

CFA's mission is to foster communication, cooperation and coordination between the educational system and the food, fiber and natural resource industries; to serve the people and inform them about agriculture, its values, needs, opportunities and challenges; and to provide support for the development of educational resources for agricultural literacy.



**COLORADO READERS —
COLORADO FOUNDATION FOR AGRICULTURE**

In 1991, the Colorado Foundation for Agriculture (CFA) incorporated as a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit educational organization. It assumed responsibility for producing the Colorado Reader series and Agriculture in the Classroom programs from the Colorado Department of Agriculture in that year.

In eleven years, CFA has produced over 100 issues of the Colorado Reader, distributing over 5 million copies across Colorado. The set of 33 Readers and a teacher's guide is provided free each month to any educator who requests it. Last year over 1,000 teachers subscribed to the Readers.

Each issue focuses on a timely agricultural topic: Livestock, Corn, Wheat, Dairy, Wildlife, Forests, Animal Science, Weeds, Recycling, Ranching, Science & Agriculture, Integrated Pest Management, Cooperative Business, Your Vote Counts, Native Plants, Farm Safety, Protecting Our Soil, Eggs, Beneficial Bugs and various Water issues.

Colorado Reader Agriculture in the Classroom

Protecting Our Soil

WHAT IS SOIL?
Soil is the top covering of the earth's surface. Soil is small pieces of rock. Rocks are broken by the actions of wind and water. Chemical reactions between minerals and atmospheric gases also break down larger particles into smaller ones. Live and dead organic matter, called **humus**, is mixed in with the pieces of rocks. Soil also contains dissolved nutrients, gasses and water. Humans, plants and animals depend upon the soil for their food. Life as we know it would not exist without soil.

SOIL TYPES
There are many different types of soil in Colorado. Soils are divided into classes depending on depth, color, texture and chemical composition. All soils are made up of a combination of **sand, silt and clay**. **Sands** are large individual particles of rock. They are easily seen. Sandy soil is coarse and feels gritty as to the touch. **Silt** is not easily seen without a microscope. It feels like flour. **Clay** soil particles are nearly invisible. They form a gummy mass when wet.

CONSERVATION:
The wise use and protection of our natural resources.

ECOLOGY: the science of the relationships between plants, animals and their environment.

"Our life depends on six inches of topsoil and the fact that it rains." *Anonymous*



Media Award

Representatives from state agencies, industry, universities and Cooperative Extension produce each issue of the Colorado Reader series. These people help write the material and review the readers for technical accuracy.

Other educational materials published and distributed by CFA include activity books on "Understanding Waters, Wool & Sheep", and "Wildlife". CFA also produces interactive CD ROMs. "A Century of Season" describes a century of agriculture (sorry, this CD is no longer available). The "A River Journey – Water in the West" CD will be available in the end of November.

In addition CFA holds the Food, Fiber and More Summer Institute for educators. This five-day, two-credit graduate level course, is geared for teachers with little or no agriculture background. Participants learn about Colorado agriculture, visit a variety of agricultural operations and even spend a day working on a farm or ranch. CFA finds scholarships to cover the cost the Institute.

For more information

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Non-Profit Award

Because birds do not recognize political boundaries and may even spend most of their lives outside of the United States, RMBO works to bring a unified approach to conservation among states and countries, and many of our projects focus on issues associated with winter grounds, especially those in Mexico. At the core of all of our conservation work is bird population monitoring. Only through long-term monitoring can we identify which species are in need of help, and evaluate our success at protecting or recovering them.

For more information

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ROCKY MOUNTAIN BIRD OBSERVATORY'S EDUCATION AND BIRD BANDING STATIONS PROGRAM



Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory's *Education and Bird Banding Stations* program provides participants with the opportunity to see birds up-close and to learn about bird physiology, behaviors, habitat requirements, and habitat conservation.

The goal of this program is to raise awareness of and appreciation for birds and, in so doing, motivate behaviors to help maintain healthy native songbird populations. The program also provides the opportunity to take part in biological data-gathering and to observe one aspect of ornithological field-work.

The program's uniqueness in being able to provide an almost guaranteed up-close experience with wildlife is novel and powerful and provides educators with a wide variety of educational opportunities, as well as a way to really "get students' attention."

RMBO provides educational materials to accompany *Education and Bird-Banding Station* fieldtrips for various grade-levels. The program content can lend itself to use in biology, zoology, and ecology classes, and also with math, geography, and language arts.

The program serves grades K-12, with an emphasis on middle and high school. Locations for the spring 2002 state-wide pilot *Education and Bird-Banding Station* program included:

- CSU's Environmental Learning Center in NE Colorado
- Chico Basin Ranch, just SE of Colorado Springs
- Lamar Community College
- Chatfield State Park in Littleton
- Audubon's Ela Wildlife Sanctuary in Grand Junction

RMBO has operated an *Education and Bird Banding Station* at Barr Lake State Park for 14 consecutive years. The expansion of the program to 5 new sites has enabled RMBO to contact an additional 3800 Coloradoans with bird education programs.

The mission of Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory (RMBO) is to conserve Rocky Mountain and Great Plains birds and their habitats through research, monitoring, education, and outreach. RMBO is a non-profit (state and federal) organization which conducts on-the-ground conservation in cooperation with private organizations and government agencies responsible for managing areas and programs important for birds. We also work with private landowners and managers to encourage practices that foster good land stewardship. Much of our work is designed to increase understanding of birds and their habitats by educating children, teachers, natural resource managers, and the general public.



COLORADO'S STUDY BUDDY STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

The Study Buddy Stewardship Project (SBSP), originally known as The Yampa River Ecology Project, started in 1999 when high school biology students were paired with first graders one-on-one to study the ecology of the Yampa River for the school year. Ed Hayne (High school biology teacher, Oak Creek), Barbara Keenan (First grade teacher, Steamboat Springs), and Elaine Sturges (Project WILD facilitator, Steamboat Springs) received a mini grant from the Yampa Valley Legacy Education Initiative for the program.

The teachers and students quickly realized that the Study Buddy Stewardship Project is a "Win-Win" opportunity for everyone involved as well as the environment! High school students increase their leadership and science skills as well as their self-confidence. First graders are excited about seeing their study buddies and are more motivated to read, write and learn about real places and local wildlife. Literacy and content standards are integrated into the project! Study buddies read books to each other about local wildlife and habitats as well as write journals, "Big Books," reports, and cards to their study buddies.

Colorado's Early Childhood Project WILD (ECPW) program started in 1997, thanks to the Berger Foundation; Jeff Rucks, Project WILD Coordinator; and the Colorado Wildlife Heritage Foundation. Funding from the Dunn and Chevron Texaco Foundations has enabled the SBSP to grow tremendously! During the past 5 years, over 1300 early childhood teachers have completed ECPW training sessions, 35 classroom follow-up programs have been presented for 600 young children, educational kits have been given to Head Start classrooms, and 700 children and youth in 18 study buddy teams are participating in the Study Buddy Stewardship Project throughout Colorado!



Ed Hayne, Biology Teacher at Soroco High School, assists study buddies with bird house assembly.



Meg Hayne and Jessie DeGanahl have fun assembling their chickadee house.



High School and first grade study buddies read a book about the downy woodpecker created by the highschool biology student.

K-12 Education Award

Study buddies are making a difference through the following stewardship projects: Tree planting at Kruse Elementary School in Ft. Collins, Summit Cove Elementary School in Dillon, and at the Yampa River Botanic Park in Steamboat; Building and placing bird houses at city parks in Denver, Kremmling, Oak Creek and Yampa; Adopting A Street-extensive litter clean-up of Franklin Street in Littleton; Trail building in Grand Junction; Implementing a school recycling program at Montbello High School in Denver; Flower planting at the Idaho Springs Library; and Creating a Children's Garden at the Yampa River Botanic Park.

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Higher Education Award

Positive feedback indicates that the program is worthwhile, successful, fun, educational, and inspirational to the local school children and the CU student volunteers. Building connections between college-aged students and future generations in the community is a larger, yet intangible benefit.

For more information

Liz Falk

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UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER'S
EARTH EDUCATION PROGRAM



Established in 1970, the CU Environmental Center assists with the educational mission of the University by providing information on environmental issues to students, faculty, staff, and the broader community. The Environmental Center assesses the environmental performance of the university and works with other parts of campus to improve its environmental performance. The Center provides direct services to the University community, including the CU Recycling program, the student bus pass program, and the management of the Windsource purchase.

The Environmental Center gives students applied experience in interdisciplinary environmental problem solving. One of its key programs is the **Earth Education Program**, bringing college students and children together through environmental education activities.

The Earth Education Program focuses on getting college students off campus to work with children in the local community. By focusing on the theme of helping children make personal connections to the Earth, the program works toward building each child's awareness of his/her relationship to the world's living systems and to the community.

The primary goal of the Earth Education program is to educate local school children about a variety of environmental issues. The program is nearly all student-run and operated. Organized by two University of Colorado student staff, CU student volunteers are given training and access to the Environmental Center's small, yet comprehensive environmental education library resources to develop appropriate activities. Suzanne Connolly, formerly of Thorne Ecological Institute, also provides valuable training each year.

The CU student volunteers make the commitment to visit a classroom in the Denver/Boulder area at least twice a month. Since its start in 1988, Earth Education has grown significantly every year, with 25 CU students now volunteering each semester. Public and private classrooms, from preschool to grade 12, invite Earth Education volunteers into classrooms year after year. In addition to the many returning volunteers and schools, new students and teachers are asking to become involved.





Karen Vail presenting a program on animal tracks to 3rd graders at the Humble Ranch 2002.



Deborah Fuller presenting a program on Ute Indians to a kindergarten class.

YAMPATIKA EDUCATIONAL PARTNERSHIP

Yampatika is a non-profit environmental education organization dedicated to teaching residents and visitors alike about the natural and cultural resources of Northwest Colorado. Yampatika has been active in the environmental education field since 1992 by presenting multi-level programs, sponsoring events, running workshops, and managing nature stores that are stocked with educational materials relevant to its mission:

“To provide an understanding of the natural and cultural resources and a sense of place through education, communication, participation, and example.”

Youth are taught environmental ethics and regional, natural, and cultural history through partnerships in four school districts. The newly developed Discovery Boxes offer hands-on, placed-based activities that teachers and naturalists can utilize in the classroom or in the field. Visitors and locals of all ages experience the beautiful Yampa Valley in all four seasons, through guided walks, campfire programs, educational dioramas and interpretive displays with trained naturalists, in all four seasons. Besides hosting environmental education workshops and conferences, Yampatika this year published a field seminar guide that expanded its scope of programming to include: llama treks, birding, composting, computer recycling, tracking, mushrooming, butterflies, navigation and backcountry survival courses, and historical tours.

Educational programs reach over 19,000 participants each year, with the nature stores reaching an additional 5,000 visitors. To date Yampatika, through its diverse programming, publications, interpretative displays and nature stores, has touched the lives of over 174,200 people. It is well on the way to supporting its long term vision:

“To inspire awareness, appreciation, and conservation of natural and cultural resources”

As Yampatika celebrates its 10th anniversary its leaders look to the future with both pride and optimism. “We wish to extend a heart felt thanks for the many volunteers, employees, members, supporters, contributors and partners over the last 10 years who have supported environmental education in Northwest Colorado and who made all these accomplishments possible.”



Community Award

Partner Organizations:

USDA Forest Service, City of Steamboat Springs, Colorado State Parks, Great Outdoors Colorado, Steamboat Ski & Resort Corporation, Vista Verde Guest Ranch, Colorado Division of Wildlife, Bureau of Land Management, Julie Green Environmental Endowment, The Nature Conservancy, Yampa Valley Community Foundation, Yampa Valley Land Trust, Legacy Education Initiative, Routt County Education Foundation, Steamboat Springs Arts Council, Historic Routt County, Colorado State Forest, Routt County Cooperative Extension, Colorado Historical Society, Tread of Pioneers Museum, Yampa Valley Recycles, Steamboat Springs Chamber Resort Association, Colorado Mountain College, Steamboat Springs, Hayden, Moffat County, and Oak Creek School Districts, Ute conservation Corp., Environment 2000 and the Humble Ranch.

For more information:

Deborah Fuller

Executive Director

Yampatika

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Government Award

LCYCC Program Overview

The LCYCC serves Larimer County, based in Ft. Collins, Colorado, completing conservation and environmental projects and other community-based needs to create lasting benefits to the local communities.

“Spikes”

Some of our projects require us to work and camp at a site for the entire workweek, and depending on the program chosen, up to 2 months of work could be spent on spike.

For more information

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LARIMER COUNTY YOUTH CONSERVATION CORPS

The Larimer County Youth Conservation Corps operates under the Colorado Youth Conservation and Service Corps (CYCSC) title and includes Weld County Youth Conservation Corps under an AmeriCorps operating grant. It is administered by the Larimer County Workforce Center.

AmeriCorps

The LCYCC: AmeriCorps program enrolls 16 young adults to complete service projects in the community.

- 2 full-time crews
- 8 members
- 10-months and a 1700-hour AmeriCorps commitment

They spend their days completing both environmental and community-based service projects for the community and tutoring in elementary schools.

In 2002, projects include work for Colorado State Parks, Rocky Mountain National Park, Habitat for Humanity, The Family Center/La Familia, the City of Ft. Collins Natural Areas, the Colorado Division of Wildlife, a City of Loveland solid waste diversion project. In addition, the 8 part-time members complete a 900-hour term working with local elementary school students.

LCYCC Summer Program and Junior Corps

This summer, the LCYCC hired 30 youth, aged 16-24, to participate in the 9 week Summer Program. The work completed this summer focused on projects relating to trailwork (construction, rehabilitation, and improvements), noxious weed eradication, and improving the Bellvue/Watson fish hatchery. All Members earn \$6.00 an hour and those 17 and older can receive an AmeriCorps education award of \$787.50. Members 16 years old can earn a cash bonus based on performance and attendance.

The Junior Corps was comprised of ten 14-15 year olds. It is a unique partnership between the LCYCC, the Larimer County Works Program, and project sponsors. These members, work 28 hours per week for \$5.15 per hour. They worked with the City of Loveland’s Stormwater Dept., Larimer County Parks and Open Lands and Lee Martinez Farm. Members are required to participate in weekly educational and enrichment activities where bonuses are earned, but no hourly wage.



CAEE Staff:

Mike Way, *Executive Director*

Ali Goulstone Sweeney,
Assistant Director

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CAEE

What Is CAEE?

Within the enormous array of environmental education (EE) programming, the effectiveness of that collective effort is as important as are the separate results of any individual program or project. The Colorado Alliance for Environmental Education (CAEE) enhances Colorado's EE community by providing professional development opportunities, coordinating support services, and facilitating communication and networking between Colorado's EE providers and the public.

CAEE was incorporated as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization in 1989 to serve the shared interests of, and provide a central coordination mechanism, for public agencies, businesses, teachers, community organizations and individuals distributing and using EE materials and programs.

Priority Programs and Activities

CAEE is a national leader in innovative, state-of-the-art approaches to statewide capacity-building for EE resources. More than 400 organizations, engaging thousands of staff and volunteers, currently provide EE programs and services. To fulfill CAEE's niche in this wide-ranging EE community, CAEE manages several programs and project activities, including:

- Electronic Information Clearinghouse – the state's on-line "yellow pages" of EE resources
- The statewide, annual conference on EE – "Teaching Outside the Box"
- A statewide, annual EE awards and recognition program
- Stewardship of Colorado's Environmental Education Master Plan project
- A monthly newsletter – EE InfoLink
- Managing centralized correlations between EE programs and the state academic standards
- Establishing a state training center for EE
- Hosting the state's EE Advisory Council
- Maintaining close working relationships with community-based EE networks



CAEE Membership

You are invited to join the largest professional organization of environmental educators in Colorado. By supporting CAEE as a member, you will receive the following benefits:

- Monthly newsletter
- Announcements of upcoming EE events and EE job openings
- Discounts to CAEE functions
- Invitations to networking functions
- Professional development workshops
- Free placement on the Colorado Environmental Education Database (if you are an organizational member)

Membership Rates

Student or Teacher: \$15/year

Individual: \$35/year

Organization/Agency/or Institution: \$65/year

(Allows up to 4 contacts, field offices, or program managers to be listed)

A membership form is available at <http://www.caee.org> or by contacting the CAEE Office.

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colorado alliance for environmental education