

The Rendezvous

The Newsletter of the Rocky Mountain Forest Service Association

Volume 13 — Number 2

Remembered



Memorial Grove Ceremony, May 2, 2026.

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“The official newsletter of the Rocky Mountain Forest Service Association, the Rocky Mountaineers.”
Editions are published Fall, Winter, and Spring and posted on-line.

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Kristen Michalski, with the Colorado Springs Fire Department Chaplain Corp, gave the invocation at the Memorial Grove ceremony.

“Would you please bow your heads as we observe a moment of silence for our lost loved ones, then join me from your tradition as I pray from mine.

Lord, we are gathered here today to honor those who have served the United States Forest Service so faithfully. Their stewardship, dedication, and contribution to the National Forests and Grasslands of the Rocky Mountain Region leave us all with beautiful places that are better for their service. They leave a legacy that impacts future generations with the magnificence of Your creation and keep it a wonder-filled place to live, work, and raise our families.

Thank You for those who loved and walked alongside them, providing critical support and sacrifice through the years they stood watch over

the precious gems in our region. We join our hearts with those who grieve their passing and call in Your comfort and encouragement as they move forward.

We thank You as we stand today in this meaningful space dedicated to those often unnoticed and under-appreciated stewards of our lands and monuments. May we always remember them for what we, as a nation, have inherited because of their efforts to preserve the wild places in our land.

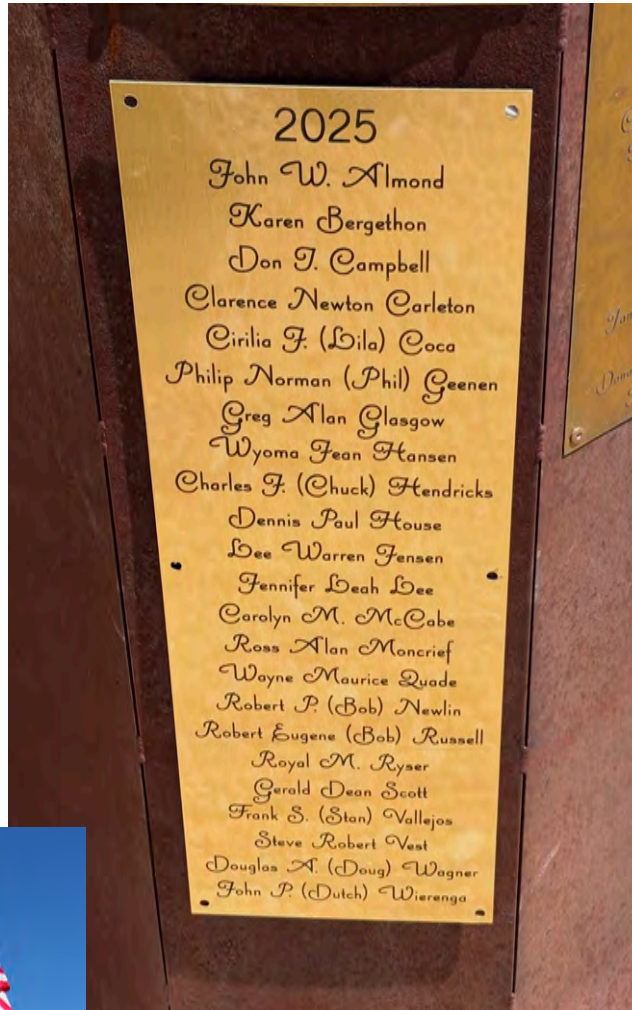
We also thank those who carry these tasks forward. Guard, strengthen, protect, and guide them. We ask these things in the Name of the One who loves us all. May His Presence be a guide and comfort today and always.”

Amen

May 2, 2026 at Monument, Colorado



It was a beautiful day to take the short walk up the Grove.



The Honorees Plaque for 2025.



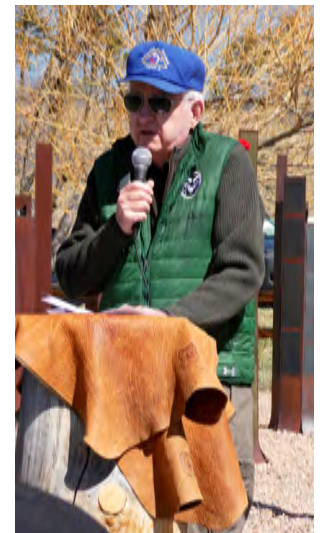
Forest Supervisor for the Pike and San Isabel, Cimarron and Comanche National Grasslands, Ryan Neal, welcomed everyone.



The Air Force High School JROTC Honor Guard raised the colors on a gorgeous morning ceremony.



Pikes Peak District Ranger Carl Bauer led the riderless horse on a last ride around the Memorial Grove.



Tom Thompson was once again the Master of Ceremonies.

Memorial Grove 2026 (continued)



The Fiddlin' Foresters Trio. Left to right. Will Wagner sat in on the cello (son of Honoree, Doug Wagner), Jim Maxwell, Jane Leche, and Tom McFarland provided the musical inspiration.



We honor those who have served.



Families travelled from all across the country to come and help recognize those employees who proudly served in the Rocky Mountain Region.



A new batch of benches greeted families and friends to the ceremony this year. Dead trees are cut down on site and halved, cut to length and provide sturdy seating for years to come.



Former Regional Forester, Frank Beum had a chance to connect with Max Forgensi, District Ranger on the Clear Creek District of the Arapaho-Roosevelt NF. who introduced speakers and kept everything on time.

Memorial Grove Workday

May 2, 2026 at Monument, Colorado



Tom Thompson cleans up the seating area while the forest tree spade is getting ready to prepare for the planting of the 2026 tree.



Retirees and Pikes Peak District folks as well as employees from the Woodland Park Work center all pitched in to get the Grove cleaned up and ready for the ceremony.



The signs needed some graffiti removed and some cracks filled. A fresh coat of paint and it's ready for another year.



Retirees Tommy John and Steve Deitemeyer reap the rewards served up by Rosie's Diner in Monument, Colorado for a successful workday at the Memorial Grove.

Kudos From Our Alert Readers

Hello Rendezvous! My wife Debbie and I are visiting Pat & Patty Lynch in Green Valley AZ....and noticed a hard copy of the Rendezvous (winter 2026) on their coffee table....Debbie and I read pretty much all of it....what a great read, and so many interesting stories and fun stuff too!...including Paul Peck's message from the Chair, and Tom Thompson's "**The Last Word.**" THANKS for putting the Museum movie shoot and update in the beginning. What a great interview with Vinh Le!....perhaps even more relevant to us

since we just got back from an Asia trip that included Vietnam.

This also reminds me of the importance of having some things hard copy, like **The Rendezvous!** I want to pay the extra \$ to start getting a printed copy of it in the mail!

THANK YOU!

-Andy Mason, Cave Creek, AZ

Your Area Representatives

Denver Area Representative
Jim Thinnes, Littleton, CO

Northern Front Range and Southeastern
Wyoming Area Representative
Steve Johnson, Ft. Collins, CO

Southern Front Range and Kansas Area
Representative
Debbie Gardunio, Pueblo West, CO

Western Colorado Area Representative
Martha Moran, Carbondale, CO

Wyoming Area Representative
Bill Bass, Sheridan, WY

South Dakota/Nebraska
Craig Bobzien, Custer, SD

NAFSR Representative
Frank Beum, Denver, CO

NMFSH Representative
Tom Thompson, Littleton, CO

Liaison for Region 2 (not retired yet)
Jace Ratzlaff, Golden, CO

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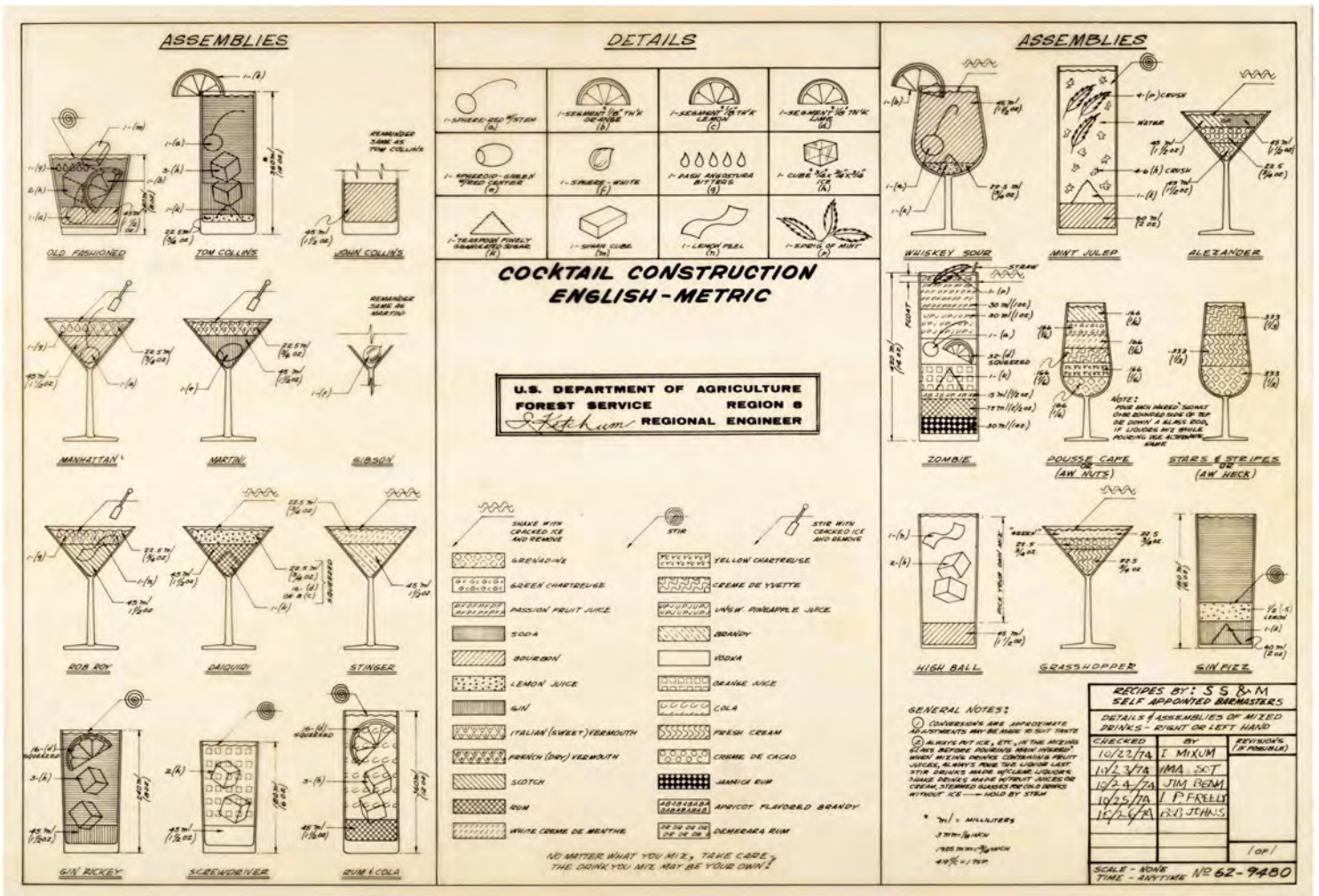
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Tom Thompson, thom46pson@gmail.com, 303-552-1711

Membership & Others - P.O. Box 270462, Fort Collins, CO 80527

History With a Splash of Humor to Shake Things Up



This is the **Cocktail Construction Chart** prepared by the U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service. **Really!** This beautifully designed chart shows the ingredients and assemblies for various popular drinks in a format that looks like a construction blueprint. Clear hatching and carefully measured lines explain the proportions and ingredients of building popular drinks as if they were architecture. This print makes for an interesting decoration in a bar, kitchen, restaurant or anywhere else. It is definitely a conversation piece. Forest Service **Region 8 Engineer Cleve Ketcham** had a good sense of humor, and in **1974** he drew up this detailed and unique cocktail construction chart.

Here's where you can find the original in the National Archives - Forest Service Collection.

<https://catalog.archives.gov/id/7035823>

Want a framed copy for your bar, while helping out the mission of the National Archives?

https://www.nationalarchivesstore.org/products/matted-print-cocktail-constru-7383#shopify-section-template--19537559224502_product-recommendations-1

Cocktails, built to federal standards

"I'm from the federal government, and I'm here to help you mix a drink."

<https://ameasuredspiritdotcom.wordpress.com/2016/04/08/cocktails-built-to-federal-standards/>

And now in Color!

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Cocktail_Construction_Chart_color.jpg

A message from the Chair



My wife Mary, me and our daughter Beth on Redcloud Peak, 2003.

Greetings Fellow Mountaineers,

It has been a busy 3 months since the last newsletter. The Scholarship Committee had a plethora of quality applications to consider. The result of their work is in the newsletter. It is encouraging to see us invest in these young people.

The Memorial Grove Ceremony was well attended and very much appreciated by the families represented. Even though rain and cold temperatures were expected, the weather was perfect. As family members shared their memories as a Forest Service family, they were so thankful and grateful for the opportunity to celebrate their loved ones. And so thankful that the Forest Service, and the Mountaineers, make this event happen. A big thank you goes to the Memorial Grove Committee, Tommy Thompson as the MC, and the tremendous support of the PSINF & CCNG employees and the Pikes Peak Ranger District. I thanked many of the Forest Service employees for their help with the ceremony. Each of them was very pleased and happy to be serving at the event.

The grand opening of the Conservation Legacy Center in Missoula, MT, is happening in mid-July. Many Mountaineers have been involved in this tremendous project to share the rich history and conservation legacy of the US Forest Service. Kudos to the National Museum of Forest Service History (NMFSH) for their vision and diligence to bring this dream to fruition. If you are not a member of NMFSH, I encourage you to join.

The future of the Rocky Mountaineers looks very solid. Our Bylaws bestow on the Chair Elect the important task of determining if any Board positions

are changing in the next year or two. Chair elect, Bill Ott, not only took on this task for the short term, he started discussions with an ad-hoc team for a long term look. This is very timely because of potential effects of the Forest Service reorganization.

Here are some key thoughts from the discussions so far:

Short Term:

- We are a solid and well respected organization.
- Keep our mission statement, bylaws, geographic alignment, and R2 focus.
- Most Board members are committed for next 2-6 years.
- Continue the good things we are doing. (Memorial Grove, scholarships, grants, gatherings, newsletters, etc).
- Current Board members will take the lead to identify and mentor replacements for a smooth transition, particularly in key technical positions (newsletter editor, website manager, treasurer, membership/email manager).
- Recruit a younger group of leaders to carry the organization forward.
- Increase outreach to current employees and new hires. We can offer encouragement and a solid and stable group to join and hold onto.

Long Term:

- As the FS reorganization unfolds, stay flexible for needed changes.
- Our intent is to keep the R2 (5 state) focus.
- Look for opportunities to help and be of value to employees, new FS State Directors, Hubs, Research Station. etc.
- We will stay in touch with other regional retiree organizations, share information, and walk together in the same direction.

A message from the Chair

More information will be shared as it develops. If you are interested in the more detailed notes of ad-hoc committee discussions, please send an email to: rmountaineers@gmail.com

Thank you Bill Ott for leading the discussions.

You can help! Please consider serving in one of the Board positions, especially if you have skills in one of the key technical positions listed above. If you are interested, send an email to: rmountaineers@gmail.com, indicating what you may be interested in. If you would like information about the positions, send an email. It is a great group to work with.

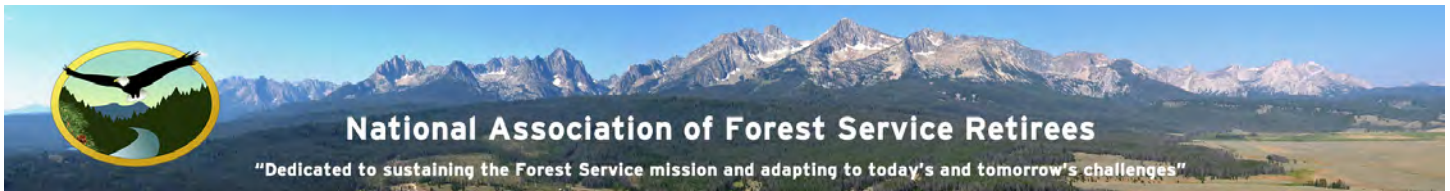
Parting thoughts:

Thanks for being part of the Mountaineers. Our Mission: to enrich and add value to the lives of Forest Service retirees who care greatly about the agency and the Rocky Mountain Region. Put that into action.

Have a great summer.

Hope to see you at the Annual Gathering.

Paul



NAFSR Notes

June 4, 2026

The National Association of Forest Service Retirees (NAFSR) has spent the last couple of months primarily focused on the proposed reorganization of the Forest Service.

On April 24 the Board of Directors held a Zoom meeting with all members to discuss the reorganization.

From that meeting, they developed a list of 30 questions concerning the reorganization and included them in a May 8 letter to Chief Schultz.

Rather than respond to the questions in writing, Associate Chief Chris French offered to meet with NAFSR members in a Zoom meeting and answer each of the questions. The meeting was held on May 18.

A transcript of the meeting is posted on the NAFSR website as well as a copy of the May 8 letter to the Chief.

The link for the NAFSR website is [National Association of Forest Service Retirees](https://www.nafsr.org) or you can copy and paste the address in your browser – <https://www.nafsr.org>

The reorganization is well underway and includes the elimination of all regional offices and movement of the Chief to a new national office in Salt Lake City. Several new "service centers" would be located across the country including one in Ft. Collins. You can find many more details in the transcript from the Chris French meeting.

Regional foresters would be replaced by State Directors. These new positions have already been advertised and the application period closed last month.

Membership and Finance

June, 2026

By Ellen Hodges &
Johnny Hodges

Membership

We have picked up 15 new members since January, giving us a total of 499. A year ago, in May we had 478 members.

This is the closest we have ever been to breaking the 500-member barrier! We recruit new members year-round, so help us find more members. Membership is open to both Forest Service retirees and current employees.

Here is a list of our newest members from April and May –

- ★ **Paul Azevedo**, Delta, CO
- ★ **Flint Cheney**, Evergreen, CO
- ★ **Jim Cuthbertson**, Arvada, CO
- ★ **Shane LaValley**, Littleton, CO
- ★ **Mark Nelson**, Ft. Collins, CO
- ★ **Richard Teck**, Ft. Collins, CO

Finance

There are a few members that haven't paid your 2026 dues. If you can't remember if you have paid or not, end us an email rmountaineers@gmail.com and we will let you know if your dues are up to date.

Annual dues remain \$25/household or you can get a Lifetime Membership for \$250/household, and you will never have to remember to pay your dues again.

We want to thank all of you that have made donations to the Rocky Mountaineers so far this year in either our **Scholarship**, **Memorial Grove**, or **General Funds**.

As a reminder, you are welcome to make donations at any time throughout the year.

In the Fall issue of The Rendezvous, we will recognize donors in the categories of **Friend** (\$1 - \$49), **Patron** (\$50 - \$249), and **Sponsor** (\$250 +).

You can make donations in the memory of someone. We will include the name of the honoree when we recognize donors.

Go to our website to pay dues or make payments. Our website address - Rocky Mountaineers Retiree Association (click the link) or <https://www.rockymountaineers.us>

Click on the "Dues and Donations" tab at the top of the home page to make a payment. You can mail us a check or pay with a credit card.

We are all volunteers and we appreciate your support!



Announcing the 2026 Rocky Mountaineer Scholarship Recipients

By Frank Roth

The Rocky Mountaineers are proud to announce the winners of the 2026 Memorial Scholarships! We had 27 applications this year and as usual, it was difficult to decide on the winners.

This was the seventh year we had two scholarships just for those studying in natural resources and the seventh year we offered four scholarships. Each scholarship is the same as last year which is \$1,500.

We had seven applicants who are natural resource majors. The natural resource winners are Allie Allred and Emmaline Warner.



Allie Allred

Allie is graduating from Glenwood Springs High School in Glenwood Springs, Colorado. She plans to attend Colorado College and for her undergraduate work to study biology and chemistry. She is very interested in using that background to develop worldwide solutions in environmental, social, and economic sustainability. She is an active learner and

leader and has taken several college level classes through Colorado Mountain College in addition to her regular curriculum. She helped to plan the first Colorado Youth Climate Summit as a youth leader and is deeply involved in planning the second summit.

Allie's Comments - *"I am so grateful for receiving this scholarship, and it means so much to not only me but also to my family. Both of my parents are US Forest Service employees, and my grandparents are lifelong USFS volunteers. The amount of influence the Forest Service has had on me has been immense! The Forest Service is such a special agency, and I am so grateful that I am being recognized! I am happy to say that with this scholarship, I have fully paid for my first year of college! I now have not only the financial burden off my shoulders, but also have new freedom with not needing to work during the school year. I am so excited for this new chapter of my life and cannot thank the Rocky Mountaineers enough!"*

She is sponsored by Chandra Allred.

Emmaline Warner

Emmaline is graduating from Roaring Fork High School in Carbondale, Colorado. She has been a part of the National Forests her entire life and started backpacking as a four year old. She volunteered and then became the youngest full time ski patroller



which set the stage for her career goals. She has been a runner on her high school teams and enjoys when the competitions take place on public lands. She has worked for the Rocky Mountain Youth Corps on multiple crews and plans to work as a seasonal wildland fire fighter. Emmaline will attend Western Colorado University to study Outdoor Recreation/Leadership and Pre-Health.

Emmaline's Comments - *"I greatly appreciate the gift of the Rocky Mountaineers Scholarship. With these funds, I will be able to pursue my educational goals of earning a degree in the health field and a minor in Outdoor Recreation, which will enable me to provide care to those who get injured in the backcountry. While at Western Colorado University, I will be on the Mountain Biking and Search and Rescue teams. Thank you so much for this scholarship that will help me to pursue my dreams!"*

She is sponsored by Martha Moran.

Scholarship Recipients (continued)



Ava Martinez

Ava Martinez is graduating from Delta High School in Delta, Colorado. She is active in Future Farmers of America and her family raises livestock. The irrigation water on her family farm comes directly from public lands. She has taken over eight advance placement and college credit courses. She is also a three sport varsity athlete and a

member of the National Honor Society. Ava plans to attend Florida Atlantic University pursuing a degree in Pre-Dental Bio-Science.

Ava's comments - "I am extremely grateful to be a Rocky Mountaineer 2026 Scholarship recipient. I hold value and respect for public lands, agricultural lands, national forests, and nature. This scholarship allows me to pursue my education and pay for tuition costs. Thank you for your generous support. It is a privilege to live in the Rocky Mountains."

She is sponsored by Martha Moran.

Audrey Roaque

Audrey is graduating from Laramie High School in Laramie, Wyoming. She is active in school and community events. She is a co-captain on the rugby team and served in both 4-H and FFA. She has organized and participated in food drives, highway clean-ups, and Christmas shopping for families in needs.

She is also a Certified Nursing Assistant which initiated her exposure to medicine. She will pursue a bachelor degree in Physiology or Kinesiology at the University of Wyoming with a long term goal to be a Doctor.

Audrey's comments - "This scholarship is important to me because it helps provide the opportunity for me to follow my chosen career path and keep doing what I love, which is medicine! This generous scholarship, not only provides final aid, but also serves a reminder of how the Rocky Mountaineers community has supported me so I can in turn go out and support others through my career."

She is sponsored by Jackie Roaque.



We want to thank all the applicants and their sponsors for their interest and participation. And, again, many thanks to all of you who have generously donated to the Scholarship Fund. All of you make the growth of this program possible.

2026 Annual Gathering Preview

Save the Date

2026 Rocky Mountaineers Annual Gathering

October 12-14 in Alamosa, CO



This is the first time we've held the Annual Gathering on the Rio Grande N.F. It's also the first time we've ridden a train as a part of an Annual Gathering.

We hope to catch the peak of Fall aspen colors.

Monday, October 12

Travel to Alamosa in the a.m. If you have a really long drive or want to do lots of leaf-peeping on the way or want to play golf in the morning, you may want to leave on Sunday.

Lunch at 1:00 p.m. at Kneeknockers Bar & Grill at the Cattails Golf Course in Alamosa. We will eat "make 'em yourself" tacos.

Business meeting, other speakers at the same location from about 2:00 - 4:00 p.m. We hope to have someone (Forest Supervisor) talk to us about what's happening on the Rio Grande.

We are not organizing a golf outing, but if some members want to play in the morning, we can find a volunteer to be in charge. If that is of interest and

someone would like to organize an outing, please contact Debbie Gardunio at (303) 990-1741.

Tuesday, October 13

Ride the Cumbres/Toltec Railroad from Antonito, Colorado to Chama, New Mexico.

The Antonito train station is about 30 miles south of Alamosa.

The train will depart from Antonito at 10:00 a.m.

The train ride is 64 miles long and crosses the southern portion of the Rio Grande N.F. You will spend about 6 hours on the train. We will have our own train car(s) depending on the number of riders (we need at least 40).

The train will stop about halfway at Osier station for a hot lunch (included).

There are numerous aspen stands at higher elevations of the ride, so the colors could be excellent.

The train crosses Cumbres Pass at an elevation of 10,022 ft. The train cars are not heated.

We will ride a coach bus back from Chama to Antonito which takes about an hour, arriving at 6:00 p.m. The bus route back to Antonito is mostly north of the train route and eventually follows the Conejos River as it flows through the Rio Grande N.F.

If you want more details on the train ride, go to their website - <https://cumbrestoltec.com>

Wednesday, October 14

There are no events planned for today, so you are on your own to wander or to travel home.

If you've seen enough aspen leaves, you can head over to the Great Sand Dunes N.P. which is nearby.

(Continued on page 14)

(Continued from page 13)

2026 Annual Gathering Preview (continued)



Camping

If you would prefer to camp out on your visit, Steve Deitemeyer has a 500-acre spread a few miles south of Alamosa for anyone that would like to rough it. No facilities, but it is free! It could be chilly.

What's It Going to Cost Me?

There may be members that don't want to ride the train, so we are offering two pricing options.

- **Lunch on Monday plus train on Tuesday (with lunch) - \$150 per person**
- **Lunch on Monday, no train on Tuesday - \$20 per person**

Places to Stay

We did not block any rooms for our group. You can make your own arrangements. There are numerous hotels/motels in Alamosa and the surrounding area.

There are numerous bus tour groups passing through during aspen season and have already blocked rooms at some of the larger hotels (Holiday Inn Express, Fairfield Inn, Hampton Inn) so you may want to book your room early.

Here is a list of some of the available hotels in Alamosa. Please call them directly to make your reservations or you can shop around online. There are other places to stay in Monte Vista or South Fork.

- **Quality Inn, Alamosa – (719) 496-1404**
- **Holiday Inn Express, Alamosa – (719) 589-4026**
- **Fairfield Inn, Alamosa – (719) 215-1220**
- **Best Western, Alamosa – (800) 780-7234**
- **Hampton Inn, Alamosa - (719) 480-6023**
- **Comfort Inn & Suites, Alamosa – (719) 937-4002**

Registration

We will begin registration through our website starting in July. Because we need to finalize numbers for Monday lunch and Tuesday train ride 30 days in advance, and to get a group discount, everyone will need to pay their registration in advance. We'll provide more details later.



Rocky Mountaineers Grant Program

By Dan Nolan



The Rocky Mountaineers grant program provides funds for projects that further the goals of the Rocky Mountaineers within the Rocky Mountain Region. Applicants must be from private, non-profit or non-governmental organizations, and individuals. Projects should have a lasting influence on National Forest and Grassland management, natural resource management, and will help educate the public on the importance and significance of these resources. Grants typically range from \$2,500 - \$5,000. Applications are due by April 30 of each year.

Here are a few examples. In 2022 a grant was provided to The Nature Connection working in partnership with the Delta County School District and the Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre, and Gunnison National Forest for their Every Kid in the Park program encouraging school kids to connect to the outdoors. The funds were used to cover the cost of transportation for 450 fourth graders to spend time on public lands and engage in outdoor education and stewardship activities.

In 2023 a grant was awarded to Frank Roth for the installation of three interpretive signs on the Beartooth Highway. This project was in partnership with the Wapiti Ranger District of the Shoshone National Forest and the Wyoming Native Plant Society. The signs describe the uniqueness and fragility of the alpine tundra and the special features of the subalpine landscape. The most recent grant, in 2025, was for the California Park Wet Meadow Restoration Project completed by the Western Resilience Center on the Hahn's Peak/Bears Ears Ranger District of the Routt National Forest. This project enlisted the



assistance of 32 volunteers from the Rocky Mountain Youth Corps who installed rock structure sediment traps along 1.6 miles of ephemeral streams equating to six acres of restored wet meadow habitat.

Additional information about the grant program can be found at the Rocky Mountaineers website:

<https://rockymountaineers.us/grants/Grant%20Program-Directions.pdf>

Just Too Wide To Shrink!

Follow the steps below to fix the pic.

1

Click Here to Fix the Picture!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oHg5SJYRHA0>

2

Click Here to Understand what just happened when you clicked on the link above

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rickrolling>

3

Click Here to really get geeky and turn the group photo sideways so you don't hurt your neck by using that "library browsing sideways method."

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H0g35V_3lyM



Standing - Jonathan Marston , Johnny Hodges, Steve Williams, Mark Nelson, John Heaton, Glen Bartter, Roy Mita, Rich Teck, Pete Blume, Colleen Shepperd, Wayne Shepperd, Marica Patton Mallory, Ellen Hodges, Mike Foley, Marla Foley, Flint Cheney, Mariynn Orr, Skip Underwood, Karen Argys, Richard Edwards, Lynnette and Floyd Reed.
Seated - Steve Johnson, Jim Cuthbertson, Brad Orr.

The National Museum of Forest Service History

Sharing the rich history and stories of America's conservation legacy



Forest Service Reorganization – What does it mean for the Museum?

We have been following the recently announced reorganization, including the transition to 15 state offices, the closure of 9 regional offices, the unification of R&D leadership in Fort Collins, and the relocation of the Chief and about 2/3 of WO employees to Salt Lake City.

With so much change in the Forest Service underway, it is important to keep in mind:

The Museum is not part of the Forest Service; we are a 501 (c) (3) nonprofit organization, and we do not advocate or take positions on policy or legislation.

However, we cooperate closely with the Forest Service on many activities and, very recently (June 2025), Chief Tom Schultz and then Museum President Tom Thompson approved a new Memorandum of Understanding. We will certainly follow through on our MOU commitments, working with the Forest Service personnel and positions specified in the MOU. Per the MOU, the Museum is charged with “Collecting, preserving, and studying materials, photographs, and documents

illustrating the historical and contemporary activities of the Forest Service.”

The Museum continues to have an interest in safeguarding historical items that could be lost or displaced with office closures and changes associated with the reorganization. We would appreciate any information from the Rocky Mountaineers on this issue.

We regularly communicate with NAFSR and the regional USFS retiree associations and will stay tuned for any changes they may choose to make to align with the new agency organization. The reorganization will make it more difficult to track historical information, and we will try to

accommodate or mitigate in some manner as these changes are made.

The Museum recognizes the Rocky Mountain geographic area (R02 and RMRS). Dan Nolan is the Museum's R02/RMRS Director, and Larry Gadt serves as the Board Liaison. This is one of 10 geographic areas, each with a volunteer director or co-directors (Eastern has four). In total there are about 70 cadre members (volunteers) nationwide who help raise Museum awareness and support our programs and activities.

The Museum's ten recognized geographic areas: Northern (R01, RMRS); Rocky Mountain (R02, RMRS); Southwestern (R03, RMRS); Intermountain (R04, RMRS); Pacific Southwest – Northern Calif. (R05, PSWRS); Pacific Southwest – Southern Calif. (R05, PSWRS); Pacific Northwest (R06, R10, PNWRS); Southern (R08, SRS); Eastern (R09, FPL, NRS), and the Washington Office. We may have to realign our Regional Director cadres as the reorganization is implemented.

For the time being, we will keep it as it is.

The Grand Opening of the Museum

It's gonna be a GRAND Grand Opening, July 16-17!...Come Join Us!
All events will be at the National Conservation Legacy Center. Tentative agenda:



Thursday, July 16, 2026

9am -1pm: Exclusive *Museum Members Only Preview" of the Center

1pm-3pm: Private Donor Groups Preview Center

3pm -5pm: Set up for the evening celebration

6pm-9pm: Celebration party for all donors including Capital Campaign Closers Club, and VIPs

(RSVP required) Hors d'oeuvres and Champagne!

Friday, July 17, 2026

10:00am: Program Starts at podium on the South Colonnade

10:00am-11:00am: Welcome and Speakers

11:00pm: Ribbon Cutting

11:30am-4:00pm: Museum open- Free Admission

Lunch, cake, music, special guests and activities in the South lawn



*If you aren't a Museum member already, we encourage you to join now (or consider upgrading your membership to Life!). Members will receive a very special invitation to the Grand Opening. Our membership rates are truly a bargain and will be going up in 2027, so why wait! Join or upgrade your membership: <https://forestservicemuseum.org/become-a-member/>



As always, if you have donation/fundraising questions, or any other questions about the Museum and our programs and activities, please contact:

Lisa Tate, lisa.tate@forestservicemuseum.org, or (208) 484-6667 (mobile)

Tom Petersen, tom.petersen@forestservicemuseum.org

Call the Museum at (406) 541-6374.

Your regional Museum key contacts:

Dan Nolan, Museum Director, dnolan829@gmail.com, (720) 937-8058

Larry Gadt, Board Liaison, larrygadt224@gmail.com, (785) 979-3756

Federal Scientists, a Great American Invention

a letter to our federal colleagues

From the The Ecological Society of America
<https://esajournals.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/fee.70050>

A recent analysis by Science found that 10,109 PhDs in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) and health fields in the US federal government voluntarily left or involuntarily lost (collectively hereafter, “departed from”) their jobs in 2025. The highest numbers of STEM PhDs departed from the National Institutes of Health, the Food and Drug Administration, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Likewise, the greatest percentage of STEM PhDs (40%) departed from the National Science Foundation. Many other STEM PhDs also departed from environmental agencies, including the Environmental Protection Agency (23%), USDA Forest Service (22%), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (19%), US Geological Survey (14%), and the US Fish and Wildlife Service (12%). Although there were some hires across the 14 agencies included in the analysis, the number of departures exceeded those hired by a factor of 11, for a net loss of 17% of the workforce—within a single year alone.

During the past year, we watched this exodus and the strain that it and the associated uncertainties put on our colleagues across the federal agencies. These are colleagues who do some of the world's most important research, reinforcing the country's status as a global leader in science and technological innovation. Reflecting on these events, we want to express appreciation to federal scientists, engineers, and health professionals for their contributions.

To our federal science colleagues, past and present, We are grateful for your scholarship, integrity, curiosity, and dedication to the scientific endeavor, to the public good, and to the United States of America. Your expertise, achievements, and critical thinking have guided domestic policies and administrations for decades. Your research has generated breakthroughs in medicine, computer science, and renewable energy; bolstered the economy; informed critical weather forecasts and natural disaster warnings; and ensured clean water, safe food, productive farms, healthy forests,

sustainable fisheries, resilient infrastructure, and secure communities. You have made the nation healthier, safer, and capable of more than our predecessors could have ever imagined, enabling millions to thrive within a vibrant country. Your discoveries have changed our fundamental understanding of ourselves, the environment, the planet, and the universe and, in the process, have inspired generations of Americans.

As Americans spend the year celebrating our nation's 250th anniversary, one of the country's greatest inventions—you, our federal science workforce—is particularly worthy of admiration. Our founders deeply valued science. Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson occupy unique places in America's psyche as, like you, patriot scientists. They and two centuries of Americans recognized vigorous scientific enterprise as essential to maintain a strong and healthy nation. Over time, as the nation grew, America's values around science were forged into our federal infrastructure. At key inflection points in the nation's history, myriad federal agencies were established, with diverse missions—to protect our homes, businesses, and environment; the diversity of species in our lands and waters; workplace safety; and our rural and urban communities and livelihoods—requiring a rich understanding of the human and natural systems they were tasked with managing. Within these agencies, scientists formed a stable core of discovery and archives central to the government's ability to uphold its most important mandate—to protect the people who call the US their home.

For those of you who have exited from federal service, voluntarily or otherwise, we are grateful for your service to our country—and we look forward to your future endeavors. For current federal scientists, we value your contributions more than ever—we appreciate all you have done and will continue to do. The US would not have come so far without you.

OPM Proposes Requiring All Feds Sign An NDA?

Experts warned the measure, when combined with the federal HR agency's new power to target employees' suitability for federal employment, creates a new pathway for Trump administration officials to purge those deemed insufficiently loyal to the president.

The Office of Personnel Management is set to propose requiring all federal employees to sign a nondisclosure agreement barring them from divulging "confidential" information in most cases, a move that experts warn violate workers' First Amendment rights and statutes aimed at protecting whistleblowers from retaliation.

OPM announced its plan in a filing set for publication in the Federal Register Wednesday. In justifying the requirement, officials cited reporting in Government Executive and other news outlets disclosing controversial proposals to overhaul federal layoff and performance management rules—and internal warnings against their implementation—prior to their formal publication.

<https://www.govexec.com/workforce/2026/05/opm-proposes-feds-sign-nda/413770/>


From the U.S. Merit Protections Board Website

Prohibited Personnel Practice 13: Nondisclosure Forms, Policies & Agreements

⏪

Prohibited Personnel Practice

⏩



**Nondisclosure Forms,
Policies & Agreements**

Any employee who has authority to take, direct others to take, recommend, or approve any personnel action, shall not, with respect to such authority—

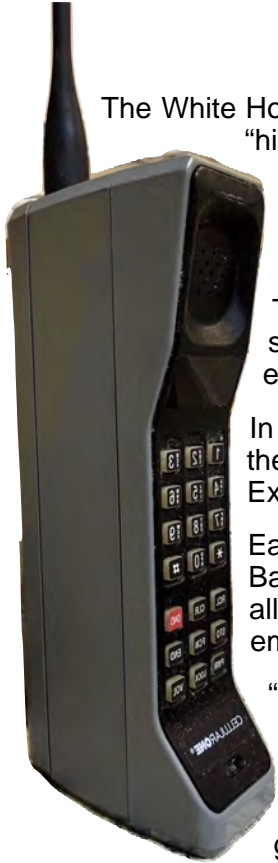
implement or enforce any nondisclosure policy, form, or agreement, if such policy, form, or agreement does not contain the following statement: "These provisions are consistent with and do not supersede, conflict with, or otherwise alter the employee obligations, rights, or liabilities created by existing statute or Executive order relating to (1) classified information, (2) communications to Congress, (3) the reporting to an Inspector General of a violation of any law, rule, or regulation, or mismanagement, a gross waste of funds, an abuse of authority, or a substantial and specific danger to public health or safety, or (4) any other whistleblower protection. The definitions, requirements, obligations, rights, sanctions, and liabilities created by controlling Executive orders and statutory provisions are incorporated into this agreement and are controlling."

<https://www.mspb.gov/ppp/13ppp.htm>

Page 20

The White House is Ordering Agencies To Place its New App On All Employees' Government Phones

From Government Executive. - May 22, 2026



The White House recently unveiled a new app to give the public “unfiltered” access to “key priorities,” “historic moments” and “policy breakthroughs.” Now, it’s directing agencies to help install it on the government phones of federal employees.

The Trump administration launched the app, which promises to “[keep] you connected to President Donald J. Trump and his administration like never before,” in March.

The push to install the app on the devices of millions of government employees drew surprise from current and former federal officials, who called the move highly unusual and even dangerous.

In at least one agency, the automatic downloads will start next week in a move directed by the White House itself, according to internal communications obtained by Government Executive. The White House did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Earlier this week, agency chief information officers got orders from the federal CIO, Greg Barbaccia, to help the White House understand the mechanics of installing the app across all government-furnished mobile phones in the executive branch, according to an internal email obtained by Government Executive.

“The White House App gives all Americans direct access to White House live streams, breaking news alerts, new policy initiatives, social media posts, and more,” said Olivia Wales, a White House spokesperson.

“Government devices typically include pre-installed apps that provide value to government employees’ day-to-day work.”

The move is “dangerous,” Sonny Hashmi, a former longtime government IT executive, told Government Executive.

Cybersecurity researchers warned about vulnerabilities in the app soon after it debuted, like how it shares the IP addresses, time zones and other data of users with third-party services. The app also raised initial concerns about its potential GPS tracking capability, but the White House has since removed that functionality.

Forcing agencies to install it on employee’s government furnished phones should be “cause for alarm,” said Hashmi, who worked at the General Services Administration for years, most recently as a Biden administration appointee. “Any app that is installed on government issued devices can potentially create backdoor access to government networks behind the firewall.”

The Federal Aviation Administration told employees on Friday that its IT team “will automatically install ‘The White House’ application on all FAA-issued iPhones and iPads, as mandated by the White House,” adding the process would occur automatically and employees “do not need to take any action.”

“The application will grant access to breaking news, policy updates, livestreams, videos, photos, social media content, and exclusive early-access information,” it said.

<https://www.govexec.com/management/2026/05/white-house-ordering-agencies-place-its-new-app-all-employees-government-phones/413738/?oref=ge-home-top-story>

Reorganization Talking Point Bingo

Here’s your handy **Talking Point Bingo Card** for the reorganization. All of the bingo quotes are pulled directly from USDA press releases and interviews. It’s easy to play. Every time you see a USDA press release, or TikTok video, a short piece on television or even a news story about the USFS reorganization, pull out this trusty card and follow along. Prizes would normally be given to winners, but sadly the budget for employee awards and morale was cut.



| | | | | |
|---|--|---|--|---|
| “It will boost employee recruitment” | “It will bring USDA closer to its customers.” | “It will improve our core mission of managing our forests.” | “A State-based organizational model designed to simplify the chain of command.” | “Relocating and realigning” |
| “It means better, faster decisions.” | “We’re getting input from folks internally and externally.” | “It will reduce administrative duplication... duplication.” | “We’re sensing the impact to be relatively small compared to the overall size of the organization” | “I’m not expecting a massive exodus of the agency” |
| “A more state-focused approach strengthens federalism.” | “It’s incumbent on us to understand our fiscal resources.” | “It will save taxpayer dollars” | “In terms of selling lands or divesting lands, that is not the intent of this organization.” | “We anticipate much more in terms of savings than any cost associated with this.” |
| “Salt Lake has a lot of amenities, it’s very family friendly, and it’s got a tremendous airport.” | “There may be approximately 500 or less that would actually have to relocate out of a 30,000 agency” | “We anticipate much more in terms of savings than any cost associated with this.” | “Secretary Rollins announces the creation of the USDA Office of Seafood.” | “Employees and partners will receive detailed transition guidance as |
| “It’s a structural reset” | “We have to make sure that we’re fiscally responsible.” | “Create a more integrated and efficient national research footprint.” | “We are going to build an organization that will align with the funding we have today.” | “This relocation is long overdue.” |



Higher fees could turn one of Colorado's most visited public lands into a place only some people can afford

From the The Center for Western Priorities

<https://westernpriorities.org/2026/05/the-maroon-bells-belong-to-everyone-why-are-we-treating-them-like-a-business/>

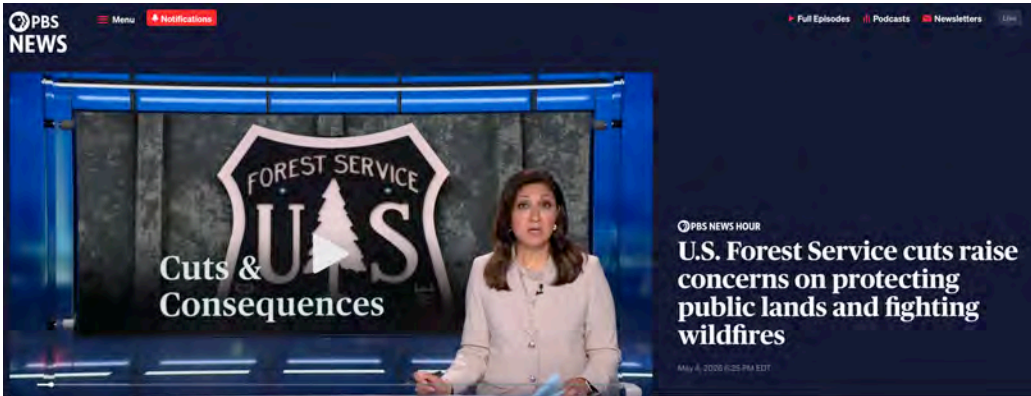


Maroon Bells Scenic Area, located outside Aspen, Colorado, is one of the most photographed mountain landscapes in North America and an iconic symbol of the American West. The area, which is located in the White River National Forest, draws close to 200,000 visitors every summer, making it one of the most visited sites in the entire national forest system. Now, a management change is putting public access to the hiking destination in jeopardy by raising fees. Both the Forest Service and Pitkin County are treating the Maroon Bells like a business that needs to turn a profit, rather than a public good that Americans have already paid for through their taxes.

Managing heavy visitation has always been a challenge at the Maroon Bells, and the area currently relies on shuttles, timed-entry, and limited parking reservations to keep crowds from overwhelming the landscape. Hiking the Maroon Bells is already a costly endeavor that requires visitors to pay for parking in Aspen and for the shuttle ride to the trailhead. The Forest Service currently oversees these operations at a nearly \$300,000 annual deficit.

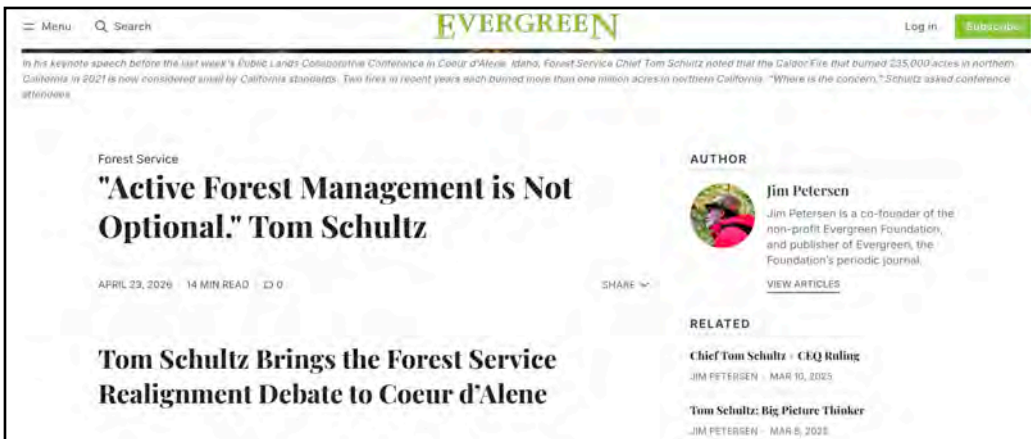
[\(Click the link above for the whole story\)](https://westernpriorities.org/2026/05/the-maroon-bells-belong-to-everyone-why-are-we-treating-them-like-a-business/)

From Different Points of View



A sweeping reorganization of the U.S. Forest Service signals that the agency is planning to lean heavily on states to help manage millions of acres of federal land, foresters across the West say.

<https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/u-s-forest-service-cuts-raise-concerns-on-protecting-public-lands-and-fighting-wildfires>



“Schultz’s affinity for statistics that underscore the necessity of realigning the entire U.S. Forest Service is stunning. But he began his keynote address by reminding the nearly 100 forest stakeholders in the room that their efforts were “essential to the health of our forests and the strength of our rural communities.”

<https://evergreenmagazine.com/active-forest-management-is-not-optional-tom-schultz/?ref=friends-of-evergreen-newsletter>



“The transition from regional offices to more state-level offices is a recognition that partnerships are the future for the Forest Service.” But many forestry veterans fear the shake-up will cause more attrition in an agency that’s already shrunk because of Trump’s cuts to the federal workforce.

<https://stateline.org/2026/04/14/forest-service-shake-up-will-boost-states-role-but-even-supporters-have-concerns/>



Where in the World is Jim Thinnes?

The Rocky Mountaineers Traveling to New Heights

By Cindy Dean and Jim Thinnes –
The Rendezvous International Travel Writers

Vietnam Welcomes the Year of the Horse

Vietnam is a little larger than Colorado in area with a population of over 100 million people. Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon) has 14 million people and is Vietnam's largest city, while Hanoi is the capital and second largest city with a population of nearly nine million. Vietnam is a country of contrast where the communist party rules and Ho Chi Minh is revered while the streets and alleys bustle in the country's capitalist-driven economy. We found the Vietnamese to be incredibly friendly despite the language barrier.

Cindy and I arrived in Hanoi as the country was preparing for its New Year. Tết Nguyên Đán is Vietnam's most important festival, marking the Lunar New Year. This year, Tet was February 17, 2026, to begin the Year of the Horse. Vietnamese clean their homes to "sweep away" bad luck that accumulated during the old year as Tet approaches. The holiday is a time when many Vietnamese return to their home villages to visit relatives and friends. It's also an important time to visit temples and shrines and honor ancestors.



New Year's decoration at Hanoi's Hoan Kiem Lake.

Hanoi's Hoan Kiem Lake was a pleasant walk from our hotel where French colonial influence was apparent in the area's architecture, including St. Joseph's Cathedral. We visited Ho Chi Minh's Mausoleum, learned about water puppetry, and toured the backstreets on motorbikes where we tasted Hanoi's famous "Egg Coffee" and experienced "train street" as trains wiz past within a couple of feet of shops and restaurants.



Halong Bay.

Our travels included an overnight boat excursion on Halong Bay. The weather was perfect for visiting the "the bay of the descending dragon", which is a spectacular limestone karst landscape with thousands of tiny islands.

(Continued from page 25)

Where in the World is Jim Thinnes? (Continued)



Fireworks welcoming the Year of the Horse in Hoi An.

We continued south to Hué, which served as the seat of 13 Nguyen-dynasty emperors who ruled the country between 1802 and 1945. The city's Imperial Citadel was inspired by the Forbidden City in Beijing and served as the home of the royal family and the administrative center. After a stop in Da Nang and My Khe Beach (aka China Beach), we arrived in Hoi An on New Year's Eve.

The city of about 100,000 residents is popular with tourists and proved to be a great location to enjoy the Tet celebrations. We visited with local farmers and cruised along the Thu Bon River, where we lit candle lanterns. The old town was alive at night with lantern boats, fireworks, and other festivities

Other highlights included the My Son Cham ruins from the ancient Kingdom of Chama, the beachside Nha Trang, and the mountain resort of Dalat. Our trip ended in Ho Chi Minh City (aka Saigon) with visits to the Cu Chi Tunnels and the Mekong Delta.

We continue to enjoy the adventure and cultural immersion of international travel. Space is still available for upcoming Rocky Mountaineers' trips to the Danube River in July and to Egypt in November.

Details are available on the Rocky Mountaineers' website at <https://rockymountaineers.us/>.

Contact Jim Thinnes at jimthinnes2@gmail.com if you want to learn more about our next trips.



Cindy and Jim in the Mekong Delta.



“Sign, Sign, Everywhere a Sign”

originally written by Les Emmerson and released by the Canadian rock group Five Man Electrical Band in 1971.



Okay...we have some confusion here... they like the Park Service shield on a Forest Service sign?

STACKED MARTINI NF SIGN

\$120.00

Taking our National Forest signs to a whole new level with these dimensional pieces of steel art. Choose your favorite Icon and put that with your favorite color combo and decorate your cabin or home. Comes ready to hang on your wall or set on your mantle or bookshelf. The Icon, lettering and outside border are always in Ivory White. Size is 12.5" H x 14" W x 3" D.

COLOR

The Ike Jacket



Dwight D. Eisenhower Presidential Library and Museum, National Archives (63-92)

An Eisenhower is a short, waist-length jacket, still sold today by workwear brands and worn by civilians as a casual piece of streetwear. Its name comes from one of America's most celebrated generals: Dwight D. Eisenhower. Eisenhower wasn't a fan of the original World War II uniform, which he considered poorly fitting and restrictive. So, he asked his tailor to make some modifications, creating a jacket that could be worn by itself or over a shirt. The design was a success and became standard issue for U.S. troops in November 1944. The cropped, practical silhouette crossed into civilian fashion after the war and hasn't entirely left since, retaining the Eisenhower name.



"I have no doubt that you have been impressed by the virtual impossibility of appearing neat and snappy in our field uniform. Given a uniform which tends to look a bit tough, and the natural proclivities of the American soldier quickly create a general impression of a disorderly mob. From this standpoint alone, the matter is bad enough; but a worse effect is the inevitable result upon the general discipline. This matter of discipline is not only the most important of our internal military problems, it is the most difficult. In support of all other applicable methods for the development of satisfactory methods we should have a neater and smarter uniform. I suggest the Quartermaster begin now serious work to design a better woolen uniform for next winter's wear."



US Forest Service

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Home > Men's > Men's Outerwear > **Men's IKE Jacket**



FS102-Men's IKE Jacket

Men's IKE Jacket

55% Dacron/45% Wool Dark Green Hunter, 11.5 oz. Ike jacket is a five (5) button "Ike" style with peak lapels, gabardine weave fabric. Pleated outside breast mock bellows style pockets with scalloped flaps. Buttons are brass finish "USFS" buttons.

Available in Regular, Long and Short Length in certain sizes.

Price: \$302.88

Availability: **In Stock**

SKU Number: FS102

Size:

Style:

Quantity:

[add to cart](#)

Apollo “Moon Trees” - 1971

Have a Really Tough Job? Call a Smokejumper!



Front side of Forest Service Moon Rocket Medal. A container with ends made of these medals carried tree seeds to the moon on the Apollo XIV moon mission.



Reverse side of Forest Service Moon Rocket Medal.

Forest Service Archive Photo #521149

Apollo 14 launched in the late afternoon of January 31, 1971 on what was to be NASA's third trip to the lunar surface. Five days later Alan Shepard and Edgar Mitchell walked on the Moon while **Stuart Roosa, a former U.S. Forest Service smoke jumper**, orbited above in the command module. Packed in small containers in Roosa's personal kit were hundreds of tree seeds, part of a joint NASA/USFS project.

Upon return to Earth, the seeds were germinated by the Forest Service. Known as the Apollo "Moon Trees", the resulting seedlings were planted throughout the United States (often as part of the nation's bicentennial in 1976) and the world. They stand as a tribute to astronaut Roosa and the Apollo program.

The project began after Roosa was chosen for the Apollo 14 mission. Ed Cliff, Chief of the Forest Service, knew of Stuart Roosa from his days as a smoke jumper and contacted him about bringing seeds into space. Stan Krugman of the Forest Service was put in charge of the project and selected the seeds for the experiment. Seeds were chosen from five different types of trees: loblolly pine, sycamore, sweetgum, redwood, and Douglas fir.

The seeds were classified and sorted, and sealed in small plastic bags that were stored in a metal canister. Control seeds were kept on Earth for later comparison. Roosa carried possibly 2000 or more seeds in the canister in his personal kit, a small canvas pouch that stayed with him as he orbited the Moon in the command module "Kitty Hawk" in February, 1971. Unfortunately, the seed bags burst open during the decontamination procedures after their return to Earth, and the seeds were scattered about the chamber and exposed to vacuum, and it was thought they might not be viable.

[More](#)

<https://science.nasa.gov/resource/apollo-moon-trees/>

Are Naps Good For You?

By Mayo Clinic Staff
Nov. 06, 2024

Napping: Do's and Don'ts for healthy adults

Not sure whether napping is good for you? Understand the pros and cons, along with tips for getting a good nap.

If you're sleep deprived or just looking for a way to relax, you might be thinking about taking a nap. Napping at the wrong time of day or napping for too long can backfire though. Understand how to get the most out of a nap.

What are the benefits of napping?

Napping offers various benefits for healthy adults, including:

- Relaxation.
- Less tiredness.
- More alertness.
- Better mood.
- Improved performance, including quicker reaction time and better memory.

What are the drawbacks to napping?

Napping isn't for everyone. Some people have trouble sleeping during the day. Or they have a hard time napping in places other than their own beds.

Napping also can lead to issues such as:

- **Feeling groggy** right after waking. This is known as sleep inertia. That groggy feeling could make it harder to work

and feel alert right after a nap. But it often goes away within about 35 minutes.

- **Trouble sleeping at night.** For most people, short naps don't tend to affect sleep quality overnight. But if you have trouble falling asleep or staying asleep at night, napping might make these problems worse. Long or frequent naps might interfere with nighttime sleep.

Some research also links naps longer than an hour a day with higher risks of conditions such as high blood pressure, diabetes and heart disease.

When should I think about taking a nap?

Think about making time for a short nap if you:

- Start to feel tired or sleepy during the day.
- Are about to lose some sleep - for example, due to a long work shift.
- Want to make planned naps part of your daily routine.

Could a sudden greater need for naps signal a health condition?

Talk with your healthcare professional if you feel the need to nap more than usual. It's extra important to have this talk if you feel sleepy or tired after you wake up in the morning. You might be getting poor sleep at night due to a certain medicine, sleep disorder or another health condition.

What's the best way to take a nap?

To get the most out of a nap, try these tips:

- **Keep naps short.** A 20- to 30-minute nap is ideal. Try not to snooze more than 30 minutes on a regular basis. The longer you nap, the more likely you are to feel groggy afterward.
- **Take naps in the early afternoon.** Napping after 3 p.m. can make it harder for you to sleep soundly at night. Factors such as your need for sleep, sleeping schedule, age and medicine use also can play roles in figuring out the best time of day to nap.
- **Create a restful space.** Nap in a quiet, dark place with a comfortable room temperature. Limit distractions such as TVs, computers, phones and other devices.

After you nap, give yourself time to wake up before you get back to your activities. This is key if you need to do a task that requires a quick or sharp response.





Remembrances



Ladd G. Frary

Ladd Frary of Davisville, WV, passed away at Camden Clark Medical Center on March 3, 2026, at the age of 97. Born in Nebraska City, Nebraska, to Glenn Frary and Verda (Hauptman) Frary on May 5, 1928, he spent his early years

in Hot Springs, South Dakota. During his summers after eighth grade, Ladd worked as a ranch hand at 7-11 Ranch outside Hot Springs. At age 17 in 1945, he graduated early from high school and joined the Navy in the final year of WWII. Following the end of the war, he served as an electrician's mate on the U.S.S. Pine Island on the Operation Highjump expedition to Antarctica. After his time in the Navy, he attended college at Colorado A&M (now CSU) in Fort Collins, Colorado.

While studying for his master's degree, he spent a summer at Tarryall Lake, Colorado, where he met his future wife, Alice Jones. They were married December 20, 1953, in Colorado Springs, Colorado. He went on to work as a wildlife biologist for the New Mexico and South Dakota Game and Fish Departments and then in the U.S. Forest Service in Colorado and Wyoming for 30 years.

During his career, he was also active in the National Guard. Upon retiring, he and Alice moved to Grand Junction, Colorado, where he served as an income tax preparer and occasionally helped the BLM and Forest Service during the wildfire season.

Ladd was preceded in death by his parents, sister Nancy Donovan, and son Greg Frary. He is survived by his wife of 72 years, Alice, sons Mike (Shelly) Frary, Doug (Anne) Frary, daughter-in-law Lisa Frary, grandchildren Kyle Frary, Dan Frary, Jenny Frary, Kelsa (Seth) Tinsley, and Jeff Frary (fiancé Katie Rogers), great-granddaughter Taegan Tinsley, brother Lynn (Patty) Frary, brother-in-law Uhl Donovan, goddaughter Gretchen Frary Seay, and many other nieces, nephews, cousins, and grand-nieces and -nephews. Ladd enjoyed fishing, hunting, trapping, and camping, and was greatly interested in genealogy and history. He could recall the scientific names of birds well into his nineties and could identify almost any tree or plant species. He was a brilliant, kind, and full of humor, and he will be greatly missed. A celebration of Ladd's life is planned for May.

(Continued from page 31)

Robert (Bob) James Miller

Robert Miller age 97 died peacefully at his home in Rifle, CO on February 14, 2026.

Bob was born in 1928 in Canton, OH to Ethel and Loyal Miller. As a youth he lived in Colorado long

enough to fall in love with its natural beauty and returned after high school to work and ultimately to attend college at Western State and Colorado State University attaining a Bachelor's Degree in Range Management. His college was covered by the GI Bill after he served in WWII as a military policeman. He spent 38 years with the US National Forest Service working first as a ranger conservationist. He started in this position in Utah, then transferred to Rico, CO.

His career took him to Steamboat Springs, Meeker (where he met his wife, Karen, of 60 years), Colorado Springs (where they celebrated the birth of their first child, Tracy) and Lakewood (where they welcomed their second child, Wes). While living in Colorado Springs and Lakewood, Bob was on the volunteer Vail ski patrol. They moved to Glenwood Springs in 1977 where Bob became the White River Forest Recreation Director. This was an ideal job for a person who loved to be outdoors experiencing nature. His days were filled with skiing to assess ski area permits and hiking/horseback riding to assess campgrounds and trails. During fire season, he simultaneously served as a wildland fire fighter for Type 1, 2 and 3 teams. Ultimately he served as the Incident Commander for the Rocky Mountain Incident Command Team for three years covering several large fires and the Exxon-Valdez oil spill in Alaska.

He retired from the Forest Service in 1990 and became a real estate associate broker with Bray Realty for ten years before retiring to be a horse rancher in Silt, CO. He also served as a volunteer on the Grand River Hospital Board and on the Garfield County Noxious Weed Committee.

Bob loved the outdoors and was a hiker, skier, horse-back rider and hunter throughout his life. He was an avid runner and reader of fiction, current events and western history. In his later life, he loved to soak in the sun and play games. He enjoyed meeting new people and always had a twinkle in his eye and a joke in mind to share with anyone nearby. Bob had many lifelong friends from his various career paths. Wherever he went he left a trail of friendships that lasted his lifetime. He was usually accompanied by a dog or two and for most of his life owned horses. He passed his love of nature, physical activity, friendship and animal companionship onto his family as a devoted husband, father, grandfather and friend.

Bob is survived by his wife, Karen; son, Wes and daughter-in-law, Tracy, of Silt, CO; daughter, Tracy and son-in-law, Alan Brewer, of Nederland, CO; granddaughters, Ellie and Madi; brother, Bruce, of Florida and Bruce's children, Greg and Cindy. He is preceded in death by his parents and two sisters. And so, with sadness, peace and love we send this old cowboy off into the western sunset with the words he chose to be said of him, "he loved the national forests and all the world of natural things." A Celebration of Life will be held in the spring. If you are so inclined, please donate to the Special Olympics in his name.



Remembrances



Dolores Caroline Rolland

Dolores Rolland passed away on April 28, 2026, at the St. Martin Village Serenity Place Nursing Home in Rapid City. Dolores was born June 24, 1931, to Charles F. and Grace Brophy Snyder at their home between Hill City and Keystone, where she joined sisters Laverne and Hildred. Later, brother Charles

Kenneth was born. She attended school from first grade through high school in Hill City by riding her father's school bus.

Upon graduating from high school in 1949, she went to Parks School of Business in Denver, Colorado. While still attending school, she began working as a civilian for the U.S. Air Force in Denver. In 1953, she transferred to a civilian job on the island of Guam. From there she was able to travel to the Philippines, Japan and Hong Kong. After a year, she returned to the United States and worked for a time in New York City. In 1955, she started a new civilian position with the U.S. Air Force, stationed in Germany.

From Germany, she returned to South Dakota and attended Black Hills State University in Spearfish and became an elementary school teacher. Her first job was at Jefferson school in Rapid City. There she met and married Jerry Rolland and her daughter, Cheryl, was born in 1960.

She then worked for a short period of time at Ellsworth AFB. After Jerry's graduation from SD

School of Mines and Technology, the family traveled with the U.S. Bureau of Public Roads extensively throughout all 48 states for several years. They were divorced in 1969 while living near Morrison, Colorado.

Dolores began working for the U.S. Forest Service in Denver in 1969. She retired in 1990 while at the Black Hills National Forest Supervisor's Office in Custer. She continued living in her home between Hill City and Keystone until 2003, when she sold everything at auction and moved to the Echo Ridge retirement facility in Rapid City. After retiring, she became passionate about photography, particularly wildlife and Black Hills scenery. She drove many miles of road throughout the Black Hills taking pictures, often accompanied by her daughter. She also continued a lifelong passion of painting in oils, creating more than 500 paintings.

In 2012, she moved from Echo Ridge to New Mexico where her daughter lived. They continued the tradition of going for drives and taking pictures throughout New Mexico. But she missed South Dakota and moved back to Echo Ridge in 2015. She moved from Echo Ridge to St. Martin Village in September 2025.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Charles F. and Grace Snyder, sisters Laverne Pease and Hildred DeWitt, and brother Charles Kenneth Snyder. She is survived by her daughter, Cheryl Rolland, who lives in New Mexico.



Remembrances



James (Jim) Shafer

James Shafer 1946-2025. Jim was born in Benton Harbor, Michigan, where he attended grade school and high school. He graduated from Michigan State University with a BS in Forestry. After college he joined the U.S. Coast Guard, serving with International Ice

Patrol for 4 years. He was based on Governor's Island in New York. There he met and married Barb. They had two daughters, Kelly and Carol. After his discharge from the military, he began his career with the Forest Service.

It began in Hot Sulphur Springs, CO (where he worked as a seasonal employee during summer breaks in college). Then he transferred to Eagle, Colorado, then, Spearfish, South Dakota, and finally to Durango, Colorado. There he worked in Timber on the District and later transferred to the Supervisor's Office, where he retired after 30+ years.

Jim and Barb bought property in Cortez, and built their dream home to live out their retirement dream. Jim could pursue his hobbies of woodworking, silversmithing, bicycling, and landscaping their new five acre home.

Jim and Barb enjoyed 53 wonderful years of marriage together. He will be sorely missed.

The Last Word

Celebration, Confusion, Chaos, and Conscience

By Tom L. Thompson



As this year passes the midpoint, the coming Fourth of July symbolically provides an opportunity to **celebrate** our nation's founding two hundred and fifty years ago. It is a time like no other for our country. The foundation that was laid by our forefathers for a new independent nation built on the ideas of democracy, freedom, independence, and respect for differences that exist amongst us as Americans have for the most part served us well as a people. This country has faced so many, many challenges and has prospered or endured in both good and bad times respectively. America today, as you and I know it, has been blessed with amazing resilience, a respect across the globe as a leader of all, and a living standard that is very high compared with other times and clearly with most other nations. There is unquestionably much to celebrate. However, with a few exceptions, there has also never been a time when our basic assumptions about who we are a nation are being questioned both within our borders and outside as well.

Though justifiably criticized at times, our legislative, judicial system, and administrative branches of government and our leadership has been a strength of our country. In all my years in the Forest Service at all levels from the district to Washington, D.C. going back almost sixty years now, I have always had a respect for our government and understood the importance of credibility of actions and respectful behavior. Yes, there have always been differences of philosophy and strong leanings left and right, but never, in my opinion, has there been such a time when so many question the credibility of our government.

Hardly a week or even a day goes by that there isn't a story that illustrates how the standards that have guided us for our two hundred and fifty years are either weakened or stretched with corruption, vindictiveness, disrespectful behavior, illegal actions, dishonesty, impulsive decisions, ignorance, arrogance, racism, sexism, or disregard for the rule of law. Our government system relies on accountability and credibility and is built on trust. And yes, there are numerous examples over the years where our government or leaders, in some manner or another from both major political parties, failed to meet the expectation of excellence or abused their responsibility, but it is hard to find a record of such blatant disregard for the standards that have guided us since 1776 as right now.

There is lots of finger pointing, a tendency to ignore what is happening, or just lining up on one's partisan side and saying you have to take the bad with the good. Ultimately, however, the slippery slope of acceptance just leads to a lowering of the standard we expect from our government without addressing the cause. There's a constant flow of **confusion** and **chaos** that appears to be deliberately created. Every action seems to be accompanied with a litany of lawsuits back and forth. There have been protests. There have been injunctions. There have been speeches. Approval of our country's leadership is at an all-time low. Luckily, some judges have done what they could when called upon to ensure our system of law and order are kept intact. As the weeks and months go by we kind of grow accustomed to this situation, hope for an awakening, and at least for now just accept what is happening. What is happening without question is abuse or lust for power simply caused by greed.

The Last Word

A paragraph in Jack London's 1913 book, The Valley of the Moon, says it so well as a warning... *"When you think of the glorious chance, a new country, bounded by oceans, situated right in latitude, with the richest land and vastest natural resources of any country in the world, settled by immigrants who had thrown off all the leading strings of the old world and were in the humor for democracy. There was only one thing to stop them from protecting the democracy they started, and that thing was greediness."*

To some degree there is no program or interest that is not being influenced by what is happening to our government and greed permeates. Across the spectrum of interests, most of our lives as Forest Service retirees have been devoted to doing what we could to make the world better by using our natural resources wisely and with an intent to ensure those resources continue to provide for future generations as well. The Forest Service has been a world leader in conservation based on science and professionalism, and I believe most of us should be proud to have been a part of that. The organization and structure established by Gifford Pinchot, half as old as our country, has served the country well and has adjusted to changing times and changing priorities. The idea of conservation is still relatively young. The intent of the new National Conservation Legacy Center in Missoula, which will be open the third week of July, is to celebrate and acknowledge what has taken place and what has been learned this past century.

Without question, our assumptions are being tested about how the idea of conservation continues to move forward as an idea embraced by all. The pendulum that has swung back and forth for years and years has continually redefined and adjusted priorities and commitments but always seemed to settle back with a respect for science, professionalism, dedication to all resources, and most importantly an intent or an appearance of willingness to listen to the desires of the public. I believe the restructuring that is taking place with the Forest Service is weakening each of these tenants and is being politically driven. There are always ways to improve but the scope of the changes being made is uncalled for and will weaken considerably what the agency has been able to do and may be irreparable.

As each day goes by, I keep hoping and praying for our country's conscience to kick in and that there will be an awakening to what is basically right and wrong. In my view, we have gotten off track badly. I believe or would hope that each of us have a fairly common view of basic right and wrong but it seems to me this is being clouded up with partisan allegiance and ignorance perhaps of what is happening right in front of us.

Our country needs leadership, our country needs a responsible and respectable Congress, and our country depends on an impartial judicial system that ensures the laws and constitution is adhered to. Whether you are a Republican, a Democrat, or independent your expectation should be that first and foremost your leaders respect the law, respect their fellow citizens, and exhibit character traits that set a high standard for others to emulate, especially our youth. That's your and my grandkids and great grandkids!

As Gifford Pinchot so wisely and clearly stated so many years ago... *"It's a far greater thing to be a good citizen, than a good republican or democrat."* If only we could all adhere to these wise words, what a better world we would be living in America today as we turn 250.

