary of Red Rock Canyon Open Space. Rocks in this part of the park are approximately 110 to 70 million years old and tell a fascinating story of

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past deltas, tidal flats, barrier islands, and more. Those in attendance learned how to “read” the rocks for clues, looking for details like small fossils, shark teeth, and even dinosaur prints.

***Please note our Talk and Walks have proven to be very popular. Now our invitations to join them are announced through our online email list, so please sign up to get our emails, at no cost to you. Simply visit our Friends of Red Rock Canyon web site: redrockcanyonopenspace.org (the bottom of our home page has a convenient way for you to enter your email address).



Eric Billmeyer out with the rocks

Colorado Public Lands Day

The first Colorado Public Lands Day was celebrated throughout the State this past May. The Rocky Mountain Field Institute (RMFI) coordinated this day of stewardship and fun in Red Rock Canyon Open Space. RMFI partnered with UpaDowna,

Medicine Wheel Trail Advocates, Colorado Springs Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services, Fossil Craft Beer Company and the Friends of Red Rock Canyon to coordinating work and recreation in the open space.



Dave and Carol Schell with Ted, along with Joe and TJ after Ted landed at Colorado Public Lands Day

Volunteers started off the day with a trail work helping to create the new White Acres Trail off 26th Street. Ted Smith organized the Pikes Peak Paragliding Club to fly over the trail work crews, with even some landing nearby. We are proud that all the FoRRC Board were actively involved at this inaugural event!

After lunch, which La’au’s Taco Shop generosity supplied, all had a choice of recreational activities to do. UpaDowna led a guided hike of the open space. Medicine Wheel offered a bike ride in the area. IIRC, the Colorado Climbing Alliance, did some climbing activities aimed at the level of those who participated. T.J. Maltese, led a geologic hike. After the afternoon events, Fossil Craft Beer Company hosted everyone for an after party with a complimentary (thanks!) beer.

New Trails Have Opened This Year in Red Rock Canyon

The White Acres Trail, built this summer, now connects the Meadows Trail going through the White Acres addition. It starts by the “old” pavilion off the Hogback Valley Trail near 26th Street. Built by the City using a mechanized trail builder along with dozens of volunteers on Colorado Public Lands Day, it presents a nice connection on the southeast side of the open space.

As described in our last Rag, a brand new trail is now accessed easily from the Section 16 trailhead/ parking off Lower Gold Camp Road. The trail makes a loop to the north and east off the Section 16 trail before meeting the Intemann Trail. The trail is named the “Red Rock Canyon Overlook Trail”. It offers a uniquely different experience as hikers walk the loop with fantastic views of Red Rock Canyon.

Another update from the last Rag, work this past year has been completed on the Intemann

Trail near Crystal Hills. The rerouting of the trail makes it easier for bikers as well as hikers. It also makes a more sustainable and long lasting trail. Check them out!



Hawk's nest with chicks off Contemplative Trail earlier this summer

New Historical and Geological Educational Loop Plan

The Friends of Red Rock Canyon is working with interns from UCCS and staff from Colorado Springs to develop a self-guiding walking tour in our park. On just a few trails near the parking lot you will be able to learn about the geology and cultural history that has unfolded along your walk. Actually, plans for these walks have been around since the first RRC Master Plan. It feels good to be moving on this.

The planning and initial research started in September with Professor Brandon Vogt, David Valier, TJ Maltese and Shanti Toll. The two interns are Camilla Haddock (Geology) and Neal Lonsky

(History). Don Ellis is also an important person in this research phase. Park rangers and Matt Mayberry from the Pioneer Museum are on a steering committee with UCCS and FoRRC to guide this process.

Next year the actual sign will be written, designed and vetted for the best placement in RRC. Hopefully the signs would be installed in the spring of 2019. FoRRC will use about \$5000 of your donations to fund the sign construction.

We thank you for your support.

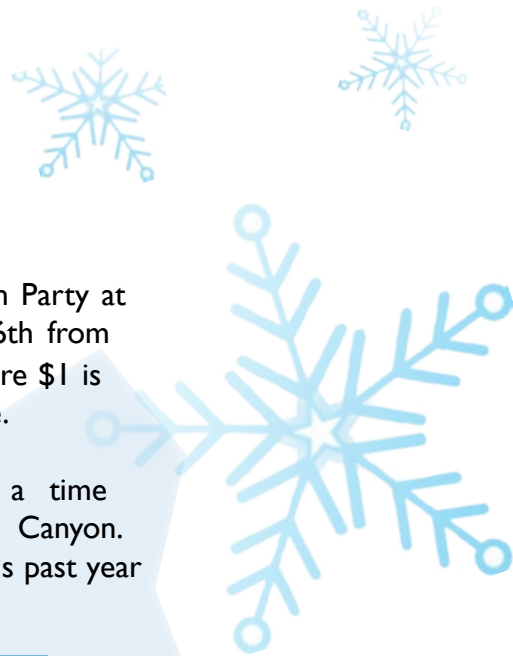
Annual Holiday Party 2017

Boxing Day (Dec. 26)

6-8pm

The Bristol Pub:

1604 S Cascade Ave, Colorado Springs, CO 80905



Everyone is invited to join our Friends of Red Rock Canyon Party at Bristol Brewery at Ivywild on Boxing Day on December 26th from 6 to 8pm. This year we are [Bristol's "Karma Hour"](#) where \$1 is donated to the FoRRC for every pint of beer sold at this time.

We will have appetizers for all to enjoy along with a time to meet old and new friends supporting Red Rock Canyon. We especially want to thank all those who have helped us this past year as well as all the years before!!! Please come.



New Maps and Brochure

We are working with the City of Colorado Springs to update the maps and brochure for Red Rock Canyon. There are a number of corrections that need to be made.

We are also clarifying future plans and projects, which might impact the maps.

The brochures will probably come out around March next year.

Construction in Our Open Space

In the next six months there will be a series of construction projects taking place in Red Rock Canyon Open Space (RRCOS). State law must be complied with. The first project is in response to an enforcement letter sent to the City by the State of Colorado's Dam Safety Inspector. The second relates to the City's ongoing obligations concerning maintenance and monitoring of the landfill.

The first project will address an illegal holding pond (currently empty) or dam structure located at the intersection of Red Rock Canyon Trail and Red Rock Rim Trail (near the road that crosses the dump). This dam was installed on the property by the prior owner without a permit before the City of Colorado Springs acquired it as Open Space. This holding pond came to the State's attention during the historic

rains the area experienced in May of 2015 when the Sand Canyon dam failed and sediment spilled over onto South Ridge Road and High Street at the intersection of Highway 24.

The State's Dam Safety Inspector decided in light of that event to review the other structures that had been built on the property prior to the City's acquisition of it. As a result of the review, the City received an enforcement

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RMFI Stewardship Update

The Rocky Mountain Field Institute (RMFI), a local environmental stewardship non-profit, in 2017 worked at 6 TOPS-acquired open spaces in Colorado Springs over 86 days, 12 of which were at Red Rock Canyon Open Space.

In this second year of the Stewardship program, RMFI's "TOPS crew" helped the City Parks department implement resource protection goals listed in the RRC Master Plan. One of the primary challenges in protecting the area's iconic landscapes is limiting impact from the millions of people who visit on an annual basis. Trails, while providing a means for navigating the landscape, are also a conservation tool that limits impact to one area. A network of trails make it possible to visit the amenities of the Open Space in a sustainable way.

RMFI helped to maintain the trail network either by building new trail (such as the White Acres Trail), improving trail (such as the Red Rock Canyon Trail),



or closing and actively restoring undesigned social trails (such as those near the Upper Dog Loop). Visitors to the Open Space may have noticed new buck and rail fencing near the West Parking Lot. Fences are one of the most effective ways to protect a restored area and keep visitors on designated trails.

Please help protect our treasured landscapes by respecting closures and staying on trail.

Winter Solstice Trail Social w/ RMFI



Thursday, December 21, 2017
6:00 PM – 9:00 PM
Trails End Taproom
3103 W. Colorado Ave.
Colorado Springs, CO 80904

Celebrate the shortest and darkest day of the year by getting out on the trails with Rocky Mountain Field Institute and enjoying select warm and dark libations at Trails End Taproom, Colorado Springs' first self-pour taproom! Co-hosted by Bicycle Experience Colorado Springs, Hiking Bob, Pikes Peak Road Runners, and Friends of Red Rock Canyon, this event will feature your choice of a group bike ride, hike, or run starting at 6pm followed by merry-making

back at the taproom. Trails End will be tapping an extra large array of DARK beers and a limited quantity of special warm libations as well. Riders, hikers, and runners should bring their headlamps and best reflective gear for the dark trail excursions. Everyone attending should bring their appetite for the craft beer and libations and delicious taproom food selection. As Trails End Taproom's nonprofit partner of the month, 100% of tips will be donated to Rocky Mountain Field Institute, directly supporting trail and restoration initiatives in public parks and open spaces throughout the Pikes Peak Region. Happy Solstice!

Membership Form for Friends of Red Rock Canyon

Name: _____ Home Phone: _____

Address: _____ Work Phone: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Email Address: _____

Newsletter Delivery Preference: Via email (full-color, recommended) Via postal mail

Yes, I want to join Friends of Red Rock Canyon for the coming year

Individual/Family membership (\$15) Organization / Business membership (\$30)

I would like to help even more with a contribution of \$ _____.

I would like to be involved in volunteer efforts Please describe your interest:

Please mail this membership for
with your check to:

Friends of Red Rock Canyon

PO Box 6754

Colorado Springs, CO 80904-6754

(Continued from page 5)

notification determining that the holding pond/dam at the intersection of Red Rock Canyon Trail and Red Rock Rim Trail was an illegal dam structure and that it must be addressed.

The City elected to fill the holding pond area with material from other City park and open space properties. Since midyear of 2015, City Parks staff have been working to prepare the site, communicating with the State Dam Safety Inspector concerning the fix, obtaining the fill material, and making arrangements to have the fill material hauled to RRCOS. These steps are now complete and the project is moving ahead.

The second project is needed for the ongoing maintenance of the landfill. The City has been working with a contractor to design a corrective action plan to

satisfy regulatory requirements set by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) for the landfill. Recently, CDPHE has provided the City with written approval indicating that the plan submitted by our contractor is acceptable. This will allow the City to begin working on the corrective action plan (CAP). The plan will require that more fill material be placed on top of the landfill to repair areas that have settled over the years. The purpose of this CAP is to bring the landfill back into compliance with our state requirements. The CAP also requires that another groundwater monitoring well be installed. The City is getting ready to issue a contract to have a drilling company place this well in a state approved location. Parks expects to have this well

drilled before the end of the year. For both projects the Haul Road from the top of the landfill (or Southside) to the bottom of the landfill (or Northside) will need to be repaired and strengthened. Then the fill material will be staged either on the landfill or placed in the holding pond/dam area and distributed to the projects as contractor work requires.

There will be times during the next six months when trails and portions of the RRCOS will be temporarily closed due to these construction activities. Closures will be in place for the safety of RRCOS users and our contractors.

The Red Rock Rag

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**MEMBERSHIP
RENEWAL DATE**

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Vice President: Dave Schell
Treasurer: David Valier
Newsletter Editor/Webmaster: Jenny Montague
Secretary: Erica Meyer
Special Projects: Dave Schell, Ted Smith,
Shanti Toll
Members at Large: Joe Lavorini



FoRRC Board Meetings Calendar

Monday, January 8th

Monday, March 12th

Monday, April 9th (get your taxes done early)

Anyone welcome to come.

Board Meetings are held at the Westside Community Center, at 1628 West Bijou Street, on the second Monday of each month beginning at 6:30pm.

AmazonSmile

Many people do not realize that the shopping they do on Amazon can also be used to support many of their favorite non-profits. Simply by using AmazonSmile, you can purchase the same products you get on Amazon with a certain percent going to the charity or charities of your choice. If you would like to support the Friends of Red Rock Canyon using AmazonSmile, simply go to www.smile.amazon.com and add us by our founding name: **Red Rock Canyon Foundation**. Thanks!!!



We appreciate your support!



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