

Indian Peaks Wilderness Alliance (IPWA)



Photo credit: Luz Newton



2023 Annual Report

Hello IPWA Volunteers, Supporters, and Friends,

We continued to preserve and protect the Indian Peak and James Peak Wilderness Areas year-round in 2023, with our 123 volunteers performing nearly 600 patrols, covering over 3,000 miles and contacting over 40,000 members of the public.

We welcomed 10 new volunteers to IPWA, and re-started our Outreach program with the help of several volunteers who are keen to spread the word about IPWA and protecting the Wilderness. We also continued our annual Photo Contest – winning photos illustrate this Annual Report.

Our financial position is sound, thanks to our generous donors. We have been able to put aside funds to identify some “brick and mortar” projects that IPWA could help fund for the US Forest Service, such as replacing informational kiosks and signage.

Many thanks to our volunteers (especially our hard-working volunteer Board of Directors), US Forest Service Boulder Ranger District, and all of our supporters for another successful year.

Fiona Garvin
IPWA Board Chair

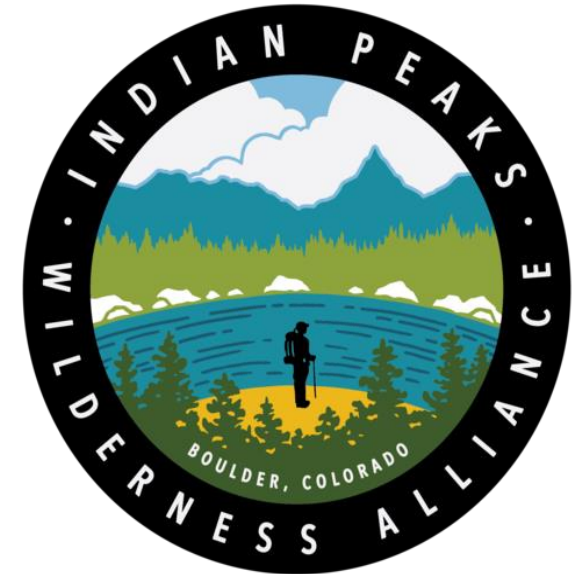




Photo credit: Alexander Meyer

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.

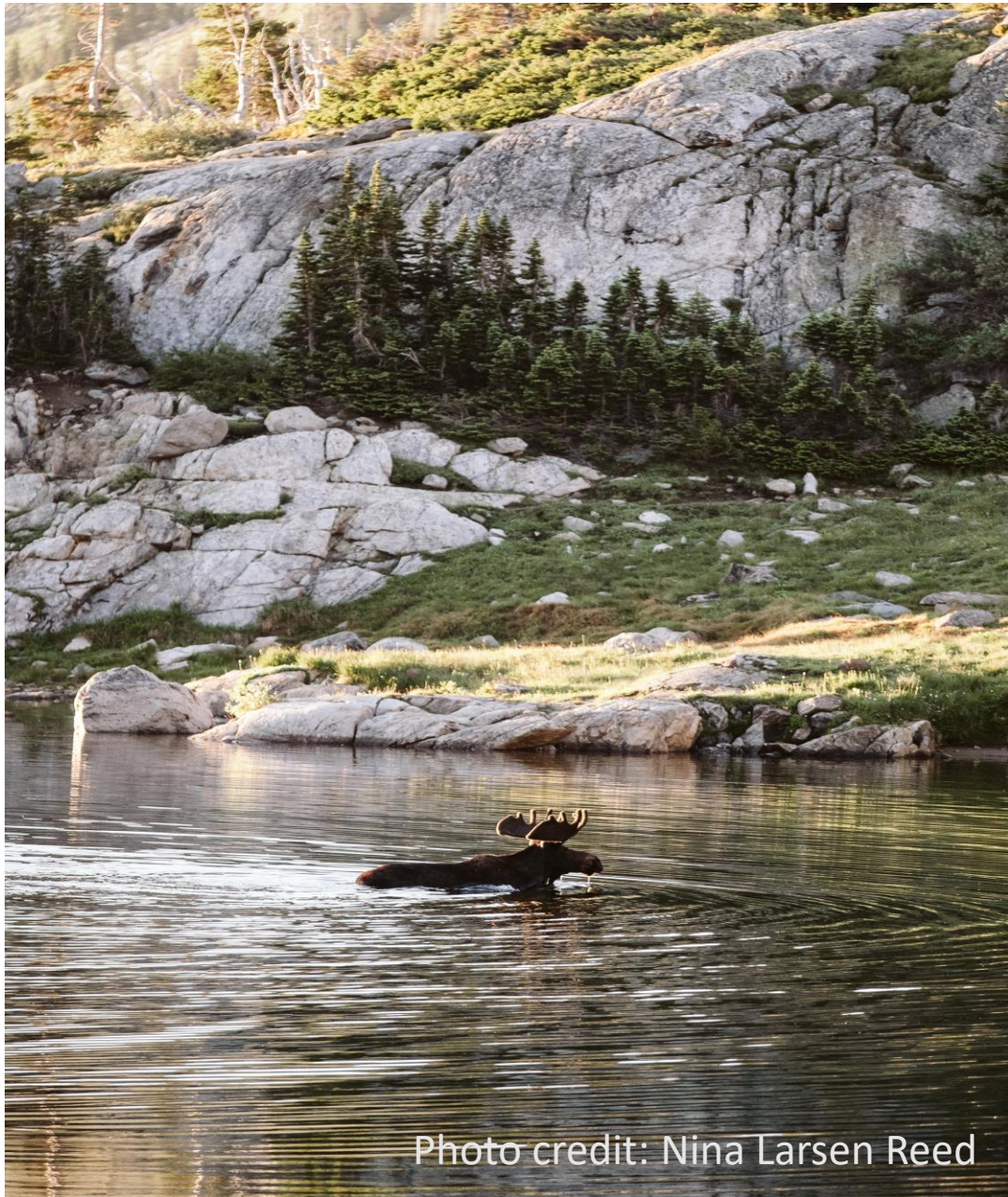


Photo credit: Nina Larsen Reed

“The idea of wilderness needs no defense. It only needs defenders.” — **Edward Abbey**,

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,*
- *Fire education and wildfire prevention,*
- *And more*

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 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 as a Colorado Non-Profit organization. The US Forest Service agreed to most of the group's recommendations, and thus began a citizen- agency partnership which still endures to this day.



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

Our Wilderness Areas



Photo credit: Bill Bowman

Indian Peaks Wilderness

- ***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.

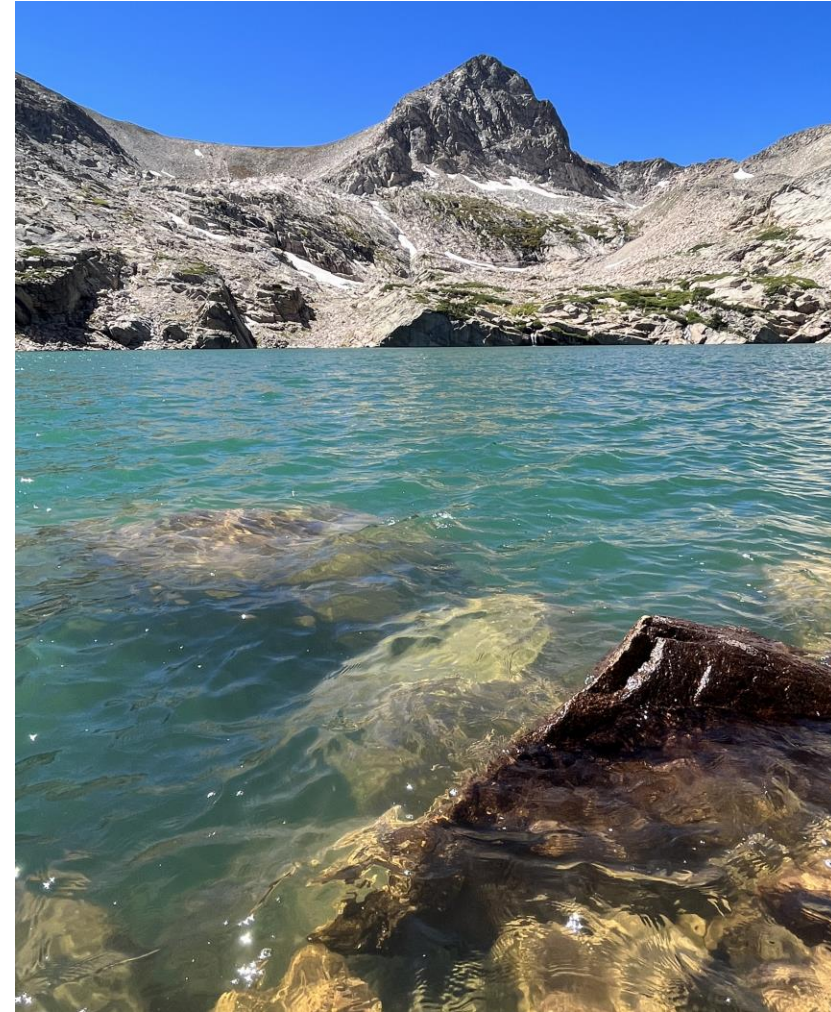
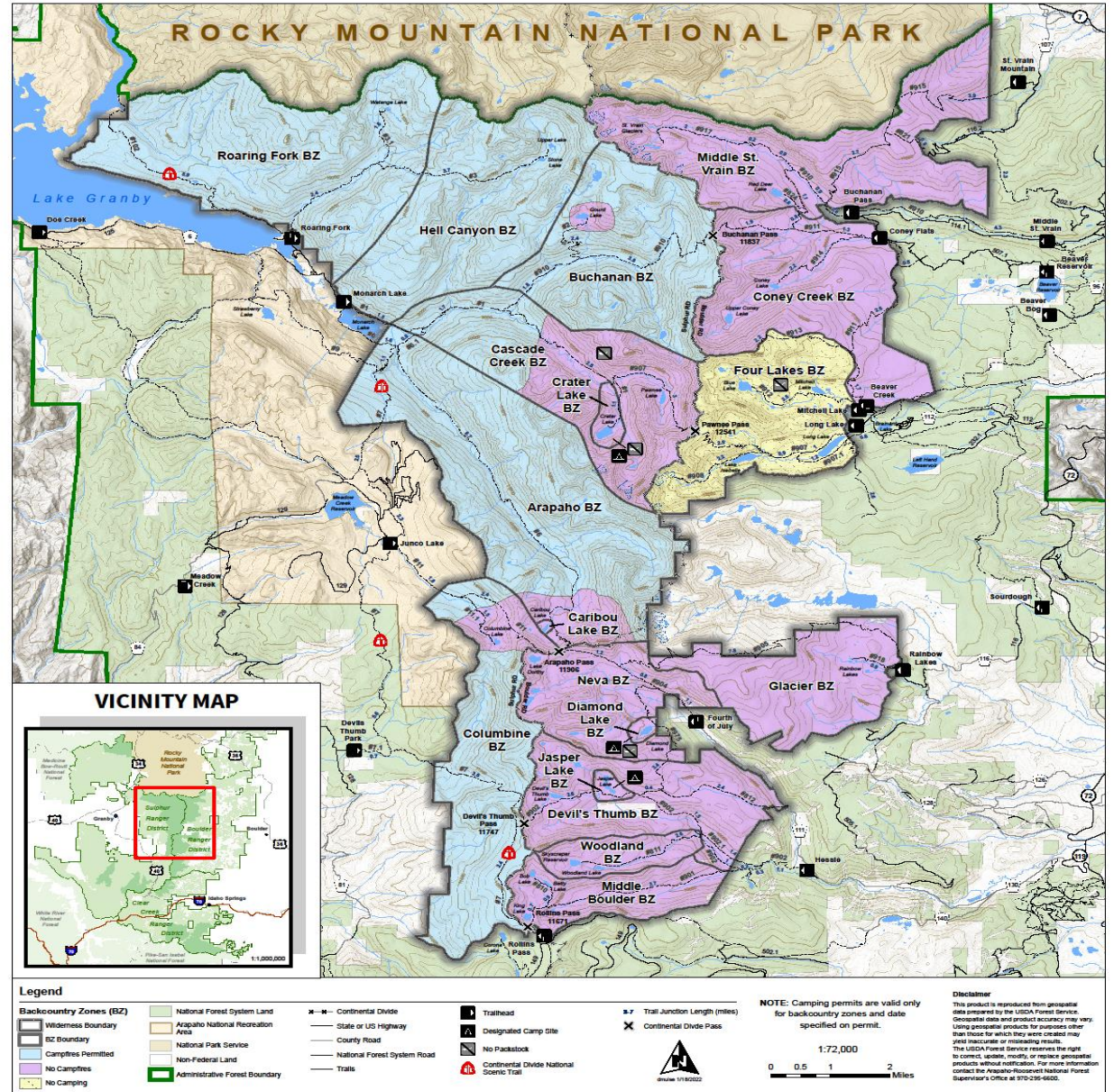


Photo credit: Ellen Steiner

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 approx. 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 which requires permits*).

James Peak Wilderness



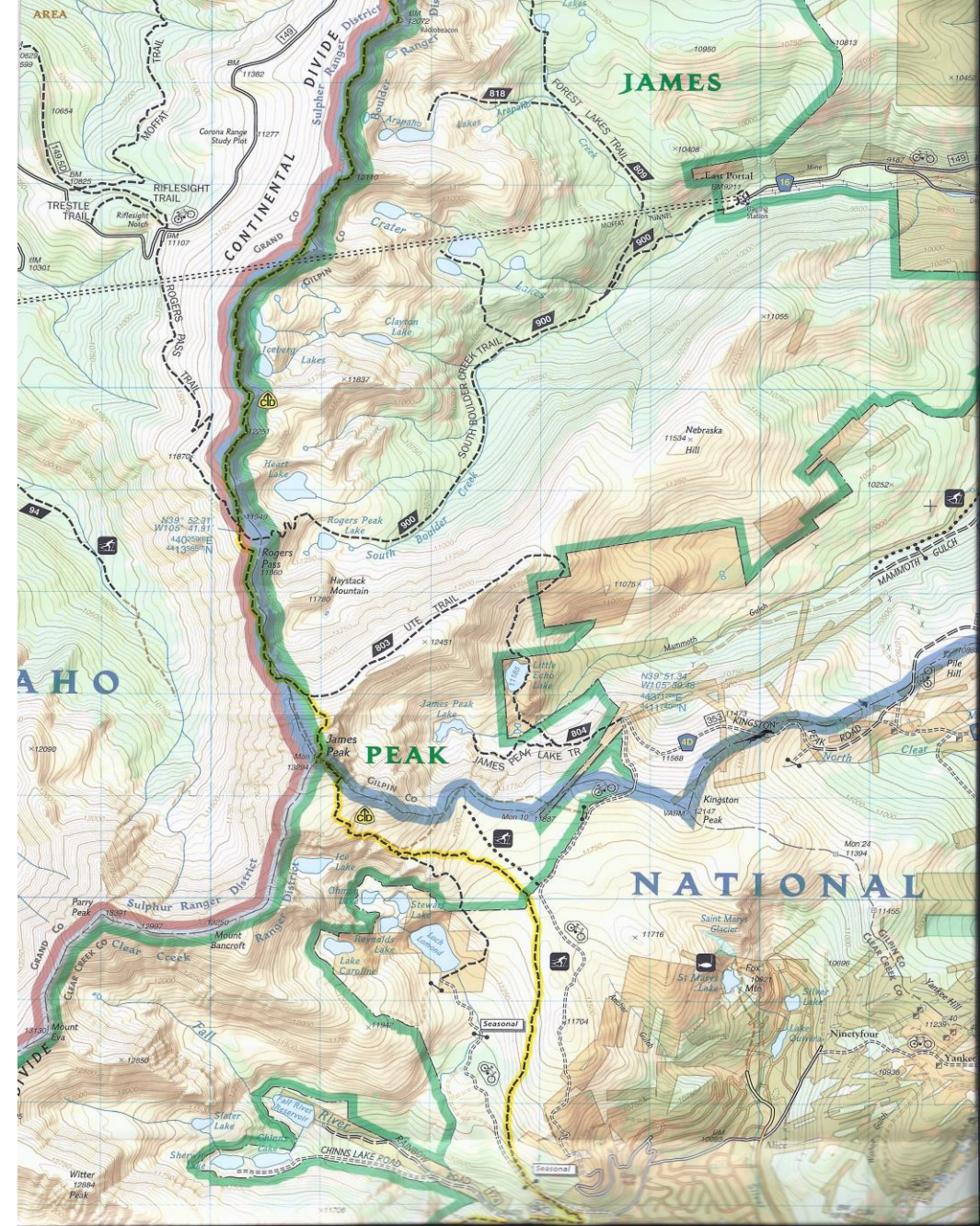
Photo credit: Jeff Bluhm

- **James Peak Wilderness receives heavy usage summer and winter, with ATVs and snowmobiles using the old Rollins Pass road to access the Wilderness as well as thousands of backpackers, anglers, and hunters each year.**
 - ~ 60 minute drive from Boulder, ~ 60 minutes from Denver.
 - Situated within the Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forests.
 - Three main lake basins, plus access to James Peak and western slope trails.

James Peak Wilderness

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

- Approx. 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 who was part of Stephen Long's expedition to Colorado in 1820.
- Approx. 20 miles of trails.
- 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 joint Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) which defines roles, responsibilities, and working relationships.
 - Conduct joint volunteer training annually
 - Plan and execute joint projects annually
- Volunteers complete annual service agreements and RAW (Risk Awareness Worksheet)



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...		



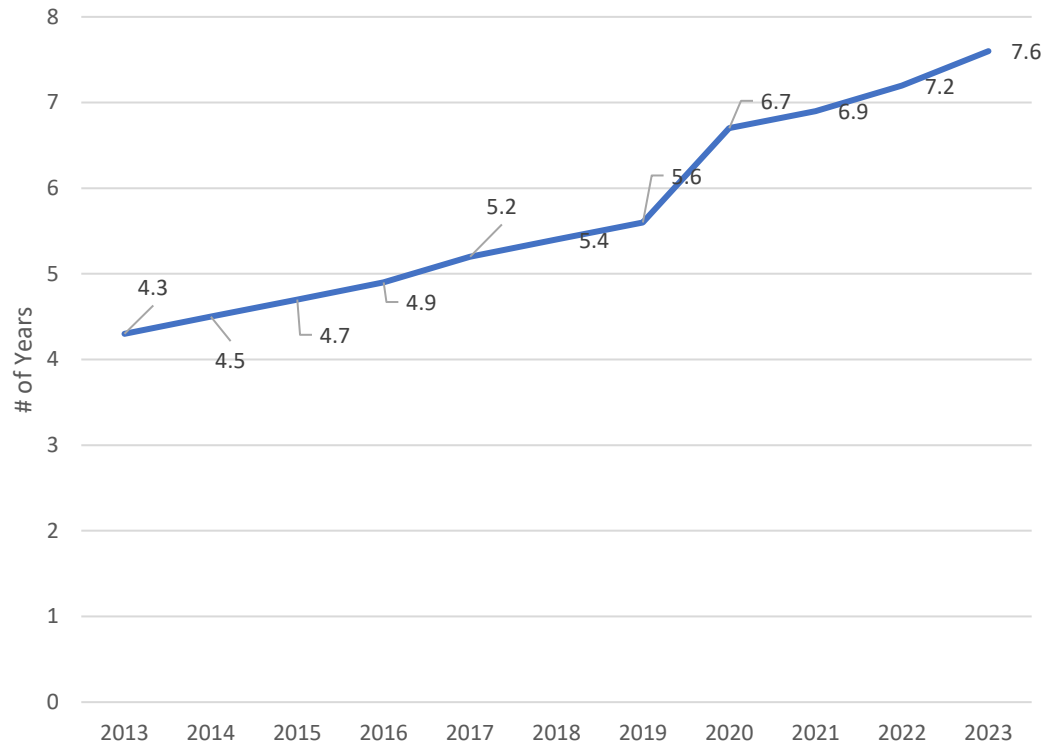
Current and Past Alliances

- American Land and Leisure
- Bear Vault
- Osprey
- Fjallraven
- Boulder Bookstore
- Bryan Mountain Ski Patrol
- Colorado Mountain Club (CMC)
- National Wilderness Stewardship Alliance (NWSA)
- Poudre Wilderness Volunteers
- University of Colorado
- Eldora Ski Area
- and more!

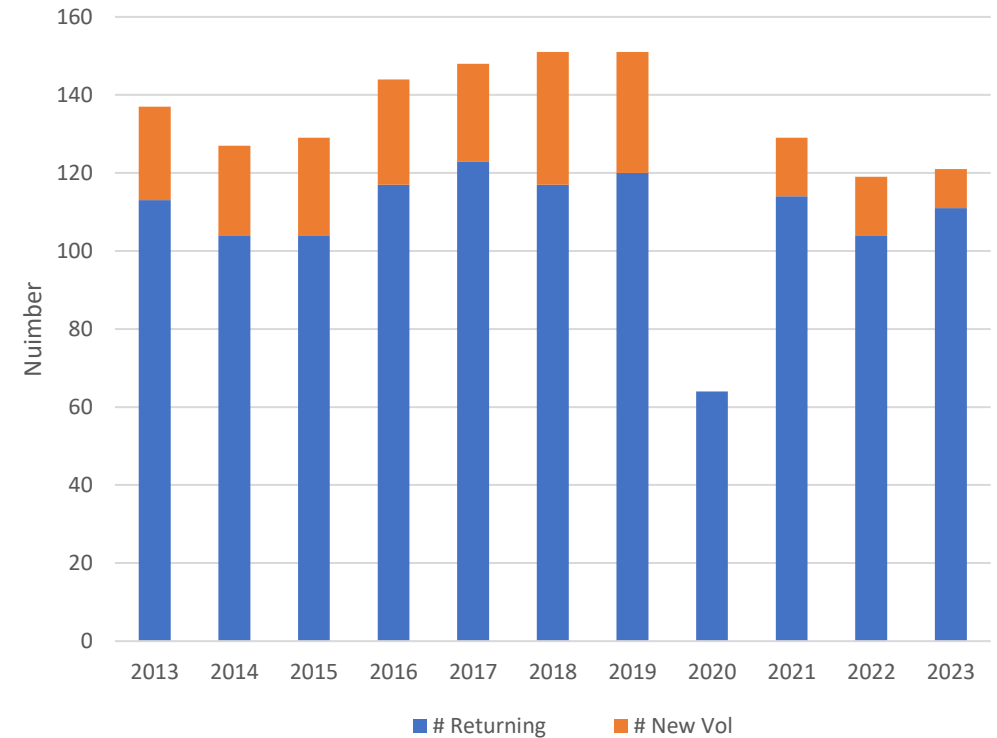
Our Volunteers

In 2020, IPWA gave returning volunteers the option to pause their volunteer status for COVID related safety reasons but to remain as volunteers. With vaccines and improved guidance many volunteers resumed activities and we were able to add 10 enthusiastic new volunteers to IPWA in 2023.

Average Years Volunteering



of IPWA Volunteers



2023, IPWA provided over 2800 hours of volunteer service at a value of \$84K to the USFS and provided 4 research grants to CU graduate students.



Photo credit: Clint Dillard

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 Patrols

- Summer
- Winter

Wilderness Restoration

- Trail Projects
- Trail Tree Clearing

Wilderness Education

- Research Grants
- Trailhead Host program

Wilderness Advocacy

- Newsletters
- Social Media
- Outreach Events

Wilderness Patrols: Summer Season



In the 2023 Summer Patrol season, IPWA volunteers:

- Spent 2,335 hours on 355 patrols, covering 3,083 miles
- Contacted 35,108 members of the public and 5,359 dogs (451 off-leash)
- Removed 99 illegal fire rings

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 season.

IPWA Winter Patrollers complete additional classroom and field training in:

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

- In 2022-2023, winter patrol season, IPWA Volunteers:
 - Completed 124 patrols
 - Logged 482 volunteer hours
 - Skied or snowshoed over 749 miles
 - Contacted more than 4,511 visitors
 - Encountered 220 bikes and 697 dogs (133 off-leash)



Trailhead Host Days:

Our Trailhead Host program hosted two days at East Portal Trailhead (James Peak Wilderness) and one day at Hessie Trailhead (Indian Peaks Wilderness)



IPWA contacted 1,382 visitors during Trailhead Host days, including approximately 250 backpackers heading into the three main lake basins of JPW



Wilderness Restoration:

In 2023, IPWA Volunteers worked to remove several trees from wilderness trails. While our trained sawyers were eager to do more tree work, USFS staffing constraints limited our number of projects. We anticipate increased efforts in 2024, both in tree work and trail maintenance!



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 2023 we provided 4 grants for a total of \$7,061. See links below for an introduction to the researchers and a summary of their work.

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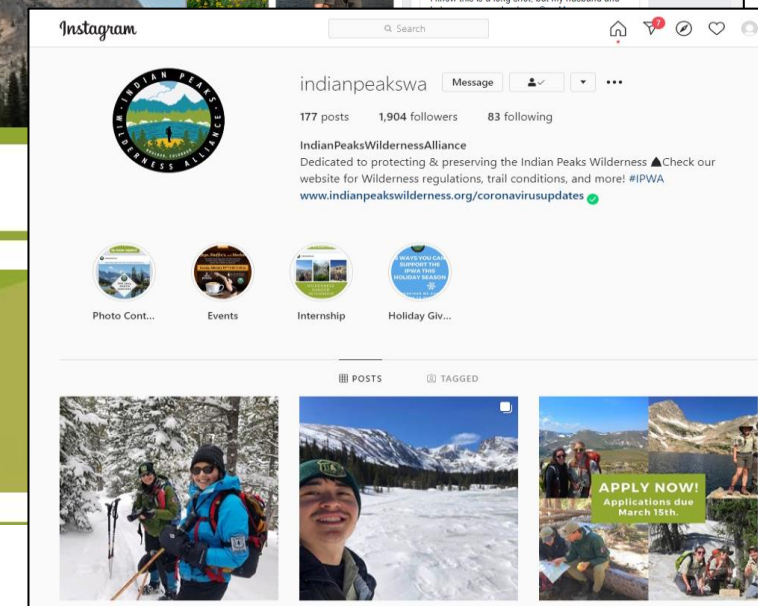
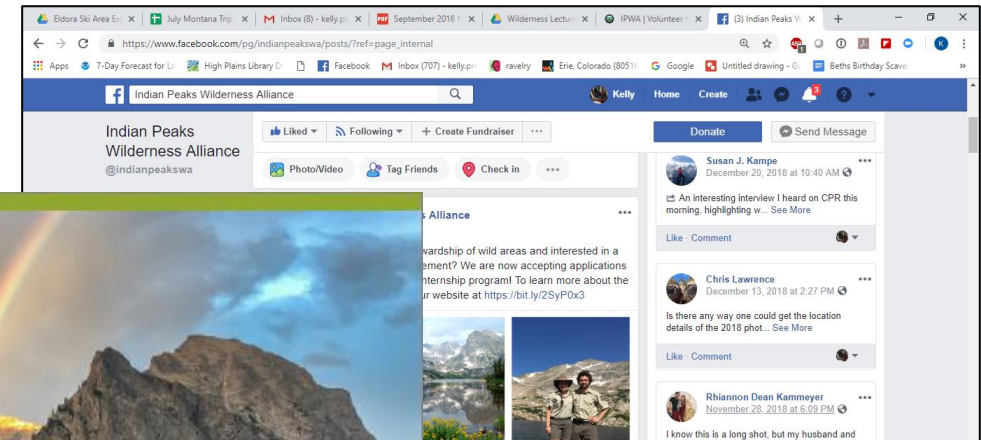
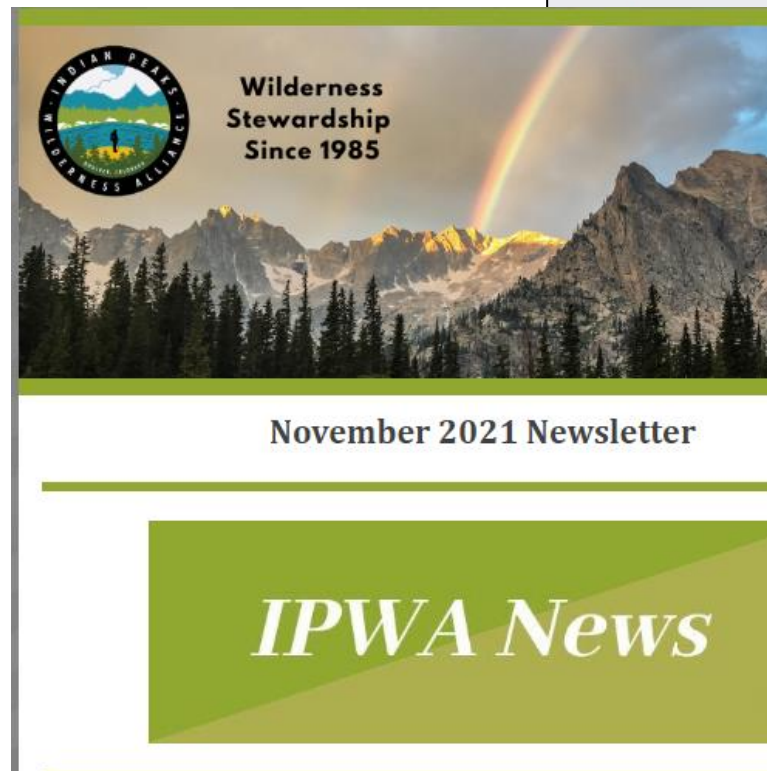
- ❖ Doug Castro: Microplastics in Mountain Ecosystems of the Colorado Front Range (https://youtu.be/IQ_Tee6Nz1I)
- ❖ Alec Chiono: Evaluating responses to climate change in the seed bank of an alpine wildflower (<https://youtu.be/c19J1VyAC6c>)
- ❖ Seth Raynor: Lichens of the Indian Peaks Wilderness, Towards a Complete State Inventory (<https://youtu.be/-dqff0FSbdc>)
- ❖ Zachary Schwartz: Examining the Effects of Rising Air Temperature on N Cycling and Trace Gas Emissions in the Alpine Environment (<https://youtu.be/C3SHsHI0TH4>)

*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** (1,600+ contacts)
 - **Our website**
 - www.indianpeakswilderness.org
 - **Expanded Social Media**
 - Facebook (2315 followers)
 - Instagram (2387 followers)
 - **Constant Contact Email Groups**
- We participated in CU's Volunteer Fair in August and several other community events



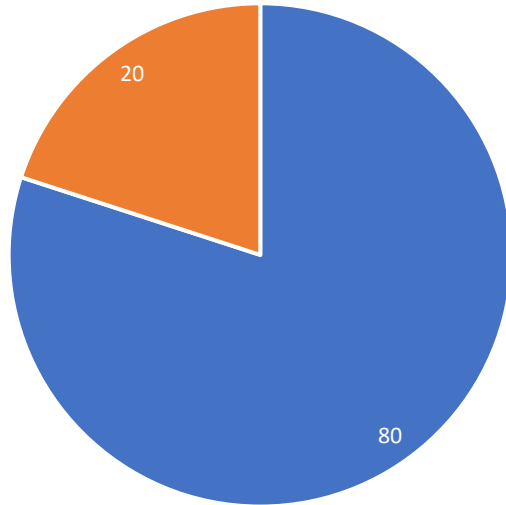
Finances



Photo credit: Dan Weprin

IPWA Revenue and Expenses, 2023

IPWA Expenses 2023



- Total Program expenses
- Total Admin&Fund Raising expenses

Total Revenue:	\$ 43,720*
Total Expenses:	\$ 19,341
Overage:	\$ 24,379

Note: IPWA is an all-volunteer run non-profit organization, with no paid staff.

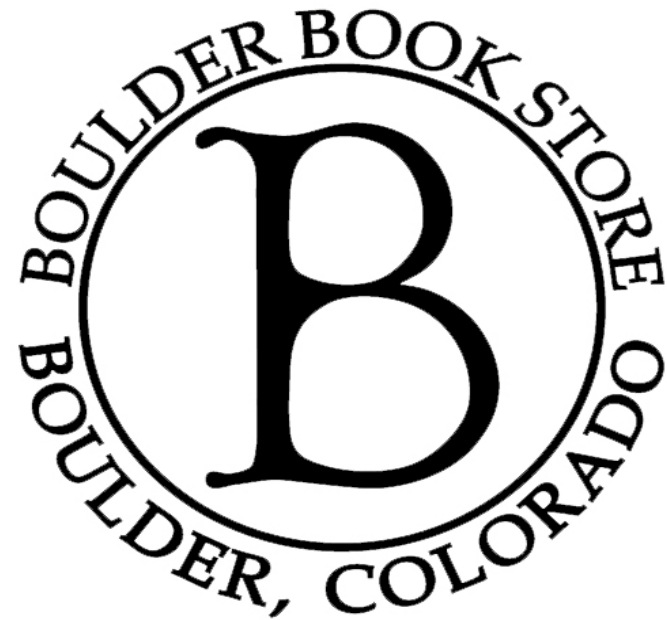
** Includes one-time donation of \$10,000 from Eldora Play Forever Fund*

Local Corporate Fundraising

In 2023, 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

- 2023 was IPWA's 9th year to hold an annual Volunteer and Supporters Photo Contest.
- Selected photos are turned into note cards which are in turn provided to donors who give \$100+ as a "Thank You" for their financial support.



Photo credit: Steve Cushard

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:

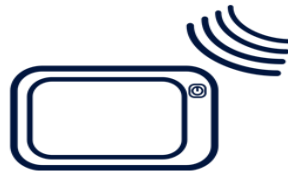


Overuse

*Continued
Colorado
population growth*



Lack of
Awareness
*of Leave No Trace
Principles*



Technology
*Drones, Mtn
Bikes, Social Media*



Pollution



Climate
Change

Our 5-year Strategic Plan, written in 2021, specifies actions to address these challenges, such as improving the administrative stability of IPWA, increasing volunteer numbers and patrols, and working with our Forest Service partners to continue improvements to our training and volunteer support.

IPWA is 100% Volunteer Run hikers@Indianpeakswilderness.org



Training Day, June 2019

“Saving Wilderness,



Changing Lives”

2023 IPWA Board Members and Officers:

- Fiona Garvin (Chair)
- Andy Gup (Vice Chair)
- Serge Goldberg (Treasurer)
- Emily Herrington
(Secretary)
- Alexa Carollo
- Yonah Cohen
- Peter Fellenz
- Reghan Gillman
- CJ Gup
- Faith Overall
- Aaron Swain

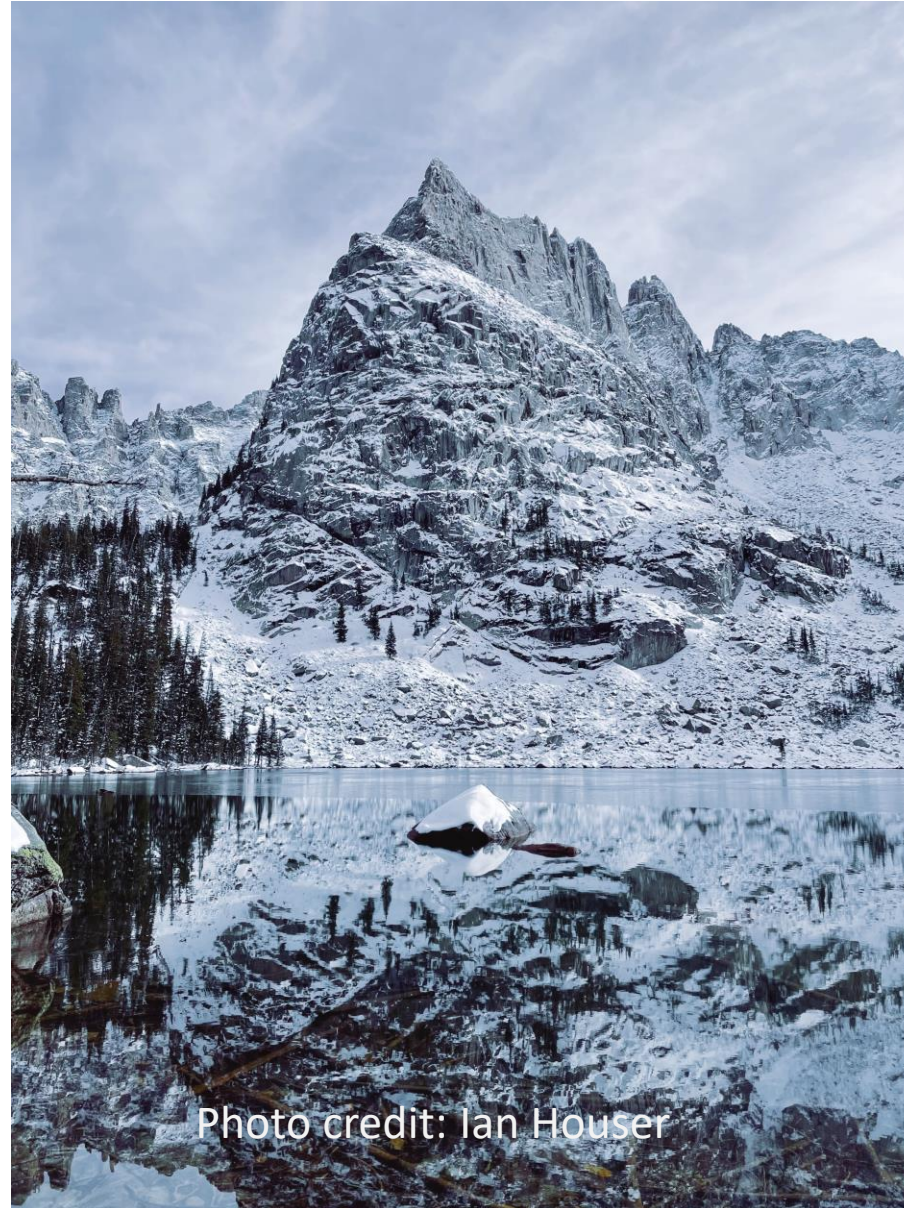


Photo credit: Ian Houser

IPWA would like to hear from you!
Please send us your thoughts at: [***hikers@indianpeakswilderness.org***](mailto:hikers@indianpeakswilderness.org)



Photo credit: Forest Hoff



Photo credit: Jeff Sampson