

Indian Peaks Wilderness Alliance (IPWA)



Annual Report 2021

Photo Credit: Jack Pritchard

Dear IPWA Friends,

What a great job our Volunteers did in 2021 as wilderness stewards. Despite smoky days, the ongoing pandemic, the new USFS timed entry system at the Brainard Lake Recreation Area (BLRA), and a new IPWA schedule and reporting system, our Volunteers did not miss a beat and were out in the field helping to keep the wild in Wilderness.

After a recruiting hiatus in 2020, we welcomed 14 enthusiastic new volunteers to IPWA. And the new Volunteer reporting system allows us to conduct timely analysis of our patrol data so IPWA can shift resources to areas that need more attention. And once again, the generosity of donors was a real bright spot for IPWA.

Thank you all for helping us get through the pandemic rough patch and for enabling us to grow and succeed.

Kelly Prendergast
IPWA Board Chair





"Wildness reminds us what it means to be human, what we are connected to rather than what we are separate from."- Terry Tempest Williams.

Your support for the Indian Peaks Wilderness Alliance helped us actively protect the Indian Peaks and James Peaks Wilderness areas which provide an array of important benefits to our communities.

- *Clean water and clean air,*
- *Protected plant and wildlife habitat,*
- *Economic value,*
- *Opportunities for solitude and outdoor adventure,*
- *Scientific knowledge of natural processes*
- *And more*

Our History

IPWA's history goes back several decades. In October of 1978, The **Indian Peaks Wilderness was designated by Congress as part of the Wilderness Preservation System.** With its new designation, it started to receive more and more visitation and impacts.

□
In 1980 a citizens' working group was organized by 3 pioneering women - **Dr. Anne Forrest Ketchin, Jan Robertson, and Anne Vickery.** Over several years this group produced a set of 27 points for preserving and protecting the Indian Peaks. And in 1985 the Indian Peaks Working group was officially incorporated. The US Forest Service agreed to most of the group's recommendations, and thus began a citizen- agency partnership which still endures today.



Photo from Carnegie Library for Local History/Museum of Boulder Collection



Our Mission

The Indian Peaks Wilderness Alliance's mission is to "Preserve and Protect the Indian Peaks and James Peak Wilderness Areas".

- Officially partnered with the U.S. Forest Service Boulder Ranger District in a collaborative stewardship effort.
- Indian Peaks (IP) and James Peak (JP) are among the most heavily visited and utilized wilderness areas in the United States

Articles of Incorporation

1. A **forum for discussion of issues** regarding the Indian Peaks Wilderness Area,
2. A **volunteer clearinghouse** to work with the USFS to coordinate, train, and supervise volunteers working in the Indian Peaks Wilderness Area,
3. A forum for **information exchange** among the USFS, local government, and interested citizens,
4. Assist in **identifying and solving problems** for the Indian Peaks Wilderness Area,
5. **Ongoing public education program** regarding the Indian Peaks Area, its ecology, its popularity, and techniques to minimize the impact on it, and
6. To **sponsor, encourage and assist in research** on the natural sciences and management problems of the Indian Peaks Wilderness and adjacent areas.

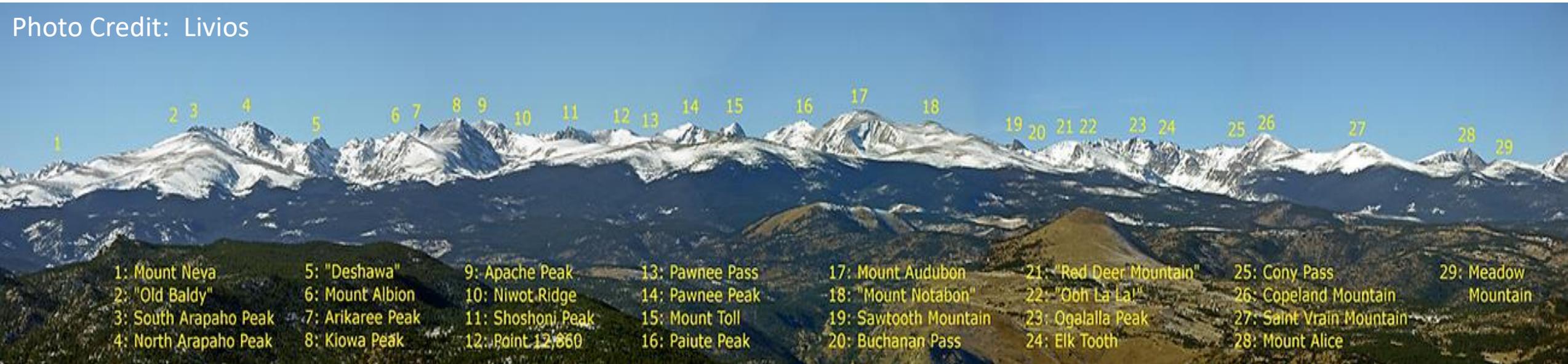
Our Wilderness Areas



Photo Credit: Steve Cushard

Indian Peaks Wilderness

Photo Credit: Livios

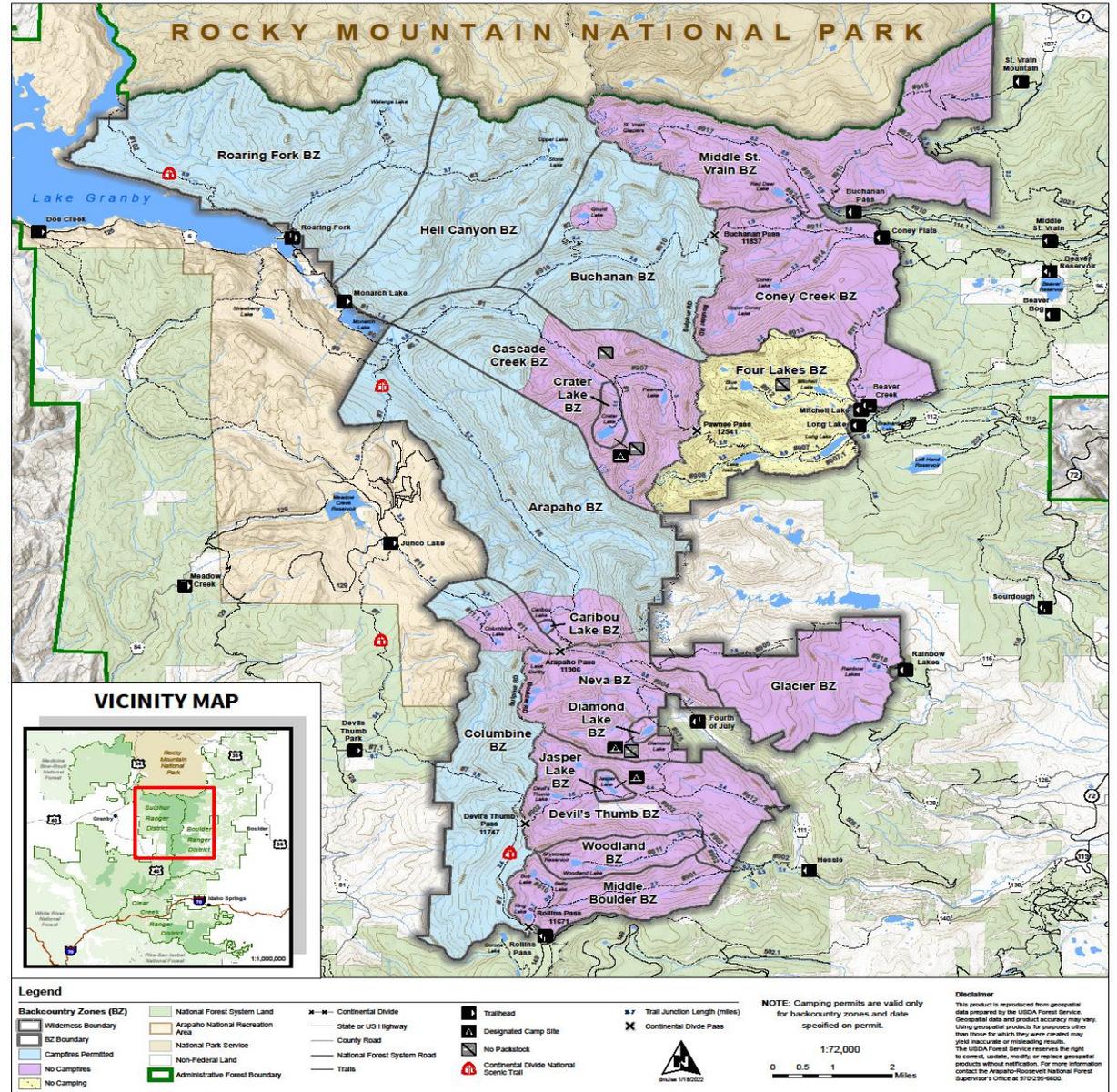


The Indian Peaks Wilderness is among the top five most visited wilderness areas in the country with ~ 150,000+ visitors per season.

- ~ 30 minute drive from Boulder, ~ 60 minutes from Denver.
- Situated within the Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forests.
- Peaks named by Ellsworth Bethel in early 1900's after native American tribes that visited/populated the area or were based in the West

INDIAN PEAKS WILDERNESS AREA

Camping Permit Required June 1 through September 15



Indian Peaks Wilderness

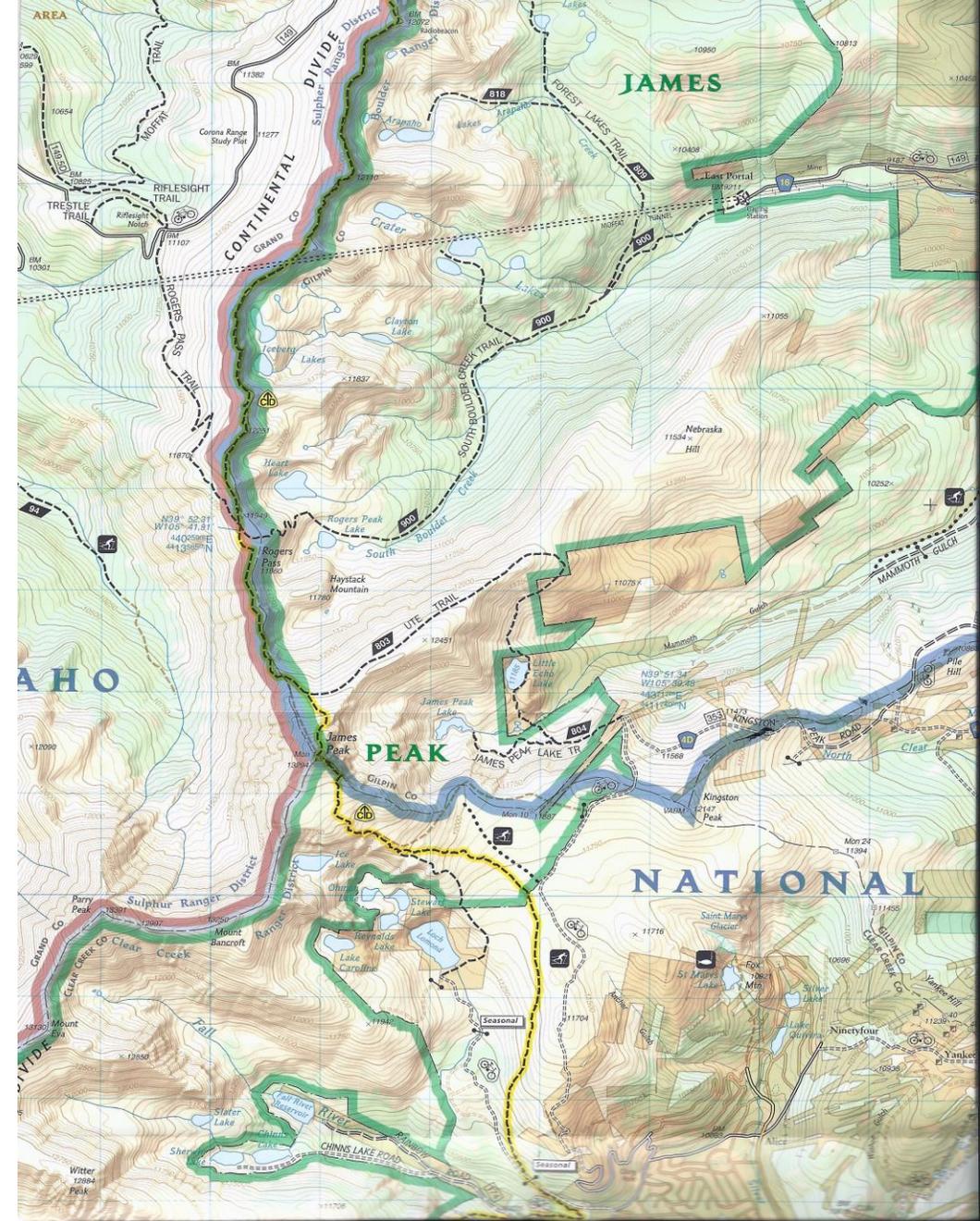
The IPW was designated as wilderness in 1978 by an act of Congress and encompasses ~ 75,000 acres.

- Originally proposed to be part of Rocky Mtn National park by Enos Mills, the IPW is located just south of the Park.
- The IPW stretches 18 miles north/south and 15 miles east west at the widest point.
- Elevations range from 8,300' to 13,500'.
- 7 peaks over 13,000'.
- 28 maintained trails covering ~ 130 miles.
- Camping permits required (*only wilderness in Colorado requiring permits*).

James Peak Wilderness

The JPW was designated as wilderness in 2002 – by an act of Congress and signed by George W. Bush.

- ~ 17,000 acres, with majority on the East side of the Continental Divide.
- Situated within 4 distinct Colorado counties – Boulder, Clear Creek, Gilpin and Grand.
- Named after Edwin James, botanist that was part of Stephen Long's expedition to Colorado in 1820.
- ~ 20 miles of trail.
- Elevation from 9,000' to over 13,000'.
- Upper montane, sub alpine, alpine ecosystems.
- The Winter Park Ski train from Denver goes underneath the JPW at the Moffat Tunnel!



Our USFS Boulder Ranger District Partner

IPWA “assists the Boulder Ranger District by providing a volunteer presence in the Indian Peaks and James Peak Wilderness Areas that promotes responsible visitor use and supports the preservation of the Wilderness and the areas natural resources.”

- IPWA and USFS
 - Work together under a 5 year joint Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) which defines roles, responsibilities, and working relationship.
 - Conduct joint volunteer training annually
 - Plan and execute joint projects annually
- Volunteers complete annual service agreements.



Other Alliances

We also partner and create alliances with a wide variety of other organizations to achieve our mission.

| Task | IPWA | Partner |
|------------|------|---------|
| Patrolling | | |
| Trail work | | |
| Research | | |
| Staffing | | |
| Advocacy | | |
| Etc... | | |



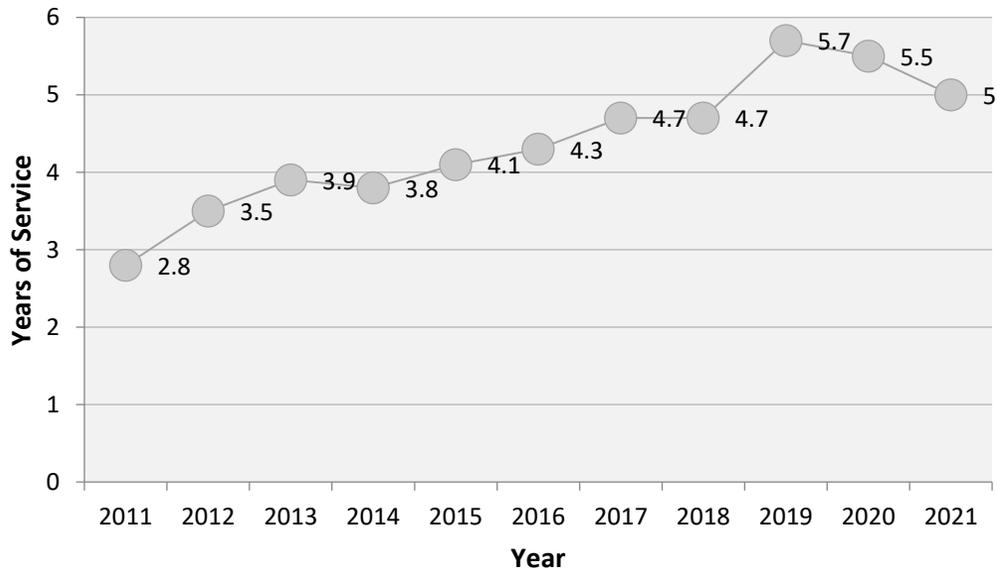
Current and Past Alliances

- American Land and Leisure
- Bear Vault
- Boulder Bookstore
- Bryan Mountain Ski Patrol
- Colorado Mountain Club (CMC)
- Front Range CPR
- National Wilderness Stewardship Alliance (NWSA)
- Rocky Mountain Conservancy
- Rocky Mountain Youth Corp
- University of Colorado
- University of Northern Colorado - Center for Urban Education
- Wildland Restoration Volunteers
- and more!

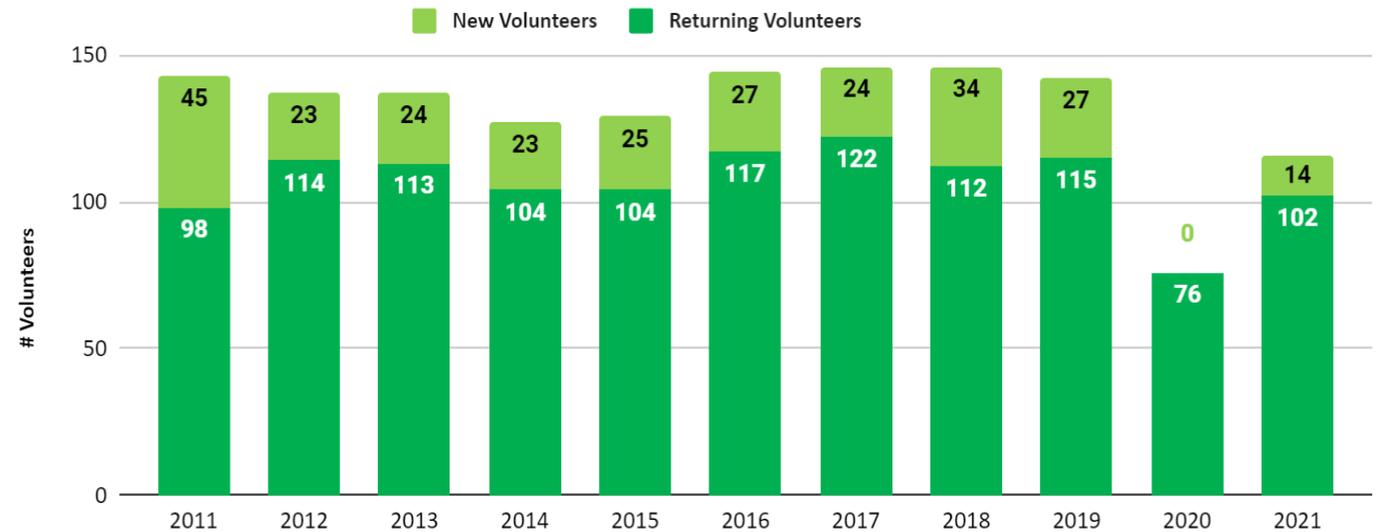
Our Volunteers

In 2020 and 2021, IPWA gave returning volunteers the option to pause their volunteer status for COVID related safety reasons but to remain as volunteers. In 2021, after vaccines and improved guidance many volunteers resumed activities and we were able to add 14 enthusiastic new volunteers to IPWA.

Average Years of Service of IPWA Volunteers



Number of IPWA Volunteers by Year



*2020 Includes returning volunteers only. 75 active and 72 "slip a year" volunteers due to COVID-19.

In 2021, IPWA provided 3003 hours of volunteer service at a value of \$85K to the USFS, provided 2 research grants, and funded much needed trail restoration!



Our Programs

To “Preserve and Protect the Indian Peaks and James Peak Wilderness Areas” we implement four main programs with our 100% volunteer workforce.

| Wilderness Restoration | Wilderness Education | Wilderness Advocacy | Wilderness Patrols |
|--|--|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Trail Projects• Trail Tree Clearing | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Research Grants• Internships• Information Specialists• Wilderness in Nature | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Newsletters• Social Media• Member Outreach• Lectures Series | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Summer• Winter• Trailhead Host |

Note: *The IPWA Internship, Information Specialist, and Trailhead Host Activities were paused in 2021 due to BRD and IPWA resource constraints and COVID restrictions.*



Wilderness Restoration :

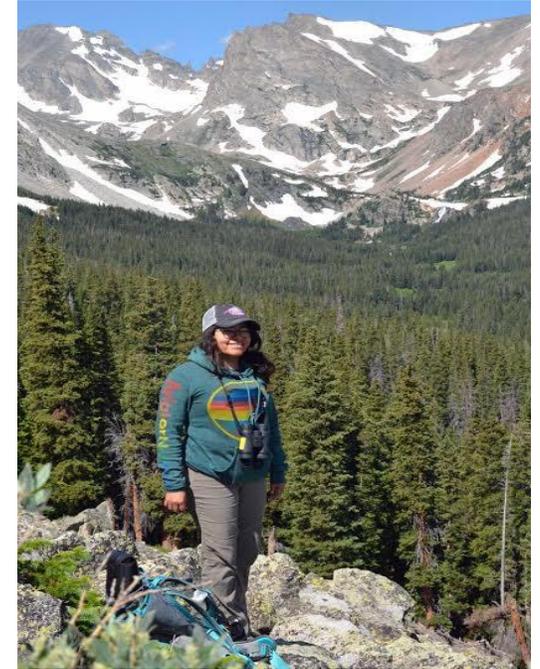
- Trail Maintenance – Our volunteers completed 4 trail projects to improve drainage, replace a bog bridge and built new rock-cribbed turnpikes
- Trail Tree Clearing - work to remove as many trees as possible from wilderness trails prior to heavy summer hiking season and pre-winter patrol season. In 2021, Volunteers removed over 60 trees from wilderness trails

Wilderness Education: *Paddon/Gellhorn Research Grants**

For over 20 years, IPWA has provided research grants to graduate students for studies within high altitude ecosystem. In 2021 we provided 2 grants for a total of \$4000.



Scott Nordstrom (PhD Candidate, University of Colorado): Do shading and soil moisture influence flowering time in alpine wildflowers? ([see video report](#))



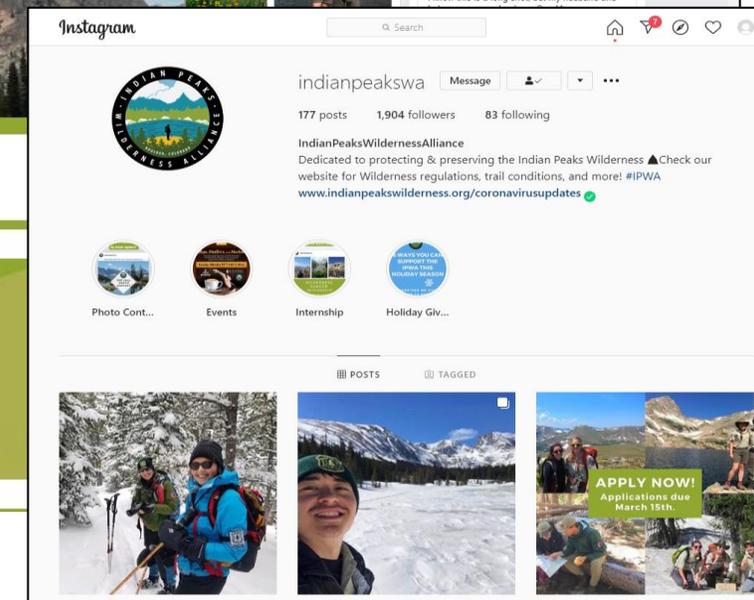
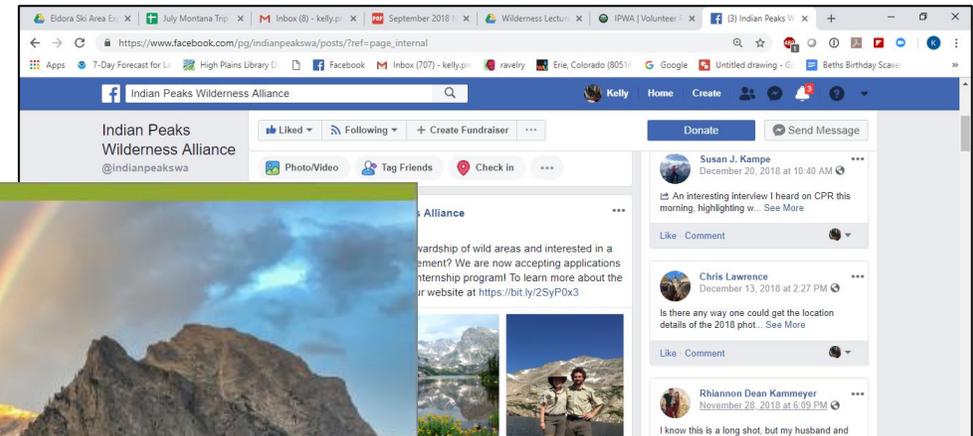
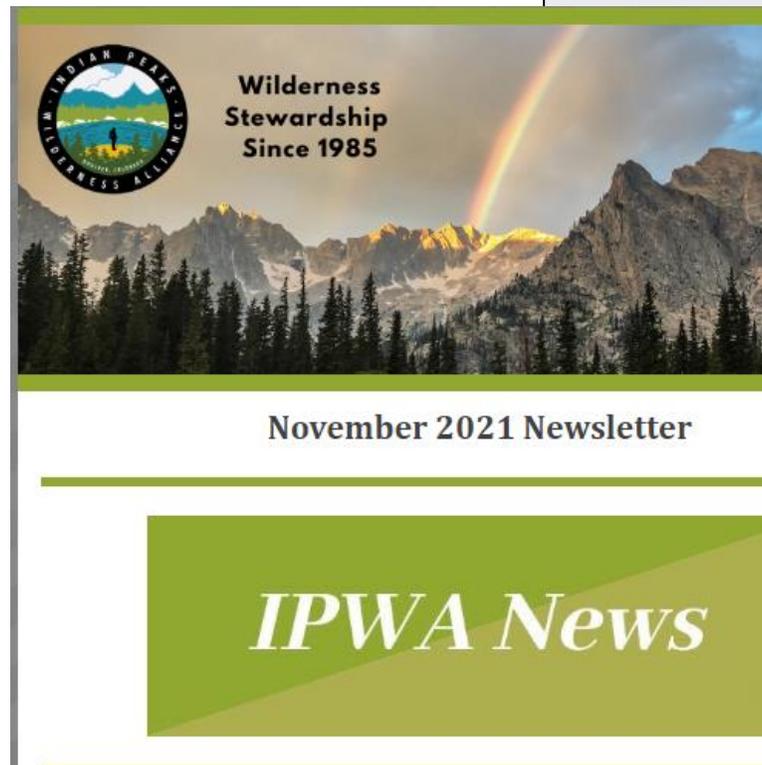
Airy Peralta (PhD Candidate, University of Colorado): Improving forecasting of pika occupancy in Rocky Mountain National Park using microclimatic variables as predictors ([see video report](#))

*Named for David Paddon and Joyce Gellhorn – researchers, teachers, and supporters of the wilderness.

Wilderness Advocacy: Outreach

IPWA uses a variety of methods to reach its volunteers, members and friends on topics and issues of importance relating to the IP and JP Wilderness.

- We reach over 5000 contacts through
 - **Monthly Newsletter** (1684 contacts)
 - **Newly designed website**
 - www.indianpeakswilderness.org
 - **Expanded Social Media**
 - Facebook (2315 followers)
 - Instagram (2387 followers)
 - Constant Contact Email Groups



Wilderness Advocacy Outreach Articles:

IPWA members provide informational articles on our blog site relating to various aspects of the Indian Peaks and James Peak Wilderness areas (Wildlife, Human and natural history, access)

[The Hessie Shuttle: Past and Future](#)



[BEARing Responsibility](#)



[Native American History of the Indian Peaks and James Peak Wilderness Areas](#)



[What the Duff?](#)



Wilderness Patrols: Winter Season

Our volunteers patrol the Brainard Lake Recreation Area and James Peak Area from the end of hunting season to the start of the summer

IPWA Winter Patrollers are trained in:

- Basic wilderness first aid and CPR
- Radio and satellite device communications

- Complete additional classroom and field training

- In 2020-2021, winter patrol season IPWA
 - Completed over 64 patrols
 - Logged 524 volunteer hours
 - Skied or snowshoed over 1079 miles
 - Contacted more than 2800 visitors



Dismantling a prohibited structure in the Wilderness

A wide-angle photograph of a mountain valley. The foreground is filled with large, light-colored boulders and patches of snow. In the middle ground, a valley floor is visible, partially covered in snow and surrounded by rocky slopes. The background shows more mountain peaks, some shrouded in mist or low clouds. Evergreen trees are scattered throughout the scene, particularly in the foreground and on the right side. The overall atmosphere is cool and somewhat overcast.

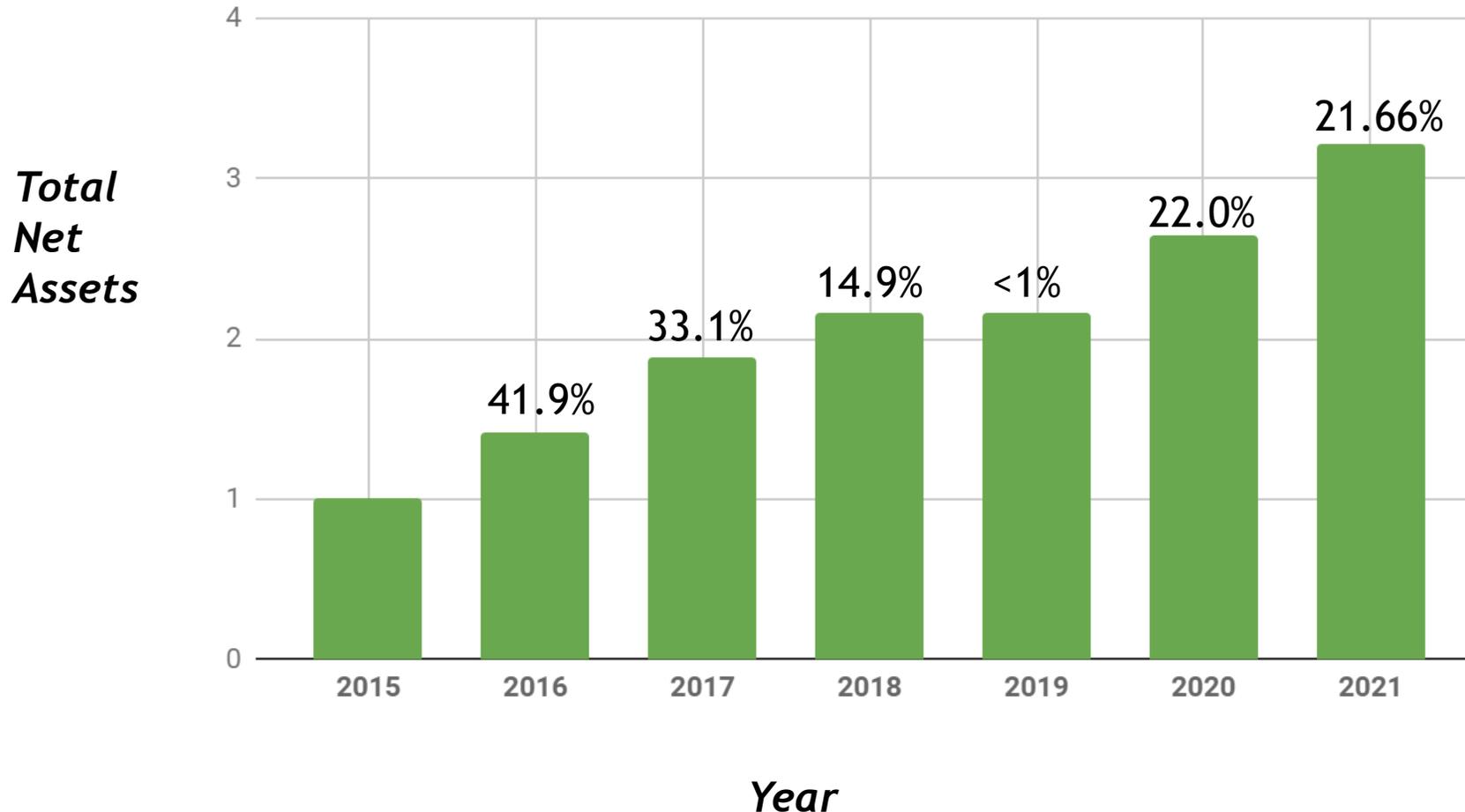
Finance and Accounting

Photo Credit: Carol Dozier

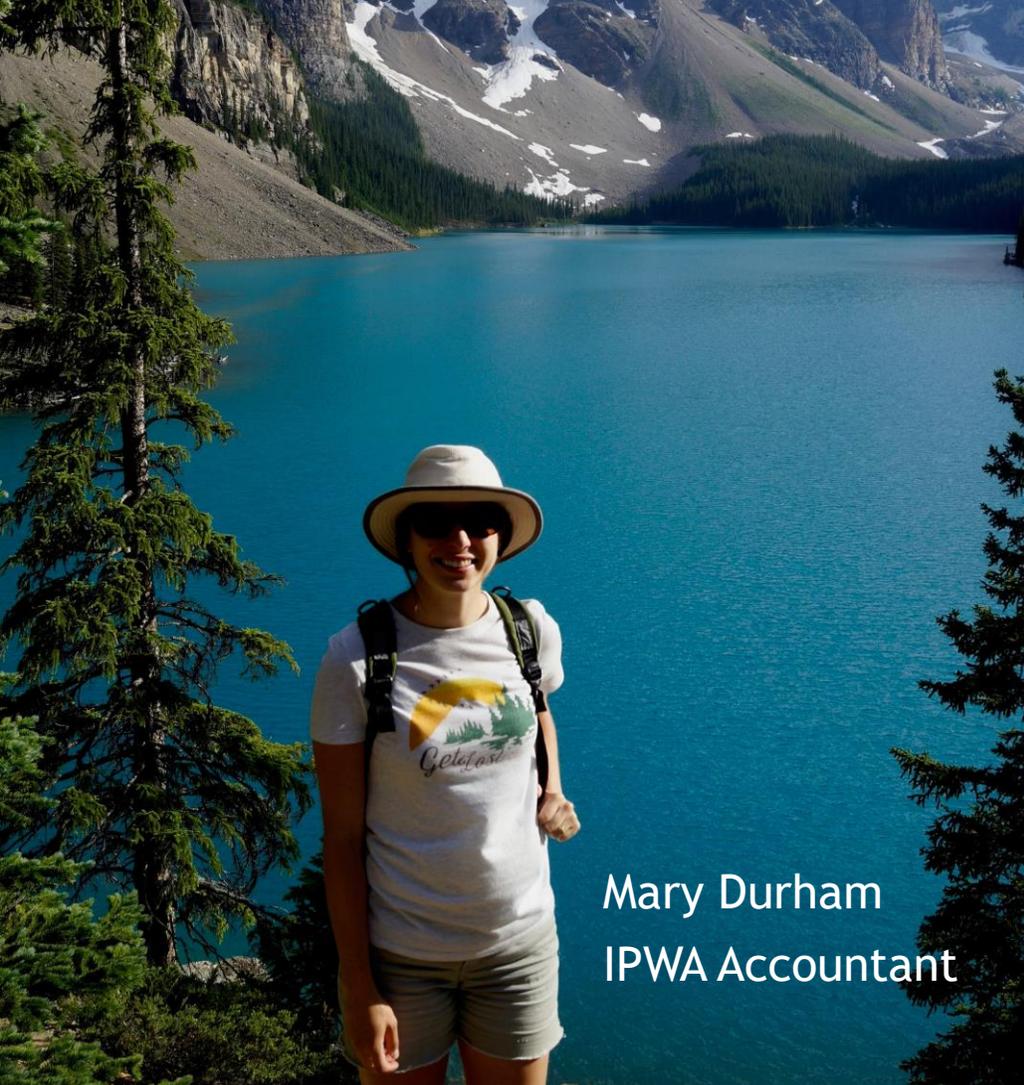
2021 Financial Status

Thanks to all of our incredible donors and grantors!

IPWA Net Assets: Percent Growth Over Prior Year



➤ The IPWA is a 100% volunteer organization so all funding goes to programs and operations. We have no paid staff.



Mary Durham
IPWA Accountant

Thank You!



For the past 5 years, IPWA has been incredibly fortunate to have the Boulder based accounting firm of KCO, Inc manage our accounting and financial and tax reporting requirements.

2021 Grant: Thank you NWSA!

In 2021, the IPWA was fortunate to receive a summer grant from the National Wilderness Stewardship Alliance (NWSA) to help fund our Education and Trail Maintenance Programs.



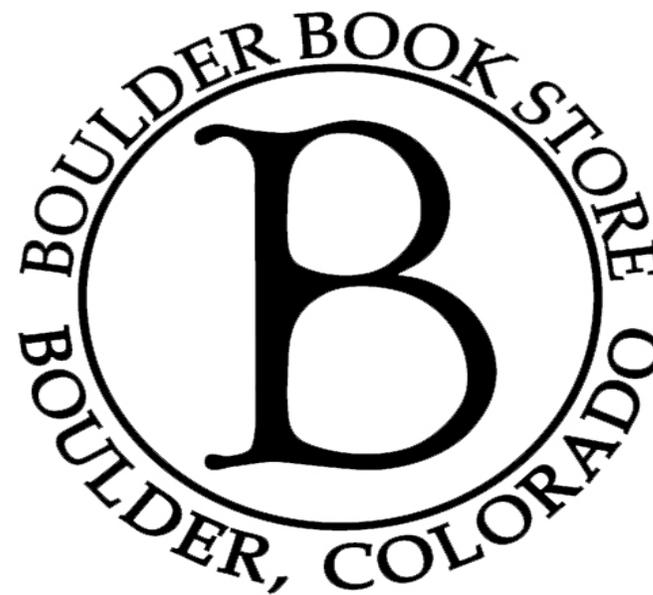
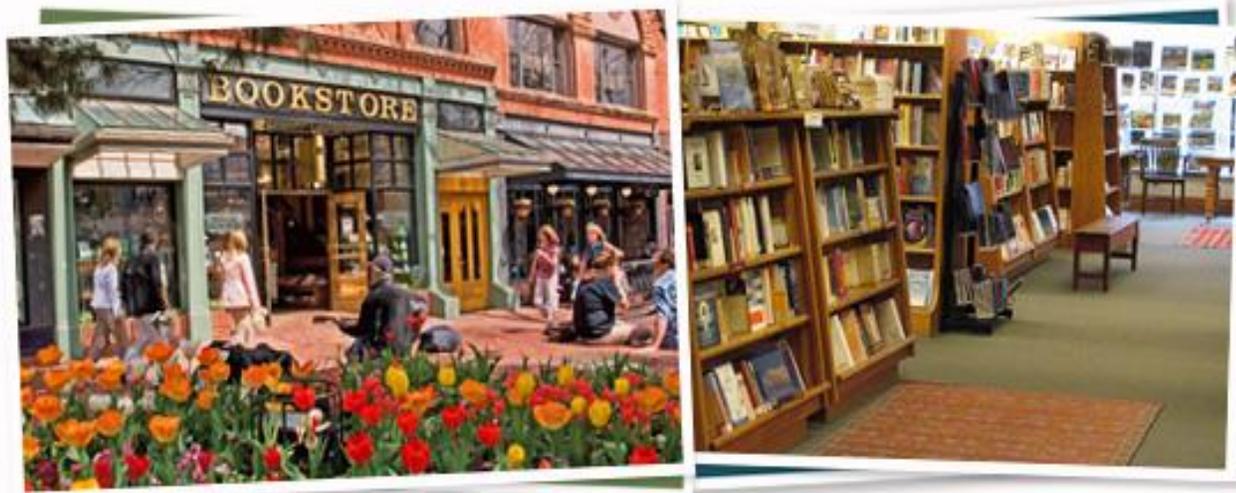
NATIONAL WILDERNESS
STEWARDSHIP
ALLIANCE

- The NWSA brings together the growing wilderness stewardship volunteer community to provide stewardship for America's enduring resource of wilderness. (www.wildernessalliance.org).

Local Corporate Fundraising

In 2021, The Boulder Bookstore and IPWA teamed up for another year to do a giftwrap fundraiser throughout the holiday season.

Thank you Boulder Bookstore!

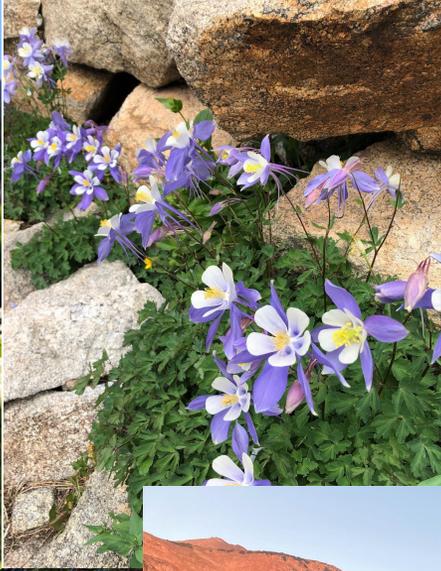


Fundraising: Photo Contest

- 2021 was IPWA's 7th year to hold an annual Volunteer/member Photo Contest.
- Selected photos are turned into note cards which are in turn provided to select donors as a "Thank You" for their financial support.



Photo Credit: Jeff Bluhm

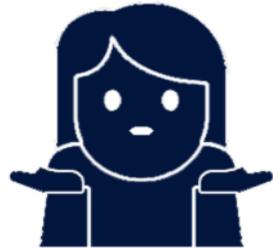


Challenges/Opportunities to Our Mission

During our next planning cycle, we see a number of challenges facing our organization, the USFS, and the IPW/JPW Areas including:



Overuse



Lack of
Awareness

*of Leave No Trace
Principles*



Technology

**Drones, Mtn Bikes,
Social Media**



Pollution

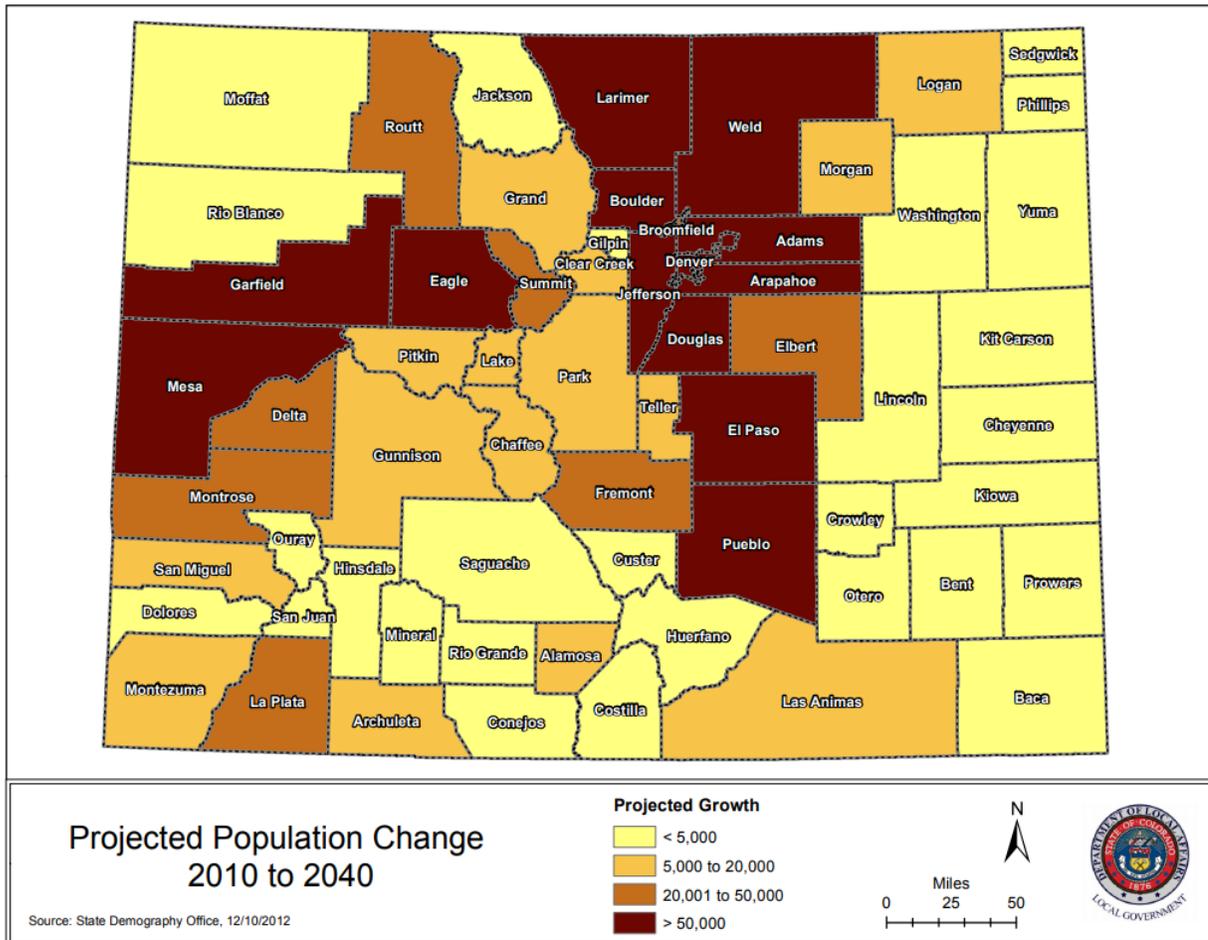


Climate
Change

Learn more about these challenges and how we can help by [clicking here.](#)

Colorado Population Growth

According to US Census data, between 2010 and 2020, Colorado's population increase by 744,518 or 14.8% since 2010.



- IP/JP Wilderness Implications:
 - IPW/JPW will see increased visitation with associated challenges (e.g. traffic, parking, trail congestion, social trails, garbage, etc.)
 - Visitor education will be of even greater importance.
 - Permitting systems may need to be considered in the JPW.
- IPWA Implications:
 - Greater need for our services.

Mountain Bikes in the Wilderness

The proposed “Human-Powered Travel in Wilderness Areas Act” - SR 1695 was introduced by Sen. Mike Lee (R-UT) in 2019 and proposes modifications the 1964 Wilderness Act to allow mountain bikes in the wilderness.



➤ IPW/JPW Wilderness Concerns

- Acceleration of trail erosion
- Will likely lead to small animal and plant deaths on or next to the trail,
- Will likely drive larger wildlife and other trail users out of the area due to highspeed trail conflicts

IPWA Over The Next 5 Years

Building on a firm foundation, IPWA will focus on increasing our multi-generational membership and volunteer community, becoming more ethnically diverse, enhancing our online presence, and furthering our educationally focused wilderness preservation programs.



IPWA is 100% Volunteer Run hikers@Indianpeakswilderness.org



“Saving Wilderness,



Changing Lives”

IPWA Board Members and Officers:

- Kelly Prendergast (Chair)
- Andy Gup (Vice Chair)
- Fiona Garvin (Treasurer)
- Emily Herrington (Secretary)
- Yonah Cohen
- Reghan Gillman
- CJ Gup
- Daryl Ogden
- Faith Overall
- Alexa Carollo

IPWA would like to hear from you so please send us your thoughts at:

hikers@indianpeakswilderness.org

“Keep it Wild”

The IPWA Board