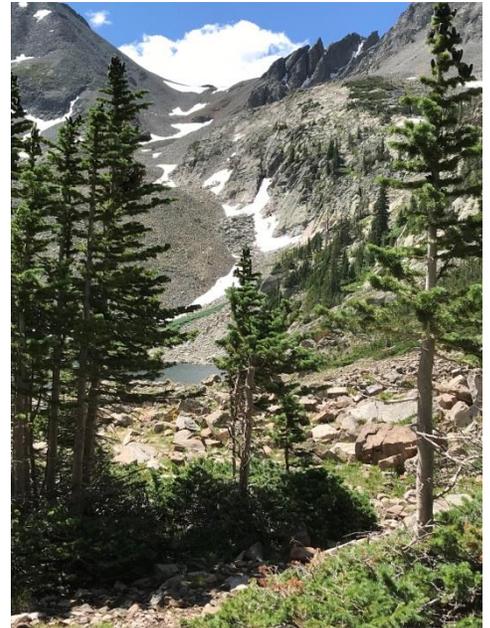




# CATS End of Year Report - 2018

*By: Brandon Smith (President) & Bob Johnson (Field Director/Vice President)*

The Colorado Addicted Trailbuilders Society is a 501(c) (3) nonprofit organization based out of the Loveland/Fort Collins area which is devoted to designing, building and repairing the various recreation trails found in Northern Colorado. We partner with city, county, state & national agencies to help provide the manpower and skill required to help keep their trails managed and open to the public. All members of the organization are volunteers (no paid positions), who share a common bond with their love for the outdoors. Our members come from various backgrounds and ages ranging from seven years old to seventy-one years old.



## Highlights for 2018

The Colorado Addicted Trailbuilders Society (CATS) completed its sixth trail season in the Northern Colorado area. CATS had a total of 16 trail project locations which accumulated over 47 whacks for a grand total of 205 event hours. With the attendance of all our volunteers at these projects our hours for land agencies exceeded 2900 hours!

CATS constructed or otherwise helped improve over 6,000 foot of soft surface trail in the Northern Colorado area and parts south to Colorado Springs. Our quantitative log shows that the organization installed over 200 new stone steps, thirteen plus monowalls of various sizes and lengths (333'), 12 causeways totaling over 250', numerous rolling grade dips, rock water bars, nicks, drain clearings and construction, and extensive placement of rip-rap elements to trail up/down slopes. We push the limits this year with crusher fines delivery to awaiting trail cut outs at a staggering 4300'. Most of the placement was manually done with the use of shovels and wheel barrows and finally pick-up trucks. Nevertheless, the work was laborious but the end results were satisfying.

## Membership

The organization grew by a substantial number of new members adding twelve new member to its ranks; five more than last year. We also picked up two family units which always makes the group expansion congenial with diversified family contributions. CATS projects can be appealing to the whole family which is implied and demonstrated by our volunteer turn out. Our increase in the younger crowd is patiently acknowledged and appreciated as these folks are still working and have other responsibilities, yet they take time off to come out and work on trail. Obviously there is a ratio with more hands on the trail and work output. As we continue to field on the average of 7-10 volunteers per



event, our work load and production has increased tremendously. Though expeditious trail construction or repairs is what we strive for, the time it takes is irrelevant to the quality of the product.

### **Partnership**

In 2018 our relationship with Overland Mountain Bike Club (OMBC) and Wildland Restoration Volunteers (WRV) continued to strengthen with the early season trail crew leader training course. The NOCO Trailbuilders Coalition provided a second year of training this year, and due to the size of the participants, we held it at the Chilson Center in Loveland CO. CATS continued to work alongside with OMBC, WRV and Volunteers for Outdoor Colorado (VOC) at various projects, most notable the Young Gulch and Lory State Park trail projects. We also expanded our reach this year by partnering with the Rocky Mountain Field Institute (RMFI) on a project in Colorado Springs; building a new partnership with the trail crew at State Forest State Park; and a new organization – No Barriers which we will be assisting in trail repairs in 2019. Along with the new partnerships we continued to work with the current land agency partners who provided CATS with challenging projects yet again this year.

### **Equipment**

Our van made it through the first year of service with road trips to Colorado Springs and Cameron Pass. The tools are in remarkable condition and we are acquiring new tools as we grow in volunteer size and perceive additional tools for special projects. Our wonderful deep pocket donors keep providing needed capital to keep the van in tip-top condition. As the season drew to a close, the van got several major upgrades, including new tires, oil change, brake job, filters, wiper blades and more. The automotive technicians have exclaimed the van is in good working order. Our camping equipment is also increasing to meet the needs of our group. Other expendable equipment such as recruiting materials, swag, and most desirable membership attire has increased. We now have long sleeved shirts and vests for members that put in the required number of whacks.



*Below is a condensed overview of the projects/locations CATS worked in 2018:*

**Loveland Open Lands and Trails – 1133 Project Hours, 5 Projects, 28 Events**

This was great year for trail work with the City of Loveland and CATS. CATS was everywhere knocking out over three different trail systems and back at the Mariana Butte Golf course to throw in crusher fines on the Hidden Hogback trail. The first project of the season was held at Boise Bend NA (not named at the time) on Boise, south of 1<sup>st</sup>. CATS designed and built almost a half mile of trail there with causeways and drainages to raise the trail. Crush was delivered to the entire trail system. Another trail system was designed and constructed by CATS over at Lake Boedecker (1<sup>st</sup> and Rossum Dr). This .5 mile loop trail is similar to the Boise Bend trail. CATS assisted with a new piece of trail at the other end of Rossum Dr with the National Trails Day celebration and working with the public to install crusher fines. The group did some preliminary work in there with regards to causeways and drainages. The season ended at Willow Bend trail system off of 1<sup>st</sup> St again with the construction of a 6' wide grassland trail.



**Fort Collins Natural Areas - 88 Project Hours, 1 Project, 2 Events**

CATS worked at Pineridge NA on a hiker only trail - Viewpoint Spur putting in check steps and drainages. The group spent two trips there installing proper water drainages.





**Colorado Parks and Wildlife - 910 Project Hours, 7 Projects, 11 Events**

CATS worked in three different state parks this year – a first! SFSP approached CATS with an alpine lake trail restoration project at Lake Agnes in July. Ten members attended the first camping trek of the season and worked diligently on stone structures and log bridges. CATS next camping trip was a long distance trip to Colorado Springs at Cheyenne Mountain SP to work on the Dixon Trail. Eleven members made this trip and put in an extraordinary amount of energy in building rock structures four miles from camp. At Lory SP CATS worked several trail projects and worked in a fall camping trip behind Arthur's Rock.



**Larimer County Natural Resources – 143 Project Hours, 2 Projects, 5 Events**

CATS headed back at Devils Backbone and the keyhole area to do some repairs on the stone steps this year. Another project was the Duncan Ridge climbing trail at Horsetooth which the group put in over 60 new stone steps to help the climber get to the climbing area easier.



**US Forest Service & WRV – 228 Project Hours, 1 Project, 7 Events**

For the third year, CATS has dedicated work efforts to the restoration of Young Gulch Trail. This year a back woods base camp was established to work trail from the middle in both directions. Some CATS members participated in that effort. The other sanctioned weekend events sponsored by WRV worked the trail up to crossing number eight. There is a considerable amount of work needed to complete this trail by the projected opening timeframe of fall - 2019.





## **Closing**

The CATS organization provided substantial trail improvements around the state and continues to offer excellent leadership and trail skills development with its members and partners. The senior base is solid and the Board of Directors keeps the group viable and concrete. With the van and tools accessibility established for the membership, CATS outreach has increased and allowed the 'society' to be more autonomous. CATS no longer depend on loaner tools and equipment and the groups' transportation needs have been satisfied. CATS visibility in the community has doubled with multiple projects and new membership attire. Effectively, CATS is more of a solidified trail organization with established roots here in the NOCO area. The existing land agency partners are eager to provide the group with yearly challenges. CATS are moving forward with a new partner agency in 2019 – No Barriers. Work will entail extensive trail re-design on their climbing trail. The future of CATS is secure in its vision for promoting citizens to become skillful outdoor stewards and take independent personal responsibility for developing future trailbuilders.