



# On The Trail

The PLHC's Year in Review, 2020-2021  
Volume 7, No. 1, Autumn 2021



**PUBLIC LANDS  
HISTORY CENTER**  
COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY

# On The Trail

## The PLHC's Year in Review, 2020-2021

Volume 7, No. 1, Autumn 2021

### Letter from the Director



Bear Lodge, or Mato Tipila.

Throughout its fourteen-year history, the PLHC has strived to tell rich, inclusive histories of public lands. A family camping trip this summer reminded me how valuable that is.

Our destination was Bear Lodge, Mato Tipila in Lakota. The Cheyenne, Crow, Mandan, Arapaho, and others give it similar names and, along with the Lakota, hold it sacred. Highway maps label it Devils Tower, the garbled translation applied by a U.S. military expedition.

I'd wanted to go there since I was seven, after seeing the classic alien movie *Close Encounters*, which featured the monolith prominently. But I also knew from Ann McGrath's chapter in the PLHC's book, *National Parks Beyond the Nation* that Devils Tower is a troubling place. In the nineteenth century, the United States chased Indigenous peoples away and later established the first national monument there. In the 1990s, as the NPS considered restricting climbing to honor Native traditions, climbers resisted, ironically in the name of freedom.

Over breakfast, we discussed how to visit such a monument so tied to historic and ongoing conquest, and we agreed on a few rules. We would look deeply for Indigenous presence. We would call it Bear Lodge instead of Devils Tower. We would post about it on social media. The conversation drew our attention to injustices we might have had the luxury of overlooking had we stayed home.



The Devils Tower Trading Post.

At the monument, a sign announced mandatory prohibitions on climbing Mato Tipila during spring falcon nesting. It also asked climbers to observe a voluntary closure every June, a compromise that fell short of the fuller restrictions tribes and the NPS had sought. In public lands management priorities, the needs of recreators and wildlife usually trump those of Indigenous peoples.

The interpretive signs that ringed the paved path around Bear Lodge would not surprise veteran national park visitors. One told of fire ecology, one of wildlife. Another made the obligatory acknowledgment of ancient Native peoples but avoided dispossession or the park service's involvement in it.

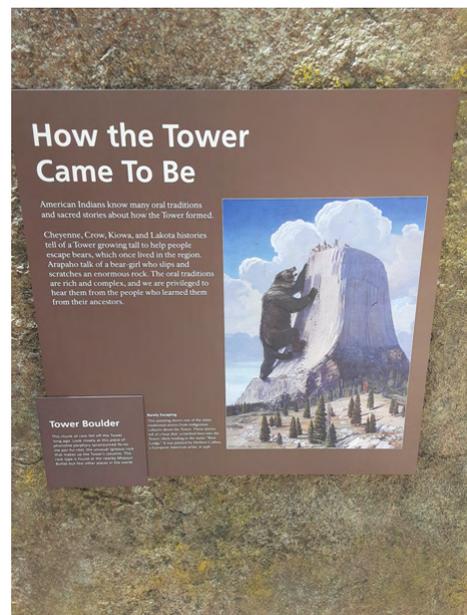
We hiked the outer loop, conscious of the imprint our footsteps made on sacred ground. One line of a prayer in my religion seeks forgiveness for trespass. That petition felt palpably relevant at Bear Lodge. I stopped and said the prayer silently.

My son and I tried to imagine how early Indigenous visitors might have experienced Mato Tipila. From overlooks above the Belle Fourche River, we tried to guess where they would have camped, surely someplace timbered and well-watered.

Seeing Native presence required no great leap of imagination. Brightly colored cloths and prayer bundles hung from branches, signaling ongoing tribal connections. An interpretive display back at the parking lot asked, "How the Tower Came to Be," and offered Indigenous oral tradition as the explanation. In the visitor center interpretive text acknowledged that the US army had driven tribes from the area.

The monument had pursued inclusiveness in other ways too. Several outdoor exhibits were constructed at the eye level of wheelchair users. Other exhibits had braille. A decade at the PLHC has alerted me that public lands tell stories at many levels. This summer, it equipped my family to visit this troubling place more respectfully than we might otherwise have and to detect a wider range of voices. In the articles ahead, you will find other rich stories the PLHC is in the process of telling.

I do not expect to return frequently to Mato Tipila, if ever. The feeling of trespass is too strong. But I am grateful for the opportunity to have visited once. Perhaps someday we might reserve places like Bear Lodge for Indigenous peoples, and open them to visitors and climbers one month per year.



Interpretive signage shares Native American beliefs about Bear Lodge.

—Dr. Jared Orsi, PLHC Director

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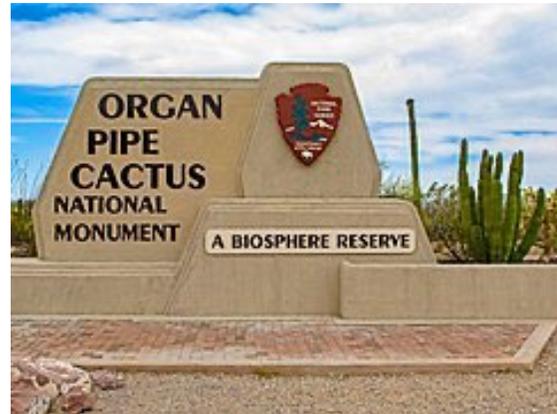
## Telling O’odham Stories

**Q**uitobaquito Springs in Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument has been a place of significance for many communities over the centuries, especially the Hia C’ed O’odham, a tribe without federal recognition, who share a reservation with the Tohono O’odham. There are three groups that comprise the O’odham people: the

Tohono O’odham, the Akimel O’odham (also known as Pima), and the Hia C’ed O’odham. Quitobaquito began as a rest stop for the O’odham people on their way to the Gulf of California in their traditional salt pilgrimage. Some Hia C’ed families, such as the Orozcocos, even called Quitobaquito home, settling there in the mid-nineteenth century. Spanish explorers, American settlers, and travelers became enamored with the oasis. Quitobaquito never lost its significance to the Hia C’ed and Tohono O’odham despite restrictions placed upon them and their movement through the land. In 1937, the National Park Service established Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument which began federal jurisdiction and management of Quitobaquito. By 1950, the NPS pushed the last O’odham families out of their land in Quitobaquito, further cementing federal control and management of Quitobaquito. Since then, the NPS has had difficulty properly managing Quitobaquito in part due to the fragile desert ecosystem.

The PLHC’s project, “Telling O’odham Stories at Quitobaquito,” involves gathering oral histories from the O’odham peoples about the oasis located in Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument. The project’s goal is not only to document the experiences of Indigenous people with this centuries-old cultural resource, but also to aid National Park Service managers in interpreting Indigenous stories and integrating Indigenous knowledge and approaches to land management into their decision-making concerning the oasis.

The project’s activities this summer have been part of a pilot year as we plan our future work. As part of the pilot program, the research team (Dr.



Organ Pipe Cactus National Park entry sign.

## Featured Research Project

Jared Orsi, Ariel Schnee, and student research assistants) hope to complete several different oral histories with Hia C'ed O'odham narrators before the end of the year. The pilot year was made possible by generous support from the Henry B. Luce Foundation through the PLHC's "Telling Untold Stories of Public Lands" grant. Next summer, the project will continue under funding from the NPS's Southwest Borderlands Resources Protection Group. Future phases of the project will perform additional oral histories, write a collections context and produce interpretation that communicates the team's findings.

My contributions to the project have been to research, compile information, and participate in meetings and oral history interviews. One example of my work has been compiling research of the Hia C'ed O'odham, a group of the O'odham that has been battling the almost century-old perception that they are extinct. The research entailed finding sources about the Hia C'ed O'odham, of which there are few. I also wrote a literature review of the sources and created a chronology of the archaeological studies conducted within Organ Pipe.



Graduate student research assistant, Margaret Gentry, hard at work on the "Telling O'odham Stories" Project.

Through my time on this project, I learned some of the most valuable skills for every public historian. Not only have I honed my research and writing skills, but I've also been able to learn the practice of oral history in more depth. This project has aided me in understanding how important working with communities is to the work of public history, and has also piqued my interest in how oral histories can be used in various ways, such as in land management. The project has not only given me the skills, professional experience, and confidence to prepare myself for career opportunities in public history, but has also emphasized to me the importance of communities in public history.

—Margaret Gentry, PLHC Graduate Research Assistant



Participants at Parks as Portals to Learning (PPL) observe Dr. Ruth Alexander conducting an oral history with NPS Wilderness Ranger, Jacob Siedel.

**E**ight CSU History graduate students returned to Rocky Mountain National Park in early August to participate in the 2021 edition of Parks as Portals to Learning (PPL). Led by PRSE Fellow and second year graduate student, Amber Scott, as well as Faculty Advisor, Dr. Mike Childers, and Program Manager, Ariel Schnee, the group built upon last summer's PPL project examining the historic management of wilderness campsites within the park.

This year's team also included second year students Jacie Rex, Shaun Rose, Paige Rooney, Taylor LaPointe, and first year student Kristy Ornelas. The group spent the week reading through the Jim Wilson papers, which chronicle RMNP's Wilderness Office, and conducting research in the park's archives. The end result of their work was a database that tracked campsite changes from the 1970s to the 1990s. They then spent a day discussing wilderness management with RMNP's Wilderness Office Manager Barry Sweet, Trails Program Supervisor Doug Parker and Facilities Manager Daniel Lawson. Finally, they observed Dr. Ruth Alexander conduct an oral history with Wilderness Ranger Jacob Siedel on efforts to reclaim wilderness campsites

following last summer’s Cameron Peak and East Troublesome Fires.

The team wrapped up the week by presenting their research and findings to national park personnel. The audience asked questions on a wide range of topics, including equity and diversity within the park and the impacts of RMNP’s current timed reservation system, in an enthusiastic Q&A session following the presentation. The graduate students came away from the ninth PPL both excited about the week’s work and further engaged in public and environmental history. View the team’s final presentation on [YouTube!](#)

## High Line Canal Conservancy

**I**n Summer 2021, the PLHC teamed up with the High Line Canal Conservancy (HLCC) to develop a State Historic Fund grant application. If funded, the approximately \$200,000 grant would fund PLHC research and interpretative planning along the 71-mile historic irrigation ditch. The canal’s history traces back to the 1880s, when water from the South Platte was diverted through the canal to meet the demands of settlers and farmers.

Since, the canal has become one of Denver’s signature recreation areas, providing trails, access to natural space, and connectivity to people throughout the city. Interpretation would allow the canal’s more than 200,000 annual visitors to learn about and appreciate the history of this resource. This project is more important than ever, as Denver Water is beginning to evolve the canal from water delivery infrastructure to green stormwater management, marking a new chapter in the canal’s history and helping the city adapt to climate change.

## Climate Adaptation Partnership (CAP)

**O**n September 1, Dr. Courtney Schultz and PLHC council member, Dr. Leisl Carr Childers, along with partners including the PLHC, the Salazar Center, the Center for Environmental Justice, the Colorado Water Center, the School for Global Environmental Sustainability, the Colorado Forest Restoration Institute and a variety of



The CAP logo represents the new center’s mission to create research partnerships that focus on climate adaptation.

other researchers across CSU officially launched the [Climate Adaptation Partnership \(CAP\) for Policy Innovation and Research Coordination](#).

Funded by the Office of Vice President for Research's Catalyst for Innovative Partnerships program, the CAP has two core emphases: 1) supporting interdisciplinary research efforts to address the complex challenges of climate adaptation and 2) building connections among researchers and policymakers to facilitate the application of climate adaptation research in policy venues. Anyone interested in receiving more information about the CAP can reach out to [csu\\_cap@mail.colostate.edu](mailto:csu_cap@mail.colostate.edu).

### Denver Historic Resources Commission

**I**n the aftermath of the 2020 Black Lives Matter uprisings and the toppling of a Civil War statue located in front of the Colorado Capitol, the Denver Mayor's office tasked the city's Commission on Human Rights and Community Partnerships with examining city assets that should be recommended for renaming or reinterpretation in order to foster more inclusive public spaces.

To learn more about the history behind these assets, the Commission approached the State Historians' Council, which includes Dr. Jared Orsi, director of the Public Lands History Center. Along with program manager, Ariel Schnee, Orsi and the rest of the council researched the assets and made presentations that gave the Commission information used to provide recommendations about the assets under discussion. Among the assets considered were parks, streets, recreation areas, and other sites. Schnee and Orsi were approached earlier this year by the "I Am Denver" project to provide recorded interviews that will be made available to community members so citizens can make informed decisions about whether to rename, reframe, or keep the names of the assets in their community the same.

### The Mark Soldier Wolf Community Archive

*Adapted from "A Daughter's Promise," by Jeff Dodge. This article appeared in SOURCE on May 3, 2021. For the full article, see: <https://tinyurl.com/3mfe7ksy>.*

**S**tarting in Fall 2019, PLHC director, Jared Orsi, and documentarian Frank Boring began discussions with Yufna Soldier Wolf about her family’s historical archive. The archive documented the Northern Arapaho family’s history and ties to the Fort Collins area. The collection included photographs, art, military records, recordings, and objects that represented Northern Arapaho tribal history. The archive was born out of Mark Soldier Wolf’s passion for ensuring that the Soldier Wolf family’s and the Northern Arapaho’s stories were never forgotten. The collection was housed in a disused trailer on the Soldier Wolf family’s property on the Northern Arapaho’s Wind River reservation. Mark Soldier Wolf’s last wish was that his collection be returned to the family’s ancestral homelands in northern Colorado as a reminder of the area’s Native heritage. He also hoped that the collection would encourage research and interpretation of Colorado’s Indigenous history.



Yufna Soldier Wolf stands with part of the collection in the family’s trailer on the Wind River Reservation.  
*Photograph by Jared Orsi.*

Endangered by natural elements on the reservation, including freezing winter temperatures, summer heat, wind, and wildfire, the project partners determined that the time was right for the collection to return home in early 2021. After many months of working with the PLHC, as well as documentary filmmaker, Frank Boring, and philanthropist and CSU supporter, Ed Warner, the Soldier Wolf family selected the Fort Collins Museum of Discovery to house the collection through a temporary loan agreement. Orsi personally drove the archive from southern Wyoming to Colorado in early 2021, braving snow-swept roads to transport the collection to Colorado. The boxes of historic materials were ceremonially welcomed back by the Irons family with drumming, smoke smudging, and song. “These are more than inanimate objects for Yufna and her family,” Orsi said. “They are a passageway to connect with people who are no longer here.” The PLHC’s participation in this initiative is supported by the Henry B. Luce Foundation grant, “Telling Untold Stories of Public Lands,” a research program dedicated to telling and sharing the under-told histories behind American public lands, broadly conceived.

## Alumni Spotlight

*Our 2021 Alumni Spotlight, Dr. Nichelle Frank, reflects on her path into academia and the PLHC's role in helping her reach her career aspirations. If you would like to be considered for a future alumni spotlight, please reach out to us at [cla\\_plhc@mail.colostate.edu](mailto:cla_plhc@mail.colostate.edu). We look forward to featuring you in an upcoming edition.*

**T**he road to my current position as assistant professor at Utah State University Eastern began in earnest with my education at Colorado State University and work at the Public Lands History Center. The firsthand knowledge I gained from these experiences has been invaluable in my teaching, since it helps me introduce students to exciting subfields of history, including all manner of public history methods and topics.

My first year of teaching full-time as a university professor was a “trial by fire” while a pandemic rocked the globe, but I encountered students excited to learn and willing to work hard. At USU, I teach US and women’s history as well as historical methods and public history. Among my favorite topics to teach are those related to public history, such as preservation of historic sites and structures, national parks, and oral history. It has been heartening to hear students say that these courses and topics have opened their eyes to memorable and applicable ways of understanding history. Without words of encouragement from a few key CSU history professors, I never would have believed in myself enough to apply to a master’s program, much less pursue a PhD. I will be forever grateful.



**“Without words of encouragement from a few key CSU history professors, I never would have believed in myself enough to apply for a master’s program, much less pursue a Ph.D.”**

*-Dr. Nichelle Frank, Utah State University Eastern*

## USAJobs for Beginners: Dr. Rachel D. Kline

In 2020, Public Lands History Center hosted a federal resume workshop conducted by Supervisory Historian at the US Forest Service and PLHC alumna, Dr. Rachel Kline. The workshop focused on helping students navigate the federal government's hiring portal, USAJobs. Dr. Kline challenged attendees to think about their skill sets holistically, encouraging them to think about how what they learned in graduate school might transfer to a broad range of job categories within the federal government. The workshop provided essential training for history graduate students seeking employment within the federal government, the leading employer of historians in the United States.



To build student familiarity with and success in federal hiring, Dr. Kline coached students how to build a federal resume.

## Oral History: Dr. Mary Therese Anstey

In March 2021, the Public Lands History Center presented a virtual oral history workshop. The workshop featured founder of HistoryMatters, LLC, Dr. Mary Therese Anstey. Over the course of the half-day workshop, students learned about the lengthy preparation and relationship-building that goes into a successful oral history project.

Dr. Anstey discussed her oral history project with the residents of the Eiler neighborhood in Pueblo, Colorado, home to a passionate and tight-knit Slovenian ethnic community. With the benefit of Anstey's dedication to collecting their stories, the community rallied around the project, contributing their time, memories, knowledge, and, above all, their love for their Pueblo neighborhood to paint a vibrant and enduring portrait of their homes and community.

Workshop participants also learned about the technical details of oral histories, including legal considerations and best practices, from PLHC council members, Dr. Leisl Carr Childers, and Ariel Schnee, as well as graduate student presenter, Madelyn Newman.

## Undergrad Student Spotlight

**A**ugusta "Gus" Rudnick is a fourth-year undergraduate history student pursuing a certificate in museum studies and a minor in political science. This summer, Gus was selected to be one of CSU Extension's summer interns. Through CSU's Office of Extension internship program, she worked with PLHC council member, Dr. Adam Thomas, Larimer County extension agent, Amber Webb, and community partner, Liz Harrison, at the Bee Family Centennial Farm Museum to share Northern Colorado's agricultural history with visitors.

The Bee Family Centennial Farm Museum, or the Bee Farm, is situated on the land that the family homesteaded in 1894. During her summer on the farm, Gus helped the museum prepare to hire a director and developed a site management plan. Gus also conducted oral histories with the Bee Family that documented the property's transition from a working farm to a museum. She also collaborated with neighboring museums and coordinated the acquisition of a fiberglass draft horse for demonstrations. In addition, she worked with graduate student intern, Natalie Stacker, to evaluate items in the museum's collection and helped the museum position itself as a resource for academic research on agricultural history in Northern Colorado. This work will also support the museum's efforts to apply for grant funding. This fall, Gus will participate in the Extension Forum at CSU to present the work she did over the summer!



Gus proudly shows off the museum's newest acquisition, a life-size fiberglass draft horse at the Bee Family Centennial Farm Museum.



Natalie Stacker and Gus Rudnick represent the Bee Farm with LeeAnn Bee in the 2021 Fourth of July Parade in Wellington, CO.

**N**atalie Stacker, (M.A. 2021), also assisted the PLHC in expanding its partnership with the Bee Family Centennial Farm Museum during summer 2021. Stacker put her graduate training in Museum Studies to work, preparing and installing several temporary exhibits for an upcoming museum event. Along with undergraduate intern, Augusta “Gus” Rudnick, Stacker collaborated with museum staff to increase public outreach, improve the museum’s infrastructure, and prepare the museum to pursue grant funding.

Both students worked under Dr. Adam Thomas’s supervision. An assistant teaching professor and PLHC council member, Dr. Thomas also serves on the Bee Farm’s board of directors. Natalie has since gone on from her Bee Farm Internship to continue pursuing her passion in social studies education. She will be returning to teaching at the secondary level with her History MA, and looks forward to returning to the classroom (this time as a teacher!) starting in Autumn, 2021.



Natalie Stacker helps the Bee family stack hay for the summer.

## Colorado Ranchlands Project

**T**he Colorado Ranchlands project, funded by the Henry B. Luce Foundation under the “Telling Untold Stories of Public Lands” grant, produced important connections this summer between the PLHC, CSU Extension, and History Colorado’s [Centennial Farms and Ranches program](#). Using an [Extension internship](#) in Routt County as a model, Dr. Leisl Carr Childers, the project lead, worked with an Extension intern and a research assistant to collect baseline historical information and interviews on ranches in Routt County and Gunnison County that have existed for one hundred years or more.

The model brings to bear the best historical research on ranching operations in Colorado’s counties and trains 4-H students in oral history interviewing practices. The 4-H students conduct the interviews with ranchers, and CSU graduate students compile the historical research and interviews into a public-facing story map: the “Art of Ranching.” Each map will be specific to that county. The Routt County story map is drafted and will be published on History Colorado’s Centennial program website by the end of the year. The PLHC and CSU Extension are gearing up to launch the “Art of Ranching” in Gunnison County in summer, 2022.



PLHC graduate student researcher, Jacie Rex (right) poses with a participant from the Art of Ranching project.

## USDA National Wildlife Research Center

**D**uring summer 2021, graduate student Lucas Avelar had the opportunity to work as the PLHC's graduate collaborator with the USDA's National Wildlife Research Center (NWRC). The NWRC seeks to provide solutions that mitigate wildlife-human conflicts and preserve natural resources. As a federal agency, the USDA needs to comply with specific regulations regarding the upkeep of its digital records and ultimately the preservation of historic data and institutional records.



NWRC project researcher Lucas Avelar enjoys a sunny afternoon out of the office.

Since the computer programs that allow access to different files can change or simply cease to exist over time, the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) provides guidelines and minimum standards for digital data formatting and storage. Avelar evaluated and proposed migration plans for different formats of data and metadata. The project's goal was to ensure that the NWRC's digital records met federal standards that will ensure their long-term preservation and provided continual access for scientists and other researchers. Avelar deployed archival methodologies and used specialized technology to secure sensitive institutional information and secure public access to historic records.

Avelar said of his work with the NWRC this summer: "Working on this project not only increased my computational skills and data management ingenuity, but it also introduced me to the multiple challenges public historians and archivists will be facing in the field of digital preservation. I am looking forward to the work ahead of us."

## Klondike Gold Rush Administrative History

**P**LHC council member Dr. Sarah Payne and Center for the Environmental Management of Military Lands (CEMML) researcher Dillon Maxwell, went on a two-week research trip to Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park in Skagway, Alaska in July of 2020. The two conducted archival research to aid in telling the park’s administrative history from the mid-1990s to present. They also spent time getting to know park staff (including the new superintendent Angela Wentz, a CSU alumna), the park’s resources, and the town of Skagway. They were even able to hike part of the famed Chilkoot Trail, one of the routes to the storied Klondike Gold Fields. The two are moving into Phase II of the project to continue researching and writing the second volume of the park’s administrative history during the 2020-2021 academic year and beyond.



Dr. Sarah Payne and Dillon Maxwell at the Historic Dyea Townsite. Dyea is two inlets north of Skagway and was once a booming gold rush town. Since then, it has been a timber site, farms, and today an interpretive area for visitors.

## Colorado Parks and Wildlife: Fishers Peak

**T**he PLHC continued its research collaboration with Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) this summer, entering into the fourth year of its work with Colorado’s State Park system. This year, researchers focused on Colorado’s newest state park, Fishers Peak. The state park is located near Trinidad, Colorado on a sprawling former ranch property.

The research team, consisting of Dr. Jared Orsi, Dr. Adam Thomas, Ariel Schnee and graduate student researcher, Shaun Rose, conducted interviews with locals and developed site forms, management

recommendations, and interpretive signage. Along with a narrative history, these deliverables will form the cultural resources stewardship chapter of the state park's management plan. Along with CPW archaeologist, Rachel Egan, and an instructor and students from Trinidad State Junior College (TSJC), the team visited the park this summer and conducted a cultural resource survey.



TSJC, PLHC, and CPW personnel set out on survey work to document cultural resources sites at Fisher's Peak State Park.

## USDA Forest Service Administrative History

**D**r. Leisl Carr Childers and Dr. Michael Childers spent the summer synthesizing the vast historical literature on the modern USDA Forest Service. To make the agency's past more digestible, they also worked on selecting important case studies that reveal how the agency has operated over the last sixty years. In July, they worked on range restoration in [California Park](#), a high-mountain grassland in northern Routt County. California Park's past as a major livestock grazing range and subsequent subject of early range restoration treatments using heavy herbicides have made it a conundrum for range restoration ecologists. The project leads toured California Park with retired range management specialist Erik Taylor. Additional case studies include other Colorado sites such as [Pawnee National Grasslands](#).



Dr. Mike Childers and retired Range Management Specialist, Erik Taylor at California Park earlier this summer.

## Naval Reactors Facilities (NRF)

**B**uilding on Dillon Maxwell’s work developing a historic context of the Naval Reactors Facility (NRF) in 2020, graduate student Shaun Rose will continue the collaboration between the PLHC and the Center for the Environmental Management of Military Lands (CEMML). Working with CEMML’s Alexandra Wallace and Amanda Wallander, Rose will conduct fieldwork, write descriptions, complete site forms, and create site maps of the facility, located on the Snake River Plain in Idaho.



The Center for Military Management is a research entity at CSU’s Warner College of National Resources that brings together multidisciplinary teams of natural and social scientists to conduct resource management on military lands.

## Career Advancement

Despite the challenges of the past year, many of our alumni found opportunities for career and academic advancement. Here are some of our most exciting alumni headlines!

Dr. Nichelle Frank, **Assistant Professor of History**, Utah State University (Logan, Utah)

Kylee Hevrdejs (formerly Kylee Cole), **Historic Preservation Officer/Planner**, City of Eureka Springs (Eureka Springs, Arkansas)

Amy Hootman, **Environmental and Historic Preservation Specialist** at the Iowa Economic Development Authority (Des Moines, Iowa)

Poppie Gullet, **National and State Register Historian** at History Colorado (Denver, Colorado)

Alex Miller, **Montrose Public Lands Ambassador** at the San Juan Mountains Association (Montrose, Colorado)

Andy Olson, **Tallgrass Prairie Center** at the University of Northern Iowa, (Cedar Falls, Iowa)

Shannon Kelly, **Lead Interpreter** at the Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center (Washburn, North Dakota)

## Academic Accomplishments

Dr. Will Wright, **Ph.D., University of Montana** (Bozeman, Montana)

## Welcome Back!

The PLHC would like to welcome our alumna, Dr. Rachel Kline, back to CSU as an instructor. This fall, Dr. Kline is teaching the undergraduate seminar in Public History.

*Do you have exciting news that we should hear about? Let us know at [cla\\_plhc@mail.colostate.edu](mailto:cla_plhc@mail.colostate.edu). We would love to celebrate you in an upcoming issue!*

## PLHC Faculty and Staff Updates

A hearty congratulations to Professor of History Emerita, **Dr. Ruth Alexander**, on her retirement this past year! Dr. Alexander will continue teaching at CSU's Todos Santos campus located near Baja, California.

This year, **Dr. Leisl Carr Childers** earned tenure. She is also co-leading the Catalyst for Innovative Partnerships (CIP) project, the Climate Adaptation Partnership (CAP), which convenes CSU researchers from a range of disciplines linked by their common research on climate adaptation. Dr. Carr Childers is also heading the PLHC's "Art of Ranching" partnership with CSU's Office of Extension.

**Dr. Mike Childers** earned tenure this year. His recent article in *The Conversation*, "Overcrowded US national parks need a reservation system," has attracted widespread popular interest, including numerous reprints in such newspapers as *The Denver Post*. Dr. Mike Childers serviced as the faculty advisor for the 2019-2021 editions of Parks as Portals to Learning.

**Dr. Jared Orsi** won a \$50,000 grant from the National Park Service's Southwest Borderlands Resources Protection Group (SWBRPG) to continue his work conducting oral histories at Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument. He currently serves as a member of the State Historians' Council.

**Dr. Sarah Payne** is continuing her administrative history on Klondike Gold Rush National Park into a second phase of research. The project is focused on filling in the gaps in the park's history from the 1990s to the present. Dr. Payne is collaborating with PLHC alumnus, Dillon Maxwell, on the project.

**Dr. Adam Thomas** supervised PLHC and CSU Extension interns Gus Rudnick and Natalie Stacker this summer as they provided critical support to the Bee Family Farm and Museum. In addition, he provided survey and resource documentation expertise for the Fisher's Peak Cultural Resource Management Chapter.

PLHC program manager, **Ariel Schnee**, was featured in *National Geographic* this year for her insights into changing public lands use during the COVID-19 pandemic. Schnee's three-part series on racial diversity and camping in the Colorado high county also appeared in *The Colorado Magazine*.



## Our Mission

The PLHC believes that recovering histories of difference on public lands facilitates the preservation of cultural and natural resources, informs public dialogue, and is the basis for the development of shared public lands values. To promote justice and democracy, the PLHC reveals, tells, and disseminates complex histories of public lands in partnership with public lands agencies, communities, students, and the public.

## Our Values

Collaboration, Useful Knowledge, Education, Resource Stewardship, Innovation, Community

## Our Future

The PLHC gratefully accepts donations from individuals and organizations who wish to support our efforts to produce historical knowledge for resource managers, to inform public dialogue about our shared public lands history, and to train the next generation of historians and cultural resource managers. All donations are tax deductible. To donate, please visit <https://advancing.colostate.edu/PLHC>.

## PLHC Council

**Jared Orsi**, PLHC Director and Professor of History

**Sarah Payne**, Associate Director for Research and Assistant Professor of History

**Leisl Carr Childers**, Associate Professor of History

**Michael Childers**, Associate Professor of History

**Adam Thomas**, Assistant Teaching Professor of History

**Ariel Schnee**, Program Manager

## PLHC Affiliates

**Mark Fiege**, Wallace Stegner Chair in Western Studies, Montana State University

**Janet Ore**, Associate Director of Graduate Studies and Public History Outreach, Montana State University

**Adrian Howkins**, Reader in Environmental History, University of Bristol

**Ruth Alexander**, PLHC Council Member Emerita, Professor of History Emerita, Colorado State University

## PLHC Student Staff

**Amber Scott**, PRSE Graduate Fellow, 2020-2021

**Kristy Ornelas**, PRSE Graduate Fellow, 2021-2022

## Partners and Friends

CSU Department of History

Center for the American West

Center for Protected Area Management

The Continental Divide Research Learning Center

Rocky Mountain National Park

Organ Pipe National Historic Site

Colorado Humanities

History Colorado

Colorado Parks and Wildlife

CSU Water Resources Archive

The Climate Adaptation Partnership

The Center for the Environmental Management of Military Lands

CSU College of Liberal Arts

CSU Office of the Vice President for Research

CSU Center for Literary Publishing

United States Forest Service

National Park Service

CSU Native American Cultural Center

## Featured Donor: E. Michael Rosser

A passion for history and philanthropy runs deep for longtime Public Lands History Center friend and board member Mike Rosser. In partnership with the PLHC and his no-author, PLHC alumna Diane Sansders, Mike wrote and produced his book, *Financing the America's Dream: A History of Mortgage Banking in the West*. The sales of his work which are donated to the PLHC in support of its mission.

A former board member of the High Line Canal Conservancy (HLCC), Mike is a passionate convener of organizations committed to the preservation of public lands in the American West, connecting the HLCC with the PLHC. Together, the two organizations collaborated on a grant application to the State Historic Fund offered by History Colorado.

Mike is perhaps most proud of the Anne Ratliff Rosser Scholarship in Public and Environmental History, which he created in memory of his late mother. Of the scholarship he created, Mike said: "This is a way to say thank you, and remember, memorialize, pay tribute and express gratitude for a great Mom."

The scholarship supports undergraduate and graduate students with demonstrated interests in Western American history, historic preservation, and environmental history. The Anne Ratliff Scholarship will benefit CSU's history students for generations to come, supporting and nurturing their scholarship and contributions to one of the liberal arts disciplines Mike loves and appreciates so much. The PLHC is deeply honored and touched by this generous gift to our students. On behalf of our center and the Department of History, thank you, Mike!

*The PLHC extends its sincere appreciation to Leighanne Alford, College of Liberal Arts Office of Development, for contributing this story.*



Rosser pauses for a snapshot during a recent fundraiser for the High Line Canal last October.

# Thanks to Our Authors

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Thank you for sharing your stories.

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