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December 2024



**Celebrating
2024: Together
for Land, Water,
& Community**



**CENTER FOR
COLLABORATIVE
CONSERVATION**

**Be Well,
The CCC Team**



top: Cohort 14 Fellows participating in a panel discussion during their Training Retreat; *middle:* CCC staff at Confluence in Tucson, left to right- Aireona, Allison, John, Nicole, and Katie; *bottom left:* Summit presenter La Plata County Commissioner Clyde Church (John Sanderson); *bottom middle:* Storyteller's Circle

workshop at Seedskadee National Wildlife Refuge (Nicole Reese); *bottom right*: 2024 July CFHC field tour to Glenwood Canyon (Katie McGrath Novak)

A Note from the CCC Director

This morning I received an email from the National Forest Foundation's Collaborative Capacity Program for Forests & Communities telling us our proposal had not been funded. We had worked hard on his proposal in hopes of funding work that might not otherwise happen, so I was disappointed. At the same time, I was thrilled to read in the email that the program had received 10 times more proposals than they could fund. The existence of this program tells me that funders increasingly recognize that the size and scope of the conservation challenges we face require capacity to build and sustain collaborations. And the demand for that funding is an expression of the expanding commitment to conservation that is fundamentally rooted in relationship—among our human communities and the more-than-human world.

I also see this commitment in the many people we have the privilege of working with through our work at the CCC. At this moment when our national and global politics appear fractured and fraught, I applaud you for your efforts to connect across differences to find meaningful and enduring solutions to our conservation challenges. This can be hard, especially with the most important challenges, which tend to be the most contentious. As CCC Fellow Mireille Gonzalez showed in a recent paper (see below), no matter what side of a contentious issue we are on, we tend to think positively about our own social groups while thinking poorly about those who see the world differently. Knowing this is true, opening ourselves to the possibility of working together in curiosity and relationship, including with others who don't see the world as we do, gives us a chance to find a path forward together.

At the CCC, we strive to support all of us to collaborate better. As always, I invite you to be in touch with resources, opportunities, and stories that we can learn from and share. Below we share several highlights of our work during the past year. We also share gratitude for the many partners who make this work possible and give us hope along the way, including you. **Looking back on 2024, I see plenty to celebrate. Looking forward, I see plenty to do.** I look forward to working with you as the journey continues.

Be well,

John

2024 with our CCC Programs!



Here's to another wonderful year of the CCC Fellows Program!



top right: Fellows Dr. Joy Life and Dr. Life Mashumba of Cohort 13, Botswana; top left: Cohort 14 Fellows participating in a panel discussion during their Training Retreat; middle left: Museum exhibit by Cohort 13 Fellow Alex Ocañas, Montana; bottom left: Cohort 13 Fellows plan Proyecto Pi with Pintag Amaru, Ecuador; bottom

right: Manoela Ebner Pinho (Cohort 14) feeds a giraffe at the Denver Zoo during their Training Retreat.

Fellows Program

Dear Fellows, current and alum,

The CCC Fellows program is a truly unique opportunity to create a community of collaborative conservationists. Funding, training, and peer-to-peer learning allows a cohort of students, faculty and practitioners to complete on-the-ground collaborative projects.

*Being a Fellow with the Center for Collaborative Conservation is a special experience, filled with mutual trust, friendship, and learning. **I look at the work that you all do as Fellows - and beyond - and it fills me with optimism and hope for the world.***

Taking a look back at the year shows how special this program really is!

- Allison

CCC Fellows Program Coordinator

Let's take a look at the past year with the Fellows Program!



HERE'S TO 2024!
Another Wonderful
Year of Collaboration
at the WCCN



SEE YOU IN 2025!



top: winery visit in the Cienega Watershed, Tahnee Robertson; middle: cactus selfie at the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum, Jessica Archibald; bottom left: morning hike with Emerging Leaders Working Group members, Paula Short; bottom middle: learning at the San Xavier Farm Co-op Farm, Colleen Cooley; bottom right: enthusiastic conversations at Confluence, Katie McGrath Novak

Western Collaborative Conservation Network

Dear Friends,

There's lots to celebrate for WCCN in 2024, and I can't cover everything here. But Roxie, Nicole, and the Awareness and Engagement Working Group have blown it out of the water with this year's newsletters. The Emerging Leadership Working Group with Crowd Conservation has also been making headway on our Mentorship Best Practices project. In the coming year, we will be producing a Mentorship Best Practice toolkit to share with you all thanks to this work. WCCN's biggest accomplishment this year was, of course, Confluence 2024, our third Confluence gathering. From our planning committee, to our funders,

our volunteers, our core team of event planners, and everyone involved, Confluence was only possible because of the shared care that we have for this community. As we move into a new year, I find so much inspiration and energy in remembering how many of you I got to work with this year.

Thank you so much for making WCCN the community and space that it is. May 2025 be kind to all of us, and may we be there for one another for all the new opportunities that the new year will present across the West.

- Aireona
WCCN Director

Read what the WCCN got up to this year and celebrate with us!



clockwise from upper left: 2024 July CFHC field tour to Glenwood Canyon (Katie McGrath Novak), interpretive hike at Summit (from photo wall), Summit presenter La Plata County Commissioner Clyde Church (John Sanderson), pre-Summit social (Katie McGrath Novak), CFHC group photo (Dan Gibbs)

Colorado Forest Collaboratives Network

Happy December, Forest Collaboratives Network!

In [this newsletter](#), we're taking some time to reflect on year THREE of the CFCN. I am so thankful to all of you who helped the CFCN feel like a real community this year - many of you stepped up to support our Summit planning, speak at events, share your ideas, and engage as participants. I've started to read through and compile many of your end-of-year reports, and as always I am inspired by what you all have accomplished!

*I recently stumbled upon this quote: **"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."** ~Margaret Mead*

In the face of some really daunting, large-scale challenges that seem impossible to beat, I am proud to be surrounded by YOU - the people bridging jurisdictional and political and administrative divides to get things done in your communities. You all prove to me every day that there is positive change happening in the world. Keep going!

- Katie
CFCN Coordinator

It's a good time to celebrate 2024 at the CFCN!



North Sand Creek Project Update

Beginning in 2021, the Center for Collaborative Conservation convened a diverse group of stakeholders who agreed to move forward together with the goal of improving the health and water quality of North Sand Creek. The goals of the North Sand Creek Restoration Partnership are to (1) restore stream structure and function, including reducing sediment transport, and (2) protect a private landowner's ability to use and maintain their water right. The partnership is pursuing these goals while also acknowledging the importance of OHV recreation at North Sand Hills. This project engages the [Bureau of Land Management](#), [Ducks Unlimited](#), off-highway-vehicle (OHV) user groups, [Denver Botanic Gardens](#), [Colorado Natural Heritage Program](#), [Colorado Water Conservation Board](#), [Colorado Watershed Assembly](#), and private landowners through occasional meetings and field trips.

The year 2024 has seen some exciting progress in the North Sand Creek project. A non-point source pollution 319 grant through the [Colorado Department of Health and Environment](#) was secured by the CCC team and Ducks Unlimited. This grant will fund a large portion of the **in-stream restoration and riparian revegetation efforts** at North Sand Creek and the North Sand Hills. Most recently, we received a **vegetation restoration and monitoring report** by the Denver Botanic Garden and CSU graduate students. They collected baseline sedimentation and hydrology monitoring data this past summer to guide our revegetation efforts. Our team has also met with a recreation advocacy group called [Stay the Trail Colorado](#) to **plan engagement with the public land visitors**.

You can read more in [our recent final report](#) of our [Colorado Healthy Rivers Fund](#) grant! **We look forward to continuing to do important work with this partnership in 2025!**

Read more about the North Sand Creek Project's recent efforts!



Storyteller's Circle - Pilot Project Success

Dear Storytellers,

Thank you to the 280 people who have engaged with the Storyteller's Circle over the past two years!

What started as an idea between peer-mentors matched during WCCN's [Confluence](#) in 2022 has blossomed into an enthusiastic and motivated group of conservation communicators.

These virtual sessions over the past two years have built up enough momentum that in October of this year we hosted our first in-person workshop at Seedskaadee National Wildlife Refuge! While camping for three days, 20 participants learned from guest speakers and practiced their communication skills in photography, videography, and interviewing. We left this workshop with new ideas on how we can collaborate in our communication efforts.

Check out our end-of-year wrap up [blog post here](#), and I hope you'll join us in 2025 for our monthly virtual sessions, [register here!](#)

- Nicole
Conservation Engagement Specialist

CCC News



WCCN Emerging Leadership Initiative's Toolkit – What We've Learned About Mentorship

This December at our WCCN All-Partners webinar, **Nicole and Paula** from [Crowd Conservation](#) updated the group about [WCCN's Emerging Leadership's Mentorship Best Practices research](#) – which they have been leading with support from the [WCCN Emerging Leadership Working Group](#).

Mentorship is a two-way street! And just to name a few benefits for both mentors and mentees:

- Relationships/building social capital
- Sharing different perspectives and experiences
- Peer-learning
- Developing leadership skills
- Emotional support

- Passing forward Institutional Knowledge

We advocate for mainstreaming mentorship - incorporating it into our organization cultures and promoting the self-reflection, support, and empowerment that comes with a mentorship relationship. Robust mentoring programs have the potential to solve for recruiting, retaining, succession planning and removing barriers to entry (especially for minorities in STEM fields).

If you are interested learning more, Nicole has shared her powerpoint [HERE](#). There are some amazing insights that she pulled together for all of us. Keep an eye out in 2025 for the publication of our Mentorship Toolkit!

Get to Know the CCC



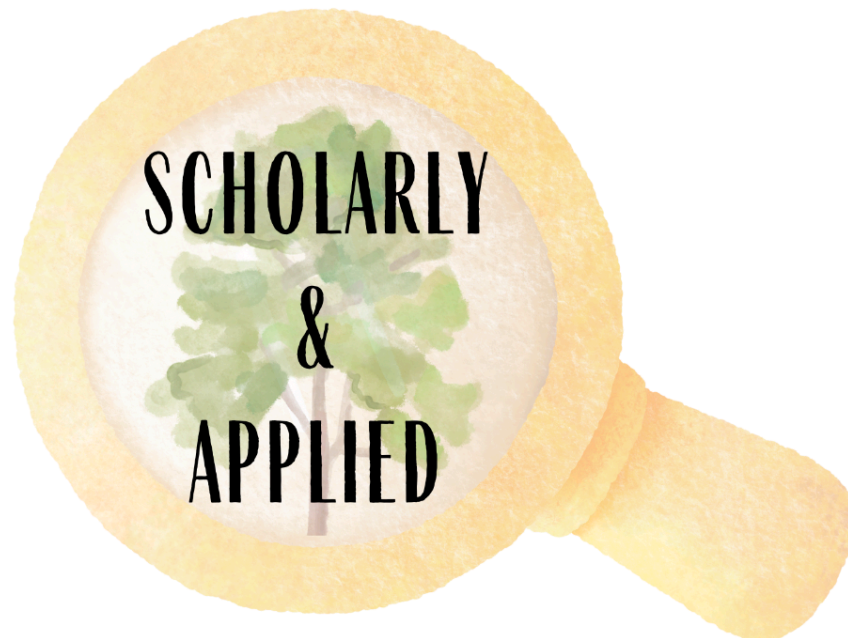
Meet our North Sand Creek Project Assistant: Julia Lankisch

Julia is currently working toward her [Masters of Conservation Leadership](#) with a capstone focusing on restoring wildlife connectivity corridors across I-25. She

earned her undergraduate degrees in Environmental Science and Music from Xavier University in Cincinnati, OH. She has previously been engaged, through a variety of organizations in Cincinnati, with invasive species research, urban agriculture and permaculture, environmental education, and outdoor recreation. Julia most recently created and led the WestRoots Urban Agriculture program to mitigate the effects of food deserts with nonprofit [Cincinnati Urban Promise](#).

Julia has way too many hobbies and enjoys everything from hiking and canoeing to embroidery and painting. She spends her free time doing crosswords with her corn snake [Sergeant Pepper](#) and daydreaming about her ideal job as leader of a nonprofit that rewilds landbank properties in urban areas. Julia believes first and foremost in the fundamental right of every person to have access to quality natural areas and healthy environmental conditions. She looks forward to applying her newfound interest in and knowledge about collaborative conservation to the [North Sand Creek restoration project](#).

Scholarly and Applied Impact



Here we review research to guide our practice. Please [reach out with suggestions](#) for what we should cover! **CCC Fellows and staff are indicated by bold font.**

Mirielle (Ray) Gonzalez ([Cohort 10](#)) recently coauthored an [article](#) exploring the use of reconciliation to repair relations, rebuild trust, and effectively manage

conflict situations related to wolf reintroduction in Colorado. Using reconciliation can be an important strategy for collaboration, especially when trust and relationships have been broken, or a conflict seems intractable. Many reconciliation ideas have roots in the “conflict and peace-building literature,” which outline approaches that help reframe how conflict is perceived. They can also shift ideas people hold about the motivations, values, and actions of people on the other side of the conflict. You can read the plain language summary of the article [here](#).

This type of thinking is one of the things that makes **Ray** an excellent mentor for [Cohort 14 Fellows](#). In fact, our current group of mentors have a remarkable range of experiences and expertise – which is exactly what the [Fellows Mentoring Program](#) thrives on. *Whatever your background or experience, we hope you will consider mentoring as a way to make an important contribution to this impactful program. Read the Mentor Letter of Invitation [here](#).*

Highlights of the [Fellows Mentoring Program](#):

- A 12-month commitment, designed to meet your schedule (in-person or virtual)
- Training and support provided
- Matchmaking will ensure a great fit between mentor and Fellow, paving the way for a productive and rewarding relationship

- Allison Brody, PhD

Our Associate Director of Learning

Learn more & apply to be a Fellows Mentor today!

Other News and Opportunities

New Professional Course in Landscape Planning from The Center of Wildlife Studies | Introducing a brand new course with Dr Patrick Crist: Conservation planning happens at multiple scales, from site-specific to transcontinental. While most implementation happens on-site, planning on a landscape level is important to put it into context! [Learn more and register here.](#)

The Inter-American Foundation Research Fellowship Program | The Inter-American Foundation is offering up to TEN fellowships this year to researchers for community-led development in Latin America and the Caribbean. The fellowship lasts 12 months: plenty of time to dive into rigorous research (and maybe the deep blue, too). [Learn more and apply here.](#)

National Forest Foundation 2025 Conservation Connect Fellowships | The National Forest Foundation (NFF) invites graduate students pursuing a master's or doctoral degree to apply to the 2025 Conservation Connect Fellowship Program. They are striving to build a cohort of emerging leaders, connecting graduate students who will go on to do important work with communities and public lands in the future! [Learn more and apply.](#)

Community Wildfire Mitigation Best Practices Training | The Community Wildfire Mitigation Best Practices training is designed to increase the skills of the professional mitigation practitioner and individuals who run mitigation programs. Applications are considered on a rolling basis! [Learn more](#) and [apply.](#)

Jobs

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

Here are just a few postings shared through our board:

PhD-Level 2-Year Graduate Research Assistantship at Kent State University | Kent State University's (KSU) School of Peace and Conflict Studies (SPCS) is dedicated to peaceful change and to empowering people to prevent, resolve, and transform conflicts, building more just, sustainable, and peaceful societies. This is a Graduate Research Assistantship (GRA) renewable up to 2 years to work with Dr. Hsiao and Dr. Yin in performing a variety of research and administrative duties associated with this or other related projects. [Read about details and qualifications.](#)

Senior Forest and Fire Ecology Research Associate at CSU | This position is tasked with providing leadership in the growth, application, and impact of forest and fire ecology applied research programs at the Colorado Forest

Restoration Institution ([CFRI](#)), working closely with the CFRI Director. The job calls for hybrid/in-office work on the beautiful CSU campus! [Learn more.](#)

Clear Creek Watershed Coordinator | The Watershed Coordinator will be crucial to advancing the Clear Creek Watershed & Forest Health Partnership’s (CCWFHP) mission to protect and restore the Clear Creek Watershed. They serve as the primary facilitator and core staff person for partnership-based management and stewardship in the Clear Creek watershed. [Learn more.](#)

Forester for The Watershed Center | The Watershed Center protects and restores watersheds for people and the environment using a collaborative and science-based approach. The successful applicant will develop cross-boundary forest management plans and projects for public and private landowners, lead forest management project implementation, and more. [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 [supporting the CCC with a donation](#).

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

Be well,
The CCC Team





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