



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – 12/09/14

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Counties: Adams, Chaffee, Clear Creek, El Paso, Grand, Gunnison, La Plata, Mesa, Mineral, Montrose, Pueblo, Routt, Summit, and Teller

GOCO awards \$500,000 for Youth Corps fire mitigation, trail projects

DENVER – Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) awarded \$500,000 in grants that will employ hundreds of youth across the state. Corps members will work on a variety of projects critical to Colorado’s ecological health as well as projects designed to improve public access and safety.

The 17 projects taking place in summer 2015 are expected to complete:

- 16.8 miles of trail rehabilitation or construction
- 450 feet of fence construction
- 103.8 acres of fire mitigation and forest restoration
- 31.2 acres of invasive species removal
- 1 mile of riparian restoration work

Funds were awarded to 14 different counties; Adams, Chaffee, Clear Creek, El Paso, Grand, Gunnison, La Plata, Mesa, Mineral, Montrose, Pueblo, Routt, Summit, and Teller counties will all benefit from Youth Corps projects funded through GOCO’s competitive grant program. The grants were awarded at the Board’s Dec. 9 meeting in Colorado Springs. Details about each grant can be found at the end of this release.

The grants will be administered by the Colorado Youth Corps Association (CYCA) and will deploy crews from seven Youth Corps across the state. Presently, there are 10 CYCA Accredited Youth Corps in Colorado that engage and train 1,600 youth between the ages of 14 and 25 each year for land, water, and conservation work. Youth Corps participants earn a living stipend for their full-time service and an AmeriCorps education award to use toward college or trade school.

Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) invests a portion of Colorado Lottery proceeds to help preserve and enhance the state's parks, trails, wildlife, rivers and open spaces. GOCO's independent board awards competitive grants to local governments and land trusts, and makes investments through Colorado Parks and Wildlife. Created when voters approved a Constitutional Amendment in 1992, GOCO has since funded more than 4,500 projects in urban and rural areas in all 64 counties without any tax dollar support. Visit goco.org for more information.

GRANT DETAILS

ADAMS COUNTY: The City of Brighton was awarded \$17,550 to address safety issues at ten parks as well as beautify the Downtown parking lot. Crews from Mile High Youth Corps will spread mulch, plant trees and shrubs, and constructed a fence.

CHAFFEE COUNTY: The City of Salida received \$36,900 to remove noxious weeds and other invasive species along the Salida Trail and Salida School Garden site. Crews from the Southwest Conservation Corps will also replant native plants and annual garden crops to revitalize the ecosystem.

CLEAR CREEK COUNTY: Clear Creek County will utilize \$13,800 from GOCO to perform fire mitigation in the Floyd Hill, Beaver Brook, and Saddleback residential areas. The project will help maintain a clear evacuation route for the approximately 400 homes at risk.

EL PASO COUNTY: The Mile High Youth Corps will complete two projects in El Paso County, including the restoration of Fountain Creek Regional Trail and three projects involving fire mitigation and reforestation efforts in response to 2013's Black Forest wildfire. In total, El Paso County received \$55,050.

GRAND COUNTY: Rocky Mountain Youth Corps will work to create a non-motorized trail system in the Town of Winter Park that will connect downtown to the Idlewild Trail System. The Town received \$12,600 from GOCO for the project.

GUNNISON COUNTY: The Town of Crested Butte received \$25,200 in GOCO funds for the Baxter Gulch Trail project, which connects land owned by the Town to a series of trail and conservation easements until it reaches Gunnison National Forest.

LA PLATA COUNTY: GOCO funded two projects in La Plata County for a total investment of \$33,000. The Ignacio School District Trail Project will help connect schools to their communities and remove barriers for residents that want to access the outdoors. The second project will create fuel breaks across the Newmyer Conservation Easement in Durango.

MESA COUNTY: The City of Grand Junction received \$15,000 to clear invasive species from the City's long awaited Matchett Park project. Removal of invasive species by the Western Colorado Conservation Corps will allow a variety of amenities to be created at the park.

MINERAL COUNTY: The Rio Grande Headwaters Land Trust will utilize a \$12,600 grant to improve riparian vegetation to anchor currently eroding river banks along the Rio Grande.

MONTROSE COUNTY: The City of Montrose received \$15,000 to spray 25.5 acres of noxious weeds and build two miles of sustainable, non-motorized hiking trails in the Cerro Summit Recreation Area.

PUEBLO COUNTY: \$45,000 in GOCO funds will enable to City of Pueblo to hire Youth Corps crews to remove invasive species, control erosion, and mitigate the Mountain Pine Beetle population on the Colorado Trail System and Pueblo's Urban Forest.

ROUTT COUNTY: The City of Steamboat Springs received \$37,800 for two projects on the Spring Creek Trail as well as the Emerald Directional Trail. The project in Spring Creek will enhance trail safety, prevent erosion, and protect the water quality of Spring Creek, while the project on the Emerald Directional Trail endeavors to mitigate user conflict on the multi-use trail.

SUMMIT COUNTY: The Golden Horseshoe Trail will be created near the Town of Breckenridge thanks to \$31,500 in GOCO funds. The project will construct over 3.5 miles of trail connections.

TELLER COUNTY: Palmer Land Trust was awarded \$90,000 to hire Mile High Youth Corps crews for a 12-week fire mitigation project near Divide. In addition to significant environmental benefits, the project will also provide Corps members with a range of educational opportunities.