



FELLOW PROFILE

Fellow's Name: Asheton Gilbertson

Fellow's Partner Organization: Conservation Colorado

What are your main responsibilities as a PIFP fellow?

Daily, I create a news digest for the staff so that we're all up to date on the latest environmental news in addition to documenting and reporting our actions to grant distributors.

Weekly, I take on various graphic design and writing projects. For example, this week I wrote two press releases, designed promotional information for an upcoming event and edited graphics for our website.

Long term, I will be responsible for researching lease sales on public lands and creating a website from which I can share this information. The goal of this project is to inform citizens on the lease sale process and the economic, social and environmental impacts that drilling has on Colorado's communities.

What's the most interesting thing you've learned in your fellowship so far?

With technology becoming more and more ubiquitous every day, informing the public about conservation issues seems like it should be easy, but getting people *to care*, and *to act*, is difficult. The most interesting thing that I've learned so far is that to get people involved, you have to be extremely strategic not only about *how* you share information – be it through a social media post, a blog, a video, etc. – but *who* you share this information with. Facebook has an unbelievably detailed record of its users and in turn, advertisers (i.e. all entities attempting to promote themselves) have the ability to target to unbelievably tailored audiences.

It is common knowledge that audiences can be refined by such things as gender, age, and education level, but in today's setting, they can also be refined by how many children they have, what they like to do in their free time (e.g. hike), and where they like to shop (e.g. REI). And those are only general categorizations! If I wanted to, I could advertise based upon a person's credit limit. That ability, it still astounds me.

Why did you want to become a PIFP Fellow?

I want to be an advocate for change; I want to dedicate my life to protecting the ecosystems that I am both a part of and a stakeholder in. Throughout college, I worked to further my abilities as an environmental advocate. I learned how to dissect an environmental issue, research its impacts and propose realistic solutions that emphasize social and economic equality. Post college, I wanted to apply these skills by working for an organization striving to make a positive change in the world.

Becoming a PIFP fellow provides me with incomparable meaning, experience, and support. Having this fellowship offers an unparalleled opportunity to be a part of an organization actively working to make Colorado a more just, equitable and conservation-minded place. As a fellow, I'm working toward a greater purpose, not just a paycheck.

What activities outside of your work do you enjoy?

I love group fitness, so I try to go to a class nearly every day. Since I've started my fellowship I've managed to maintain a consistent workout schedule which I'm thrilled about!

I also love taking pictures, specifically of nature. I make it a point to try to take a camera out with me on my weekend excursions, be it to the farmer's market, walking around town or hiking in the wilderness.

What is something most people would be surprised to know about you?

Although I've finally gotten outside of the United States – I was able to study ecology in Argentina for a month in January 2018 – I've never been to the East Coast. I've managed to live less than a mile from the Pacific Ocean in Bellingham, WA, however, the farthest East I've been in the US is New Orleans. And believe me, I know NOLA does *not* count as an Eastern location!