

INDEPENDENCE PASS FOUNDATION ANNUAL REPORT

2017





“

*Of all the paths you take
in life, make sure a few of
them are dirt.”*

JOHN MUIR

WE ARE PROUD TO SHARE WITH YOU the accomplishments of the Independence Pass Foundation in 2017. This couldn't have happened without the support and enthusiasm of our donors, grantors, partners, volunteers, board, and staff. Thank you, everyone!

The phrase “less is more” applies to quite a bit of our work this past year, although in some contexts it would be more correct to say “fewer is better.” With “less is more”, I offer apologies to Robert Browning and Mies van der Rohe, because I am twisting the phrase to serve my purpose. In my usage, “less is more” is focused on results – where a reduction of impacts improves the environment and ensures the future.

What, exactly, does “less is more” mean to me and to the Independence Pass Foundation?

■ **Less wire** is hanging from inactive telephone poles along the roadway. Thus, there is less danger to animals that might have become entangled in the wire, and there are fewer eyesores for travelers along the roadway. The poles remain for now – their removal is a decision for the US Forest Service. We'll keep you posted.

■ **Bear encounters were reduced** after IPF helped the Forest Service install bear boxes in the campsites lining Lincoln Creek Road.

■ **Fewer invasive plants** are surviving, due to our continued efforts to control and eliminate them, which means less competition for the native plants in the corridor.

■ **Two fewer mining claims** now exist, one of which could have been activated with vehicular access and the right to build a home.

■ **Not so much rebar and debris** from the Continental Divide snow fence experiment is in the ground near the summit, though much of it still needs to be carried out of the Wilderness by hand or by mule.

■ **Perhaps fewer 35' trucks used** or attempted to use Highway 82 to cross the Pass (we can't say for sure), but prevention has cost less than it might have – because our Winter Gate restoration project serves as a truck turnaround for the cost of a few “no parking” signs. Other options for a truck turnaround, if implemented, would have been more expensive and more intrusive for those of us who drive over the Pass on a regular basis. And the Winter Gate restoration project has blocked our view into CDOT's dumping site behind the parking area.



■ We won't ever know how many **fewer steps** there have been, and will be, **on the tundra**, but we hope to reduce the number with a new educational sign at the summit.

In fact, the phrase “more is better” applies quite accurately to certain aspects of our work: huge volunteer efforts and hours by local school students and adult volunteers; summer wildflower walks informing participants about the diverse flora of the Pass; our phenocam, recording the changing environment at the summit, four times a day, every day; the large and diverse public participation and enjoyment of the Pass during our Ride for the Pass, Ski for the Pass, and Class on the Pass events; and the amount of work we accomplish in collaboration with governmental and nonprofit partners.

How does all of this get done? The IPF board is one of the reasons. Board members provide on-the-ground labor on the Pass and dedicated stewardship in the meeting room. Karin Teague, IPF's executive director, is another of the reasons – she is on the Pass as often as possible in the summer season, weeding, pulling rebar, planting trees, teaching school kids how to plant trees, moving rocks, removing phone wire, leading wildflower walks, cajoling volunteers, and nudging the board to make thoughtful and informed decisions.

We love the Pass, and we remain dedicated to taking care of it. Thank you for supporting our work.

Sincerely,

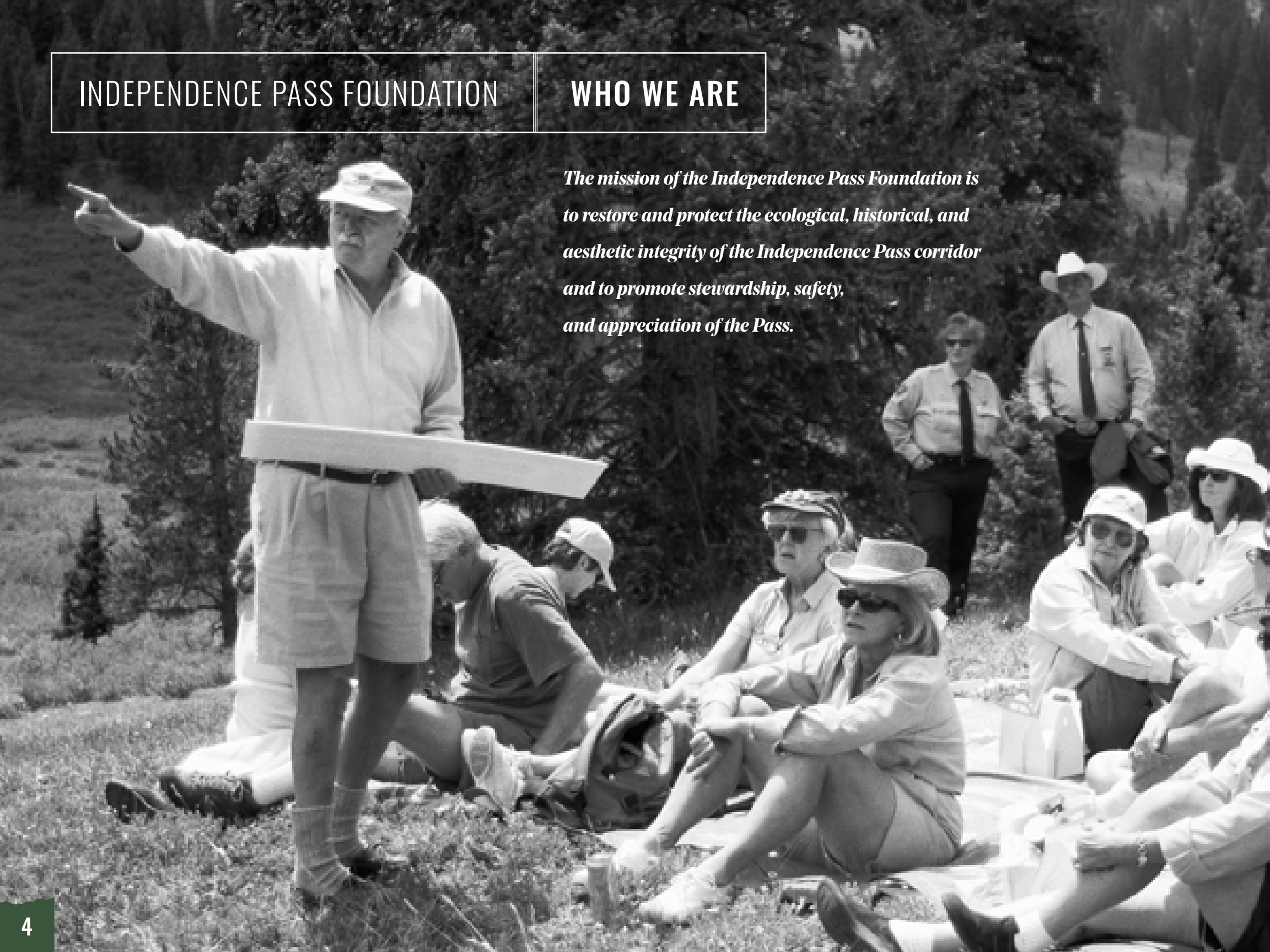
Debbi Falender

Debbi Falender

INDEPENDENCE PASS FOUNDATION

WHO WE ARE

The mission of the Independence Pass Foundation is to restore and protect the ecological, historical, and aesthetic integrity of the Independence Pass corridor and to promote stewardship, safety, and appreciation of the Pass.



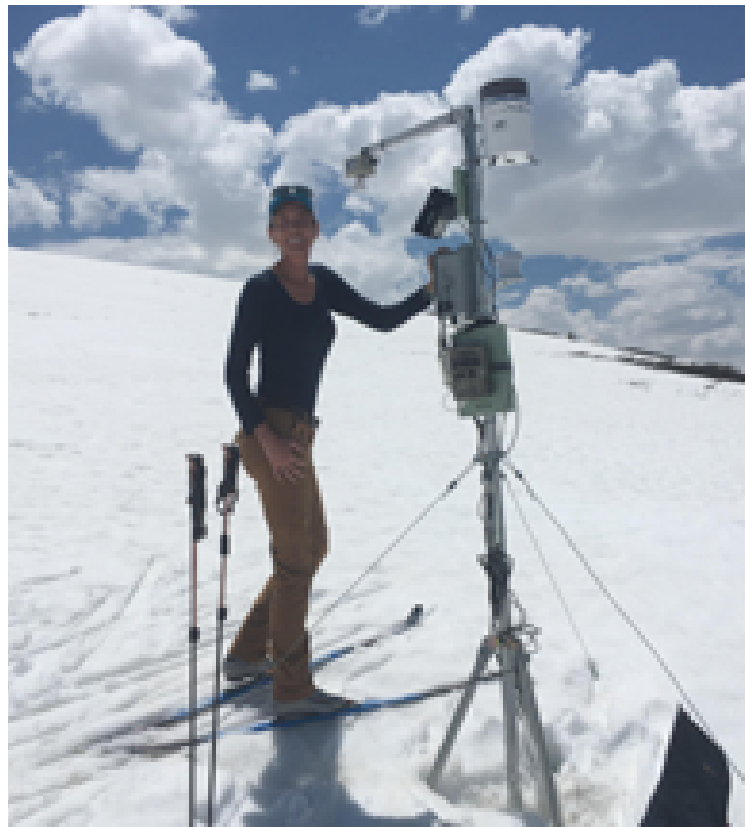
2017

BOARD

Debbi Falender, *President*
Kristen Henry, *Vice-President*
Paul D'Amato, *Treasurer*
Lindsey Utter, *Secretary*
Boots Ferguson
Bill Gruenberg
Heidi Hoffmann
Gail Holstein
David Hyman
Emily Jack-Scott
James Peterson
Jim Stark
Lindsey Utter
Bob Wade
King Woodward

Staff

Karin Teague, *Executive Director*



2017

PARTNERS

The people and organizations who made our work this year possible —

Aspen Community School
Aspen Country Day School
Aspen Global Change Institute
Aspen Middle School
Jaywalker Lodge
YouthZone
Pitkin County Public Works
Pitkin County Weed Advisory Board
USFS, White River National Forest, Aspen-Sopris Ranger District
USFS, San Isabel National Forest, Leadville Ranger District
CDOT
Citizen volunteers
IPF Board of Directors
IPF donors



CONTINUING ITS DECADES-LONG RELATIONSHIP with the Aspen School District, IPF worked with over 100 children from Aspen Middle School and Aspen Country Day School planting Engelmann spruce, lodgepole pine, and Douglas fir saplings throughout the Independence Pass corridor.

Planting trees offsets carbon emissions, provides habitat and food for native birds and critters, stabilizes slopes de-vegetated by road building and other human activity, and beautifies the corridor. Of equal importance, IPF believes that getting kids outside to dig in the dirt in a service activity that is challenging but fun and produces tangible results is one of the best ways to cultivate young stewards.



Every time kids who have planted trees on the Pass drive to Denver or hike, climb, or swim on the Pass, they will look for “their” tree, watch it grow over the years, and feel a sense of pride in their contribution. And maybe they’ll show a six-foot tree to their own children one day.



IPF IS OFTEN ASKED ABOUT the telephone poles lining the Highway 82 corridor: What are they for? Did they once serve the mining town of Independence? Perhaps they were telegraph lines? And since many sections of wire are missing or sagging along the ground, and are therefore no longer functional, why haven't they been cleaned up?

In fact, the first telephone line on the Pass was installed in 1895. It went up and over the summit along the old toll road and connected Leadville to Aspen, serving Independence along the way. This line was dismantled in its entirety in 1939.

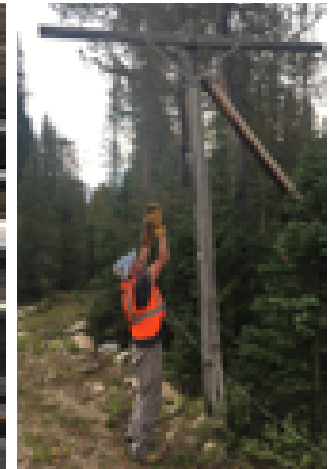
The current line was put in decades after the original to serve the caretakers at Grizzly Reservoir, who live there year-round maintaining the water diversion system. When more reliable satellite phone technology became available in 2000, the telephone line was abandoned and fell into disrepair.

It has been a long-held goal of the Forest Service to, at a minimum, remove the low-hanging wires, as they

present a hazard to wildlife and humans. Another goal is to remove the lines and poles that cross over Green Mountain to Grizzly through the Collegiate Peaks Wilderness, since the poles are neither historic nor in keeping with Wilderness values.

In 2017, under the leadership of citizen volunteer Tim Hall and with the critical participation of the Jaywalker Lodge, IPF took on the daunting task of removing over ten miles of wire from below Weller to Independence. In the process we removed hundreds of yards of steel wire embedded in the Roaring Fork River and thousands of pound of metal from the forests and meadows along the corridor.

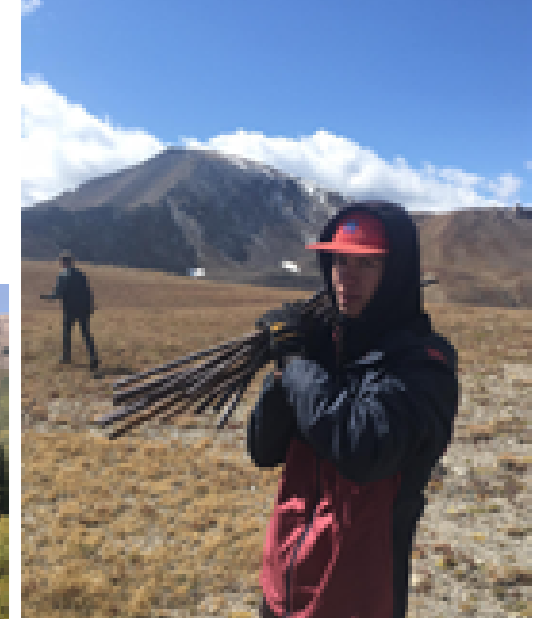
As for the poles, while some people view the poles as aesthetic blights along an otherwise pristine corridor, others enjoy their appearance and appreciate their historical reference. The fate of the poles will be determined by the US Forest Service, not IPF. For now, we are delighted to have many miles of abandoned, hazardous steel wire out of the Independence Pass landscape, and we are enormously grateful to the volunteers who put untold hours into this difficult project.



IPF ONCE AGAIN PARTNERED with middle and high school students from the Aspen Community School and YouthZone to remove rebar, metal cable, steel wire, and other debris from the Mountain Boy region of the Collegiate Peaks Wilderness.

The debris represents the remains of the mammoth Continental Divide snow fence experiment, the aim of which was to capture and hold snow, allowing for a more gradual runoff throughout the summer. The project was abandoned midway through construction in the 1960s when scientists determined it wouldn't work. While IPF was able to remove those portions of the snow fence that ran along the summit of Independence Pass by helicopter, the debris in Mountain Boy, because it is in designated wilderness, can be carried out only by hand or pack animals.

To accomplish this, the ACS and YouthZone crews first hiked up to 12,500 feet, most of it off trail. They then pulled the deeply-buried rebar out of the tundra by wrenching, cranking, and when all else failed, sledgehammering it. Finally, they loaded the heavy metal into backpacks and hauled it out for recycling. This multi-year, physically demanding project has turned out to be a hugely popular and satisfying one for our community's incredible kids.



IN 2017, IPF TEAMED with The Wilderness Land Trust to purchase two mining claims, the seventeen-acre Grandview and Spotted Tail lodes, in the Collegiate Peaks Wilderness. Because these inholdings above the ghost town of Independence carried the right to build a home and be accessed by car, they posed a significant threat to wilderness values.



The Wilderness Land Trust is now working with the US Forest Service to make the inholdings part of the Collegiate Peaks Wilderness. This will ensure the property remains free from development and open to the public for all time. It will preserve the existing view plane from the ghost town and from Highway 82. And it will protect migration corridors and habitat for elk and other species, including the rare Colorado plant, Altai cottongrass.

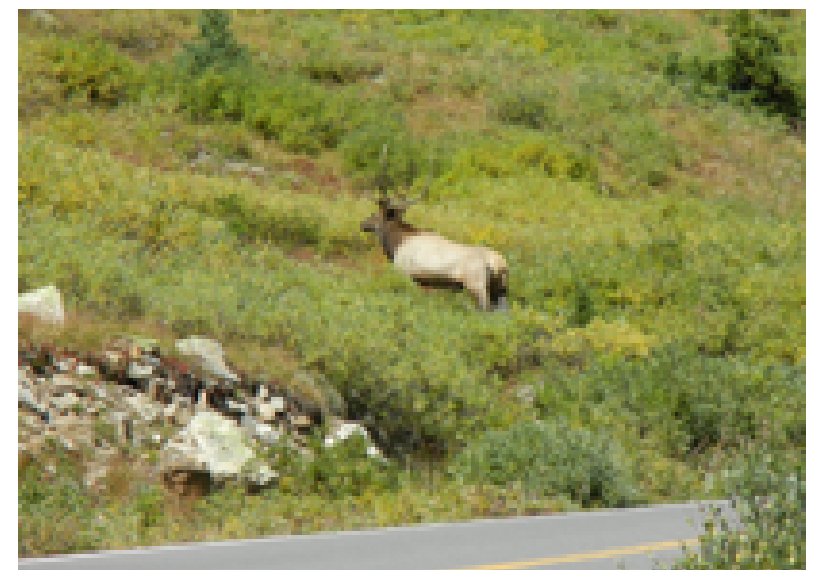
This fall, IPF and The Wilderness Land Trust celebrated this win for wilderness with a joint gathering at the site and a talk by local author, historian, and environmental champion, Paul Andersen.



IPF CONTINUED ITS EFFORTS to keep invasive weeds at bay by hand pulling species like oxeye daisies and knapweed throughout the summer. It also chemical-ly spot treated yellow toadflax, a species that cannot be controlled by pulling and that has taken over hundreds of acres in the Maroon Bells-Snowmass Wilderness.

Noxious weeds are plants that have been transported either accidentally or purposefully as ornamentals from overseas. They have an advantage in their new environment because the insects, diseases, and animals that would normally control them are not found here. And as the toadflax seen near the summit of the Pass demonstrates, they are able to adapt to a wide variety of climatic and environmental conditions. As a result, invasive weeds can displace native plants at an alarming rate.

When the native plants that wildlife use for food, shelter, or nesting are gone, wildlife leaves the area. And because these weeds' seeds can hitchhike on vehicles and like to establish themselves in disturbed sites such as roadsides, the Independence Pass corridor is prime territory for invasive species to take hold. By controlling their spread, IPF has committed to protecting the beautiful native wildflowers, plants, and wildlife that call Independence Pass home.



THE WINTER CLOSURE AREA five miles east of Aspen, a popular jumping-off point for skiing, snowshoeing, and dog walking when the Pass is closed to cars, got a big facelift in 2017. Specifically, IPF removed the weed-infested berm to the north of the parking area and replaced it with a locally-sourced rock wall and berm. The berm was planted this fall with native shrubs, grasses, and wildflowers, which will block the view into the Colorado Department of Transportation dumping area to the north.

IPF also removed the jersey barriers that served as a winter loading dock and replaced them with an attractive board-form concrete wall. We installed an information kiosk with a map of the Pass for first-time travelers.

In addition, we fabricated a new winter closure gate to replace the existing ramshackle one. The new gate will be installed this year when the road closes for the winter. These improvements have helped reclaim the natural appearance of the area and have created a more inviting gateway to the Pass.

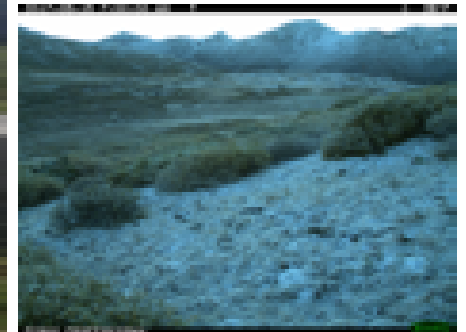
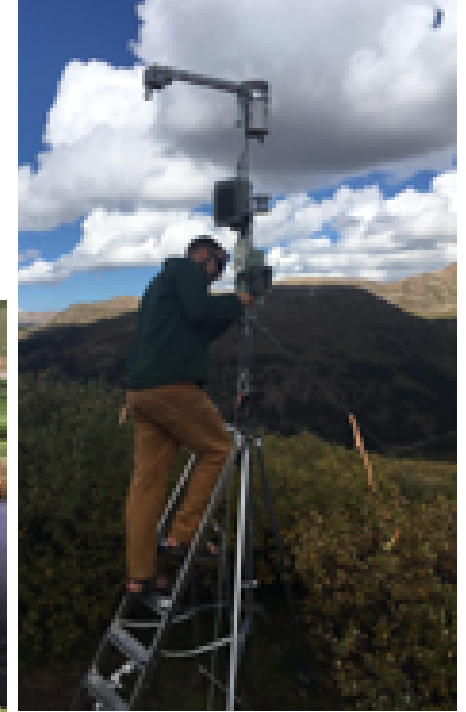
Also, IPF's work at the site has allowed CDOT and Pitkin County to utilize the winter gate area as a safe turnaround point for trucks and trailers over 35 feet in length. This is a change that will reduce safety hazards on the narrow, winding Independence Pass corridor.



IPF HOSTED ITS FIRST “Wildflower Walks” along the upper Lost Man Trail with ecologists Delia Malone and Dawn Barton. There we discussed all things wildflowers, including the phenology (timing of bloom) and cover composition studies launched in 2016 by Colorado Mountain College, the Aspen Global Change Institute, and IPF.

On the walks, participants learned the names and unique characteristics of the diverse alpine flora of the Pass; how and why the flowers grow where they do; how they fit into the larger Pass ecology; and why IPF is dedicated to protecting them. IPF works to protect our native wildflowers through its noxious weed eradication efforts (see page 10), its trail and signage work (to encourage people to stay on the trail and off the fragile tundra flowers), and its citizen science work (to involve the public and enrich their understanding and appreciation of our native plants).

IPF also got its first look at photographs taken at the summit by its newly-installed “phenocam,” a time-lapse camera that takes photographs four times a day, 365 days a year. Stitched together, the images will create a movie portraying the ever-changing conditions at the summit, including the rising and falling snowpack, the emergence of alpine plants in the spring, and the tundra’s changing color from green to gold in the fall. Look for the movie on IPF’s website in 2018.



anthophilous

an·thoph·i·lous

an'THäfəles

adjective ZOOLOGY **attracted by or living among flowers**

IN A HUGE WIN for wildlife and humans, IPF helped the Forest Service install 21 bear-proof boxes—300-pound metal containers designed for food storage—in the dispersed campsites that line Lincoln Creek Road. The campsites are popular for their easy access, proximity to excellent hiking trails, and the beautiful geology of the Lincoln Creek corridor.

In 2016, the campsites were closed for over half the summer due to the persistent presence of bears that were breaking into tents and creating the conditions for conflict. After installation of the boxes this summer, NO bears were reported in the campsites. This is a trend we hope continues in the future.

“

*Let the beauty you love be
what you do.”*

JALALUDDIN RUMI



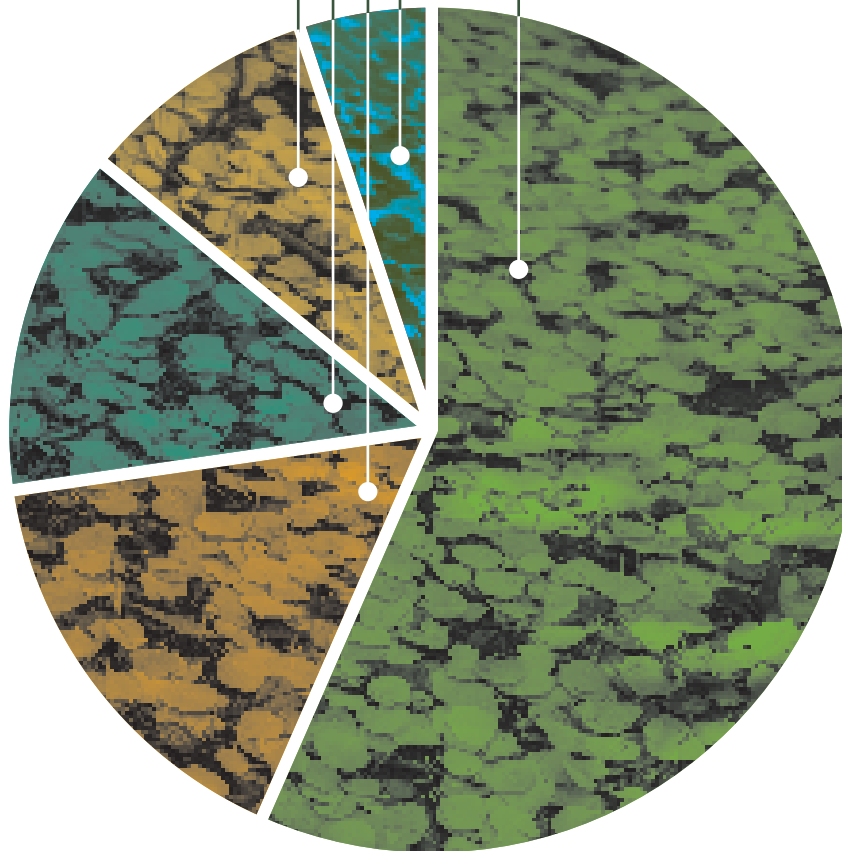
ANNUAL INCOME & EXPENSES

September 1, 2016 - August 31, 2017

INCOME

| | | | | |
|--------------------|--|-----------|--|-----|
| Individuals | | \$130,039 | | 56% |
| Governments | | \$38,000 | | 16% |
| Foundations | | \$30,560 | | 13% |
| Businesses | | \$21,806 | | 9% |
| Event Participants | | \$12,663 | | 5% |

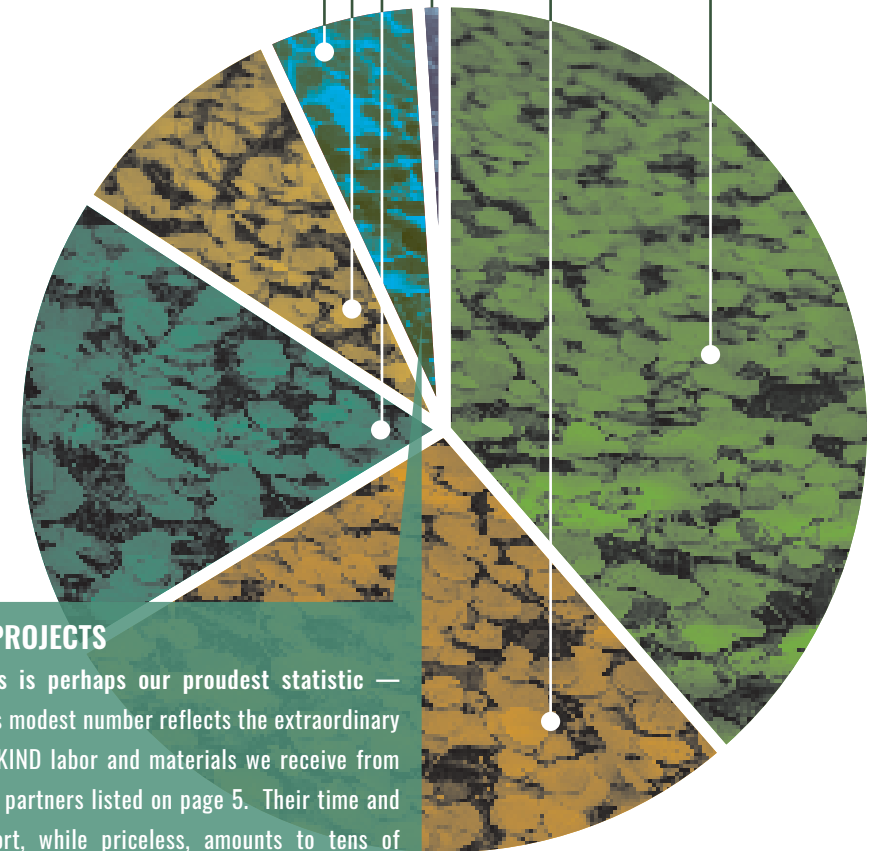
TOTAL \$233,068



EXPENSES

| | | | | |
|------------------------|--|----------|--|-----|
| Salaries & Consultants | | \$87,281 | | 39% |
| Capitol Project | | \$63,658 | | 28% |
| Education/Outreach | | \$40,001 | | 18% |
| Administration | | \$20,450 | | 9% |
| Projects* | | \$14,018 | | 6% |
| Fundraising | | \$1,109 | | <1% |

TOTAL \$226,517



*** PROJECTS**
 This is perhaps our proudest statistic — this modest number reflects the extraordinary IN-KIND labor and materials we receive from our partners listed on page 5. Their time and effort, while priceless, amounts to tens of thousands of real dollars.

INDEPENDENCE PASS FOUNDATION

DONORS



NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Words cannot express how much it means to me and my Board to see this LONG list of donors — to know that so many people from all over the country care about Independence Pass like we do. Our deepest thanks.”

\$10,000+

Anonymous
City of Aspen
Loyal & Bernice Durand (Winter Gate)
Pitkin County

\$5,000+

Black Magic Welding (Winter Gate)
Fred & Elli Iselin Foundation (Winter Gate)
Peter Looram
Robert Glickman
J.M. Kaplan Fund (Winter Gate)
The Louis & Harold Price Foundation
RCG Fund
Mark Tache & Christin Cooper
The Thrift Shop of Aspen

\$2,500+

Jack Albright/Albright & Associates (Winter Gate)
Steven & Susan Baird (Winter Gate)
Corbin Family Fund of the Community Foundation of New Jersey
Roger & Joan Gurrentz
Kristen Henry (Winter Gate)
Jack & Diane Kennedy

\$1,000+

James & Hensley Peterson (Winter Gate)
Jennifer Woodward, in memory of Anne Marie Woodward
David Levin
Freeport-McMoran Foundation
Environment Foundation
Ernst & Wilma Martens Foundation

The Rockwood Charitable Trust
Patrick Henry, Jr., in honor of Casady Henry
Jonathan & Gayle Armytage (Winter Gate)
Carol Craig
The Joe W. and Dorothy Dorsett Brown Foundation
Mary Griffith, in honor of Joan Farver
Kovler Family Foundation
Alpenglow Foundation
Dianne & David Stern
Michael Fuller Architects
David Sien (Winter Gate)
Tom & Sallie Bernard
Ron & Donna Thompson
George Mead
Tom Stevens (Winter Gate)
Ute Mountaineer

\$500+

AABC Foundation (x2)
Paul D'Amato & Beth Cashdan (Winter Gate)
Margaret A. Frank Fund
Richard & Pamela Crandall
Janet Clark
Aspen Elks Lodge
Bill & Joyce Gruenberg (Winter Gate)
Anonymous
Bob Camp
Buettner Family Foundation
William Blair/James Trapp
Anne Rickenbaugh
Debbi & Steve Falender (Winter Gate)

Jay & Patti Webster, in honor of King Woodward
Andrew Allan
Casady Henry, in honor of Kristen Henry
Richard & Marianne Kipper
Judi & Bob Loubier
David Hyman & Barbara Reid
Frank Peters & Marjory Musgrave
Margot Hampleman
Sean Sebastian
Cynthia Wayburn, in memory of Heather Hopton
TJ Concrete Construction, Inc. (Winter Gate)
Pamela Collins

\$250+

Smyth Family Charitable Fund
T-Lazy-7 Ranch
Fred & Susan Lodge
Ceceilia & David Zumwinkle
Boots Ferguson (Winter Gate)
Gail & Phil Holstein (Winter Gate)
Kay Bucksbaum
Ruth Owens
Linda Harlan, in honor of Kristen Henry
Kristen Henry, in honor of Ed Barber
Barry Goldstein
Shelley Emerick
Sandra & Gerald Eskin
Dan & Tita McCarty
Bob & Ruth Wade (Winter Gate)
Stephen W. and Susan M. Baird Foundation
Katherine Peterson
Catherine Porter & James Fuller
Sallie Shatz
Karen Bissett & Robert Barnes
Brooke A. Peterson
Advised Fund at ACF
Paula & Monty Loud
Paula & Robert Peck, in memory of Milton Peck
Debbi & Steve Falender (Winter Gate)

Rotary Club of Aspen
Susan & George Fesus
Bruce Berger

\$100+

Aspen Elks Lodge #224
Scott Hicks
William & Judy Murray, in honor of Mark Fuller
Stanley Hoffberger (x2)
John & MJ Gray
Bruce & Genevieve Jeffreys
Curt Conner, in memory of my sister Ramona Markalunas
Stryer Family Fund
Myri & Roberta Lemburg
James Kirschvink & Martha Moran
Sandra & Stephen Stay
Jaclynn & Dean Derosier, in honor of Wolf & Nancy Gensch
Sheilah Bryan

Tyrolean Lodge
Pierre & Beth Wille
Timothy McGuire
Aron Ralston
Gina Pogliano
William Lightstone
Michael Kendrick
Allyn Harvey
Julie Comins & Greg Pickrel
Jim & Liz Stark (Winter Gate)
Robert Wilson, in memory of Linda Jean Wilson
Mark Fuller & Penny Atzet
Helen Buchanan Davis
Mark Harrison (Winter Gate)
Norman & Melinda Payson
Donald "Brig" Young, in honor of King Woodward
Robert Cardwell
William & Marianne Lederer
Raymond & Lou Stover
Jeremy Bernstein & Elise Elliott
Becky Ayres
David & Yun Negri
Lindsey Utter
Chuck Bellock, Bellock Morrison Philanthropic Foundation of the JEWISHcolorado
The Flunison Fund
Amory & Judy Lovins
Denise Jurgens
Jane Jenkins
Buzz Patten
Valerie and Herschel
Richter Donor Advised Fund of the Jewish Community Foundation of Greater Phoenix
Dr. Frank C. Marino Foundation, Inc.
Edward & Kathy Hansen Sweeney
Tim Rodell
Nancy Thomas & Roger Davis
Stanley Kritzik
Don Fleisher
Tim & Ginna Francis
Kathryn Koch
James Scull
Carol Sisler
Lisa Markalunas
Don & Cinda Erdman
Dorothy Frommer
Mike & Margaret Simmons
Valerie Borthwick
Ken Ransford

John Katzenberger & Deb Jones
James & Ann Nadon (x2)
Richard & Susan Gessner
Mary Salton, in memory of Heather Hopton
Mary & Dan Ellis
Julia Marshall, Mt. Daly Enterprises
Anita Thompson, Gonzo Foundation
Amy O'Rourke
Richard Horvitz & Erica Hartman-Horvitz Foundation
Pattie & Charlie Firestone
Phil Hodgson
Ruth A. Carver Foundation
Irma Proding
Diana Beuttas
John Starr
Nancy & Wolf Gensch
Jan & Bill Frazer
Francine Liebel
Helen & Roger Carlsen
Mary Dominick-Coomer & Sven Coomer

Tracey Sharples
Sallyanne Johnson
Father Ron Cattany
Tom & Carolyn Moore

\$1-99

Bruce Parlette
Sandra Simpson
Rachel Richards (x2)
John Bennett
Mary Lou & Joe Farrell (x2)
Josephine Dolinsek
John Keleher/JKG Trust
Jim Harrison & Mary Jo Kimbrough
Richard & Pamela Musso
Rob Whalen & Trish Chew, in memory of Cindy Curlee
Robert Leatherman & Kathryn Pitner
Jane Grossman
Heidi Hoffmann
Ethel Levantin
Janet & Ned Cochran, in memory of Jack & Anneke de Pagter and Perry Pollock

Charles & Doris Downey
Lawrence Slater
Margot Graham
Taylor Foundation
Mary & Paul Fee
Lindsey Utter (Winter Gate)
Richard & Sheryl Herrington
Jordan Rednor & Elizabeth Schneider
Suzanne Jackson
Nina Coulter Ware
Helene Gude
Dick Shohet
Douglas Dyakon
Jon Gibans
Shelley Supplee
Emily Jack-Scott
Howard & Leslie Schirmer
Jacquelyn Kasabach
Mark Kavasch & Susan Lau
Tom & Donna Ward
Chris & Sally Skaggs Faison
Edith Wombwell
BA Campbell
Floreat Foundation

Laurie Rosedale Loper
Brooke Newman
Helen Palmer
Paul & Lee Michaels
Jacquelyn Powers & Jordan Dern, in honor of Karin Teague
Nancy Tipton, in memory of Jack Tipton
Susan & William Frensley
Larry Slater
Suzanne Scheer, in memory of Grace Dabagian

RIDE FOR THE PASS SPONSORS 2017

\$2,500+
Fidel Duke
Patagonia/Ute Mountaineer
Resnick Foundation

\$1,000+

Alpine Bank
Blazing Adventures
John and Jacolyn Bucksbaum
Hansen Construction
Jeff Kenner
George Mead
Mead Witter Foundation
St. Regis Aspen

\$500+

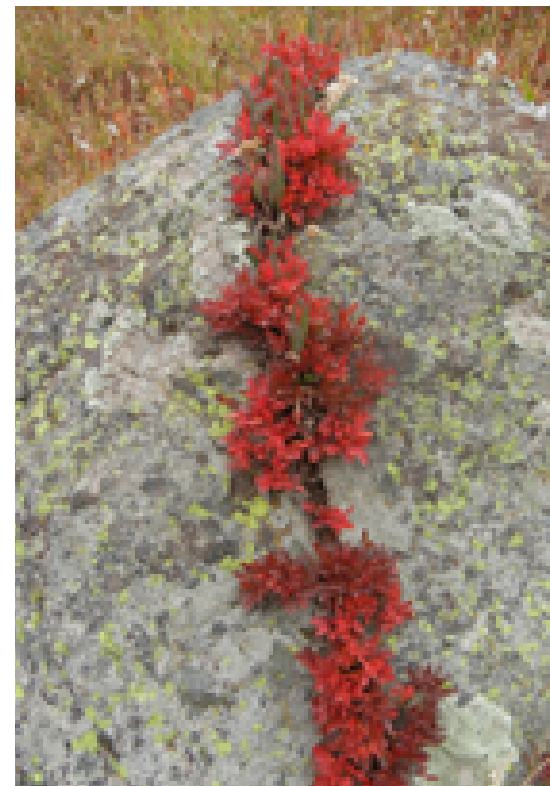
Aspen Associates Realty Group
Aspen Brewing Company
Aspen Tree Service
Basalt Bike & Ski
Best Sign Systems
Bob Camp
Chinook Charitable Foundation
Earth-Wise Horticultural
The Gant

Holy Cross Energy
David Hyman and Barbara Reid
Obermeyer Wood Investment Counsel
Reese Henry
Rockwood Charitable Trust
SGM
Thomas Land Management
Timberline Bank

\$250+

Adventure Travel Group
Anonymous
Aspen Sports
Balcomb & Green
Bluegreen
Dave Borchers, MD
Steve and Donna Chase
Community Banks of Colorado
The Cunningham Companies
Paul D'Amato and Beth Cashdan
Debbi & Steve Falender
GZO Roofing
Garfield & Hecht
Bill & Joyce Gruenberg
H3 Architects
Gail and Phil Holstein
Rodney and Niki Jacobs
Kazakh Adventures
Kind Bar
Carol Ann Jacobson Kopf
Lone Pine Construction
OKG&M
Only Natural Pet
Pagni Lawn
Paradise Bakery & Cafe
Peczuh Printing
James and Hensley Peterson
Renewal by Andersen
Ryan Investments
Ski.com
T-Lazy-7 Ranch
Valley Lumber
Wells Fargo
King Woodward

10/1/16 to 9/30/17



This report is made possible by a generous grant from the Thrift Shop of Aspen—please consider donating to and shopping at this wonderful community institution!



Post Office Box 1700

Aspen Colorado 81612

970.274.9690

www.independencepass.org

PAPER FREE?

If you would prefer to receive IPF's annual report and summer newsletter by email only, please let us know at director@independencepass.org.