

the **RED ROCK RAG**

Volume 14, #3
Winter, 2013



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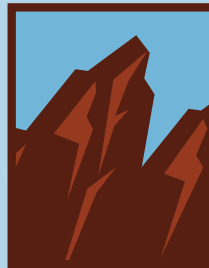
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FRIENDS OF

**RED ROCK
CANYON**

Celebrating 10 Years!

August 17th of this year the City of Colorado Springs and The Friends Of Red Rock Canyon held an event at the pavilion in Red Rock Canyon to celebrate the the 10 years since purchasing the property.

The event kicked off in the morning with a Native American Blessing by Eddie Three Eagles. Mayor Bach opened up the Celebration and expressed his commitment to the open space movement. Representatives from the County, State and Manitou Springs also talked of their love and commitment to our open spaces.

There were awards and recognition given to the many people and organizations that helped bring about the acquisition of this prized jewel of open space we call Red Rock Canyon. With the beautiful Colorado deep blue sky and abundant sunshine, The lush green landscape from the recent rains, and the gorgeous red sandstone rocks towering above, the day was perfect for a celebration.

After the ceremonies cakes were cut and refreshments were served. The Cheyenne Mountain Resort furnished their ice cream truck and gave away free ice cream treats.

The afternoon was filled with fun and educational opportunities. There were Native American Drummers and Dancers, Rapture demonstra-



Eddie Three Eagles



Mayor Bach

(continued from front page)

tions, and the J Miller Band provided some excellent blue grass and country music all afternoon. Representatives from Mountain Chalet, City Rock, Trails and Open Space Coalition, Colorado Springs Park and Rec, Runners Roost, and others were available for information. The Fire Department and Paramedics offered free children's fingerprinting and ID. Wild Fire Tee's was there selling T-shirts to help the wildfire victims. There were several food vendors to keep appetites at bay.

It was an opportunity to celebrate our profound love of nature and express our thanks and gratitude to those who worked tirelessly to bring about this gift to the people and visitors of our region.

Education in Red Rock Canyon

The Friends of Red Rock Canyon were able to start offering (again!) educational Talk and Walks this past summer. Three Talk and Walks done in; Geolo-

Talk and Walks again, starting in the coming Spring. We hope to offer some of the same sessions covered this last year; geology, history and invasive weeds/flora, as most presenters have indicated they would be happy to work with us again. We would like to expand our Educational Offerings next year. We would appreciate any ideas for



gy, History and Invasive Weeds were well attended. So popular at times, that many people interested in attending were turned away with the session being so full. Two other Talk and Walks were to be done in the Fall but were cancelled because of the weather and flood damage to the trails, caused by the heavy rains. The Friends of Red Rock Canyon plan to offer a series of

topics, what you would like to know about Red Rock Canyon, and formats for any new workshops. Our programs offered last year were offered in the early evening on weekdays. Usually starting around 5:30pm at the pavilion and ending around 7pm.



If you, or someone you know, is interested in presenting at Red Rock Canyon please contact friends@redrockcanyonopenspace.org or call David at 685-4792 with your suggestions or offers to help.



Forest Restoration to Take Place at Red Rock Canyon

Don't be alarmed by the noise and activity in Red Rock Canyon! Work is beginning in November to reduce the fire fuels and help to restore the natural forests in Red Rock Canyon Open Space. The two areas to be worked on will be the Sand Canyon area next to Crystal Hills in Manitou Springs, some 70 plus acres, and a smaller area off Gold Camp Road by the Section 16 Trailhead, close to 4 acres. The work will serve as basic fire mitigation. Cutting will be done mostly to the area's non-native Siberian elms and scrub oaks. This will help to reduce the risk of wildfires, as well as restore the natural vegetation being crowded out by the elm and oak brush. Cutting back the dense growth of elms and scrub oaks will help to make way for willows, cottonwoods and ponderosa pines, all of which are considered to be a more natural forest for the area. The scrub oaks are considered to be a "perfect" fuel for wildfires as well.

The forest restoration work had been identified within the new Red Rock Canyon Master and Management Plan as being a high priority for the ecological health of the open space. The City of Colorado Springs

emphasizes, "that as we improve the environmental health of the site, we will also significantly help to reduce the risk of wildfire within Red Rock Canyon and the surrounding neighborhoods".

The mitigation work will take place over a period of 28 weeks, lasting well into May next year. The work will be performed by a crew from the Mile High Youth Corps with supervision by the City of Colorado Springs Forestry Division. Most visitors to Red Rock Canyon will not be affected by the ongoing fire mitigation, as much of the work is off the established trails. Though the sound of chainsaws may be of some concern, the work should not detour any hikers.

If you have questions or concerns about the mitigation, you can contact the City Forestry Division directly at: Dennis Will at 385-5942 or Jeffery Webb (Sr Grants & Design Analyst) jwebb@springsgov.com.

The Mile High Youth Corps employs young people to help with conservation projects around the state. Those working with Mile High Youth Corps learn organization and leadership

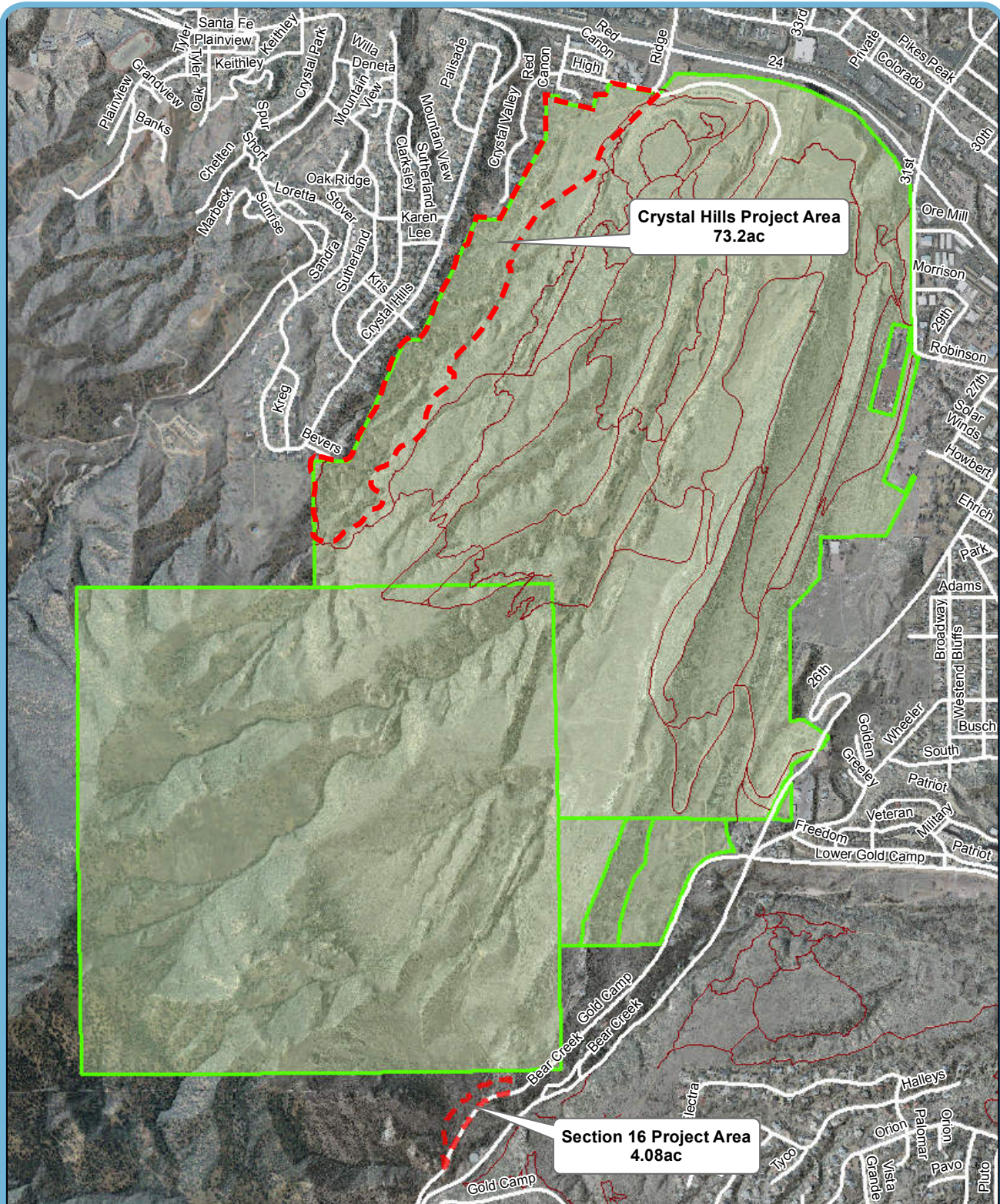
skills, and are exposed to educational opportunities while working on projects. They will spend 10% to 20% of their work week attending workshops and educational sessions. Not only do the young people learn important job skills and receive a healthy stipend for their work, but they will receive a scholarship to help pay for college after their work is completed.

The Mile High Youth Corps offer these safety guidelines on "How Can You Help?":

- *Stay out of the mitigation area!*
- *Stay away from working crews!*
- *Stay away from the chipper!*
- *Keep pets on leash!*
- *Obey signs, stay on trails.*
- *Don't bring your own slash.*

The Mile High Youth Corp would be interested if you could offer to teach a topic or skill to their crew this winter. If you can, please contact Nancy at 630-7421 or at ANI@MHC.org. They ask that the information regarding availability of work is shared with young people (18-24).





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Red Rock Canyon Open Space

0 1,000 2,000 4,000 Feet



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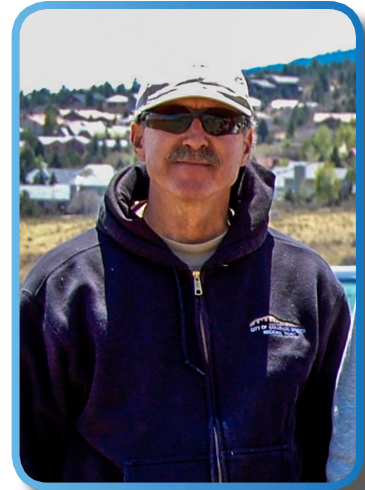
Fire mitigation areas in Red Rock Canyon

Red Rock Canyon Ranger Retires

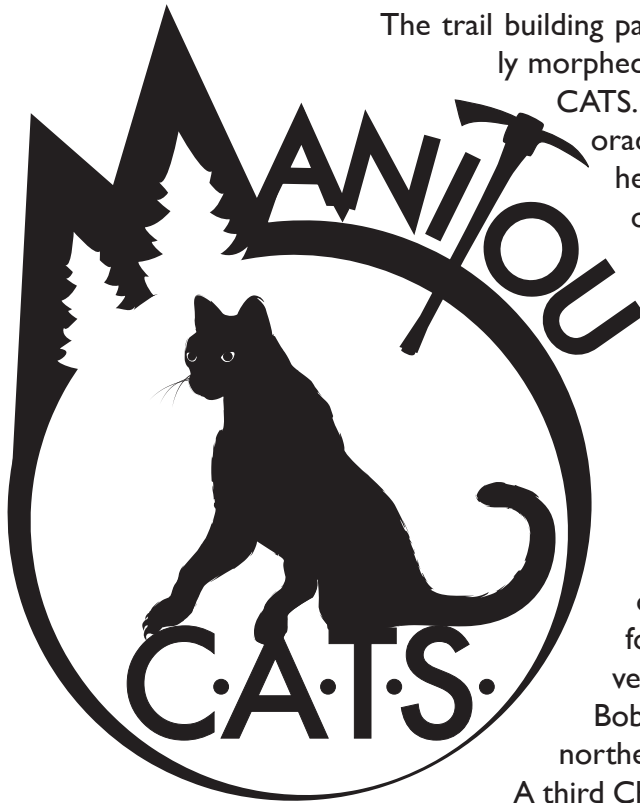
In December Mike Weeks, the Red Rock Canyon ranger, will retire after 6 years of stewarding our open space. He has been an outstanding supporter of the land and the Friends of Red Rock Canyon. He has gone out of his way to help us on a variety of projects, often volunteering his personal time.

Mike has been with the City since 1997. He is retiring to “enjoy life and travel a lot”. He plans to also follow his many other personal pursuits- especially karate. He wishes to thank all the volunteers who have worked with him over the years. He says he loved working in Red Rock Canyon and hopes to stay involved as a citizen.

We will miss him.



C.A.T.S. (Colorado Addicted Trail-builder Society)



The trail building part of Friends of Red Rock Canyon has humorously morphed into “Colorado Addicted Trail-builder Society” or CATS. The volunteers in CATS come from all over Colorado Springs. Our Open Space is lucky so many good hearted people are willing to help build and maintain our trails. Using the FoRRC tools CATS helps maintain trails in not only Red Rock Canyon but now also in public Open Space and Parks throughout the region. It is a win - win situation.

Actually CATS was started about five years ago by Bob & Connie Johnson and Coreen & Shanti Toll. Dave Dombach, Jack Busher and Malcolm Hammerton soon joined in. The concept was to have people who are experienced in safe trail building come together for fun and service. We go work on a trail in small groups after work and then go out for dinner and socializing. It was (is) good exercise, very efficient and enjoyable.

Bob and Connie moved to Loveland and started a northern chapter of CATS.

A third Chapter has just started called “Manitou Springs Trail CATS” (Coop of Active Trail-builderS or maybe Collection of Attractive Trail-people Society). It is the Manitou organization of trail building volunteers that will be needed to build the Iron Mountain Trail connection of Red Rock Canyon and Barr Trail parking lot. We probably will need more than 400 volunteer days next year to build the missing link. We have a logo as you can see and an email address, so you can email to join this illustrious service society.

MCATS@outlook.com.

Flooding in RRC

Red Rock Canyon certainly wasn't left out when it came to being affected by the major flooding we experienced in September. I couldn't help but visit the Canyon during the second day of rain. It was foggy and a heavy drizzle was falling. The first thing I noticed approaching the pavilion was the sound of water running everywhere. The pond had filled about half way and water was still flowing into the pond from several sources. Small streams and waterfalls were running everywhere. The road up the canyon was gutted fairly deep already and water was rushing down like a small mountain stream. I continued up the road hopping



over gullies, some two or three feet deep. There were more ponds forming as climbing up past the cave to what I hoped would be a full pond at the top. I wasn't disappointed as the former pit was now a full pond. Going on up the trail to the mouth of the canyon I found a rushing mountain



stream coming down, water rushing down the usually dry stream bed and across parts of the "Round Up Trail." I stood in amazement, Nature was creating a new landscape. A new enhanced Red Rock Canyon. I returned again over the next few days and was thrilled to see all the ponds filled to the brim and overflowing. The majority of damage was done to the original roads in the canyon. The trails fortunately only received minor damage for the most part. I'm convinced that the damage would have been much worse if not for those original dams and ponds created by the original owner, John Bock. Most of the damage has been fixed thanks to prompt and hard work by the City and by volunteers. Most of the ponds in Sand canyon, some 12-15 feet deep have dried up now. But the two beautiful ponds near the pavilion are still full as is the southern pond further up the road. The ducks and geese are back on the ponds and I'm sure the rest of the wildlife is thrilled with the new and improved Red Rock Canyon.

Manitou Springs New Years Eve Dance Party

If you are a lover of Manitou or a supporter of the mountain trail connection of Red Rock Canyon to the Manitou Incline, you are invited to a dance party on December 31, 2013. Manitou Springs Trail CATS is Hosting a celebration of New Years Eve at Venue 515 on Manitou Ave from 8:38 to midnight.

It has been a tough year for Manitou. We have pulled together and made it through. It is time to embrace the joyful side of Manitou. Manitou's

own D Gravity and friends will spin an eclectic mix of danceable tunes. Pot luck hors d'oeuvres and desserts (thank you) will compliment a cash bar. All profits will be donated to the Manitou Arts Center and the Manitou Springs Collaborative, so they can continue their good work. Donation for party entry is \$10 cash (or more). Volunteer hours instead of money will also get you in. (call 321-5354 to arrange).

Make a Difference

There is a change of the guard at Friends of Red Rock Canyon. We have had a dynamic Board but many members are moving on to other endeavors. We have accomplished a lot over the last two years: We published electronic and hardcopy versions of our Red Rock Rag newspaper every season •

Created a new website • Ran a successful Indy-Give Campaign • Directed many trail maintenance and cleanup project throughout the Open Space • Put on the 10th Anniversary Celebration honoring all the people that made Red Rock Canyon Open Space possible • Filled the ponds with 9 inches of rain in three days [maybe the rain dance worked].

SO - It is time for some new people to come forward and steward Red Rock Canyon. FoRRC is important because it is the vehicle to keep citizens involved and informed about needs of land [City staff do not have the resources to take care of the land by themselves]. We have lost our web master, the editor of the Red Rock Rag. Please consider helping now when it is needed. Here is what we need.

- **SPECIAL EVENTS COORDINATOR(S):** Next year we will have a number of trail building days and community support days. It takes planning and enthusiasm to make good things happen.
- **WEB SUPPORT PERSON(S):** We have a lot of new material to get up on the website, which is based on Word Press. The website will be as dynamic as the people managing it.
- **NEWSLETTER EDITOR AND WRITERS:** The Red Rock Rag comes out four times a year. It is the backbone of our organization and how we get things done with the public.
- **COMMUNICATION DIRECTOR:** E-mails, text and phone keep FoRRC responsive to the needs of the land, people and the City. Tracking all this takes some special people and computer skills.
- **BOARD OF DIRECTOR:** We do have openings on the board, which helps channel the citizen input and stewardship on Red Rock Canyon Open Space.

These volunteer positions will take 2 or 3 hours a week and will be of great service to our community. We recognize that volunteering needs to be worthwhile and enjoyable. So, make it so

If you want to help on any of these projects or others, please email shantitoll@hotmail.com and give contact information and your area of interest. We will call you to discuss what works for you.

Membership Form for Friends of Red Rock Canyon

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.

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

Note: Should you want to pay by credit card, go to
our website:

www.RedRockCanyonOpenSpace.org

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

The Red Rock Rag

Friends of Red Rock Canyon

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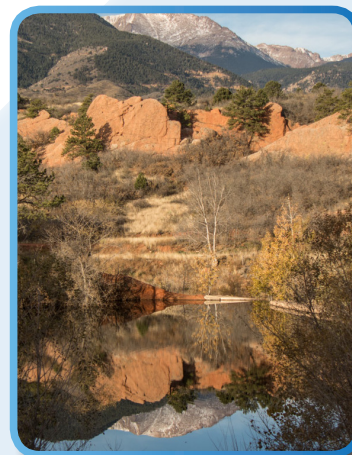


The Pond Saved!

Pond Restoration Fundraising Suspended

Due to the heavy rains this fall, the ponds in the Red Rock Canyon Open Space are once again filled with water. We therefore have suspended our fundraising efforts to refill, or "save," the pond. The nearly \$12,000 that was raised to restore the pond is being held in a dedicated account for such time that the pond restoration project needs to be revived.

Thank you for your contributions and support. Please be assured that all monies donated for the pond will be spent exclusively in the effort to preserve the ponds and in pond area improvements. In the meantime, feel free to contribute to our general contribution fund to help with other important Red Rock Canyon projects. Visit our website to donate.



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