



ANNUAL REPORT

2024



*Connecting
you to the
outdoors.*



Our Mission

La Veta Trails (LVT) is a 501(c)3 nonprofit founded in 2015 to develop, improve, and maintain parks and trail systems that connect people of all ages and abilities to the outdoors, inspire volunteerism, and contribute to the health and economic vitality of the region. LVT serves the stewardship needs of Huerfano and Las Animas Counties, located in the Spanish Peaks region of the Southern Front Range. The area covers 186,156 acres of public land with four watersheds, 100+ miles of multi-use trails, and numerous parks that provide recreation and ecological amenities. Working in partnership with land management agencies, LVT executes programs and projects that improve wildlife habitat, address the impact of recreational use, restore open spaces, and mitigate wildfire.

Dear Friends:

We want to begin by thanking you. We are grateful to partners, volunteers, sawyers, funders and donors for making 2024 one of our most successful seasons. In this annual report we showcase the work contributed by crews on a variety of projects executed in Huerfano, Las Animas, and Pueblo Counties.

We also want to thank the Rocky Mountain Back Country Horsemen and the New Mexico Chapter of the National Smokejumper Association for the hundreds of hours spent clearing the Bartlett Trail in the Greenhorn Mountain Wilderness Area.

Together, we completed 1,312 hours of maintenance on 46 miles of trails in partnership with the Town of La Veta, Colorado Parks and Wildlife, and the San Carlos Ranger District of the U.S. Forest Service. We also supported the Town of La Veta's outdoor recreation priorities in the master plan, the Huerfano County Outdoor Recreation Community Action Plan, and the Spanish Peaks Outdoor Coalition.

As we reflect on our impact, it is clear that you have helped make La Veta Trails a significant regional asset for the preservation and protection of public lands. We look forward to your continued support as we actively take steps to sustain La Veta Trails into the future.

La Veta Trails Board of Directors:

- Marilyn Russell, President
- Mark White, Treasurer
- Judy Fisher
- Celeste Melville





201
VOLUNTEERS



1,170
VOLUNTEER HOURS



5
CERTIFIED CROSSCUT SAWYERS



142
CROSSCUT AND CHAINSAW SAWYER HOURS



\$42,505
VALUE OF VOLUNTEER IN-KIND



9
STEPS CONSTRUCTED



449
FALLEN/DEAD TREES REMOVED



.5
MILES BARBED WIRE REMOVED



16
30-GALLON BAGS OF INVASIVE WEEDS REMOVED

School Nature Trail

Town of La Veta

The School Nature Trail is a restored .25-mile interpretative trail on 3-acres of Town-owned open space with information kiosks, plant identification signs, footbridges and benches that provides an outdoor space to learn about the natural environment. In 2024, a crew of 21 students enrolled in Whitman College's Semester in the West (Walla Walla, WA) spent 105 hours removing 16 30-gallon bags full of invasive weeds. In addition, 12 representatives from trail organizations in the region made improvements to the SNT while working on their Crew Leader certificates.



33
VOLUNTEERS

165
VOLUNTEER
HOURS

\$6,000
VALUE OF
VOLUNTEER
IN-KIND

Wahatoya State Wildlife Area

Colorado Parks and Wildlife

Located adjacent to La Veta, it is a 203-acre open space that includes two reservoirs/lakes, each with a one-mile trail, that provides habitat for deer, fox, bears, bobcats, mountain lions, Bald Eagles, Osprey, waterfowl, wading birds, and several fish species. A crew of volunteers working alongside Colorado Parks and Wildlife constructed 9 wooden steps to address soil erosion and reduce the impact of silt on fish habitat. Volunteers annually groom the trails to maintain the width of the trail corridor.



14
VOLUNTEERS

89
VOLUNTEER
HOURS

\$3,236
VALUE OF
VOLUNTEER
IN-KIND

San Isabel National Forest

U.S. Forest Service, San Carlos Ranger District

The southern region of the National Forest consists of 141,499 acres of pristine forests that provide habitat for deer, bears, mountain lions, birds, and small mammals and includes the Purgatoire, Cucharas and Apispaha watershed. Crews cleared trees and removed vegetation growing in the Blue Camp Trail, Bear Lake Trail, and the North Fork Trail in the San Isabel National Forest. Volunteer and crosscut sawyers cleared 11 trees, restored 2.20 miles of trail damaged by the 2022 windstorm and the cleanup operation, and brushed .50 miles of trail.



55
VOLUNTEERS

213
VOLUNTEER
HOURS

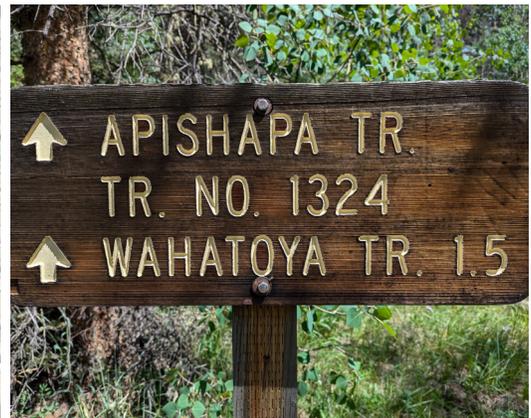
16
FALLEN/DEAD
TREES
REMOVED

\$7,745
VALUE OF
VOLUNTEER
IN-KIND

Spanish Peaks Wilderness Area

U.S. Forest Service, San Carlos Ranger District

Located on the West Peak, 19,226 acres of pristine forest provide habitat and support hiking, hunting, and horseback riding. Volunteer Stewards will monitor and assess the condition of 24.6 miles of Wilderness trails using the Wilderness Stewardship Performance methodology that covers understanding the magnitude and significance of recreation, camping, soil compaction and erosion, vegetation impacts, invasive species, wildlife, fish, and water health. Volunteer Stewards will clear a neglected 3.5-mile trail.



15
VOLUNTEERS

120
VOLUNTEER
HOURS

78
FALLEN/DEAD
TREES
REMOVED

\$4,363
VALUE OF
VOLUNTEER
IN-KIND

Greenhorn Mountain Wilderness Area

U.S. Forest Service, San Carlos Ranger District

It consists of 23,087 acres that provide habitat and recreational trails popular with people who horseback ride. The Rocky Mountain Backcountry Horsemen (RMBCH) has requested LVT's support to build its capacity to steward trails. RMBCH and LVT will join forces to engage their respective volunteers to clear Bartlett Trail.



MARCH

St. Patrick's Day Bingo

APRIL

Week of the Young Child
*sponsored by the Huerfano-Las Animas
Counties Early Childhood Advisory Committee*

APRIL

La Veta Earth Day Celebration

MAY

Wild Iris Hike at Tres Valles

JULY

Crosscut Saw Demonstration,
Francisco Fort Day

JULY

The Origins of the Spanish Peaks

SEPTEMBER

Spanish Peaks Health Fair

NOVEMBER

Volunteer Appreciation



12

New Crew Leaders in the region were trained by Volunteers for Outdoor Colorado

Kirk Anderson,
Fremont Adventure Recreation

Cliff Carlson,
La Veta Trails

Jenn Green,
Trinidad Trails Alliance

Dan Kruzek,
Trinidad Trails Alliance

David Kurian,
Trinidad Trails Alliance

Trisha Lootens,
La Veta Trails

Kerry Meier
Fremont Adventure Recreation

Melissa Swenson,
Rocky Mountain Back Country Horsemen

Melissa Toering,
Trinidad Trails Alliance

Joe Young,
La Veta Trails

7

Crew Leaders and Crosscut Sawyers earned their First Aid/CPR Certificate with the Beulah Fire Department.

Cliff Carlson,
La Veta Trails

Matt Hayden,
La Veta Trails

Trisha Lootens,
La Veta Trails

Amy Mason
Rocky Mountain Back Country Horsemen

Celeste Melville,
La Veta Trails

David Gonzalez,
La Veta Trails

Sandi Gregg,
La Veta Trails

7

Crosscut Sawyers were certified or recertified by the San Carlos Ranger District.

Robert Bidner,
Trails for All

David Gonzalez,
La Veta Trails

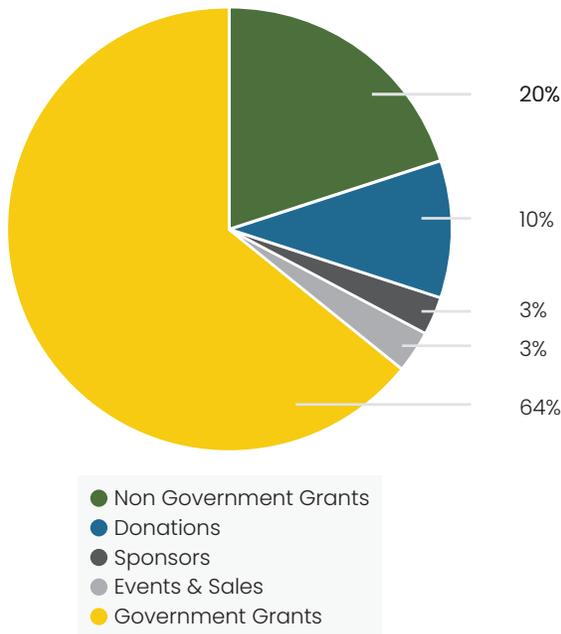
Matt Hayden,
La Veta Trails

Amy Mason,
Rocky Mountain Back Country Horsemen

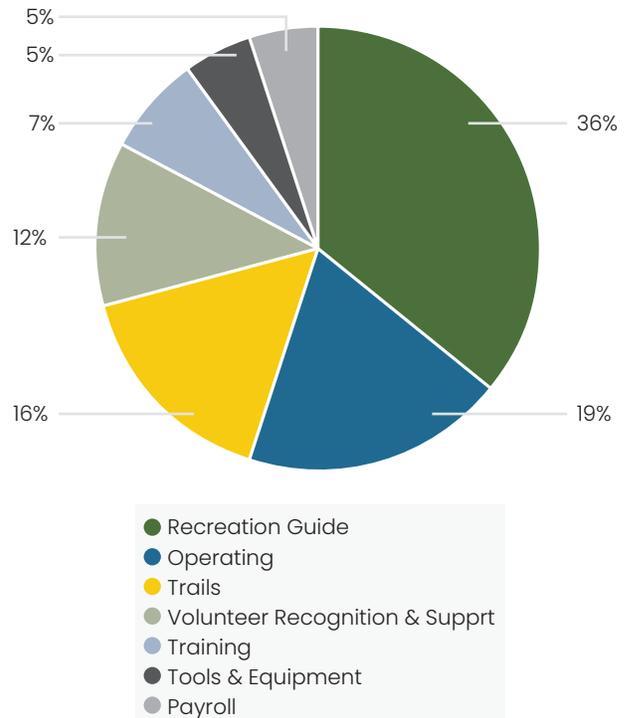
Celeste Melville,
La Veta Trails

Mark White and Alan Wonders with La Veta Trails were recertified Crosscut B Sawyers.

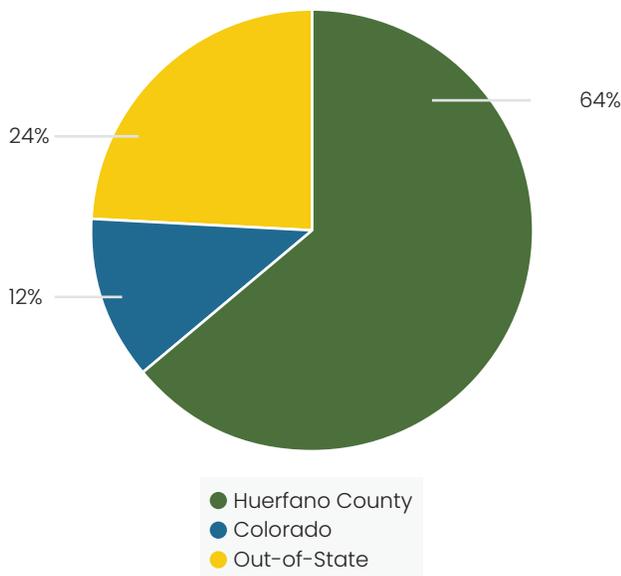
2024 REVENUE



2024 EXPENSES



WHERE LA VETA TRAILS SPENDS ITS MONEY



MAJOR CONTRIBUTORS

- El Pomar Foundation
- Great Outdoors Colorado
- Huerfano County Tourism Board
- National Wilderness Stewardship Alliance
- Southern Colorado Community Foundation
- Tercio Foundation
- Town of La Veta

We want to thank our Partners for being an integral part of our success story:

- Mayor Doug Brgoch and the La Veta Town Board of Trustees
- Destiny Chapman, District Ranger, San Carlos Ranger District, U.S. Forest Service
- Bill Velarde, Wildlife Technician, Colorado Parks and Wildlife
- Arthur Ellege, Recreation Manager, San Carlos Ranger District, U.S. Forest Service
- Kevin Spoor and Lisa McClure, U.S. Forest Service Crosscut Saw Certification
- Alan Wonders, New Mexico Chapter, National Smokejumper Association
- Sadie and Brandon Welsh, Rocky Mountain Back Country Horsemen
- Amber Reiman, Fire Chief, Beulah Fire Protection and Ambulance District

LA VETA TRAILS VOLUNTEERS

- Wanda Boettcher
- Ann Caffey
- Cliff Carlson
- Azada Casper
- John Costea
- Carolyn Frazee
- David Gonzalez
- Joel Gregg
- Sandi Gregg
- Matt Hayden
- Katrin Hurley
- Louise Ile
- Robert Ingoldby
- Jonathan James
- Dorinda Jennings
- Randle Jennings
- Bruce Johnson
- Paul Kronk
- Helena Laliberte
- Carmen Lara
- Trisha Lootens
- Heloise Lynn
- Tony Masinton
- Paul McConnellogue
- Butch McGuire
- Celeste Melville
- Susan Morris
- Tracey Paolone
- Wayne Robertson
- Liam Runnells
- Leslie Sheridan
- Chris Silks
- Shawna Summers
- Mark White
- Reed White
- Joe Young

ROCKY MOUNTAIN BACK COUNTRY HORSEMEN VOLUNTEERS

- Grant Swenson
- Michelle Swenson
- Barb Tigyer
- Brandon Welsh
- Sadie Welsh

NATIONAL SMOKEJUMPER ASSOCIATION, NEW MEXICO CHAPTER VOLUNTEERS

- Kevin Howe
- Jon Klingel
- Hugh McNeice
- Alan Wonders

Sponsors

TRAIL SUSTAINER - \$2,500



TRAIL STEWARD - \$1,000



TRAIL BUILDER - \$500



CREW LEADER - \$250



TRAIL EXPLORER - \$100

