

# KEEP IT COLORADO SPRING SUMMIT 2024



*Slate River. Credit: Crested Butte Land Trust*



**WEDNESDAY MAY 8 - FRIDAY MAY 10**

Morgridge Commons  
815 Cooper Ave  
Glenwood Springs, CO 81601

# SCHEDULE SUMMARY



## DAY 1

*Wednesday, May 8 | 9am - 9pm*

9:00am - 9:30am

**WELCOME AND COFFEE**

9:30am - 12:00pm

**LEARNING SESSION A**

12:00pm - 1:00pm

**CATERED LUNCH**

2:00pm - 5:00pm

**CONSERVED LAND & WATER TOUR**

5:00pm - 7:00pm

**HAPPY HOUR**

7:00pm - 9:00pm

**DINNER ON YOUR OWN**

## DAY 2

*Thursday, May 9 | 9am - 9pm*

9:00am - 10:00am

**BREAKFAST ROUNDTABLE: JOB FUNCTION**

10:00am - 12:00pm

**KIC KICKOFF AND CONSERVATION SHOWCASE**

12:00pm - 1:00pm

**CATERED LUNCH AND NETWORKING**

1:00pm - 2:30pm

**LEARNING SESSION B**

2:30pm - 3:00pm

**BREAK**

3:00pm - 4:30pm

**LEARNING SESSION C**

5:00pm - 7:00pm

**HAPPY HOUR**

7:00pm - 9:00pm

**DINNER ON YOUR OWN**

## DAY 3

*Friday, May 10 | 9am - 4pm*

9:00am - 10:00am

**BREAKFAST ROUNDTABLE: TOPICS**

10:00am - 11:30am

**LEARNING SESSION D**

12:00pm - 1:00pm

**CLOSING LUNCH**

1:30pm - 4:00pm

**CONSERVATION OLYMPICS & CLOSING CEREMONY**

# DETAILED SCHEDULE



DAY 1

Wednesday, May 8 | 9am - 7pm

9:00am - 9:30am

## WELCOME AND COFFEE

9:30am - 12:00pm

## LEARNING SESSION A

### Topic A1: Water Classroom

*Tom Romero, University of Denver, Sturm College of Law; Susan Ryan, Holland & Hart LLP; Erin Light and James Heath, Colorado Division of Water Resources; and Kate Ryan, Colorado Water Trust*

As Wayne Aspinall said, "In the West, when you touch water, you touch everything." As a Colorado conservation professional, you live this every day. If you are a water novice, come to this day-long session on water where you will learn about foundational principles of water in Colorado and the West, taught by expert water professionals, from a water professor from DU Law to a former Water Division 5 referee (magistrate judge). And even if a water-expert, you can always learn more. Everyone will walk away with a better understanding of water in Colorado, no matter your knowledge level. [This session will be extended from 1pm-2pm.]

### Topic A2: The Water Lab

*Ilene Roggensack and Shannon Wadas, Strategic By Nature, Inc.*

Are you a water leader in the land conservation field who is keen on taking your practice to the next level? Do you have amazing--even crazy--ideas about how land conservation and water can intersect but no place to help incubate those ideas? Do you want to hear from people about leading edge ideas they are trying to implement or that area underway in a more intimate setting? Then The Water Lab is for you. Come to this facilitated discussion that is designed to bring together inchoate water and land ideas and the community's innovative water thinkers to help launch the next best water-and-land-conservation-intersected ideas. If successful, this Water Lab could be extended over the course of 2024 based on these initial discussions at Spring Summit.

### Topic A3: Two Winning Strategies for Advancing Your Fundraising Program in 2024

*Brandy Bertram, Great Big Good*

Every fundraising program, big or small, will benefit from joining this lively session that is one part educational, one part conversational, and all parts collaborative! Together we'll explore two strategies that will help you break out of the traditional annual giving monotony and raise better (and bigger!) gifts. After we work through our topics of non-cash gifts and planned giving, we'll then open the floor for a facilitated conversation about challenges in conservation fundraising, and solutions that are working for your colleagues today.

# DETAILED SCHEDULE



## DAY 1

Wednesday, May 8 | 9am - 9pm

12:00pm - 1:00pm

### CATERED LUNCH

Join us for lunch with your colleagues at Morgridge Commons. Sign up for a carpool to get to the afternoon tour.

1:00pm - 2:00pm

### TOPIC A1: WATER CLASSROOM, CONTINUED

We'll have one final presentation in the Water Classroom on Water Rights Administration with Erin Light and James Heath, Colorado Division of Water Resources, before heading out to the field.

2:00pm - 4:30pm

### CONSERVED LAND & WATER TOUR

Visit Cold Mountain Ranch, a permanently conserved ranch in Carbondale that has also has an innovative water leasing agreement with Colorado Water Trust. Fully occupied carpools will be organized over lunch and depart for Carbondale by 2:15pm. Directions will be provided to carpool drivers.

5:00pm - 6:30pm

### HAPPY HOUR

Enjoy light beverages and snacks with us at the 22-acre Two Rivers Park, at the confluence of the Colorado and Roaring Fork Rivers. The lot has plenty of parking. Located at 740 Devereux Rd, Glenwood Springs.

7:00pm - 9:00pm

### DINNER ON YOUR OWN

# DETAILED SCHEDULE



## DAY 2

Thursday, May 9 | 9am - 9pm

9:00am - 10:00am

### **BREAKFAST ROUNDTABLE: JOB FUNCTION**

Gather for breakfast, coffee or tea, and conversation with your colleagues at Morgridge Commons. A light breakfast of bagels, fruit, yogurt, and granola will be provided. This breakfast will feature discussion prompts and tables for people with different roles in the land conservation world, such as stewardship, finance, development, community outreach, conservation, operations, executive directors, and more. Come caffeinate and commiserate - I mean, collaborate - with folks who have jobs similar to yours!

10:00am - 12:00pm

### **KIC KICKOFF AND CONSERVATION SHOWCASE**

Spring Summit will officially kick off with a warm welcome from Keep It Colorado staff and updates from the coalition. The Conservation Showcase will feature the following presentations about some of the most innovative and interesting work happening around the state:

- *Groundwater Conservation Easements* - Sally Wier of Colorado Open Lands
- *Facilitated Farm Transfer* - Kate Ryan of Colorado Water Trust
- *Harvesting Water with Contour Terraces & Bioswales to Revitalize Land* - Briana Cohen of Drylands Agroecology Research

12:00pm - 1:00pm

### **CATERED LUNCH**

# DETAILED SCHEDULE



DAY 2

Thursday, May 9 | 9am - 9pm

1:00pm - 2:30pm

## LEARNING SESSION B

### **Topic B1: Strategies for Community Engagement**

*Travis Custer, CORE Conservation Consulting and Montezuma Land Conservancy; Olga Gonzalez, O.G. Consulting and Cultivando; Rocio Franco, Cultivando; and Esteban Salazar, San Luis Valley Great Outdoors*

We all know that one of the key aspects of community-centered conservation work is building relationships across our communities. We also know that this work can be challenging and take considerable commitment. So, where do we begin and how do we sustain our efforts? This workshop will help your organization effectively engage new communities and partners in your work. It will include guest speakers and focus on topics to help build strategies for engaging diverse communities, storytelling, and building lasting relationships. Participants will learn from the work of the presenters while also taking time to apply thoughts and discussion to their own programs and challenges. *[Note that this topic will be repeated at 3:00 in Session C]*

### **Topic B2: Considering Applying for NRCS Funding? Demystifying ACEP and RCPP**

*Laura Trimboli and Marissa Markus, Natural Resources Conservation Service; John Peters and Joel Nystrom, Colorado Open Lands*

NRCS easement staff and Colorado Open Lands staff will help conservation staff understand not only what the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program and Regional Conservation Partnership Program funds are and how to apply, but also how these funding programs differ from others that land trusts and public agencies may be familiar with. Participants will walk away with a solid sense of what capacity is needed and how to set landowner expectations around these programs.

# DETAILED SCHEDULE



DAY 2

Thursday, May 9 | 9am - 9pm

1:00pm - 2:30pm

## LEARNING SESSION B (CONTINUED)

### **Topic B3: Boulder County's Conservation Program: 50 Years of Innovative Strategy**

*Janis Whisman, Tina Burghardt and Melissa Arnold, Boulder County Parks and Open Space*

Come hear how Boulder County's innovative use of conservation easements has met local urban growth challenges for decades. We'll share the real stories of two easements that many of you have heard about: Rainbow Nursery and Kanemoto Estates. Boulder County's conservation easement program began in 1976 when landowners doing subdivisions were required to grant conservation easements as part of the land use subdivision approval process. These early regulatory easements were essential in preventing urban sprawl. In 1990, the county accepted its first donated conservation easement, and in 1994 it began acquiring conservation easements with sales tax funding. Today, Boulder County's conservation easement program stewards 776 conservation easements over 45,000 acres, 108 (14%) of which have a donation component. Join us to learn how Boulder County envisioned its future back in 1976 and made it happen, which will prime us for the juicy stories about Rainbow Nursery and Kanemoto Estates.

### **Topic B4: Guardians of Giving: Affordable Cybersecurity Solutions for Non-Profits**

*Michael Maschke, Sensei Enterprises, Inc.*

This presentation teaches non-profit organizations that there are affordable cybersecurity measures that should be considered to protect confidential and private information- even when working with limited budgets. There are affordable solutions for all sizes, including small and medium-sized non-profit organizations. Assessing your cybersecurity is extremely important in the current hybrid work environment where vulnerabilities are far greater, and hackers are focused on exploiting them - especially with remote workers. While the process may seem overwhelming, with a little education, you will learn how to strengthen your organization's security posture further without breaking the bank or your budget. This CLE will cover practical and budget-friendly cybersecurity tips and solutions, with real-world recommendations you can implement.

# DETAILED SCHEDULE



DAY 2

Thursday, May 9 | 9am - 9pm

1:00pm - 1:45pm

## LEARNING SESSION B (CONTINUED)

### **Topic B5-1: Satellite Imagery Monitoring: Misinterpretations & Deciphering Change**

*Chelsea Collins and Jenn Murdock, Colorado Open Lands*

The growing availability of satellite imagery has enabled us to monitor landscape change on a greater physical and temporal scale than on-the-ground monitoring has been able to accomplish in the past. Through satellite imagery, we can observe areas inaccessible by foot, long-term variations in vegetation or forest health, river course alterations, fluctuations in irrigation, new structures and encroachments from neighboring landowners. However, satellite imagery still isn't perfect and often the resolution, time of year, and sometimes air quality can have a significant impact on our interpretations. Even with clear, high-resolution imagery, it can still be difficult to identify what you are looking at. We will discuss using context clues to make objective interpretations, review examples of misinterpretations, share trends we have noticed, and discuss satellite imagery's limiting factors as well as its invaluable benefits.

1:45pm - 2:30pm

### **Topic B5-2: Expanding Agricultural Land Access with Colorado Land Link**

*Emma Lietz Bilecky, Guidestone Colorado*

Land and water access is a challenge for young and beginning farmers across the state. The Colorado Land Link program works to connect farmers and ranchers with agricultural landowners to address these challenges and provide mutual benefit to landowners. This session will introduce Guidestone Colorado's Land Link Program, their Land Access Database, and discuss how land trusts and public agencies can utilize Land Link's services when working with private landowners considering land succession planning or land leasing.

# DETAILED SCHEDULE



DAY 2

Thursday, May 9 | 9am - 9pm

3:00pm - 4:30pm

## LEARNING SESSION C

### **Topic C1: Strategies for Community Engagement**

*Travis Custer, CORE Conservation Consulting and Montezuma Land Conservancy; Olga Gonzalez, O.C. Consulting and Cultivando; Rocio Franco, Cultivando; and Esteban Salazar, San Luis Valley Great Outdoors*

We all know that one of the key aspects of community-centered conservation work is building relationships across our communities. We also know that this work can be challenging and take considerable commitment. So, where do we begin and how do we sustain our efforts? This workshop will help your organization effectively engage new communities and partners in your work. It will include guest speakers and focus on topics to help build strategies for engaging diverse communities, storytelling, and building lasting relationships. Participants will learn from the work of the presenters while also taking time to apply thoughts and discussion to their own programs and challenges.

*[Note that this topic is a repeat from Session B]*

### **Topic C2: Conservation Easement Appraisal: Best Practices and Opportunities for Efficiencies**

*Kevin McCarty, McCarty Land & Water Valuation, Inc.; Kevin Shea, Shea Appraisal Company LLC; Sara Streight, Sara J. Streight, LLC; John Gioia, Colorado Cattlemen's Agricultural Land Trust; and Matt Tobler, Blue Mountain Environmental Consulting LLC*

Conservation easement (CE) appraisal is an essential step in a conservation easement transaction. In this session, learn about the process of conservation easement appraisal and appraisal review. After establishing some appraisal basics, the panel will dive into the nuances of the appraisal process with the goal of addressing appraiser capacity statewide. Understand how many appraisals are done per year, who is actively taking CE assignments in different regions, and how as a community we can support appraiser capacity. Additionally, the panel will discuss how excellent project management on the land trust's or public agency's side can extend existing appraiser capacity.

# DETAILED SCHEDULE



DAY 2

Thursday, May 9, 9am - 9pm

3:00pm - 4:30pm

## LEARNING SESSION C (CONTINUED)

### **Topic C3: Hot Topics and a To-do List for Sustainable, Perpetual Land Conservation**

*Jessica Jay, Conservation Law, P.C.*

Join Jessica Jay, the founder and principal attorney of Conservation Law, P.C., for a discussion on some of the latest hot topics in Colorado's conservation law. Engage in issues of state significance including: the case for tax credit refresh while increasing conservation benefits and access; amendment and termination of Colorado's perpetual CEs; forever homes for Colorado's orphan easements; and balancing local land protection, land use, and governance for the greatest good.

### **Topic C4: Why Land Trusts Should Support Public Funding for Conservation**

*Jason Swann, Trust for Public Land and Jeremy Krones, Colorado Headwaters Land Trust*

As climate change impacts become increasingly apparent, particularly in underserved communities, land trusts play a crucial role in securing public funding for adaptation and conservation efforts. Currently, one-third of states are considering significant funding initiatives, potentially generating billions for parks, trails, and natural climate solutions. Additionally, many local governments are exploring funding options for conservation projects. Over the past 25 years, the Trust for Public Land has spearheaded over 650 successful ballot measures and legislative campaigns, resulting in over \$94 billion for land conservation. This workshop will explore conservation funding mechanisms at the state and local levels in 2024, providing attendees with insights into leading or supporting ballot measures and legislation. The Colorado Headwaters Land Trust will also share its experience in establishing county funding to preserve the natural landscape of the Colorado River headwaters.

# DETAILED SCHEDULE



## DAY 2

*Thursday, May 9 | 9am - 9pm*

5:00pm - 7:00pm

### **HAPPY HOUR**

Enjoy beer, wine and light appetizers with colleagues at Library Plaza, an easy flight of stairs or elevator ride down from our meeting space in Morgridge Commons. Location: 815 Cooper Ave.

7:00pm - 9:00pm

### **DINNER ON YOUR OWN**

# DETAILED SCHEDULE



## DAY 3

Friday, May 10 | 9am - 4pm

9:00am - 10:00am

### **BREAKFAST ROUNDTABLE: HOT TOPICS**

Ease into our last morning together with breakfast, coffee or tea, and conversation with your colleagues at Morgridge Commons. A light breakfast of bagels, fruit, yogurt, and granola will be provided. This breakfast will feature discussion around hot topics in the Colorado conservation scene, from water rights to funding sources to community engagement. Join an existing table or bring a topic of your own!

10:00am - 11:30am

### **LEARNING SESSION D**

#### **Topic D1: Tell Your Story and Calculate Your ROI with CODEX**

*Michael Menefee, Colorado Natural Heritage Program, Colorado State University*

Colorado's Conservation Data Explorer ( CODEX ) is the top source for synthesizing conservation data from CNHP, Colorado Parks and Wildlife, Bird Conservancy of the Rockies, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, NatureServe, and many other partners. We will learn how to harness the power of CODEX to tell the story of your land trust or public agency, chart critical natural and agricultural resources conserved and how to calculate the return on investment for a proposed easement, a phased project or even for your entire portfolio. We will also explore ways to prioritize future action based on resources provided in CODEX.

#### **Topic D2: Funder Roundtable: Navigating the Funding Landscape to Advance Your Mission**

*Chris Yuan-Farrell, Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO); Amanda Hill, Gates Family Foundation; Kim Rogers, Colorado Parks and Wildlife; Rob Viehl, Colorado Water Conservation Board; Kirstin Neff, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation; Suzanne Stephens, Aspen Valley Land Trust*

As a nonprofit leader, you know that funding makes your mission-critical work possible. This invitation-only session will feature presentations by funders, a moderated panel discussion, and opportunities for 1:1 conversations. Walk away with a better understanding of the funding landscape, funder priorities, and how these funding partners can support your work.

# DETAILED SCHEDULE



DAY 3

Friday, May 10 | 9am - 4pm

10:00am - 11:30am

## LEARNING SESSION D (CONTINUED)

### **Topic D3: Water Rights Due Diligence and Monitoring for Conservation Easements**

*Carmen Farmer, Ben Lenth and Karen Foley, Colorado Open Lands*

Water rights are an integral part of the productivity and ecological function of the lands that are conserved in Colorado. Ben Lenth and Carmen Farmer, Senior Project Managers at Colorado Open Lands, will present a case study, walking through the water rights research process that is standard practice in the due diligence phase of a new conservation easement. Then, Karen Foley, COL Land and Water Steward, will present about COL's challenges in stewarding encumbered water rights and what changes COL is considering to monitoring procedures of water rights to ensure their perpetual protection. Attendees will get to see how B3's Water Rights & Land Platform, a water rights database, can be utilized to better research water rights associated with a specific property. Learn what attributes and questions to raise when evaluating water rights in new and existing conservation easements, as the presenters walk through the components of a water rights memorandum, a key due diligence piece in modern conservation easement acquisition.

### **Topic D4: The Revised 8283 Form - What's New and Why It Matters**

*Jody Barbour and Sam Soden, Conservation Tax Credit Transfer, and Jessica Jay, Conservation Law, P.C.*

The IRS updated Form 8283 and 8283 Instructions for the 2023 tax year. The changes evolve from the Charitable Conservation Easement Program Integrity Act. There are new requirements and additions to the supplemental statement, especially related to pass through entity donors. Learn what's changed to the 8283 Form and supplemental statement for conservation easement donations and an easement holder's responsibilities.

*[This is a 60-minute session]*

# DETAILED SCHEDULE



DAY 3

Friday, May 10 | 9am - 4pm

10:00am - 11:30am

## LEARNING SESSION D (CONTINUED)

### **Topic D5: Connecting the Dots: Housing, Conservation, and Livable Communities**

*Clark Anderson, Community Builders*

How do we balance the need to protect and conserve valued open lands, while also providing affordable housing options needed to sustain our communities? Unfortunately, housing and conservation are often placed at odds with one another, but the reality is that both are central to shaping healthy and sustainable communities and regions. This session explores the key connections between housing, smart growth, and land conservation, and will engage participants in discussion about how we align these needs moving forward.

12:00pm - 1:00pm

## CLOSING LUNCH

Join your colleagues for a final closing lunch! But wait, the fun's not over yet. Head to the ranch for some more fun.... See below.

1:30pm - 3:30pm

## CONSERVATION OLYMPICS

It's just like you remembered from middle school, and more. We'll have the things you're used to, à la running relays and three-legged races, plus some events we're sure will be new to you. Think activities like "Baseline Report" and "Hammer Time." And maybe a piñata? Location: Coffman Ranch - 1837 Co Rd 100, Carbondale.

3:30pm - 4:00pm

## CONSERVATION OLYMPICS CLOSING CEREMONY

No Olympics would be complete without a ceremony. Come prepared to win some prizes and celebrate.

# GRATITUDE



## THANK YOU, PRESENTERS

Water Classroom instructors, Conservation Showcase presenters, and Learning Session presenters have put in countless hours of preparation to share their expertise with the community. Presenters, we are so grateful to be able to learn from you and strengthen conservation in Colorado. From all of us, thank you.

## THANK YOU, SPRING SUMMIT PLANNING COMMITTEE

Spring Summit would not be as robust and thoughtful without the help of our Spring Summit Planning Committee members, who volunteered their time over the last several months to help shape Spring Summit. Thank you to: Laura Cusick, Rio Grande Headwaters Land Trust; Paul Holsinger, Pitkin County Open Space and Trails; Astrid Monar, Palmer Land Conservancy; Savannah Robar, The Nature Conservancy; and Melissa Sumera, Aspen Valley Land Trust.

## THANK YOU, SPRING SUMMIT SPONSORS

Our sponsors play a critical role in making Spring Summit financially feasible. Thank you, all!

**Betsy and John Cochran**

