



Fountain Creek Chronicles April 2024

the monthly e-newsletter about your home watershed



Songbird by Jim O'Donnell

The Fountain Creek Watershed District works from Palmer Lake to Pueblo to protect and enhance the health of the watershed.

Click on images to learn more or register for related events!

Celebrate Earth Month Volunteer for Great American Cleanup!

Get ready to make a splash in the Fountain Creek Watershed as we gear up for our first cleanup of 2024! For the past 3 years, the District has been a proud host of the Great American Cleanup, witnessing remarkable transformations thanks to the dedication of volunteers like you who tirelessly work to beautify our seven municipalities across the Fountain Creek watershed.



This year, we're excited to introduce our new volunteer management software, Cervis. With Cervis, we're taking our cleanup efforts to the next level by streamlining the registration process. Now, crew leaders and crew members can easily sign up and register for cleanups through our dedicated Cervis portal.

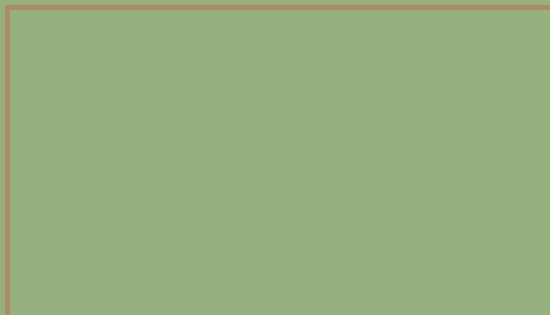
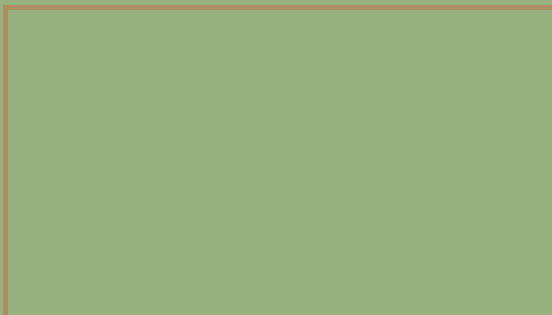
Here's what you need to know about Cervis

- **Account Creation:** Every volunteer will need to create a Cervis account to sign up for a cleanup.
- **Terms and Conditions:** Cervis includes a terms and conditions signature upon signup, serving as the risk and release waiver and effectively saving paper!
- **Impact Tracking:** Cervis features an impact tracking tool where crew leaders can record the number of trash bags collected. (More information will be provided to crew leaders.)
- **Photo Sharing:** Crew leaders are still expected to share crew photos after the event.

Important Dates for GAC Volunteers

- **Material Pickup (Crew Leaders Only):** April 12th, 2:30-5:30 PM & April 13th, 9-11 AM
- **Crew Leader Training (Hybrid):** April 12th, 5:30-6:30 PM (Bear Creek Office & Zoom)
- **Hydration Celebrations:** April 27th, post-cleanup! Crew leaders with cleanup crews aged 21 and older will receive special offers for the following breweries:
 - Seven's Gate, Colorado Springs
 - Walter's Brewery, Pueblo

We eagerly look forward to this cleanup and can't wait to see you all on April 27th!





More Volunteer Opportunities

Material Pickup: The FCWD Rain Barrel pickup and Great American Cleanup material pickup will be held at El Paso Parks Maintenance Shop on April 12th & 13th. We would love the support of our Watershed Warriors to help us distribute during blocks of time on April 12th 1:30-6:30 PM &/or April 13th 8 AM-12 PM. [Sign up on our new registration platform!](#)

Tabling at Upcoming Events: Join us to work our informational table &/or do volunteer work at April Stools Day, Scoop the Poop events, and the Earth Day event at Concrete Coyote. More information in the event listing below.

Build SWAG: If you have some free time and enjoy working with your hands, we can often use help making FCWD buttons and wrapping pet waste bags for handing out at our partners' great events!

Contact us if you'd like to help out with any of these opportunities!

Earth Day

Earth Day is every day in our watershed. Whatever the weather - rain, shine, windy, cold, hot - it's a good day to get outside. Check out these participants experiencing fun and eye-opening learning opportunities in the watershed. Did you know FCWD can come to you and present on Watershed Education? [Contact us](#) if your group or class would like a presentation!

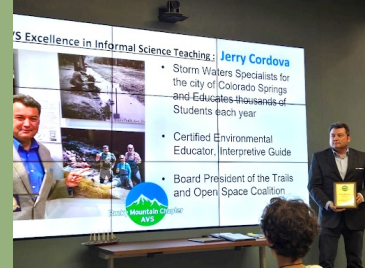
Photo credits: CO Springs Stormwater Specialist, Jerry Cordova



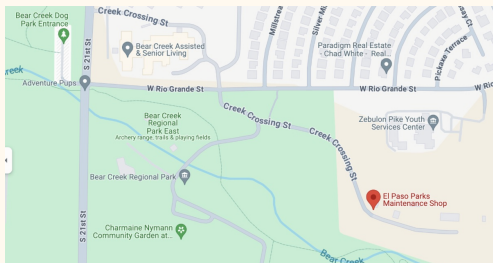
Pikes Peak State College students do citizen science by testing pH, salinity and more in Monument Creek.



Ute Pass Elementary School young scientist releases fish to Fountain Creek.



Congratulations to watershed colleague Jerry Cordova for being awarded 2023 "Informal Educator of the Year" by the CO Association of Science Teachers at the recent national conference held in Denver last month!



Rain Barrel Pickup

The Rain Barrel Sale has ended and we SOLD OUT! Thank you, Watershed Warriors, for your contributions to clean water!

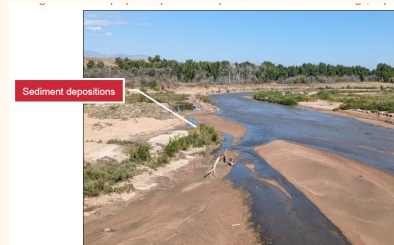
Plan your pickup at 1802 Creek Crossing Street in Colorado Springs on either of the following dates:
 April 12th, 2:30-5:30 PM
 April 13th, 9:00-11:00 AM

Please [reach out](#) if you need to make other pickup arrangements.

Featured Project Overton Road Bank Restoration

- 1,000 feet of channel restored
- \$1 million

Located in northern Pueblo County, approximately 11 miles north of Pueblo, this project accomplished the removal of abutments from the old Pinon Road bridge and addressed a large cutbank. Two bends along Fountain Creek were protected with riprap, abutments removed, and grading and revegetation were completed in June of 2020. In 2023, as part of the Districts Project Effectiveness study, Overton was assessed and identified that erosion rates have been reduced significantly from 24,000+ tons/year to negligible amounts. The vegetation has been heavily influenced by recent storm events with extremely high flows causing sediment to bury the plant material. Of the 26,257 willow cuttings and 340 cottonwood poles that were installed, approximately 20% of willows and 10% of cottonwoods were visible - the rest are either buried or have washed downstream. We will continue to monitor this site to ensure the project continues to function and that native vegetation is winning out over the non-natives.



Brewshed® Alliance

THE FOUNTAIN CREEK BREWSHED ALLIANCE PRESENTS:
LIQUID LECTURE SERIES 2024




APRIL TOPIC

WINGED WONDERS: EXPLORING COLORADO'S MIGRATORY MARVELS

Special Time! Tues, April 16th, 5:30-7 PM
OCC Brewing, 2316 W Colorado Ave, Colorado Springs



Join Dr. Claire Ramos at OCC Brewery's Rooftop for bird views and migratory bird insights. Special guest, Songbird Orchids, will offer an exclusive raffle prize and merchandise. The evening will be hosted by David Woolley, creator of Manitou Seed Library!

Attendees receive \$1 off beer
RSVP: fcwdaa@gmail.com

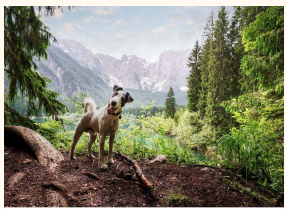


Brewshed Alliance Featured Partner

OCC Brewing
2316 W Colorado Ave
Colorado Springs, CO 80904

Locally owned by wildlife biologist pair, Dan & Claire, OCC Brewing in Old Colorado City is a community-focused spot. They run a family-friendly brewery and restaurant offering 16 beers on tap and an internationally inspired menu. Even fluffy friends are welcome on the front patio. Join us for this month's Liquid Lecture on the Rooftop as Dr. Claire shares her knowledge about migratory birds!

Upcoming Events



April Stools Day
Saturday, April 6, 9 am – 11 am
Bear Creek Dog Park

Pet waste is rampant in our communities and has a real impact on water quality. Please join us in raising awareness and help clean up our treasured dog park!

Thank you to our partners:



April Stools Day
Bear Creek Dog Park
April 6th, 9-11 AM

April Stools Day is a fantastic yearly initiative hosted by El Paso County Parks, Fountain Creek Watershed District, and Heuberger Subaru. April Stools Day aims to raise awareness about the importance of cleaning up after pets to maintain clean and healthy environments. This year, we are also teaming up with the City of Colorado Springs Stormwater Enterprise and Trails and Open Space Coalition to spread our efforts watershed-wide. Join us throughout the watershed to assist in cleaning our parks and receive exciting giveaways! No RSVP required.


Presented by Peter Richard's Donations

RICHARD'S RUBBISH ROUNDUP


EVERY TUESDAY! 3PM - 5PM

★ Head to Peter Richard's after the cleanup for complimentary pizza and a glass of beer or house wine.

★ Children 17 and under must be accompanied by an adult.



TEAMS MEET HERE
(STREET PARKING ON CORNER OF - BETWEEN COLORADO AVE & CIMARRON ST)



Richard's Rubbish Roundup
America the Beautiful Park
Every Tuesday, 3-5 PM

Richard's Rubbish Roundup in collaboration with FCWD will meet at America the Beautiful Park on Cimino Dr (between Colorado Ave and Cimarron St); see map for exact location. Supplies provided (trash bags, gloves, safety vests, trash grabbers, etc). Volunteers are invited to Rico's Cafe for a house wine, draft beer, or soft drink and discounted appetizers! All ages are welcome; 17 and under must be accompanied by an adult.



Eco Art & Meditation
Bear Creek Nature Center
Every Thursday in April, 12-2 PM

Unlock and expand your creative process with guided nature-based mindfulness and artistic prompts. This is an adults only program hosted by artist and certified Nature Therapy Guide, Summer Lajoie with Listening Pines. Prepaid registration required. \$30 per person / \$20 per

member.



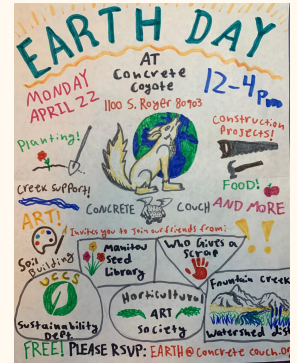
2nd Saturday Sustainability Skillshare Deerfield Hills Community Center April 13th, 9 AM-12 PM

Concrete Couch runs ongoing 2nd Saturday Sustainability Skill Shares. This month's is hosted by Deerfield Hills Community Center at 4290 Deerfield Hills Rd in Colorado Springs. Learn outdoor painting, sign making, creating wood sculptures, and mosaic tile decorating! A delicious community lunch for all participants will be provided.



Seed Saturdays Manitou Springs Public Library April 13th, 11 AM-1 PM

Manitou Springs Seed Library hosts Seed Saturdays on the 2nd Saturdays of September-May. Drop into the library to pick up native seeds ranging from wildflower, trees, shrubs, and some native grasses. Other resources will be available to learn how to grow and succeed with Front Range regional native species.



Earth Day with Our Friends! Concrete Coyote April 22nd, 12-4 PM

FCWD is celebrating Earth Day with our great friends from Concrete Couch, Horticultural Art Society, Manitou Seed Library, UCCS Sustainability Dept & Who Gives a Scrap. There's a fantastic lineup of activities planned including creek cleanup, planting, art projects, soil building, a few construction projects, and food provided. Let's get our hands dirty for Mother Nature!



2024 Pikes Peak Regional Crew Leader Training May 4th-5th, 7 AM-4 PM

The Pikes Peak Regional Crew Leader Training (PPRCLT) is an intensive weekend-long training for experienced volunteers who are interested in becoming certified Volunteer Crew Leaders. The training is hosted in partnership with Rocky Mountain Field Institute, Trails and Open Space Coalition, and the City of Colorado Springs, Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Services Department.

Contact: Calla Balliett, Volunteer & Partnership Coordinator
(719) 471-7736, ext. 4#

Featured Native Plant

Common White Yarrow, *Achillea millefolium*



Common Yarrow is a powerhouse plant that can catapult the success of your garden. It is native to dry, disturbed soils of the Northern Hemisphere and can thrive in a variety of soil types and light conditions. Its extensive roots prevent erosion and make it a resilient species to add to your landscape. Common Yarrow has many medicinal properties including anti-inflammatory, antiseptic, and wound healing. Dried flowers and leaves can be brewed into a tea. As with many natives, this is a valuable resource for pollinators. The flat-topped, tiny white flowers attract many beneficial insects by providing nectar and pollen. Varietals are also available in yellow and pink. As we get into the growing season, Common Yarrow should not be overlooked for its valuable contributions!



CDPHE Grant Awarded



Outreach and education efforts will increase in Pueblo with the recent mini-grant award of \$5,000 provided by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment's Water Quality Control Division and the US EPA. The aim is to improve water quality and reduce impacts from runoff to waterways. This funding will go towards nonpoint source pollution prevention, the Great American Cleanup on April 27th, public awareness, and a bike tour of drainage mitigation projects. Additional trash receptacles and pet waste bag dispensers will be installed along the Creek bike trail through Pueblo's east side. The FCWD will provide matching funds and collaborate with the City and County Parks & Recreation Departments for in-kind work. The FCWD is thankful for the support to engage with more citizens this spring and summer in Pueblo!

Watershed Words Happy Earth Month!

A note from Executive Director Alli Schuch

As a senior in high school, I won first place in my hometown newspaper's Earth Day essay contest. Miraculously, my parents still had it in their "Save for Allison" box when I inquired about it. I thought I would draw on a few of those words that still ring true to me all these years later as we collectively turn our calendar pages to April and Earth Month.

- *"The endangered animals, polluted oceans and smoggy skies can't speak for themselves."* I've been a fan of *The Lorax* since I read the book for the first time (and the movie is great!). It is up to US to give a voice to the plants, animals, water, land and skies. That could mean getting involved in a local environmental initiative or with an organization you support by volunteering or attending an event. Or you could take action on behalf of nature and try planting a new native plant in your yard this season. The 18-year old me was right and I still agree with her today. The watershed can't speak for itself, and the Watershed District is working to be its voice, its champion, its protector. Won't you join us?
- *"Environmental education is the key...learning can start at any age."* Watershed management is a complex, dynamic, predictably unpredictable science. Where does water go when it leaves your property? What is upstream and downstream from you? How far are you from a waterway? Be curious about your home watershed and learn more about it. Explore different parts of it to admire its vastness, its multitude of ecosystems, variety of water uses, plethora of recreational opportunities, and the diversity of species moving within it. We have an absolute gem in our backyards. The more we can learn about it, the more we will appreciate it and care for it.

I won \$100 for that essay, it was published in the paper, and carefully tucked away by my proud parents. Who knew I would have realized my childhood dream of finding a job where I can help to protect our planet?! *"Only we can make the beautiful earth we inhabit today remain this way for future generations."* Reading it now I can hear a sense of urgency and a call for action. I have those same feelings today when it comes to our Earth and particularly our home watershed.

April is Earth Month: a time to get outside more, to observe the changes in the natural world around you, to appreciate our air, land, water, and wildlife for the free ecosystem services and beauty they provide. See you around the watershed!

For the full article complete with my Senior picture, visit my [bio page](#) on our website.

~Alli Schuch

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