

ROARING FORK VALLEY HORSE COUNCIL

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July 1, 2023

REPORT on the RMYC- RFVHC 2023 SUMMER WORK WEEK

With Partners BLM, USFS, PC OST

An email on June 1st, 2023 from RFV Horse

Council rfvhc.colorado@gmail.com

TO: ROCKY MOUNTAIN YOUTH CORPS

Thank you, Ryan for calling the RFVHC about an opening in your RMYC June work schedule. We are hopeful we will fill all five days, and we are grateful to your organization for helping us “keep horses on trails” in the Roaring Fork Valley and beyond. We are emailing Alan/BLM, Seth/USFS, Gary & Ted/PC OST, Brett/RFTA, Riley/TOSV today to choose the projects we can work on next week. Thank you.



The Rocky Mountain Youth Corps 2023 crew from all around Colorado, Glenwood, Breckenridge, Denver, Frisco, and one crew member from Tennessee!

Top Row Left: Cailin Stevens (RMYC Crew) Leader, Emery Zevin, Jeni Bradford, Asher Stein, Jackson Chaknova, Lael Mckain

Bottom row: Nathan Vandenhurk, Donavon Ramey, Elle Eisner (RMYC Crew Leader) Liam Tatro

Confirmed List of Partners: BLM, USFS, PC OST

- Ryan Banks is the Rocky Mountain Youth Corps (**RMYC**) Coordinator info@rockymountainyouthcorps.com
- Sierra McQuay **RMYC Field Coordinator** Crew Leader Cailin Stevens Crew Leader Elle Eisner
- **RFVHC** scheduling coordinator Karin Reid Offield rfvhc.colorado@gmail.com
- **RFVHC** Hosts & Onsite Trails Coordinator Susan Cuseo, Holly McLain 970-948-2151 & Rheta Fulton
- **BLM** contacts Alan Czepinski Aczepinski@blm.gov & Nils Morlind
- **USFS** contacts Katy Nelson & Seth Hannula seth.hannula@usda.gov
- **Pitkin County Open Space and Trails (PCOST)** Ted Obrien web_open_space@pitkincounty.com

1. Monday and Tuesday JUNE 12-13th Sutey Ranch work BLM contact on the ground was Nils Morlind. RMYC scheduled for two days of barbed wire removal Monday and Tuesday. REPORT FROM RFVHC TRAILS CHAIR: SUSAN CUSEO "Project for the RMYC crew was barbed wire removal as requested by BLM. Susan met RMYC crew led by Cailin (far right). Nils Morlind (in rear) from BLM met us in the parking lot and directed the crew to the work location. Several earlier workdays with various organizations and the RFVHC in 2021 have removed barbed wire over the past few years and this was a welcome furthering of the project. Any horseman wants less barbed wire! Our engagement in Sutey Ranch has been a great success. Let's continue our efforts to keep the peace and support an example of how a bike free recreation on this beautiful RFV Homestead Ranch can work."



REPORT FROM BLM's Nils Morlind "The work went well, the kids got up early and started working right away in the morning with no complaints. We hiked into the ranch for about 20 minutes. In total we pulled, around 2 miles of wire, so around a half mile long stretch and about 140 T-posts. If I had to guesstimate, in total we removed at least 800lbs of metal. The kids worked fast the first day and worked a little slower the second day, as there was no cloud cover and it was much warmer, so the kids were most likely a little exhausted from the day before as well as getting exhausted from the sun. All in all, the project went well, there still is a lot of fencing to be removed but it was a good start. I enjoyed working with the RMYC crew and we are very glad that there are kids who have taken an interest in conservation so young, and are willing to work in the outdoors, and work, frankly, not a very fun job, especially for kids so young, working with barbed wire isn't easy but they went in and made the most of it!"



COMMENT FROM THE RMYC CREW LEADER: "Monday and Tuesday were spent getting rid of a barbed wire fence along a mountain side. We did approximately 2 miles of fence removal. "



“I never did anything worth doing by accident, nor did any of my inventions come by accident; they came by work. Thomas Edison, Inventor



RFVHC & THE UNITED STATES FOREST SERVICE

2. Wednesday June 14th Perham Trail work The RMYC/RFVHC crew went into the Redstone area for work on the USFS Perham Trail – meeting at 9 AM in the parking lot with USFS Trails Specialist Seth Hannula. The job description was on- going benching work to improve the tread width on multiple sections of trail. **DIRECTIONS:** From Intersection of CO Hwy 82 and Hwy 133, drive south 11 miles. Perham Creek parking is on Right/West, gates, parking lot and left to more parking. **REPORT FROM RFVHC TRAILS CHAIR SUSAN CUSEO** “This project was requested by USFS for bench work on the Perham Creek Trail which begins on CO Hwy 133 south of Carbondale. Sections of this trail soon after the start cross an eroding hillside high above the creek and the trail had become quite narrow and dangerous. Seth Hannula of USFS met us there and accompanied the crew up the trail to direct location and technique needed to widen the trail. This trail has a very good truck and trailer parking lot. ”

REPORT FROM RMYC CREW LEADER: “The Perham Creek Trail was very narrow and steep in spots. We cut into the bench to widen and brush off any debris.”



In this group photo, RMYC leaders Elle and Cailin are in front, Seth of USFS on left.

United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest Service
White River National Forest
Sopris Ranger District

Date-1999
(970)963-2266
(970)963-0657(TDD)

PERHAM CREEK #1949
NON-WILDERNESS

Length: 4.2 Mi

Elevation Gain: 1060 ft.

Beginning Elev: 6720 ft.

End Elev: 7400 ft.

USGS Map(s): Mt. Sopris and Stoney Ridge

Difficulty: Moderate

Use: Light

Summit Elev: 7880 ft.

Trailhead starts at LAT/LONG: 39.16.12N/107.13.35.8W
UTM: 0307922E, 4348922N

ACCESS: From Carbondale travel south on HWY 133 for 10 miles. The trailhead is 100 ft from mile marker 58 (they get smaller towards Redstone) on the right side. The entrance is marked with two large metal gates.

NARRATIVE: This trail was made possible by Pitkin County Open Space Board. They purchased the land for the parking area all the way to the National Forest boundary. The trail is fairly steep the first half mile, then moderate to the ridge top. From the ridge to Middle Thompson Creek it is downhill with a steep section from the stream crossing to the road.

From the Middle Thompson trailhead to the Perham Creek trailhead, the trail starts 200 feet north from where roads 305 and 306 fork. This trail follows large stands of pinyon and juniper with lots of oakbrush. Trail offers a unique view of Mt. Sopris.



RFVHC & THE BLM and PITKIN COUNTY OPEN SPACE and TRAILS

3. **Thursday June 15th Work on The Crown, for the Crown Jewel Horse Trail** RMYC /RFVHC met at BLM's Divide Parking Lot([39.320631, -107.134925](#)) to start trail and brush clearance maintenance and sightline improvement of BLM's & RFVHC's Crown Jewel Horse Trail. RMYC will continue to clear the trail down to the valley floor via the PC OST & RFVHC's Glassier Equestrian Trail. The Glassier Equestrian trail is managed by PC OST trail, and local management was aware that we were on-site this day. This entire route is for hikers and horses only. From the top of the Divide down to the Glassier Parking Lot the route is about 5.5 miles. The Glassier Equestrian Trail is approximately 1.5 miles, and the Crown Jewel Horse Trail to the Glassier gate is approximately 4 miles. This fairly new Crown Jewel Horse Trail on top of Crown Mountain is an approximate 10–12-mile loop on the 9,100 acres of Crown Mountain. These trails will not disappoint hikers or equestrians.

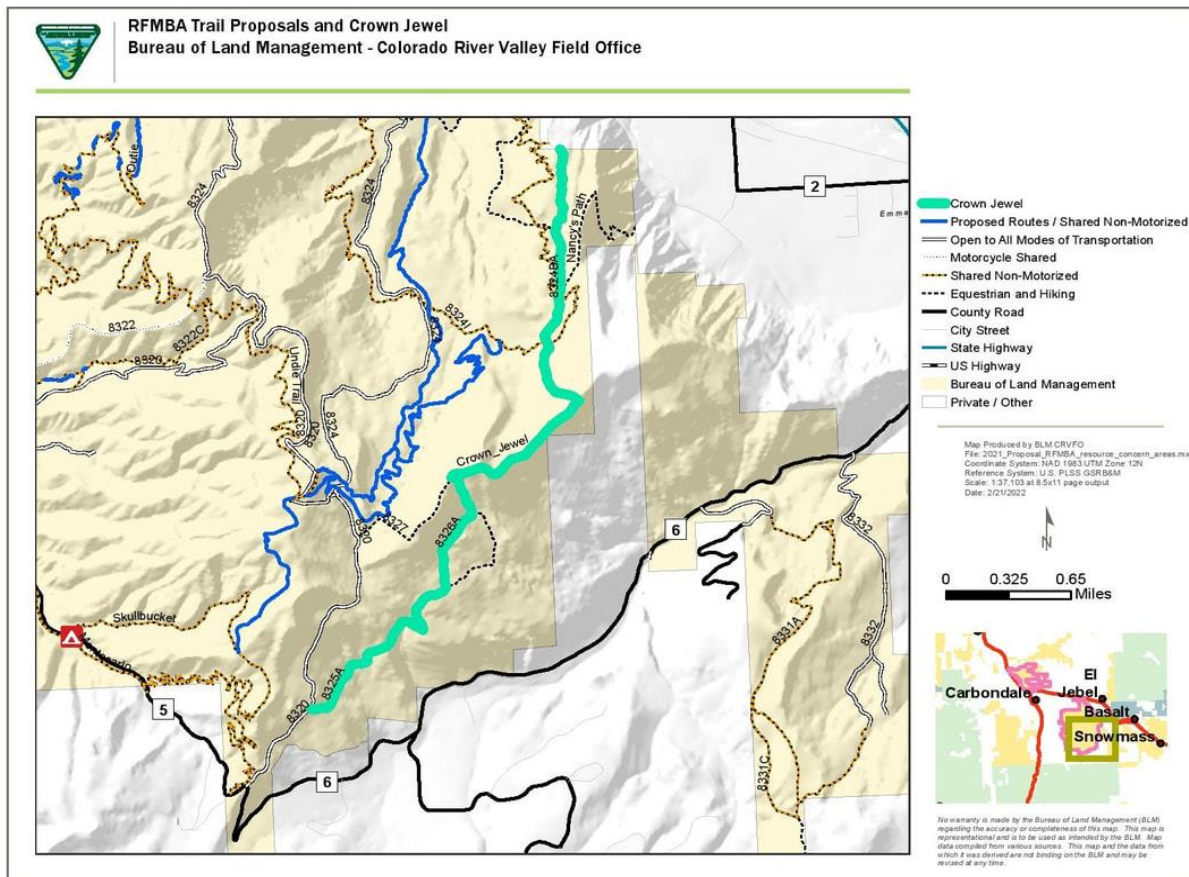
REPORT FROM THE RFVHC TRAILS CHAIR SUSAN CUSEO: "Thursday's setting was our lovely Crown Jewel horse and hiker only trail on the east edge of the Crown Mountain BLM Recreation area. RFVHC had planned and achieved horse/hiker only designation several years ago and are very proud of the results. Susan accompanied the crew to the gates leading off the 4WD road to make an adjustment to the gates and gave the RMYC crew directions from there to the intersection of the Glassier Equestrian Trail and Rio Grande Trail near the parking lot on Hooks Lane. There was some maintenance necessary on trail sections near the summit and possibly on the lower Glassier Equestrian Trail as well.

REPORT FROM THE RMYC CREW LEADER The Glassier Equestrian Trail was decently clear and even. We lopped and sawed-off small brush and dead branches in the way. There were lots of bugs and amazing views on the way!





Standing for photography at the entrance gates from the Crown Jewel Horse Trail to the Glassier Equestrian and Hiking Trail



RFVHC & PITKIN COUNTY'S OPEN SPACE AND TRAILS (PC OST)

4. FRIDAY JUNE 16th Work on a portion of the Emma Open Space – RFVHC Light Hill Access Trail

RMYC met with RFVHC Holly McLain at the Parking Lot at **Old Emma Schoolhouse**. Logistics for this task were pretty simple and compact. At PC OST's Ted O'Brien's direction, we parked at the Old Emma Schoolhouse (labeled on map) and walked in, skirting the farm fields where there is old cottonwood deadfall. The NEW Supply Ditch culvert/bridge will be cleared with tools in hand clearing brush, limbs, trash, old fence, barbed wire and trim up any old service berry bushes. We worked from this new ditch crossing towards the Rio Grande Trail (both labeled on second map) and cut brush and willows to open that access to the Rio Grande Trail. We stacked the brush neatly on the Emma Open Space property in a spot nearby but out of the way of our agriculture lessees' operation. "There was some cactus to transplant away from this hiker and horse trail. Tools needed for the job will mainly be saws, loppers, and some grubbing tools to hack out a trail surface. That all said, this is a relatively short section of brush to bust through to create our access to the ditch crossing. Depending on the group size, the job will not take very long.

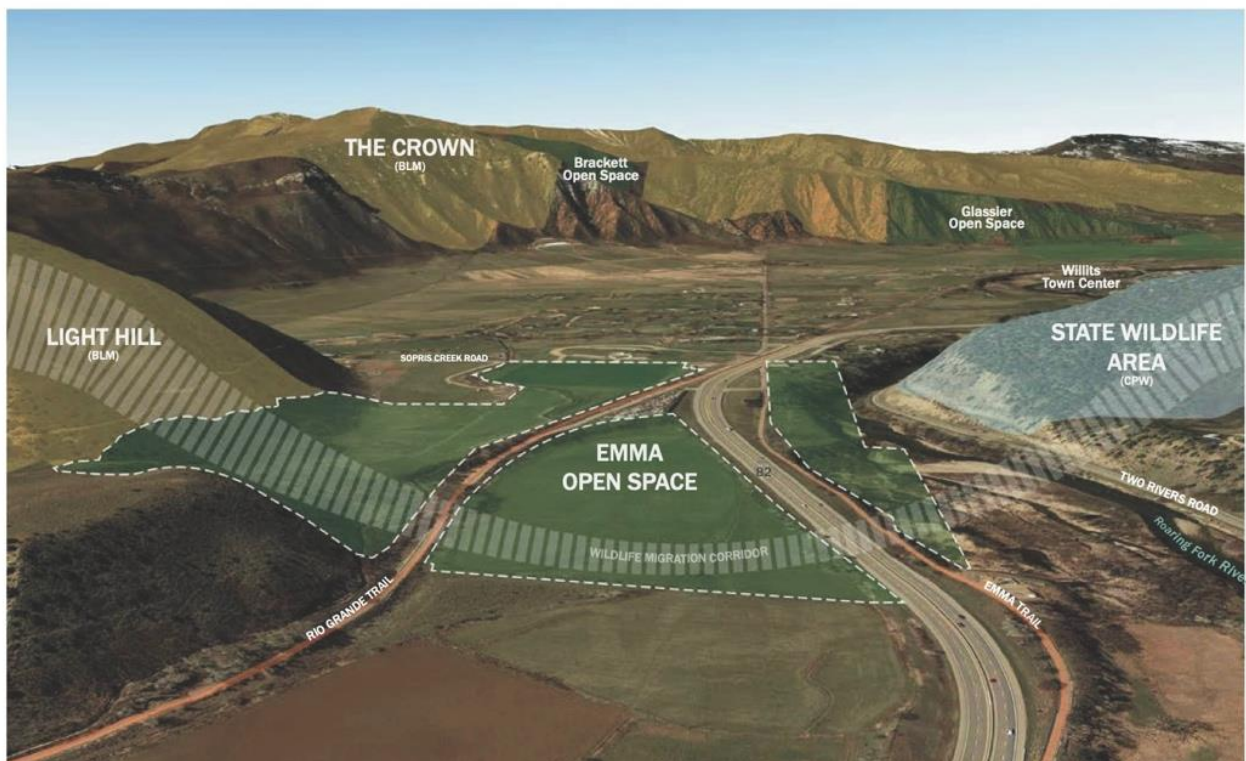
REPORT FROM RFVHC HOST HOLLY MCLAIN: "The Rocky Mountain Youth Corp (RMYC) partnered with the Roaring Fork Valley Horse Council (RFVHC) and Pitkin County Open Space & Trails (PC OST) to clear a trail section for access from the Emma School House and the Rio Grande Trail to Light Hill and Basalt High School, Emma, Colorado. Thanks to Harper Kaufman of "Two Roots Farm" for allowing the team access to clear the connection path. We now have a nice access route from the Rio Grande soft track to the small bridge crossing of the "Home Supply Ditch" on the Farm's property. The Light Hill Trail from the Emma School House is a steep two track that is prone to shifting gravel under foot and erosion problems, when rain and snow melt occur. (See the photo below.) In the future it would be a great project for Pitkin County to make a switch back trail crisscrossing the steep erosion path that now exists. Glassier Equestrian Trail is a wonderful example of excellent trail work to prevent track erosion and to make a trail welcoming to hikers and horseback riders. With more work, hikers and horseback riders could access the Rio Grande soft track from many parking areas and make a loop from the Basalt High School and around, or to and from Emma School House and back to their original starting point."





How Light Hill, Crown Mountain and Emma Open Space fits into the picture.

The RFVHC has been working to complete this equestrian trail for many years.



Map of Emma Open Space.

Thank you to the RMYC, jobs well done!

The Rocky Mountain Youth Corps Team June 2023 standing on the new bridge for hikers and horseback riders that crosses the Home Supply Bridge



Left back row from boy in blue t-shirt to girl with red jacket) Liam Tatro, AJ Panella, Nathan Vandenhurk, Elle Eisner (RMYC Crew Leader), Donovan Ramey, Jennie Bradford.

Front row from girl with sunglasses on helmet to boy in gray sweatshirt: Lael McKain, Cailin Stevens (RMYC Crew Leader), Asher Stein, Emery Zevin, Jackson Chaknova

RFVHC and the RFOV with RFOV's Jack Douglas and Aspen Valley Land Trust's Rookie of the Year Will Tucker

5. Tuesday June 13th Fisher Creek Although not a RMYC project, Tucker Family Work Day at Fisher Creek was aided by RFVHC members. REPORT FROM RFVHS TRAILS CHAIR SUSAN CUSEO "Liz and Brad Tucker signed up with RFOV/BLM to provide trail workers for 2 days in June. This was very much a family day as several kids attended and were trained in tool use and safety. Jack Douglas from RFOV guided us and provided tools. The Fisher Creek area is an old homestead/ranch that is now a recreational area for horses, hikers and cyclists. Trails are mostly old ranch roads on open ground. Jack planned several water trenches designed to move flow off the trail and reduce erosion. Susan worked on gathering barbed wire that had previously been taken down and left in piles. The whole crew helped carry the wire to the parking area for collection by BLM."

Photo below on right are Tucker Family, L-to-R are Luke, Liz, Will and Brad. Below left is photo of the crew with RFOV's Jack Douglas on the right. Will Tucker was AVL's Rookie of the Year! Both Liz and Susan are RFVHC members - Liz Tucker volunteered her family and organized the event, Susan Cuseo helped plan and worked, too.



RFVHC Press Release June 22, 2023 Published June 28, 2023

<https://soprisun.com/youth-corps-and-horse-council-team-up-to-clean-trail/>

June 11 through the 16th, the Rocky Mountain Youth Corps (RMYC) partnered with the Roaring Fork Valley Horse Council (RFVHC) for a 5-day trail improvements project. Trail management teams from the Bureau of Land Management (BLM); the United States Forest Service (USFS); and Pitkin County Open Space and Trails (PC OST) joined the RFVHC to maintain and improve some of valley's most important hiking and horseback trails. RFVHC Trails Chair Susan Cuseo was the RFVHC host.

The RFVHC's engagement in Sutey Ranch has been a great success. "We asked Garfield County Commissioners that the Sutey Ranch be one place where we can ride horses without the fear and anxiety caused by fast moving mountain bikes." said Holly McLain RFVHC Board Member. "We want to continue our efforts to provide peaceful trail experiences for hikers and horseback riders. Beautiful Sutey Homesteads Ranch is the example of bike free recreation that works".

Barb wire can be dangerous for trail users. In two days, RMYC removed about 2 miles of wire, and 140 T-posts along a half mile long stretch on this Sutey Ranch/BLM land project. Total estimated wire removed was at least 800lbs of metal. Thanks to BLM Trails Specialist Nils Morlind for his leadership.

In the Redstone Area, the RMYC met with the US Forest Service Trails Specialist Seth Hannula for work on the Perham Trail. The trail is fairly steep for the first half mile, then moderate to the ridge top and offers a unique view of Mt. Sopris. The steep sections were widened for safety. Thank you RMYC – Seth Hannula USFS Trails Specialist in charge of the project said, "The crew was great, put in some hard work on widening the trail on steeper sections. Fun, great attitudes and a pleasure to work with. We appreciate the day of work!". This trail was made possible by the PC OST Board.

At the top of Crown Mountain at BLM and RFVHC's Crown Jewel Horse Trail, the RMYC crew maintained and cleared overhanging branches and repaired gates. This trail is a "peaceful respite without mountain bikes" and is enjoyed as a loop or as an approximately 10-mile journey from the Divide Parking Lot at the top of Prince Creek Road, leading to the Crown Jewel Horse Trail connecting to the Glassier Equestrian Trail, then on to the Glassier Parking Lot at Hooks Spur Lane. This trail is not to be missed for hikers and equestrians. RFVHC strives to provide hiker and horseback only designated trails and we are very proud of the results.

We partnered with Pitkin County Open Space & Trails (PC OST) to have RMYC clear a path from the Rio Grande Trail, near the Emma School House to access the Light Hill Trail. Signage is needed to point Rio Grande trail hikers and horseback riders to this path and to the small Pitkin OST bridge crossing of the "Home Supply Ditch" on the "Two Roots Farm's" property. Light Hill Trail signage will direct trail users onward towards the Basalt High School at trails end. Thanks to Harper Kaufman of "Two Roots Farm" for access to clear this connection path. The RFVHC suggests improvements on Light Hill's steep section to make the trail more user friendly in the future.

In conclusion and sincerely,

"The Roaring Fork Valley Horse Council had only 11 days to put this opportunity together and coordinate with the land management teams for scheduling and to oversee the Rocky Mountain Youth Corps work. We'd like to thank everyone we worked with, and especially our membership who encourages us daily and donates funding to keep horses on trails and horses on our landscapes. We couldn't do this work without our members' support," said Karin Reid Offield, RFVHC's president.

For more information or to become a member Call Karin @ **561-301-7818**.

Rfvhc.colorado@gmail.com