

The Colorado Trail Foundation

Volunteer Speaking Points

The Colorado Trail

- Colorado's premier long distance trail, Denver to Durango
- 486 miles from Denver to Durango. It crosses 8 mountain ranges, 5 National Forests, 6 Wilderness Areas and 5 major river systems.
- 567 miles in all, after the 2013 addition of the Collegiate West alternative 80 miles from Twin Lakes to the Ridge Above South Forks Creek.
- Planning and building of the CT began in the 1970's, and the Trail was connected end-to-end in 1987.
- Each year it is enjoyed by thousands of hikers, bicyclists, equestrians.
- Trail access is good. There are many road access points, including at each end of the 28 Segments, some accessible by passenger car, while some require high-clearance, low-range 4 wheel drive.
- Most of the Trail is single-track but there's some double-track and short road sections. The CT is working to move the Trail off of the roads.
- Average elevation is 10,300 feet. The low point is 5,520 feet at the Waterton Canyon Trailhead (Denver Terminus) and the highest point is 13,271 feet at Coney Summit in the San Juan Mountains.
- The best planning resource is ***The Colorado Trail, The Official Guidebook***, available from the CT Store via ColoradoTrail.org.
- Other Colorado Trail guides include the CT Map Book and CT Databook. See shop.ColoradoTrail.org.
- There are opportunities for day hikes, multi-day hikes and thru-hikes. It generally takes 4-6 weeks to thru-hike the Trail.

The Colorado Trail Foundation

- The CT is maintained by volunteers enlisted by The Colorado Trail Foundation (CTF), a volunteer driven, nonprofit organization started in 1986. Work is done in cooperation with the US Forest Service.
- The CTF recruits volunteers for our Trail Crews, coordinates the Adopt-A-Trail program, offers supported Treks, and distributes information and publications to volunteers and trail users.
- The CTF, a nonprofit 501(c)(3) corporation is funded primarily through private contributions by Friends of The Colorado Trail, both individual friends and corporate contributors. The CTF also receives limited funding from the US Forest Service and a small number of grants. Donations are tax deductible (under Federal EIN 84-1057336).

Friends of The Colorado Trail

- Friends of The Colorado Trail are the many volunteers and contributors.
- Friends include around 600 volunteers and 1000 donors who assist each year.
- Friends enjoy being involved in preserving the Trail. They receive a sense of pride and our *Tread Lines* newsletter twice a year.

- Examples of the work accomplished by Volunteer Friends: the Cataract Ridge 17-mile reroute to leave the road and motorcycle trail; clearing of 300 large, fallen trees (in Wilderness without chainsaws) resulting from the extraordinary 2012 blow-down in Segment 12.
- Volunteers help on crews, by adopting a section, serving on the Board of Directors, accomplishing org mailings and even in the CTF office.
- Donors help by contributing: mailing a check, or making an electronic donation via ColoradoTrail.org or shop.ColoradoTrail.org.
- Contributions are also made by joining the Circle of Friends club (including the CTF in your will or trust) or providing mention in an obituary that "Memorial Donations may be made to The Colorado Trail Foundation."

Gudy Gaskill Endowment Fund

- Gudy Gaskill is considered the mother of The Colorado Trail. She was the instrumental force in making it a reality and continues to be involved with the CTF.
- The GGEF was established in 1998 in honor and recognition of her successful efforts to create the Trail and to ensure that it is forever available and useful to future generations.
- The fund is structured to provide money in perpetuity for the maintenance, protection and preservation of the Trail.
- Donations to the GGEF can include stocks, bonds and cash.

History of the Trail

- Conceived in 1973 by a partnership involving the US Forest Service and private business, the Trail was to fill a void in a growing segment of outdoor users – individuals and families who wanted to walk in the woods and enjoy the outdoors but didn't want the extreme wilderness experience.
- 1974-1987, Gudy Gaskill and countless volunteers worked to map, mark and build The Colorado Trail. These efforts were 'under the roof' of the Colorado Mountain Club Trails and Huts Committee.
- The Colorado Trail Foundation was founded in 1986 as a stand-alone nonprofit.
- By the end of the summer of 1987, The Colorado Trail was connected end to end and "open for business" between Denver and Durango. Official dedication ceremonies were held in 1988.
- Since 1987, CTF volunteers have continued their work, improving and maintaining the CT, so it remains enjoyable for the many users, hike bike and horse.

How Can I Get Involved?

- Become a Friend of The Colorado Trail – Volunteer or Donate!
- Participate in our summer programs – Trail Crews and/or Supported Treks.
- Adopt your own section of the CT – Adopters maintain 76 sections varying in length from 3-20 miles. Contact Janet Farrar, AAT Coordinator at wildjc@juno.com.
- Volunteer in the office – assist with mailings, administrative support and other essential duties.
- Volunteer in the Field – Email ctf@ColoradoTrail.org and inquire.