



Brief

Our Mission: "The Mosquito Range Heritage Initiative, through cooperative efforts, seeks to conserve unique natural areas, preserve historic & cultural sites, promote diverse recreation and develop community business opportunities."

December 2016



Outstanding Year for MRHI's Rare Plants & Trails



MRHI with the South Park Ranger District

But they do not have the funding to pay for research. "So, relationships with partners who are able to get this information are invaluable," says Lamb.

By targeting 35 different areas in the Mosquito Range this year our team was able to find 61 instances of rare or uncommon plants. We also returned to known locations and monitored 31 existing sites. In 2016 our team covered over 279 acres of the spectacular Mosquito Range.

MRHI's 2016 Rare Alpine Plant project was a great success. Each year, we build on the Rare Plant Project, adding new angles to this ongoing research to provide agencies with the highest quality of information to inform rare plant, recreational, and road management policies in South Park.

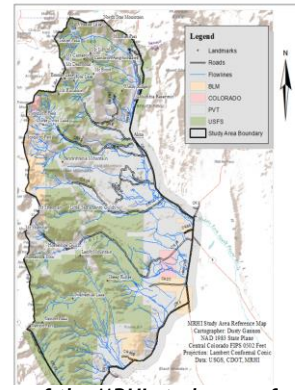
According to Sheila Lamb, South Park Ranger District, the Forest Service and other partners have a need for information, especially related to rare, sensitive, threatened, and endangered species (TES) to assist with land management.



Draba incerta

This summer we found *Draba incerta* for the first time in Park County. This flowering plant, sometimes called the Yellowstone draba, is in the mustard family.

We were also hard at work on trails. MRHI closed 2.7 miles of trails, affecting 6.5 acres of terrain. We hope that by closing illegal roads and making the designated road clear



Map of the MRHI study area from Hoosier Pass to Weston Pass.

we are helping people to choose best practices when exploring and recreating in the mountains.

More than 3 acres of elk wintering grounds and fragile wetlands were saved when MRHI partnered with Wild Connections and other organizations for the 4-day Selkirk Habitat Restoration Project.

Other projects included community trail work

days, multiple closures of illegal roads, pulling noxious weeds, a community hike/wildflower walk series, and several youth conservation projects. Work continues through the winter compiling data and providing community education. Thanks to South Park National Heritage Area, the Summit Foundation and the RAC Secure Rural Schools for their crucial contributions to this year's funding.

UPCOMING EVENTS

MRHI Annual Meeting, January 15th

A new Annual Meeting date has been selected for MRHI in 2017. Brunch with MRHI will be held on January 15th at 11 am in the Alma Town Hall. The meeting was previously held in May; however this new date will align the organization's fiscal and operating calendars. Come enjoy the company of others who are passionate about the Mosquito Range and to learn more. Contact vista@mrhi.org with any questions.



Poker Glide, March 2017

Come ski, snowshoe, or bike (depending on weather)! MRHI's Poker Glide is a fun and family friendly event to collect a poker hand at different card stops along the route. Contact Jara Johnson at jaraajohnson@gmail.com with any questions. More information will be announced closer to the event.



Youth Environmental Education Programs with MRHI

MRHI's Environmental Education Program provides free summer STEM education opportunities for area children of all ages. After four successful years providing environmental education programs for early childhood (ages 3-7), MRHI's 2016 project expanded to include youth from preschool to high school graduation. This included a botanist led phenology fieldwork program for South Park High School students.

By encouraging in youth a passion for our mountains and giving them an opportunity to take part in the conservation of these resources, we work towards the long-term preservation of the Mosquito Range. MRHI looks forward to the 2017 year where we can strengthen our programs by increasing our partnerships with local environmental and youth driven organizations.



Sponsored by the Anschutz Family Foundation, Bridge Network, South Park National Heritage Area, and New Belgium Brewing

Support us on
Colorado Gives Day
Tuesday, December 6
online at ColoradoGives.org
\$1 Million Incentive Fund!



Give where you live

MRHI's Annual Moonwalk Draws over 400 Attendees!

Photos by Dean Butler

September 17th was a clear, cool night – perfect for a walk through the Alma Cemetery. MRHI's annual Alma Buckskin Cemetery Moonwalk let visitors do just that. Members of the South Park community dressed up as historical characters from the mining days and told the tales of their lives and deaths in Buckskin Gulch. Over 400 people came to listen to stories of days gone by and enjoy hot chocolate and homemade cookies. Thank you to all our volunteers and re-enactors, and a special thank you to Sheila Skaggs for organizing the event, and the attendees for coming out. We hope to see you all (and more!) next year.



Did You Know?

December 11th is International Mountain Day!



Established by the United Nations in 2003, International Mountain Day was created to highlight the importance of sustainable mountain development.

Covering around 27 percent of the earth's land surface, mountains provide sustenance and well-being to 720 million mountain people around the world and indirectly benefit billions more living downstream. Mountains also have a high incidence of poverty and are extremely vulnerable to climate change, deforestation, land degradation, and natural disasters. The challenge is to identify new and sustainable opportunities that can bring benefits to both highland and lowland communities and help to eradicate poverty without contributing to the degradation of fragile mountain ecosystems.

International Mountain Day is an opportunity to create awareness about the importance of mountains to life, to highlight the opportunities and constraints in mountain development, and to build partnerships that will bring positive change to the world's mountains and highlands. For more information, visit: <http://www.fao.org/forestry/internationalmountainday/en/>

Sunday, December 16th, 2016 2016 Annual Fairplay Christmas Bird Count

Bird watchers of all skill levels are encouraged to celebrate the outdoors this holiday season by participating in a local bird count. Participants will spend the day observing and counting the number of each species of birds they encounter. The observer can be a field participant who goes out with a group to count birds, or an individual or family who would like to participate at home by watching their backyard feeders. The Fairplay Christmas Bird Count started in December 2012, and interesting birds like common redpolls and rosy finches have been observed in previous years. For more information, or to volunteer or participate in this event, please contact Forest Service, Wildlife Biologist, Kristen Meyer at 719-836-3860 or kristenemeyer@fs.fed.us.

Do you shop online? You can help MRHI - no cost to you! Here's how:

Amazon Smile:

If you do a lot of shopping through Amazon, consider switching to Amazon Smile; Amazon Smile is a new part of amazon.com that donates 0.5% of purchases to the nonprofit of your choice (hopefully it's us!). Amazon Smile has the same merchandise as amazon.com and it's completely free to sign up - start shopping at smile.amazon.com or learn more at <http://smile.amazon.com/about>.

iGive:

When you shop online at over 1,500 stores, a percentage of your purchase can be donated to MRHI by clicking on the iGive Button. You don't pay more, but still raise money for your cause. You can sign up for free at <http://www.iGive.com/MosquitoRangeHeritageInitiative>.

Goodshop & Goodsearch:

Goodsearch: Search the Internet with the patent-protected, Yahoo!-powered search engine (just like you'd search on any other search engine), and Goodsearch will donate about a penny for nearly all searches to your selected cause.
Goodshop: Shop at one of more than 2,800 participating stores (from Amazon to Zazzle) and a percentage of what you spend will be donated to your cause at no cost to you. Oh, and by the way, there's a big added bonus here too. Goodshop lists more than 100,000 coupons and deals so you could save money while doing good!
Visit: <http://www.goodsearch.com> to get started.



MRHI at South Park RE-2 School Career Fair

MRHI was one over 62 participants in the South Park RE 2's Career Fair for elementary through high school students. We spoke with younger students about different fields of natural resources and spoke with high school students about internship, scholarship, fieldwork, and preservation opportunities associated with MRHI.

MRHI would like to express our thanks to Gretchen Panicucci and April-Dawn Knudsen for organizing this important opportunity for the South Park students.

Contact Us!



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Support MRHI, become a Member!

To become a MRHI member, you can either visit our website at www.mrhi.org or request a membership slip and mail it back to us at PO BOX 375, Alma, CO 80420. *Thank you for your support!*

Membership levels: Basic - \$25; Family - \$60; Youth - \$10; Business - \$100; Corporate - \$250.