

# @The Preserve

*Protecting the history and future of the Monument Preserve*

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

|                                |     |
|--------------------------------|-----|
| <i>Monument Rock</i>           | 1   |
| <i>Upcoming Events</i>         | 1   |
| <i>A Recovering Landscape</i>  | 2   |
| <i>2014 Achievements</i>       | 2-3 |
| <i>Blue Bird News</i>          | 3   |
| <i>Target Shooting Cleanup</i> | 3   |
| <i>Membership Form</i>         | 4   |

**Election Night!**  
**March 10th.**  
**Renew your**  
**membership &**  
**vote!**

## Upcoming Events

### FOMP Board Meetings

**7 pm**, in the Classroom at the Monument Fire Center on the 2nd Tuesday of Month.

Everyone is invited!

**Tues, March 10th—election night**

**Tues, April 4th**—yearly project planning and prioritization

### Hot Shot Potluck

April—date/time TBA via email

### Trail Maintenance Nights

**6 pm**, @ Mt. Herman/Nursery Road Parking Lot on the 2nd Tuesday of Month May–Sept.

<http://bit.ly/FOMPMeetingSpot>

Tools provided, wear jeans, gloves, bring water.

**Tues, May 12th**

**Tues, Jun 9th**

**Tues, July 14th**

**Tues, Aug 11th**

**Tues, Sep 8th**

(dates weather permitting)

**For more info:**

**719-640-1347 Jon**

**or 719-439-8865 Chris**

## MONUMENT ROCK

*by Bill Benson*

Between Colorado Springs and Denver is a long ridge that divides the watersheds of the Platte and Arkansas River basins. This area is unique in its geology and contains some fascinating formations including Monument Rock. Monument Rock is on Forest Service public land in an area called the Monument Preserve, once home to a Forest Service tree nursery. The pond in front of the rock was built as a water storage dam to provide water for tree planting.



*Close-up of Monument Rock* Photo courtesy of Bill Benson

I have always been curious about how the rock formation ended up there. It seems a little out of place. The rock itself is a conglomerate composed of small rocks, sandstone, shale, and mud compressed and cemented together as they were buried under



*Photo-art courtesy of FOMP Board Member Bill Benson.*

other layers of rock above them. There is quite a bit of Quartz and Chert as well as some scattered fragments of limestone in the formation. Chert was one of the rocks that Native Americans used to make arrowheads. These rocks were eroded from the ancestral Rockies which existed before our current Rocky Mountains. Just to the west of Monument Rock is the Rampart Range fault that goes along the eastern edge of Mount Herman. To the west of Mount Herman is a region of granite domes called batholiths that were pushed up when the Pikes Peak massif was created along with the Rampart Range. The way I remember batholiths from my geology class was like an upside down bathtub as the granite pushes

it's way to the surface.

Monument Rock was created as Rampart Range was being pushed up from below. The erosion took away everything else in the area and left Monument Rock standing alone. This rock is harder than the rock around it, and it remained standing. There are other rocks in this same formation along the Front Range to the south such as Cathedral Rock on the Air Force Academy and several rock formations in Douglass Valley. This is just a quick overview of Monument Rock, if you are interested in some more reading, there is plenty of research done by the United States Geological Survey.

### **Graffiti Ruins Everything!**

Sadly, there has been a disappointing amount of graffiti showing up throughout the preserve on many surfaces, including foundations, cisterns, and stones. We have noticed that these tags are often accomplished late in the day or evening, not during the typical daylight hours. We ask that if you notice suspicious activity in the preserve (such as teens with a Walmart bag full of spray paint cans) that you contact our law enforcement official, Tom Healy, USFS, at [thealy@fs.fed.us](mailto:thealy@fs.fed.us), office (719) 477-4204, cell (719) 641-4698. Or to report any threatening or disorderly conduct type behavior to the El Paso Co Sheriff, call the non-emergent line at (719) 390-5555. Emergencies should go directly to 911.

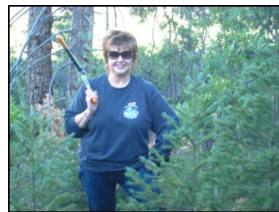
## A RECOVERING LANDSCAPE

by Diane Stroh

**T**he burned portion of the Monument Preserve landscape is recovering slowly since the April, 1989 Berry fire. But it is recovering. FOMP has been tending naturally established young trees, and planting new seedlings to restore the damaged environment. But there is still much work to do.

While the Preserve supports primarily ponderosa pine and Gambel oak, it also serves as a transition zone into a higher-elevation mixed conifer forest. Douglas fir is found primarily on north slopes, thriving on wetter sites and establishing more easily under shade. It has frequent cone crops, with light weight seeds that travel far on the wind. Thousands of firs have seeded in naturally since the fire. Some ponderosa pines have also established since the fire, but due to heavier seeds, infrequent cone production (~ every five years) and difficulty growing under the shade of an oak canopy, pine regeneration is tenuous at best. Its heavy seeds stay close to the parent tree unless carried by birds or animals. Seeds dispersed by mature cones in September require moist conditions the following spring for successful germination. High hopes for plentiful new seedlings from a strong cone crop in 2009 were dashed by one of the driest springs on record in 2010. Pines in the Preserve experienced a good cone crop in 2014, so we can expect some new young seedlings soon if weather conditions cooperate. These naturally-regenerated pines are well-adapted to the harsh, dry environment. Numerous young seedlings are now overtopped by thickets of Gambel oak, with growth so severely impaired that many

will die if not released. While healthy portions of pine-oak ecosystems support vigorous, mature clumps of Gambel oak with grass and scattered ponderosa pines, most of these old oak stands were knocked back in the fire and replaced with dense impenetrable thickets that have proliferated since the burn. Gambel oak provides an important hard mast acorn crop, especially valuable to bears, and hiding cover that benefits numerous wildlife species. It has always been part of the Front Range ecosystem, but is now heavily overrepresented, raising wildfire concerns and choking out young trees. This oak will likely garrote many hopeful seedlings, significantly slowing natural succession. Unless cleared from this daunting competition for light, water and nutrients, most of these seedlings will soon succumb to overtopping brush.



*Cindy Cope takes pride in releasing young trees*

This is where FOMP comes in. Thousands of seedlings have been released by clearing surrounding oak, providing a fighting chance

for the young tree to outgrow this robust competitor. Since most of these trees are still less than four feet in height, a quick glance across the burn area does not easily reveal the burgeoning new forest. A closer look, however, imparts hope of a healing landscape that will be treasured by future generations.

To supplement trees that have established on their own, FOMP has also planted thousands of ponderosa pine seedlings over the past decade, with help from volunteers. Planting in portions of the 1,000-acre burn

area is essential, as much of the natural seed source was destroyed.



*Jon Nordby instructs a group high school volunteers during a seedling release in September*

These seedlings are grown from locally-collected seed. Colorado is divided into seed zones with similar physiographic, climatic and geologic characteristics. Seed collected from a comparable elevation within the same zone is grown into healthy young seedlings for the Preserve by the U.S. Forest Service. These young trees will produce their own cones within 15 years, providing a fresh seed source for the future.

Due to the past several dry winters, FOMP has not planted trees since 2012. We plan to plant 200 seedlings this spring, and will be looking for eager volunteers to help! Project date will depend on soil moisture conditions, but tentative dates include March 28, April 4 or April 11. Please watch the FOMP website or sign up for emails for further information. FOMP also plans to release seedlings on Tuesday volunteer work nights, starting in May. Work is rigorous, with clearing done with handsaws and loppers. But experiencing firsthand the fledgling young forest is exhilarating. Please join us in this important landscape restoration work during the upcoming field season.

## 2014 VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES

by Jon Nordby

**T**he Friends of Monument Preserve (FOMP) had a very busy 2014, logging over 1000 volunteer hours across a variety of projects with a variety of local organizations. Early in the

year our board meetings were used for planning out the year, starting with our traditional Bluebird 4-H Club maintenance and HotShot Potluck for the firefighters stationed in the Preserve. Thanks to the membership for providing the food, and to the Pikes Peak Brewery for supporting the

event as well.

Early on in the year we were approached by an Eagle Scout candidate and FOMP worked with Kedrick Bowen to design and implement a project at the camp areas NW of the intersection of Mount Herman Road and Red Rocks Road. A small trailer



was filled with glass and trash that had accumulated over the years, and fire pits were made more permanent for safety and to keep the use of the area from spreading. Our direction from the USFS was to keep this natural, so we used larger buried rocks from nearby, to rebuild the fire rings. Scouts use this area often for camping merit badges.



Another focus was to continue our efforts to restore the Berry Fire area in the middle of the Preserve, west of the Mt. Herman Road and up the face of Mt. Herman. Although we did not plant seedlings this year

due to drought, we spent many volunteer hours doing softwood release. FOMP had a wonderful turnout in September this year of more than 35 volunteers when we worked with the local FCA and Lewis Palmer District youth track teams and other school organizations – acres of seedlings were freed from choking bramble oak.

We had many high priority trail projects that were mostly put on hold until shooting on Mt. Herman Road was closed down. We refocused our efforts to Trash Pickup Saturdays and Evenings, and a single day in which 1000 volunteer hours were spent picking up trash, organized by the Seifert family in memory of their son Devin. Our last trail project of the year was later than we normally work, but a Colorado

Springs company approached us with volunteers that had worked with us before on TR715 so we defined an additional project. Thanks to the hard work from employees at Computer Associates (shown below) that helped reroute the Ridgeline that was washing out for the last couple years – we now have a safe, sustainable trail and we can begin restoring the eroded ridge that is now closed.



## BLUE BIRD NEWS

by Hermann J. Spielkamp

With the unusually mild weather we are experiencing, our thoughts turn to spring and summer – even though we know winter is not over yet. As a result of the mild weather pattern, we plan to have the Bluebird Trail maintenance sooner this year in case we have an early spring.

The Monument-Woodmoor 4-H Club has built new bird houses over the winter in

their woodshop and we will replace the broken ones or install at new locations. All existing birdhouses will be cleaned and sprayed with disinfectant to eliminate parasites in hope for an early brood. The Bluebird Maintenance Day has become a tradition for the 4-H Club in partnership with FOMP. Some of the kids, now teenagers, have participated for seven or more years – a nice history to protect and promote our wildlife.



*Mt. Herman 4-H Club prepares for spring*

## TARGET SHOOTING CLEANUP

by Jon Nordby

FOMP has worked for years with the USFS to end the target shooting on Mt. Herman Road, primarily due to serious safety issues. The noise, trash and devastation to the forest was important to stop as well, but reports of people under fire forced us to take action. Many board members, and some firearms enthusiasts from military, hunting, and target shooting backgrounds personally experienced impacts and ricochets from the ranges while on TR715 and TR716. Dozens of similar experiences were reported to FOMP, the USFS and the Sheriff, so we finally got the message across. Several vehicles were hit in 2013 as well. One was occupied but there were no injuries – this might have

been the catalyst for the closure.



*FOMP Board Member Bill Benson wheeling one of many loads of trash to the dumpster.*

been done with that area yet.

A Colorado Springs family, the Seiferts, organized an effort the scale of which

we've never seen before and galvanized 170 friends and family to memorialize the loss of their son Devin. August 10<sup>th</sup>, 2014 was the Devin John Seifert Memorial Cleanup and BBQ, it was simply awesome to see this grieving family honor their son Devin in such an impactful and meaningful way. Another 30' dumpster was filled in less than a day from shooting-generated trash up on Mt. Herman Road where it intersects 320a, b, and c. We were honored and humbled to be part of this effort with the Seifert family.

We have a ways to go yet. Several other target shooting areas need cleanup – stay tuned for some opportunities to help which we'll announce through our email list and at trailhead information boxes.



## FRIENDS OF MONUMENT PRESERVE

PO Box 634  
Monument, CO 80132  
Email: [info@fomp.org](mailto:info@fomp.org)  
[www.fomp.org](http://www.fomp.org)

### Attention: Pet Owners!!!!

Forest users have noticed more bags of dog poop along the trails. While these bright plastic bags are highly visible, they take years to decompose and no one will collect them for you.

***So if you must scoop,  
please pack out your  
poop!***

*Renew your  
membership using  
Google Checkout  
on [www.fomp.org](http://www.fomp.org)*

## MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

At 7:00 PM on Tuesday, March 10, 2015, FOMP will be holding its annual membership meeting and Board of Directors elections. The purpose of this meeting is to elect a governing board to direct the activities of FOMP and act as your representatives to interface with the community and the USFS. If you or someone you know is interested in a board position, or just want to be more involved in defining our goals and operational plans, please plan on attending. The meeting is held in the classroom in the Fire Center Administration area. Follow the Mt. Herman Road and take the first left after it turns to dirt, and continue into the parking area. The classroom is the first building on the right. Only active FOMP members are eligible to vote, so plan on renewing your membership either prior to or at the meeting itself.

## MEMBERSHIP FORM



## FRIENDS OF MONUMENT PRESERVE

### Become a member of the Friends of Monument Preserve.

As a member of the Friends of Monument Preserve, you will help fund fire restoration efforts, quality tools for our monthly volunteer crews, scout projects, Bluebird house materials, Hotshot potlucks, and other expenses.

Make your tax deductible donation to :

**Friends of Monument Preserve  
PO Box 634  
Monument, CO 80132**

### Annual Memberships

Individual \$15 \_\_\_\_\_  
Family \$25 \_\_\_\_\_  
Business/Sponsor \$100 \_\_\_\_\_  
Other \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Company \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email\* \_\_\_\_\_

Renew or join using Google Checkout at: [www.fomp.org](http://www.fomp.org)

\* used for newsletters and event reminders



Your Interests: Hiking \_\_\_\_\_ Biking \_\_\_\_\_  
Horseback riding \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_