

The Red Rock Rag

Volume 12, Number 1

Spring 2011



FRIENDS OF RED ROCK CANYON

The President's Report —Spring 2011

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Greetings,

As I assume the position of President for this great organization, I would like to thank my predecessors and all those that gave their best effort to making Red Rock Canyon what it is today. This dedication of the volunteer spirit has left us with a living legacy to admire, but also nurture and actively embrace.

I want to especially thank our outgoing President – Ms. Karlee Thompson, Don Ellis and Shanti Toll for all their years of personal sacrifice and diligent work to build up Friends of Red Rock Canyon and advocate for land acquisition and preservation. The Friends of Red Rock Canyon is definitely a premiere non-profit guardian group here in the Springs and ranks up there with the best.

I intend to do my best in keeping the flame burning and guide this group into the future.

Some of my immediate goals are to grow the Board of Directors to include representatives from the various user groups in the open space – equestrian, climbing, biking and running communities. We would like to solicit their opinions and expectations so that the open space is more open to visitors of all interests. My other goals will be discussed in time with the board and you – the members and interested folks that give us empowerment and motivation to promote and maintain the open space.

I hope to do a satisfactory job of the Presidency and keep the 'Friends of' organization – relative, productive and en-

gaged.

We definitely have challenges for the open space and we hope the members of Friends of Red Rock Canyon and citizens as well will continue to provide support in all forms (financial and sweat equity), keeping this 'open space' a site to be visited and enjoyed.

Red Rock Canyon definitely has an abundance of opportunities for all outdoor recreationists. We, the Board of Directors, intend to keep our members informed and increase the awareness of this splendid open space with five valleys and hogbacks for all to see and use.

We hope you will share this sojourn with us!

Bob Johnson
President
Friends of Red Rock Canyon

Events Calendar

FoRRC Board Meeting	4/11
FoRRC Board Meeting	5/9
Community Day in RRC	6/11
FoRRC Board Meeting	6/13
Trail Day in Park	7/30

We know that a lot of folks have taken some beautiful pictures of Red Rock Canyon Open Space, Section 16 and/or White Acres. Now is your chance to share them with like minded people.

We are having a photo contest to pick the three best pic-

tures in each of the categories of nature, scenery, botany, and activity.

Judging will be conducted by the Board. Winner's photos will be published in the Red Rock Rag in the Summer edition.

Photos need to be emailed

to Friends@RedRockCanyonOpenSpace.org by **May 15, 2011**. Please also mention which category you are entering the photo in. Put "Photo Contest" in the subject line.

Good Luck to everyone and let's see those beautiful pictures.

PHOTO CONTEST

FORRC NEWS

Section 16

Parks and Rec ask for bids for the Master plan design for Section 16 and White Acres. Bids are coming in. Planning should start some time in May.

Animals in Red Rock

Red Rock Canyon Open Space is alive with all sorts of animals. Birds, Mammals and fish are found in the park to name a few. What animals have you seen in your

travels in the park? Email us at [Friends@RedRockCanyon OpenSpace.org](mailto:Friends@RedRockCanyonOpenSpace.org) information on the animals you have seen.

Clubs of Red Rock

Do we have a bird watching, climbing, biking or what ever club in the open space? Email us at [Friends@RedRockCanyon OpenSpace.org](mailto:Friends@RedRockCanyonOpenSpace.org) to let us know about your club.

FUTURE: Red Rock Rag

Help to save the trees! This issue of the Red Rock Rag has been sent out via email and mail. In an effort to save money and trees, we will be emailing future issues of the Rag. If you did not receive a colored copy of the Rag via email, we might have your email address wrong or do not have an email address for you. Email us your correct email or if you need to receive the Rag through the mail at [Friends@RedRockCanyon OpenSpace.org](mailto:Friends@RedRockCanyonOpenSpace.org).

TRAIL BUILDING 101

Trail building is actually a misnomer. We don't build something. We remove dirt to expose the tread of the trail. Sure, occasionally we put in a trail. Sure, occasionally we put in a rock step or two, but mostly we are digging and moving dirt. If we do our job right, all you see is the almost flat hiking/riding trail dug into the uphill side of the slope - just smooth walking!

A well designed trail is a thing of beauty. It is created to establish itself as people pass and the rains flow over. It is designed to use the natural tendency of water and humans to behave according to their nature. A good trail can last longer than almost anything else we may accomplish. A well made rock step encourages people to use it. It just feels like the easy and best way to cover the territory. A switch-back or rounded turn makes uphill/downhill safer and easier, while also protecting the land

from eroding water run off.

The designing of a trail is a creative and architectural marvel. Envisioning how a trail goes from bottom to the top of a hill is so different from the social trails people make. People walk around scrub oak and bushes. People walk straight up or down to where they want to go, thereby choosing the exact path water will take when it rains.

The trail designer uses a clinometer and a long tape measure to find the angle of elevation increase that is comfortable for people to walk. They choose a path that takes people close to the points of interest. They help control where the water flows so it doesn't erode the path. In short, they see where the most enjoyable passage way (once the shrubs are removed and natural steps and turns are in place) should be.

Perhaps the most wondrous part

of a well designed trail is that it gently invites people to see the best of what nature has to offer AND it helps protect nature from the destruction caused by human overuse. Trails save the fragile plant and animal ecosystem, while protecting the beauty of nature for all of us to enjoy. Good trails take people where they want to go. Good trails take people on a journey to some of esthetic high sights of the area. It just seems so easy and natural.

So next time you are hiking or biking, think about the process of making the trail. Appreciate your fellow nature enthusiast who volunteered many hours to make your path a safe and enjoyable experience! It is up to us citizens to protect nature and our trails. We are all stewards of the land.

By: Shanti Toll

Trail Builder

BOTANY

RED ROCK CANYON INHABITS THE FOOTHILLS ZONE

There are five distinct biological life zones in Colorado: Plains, Foothills, Montane, Subalpine and Alpine. These zones are primarily defined by their plant communities and range in altitude from 3,500 feet to above treeline beginning at 11,500 feet. Red Rock Canyon Open Space is a classic example of the **Colorado Foothills Life Zone**. Ranging from 5,500 to 8,000 feet the Foothills zone is characterized by dry land shrubs such as mountain mahogany and sagebrush and the following trees: the deciduous Gambel Oaks and several evergreens: Pinon Pine (*Pinus edulis*), Ponderosa Pine (*Pinus ponderosa*) Douglas Fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*) and several varieties of Junipers (shrubby rounded evergreens). In the wetter areas of Red Rock Canyon one also finds some Cotton-

wood Trees. Unfortunately, Siberian Elms have invaded the space and since they are 'weed trees' we are trying to eliminate them. Weed trees compete for space and nutrients with our desirable native trees and reduce wildlife habitat.

Hiking along the trails during the winter season the evergreen trees stand out in all of their glory. The dry land shrubs and Gambel Oaks have long since shed their leaves, but the native conifers continue to provide a welcome green contrast to the accumulating snow. Conifers are cone bearing evergreen trees with small leaves shaped like needles and scales. They are hardy plants that can adapt to a large range of temperatures and precipitation. Adapted to the hot, windy foothills grow-

ing conditions, neither the pinon nor the juniper usually grows higher than about 10 feet tall.

Many bird species breed almost exclusively in this environment which also provides important forage for a wide variety of wildlife like: bobcat, coyote, peregrine falcon, raccoon, striped skunk, mule deer, gray fox, mountain lions, golden eagle, red-tailed hawk, wild turkey and cottontail rabbit. For more information about these Foothill Animals visit <http://nisley.mesa.k12.co.us/students/FoothillsLifeZone.htm> and <http://www.coloradobirdingtrail.com/basics/pj.php>.

by Coreen Toll

Colorado Master Gardener



HISTORIC TRAILS

Section 16's Historic Trails

The creation of trails, and even roads, in earlier times was seldom newsworthy and seldom recorded. I know the most about old trails from old maps. And, the representation of trails on maps was, and still is, often incomplete or incorrect. So, I am fully confident that part of this story will be incomplete and incorrect.

The 1877 *Geological and Geographical Atlas of Colorado and Portions of Adjacent Territories* by F. V. Hayden showed one trail which passed through Section 16. This was the trail from Colorado City to Pikes Peak. The trail began at what today would be the corner of Colorado Avenue and 31st Street, proceeded south, just east of the hogbacks,

to near the present intersection of S. 26th Street and Gold Camp Road, then headed west, possibly through the gap in the Dakota hogback through which the Lion Trail passes today. From there, the trail went southwest, passing through the southeastern portion of Section 16, to the mouth of Bear Creek Canyon. From there, the trail followed Bear Creek up through Jones Park, crossed over to Lake Moraine, and climbed to the summit of Pikes Peak. At that time, this was the usual route to Pikes Peak. Visitors to Pikes Peak usually took 2 or 3 days for the trip, spending a night or two at a hotel which had been built at Lake Moraine by Edward Copley in 1874.

HISTORIC TRAILS

Section 16's Historic Trails—continued

In his book "Shattered Dreams on Pikes Peak" (Pulpit Rock Press, 1989, 1994), Ivan W. Brunk quotes several historic descriptions of the Lake House and the trip to Pikes Peak. A June 1875 story reported, "The Bear Creek and Pike's Peak Trail is now open to the summit of Pike's Peak. The entire trip can be made on horseback, as the trail is in excellent condition. There is good accommodations at the Moraine Lake House, where meals can be obtained at any hour. The hotel is furnished with good spring beds, and as there is a telegraph office connected to the house, rooms may be engaged on short notice by telegraph." Later, the Bear Creek Trail to Jones Park and Lake Moraine was a toll road for several years. By then, however, a different route had apparently replaced the trail through Section 16.

The Bear Creek and Pike's Peak Trail was a major trail; and Hayden's Atlas only showed major trails and major roads. There probably were other trails in Section 16 before 1877. John G. Bock's book, *In Red Rock Canyon Land* (privately published, undated) mentions a Gypsum Canyon road which was apparently used in the 1860s and presents (probably fictionalized) stories involving the road. This road almost certainly went a short distance into Section 16.

Soon after he and others founded Colorado City in 1859, Anthony Bott began

quarrying building stone along the Dakota hogback. This enterprise became Bott & Langmeyer Building Stone which operated a number of quarries and built roads to them. Four of the Bott & Langmeyer roads crossed the Dakota hogback, two near where the Lower Hogback trail now crosses the hogback, one in what is now White Acres, and one through the gap where the Lion Trail is now. The road through this gap continued south on the west flank of the hogback and turned west into Section 16, becoming a trail. In the early 1900s, this trail extended through Section 16, following much the same route as today's Section 16 Trail.

Ivan W. Brunk's book, *Crystal Park the Gem of Pikes Peak* (Pulpit Rock Press, 1990) tells us that in August of 1904 General Palmer obtained a right of way for a trail from Bear Creek to Crystal Park; and on New Years Day (1905??) General Palmer's trail was officially opened.

So, by the time the USGS published its *Pikes Peak Special* map in 1909, both the Palmer Trail and the Section 16 Trail had been established; and all of today's popular Palmer Red Rock Loop, except for a short stretch near the present trailhead, is shown on that map.

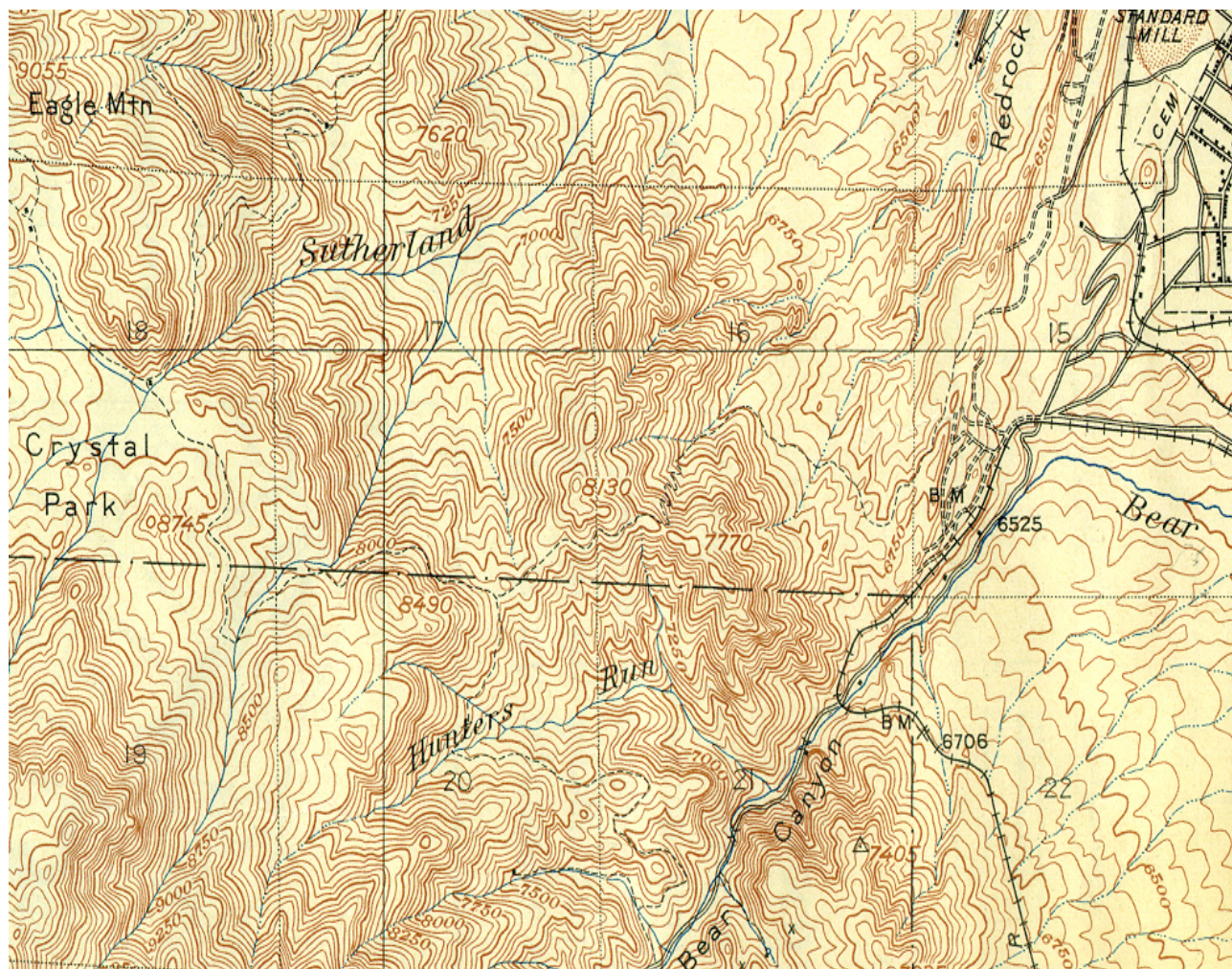
For several years in the late 1910s and early 1920s, The Colorado Springs Chamber of Commerce distributed a map, *Mountain Trails of the Pikes*

Peak Region. This map was prepared by Manly Ormes and showed another trail in Section 16. This trail connected the Section 16 Trail to what would be today's Red Rock Canyon Trail. This trail was very steep in places, going straight down the fall line into Red Rock Canyon, and became severely eroded. It continued to be shown on some maps at least up until the late 1950s. Today, it is abandoned, unused, and mostly overgrown.

For a few years in the 1950s white quartz was mined in Section 16; and a road was built to the mine. Where today's Section 16 trail crosses the mesa before starting up the upper Red Rock Canyon drainage, it follows this "Quartz Quarry Road", while today's Parallel Trail follows the much earlier Section 16 Trail. For a number of years, the "Quartz Quarry Road" was used by four wheelers and motorcyclists; and it was only with some difficulty that it was eventually closed to motorized use.

NOTE: *Shattered Dreams on Pikes Peak*, *Crystal Park the Gem of Pikes Peak*, and reprints of *In Red Rock Canyon Land* are available at the Old Colorado City History Center Bookstore.

———— See next page for map. ————



Palmer Trail and Section 16 Trail (Palmer Red Rock Loop) as shown on the 1909 USGS Pikes Peak Special map, reprinted in 1944 as the Manitou Quadrangle.



Coming Soon

A new look to our website!

If you have any suggestions for items you would like to see on the website or items you would like to change on the website, please email your suggestions to Friends@RedRockCanyonOpenSpace.org. Put "WEBSITE" in the subject line so we can get your suggestions to the webmaster.

Letters to the Editor

Email your Letters to the Editor to

Friends@RedRockCanyonOpenSpace.org.

The following is a reply to the **RED ROCK CANYON OPEN SPACE REMEMBERED** article published last month and written by Mike Haase

Dear Mike,

I just read your short article about rock climbing in the Red Rock Rag and wanted to address some of your thoughts.

I've seen a lot of changes in the rock formations at Red Rock Canyon since the park opened and even before then in the three months that I supervised the establishment of the climbing routes and the climbing area and helped Ric Geiman write the climbing management plan for the park.

It's a fact that things change and sandstone climbing areas change a lot. Red Rock Canyon sees a lot of climbers and a lot of those climbers are newbies and inexperienced. They don't understand the fragility of the stone nor the climbing routes themselves, including the hardware. The sharp edges on the Ripple Wall are now rounded and sloping. Grooves are worn in rock surfaces from repeated top-roping. And, as you point out, the bolts and bolt hangers and lowering rings are being damaged.

I initially spent over \$3000 equipping the climbs at Red Rock Canyon out of my own pocket. The Friends of Red Rock

Canyon later generously gave me \$300 and some private donations added another \$400. Brian Shelton from Front Range Climbing Company also stepped up and added \$1000 to my hardware kitty. Since then Brian and I have taken on the task of keeping the hardware as safe as possible and replacing bolts that need work but with the heavy climber use it's a difficult task.

I also try to educate climbers out there by pointing out their unsafe use of the ring anchors when they top-rove with their rope directly through them, which creates unequal and unsafe loads on the anchor bolts as well as grooves the stainless steel rings on the Fixe anchor hangers. I have replaced some of those grooved rings, often with just hangers which would hopefully force folks to use their own gear for top-roping (some still top-rove with the rope directly through the hangers! Sheer laziness.) or with screw links. Part of the management plan for climbing at Red Rock Canyon addresses anchors—since chains have too great a visual impact, other less obtrusive hardware has to be used.

The basic cost to replace the Fixe ring hangers is between \$25 and \$30 a pair so it gets pretty expensive to replace those with the cost coming out of my own wallet. So please bear in mind when you write that rings "need to be considered for replacement" that the cost of that has to be borne by someone. The city of Colorado Springs certainly doesn't have the funds nor can they replace climbing equipment

because of their liability. If you would like to donate to help keep up the equipment, I would be happy to talk with you. Much of the profits from the sale of the Red Rock climbing guide I wrote have gone to hardware replacement at RRCOS, Garden of the Gods, Shelf Road, Eleven-mile Canyon, and other local venues.

As an addendum to the above, at some point most of the bolts, especially on the popular routes at Westbay Wall, Sayers Wall, and Ripple Wall, will have to be replaced with glued-in stainless steel ½-inch bolts such as those made by Petzl. These bolts and the glue are not cheap. It will cost somewhere between \$10 and \$15 dollars a bolt to do it properly.

Lastly I would like to address the bolts. The sleeve bolts do loosen up from repeated use so they do need tightening from time to time. The problem is that if many climbers carried wrenches as you suggest then the bolts would be damaged. Most people over-tighten the bolts, thinking that tighter is better. That, however, is not true. Over-tightening those bolts stresses the shaft, creates micro-fractures in it, and weakens the bolt. I have replaced two bolts at Red Rock Canyon that broke because someone over-tightened them. I advise folks to contact either Brian Shelton or myself, or Scott Abbott at the Park and Rec Dept, about loose bolts and we will get out there and tighten them.

Climb safe!
Stewart Green

Are you interested in preserving our Open Space? Are you a biker, hiker, climber, interested in plants, flowers or animals, or a person that enjoys the beauty of the outdoors? Join Friends of Red Rock Canyon and help us keep our open space beautiful.

Don't forget to check your renewal date on the back page of the newsletter.

MEMBERSHIP FORM

Friends of Red Rock Canyon

Name: _____ Home Phone: _____
 Address: _____ Work Phone: _____
 City/State/Zip: _____
 Email Address: _____

Newsletter Preference: Delivered via Email ☐ Delivered via Mail ☐

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

____ Individual Member (\$10)
 ____ Family Membership (\$15) Other Family Members: _____
 ____ Organization / Business membership (\$30)

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

☐ I would like to be involved in volunteer efforts:

____ Trail and stewardship volunteer ____ Educational Programs ____ Serve on Board of Directors
 ____ Advocacy & Community outreach ____ Other (please describe) _____

Please mail this membership form with your check to:

Friends of Red Rock Canyon
P. O. Box 6754
Colorado Springs, CO 80904-6754

(Friends of Red Rock Canyon is a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit organization. Contributions are tax deductible)

FRIENDS OF RED ROCK CANYON



TRAIL BUILDING

ACTIVITIES IN THE PARK

STEWARDSHIP DAY—JUNE 11TH

Join ForCC and our community on June 11th at Red Rock Canyon Open Space. We will be performing maintenance on the hiking trails in the open space to get the open space ready for summer visitors. You can choose to come for half a day (8am—11:30am) or the whole day (8am—3:30). See our website to sign up or for more information.

TRAIL MAINTENANCE DAY—JULY 30TH

Come out and join ForCC to help repair the Sand Canyon and other hiking trails in the park. We will be doing maintenance on the trails. Come join us for the day or half-day. Don't worry if you have never built trail before. We will teach you.

See our website to sign up or for more information.

THE RED ROCK RAG
Friends of Red Rock Canyon
P.O. Box 6754
Colorado Springs, CO 80904-6754

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 **MEMBERSHIP
RENEWAL DATE**

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We're on the Web

www.redrockcanyonopenspace.org