Even for Colorado’s outdoor enthusiasts, the phrase, “I’m going for a hike,” probably means, at most, a several-hour trip out and back in a single day. When Brian Jackson, goes out for a hike, he’ll see you in two months. A former CFO of CoBank and now a private investor in Denver, Jackson set out in July 2010 to hike the famed Colorado Trail, which runs from Durango to Denver, covers just short of 500 miles, and includes 90,000 vertical feet of climbing. Clearly, it’s not your run-of-the-mill day trip.

Jackson didn’t just wake up one Saturday morning and decide to hike the CT. Rather, the journey was the culmination of a lifetime of outdoor activities, including hiking and backpacking while growing up in Arizona. Although work and family life pushed hiking aside for many years, Jackson knew he’d eventually pick it up again.

In recent years, as he prepared to step away from his position with CoBank, Jackson began hatching a plan to hike the entire Colorado Trail with a friend, Steve Staley, a former work colleague and chairman of The Colorado Trail Foundation, the nonprofit organization that maintains the trail.

Jackson did extensive research to prepare. He and Staley nailed down the logistics for the trip over the course of several months prior to their departure, using the official CT guidebook and maps.

Planning each night’s camping around water availability was imperative. “You can carry six or seven days of food with you at a time,” Jackson says, but daily access to water is key. Once he combined his calculations about how much he could carry and the trail specifics, “it became pretty clear where we needed to stop each day.”

Resupply came in mountain towns such as Silverton, Breckenridge, and Lake City. Boxes of supplies can be sent ahead to await your arrival, says Jackson. “When you get to the top of a pass, you find a ride into town and keep your fingers crossed there’s a box there with your name on it.”

When it wasn’t possible to send supplies in advance, Jackson’s wife, Nancy, and others met the pair at prearranged locations. “We said, ‘At 2 o’clock we’ll meet Nancy at Highway 119’ and she would be there,” Jackson says.

Spotty cell phone coverage all along the CT is part of the trail’s allure, Jackson says. “You unplug from the real world — or maybe it’s the unreal world — and your whole perspective changes. Your main concerns are very basic: food, water, shelter, and how your body is holding up.”

Other than a two-week break to take care of family obligations, Jackson hiked nonstop.

Pit stops in town meant it was time to dump trash (pack it in, pack it out), hit the laundromat, shower, resupply, and head back out on the trail. “We never took a rest day,” Jackson says.

To add a bit of complexity to the journey, Jackson and his hiking buddies decided to hike the trail in reverse. While the majority of thru-hikers start in Denver and
**Managing Director’s Update**

Hello from the one-room office of The Colorado Trail Foundation here in Golden. Trail season is under way and we’re glad to deliver updates to you in this issue of Tread Lines. The year is already good/phenomenal/killer/amazing/sweet as can be.

Worthy of particular note is the success of the CTF’s Facebook page. Launched just a year ago, we already have more than 1,500 fans/friends. Our page is popular with both Trail users and CT volunteers and is becoming a busy hub for the exchange of helpful information. For example, reports on Trail conditions are ongoing and numerous. Given this spring’s extraordinarily deep snowpack, that’s vital information for those contemplating hiking the higher parts of the Trail. Users are also sharing photos — some tell a story and others are just for fun. Check it out: If you’re a Facebook user, search for “The Colorado Trail Foundation” … and then “LIKE US.”

You’ll automatically begin receiving posts in your news feed.

Meanwhile, our regular mailing list has grown to almost 9,000 households. We are grateful that so many want to be kept “in the loop” on The Colorado Trail and Foundation. Because we limit the number of “snail mailings” each year, we are sending out e-mail updates with increasing frequency. Unfortunately, we don’t have e-mail addresses for all of you. Recently we sent out a postcard requesting new or updated e-mail addresses. Some 1,000 of you responded, which was most helpful. Now, when we send out a broadcast e-mail, it reaches around 5,000 people.

These communications are crucial to sustaining the CTF and our efforts to preserve of the Trail. It is your involvement, either through your volunteer work or donations, that sustains The Colorado Trail. You are part of the team.

Finally, as I write, the first of this summer’s volunteer trail crews have started improving parts of the CT and Adopter volunteers have started their annual maintenance and trail clearing. They deserve a hearty shout out for all their hard work.

---

**New Guidebook A Best-Seller**

The Colorado Trail Foundation has a best-seller on its hands.

Two months after the release of the Eighth Edition of The Colorado Trail Guidebook, more than half of the first-run printing has been sold.

“We printed 5,000 copies in Korea and received the books at the Mountaineers Books warehouse in Seattle at the end of March,” says Alan Stark of The Colorado Mountain Club Press. “Through the end of May, we had sold 2,546 copies.”

Costco, Sam’s Club, and REI stores in Colorado have seen “significant sales,” Stark says.

The CTF’s online store has seen similar interest, selling more than 300 copies in the first month following the guide’s release.

The book is available in most bookstores and outdoor stores in Colorado, Stark says. “If the book is not in a bookstore, ask the clerk about it and remind them to reorder,” he says.

“The CTF drew on the talents of dozens of volunteers in compiling the most comprehensive guide to the trail yet,” says Managing Director Bill Manning, who coordinated the overall effort. “It is the first full revision of the popular guide in five years. There are loads of improvements including revised maps and mileages, an end-to-end elevation profile, and new photos.”

“Over four years the Seventh Edition sold about 10,000 copies,” Stark says. “Given the new design, we suspect the Eighth Edition will do even better than that.”

---

**Right after we finished the Pacific Crest Trail and I became a Triple-Crowner, we were like, What should we do now? I said, ‘Let’s go hiking!’ I love Colorado’s mountains and I love sleeping in a tent and walking the skyline. There’s nothing like it!”**

**Felicia Hermosillo**

**Lakewood, Colorado**
end in Durango because it provides a more gradual ascent, Jackson chose to start in Durango and end in Denver. That meant that during the first two days of the trip, the hikers faced more than 6,000 feet of climbing.

“‘There wasn’t much time to acclimate,’ Jackson says. ‘Your fitness level improves very quickly.’

With an average trail altitude of 10,500 feet, and several segments over 12,000 feet, your level of fitness is very important, says Jackson. He grew stronger over the course of the hike and lost nearly 15 pounds.

“We were skin and bones by the end,” he says. “You can’t eat enough. You can’t carry enough food. You wear a belt because you need to, not for fashion.”

The world economy, the Rockies’ win/loss record, and other little things stopped being a concern as Jackson hiked. “It becomes a fairly simple existence, and you’re very focused on what you’ll do each day,” he says. “What’s the weather? What’s the elevation gain? Did you filter enough water?” Those became the important issues.

Conditions weren’t always ideal. Early in the trip, the hikers endured several days of constant rain. They hiked in muddy, slippery conditions up difficult sections of the trail while gaining significant altitude.

“It was cold and wet, and the trail was very hard,” Jackson recalls. “When you’re hiking in the rain, putting up your tent in the rain, and sitting in the rain, it can be mentally challenging. We always knew we’d hit days like that at some point. You just tell yourself it’s going to be a hard day and tomorrow will be better. There’s no upside to sitting and worrying about it.”

While there thankfully were no emergencies, accidents, or significant injuries during the trip — other than blisters and a strained Achilles tendon — there were small bursts of excitement.

One night a black bear wandered into camp. “It was more exciting for us than the bear,” Jackson says, laughing. “He was bored and looking for a quick snack. We blew our bear whistle. He didn’t even flinch.” The bear sat down, hung around for awhile, and then ambled away.

Four days into the hike, the sole of Jackson’s boot delaminated from the upper. A little duct tape held it for four days, and when the hikers reached the trailhead where his friend’s Jeep was parked, the group drove back to Durango to buy him new boots.

“Incidentally, The Colorado Trail is not the time to break in a new pair of boots,” Jackson advises. “Make sure you carry moleskin (for blisters).”

While several friends joined Jackson at different points in the trip, Staley was the only other person to make the entire journey with him. “I was blessed to have a friend who knew what he was doing and had the desire to go on a big adventure,” says Jackson. Staley previously had hiked the trail from Denver to Durango.

“When you’re hiking, you very quickly come to the realization that you and only you are responsible for getting yourself over a pass, up the hill, down the hill, and into the next camp,” Jackson says. “You may be sore, tired, hungry, and thirsty. It may be raining and cold, but there’s nobody there to help you. … Your buddies are there for moral support (but) there’s no option but to keep going.”

Jackson completed his journey on Sept. 10, 2010. Since completing The Colorado Trail, Jackson has had a few revelations.

“I realized I used to be like everybody else,” he says. “If I was outside and it started to rain, I’d run for an umbrella. Yet, the human body is waterproof. And when you live outdoors for that long, your senses become much more acute. You watch your body evolve.”

He says that hiking is the best way to see Colorado’s jaw-dropping scenery.

“We took our time on the trail because we wanted to have the opportunity to stop and really take in our state. Some of the real wonders of nature aren’t next to a highway, near an airport, or accessible by car. You can only see them on foot.”

---Continued from the Cover---

Luxurious Adventures: Trekking the CT

The popularity of the CTF’s Trekking Program continues unabated, with all seven of this year’s trips full and wait-listed. Led by guides from Durango-based Colorado Mountain Expeditions, the five- to seven-day treks are covering seven sections of the CT this summer:

- South Platte (Roxborough Park to Wellington)
- Kokomo Pass (Kenosha Pass to Camp Hale)
- Holy Cross (Camp Hale to Clear Creek)
- Chalk Creek (Clear Creek to Marshall Pass)
- Cochetopa Valley (Marshall Pass to San Luis Pass)
- Cataract Ridge (San Luis Pass to Molas Pass)
- Indian Trail Ridge (Molas Pass to Durango)

“The trekking season is off to a great start. We have hikers from a multitude of places: Germany, Ireland, Canada, the Netherlands, and more than 20 states,” reports Jeanne Szczech, who with husband Chris owns and operates Colorado Mountain Expeditions.

“The Colorado Trail Foundation is working its magic,” she says regarding the popularity of the fully supported treks, which feature equipment transport, camp setup, cold drinks, hot meals, and backcountry showers.
COME ONE, COME ALL! Trail Crews

It's going to be another busy season for Colorado Trail construction and repair – and once again dozens of volunteers have answered the call for help, signing up for one or more of the nine weeklong and five weekend trail crews. Last year's crews accomplished a number of goals, including completing the reroute across Twin Lakes Dam; rebuilding steep sections at Hagerman Pass and Squaw Creek; reconstructing retaining walls at Fourmile Creek; preserving tread at Molas Pass, Rolling Pass and Edieville; and installing new signs at various places along the Trail.

Altogether, 248 crew members and leaders donated 18,355 hours to the effort.

This year's goals are equally ambitious. They include:
• Building more sustainable trail in boggy areas at Angel of Shavano and Lost Park;
• Reconstructing bridges on Molas Pass and South Fooses Creek;
• Improving drainage and tread at Little Brown's Creek, Pine Creek, Lujan Pass, and Goat Wadi;
• Helping our partners the Continental Divide Trail Alliance construct trail near Winfield;
• Stemming erosion at Top of the World;
• Rehabbing tread at Georgia Pass and more.

Two weekend sessions in June, led by longtime volunteer Colorado Trail Foundation Operations Chief George Miller at the popular Top of the World area, were devoted in large part to training new crew leaders and camp cooks, as well as allowing other volunteers to hone their skills. But a lot of trail work got done as well.

“About three miles of trail were improved in some severely eroded sections; hundreds of water diversions were built using rolling dips and knick structures; and many other sections were treated by cutting back on the upslope bank,” Miller reports.

That's not all. The 30 or so volunteers also put in two new bridges to eliminate trail problems particularly risky for horses, according to CTF Managing Director Bill Manning. The problem spots were brought to the CTF's attention by an equestrian group that holds an annual event on the trail.

“George Miller, with assistance from Scott Dollus of the U.S. Forest Service, hiked in the area multiple times scouting for the problem spots,” Manning says. “They found three places that were especially problematic for horses and the Forest Service fixed one of them. The CTF planned new small bridges for the other two spots, secured materials, and contributed the volunteer labor to finish them. Funding assistance for bridge materials is expected from the equestrian group, North American Trail Ride Conference.

“The stout bridges were built using 6-by-6-inch treated timbers and other materials selected to be long-lasting and safe for all users,” Manning says.

There are still openings on crews in July and August. Details are available on the CT website: www.ColoradoTrail.org. Sign up and see why many volunteers find it such a great experience that they return year after year.
Pack Em’ In: A Working Partnership

For years The Colorado Trail Foundation has teamed up with one of the most recognized retailers in the outdoor recreation community, REI. From contributing to the development of CTF marketing materials in the early ‘90s to funding a brand spankin’ new support trailer and backup tools in 2010, REI has supported and helped promote the CTF’s volunteer opportunities for outdoor stewardship. In return the CTF has been delivering presentations entitled “Hiking The Colorado Trail” in the Denver-area REI stores.

This year Colorado Trail thru-hikers Morgan and Robyn Wilkinson and Phil and Apryle Magistro played to packed houses in a series of presentations about the Trail at REI stores along the Front Range this spring.

“The CT events are among the most successful and well attended of the educational presentations REI puts on each year,” according to CTF Managing Director Bill Manning. “The attendees enjoyed the programs; they were engaged. We always gain new CT Friends as a result.”

Some 515 people attended the seven presentations at stores in Denver, Fort Collins, Colorado Springs, Boulder, Westminster, Lakewood, and Englewood.

The Wilkinsons, both teachers from Boulder, thru-hiked the trail in 2009. “We had a great time passing along our experiences from the 25 days we spent backpacking from Denver to Durango,” Morgan says. “We enjoyed working with the CTF and feel good about volunteering after our time on the trail.”

The Magistros reside in Estes Park, Colorado and thru-hiked in 2010. “We enjoyed setting the goal of hiking the entire trail and training for it,” Phil explained. “We appreciate the CTF and their dedicated volunteers, plus all the unnamed trail angels who planted unexpected coolers full of soda, snacks, water, and inspiration along the way.”

Don’t Forget To RSVP

Saturday, September 10, 2011
Noon – 3 pm • Rain or Shine
11:30 Arrive & Mingle
12:30 Lunch followed by Program
4th Annual Chain Saw Competition

CTF will provide Food, Beverages (non-alcoholic) and Park Admission
If inclined BYOB – Alcohol is Allowed – NO GLASS

Please RSVP:
303-384-3729 or CTF@COLORADOTRAIL.ORG

Central Location:
Bear Creek Lake Park - Pelican Point Shelter
C-470 & Morrison Road (just east of this intersection)

(CT and Sandi Westgard, of Golden, Colo., wrote the CTF office about meeting a young French couple, Elodie and Stephane, while hiking CT Segment 22 in the San Juan Mountains in August 2010.)

Both spoke excellent English, with delightful accents. We learned that they had some weeks before departed Paris and flown directly to Denver International Airport. Taking a shuttle to a downtown Denver hotel, they stayed near the REI store, where the next day they bought their entire backpacking setup, first batch of trail food, etc. They then boarded the light rail to Littleton, got a ride to Waterton Canyon, and commenced on July 20 to thru-hike The Colorado Trail. . . . (They) are not new to such international wilderness adventures, having traveled to many places on vacations during the past 10 years. They chose The Colorado Trail after some extensive study of beautiful places for hiking. It was great to hear from them that the CT was as beautiful, wild and scenic as any they knew!

CT AND SANDI WESTGARD
GOLDEN, COLO.
** Collegiate Loop: One Killer Trip **

It’s probably safe to say that most hikers and other back-country users are map lovers. It is, after all, how most of them find their way from Point A to Point B.

It’s also probably safe to say that Colorado Trail users and others are always on the lookout for good maps that will get them where they want to go. That’s where Mike Nicolls comes in.

Nicolls, a Colorado Springs cartographer with more than 25 years of experience, is founder and owner of MountainMaps, which recently released the first in a series of highly detailed, medium-scale recreational maps covering Colorado. The initial map covers the Sawatch Range, from Leadville to Poncha Springs, including about 105 miles of the CT.

Of particular interest to Colorado Trail fans, the Sawatch map includes the entire 185-mile Collegiate Loop formed by the CT (Segments 11-15) and Continental Divide Trail, increasingly talked about as a premier Colorado backpacking loop. Those looking for additional adventures can use the standard approach trails (also included on the map) from the CT and CD T to access nearby Fourteeners including Mounts Massive, Elbert (Colorado’s highest), Yale and Princeton. Another popular side trip included on the MountainMap is Hope Pass and the option of additional Fourteeners, Oxford, Belford and Missouri.

It shows more than 65 hiking trails, along with trail info including length, high/low elevations, and features found along the trail such as historic sites, lakes, streams, views and waterfalls. Some 40 public campgrounds and RV parks, with info on the number of sites, reservations and best website, are also shown.

The two-sided shaded relief maps, with 400-foot contour intervals, fold down to 3½ by 6¼ inches and weigh only an ounce.

“Each map is a small-format (13-by-26-inch), waterproof, easy-to-read and beautiful-to-look-at work of art, filled with just the kinds of information you need to help decide what you want to do and exactly how to get there for your journeys into our mountains, whether you are a local or are here for a cool Colorado vacation,” says Nicolls.

Nicolls, who moved to Colorado in 1992 after receiving his master’s degree in geography and cartography from George Mason University in Washington, D.C., and working for seven years for the National Geographic Society’s Cartographic Division, says he started MountainMaps after becoming “frustrated with a lack of consistent and complete information anywhere on the recreational activities within the state.”

The Sawatch Range map — as will subsequent maps — highlights major recreational opportunities along the mountain range, giving detailed information on trails, trailheads, campgrounds, and 4-wheel-drive roads. In addition, specific activities and features such as Colorado’s Fourteeners and the top 200 Thirteeners, waterfalls, hot springs, and both the Colorado Trail and Continental Divide Trail, will be highlighted on each map.

“In essence,” Nicolls says, “we combine many types of difficult (and sometimes impossible) to find types of information onto one easy-to-use product.”

Nicolls, who spent more than 15 years with the Geographic Information Systems Information data provider Sanborn and the MacVan Map Co. in Colorado Springs before striking on his own, says MountainMaps strives avoid ‘manmade’ boundaries such as quadrangle edges, forest boundaries, etc., and instead focus on where people recreate.

Doubtless, a lot of people will be beating a trail to MountainMaps’ door before the company’s done.

(MountainMaps’ Sawatch Range map is available for $9.95 – plus tax and shipping – at the online CT Store via www.ColoradoTrail.org.)

**Where Do I Start?**

Another hiking season will have come and gone before The Colorado Trail’s traditional eastern starting point at Waterton Canyon -- or ending point for thru-hikers starting in Durango -- is reopened.

Since August 2010 the first seven miles of the Trail has been closed by the Denver Water Board to accommodate truck traffic that is removing some 625,000 cubic yards of sediment from Strontia Springs Reservoir on the South Platte River. Much of the sediment buildup is the result of recent forest fires in the area and is impacting water quality and the functioning of water treatment plants downriver. The closure will continue through Dec. 31 of this year.

During that time, the CTF is recommending an alternative starting point at the Indian Creek Trailhead, about 10 miles west of Sedalia on Colorado 67. That trail connects with the CT near Lenny’s Rest (mile 7.9 of Segment 1) after five miles of single-track trail.

“The Indian Creek Trail is a nice alternative to Waterton Canyon, and the conditions are superb for hiking,” says Jeanne Szczech, who with husband Chris owns and operates Colorado Mountain Expeditions, which is running the CTF’s Trekking Program again this year.

Another alternative is to skip Segment 1 altogether, starting instead with Segment 2 at the South Platte Canyon Trailhead.

Detailed directions to both trailheads are available at the CTF website, www.ColoradoTrail.org.
**Alien Worlds on the CT**

(Science fiction writer – and Colorado Trail hiker – Kevin J. Anderson has been nominated for the Nebula Award, the Bram Stoker Award, and the SFX Readers’ Choice Award.)

By Kevin J. Anderson

Hikers have many reasons for walking The Colorado Trail – the exercise, the natural beauty, the solitude. For me, the CT serves as my office: When I put in a day hiking a trail segment, I’m putting in a day at work. I’m an international bestselling science fiction author with more than a hundred books published, with 20 million copies in print in thirty languages. And I write on the Trail.

Unlike most writers, who chain themselves to an office chair and stare at a word processor screen all day, I have taught myself to create my scenes and tell my stories by dictating into a digital recorder while out hiking. I carry pages of notes and chapter outlines for whatever galactic epic or fantasy novel I’m working on, then I head off into the woods and mountains. Hiking for miles and miles allows me to get away from the crowds; I’m surrounded by natural beauty, where I let my imagination roam and the words flow.

Plodding along, I can immerse myself in the story and characters, picture the scenes, and construct each sentence – which I then speak aloud into the recorder, instead of moving my fingers along a keyboard. The squirrels and deer don’t seem to mind me talking to myself, and any other hikers assume I’m just talking into a cell phone.

But my mind is far away, maybe on the desert planet of Dune riding a sandworm, or aboard a sailing ship battling sea serpents in The Edge of the World, or in the midst of a galactic war from my imagination roam and the words flow.

I can walk for miles and dictate chapter after chapter, which my typist then transcribes. I don’t have to make a choice of whether to spend the day hiking or writing – both of which I love. I have found a way to do them simultaneously. And I’ve still got plenty of miles yet to go.

A round of applause from me to The Colorado Trail. My publisher and my fans thank you.

(For more information on Kevin’s projects, see www.wordfire.com. Autographed copies are available at anderzoneshop.com.)

---

I hiked Cataract Ridge as part of a four-day trip from Chicago Basin to Spring Creek Pass. I thru-hiked the CT in 2007, but used the Pole Creek route. It was really neat to see this spectacular new section . . . Cataract Ridge is just incredible! It is amazing how huge that alpine country is. I feel so lucky to be able to have had that experience. Thanks to all at the CTF!”

---

Alan Richards
Boulder, Colorado

---

**Community Web Guides**

The official Colorado Trail Guidebook, along with the companion Databook and Map Book, are the definitive guides to the CT. But the list of online blogs and websites about The Trail continues to grow, giving hikers and other users added information and insights on everything from day outings to thru-hikes.

First and foremost, of course, are the CTF website, ColoradoTrail.org, and the recently added Facebook page entitled “The Colorado Trail Foundation” whose “fans” get frequent updates on trail conditions and other news regarding the CT.

Also on Facebook is a page titled “Experience The Colorado Trail Web Series,” which features videos and other information about hiking the Trail. It stars web series producer Nathan Stoll and writer Jon Ziegler.

Here are some other websites and blogs we’ve run across and recommend:

**TrailJournals.com:** This website is home to dozens of journals by hikers of several long trails, including The Colorado Trail. CT journals date back to 2001.

**BackpackingLight.com:** The site describes itself as the “world’s most passionate membership-based community of people who like to travel with a light pack through the wilderness and beyond.” You can search the site for hundreds of articles and other information on The Colorado Trail.

**pmags.com/colorado-trail-end-to-end-guide-2:** This blog by friend of the CT Paul Magnanti of Boulder (he wrote the “Why and How to Go Light” section in the new guidebook) is a comprehensive guide to thru-hiking the Trail. The current version was revised in May.

**hiking-the-colorado-trail.com:** This site documents Jamie Compos’ thru-hike in August 2010. It contains general information about the CT as well as info on planning your own hike. Compos, a photographer, has posted more than 1,500 photos of his CT hike, some of which appear in the new guidebook.

**ct4recess.blogspot.com:** This is the journal of a third-grade teacher at a small K-8 public school in New Orleans who thru-hiked the CT during the summer of 2010 to raise funds for recess equipment for his school. A fun read.
I thru-hiked The Colorado Trail from Waterton to Durango starting on July 17, 2010, and ending on Aug. 16, 2010. It was a magnificent life-enhancing experience (no set of adjectives seems up to the task of describing how great it was – but if you have done the CT, you already know). I am grateful for the generous support received from many Colorado Trail supporters. Ed Herndon twice shuttled me (expending considerable time) and provided valuable advice. Melody Hahn (Hahn’s B&B) picked me up at the Mount Princeton store (after flash-flooding left the road/trail impassable), fed me, dried everything, and put me back on the trail the next morning. Trail Magic in several locations was deeply appreciated. The Silverton Hostel folks put me up three times, shuttled me once, and were always considerate and generous. Throughout the journey, I met many Colorado Trail hikers (and bikers) and am enriched by my association with them.

PAUL BRAME
GLASTONBURY, CONN.