

# Colorado Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office



OCTOBER 2018

## Who We Are/ Where We Are

Lakewood, CO  
*Pam Sponholtz,*  
Project Leader  
*JoAnn Wise,*  
Budget Admin

Buckley Air Force Base,  
Aurora, CO  
*Dustin Casady,*  
Fish and Wildlife Biologist

Peterson, Schriever, Cheyenne Mtn Air Force Bases,  
Colorado Springs, CO  
*Max Canestorp,*  
Wildlife Biologist

US Air Force Academy,  
Colorado Springs, CO  
*Brian Mihlbachler,*  
Biological Scientist  
*Melissa Whittingslow,*  
Wildlife Biologist  
*R. Joe Murphy III,*  
Forester

Rocky Mountain National Park, Estes Park, CO  
*Chris Kennedy,*  
Fish Biologist

F.E. Warren Air Force Base,  
Cheyenne, WY  
*Alex Schubert,*  
Fish and Wildlife Biologist

McConnell Air Force Base,  
Wichita, KS  
*Laura Mendenhall,*  
Fish and Wildlife Biologist

Pueblo Chemical Depot,  
Pueblo, CO  
*Clark Jones,*  
Wildlife Biologist

Gunnison, CO  
*Cole Brittain,*  
Aquatic Biotechnician

SCA Interns  
Jessica Gorski

## Region 6 Priority Projects

### Hunting & Fishing

The cow elk hunt started October 1<sup>st</sup> on USAFA and goes till January 31<sup>st</sup>. This hunt is an escorted hunt that allows Natural Resources to effectively manage the elk population, protect habitat, and minimize elk-vehicle accidents. Melissa Whittingslow escorted hunters throughout October. Three cow elk were harvested in October.



through December 31.

Two more pronghorn were reported harvested this month during the F. E. Warren AFB Archery Only pronghorn season. This brings the total up to eight for the year. The season is open from August 15

### Cutthroat Trout Recovery

Chris Kennedy conducted electro-fishing surveys at three sites on the Roaring River within Rocky Mountain National Park to assess the recovery of greenback cutthroat trout following flooding in 2013.

Fish were more abundant at all three sites than the last time it was surveyed, but the population is still not fully recovered at the most downstream site.

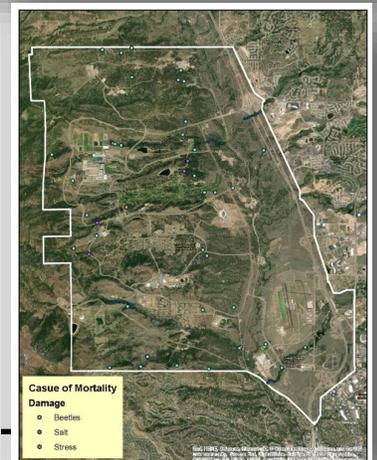
### Pollinator Conservation

Laura Mendenhall and Tina Seemayer (DoD) tagged 50 monarch butterflies in a bioswale abutting a new hangar at McConnell AFB. This is in an area that was formerly concrete and mowed turf grass. The tagging study is led by Monarch Watch and includes participants from all over the United States and Mexico.

*Background Photo: Little bluestem seeding in a prairie at McConnell AFB in Wichita, Kansas.*

## Partnerships & Accountability

- Student Conservation Association intern Jessica Gorski presented her research on the influence of black-tailed prairie dog distribution and its effect on Burrowing Owls on Pueblo Chemical Depot at the 25<sup>th</sup> Annual Wildlife Society Conference.
- Brian Mihlbachler attended a meeting with Colorado Springs Utilities and Blue & Silver Development for a North Monument Creek Sanitary Sewer Interceptor line that would run through USAFA to serve the base and communities north and east of the base. The consolidation of sanitary sewer system could reduce the amount of treated effluent diverted to upper Monument Creek, so possible impacts to existing riparian and Preble's meadow jumping mouse habitat will need to be evaluated.
- In the month of October, 22 acres of field surveys were conducted and 60 trees were removed (54 beetle infected, 4 salt killed, and 1 due to stress from the urban environment) as part of a GSA contract on USAFA.



# Species Conservation & Management



- Dustin Casady assisted with trapping and relocating raptors on Buckley AFB. The team has trapped and relocated 80 birds so far.
- Chris Kennedy completed the draft Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act Report for U. S. Army Corps of Engineers ecosystem restoration project on the South Platte River. The intent of the project is to restore the aquatic, riparian and wetland habitat along two miles of river through Denver.
- Max Canestorp checked Ips beetle funnel traps on Cheyenne Mountain AFS. Ips beetles are bark beetles that affect mostly ponderosa pine trees, boring chambers or “galleries” under the bark for egg-laying purposes. The traps are baited with a pheromone that attracts Ips beetles and collects them in a suspended cup, keeping them from infesting other pine trees upon dispersing from infested trees.

*Background Photo: Volunteer Phil Wright collecting data during electrofishing surveys on the Roaring River in Rocky Mountain National Park.*

# Habitat Conservation & Management



- Max Canestorp spent time in the field with the Center for Environmental Management of Military Lands (CEMML) assessing soil erosion impacts on Cheyenne Mountain AFS. The CEMML team will be making recommendations for mitigating erosion in drainage systems subject to damage, if indeed mitigation is needed.
- Alex Schubert and Nicole Ng (DoD) re-seeded an area at F. E. Warren AFB using a new ATV/UTV-pulled native warm season grass drill. After the area was seeded, Alex and Nicole placed straw blankets over the area to prevent erosion.
- Contractors from Alo Terra Restoration Services in partnership with the Colorado Natural Heritage Program, USFWS, and Pueblo Chemical Depot, treated approximately 5 acres of tamarisk and Canada Thistle along Chico Creek at Pueblo Chemical Depot. Chico Creek has been designated as a highly significant Potential Conservation Area by the Colorado Natural Heritage Program and is a migratory corridor for numerous species of animals in the region.