



Special thanks to:
Steve Weaver for his annual contribution of the cover photo.



Brendan Boepple is the Program Coordinator for Colorado College's State of the Rockies Project. Originally from Wilton, Connecticut, Brendan graduated from Colorado College in May of 2011 with a Political Science major and an Environmental Issues minor. While growing up Brendan developed a love for the outdoors and the environment, and he later worked with environmental organizations like Trout Unlimited and his local conservation land trust. He was a student researcher for the 2010-2011 State of the Rockies Project and researched the Eastern Plains region of the Rocky Mountain states. In the future, Brendan hopes to further his education in natural resource policy and management, and later pursue a career in that field. His interests include skiing and fly-fishing, two activities that drew him to the Rocky Mountain region.



Audrey Burns is a 2012-2013 student researcher from Bel Air, MD. She will graduate in the spring of 2013 with a degree in Environmental Science, along with a double minor in English and Philosophy. She co-chairs EnAct, interns for CC's Sustainability Office, leads service trips with BreakOut, and tutors peers at the Writing Center. In her free time, she enjoys running, baking bread, playing guitar, studying fungi, and identifying Rocky Mountain flora.



Matthew C. Gottfried is the GIS Technical Director at Colorado College and the 2012-13 technical liaison for the State of the Rockies Project, overseeing tasks including data assimilation, GIS analysis, and logistics management. He received his B.S. (1999) in Field Biology and Environmental Studies from Ohio Northern University and his M.A. (2005) in Geography and Planning from the University of Toledo where his focus was on land use planning and GIS. Matt's regional research focus includes studying the biogeography of critical species, land use planning, and conservation management practices of local natural resources.



Walter E. Hecox is professor of economics and environmental science, and project director for the State of the Rockies Project at Colorado College, Colorado Springs, Colorado. Walt received his B.A. degree from Colorado College (1964) and an M.A. (1967) and Ph.D. (1970) from Syracuse University, Syracuse, New York. He teaches courses in ecological economics and sustainable development. He has conducted research and taken leave to work for the World Bank, U.S. Agency for International Development, U.S. Department of Energy, and Colorado Department of Natural Resources. He is author of *Charting the Colorado Plateau: an Economic and Demographic Exploration* (The Grand Canyon Trust, 1996), co-author of *Beyond the Boundaries: the Human and Natural Communities of the Greater Grand Canyon* (Grand Canyon Trust, 1997), and co-editor of the Colorado College *State of the Rockies Report Cards*.



Nathan Lee hails from Spring Lake, Michigan and is a student researcher for 2012-2013. At CC, he majors in Economics with a minor in Environmental Issues and has a passion for food, ethics, and the natural world. He has made his home in the foothills of the Rocky Mountains for the past three years and is thrilled to be able to contribute to the 2013 *Report Card*. He draws inspiration from author Aldo Leopold, social and economic critic Wendell Berry, and singer-songwriter/humanitarian Harry Chapin. He hopes to live out his days gardening, reading, and writing.

Henry Madsen is a student research assistant for the 2012-13 Rockies Project. Originally from Denver, Colorado, Henry will graduate in 2014 with a degree in Biology and a minor in Physics. He hopes to use these degrees, and further education, to pursue a career in the natural world. His interest in nature began on long hikes, ski trips, and fishing trips with his father. His involvement in conservation and sustainability began when he visited a State of the Rockies speakers series event and subsequently became involved in the 2011-12 Rockies Project. Through the State of the Rockies Program, Henry hopes to learn more about the ecology of the Rocky Mountains.



Carson McMurray is a 2012-2013 field researcher for the Rockies Project. Originally from Chapel Hill, North Carolina, Carson graduated in May 2012 with a degree in Environmental Science. His interests in environmental issues originate from his family's obsession with fishing and have grown during his time at Colorado College. Carson specializes in work with GIS mapping and has combined this specialization with his environmental studies to help people see environmental issues through a new perspective. In his spare time, he enjoys playing sports, mountain biking and of course fishing.



Matt McNerney is a student researcher for the 2012-2013 State of the Rockies project. Originally from Oakton, Virginia he will graduate this coming spring with a major in Economics and minor in English. His interest in environmental issues, especially rivers, developed at an early age as he spent most of his childhood summers on the Rappahannock River. He spent his previous summer as a conservation intern for the organization American Rivers where he received a topographical look at many of the issues surrounding the preservation and restoration of river systems. Matt's interests including rock climbing, snowboarding, and playing guitar and in the future he hopes to blend his love of the environment with his background in economics.



Alice Plant is a student researcher for the 2012-2013 State of the Rockies Project. Alice will graduate from Colorado College in May of 2013 with a degree in Environmental Policy. Originally from the Northern California, Alice spent much of her childhood exploring the Sierra Nevada Mountains and developing a love for the outdoors and an interest in environmental issues. In her spare time, Alice enjoys rugby, backpacking, snowboarding and horseback riding. It was these activities that drew her to the region and developed her love for the Rocky Mountains.



Zak Podmore is an expedition manager for the 2012-2013 State of the Rockies project. He grew up in Glenwood Springs, Colorado where he came to appreciate the waters of the Rocky Mountains over the course of a childhood shaped by winters skiing on mountain slopes and summers floating through the arid sandstone canyons of the San Juan, Dolores, Green, and Colorado Rivers. A long-time kayaker and rafter, Zak's love of wilderness rivers has taken him to Mexico, Canada, Ecuador, and throughout the American West. This winter he hopes to gain a deeper understanding of the Colorado River basin by researching the water issues currently facing Southwestern communities and by exploring the rivers that fuel them. He graduated from CC in May of 2011 with a degree in Philosophy and a minor in Psychoanalysis.



David Spiegel is a field researcher for the 2012-2013 State of the Rockies Project. He grew up in Woodinville, Washington and graduated from CC in 2012 with a degree in International Political Economy. David grew up in a family of river runners and experienced the rivers of the west coast from a young age. He first discovered his love for the Colorado River during a Grand Canyon expedition in 2007 and has since paddled many of the river's wilderness sections. David joined the 2012 expedition hoping to utilize his passion for photography and social media to share water related issues with the communities that depend on the river.



Will Stauffer-Norris is an expedition manager for the 2012-2013 State of the Rockies Project. He was born in Moscow, Idaho, grew up in Blacksburg, Virginia, and graduated from Colorado College in May 2011 with an Environmental Science degree. Starting from early childhood float trips in Idaho, Will has paddled rivers in the U.S., Canada, Chile, and Argentina. He intends to combine his passions for wild rivers, visual art, and adventure to document environmental issues surrounding the Colorado River for the 2012-13 Rockies Project.



Alex Suber is the State of the Rockies videographer and a member of the Colorado College class of 2015. He was born and raised in the hills of Northern California and later moved to Highland Park, Illinois. This past summer Alex interned for Bitter Jester Creative, a documentary film company, while also working on his own documentary. Alex has no idea what he will major in, but has a strong passion for environmentalism and cinematography. These two interests have led him to become involved with State of the Rockies. When he's not making a movie, Alex enjoys playing the banjo, hiking, and working at the farm.



Shannon Thomas is a student researcher for the 2012-2013 State of the Rockies Project. A native to Colorado Springs, she will graduate from Colorado College in May 2013 with a major in Integrated Environmental Science. She also participated in the Washington Semester Program where she traveled to Ghana for a three-week service learning program and interned for the Office of the Secretary at the Department of the Interior. After graduating, she hopes to pursue a career where she can combine her interests in development and the environment. In her spare time, she enjoys hiking, snowboarding, rock climbing, and playing the piano.



The Colorado College State of the Rockies Project

Students Researching, Reporting, and Engaging:

The Colorado College *State of the Rockies Report Card*, published annually since 2004, is the culmination of research and writing by a team of Colorado College student researchers. Each year a new team of students studies critical issues affecting the Rockies region of Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah, and Wyoming.

Colorado College, a liberal arts college of national distinction, is indelibly linked to the Rockies. Through its Block Plan, students take one course at a time, and explore the Rockies and Southwest as classes embark in extended field study. Their sense of “place” runs deep, as they ford streams and explore acequias to study the cultural, environmental, and economic issues of water; as they camp in the Rocky Mountains to understand its geology; as they visit the West’s oil fields to learn about energy concerns and hike through forests to experience the biology of pest-ridden trees and changing owl populations. CC encourages a spirit of intellectual adventure, critical thinking, and hands-on learning, where education and life intertwine.

The Colorado College State of the Rockies Project dovetails perfectly with that philosophy, providing research opportunities for CC students and a means for the college to “give back” to the region in a meaningful way. The *Report Card* fosters a sense of citizenship for Colorado College graduates and the broader regional community.



Research

During summer field work, the student researchers pack into a van and cover thousands of miles of the Rocky Mountain West as they study the landscape, interview stakeholders, and challenge assumptions. Back on campus, they mine data, crunch numbers, and analyze information.



Report

Working collaboratively with faculty, the student researchers write their reports, create charts and graphics, and work with editors to fine-tune each *Report Card* section. Their reports are subjected to external review before final publication.



Engage

Through a companion lecture series on campus, the naming of a Champion of the Rockies, and the annual State of the Rockies Conference, citizens and experts meet to discuss the future of our region.

Each *Report Card* has great impact: Media coverage of *Report Cards* has reached millions of readers, and the 2006 report section on climate change was included in a brief presented to the U.S. Supreme Court. Government leaders, scientists, ranchers, environmentalists, sociologists, journalists, and concerned citizens refer to the Colorado College *State of the Rockies Report Card* to understand the most pressing issues affecting the growing Rockies region.

