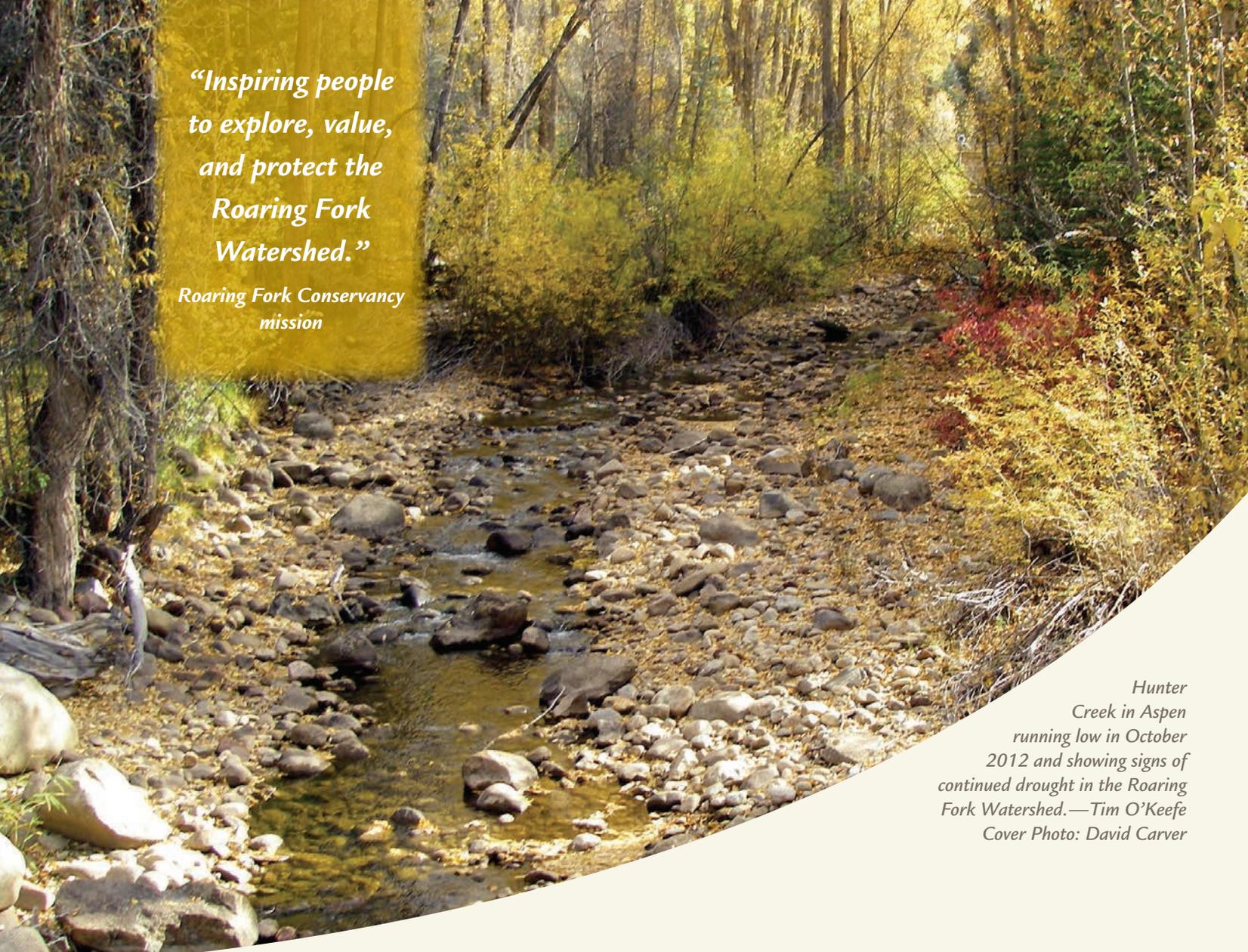


2012 Annual Report



ROARING FORK

CONSERVANCY
*Bringing People Together
to Protect Our Rivers*



*“Inspiring people
to explore, value,
and protect the
Roaring Fork
Watershed.”*

*Roaring Fork Conservancy
mission*

*Hunter
Creek in Aspen
running low in October
2012 and showing signs of
continued drought in the Roaring
Fork Watershed.—Tim O’Keefe
Cover Photo: David Carver*

Thank you for your support of our rivers!



We look back on 2012 as a year of drought regionally and financial instability nationally, but also a year of great opportunity. The poor snows of the 2011-2012 winter provided a bold reminder of the fragility of water in the West. Election year politics and the potential “fiscal cliff” kept things interesting financially. Thank you for sticking with us as a supporter during this time of economic and hydrologic drought!

Now more than ever your support matters to ensure the health and longevity of our rivers into the future. With Colorado’s current population expected to double by 2050, demand for water will only increase. Add in other factors such as climate change and energy development and the need to protect our water resources increases more. Roaring Fork Conservancy is on the forefront of watershed conservation work in Colorado.

Your support allows Roaring Fork Conservancy to further its mission and work tirelessly to protect the watershed we all love. We are pleased to present this 2012 year-end report of our programmatic successes and our financial success. We are excited for the year ahead and would love to visit with you on even more ways you can join us to make a difference.

Thank you for your continued support!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ramsey J. Kropf".

Ramsey Kropf
President, Board of Directors

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rick Lofaro".

Rick Lofaro
Executive Director

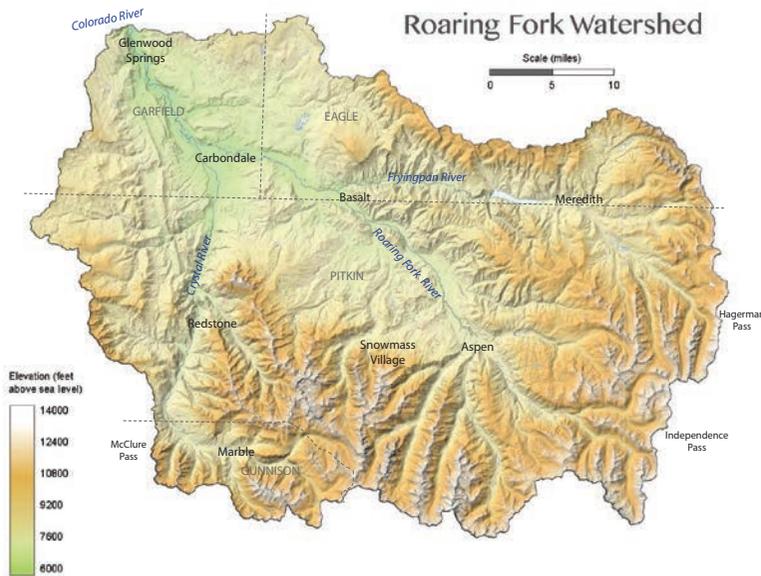
Who We Are

Founded in November 1996 through a unique public-private partnership, Roaring Fork Conservancy has become one of the most respected watershed conservation organizations in Colorado. We are the watershed conservation organization in the Roaring Fork Valley that brings people together to protect our rivers. As an independent, not-for-profit 501(c)3 organization our mission is to inspire people to explore, value, and protect the Roaring Fork Watershed. From Aspen to Glenwood Springs, Meredith to Marble, Roaring Fork Conservancy is focused on:

WATER QUANTITY — keeping water in our rivers

WATER QUALITY — keeping our rivers healthy

HABITAT PRESERVATION — keeping our riparian habitat intact



Roaring Fork Conservancy Highlights

- 1996** Founded
- 2000** Formed Rivers Council to help raise support for Watershed Action and Watershed Education programs
- 2003** Co-founded Roaring Fork Watershed Collaborative, ad-hoc committee of 50+ governments, agencies, non-profits, and citizens that proactively addresses water issues in watershed
- 2007** Became lead consultant for Roaring Fork Watershed Plan process
- 2008** Published comprehensive 500-page *State of the Watershed Report*
- 2012** Published *Roaring Fork Watershed Plan*



*Several of
the 140 people
who join us for our
educational River Float each
year on the Roaring Fork River.
—Sarah Johnson*

2012 By The Numbers

Rivers Council Members	77
Total Donors.....	613
Watershed Education Contacts.....	7,565
School Programs	342
Adult Programs	86
Website Sessions	109,370
Facebook Likes.....	1,010
Water Quality Samples Collected	218
Yards of BioChar Used in Coal Basin Pilot Restoration Project	26
Reports Published	6

The Crystal River
—Eric Allen

Our Program Areas



Watershed Action

Our watershed action program addresses current issues and future threats to our watershed. Proactive science and watershed planning help inform decision-makers and drive on-the-ground projects to improve and restore our watershed. Many of these actions come from the recently published Roaring Fork Watershed Plan and take the form of scientific study, restoration projects, changes to policies and educational campaigns. Our watershed action staff address areas of water quantity and quality, hydrology, riparian and river ecology, geomorphology, and economics.



Watershed Education

Inspiring people to take action requires knowledge. Each year our watershed education programs reach thousands of students and adults with hands-on science, exploration and experiences. Our student classes range from water chemistry and river ecology to watershed mapping and economics. When we cannot bring students to the river we often bring the river to them.

Our adult community outreach programs include River Guide Trainings, Watershed Explorations, educational dialogues and forums, and our popular river float trips. Each of these programs are designed to engage participants with people and/or places in the watershed to which they might not have access otherwise.

2012 Accomplishments

Completed Watershed Plan

- Completed Watershed Plan in March 2012 and created plan branding

Increased Staff Capacity and Effectiveness of Volunteers

- Restructured organization into Watershed Action and Watershed Education areas
- Highlighted associates to better demonstrate staff depth and breadth
- Hired Land and Water Conservation staff
- Increased effectiveness, involvement and events with our River Stewards young river enthusiasts
- Added volunteer educator and interns to increase program capacity
- Added three new volunteer stream teams to River Watch program

Moved River Center Capital Campaign and Design Forward

- Completed design development with architect and consultants
- Completed schematic design with exhibit team
- Revitalized Capital Campaign
- Pursued formalization of Watershed Institute

Initiated Coal Basin and Crystal River Confluence Area Restoration Project

- Hosted technical workshop and published final report
- Conducted 12 education and outreach presentations, including field day and presented at Sustaining Colorado Watersheds conference
- Received \$405,000 in grants from Pitkin County Rivers Board (~\$48k), Colorado Water Conservation Board (~\$38k), and WSRA (\$319k)
- Conducted macroinvertebrate sampling in Coal Basin and Crystal River
- Completed pilot project using BioChar on South Fork of Dutch Creek

Responded to 2012 Drought

- Initiated Hot Spots for Trout: Citizen Temperature Monitoring Project
- Sent weekly email stream flow reports
- Published weekly Drought Alert and Snowpack Alert in Aspen Times
- Worked with Colorado Water Trust to pursue local water leases to keep water in river

- Fielded tremendous number of concerned citizen calls due to drought

Worked Toward Crystal River Protection

- Promoted Crystal as one of Most Endangered Rivers in U.S.
- Engaged public on possibility of Crystal River Wild & Scenic Designation
- Wrote comment letter on White River National Forest oil and gas leasing

Improved Public Relations and Media Presence

- Appeared in 17 print articles, nine times on radio and twice on TV
- Sponsored daily stream flow reports on public radio
- Improved social media presence
- Had over 100 entries to 2012 photo contest

Completed Scientific Studies

- Completed 2011 Macroinvertebrate Report
- Designed Snapshot Assessment of lower Crystal and upper Roaring Fork
- Initiated Coal Basin Water Quality Report
- Completed Opportunities for

- Water Conservation Report
- Conducted 2012 Macroinvertebrate Studies

Hosted Successful 2012 River Rendezvous

- Most successful Rendezvous ever financially

Enhanced Watershed Education Programming

- Had 7,586 contacts on 445 programs (5,068 students, 2,518 adults), 720 teaching hours
- Improved programming with Colorado Mountain College
- Began year-long Watershed Education at Glenwood Elementary
- Screened Watershed film three times throughout valley

Enhanced Partnerships

- Co-sponsored FORR dialogues and worked on stream gage network
- Increased land conservation monitoring and education partnership with Pitkin County
- Pursued opportunities for water conservation
- Completed Tamarisk Removal and Grange Loadout Wire Fence Pull
- Informed final design for Elk Park in Redstone
- Presentation on our 2012 drought

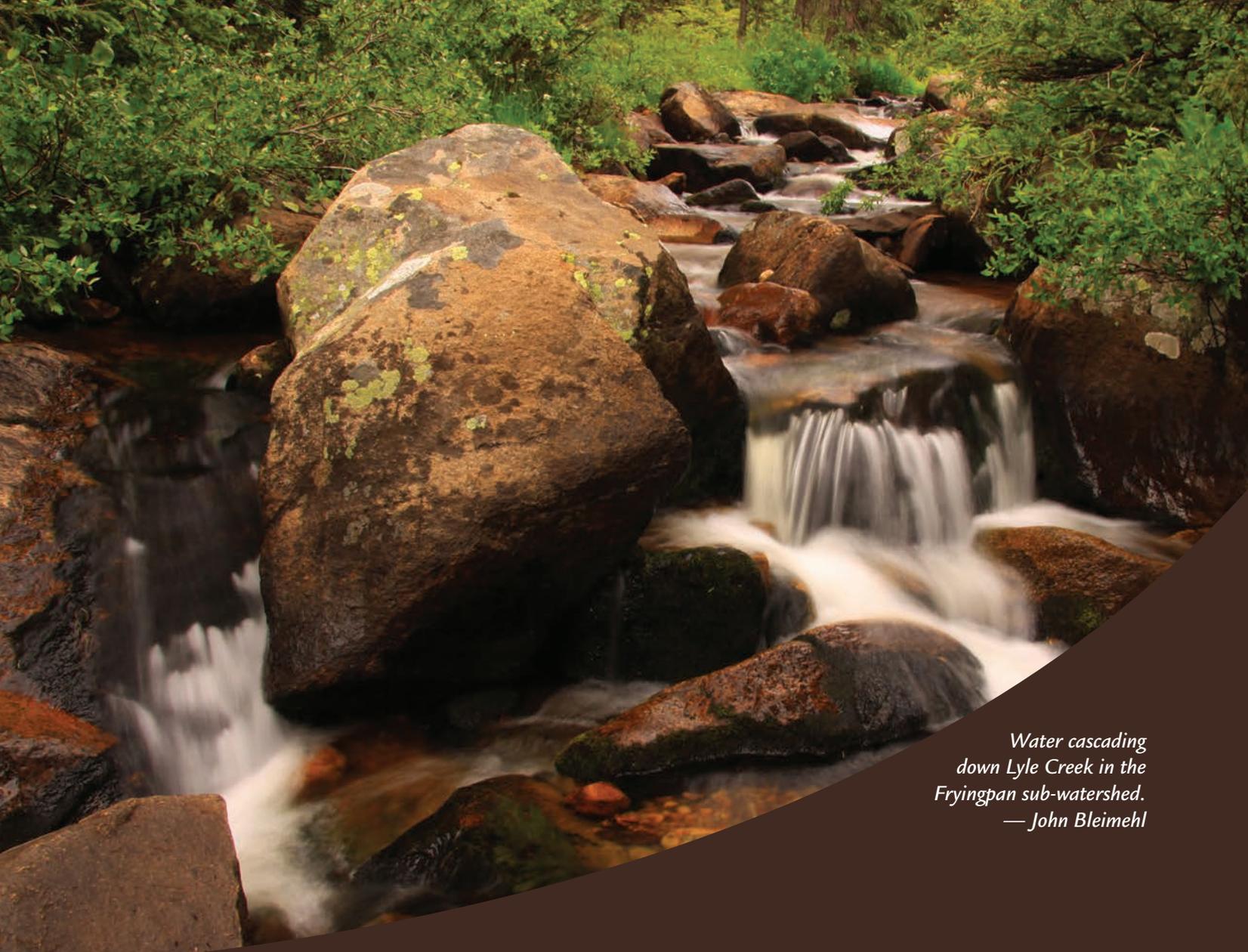


response to Colorado Mesa University

Educated Voters About Water Issues

- Published second *Voters' Guide to Water Issues*
- Co-hosted County Commissioner Candidate Forum

Summer students from Colorado Rocky Mountain School studied the Crystal River this year as part of a summer science camp.—Sarah Johnson

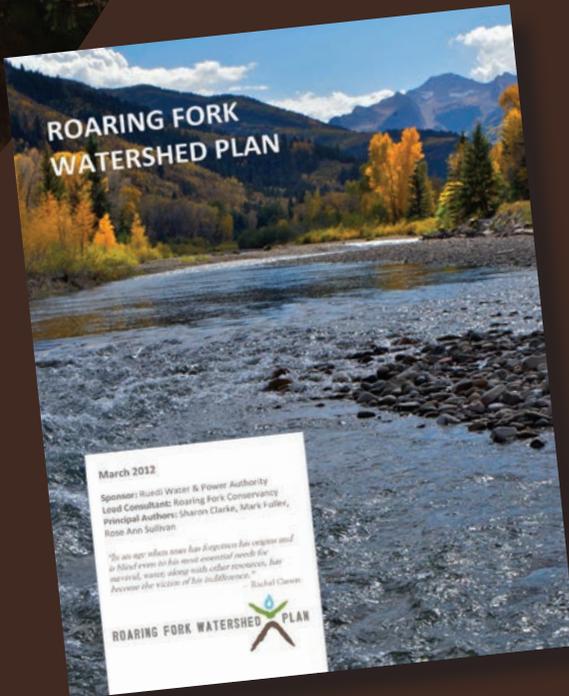


*Water cascading
down Lyle Creek in the
Fryingpan sub-watershed.
— John Bleimehl*

Roaring Fork Watershed Plan

In March 2012, Roaring Fork Conservancy, Ruedi Water & Power Authority, and Kootenay Resources, LLC published the Roaring Fork Watershed Plan. The Watershed Plan consists of a number of sections including an introduction and overview, recommendations for urgent actions, recommendations applicable to water quality, water quantity and regional water management, and a discussion of implementation. The matrices, which arrange the recommendations in a sortable format, divide the recommendations into several categories which allow for examining the recommendations from a number of perspectives such as location, key entities and recommendation type (study, project or regulation). Although the Watershed Plan is intended to be an ever-evolving and flexible document we do hope to update it periodically as information, priorities and planning changes.

For more on the watershed plan visit roaringfork.org/watershedplan.



ROARING FORK WATERSHED PLAN



Drought Response

This year's drought was just as bad as the drought of 2002. As early as February we saw the drought coming. Roaring Fork Conservancy took a proactive approach, raising public awareness and responding to low snowpack and stream flows. By June we had:

- launched a Hot Spots for Trout river temperature monitoring program
- improved and sponsored daily stream flow reports on the radio
- shared daily water conservation tips on Facebook
- informed weekly drought alert articles in the Aspen Times
- pursued short term water leases to keep water in the river
- commenced a stream flow snapshot assessment study
- assisted with identifying locations for new stream gages, and
- funded a fall macroinvertebrate study of drought effects.

Aspen's snowpack lower than during 2002 drought

Scott Condon
The Aspen Times

The Roaring Fork Valley's snowpack is significantly lower than at the same point in 2002, the last time the area was clobbered by a severe drought.

The water in the snowpack 10 miles east of Aspen was 8.6 inches Thursday.

This year, the U.S. Drought Monitor operated by the federal government, officially classifies the Aspen area as "abnormally dry." The center's outlook says more severe drought conditions could develop in Colorado in the next few months.

"It's looking horrid," said Sharon Clarke, executive director of the Roaring Fork Conservancy.

Their swimming and may increase the risk of whirling disease, Clarke said.

The weather is an unknown factor for the summer, but the snowpack is the lowest since at least 1981, Clarke said, so it's good that water levels in rivers and streams will be low.

Glenwood Springs-based public water-policy agency, is urging water providers to come up with a contingency plan in case of drought. Reservoir operators, for example, can scale back releases in anticipation of less snowmelt this spring, said Eric Kuhn, general manager of the river district.

Water providers can get frustrated, but in other ways the area surrounding the Upper Colorado River basin are better off than in 2002. The moisture level in the soil is higher and reservoir levels are higher than in 2002 because of rain in anticipation of less snowmelt this spring, said Eric Kuhn, general manager of the river district.

Water providers can get frustrated, but in other ways the area surrounding the Upper Colorado River basin are better off than in 2002. The moisture level in the soil is higher and reservoir levels are higher than in 2002 because of rain in anticipation of less snowmelt this spring, said Eric Kuhn, general manager of the river district.



River temperatures still exceeding advised levels

Conservancy program finds that trout are not out of hot water yet

Scott Condon
The Aspen Times

The temperature of water in local streams and rivers is still occasionally exceeding a state standard for healthy trout despite recent rains and slightly cooler weather, the Roaring Fork Conservancy has discovered.



Jeanne McGovern The Aspen Times
Pictured is the East Hopkins Avenue footbridge, one of the four locations where water temperatures were recorded in excess of 68 degrees for the week of Aug. 5.

He is writing a manual potential conservancy's news help guide of the short- and long-term effects of drought, consisting of the published Galloway Foundation of trout issues.

Groups seek water for rivers, and fish, this summer

The looming drought prompts an innovative new program

By Brent Gardner-Smith

The Roaring Fork Conservancy Water Trust are asking owners of water per Roaring Fork River basin and its basin to lease some of their water in if more to benefit fish and the environment.

The two nonprofit organizations' owners who might be willing to lease short-term basis to the Colorado Water Board (CWB) — without ending rights — as part of an innovative program to help combat drought.

"We've personally contacted the Roaring Fork Conservancy, about water rights owners in the valley reach out and get as many people program as possible."

The snowpack in the Roaring Fork River basin is currently at 22 percent of average and conditions are similar to 2002, when the Roaring Fork through Aspen was reduced to a trickle.

A meeting has been set for Thursday at 5:30 p.m. in Carbondale Town Hall for interested water rights owners to meet with representatives from the Water Trust

Volunteers needed to scour streams for hot spots for trout

Hot, dry conditions can make the water too warm for fish

Scott Condon
The Aspen Times

Volunteers are being recruited to check temperatures in the Roaring Fork River and its tributaries to make sure the high heat and low flows aren't creating water conditions too hot for trout to handle.

The Roaring Fork Conservancy has identified 14 spots where it needs help monitoring water temperatures in its new Hot Spots for Trout program. The data that's collected will be shared with Colorado Parks and Wildlife, which can implement restrictions or closures of fisheries if conditions warrant.

The Roaring Fork River is running significantly lower than normal for this time of year because of the low snowpack and the warm spring. That has implications for the waters in rivers and streams.

"Less quantity of water — it's going to warm up faster," said Heather Lattersell, land and water conservation specialist with the conservancy. Colorado Parks and Wildlife is monitoring conditions on rivers around the state. It has implemented a "voluntary closure" on a stretch of the Yampa River through Steamboat Springs. "I'm asking anglers to avoid fishing the White River in northwest Colorado except during cool morning hours."

No restrictions have been placed on streams or rivers in the

The goal is to keep at least enough water in the rivers to meet the environmental instream flow levels as set by the CWB.

Roaring Fork Valley at this point, though wildlife officers are monitoring flows, temperatures and oxygen levels, said Mike Porras, spokesman for Colorado Parks and Wildlife. The water temperature has been recorded as high as 68 degrees on the Roaring Fork River, he said.

The wildlife division typically doesn't close a stretch of river unless the daily maximum temperature exceeds 74 degrees, or the daily average temperature exceeds 72 degrees, according to the Roaring Fork Conservancy's website.

Nevertheless, the wildlife division is urging anglers to take some common sense precautions — fish when temperatures are lowest, play a fish quickly where caught, release it quickly and try to keep it in the water the entire time, Porras said.

Fishing is a big part of the Roaring Fork Valley's summer economy. Stratches of both the Roaring Fork and the Fryberg rivers are designated Cold Water streams, meaning they are exceptional cool streams.



*A citizen
volunteer
monitoring
temperature (right),
newspaper headlines
from the summer (left), and
low August flows on the Crystal River
(above).—Greg Poschman & Sharon Clarke*





*Inside
the exhibit
gallery of the future
River Center (above)
and the architectural design as
seen from the pond (right). —ECOS
Communications & Harry Teague Architects*

Award-Winning River Center Design

Since its inception, Roaring Fork Conservancy has envisioned creating a River Center where the hidden elements of rivers and water are revealed. Like nature centers that sprang up in the 1960s and 1970s in response to people's disconnect with the environment, the River Center will help people reconnect to their watershed and local rivers. Part education center, part action center, part

community gathering spot, part research hub, the River Center will put Basalt and the Roaring Fork Watershed on the map for celebrating rivers. The goal is to change people's relationship with water by creating a culture that values water, rivers, and watersheds in our region.

In 2012, we moved design along by completing architecture design development and exhibit

schematic design. The architectural design won a prestigious Merit Award in the Unbuilt category from the American Institute of Architects (AIA) Colorado West chapter. The River Center Capital Campaign has also been revitalized with more than \$400,000 in new contributions in 2012.

Learn more about the River Center and Capital Campaign at www.roaringfork.org/rivercenter.



Coal Basin & Crystal River Restoration

Coal Creek drains a nearly 27-square mile watershed and enters the Crystal River at Redstone. Fifty years of large-scale coal mining occurred in Coal Basin, a watershed characterized by naturally steep, unstable and eroding slopes. Erosion from mining activities and associated land uses such as road building, logging, and grazing, as well as sedimentation from naturally-occurring soil erosion and debris flows contribute to degraded water quality and stream habitat in Coal Basin and sedimentation issues and channel down cutting in the Crystal River. The Colorado Division of Reclamation, Mining & Safety completed a series of restoration projects in Coal Basin from 1994-2004. The White River National Forest and

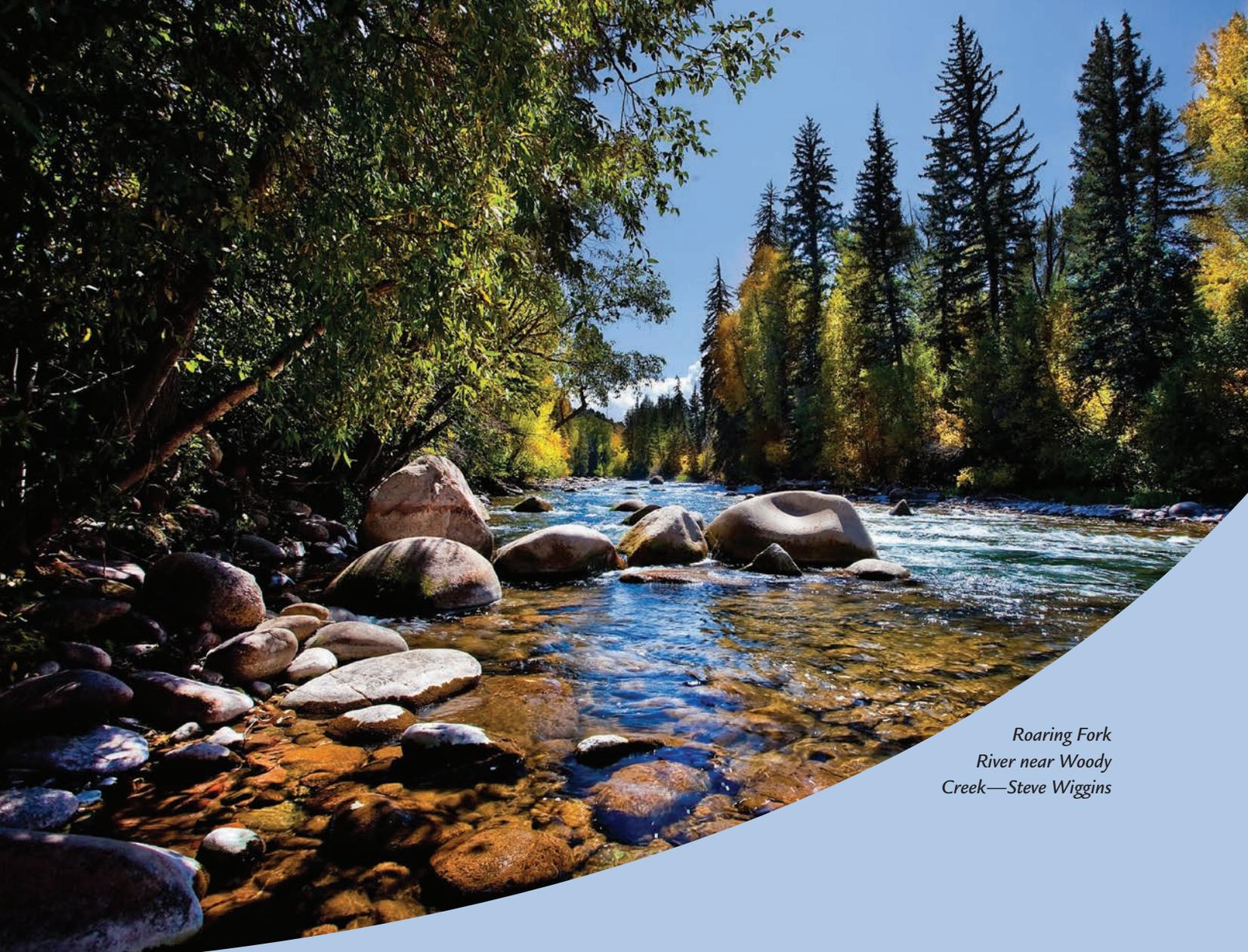
Roaring Fork Conservancy are leading a continued effort to identify, implement, and evaluate projects to address these issues.

For more information on the Coal Basin and Crystal River Restoration, please visit: roaringfork.org/crystalriver



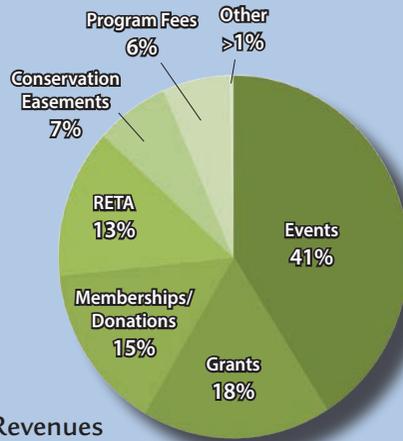


In May, 47 participants gathered from around Colorado for the Coal Basin Planning Workshop in Redstone (left). Historic coal mining in Coal Basin (left) and a pilot restoration project in 2012 (above).—Steve Renner, Sharon Clarke, Roaring Fork Conservancy

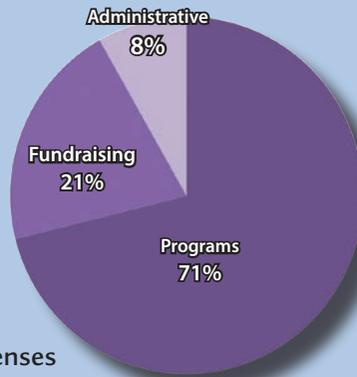


*Roaring Fork
River near Woody
Creek—Steve Wiggins*

2012 Financial Summary



2012 Operating Revenues



2012 Operating Expenses

2012 Revenues

Events	311,604
Grants	133,125
Memberships/Donations	113,197
Real Estate Transfer Assess.....	100,960
Conservation Easements	51,703
Program Fees	47,066
Other Income	2,672
Total.....	760,327

2012 Expenses

Programs	525,962
Fundraising	154,424
Administration	59,572
Total.....	739,958

*Audited 2012 financial statements will be available
August 2013 at www.roaringfork.org.*

2013 Priorities

Continuing Coal Basin and Crystal River Confluence Area Restoration Project

In light of Most Endangered River designation and other threats to the Crystal River (dams, energy development, etc.), Roaring Fork Conservancy will work towards a multi-year, multi-million dollar restoration of the Crystal River and Coal Basin as one of the urgent actions from the Roaring Fork Watershed Plan.

Re-Watering our Rivers

Having published our Opportunities for Water Conservation report last year, Roaring Fork Conservancy is now taking steps to create a water conservation campaign that puts water back in our rivers.

Developing the River Center & Watershed Institute

With Design Development complete and the Capital Campaign revitalized, Roaring Fork Conservancy will pursue final steps to bring the River Center and the Watershed Institute to life.

Roaring Fork Watershed Plan

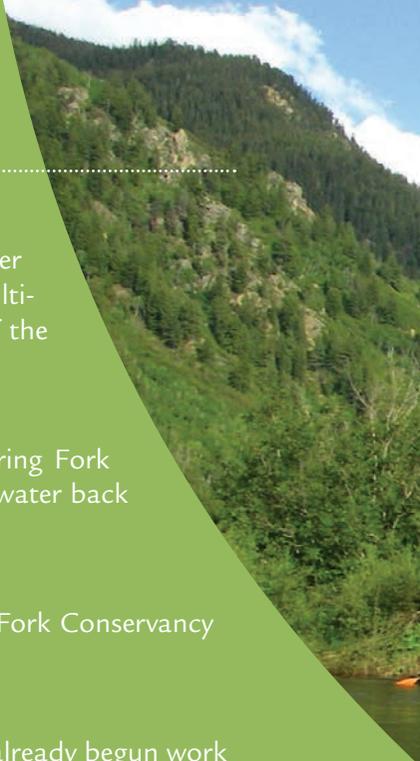
With the publication of the final plan in March 2012, Roaring Fork Conservancy has already begun work on many of the recommended actions to protect our watershed.

Maintaining a Healthy Media Presence in the Community

The drought in 2012 offered a platform for Roaring Fork Conservancy to engage the public in some new ways. We will continue that effort in 2013 as we seek to make more people aware and help them take action.

Increasing Operational and Capital Campaign Funding

Roaring Fork Conservancy sees the need to expand our current capacity to keep pace with demands for watershed-related work.





*Guided
float trip
on the Roaring
Fork River through
Northstar Preserve above
Aspen.—Tim O’Keefe*



*Some
of the
staff enjoying
a summer cookout.
—Marina O’Keefe*

Roaring Fork Conservancy Crew

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Jacque Whitsitt *Town of Basalt Representative*
Larry Yaw
Valerie Yaw

Rivers Council Executive Committee *(National Council)*

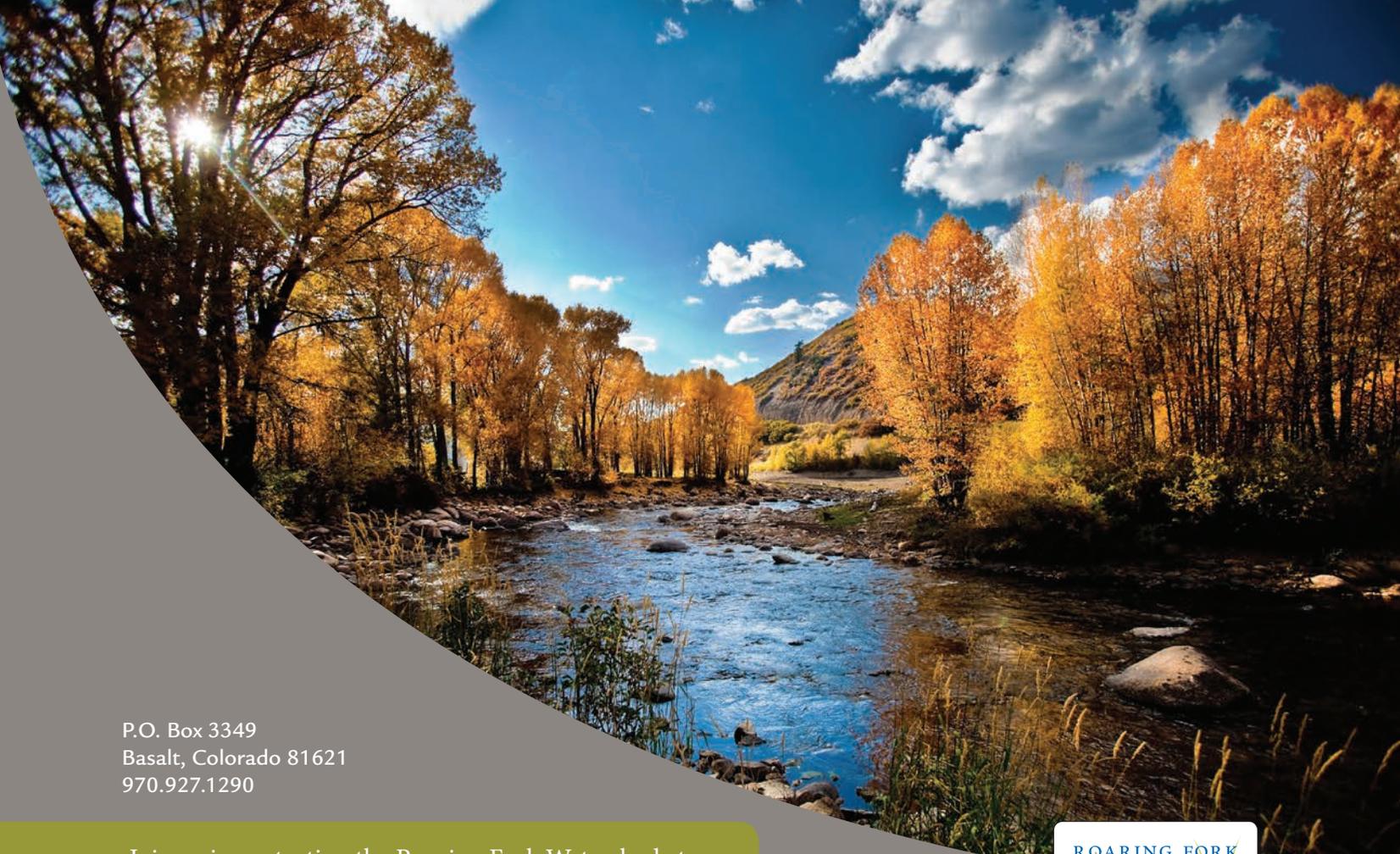
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Elise Osenga *Educator*
Lindsey Palardy *Water Policy*
Chad Rudow *Water Quality Coordinator*
Rose Ann Sullivan *Strategic Partnerships*
Heather Tattersall *Land, Water & Policy*
Jamie Tredeaux *Bookkeeper*
Sarah Woods *Director of Philanthropy*



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970.927.1290

Join us in protecting the Roaring Fork Watershed at
www.roaringfork.org

Fryingpan River—Steve Wiggins

