

ART OF RANCHING

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Supervisors:
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PROJECT INTRODUCTION

The Art of Ranching is a multigenerational history project that works with 4-H youth, historical agricultural families, and their descendants. The project began with Tami Eggers, the 4-H Youth Development Specialist, in 2021 in Routt County. She imagined bringing together 4-H youth, historians, college interns, Extension specialists, and individuals from historic ranches to preserve the stories of the county's agricultural roots. Since that time, it has expanded to other counties, including Douglas, Elbert, Garfield, Logan, and Custer counties.



The project's goal is to preserve the many stories of historic farms, ranches, and agriculturalists throughout Colorado, promote an interest in community history with local youth, and establish connections between youth and their elders across generational lines. The Art of Ranching Project supports the CSU Extension mission by sharing knowledge and skill sets within the community. This then allows us to share these stories with the general public and academics to further education.

INTERNSHIP GOALS

- Take inventory of past transcriptions and create a comprehensive narrative for future use.
- Construct an academic curriculum based in agricultural history that can not only be used for 4H participants but for Colorado youth at large.
- Do on site research in Routt county to assess how the public engages and constructs their local history
- Visit archives to obtain information about members of historic ranches to use as research in upcoming AOR projects.

CAREER APPLICATION

- Learned how to make a curriculum that meets academic standards for multiple grades.
- Made worksheets and agendas for youth to use during workshops
- Made narratives for public use based on youth-led interviews
- Made a finding aid for the archives.

Already my work on this internship has led to other work opportunities, such as in Morgan Library's Special Collections and University Archives.

HISTORICAL METHODS

In this internship, I used oral history, archival, and social studies curricular methodologies.

In conducting oral histories, we instructed the youth to use the Art of Ranching manual on oral histories to help guide their questions in interviewing ranchers in their area.

We then took those audio files and transcribed them for future use in archival research, as well as wrote a comprehensive narrative based on the interview to make it easier to read.

We also visited various archival sites around the area, such as the Tread of Pioneers Museum in Steamboat Springs, and other museums in Routt County to take inventory of what kind of collections they store.

We digitized certain collections to go into the CSU Archives for preservation and to make them easier to access for the public at large.

I then used those archival resources as well as the Colorado Academic Standards to construct a curriculum for 4-H leaders to use to teach the youth about their history.

OUTCOMES AND PRODUCTS

1. Organized an on-site workshop for 4H youth at the Morgan Library, where they could learn about Fort Collins' Agricultural History, such as their historic orchards, our archives at the library, and learn about heritage trees.

2. Curated a curriculum for not only 4H youth but also made it applicable for any students from second grade to high school to learn about the importance of agricultural history.

3. Visited Routt County to collect Oral histories as well as visit various heritage and historic sites to gauge how the public engages with their own history.

4. Researched various history programs that could run concurrently with the Art of Ranching project to broaden the youth's exposure to history.



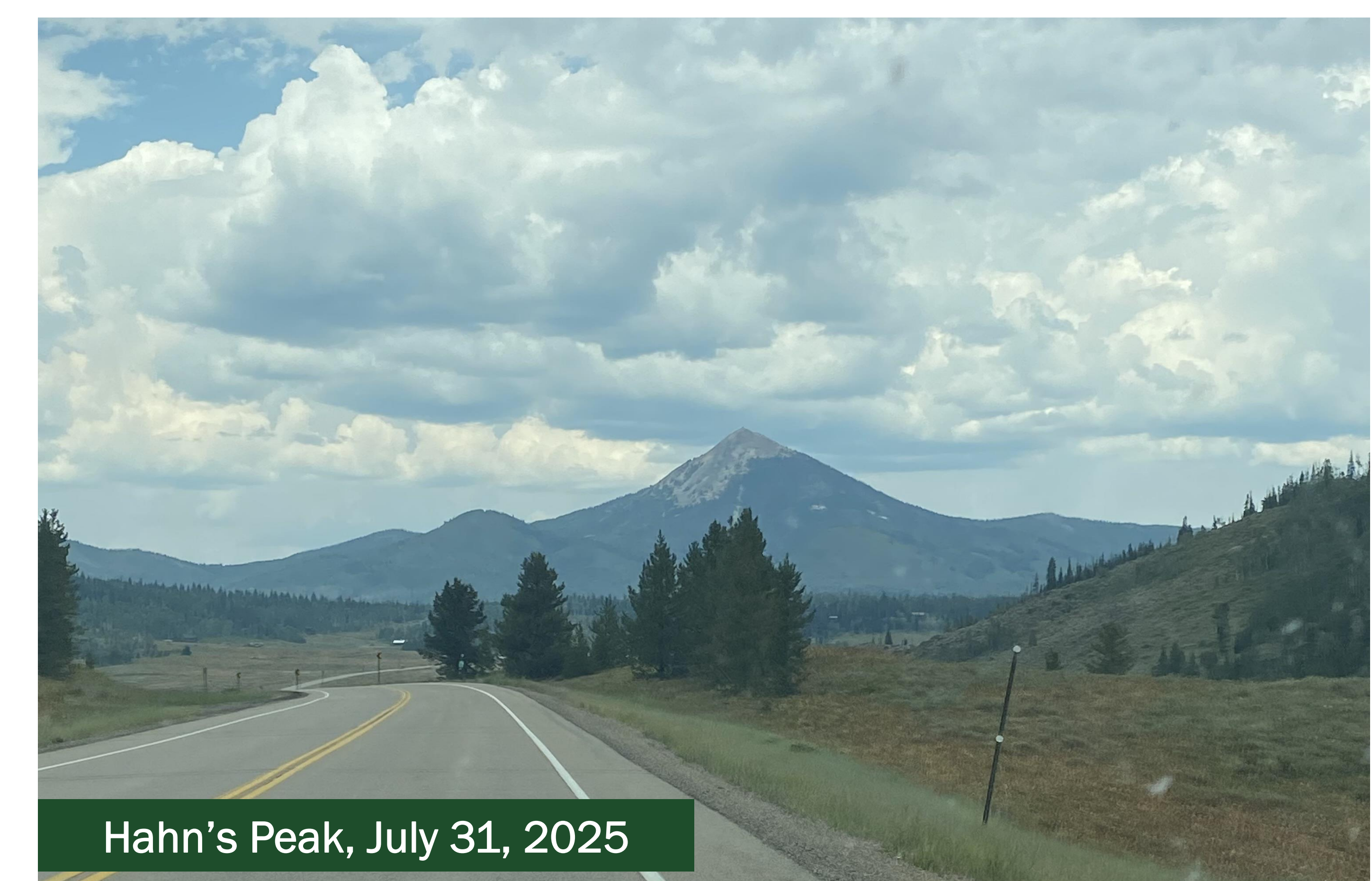
Paul and Ellen Bonifield,
July 30, 2025



Tread of Pioneers Museum, July 30, 2025

NEXT STEPS

The transcriptions and narratives constructed during my internship can be used by youth to help conduct their research into future AOR projects. My curriculum can also be used to help teach students about local history and oncoming interns can edit and adapt it to fit new information discovered or obtained in upcoming years.



Hahn's Peak, July 31, 2025