



# CATS End of Year Report - 2017

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The Colorado Addicted Trailbuilders Society is a 501(c) (3) nonprofit organization based out of the Loveland/Fort Collins area which is devoted to designing, building and repairing the various recreation trails found in Northern Colorado. We partner with city, county, state & national agencies to help provide the manpower and skill required to help keep their trails managed and open to the public. All members of the organization are volunteers (no paid positions), who share a common bond with their love for the outdoors. Our members come from various backgrounds and ages ranging from seven years old to sixty seven years old.

## Highlights for 2017

The Colorado Addicted Trailbuilders Society (CATS) finished with integrity its fifth year in Northern Colorado and celebrated its first full year as a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization in 2017.

CATS had a total of 80 events [including meetings/trainings/scouting treks/toolfests] this year. Designated trail whacks numbered at 64 [evenings/one dayers/weekends]. CATS constructed and/or improved over 3200 ft. of dirt surfaced trails in the NOCO region. Some other interesting facts include the group installing 52 stone steps and 46 stone mono-walls of various lengths. More detailed statistics can be found throughout this report broken by the various agencies which we worked with.

## Membership

The CATS welcomed seven new active members in 2017 making our overall membership increase 30% year over year. We hope that this trend continues into 2018 so more hands can help build the trail we cherish. Quality versus quantity in trail and membership is a key factor with CATS. Increasing our membership is as good as the dedication that comes from the volunteer.

## Partnership

In 2017 we were able to strengthen our relationship with Overland Mountain Bike Club (OMBC) and Wildland Restoration Volunteers (WRV) with the creation of the Northern Colorado Trail Building Coalition. Through the coalition our organizations were able to host a number of joint crew leader trainings and host a number of project days at Young Gulch. We expect this increased partnership to ultimately benefit the city, state and national agencies that we build trail for in the future. Our value-added involvement with agencies and their trail projects has solidified CATS presence in the NOCO area as a serious and reliable volunteer trail organization.



## Equipment

CATS expanded the organization's capabilities in 2017 with the purchase of a tool van, new trail tools, and equipment (thanks to a generous donor). This van and equipment will help magnify our responsiveness and visibility on future projects. Borrowing tools from agencies will be on a limited scale and determined by the scope and size of the project.

*Below is a condensed overview of the projects/locations CATS worked in 2017:*

## Loveland Natural Areas – 529 Hours, 17 Events

After three years of trail work CATS finished the Mariana Butte Trail and the Hidden Hogback Trail in 2017, the trails were open to the public with a grand ribbon cutting ceremony in September. Most of our Loveland events in 2017 were focused on finishing the portion of the trail which ran parallel and south along the Big Thompson River. This section of the trail included a technical spiral stone staircase feature (one of our most challenging stairs we have ever built), along with a number of long mono walls, switchbacks, and basic trail.

Special thanks to the Wapiti and Mariana Butte Golf course management and staff for their continued support of CATS and our trail development sessions throughout the past years.



## Fort Collins Natural Areas -132 Hours, 4 Events

For the third year in a row we spent a weekend at Soapstone Prairie Natural Area. Though the weather was challenging (bitter wind and a 20 minute brief snow storm), we were able to make a significant amount of progress in repairing ruts, drainages, backsloping, edging, and trail signs on the Cheyenne Rim Trail.

We also hosted a few projects on a connector trail attached to Reservoir Ridge – west side parking lot. We focused on a few areas which needed either armoring or support to help with water drainage on the trail. Some crew members learned a new skill set – called 'check ramps'.





## Colorado Parks and Wildlife - 397 Hours, 11 Events

CATS assisted in maintaining a number of trails within Lory State Park this year.

- We worked on the Wells Gulch trail focusing on 'trail footing' - making it easier and safer for the school field trip groups that use the trail for environmental classes.
- We completed our third yearly weekend at the top of Lory State Park (near Author's Rock) where we worked alongside Lory's State Park trail crew installing several large mono walls on the Howard trail (to help prevent it from washing away).
- Finally, we were able to go back to Shoreline Trail to add a few bike-friendly ramps to the stone steps.



## Larimer County Natural Resources – 305 Hours, 8 Events

We had the opportunity to work with the County once again at Hermit Park. CATS hosted a number of project days (including a weekend) with the county crew and we also assisted in a number of partner lead events at Hermit Park, including an event hosted by OMBC and one hosted by VOC. On one particular project the crew had the opportunity to move what was estimated to be the largest rock CATS has ever moved (est. weight of 10K pounds). [Photo to the right]

The CATS are excited to see the new Limber Pine Trail open in 2018.





## US Forest Service - 806 Hours, 19 Events

For the second year in a row we had the good fortune to partner with WRV, OMBC & PWV on the Young Gulch trail project. This year we ran a number of CATS hosted trail builds; including one where we provided a basic trail and rock training course. CATS also worked on a number of partner run events as either crew leaders or as skilled workers. The workload at Young Gulch varied this year, from a massive elevated rock turn, two complex climbing creekside ramps to a simple rock monowall but overall the work was fun and we are excited to see the trail take shape.



## Closing

The CATS organization is continuing to grow and has become the 'go to' group for crew leadership and technical knowledge in the Northern Colorado Area. In 2018, our continued vision is to cement our relationships with partnering agencies and extend an outreach to other clubs. CATS have the drive to continue trainings in the crew leadership arena and skill sets for quality trail products. CATS is distinctly different but strives to work in conjunction with other like-minded trail organizations; as we know that working together creates a better community and leads to greater successes on the trail.

In 2018, CATS will focus on several things: 1) general recruitment into the organization so that we can expand our abilities and bring even more people into the trail building community, 2) Upgrading, streamlining and enlarging our combined crew leader training program and staff, 3) produce quality videos for recruiting and training, 4) increase our visibility with social media platforms, awareness tables at outdoor stewardship fairs/venues, 5) inject more hands on training at trail events/whacks, and 6) promote more fun and social ingredients into our trail program.

Hope to see you on the Trail.