

# RIVER CURRENTS

## The Year of the Dipper

By Rick Lofaro, Executive Director

*He is the mountain streams' own darling, the humming-bird of blooming waters, loving rocky ripple-slopes and sheets of foam as a bee loves flowers, as a lark loves sunshine and meadows. Among all the mountain birds, none has cheered me so much in my lonely wanderings—none so unfailingly. For both in winter and summer he sings, sweetly, cheerily, independent alike of sunshine and of love, requiring no other inspiration than the stream on which he dwells. While water sings, so must he, in heat or cold, calm or storm, ever attuning his voice in sure accord; low in the drought of summer and the drought of winter, but never silent. John Muir, "The Mountains of California"*

Roaring Fork Conservancy (RFC) chose the American Dipper to anchor its logo over 20 years ago. Birds featured in a logo are often selected for their unique coloring or vibrant plumage. Why would RFC pick this nondescript little gray character as a centerpiece? Touted as the only North American aquatic songbird, this drab-colored little bird was chosen because it serves as an indicator species for healthy mountain streams.

Restricted to fast-moving, healthy waters found in the mountains, coasts and deserts of the American West, the dipper, also known as a water ouzel, toils in riverbank vegetation that provides both cover and shelter to raise its young. The American Dipper stays through the winter months, when many other birds migrate to warmer climates, making the most of the unfrozen reaches of streams.

This little gray bird is more skilled than it seems. Its namesake behavior is a dip-like movement that makes the dipper appear to be performing a streamside boogie while chirping its distinctive song. Whether diving from a rocky perch, or directly from the air, the dipper swims underwater as effortlessly as it flies in search of seasonal macroinvertebrates to eat, including midges, mayflies, stoneflies, and caddisflies. That's right — dippers not only enjoy the river's fine dining, they also fly, swim, sing, and dance!

To celebrate this unsung icon of the American West, RFC has declared 2017 the "Year of the Dipper!" We sit in envy daily of the time our dipper friends spend on rivers at the intersection of the semi-arid landscape and lush riparian areas in some of our favorite places to fish, float, relax, adventure, and observe. This year and every year, we want to inspire YOU to find your inner dipper while you explore, value and protect the Roaring Fork Watershed. Show us where you travel with RFC's dipper logo, spot your favorite dipper, or practice your dipper dance!

Whether you are on top of a mountain, on the banks of a river, or somewhere in between, take a photo or video of you and your friends along with RFC's dipper logo and share it to our Facebook or Instagram page with the hashtag #wheresyourdipper. We can't wait to see where our dipper and its friends adventure as we celebrate the Year of the Dipper!



Photo by Mark Fuller



Photo by Robin Henry



## River Protectors: Middle Schoolers Explore River-Related Careers

By Christina Medved, Watershed Education Director

This spring, RFC offered a 7-week River Protectors internship to 6th graders at Basalt Middle School. The internship was part of Youth Entity's "My Career. My Life." program which provides opportunities for students to learn about possible career choices most suited for them. Ten students learned what it takes to protect and care for a river through water quality sampling and analysis, discovering how aquatic macroinvertebrates provide food for trout, birds and other insects, studying the local fisheries, and even tying flies and casting a fly rod. At the conclusion of the program, students were asked to utilize their new knowledge by being a voice for the river. Here are their responses to a series of questions we posed, and what they want everyone to know about the rivers in the Roaring Fork Valley:



### WHAT DID YOU LEARN DURING RIVER PROTECTORS?

- ✓ How to protect rivers and how to determine if they're healthy.
- ✓ How to fly cast.
- ✓ How to measure water temperature.
- ✓ The different varieties of sportfish in our local rivers and that there can be a cut-bow (cutthroat-rainbow hybrid) trout.
- ✓ How much the local community depends on our rivers.
- ✓ How to tie flies. It's cool that we can tie a fly to imitate fish food.
- ✓ That people come here from all over the world because of our rivers.
- ✓ That without healthy rivers there will be an 'unbalanced' community.



### WHY SHOULD WE PROTECT RIVERS?

- ✓ Because we are doing something good.
- ✓ Because peoples' jobs depend on them.
- ✓ Because we don't want fish to be sick or wildlife to drink polluted water.
- ✓ So our fish and rivers are healthy.
- ✓ To maintain our economy.
- ✓ To keep them clean so they don't catch on fire (after learning about the infamous Cuyahoga River fire and the birth of the Clean Water Act).
- ✓ To maintain large numbers of fish (after learning that the purpose of catch and release regulations is to protect from overfishing).
- ✓ To protect drinking water.



### WHAT CAN PEOPLE DO TO PROTECT RIVERS?

- ✓ Don't litter, and pick-up trash.
- ✓ Use reusable water bottles.
- ✓ Donate money to river organizations.
- ✓ Fix your car if it has an oil leak.
- ✓ Pick up after your dog.
- ✓ Recycle and reuse (after learning the impacts of a water footprint).
- ✓ Eat organic and local food (after learning about irrigation and agriculture on the larger Colorado River system).

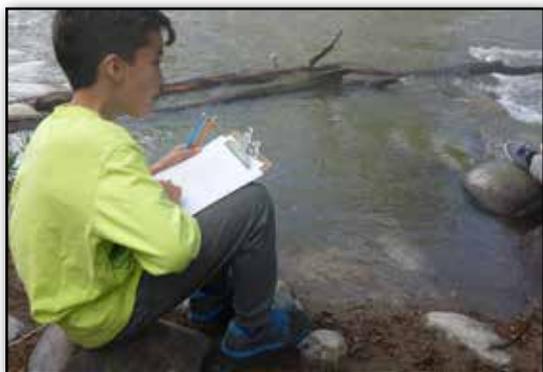
Nathalie, one of the River Protectors, said it perfectly, "**Rivers are absolutely everything that we depend and rely on.**" We agree wholeheartedly, which is why RFC remains committed to supporting our next generation of river stewards. A heartfelt thank you to all of the individuals who shared their time, expertise and love of rivers with the students:

- Kendall Bakich, fisheries biologist with Colorado Parks and Wildlife;
- Buzz McArthur, fly casting instructor and member of the Roaring Fork Valley Fly Fishing Club;
- John Newbury, aquatic scientist, professional fly tier and owner of Newbury Angling Arts;
- Will Sands and Scott Spooner at Taylor Creek Fly Shop; and
- Rick Lofaro and Chad Rudow with RFC.

To the 10 River Protectors who actively participated throughout their internship - Katherine, Carson, Nathalie, Stephanie, Orlando, Ricardo, Triana, Jaylynn, Stefano, and Brayan - we look forward to seeing how you incorporate your new knowledge into exploring the beautiful Roaring Fork Valley and protecting it for future generations.

## Dee Dee the Fryingpan River Dipper: Roaring Fork Conservancy's First Children's Book

By Christina Medved, Watershed Education Director and Liza Mitchell, Education & Outreach Coordinator



The little gray bird in RFC's logo is a celebrity in its own right. Known as the American Dipper, or the water ouzel, it is found living near mountain streams that have good water quality and healthy riparian habitat. Dippers often make "dipping" movements as they stand on rocks near fast-flowing rivers, then dive into the water to catch and eat aquatic macroinvertebrates. It's an endearing little bird, and the children we teach in our watershed education programs are especially tickled by the bird's dip, dip, dip. The enthusiasm from these youngsters inspired us to write a children's book, and to have local students illustrate it to share the story of this fascinating little bird.



In 2016, after the entire 4th grade class at Basalt Elementary School had completed our 2-month watershed education program, the timing was perfect to start recruiting students to illustrate a book. Megan Dean, former watershed educator at RFC, led 4th grade students in the Extended Learning Class outside to discover and study the American Dipper. Over the course of a month, the students watched American Dippers build their nests and thrive on the banks of the beautiful Fryingpan River in Basalt, Colorado. Students quietly immersed themselves in the dipper's world and observed the bird hunt, fly, and of course dip! After careful observations and sketches, the students drew their final illustrations for our book. They also selected the name for the main character of the book, and thus, *Dee Dee the Fryingpan River Dipper* was born!



*Dee Dee*, the result of this beautiful joint education venture between RFC and Basalt Elementary School, is now in its final stages of publishing with Maple Corners Press. This full-color, fun and educational children's book will be available at the RFC office by mid-July.

Spotting a dipper near your local river is truly a treat. The next best thing will be sharing this book with a special child in your life!

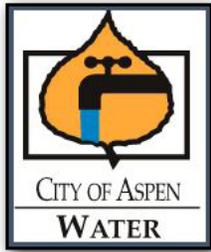
*If you are interested in purchasing a book, or bringing the book to a bookstore near you, please contact Christina Medved at [christina@roaringfork.org](mailto:christina@roaringfork.org) or (970) 927-1290.*

I'm a special little bird, the American Dipper  
Perhaps you have heard, I live by the river.  
You can find me near the water, of clear mountain streams,  
Or flying up higher, through the warm sunbeams.



## Saving Water in Aspen by Using Less on Landscaping

By Lee Ledesma, Utilities Finance and Administrative Services Manager, City of Aspen



The City of Aspen is working on an ordinance to help reduce water use in landscaping practices. The overarching goal of the proposed *Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance* is to conserve water in this particular sector, which represents the highest water use by our customers. Conservation is an important component of Aspen's Integrated Water Supply System, and effective conservation

practices enable the City to efficiently manage its water supplies. Water is precious to our community, especially in the late summer when landscapes are thirsty and local stream flows are diminished. Managing outdoor water use will help mitigate water availability problems when combined with several other actions being implemented through Aspen's Integrated Water Supply System.

A 12-month pilot phase for the landscape ordinance was proposed to Aspen City Council in April. During this pilot phase, staff has recommended that the standards, including documentation, plan submittals and installation of plantings and irrigation infrastructure, be required. The "maximum applied water budget," as well as issues that may arise during a post-installation site audit, will be part of the review but not part of compliance. These standards will apply to the following projects that use City of Aspen potable water:

- 💧 Landscaping, grading, installing or disturbing hardscapes, additions to structures, etc. that have a disturbance area greater than 1,000 square feet and greater than 25% of the entire site; and
- 💧 All new construction which involves only internal work that demolishes more than 50% of an existing structure.

The proposed *Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance* will provide standards that promote efficient development and use of treated water within the City of Aspen's water service area. Implementation of these standards fulfills certain recommendations identified in the City of Aspen's Municipal Water Efficiency Plan, the Roaring Fork Regional Water Efficiency Plan, and the Roaring Fork Watershed Plan.



*Rudbeckia hirta—Black-eyed Susan*

The goals of the new *Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance* standards are to:

- 💧 Promote the values and benefits of healthy landscapes while recognizing the need to invest in efficiency;
- 💧 Require better designed, more efficient, effective irrigation systems, and precise delivery of water to the landscape, reducing water needed to maintain a healthy landscape;
- 💧 Establish a structure for planning, designing, installing, maintaining and managing water-efficient landscapes in new construction and renovated/rehabilitated projects; and
- 💧 Use water efficiently, without waste, by setting an upper limit water budget and a low use goal.

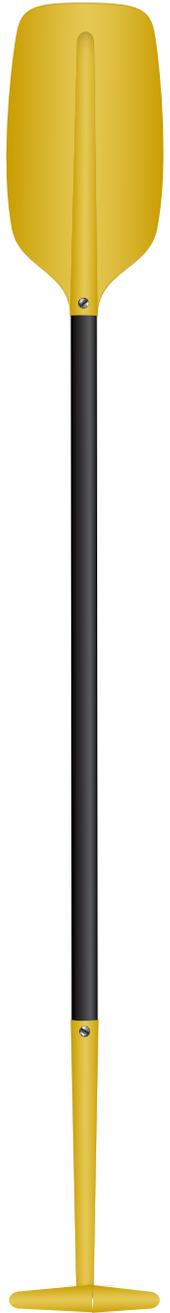


*Echinacea purpurea—Purple coneflower*



*Arctostaphylos uva-ursi—Kinnikinnick, bearberry*

Interested in learning more? Visit this website to read a draft of the proposed *Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance*:  
<http://www.aspenpitkin.com/Departments/Utilities/Water>.



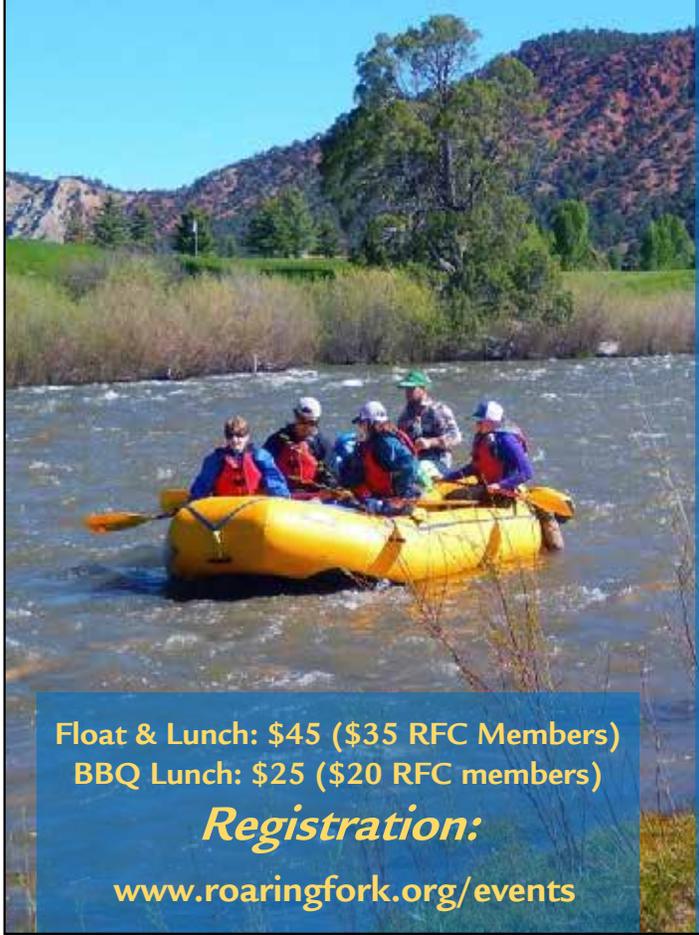
**Roaring Fork Conservancy's**  
*13<sup>th</sup> Annual*  
**River Float!**

**Saturday,  
 June 10**

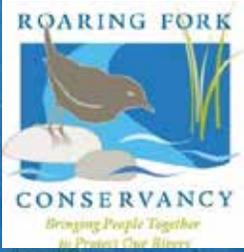
**Coryell Ranch,  
 Carbondale**

**8:00am  
 Educational  
 River Float**

**11:30am  
 BBQ Lunch**



**Float & Lunch: \$45 (\$35 RFC Members)**  
**BBQ Lunch: \$25 (\$20 RFC members)**  
*Registration:*  
[www.roaringfork.org/events](http://www.roaringfork.org/events)



Rafts and guides provided by

- Aspen Whitewater
- Blazing Adventures
- Blue Sky Adventures
- Elk Mountain Expeditions




**ROARING FORK**  
**CONSERVANCY**  
*Bringing People Together  
 to Protect Our Rivers*

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**THANK YOU, 2017  
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Please consider supporting these businesses that value our rivers!

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- Alpine Angling / Roaring Fork Anglers
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- Oddo Engineering
- Prouline Guided Fly-Fishing
- Roaring Fork Beer Company
- Roaring Fork Nets
- Starkworks Inc.
- Trout Bandits
- Ute Mountaineer



Situated near downtown Basalt and Old Pond Park, the River Center provides easy access for both residents and visitors to drop in and learn more about the pivotal role rivers play in the community, the watershed, the state and the American West. The River Center would also boast an ideal location to host water-related educational seminars and classes, in addition to providing much needed lab space for water quality testing and river research.

*With the unique combination of accessibility, visibility and functionality, the River Center is not just a building; it is an innovative concept to demonstrate, experience and share the actions and interactions necessary to protect our exceptional rivers and watershed.*

For more information please contact: Sarah Woods, Director of Philanthropy, (970) 927-9595, [swoods@roaringfork.org](mailto:swoods@roaringfork.org)

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**THE RIVER CENTER  
 CAPITAL CAMPAIGN**



For updates and our continued list of Major Donors and Community Supporters visit [www.roaringfork.org/RiverCenter](http://www.roaringfork.org/RiverCenter).

# WATERSHED EXPLORATIONS

2017 Summer & Fall Events Calendar

## MAY

- 6 Carbondale Boat Ramp Workday with Roaring Fork Outdoor Volunteers
- 6 Women's Fly Fishing Clinic
- 10 High Altitude Heron Watch
- 13 Beginner Adult Fly Fishing Clinic
- 18 Ruedi Reservoir Tour:  
Storing West Slope Water
- 24 Birding Maroon Creek Wetlands

## JUNE

- 6 North Star Preserve Roaring Fork River Float
- 10 RFC's 13th Annual River Float
- 15 North Star Preserve Roaring Fork River Float
- 19 North Star Preserve Roaring Fork River Float
- 19-23 Kids' Fly Fishing Camp at Rock Bottom Ranch
- 20 Wetland Walk in Aspen's Rio Grande Park
- 21 Deer Hill Early Summer Wildflower Walk
- 26-28 Basalt Library Youth Fishing Clinic
- 27 SUP North Star Preserve
- 24-26 Crooked Creek Wetland Planting
- 28 Family Night at Filoha Meadows:  
Fireflies, Bats, and Bugs
- 29 Family Night at Filoha Meadows:  
Fireflies, Bats, and Bugs

## JULY

- 5 Filoha Meadows: Firefly & Rare Orchid Walk
- 6 Family Night at Filoha Meadows:  
Fireflies, Bats, and Bugs
- 7 Family Night at Filoha Meadows:  
Fireflies, Bats, and Bugs
- 10 Filoha Meadows: Firefly & Rare Orchid Walk
- 17 Family Night at Filoha Meadows:  
Fireflies, Bats, and Bugs
- 18 Filoha Meadows: Firefly & Rare Orchid Walk
- 20 Filoha Meadows: Firefly & Rare Orchid Walk
- 26 Water in the Age of Silver: Touring Aspen's  
"Holden Works"
- 28 Twin Lakes Tunnel & Diversion Tour
- 31-Aug 4 Kids' Fly Fishing Camp at Rock Bottom Ranch

## AUGUST

- 2 Woody Creek: Farm & Distillery Tour
- 9 Family Exploration at Filoha Meadows
- 18 Family Exploration at Filoha Meadows

## SEPTEMBER

- 9 Family Exploration at Filoha Meadows
- 13 Aspen Tap: Drinking Water Tour
- 19 Carbondale Bicycle Ditch Tour
- 20 Filoha Evening Walk: Elk & Bighorn Sheep



# THANK YOU

TO ALL THE VOLUNTEERS WHO CAME  
TO THE 19TH ANNUAL FRYINGPAN  
CLEANUP ON EARTH DAY  
APRIL 22, 2017



For program information and to register visit:  
[www.roaringfork.org/events](http://www.roaringfork.org/events)

Photo credits: Dale Armstrong and Chad Rudow

## Staff & Board Flows



**Kristen Doyle, Watershed Educator**

Kristen Doyle became RFC's Watershed Educator in spring of 2017. Originally from Michigan, Kristen graduated from Colorado State University with a B.S. in Fish, Wildlife, and Conservation Biology in 2012. Since graduating, Kristen has worked as a fisheries and wildlife

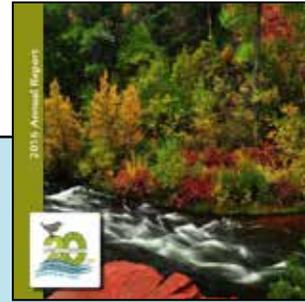
science technician for the U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, and the National Park Service. In previous research and management work, Kristen routinely found ways to share her love and deep interest for riparian ecology with students of all ages and walks of life. She is excited to share her working knowledge and passion for high alpine lakes and headwaters while working for Roaring Fork Conservancy. When not teaching, ski instructing, or working with developmentally disabled adults, Kristen can be found mountain biking, camping, quilting, or wood burning.



**Michael Schuster, Program Assistant**

Mike has lived in the Roaring Fork Valley since 1995. He first worked with RFC during the 2015 field season, then again in 2016, and returned this past May, after a busy winter managing Four Mountain Sports at Buttermilk Ski Area. Armed with a B.S.

in Water Science, with a minor in Ecology from the University of Colorado, Mike assists staff with water quality and didymo sampling, and led educational outreach programs targeting local farmers markets and other community events.



## WHAT DOES 20 YEARS OF PROTECTING RIVERS LOOK LIKE?

We are excited to present Roaring Fork Conservancy's 2016 Annual Report recapping our programmatic and financial success, all of it made possible because of your support.

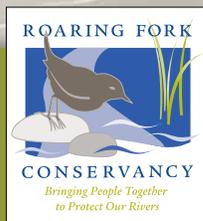
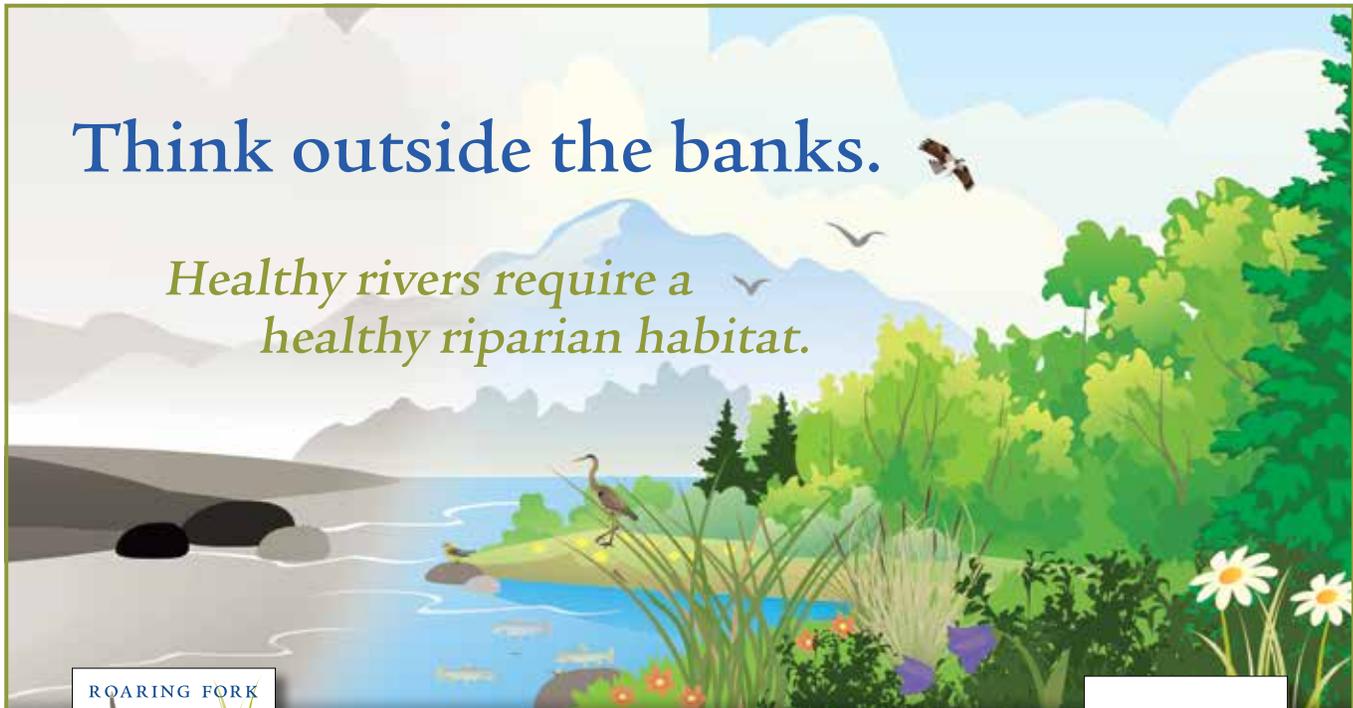
As we move into our third decade of Watershed Action and Education, we are continuously reminded that even this beautiful watershed has its challenges to overcome, and significant reasons to invest in its protection. Each day we embrace our responsibility to every river, streambank, community member and student. Thank you for enabling us to continue inspiring people to explore, value, and protect the Roaring Fork Watershed.

View the report at

<http://www.roaringfork.org/about-us/>

# Think outside the banks.

*Healthy rivers require a healthy riparian habitat.*



To learn more about your riparian habitat, or for a free riparian assessment, call Roaring Fork Conservancy at 970-927-1290.



## Peppy and Wally Dallenbach Honored as 2017 River Conservators

By Sarah Woods, Director of Philanthropy

Roaring Fork Conservancy will honor Peppy and Wally Dallenbach, Sr. as 2017 Robert Billingsley River Conservators, at the 18th Annual River Rendezvous on July 12, 2017. This event will once again be held at the Dallenbach Ranch on the banks of the Fryingpan River.

Peppy, Wally and their 3 children used to live in New Brunswick, New Jersey, where Wally owned several businesses and indulged in his favorite sport: auto-racing. Wally competed in 185 Indy car races from 1965-1979, winning 5 times! He raced the Indy 500 thirteen times, finishing 4th in 1976. Wally retired from Indy racing following the 1979 season, but did not leave the sport. Wally joined CART, a new Indy car sanctioning group, as Competition Director in 1980, then became Chief Steward in 1981. After 20 years, he retired as Chief Steward at the end of the 1999 season. Wally and his trade-mark cowboy hat would not be gone as he focused to more duties on their Colorado Ranch.

Wally's No.1 fan has always been Peppy. She is an unabashed racing enthusiast who always supported her husband as well as their sons and daughter, who are all involved in racing. She also served as the Registrar of CART Indy car racing series. She has also been a 20+ year member of Basalt Beta Chi Ladies Service Organization with major projects being Christmas Shoe Boxes, and other local charities.

In 1973, Peppy and Wally were drawn to the mountains of Colorado and made Basalt their home by purchasing the Dallenbach Ranch (formally the Wood'N Handle Ranch) on the Fryingpan River. New Jersey's loss was Basalt's gain, as they have been very generous to the community and great stewards of the Fryingpan River.

Wally is the founder and Chairman of the Colorado 500 Invitational Charity Dirt and Road Motorcycle Rides, which is now 41 years strong. In 1995, the Colorado 500 was a recipient of a Great Outdoors Off-Highway Vehicle grant, which was used to enhance trails and roads used by the event. More than \$400,000 has been applied to U.S. Forest Service trails used by the ride. In 1999, the Colorado 500 launched a campaign to promote responsible use of trails and 4WD roads in Colorado. In 2001, noise limits were adopted for the ride, which now holds tech inspections for noise-level compliance. All of these



actions are beneficial to our watershed. The ride provides philanthropic support to schools, community organizations, ambulance and mountain rescue services, ministries, plus college scholarships for over 77 Colorado students.

Wally was inducted into the Colorado Motorsports Hall of Fame and the New Jersey Motorcycle Hall of Fame in 2004, then in 2006 both the Garden State Stock Car Hall of Fame, and the AMA Motorcycle Hall of Fame, and has won many other awards and achievements over the years. Wally has ridden both street and dirt bikes for well over 60 years. He says his favorite ride is, of course, the Colorado 500. Through the Colorado 500 Charity Fund, participants, sponsors, and friends have donated in excess of \$2M to various agencies and schools since 1981.

The Dallenbachs are conservationists who believe in and support healthy rivers and water education. Peppy and Wally could not have possibly dreamed that the Colorado 500 charity rides would change the lives of so many young people in western Colorado. Wally's dream of helping others has become even bigger than the majestic Rockies we all love so much!



### Company Volunteer Workday

Do you spend your days at work wishing you were on the river?  
If you can't be on the river, how about next to it along with your  
co-workers, volunteering to help the river?

Let Roaring Fork Conservancy plan your next company volunteer project on the banks of our local rivers! From weed pulls to erosion control, we've got a volunteer job for you!

Contact Rick Lofaro, Executive Director,  
at (970) 927-1290 to learn more!

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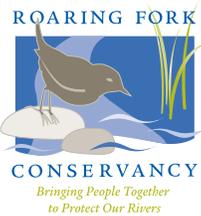
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