


Accomplishments

2009 demonstrated the power of people, conservation organizations and the Forest Service working together.

- 2.25 linear miles and 4.95 acres of critical habitat were reclaimed.
- Volunteers and crew leaders contributed 82 volunteer-days/600 hours of restoration work.
- 242 pounds of native grass seed sprouted by mid-July.
- The southwest part of Rampart West Roadless Area and the proposed Polhemus Gulch Research Natural Area were reconnected in continuous habitat.
- Monitoring to assess stability and vegetation growth is scheduled for late summer.
- Field surveys and planning for the 2010 sites in Eagle Creek and Trout Creek are underway.



Wild Connections
FROM THE MOUNTAINS TO THE PRAIRIES



1420 Pinewood Road, Florissant CO 80816
www.wildconnections.org
info@wildconnections.org
719-686-5905



Reclaiming Wildways is a multi-year project to restore wildlife habitat and linkages in the South Platte and Upper Arkansas watersheds. Wild Connections facilitates planning and implementation with our partners: Willards Arkansas Restoration Volunteers, Rocky Mountain Field Institute, Coalition for the Upper South Platte, Cheyenne Mountain Zoo, Rocky Mountain Field Institute, and the South Platte RANGER District of the Pike-San Isabel National Forest. Cheyenne Mountain Zoo, Maki Foundation, New-Land Foundation, Patagonia, individual donors and local merchants fund this work.

Reclaiming Wildways



Wild Connections
FROM THE MOUNTAINS TO THE PRAIRIES

Reclaiming Wildways is recovering wildlife habitat and linkages for animals ranging from large mammals to the smallest of creatures such as butterflies and mice. Animals are affected by roads that cut their habitat into small islands, by loss of vegetation from erosion and invasive weeds, by pollution of waterways from sediment and chemicals, and by too much human presence during breeding seasons, when caring for their young or during deep winter.

Trout Creek

Wild Connections launched this project in 2009 in the Trout Creek drainage on the southern Rampart Range. The

area is home to mountain lions, deer, elk, black bears, coyotes, foxes, squirrels, trout, and beavers. It includes critical habitat for three threatened species listed under the Endangered



Species Act:

Pawnee montane skipper butterfly, Preble's meadow jumping mouse and Mexican spotted owl.

The U. S. Forest Service closed several motorized trails in the area because of damage to the forest and streams. Reclaiming these corridors will reduce erosion, recover wildlife habitat, reconnect roadless areas on either side of the former trails, and restore quiet recreation west of the busy Rampart Range road.

Site Preparation and Training

An unnamed tributary of Trout Creek just north of Eagle Creek was surveyed, work sections were staked and a detailed workplan of tasks for each section was created.

A Forest Service bulldozer recontoured gullies and ripped the old trail bed. The Forest Service's Rocky Mountain Mule Team dropped some 3,500 pounds of baled straw for mulch, 357 pounds of Biosol

organic fertilizer and rolls of erosion matting along 2½ miles of the steep trail.

Wildlands Restoration Volunteers provided classroom and on-site training for the project managers and volunteer crew leaders. They, along with Rocky Mountain Field Institute, Coalition for Upper South Platte and Cheyenne Mountain Zoo, shared their many years' experience in restoration projects and species protection.

Workdays

Five workdays brought people together from such diverse backgrounds as the Mile High Youth Corps, Sierra Club, Colorado Mountain Club, Cheyenne Mountain Zoo, Coalition for Upper South Platte, Wild Connections and individuals who responded to public service announcements.

Volunteers gathered at a staging area for registration, bagels and hot drinks, and assignments to work crews. Crew leaders gave instructions on the tasks of the day. Crews hiked in from either end of the project area with hand tools, native grass seed, lunch and lots of water to their assigned section.

Work teams broke down berms left by the bulldozer and did light preparation for seeding.

They hand-broadcast a mix of native grass seed, scattered straw mulch and placed erosion matting to protect the seeds. Branches were scattered across the upper end of the rehabbed area to discourage any motorized users who might attempt to ride here.

