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WARNER COLLEGE
OF NATURAL RESOURCES
COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY

May 2025



A Note from the CCC Director

In June, I will mark my 31st anniversary living in the American West. During those decades, Colorado's population has nearly doubled. I arrived in Colorado in the early stages of changes that are the focus of the new book [A Watershed Moment: The American West in the Age of Limits](#). The essays in this book are grounded in specific places and communities. They share the history and the challenges of those places. And they show people working together across differences, often in demanding situations. While the essays don't offer easy solutions, they do illustrate, as co-editor Robert Frodeman writes, "small steps toward a better future."

In his introductory essay, *The West as Myth and Reality*, Frodeman frames this

collection of essays as grappling with the tension between ideas that have drawn people of European descent to the West for generations—opportunity, wide open spaces, freedom—and strains that have arisen as the West’s population has grown—conflict over water and predators, increasing megafires, unaffordable housing.

In their essay *Beyond Current Boundaries*, Indigenous scholars Monte Mills and Kekek Jason Stark, writing about the Blackfeet’s work in the “Crown of the Continent,” take on one powerful myth directly, the myth of wilderness, “the open, natural, seemingly uninhabited places of the American West.” In contrast, they write, the tribal perspective on wilderness is a place where people live on the land in harmony with the landscape. Like many of the essays in this book, Mills and Stark illustrate several essential ingredients for building a positive future for the West such as the need to incorporate Indigenous values and perspectives, the centrality of relationships and trust, and the importance of being willing to navigate through conflict.

Conflict is also present in several other essays in this book. For example, the chapter *Innovation and Collaboration on Private Lands along Wyoming’s Absaroka Front* describes how momentum was building toward conflict between wildlife interests and private landowners, but through patience, listening, and innovation, they are finding a path forward. Here, too, the authors emphasize how potentially opposing interests are building social connections and trusting relationships and how these dialogues are leading to conservation outcomes.

In his essay on living with bears, Stewart Breck reminds us that working across differences starts with how each of us shows up. Breck shares a personal story that both demonstrates and calls for a key personal attribute needed for collaboration: humility. He suggests scientists in particular need more humility, but I believe his observations apply to all of us who think we have the answer.

Whether or not you are from the West, you may find, as I did, some value in these essays. You may also find hope. As Mills and Stark say at the end their essay, a different, more just, and more sustainable future is possible.

Do you have a book suggestion for me? If so, I would love [to hear from you](#).



News from the CCC



What's new with the [Colorado Forest Collaboratives Network?](#)

Below are resources that are Colorado-based, but have a much broader applicability across the West!

[The Colorado Forest Resilience Planning Guide](#) provides tools to strengthen collaboration, integrate community values, and access science-based resources tailored to local landscapes. By fostering collaborative planning and adaptive management, this guide helps communities, agencies, and resource allocators to better position themselves to achieve lasting forest health and resilience together. The resilience guide is described and discussed extensively in a recent Colorado Forest Collaboratives Network **Branching Out session**. You can see a [recording of this session here](#), including an engaging [Q&A and discussion](#) beginning at 00:41:02.

The upcoming **Branching Out session**, next **Thursday, May 22nd, 2025 at 10:30 am – 12:00 pm MDT**, will focus on the [Colorado Forest Tracker](#), a new tool that compiles forest management data and presents it in an online dashboard to inform strategies and policies for improving forest health and reducing wildfire risk. During the Branching Out session, the creators of the guide, the Colorado State Forest Service and the Colorado Forest Restoration Institute, will provide background and a tour of the data and dashboard. They will then walk through a practical application of this tool, so it can be useful to YOUR work! To join this session, [register here](#).

And that's not all! On May 29th, 1 – 2 pm MDT, there will be a webinar with Q&A on the federal ***Fix Our Forests Act, a.k.a. FOFA***. *FOFA* reflects months of bipartisan negotiations in the Senate to find consensus on how to accelerate forest management projects, promote safe and responsible prescribed fire treatments, expand public input in assessments of wildfire resilience needs, and enhance collaboration between federal agencies, states, tribes, and stakeholders. During the webinar, staff from Senator John Hickenlooper's office will present on the key sections of the bill, give the political context for this bill, and answer questions. Interested? [Register here](#).

Learn more about these and the CFCN's general work [here](#).

Get to Know the CCC

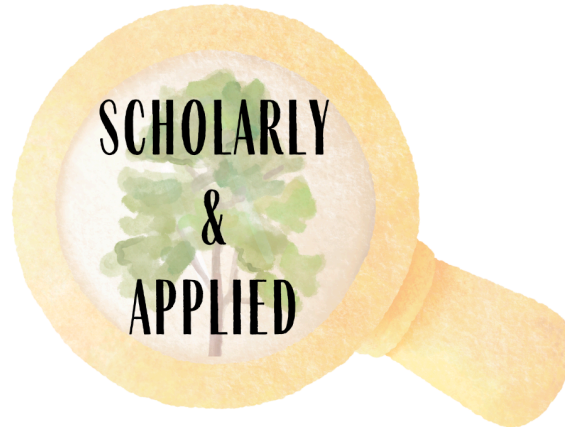


Meet our CCC Student Office Assistant, Lizzy Camp!

Lizzy is a current Colorado State University freshman studying Landscape Architecture, as well as our Office Assistant. Born and raised in Fort Collins, they have cultivated a lifelong love and passion for conserving and protecting

nature. They are particularly interested in the biology of forests, crafting cute beanies for their goose statue, and the use of sustainable and native plant garden design as a way to conserve lands. Lizzy is just at the beginning of their journey in conservation and is excited to learn more about the process of caring for nature.

Scholarly and Applied Impact



Here we review research to guide our practice. Please [reach out with suggestions](#) for what we should cover!

At this moment in time, it may not seem the most useful advice to hear that we need to listen more and talk with people that we disagree with. After all, people we disagree with – those in our “out-group” -- often seem “selfish, close-minded, unintelligent, dishonest, immoral, or hypocritical.” And we to them. More and more, we are falling prey to stereotypical viewpoints that “maximize ingroup-outgroup distinction by magnifying partisan identities” ([Doornbosch et al, 2025](#)).

Recently, the Institute for Science & Policy at the Denver Museum of Nature & Science launched [The Compass Series: Navigating Our Complex State of Affairs](#), sharing interviews, webinars, and articles that explore “critical topics at the intersection of science, policy, and human behavior.”

The [first week](#) of the Compass series explores polarization and conflict, highlighting the need for constructive conversations that bridge our divides, and providing plenty of strategies and ideas for doing so. I’m excited to sign up for a conversation through [Story Corp’s “One Small Step”](#) initiative – during which I will try to use supportive communication and be open to positive

characterizations, yet not abandon the use of effective criticism (Doornbosch et al, 2025).

The [second week](#) of the Institute’s Compass series covers “Navigating Uncertainty” – a particularly relevant topic, as the “intolerance of uncertainty may be very important to understanding the psychology of worry” ([Intolerance of Uncertainty Scale, IUS](#)). This also brings to mind a recent [interview](#) that science writer Ed Yong did with the NY Times. In it, Ed Yong shares three ideas for coping with uncertain times: (1) hope is a discipline – “it is a practice that you cultivate through active effort;” (2) fight the long defeat – we will suffer “defeats and setbacks,” yet we “fight nonetheless;” and (3) practice the Stockdale paradox by understanding “the full and brutal” reality of the situation, while also holding “indomitable hope that things could get better.”

I look forward to diving into future episodes of the Compass series!

- Allison Brody, PhD

Our Associate Director of Learning

Notes From the Field



Here we take short explorations of the CCC’s projects, on-the-ground engagement, research, and what we are learning along the way!

The focus this month is Reflecting on Hope

This month, I’d like to do something a little different with my section of the newsletter. I’d like to reflect on hope. And maybe it is a little selfish, but I’ve recently come to the realization that I am not the only one feeling like I could desperately use some right now. First, let’s talk about what “hope” is, because

definitions can ground us in where to find this elusive and yet essential thing.

Tamar Chansky, Ph.D. of Worry Wise says this – “Hope is momentum-forward trust in life and oneself, without the certificate guaranteeing ‘x will happen.’”

Everett Worthington, psychologist, writes, “Hope is a motivation to persevere toward a goal or end state, even if we’re skeptical that a positive outcome is likely.”

And my favorite – Dr. Alan Wolfelt, the Director of the Center for Loss and Life Transition, writes, “It’s an expectation of a good that is yet to be. It is an inner knowing that the future holds positive things. It is trust that no matter the current circumstances, the days to come will reveal happiness.”

A few months ago, Allison said something to me that I had never thought of before, and it has been quietly pivotal in my mind. She said – hope is a verb.

In my ruminations on this, I have come to consider hope to be a decision that we make, and a mindset that we can choose to cultivate. But how do we do that in times like these? I’ve found that the past five years have inspired many scholars of hope to share their insight, and here are some of the things that I’ve found.

In his article, “[Nurturing Hope in Difficult Times](#),” Dr. Wolfelt considers hope in response to a question I have been asking myself a lot lately, “Are we going to get through this?” His entire article is well worth a read, and his perspective is both grounded and helpful. What I will pull from that here is this – focus on mindfulness and letting go. Dr. Wolfelt explains it best:

“Relinquishing the illusion of control can lessen our anxiety and help us to build trust in our own capacity to cope with whatever happens. If we work on mindfulness, we don’t have to obsess and worry. Instead, we can learn to be OK with our lack of control and trust in our own resilience. When tomorrow comes, we will handle what comes tomorrow. Today we are only responsible for today.”

Tamar Chansky, Ph.D. from Worry Wise, wrote about “[Finding Hope in Hard Times](#).” Among several things, she discusses the importance of acknowledging our feelings of hopelessness. This avoids issues with “toxic positivity” and also gives us room to explore our genuine experiences, rather than pretending that

these difficult emotions don't exist for us, which can ironically lead to greater suffering.

She talks about asking for help, something that Dr. Wolfelt also mentions. I think we are in a space to do this well in collaborative conversation. We have invested in building networks of support, and now is the time to activate them. We have to remember that it isn't naive to seek hope, and that asking for support is another way to cultivate trust and resilience.

Finally, for those among you who like concrete actions, Donald Altman, a psychotherapist and former Buddhist monk, was spotlighted in Shilagh Mirgain's article "[Finding Hope During Tough Times](#)" for his GLAD technique, which is a simple way to help ourselves find balance. For this daily practice, you will want to think of at least one thing for each category that ...

G – You are grateful for.

L – You learned.

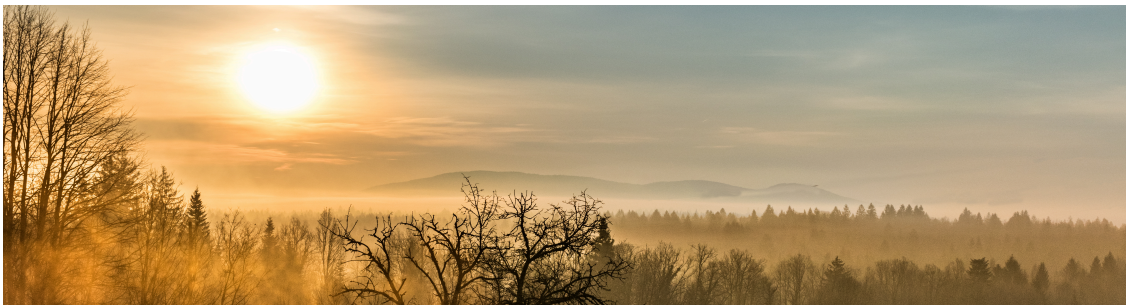
A – You accomplished.

D – You found delight in.

And of course, as nearly all of these authors mention, it is important for us to remember – we are not alone. We can find hope in ourselves and hope in our friends and family, trusted colleagues and partners, and in the natural world around us.

- Aireona Raschke, PhD

Our Associate Director of Practice



Other News and Opportunities

Meet the Coloradoans Working to Save the West's Wildfire-Ravaged

Forests | This uplifting 5280 magazine article involves several of our partners and is an excellent example of storytelling in conservation work! [Read here](#)

The Role of Fuel Treatments During Incident Management | Katie McGrath Novak, our CFCN Coordinator, co-authored this piece during her time with the Public Lands Policy Group at CSU. This paper explores how firefighters and Incident Management Teams use fuel treatments during fires to design and assess fuel treatment effectiveness. [Read here](#)

Colorado Statewide Strategy for Prescribed Fire on Non-Federal Lands | The Prescribed Fire Subcommittee, including Katie McGrath Novak, developed this outline. They incorporated a collaborative-centric focus group to inform the plan; several Colorado forest collaboratives are featured as case studies within! [Read here](#)

Would you like to learn about more news and opportunities? If so, you can subscribe to the newsletter of the [Western Collaborative Conservation Network](#) and/or the [Colorado Forest Collaboratives Network](#).

Jobs



Check out the CCC's [Job Board](#) for a list of jobs focused on natural resources and collaborative conservation!

Here are just a couple of postings shared through our board:

Trails Technician for the Great Basin Institute | The Great Basin Institute and Tahoe Area Mountain Biking Association are seeking a Trail Operations Technician for a 22-week project in the Lake Tahoe Basin, focusing on trail

construction and maintenance. Ideal candidates will have a related background!
This is a seasonal position. [Learn more](#)

Conservation Finance Director for the Western Landowners Alliance |

WLA works to improve the well-being of working lands in the American West and the communities therein. *This is a full-time, remote position!* The Conservation Finance Director will develop and implement strategies to strengthen economic support for conservation and stewardship. [Learn more](#)

If you have job openings that are aligned with our work on collaborative conservation and you want us to share them, submit them to our [job board](#).

If you think a colleague would find value in reading CCC news, please forward this email to them and invite them to subscribe to our email list using the form at the bottom of the [CCC home page](#).

If you feel moved to support our work supporting conservation, please consider [donating to the CCC](#).

Questions? Ideas? Opportunities? Please email the CCC Director [John Sanderson](#).

Be well,
The CCC Team



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