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WARNER COLLEGE
OF NATURAL RESOURCES
COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY

October 2025



A Note from the CCC Director

We lost a hero last week. I had the good fortune of seeing Dr. Jane Goodall speak twice, both times with her stuffed monkey Mr. H, on the lectern with her. Mr. H allowed Goodall to point out a key difference between monkeys and chimpanzees: monkeys have a tail; chimps do not. Of course, Goodall's major contribution to Western science and culture was the understanding that similarities between us and chimps far exceed our differences.

As I have been reflecting on Goodall's life, I have been struck by how many of the core themes that make collaboration powerful have been reflected in her life and her work. Here are a few:

Relationship. We are far more related to others—including humans and other species—than not. Goodall points out, “talk to the Buddhists and talk to the Indigenous people. They believe that we’re part of the animal kingdom. They believe animals are our brothers and sisters.” These relationships are the foundation for healthy communities and successful conservation.

Rationality. As a young scientist, Goodall was told that regarding chimps “you can’t talk about personality, minds capable of problem-solving, or emotions, because those are unique to [humans].” This admonishment emerged from our culture’s deeply-rooted beliefs that people are rational and science is objective. There is some truth to these beliefs, but in [The Righteous Mind](#), Jonathan Haidt describes how our beliefs and actions 90% intuitive and only 10% rational, suggesting we should be circumspect about how we view rationality.

Connecting. When Goodall wanted to see change in the world, connecting with those who held different viewpoints was intuitive for her. For example, when she was working to stop the use of chimpanzees as lab subjects, she should go talk with people in those labs. Seeing this, a lot of animal rights activists stopped talking to her, saying, “How can you sit down with them?” Goodall countered, “If you don’t sit down and talk to people, how can you expect they’re going to change?”

Hope. Hope has been a theme of Goodall’s for decades. In the 1990s, she tells us, young people seemed to have lost hope. We still see this today. But in the story of her favorite tree—a beech that has grown over a century from a tiny seedling, breaking through rocks to become a strong and tall—there is a message of hope: hundreds and thousands of people around the world can break through and make this a better world. For more on hope, see Arieona’s “Reflecting on Hope” [in this CCC newsletter](#).

Agency. In Jane Goodall’s Famous Last Words, she reminds us that “You have it in your power to make a difference.” Among the many people working in conservation, I see this every day.

For this note, I was inspired by an [On Being interview](#) with Goodall. I also recommend [Famous Last Words: Dr. Jane Goodall](#).

Be well,



News from the CCC



Upcoming Storyteller's Circle Session

Join us to talk about mentorship!

On Thursday, October 30th (our last session of 2025!), Nicole Reese will share with us a new mentorship toolkit for conservation organizations and discuss how we can all bring mentorship into our work.

[Register Here](#)



Fellows Update from Cohort 14

The CCC Fellows Program provides funding, training, and a community of practice.

Here we present our Cohort 14 end-of-project presentations from September 2025! In the video, see the showcase of their hard work and reflections on this experience.

More information can be found on [our website!](#)

[Watch the video](#)



Service-Learning Field Trip Engages Volunteers in the North Sand Creek Project

One of the unique challenges the North Sand Creek Restoration Partnership faces is learning to communicate effectively with off-highway vehicle (OHV) users who recreate at the North Sand Hills. As the user group has shifted over the past 10 years to include more Spanish-speaking families, addressing communication gaps has become especially important to our project. **If we are going to create interpretive messages that resonate with the public, whose help we need to steward the land, we must first get to the bottom of their connection to it.** Over Labor Day weekend, a group of Colorado State University graduate students and young employees accompanied by Allison (Associate Director of Learning) and Julia (North Sand Creek Project Assistant) journeyed out to the North Sand Hills to investigate.

After receiving a training about audience-centric communication from Allison, our majority-bilingual volunteers crafted strategies and questions to understand the value systems of OHV users. We settled on an approach that centered around **one essential question: "what brings you back to this place?"** We had conversations with OHV'ers in both Spanish and English, asking questions and listening about what matters to them and how they feel about the fence protecting the creek bed. Our volunteers also had the opportunity to learn about the project directly from collaborators - our partners at State Line Ranch, CSU's Geosciences department, and Colorado Parks and Wildlife all connected with them over the course of the weekend.

The Center for Collaborative Conservation was incredibly lucky to have an incredibly generous group of volunteers. They brought passion and fresh perspectives to this work, asking thoughtful questions and reflecting on their experiences with intention and keen discernment.

We are so grateful for their time, expertise, and insight!



The 2025 CFCN Summit

Last month, about **120 people from across Colorado who work on forest health and wildfire challenges** gathered for the [2025 Forest Collaboratives Summit](#). We spent time in the field, learned about communications and storytelling, and for the entire second day dug into policy, funding, and related topics to help us navigate the current moment of change and uncertainty.

We received some incredible feedback regarding the value of the event! The content provided **“real tools for my situation”**, and people **“appreciated the funding focus”**. **“I’m always learning things to apply,”** said one participant.

When it comes down to it, the company makes the event. There were **“great people here,” “great conversations, ideas, etc.,”** and **“it was nice to commiserate and feel seen/heard.”**

We have begun work on a 2025 Summit summary. When we have it completed, we will post it on the [Summit website](#) and we will announce its availability in the Colorado Forest Collaboratives Network newsletter. If you want to receive this newsletter, you can [subscribe here](#).

We look forward to the next Summit in September 2026, but meanwhile, for

those of you in Montana (or those looking for a reason to visit Missoula), **consider attending** the [Montana Forest Collaboration Network's Annual Workshop](#) from October 31-November 1. Anyone interested in collaborative forest and grassland management—particularly representatives of collaborative groups working on or interested in natural resource issues across Montana—will find this workshop worthwhile.



Help Us Out With a Quick Survey!

In preparation for **Confluence 2026** (May 19-21 in Fort Collins) and the Association for Conflict Resolution conference (this November), we are conducting a **short survey** (4 open ended questions) on the state of collaboration to better understand the trends, opportunities, challenges and future of collaboration.

Our ask is that you please take the survey to share your thoughts, and distribute the survey with anyone that you think might like to contribute.

[Take it here](#)

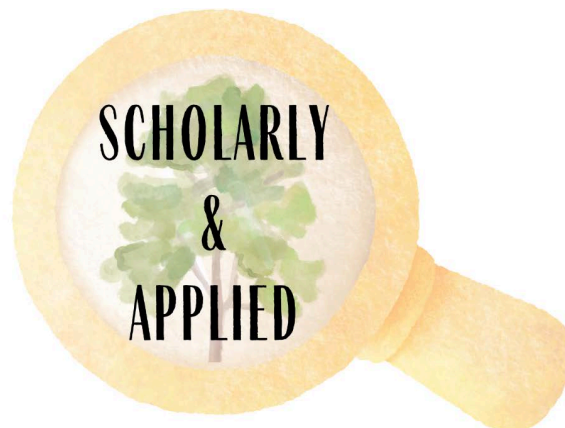
Get to Know the CCC



Mimi Pryor, Interim CCC Communications Manager

Mimi has worked in non-profit communications for over 5 years with city-level organizations like Big Brothers Big Sisters of Atlanta to national firms like Berlin Rosen. After her time as a resource assistant with the US Forest Service, she wanted to continue working in conservation. She currently lives in Las Vegas, Nevada, with her senior beagle mix, Raleigh.

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.**

Friends of the CCC, including Patrick Bixler (**Cohorts 2 and 6**), recently published an [article](#) delving into what we know about collaborative capacity (*[Relating Collaborative Capacity to Social-Ecological Outcomes in the United States– Bridging Academic and Practitioner Perspectives](#)*). Here, the authors learned directly from practitioners which capacity elements underly the activities that, in turn, enable successful outcomes. By making a direct connection between capacity elements and outcomes, the authors hope to address an issue that they believe “has inhibited policymaker and funder support, which has, in turn, hampered the field’s growth and impact.” For example, the study revealed the importance of recognizing and supporting interpersonal relationship-building as a legitimate outcome – a tricky case to make to funders if you don’t have the right language and research to back you up. I think the proposed framework is a helpful guide for our practice.

Maria Fernández-Giménez (**Cohort 2**) and Hailey Wilmer (**Cohort 8**) were coauthors on an [article](#) exploring how pastoralist and rancher identities influence land and livestock management, social conflict, and responses to change (e.g., economic, social, and environmental changes) (*[Towards a theory of pastoralist and rancher identity: insights for understanding livestock systems in transformation](#)*). They used a strategy called *poetic inquiry* to transform interview responses into poetic passages that are filled with emotional and symbolic meanings. Here’s an excerpt from a data poem entitled “I Make these Mountains” from a pastoralist in Spain:

*... But for there to be a village
For Ansó to be alive
For it to be inhabited
There must be sheep
There must be cattle
And there must be shepherds and cattlemen
In the mountains.
“We have sheep because we want to live in Ansó.*

The article provides a nuanced understanding of identity that takes into account the cultural and emotional dimensions of pastoralist life, not just economic or ecological factors – something to keep in mind as we grapple with issues such

as human-carnivore coexistence.

Advancing Conservation and Reducing Conflict through Democratic
Governance,
Processes, and Practices: A Convening

The CCC was thrilled to work with a cross-university coalition (folks from Colorado State University, the University of Wyoming, and the University of Montana) to plan and host a recent convening of practitioners, researchers, and others in the field of collaborative natural resource management. Over two days and through many rich conversations, we identified barriers and opportunities to expand democratic principles in environmental decision making, with an eye on achieving better outcomes for our communities and landscapes. We grounded these conversations in the lived experiences and expertise of the 19 participants, who came from across the western US (and beyond). Our plan is to use these conversations as a starting point to create and share transferable and transformative approaches with our broader community of collaborative doers, policy makers, and others.

***What is democracy in this context?** We believe that some of the most innovative and impactful collaborative natural resource management efforts are also the most democratic. That is, they include diverse perspectives and interests; they share power, resources, and funding; and they create systems for implementation, adaptation, and accountability to shared goals and outcomes. They provide productive platforms for people to have a voice in stewarding their local places, and demonstrate processes for finding common ground among many different values.*

- 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!

On Belonging and Collaboration

Towards the end of September, the Center for Collaborative Conservation, along with the Haub School of Environment and Natural Resources at the University of Wyoming and the Center for Natural Resources and Environmental Policy at the University of Montana, brought together people from across the United States to explore the linkages between democracy and collaboration. As you might imagine from my writings this year, this topic has been very salient for our partners and myself.

That all being said, there was really only one thing on my mind throughout my conversations last week – belonging.

In 2023, the US Surgeon General put out a report called “Our Epidemic of Loneliness and Isolation” (<https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/surgeon-general-social-connection-advisory.pdf>) – subtitled, “On the Healing Effects of Social Connection and Community.” This document defines belonging as: A fundamental human need – the feeling of deep connection with social groups, physical places, and individual and collective experiences.” Among the data shared to set the stage for this epidemic in the United States:

- In 2018, only 16% of Americans reported that they felt very attached to their local community.
- The rate of loneliness among young adults has increased every year between 1976 and 2019.

As someone who has struggled with loneliness and a feeling of not belonging for my entire life, I resonate with the discussion of the impacts that these facts have on the day to day lives, health and well-being of the people who find themselves feeling isolated. Beyond the personal impact, I believe that we are seeing the ramifications of this on our society. It's hard to be so divided by strangers (but not impossible) when we feel strongly connected to the people who we are supposed to fear and distrust.

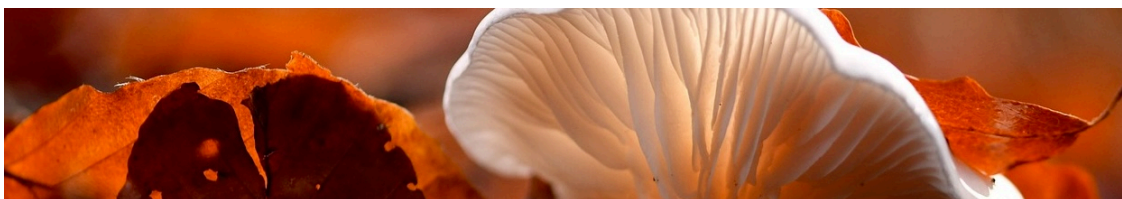
So, what does all this have to do with collaborative practice? When collaborative conversation is done right, we can play a role in creating spaces for belonging. Not only is this key to the direct outcomes that we want to have, but it's one of the most healing things that we can do as a profession. Now, the question is – how can we create this truly human magic in our collaborations? No easy feat, but well worth pursuing!

One resource that is quick but extremely impactful is eCornell's Tool: Facilitating Inclusion and Trust in Groups. Some key take aways along with my own additions:

- Everyone brings something different to the table, and creating spaces that value those different perspectives and roles is essential.
- Consider when you might be able to split people into smaller groups, as this can provide more space for different voices. I would also add that creating time for reflection and gathering one's thoughts can be helpful before large discussions as well.
- Strive to create a positive, shared history with the team that emphasizes celebration of accomplishments.
- Develop spaces that protect everyone's psychological safety (including yours!). This requires agreed upon norms, which include exploration of how to give feedback and voice disagreement respectfully.
 - As it is truly hard to hold people to account, consider designating someone that "official advocate of candor" to help folks recognize when they might not be following norms. In my opinion, having this person not be the facilitator is important.
- When creativity is needed encourage experts to wait for others to speak first.
- Hold some time in your meetings to check in about anything that might be missing so that people can voice their worries.

What other tips and tools have you used for creating belonging? If you lead collaborative work, how do you make sure that your well-being is cared for as well?

- **Aireona Bonnie Raschke, PhD**
Our Associate Director of Practice



Other News and Opportunities

Take a course in Multimedia Conservation Communication | Learn how to identify key challenges in your field, develop targeted communication strategies, and create compelling materials to support goals. Throughout the course, students will design and refine their own science communication impact campaign, ensuring they leave with a concrete, actionable plan to implement in their work. [Learn more](#)

Center for Environmental Justice hosting 2026 GLOBAL CONFERENCE | This event will take place in April, 2026 at Colorado State University, Fort Collins. They invite proposals for papers, performances, events, and panels across the full scope of society and nature, encompassing all spatial and temporal scales, and all perspectives. The theme: “*Where Do We Grow from Here: Environmental Justice and the Politics of Hope in the Planetary Age*”, and proposals are DUE by OCT 20th, 2025! [Learn more](#)

Reminder: COSWAP Grant Applications are Live until November 3 | This is a two-year grant that will be offered every other year. We encourage applicants to submit proposals for projects that span the next two years so there will not be a gap in work completed before the next round of funding becomes available again. Visit the [COSWAP website](#) to download the [Request for Applications](#) and access the application materials.

Elevate Your Skills in Facilitation, Engagement, and Collaboration | The 2025 Facilitation, Engagement, and Collaboration in Environmental Conflicts training offers practitioners a unique opportunity to enhance their professional skills relating to work in transportation & mobility, public lands use, water resources, and disaster resilience. This will be at the Museum of Boulder, CO, **next week, October 21-23rd, 2025.** [LEARN, APPLY, ENGAGE, AND NETWORK](#)

Everyone Outdoors Colorado Event | Everyone Outdoors Colorado (formerly known as Next 100 Colorado) is hosting its third annual convening, October 28-29, 2025, at CSU Spur in Denver, Colorado.

We invite you to apply to join us! We will be joined by coalition members, partners, allies, and funders for the full convening consisting of plenary sessions and discussion-based sessions related to this year's theme, "Rooted in Resilience: Shaping What's Possible" and the work of the coalition. [Learn more and RSVP](#)

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:

Biologist for Ducks Unlimited | This role will be responsible for helping promote and deliver NRCS Farm Bill programs and the Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks Migratory Bird Wetland Program throughout north-central and northeastern Montana. *This position is full-time in Great Falls, MT.* [Learn more](#)

Community Engagement Manager for the Eagle River Coalition | This position focuses on the implementation and streamlining of watershed education programs throughout the Eagle River Valley. Additionally, this position will oversee ERC marketing efforts and require public speaking skills. *Full-time, salaried position in Eagle CO.* [Learn more](#)

Colorado Parks and Wildlife Ranger Trainee | As a Park Ranger Trainee, this position attends a Colorado Peace Officer Standards & Training (POST)

certified law enforcement academy and, at successful completion of this training, is certified as a Colorado Peace Officer in accordance with the official duties and authority of Colorado Parks and Wildlife. *This position is full-time in Denver, CO.* [Learn more](#)

Associate Director of Digital Advocacy, Conservation Lands Foundation |

Play a vital role in designing and executing inspiring digital advocacy campaigns while serving as critical communications support for the Friends Grassroots Network. This position is remote within the states of AZ, CO, ID, NM, NV, OR, and UT. Applications due Oct 21, 2025. [Learn more](#)

Competition: Finding Solutions to Human-Wildlife Conflict |

The Handprint Challenge Competition empowers CSU undergraduates to design innovative solutions for reducing carnivore-livestock conflict, a pressing conservation and agricultural challenge. This Shark Tank-style event fosters creativity, cross-college collaboration, and experience tackling real-world problems. **Your donation funds the \$12,000 in cash prizes awarded to the top three winning teams and the event itself**, rewarding the most innovative solutions with immediate impact potential. We need to raise a minimum of **\$8,000** so we can support student changemakers. [Donate today!!](#) Thank you!

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](#).

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